George Washington Papers, Series 2, Letterbooks 1754-1799

To THE SECRET COMMITTEE OF THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

Head Quarters, July 15, 1776.

Gentn: In answer to your favor of yesterday, I beg leave to acquaint you, that I have consulted with such of the General Officers as could be easily convened, with respect to the prisoners confined in the Goal of this City. We are all of opinionthat to enlarge them, or permit their continuance here is equally dangerous; no other Course therefore remains, than to send them to some place where they can be safely kept, can have no Influence, and consequently do us no Injury. If such a Place could be conveniently found in the Province, it would be most proper, but if not, we are of opinion they should be sent to some other and that without any delay. To obviate any difficulty which may arise, from the Authority of one Province sending its Prisoners to another, I will most chearfully Co-operate with you, so as to give the Measure the weight it may derive from my General Command. The Place which in this case, has been proposed is Farmington in Connecticut.

The Multiplicity of other Engagements obliges me to Solicit your Attention and Care to these Matters, which are rather of Civil than Military concern, and I would particularly request you, to Consult and determine upon some method to remove Persons out of Town, whose Conduct, Connections and Office afford the Strongest presumption of their remaining here, with dangerous and unfriendly Views to the American Cause. An indiscriminate order, to remove all who do not belong to the Army or Connected with it, or have not taken up Arms to defend the City, would probably involve many innocent and inoffensive Persons in Difficulty. On the other hand, to leave the City open to Spies and Emissaries from the Enemy, and facilitate their Intelligence is totally inconsistent with

common prudence; I must therefore, beg your Advice and Assistance in this delicate and difficult circumstance.

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

Head Quarters, New York, July 15, 1776.

Sir: Since my last, two of the Enemy's Ships, one of Forty the other Twenty Guns, taking advantage of a Strong Wind and tide, passed us, notwithstanding a Warm fire from all our Batteries. they now lie in Tappan Sea, between twenty and thirty Miles up Hudson's River, where no Batteries from the shore can molest them. their Views, no doubt are to cut off all Communication between this and Albany by Water, which they Effectually will do. If the Gundolas, Row Gallies &c. from Connecticut and Providence were here, I should think of making their Station uncomfortable if Possible; I must request they may be sent on as soon as Conveniently can be. I have wrote Governor Cooke requesting the same of him, 'Tis but reasonable to suppose, these Ships have a Number of Small Arms on Board, which are intended to put into the hands of the Disaffected on the North River, and in the back Parts of this Province, when a favorable opportunity may offer, for their making use of them against us. I am sorry to say their Number, by the best information I can get is great. Inclosed is a Letter I wrote the 11th. Inst. which thro' mistake, was neglected by the Thursday Post. We have one large Row Galley nearly compleated and another which may be ready by the time they arrive from your Honor and Governor Cooke; the whole when collected will be sufficient to attack the two Ships up the River, as the Channel they now occupy is narrow which will prevent working their Guns to Advantage. I am, etc.47

47. The same letter was sent to Governor Cooke.

To MAJOR GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER

New York, July 15, 1776.

Dear Sir: Inclosed you will receive a Letter from Congress which came to Hand this Morning, with a Copy of some Resolves, to which you will pay your Attention, as their Execution will be under your Direction.

I have also inclosed a Letter for General Burgoyne, which I request you to seal and forward to him, as soon as you have perused the important, and necessary Resolves it contains. The spirited Measures Congress have entered into, I am hopeful, will make the British Troops more regardful of that Faith, which ought to be preserved inviolate between Nations, and that the Rights of Humanity, may not be infracted, in future.

Admiral Howe arrived on Friday last, and we hourly expect his Fleet. The same Day, just before he came in, two Ships of War, one of forty, and the other of twenty Guns, and three Tenders passed our Batteries, without any certain Damage that I could perceive, tho' an incessant Fire was kept up. They availed themselves of a brisk and favourable Wind and Tide.

Our last Intelligence is, that they are at Tappan Bay. You may readily conjecture a Variety of bad Purposes intended by this Manœuvre. I am, etc.

P. S.—I wrote to Fort Constitution and directed that Intelligence should be forwarded respecting the Ships passing by us, to Albany that, Precautions might be used to prevent Vessels falling into their Hands.—You will give further Directions in this Matter.

To SIR WILLIAM HOWE

New York, July 15, 1776.

Sir: I have it in charge from Congress to transmit the inclosed Resolutions to you;43 And have the honor to be, etc.

To MAJOR GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER

Head Quarters, New York, July 15, 1776.

Dear Sir: The inclosed Resolve44 and Extract of a Letter, you will see is of some Standing. Upon considering the Matter, I do not see how it is possible, for me to carry the Resolve into Execution with tolerable Precision or Certainty. The Persons, the Witnesses and all other Circumstances are so totally unknown, that any Inquiry made by me, must prove delusive and unsatisfactory. I am, therefore, under the Necessity of passing it wholly by, or putting it under your Direction, that, as Time and Circumstances will admit, you will have it executed, in the best Manner you can, to answer the Wishes and Expectations of Congress.

Colo. Nicholson45 (Commandant of a Regiment raised in this Province) requests that his Conduct may be inquired into; I suppose he would be included in the

43. The same letter was sent to Gen. John Burgoyne. The resolves referred to were those of July 10, 1776, announcing retaliatory measures for treatment received by Americans taken prisoner at The Cedars.

44. The resolve of June 24, 1776: “That General Washington be directed to order an enquiry to be made into the conduct of the officers heretofore employed in the Canada department; that the said enquiry be made at such times and places as, in his judgment, shall be most likely to do justice, as well to the public as to the individuals; and that the result of the said enquiry, together with the testimonies upon the subject, be transmitted to Congress: that, moreover, all officers accused of cowardice, plundering, embezzlement of public monies, and other misdemeanors, be immediately brought to trial.”

45. Col. John Nicholson, of the Fourth New York Regiment.

above general Inquiry, but as that may be long delayed and perhaps never fully had, I could wish his Case might be distinguished from the general Mass. I expected to receive from the Commissioners of Congress, who went to Canada some Vouchers and Proofs

respecting him, as his Conduct did not appear to them, in the most favourable View; but none have yet come to Hand. Lieut. Colo. Visher,46 I understand, is a material Witness against Colo. Nicholson, and will direct to such others, as are expected to support the Charge against him.

I am very sensible the General Inquiry requested by Congress must be a Work of Difficulty and Delicacy; but as they seem to desire it very earnestly, I hope it is not impracticable. I should hope, upon a Conference with Generals Gates and Arnold, some Plan may be devised to comply with it. I am persuaded you will leave nothing unattempted on your Part for this Purpose. I am, etc.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, July 15, 1776.

Sir: This will be handed you by Mr. Griffin38 who has also taken upon him the charge and delivery of two Packets containing sundry Letters which were sent to Amboy Yesterday by a Flag and forwarded to me to day by General Mercer. The Letter addressed to Governor Franklin came open to my hands.39

I was this morning honoured with yours of the 13th. instant, with its important and necessary Inclosures, and in Obedience to the Commands of Congress have transmitted General Howe, the Resolves intended

46. Lieut. Col. John Vischer, of the New York Militia.

38. Col. Samuel Griffin. He had been elected deputy adjutant general of the Flying Camp on July 19.

39. These papers contained Lord Howe's declaration of the appointment of himself and his brother as commissioners from the King for granting free and general pardons, and a letter

to Governor Franklin requesting him to give publicity to the said declaration in New Jersey, — *Sparks*.

for him. Those for General Burgoyne I Inclosed and sent to General Schuyler with directions immediately to forward to him. The Inhuman Treatment to the whole, and Murder of part of our People after their Surrender and Capitulation, was certainly a flagrant violation of that Faith which ought to be held sacred by all civilized nations, and founded in the most Savage barbarity. It highly deserved the severest reprobation, and I trust the Spirited Measures Congress have adopted upon the Occasion, will prevent the like in future: But if they should not, and the claims of humanity are disregarded, Justice and Policy will require recourse to be had to the Law of retaliation, however abhorrent and disagreeable to our natures in cases of Torture and Capital Punishments.40 I have &ca.41

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, July 17, 1776.

Sir: I was this Morning Honoured with yours of the 15th instant with Sundry Resolves. I perceive the Measures Congress have taken to expedite the raising of the Flying Camp and providing it with Articles of the greatest use. You will see by a postscript to my Letter of the 14, I had wrote to the commanding Officer of the Pennsylvania Militia, ordering them to be marched from Trenton to Amboy, as their remaining there, could not Answer the least

40. The Americans captured at The Cedars were plundered by the Indians and several were murdered. Capt. George Forster, of the Eighth Foot, seems to have made no effort to protect the prisoners. The particulars are spread on the *Journals of the Continental Congress*, July 10, 1776.

41. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

public Good. For having consulted with sundry Gentlemen I was informed, if the Enemy mean to direct their views towards Pennsylvania, or penetrate the Jerseys, their Route will be from near Amboy and either by way of Brunswick or Bound Brook. The lower road from South Amboy being thro.' a Woody and Sandy country; besides they will be then able to throw in succour here and to receive it from hence in cases of Emergency.

The Connecticut Light Horse mentioned in my Letter of the 11th., notwithstanding their then promise to continue here for the defence of this place, are now discharged and about to return Home; having peremptorily refused all kind of fatigue duty, or even to mount Guard, claiming an exemption, as Troopers.

Tho' their Assistance is much needed and might be of Essential service in case of an Attack, yet I judged it advisable, on their application and claim of such Indulgences, to discharge them; as granting them, would set an Example to others and might produce many ill consequences. The Number of men included in the last return by this is lessened about 500.

I last Night received a Letter from Genl. Schuyler with several Inclosures, Copies of which I have herewith transmitted. They will give Congress every Information I have respecting our Northern Army and the Situation of our Affairs in that Quarter and to which I beg leave to refer their attention. I cannot but express my surprize at the scarcity of Provisions which General Schuyler mentions, after what the

Commissary assured me and which formed a part of my Letter of the 14th. He still assures me of the same. This is a distressing circumstance, as every Article of Provision and every thing else necessary for that department, can have no other now, than a Land conveyance, the Water communication from hence to Albany being entirely cut off.

Congress will please to consider the Inclosure No. 6 about raising six Companies out of the Inhabitants about the Lakes, to prevent the Incursions of the Indians. The General

Officers in their Minutes of Council have determined it a matter of much Importance, and their attention to the price of Goods furnished the Soldiery may be extremely necessary. They have complained much upon this head.

The Retreat from Crown Point seems to be considered in opposite views by the General and Field Officers. The former I am satisfied have weighed the matter well, and yet the reasons assigned by the Latter against it appear Strong and forcible; I hope what ever is done will be for the best. I was apprehensive the Appointment of General Gates over General Sullivan would give the latter disgust. His Letter I transmitted Congress seemed to Warrant the Suspicion.—he is not arrived yet, when he does, I shall try to settle the Affair and prevail on him to continue, as I think his resignation will take from the service a useful and Good Officer.54

By a Letter from the Committee of Orange County, received this Morning, the Men of War and Tenders were Yesterday at Haverstraw

54. This was the age-old dispute between the line and the staff. On June 17, 1775, Gates was appointed Adjutant General of the Continental Army with the rank of brigadier general. Sullivan was appointed a brigadier general in the line of the Army June 22, 1775. Gates was promoted to major general May 16, 1776, and Sullivan was not raised to that rank until Aug. 9, 1776. Sparks quotes his letter of July 6 to General Schuyler: “I ever was desirious, that some officer superior in rank should relieve me from this disagreeable command, and should with pleasure have remained in the army and served under him; but, Congress having thought proper to supersede me by appointing General Gates, who had not, by the rank they were pleased formerly to confer upon us, the same pretension as myself, I can construe this in no other light, than to suppose Congress were apprehensive that I was not equal to the trust they were pleased to repose in me. If this be the case, I am bound in justice to my country to relinquish a command to which I am not equal. If this was not the foundation, and they had not such an opinion of me, surely my honor calls upon me to leave the service, after a person is put over me without any impeachment

of my conduct.“ Sullivan went to Philadelphia and tendered his resignation; but after the reasons for promoting General Gates were explained to him by the President of Congress he asked leave to withdraw his application to resign, which was granted.

Bay, about 40 miles above this. A number of Men in four Barges from the Tenders attempted to land; with a view they suppose of taking some Sheep and Cattle that had been previously removed. A small number of Militia that was collected, obliged them to retreat without their doing any damage with their Cannon. They were sounding the Water up towards the Highlands, by which it is probable they will attempt to pass with part of the Fleet if possible.

Yesterday Evening a Flagg came from General Howe with a Letter addressed “ *To George Washington Esquire &ca. &ca. &ca* .” It was not received on the same principle, that the one from Lord Howe was refused.55 I have &ca.56

55. General Howe gave the following account of this matter in a letter to Lord George Germaine (August 6): “The Commander-in-chief of the rebel forces sent me the enclosed letter and narrative of some past transactions in Canada, which I thought proper to answer in general terms, directing to ‘George Washington, Esq., &c., &c., &c.’ as the most unexceptionable mode of address. The officer sent to receive the flag would not receive my letter, as it did not express his General's titles. In consequence of which I sent Lieutenant-Colonel Paterson, adjutant-general, a few days afterwards to remonstrate upon this, and other circumstances relative to the usage of General Prescott, and several officers in the enemy's possession, and to mention an exchange of prisoners. This interview was more polite than interesting. However, it induced me to change my superscription for the attainment of an end so desirable; and in this view I flatter myself it will not be disapproved.”— *Sparks*.

56. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To MAJOR GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER

New York, July 17, 1776.

Dear Sir: Yesterday Evening I was favored with yours of the 12th. Inst. with its several Inclosures.

As to the Propriety or Impropriety of giving up Crown Point, and vacating that Post, it is impossible for me to determine. My Ignorance of the Country, my Unacquaintance with it's Situation, and a Variety of Circumstances, will not permit me to pronounce any certain Opinion upon the Subject, or to declare, whether it might or could not be maintained against the Enemy. I doubt not, the Measure was duly weighed by the General Officers in Council, and seem'd to them best calculated to secure the Colonies and prevent the Enemy from penetrating into them. However, I cannot but observe, tho' I do not mean to encourage, in the smallest Degree, or to give the least sanction to inferior Officers, to set up their Opinions against the Proceedings and Councils of their Superiors, knowing the dangerous Tendency of such a Practice, that the Reasons assigned by the Officers in their Remonstrance appear to me forcible and of great Weight. They coincide with my own Ideas. I have ever understood Crown Point to be an important Post, and from its Situation, of the utmost Consequence to us, especially if we mean to keep the Superiority and Mastery of the Lake. If it is abandoned by us, it is natural to suppose, the Enemy will possess it. If they do, and my Judgement does not mislead me, any Vessels or Gallies we employ upon the Lake, will certainly be in their Rear, and it will not be in our Power to bring them down to Ticonderoga or the

Post opposite to it; or from thence to have the least Communication with them, or the Means of granting them Succours or Supplies of any Kind. Perhaps it is intended to employ the Gallies only on the Communication between the two Posts, that of Crown Point and the one now to be established. How far they would there answer our Views, I cannot tell. As I said before, I have not a sufficient Knowledge of the several Posts

on the neighbouring Country, to form an accurate Judgement upon the Matter, and of Consequence do not design anything I have said, by way of Direction, trusting, that whatever is best to advance the Interest of the important Struggle we are engaged in, will be done.50

I am extremely sorry to have such unfavorable Accounts of the Condition of the Army.51 Sickness of itself is sufficiently bad; but when Discord and Disorder are added, greater Misfortunes cannot befall it, except that of a Defeat. While they prevail, there is but little Hopes of Things succeeding well. I must intreat your Attention to these Matters, and your Exertions to introduce more Discipline, and to do away the unhappy pernicious Distinctions, and Jealousies between the Troops of different Governments. Enjoin this upon the Officers, and let them inculcate, and press home to the Soldiery, the Necessity of Order and Harmony among them, who are embark'd in one common Cause, and mutually contending for all that Freeman hold dear. I am persuaded, if the Officers will but exert themselves, these Animosities, this Disorder, will in a great Measure subside, and nothing being more essential to the Service

50. In a council of officers, consisting of Generals Schuyler, Gates, Sullivan, Arnold, and Baron de Woedtke, at Crown Point (July 7), it was resolved that the post was not tenable and that the army should retire to the strong ground opposite Ticonderoga, afterwards called Mount Independence. A remonstrance against this decision was drawn up and signed by 21 of the inferior officers, at the head of whom were Cols. John Stark, Enoch Poor, and William Maxwell. Contemporary copies of the proceedings of the council and of the remonstrance are in the *Washington Papers*.

The Baron Friedrich Wilhelm de Woedtke had been a major in the Prussian Army. He came to Philadelphia with strong letters of recommendation to Doctor Franklin and was appointed a brigadier general (March 16) and ordered to Canada by Congress. He died at Lake George about three weeks after this council of war and was buried with military honors.

51. Gates had written (July 16) that since the beginning of May the loss sustained in the northern army from the enemy, and by death and desertion, amounted to more than 5,000 men, and that 3,000 were then sick.

than that it should, I am hopeful nothing on their Parts will be wanting to effect it.52

The Scarcity of Provision which you mention, surprises me much. I had hoped, that an ample and competent Supply, for a considerable Time, was now in Store; nor can I but believe, the most lavish and extravagant Waste has been made of it. Not longer than three or four Days ago, and just after the two Men of War and Tenders passed by, as mentioned in my last, the Situation of the northern Army in Respect to this Article, occurred to my Mind, and induced an Inquiry after the Commissary about it, being certain the Water Communication with Albany would be intirely cut off, and was happy to find from him, that the Supplies he had forwarded, with such a Proportion of fresh Meat as could be procured, would be fully sufficient for 10,000 Men for four Months. This I informed Congress of, as a most fortunate Event. To be told now, that there is none, or next to none, is so contrary to what I expected, that I am filled with Wonder and Astonishment. I have informed the Commissary of it, who is equally surprised, and must request, as our Navigation is so circumstanced, that you will direct those whose Business it is, to use every possible Means, to provide such Supplies as may be necessary, and that proper Attention be paid to the Expenditure, or it will be impossible ever to subsist that Army.

As to intrenching Tools, I have from Time to Time forwarded all that can possibly be spared.

I have directed the Quarter Master, to send such

52. Schuyler had written (July 12): “The most descriptive pen cannot describe the Condition of our army. Sickness, Disorder, and Discord reign triumphant; the latter occasioned by an illiberal and destructive Jealousy, which unhappily subsists between

the Troops raised in different Colonies.…The waste that has been made of provisions is incredible. Flour we have in plenty, but of pork not more than six hundred Barrels and fresh Beef extremely difficult to be procured.” Schuyler's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

Things contained in your List, as can be had and may be transported by Land. The greatest Part it would be difficult to procure, and if they could be had, it would be attended with immense Trouble and Expence to forward them. I must, therefore, entreat your utmost Diligence and Inquiry to get them, and not only them but every Necessary you want wherever they may be had. The Water Intercourse being now at an End, but few Supplies can be expected from hence, and I make not the least Doubt, if active proper Persons are employed, in many Instances you will be able to obtain such Articles as you stand in Need of. I am under the Necessity of doing so here, and by much Pains and Industry, have procured many Necessaries.

As for the Articles wanted for the Gondolas, I should suppose many of them may be purchased of the Proprietors of Crafts about Albany, and of Persons who have Vessels there, by allowing them a good Price. The Communication by Water being now stop'd, they cannot employ them, and I presume may be prevailed on to part with most of their Tackle, for a good Consideration.

I transmitted Congress a Copy of your Letter and of its several Inclosures, and recommended to their particular Attention the Resolution No. 6, for raising six Companies to guard the Frontiers, and the high Price of Goods furnished the Soldiery, and that some Measures might be taken thereon.

There is a Resolve of Congress against Officers holding double Commissions, and of long

standing, none are allowed it except Adjutants and Quarter Masters. They generally are, also first or second Lieutenants; In this Army there is no Instance of double Offices, but in the Cases I mention.

The Carpenters from Philadelphia, unfortunately had not Time to get their Tools &c. on Board a Craft here before the Men of War got up. They set out by Land next Day, and I suppose will be at Albany in the Course of this Week, as also two Companies from Connecticut.

I have inquired of Mr. Hughes, and find that the six Anchors and Cables were on Board Captn. Peter Post's Vessel belonging to Esopus; who, upon the first Appearance of the Fleet coming above the Narrows, went off without taking the Necessaries brought by Captain Douw.53 Mr. Hughes says, Captain Douw who brought you the Lead, had Orders to get them.

I have inclosed you a List of the naval Articles the Qr. Master expects to obtain and send from hence, which will evince the Necessity of your Exertions to get the Rest elsewhere. Many of the Articles, I should suppose may be made at Albany and within the Neighbourhood of it.

I am in Hopes, in Consequence of your Application, the different Governments will take some Steps for apprehending Deserters. It is a growing Evil, and I wish it may be remedied. From the northern Army, they have been extremely numerous from Report, and should most certainly be returned, if they should be found.

53. Volckert Pieterse Douw, commissioner of Indian affairs of the Northern Department.

How far, the Mode suggested by you, may answer, the Event will shew; but I am doubtful whether many will return of themselves. I fancy a Part of your Letter was omitted to be sent. When you come to speak of Deserters, what I have on the Subject begun a new Sheet, and seems to suppose something preceding about them. After requesting Mr.

Hughes to be spoke to about the Anchors &c. the next Page begins “unanimously agreed that I should write &c.”

You will perceive by the inclosed Resolve, Congress mean to raise the Garrison for Presque Isle &ca.…in the Counties of Westmoreland and Bedford in Pennsylvania. I am, etc.

P.S. July 18th.—10 O'Clock ante Meridiem. I have this Minute spoke to Mr. Trumbull again about Provisions and pressed his most vigorous Exertions; I believe he is determined to leave nothing undone on his Part and has already sent off some Persons upon the Business, of which, I suppose he will inform you or Mr. Livingston.

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

New York, July 19, 1776.

Sir: The inclosed Extracts from the proceedings of Congress, which I have the Honor to transmit you, will discover their anxiety respecting our Army here, and their wishes to have it reinforced. I shall only add, that the Situation of our affairs, demands the most speedy Succour, and my request that you use your good offices for Expediting the New Levies as fast as possible. I have also inclosed you a Copy of a Letter and sundry Resolutions which I received yesterday from the Convention of this State. you will perceive thereby, that they have been deliberating on Sundry important measures and are exerting themselves in the most vigorous manner, to defeat the wicked designs of our Common Enemy, and such disaffected Persons as may attempt to favor their Views. They also contain a request, that I should solicit you, to devise some mode for Keeping up a Communication and Intercourse between your State and this, and suggest the Expediency of your forming a Camp of 6000. Men about Byrom River, to co-operate with those they are Collecting, in order to hang on the rear of the Enemy, in case they land above Kingsbridge and attempt to cut off the Communication between the Country and this City. As the Quota of Men requested by Congress for the defence of this Place, is not yet arrived, I could

not conceive myself at Liberty to ask of you, to furnish such an additional number, altho' I cannot but observe that the scheme

seems well calculated for the purposes they have in View, and might be productive of the most salutary consequences, in case of an attempt of that sort. Colo. Broom and Mr. Duer two Members of the Convention wait on you upon the Subject and will fully point out, the object they have in view, and their Ideas of the importance and expediency of the Plan, and to them I beg leave to refer you. I am Sir, etc.

To THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

Head Quarters, New York, July 19, 1776.

Gentn.: By Messrs. Broome and Duer, I was yesterday favored with your several Resolves of the 16th. Instant.

The spirit and decision in which they are formed, will I doubt not appear in their execution, and as far as I can cooperate, I shall most chearfully contribute all my Aid and Assistance. The State of this Army would make it improper for me, to send up any General Officer in the Continental Service, to take the Command of the Levies proposed to be raised; and from the nature of the Service, I should apprehend a knowledge of the Country and its Inhabitants would be very necessary. General Clinton on all Accounts appears to me the most suitable Person, and as the appointment is made dependent on me, I shall nominate him, unless some objections should be made, or Difficulty arise which I do not now know.

The Deputy Commissaries I will take advice upon, and have them appointed as soon as possible. The State of the Pay Office here did not admit a full compliance with your request of the Loan of £20,000, there not being so much in the Paymaster's hands at this time. However, that so good

a work might not be delayed, I immediately gave a Warrant for 20,000 Dollars, and as fast as Circumstances will admit shall make up the remainder. I have inclosed your Resolutions to Governor Trumbull, on the Subject of forming a Camp at Byrom River, for the security of the Communication with New York, but at the same time I very much doubt his ability to carry it into execution. The Quota of Troops to be furnished by Connecticut, for the Assistance of this Army, is not half compleated, notwithstanding the most urgent and pressing Instances on the Subject, which afford a very dull prospect of fixing a New Camp, adequate to the intended design. and I very much fear, the Attempt would obstruct the raising the Levies now ordered and in the end prove ineffectual. at the same time I most heartily approve the Measure, and should rejoice to see it carried into Execution, in the compleatest manner. Since writing the above, your favor of the 18th. Inst. inclosing Colo. Cortlandt and Capt. Platt's74 report is come to hand; the Spirit and Alacrity of the Militia in so readily turning out at this busy Season, is a very encouraging circumstance, and does them great honor. I observe ColoFellows75 of Massachusetts Bay, mentioned as having marched in. If his Troops compose a part of those destined for this Army, it is my intention, that all under that circumstance should come immediately down and be properly arranged; and I observe there will be the less inconvenience, as Messrs. Cortlandt and Platt observe, that they had such a surplus of Men as to enable them to discharge a Number. I am etc.

P.S. with respect to Amunition, I had flattered myself, that the Provincial Stock, would not only have been sufficient for the purposes of its immediate defence, but in case of necessity, have assisted us; I shall endeavour, under a late Direction of Congress, to procure what is to be had from the adjoining Mills.

74. Capt. Richard Platt, of the First New York Regiment.

75. Col. John Fellows. He was, later, brigadier general, Massachusetts Militia.

To THE SECRET COMMITTEE OF THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

Head Quarters, New York, July 19, 1776.

Gentn.: I am favored with yours of the 17th. Inst. My unacquaintedness with Hudsons River and with every other circumstance, necessary to form a judgment of the mode of defending it, will incapacitate me, from giving you the Assistance and advice you politely ask. I must entirely refer it to your own Judgment and skill, only assuring you, that it will give me great pleasure, if any thing effectual can be done, and that I will most readily give all the assistance in my power. I had some Intentions of throwing obstructions in the Passage at Mount Washington, but so many difficulties and obstacles have retarded it, that I much fear my being able to compleat it. however it is a Matter so purely confidential, if it can be effected, that I must desire the most profound Secresy may be observed on the Subject. I heartily wish you Success in the Measures you may adopt, and am etc.

To THE COMMITTEE OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Head Quarters, New York, July 19, 1776.

Gentn.: I enclose you a Copy of a Resolution of the Provincial Convention of the State of New York, dated the 16th. Instant recommending it to all the General and Sub Committees, to apprehend and secure all such Persons, whose going at large at this Critical time, they may deem dangerous to the Safety of the State. As this City is hourly threatened with

an attack from a powerful Enemy; and as there is too much reason to apprehend, from their Vicinity to this City, and from the number of Suspicious Characters still in it, that they may recieve intelligence, which may counteract all my Operations for its defence, I strongly recommend it to you to remove, for some time, all equivocal and suspicious Characters. This appears to me to be the Spirit of the Resolution of the Provincial Convention; and the propriety of it is founded on the Law of Self preservation, and confirmed by the Practice of all Nations in a State of War.

I esteem it my duty to add my recommendation, to that of the Provincial Convention, that if, through an Ill timed lenity, my attempts to secure this Province should be Baffled, the blame of it may not be imputed to my want of Vigilance.

I have inclosed a list of Persons represented as dangerous,76 as I can only speak from Information, I must rely upon your taking proper Steps with them; unless, from your better knowledge, you determine them of different Characters than Represented. I am etc.

76. Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene handled this loyalist business. He wrote (July 27) reporting his experience with these Tories: “I have examined the prisoners, and find them to be a poor parcel of Ignorant, Cowardly fellows. Two are Taylors, named John and Isaac Dunbar, and the other two common labourers named Petit and Will Smith. They candidly confess, that they set off with an intention of going to Staten Island, but not with any intention of Joining the Enemy; but to get out of the way of fighting here.…There has been a draught amongst the Militia to fill the New Levies, and it was rumored that these were a part that were drawn. It was also reported, that they were to go to the Northern Army, and that almost all that went there dyed or were killed. The prospect was so shocking to them, and to their GrandMothers and Aunts, I believe they perswaded them to run away. Never did I see fellows more frighted, they wept like a parcel of Children, and appear exceeding sorrowful.…I beg your Excellency's direction how to dispose of them, they dont appear to be acquainted with one public matter. They have been Toryish; but I fancy not from principle, but from its being the prevailing Sentiment in the County.” Greene's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, July 21, 1776.

Sir: I have just time to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 19th. The Interesting Intelligence of the Success of our Arms in the Southern Department gives me the highest Satisfaction.83 Permit me to join my Joy to

83. A copy of Maj. Gen. Charles Lee's letter to Congress (July 2) announcing the defeat of the British at Charleston, S.C., and also copies of the accounts of various persons of the attack on Fort Moultrie, S.C., had been inclosed in the letter of the 19th to Washington.

the Congratulations of Congress upon the Event. To Morrow I will write you more fully.

2 O'Clock P.M. I this moment had report made me, that Ten Ships were seen in the Offing, coming in. I suppose part of Admiral Howe's Fleet. I have &ca.84

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, July 22, 1776.

Sir: Your favors of the 18th. and 19th., with which you have been pleased to honor me have been duly received with the several Resolves alluded to.

When the Letter and Declaration from Lord Howe to Mr. Franklin and the other late Governors come to be published I should suppose the warmest advocates for Dependance on the British Crown must be silent, and be convinced, beyond all possibility of doubt, that all that has been said about the Commissioners was illusory and calculated expressly to deceive and unguard, not only the Good People of our own Country, but those of the English Nation that were averse to the proceedings of the King and Ministry.86 Hence we see the cause why a specification of their Powers were not given the Mayor and City of London on their Address requesting it, that would have been dangerous, because it would then been manifest, that the Line of Conduct they were to persue would be totally variant from that they had Industriously propagated and amused the Public with.

The Uniting the Civil and Military Offices in the same Persons too, must be conclusive to every thinking one, that there is to be but little Negociation of the Civil Kind.

I have inclosed for the Satisfaction of Congress the substance of what passed between myself and Lieut. Colonel Patterson, Adjutant General, at an Interview had Yesterday in consequence of a Request, from General Howe the day before,

84. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

86. These letters from Richard, Lord Howe, to Govs. William Franklin, John Penn, Robert Eden, Lord Dunmore, Josiah Martin, and Sir James Wright had been sent to Amboy under a flag of truce and forwarded by Washington to Congress, which decided that the letters should “be published in the several gazettes, that the good people of these United States may be informed of what nature are the commissioners, and what the terms, with the expectation of which, the insidious court of Britain has endeavoured to amuse and disarm them, and that the few, who still remain suspended by a hope founded either in the justice or moderation of their late King, may now, at length, be convinced, that the valour alone of their country is to save its liberties.” (See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, July 19, 1776.) The letters were published in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 24, 1776.

to which I beg leave to refer them for particulars.87

Col: Knox of the Train, having often mentioned to me, the necessity of having a much more numerous body of Artillerists, than what there now is, in case the present Contest should continue longer, and knowing the deficiency in this Instance and their extreme usefullness; I desired him to commit his Ideas upon the Subject to writing, in Order that I might transmit them to Congress for their consideration, agreeable to my request he has done it, and the propriety of his plan is now submitted for their decision.88 It is certain that we have not more at this Time than are sufficient for the several extensive Posts we now have, including the Drafts which he speaks of, and which, I presume, not only, from what he has Informed me, but from the Nature of the thing, can never be Qualified to render

the same service, as if they were regularly appointed and Formed into a Corps for that particular purpose.

I beg leave to remind Congress that some time ago I laid before them the proposals of some persons here for forming a Company of Light Horse, and of the President's Answer a little time after intimating that the plan seemed to be approved of, as those who wanted to make up the Troop are frequently pressing me for an Answer, I could wish to be favoured with the decision of Congress upon the Subject.

By a Letter from General Schuyler of the 14th. Instant, dated at Albany, he informs me, that the day before, some desperate designs of the Tories in that Quarter had been discovered, the particulars of which he could not divulge, being under an Oath of Secrecy. However, that such measures had been taken as to promise a prevention of the intended Mischief, and that four of the Conspirators, among them a Ringleader, were apprehended, about one O'Clock that Morning not far from the town. What the plot

87. A memorandum of the interview between Lieut. Col. lames Patterson, of the Sixty-third Foot, British Army, and General Washington was ordered published by Congress (July 26):

“The following is an exact state of what passed at the interview between his Excellency General Washington and Colonel Patterson, Adjutant General of the army under General Howe, July 20, 1776.

“After usual compliments, in which, as well as through the whole conversation, Col. Patterson addressed General Washington by the title of Excellency, Col. Patterson entered upon the business by saying, that General Howe much regretted the difficulties which had arisen respecting the address of the letters to General Washington; that it was deemed consistent with propriety, and founded upon precedents of the like nature by Ambassadors and Plenipotentiaries where disputes or difficulties of rank had arisen; that General Washington might recollect he had, last summer, addressed a letter to General

Howe, To the Hon. William Howe, Esq., that Lord Howe and General Howe did not mean to derogate from the respective rank of General Washington; that they held his person and character in the highest esteem; that the direction, with the addition of &c. &c. &c. implied everything that ought to follow. He then produced a letter which he did not directly offer to General Washington, but observed that it was the same letter which had been sent, and laid it on the table, with a superscription to George Washington, &c. &c. &c. The General declined the letter, and said, that a letter directed to a person in a public character, should have some description or indication of it, otherwise it would appear a mere private letter; that it was true the &c. &c. &c. implied everything, and they also implied anything; that the letter to General Howe alluded to, was an answer to one received under a like address from him, which the officer on duty having taken, he did not think proper to return, but answered it in the same mode of address; that he should absolutely decline any letter directed to him as a private person, when it related to his public station. Colonel Patterson then said, that General Howe would not urge his delicacy further, and repeated his assertions, that no failure of respect was intended. He then said that he would endeavor, as well as he could, to recollect General Howe's sentiments on the letter and resolves of Congress, sent him a few days before, respecting the treatment of our prisoners in Canada. 'That the affairs of Canada were in another department, not subject to the control of General Howe, but that he and Lord Howe utterly disapproved of every infringement of the rights of humanity.' Colonel Patterson then took a paper out of his pocket; and, after looking it over, said he had expressed nearly the words. General Washington then said that he had also forwarded a copy of the resolves to General Burgoyne. To which Colonel Patterson replied, he did not doubt a proper attention would be paid to them, and that he (General Washington) was sensible that cruelty was not the characteristic of the British nation. Colonel Patterson then proceeded to say he had it in charge to mention the case of General Prescott, who, they were informed was treated with such rigor, that, under his age and infirmities, fatal consequences might be apprehended.

“General Washington replied that General Prescott's treatment had not fallen under his notice; that all persons under his particular direction, he had treated with kindness, and made their situation as easy and comfortable as possible; that he did not know where General Prescott was, but believed his treatment very different from their information. General Washington then mentioned the case of Colonel Allen, and the officers who had been confined in Boston gaol. As to the first, Colonel Patterson answered that General Howe had no knowledge of it but by information from General Washington, and that the Canada department was not under his direction or control; that as to the other prisoners at Boston, whenever the state of the army at Boston admitted it, they were treated with humanity and even indulgence; that he asserted this upon his honor, and should be happy in an opportunity to prove it.

“General Washington then observed, that the conduct of several of the officers would well have warranted a different treatment from what they had received; some having refused to give any parole, and others having broke it when given, by escaping or endeavoring so to do. Colonel Patterson answered, that as to the first, they misunderstood the matter very much, and seemed to have mistook the line of propriety exceedingly; and as to the latter, General Howe utterly disapproved and condemned their conduct.

“That if a remonstrance was made, such violations of good faith would be severely punished; but that he hoped General Washington was too just to draw public inferences from the misbehavior of some private individuals; that bad men were to be found in every class and society; that such behavior was considered as a dishonor to the British army. Colonel Patterson then proceeded to say, that the goodness and benevolence of the King had induced him to appoint Lord Howe and General Howe his commissioners, to accommodate this unhappy dispute, that they had great powers, and would derive the greatest pleasure from effecting an accommodation; and that he (Colonel Patterson) wished to have this visit considered as making the first advances to this desirable object. General Washington replied, he was not vested with any powers on this subject by those

from whom he derived his authority and power. But from what had appeared or transpired on this head, Lord Howe and General Howe were only to grant pardons; that those who had committed no fault wanted no pardon, that we were only defending what we deemed our indisputable right. Colonel Patterson said that would open a very wide field for argument. He then expressed his apprehensions that an adherence to forms was likely to obstruct business of the greatest moment and concern.

“He then observed that a proposal had been formerly made of exchanging Governor Skene for Mr. Lovell; that he now had authority to accede to that proposal. General Washington replied, that the proposition had been made by the direction of Congress, and having been then rejected, he could not now renew the business, or give any answer, till he had previously communicated it to them.

“Colonel Patterson behaved with the greatest attention and politeness during the whole business, expressed strong acknowledgements that the usual ceremony of blinding his eyes had been dispensed with. At the breaking up of the conference, General Washington strongly invited him to partake of a small collation provided for him, which he politely declined, alledging his late breakfast, and an impatience to return to General Howe, though he had not executed his commission so amply as he wished. Finding he did not propose staying, he was introduced to the general officers, after which he took his leave, and was safely conducted to his own boat, which waited for him about four miles distant from the city. Made public by order of Congress.”

This was published in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 31, 1776. A memorandum of the same, in the writing of Joseph Reed, is in the *Washington Papers*.

88. By resolve of Congress (July 24) the plan was ordered to be put into execution as soon as possible. Knox's plan accompanies his letter, which is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

was, or who were concerned in it, is a Matter I am Ignorant of as yet. With my best regards to Congress. I have the Honor etc.

P. S. Congress will please to observe, what was proposed respecting the Exchange of Mr. Lovel and signify their pleasure in your next. [The last Weeks return is also Inclosed.]89

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, July 22, 1776.

Sir: Congress having been pleased to appoint Mr. Wilper to the command of a Company in the German Batallion now raising, I have directed him to repair to Philadelphia for their Orders.

From my acquaintance with him, I am persuaded his conduct as an Officer will meet their approbation, and thanking them for their kind attention to my recommendation of him. I have the Honor &ca.90

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, July 23, 1776.

Sir: I was honoured with your favor of the 20th., by Yesterday's Post; since which and my Letter, nothing of moment has occurred.

The Ships mentioned in my Letter of the 21st. to have been in the Offing, got in that day, and are supposed to be part of the Scotch Fleet, having landed some Highlanders Yesterday.

Inclosed I have the honor to Transmit you,

89. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The words in brackets are in Washington's writing. The return showed a strength of rank and file fit for duty, not counting officers, of 10,439. The original return is in the office of The Adjutant General, War Department, Washington, D.C.

90. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

Copies of a Letter and Sundry Resolutions which I received last Night from the Convention of this State. They will inform you of the computed Number of Inhabitants and Stock upon Nassau Island,96 and their Sentiments on the Impracticability of removing the Latter, and also of the means they think necessary and likely to secure them.

I have also inclosed a Letter from Mr. Faesh97 to Lord Stirling, upon the Subject of a Cannon Furnace for the use of the States. Congress will see his plan and proposals and determine upon them as they shall Judge proper. I am &ca.98

To BARON DE CALBIAC

New York, July 23, 1776.

Sir: I received your favour of Yesterday, and in answer thereto, I am to inform you, at the same time that I commend the good Intentions which you profess induced your Countrymen94 to leave their Families and Homes, that I have done the only thing in my power to favour their views.

On their first arrival and introduction to me, I gave them a letter to the Continental Congress, to whom it was necessary to make known their wishes and from whom any Appointments they expect, must come. This, I am persuaded, you are sensible of, and would wish you to communicate to them. Their pretensions will be duly considered, and if supported by proper Credentials, I make no doubt but suitable Regard will be had to their Merits.

Your and their good Sense will readily suggest the Propriety and Expediency of their furnishing some testimonial and recommendation previous to any appointment: These would have been proper at any time, but the late instance of treachery and ingratitude in Monsieur 95 in deserting and taking the Command of a party of the Enemy in Canada, after he had been promoted to Office in the service of the United Colonies, makes them indispensably

96. The old name of Long Island.

97. John Jacob Faesh, owner of blast furnaces at Mount Hope, N. J.

98. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

94. Baron de Calbiac came from Guadeloupe.

95. The name is left blank in the “Letter Book.”

necessary. Though I do not entertain the least suspicion of the Honour and Integrity of the Gentlemen of whom you write, or mean to insinuate that a conduct like Monsieur would frequently happen.

I might further add, that the unacquaintance of our Soldiers with any Language but their own, makes them rather unwilling and impatient under the Command of Foreigners, unless they axe Men of high reputation. Nor will they consent thereto but on that account and where they profess great Military knowledge. It therefore follows that any Appointments these Gentlemen may obtain, will not be attended with any good purposes or satisfaction to themselves, unless they are to [be in a] Corps of their own people, or those who understand their Language. I am, Sir, etc.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, July 23, 1776.

Sir: Since I had the pleasure of writing you by this mornings post, I was favoured with a Letter from Governor Trumbull, a Copy of which is inclosed and to which I beg leave to refer you.

In regard to the Stock he mentions, I wrote to him, requesting that they might be removed from the Islands on which they were, as I conceived it of great Importance to distress the Enemy, as much as possible, in the article of fresh provision. I wish the other Governments may follow his Example and have it removed from the Islands belonging to them respectively.

When the Ships of War and Tenders went up the River, It was thought expedient that application should be made for the Connecticut Row Gallies and those belonging

to Rhode Island, in order to attempt some thing for their destruction. As soon as they arrive we shall try to employ them in some useful way; but in what, or how successfully I cannot at present determine.

Congress will please to observe what Mr. Trumbull respecting the Continental Regiment raising under Colonel Ward. If they incline to give any Orders about their destination you will please to communicate them by the earliest Opportunity, as their March will be suspended 'till they are known.

The Orders Mr. Trumbull has given to the Officers of their Cruizers to stop Provision Vessels seem to be necessary; we have too much reason to believe, that some have gone voluntarily to the Enemy and that there are many persons who would contrive to furnish them with large supplies, and however upright the Intentions of others may be, It will be a matter of the utmost difficulty, if not an impossibility, for any to escape falling into their hands now, as every part of the Coast, it is probable, will swarm with their Ships of War and Tenders. I had proposed writing to the Convention of this State upon the Subject,

before I received his Letter, and am now more persuaded of the necessity of their taking some steps to prevent further exportations down the Sound. In my next I shall inform them of the Intelligence received from Mr. Trumbull and recommend the Matter to their attention. I have the Honor to be &ca.

P. S. It appears absolutely necessary, that the Exportation of Provision should be stopped. Our Army is large and otherwise may want. Nor can Individuals be injured, as they have a ready money market for every thing they have to dispose of in that way.99

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

New York, July 24, 1776.

Sir: I was honoured yesterday with your favor of the 17th Inst. and return you my thanks for your kind attention to and compliance with my request for the Row Gallies. They are not yet arrived as I know of.

I wrote Congress by the return Express that brought yours, respecting Colo Ward's Regiment, and as the Post comes in every day, It is probable I shall soon have their Answer. The result, I will transmit you by the first opportunity, and would recommend, that the Regiment be put under Marching orders, that they may proceed without loss of time whatever way Congress shall direct.

The orders you have given to your Armed Cruizers, for stopping provision Vessels, appear to me extremely necessary. I have mentioned the Matter to Congress, and shall warmly recommend it to the consideration of the Convention of this State. If it should be attended with Inconvenience to individuals; Yet necessity and Public utility, ought to be first considered and outweigh every thing else. But it Cannot, there is nothing but

99. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

what they can readily dispose of, for the use of the Army and for ready Cash, so that every ground of Objection, must be nugatory. I am &c.

To THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

New York, July 24, 1776.

Sir: I have been honored with your favor of the 20th Inst. with it several inclosures. I observe the Sentiments of your Honorable Body, on the impracticability of removing the Stock from Nassau Island, and the Measures they have adopted for securing them there and protecting the Inhabitants, and sincerely wish they may prove adequate.

I have long since and frequently requested the Commissary, to purchase all the fatted Cattle and Sheep from the Island, that he possibly could in preference to any other; he informs me that he has had many from thence, and that he now has persons employed in different parts for that purpose. The expediency of the measure strikes me so forcibly, that you may depend every means in my power, will be directed to its execution.

Agreeable to your request, I shall Continue Col. Livingston2 at his present Post, for the protection of the Inhabitants against the Insults of the Enemy's Cruizers, unless something should happen to make his removal necessary.

When the several Regiments are raised and I am certified thereof, and of the Places of Rendesvous, I will direct the Muster Master General to attend and Compleat the Musters.

Governor Trumbull having Informed me by Letter Yesterday, that since the arrival of the Fleet at the Hook, many of the Enemy's Frigates and Ships have been stationed between Montauk Point and Block Island, to intercept the Trade from the Sound, and in which they had been but too successful in taking several provision Vessels, and of the impossibility, that any should escape falling into their hands; he had ordered

2. Col. Henry Beekman Livingston, of the Fourth New York Regiment.

the Armed Vessels in the Service of Connecticut, to stop and detain all Vessels going down the Sound with Provisions, till the Continental Congress or the Convention of the States to which they belong, could be apprized of the hazards attending their proceeding in their Voyages and give orders thereon. I beg leave to recommend the Matter to the Consideration of your Honble. Body, and submit it to them, whether it may not be expedient to lay a General Embargo, or prohibition upon all exports of this kind from your State, except such as the Congress or yourselves may order. The propriety of keeping the Enemy from supplies of this Sort, and providing a Sufficiency for our own Army is so evident, that words are unnecessary upon the Subject. However I cannot but observe as my opinion, that the former will be impossible to effect, unless some General restraining regulation is come into. No care, nor Industry, nor honesty, on the part of Exporters, will be able to elude the Vigilance and Activity of their almost Innumerable Cruizers. But when iris considered, that as long as a free export of any Articles of this Nature is tollerated, disaffected Persons may easily fall into their hands with impunity, nor any means be left us to asscertain their Guilt. When there is strong reason to believe, that some have designedly done so, and almost incontestible proof, from Sundry depositions of deserters and others, that a Ship that went from hence, sailed with no other View and joined the Enemy at the Hook; I incline to think the measure not only advisable but Necessary; Especially, as the large Consumption of Provision by our Army, affords and will afford a ready Cash Market, for all that Individuals may have to dispose of, and take away every objection of injury on that head; were it otherwise, private advantages and Emoluments

must always give place to the public good when they are incompatible.

The last deserters from the Enemy Inform us, since they have heard of our forming a Camp at Amboy, they have talked much of turning their Views to long Island and regaling themselves with large Supplies of Provisions they intend to get from thence. This is an

additional circumstance, to induce the Commissary to purchase the Cattle, there before any other. I have the honor etc.

P. S. When the Ships of War &c run up the River, I wrote Governors Trumbull and Cooke for some of their Row Gallies; supposing they might be of Service, in attempting something against the Ships. I expect three or four every hour, besides the one I have. If the secret Committee are forming any plan against the Ships, in which they think they may be usefully employed, If they will let me know, I shall be glad to Co-operate with them and furnish every Assistance the Gallies can give, if not otherwise materially engaged.

I am just now informed, that the Ship mentioned above to have gone to the Enemy was fitted out by the Congress, under the Command of a Captain Hilton3 who has acted this base part.

***To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS**

New York, July 25, 1776.

Sir: Disagreeable as it is to me, and unpleasing as it may be to Congress to multiply Officers, I find myself under the unavoidable necessity of asking an Increase of

3. Captain Hilton's ship was captured by the Connecticut armed sloop *Spy*. Governor Trumbull wrote to the New York Legislature respecting the capture and, in reply, was favored with a resolve (July 23) forbidding the exportation of provisions from New York City under penalty of being held an enemy to the United States.

my Aid de Camps. The augmentation of my Command, the Increase of my Corrispondance, the Orders to give; the Instructions to draw, cut out more business than I am able to execute in time, with propriety. The business of so many different departments centering with me, and by me to be handed on to Congress for their information, added to the Intercourse I am Obliged to keep up with the adjacent States and incidental

Occurrences, all of which requiring confidential (and not hack) writers to execute, renders it impossible in the present State of things for my family to discharge the several duties expected of me with that precision and dispatch that I could wish. What will it be then when we come into a more active Scene, and I am called upon from twenty different places perhaps at the same Instant?

Congress will do me the Justice to believe, I hope, that it is not my Inclination or wish, to run the Continent to any unnecessary expence; and those who better know me, will not suspect that shew, and parade can have any Influence on my Mind in this Instance. A Conviction of the necessity of it, for the regular discharge of the trust reposed in me is the Governing motive for the Application, and as such is Submitted to Congress by. Sir &ca:6

6. This letter was read in Congress July 29, and Washington was immediately authorized to employ another aide-de-camp.

General Greene, in a letter to Washington (July 25), described the waste of energy demanded of the higher officers in routine matters: “I am so confined, writing passes, &c., that it is impossible for me to attend to the duties of the day, which in many instances prejudices the service. Such a confined situation leaves one no opportunity of viewing things for themselves. It is recommended, by one of the greatest Generals of the Age, not only to issue Orders, but to see to the execution; for the Army being composed of men of Indolence, If the Commander is not attentive to every Individual in the different departments, the Machine becomes dislocated, and the progress of business retarded. The science or Art of War requires a freedom of thought, and leisure to reflect upon the Various incidents that daily Occur, which cannot be had where the whole of one's time is engrossed in Clerical employments. The time devoted to this employment it not the only injury that I feel; but it confines my thoughts as well as engrosses my time. It is like a merchandise of small wares.” Greene's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

To THE MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATURE

New York, July 25, 1776.

Gentn.: Congress having impowred me to appoint suitable places of Rendezvous for the Battalions raising in your Government for the Northern Army and to communicate the same to you, Also to advance them one Month's pay &c., as you will perceive by the inclosed Copy of their Resolution, which I have the honor to transmit; I must request the favor of you, to direct them to March by Companies as they are raised, to Skenesborough, and there receive orders and instructions for their conduct, from the Officer Commanding the Northern Army; and also to advance the Month's pay and take every Necessary Measure, for forwarding their March and complying with the purport of the said Resolve, assuring you that whatever money may be advanced necessarily in carrying the same into execution shall be repaid to your Order.

Before I conclude, I cannot but Confess, that I do not clearly understand what Battalions Congress allude to, and therefore beg leave to refer you to the requisition, I presume they made you upon the subject. I am etc.7

7. The same letter was sent to the New Hampshire Legislature and to Governor Trumbull.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, July 27, 1776.

Sir: I was yesterday morning honored with your favor of the 24th. instant, with its several Inclosures, to which I shall pay the strictest attention. The confidence Congress are pleased to repose in my Judgment demands my warmest acknowledgements, and they may rest assured, It shall be invariably employed as far as it shall be in my power, to promote their views and the Public weal.

I have Inclosed a Letter received from Major French two clays ago; Also one from him to his Lady. Congress will perceive thereby, what he says and thinks about his parole, and

will be pleased to transmit me by the earliest Opportunity the result of their Opinion, and such Orders as they may think necessary to be taken upon it. The Letter for Mrs. French they will please to return me, it was only sent to shew his views more explicitly than what, that for me does.

Since my last nothing material has occurred. Yesterday Evening report was made that eight Ships were seen in the Offing standing towards the Hook. The Men of War and Tenders are still up the River. They have never attempted to pass the Highland Fortifications and a day or two ago quitted their Station and fell down the River Eight of Ten Miles. The Vigilance and Activity of the Militia where they were, have prevented their landing and doing much Injury: one poor Peasents Cot they plundered and then burnt.

I would wish to know whether the Allowance given to Officers the 17th. of January, of one and # Dollar

for every man they inlist, Congress mean to extend to the Officers who Inlist for the New Army for three years: At first sight It may appear wrong or rather exhorbitant, supposing that many will be recruited out of the Regiments now in service and under them. but the allowance will be of great use, as it will Interest the Officers and call forth their exertions which otherwise would be feint and languid.12 Indeed I am fearful, from the Inquiries I have made, that their utmost exertions will be attended with but little success. It is objected that the bounty of ten Dollars is too low, and Argued that if the States furnishing Men for five or Six Months allow considerably more, why should that be accepted, and when the Term of Inlistment is to be for three Years? I heartly wish a bounty in Land had been or could be given, as was proposed some time ago. I think it could be attended with salutary consequences.

In consequence of my Application to Governor Trumbull he has sent me two Row Gallies and I expect another from him. None from Governor Cooke are yet come, nor have I heard from him on the Subject. One is complete here; The fire Ships are going on under

Mr. Anderson's direction, but rather slowly and I am preparing some Obstructions to the Channel, nearly opposite the Works at the upper end of this Island. When all things are ready, I intend to try if it shall seem practicable, to destroy the Ships and Tenders above and to employ the Gallies, if they can be of Advantage.13

The Militia for the Flying Camp come in but slowly. By a return from General Mercer Yesterday, they are but a little more than 3000.

If they were in, or can be there shortly, and the Situation of the Enemy remains the same, I would make some Efforts to annoy them, keeping our posts here well guarded and not puting too much to the hazard or in any manner to to the risk. I have &c.14

12. “Resolved, That the resolution of the 17th of January last, allowing to officers I dollar and #d of a dollar for every man they inlist, be extended to officers who inlist for the new army for three years.”— *Journals of the Continental Congress*, July 30, 1776.

13. Several plans were suggested for attacking the enemy on Staten Island. A council of war decided that a general attack was inexpedient, but that an attempt might be made by a party from the Jersey shore nearest to the island. The intrepid Major Knowlton, who was stationed at Bergen, was directed to confer with General Mercer on the subject. They determined to make the experiment on the night of July 18, and everything was got in readiness. Major Knowlton was to head a party of Continental troops and be supported by others from the Flying Camp under General Mercer, who was to take a part in the enterprise. They marched early in the evening to the point of embarkation, but the weather became so tempestuous and the waves so high that it was impossible to cross the river in time to effect the object. Another scheme was projected for an attack from the same quarter, with a body of 3,900 men, but boats could not be collected sufficient to transport half that number across the water.— *Sparks*.

14. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE BOARD OF WAR AND ORDNANCE

New York, July 29, 1776.

Gentlemen: At length I have been able to comply with the first part of a Resolution of Congress of the 27th Ulto., relative to a return of the vacancies in the several Regiments, composing that part of the Army under my immediate command.

I thought to have made this return much sooner, but the dispersed situation of our Troops, the constant duty they are upon, the difficulty of getting returns when this is the case, especially when those returns are more than probable to undergo several corrections and the variety of Important occurrences which have intervened of late to withdraw the attention from this matter, will I hope be admitted as an excuse, and the delay not ascribed to any disinclination in me, to comply with the order, as I shall while I have the honor to remain in the service of the United States, obey to the utmost of my power and to the best of my Abilities, all orders of Congress with a scrupulous exactness.

With respect to the latter part of the aforementioned Resolution of the 27th. of June, I have to observe that I have handed in the names of such persons as the Field Officers of the several Regiments and their Brigadiers have pointed out as proper persons to fill these vacancies. I have neither added to, or diminished ought from their choice, unless the following special Information, which I conceived my indispensible duty to give, should occasion any alterations.

For the 20th. Regiment then late Arnold's there are two Competitors, towit Col: Durkee the present Lieut. Colonel who has had charge of the Regiment ever since the first establishment of it, and Lieut. Colonel Tyler of Parsons's Regiment. The pretentions of both, and a State of the case, I have subjoined to the list of vacancies given in by General Spencer, as I have also done in the case of Col: Learned, to another list

exhibited by General Heath. If Learned returns to the Regiment the vacancies stand right; If he should not, I presume the Regiment will be given to the Lieut: Colonel William Shepherd who stands next to Tyler in Rank and not second to him in reputation. This change would in its consequences occasion several moves. There is a third matter in which I must be more particular, as it is unnoticed elsewhere, and that is, the Lieut: Colonel of Wyllys's Regiment, Rufus Putnam Acts here as a Chief Engineer, by which means the Regiment is totally deprived of his services, and to remove him from that department, the Public would sustain a Capital injury, for altho' he is not a man of Scientific knowledge, he is indefatigable in business and possesses more practicable Knowledge in the Art of Engineering than any other we have in this Camp or Army. I would humbly submit it therefore to Congress, whether it might not be best to give him (Putnam) the Appointment of Engineer with the pay of Sixty Dollars per month; less than which I do not suppose he would accept; as I have been obliged in order to encourage him to push the business forward in this our extreme hurry, to give him reasons to believe that his Lieutenant Colonel's pay would be made equal to this sum.

If this appointment should take place then, it makes a vacancy in Wyllys's Regiment which I understand he is desirous of having filled by Major Henly17 an Active and Spirited Officer, now a Brigade Major to General Heath.

I am sorry to take up so much of your time as the recital of these particular cases and some others require, but there is no avoiding it, unless Congress would be pleased to appoint one or more persons in whom they can confide, to visit

17. David Henly. He became deputy adjutant general to Gen. Joseph Spencer Sept. 6, 1776; lieutenant colonel of the Fifth Massachusetts Regiment Nov. 1, 1776; colonel of one of the 16 Additional Continental regiments Jan. 1, 1777; retired Apr. 23, 1779.

this part of this Army once a Month; Inspect into it, and fill up the Vacancies as shall appear proper to them upon the Spot. This cannot be attended with any great trouble, nor

much expence, as it is only in the part of the Army under my immediate direction, that such a regulation would be necessary; the Officers commanding in other Departments having I believe this power already given them.18

I have the honor to inclose a List of the Officers of the Regiments at this place, and long ago directed the like return to be made from the Northern and Eastern Troops which I hope is complied with. I also make return of the Artillery according to Col: Knox's report and of the Ordinance Stores &ca. agreeable to the Commissary's Return.

I come now to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 20th. Instant, with several Inclosures, relative to a proposal of Mr. Goddard19 and beg leave to give it as my Opinion, that the Introduction of that Gentleman into the Army as Lieut: Colonel would be attended with endless confusion. I have spoke to Colo: Parsons who is a very worthy man, upon this Subject. I have done more. I have shewn him the Memorial: in answer to which he says, that in the conversation had between him and Mr. Goddard the latter was told, that unless Lieut Colonel Tyler was provided for, The Major, Prentice20 advanced to a Lieut: Colonelcy in some other Regiment, and his eldest Captain (Chapman)21 not deprived of his expectation of the Majority; his coming in there would give uneasiness, but nevertheless if it was the pleasure of Congress to make the appointment, he

18. To this paragraph the President of Congress replied (August 2): “I am particularly instructed by Congress to answer that part of your letter of 29th Ulto. directed to the Board of War, which relates to the filling up Vacancies in the Army. The Congress are Concern'd to find, that an opinion is Entertain'd, that greater Confidence has been plac'd in, and larger powers given to, other Commanders in that respect, than to yourself. They have in no instance, except in the late Appointment of General Gates to the Command in Canada, parted with the power of filling up Vacancies. The great Confusion and many Disorders prevalent in that Army, and its Distance, induc'd Congress to lodge such a power in that General for the limited space of three months, and only during his Continuance in Canada. Should Congress ever empower its Generals to fill up Vacancies in the Army, they know of

no one in whom they would so soon Repose a Trust of such Importance as in yourself; but future Generals may make a bad use of it. The Danger of the Precedent, not any suspicion of their present Commander in chief, prompts them to Retain a Power, that, by you, Sir, might be exercised with the greatest public Advantage." It should be noted that Congress took no steps to improve the condition. On August 10 it approved the list submitted by the Board of War to fill the vacancies. The President's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

19. William Goddard.

20. Samuel Prentiss. He was promoted to this lieutenant colonelcy Aug. 12, 1776; became lieutenant colonel of the First Connecticut Regiment Jan. 1, 1777; resigned May 17, 1778.

21. Capt. James Chapman, of the Tenth Continental Infantry. He attained his majority Aug. 15, 1776, and was killed a month later in the fighting retreat from New York.

would do every thing in his power to make it palatible. If all these Contingencies were to take place before Mr. Goddard could get into a Regiment he had been paving the way to, What prospect can there be of his getting into any other without spreading Jealousy as he goes?

With respect to the Regiment of Artificers, I have only to observe that the forming them into one Corps at the time I did, when immediate Action was expected, was only intended as a Temporary expedient to draw that useful body of near 600 Men into the field, under one head and without confusion. The appointment of Officers therefore in this Instance, was merely nominal and unattended, with expence.

The mode of promotion whether in a Continental, Colonial or Regimental Line, being a matter of some consideration and delicacy to determine, I thought It expedient to know the Sentiments of the General Officers upon the consequences of each, before I offered my own to your board, and have the honor to inform you that it is their unanimous Opinion, as it is also mine, from Observations on the Temper and local Attachments of each Corps

to the Members thereof, that Regimental promotions would be much the most pleasing; but this it is thought had better appear in practice than come announced as a Resolution, and that there ought to be Exceptions in favor of extraordinary Merit, on the one hand and demerit on the other. The first to be rewarded out of the common course of promotion whilst the other might stand and sustain no Injury.

It is a very difficult matter to step out of the Regimental line now, without giving much

Inquietude to the Corps in which it happens: Was it then to be declared, as the Resolution of Congress, that all promotions should go in this way without some strong qualifying clauses, It would be almost impossible to do it without creating a Mutiny; This is the sense of my Officers. As also that the promotions by succession, are not meant to extend to Non-Commissioned Officers further than circumstances of good behavior &ca. may direct.

As the Lists of Vacancies are returned in consequence of an Order of Congress and would I doubt not be referred to your Board, I have sent no Duplicate; nor have I wrote to Congress on the Subject, but that I may appear inattentive to their commands, I must request the favor of having this Letter or the substance of it laid before them. I have the Honor to be, etc.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, July 29, 1776.

Sir: Your favor of the 24th. I received on Saturday Evening, and agreeable to your request, shall expunge the Preamble to the resolution subjecting the property of Subjects to the British Crown, to forfeiture and confiscation.15

Our Stock of Musquet Powder is entirely made up in Cartridges, I therefore request that Congress will order four or five Tons more of that sort to be immediately forwarded, It

being not only necessary that we should have more for that purpose, but also some Stock to remain in Barrels.

15. The expunged preamble recited: “Whereas these United States have by a long series of oppressions, been driven into a war with Great Britain and at last to the necessity of declaring themselves free and independent States; and as it is impossible to distinguish among the subjects of the same sovereign, between those who are friends and such as are enemies to the rights of America and Mankind, it is become necessary to consider as enemies all the subjects of the King of Great Britain and all others, who aid, abet, adhere to or in any way assist him in his unjust and cruel designs against these states.” (See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, July 24, 1776.)

Yesterday Evening Hutchinson's and Serjeants Regiments from Boston arrived, also two Row Gallies from Rhode Island. I am fearful the Troops have not got entirely clear of the Small pox.

I shall use every possible precaution to prevent the Infection spreading, and for that purpose have ordered them to an Encampment seperate and detached from the rest.

By Saturday's report from Long Island Camp, five Ships a Brig and five Schooners had got into the Hook. By Yesterday's two Ships more and a Sloop were standing in; what they are I have not been able to learn.

I have transmitted a General Return herewith, by which Congress will perceive the whole of our Force at the Time it was made.

I have inclosed you an Account of sundry prizes which was transmitted to several Gentlemen here by Saturday's Post. The two last prizes I did not see mentioned in the Letter shewn me, and I fear the report of the 2d. Provision Vessell is premature. I was also this minute informed that Captain Biddle had taken a Ship with Sugars for Britain and in bringing her in, unfortunately lost her on Fisher's Island. I have &ca.16

To SIR WILLIAM HOWE

Head Quarters, New York, July 30, 1776.

Sir: Lieutenant Col. Pattison, Adjt. General of the Army under your command, at the Interview between us, having proposed an Exchange of Mr. Lovell for Govt. Skeene, I am authorized to inform you, that the Congress have not only approved of this proposition,

16. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

but judging that a General Exchange of Prisoners, will be attended with mutual convenience and pleasure to both parties, have empowered their Commanders in each Department to negotiate one in the following manner, “Continental Officers for those of equal rank, either in the Land or Sea Service, Soldier for Soldier, Sailor for Sailor and Citizen for Citizen.” They have also particularly mentioned the Exchange of Col. Ethan Allen for any Officer of the same or inferior rank.

You will be pleased to signify the time and place for that of Mr. Lovell and Governor Skeene, that I may give direction for the latter to be ready, who is now at Hartford about 120 miles from hence; also to favor me with your Sentiments, as well on the proposition respecting Col: Allen, as on the Subject of a Genl. Exchange. I am, etc.26

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, July 30, 1776.

Sir: I was this Morning honored with your two favors of yesterday's date and agreeable to your request have given Mr. Palfrey liberty to negociate your claim with Mr. Brimer and wish it may be satisfied, agreeably to you.23

I last Night received a Letter from General Schuyler a Copy of which I do myself the honor to Transmit you; You will thereby perceive his reasons for leaving Crown Point and for

prefering the Post, the Council of Officers determined to take, opposite Ticonderoga. I am totally unacquainted with these several posts and the Country about them. and

26. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

23. There is no mention of this Brimer claim in the *Journals of the Continental Congress*.

therefore cannot determine on the validity of his observations, or think myself at Liberty to give any directions in the matter. Congress will be pleased to observe what he says of their distress for Money, from hence he can have no Relief: there being only three or four thousand Dollars in the pay Master's hands according to his Return this Morning, and all but two Months pay due the Army, besides many other demands.

I could wish that proper supplies of Money could be always kept; the want may occasion consequences of an Alarming nature. By a Letter from him of a prior date to the Copy inclosed, he tells me, that a Mr. Ryckman who has just returned through the Country of the Six Nations reports, that the Indians who were at Philadelphia have gone home with very favorable Ideas of our strength and resources, This he heard in many of their Villages. A lucky circumstance if it will gain either their Friendship or secure their Neutrality. In my letter of the 27th. I informed Congress of my views and wishes to attempt something against the Troops on Staten Island, I am now to acquaint them that by the advice of General Mercer and the other Officers at Amboy, it will be impracticable to do any thing upon a large Scale for want of Craft; and as the Enemy have the entire Command of the Water all round the Island; I have desired Genl. Mercer to have nine or ten flatt Bottom Boats built at Newark bay and Elizabeth Town, with a design principally to keep up the Communication across Hackensack and Passaic Rivers, which, I deem a matter of great importance and extremely necessary to be attended to. Since I wrote you Yesterday, Eleven Ships more, four Brigs

and two Sloops have come into the Hook. I have not yet received Intelligence what any of the late Arrivals are, but I suppose we shall not long remain in a State of Incertainty.

Having reason to believe that Lord Howe will readily come into an exchange of such Prisoners, as may be more immediately under his Command, and that some thing will be offered on this Subject within a day or two, or rather come in answer to the propositions I have made General Howe; I shall be glad to have Congress's Interpretation of the Resolve of the 22d. instant empowering the Commanders to exchange &ca. “Whether by the word Sailor they mean Sailors generally, as well those taken in the Vessels of private Adventures by the Enemy, as those belonging to the Continental Cruizers or Vessels in the Continental employ, or whether they only design to extend the Exchange to the latter, and those in their particular employ.” I would also observe that heretofore Sailors belonging to Merchant Ships, that have fallen into our hands and such as have been employed merely as Transports, have not generally been considered as Prisoners. I submit it to Congress whether it may not be now necessary to pass a Resolve declaring` their Sentiments on this Subject, and in General who are to be treated as Prisoners of War that are taken in Vessels belonging to the Subjects of the British Crown &ca. The result of their Opinion upon the first Question proposed, you will be pleased to transmit me by the earliest Opportunity.

I have inclosed for the Consideration of Congress a memorial and Petition by captain Holdrige,24 praying to be relieved against the Loss of Money stolen from him, not conceiving myself Authorized to grant his request. The

24. Capt. Hezekiah Holdridge, of the Twenty-second Continental Infantry. He was promoted to major Sept. 3. 1776; transferred to the Second Connecticut Regiment; made lieutenant colonel of the Seventh Connecticut Regiment Jan. 1, 1777; retired Jan. 1, 1781.

Certificate which attends it proves him a Man of Character, and his case is hard on his State of it. Whether making the Loss good may not open a door to others and give rise

to applications not so just as his may be, I cannot determine. That seems to me the only objection to relieving him.

I am informed by General Putnam, that there are some of the Stockbridge Indians here, I have not seen them myself, who express great uneasyness at their not being employed by us and have come to enquire into the cause. I am sensible Congress had them not in Contemplation, when they resolved that Indians might be engaged in our Service.

However as they seem so anxious, as they were led to expect it, from what General Schuyler and the other Commissioners did. As we are under difficulties in getting men, and there may be danger of their or some of them taking an unfavourable part, I beg Leave to submit to Congress as my Opinion under all these circumstances that they had better be employed. I have the Honor &ca.25

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, July 31, 1776.

Sir: This will be handed you by Captain Marquisie27 with whom I have no other acquaintance than what is derived from the inclosed Letter from General Schuyler. He says he has lost his Baggage in our service and all he had and is now going to wait on Congress to whom I suppose he means to make his pretensions known. I am &ca.28

25. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

27. Capt. Bernard Moissac de la Marquise.

28. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison

To MAJOR GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER

New York, July 31, 1776.

Dear Sir: Your Favors of the 14th. 17th. 20th. and 24th. have been duly received, and I am extremely happy to find, that you have discovered and apprehended some of the Ringleaders of a dangerous Plot you say was forming in the Neighbourhood of Albany; nor do I hear with little Pleasure, of the Harmony and good Agreement between you and General Gates, knowing how essential they are to the Service.

Agreeable to your Request, I communicated to Mr. Trumbull that Part of your Letter respecting Mr. Livingston's and your Apprehensions of his resigning, in Case any Person should be appointed to act independently of him, in the Business he usually managed. Upon this Occasion I must observe, that as Mr. Trumbull has the supreme Direction given him by Congress, of supplying the Northern Army, and is the Person that is to be accountable if it is not done in a proper Manner; his Appointments should, and must be regarded, or Things in this Instance will never proceed in a regular Channel and fatal Consequences will otherwise ensue. Mr. Trumbull, I believe, has wrote Mr. Livingston on the Subject, and I imagine has mentioned in what Manner he would have him to act and also given necessary Instructions to his Deputies.

It gives me great Satisfaction to hear, that taking Post at Fort Stanwix, has not given Umbrage to the Indians; and also that those that were at Philadelphia, and this Place, have returned to their several

Nations. From this Circumstance, I am hopeful, you will be able to engage them in our Interest, and with the Assistance of the Reward allowed by Congress, to excite their Efforts to make Prisoners of our Enemies. I would have you press the Matter strongly in both Instances, and though you should not succeed, I flatter myself, you will secure their Neutrality. That will be an important Point to gain.

I conceive it will not be only proper, but absolutely necesseary, to request General Howe to deliver the Officers, who, regardless of their Paroles, have escaped from Pensylvania; and all others that have acted in the same Manner; pointing out the Impropriety of such

Conduct, and the Difficulty it lays us under, as to the Line of Treatment to be observed to others. In a Conversation with the Adjutant General of the King's Army, I touched upon this Subject, and he assured me all Complaints of this Nature would be strictly attended to by Generl. Howe, and those who gave Rise to them be handled with Severity. Lord Howe too, I am confidently informed, has express'd his great Disapprobation of such Behaviour, and said, that those that were guilty of it, should be severely noticed if they came into his Hands. Every thinking and sensible Person must see the Impropriety of it, and the Consequences that must attend it. I shoud suppose the Requisition will claim General Burgoyne's Attention and be readily complied with.

The Swivels you mention, cannot be had; but if the Experiments of a Person, who has undertaken to cast some three Pounders, should succeed; perhaps after sometime you may be furnished in Part with a Quantity of these. Colo. Knox seems

to think they will be far superior to Swivels. The Man supposes, after he begins, he will be able to compleat twenty every Week.

Neither are there any Hand Granadoes. We have a large Number of 4¼ Inch Shells, which might be a good Substitute; But I do not know how Things of this Sort can be forwarded to you, as the Water Communication with Albany, is entirely cut off. The Difficulty will be great, if not almost insuperable.

I observe your Reasons for quitting Crown Point, preferring Ticonderoga. My Knowledge of the Importance of the former, was not properly my own; It arose from the Information I had from Gentlemen and Persons who were, or said they were, well acquainted with it, and the Situation of the Country about it. Being founded on that, I cannot say any Thing myself upon the Subject. Your Representation of it, most certainly lessens it's Consequence in a capital Degree. However, I am fearful, the Observation of the Field Officers, “that the New-England Governments &c. will be thereby exposed to the Incursions of our cruel and

savage Enemies ”will be but too well verified. If that Post could not be maintained, this Evil with others greater must have happened.

In Respect to the Privilege you have given the Officers who held double Commissions, to retain which they choose, I can not object. If the Authority giving them was the same, and such as was exercised usually, and approved, I see no Cause for it, and suppose the Officers have that Right.

As to Lieutt. Colo. Buell's Case,29 I cannot give any Direction about it, not having Authority to appoint Officers generally.

It is not in my Power to spare you any Money from hence. Our Chest is all but empty. Congress

29. Lieut. Col. Nathaniel Buell, of Col. Charles Burrall's Connecticut State Regiment. Later he served as a colonel of Connecticut Militia.

would be informed by your Letters of your Situation, doubtless. I mentioned it in mine and have suggested, as I often have, the Expediency, nay the Necessity of keeping regular Supplies.

Nothing of Moment has occurred here lately. The Enemy are growing stronger. For some Days past, Ships &c. have been coming in to them more or less.

All the Eastward Accounts say, three or four Captures have been made lately, among them a Provision Vessel from Ireland which of herself came into Boston Harbour.

In the Southern Department, we have been still more lucky. Sir Peter Parker and his Fleet got a severe Drubbing in an Attack made against our Works on Sullivan's Island, just by Charles-Town, South Carolina. A Part of their Troops, at the same Time attempting to land, were repulsed. The Papers, I presume, have reached you, announcing this fortunate

Event, where you will see the Particulars, as transmitted by General Lee to Congress. I am, etc.

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

New York, August 1, 1776.

Sir: Congress having been pleased to impower me, to order Colo. Ward's Regiment wherever I might think it necessary; I take the liberty of requesting you to direct him to March it immediately to this Place, where I am of opinion, the Service requires it and their Aid may be extremely material, especially as the Levies come in very slowly.

Since my last nothing of Importance has occurred or that is worthy of Notice; Except an Augmentation of about Twenty Nine Ships and Brigs, with Seven or Eight smaller Vessels to the Enemy's Fleet. I have not learned certainly what they bring; however some Troops were seen landing yesterday, which the Gentlemen who

observed them, took to be Artillery Men. It is not Improbable that they were some of the Guards, whose dress is pretty much like that of the Artillery. I have the Honor etc.

P.S. The three Gallies, which you were kind enough to order, are safely arrived, as are two from Rhode Island, with these and one that we have finished here, we propose attempting something against the Ships above and are preparing for it.

To COLONEL SAMUEL ELMORE

New York, August 1, 1776.

Sir: Having just received from Congress a Return of your Regiment30 now in the State of Connecticut, with directions that it shall Join this Army, I request the favor of you to march immediately to this place. They have appointed John Brown Esqr. Lieutenant Colonel of

it, and Robert Cochran Esqr. > Major. Commissions for such Officers as appear with their respective Companies, I am to fill up.31 I am &c.

30. Elmore's regiment was one of the Connecticut State regiments. The American Army was made up of the Continental line regiments, which came from the different States; State regiments, like this of Elmore's, which were not considered militia; the 16 Additional Continental regiments, raised later, by order of Congress and recruited from the States at large; partisan corps, like Lee's Legion; two Canadian regiments, composed of Canadian refugees; militia; minutemen; etc. The artillery and cavalry were usually Continental line organizations.

31. Washington also wrote to Governor Trumbull, this date, asking him to order Elmore forward. He added: “half past 12 O'Clock. I this moment received Intelligence that Thirty Ships more were coming into the [Sandy] Hook.”

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, August 2, 1776.

Sir: Your favor of the 30th. Ulto. with its several Inclosures, I was honored with, by Wednesday's Post.

Congress having been pleased to leave with me the directions of Colonel Ward's Regiment, I have wrote Governor Trumbull and requested him to order their March to this place, being fully satisfied that the Enemy mean to make their Grand push in this Quarter, and that the good of the service requires every aid here that can be obtained. I have also wrote Col: Elmore and directed him to repair hither with his Regiment; when it comes, I shall fill up Commissions for such Officers as appear with their respective Companies.

Colonel Holman32 with a Regiment from the Massachusetts State is arrived: Col: Carey33 from thence is also here waiting the Arrival of his Regiment which he hourly expects; he

adds, when he left New London, he heard that the third Regiment from the Massachusetts was almost ready and would soon be in motion.

The Enemy's force is daily augmentg and becoming stronger by New Arrivals. Yesterday General Greene reports that about Forty sail (including Tenders) came into the Hook. What they are, or what those have brought, that have lately got in, I remain uninformed. However I think it probable they are part of Admiral Howe's fleet with the Hessian Troops. It is time to look for them.34 I have the Honor &ca.

P.S. I am extremely sorry to inform Congress that our Troops are very sickly.35

32. Capt. John Holman, of the Massachusetts Militia.

33. Col. Simeon Carey, of the Massachusetts Militia.

34. These vessels were those composing the fleet of Sir Henry Clinton and Lord Cornwallis from Carolina. They had attempted to capture Charleston and been repulsed by the fort on Sullivans Island, later called Fort Moultrie, in honor of its gallant defender, Col. William Moultrie. The action was fought on June 28. Sparks quotes Lord George Germain's letter to Sir Henry Clinton (August 24): “I had reason to flatter myself, that, the season being far advanced, you would not make any attempt at the southward, whereby there could be a possibility of your being prevented from proceeding with your army in due time to the northward to join General Howe, who has long impatiently expected your arrival. I was therefore extremely disappointed and mortified to learn by your letter of July 8th, that you were still in the south, and that the fleet had received a severe check at Sullivan's Island.”

35. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONGRESS

New York, August 5, 1776.

Sir: I was honored with your favor of the 31st. Ulto. on Friday with its several Inclosures, and return you my thanks for the agreeable Intelligence you were pleased to communicate of the arrival of one of the Ships, with such valuable Articles, as Arms and Ammunition; also of the Capture made by a Privateer.

The mode for the Exchange of Prisoners, resolved on by Congress is acceded to by General Howe, so far as it comes within his command, a Copy of my Letter and his answer upon the Subject, I have the Honor to inclose you and to which I beg leave to refer Congress.44

The inclosed copy of a Letter from Col: Tupper,45 who had the General Command of the Gallies here, will inform Congress of the Engagement between them and the Ships of War up the North river on Saturday Evening and of the Damage we sustained; what injury was done to the Ships I cannot ascertain. It is said they were hulled several times by our Shot. All accounts agree, that our Officers and Men, during the whole of the Affair, behaved with great Spirit and bravery; the damage done the Gallies shews beyond question, that they had a warm time of it, the Ships still remain up the river and before anything further can be attempted against them, should it be thought advisable, the Gallies must be repaired.

I have also transmitted Congress, a Copy of

44. See Washington's letter to Sir William Howe, July 30, 1776, *ante*.

45. A copy of Col. Benjamin Tupper's letter of Aug. 3, 1776, is filed with Washington's letter of Aug. 5, 1776, in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

a Letter I received by Saturday's post, from Governor Cooke, to which I refer them for the Intelligence46 It contains. The Seizure of our Vessels by the Portuguese, is I fear, an event too true, their dependance upon the British Crown for aid against the Spaniards,

must force them to comply with every thing required of them. I wish the Morris may get in safe with her Cargo. As to the Ships Captain Bucklin saw, on the 25th. Ulto., they are probably arrived; For Yesterday twenty five Sail came into the Hook.

By a Letter from General Ward of the 29th. Ulto,47 he informs me, that two of our armed Vessels the day before had brought into Marblehead, a Ship bound from Halifax to Staten Island, she had in about 1509£ Cost of British Goods, besides a good many belonging to Tories. A Hallifax paper found on board her, I have inclosed, as also an Account sent me by Mr. Hazard transmitted him by some of his Friends, as given by the Tories taken in her; their Intelligence I dare say is true, respecting the arrival of part of the Hessian Troops. General Ward, in his Letter mentions the day this prize was taken, Capt. Burke48 in another of our Armed Vessels had an engagement with a Ship and a Schooner which he thought were Transports and would have taken them, had it not been for an unlucky accident in having his Quarter Deck blown up. Two of his men were killed and several more were wounded.

The Hulks and Cheveaux de frieze

46. A copy of Gov. Nicholas Cooke's letter, dated July 29, 1776, is filed with Washington's in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

47. Ward's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

48. Capt. William Burke, then commanding the *Lee*.

that have been preparing to obstruct the Channel, have got up to the place they are intended for, and will be sunk as soon as possible.

I have transmitted Congress, a Genl. Return of the Army in and about this place, on the third instant, by which they will perceive the amount of our force.49

Before I conclude I would beg leave to remind Congress of the necessity there is of having some Major Generals appointed for this Army: the duties of which are great, extensive and impossible to be discharged, as they ought and the good of the service requires, without a Competent number of Officers of this rank. I mean to write more fully upon this Subject, and as things are drawing fast to an Issue and it is necessary to make every proper disposition and arrangement that we possibly can; I pray that this matter may be taken into consideration and claim their early attention. I well know What has prevented appointments of this sort for some time past, but the situation of our Affairs will not Justify longer delays in this Instance; by the first Opportunity I shall take the Liberty of giving you my sentiments more at large upon the propriety and necessity of the measure. I have the Honor etc.50

49. The figures of this general return are given in Washington's letter to Trumbull. Aug. 7, 1776, *q. v*.

50. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To MAJOR GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER

New York, August 7, 1776.

Dear Sir: Before this, I presume you have received a letter from Congress, Inclosing Sundry Resolutions of the 22, 23, and 24 Ulto., among which was one, impowering their Commanders in Chief in every Department, to Negociate an Exchange of prisoners, upon the plan therein pointed out, There were two others, mentioning the case of Colo. Allen and the persons taken with him. That the views of Congress might be carried into Execution in those Instances, as far as they could in this Department, and for the Enlargement of Mr. Lovell, whose case they have since mentioned, I wrote to Genl. Howe who has acceded to the several propositions I made him, as far as they came within the Extent of his Command. A copy of my letter and his Answer I have Inclosed. By

the Letter, you will perceive, Prisoners made in Canada are Subject to Genl. Carleton's Determination and pleasure. It is probable, you have already wrote him upon the Subject of an Exchange; but If you have not, I think you should propose It immediately, both to him and Genl. Burgoyne, and try to obtain Genl. Thompson for Genl. Prescott, and also one for the other Officers and Men, who are Prisoners in their Hands. Justice and a Regard to the merits and Bravery of the Officers, and Privates, who were taken when Genl. Montgomery unfortunately fell, Require that our Exertions should be directed, to Relieve their Sufferings, and procure their Enlargement among the first. It may not be improper, to Inform these two Gentlemen, of what has passed between

Genl. Howe and Myself.—Perhaps the Copies of our Letters, will Contribute in some measure to facilitate the Worke.

I was Yesterday evening favoured with your Letters of the 1st. and 2nd., also with One from Mr. Varrick.60 It is impossible to spare any Gunners or Mates from hence, Our posts being so extensive that we are obliged to draft upwards of Six hundred Men from different Regiments to Assist the Artillery. Colo. Knox Informs me you have four Comps. of Gunners and Matrosses at the Lakes, as good as any here, which is a much greater proportion than we have. You must draw what are necessary for them and other parts of the Army. As to Seamen they are extremely difficult to procure, and I wish they may be got; as it is almost certain, they would not engage in the Service you want 'em for, upon the terms usually allowed here, there seems to have been a Necessity for employing them on the best that can be had.

From Lt. McMichels report, Our Enemies seem determined to push us on all Quarters, It is nothing but what we may expect, your utmost activity and exertions must be employed, to counteract their designs and prevent their Penetrating the Country. I hope Fort Stanwix 'ere long will be compleat and defensible, against any attack they can make, If they have any such views. The Garrison should by all means have a proper supply of provision, in case It should be Invested.

In respect to the Articles, in the list Marked B. in Mr. Varrick's Letter, All that can be procured here, and those set down in the list subscribed by the Qr. Mr. General. As to the Cordage, lest a supply may not be got in Connecticut, Mr. Ivers61 has undertaken, and will immediately set out for Poughkeepsie, in Order to Manufacture Six or Eight Tons of Hemp, he has there an Assortment of it, which will be forwarded to Albany with all possible dispatch from thence. I hope the other Necessaries will be got by the person sent to Connecticut, and the Anchors &c. at the Forges Mr. Varrick mentions. Captn. Bacon62 sent in pursuit suit of Seamen &c. by Genl. Arnold, is gone to Connecticut to see what he can procure. I advanced him Five Hundred Pounds Lawful, all the Money that was in the paymasters Hands.

Having represented to Congress, the expediency of imploying the Stockbridge Indians, as they are desirous of it, they have Authorized me to do it, as you will see by the inclosed Copy of their Resolution, passed the 2nd. Instant. If Mr. Edwards63 is at the Treaty you are now holding, shew him the Resolve, and please to inform him, that it is my request, he should adopt the most expeditious mode of raising them, giving such of them that chuse it, Liberty to Join the Northern Army, and those that prefer coming here, leave to do it, in case they incline to divide. If they do not the whole may go to which of the Armies they please, least Mr. Edwards should not be at the Treaty, I will try to write him by another opportunity to the same effect.

Congress I see, too, have ordered Five hundred Thousand Dollars to be sent Mr. Trumbull for the Northern Army, I am hopeful they will be attentive to the Necessary Supplies of Money in future.

By two deserters, we are informed Genl. Clinton with his whole Army from the Southward, except three Companies has arrived; they also add, that about One thousand of the Hessians have got in, the remainder of the foreign Troops they expect (about Eleven

Thousand) will be in every day, those that have arrived having parted with them in a Gale of Wind of the Banks of New found Land.

Congress having Resolved, that Colo. Elmore's Regiment should reinforce this Army; On the first Instant I wrote him, supposing him in Connecticut, with his Regiment to repair here, with all possible expedition; but being informed that he is at Albany with it, or a great part of it, are now, and fully convinced that he cannot be here in time to afford any succour, I request that you will detain him and direct his Regiment to such Service as you may think Necessary, I wrote him by this Opportunity countermanding my former Orders.64 I am etc.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, August 7, 1776.

Sir: In my Letter of the 5th., which I had the honor of addressing you, I begged leave to recall the attention of Congress to the absolute necessity there is for appointing more General Officers, promising at the same time by the first opportunity to give my sentiments more at large upon the Subject.

Confident I am that the postponing this measure, has not proceeded from Motives of frugality, otherwise I would take the Liberty of attempting to prove that we put too much to the hazard by such a saving. I am but too well apprized of the difficulties that occur in the choice. They are I acknowledge, great, but at the same time It must be allowed, they are of such a Nature as to present themselves whenever the Subject is thought of. Time on the one hand does not remove them, on the other, delay may be productive of

60. Richard Varick. He was captain in the First New York Regiment; aide to Schuyler; deputy commissary general of musters, Northern Army; lieutenant colonel and aide to Arnold; recording secretary to Washington. After the war he was recorder and mayor of New York City and attorney general of the State.

61. Ivers was of Stratford, Conn. In 1778 he is mentioned as furnishing cordage for one of the armed vessels.

62. Capt. Asa(?) Bacon, of Chester's Connecticut State regiment.

63. Timothy Edwards, Indian commissioner for the Northern Department.

64. Washington's letter to Elmore is dated August 7 and is, in effect, what he here states to Schuyler.

fatal consequences. This Army tho' far short as yet, of the Numbers intended by Congress, is by much too unweildy for the command of anyone Man, without several Major Generals to assist. For it is to be observed, that a Brigadier General at the head of his Brigade is no more than a Colonel at the Head of a Regiment, except that he Acts upon a larger scale.

Officers of more General command, are at all times wanted for the good order and Government of an Army, especially when that Army is composed chiefly of raw Troops, but in an action they are indispensibly necessary. At present there is but one Major General for this whole department and the flying Camp, where as at this place alone, less than three cannot discharge the duties with that regularity they ought to be: If these Major General are appointed, as undoubtedly they will, out of the present Brigadiers, you will want for this place three Brigadiers at least. The Northern department will require one, if not two, as General Thompson is a Prisoner and the Baron De Woedtke reported to be dead or in a state not much better, there being at present only one Brigadier (Arnold) in all that department. For the Eastern Governments there ought to be one, or a Major General to superinted the Regiments there and prevent Impositions that might Otherwise be practised. These make the number wanted to be Six or Seven, and who are to be appointed, Congress can best Judge. To make Brigadiers of the oldest Colonels would be the least exceptionable way, but it is much to be questioned, Whether by that mode, the ablest men would be appointed to Office; and I would observe, tho' the Rank of

the Colonels of the Eastern Governments were settled at Cambridge last year, It only respected themselves and is still open as to Officers of other Governments. To pick a Colonel here and a Colonel there through the Army according to

the Opinion entertained of their abilities, would no doubt be the means of making a better choice and nominating the fittest persons; But then the Senior Officers would be disgusted and more than probable with their Connexions quit the service. That might prove fatal at this time. To appoint Gentlemen as Brigadiers, that had not served in the Army, (in this part of it at least) would not wound any one in particular, but hurt the whole equally and must be considered in a very discouraging light by every Officer of Merit.

View the matter therefore in any point of light you will, there are Inconveniences on the one hand and difficulties on the other which ought to be avoided.

Would they be remedied by appointing the oldest Colonels from each State?

If this mode should be thought expedient, the Inclosed List gives the names of the Colonels from New Hampshire to Pennsylvania inclusive, specifying those who rank first as I am told in the several Colony Lists.56

I have transmitted a Copy of a Letter from Mr. Jona. Glover, setting forth the nature and Grounds of a dispute between him and a Mr. Bradford respecting their Agency. Not conceiving myself Authorized, nor having the smallest inclination to interfere in any degree in the matter; It is referred to Congress, who will determine and give direction upon it in such manner as they shall Judge best. I will only observe, that Mr. Glover was recommended to me as a proper person for an Agent when we first fitted out Armed Vessels and was accordingly appointed one, and so far as I know, discharged his Office with fidelity and Industry.

I received Yesterday Evening a Letter from

56. This letter was read in Congress August 8, and on the 9th that body appointed Brig. Gens. William Heath, Joseph Spencer, John Sullivan, and Nathanael Greene major generals; and Cols. James Reed, John Nixon, Arthur St. Clair, Alexander McDougall, Samuel Holden Parsons, and James Clinton brigadier generals. The list of colonels was not inclosed with the letter.

General Schuyler, containing Lieutenant McMichels57 report, who had been sent a Scout to Oswego. A Copy of the Report I have inclosed for the Information of Congress, least General Schuyler should have omitted It in his Letter, which accompanies this. he was at the German Flatts when he wrote which was the 2d Instt. and the Treaty with the Indians not begun, nor had the whole expected, then arrived, but of these things he will have advised you more fully I make no doubt. The Pay Master Informs me he received a supply of Money Yesterday. It came very seasonably, for the Applications and clamours of the Troops had become incessant and distressing beyond measure. There is now two month's pay due them. I have &ca.58

57. Lieut. Edward McMichael, of the Third New Jersey Regiment. Copies of his report are in both the *Washington Papers* and in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

58. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, 1. O'Clock P.M., August 7, 1776.

Sir: Since closing the Letter which I had the honor to write you this Morning, two Deserters have come in, who left the Solebay Man of War last Evening.—one of them is a Native of New York. Their Account is that they were in the Engagement with Col. Moultrie at Sullivan's Island on the 9th. July; the particulars they give nearly correspond with the narrative sent by General Lee; that they left Carolina 3 Weeks ago as a Convoy to 45 transports, having on board General Clinton, Lord Cornwallis and the whole Southern

Army, consisting of about 3000 Men, all of whom were landed last week on Staten Island, in tolerable Health.

That on Sunday 13 Transports part of Lord Howe's fleet and having on board Hessians and Highlanders, came to Staten Island: that the remainder of the Fleet which was reported to have in the whole 12000 Men; had parted with these Troops off the Banks of Newfoundland and were expected to come in every Moment; that they were getting their heavy Carriages and Cannon on board; had launched 8 Gondolas with flatt Bottoms, and 2 Rafts on Stages to carry Cannon. These men understand that the attack will soon be made, if the other Troops arrive; That they give out they will lay the Jerseys waste with Fire and Sword. The computed Strength of their Army will be 30,000 Men. They further add, that when they left Carolina one Transport got on Shore, so that they were not able to give her relief, upon which she surrendered with 5 Companies of Highlanders to General Lee, who after taking every thing valuable out of her burnt her

That the Admiral turned General

Clinton out of his Ship after the Engagement, with a great deal of abuse; great differences between the Principal Naval and Military Gentlemen; that the Ships left in Carolina, are now in such a Weakly distressed condition they would fall on easy Prey. I am, etc.

P. S: The Ships are changing their position, and the Men of War forming into a Line, but I still think they will wait the arrival of the remaining Hessians before any general attack will be made. Monday's return will shew our strength here.59

To THE COMMITTEE OF SAFETY OF HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

Head Quarters, New York, August 7, 1776.

Gentn.: I am to acquaint you, that I lately recived a Letter from Major French, who is a prisoner in your Place, signifying that his parole would be out the 12th Inst., and that he

had no intentions of renewing it. This conduct I must Confess, appears very extraordinary, as he cannot be ignorant, that he has been hitherto considered as a prisoner of War, and that accepting his parole at first was an indulgence granted, solely to make his situation more easy and Comfortable; and to prevent his experiencing the disagreeable Effects of a close confinement. I have expressed my sentiments to him freely on the Subject in my Answer, which I inclose unsealed for your perusal. I doubt not, you will

59. In the writing of Joseph Reed; the P.S. is in that of Washington.

pursue such measures, as are most proper on this occasion. You will please to seal and deliver the Letter inclosed, without delay, to avoid any trouble that may arise on Account of not delivering it, previous to the date before mentioned. I am, etc.

To BRIGADIER GENERAL HUGH MERCER

Head Quarters, New York, August 8, 1776.

Sir: The Account given you by a deserter, as brought me by Mr. Tilghman is confirmed by two Sailors who came off the Night before last from the Enemy; That Genl. Clinton is arrived with his Army from South Carolina, and that Preparations are makeing for an early and Vigorous Attack. They further add, that last Sunday 1000 Hessians landed, part of 12,000, the Remainder being left off the Banks of Newfound Land, that may be expected every Hour. under these Circumstances, and considering how much deficient this Army is, from the not filling up the new Levies, and Sickness, I must desire you to send over one of the

Rifle Regiments, as we have not one Corps of that kind on this Island. I leave it to you, to fix upon that which you think will come with the most Chearfulness, and are best appointed, but would not have any time lost. The Quarter Master may set out immediately to prepare for them; from all accounts the grand Attack will be made here, and at Long Island. I cannot find any thing meditated against New Jersey at present. I have wrote to

the Convention of Jersey, and to Connecticut, to send in the Militia, with all expedition. I am, etc.

To BRIGADIER GENERAL WILLIAM LIVINGSTON

[Head Quarters, August 8, 1776.]

Sir: Before this reaches you, you will undoubtedly have heard of the unexpected arrival of the Carolina Army on Staten Island, which added to the Hessians and foreign Troops under Lord Howe, exhibit a force Justly Alarming. When I compare it with that which we have to oppose them, I cannot help feeling every anxious Apprehension. The New Levies are so incomplete, the Old Regiments deficient in their Compliment, and so much Sickness, that we must have an immediate Supply of Men. I have therefore wrote to Connecticut, and to the Convention of your Province, to call the

Militia immediately. but as it may take some time, and the Necessity admit of no delay, I have thought it proper to Apply to you also, under the Resolution of Congress of last June, Copy of which was sent you when Lord Howe's Fleet first arrived, to beg you would use your utmost exertions to forward this most Necessary Measure. The Consequences to the American Interest of any Failure here, are so obvious, that I need not enlarge upon them, your own good Judgement will suggest every thing proper.

It would be a great saving of Time and expence, if the Militia, when they come, would always equip themselves with Arms, Ammunition, Blankets, Canteens and Kettles, as far as they can, and in any Order given on the present Occasion, I would wish you to notice it specially. I am, etc.

To THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

New York, August 8, 1776.

Sir: I have been favored with your Letter of the 6th. Inst. and am happy, to find the Nomination I made of Genl. Clinton,71 in consequence of your Request to appoint an Officer to the Command of the Levies on both sides Hudson's River, has met the approbation of your Honble. Body. His acquaintance with the Country, abilities and zeal for the Cause

71. Brig. Gen. George Clinton. (See Washington's letter to the Secret Committee of the New York Legislature, July 19, 1776, *ante*.)

are the Motives that induced me to make choice of him. However, I am led to conclude, from that part of your Letter which desires me to transmit him his appointment, with the Resolution Subjecting the Levies on both sides of the River at his command, that your Honorable Body entertain Ideas of the Matter, somewhat different from what I do, or ever did.

When I was honored with your Letter of the 16th Ulto, with the Resolves of Convention upon this Subject, the State of the Army under my Command would not allow me to send a General Officer in the Continental Service, to Command the Levies you then proposed to raise; supposing I had been authorised to do it; but considering myself without power in this Instance.

The Levies altogether of a Provincial Nature—to be raised by you and Subject to your direction, I esteemed the nomination of a General Officer over them, entrusted to my choice, a matter of favor and of Compliment, and as such I gratefully fill it.

I am persuaded, I expressed myself in this Manner to the Gentn. who were pleased to attend me upon the occasion and that they had the same Ideas. Under the Influence of this Opinion, all I expected was, that an Appointment would be made in conformity to my Nomination, If there was no Objection to the Gentleman I proposed, conceiving then as I do now, if he was approved by Convention, he was their Officer and deriving his

appointment and Authority from them. In this light I presume Genl. Clinton must be viewed and his powers over the Levies you allude to, flow from you. Least accident may have mislaid the Letter I wrote

you on the Subject, I have inclosed an Extract of it, so far as it had relation to it.

It is not in my Power to send an Experienced Officer at this time to the post you mention; I trust that Colo. Clinton72 will be equall to the Command of both the Highland Fortifications, they are under his direction at present.

In respect to the two Commissaries, I thought the Matter had been fixed; but as it is not, I have requested Mr. Trumbull, who has the Charge of this, to wait upon and agree with the Convention, on proper persons to conduct the business and in such a way that their purchases and his may not clash; to him therefore, I beg leave to refer you upon this Subject.

I am extremely obliged by the order for the Telescope. I have obtained it, and will try to employ it for the Valuable purposes you designed it.

I shall pay proper attention to your Members and persons employed in their Service, and give it in General Orders that they be permitted to pass our Guards without Interruption.

Before I conclude, I cannot but express my fears, lest the Enemy's Army so largely augmented, should possess themselves of the whole Stock on long Island; When the further reinforcement arrives, which they hourly expect, they may do it without a possibility on our part of preventing them.

I wish the Convention may not see Cause to regret, that they

72. Col. James Clinton, of the Second New York Regiment. He was made a brigadier general in the Continental Army Aug. 9, 1776; wounded at Fort Montgomery, N.Y., in Sir Henry Clinton's raid up the Hudson in 1777; served to the close of the war.

were not removed. I have the Honor to be &c.

To THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

New York, August 8, 1776.

Sir: By this, I mean to Communicate to your Honble. Body, the Substance of the Intelligence I received yesterday from two deserters, that came the Evening before from the Solebay Man of War. They inform, that they were in the Engagement at Sullivan's Island and give nearly the same Account as that transmitted by Genl. Lee, which you would see published by Congress. They add, that they left South Carolina about three Weeks ago, with Genl. Clinton and his whole Army, who are now arrived and landed on Staten Island; they also say, that part of Lord Howe's fleet, with Hessian and Highland Troops on board, have got in, and that the remainder, with a considerable body, is hourly expected, which, those that have come in parted from, in a Gale of Wind of the Banks of New found land.

As the Accounts given by these Men, are direct and circumstantial, and their Authenticity corroborated by many other things that have occurred; It is not to be doubted but the number of the Enemy's Army will greatly exceed ours.

Their force which was generally expected would be considerable of itself; the unexpected augmentation of Genl Clinton's Army makes it more so. On the other hand, ours does not

come up to the Intended establishment.

Under these Circumstances and as we may expect the period just at hand, when they will make their Vigorous push, I submit it to the Consideration of your Honble. Body, whether it may not be Necessary, for your Exertions to be employed in calling in, in the most expeditious manner, such reinforcements as you can Obtain, to the Aid of this Army. I have &c.

To COLONEL JONATHAN FITCH

New York Head Quarters, August 7, 1776.

Sir, The Spirit and Zeal, which the Colony of Connecticut have ever shewn in the cause of America, makes it only necessary to acquaint you with our Situation, in order to ensure your assistance.65 General Clinton has brought his whole Body of Troops from South Carolina, the Foreign Troops are every day arriving, and we have the most Authentic account that in a little time our Enemys Army will amount to 30,000 Men; with these, a decissive Attack will be made upon the Army, which in its present Situation, from Sickness, the Deficiency of Regiments, and other Causes, is far short of its intended Compliment; under these Circumstances, I am persuaded I need only remind you, of the power given by the Laws of the Colony to the Colonels of Regiments,

65. Colonel Fitch was at New Haven, Conn.

upon an Alarm, Invasion or Appearance of an Enemy, by Sea or Land, to call out their respective Regiments into Service. Since the Settlement of these Colonies their has never been such just Occasion of Alarm, or such an Appearance of an Enemy, both by Sea and Land; I am therefore to request you to call forth your Regiment without delay, and have them equipp'd with Blankets, Arms and Ammunition, if possible, and march them immediately to this place, agreeable to the Power given by your Constitution, as explained by His Honor Governor Trumbull, in his Letter to the Honourable Continental Congress,

dated the 6th. July last. I can only add, that the greater the expedition used the more essential and honourable the Service will probably be. I am &c.66

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, August 8, 1776.

Sir: By yesterday's post, I was honoured with your favor of the 2d. instant, with Sundry Resolutions of Congress, to which I shall pay strict Attention. As the proposition for employing the Stockbridge Indians has been approved, I have wrote Mr. Edwards, one of the Commissioners and who lives among them; requesting him to engage them or such as are willing to enter the Service. I have directed him to Indulge them with liberty to join this or the Northern Army or both, as their inclination may lead.

I wish the salutary Consequences may

66. The same letter was sent to Col. Ichabod Sears at Stratford, to Col. John Mead at Greenwich, to Col. Edward Hinman at Woodbury, and to Col. Joseph Platt Cooke at Danbury.

result from the regulation, respecting Seamen taken, that Congress have in view. From the nature of this kind of People, and the priviledges granted on their entering into our service, I should suppose many of them would do It. We want them much.

I yesterday transmitted the Intelligence I received from the Deserters from the Solebay Man of War. The inclosed copy of a Letter by last night's post from the Honr. Mr. Bowdoin,73 with the information of a Captain Kennedy lately taken, corroborate their accounts respecting the Hessian Troops. Indeed his report makes the fleet and Armament to be employed against us, greater than what we have heard they would be; However there remains no doubt of their being both large and formidable, and such as will require our most vigorous exertions to oppose them. persuaded of this, and knowing how much

Inferior our Numbers are and will be to theirs, when the whole of their Troops arrive; of the important consequences that may, and will flow from the Appeal that will soon be made, I have wrote to Connecticut and New Jersey for all the succour they can afford, and also to the Convention of this State. What I may receive, and in what time, the event must determine. But I would feign hope, the Situation, the exigency of our Affairs, will call forth

73. James Bowdoin. A copy of his letter of July 29, 1776, with Washington's letter, is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

the strenuous efforts and early Assistance of those, who are friends to the Cause. I confess there is but too much occasion for their exertions. I confidently trust, they will not be witheld.

I have inclosed a Copy of a Letter from Mr. Bowdoin74 respecting the Eastern Indians. Congress will thereby perceive, they profess themselves to be well attached to our Interest, and the Summary of the measures taken to engage them in our Service. I have the Treaty at large between the Honorable Council of the Massachusetts on behalf of the United States, with the Delegates of the St. Johns and Mickmac Tribes. The probability of a copy's being sent already, and its great length, prevents one coming herewith.—If Congress have not had it forwarded to them, I will send a Copy by the first opportunity after notice that it has not been received.

August 9.

By a report received from General Greene last night, at Sun set and a little after, about one hundred Boats were seen bringing Troops from Staten Island to the Ships. Three of which had fallen down towards the narrows having taken in Soldiers from thirty of the Boats; he adds that by the best observations of several Officers, there appeared to be a General Embarkation.

I have wrote to General Mercer for Two Thousand Men from the Flying Camp: Colonel Smallwood's Battalion, as part of them, I expect this forenoon, But where the rest are to come from I know not, as by the General's last return, not more than three or four hundred of the New Levies had got in. In my Letter of the 5th. I inclosed a General return of the Army under my immediate Command, but I immagine the following state will give Congress a more perfect Idea, tho' not a more agreeable one, of our Situation. For the several posts on New York, Long and Governor's Islands and Paulus Hook we have fit for duty 10,514. Sick present 3039. sick absent 629. On Command 2946. On Furlo 97. Total 17225 in addition to these we are only certain

74. A copy of this letter, dated July 30, 1776, with Washington's letter, is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

of Colo: Smallwood's Battalion, in case of an immediate Attack.

Our posts too are much divided having Waters between many of them and some distant from others 15 Miles.

These circumstances sufficiently distressing of themselves, are much aggravated by the sickness that prevails thro the Army; every day more or less are taken down, so that the proportion of Men that may come in, cannot be considered as a real and serviceable Augmentation in the whole. These things are melancholy, but they are nevertheless true. I hope for better. Under every disadvantage my utmost exertions shall be employed to bring about the great end we have in view, and so far as I can Judge from the professions and apparent disposition of my Troops, I shall have their Support. The Superiority of the Enemy and the expected Attack, do not seem to have depressed their Spirits. These considerations lead me to think that tho' the appeal may not terminate so happily in our favor as I could wish that yet they will not succeed in their views without considerable loss. Any advantage they may get I trust will cost them dear.

8 o'Clock A.M.

By the Reverend Mr. Maddison75 and a Mr. Johnson two Gentlemen of Virginia who came from Staten Island Yesterday and where they arrived the day before in the Packet with Colonel Guy Johnson, I am informed that nothing material had taken place in England when they left it. That there had been a change in the French Ministry which many people thought foreboded a War.76 That it seemed to be believed by many, that Congress would attempt to buy off the Foreign Troops and that it might be effected without great difficulty. Their Accounts from Staten Island nearly correspond with what we had before. They say every preparation is making for an attack; That the force now upon the Island is about 15,000. That they appear very Impatient for the Arrival of the foreign Troops, but a very small part having got in; whether they would attempt any thing before they came, they are uncertain, but they are sure they will as soon as they arrive, if not before.

They say from what they could collect from the conversation of Officers &ca. they mean to Hem us in by getting above us and cutting off all communication with the Country. That this is their plan, seems to be corroborated and confirmed by the circumstances of some Ships of War going out at different times within a few days past and other Vessels.

It is probable that part are to go round and come up the Sound. Mr. Maddison says Lord Howe's powers were not known when he left England. That General Conway77 moved before his departure, that they might be laid before the Commons and had his motion rejected by large Majority. I have the Honor &c.

To BRIGADIER GENERAL GEORGE CLINTON

Head Quarters, New York, August 8, 1776.

Dear Sir: Yours of the 2nd. Instant is duly received. Inclosed you have a Resolution of the Provincial Convention, which came to hand last evening, by which you will please to regulate your Conduct. I must beg you to inform me, as soon as possible, what Number

your Brigade now consists of, and what Number it will contain, when a fourth part of the Militia are drafted, agreable to Order of Provincial Congress.

By Intelligence received and movements observed of the Enemy, we have the greatest reason to believe, a General Attack will be made

75. Rev. James Madison, who had gone to England in 1775 to be ordained. He was instructor in mathematics and natural philosophy in William and Mary College and after the Revolution became Protestant Episcopal bishop of Virginia.

76. This, probably, was the news of Turgot's dismissal from the Ministry of Finance, which had occurred in May, 1776. He was strongly opposed to a war between France and Great Britain.

77. Gen. Henry Seymour Conway.

in the course of a few days, our Numbers are much short of the Enemy. I hope no time will be lost, in Marching the Reinforcements expected to our Assistance from Different Quarters, with all possible dispatch. I am etc.

To NATHANIEL SHAW, JUNIOR

Head Quarters, New York, August 5, 1776.

Sir: This will be accompanied by four french Gentn. from the Island of Guadaloupe, who arrived from thence at Newburry pt., with a view of engaging in the Continental Service;—they came to this place about 6 Weeks since, and delivered me a letter from Genl. Ward at Boston, which I inclosed to the President of the Congress, intending to forward it by them, that it might serve as some sort of introduction: but it seems that for want of proper Credentials, added to the unsuccessfulness of some of their Countrymen, on that same Account, they declined applying to Congress,—and as it appears they are quite destitute of Money, I am Obliged to pay their Expences here, and to send them to New London, to

enable them to procure a passage Home.—I have therefore addressed them to your care, requesting you will assist in providing them a passage as soon as possible. I suppose, it will not be long before an Oppertunity Offers, as I understand there are Vessels with you bound to the West Indies.

You will please to furnish them with convenient and cheap Lodgings, when they get to N. London, and I will reimburse you what you may be in advance therefor.

You are to observe tho', that I do not mean to be at the

expence of supporting them in your place, more than eight or ten days at farthest. neither do I mean to be at the expence of their passages Home; they must make the best terms for themselves they can, with the Master of the Vessel, as I dont determine to burthen the Continent any more, on their Account or any of their Countrymen. I am etc.

To JESSE ROOT

Head Quarters, New York, August 7, 1776.

Sir: I have the most Authentic intelligence, that General Clinton with his whole Southern Army, 1000 Hessians and a number of Highlanders, have within these few days, joined General Howe. that 11,000 more, foreign Troops, are hourly expected having been left on the banks of Newfound Land a few days ago. An attack is now therefore to be expected, which will probably decide the Fate of America. The Levies from New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut are not compleated within one half of their Establishment and my whole Army much Short of its Compliment.

Under these Circumstances Sir, I must desire you to apply to the Several Committees or other Authority of Connecticut, to hasten down, as fast as possible, the Militia, and I cannot doubt but a sence of Public duty and the imminent Dangers, to which every thing that is

dear to us is exposed, will induce every true friend and Lover of his Country, to exert his utmost Powers for its Salvation and Defence. I am etc.

To THE OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS OF THE PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATORS70

Head Quarters, August 8, 1776.

Gentlemen' I had fully resolved to have paid you a Visit in New Jersey if the movements of the Enemy, and some intelligence indicating an early attack, had not induced me to suspend it.

Allow me therefore, to address you in this Mode, as fellow Citizens and fellow Soldiers engaged in the same Glorious Cause; to represent to you, that the Fate of our Country depends in all human probability, on the Exertion of a few Weeks; That it is of the utmost importance, to keep up a respectable Force for that time, and there can be no doubt that success will Crown our Efforts, if we firmly and resolutely determine, to conquer or to die.

I have placed so much confidence, in the Spirit and Zeal of the Associated Troops of Pennsylvania, that I cannot persuade myself an impatience to return Home, or a less honourable Motive will defeat my well grounded expectation, that they will do their Country essential Service, at this critical time, when the Powers of Despotism are all combined against it, and ready to strike their most decisive Stroke. If I could allow myself to doubt your Spirit and Perseverance, I should represent the ruinous Consequences of your leaving file Service, by setting before you, the discouragement it would give the Army, the confusion and shame of our Friends, and the still more galling triumph of our Enemies. But as I have no such doubts, I shall only thank you for the Spirit and Ardor you have shewn, in so readily marching to meet the Enemy, and am most confident you will crown it by a Glorious Perseverance. The Honor and safety of our bleeding Country, and every other motive that can influence the brave and heroic Patriot, call loudly upon us, to acquit ourselves with Spirit.

70. The Pennsylvania Associators, as they were called, were the same as militia and were stationed at this date near Elizabethtown, N.J.

In short, we must now determine to be enslaved or free. If we make Freedom our choice, we must obtain it, by the Blessing of Heaven on our United and Vigorous Efforts.

I salute you Gentlemen most Affectionately, and beg leave to remind you, that Liberty, Honor, and Safety are all at stake, and I trust Providence will smile upon our Efforts, and establish us once more, the Inhabitants of a free and happy Country. I am, etc.

To TIMOTHY EDWARDS

Head Quarters, New York, August 10, 1776.

Sir: This will be delivered you by Saml. and John two of our friends of the Stockbridge Indians, who have been here and expressed the desire of their People, to become part of the Army of the United States. Having wrote you fully on the 7th. Inst. and transmitted a Copy of the Resolution of Congress upon this Subject, which I presume will have reached you before this comes to hand, I have referred them to you for Information, in the Instance of their Application, and have only to request the favor of your early attention to what I then recommended to your care and direction. I am &c.

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

New York, August 11, 1776.

Sir: Necessity obliges me to trouble your honor with some more suspected persons, whose Characters are such, as to make it unsafe for them to remain at their usual places of abode on Long Island; and there is no retreat in this Province, where they may not do some Mischief, or be less secure than our safety requires. As they are apprehended merely on Suspicion, arising from a General line of Conduct, unfriendly to the American

Cause, I have given them reason to suspect from you, every Indulgence which your good judgment will admit you to allow them, consistent with the public Safety; there are few of them who will not defray their own Expences; and those few, their Companions of better Circumstances will assist, if Convenience will admit their being together in the same Place, which will be a Saving to the Public. If there are any quite destitute, I presume they must be put on the footing with other Prisoners in like Circumstances; They express a very Earnest desire to be permitted to choose their own Lodgings and accomodations, to which I see no objection. but as I have referred them intirely to you, I do not choose to enter into any Engagement on this or any other point; only adding, generally, that I could wish they might have every accomodation and Indulgence, having a Respect to their rank and Education, which may be deemed Consistent with Safety; And they are given to understand, that your humanity and Politeness will most effectually prevent their being liable to any unnecessary Hardships. I am etc.

P.S. I am just informed that Judge Jones89 has obtained some Letters of Recommendation to Connecticut, from which he expects to be permitted to stay at New Haven, unless very particular Circumstances should require it. I cannot but think you will agree with me, that these Prisoners should be removed from Sea Port and Post Towns, as the intention of removal from hence is not fully answered, while they have opportunities of carrying on Correspondence.

To THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

New York, August 11, 1776.

Gentn.: In Answer to your favor of the 9th., with which I have been honored; I beg leave to inform you, that I neither wish or expect any thing more, than that the Levies raised by you, will be in Continental Pay, from the time they were called into Service. That Troops employed in a General Cause, should be supported at the General Expense, is so evidently just, that I cannot see any objection to it.

It is true, when the proceedings of your Honble. Body for raising these Levies, were first Communicated to me, and it was mentioned by the Committee who brought them, that it was expected they would be paid by the States; I did not think myself Authorised to take into Service so large a Number of Men,

89. Judge Thomas Jones, of the New York Supreme Court. He had been arrested in June, 1776, and paroled; again arrested in August, he was sent to Connecticut and again released on parole. He was arrested again in 1779. His case was one of unnecessary aggravation and was more of a persecution than a patriotic necessity, Judge Jones married Anne de Lancey and owned valuable real estate in New York City. He finally went to England. His history of New York during the Revolution is a work of merit.

and therefore could not say the States would pay them. But the Situation of our affairs being much changed and requiring their Service, I cannot but consider them as much Intitled to Continental Pay as any Troops in this Army. In this light I am persuaded Congress will View them, It is so obvious and so equitable, that no application from me can be necessary. The Bounty I imagine, as you yourselves do, will be the expence of the State, for which Indemnification will not be made by the Public. My Letter of the 8th was not meant to Comprehend this Subject; It was particularly design'd to explain my Ideas of the authority from whence Genl. Clinton's powers were derived.

I have requested Mr. Trumbull, to take the directions of the Commissaries and to see that the Levies are properly supplied with Provisions. I am extremely Concerned that the Quotas of Men to be furnished by the Neighbouring States, have proved so deficient. The busy Season and Harvest, to which it has been ascribed, being now over in a great degree; I flatter myself from the zeal they have heretofore Manifested, they will afford every possible Assistance, they are well apprized of the Importance of this State, in the present Contest and the Necessity of maintaining it against the attempts of the Enemy.

In respect to the Militia of Albany County, as you are pleased in your proceedings of the 10th. Inst., to submit the propriety of Calling them

out, to my determination; I wou'd advise, that they should not, unless the Necessity for bringing them here should be extremely great; They otherwise should remain in their County, to afford succour to the Frontier Parts of the Government, If it should be Necessary. I have Inclosed a Copy of Lt. McMichael's report transmitted me by Genl Schuyler, from whence it will appear, If the Intelligence contained in it be true, that their aid may be required there.

I have desired Genl. Greene, on the Application of the Committee sent to Kings County, to afford them every Assistance he conveniently can, for executing the business they are upon.90

Before I conclude, I would observe, the Letter of the 9th. which I have acknowledged to have received, is without any Signature; I presume it has been omitted thro' the hurry of Business. I have the Honor to be with great respect.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, August 12, 1776.

Sir: I have been duly honored with your favours of the 8th and 10th Instant, with their several inclosures. I shall pay attention to the Resolution respecting Lieut. Josiah91 and attempt to relieve him from his rigorous Usage. Your Letters to such of the Gentlemen as were here have been delivered, the rest will be sent by the first Opportunity.

Since my last of the 8 and 9th. the Enemy have made no movements of consequence:—

90. A committee of the New York Legislature was ordered to investigate conditions in Kings County, to seize all arms from the disaffected, arrest them, remove or destroy their

grain, and, if necessary, lay waste to the whole country. Greene was to furnish the needed military assistance.

91. Lieut. James Josiah, of the Continental Navy. By resolve of Congress (August 7) Washington was directed to propose the exchange of Josiah and to remonstrate to Lord Howe on the cruelty of his treatment.

They remain nearly in the same state nor have we any further Intelligence of their designs, they have not yet been joined by the remainder of the Fleet with the Hessian Troops.

Col: Smallwood and his Battalion got in on Friday and Col: Miles is also here with two Battalions more of Pennsylvania Riflemen. The Convention of this State have been exerting themselves to call forth a portion of their Militia to an Encampment forming above Kings Bridge, to remain in service for the space of one Month after their arrival there, and also half of those in King's and Queen's Counties to reinforce the Troops on Long Island, till the 1st. of September, unless sooner discharged. General Morris too is to take post with his Brigade on the Sound and Hudsons River for ten days, to annoy the Enemy in case they attempt to land, and others of their Militia are directed to be in readiness in case their aid should be required.92 Upon the whole from the information I have from the Convention, the Militia ordered, are now in motion or will be in a little time and will amount to about three thousand or more.

From Connecticut I am not certain what succours are coming: By one or two Gentlemen who have come from thence I am told some of the Militia were assembling and from the Intelligence they had would march this Week.

By a Letter from Governor Trumbull of the 5th., I am advised that the Troops from that State, destined for the Northern Army, had marched

92. Each militiaman in default of arms was to bring a shovel, spade, pickax, etc. One-fifth of the militia from Albany County were ordered to march immediately to the encampment

north of Kings Bridge; and whenever the whole of the militia of any county should march, they were ordered, by the New York Legislature, to bring with them all the disarmed and disaffected male inhabitants, from 16 to 55 years of age, who should serve as fatiguemen to the respective regiments.

for Skeenesborough. General Ward too, by a letter of the 4th. informs me, that the two Regiments would march from Boston last Week having been cleansed and generally recovered from the small Pox. I have also countermanded my orders to Col: Elmore and directed him to join the Northern Army having heard after my Orders to Connecticut for his marching hither, that he and most of his Regiment were at Albany or within its Vicinity. General Ward mentions that the Council of Massachusetts State will have in, from two to three Thousand of their Militia to defend their Lines and different posts in lieu of the Regiments ordered from thence, agreeable to the Resolution of Congress.

The inclosed Copy of a Resolve of the Convention, of the State passed the 10th. instant, will discover the apprehension they are under of the defection of the Inhabitants of Kings County from the Common Cause, and of the Measures they have taken there upon. I have directed General Greene to give the Committee such Assistance, as he can and they may require, in the Execution of their Commission. tho' at the same time I wish the Information the Convention have received upon the Subject may prove groundless.

I would beg leave to mention to Congress, that in a Letter I received from General Lee, he mentions the valuable consequences that would result from a Number of Cavalry being employed in the Southern Department;

without them, to use his own expressions, he can answer for nothing; with one thousand he would ensure the safety of those States. I should have done myself the honor of submiting this matter to Congress before at his particular request, had it not escaped my mind. From his acquaintance with that Country, and the Nature of the Grounds, I doubt not he has weighed the matter well, and presume he has fully represented the advantages

that would arise from the Establishment of such a Corps. All I mean is, in compliance with his requisition, to mention the matter, that such considerations may be had upon it, If not already determined,93 that it may be deserving of.

I have transmitted a General Return, whereby Congress will perceive the whole of our Strength, except the two Battalions under Col: Miles, which coming since it was made out are not included.

I have inclosed a Letter just come to hand from Martinique. Congress will please to consider of the purport, favouring me with their Answer and a Return of the Letter.

This Moment (10. O Clock) report is made by General Greene, that a Man of War came in Yesterday, and that Sixty Sail of Ships are now standing in; no doubt they are a further part of the Hessian Troops. I have the Honor to be etc.94

93. Congress had already ordered (August 8) that General Lee be called from the South. Hancock's letter to Washington notifying him of Lee's recall, dated August 8, 1776, is in the *Washington Papers*.

94. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To COLONEL THOMAS SEYMOUR AND OTHER FIELD OFFICERS OF THE CONNECTICUT LIGHT HORSE

New York, July 16, 1776.

Gentn.: In Answer to yours of this Date, I can only repeat to you what I said last Night, and that is, that if your Men think themselves exempt from the common Duties of a Soldier, will not mount Guard, do Garrison Duty, or the Service seperate from their Horse, they can be no longer of Use here, where Horse cannot be brought to Action, and I do not care how soon they are dismissed. I am, etc.

To COLONEL JAMES CLINTON

Head Quarters, New York, July 17, 1776.

Sir: Your Favour of the 13th. Inst. was duly received. The Steps you have taken appear to me extremely proper; and that there may be no Discouragement in the Purchase of Arms, of which we stand in great Need, I have by the Bearer sent you the £300 you request. You will please to keep a particular Account of the Disbursement, in Order that it may be brought into it's proper Place of Settlement, at a future Day.

Before this reaches you, two Officers of the Artillery, whom I dispatched last Sunday, will have arrived to supply the Place of those so unhappily disabled. I trust these Accidents will form a Lesson of Prudence and Calmness at such Times, and particularly excite Care and Caution. It is a melancholy Consideration that in these Cases we suffer more from our own Artillery than the Enemy.

As the Enemy weighed Anchor Yesterday, with a seeming Intention to pass up the River, I trust every

Thing is in the best Readiness and Preparation to receive them.

The Rafts, if properly constructed and executed with Spirit and Intrepidity, are most dangerous and alarming Enemies to Shipping. Unacquainted with the River, the Situation of the Ships, and many other Circumstances necessary to form a Judgement of the Probability of success, I can only say, that I agree in opinion with your Brother, that Expenses ought not to be regarded, if the Prospect of Success is any Way encouraging. You must, with them on whose Opinion you can depend, form the best Judgement and act accordingly. I am, etc.

To THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

Head Quarters, New York, July 17, 1776.

Gentn.: Your Letter of the 15th Inst. covering the resolution of the same date58 was duly received; which I beg leave to say was Noble and does honor to your respectable Body; It likewise adds further proof of your determination, to afford me all possible Assistance, in discharging the Important Duties of my Office. It is impossible to say *what may be* Necessary, but I shall conduct as the exigencies of the case may require, and doubt not your cheerful Aid and Assistance whenever called for. It has been out of my power, to procure more Whale Boats than are absolutely Necessary for the Night Guards, I doubt not you will be able to procure the Number you want from the Western Shore of the Sound, which may be easily transported by land or by the Way of Kingsbridge to the North River. I have the Honor etc.59

58. Sparks quotes the resolve, which was to the effect that if the Commander in Chief thought it necessary to evacuate the city of New York the legislature would cheerfully cooperate with him in every necessary measure.

59. On July 18 instructions were issued by Washington, through Lord Stirling, for governing the ferries in the East and North (or Hudson) Rivers. Malcom McEwen and Daniel Green were to superintend the East River Ferry to Long Island and the one at Peck's Slip. McEwen was a lieutenant in Col. John Lasher's New York Militia, and he was to receive a dollar a day for this ferry duty “after deducting his pay”; Green, having no military employment, received a dollar a day. Capt. John Johnson, of the First New York Regiment, and Lieut. Abraham Mesier, of Lasher's regiment, were to superintend the North River Ferry between Powles Hook and Hooghbook. They were to receive half a dollar in addition to their regimental pay.

To MAJOR GENERAL ARTEMAS WARD

Head Quarters, New York, July 19, 1776.

Dear Sir: In my Letter of the 7th. Inst. I mentioned the Propriety of forwarding a Quantity of Powder and lodging it between this and Boston. I am now more fully convinced of the Necessity of such a Measure, and would wish you to forward with all convenient Speed, five hundred Barrels, to be stored at Norwich in Connecticut, till further Orders.

In a Postscript to my Letter of the 9th. Inst. I was of Opinion, it would be much easier for the Troops bound from Boston to the Northward, to proceed this Way for the Benefit of Water Carriage. This being intirely cut off by the Ships up Hudson's River, you will speed their

March by the nighest and most convenient Rout.

The several Articles wrote for in my Letter of Yesterday,66 you will please to forward to Norwich, with Orders for them to be sent on by Water, provided the Enemy's Ships should not stop the Communication, in which Case Land-Carriage must be procured. I am, etc.

P.S. In speaking of the Troops marching to the Northward, I have Reference to the three Regiments bound to Ticonderoga; The other two, I hope, will be on their Way to this Place before this reaches you.

P.S. Since writing the above, your Letter of the 15th. Inst. came to Hand. If the three Regiments you mention have marched they may proceed to this City. If not, one of them to march for Ticonderoga; the two remaining (sick) to follow to the last mention'd Place by Divisions, as fast as a Field Officer's Proportion is well enough; as they will be much the properest (having had the small Pox) for that Department. Yours&c.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, July 19, 1776.

Sir: I have been duly honoured with your favours of the 16th. and 17th. with the several Resolves they contained, to the Execution of which, so far as shall be in my power, I will pay proper attention.

In my Letter of the 17th. inst. I transmitted you a Copy of one from General Schuyler and of its several Inclosures. I confess the determination of the Council of General Officers on the 7th. to retreat from Crown point, surprized me much, and the more I considered it, the more striking does the Impropriety appear. The reasons assigned against it by the Field Officers in their remonstrance, coincide greatly with my own Ideas, and those of the other General Officers I have had an Opportunity of consulting with, and seems to be of considerable Weight, I may add conclusive.

I am not so fully acquainted with the Geography of that Country, and the Situation of the different Posts, as to pronounce a peremptory Judgment upon the Matter; but if my Ideas are right, the possessing of Crown Point, is essential to giving us the Superiority and Mastery upon the

66. The letter of July 18 was written and signed by Samuel Blatchley Webb. “His Excellency General Washington having occasion to ride out early this morning, has dictated and Ordered me to acknowledge and answer your two Letters of the 11th Inst.” The Continental agents for prizes had disposed of the cargoes of prizes without Ward's orders, The list of articles wanted are entered, with Webb's letter, in the Washington “Letter Books,” and calls for all the muskets, bayonets, canteens, clothing, etc., taken in the ships *George, Anne*, and *Lord Howe*, and the brig *Annabella*.

Lake. That the Enemy will possess it, as soon as abandoned by us, there can be no doubt; and if they do, what ever Gallies or force we keep on the Lake, will be unquestionably in their rear. How they are to be supported there, or what succour can be drawn from them then, is beyond my comprehension. Perhaps it is only meant, that they shall be employed, on the communication between that and Ticonderaga; It this is the case, I fear the views

of Congress will not be Answered, nor the salutory effects be derived from them that were intended. I have mentioned my surprize to General Schuyler, and would by the Advice of the Generals here have directed, that that post should be maintained, had it not been for two causes. An apprehension that the Works have been destroyed, and that if the Army should be ordered from Ticonderoga or the post opposite to it, where I presume they are, to repossess it, they would have neither one place or another secure and in a defensible State. The other, lest it might increase the Jealousy and diversity in Opinions which seems already too prevalent in that Army, and establish a precedent, for the Inferior Officer s to set up their Judgments when ever they would, in opposition to those of their Superiors. A matter of great delicacy, and that might lead to fatal consequences If countenanced; tho' in the present Instance I could wish their reasoning had prevailed. If the Army has not removed, what I have said to General Schuyler may perhaps bring on a reconsideration of the matter, and it may not be too late to take measures for maintaining that Post, but of this I have no hope.

In consequence of the Resolve

of Congress for three of the Eastern Regiments to reinforce the Northern Army, I wrote General Ward, and by advice of my Genl. Officers, directed them to March to Norwich and there to embark for Albany conceiving that two valuable purposes might result there from. First, that they would sooner join the Army by pursuing this route and be saved from the distress and fatigue that must attend every long March, thro' the Country at this hot and uncomfortable season; and secondly, that they might give succour here in case the Enemy should make an Attack about the time of their passing: But the Enemy having now with their Ships of War and Tenders cut of the Water Communication from hence to Albany, I have wrote this day and directed them to proceed by Land across the Country. If Congress disapprove the route or wish to give any orders about them, you will please to certify me thereof, that I may take measures accordingly.69

Inclosed I have the honor to transmit you, Copies of a Letter and sundry Resolutions which I received Yesterday from the Convention of this State.70 By them you will perceive they have been acting upon matters of great importance, and are exerting themselves in the most vigorous manner, to defeat the wicked designs of the Enemy and such disaffected Persons as may incline to Assist and facilitate their views. In compliance with their request and on Account of the scarcity of Money for carrying their Salutary views into execution, I have agreed to lend them out of the Small Stock now in hand, (not more than 60,000 Dollars) twenty thousand Dollars, in part of what they want, which

69. “Resolved, That General Washington be informed that Congress have such an entire confidence in his judgment, that they will give him no particular directions about the disposition of the troops, but desire that he will dispose of those at New York, the flying camp, and Ticonderoga, as to him shall seem most conducive to the public good.”— *Journals of the Continental Congress*, July 23, 1776.

70. Resolutions for calling out one-fourth part of the militia of the counties of Westchester, Dutchess, Ulster, and Orange, for the defense of the State; to be engaged tall the last day of December, and each man to receive a bounty of $20 and Continental pay and subsistence. They were to be stationed in the Highlands, and in the vicinity below, to guard the defiles and prevent incursions of the enemy from Hudson's River. General Washington was requested to appoint a commander of these levies. He appointed Gen. George Clinton.— *Sparks*.

they promise speedily to replace.

Had there been Money sufficient for paying the whole of our Troops and not more, I could not have done it. but as it was otherwise, and by no means proper to pay a part and not the whole, I could not foresee any Inconveniences that would attend the Loan, on the Contrary, that It might contribute in some degree to forward their Schemes. I hope my conduct in this Instance, will not be disapproved.

I inclosed Governor Trumbull a Copy of their Letter and their several Resolves to day, by Colonel Broom and Mr. Dewer,71 two Members of the Convention, who are going to wait on him, but did not think myself at Liberty to urge or request his Interest in forming the Camp of 6,000 Men; as the Levies directed by Congress to be furnished the 3d of June, for the defence of this place by that Government, are but a little more than one third come in. At the same time the proposition I think a good one, if it could be carried into execution. In case the Enemy should attempt to effect a landing above Kings Bridge and to cut of the communication beween this City and the Country; An Army to hang on their Rear, would distress them exceedingly. I have the Honor &ca.

P.S. After I had closed my Letter I received one from General Ward, a Copy of which is herewith transmitted.72 I have wrote him to forward the Two Regiments now at Boston by the most direct road to Ticonderoga, as soon as they are well, with the utmost Expedition; and consider their having had the small Pox as a fortunate circumstance. when the three arrive which have marched for Norwich, I shall immediately send one of 'em on; if Congress judges it expedient, of which you will please to inform me.73

71. John Broome and William Duer.

72. Gen. Artemas Ward's letter, dated July 15, 1776, is in the *Washington Papers*.

73. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison, who noted that: “The Inclosed paper should have been sent before but was Omitted thro hurry,” which refers to a copy of a letter of July 16 from the New York Legislature, to Washington.

***To MAJOR GENERAL HORATIO GATES**

New York, July 19, 1776.

Dear Sir: I expected 'ere this to have heard from you; as I have not I will open the corrispondance by expressing my exceeding great concern on acct. of the determination

of your board of General Officers, to retreat from Crown Point to Ticonderago; assigning (contrary to the opinion of all your Field Officers) for reason, that the former place is not tenable with your present force, or the Force expected.

My concern arises from information, and a firm belief, that your relinquishing Crown point is, in its consequences, a relinquishment of the Lakes, and all the advantages to be derived therefrom; for it does not admit of a doubt, but that the Enemy will possess themselves, if possible of that pass (wch. is a key to all these Colonies) the moment you leave it, and thereby confine your Vessels to the narrow part of the Lake in front of that Post, or, by having them in the Rear of it cut off all kind of Supplies from, and intercourse between your Camp and them; securing by this means a free and uninterrupted passage into the three New England Governments for Invasion thereof. Nothing but a belief that you have actually removed the Army from the point to Ticonderoga, and demolishd the Works at the former; and the fear of creating dissensions, and encouraging a Spirit of remonstrating against the conduct of Superior Officers by inferiors, have prevented me, by Advice of the Genl. officers here, from directing the Post at Crown point to be held till Congress should decide upon the propriety of its Evacuation. As the case stands, I can give no Order in the matter, least between two opinions; and places, neither

are put into such a posture of defence, as to resist an advancing Enemy. I must however express my sorrow at the Resolution of your Council, and wish, that it had never happend, as every body who speaks of it also does; and that the measure could yet be changed with Propriety.67

We have the Enemy full in view of us, but their operations are to be suspended 'till the Reinforcement hourly expected, arrives, when I suppose there will soon be pretty warm Work. Lord Howe is arrived. He and the Genl. his Brother68 are appointed Commissioners to dispense pardons to Repenting Sinners. My Compliments to the Gentlemen with you of my Acquaintance. I am, &c.

[N.Y.H.S.]

67. In his reply to this letter (July 29) Gates, after stating the reasons for evacuating Crown Point, added: “It would be to the last degree improper to order those Troops to Crown Point, or even hither, untill obliged by the most pressing emergency; as that would only be heaping one hospital upon another. Those troops, when they arrive, are all ordered to halt at Skeensborough. Every thing about this army is infected with the pestilence; the cloathes, the blankets, the air, and the ground they walk upon. To put this evil from us, a general hospital is established at Fort George, where there are now between two and three thousand sick, and where every infected person is immediately sent. But this care and caution have not effectually destroyed the disease here; it is notwithstanding continually breaking out.” In the same letter Gates took rather high-handed umbrage at the expression of opinion of the general officers in Washington's army. “I must now take the Liberty,” he wrote, “to Animadvert a little upon the unprecedented behaviour of the Members of Your Council to their Compeers in this Department. They, Sir, having every Ample Supply at Hand, make no allowance for the Misfortunes, and wants, of this Army, nor for the Delay and Difficulty that Attends the procuring every thing Necessary here. Had we a Healthy Army, Four Times the Number of the Enemy; Our Magazines full, Our Artillery Compleat, Stores of every kind in profuse Abundance, with Vast and populous Towns and Country close at Hand, to Supply Our Wants, Your Excellency would hear no Complaints from this Army; And the Members of your Council, our Brethren and Compeers, would have as little reason then, as they have now, to Censure the Conduct of those, who are in Nothing inferior to themselves.” Gates's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

68. Richard, Earl Howe, and William, Viscount Howe.

To BRIGADIER GENERAL GEORGE CLINTON

Head Quarters, New York, July 26, 1776.

Dear Sir: Yours of the 23rd. Inst. is duly received, and am pleased with the timely Notice of your Situation, Strength, Movements &c. &c. and think Time is not to be lost, or Expence regarded, in getting yourselves in the best Posture of Defence, not knowing how soon the Enemy may attempt to pass you.

The Fire Rafts you mention, are not of the best Construction; but probably are the best that can be procured with the necessary Dispatch.

Cables and Anchors, I should suppose, might easily be procured from the Vessels which used to be plying up and down the River, and are now lying idle; Salt Petre from the Manufacturers in the Country, as neither are to be had in this Place.

The Necessity of the Case, will fully justify your taking the former wherever to be found, and the Safety of the People, I should imagine, would induce them to assist you to the latter, all in their Power.

I have sent up Lieutt. Machine,9 to lay out and oversee, such Works as shall be thought necessary by the Officers there, and from your Representation of the Hill which overlooks the

9. Simms's *History of Schoharie County* (N.Y.) gives some additional biographical information as to Thomas Machin: That he was an English engineer who had been employed by Brindley in constructing the canal of the Duke of Bridgewater, and had come to America in 1772 to examine a copper mine in New Jersey. He joined the Colonists; was wounded at Bunker Hill; and, later, commissioned in Knox's regiment of artillery; laid out the fortifications around Boston after the British evacuation; and served with Sullivan on his Indian expedition. He was also present at the Siege of Yorktown.

Fort, I think it ought to be taken Possession of immediately. You, who are on the Spot, must be a better Judge than I possibly can. I must leave it with you to erect such Works as you with Colonel Clinton, and the Engineer, may think necessary.

A proper Abstract or Pay Roll should be made out, of the Wages due the Artificers, examined and certified by you or your Brother, when it may be sent here and the Money drawn.

Your Method of fixing Fires with advanc'd Guard, if they are vigilant, must answer the Purpose you intend.

Your dismissing all the New England Men to 300, is a Step I approve of.

I hope you may continue to prevent the Enemy from obtaining any Supplies or Intelligence, and committing any Ravage on the distress'd Peasantry, on and about the Shores. While you are able to keep them in this Situation below the Forts, they can do little Damage.

By every Conveyance I shall like to hear of your Situation, and the Enemy's Manœuvres. I am, etc.

P S. Since the above, the Qr. Mr. General informs me, you may be supplied with Turpentine here; and thinks he can get Salt Petre enough for the present Emergency.

To MAJOR GENERAL ARTEMAS WARD

Head Quarters, New York, July 29, 1776.

Dear Sir: Yours of the 22nd. Inst. I received per Post and note the Contents. The Company of Artificers you mention, are much wanted, and I would have you order them on with all convenient Dispatch.

It was necessary, the Troops on their March for Ticonderoga, should be furnished with Powder and Ball.

I have wrote several Times, about the remaining Part of the Arms, which you have not noticed

in your Letters. There is yet a Deficiency in the Carbines, which are not all arrived. These with the other Arms taken in different Vessels, I wish you to send on.

I am exceedingly anxious to know if you have forwarded the Powder I mentioned, what Quantity and where stored. I must beg your Answer to these Particulars in your next.

The Pork taken, from Ireland, the Commissary General requests may all be secured for the Use of the Army, and desires you will order the Dept. Commissary, Mr. Miller22 to secure it in Store, 'till he receives his Orders respecting it.

Colonels Hutchinson's and Sergeant's Regiments have arrived, with one Man who has the small Pox; but hope to be able to prevent the spreading of that fatal Disorder.

The Enemy's Fleet are daily arriving; It appears they must have been scattered on their Passage, as they come in sometimes single; at others, three four and so on. I hope our Cruisers may pick up some of them. I am, etc.

P.S. We are in distressing Want of Artillery Men. If you can make any tolerable Shift, I must urge your sending on Captn. Burbeck with his Company as soon as possible.

To JOHN BRADFORD

Head Quarters, New York, August 5, 1776.

Sir: Yours of the 29th. Ulto. is duly Received; for the future I must desire all Warlike Stores and Necessaries for an Army, taken by the Armed Vessels in public Service, may be

safely Stored, under care of the Different Agents, 'till they receive Orders from proper Authority. you will please to enjoin it upon the different Commanders of the Continental Cruisers, to be particularly careful, no Embezelment is made by their Crew or others. I am &c.

22. Charles Miller.

To THE MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATURE

Head Quarters, August 2, 1776.

Sir: Your Letter of the 16th Ulto., in behalf of the Council of Massachusetts Bay, is duly Received; the Contents have been attended to; and I have the pleasure to inform you, there is a prospect of an early exchange of the Prisoners taken in the Yankee Hero Privateer. As Mr. Tracy negociated this Matter, and had an Inteview with Lord Howe on board the Eagle, Man of War, I must refer you to him for particulars.

Congress authorised Me to comply with General Howe's request of giving Governor Skene for Mr. Lovell, I have wrote informing Genl. Howe thereof, and expect soon to have Mr. Lovell sent to some part of the Continent.

Assure the Members of your Honorable Body, it gives me particular pleasure, that I had it in my power to relieve one of their Citizens from a long and tedious Imprisonment, and shall esteem myself happy in complying with any request they may make consistent with the Important Duties of my Office. I have the Honor to be etc.

Augst. 5th, P.S. on the 11th. Ulto. I wrote your Honble. Body, respecting the St. Johns, Nova Scotia and Penobscot Indians, since which I have heard nothing from them. It is a Matter of the greatest consequence, must therefore beg an Answer, acquainting me what steps they have taken, by the first post.

Since the above I have a Letter from General Howe, acquainting me he has sent for Mr. Lovell for the proposed exchange.

To GOVERNOR NICHOLAS COOKE

New York, August 5, 1776.

Sir: I have been duly honored with your two favors of the 20th. and 29th. Ulto. and wish your acceptance of my thanks for your Kind and ready Compliance, with my requisition for the Gallies, and the Matters of Intelligence transmitted in the last. The Account given Capt. Bucklin, on whose success I congratulate you, by Capt. Bell of the Portuguese seizing our Vessels, I fear is too true. Their dependance on the British Crown for protection and Aid, against their Spanish Neighbours, obliges them to comply with everything required of them. Capt. Bucklin's information of the Fleet he saw, I dare say is not to be doubled. It is probable they arrived yesterday; for twenty five Ships then came into the Hook. These make from 90 to 100. that have come in since Thursday Sen-night.

Our Gallies, on Saturday Evening, had a Smart engagement with the Ships up the River. The Inclosed Copy of a Letter from Colo. Tupper, under whose Genl Command they were, will give you the particulars. Tho' they did not take the Ships, nor is it certain what Damage they Sustained; I have the pleasure to inform you, Our officers and Men behaved with

the greatest spirit and resolution; the injury their little Fleet sustained Testifies their Courage. It is said, the Ships were several times hulled by our Shot, they still remain up the River, The Gallies must be a little repaired before anything further can be attempted, provided it should be thought advisable.

By a Letter from Colo. Hancock of the 31st. Ulto., I am Authorised to say, that a Continental Ship had arrived at Chester, not far below Philadelphia, with 366 pigs Lead, 54 Boxes of Musquet Ball, 1000 Stand of Arms with Bayonets, 1 Barrel Flints and 193 whole Barrels of Gun Powder. He also adds, that a Privateer had sent in a West India

Man, having on Board, besides produce, 1100 Johans. and 700 Guineas. I wish the Ship Capt Bucklin saw may get in safe. I have the Honor to be &c.

To THE NEW JERSEY LEGISLATURE

New York, August 7, 1776.

Sir: I have received repeated information, that a number of Persons known to be inimical to the cause of the American States, or of a Suspicious Character, have lately removed from this and other places into the County of Monmouth in New Jersey, with intent no doubt from its situation; of Communicating with and Aiding our Enemies. All those of Similar Characters on Long Island and the other Counties adjacent to this place, will be secured by to morrow Morning, and I must urge the necessity of your Congress adopting the same Measure, in all those Parts of your

Province, which are most contigious to the Enemy. There are some also, of very dangerous Characters, who I am informed are lurking in the Neighbourhood of Hackinsack and what they call the English Neighbourhood, particularly Benjamin Hugget and Frederick Rhinelander ; this Measure is now become the more necessary, as from the Intelligence I have this day Received, there is the greatest reason to believe, that the Enemy intend to begin their Operations in a very few days, and that with a very powerful force; for not only a Considerable part of the Foreign Troops, the British Guards and an additional Number of Scotch Troops are lately arrived at Staten Island; but the Army from the Southward under Genl. Clinton also joined them last Thursday; and the remainder of the foreign Troops have been spoke with on the Coast and are momently expected; this must also urge the absolute necessity, of your Congress Instantly adopting some effectual measures for compleating the Troops Voted, and for affording every other reinforcement to this Place, that is in their Power; by detaching a Considerable Body of the Militia, or in such other manner, as will be more effectual. Of the 3300. voted by your State, we have but 1450, and in the same proportion from the other Colonies, so that you will easily conceive,

what an Alarming Situation we are in. As the Harvest is now over and the Militia engaged most chearfully to return if Necessary, I persuade myself they will readily turn out, upon a Representation being made to them

of the Necessity; what from a Deficiency of the old Regiments, Sickness, and the failure of New Levies, we are in danger of being outnumbered by the Enemy, at least doubly, if not more. The Consequences may be fatal, unless prevented by the Spirit of the Country. I have dispatched Expresses to Connecticut to call in their Militia immediately, with their Arms, Blankets and what Ammunition they have; as the Supply here, to suit their Guns is attended with much difficulty and delay. I must beg your attention to the same Circumstance, as far as the Situation of things will admit, but so as not hinder from Marching, those who cannot come so provided. I am &c.

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

Head Quarters, August 7, 1776.

Sir: By two deserters this day, we have the following Intelligence, Vizt., that General Clinton and Lord Cornwallis with the whole Southern Army, have arrived and landed on Staten Island from South Carolina, in number about 3. or 4,000; that the Fleet which came in a few days since, are the Hessians and Scotch Highlanders, part of 12,000 who were left off Newfound Land; in the whole making about 30,000 Men; and that, it is said by Officers of the Navy and Army, they are to attack N. York, Long Island, &c. in the course of a Week. The uncommon movements of the Fleet this day, together with the above intelligence, convince us, that in all human probability, there can but a very few days pass, before a general Engagement takes place. When I consider the Weakness of our Army by Sickness, the great extent of Ground we have to defend, and the amazing slowness with which the Levies come forward, I think it absolutely necessary, the Neighbouring Militia should be immediately sent in to our assistance; and, agreeable to your Letter of the 6th July, I have ordered the Colonels, with their Regiments, to March, with all Convenient

Speed, to this Place. The disgrace of the British Arms to the Southward, and the Season being far advanced, will make them exert every nerve against us in this Quarter. To trust altogether in the justice of our cause, without our own utmost exertions, would be tempting Providence; and, that you may judge of our Situation, I give you the present state of our Army:

Copy from the General Return of the Army of the United States of America, now on New York, Governor's, and Long Islands, and at Powles Hook, Augst. 3d., 1776 Vizt.

Present, fit for duty, 10,514; Sick, present, 3,039; Sick, absent, 629, on Command 2,946, on furlow 97: Total 17,225. By this, you will see, we are to oppose an Army of 30,000 experienced Veterans, with about one third the Number of Raw Troops, and these scattered, some 15 Miles apart. This will be handed you by Mr. Root, to him, I must refer you for further particulars; and have the pleasure to be etc.

To COLONEL LEWIS DUBOIS

Head Quarters, New York, August 9, 1776.

Sir: Your Letter of the 5th. by your Brother is received; by him I forward you 800 Dollars, would have you order your Regiment to March for this place,82 as fast as any Officer's party are enlisted. you will make a return to me immediately, if the Number of men already embodied, and Continue to make your returns, by which you may call for money as wanted. I conceive that taking Men from the 4 or 5 Month's Militia, will not answer our present Necessity, as it will not add to the Number in Service; but of the Militia, which is only ordered in for a few days or Weeks, you have an undoubted right, to take such as have a mind to inlist with you. Previous to your men arriving in this City, you will order a field Officer here, to take Charge of them, as they come in. I am, etc.

To COLONEL ANN HAWKES HAY83

Head Quarters, New York, August 10, 1776.

Sir: Your favours of the 2nd. and 7th. Instr. are duly received; the Commissary General, to whom I had refered the matter of your Appointment, was to have wrote and desired you to undertake the Business; since which it is determined those Troops under General Clinton, are to march to Kingsbridge, and of Consequence will receive their supplies from the General Store there. It cannot be long, before matters may take a Capital turn this way; the Issue will determine whether a Post from your part of the Country is necessary or otherways. Any movements of the Enemy which you think may be of Consequence, I shall be obliged if you will transmit me. I am etc.

82. Dubois's Fifth New York Regiment was then at Poughkeepsie.

83. Hay, then at Haverstraw, was a colonel of New York Militia. Later he was appointed a deputy commissary general in the Continental Army.

To CAPTAIN RICHARD VARICK

Head Quarters, New York, August 10, 1776.

Sir: Your Letter of the 5th. Instant, with its several enclosures is come safe to hand, and I now enclose you a list from the Colo. of Artillery and Quarter Master General, of what is and will be forwarded from this place, which is all that can be procured. there was some Duck arrived at Providence, out of which I have requested Governor Cooke to supply the Northern Army, provided it's not otherways disposed of. The Water Communication being yet stoped makes it exceeding difficult to transport these Articles to Albany. I am &c.

To THE COMMITTEE OF QUEENS COUNTY, NEW YORK

Head Quarters, New York, August 11, 1776.

Gentn.: The public exigencies, having required my apprehending a number of suspected Persons in your County and sending them into another Colony, for a short time; they have expressed some apprehensions that in their Absence their property maybe exposed to Injury, and their Family's deprived of the Support they would otherwise derive from it. I therefore beg leave to acquaint you, that a Temporary Restraint of their persons, is all that is intended by the present Measure; and that it would give me much pain, if it should be construed to extend to any depredation of property; that Matter resting intirely within the Jurisdiction of the Civil Authority of the Province. Until therefore some Orders are received from them to that Effect, I shall be happy in believing, you will exert your whole Power and Influence, to prevent the Mischief which these Gentlemen seem to apprehend. I am, etc.

To MAJOR GENERAL ARTEMAS WARD

Head Quarters, New York, August 12, 1776.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 4th. Instant, is safe to hand. an answer to the several particulars it contains, will be given soon, time will but allow me, to request your forwarding with all possible dispatch, two 13 Inch Sea Mortars, of the best in Boston, to this place, with their Beds and every thing compleat. I am &c.

To THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

Head Quarters, New York, August 12, 1776.

Gentn.: As the time is certainly near at hand, and may be hourly expected, which is to decide the fate of this City and the Issue of this Campaign; I thought it highly improper, that persons of suspected Characters should remain in places, where their opportunities of doing Mischief were much greater, than in the Enemies Camp. I therefore have Caused a number of them to be apprehended and removed to some distance; there to remain until this Crisis is passed. Having formerly mentioned this Subject to your Honble. Body, I would not again trouble them in a business, which former Connections, Obligations, and

Interests must make very unpleasant, and which, I apprehend, must have been in danger of failing in the execution, unless done with all possible Secrecy and dispatch. I postponed this most disagreeable duty till the last moment; but the Claims of the Army upon me, an application from a number of well affected Inhabitants, concurring with my own Opinion, obliged me to enter upon it while time and Circumstances would admit. I have ordered a very strict attention to be paid to the Necessities of the Gentlemen apprehended and to their comfortable accomodations in every respect, both here and at the Places

of their Destination. I have also wrote to the Committee of Queens County, that this step is not to be construed as making their property liable to any Injury or appropriation, unless they should receive directions from your Honble. Body, to whom I have referred them on this Subject; being resolved in all cases, where the most absolute necessity does not require it, to confine myself wholly to that Line, which shall exclude every Idea of interfering with the Authority of the State.

Some of these Gentlemen have expressed doubts and raised difficulties, from Engagements they lay under to your Honorable Body, or some Committees; they do not appear to me to deserve much attention, as they cannot, with any propriety, be charged with a breach of any Parole under their present Circumstances; but I beg leave to Submit to your Consideration the propriety of removing the pretence. I am, etc.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, August 13, 1776.

Sir: As there is reason to believe, that but little Time will elapse before the Enemy make their Attack, I have thought it advisable to remove all the papers in my hands respecting the Affairs of the States, from this place. I hope the Event will shew the precaution was unnecessary, but yet prudence required that It should be done, lest by any Accident they might fall into their Hands.

They are all contained in a large Box nailed up and committed to the care of Lieutenant Colonel Reed,10 Brother of the Adjutant General, to be delivered to Congress, in whose Custody I would beg leave to deposit them, until our Affairs shall be so circumstanced as to admit of their return.

The Enemy since my Letter of Yesterday have received a further Augmentation of thirty Six Ships to their fleet, making the whole that have arrived since Yesterday Morning ninety Six. I have the Honor &ca.

P. S. I would observe that I have sent off the Box privately that It might raise no disagreable Ideas and have enjoined Colo. Reed to Secrecy.11

To MAJOR GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER

New York, August 13, 1776.

Dear Sir: Your Letter of the 6 Instant I received this Morning by Bennet. The reports made by the emissaries, who have been among the Indian Nations, appear not so promising, as I could wish. However I trust, as so

10. Lieut. Col. James(?) Reed, of the Pennsylvania Militia.

11. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

many have come to the Treaty, their views are Friendly, and tho' they may not consent to take an Active part, that they will not arm against us. The Difficulties attending the Vessels fitting for the Lakes, I am well apprised of, my late Letters will inform you, that I have taken every measure in my power to facilitate the work. Before this comes to hand, the Pay master I expect will have received a supply of money. The Extract of Mr. Varicks Letter shews it was much wanted, I have not failed in any Instance, to communicate your wants of this Article to Congress, when they have been mentioned to me; Urging at the

same time, not only the Expediency but the Necessity of keeping the Military Chests constantly furnished. It will be well for you, always to give them early notice of what you may have Occasion for, that their Remittances may be adequate; In future I presume they will have the fullest Information upon that Subject, having by some late Resolves, enjoined their Commanders in every Department, to transmit them monthly a List of the Warrants they grant. The paymasters to return a Weekly state of their Military Chests, and the Commissaries and Quarter Masters of what they receive. I have not these Regulations by me, but if my Memory serves, they were passed the 2nd. Instant, and have been forwarded to you. I have always laid before Congress Copies of your letters and their Inclosures, when they were of a public nature or contained Intelligence any ways material, except when advised that you had done it yourself. I shall here take Occasion to request, that whenever you write to them and me of the same things, you certify me thereof, to prevent me transmitting useless Information.

In Respect to Colo. Nicholson's Regiment13 and the places

13. Col. John Nicholson's Continental Infantry appears to have been a New York militia regiment taken into the Continental service for a few months in 1776.

where it should be Stationed, you certainly can determine better than I, having more in your power, Intelligence of the Enemy's Movements and Designs. I would observe in answer to that part of your letter, which mentions that a Council of Officers or a Court Martial had been convened and held here to decide upon the Council of those who had sat at Crown point, that your Information is wrong. No Council, no Court of Enquiry, nor Court Martial upon that Subject Sir, was ever convened by my Order or their own accord. when Intelligence was first received here that Crown point was abandoned, It was the cause of a general Alarm and filled the minds of most who heard it with no small degree of anxiety; some Judging from the Common accepted Opinion and others from their Knowledge and Acquaintance with it and the Country round about it, that it was of the last Importance to us to possess it, to give us, in Conjunction with the Vessels we were about to build,

the Superiority of the Lake, and to prevent the Enemy from penetrating into this and the Eastern States. Among others, some of the General Officers, from their own Knowledge and the rest from the Ideas they had formed, as the Matter was Occasionally mentioned, delivered their Sentiments to this Effect, as did every person I heard speake of it, at the time the Account first came. From the universal Chagrin that took place, the Regret that every person expressed upon the Occasion; The Remonstrance of the Officers which you transmitted, and which appeared to contain many weighty Reasons, I felt myself much concerned as every body else did, and wished according to my Information and Opinion at that time, the post had been mentioned. I do not wish to dwell longer upon the Subject, and therefore shall only add that your Letter of the 24th. Ulto. (or at least a Copy of it) was transmitted to Congress, as soon as it was received, nor shall I have any

Objection to sending a Copy of the one before me now, when I have an Opportunity to make it out, if it shall be your Inclination and request. I have no news of any Importance to Communicate, unless that the Enemy are daily becoming stronger. On Monday they received an Augmentation of Ninety eight Ships to their Fleet, with a further part of the foreign Troops it is probable. They seem to be making great preparations and we have reason to expect, they are upon the point of making at Attack. The Letters which accompany this you will be pleased to deliver to Generals Gates, Reed and St. Clair, they came to hand on Sunday, and wishing you and the Army under your Command, Health and the smiles of a kind providence on all your Efforts. I am, etc.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, August 14, 1776.

Sir: Since I had the honor of addressing you on Monday, nothing of Importance has occurred here, except that the Enemy have received an Augmentation to their Fleet of Ninety Six Ships; some Reports make them more.

In a Letter I wrote you Yesterday by Lieutenant Colonel Reed, I advised you of this, but presuming It may not reach you so soon as this will, I have thought proper to mention the Intelligence again.

Inclosed I have the Honor to transmit, a Copy of the Examination of a Deserter, sent me this Morning by General Mercer, to which I beg leave to refer

Congress for the latest Accounts I have from the Enemy. Whether the Intelligence he has given is literally true I cannot determine, but as to the Attack we daily expect it.

Your favor of the 10th. with the Inclosures was duly received, and I have instructed the several Officers who were promoted, to Act in their Stations as you requested, tho their Commissions were not sent.

As we are in extreme want of Tents and Covering for this Army; A great part of them at outposts having nothing to shelter them; nor Houses to go in, I submit it to Congress, whether it may not be prudent to remand those that were sent to Boston lately where there are no Troops at present, and if there were, the necessity for them would not be great as the Town and Barracks at several of the posts would be sufficient to receive them.

The inclosed Letter from Lieutenant Colonel Henshaw14 will discover to Congress his views and wishes, of which they will consider and determine on, in whatever way they think right and conducive to the Public good; meaning only to lay his Letter before them.

I take the Liberty of mentioning that Col. Varnum of Rhode Island has been with me this Morning, to resign his Commission, conceiving himself greatly injured in not having been noticed in the late Arrangement and promotion of General Officers. I remonstrated against the Impropriety of the measure at this Time, and he has consented to stay 'till affairs wear a different aspect than what they do at present.

11. O'Clock. By a report just come to hand from General Greene, Twenty Ships more are coming in. I am &ca.15

14. Lieut. Col. William Henshaw, of the Twelfth Continental Infantry.

15. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES CLINTON

Head Quarters, August 14, 1776.

Sir: I have the pleasure of forwarding you by this Opportunity, a Letter from Congress inclosing your Commission for a Brigadier in the Continental Army, on which appointment please to accept my hearty Congratulations.

As the post you are now at, is an Object of great Importance, and I am unacquainted with the Officers under you, must request you will remain there, till you hear further from me.17 I am &c.

To MAJOR GENERAL HORATIO GATES

New York, August 14, 1776.

Dear Sir: I yesterday Morning received your Letter of the 29th. Ulto., by Bennet the Express, and am extremely sorry to find, that the Army is still in a Sickly and melancholy State. The precaution taken to halt the Reinforcement at Skenesborough, which are destined for your Succour, is certainly prudent. They should not be exposed or made liable to the Calamities already too prevailing, unless in Cases of extreme Necessity. Doctor Stringer has been here with Doctor Morgan and is now at Philadelphia, I trust he will obtain some necessary Supplies of Medicines, which will enable him under the Smiles of Providence, to relieve your Distresses in some degree. By a Letter from General Ward, two Regiments (Whitcombs and Phinneys) were to march to your Aid Last Week,

They have happily had the small Pox and will not be subject to the fatal Consequences attending that disorder.

I am glad to hear the Vessels for the Lakes are going on with such Industry. Maintaining the Superiority over the Water is certainly of infinite Importance.

17. Clinton was in command at Fort Montgomery, N. Y,, on the Hudson River below West Point.

I trust neither Courage nor Activity will be wanting in those to whom the Business is committed.

If assigned to General Arnold none will doubt of his Exertions. In answer to those parts of your Letter, which so highly resent the Conduct of the General Officers here, I would observe, Sir, that you are under a Mistake, when you suppose a Council of Officers had sat upon those who composed the Board at Crown Point. When Intelligence was first brought, that, that post was evacuated, it spread a general Alarm and occasioned much anxiety to all who heard it, it being almost universally believed, that it was a post of the last Importance, and the only one, to give us, in Conjunction with our Naval Force, a Superiority over the Lake, and for preventing the Enemy's penetrating into this and the Eastern Governments. As this matter was occasionally mentioned, The General Officers, some from their own Knowledge, and others from the Opinion they had formed, expressed themselves to that Effect, as did all I heard speak upon the Subject. Added to this, the Remonstrance of the Officers, transmitted by General Schuyler at the same time the Account was brought, did not contribute a little to Authorize the Opinion which was Generally entertained. They surely seemed to have some reason for their support, tho' it was not meant to give the least Encouragement or Sanction to preceedings of such a Nature. Upon the whole, no event that I have been informed of for a long time, produced a more General Chagrin and Consternation. But yet there was no Council called upon the

Occasion, nor Court of Enquiry, nor Court Martial, as has been Suggested by some. I will not take up more time upon the

Subject, or make it a Matter of further Discussion, not doubting but those who determined that the post ought to be abandoned, conceived it would promote the Interest of the great Cause we are engaged in, the others have differed from them. By the by, I wish your Description perfectly corresponded with the real Circumstances of this Army. You will have heard, before this comes to hand most probably, of the arrival of Clinton and his Army from the Southward. They are now at Staten Island as are the whole, or the greatest part of the Hessian and foreign Troops. Since Monday, Ninety Six Ships came in, which we are informed is the last Division of Lord Howe's Fleet which touched at Hallifax, and by a Deserter, are not to land their Troops. We are in daily Expectation, that they will make their Attack, all their Movements and the advices we have, indicating that they are on the point of it. I am etc.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, August 14, 1776.

Sir: This will be delivered you by Captain Moeballe, a Dutch Gentleman from Surinam, who has come to the Continent with a view of entering into the Service of the States, as you will perceive by the inclosed Letters from Mr. Brown of Providence and General Greene.

What other Letters and Credentials he has, I know not, but at his request have given this Line to Congress, to whom he wishes to be introduced, and where he will make his pretensions known.

I have ordered the Quarter Master Immediately to write to Mr. Brown for the Russia Duck he mentions with directions to have it made instantly into Tents, being in great distress for want of a sufficient number to cover our Troops. I have &ca.16

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, August 15, 1776.

Sir: As the Situation of the Two Armies must Engage the attention of Congress and lead them to expect, that each returning day will produce some Important Events, This is meant to Inform them that nothing of Moment has yet cast up. In the Evening of Yesterday there were great movements among their Boats and from the Number that appeared to be passing and repassing about the Narrows, we were induced to believe they intended to land a part of their Forces upon Long Island, but having no report from thence from General Greene, I presume they have not done it. I have the Honor &ca.

16. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

P. S. Your favor of the 13th. was received by Yesterday's Post. I wrote on Monday by the Return Express, as you supposed.20

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, August 16, 1776.

Sir: I beg leave to inform you, that since I had the pleasure of addressing you Yesterday, nothing interesting between the two Armies had happened. Things remain nearly in the situation they then were.

It is with peculiar regret and concern, that I have the Opportunity of mentioning to Congress the Sickly condition of our Troops. In some Regiments there are not any of the Field Officers capable of doing duty. In Others the duty extremely difficult for want of a sufficient number. I have been Obliged to Nominate some, 'till Congress transmit the Appointments of those they wish to succeed to the several Vacancies occasioned by the late Promotions. This being a matter of some consequence, I presume will have their early

attention, and that they will fill up the several Vacancies, also mentioned in the List I had the Honor of transmitting some few days ago to the Board of War. I am Sir &ca.21

20. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

21. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE NEW JERSEY LEGISLATURE

Head Quarters, August 16, 1776.

Gentn.: I am informed, that in Consequence of my Letter acquainting you that a number of Persons deemed unfriendly to the Interests of America, were suspected of holding a Correspondence with the Enemy from Shrewsbury and its Neighbourhood; Mr. Isaac Low late of this City has been apprehended, and is now detained under some kind of Confinement.

Since that time, I have received Satisfaction with respect to this Gentleman, who I find has also entered into a Contract with the Congress for the Supply of a great quantity of European Goods; I should therefore be glad that any restraint laid upon him, merely upon my Representation, might be removed, and he restored to his former Liberty on such Terms and Conditions, as you may think proper, if any are necessary. I am etc.

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

Head Quarters, New York, August 16, 1776.

Sir: I have been obliged to trouble you with some more disaffected persons, whose Residence here was dangerous to the American Interest; I trust I have now done with them, at least for the present, and hope you will excuse the disagreeable Necessity I have been under, of Soliciting your care and attention to provide for them and dispose of them.

As the Case of these differs in no respect from that of those before sent, I presume they will be put under the same

Regulations. I am etc.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, August 17, 1776.

Sir: The circumstances of the two Armies having undergone no material Alteration since I had the honor of writing you last, I have nothing particular or Important to communicate respecting them.

In my Letter of Yesterday I forgot to mention the Arrival of Lord Dunmore here.32 By the Examination of a Captain Hunter,33 who escaped from the Enemy and came to Amboy on the 14th. transmitted me by General Roberdeau,34 I am certainly informed his Lordship arrived on the 13th., The Examination does not say any thing about the Ships he brought with him. It only extends to his force which it mentions to be weak.

I before now expected the Enemy would have made their Attack; nor can I account for their deleting it, unless the Intelligence given by Captain Hunter and another person who escaped from them about the same time is the cause; towit, that they are waiting the Arrival of another division of Hessian Troops which they say is still out. Whether that is the reason of the delay I cannot undertake to determine, but I should suppose things will not remain long in their present State. I have inclosed a Copy of General Roberdeau's Letter and of the Examination of these two persons which will shew Congress all the Information they have given upon these Subject.

I am just now advised by Mr. Ayres, who came from Philadelphia to build the Row Gallies; that two of our Fire Vessels attempted last night to burn the Enemy's Ships and Tenders

up the River. He says they burnt one Tender, and one of them boarded the Phœnix and was grapled with her for near ten Minutes, but she cleared herself.

We lost both of the Vessels. This Account is not so particular as I could wish, however, I am certain the Attempt has not succeeded to our Wishes.

In a little time it is probable the matter will be more minutely reported. I have the Honor &ca.35

32. John Murray, Earl Dunmore.

33. Alexander Hunter. His examination, in the writing of Tench Tilghman, dated Aug. 4, 1776, is in the *Washington Papers*.

34. Brig. Gen. Daniel Roberdeau, of the New Jersey Militia.

35. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

Head Quarters, New York, August 17, 1776.

Gentn.: When I consider that the City of New York, will in all human probability very soon be the Scene of a bloody Conflict; I cannot but view the great Numbers of Women, Children and infirm Persons remaining in it, with the most melancholy concern. When the Men of War passed up, the River, the Shrieks and Cries of these poor Creatures, running every way with their Children, was truly distressing and I fear will have an unhappy effect, on the Ears and Minds of our young and inexperienced Soldiery. Can no Method be devised for their removal? Many doubtless are of Ability to move themselves; but there are others in a different Situation. Some Provision for them afterwards, would also be a Necessary consideration. It would relieve me from great anxiety, if your Honble. Body

would Immediately deliberate upon it and form and execute some plan for their removal and relief; In which I will co-operate and assist to the utmost of

my Power. In the mean time I have thought it proper, to recommend to persons under the above description, to convey themselves without delay to some Place of Safety, with their most Valuable effects.30 I have the Honor &c.

To JAMES, LORD DRUMMOND

New York, August 17, 1776.

Sir: I have your Lordships Favor of this Day accompanied by Papers on Subjects of the greatest Moment and deserving the most deliberate consideration.

I can allow much for your Lordships well meant Zeal on such an Occasion, but I fear it has transported you beyond that attention to your Parole, which comprehends the Character of a Man of Strict Honor. How your Lordship can reconcile your past or present Conduct with your Engagement, so as to satisfy your own Mind, I must submit to your own Feelings; but I find myself under the disagreeable Necessity of Objecting to the Mode of Negociation proposed while your Lordship's Conduct appears so exceptionable.

I shall, by Express, forward to Congress your

30. Conformably to this suggestion a committee was appointed by the New York Legislature to remove such persons as it should think proper and to afford the necessary assistance and support to the poorer citizens. The committee of safety of the State was requested to lend its aid.

Lordship's Letter and the Papers which accompanied it; The Result will be communicated as soon as possible.

I am sorry to have detained your Lordship so long, but the unavoidable Necessity must be my Apology. I am etc.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, August 18, 1776.

Sir: I have been honored with your favor of the 16th. with its Inclosure and am sorry it is not in my power to transmit Congress a Copy of the Treaty as they require, having sent it away with the other papers that were in my Hands.42

The Resolution they have entered into respecting the Foreign Troops, I am persuaded would produce Salutary Effects, If it can be properly circulated among them; I fear it will be a matter of difficulty:—However I will take every measure that shall appear probable to facilitate the end.43

I have the Honor to inclose you for the perusal and consideration of Congress, sundry papers marked No. 1 to No. 7. inclusive, the whole of which, except No. 2 and 7, my Answer to Lord Drummond and General Howe, I received Yesterday Evening by a Flag, and to which I beg leave to refer Congress.44

I am exceedingly at a loss to know the Motives and causes inducing a proceeding of such a Nature at this Time and why Lord Howe has not attempted

42. By a resolve (August 13) Congress requested Washington to send a copy of the treaty between Massachusetts and the St. Johns and Micmac Indians.

43. On August 14 Congress adopted resolves to encourage the Hessians and other foreigners to quit the British service. These were printed in German and were used as wrapping for small quantities of tobacco smuggled into the Hessians, who would, for the

tobacco, conceal the wrapping from the officers. On August 27 resolves offering land to German officers were adopted, printed, and sent into the British lines.

44. Inclosures Nos. 6 and 7 are all that are filed with Washington's letter in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, and these are Howe's letter to Washington *re* Robert Temple and Washington's answer. It seems probable, however, that all of the Drummond correspondence is in the *Washington Papers*, as the record appears complete.

some plan of Negociation before, as he seems to be desirous of it. If I may be allowed to conjecture and guess at the Cause, It may be that part of the Hessians have not arrived as mentioned in the examination transmitted Yesterday, or that General Burgoyne has not made such progress, as was expected, to form a junction of their two Armies: or what I think equally probable, they mean to procrastinate their Operations for some time, trusting that the Militias, which have come to our Succour, will soon be tired and return home as is but too usual with them. Congress will make their Observations upon these several matters and favor me with the result as soon as they have done.

They will observe my Answer to Lord Drummond, who, I am pretty confident, has not attended to the Terms of his parole, but has violated it in several Instances. It is with the rest of the papers; But if my Memory serves me, he was not to hold any Correspondence directly or Indirectly with those in Arms against us, or to go into any port or Harbour in America where the Enemy were, or had a Fleet, or to go on board their Ships.45

The Treaty with the Indians is in the Box which Lieutenant Colonel Reed I presume has delivered before this. If Congress are desirous of seeing it, they will be pleased to have the Box opened. It contains a variety of papers and all the Affairs of the Army, from my first going to Cambridge 'till it was sent away.

This morning the Phœnix and Rose Men of War with two Tenders, availing themselves of a favourable and brisk Wind, came down the River and have joined the Fleet.—Our

several Batteries fired at them in their passage, but without any good Effect, that I could perceive. I am &ca.46

45. “The late Conduct of Lord Drummond is as extraordinary as his motives are dark and mysterious. To judge the most favourably of his Intentions, it would seem, that an overweening Vanity has betrayed him into a criminal Breach of Honour. But whether his Views were upright, or intended only to mislead and deceive, cannot at present be a Matter of any importance. In the mean time, I have the pleasure to acquaint you, that Congress highly approve the Manner in which you have checked the officious and intemperate Zeal of his Lordship. Whether his Designs were hostile or friendly, he equally merited the Reproof you have given him, and I hope for the future be will be convinced, that it is highly imprudent to attract the Attention of the publick to a Character, which will only pass without Censure when it passes without Notice. The Congress, having considered the Matter thoroughly, are of Opinion to decline taking any publick or farther Notice of his Lordship, or his Letters, and particularly as you have so fully expressed their Sentiments on the subject in your Letter to him.”— *Hancock to Washington*, Aug. 24, 1776.

Drummond attempted to vindicate himself from the charge of having broken his parole and to explain his conduct, but without success, as the facts in the case were too obvious. The difficulty, of course, was the ingrained feeling of superiority of the Britisher toward the Colonial; a feeling that must be taken into account in every attempt to understand the causes of the Revolution.

46. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To RICHARD, LORD HOWE

Head Quarters, New York, August 17, 1776.

My Lord: Being authorized by Congress, as their Commanders in every Department are, to Negotiate an Exchange of Prisoners; and presuming, as well from the Nature of your

Lordship's command, as the Information General Howe has been pleased to Honor me with, that the Exchange in the Naval Line will be subject to your Lordship's Directions, I beg leave to propose the following mode of Exchange for your Lordship's consideration, Vizt. “Officers for those of equal Rank and Sailors for Sailors.”

If the above proposal should be agreeable to your Lordship, I am charged in a particular manner to exchange any Officer belonging to the British Navy in our hands and of equal Rank, for Lieut Josiah, who was lately made prisoner in a Ship retaken by the Cerberus Frigate.

The Reason my Lord, of my being charged to propose the exchange of Lieut Josiah, in preference to that of any other Officer, is, that authentic Intelligence has been received, that regardless of his Rank, as an Officer, he has not only been subjected to the duties of a common Seaman, but has experienced many other marks of Indignity.

As a different Line of Conduct, My Lord, has been ever observed towards the Officers of your Navy, who have fallen into our Hands, It becomes not only a matter of Right, but of Duty, to mention this to your Lordship,38 to the end that an Inquiry may be made into the case above refered to.

From your Lordship's Character for Humanity, I am led to presume, the Hardships imposed on Lt. Josiah, are without either your Knowledge or concurrence, and therefore most readily hope that upon this representation, your Lordship will enjoin all Officers under your command,

38. In Washington's “Letter Book,” in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison, there are a few verbal changes from the copy of the letter as sent, the most radical of which is the phrase noted which reads “it becomes not only a matter of duty but of right in me to mention this,” etc. Howe's reply (August 19) acceded to the suggested exchange, but answered the charge of ill treatment with a general statement that all his officers

disapproved insults and indignities to prisoners of every rank. Howe's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

to pay such regard to the Treatment of those that may fall into their Hands, as their different ranks and Situations require, and such as your Lordship would wish to see continued by us, to those who are already in our power, or who may hereafter, by the chance of War, be subjected to it. I have the Honor etc.

To THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

New York, August 18, 1776.

Gentn.: I have been honored with your Letter of the 17th., with the Resolution of your Honorable Body, for obstructing the Channel betwixt the grand Battery and Nutten Island. Having gone into a Considerable Expence for stopping that of the North River, and such as I am not Certain I shall be justified in, and the obstructions there being far from Compleat, it will not be in my power to engage in the Business you propose, or undertake to Advance any part of the Money, which will be necessarily expended in the Execution. At the same time, give me leave to Assure you, Gentlemen, that I shall most readily afford you such Assistance, as may be derived from the Labour of the Troops here and that can be spared from other service to facilitate the design; which will be of great Importance, if it can be executed.

I have been also honored with your favor and Resolution of the same date, and am exceedingly obliged by the ready attention you have paid to my Recommendation, for the removal of the Women and Children and Infirm Persons from the City. I have the honor etc.

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

New York, August 18, 1776.

Sir: I have been duly honored with your favor of the 13th. Instant; and, at the same time, that I think you and your honorable Council of Safety highly deserving of the thanks of the States, for the Measures you have adopted, in order to give the most early and Speedy Succour to

this Army; give me leave to return you mine in a particular Manner. When the whole of the Reinforcements do arrive, I flatter my self we shall be competent to every exigency; and, with the Smiles of Providence upon our Arms and Vigorous Exertions, we shall baffle the designs of our Inveterate Foes, formidable as they are. Our Situation was truly Alarming, a little while Since; but, by the kind Interpositions and Aid of our Friends, is much bettered.

You may rest Assured, Sir, that due Consideration shall be had to the Several Militia Regiments, that have come, and are Marching to our Assistance, and that they shall be dismissed as soon as Circumstances will admit of it, I trust, as long as there is Occasion for their Services, that the same Spirit and Commendable Zeal, which Induced them to come, will Influence their Continuance. I sincerely wish, it was in my power to ascertain the particular Period when they would be needed, that they might not be detained one unnecessary Moment from their Homes and Common pursuits; But, as this cannot be done; as the Approaching Contest and Trial between the two Armies will, most unquestionably, produce events of the utmost Importance to the States; As the Issue, if favorable, will put us on such a footing, as to bid defiance to the utmost Malice of the British Nation and those in Alliance with her; I have not a doubt, but they will most readily Consent to stay, and chearfully forego every present and Temporary Inconvenience, so long as they are Necessary. I am happy Capt. Van Buren47 has Succeeded so well in the Business he was upon, It being of great Consequence for us to fit out and maintain our Vessels on the Lake. On the Night of the 16th., Two of our fire Vessels Attempted to burn the Ships of War

47. Capt. Abraham Van Buren, of the Albany militia.

up the River. One of these Boarded the Phœnix of 44 Guns, and was Grappled with her for some Minutes; but unluckily she cleared herself. The only damage the Enemy sustained, was the destruction of one Tender. It is agreed on all hands, that our People, engaged in this affair, behaved with great Resolution and Intrepidity; one of the Captains, Thomas, It is to be feared, Perished in the attempt, or in making his Escape by Swimming, as he has not been heard of; His Bravery Intitled him to a better fate. Tho' his enterprize did not succeed to our Wishes, I incline to think it alarmed the Enemy greatly. For this morning the Phœnix and Rose, with their two remaining Tenders, taking Advantage of a brisk and prosperous Gale, with a favorable tide, Quitted their Stations, and have returned and joined the rest of the Fleet.

As they Passed our Several Batteries, they were fired upon, but without any damage that I could perceive.48 The whole of the British forces in America, except those employed in Canada are now here, Clinton's arrival being followed the last week by that of Lord Dunmore, who now forms a part of the Army we are to oppose. his coming has not added but little to their Strength. I have the Honor to be &c.

48. The British ships sustained a good deal of injury in passing the upper batteries near Fort Washington and the Harlem River. General Heath's letter (August 18) reported that the *Phœnix* was three times hulled by the shot from Mount Washington and one of the tenders once and that the *Rose* was hulled once by a shot from Burdetts Ferry on the opposite side of river. The *Phœnix* and *Rose* had been sounding the river as far up as the Highlands. The tender, burned by one of the fire ships, was beached by the British the next day. A 6-pound cannon, 3 smaller ones, and 10 swivels were recovered from her by the Americans. Heath's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, August 19, 1776.

Sir: I have nothing of Moment to communicate to Congress, as things are in the Situation they were when I had last the honor of Addressing them.

By a Letter from General Ward of the 12th. I find that Whitcomb's Regiment on the 8th. and Phinney's on the 9th. marched from Boston to Ticonderoga.

Governor Trumbull also, in a Letter of the 13th., advises me that Ward's Regiment in the service of the States, was on their March to this Army, and that he and his Council of Safety had, in the whole ordered fourteen Militia Regiments to reinforce us, three of them have arrived and amount to about one thousand and twenty men. When the whole come in, we shall be on a much more respectable footing than what we have been, but I greatly fear if the Enemy defer their attack for any considerable time, they will be extremely impatient to return home, and if they should, we shall be reduced to distress again. He also adds that Captain Van Buren who had been sent for that purpose had procured a sufficient supply of Sail Cloth for the Vessels to be employed in the Lake and a part of the Cordage in that State, and had a prospect of getting the remainder.

As there will be a difficulty in all probability, to circulate the papers designed for the Foreign Troops and many Miscarriages may happen before it can be effected, it may be proper to furnish me with a larger Quantity than what I already have.

Inclosed I have the honor to transmit you a General Return of our whole Force at this Time, in which are comprehended the three Regiments of

Militia above mentioned. I am Sorry it should be so much weakned by Sickness. The Return will shew you how it distresses us. I have the Honor etc.

P. S: The post just now arrived, has brought a further Supply of Papers for the Hessians60 which makes my Requisition unnecessary.61

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, August 20, 1776.

Sir: I was yesterday Morning favoured with yours of the 17th., accompanied by several Resolutions of Congress and Commissions for Officers appointed to the late Vacancies in this Army.

I wrote some days ago to General Schuyler to propose to Generals Carleton and Burgoyne, an Exchange of Prisoners, in consequence of a former Resolve of Congress, authorizing their Commanders in each Department to negotiate one.

60. See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, Aug. 14 and 27, 1776, for resolves to encourage the Hessians to desert.

61. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

That of Major Meigs for Major French and Captain Dearborn's for any Officer of equal Rank, I submitted to General Howe's consideration by Letter on the 17th. understanding their paroles had been sent him by General Carleton, but have not yet received his Answer on the Subject.

In respect to the Exchange of the Prisoners in Canada, If a my Letter to Lord Howe, as well on the Subject of a General lieve it has not, the inclosed Copy of General Carleton's Orders63 transmitted me under Seal by Major Bigelow who was sent with a Flag to General Burgoyne from Ticonderoga, with the proceedings of Congress on the Breach of Capitulation at the Cedars and the inhuman Treatment of our people afterwards, will shew it is unnecessary, as he has determined to send them to their own Provinces, *there* to remain as prisoners, interdicting at the same time all kind of intercourse between us and his Army, except such as may be for the purpose of imploring the King's Mercy.64 The Assassination of Brigadier General Gordon65 is a fact entirely new to me, and what I never heard of. I shall not trouble Congress with my Strictures on this indecent, illiberal and Scurrilous performance, so highly unbecoming the Character of a Soldier and

Gentleman, only observeing that its design is somewhat Artful, and that each Boatman with Major Bigelow was furnished with a Copy.

I have also transmitted a Copy of the Major's Journal, to which I beg leave to refer them for the Intelligence reported by him, on his Return from the Truce.66

By a Letter from General Greene Yesterday Evening, he informed me he had received an Express from Hog Island Inlet, advising, that five of the Enemy's small

63. A copy of Sir Guy Carleton's orders, dated Aug. 7, 1776, given to Maj. Timothy Bigelow is in the *Washington Papers*.

64. The events attending the capitulation at The Cedars and the agreement for the exchange of prisoners entered into by Arnold were of so extraordinary and irritating a nature in regard to the conduct of the enemy that Congress, at the same time they confirmed Arnold's stipulation, resolved: “That, previous to the delivery of the prisoners to be returned on our part, the British commander in Canada be required to deliver into our hands the authors, abettors, and perpetrators of the horrid murder committed on the prisoners, to suffer such punishment as their crime deserves; and also, to make indemnification for the plunder at the Cedars, taken contrary to the faith of the capitulation; and that, until such delivery and indemnification be made, the said prisoners be not delivered.” (See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, July 10, 1776.)

65. Gen. Patrick Gordon was lieutenant colonel of the One hundred and eighth Foot, and a brigadier general in America. An American lieutenant and four men from Ticonderoga, while on a scout within the enemy's lines, concealed themselves near the road leading from St. John's to Laprairie. General Gordon passed them on horseback; the lieutenant fired at and shot him through the body. The general was able to ride to St. John's before he expired. This killing aroused the indignation of the British officers and, occurring but

two or three days before the dispatch from Congress arrived, it may have had a principal influence in dictating the paper called General Carleton's order.

This was in effect a refusal to confirm the treaty and was so considered by the commanding officers in Canada. The report of the committee of Congress on this subject, and the resolves respecting the treaty, were forwarded to General Burgoyne. The dispatch was sent under the charge of Major Bigelow from Ticonderoga. He proceeded down the lake to Isle-aux-Noix, which was then a British outpost, where he was detained, and the dispatch was forwarded to General Burgoyne then at St. John's. Major Bigelow stayed to days at Isle-aux-Noix, where he and his party were treated very civilly by Captain Craig, the commander of that post, and by the other officers. At length the messenger came back from St. John's with a letter directed to “George Washington, Esquire,” which was handed to Major Bigelow, and with which he returned immediately up the lake to Ticonderoga, being escorted on his way as far as Gilleland's by a boat with two British officers and nine Canadians.

This letter General Gates sent off by express to General Washington. When opened it was found to be a mere envelope inclosing a paper purporting to be a military order issued by General Carleton at Chamblee on August 7, without signature or address, and unaccompanied by any remarks. The contents of this paper were of so singular a character, and comported so little with the spirit and temper of a high-minded officer, that they might well have excited a strong suspicion as to their being genuine had not the dispatch been formally entrusted to Major Bigelow as coming from General Burgoyne, or General Carleton, who was commander in chief. The order prohibits all intercourse “with rebels, traitors, rioters, disturbers of the public peace, plunderers, robbers, assassins, or murderers,” and adds, “should emissaries from such lawless men again presume to approach the army, whether under the name of flag-of-truce men, or ambassadors, except when they come to implore the King's mercy, their persons shall be immediately seized and committed to close confinement and proceeded against as the law directs.” After a good deal more in the same style of rodomontade, the order concludes by directing

“all the prisoners from the rebellious provinces, who choose to return home, to hold themselves in readiness to embark at a short notice, and that the commissary should visit the transports destined for them, and see that wholesome provisions and necessary clothing, with all possible conveniences for their passage, be prepared; and that the prisoners were to look on their respective provinces as their prisons, there to remain till further enlarged, or summoned to appear before the commander in chief in Canada,” With no other explanation than the order itself it is now impossible to decide what degree of credit ought to be ascribed to it. From the tenor of Washington's letter above, and from the circumstance of his transmitting the paper to Congress, it is obvious that he considered it genuine. General Schuyler and General Gates were of the same opinion.— *Sparks*.

66. A copy of Maj. Timothy Bigelow's journal is filed, with Washington's letter, in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

Vessels had appeared at the Mouth of the Creek with some Troops on Board; also that he had heard two Pettit Augers were off Oyster Bay, the whole supposed to be after live Stock; and to prevent their getting it, he had detached a party of Horse and two hundred and twenty Men, among them twenty Rifle Men. I have not received further Intelligence upon the Subject.

I am also advised by the Examination of a Captain Briton,67 Master of a Vessel that had been taken, transmitted me by General Mercer, that the General Report, among the Enemy's Troops, was, when he came off, that they were to attack Long Island and to secure our Works there, if possible; at the same time, that another part of their Army was to land above this City. This information is corroborated by many other Accounts, and is probably true; nor will it be possible to prevent their landing on the Island, as its great extent affords a variety of places favourable for that purpose and the whole of our Works on it, are at the end opposite to the City. However we shall attempt to harrass them, as much as possible, which will be all that we can do. I have the Honor etc.68

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, August 21, 1776.

Sir: Inclosed I have the Honor to transmit you, a Copy of my Letter to Lord Howe, as well on the Subject of a General Exchange of Prisoners in the Naval Line, as that of Lieut. Josiah in particular, and of his Lordship's Answer; which for its matter

67. Britton's examination, dated Aug. 18, 1776, is in the *Washington Papers*.

68. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

and manner is very different from General Carlton's Orders which were forwarded yesterday.84

The Situation of the Armies being the same as when I had the pleasure of addressing you last, I have nothing special to communicate on that Head, nor more to add than that I am etc.85

To MAJOR GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER

New York, August 21, 1776.

Dear Sir: On Monday I received your favor of the 16th Instant with its Several Inclosures. The time you were in Treaty, I can readily conceive was Irksome and disagreable, However, If the Good consequences you Intended, are produced, you will think it well spent.

General Carleton's Orders, for their Indecent, Illiberal Scurrility, are equal if not superior to any thing I have seen, and are such as I could not have expected from a person of his High rank. He holds forth a Language very different from General Howe, as you would perceive by the Copy of his Letter I transmitted you. The Assassination of General Gordon

is a matter intirely new, having never heard of it before. The paper made up as a Letter and directed to me, which Major Bigelow brought with him, only contained a Copy of the Orders.

I am glad the works at Fort Stanwix are going on so well and that they have so much provision in Store. In a little time I hope they will be strong and Compleat.

By a letter from Governor Trumbull, I am Informed that a Captain Van Buren had procured a sufficient Quantity of Sail Cloth, and part of the Cordage wanted for

84. Washington's letter and Howe's answer, dated Aug. 19, 1776, are in the *Washington Papers*. (See Washington's letter to Sir William Howe, Aug. 17, 1776, *ante*.)

85. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

the Gallies, in Connecticut, and that the rest would be probably Obtained there. Upon the whole, I hope Necessaries to fit them out, will be obtained one way or other.

The Inclosed Letter from Colonel Stark was transmitted and refered to me by General Gates, in Order that I might determine upon the Subject of it. I should suppose the Value of Rations, ought to be settled with the Commissary or Submitted to Congress for their decision. I do not conceive it is with me to direct in this Instance, and therefore think it right to give notice of It by this Opportunity.

Since my Last of the 13th, nothing worthy of mention has occurred in this Quarter, unless the Ships of War having left their Stations up the North River and Joined the Fleet again, is considered as such. On Sunday Morning they came down with their remaining Tenders. It is more than probable that an Attempt by two of our fire Vessels to destroy them a Night or two before, contributed to their departure. The Enterprize, tho' conducted with Spirit and resolution, did not succeed to our Wishes, only one Tender having been burnt. The Phoenix was grappled for some time, but cleared herself without Damage. I am &c.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, August 22, 1776.

Sir: I do myself the Honor to transmit Congress a Copy of a Letter I received Yesterday Evening by

Express from General Livingston;86 also Copies of three reports from Colonel Hand.

Tho' the Intelligence reported by the Spy on his return to General Livingston, has not been confirmed by the Event he mentions, “Vizt. an Attack last night,” there is every reason to induce a belief that one is shortly designed.

The falling down of several Ships Yesterday Evening to the narrows crowded with men. Those succeeded by several more this Morning and a great number of Boats parading around them as I was just now informed, with Troops; are all circumstances indicating an Attack, and it's not Improbable it will be made to day.—It could not have happened last night by reason of a most violent Gust.

We are making every preparation to receive them, and I trust, under the smiles of Providence, with our own exertions, that my next, if they do attack will transmit an Account which will be pleasing to every Friend of America and to the rights of Humanity. I have, etc.87

To MAJOR GENERAL WILLIAM HEATH

Head Quarters, New York, August 23, 1776.

Sir: Yesterday Morning the Enemy landed at Gravesend Bay upon Long Island, from the best Information I can obtain, to the Number of about Eight Thousand. Colonel Hand88 retreated before them, burning as he came along several parcels of Wheat and such other

matters, as he Judged would fall into the Enemy's Hands. Our first accounts were, that they intended, by a forced march, to surprize

86. Brig. Gen. William Livingston. His letter conveyed a spy's intelligence from Staten Island of the intended attack by the British.

87. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

88. Col. Edward Hand. He was colonel of the First Continental Infantry, First Pennsylvania Regiment, and, later, brigadier general and Adjutant General of the Continental Army.

General Sullivan's (who commands during the illness of General Greene) Line's, where-upon I immediately reinforced that post with Six Regiments; But they halted last Night at Flat Bush. If they should attack General Sullivan this day, and should shew no disposition to attack me likewise, at the making of the next Flood, I shall send such further Reinforcements to Long Island as I may Judge expedient, not chusing to weaken this post too much, before I am certain, that the Enemy are not making a Feint upon Long Island to draw our Force to that Quarter, when their real design may perhaps be upon this. I am &c.

P.S. The Flood Tide will begin to make about Eleven o'Clock, at which time, if the Detachment Ordered Yesterday, were to move to the high, and open Grounds about Mr. O. Delancey's and Bloomingdale, they would be ready to come forward, or return back, as occasion should require, it will give them a little Exercise, and shew them wherein they are wanting in any matter.89

To THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

Head Quarters, New York, August 23, 1776.

Gentn.: I am favored with yours of the 22d, acquainting me with a report now Circulating, “that if the American Army should be obliged to retreat from this City, any Individual may set it on fire.”91

I can Assure you Gentlemen, this Report is not founded upon the least Authority from me; on the Contrary, I am so Sensible of the Value of such a City and the

89. In the writing of Tench Tilghman; the P.S. is in that of Washington.

91. “The Convention of this State have received Information from one of the Deputies of the City and County of New York of a Report prevailing amongst the Army that if the fortune of War should oblige our Troops to abandon that City, it should be immediately burnt by the retreating Soldiery, and that Any Man is authorized to set it on fire.

“The Convention will chearfully submit to the fatal necessity of destroying that Valuable City whenever your Excellency shall deem it essential to the Safety of this State or the general Interest of America. Yet the Duty which they owe to their Constituents obliges them to take every possible Precaution that Twenty thousand Inhabitants may not be reduced to Misery by the wanton Act of an Individual.

“They therefore entreat the favor of your Excellency to take such Measures in preventing the evil Tendency of such a Report as you shall deem most Expedient.”— *New York Legislature to Washington*, Aug. 22, 1776. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

Consequences of its destruction, to many worthy Citizens and their Families, that nothing but the last Necessity and that such as should justify me to the whole World, would induce me to give orders for that purpose.

The unwillingness shewn by many families to remove, notwithstanding your and my Recommendation, may perhaps have led some persons to propogate the Report, with

honest and Innocent intentions; but as your Letter first informed me of it, I cannot pretend to say by whom or what purpose it has been done.

As my Views with regard to the Removal of the Women and Children, have happily coincided with your Sentiments and a Committee appointed to Carry them into execution; I submit it to your judgment, whether it would not be proper for the Committee to meet immediately in this City, and give Notice of their Attendance on this Business. There are many who anxiously wish to remove but have not the Means. I am etc.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, August 23, 1776.

Sir: I beg leave to inform Congress that Yesterday Morning and in the course of the preceeding night, a considerable body of the Enemy, amounting by report to eight or nine thousand, and these all British, Landed from the Transport Ships mentioned in my last, at Gravesend Bay on Long Island, and have approached within three miles of our Lines, having marched across the Low, cleared Grounds, near the Woods at Flat Bush

where they are halted, from my last Intelligence.

I have detached from hence, Six Battalions, as a reinforcement to our Troops there, which are all that I can spare at this Time, not knowing but the fleet may move up with the remainder of their Army and make an Attack here on the next flood Tide. If they do not, I shall send a further reinforcement should it be necessary, and have ordered five Battalions more to be in readiness for that purpose. I have no doubt but a little Time will produce some Important events. I hope they will be happy. The Reinforcement detached Yesterday went off in high Spirits and I have the pleasure to inform you that the whole of the Army that are effective and capable of duty, discover the same, and great chearfulness.

I have been Obliged to appoint Major General Sullivan to the Command on the Island, owing to General Greene's Indisposition, he has been extremely ill for several days and still Continues bad.

By Wednesday Evening's Post I received a Letter from General Ward, inclosing a Copy of the Invoice of Ordinance Stores taken by Captain Manly with the Appraisement of the same, made in pursuance of my direction founded on the Order of Congress, which I do myself the honor of transmitting.

You will also receive the Treaty between the Commissioners and Indians of the six Nations and others at the German Flats, which General Schuyler requested me to forward, by his Letter of the 18th. Instant. I have &ca.90

90. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

***To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS**

New York, August 24, 1776.

The irregularity of the Post prevents your receiving the early and constant Intelligence it is my Wish to communicate. This is the third Letter which you will, probably, receive from me, by the same Post. The first was of little or no consequence, but that of Yesterday gave you the best Information I had been able to obtain of the Enemy's Landing, and movements upon Long Island. Having occasion to go over thither Yesterday, I sent my Letter to the Post Office at the usual hour (being informed that the Rider was expected every Moment and wou'd go out again directly) but in the Evening, when I sent to enquire, none had come in.

I now Inclose you a report made to me by Gen. Sullivan, after I left Long Island Yesterday. I do not conceive that the Enemy's whole Force was in Motion, but a detach'd Party rather. I have sent over four more Regiments with Boats, to be ready, either to reinforce the

Troops under General Sullivan, or to return to this place, if the remainder of the Fleet at the Watering place, should push up to the City, which, hitherto (I mean since the Landing upon Long Island) they have not had in their power to do, on Acct. of the Wind, which has either been ahead, or two small, when the Tide has served. I have nothing further to trouble the Congress with at present than that I am, etc.

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

New York, August 24, 1776.

Sir: On thursday last the Enemy landed a body of Troops, supposed to Amount (from the best Accounts I have been able to obtain) to Eight or Nine Thousand Men at Gravesend Bay on Long Island, Ten Miles distance from our Works, (on the Island) and immediately marched thro' the Level and open Lands to Flat Bush, where they are now incamped:—They are distant about three Miles from our Lines, and have Woods and broken Ground to pass (which we have lined), before they can get to them; some Skirmishing has happened between their Advanced parties and ours, in which we have always obtained an Advantage; what the real Designs of the Enemy are, I am not yet able to determine. My Opinion of the Matter is, that they mean to attack our Works on the Island, and this City, at the same time, and that the Troops at Flat Bush are waiting in those Plains, till the Wind and tide (which have not yet served together) will favor the Movement of the Shipping to this place; Others think they will bend their principal Force against our Lines on the Island, which if carried will greatly facilitate their designs upon this City. This also being very probable, I have thrown what force I can over, without leaving myself too much exposed here; for our whole Numbers, if the Intelligence we get from Deserters &c. be true, falls short of that of the Enemy, consequently the defence of our own Works, and the approaches to them, is all we can aim at. This then in a Manner leaves the whole Island in possession of the Enemy, and of Course, of the Supplies it is capable of affording them.

Under these Circumstances, would it be practicable for your Government to throw a Body of about one thousand or more Men across the Sound, to harrass the Enemy in their rear or upon their Flanks? This would annoy them exceedingly, at the same time that a Valuable end, to wit, that of preventing their parties securing the Stocks of Cattle &c. would be answered by it. The Cattle to be removed or killed. The knowledge I have of the extraordinary Exertions of your State, upon all occasions, does not permit me to require this (not knowing how far it is practicable); I only offer it therefore, as a Matter for your Consideration and of great Public Utility, if it can be accomplished. The Enemy, if my Intelligence from Staten Island be true, are at this time rather distressed on Account of Provisions; if then we can deprive them of what this Island affords, much good will follow from it.

The foreigners are yet upon Staten Island.96 The British Troops are upon Long Island and on Ship Board. With my great respect and Esteem, I remain etc.

To MAJOR GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER

New York, August 24, 1776.

Dear Sir: I received your favor of the 18th. with its several Inclosures on Thursday, by Mr. Allen.

My Letter of the 13th. does not, nor was it meant to contain the most distant hint of your entertaining doubts or suspicions, of my not having Communicated

96. This was an error, as a part of the Germans, Colonel Donop's corps of chasseurs and Hessian grenadiers, were landed on the 22d. Lieutenant General von Heister, commander in chief of the Hessian forces in America, with two brigades of Hessians, joined the army on Long Island on the 25th.— *Ford*.

to Congress, such parts of your Letters as were material. It was only designed to answer yours, where you say, since my arrival here you had not written to them on Military Affairs, supposing whatever Information you might give and which was necessary for them to know, would be communicated by me. My request to be advised of the Information you might give Congress of any matters, of which you write me at the same time, was to prevent my sending them unnecessary Intelligence and the trouble of having needless Copies and Extracts made out.

I am in hopes the Articles mentioned in the Letter to Captn. Varrick will have come to hand before this. Also those contained in the Inclosed List; shippd on Board the Schooner Union, Phillip Sandford, Master, the 19th. Instt., as the Quarter Master General has reported to me.

The Treaty with the Indians, agreable to your request, I have transmitted Congress.92

It gives me pleasure, to find the Vessels for the Lakes are in such forwardness and going on with so much Industry. I yet hope we shall have a Navy there, equal to every exigency, and that will be superior to those the Enemy can build. Captains Hawly and Chappel93 are now here, with permission from Governor Trumbull and myself, to Inlist, if they can, Two Hundred Seamen out of the Militia Just sent from the State of Connecticut. How they will Succeed, I can not determine.

I wish you had proceeded as your own Judgement and Inclination led in the case refered to me for my advice, respecting Colonel Dayton's94 Officers. I am sorry that persons of their rank and of their Connections should have given into such dishonourable and disgraceful practices, and I feel myself much concerned

92. This so-called treaty was really a conference with the Six Nations at German Flats, August 8–13. The speeches are printed in full in Force's *American Archives*, Fifth Series, vol. 1, 1035–1049.

93. Capts. David Hawley and Frederick Chappell.

94. Col. Elias Dayton, of the Third New Jersey Regiment. He was, later, of the Second New Jersey Regiment and, finally, brigadier general in the Continental Army.

for themselves and Friends. But as the matter is with me to determine; As their making concessions at the Head of the Regiment would not answer any purpose, but that of rendering them Objects of Ridicule and Contempt; As they could never after claim and support, that Authority over their Inferiors, that is necessary to good Government and discipline; As public Justice and a regard to our Military character, require that matters of such a nature should meet every possible discouragement; As my conduct might otherwise be deemed reprehensible, and to deter others from the like conduct, which is but too prevalent, I cannot but advise that the several persons concerned be subjected to the Trial of a Court Martial. If the Court should be of Opinion that they ought to be broke and dismissed the Service, Colonel Dayton, His Major and other Officers will recommend such as will be proper persons to fill the Vacancies, occasioned by their removal.95

On Wednesday night and Thursday Morning a Considerable body of the Enemy, said to be Eight or Nine Thousand, landed at Gravesend Bay, on Long Island; They have approached within about three Miles of our Lines, and Yesterday there was some skirmishing between a Detachment from them, and a party from our Troops. Their Detachment were obliged to give Ground, and were pursued, as far as where they had a post at a Judge Lefferts's. His House and out Houses served as Quarters for them and were burnt by our people. we sustained no loss in this Affair, that I have heard of, except having two Men slightly wounded. Our people say the Enemy met with more. They found one Dead body, in the Habit of a Soldier, with a good

95. Some of Dayton's officers broke open the doors of Johnson Hall and plundered the private effects therein.

deal of Money in his pocket, and got three Hangers and a Fusee. They fired a shell from a Howitz, which fell on and bursted in a House where some of the Enemy were, but whether they were Injured by it, I have not learnt. A Firing has been heard this Morning, but know nothing of the Event. I am &c.

To MAJOR GENERAL ISRAEL PUTNAM

Head Quarters, August 25, 1776.

Sir: It was with no small degree of concern, I perceived Yesterday, a scattering, unmeaning and Wasteful fire, from our people at the Enemy; a kind of fire that tended to disgrace our own Men; as Soldiers, and to render our defence contemptible in the eyes of the Enemy; no one good consequence can attend such irregularities, but several bad ones, will inevitably follow from it. Had it not been for this unsoldierlike and disorderly practice, we have the greatest reason imaginable to believe, that numbers of deserters would have left the Enemy's Army, last year, but fear prevented them from approaching our Lines then, and must for ever continue to operate in like manner whilst every Soldier conceives himself at Liberty to fire when, and at what he pleases.

This is not the only nor the greatest evil resulting from the practice; for as we do not know the hour of the Enemy's approach to our lines, but have every reason to apprehend that it will be sudden and violent, whenever attempted;

we shall have our men so scattered, and (more than probable) without Ammunition, that the consequences must prove fatal to us; besides this there will be no possibility of distinguishing between a real and false alarm.

I must therefore Sir, in earnest terms, desire you to call the Colonels and commanding Officers of Corps, (without loss of time) before you97 ; and let them afterwards do the same by their respective Officers, and charge them, in express, and positive terms, to stop these irregularities, as they Value the good of the service, their own Honor, and the safety

of the Army; which under God, depends wholly upon the good order and Government that is observed in it.

At the same time, I would have you form a proper line of defence, round your Encampment and Works, on the most advantageous ground; your guards, which compose this, are to be particularly instructed in their duty, and a Brigadier of the day, to remain constantly upon the lines, that he may be upon the spot to command, and see that orders are executed; Field Officers should also be appointed to go the rounds and report the Situation of the Guards; no person to be allowed to pass beyond the Guards, without special order in writing.

By restraining the loose, disorderly and unsoldierlike firing before mentioned, I do not mean to discourage Partizan and scouting parties; on the contrary I wish to see a Spirit of this sort prevailing, under proper regulations, and Officers either commissioned or non commissioned (as cases shall require) to be directed by Yourself or Licensed by the Brigadier of the day, upon the spot, to be sent upon this service.

97. Putnam had just been sent over to take the general command on Long Island. Sullivan had the immediate command of all the troops not within the lines at Brooklyn.— *Sparks*.

Such skirmishing as may be effected in this manner, will be agreable to the rules of propriety, and may be attended with salutary effects; inasmuch as it will inure the Troops to Fatigue and danger; will harrass the Enemy, may make prisoners and prevent their parties from getting the Horses and Cattle from the interior parts of the Island, which are objects of infinite importance to us, especially the two last.

All the Men not upon duty, are to be compelled to remain in, or near their respective camps, or Quarters, that they may turn out at a moments warning; nothing being more probable, than that the Enemy will allow little enough time to prepare for the attack.

The Officers also are to exert themselves, to the utmost to prevent every kind of abuse to private property, or to bring every Offender, to the punishment he deserves; shameful it is to find that these men, who have come hither in defence of the rights of mankind, should turn invaders of it, by destroying the substance of their friends.

The burning of Houses, where the apparent good of the Service is not promoted by it, and the pillaging of them, at all times, and upon all Occasions, is to be discountenanced and punished with the utmost severity. In short, it is to be hoped, that men who have property of their own, and a regard for the rights of others, will shudder at the thought of rendering any Man's Situation, to whose protection he had come, more insufferable, than his open and avowed Enemy would make it, when by duty and every rule of humanity, they ought to Aid, and not Oppress, the distressed in their habitations.

The distinction between a well regulated Army, and a Mob, is the good order and discipline of the first, and the licentious and disorderly behaviour of the latter; Men, therefore, who are not employed, as mere hirelings, but have

steped forth in defence of every thing that is dear and Valuable, not only to themselves but to posterity, should take uncommon pains to conduct themselves with uncommon propriety and good Order, as their honor, reputation &c. call loudly upon them for it.

The wood next red Hook should be well attended to, put some of the most disorderly rifle men into it; The Militia are most indifferent Troops (those I mean which are least tutored and seen least service) will do for the interior Works, whilst your best Men should at all hazards prevent the Enemy's passing the Wood, and approaching your Works.
The Woods should be secured by Abattis &c. where Necessary to make the Enemy's approach, as difficult as possible; Traps and ambuscades should be laid for their parties, if you find they are sent out after Cattle &c.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, August 26, 1776.

Sir: I have been duly honored with your favors of the 20th. and 24th. and am happy to find my Answer to Lord Drummond has met the approbation of Congress. Whatever his views were, most certainly his conduct respecting his parole is highly reprehensible.

Since my Letter of the 24th., almost the whole of the Enemy's Fleet have fallen down to the Narrows and from this circumstance, the striking of their Tents at their several Incampments on Staten Island, from time to time, previous to the Departure of the

Ships from thence; we are led to think, they mean to land the Main Body of their Army on Long Island, and to make their grand push there. I have ordered over considerable Reinforcements to our Troops there, and shall continue to send more as circumstances may require. There has been a little Skirmishing and irregular firing kept up between their and our advanced Guards, in which Colonel Martin3 of the Jersey Levies has received a Wound in his Breast, which is apprehended will prove Mortal. A private has had his Leg broke by a Cannon Ball, and another has received a shot in the Groin from their Musquetry. This is all the Damage they have yet done us. What they have sustained is not known.

The Shifting and changing the Regiments have undergone of late, has prevented their making proper returns and of course put it out my Power to transmit a general one of the Army. However I believe our Strength is much the same, that it was when the last was made, with the Addition of Nine Militia Regiments more from Connecticut averaging about 350 Men each these are 9 of the 14 Regiments mentioned in my Letter of the 19th.—Our people still continue to be very sickly.

The Papers designed for the foreign Troops, have been put into several Channels, in order that they might be conveyed to them, and from the Information I had Yesterday, I have reason to believe many have fallen into their Hands.4

I have inclosed a Copy of Lord Drummond's second Letter5 in Answer to mine, which I received since I transmitted his first and which I have thought proper to lay before Congress; that they may possess the whole of the correspondence between us, and see how far he has exculpated himself from the Charge alleged against him. The Log Book he mentions to have sent Colonel Moylan, proves nothing in his favor; That shews he had been at Bermuda and from thence to some other place, and on his passage from which to this place, the Vessel he was in was

3. Col Ephraim Martin, of the New Jersey Militia. He was appointed colonel of the Fourth New Jersey Regiment Nov. 23, 1776, but never joined, presumably on account of his wound. He died in 1806.

4. See note to Washington's letter to Congress, Aug. 18, 1776, *ante*.

5. Drummond's letter, dated Aug. 19, 1776, is in the *Washington Papers*.

commanded by a pilot who brought her into the Hook, where he found the British Fleet which his Lordship avers he did not expect were there, having understood their destination was to the Southward. I am &ca.6

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, Eight O'Clock, P.M., August 27, 1776.

Sir: I this minute returned from our Lines on Long Island, where I left his Excellency the General. From him I have It in command to Inform Congress, that yesterday he went there, and continued till Evening, when, from the Enemy's having landed a considerable part of their Forces, and from many of their movements, there was reason to apprehend they would make in a little time a General Attack. As they would have a Wood to pass through before they could approach the Lines, it was thought expedient to place a number of men there on the different Roads leading from whence they were stationed, in order to harass

and annoy them in their March. This being done, early this morning a Smart engagement ensued between the Enemy and our Detachments, which, being unequal to the force they had to contend with, have sustained a pretty considerable loss. At least many of our Men are missing, among those that have not returned, are General Sullivan and Lord Stirling. The Enemy's loss is not known certainly; but we are told by such of our Troops as were in the Engagement, and what have come in, that they had many killed and wounded. Our party brought off a Lieutenant, Sergeant, and Corporal, with twenty privates, prisoners.

6. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

While These Detachments were engaged, a Column of the enemy descended from the Woods, and marched towards the Centre of our Lines with a design to make an Impression, but were repulsed. This Evening they appeared very numerous about the Skirts of the Woods, where they have pitched Several Tents; and his Excellency Inclines to think they mean to attack and force us from our Lines by way of regular approaches, rather than in any other manner. To day Five Ships of the Line came up towards the Town, where they seemed desirous of getting, as they turned a long time against an unfavorable Wind; and, on my return this Evening, I found a Deserter from the 23d Regiment, who Informed me that they design, as soon as the Wind will permit'em to come up, to give us a Severe Cannonade, and to Silence our Batteries, If possible. I have the honor etc.

Robt H. Harrison .

To THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

New York, August 30, 1776.

Sir: Your favor of this date is just come to hand. Circumstanced as this Army was, in respect to Situation, Strength, &c, it was the unanimous advice of a Council of General Officers, to give up Long Island; and not, by dividing our force, be unable to resist the Enemy in any one point of attack. This reason, added to some others, particularly the

fear of having our Communication cut off from the Main, (of which there seemed to be no small probability), and the extreme fatigue our Troops were laid under, in guarding such extensive Lines, without proper shelter from the Weather, induced the above Resolution.

It is the most intricate thing in the World, Sir, to know in what Manner to conduct one's self with respect to the Militia; if you do not begin, many days before they are wanted to raise them, you cannot have them in time: if you do, they get tired and return; besides being under but very little order or Government whilst in Service. However, if the Enemy have a design of serving of us at this Place, as we apprehend they meant to do on Long Island: It might not be improper to have a Body in readiness, to prevent or retard a landing of them, on the East of Harlem River, if need be. In haste, and not a little fatigued, I remain, etc.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, New York, August 31, 1776.

Sir: Inclination as well as duty, would have induced me to give Congress, the earliest information of my removal of the Troops from Long Island and its dependencies to this City, the night before last; but the extreme fatigue, which myself and family have undergone (as much from the Weather as any thing else) since the incampment of the 27th. rendered me entirely unfit to take a pen in hand. Since Monday, we have scarce any of us been out of the Lines, till our passage across the East River was effected yesterday Morning, and for the 48 hours preceeding that; I had hardly been off my horse and had never closed my Eyes, so that I was quite unfit to write or dictate till this Morning.

Our Retreat was made without any loss of Men or Ammunition and in better order than I expected, from Troops in the Situation ours were; we brought off all our Cannon and Stores, except a few heavy pieces, (which in the condition the Earth was, by a long continued rain) we found upon tryal impracticable; the Wheels of the Carriages sunk up to the Hobbs, and rendered it impossible for our whole force to drag them; We left but little Provisions on the Island, except some Cattle, which had been driven within our Lines and

which after many attempts to force across the Water, we found impossible to effect. I have inclosed a Copy of the Council of War held previous to the Retreat,28 to which I beg leave to refer Congress for the reasons or many of them that led

28. Held August 29. These proceedings, in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison and William Grayson, are in the *Washington Papers*. They are accompanied by a minute of the unanimous decision to withdraw from Long Island to New York, in the writing of Joseph Reed, and signed by all the council except Washington and Fellows. From the appearance of the papers it seems that the advisability of obtaining a signed decision was an afterthought. (See General Orders, Aug. 31, 1776, *ante*.)

to the adoption of that measure. Yesterday Evening and last Night, a party of our Men were employed in removing our Stores, Cannon, Tents &ca. from Governors Island, which they nearly compleated. some of the Cannon yet remain but I expect will be got away to day.

In the Engagement on the 27th. Generals Sullivan and Stirling were made prisoners; The former has been permitted on his parole to return for a little time. From Lord Stirling I had a Letter by General Sullivan, a Copy of which I have the honor to transmit.29 It contains his Information of the Engagement with his Brigade. It is not so full and certain as I could wish, he was hurried most probably, as his Letter was unfinished. Nor have I been yet able to obtain an exact amount of our Loss, we suppose it from 700 to a 1000 killed and taken.30 General Sullivan says Lord Howe is extremely desirous of seeing some of the Members of Congress, for which purpose he was allowed to come out and to communicate to them what has passed between him and his Lordship. I have consented to his going to Philadelphia, as I do not mean or conceive it right to withhold or prevent him from giving such Information as he possesses, in this Instance.31

I am much hurried and engaged in arranging and making new Dispositions of our Forces, the movements of the Enemy requiring them to be immediately had, and therefore have

only time to add that I am, with my best regards to Congress, and to you. Their and your &ca.32

To THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

New York, September 1, 1776.

Sir: I was yesterday honored with your favor of that date, and should have Answered it by the Return of the Person who brought it; had I not been engaged then in a Multiplicity of business, which occasioned me

29. This letter is in the *Washington Papers* and is printed by Sparks in Appendix to volume 4 of *Writings of Washington*. (See note to Washington's letter to Congress, Aug. 29, 1776, *ante*.) Howe's account of the battle is printed in Force's *American Archives*, Fifth Series, vol. 1, 1255–1256, from the *London Gazette Extraordinary*, Oct. 10, 1776. There are a number of monographs on the battle, T. W. Fields's being a satisfactory one.

30. According to General Howe's return of the American prisoners taken on Long Island, the whole number amounted to 1,076. This list includes General Woodhull, and the militia under him, probably about 200, who were not in the action, but were taken afterwards at Jamaica. The British loss, as stated by General Howe, was 94 killed and missing and 283 wounded.— *Sparks*.

31. Sullivan's visit and delivery of Lord Howe's message to Congress caused sharp debate in that body. John Adams referred to him as “a decoy duck whom Lord Howe has sent among us to seduce us into a renunciation of our independence,” and he remarked *sotto voce* that he wished the first shot fired by the British in the Long Island engagement had gone through Sullivan's head. (See Benjamin Rush's *Memorial*.) A committee, consisting of Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge, was finally appointed (September 6) to confer with Howe. They met on Staten Island, and the conference came

to naught when it was discovered that Howe had no power to grant peace except on condition that the Declaration of Independence be rescinded.

32. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

to forget it, till he was gone.

In Respect to the Cattle on this Island, I shall desire the Commissary to purchase as many of them from the Inhabitants, as he can conveniently and will afford every Assistance the Situation of Affairs will admit of, to have the remainder secured; but as to those on Long Island, It is impossible for me to take any Measures, or give any Assistance to prevent their falling into the Enemys hands. I am persuaded the Number of Rangers you mention, were they to exert themselves, might be of Service and annoy the foraging Parties of the Enemy not a little. But Sir, I cannot spare any Men for that purpose. Tho' our Force is Called in from the out Posts and Collected on this Island, yet it will not be more than Competent to the defence of the several Lines necessary to be maintained; nor is it perhaps by any means so great as common estimation and report make it.

I am extremely obliged by your Opinion, on the defencible State of the Grounds above King's Bridge, tho' they had not escaped my Observation. Their Importance I am fully sensible of; and as far as the Critical situation of things will allow, their defence shall be attended to, to prevent if possible the Enemy from possessing them. I have the honor etc.

P.S. As the Posts at Kings Bridge are of such great Importance, I think it will be well and extremely necessary to be favored with your friendly exertions, in affording every Aid in your power for their defence. Cannot some more Militia be prevailed on to give their Assistance and in whom you can confide. I will not enlarge, being fully assured you will do all

you can.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, September 2, 1776.

Sir: As my Intelligence of late has been rather unfavorable and would be received with anxiety and concern, peculiarly happy should I esteem myself, were it in my power at this Time, to transmit such Information to Congress, as would be more pleasing and agreeable to their wishes: But unfortunately for me, unfortunately for them, It is not.

Our situation is truly distressing. The Check our Detachment sustained on the 27th. Ulto. has dispirited too great a proportion of our Troops and filled their minds with apprehension and dispair. The Militia, instead of calling forth their utmost efforts to a brave and manly opposition, in order to repair our Losses, are dismayed, Intractable and Impatient to return. Great numbers of them have gone off, in some instances almost by whole Regiments, by half ones and by Companies at a Time. This circumstance of itself, Independent of others, when fronted by a well appointed Enemy, superior in number to our whole collected force, would be sufficiently disagreeable, but when their example has Infected another part of the Army, When their want of discipline and refusal, of almost every kind of restraint and Government, have produced a like conduct but too common to the whole, and an entire disregard of that order and Subordination necessary to the well doing of an Army, and which had been inculcated before, as well as the nature of our Military establishment would admit of, our Condition is still more Alarming, and with the deepest concern I am obliged to confess my want of confidence, in the

generality of the Troops. All these circumstances fully confirm the Opinion I ever entertained, and which I more than once in my letters took the Liberty of mentioning to Congress, That no dependence could be in a Militia or other Troops than those enlisted and embodied for a longer period than our regulations heretofore have prescribed. I am persuaded and as fully convinced, as I am of any one fact that has happened, that our Liberties must of necessity be greatly hazarded, If not entirely lost, If their defence is left

to any but a permanent standing Army, I mean one to exist during the War. Nor would the expence incident to the support of such a body of Troops as would be competent almost to every exigency, far exceed that which is daily incurred, by calling in Succour and new Inlistments, and which when effected are not attended with any good consequences. Men who have been free and subject to no controul, cannot be reduced to order in an Instant, and the Priviledges and exemptions they claim and will have, Influence the Conduct of others, and the aid derived from them is nearly counterbalanced by the disorder, irregularity and confusion they Occasion. I can not find that the Bounty of Ten Dollars is likely to produce the desired effect. When men can get double that sum to engage for a month or two in the Militia and that Militia frequently called out,—It can hardly be expected. The addition of Land might have a considerable Influence on a permanent Inlistment6 Our number of men at present fit for duty are under 20,000. They were so by the last return and best accounts I could get, after the Engagement on Long Island, since which numbers have deserted.

6. On September 16 it was resolved: “That Congress make provision, for granting lands, in the following proportions…such lands to be provided by the United States, and whatever expense shall be necessary to procure such land, the said expence shall be paid and borne by the states in the same proportion as the other expences of the war, viz. To a colonel 500 acres; to a lieutenant colonel, 450; to a major, 400; to a captain, 300; to a lieutenant, 200; to an ensign, 150; each non-commissioned officer and soldier, 100.”

I have ordered General Mercer to send the men intended for the Flying Camp to this place, about a thousand in number and to try with the Militia, if practicable, to make a diversion upon Staten Island. Till of late I had no doubt in my own mind of defending this place, nor should I have yet, if the men would do their duty, but this I despair of. It is painful and extremely grating to me, to give such unfavourable Accounts, but it would be still more criminal to conceal the Truth at so critical a Juncture. Every power I possess shall be exerted to serve the Cause, and my first wish is, that whatever may be the event, the Congress will do me the Justice to think so. If we should be obliged to abandon the

Town, ought it to stand as Winter Quarters for the Enemy ? They would derive great conveniences from it on the one hand, and much property would be destroyed on the other. It is an Important question, but will admit of but little time for deliberation. At present I dare say the Enemy mean to preserve it, if they can. If Congress therefore should resolve upon the destruction of it, the Resolution should be a profound secret, as the Knowledge of it will make a Capital change in their plans.7 I have the Honor &ca.8

To BRIGADIER GENERAL HUGH MERCER

New York, September 3, 1776.

Dear Sir: From the present complexion of our Affairs, It appears to me of the utmost Importance and that the most Salutary consequences may result, from our having

7. This letter was read in Congress September 3; at once considered in Committee of the Whole, and resolution adopted for reinforcing Washington with three battalions from Virginia, two from North Carolina and one from Rhode Island. The States north of Virginia were urged to send all the aid in their power to the army at New York. It was also resolved: “That General Washington be acquainted, that Congress would have special care taken, in case he should find it necessary to quit New York, that no damage be done to the said city by his troops on their leaving it: The Congress having no doubt of being able to recover the same, though the enemy should, for a time, obtain possession of it.” (See *Journals of the Continental Congress*.)

8. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

a Strong Encampment at the post on the Jersey side of the North River,9 opposite to Mount Washington on this Island. I therefore think It adviseable and highly necessary, that you detach such a force from Amboy and Its dependencies, under the Command of an Officer of note, Authority and influence, with a Skilful Engineer, to lay out such additional

Works as may be Judged Essential and proper, and the Situation of the Ground will admit of, they should be begun and Carried on with all possible diligence and dispatch.

It will be proper, that a considerable Quantity of provision should be collected for the Maintenance and support of the Camp, and for this purpose I wish you to have proper measures adopted to procure It and have it deposited there and at places of Security not far distant.

As the Continental Officers now at this post will take rank and the command probably of any you may send, unless he should be a General Officer, I think and Wish if you have one that possibly can be spared and in whose Judgement, activity and fortitude you can rely, that he may be appointed to the command rather than an Officer of Inferior rank. I am &c—

9. Fort Lee, N.J.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, September 4, 1776.

Sir: Since I had the Honor of addressing you on the 2d. our affairs have not undergone a change for the better, nor assumed a more agreeable aspect than what they then wore. The Militia under various pretences of sickness &ca. are daily diminishing and in a little time I am persuaded their number will be very inconsiderable.

On Monday night a forty Gun Ship passed up the Sound between Governor's and Long Island and Anchored in Turtle Bay. In her passage she received a discharge of Cannon from our Batteries, but without any damage and having a favourable Wind and Tide, soon got out of their reach. Yesterday morning I dispatched Major Crane14 of the Artillery with two twelve pounders and a Howitzer to annoy her, who hulling her several times forced her from that Station and to take shelter behind an Island where she still continues.

There are several other Ships of War in the Sound

14. Maj. John Crane, of Knox's artillery.

with a good many Transports or Store Ships which came round Long Island, so that, that communication is entirely cut off. The Admiral with the main body of the Fleet is close in with Governor's Island.

Judging It expedient to guard against every Contingency, as far as our peculiar situation will admit, and that we may have resources left, If obliged to abandon this place, I have sent away and am removing above Kingsbridge, all our Stores that are unnecessary and that will not be immediately wanted.

I have inclosed several original Letters from some of our Officers, prisoners at Quebec, which fell into General Gates's hands and were transmitted by him to General Schuyler who sent them to me. General Gates adds, that the persons who brought them said Genl. Burgoyne had sent Messages to the Inhabitants upon the Lakes inviting their continuance on their Farms and assuring them that they should remain in security.

The Post Master having removed his Office from the City to Dobbs's ferry, as it is said, makes it extremely inconvenient, and will be the means of my not giving such constant and regular Intelligence as I could wish. Cannot some mode be devised by which we may have a pretty constant and certain Intercourse and communication kept up? It is an Interesting matter and of great importance

and as such I am persuaded will meet with due attention by Congress.

I have transmitted the Copy of General Gates's Letter, as sent me by General Schuyler, from which Congress will discover all the Information I have respecting General Burgoyne's Message and my latest Intelligence from Ticonderoga, with the returns of the Army there.

Those of the Army here it is impossible to obtain till the hurry and bustle we are now in, are a little over. I have &ca.

P.S. Congress will perceive by General Gates's Letter,15 his want of Musquet Cartridge paper, It is Impossible to supply him from hence, they will therefore be pleased to order what he wants, If it can be procured, to be immediately sent him from Philadelphia.16

To MAJOR GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER

New York, September 4, 1776.

Dear Sir: Your favors of the 29th. and 31st. Ulto. with their several Inclosures, have been duly received.

I sincerely wish the event of the Skirmish on Long Island had been as favourable to us as reported to you. Hurried and Involved in a Multiplicity of Business, I cannot give you a particular detail of It. I shall only add, that we lost in killed and wounded

15. Gates's letter to Schuyler, dated Aug. 26, 1776, is in the *Washington Papers*.

16. The text is from the copy made in the office of the Secretary of Congress.

and prisoners from 700 to 1000 Men, among the prisoners are General Sullivan and Lord Stirling. The Enemy's loss has not been ascertained yet, But there is reason to believe, from the continuance of the action and the heavy firings between them and Lord Stirling's Detachment, that it was considerable. We have been informed so by Deserters, they overpowered our people by their Numbers and constant reinforcements.

When I have an Opportunity and circumstances will admit, I will enquire after Lieut. Johnson10 and order him to Albany.

I am extremely obliged, by your Interposing to have the Boards sent down. I have informed the Quarter Master General, and directed him, to take measures for obtaining a large supply, as I have grounds to apprehend many will be wanted.

The short Inlistment of our Troops has been the Source of some of our misfortunes and of infinite trouble and difficulty already, and I am not without apprehension, that sooner or later, must prove of fatal consequence. I have wrote my sentiments very fully to Congress upon this Subject two or three Times. In a late Letter, I have urged the Expediency of a permanent Army during the War. The Necessity is too obvious to require Arguments to prove it. I think it will be adviseable to recruit out of the present Army as fast as possible; But I fear the progress will be but small. The bounties given by the different States, to raise their Quotas of men for so short a time, must have a prenicious tendency. Many will refuse to inlist, as that allowed by Congress is so low, in hopes of exacting more.

The Letters from our Officers in Canada, transmitted

10. Lieut. Martin Johnson, of Lamb's artillery.

by General Gates, I have sent to Congress with the return you inclosed. I have also perused and delivered your Letter to the Commissary, having sealed it first, and wish matters to be so ordered as best to promote the Service.

Observing that General Gates in his Letter to you, mentions his want of Cartridge paper for Musquets, I have wrote to Congress and requested them to supply it If possible, having none here or but very little, and have also directed the Quarter Master General to send up some Grind Stones, not knowing whether they can be had at Albany. I am &c.

P.S. Your Letter preceding the two Last, came to hand when I was sending away my papers and being put up with them after a cursory reading, I dont recollect it sufficiently to answer.

Being certain that we shall have occasion for a large Quantity of Boards for Barracks and Shelter for the Troops which will be posted at Kings bridge, in Its vicinity and over the River, opposite the Works erected at the upper end of this Island, I wish to be informed if they can be supplied and shall be glad those who undertake it will begin to hurry 'em down with all expedition, to the nearest Landing place to the Bridge.

To LIEUTENANT COLONEL HENRY BEEKMAN LIVINGSTON12

September 4, 1776.

Sir: In answer to both your favours Just received by Lieutt. Smith,13 I can only say, that circumstanced as we both are at present, it is not in my power to give you any other instructions for your Conduct, than that

12. Of the Fourth New York Regiment. He was then on Long Island.

13. Lieut. Samuel Smith, of the Third New York Regiment.

you pursue every step which shall appear to you necessary and Judicious, for annoying and harrassing the Enemy, and to prevent their forraging, and while those measures are in any degree effectual, I would wish to have you continue on the Island; but as soon as you find you can be of no longer Service, I would have you make your retreat to the main, without further delay. You will take care to have Boats so provided, as to secure your Retreat in the best manner possible. I am etc.

To BRIGADIER GENERAL HUGH MERCER

New York, September 5, 1776.

Dear Sir: I have been favoured with your two Letters of the 3rd. Instt. and observe what you have done in consequence of my Instructions. When I wrote for Troops to be sent to the post opposite Mount Washington, I did not imagine you would have so Many to spare.

About a Thousand under General Ewing,17 in addition to those already at the post, I think will be fully competent to Its defence and such Works as may be necessary to erect, and will also be sufficient to carry them on. More I conceive will be unnecessary and may be better employed elsewhere. I am &c.

P.S. You will be pleased to keep in view the matter I mentioned to you about Staten Island, Esteeming a Diversion there, if it can be effected will be of great Service.

17. Brig. Gen. James Ewing, of the Pennsylvania Militia.

To COLONEL FISHER GAY11

New York, September 4, 1776.

Sir: Whether you do not get the General Orders, with that regularity which is to be wished, or whether (which is hard to suppose) you do not attend to them, I will not undertake to determine, But it is a Melancholy truth, that Returns essentially necessary for the Commanding Officer to Govern himself by, and which might be made in an hour after they are called for, where care and Order are observed, are obtained with so much difficulty.

Nor can I help regretting, that not only regular Returns, but that orders, in instances equally important should be so little attended to. I therefore address myself to you in this manner, requesting in Express and peremptory terms, that you do without delay make out and return to the Adjutant General's Office immediately, an exact state of the Regiment or Corps under your Command. And that the like return be given in every Saturday at Orderly time without fail. I also desire in terms equally express, that you do not suffer the Men of your Corps to straggle from their Quarters, or be absent from Camp without leave, and even then, but few at a time. Your own Reputation, the safety of the Army, and the good of the cause depends, under God, upon our vigilance and readiness to oppose a Crafty and enterprising enemy, who are always upon the watch to take advantages. To prevent straggling let your Rolls be called over three times a day, and the delinquents

punished. I have one thing more to urge, and that is, that every attempt of the Men, to plunder, Houses, Orchards, Gardens &c. be discouraged, not only for the Preservation of property and sake of good order, but for the prevention of those fatal Consequences, which usually follow such diabolical practices. In short Sir, at a time when every thing is at stake, It behoves every Man to exert himself. It will not do for the Commanding Officer

11. Of a Connecticut State regiment.

of a Regiment to content himself, with barely giving Orders, he should see (at least know) they are executed. He should call his men out frequently and endeavour to impress them with a Just and true sense of their duty, and how much depends upon subordination and discipline. Let me therefore not only Command, but exhort you and your Officers, as you regard your Reputation, your Country, and the sacred Cause of Freedom in which you are engaged, to Manly and Vigorous exertions at this time, each striving to excell the other in the respective duties of his department. I trust it is unnecessary for me to add further, and that these and all other Articles of your duty you will execute with a Spirit and punctuallity becoming your Station. I am etc.

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

New York, September 6, 1776.

Sir: I have been honored with your favor of the 31st Ulto. and am extremely obliged by the Measures you are taking, in consequence of my recommendation Letter. The exertions of Connecticut upon this, as well as upon every other occasion, do them great honor and I hope will be attended with successful and happy Consequences. In respect to the mode of Conduct, to be pursued by the Troops, that go over to the Island, I cannot lay down any Certain rule, it must be formed and governed by Circumstances and the Direction of those who Command them.

I should have done myself the honor of transmitting you an Account of the Engagement between a detachment of our Troops and the Enemy on long Island on the 27th, and of our

Retreat from thence, before now, had it not been for the Multiplicity of Business I have been involved in ever since; and, being still engaged, I cannot enter upon a Minute and particular detail of the affair; I shall only add, that we lost, in killed, wounded and prisoners, from 700 to 1,000 Men. Among the Prisoners are Genl. Sullivan and Lord Stirling. The Inclosed list will shew you the names of many of the officers that are Prisoners; The Action was chiefly with the Troops from Jersey, Pennsylvania, the lower Counties, and Maryland, and Col. Huntingdon's Regt.; they suffered greatly, being attacked and overpowred by Numbers of the Enemy greatly superior to them. The Enemy's loss we have not been able to ascertain; but we have reason to believe it was considerable, as the Engagement was Warm and Conducted with great Resolution and bravery on the part of our Troops. During the Engagement, a deep Column of the Enemy descended from the Woods and attempted an Impression upon our Lines, but retreated immediately on the Discharge of a Cannon and part of the Musquetry from the line nearest to them. As the Main body of the Enemy had Encamped not far from our Lines, and I had reason to believe they intended to force us from them by regular Approaches, which the Nature of the Ground favored extremely, and at the same time meant, by the Ships of War, to cut off the Communication between the City and the Island, and by that means keep our Men divided and unable to oppose them any where; by the advice of the General Officers, on the night of the 29th, I withdrew our Troops from thence without any loss of Men and but little Baggage. I am &c.

To THE COMMITTEE OF SAFETY OF NEW YORK

Head Quarters, New York, September 6, 1776.

Sir: I have now before me your Letter of the 4th Inst., inclosing the report against Ordering out any more of the Militia from the Counties of Orange, Dutchess, Westchester or Ulster.

The reasons alledged by the Committee, to whom this matter was referred, are intirely satisfactory to me, and therefore I do not expect a Compliance with that part of my Letter which respects this Matter. I have the Honor to be &ca.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, September 6, 1776.

Sir: I was last Night honored with your favor of the 3d with sundry Resolutions of Congress and perceiving it to be their Opinion and determination that no Damage shall be done the City, in case we are Obliged to abandon it, I shall take every measure in my power to prevent it.

Since my Letter of the 4th., nothing very material has occurred, unless it is, that the Fleet are drawing more together and all getting close in with Governor's Island. Their designs we cannot learn, nor have we been able to procure the least information lately, of any of their plans or intended operations.

As the Enemy's movements are very different from what we expected and from their large Encampments a considerable way up the Sound, there is reason

to believe they intend to make a landing above or below Kings bridge and thereby to hem in our Army and cut off the communication with the Country; I mean to call a Council of General Officers to day or to morrow and endeavour to digest and fix on some regular and certain System of Conduct to be pursued, in order to baffle their efforts and counteract their Schemes and also to determine on the expediency of evacuating or attempting to maintain the City and the several posts on this Island.

The result of their opinion and deliberations I shall advise Congress of by the earliest Opportunity, which will be by Express, having it not in my power to communicate any

Intelligence by post as the Office is removed to so great a distance and entirely out of the way.20

I have inclosed a List of the Officers who are prisoners, and from whom Letters have been received by a Flag. We know there are others not included in the list.

General Sullivan having informed me, that General Howe is willing that an exchange of him for General Prescot should take place, it will be proper to send General Prescot immediately that it may be effected.

As the Militia Regiments in all probability will be impatient to return and become pressing for their pay, I shall be glad of the direction of Congress, Whether they are to receive it here, or from the Conventions, or Assemblies of the respective States to which they belong. On the one hand, the settlement of their Abstracts will be attended with trouble and difficulty; on the other they will go away much

20. See Washington's letter to Congress, Sept, 4, 1776, *ante*.

better satisfied and be more ready to give their aid in future, If they axe paid before their departure.

Before I conclude, I must take the Liberty of mentioning to Congress the great distress we are in for want of Money. Two month's pay and more to some Battalions, is now due the Troops here, without any thing in the Military chest to satisfy it. This occasions much disatisfaction and almost a general uneasiness. Not a day passes without complaints and the most Importunate and urgent demands on this head. As it may Injure the service greatly, and the want of a regular supply of cash produce consequences of the most fatal tendency, I entreat the attention of Congress to this Subject and that we may be provided, as soon as can be with a sum equal to every present claim.

I have wrote to General Howe proposing an Exchange of General McDonald for Lord Stirling and shall be extremely happy to obtain it, as well as that of General Sullivan for General Prescot, being greatly in want of them and under the necessity of appointing protempore some of the Colonels to command Brigades. I have &ca.

P S. As two Regiments from Carolina and 3 more from Virginia are ordered here, If they could embark at Norfolk &ca. and come up the Bay with Security, It would expedite their arrival and prevent the men from a long fatiguing march. This However should not be attempted; If the Enemy have Vessels in the Bay and which might probably intercept 'em.21

21. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The “Letter Book” records the last sentence thus: “If the Enemy have Vessels that could take them and that are in the Bay.”

To SIR WILLIAM HOWE

Head Quarters, New York, September 6, 1776.

Sir: By a Letter from Major General Sullivan, while on Long Island, and which he acquainted me was wrote by your permission, I was informed, it would be agreeable to exchange that Gentleman for Major General Prescott, and Brigadier Lord Sterling for any Brigadier of yours in our possession.

In consequence of this intelligence, I have wrote to Congress, requesting that General Prescott may be sent here, that this proposal may be carried into execution. We have no Brigadier of yours a Prisoner with us, except General McDonald, taken in North Carolina, whom I am willing to exchange for Lord Sterling, and shall be glad to know your pleasure on the Subject.19 I have the Honor to be Sir, etc.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, September 7, 1776.

Sir: This will be delivered you by Captain Martindale and Lieutenant Turner25 who were taken last Fall in the armed Brig Washington and who with Mr. Childs the 2d. Lieutenant have lately effected their escape from Hallifax.

Captain Martindale and these two Officers have applied to me for pay from the 1st. of January 'till this time But not conceiving myself authorized to grant it, however reasonable It may be, as they were only engaged 'till the last of December; at their Instance I have mentioned the matter to Congress and submit their case to their consideration. I have &ca.26

19. See Washington's letter to Sir William Howe, Sept. 19, 1776, *post*.

25. Capt. Sion Martindale and Lieut. Moses Turner were both of the Third Rhode Island Regiment before being detached for service on the Continental armed vessels.

26. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

New York, September 8, 1776.

Sir: I have just received the Resolve of your Convention, respecting the removal of the Bells belonging to the different Churches and Public Edifices in this City, to New Ark in the Province of New Jersey. The Measure I highly approve of, and shall accordingly have it Carried into Execution.

I have lately been Conversing with Genl Clinton, concerning the Defence of the Forts in the Highlands, who agrees with me in Sentiment, that the force already there is by no means Sufficient; I should therefore conceive it would be greatly in advancement of the Service, if you would cause a Reinforcement of Militia, amounting to about 600 Men, to be

sent there from the Counties of Ulster and Orange or any other that may be most proper and Convenient. They may be usefully and importantly employed, as well in defence of the Highlands, in case they should be attacked, as in erecting new Works and Fortifications, by which they may be rendered more Secure. I am, etc.

To BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES CLINTON

New York, September 8, 1776.

Sir: I have this day wrote to the President of the Convention of New York, requesting that an Aid of Six hundred Militia may be sent to you from the Counties of Ulster and Orange, or any other that is more proper and convenient, for the purpose of assisting you, either in the defence of the High lands, in case they should be attacked, or of constructing New Works and Fortifications, by which they may be rendered more

secure. However, whether you receive this Reinforcement or not, I must intreat you in the strongest manner to exert yourself to the utmost of your abilities in making those two posts at the High lands, as defensible as possible. Their great Importance must be obvious to every person. I am.

To BRIGADIER GENERAL HUGH MERCER

Head Quarters, New York, September 8, 1776.

Sir: I have received your letter by General Roberdeau34 of the 8th. of Septembr, and am sorry to hear of your indisposition, which however I hope will in a short time be removed. There has nothing very material passed in this Quarter since you were here, still matters wear so critical an aspect, that I have determined to call over Colonel Ward's Regiment35 from the post opposite Mount Washington; you will therefore be pleased to detach so many of the Troops under your Command, as will make up this deficiency, and still keep General Ewing's Compliment of fifteen hundred men intire. Not with standing this

Assistance, I shall still stand in need of two or three thousand men to reinforce the posts here, and am anxious for the arrival of the Maryland and Virginia Troops, which are on their march to this place, I shall be glad you will immediately inform me by Express, where they are, and when I may with Certainty expect them; I could wish they were pushed forward with all possible expedition. General Roberdeau will Communicate to you, the result of the Council, also any other thing material which are not mentioned in this Letter. I am, etc.

P.S. I desire you will direct the Engineer to Expedite the Works (to the utmost of his abilities) which are necessary for the defence of General Ewing's Post.

34. Brig. Gen. Roberdeau, of the Pennsylvania Militia.

35. Col. Andrew Ward's Connecticut State regiment.

To THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

New York, September 8, 1776.

Sir: I wrote you this Morning by your Express; but forgot to mention a Matter of Consequence. It being determined to remove our Sick to Orange Town, we shall want four Large Albany Sloops for that Purpose; The fatigue of traveling that distance by land, would not only be more than the patients could bear, but we have full employ for our Waggons in transporting Baggage, Tents &c. for the Troops from hence to our out Posts; I must therefore beg the favor of your honorable Body to procure the above number of Vessels and send them down with as much dispatch as possible to this City. I am etc.

P.S. I shall be glad to know by return of the Express, when I may probably expect the Sloops down, There are several now on the lower parts of the River with Boards; perhaps you might engage them to come this way, which would save time.

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

Head Quarters, New York, September 9, 1776.

Sir: I have the honor of your favor of the 5th Instant, and am sorry to say that, from the best information we have been able to obtain, the people on Long Island have, since our evacuation, gone generally over to the Enemy, and made such Concessions as have been required—some through compulsion I suppose, but more from Inclination. As a diversion upon the Island has been impracticable under these circumstances, I think you have done well in assisting the removal of the persons and Effects of our Friends from thence.

I observe, with great pleasure, that you have ordered the remaining Regiments of Militia that can be spared from the immediate defence of the Sea Coast, to march towards New York with all expedition. I cannot sufficiently express my thanks, not only for your constant ready compliance with every request of mine, but for your own strenuous exertions and prudent forecast in ordering matters so, that your force has generally been collected and put in motion as soon as It has been demanded.

With respect to the Militia, both Horse and Foot, I am of opinion that they will render us more service by rendezvousing at different places along the Sound, in Westchester County and thereabouts, than by coming directly to this City. It will not only give the Enemy, who are extending their Encampment up the Island, an Idea of our Force along the Coast, but If they should attempt a landing above King's Bridge, they will be in readiness to Join our force about that place. The Horse particularly, whose rapid motion enables them to be in a short time at any point of Attack. Besides, the difficulty of procuring

forage upon this Island for any number of Horses, is an objection to their being stationed here. I fear the Militia, by leaving their Homes so suddenly, and in a manner unprepared for a long absence, have sustained some Injury. To this cause I must impute, in a great

measure, their impatience to return, and the diminution of their number at this time to about 2000. Their want of discipline, the Indulgences they claim and have been allowed, their unwillingness, I may add refusal, to submit to that regularity and order essential in every Army, Infecting the rest of our Troops more or less, have been of pernicious tendency, and occasioned a good deal of confusion and disorder. But, Sir, these things are not peculiar to those from any one State; they are common to all Militia, and what must be generally expected: For men who have been free, and never subject to restraint or any kind of control, cannot be taught the necessity, or be brought to see the expediency, of strict discipline in a day.

I highly approve of your plan and proposition for raising such a naval force as will be sufficient to clear the Sound of the Enemy's Ships of War. If Admiral Hopkins will Join you, I should suppose It not only practicable, but a matter of certainty; and If It can be effected, many valuable and salutary consequences must result from It. As to draufting seamen from the Continental Regiments, It cannot be done, as their Numbers have been reduced so low already by taking men from them for the Gallies, Boats, and other purposes, that some of them have hardly any thing left but the name; besides, I must depend chiefly upon them for a successful opposition to the Enemy. If It can be done out of the Militia, I shall not have the least objection, and heartily wish the Enterprise,

whenever attempted, may be attended with all possible success. Secrecy and dispatch will be the most likely to give It a happy Issue. The Enemy's Ships can receive no reinforcements but such as go round Long Island. Our Works at Hell Gate preventing their sending Ships that way, they are sensible of their importance, and yesterday opened Two Three-Gun Batteries to effect their destruction, but as yet have not materially damaged them; and they must be maintained If possible. I have, &c.

P.S. The nearer the Militia and Horse keep on the Sound towards King's Bridge, the better, as they will be ready to oppose any Landing of the Enemy, and also to receive orders for reinforcing any posts on this side, in case of necessity.

To RICHARD, LORD HOWE

Head Quarters, New York, September 9, 1776.

My Lord: I do myself the Honor of transmitting to your Lordship the inclosed Letter, recommended to my care by Doctor Franklin and which just now came to Hand.41

If your Lordship shall incline to return an Answer to Dr. Franklin, and will Honor me with the charge of it, I will immediately forward it to him by Express. I am, etc.

41. Benjamin Franklin's letter of September 8 in answer to Howe's of August 16 informing his Lordship that the committee of Congress of which he (Franklin) was a member would soon be at Amboy, N.J., as a result of Howe's message through General Sullivan.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, September 11, 1776.

Sir: I was yesterday honored with your favor of the 8th. instant, accompanied with sundry Resolutions of Congress, to which I shall pay the strictest attention, and in the Instances required make them the future Rule of my Conduct.

The mode of Negociation pursued by Lord Howe, I did not approve of; But as General Sullivan was sent out upon the Business and with a Message to Congress, I could not conceive myself at Liberty to interfere in the matter, as he was in the Character of a Prisoner and totally subject to their power and direction. The list of Prisoners (before omitted thro' hurry) is now inclosed tho' it will probably have reached Congress before this. I shall write by the first Opportunity for Major Hawsaikse54 to repair to Philadelphia, he is in the Northern Army and will also mention the several Appointments in consequence of Colonel Sinclair's promotion.55

As soon as Generals Prescott and McDonald arrive, I shall take measures to advise General Howe of it, that the proposed exchange for General Sullivan and Lord Stirling may be carried into execution.

Since my Letter of the 8th. nothing material has occurr'd, except that the Enemy has possessed themselves of Montresor's Island, and landed a considerable Number of Troops upon it; this Island lies in the Mouth of Harlem River, which runs out of the Sound into the North River and will give the Enemy an easy opportunity of landing either on the low grounds of Morrisania; if their views are to seize and possess the passes above Kingsbridge, or on the Plains of Harlem, If they design to intercept and cut of the communication between our several Posts. I am making every disposition and arrangement that the divided State of our Troops will admit of, and which appear most likely and the best calculated to oppose their Attacks, for I presume there will be several. How the event will be God only knows; but you may be assured that nothing in my Power, circumstanced as I am, shall be wanting to effect a favorable and happy Issue.

By my Letter of the 8th. you will preceive,

54. Col. Nicholas Hausseger, of the Pennsylvania German Battalion. He had been major of the Fourth Pennsylvania Regiment; was taken prisoner at Princeton, N. J., Jan. 17, 1777, and joined the British.

55. Arthur St. Clair, colonel of the Second Pennsylvania Battalion. He had been promoted to brigadier general, Continental Army, Aug. 9, 1776; was again promoted to major general Feb. 19, 1777; served to close of the war.

that several of the Council were for holding the Town, conceiving it practicable for some time. Many of them now, upon seeing our divided state, have altered their oppinion, and allow the expediency and necessity of concentering our whole force, or drawing it more together.56 Convinced of the propriety of this Measure, I am ordering our Stores away,

except such as may be absolutely necessary to keep, as long as any Troops remain, that if an Evacuation of the City becomes Inevitable, and which certainly must be the case, there may be as little to remove as possible.

The inclosed Packet contains several Letters for particular Members of Congress and for some Gentlemen in Philadelphia; they came to hand Yesterday and were brought from France by a Captain Leviz, lately arrived at Bedford in the Massachusetts State; I must request the favor of you to open the packet and to have the Letters put in a proper Channel of Conveyance to the Gentlemen they are addressed to. I have &c.57

To BRIGADIER GENERAL HUGH MERCER

New York, September 11, 1776.

Sir: I have received your favour by Colo. Weedon.51 As it seems every day more probable that the posts at Kingsbridge will be Occupied by this Army and the principal defence made there, I have Ordered Colo. Bradlys52 Regiment to move from Bergen. As that post does not seem to be an object of the Enemys Attention, I am in doubt whether it is Necessary for you to replace this Regiment or leave it to the remaining Troops, as you best know what Number there are from your Camp at that post, I must leave it to you to direct a further supply or not, as under all Circumstances you think best and Necessary. We find a moving Camp will

56. On September 11 Gens. Nathanael Greene, Thomas Mifflin, John Nixon. Rezin Beall Samuel Holden Parsons, James Wadsworth, and John Morin Scott addressed a petition to Washington to convene a council of war to reconsider the previous decision (September 7) to hold New York City. The council was held September 12 at General McDougall's quarters. The petition, in Mifflin's writing, is in the *Washington Papers*.

57. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

51. Col. George Weedon, of the Third Virginia Regiment. He was Acting Adjutant General of the Continental Army Feb. 20, 1777; brigadier general, Continental Army, Feb. 27, 1777; resigned June 11, 1783.

52. Col. Philip Burr Bradley's Connecticut State regiment.

require a greater Number of Waggons than was expected. If Mr. Biddle53 could engage about 50 of the common Country Waggons, or in proportion, of the Philadelphia Teams, to go up to Burdetts ferry, it would greatly releive us; The Idea of impressing is very disagreeable and only to be adopted in case of the most urgent Necessity. The Enemy is taking Posts on the Islands about Hellgate, so as to make a landing with the greater ease and Convenience. We are endeavouring to give them a suitable Reception, and hope they will not be able to execute their Scheme. I am &c.

To ROBERT MORRIS

Head Quarters, New York, September 12, 1776.

Sir: I have been honored with your favor of the 7th. instant upon the Subject of Tents for this Army. That you might receive proper information of the number wanted, I directed the Quarter Master General to return you an estimate, whose Office it is to provide them. His report you will find in the inclosed Letter to which I beg leave to refer you, and requesting that the greatest Dispatch may be used in having them made and forwarded. I have the Honor etc.

53. Lieut. Col. Clement Biddle, deputy quartermaster general of the Flying Camp. He was Commissary General of Forage of the Continental Army from July, 1777, to June, 1780; colonel and quartermaster general of Pennsylvania from September, 1781, to close of the war.

To BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES CLINTON

Head Quarters, New York, September 12, 1776.

Sir: I have before me your two Letters of the 8th. and 10th. Instt. the first in closing Returns of the Number of Men and Ordinance and Artillery Stores at Forts Montgomery and Constitution; the last, Copies of two Letters from the Convention of the State of New York, by which it appears, they had ordered in 600 Militia, as a Reinforcement to the two posts and which I hope will prove Sufficient to put them in a proper State of defence.

I ordered Colo. Knox to provide and forward the different Articles wanted by you in the Ordnance department, but he informed me, that from the present unsettled State of our Magazine and Laboratory (many of our Stores being removed and on their way to Kingsbridge and Mount Washington) he could not comply at once with the whole of the demand, but would send what he could conveniently collect. The Convention of New York, having appointed Mr. Schenk to provide what Articles they found wanting at their late Review of your Works and Stores, and which include many of the Articles you wrote for, I hope, as he will make it his Business, that he will collect many Articles which Colo. Knox, from the present hurry of our Affairs, cannot attend to. And if they should both provide the same things, your Stores will only be fuller. I have again ordered the Quarter Master General to send up the Nails with all possible Expedition. The Convention having ordered an Armourer with proper Tools to be fixed at your two posts, I hope what Arms are at present out of repair, will be soon made fit for Use. We must make every Shift with our old Arms, till we can get better Supplied. I am &c.

To THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

Head Quarters, New York, September 12, 1776.

Sir: I yesterday received the favor of your Letter of the 9th. with its several inclosures, and am extremely happy that your Honble. Body had anticipated my recommendation, by resolving on an augmentation of Six hundred Men to the Garrisons in the Highlands; The

Importance of those Posts demands the utmost attention and every exertion to maintain them.

The Vessels for the removal of the Sick are not yet arrived; Their present Situation gives me great anxiety, as the Wind is now favorable, I would fain hope that a Sufficient number will come down to day, to take in the whole; If they do not, my distress will be much increased.

Genl Clinton in a Letter of the 8th., transmitted me a list of Artillery and Ordnance Stores wanted at Forts Montgomery and Constitution, which included the Several Articles you have determined to procure, except those mentioned below. I directed that they should be sent up, but as the Situation of our affairs at this time, may not perhaps admit of it; I think it will be prudent for Mr. Schenck58 whom you have appointed an Agent in this Instance, to get all he can. Should he be able to obtain the Supply you have voted to be necessary, and Genl Clinton's demand be Complied with also, no damage will be done, Our Stores will not be too large. I have the Honor to be etc.

58. John Schenck, jr., of Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

To MAJOR GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER

Head Quarters, New York, September 12, 1776.

Dear Sir: I Yesterday evening received your favour of the 8th Instant, with its inclosures.

You were right, in supposing me unable to comply with General Gates's request; I am by no means provided to Supply so large a demand and am glad you transmitted his Application immediately to Congress.

The papers you inclosed, but too strongly indicate the hostile intentions of the Indians; however, I trust if they should attempt an incursion upon the frontiers, that the force you

will be able to oppose to 'em, will be sufficient to repel their Attacks and prevent their doing much mischief.

I have delivered the returns of Boards and Plank, to the Quarter Master General, who will examine them and pay what. ever is due, as soon as proper Accounts are rendered him. As we shall have occasion for a great Quantity, I must request your Assistance in furnishing every supply in your power. Neither Timber or Boats will be wanted. I am exceedingly hurried by a Variety of Business now before me, and shall only add that I am etc.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, at Col. Roger Morris's House,65 September 16, 1776.

Sir: On Saturday about Sun set six more of the Enemy's Ships, (one or two of which were Men of War) passed between Governor's Island and Red Hook and went up the East River to the Station taken by those mentioned in my last. In half an Hour after, I received two Expresses, one from Colonel Serjeant at Horn's Hook (Hell Gate) giving an Account that the Enemy, to the amount of three or four Thousand, had marched to the River and were embarking for Barns's or Montresor's Island where Numbers of them then Incamped: The other from General Mifflin, that uncommon and formidable Movements were discovered among the Enemy, which being confirmed by the Scouts I had sent out, I proceeded to Harlem, where it was supposed, or at Morrisania, the principal attempt to land would be made: However nothing remarkable happened that Night. But in the Morning they began their operations. Three Ships of War came up the North River, as high as Bloomingdale, which put a total Stop to the removal by Water of any more of our Provision &ca. and about Eleven O'Clock those in the East River began a most severe and heavy Cannonade to scour the Grounds and cover the landing of their Troops between Turtle Bay and the City, where Breast Works had been thrown up to oppose them; as soon as I heard the firing, I road with all possible dispatch towards the place of landing, when to

my great surprize and mortification, I found the Troops that had been posted in the Lines, retreating with the utmost precipitation, and those ordered to support them, Parsons's and Fellows's Brigades, flying in every direction and in the greatest confusion, notwithstanding the exertions of their Generals to form them. I used every means in my power, to rally and get them into some order, but my attempts were fruitless and ineffectual and on the appearance of a small party of the Enemy, not more than Sixty or Seventy in Number, their disorder increased and they ran away in the greatest confusion without firing a single Shot. Finding that no confidence was to be placed in these Brigades and apprehending that another part of the Enemy might pass over to Harlem plains and cut of the retreat to this place, I sent orders to secure the Heights in the best manner with the Troops that were stationed on and near them, which being done; the retreat was effected with but little or no loss of Men, tho' of a considerable part of our Baggage occasioned by this disgraceful and dastardly conduct.66 Most of our Heavy cannon and a part of our Stores and Provisions, which we were about removing, was unavoidably left in the City, tho' every means, after it had been determined in Council to evacuate the post, had been used to prevent it. We are now Encamped with the Main body of the Army on the Heights of Harlem, where I should hope the Enemy would meet with a defeat in case of an Attack, If the generality of our Troops would behave with tolerable resolution, But, experience, to my extreme affliction, has convinced me that this is rather to be wished for than expected. However I trust that there are many who will act like men and shew themselves worthy of the blessings of Freedom.

I have sent out some reconoitring parties to gain Intelligence if possible, of the disposition of the Enemy and shall inform Congress of every material event by the earliest Opportunity. I have &ca.67

65. Colonel Morris's house, now known as the Jumel Mansion, was built by Morris when he married Mary, the daughter of Frederick Philipse, of Philipse Manor, which comprised a large part of Westchester, Dutchess, and Putnam Counties, N.Y. Washington had visited

the Philipses on his journey to Boston in 1756. The house is on high and commanding ground, called Washington Heights, in the Borough of Manhattan, New York, N.Y.

66. Ford quotes a “Letter from New York,” Sept. 27, 1776, printed in the *London Chronicle* (Nov. 19, 1776): “I forgot to mention that Mr. Washington shortly after the landing on New York island, narrowly escaped being made prisoner. He left Mr. Apthorpe's house, at Bloomingdale, a few minutes only before the British light infantry entered it.” Spark's quotes a letter from General Greene (September 17): “Fellows's and Parsons's brigades ran away from about fifty men and left his Excellency on the ground within eighty yards of the Enemy, so vexed at the infamous conduct of the troops, that he sought death rather than life.” The Rev. William Gordon, whose history of the Revolution must always be read with recollection that the author's enthusiasm for America had cooled before he published his work, recounts the episode as he is supposed to have gleaned it from first hand in the camp shortly after the retreat. Col. William Smallwood states that Washington caned and whipped the fleeing men, though he does not state with what. Howe reported to Germain (September 21) merely that the landing at Kips Bay was unexpected to the Americans and that the British cannonade was so severe that the descent was made without the least opposition. He made no mention of Washington After making due allowance for the excited recollections on the American side, colored by the chagrin for the panic, the bald fact seems to be that Washington continued his efforts to check the retreat until the British were so close as to put him in grave jeopardy of death or capture.

67. The following note was signed by Robert Hanson Harrison: “Sir, The above Letter is nearly a copy of a rough one sketched out by his Excellency. this morning, and who intended to sign it; but having rode out and his return or where to find him uncertain, I have sent it away without and have the honor, &c.”

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New York, September 14, 1776.

Sir: I have been duly honored with your favor of the 10th. with the Resolution of Congress which accompanied it, and thank them for the confidence they repose in my Judgment, respecting the evacuation of the City. I could wish to maintain it, Because It is known to be of importance, But I am fully convinced that it cannot be done, and that an attempt for that purpose, if persevered in, might and most certainly would be attended with consequences the most fatal and alarming in their nature.

Sensible of this, several of the General Officers since the determination of the Council mentioned in my last, petitioned that a second Council might be called to reconsider the propositions which had been before them upon the Subject. Accordingly I called one on the 12th.; when a large Majority not only determined a removal of the Army, prudent but absolutely necessary, declaring, they were entirely convinced from a full and minute inquiry into our situation, that it was extremely perilous and from every movement of the Enemy and the Intelligence received, their plan of Operations was to get in our Rear, and by cutting of the Communication with the Main, Oblige us to force a passage thro' them, on the Terms they wish, or to become prisoners in some short time for want of necessary Supplies of Provisions.61 We are now taking every Method in our Power to remove the Stores &ca. in which we find almost insuperable difficulties; They

61. The council was attended by the Commander in Chief, four major and eight brigadier generals. A question as to the post to be taken by the Army at or near Kings Bridge, in event of the evacuation of New York City, was debated. but the record of this is crossed out. Joseph Reed's record of the proceedings shows that it was decided by a vote of 10 to 3 to reconsider the decision (September 7) not to evacuate New York, but notes no action beyond this point other than that 8,000 men should be left to defend Mount Washington. The three dissenters in the vote to reconsider the decision to evacuate New York were Joseph Spencer, George Clinton, and William Heath. Ford notes that McDougall (Jan. 7, 1782) wrote that none were opposed to retreating from New York “but *fool, a knave* and *an*

obstinate, honest man." The record of this council of way (held September 12), in Joseph Reed's writing, is in the *Washington Papers*.

are so great and so numerous, that I fear we shall not effect the whole before we meet with some Interruption. I fully expected that an Attack some where, would have been made last night.

In that I was disappointed and happy shall I be, If my apprehension of one to Night or in a day or two, are not confirmed by the event. If it is deferred a while longer, I flatter myself all will be got away and our Force be more concentred and of course more likely to resist them with success.

Yesterday Afternoon Four Ships of War two of 40 and 2 of 28 Guns, went up the East River, passing between Governor's and Long Island and Anchored about a Mile above the City opposite Mr. Stivansents and where the Rose Man of War was laying before. The design of their going not being certainly known, gives rise to various conjectures; some supposing they are to cover the Landing of a part of the Enemy above the City: others that they are to assist in destroying our Battery on Horn's Hook, that they may have a free and uninterrupted navigation in the Sound. It is an object of great Importance to them, and what they are industriously trying to effect, by a pretty constant Cannonade and Bombardment.

Before I conclude, I would beg leave to mention to Congress, that the pay now allowed to nurses for their attendance on the Sick, is by no means adequate to their services. The consequences of which is, that they are extremely difficult to procure, indeed they are not to be got, and we are under the necessity of substituting in their places, a Number of Men from the respective Regiments, whose service by that means is entirely lost in the

proper line of their duty and but little benefit rendered to the Sick. The Officers I have talked with upon the Subject, all agree that they should be allowed a Dollar pr. Week and that for less they cannot be had.

Our Sick are extremely numerous and we find their removal attended with the greatest difficulty: It is a Matter that employs much of our time and care, and what makes it more distressing, is the want of proper and convenient places for their reception;— I fear their sufferings will be great and many, However nothing on my part that Humanity or policy can require shall be wanting to make them comfortable, so far as the State of things will admit of. I have &ca.62

62. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To GOVERNOR NICHOLAS COOKE

Head Quarters, Colo. Morris's House, September 17, 1776.

Sir: I recd the honor of your favor of the 6th. Inst., by Messrs. Collins, Babcok, and Stanton,71 and should have acknowledged it before now, had I not been prevented by the peculiar Situation of our Affairs.

I communicated my Sentiments to those Gentlemen, upon the Subject of your Letter and the several propositions that were before us; who, I doubt not, will make a full and due Report of the same to you and your Honble. Assembly: however, I shall take the liberty of adding, that the divided State of our Army, which, when collected in one body, is inferior to that of the Enemy—their having landed almost the whole of their force on Long Island, and formed a plan for cutting off all Communication between that and the City of New York, which we had but too good reason to believe practicable and easy to Effect with their Ships of War, made it necessary and prudent to withdraw our Troops from the former, that

our chance of resistance and opposition might be more probable and likely to be attended with a happy Issue.

I feel myself much concerned on Account of your Apprehensions for the Town of New Port and the Island of Rhode Island; and

71. John Collins, Joshua Babcock, and Joseph Stanton, a committee of the Rhode Island Assembly appointed to confer with Washington.

should esteem myself peculiarly happy, were it in my Power to afford means for their Security and that of the State in General, or to point out such Measures as would be effectual for that Purpose. But, Circumstanced as I am, it is not Possible for me to grant any Assistance; nor can I, with propriety, undertake to prescribe the mode, which will best promote their defence. This must depend on such a Variety of Circumstances, that I shou'd suppose you and the Assembly, who are in the State, will be much more Competent to the task; than what I, or any person out of it, can be; and, therefore, I can only recommend, that you will pursue such Steps as you, in your Judgment, shall think most conducive to that end; observing that it appears to me a Matter of extreme difficulty (if Practicable), to prevent the Enemy's Ships doing damage to every Island accessible to them, unless the passes, between them and the Main, are so Narrow, as to oblige them to come very near such Batteries, as may be erected for their Annoyance, on commanding Ground.

I cannot sufficiently express my thanks, for the readiness you and your Assembly manifested in ordering Troops &c. to Long Island, on hearing of my request to Govr. Trumbull upon that Subject. At the time that I made it, I conceived the plan of much Importance, and that many Valuable and Salutary Consequences might have resulted from it; but as things have undergone a Material Change since, it may not be improper to consider and be Satisfied of some facts, which ought to be clearly known, previous to any Attempt to carry it into Execution and on which the Success of it will greatly depend:

Such, as an intire Conviction of the friendly disposition of the Inhabitants of the Island; the Number that would join the Troops that might be sent over; The lengths they would go; The Support they would and can give and whether a retreat from thence could be safely effected in case it should be necessary. These Matters and others which a more Minute

Consideration of the Plan, will present to your View, should be well weighed and digested and which I thought it my duty to mention, especially as the scheme had originated with me. My Anxiety and Concern for the Inhabitants at the East end of Long Island, who have been represented always as friendly and well attached to the cause of the States, prompt me to wish them every Assistance; but if the efforts you could make in conjunction with Govt. Trumbull, would not promise almost a Certainty of Success, perhaps they might tend to aggravate their Misfortunes. The Committee stated sundry propositions respecting this Expedition; such as if any thing was attempted, where a stand should be made? This must be left to the discretion of those who Command, nor can I spare an Officer for that purpose nor recommend one. what Number of Men should be sent and what proportion from the Massachusetts? The Number necessary will depend upon the force they will have to oppose and the Assistance they would derive from the Islanders. The proportion from the Massachusetts on the Will of the Legislature or Voluntary Engagement of the People, in the Service. What Artillery they should have? I am of Opinion the Artillery would be Subject to Loss without any great advantage resulting from it. They also asked whether any frigates should be sent &c.? As the Enemy have now the free and intire Command of the Sound, and many Ships of War in it, they will be much more liable to be taken, than they would have been some time ago and when it was proposed by Govt. Trumbull to make an attempt upon the Ships above Hell Gate; In this Instance stance however 1 do not conceive myself at liberty to say any thing peremptory one way or other, having no power over the Frigates.

I am sensible of the force of your Observation, that the Common Cause might be benefited by the several States receiving early and Authentic Intelligence of every material occurrence. permit me at the same time to

assure you, that I often regret my Incapacity in this Instance and that the neglect does not arise from want of Inclination or thro' Inattention; but from the variety of important Matters, that are always pressing upon and which daily surround me. Before I conclude, I shall take this Opportunity to inform you, that having received certain Information that the Enemy's plan was to pass from Long Island and land in our rear with their Army; to cut off all Communication with the Country and for which they were making every possible disposition; a Council of General Officers determined last Week, on a Removal of the Army from the City, in order to prevent the fatal Consequences which must inevitably ensue, if they could have executed their Scheme: resolving at the same time, that every appearance of defence should be kept up, till our Sick, Ordnance and Stores could be removed. This was set about with the greatest Industry and as to the Sick was compleatly effected, but on Sunday Morning before we had accomplished the removal of all our Cannon, Provision and Baggage ***.72

72. The omitted portion is practically a duplication of the information in Washington's letter to Congress of the panic at Kips Bay. (See Washington's letter to Congress, Sept. 16, 1776, *ante*.)

This Scandalous Conduct occasioned a loss of several Tents and other Baggage which would have been easily secured. The remainder of the Troops that were in the City got out, and the Retreat of the whole was effected with the loss of but very few Men, not more than three or four that I have heard of were made Prisoners, and only one or two killed. I am now Encamped on the Heights above mentioned which are so well Calculated for defence, that I should hope, if the Enemy make an attack and our Men will behave with tolerable Resolution, they must meet with a Repulse, if not a total defeat. They advanced in sight yesterday in several large Bodies, but attempted nothing of a General Nature;

Tho' in the forenoon there were some smart Skirmishes between some of their parties and detachments sent out by me; In which I have the pleasure to inform you our Men behaved with bravery and Intrepidity, putting them to flight when in open Ground and forcing them from Posts they had seized, two or three times. From some of their Wounded Men which fell into our hands, the appearance of Blood in every place where they made their Stand and on the Fences as they passed, we have reason to believe they had a good many Killed and Wounded; tho' they did not leave many on the ground. In number our loss was very inconsiderable, but in the fall of Lieut. Col Knowlton,73 I consider it as great, being a brave and good Officer, and it may be increased by the Death of Major Leitch74 of the Virginia Regiment, who unfortunately received three Balls thro' his side. Having given you a Summary Account of the Situation of our affairs and in such Manner as Circumstances will

73. Lieut. Col. Thomas Knowlton, of the Twentieth Continental Infantry.

74. Maj. Andrew Leitch, of the Third Virginia Regiment. He died of his wounds Oct. 1, 1776.

admit of; I have only to add, that I have the honor to be &c.

P.S. The Committee have expressed their apprehensions of being obliged to abandon the Island of Rhode Island and New Port, and requested my opinion. at present I can see no Cause for it, and the propriety of the Measure must depend upon Circumstances; But I should suppose they ought to be very pressing and the Necessity great, before they ought to be given up, most certainly no imaginary Ills or Necessity should lead to such a Measure. At this time the danger can only be Ideal and if the Enemy persevere in their Plans, and our Men behave as they should do, I am persuaded they will not have an opportunity to employ their Attention else where this Campaign.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Col. Roger Morris's House, September 18, 1776.

Sir: As my Letter of the 16th. contained Intelligence of an important Nature, and such as might lead Congress to expect, that the Evacuation of New York and retreat to the Heights of Harlem in the manner they were made, would be succeeded by some other interesting event, I beg leave to inform them, that as yet nothing has been attempted upon a large and general plan of Attack.

About the time of the post's departure with my Letter, the Enemy appeared in several large Bodies upon the plains, about two and a half Miles from hence; I rode down to our advanced posts to put matters in a proper Situation, if they should attempt to come on: When I arrived there, I heard a firing which I was informed was between a party of our Rangers under the Command of Lieutenant Colonel Knolton and an advanced party of the Enemy. Our Men came in and told me, that the Body of the Enemy, who kept themselves concealed, consisted of about three hundred as near as they could

guess; I immediately ordered three Companies of Colonel Weedon's Regiment from Virginia, under the Command of Major Lietch and Colonel Knolton with his Rangers, composed of Volunteers from different New England Regiments, to try to get in their Rear, while a Disposition was making as if to attack them in front and thereby draw their whole attention that way. This took effect as I wished on the part of the Enemy. On the appearance of our party in front they immediately ran down the Hill, took possession of some fences and Bushes and a smart firing began, but at too great a distance to do much execution either side. The Parties under Colonel Knolton and Major Leitch unluckily began their Attack too soon, it was rather in flank than in Rear. In a little time Major Leitch was brought off wounded, having received three Balls thro' his side, and in a short time after Col: Knowlton got a Wound, which proved Mortal.

Their Men however persevered and continued the Engagement with the greatest Resolution. Finding that they wanted a support, I advanced part of Colo: Griffith's and

Colo: Richardson's78 Maryland Regiments, with some Detachments from the Eastern Regiments, who were nearest the place of Action. Those Troops charged the Enemy with great Intrepedity and drove them from the Wood into the plain, and were pushing them from thence (having silenced their Fire in a great measure), when I judged it prudent to order a retreat, fearing the Enemy (as I have since found was really the case) were sending a large Body to support their party. Major Leitch, I am in hopes, will recover but Col: Knolton's fall is much to be regretted, as that of a brave and good Officer. We had about forty wounded, the Number of Slain is not yet ascertained, but it is very inconsiderable.

By a Serjeant who deserted from the Enemy and came in this Morning, I find that their party was greater than I imagined. It consisted of the 2d. Battalion of Light Infantry, a Battalion of the Royal Highlanders and three Companies of the Hessian Rifle Men, under the command

78. Col. William Richardson and Col. Charles Greenberry Griffith, of the Maryland regiments of the Flying Camp. He resigned in October, 1779.

of Brigadier General Leslie.79 The Deserter reports that their Loss in wounded and missing was 89. and 8 killed. In the latter his Account is too small, as our people discovered and buried double that Number. This Affair I am in hopes will be attended with many salutary consequences, as it seems to have greatly inspirited the whole of our Troops. The Serjeant further adds, that a considerable body of Men are now encamped from the East to the North River, between the 7 and 8 Mile Stones, under the Command of General Clinton.80 General Howe he believes has his Quarters at Mr. Apthorp's House.81 I have the Honor to be etc.

P.S. I should have wrote Congress by Express before now, had I not expected the post every Minute, which I flatter myself will be a sufficient Apology for my delaying it. The late losses we have sustained in our Baggage and Camp Necessaries have added much to

our distress which was very great before, I must therefore take the liberty of requesting Congress to have forwarded, as soon as possible, such a supply of Tents, Blankets, Camp Kettles and other Articles as can be collected. We cannot be over stocked.82

To SIR WILLIAM HOWE

Head Quarters, September 19, 1776.

Sir: I have the honor to advise you, that in consequence of General Sullivan's Information, first by Letter and afterwards verbally, that you were willing to exchange him for Major General Prescott, and Brigadier Genl. Lord Sterling for any Brigadier of yours in our possession: I wrote to Congress to send General Prescott to some convenient place, from whence the proposed Exchange might be made. And supposing that it would be agreeable to exchange Lord Sterling for Brigadier General McDonald, he is also come forward with General Prescott.

79. Brig. Gen. Alexander Leslie.

80. Sir Henry Clinton.

81. Apthorp's house was due west of Hell Gate but nearer the Hudson River. Howe's report to Lord Germain (September 21) gives the British version: “On the 16th. in the morning, a large party of the enemy having passed, under cover of the woods, near to the advanced posts of the army by way of Vandewater's Height, the 2d and 3d battalions of light infantry, supported by the 42d regiment, pushed forward and drove them back to their intrenchments, from whence the enemy observing they were not in force attacked them with near 3,000 men, which occasioned the march of the reserve with two field pieces, a battalion of Hessian grenadiers, and the company of chasseurs, to prevent the corps engaged from being surrounded who repulsed the enemy with considerable loss and obliged them to retire within their works.…We had eight officers wounded, most of them slightly, fourteen men killed, and about seventy wounded.”

82. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

Both these Gentlemen are now at Elizabeth Town, and I only wait your Answer to this, in which you will please to fix the Time and place, when and where the Exchange may be effected. I am, etc.88

To THE MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATURE

Head Quarters, Colo. Roger Morris's House, 10 Miles from New York, September 19, 1776.

Gentn.: I was honored the Night before last, with your favor of the 13th. Inst.; and at the same time that I conceive your anxiety to have been great, by reason of the vague and uncertain Accts. you received respecting the Attack on Long Island, give me leave to assure you that the Situation of our Affairs and the Important

88. Howe answered on September 21. He agreed to exchange Sullivan for Prescott but demurred at Stirling for McDonald, as the latter was only a major in rank. Howe proposed instead Gov. Montfort Browne. Gen. Donald McDonald, of the Royal Highland Emigrants, had been captured by Col. Richard Caswell, of the North Carolina Militia, the day after the action at Moores Creek Bridge, in North Carolina, February 27. He was exchanged Dec. 3, 1776. The last paragraph of Howe's letter recited: “My Aid de Camp charged with the Delivery of this Letter will present to you a Ball cut and fixed to the Ends of a Nail, taken from a Number of the same Kind, found in the Encampments quitted by your Troops on the 15th Instant. I do not make any Comments upon such unwarrantable and malicious Practices, being well assured the Contrivance has not come to your Knowledge.” Howe's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

concerns which have surrounded me, and which are daily pressing on me, have prevented me, from transmitting in many Instances, the Intelligence I otherwise should have conveyed.

In respect to the Attack and retreat from long Island, the Public papers will furnish you with Accounts nearly true. I shall only add, that in the former we lost about 800 Men; more than three fourths of which were taken Prisoners. This Misfortune happened in great Measure, by two Detachments of our people, who were posted in two Roads leading thro' a Wood, in order to intercept the Enemy in their March, suffering a Surprise and making a precipitate retreat; which enabled the Enemy to lead a great part of their force against the Troops Commanded by Lord Stirling which formed a third detachment, who behaved with great Bravery and Resolution, charging the Enemy, and maintaining their Posts from about Seven or Eight O'Clock in the Morning, 'till two in the afternoon; When they were Obliged to Attempt a retreat, being surrounded and overpowred by Numbers on all Sides, and in which many of them were taken, one Battalion, Smallwoods of Maryland, lost 259 Men and the general damage fell upon the Regiments from Pennsylvania Delaware and Maryland and Col Huntingdon's of Connecticut. As to the Retreat from the Island, it was effected without loss of Men and with but very little Baggage; a few heavy Cannon were left, not being Movable, on Account of the Grounds being soft and miry, thro' the Rains that had fallen. The Enemy's loss, in killed we could never ascertain, but have many reasons to believe that it was pretty considerable, able, and exceeded ours a good deal. The Retreat from thence was Absolutely Necessary, The Enemy having landed the Main body of their Army there to attack us in front, while their Ships of War were to cut off the Communication with the City, from whence resources of Men, Provisions &ca. were to be drawn.

Having made this Retreat, and long after, we discovered by their Movements and the Information we reed from deserters and others, that they declined attacking our Lines in the City and were forming a

Plan to get in our Rear with their land Army, by crossing the Sound above us, and thereby cut off all intercourse course with the Country and every Necessary Supply. The Ships of War were to co-operate, Possess the North River and prevent Succour from the Jerseys &c. This Plan appearing probable and but too practicable in its execution; it became Necessary to guard against the fatal Consequences that must follow, if their Scheme was effected, for which purpose I caused a removal of a Part of our Stores, Troops &c from the City; and a Council of General Officers determined on thursday last, that it must be intirely abandoned, holding up however every Shew and appearance of defence, till our Sick and all our Stores could be brought away. The Evacuation being resolved on, every exertion in our power was made, to baffle their design and effect our own. The Sick were Numerous and an object of great Importance, happily we got them away; but before we could bring off all our Stores, on Sunday Morning Six or Seven Ships of War, which had gone up the East River some few days before, began a most severe and heavy Cannonade. ***90

90. The omitted portion is a repetition of the account of the Kips Bay affair. (See Washington's letter to Congress, Sept. 16, 1776, *ante*.)

The Retreat was effected with the loss of three or four Men only. We encamped and still are on the Heights of Harlem, which are well calculated for defence against their approaches. on Monday Morning they advanced in Sight in Several large Bodies, but attempted nothing of a General Nature; Tho' there were smart Skirmishes between their advanced parties and some Detachments from our Lines which I sent out; In these our Troops behaved with great Resolution and Bravery, putting them to flight in open Ground and forcing them from posts they had Seized two or three times. A Serjeant who deserted from them, Says, the Report was, they had 89 Missing and Wounded, and Eight Killed. in the last Instance his Account is too Small, because our People have buried more than twice as Many. In Number our Loss was very inconsiderable, but in the fall of Lieut Colo. Knowlton of Connecticut, I consider it as great, being a brave and good Officer. Major Leitch who Commanded a detachment from the Virginia Regiment, unfortunately received

three Balls thro' his side, he still supports his Spirits and seems as if he would do well. Colo Knowlton was Interred with every honor due to his Merit and that the Situation of things would admit of. Since this affair, nothing has happened. The Enemy, it is said, are bringing forward several Heavy Cannon to force us from the Heights. At the same time that they open their Batteries in front, their Ships of War, Seven or Eight of

which are in the North River, are to Cannonade our right Flank. Thus have I run over, in a cursory rough way, an Account of the most material Events from the Battle on Long Island to the present moment. I have not time to study order or Elegance. This however I do not so much mind, and only wish my Narrative was more agreeable. But we must set down things as they are. I hope they will be better: Nothing on my part shall be wanting to bring about the most favorable Events.

I am now to make my most grateful Acknowledgments to your Honble. Body, for the succour they meant to afford me in the Militia lately Ordered to March; and have only to lament, that they should be so unprovided with Tents and other Camp Necessaries. Our Distresses in these Instances are extremely great, having by no means a Sufficiency for the Troops already here, nor do I know how they can be procured. I am at a loss for the Officers Names who Command this Reinforcement as they are not Mentioned. However, I have wrote by Fessenden, that they should lead the Men on as fast as possible, sending before them, when they get within one or two days March of King's Bridge, an Officer to receive Orders from me, How they are to be disposed of. Instructions given now, might become improper, by the Intervention of a Variety of Circumstances. I have the honor to be &c.

To THE OFFICER COMMANDING THE MASSACHUSETTS MILITIA89

Head Quarters, at Colo. Morris's House, 10 Miles from New York, September 19, 1776.

Sir: The Honourable Assembly of the State of the Massachusets Bay having informed me, by Letter of the 13th. Instt., that they have Ordered a Number of Militia to reinforce

the Army under my Command, and requested my Orders for their Destination; I therefore request, that you will give direction, that the whole of them may be brought forward, as expeditiously as they can; sending before you, when you get within three or four days march of Kingsbridge, an Officer to receive Instructions from me, how they are to be Stationed and disposed of. It will be proper, to send Notice of this to the Officers who are behind you with part of the Men, that they may know how to conduct themselves. I am &c.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Heights of Harlem, September 20, 1776.

Sir: I have been honored with your favor of the 16th. with its inclosures; to prevent the injury and abuses which would arise from the Militia and other Troops carrying away Ammunition and Continental property, I have published the substance of the Resolves upon the Subject, in General Orders.

Since my Letter of Yesterday, nothing of importance has cast up; The Enemy are forming a large and extensive encampment, in the plains mentioned in my last and are busily employed in transporting their Cannon and Stores from Long Island. As they

89. The “Letter Book” copy addresses this to the commanding officer of the First Division of Massachusetts Militia.

advance them this way, we may reasonably expect their Operations will not long be deferred.

Inclosed are sundry Letters &ca. to which Congress will be pleased to pay such regard, as they may think them deserving of. The Letter from Monr. Devourony93 came open, under cover of one to me. Those from Colonel Hand and Colonel Ward, contain a list of vacancies in their Regiments, and of the Persons they esteem proper to fill them. The former, I believe returned no list before, the latter says he never got any Commissions.

Generals Howe and Erskine's Proclamations,94 shew the Measures that have been pursued to force and seduce the Inhabitants of Long Island from their Allegiance to the States, and to assist in their destruction.

As the period will soon arrive, when the Troops composing the present Army, (a few excepted) will be disbanded according to the tenor of their Inlistments and the most fatal consequences may ensue, if a suitable and timely Provision is not made in this Instance, I take the Liberty of suggesting to Congress, not only the expediency, but the absolute necessity there is, that their earliest attention should be had to this Subject. In respect to the time, that Troops should be engaged for, I have frequently given my Sentiments, nor have I omitted to express my Opinion of the difficulties that will attend raising them, nor of the Impracticability of effecting It, without the allowance of a large and extraordinary bounty.

It is a melancholy and painful consideration to those who are concerned in the Work, and have the command, to be forming Armies constantly, and to be left by Troops just when they begin to deserve the Name, or perhaps at a Moment when an important blow is expected. This I am informed will be the case at Ticonderoga, with part of the Troops there, unless some system is immediately come into, by which they can be induced to stay. General Schuyler tells me, in a letter received yesterday,

93. Chevalier de Berruyer du Maurony. He wrote from Boston (September 9) asking permission for his vessel to leave that port for the West Indies. His letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

94. Sir William Howe and Sir William Erskine. The latter had been colonel of the Eightieth Foot and was now a brigadier with the rank of major general in America. Howe's proclamation, signed by both Lord and Sir William Howe, was dated September 19, and promised in the King's name a revision of his instructions and pardons and favors to all who would now return to the British allegiance. A copy is in the *Papers of the Continental*

Congress. It was published in the *New York Gazette* of Sept. 9, 1776; in the weekly *Mercury* of Sept. 30, 1776; and repeated in the latter Oct. 7, 1776.

that DeHaas,95 Maxwell's96 and Winds's97 Regiments stand engaged only till the beginning of next Month, and that the Men, he is fearful, will not remain longer, than the time of their Inlistments.

I would also beg leave to mention to Congress, that the Season is fast approaching, when Cloaths of every kind will be wanted for the Army. Their distress is already great, and will be encreased, as the weather becomes more severe. Our situation is now bad, but is much better than the Militia that are coming to Join us from the States of Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut, in consequence of the requisition of Congress. They I am informed have not a single Tent, or a necessary of any kind, nor can I conceive, how It will be possible to support them. These circumstances are extremely alarming and oblige me to wish, Congress to have all the Tents, Clothing of every kind, and Camp necessaries, provided and forwarded that are to be procured. These Eastern reinforcements have not a single necessary, not a pan or a Kettle, in which we are now greatly deficient. It is with reluctance that I trouble Congress with these Matters, but to whom can I resort for relief but to them? The necessity therefore which urges the Application, will excuse It, I am persuaded.

I have not been able to transmit Congress a Genl. return of the Army this Week owing to the peculiar situation of our Affairs and the great shifting and Changing among our Troops. As soon as I can procure One a Copy shall be forwarded to Congress. I have the Honor etc.

September 21, 1776.

Things with us remain in the situation they were Yesterday.98

95. Col. John Philip de Haas, of the Second Pennsylvania Regiment.

96. Col. William Maxwell, of the Second New Jersey Regiment.

97. Col. William Winds, of the First New Jersey Regiment.

98. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To MAJOR GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER

Head Quarters Colo. Roger Morris's, 10 Miles from New York, September 20, 1776.

Sir: I have your several favors of the 9th. 12th. and 16th Instt. with their inclosures. I am particularly happy to find by the Copies of General Arnold's and Colo. Dayton's Letters, that your apprehensions of an Indian War in your Quarter have entirely vanished, and that you have disbanded the Militia in consequence.

I clearly see, and have severely felt the ill effects of short enlistments, and have repeatedly given Congress my sentiments, thereon; I beleive they are by this time convinced, that there is no opposing a standing, well disciplined Army, but by one upon the same plan; and I hope, if this Campaign does not put an end to this contest, they will put the Army upon a different footing, than what it has heretofore been. I shall take care to remind them, that the terms for which DeHaas's Maxwell's and Wind's Regiments enlisted, expires the beginning of October, but if they have not already thought of taking some steps to secure them a while longer, it will be too late; except the Officers will exert themselves in prevailing on the Men, to stay till their places can be supplied by some means or other. If the Officers are spirited and well inclined, they may lead their men as they please.

I removed my Quarters to this place, on Sunday last, it having been previously determined, by a Council of General Officers, on the preceding Thursday, to evacuate New York; The reasons that principally weighed with them, were, that from every information, and every movement of the Enemy, it was clear, that their attack was not meditated against the City, their intent evidently was, to throw their whole Army, between part of ours in

New York, and its environs, and the remainder about Kingsbridge, and thereby cut off our communication with each other and with the Country. Indeed their operations on Sunday last, fully satisfied the opinion

of the Council, and the steps taken in consequence; for on that Morning, they began their landing at Turtle Bay, and continued to throw over great Numbers of men, from Long Island, and from Montresor's and Bohhanan's Islands, on which they had previously lodged them. As we had exerted ourselves in removing our Sick and Stores of every kind, after the measure of abandoning had been determined upon, very few things, and but three or four Men fell into the Enemy's hand.

On Monday last, we had a pretty sharp skirmish between two Battalions of light Infantry and Highlanders, and three Companies of Hessian Rifle Men, commanded by Brigr. Leslie, and Detachments from our Army under the Command of Lieutt. Colo. Knowlton of Connecticut, and Major Leitch of Virginia. The Colo. received a mortal wound, and the Majr. three balls thro' his body, but he is likely to do well. Their parties behaved with great bravery, and being supported with fresh troops, beat the Enemy fairly from the field. Our loss, except in that of Colo. Knowlton, a most valuable and gallant Officer, is inconsiderable. That of the Enemy, from Accounts, between Eighty and One hundred Wounded, and fifteen or twenty killed. This little advantage has inspirited our troops prodigiously, they find that it only requires resolution and good Officers to make an enemy, (that they stood in too much dread of) give way.

The British Army lays incamped about two Miles below us, they are busy in bringing over their Cannon, and Stores from Long Island, and we are putting ourselves in the best posture of defence, that time and Circumstance will admit of.

I inclose you Copies of several resolutions of Congress, respecting the Northern Army &c, not knowing whether they have yet been transmitted to you, I received Capt. Varicks resignation, which shall be forwarded to Congress this day. I am &c.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Heights of Harlem, September 22, 1776.

Sir: I have nothing in particular to communicate to Congress respecting the situation of our Affairs, It is much the same as when I had the Honor of addressing you last.

On Friday night, about Eleven or twelve O'Clock a fire8 broke out in the City of New York, near the New or St. Pauls Church, as It is said, which continued to burn pretty rapidly till after Sunrise the next morning. I have not been Informed how the Accident happened, nor received any certain Account of the damage. Reports says many Houses between the Broadway and the River were consumed. I have the Honor to be &ca.9

8. Responsibility for the fire does not rest with any official, civil or military. It was probably started to cover looting by the criminal element. There were many exaggerated reports published in the London papers in October, in which the usual tales of bad blood between the New England and other troops are again recounted. The New Englanders wanted to burn the town but were prevented by the New Yorkers and Pennsylvanians, according to the *London Chronicle*.

The Pennsylvania Journal of Oct, 20, 1776, states: “The fire originated at or near Whitehall, soon extended to the Exchange, took its course up the west side of Broad Street, as far as Verlattenberg Hill, consuming all the blocks from the Whitehall up. The flames extended across the Broadway from the house of Mr. David Johnson to Beaver Lane, or Fischer's Alley, on the west, and carried all before it, a few buildings excepted, to the house at the corner of Barclay Street, wherein the late Mr. Adam Vandenberg lived, sweeping the cross streets in the way….The cause of the fire is not known. We imagine about a 6th part of the whole city is destroyed.”

Sparks notes that in describing this catastrophe the British commander wrote to Lord George Germain on the 23d that the town was set on fire in several places with matches

and combustibles that had been prepared with great art and ingenuity. He added: “Many were detected in the act, and some killed upon the spot by the enraged troops in garrison; and had it not been for the exertions of Major-General Robertson, the officers under his command in town, and the brigade of guards detached from the camp, the whole must infallibly have been consumed, as the night was extremely windy. The destruction is computed to be about one quarter of the town.”

9. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

Head Quarters, Heights of Harlem, September 23, 1776.

Sir: Genl Howe, in a Letter received from him yesterday Evening by a Flag, having offered to exchange Brigadier Genl. Lord Stirling for Governor Montfort Brown, and also requested that Govr. Skene may be granted his liberty without delay, assuring me that Mr. Lovell shall be immediately enlarged, on his Arrival from Hallifax and whose exchange for Governor Skene's has been agreed upon; I must take the Liberty of requesting the favor of your Notice to these two Gentlemen, and that you will provide them with a proper Escort to repair to Head Quarters as soon as they can, with their baggage; that the proposed Exchange for Lord Stirling may be effected, and Genl. Howe's request be Complied with respecting Governor Skene's being returned. The Gentlemen are to consider themselves under parole, till such time as they are sent from Head Qurs. to General Howe.

I must beg your excuse, for not having wrote you of late upon the Situation of our Affairs, and such Events as have cast up in the Military Line. I shall only add, that the Important Concerns which have Commanded my Closest attention, have been the Cause, and, I am fully persuaded, will furnish me with a Sufficient apology.

Of the evacuation of the City of New York, on Sunday Sennight, and the retreat to this Place you will have heard before now, and of the Manner in which it was conducted. I

am certain, a minute relation of them, would only increase the uneasiness, which would naturally arise upon hearing the Events; and therefore, as I have not time, I shall not enter upon it. The Enemy by their Movements having unfolded their Plan of Operations, and discovered that they declined making a direct attack upon the Town, and that their designs were to land in our Rear and to cut off all intercourse with the Country; at the same time to prevent any Communication with the Jersey and States, South of the North River, by

means of their Ships of War; It became necessary to adopt such Measures, as seemed best calculated to baffle their schemes and promote the Common Interests. To these ends, a Council of Officers determined the Evacuation of the City absolutely necessary, and I have only to wish, that it had been made in a Way more honorable and with less loss of Baggage; which might have been the case, had the Troops that remained there, for the defence of the Lines, not betaken themselves to a most precipitate and disgraceful flight, contrary to the exertions of their General officers and every effort in my Power to prevent and form them. Having gone from hence, as soon as the Ships began their Cannonade, and whither I had come the Night before, to the Main Body of our Army, in expectation of an Attack that night or the next Morning; as the parade of the Enemy and the unusual Stir amongst them, strongly Indicated one. The next Morning, several large Columns of them appeared on the Plains, at the distance of about two Miles and a half below us, and some smart Skirmishes ensued between their Advanced parties composed of the 2d. Battallion of Infantry, a Regt. of Royal Highlanders, and three Companies of the Hessian Chauseurs or Rifle Men and the detachments which I sent out to oppose them. Upon this Occasion, our Men behaved with great Spirit and Intrepidity, putting the Enemy to flight and forcing them from their Posts two or three times. Our people buried Sixteen or Eighteen of their dead, as they say; and a Serjeant who has since deserted, reports, they had Eighty Nine Missing and Wounded. Our Loss in Number was inconsiderable, but must be considered as great, in the fall of Lieut. Colo. Knowlton of your State who Commanded a party of Rangers, composed of Volunteers from the several New England Regiments, and who was a brave and good officer. Every honor was paid to his merit in his Interment, that

the Situation of things would admit of. The Enemy have formed a large Encampment in the plains, or rather Heights, below us, extending across, as it were, from the East to the North River; but have attempted nothing as yet of a General nature. We are making every disposition in our power, for defence and I should hope from the Ground we are on, If they make an

Attack and our Men behave with tolerable resolution and firmness, that they will meet with a repulse, or, at least, any advantage they gain will be attended with Sorrow and a Considerable Loss. Major Leitch, who led on a detachment of the Virginia Regiment in the affair of Monday, received three Balls thro' one Side; he still retains his Spirits and seems as if he would recover. On friday Night, about Eleven or twelve OClock, a fire broke out in the City of New York, which, burning rapidly till after Sun rise next morning, destroyed a great Number of Houses. By what means it happened we do not know; but the Gentleman who brought the Letter from Genl. Howe last night, and who was one of his Aide De Camps, informed Col. Reed, that several of our Countrymen had been punished with various deaths on Account of it; some by hanging, others by burning, &c., alledging that they were apprehended when Committing the fact. I have &c.

P.S. I would choose that Governors Brown and Skene should be stopt, when they come within Ten or twelve Miles, and detained till one of the Escort can inform me of their coming, and receive my directions respecting them.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, September 24, 1776.

Sir: The post being about to depart. I have only time to add, That no event of importance has taken place on this side Hudson's River since my last of the 22d. instt.

The inclosed Letter received last Night from Genl Greene, who now commands in the Jerseys, will give Congress all the information I have respecting the evacuation of Powles Hook and the landing of the Enemy to possess It.20

I this minute obtained a Copy of the General

20. Greene's letter, dated Sept. 23, 1776, is filed with Washington's in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

return of our force, the first I have been able to procure for some time past, which I do myself the honor of transmitting for the satisfaction of Congress. I am &ca.

P.S. The Thirteen Militia Regiments from Connecticut, being reduced to a little more than Seven Hundred Men Rank and file, fit for duty, I have thought proper to discharge the whole, to save the States the immense charge that would arise for officers pay. There are too, many Militia that have just come in and on their way from that State, none of which are provided with a Tent or a single Camp utensil.21

This distresses me beyond measure.22

To SIR WILLIAM HOWE

Head-Quarters, Heights of Haerlem, September 23, 1776.

Sir: I yesterday evening received the favor of your letter of the 21st. by your Aid de Camp Captn. Montresor11 ; in consequence of which, I this morning despatched an Express to Elizabeth Town with orders that Major Genl. Prescott should be permitted to return in the Boat that carried Genl. Sullivan over to that place.

I most readily concur in the proposition you are pleased to make for the Exchange of Brigadier General Lord Stirling for Governor Montfort Brown and have sent for him accordingly. I should hope that Lord Stirling will be immediately set at liberty, on my

promise that Governor Brown shall be sent to you as soon as he arrives.12 I had no doubt but Mr. McDonald's title would have been acknowledged, having understood that he received his Commission from the hands of Governor Martin13 , nor can I consent to rank him as Major, till I have proper authority from Congress, to whom I shall state the matter upon your representation.

Agreeably to your request, I shall transmit to

21. In his journey to Staten Island, N.Y., John Adams noted (*Works*, vol. 3, p. 75) the straggling and loitering soldiers on the road and in the public houses and conceived “but a poor opinion of the discipline of our forces, and excited as much indignation as anxiety.” Upon his return to Congress, at his instance, and through the Board of War, a resolution for enforcing and perfecting discipline in the army was adopted. “That the commander in chief of the forces of these states in the several departments, be directed to give positive orders to the brigadier generals and colonels, and all other officers in their several armies, that the troops under their command, may every day, be called together, and trained in arms, in order that officers and men may be perfected in the manual exercise and manœuvres, and inured to the most exemplary discipline, and that all officers be assured that the Congress will consider activity and success in introducing discipline into the army, among the best recommendations for promotion.” (See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, Sept. 19, 1776.) This officious resolution must have reached Washington before the 22d, and was the cause of the letter of the 24th,. which was written by his own hand, and shows no sign of resentment at the criticism thus leveled against him by Adams and the Congress. The extreme difficulties to be overcome in obtaining even the semblance of discipline in such an army as Congress gave to Washington are described in the letters of Reed, now Adjutant General, who, soon after, sent in his resignation. John Sloss Hobart saw Washington on the evening of the 24th and spoke of him as “much indisposed.”—*Ford*.

22. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

11. Capt. Robert Montresor, of the Forty-ninth Foot, British Army.

12. Washington wrote to Brig. Gen. Hugh Mercer (September 23) directing him to send forward General Prescott but to return McDonald to Philadelphia and take the directions of Congress concerning him. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

13. Gov. Joseph Martin, of North Carolina.

Lieutt. Colo. Campbell,14 a copy of the List of Officers of the 42d. and 71st. Regiments, taken by us last spring, that it may be rectified in the Instances in which it may be wrong, and will then place opposite to their Names the Officers I would wish in return for them: The Exchange of privates, I shall take the earliest opportunity in my power to carry into execution; but their being greatly dispersed through the New England Governments, in order to their better accommodation, will prevent it for some time.

Having the fullest confidence in your assurance, that Mr. Lovell will be released when he arrives from Halifax, I have wrote for Governor Skene to come to Head Quarters, that he may proceed immediately to you.

As to the Exchange of prisoners settled between Captn. Foster15 and Genl. Arnold, I beg leave to inform you, that it was a transaction, in which I had not the smallest concern, nor have I authority to give directions in any degree respecting the matter.

The information you have received concerning the ill-treatment of your Officers, I would fain hope is not generally well founded: The Letters from them, which have passed through my Hands, hold forth a different language. In particular instances, 'tis true, there are some who have been restricted to a closer confinement and severer treatment than they otherwise would have been, for breaking or refusing to give their paroles. Such I am confident will not be countenanced by your Excellency, and I am persuaded by a closer investigation of the enquiry, you will discover, that there have been no other persons whatever, who have experienced the smallest harshness from us; I shall However obtain

all the information on the Subject in my power, that every ground of complaint, if any exists, may be entirely removed, it being my most earnest wish, that during this unhappy contest, there be every exercise of humanity, which the nature of the case will possibly admit of.

Your Aid de Camp delivered me the

14. Lieut. Col. Archibald Campbell, of the Seventy-first Foot, British Army.

15. Capt. George Forster, of the Eighth Foot, British Army.

Ball you mention, which was the first of the kind I ever saw or heard of; You may depend the contrivance is highly abhorred by me, and every measure shall be taken to prevent so wicked and infamous a practice being adopted in this Army. I have the honor &c.

***To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS**

Colonel Morris's, on the Heights of Harlem, September 24,23 1776.

Sir: From the hours allotted to Sleep, I will borrow a few Moments to convey my thoughts on sundry important matters to Congress. I shall offer them, with that sincerity which ought to characterize a man of candour; and with the freedom which may be used in giving useful information, without incurring the imputation of presumption.

We are now as it were, upon the eve of another dissolution of our Army;24 the remembrance of the difficulties which heppened upon that occasion last year, the consequences which might have followed the change, if proper advantages had been taken by the Enemy; added to a knowledge of the present temper and Situation of the Troops, reflect but a very gloomy prospect upon the appearance of things now, and satisfie me, beyond the possibility of doubt, that unless some speedy, and effectual measures are adopted by Congress, our cause will be lost.

It is in vain to expect, that any (or more than a trifling) part of this Army will again engage in the Service on the encouragement offered by Congress. When Men find that their Townsmen and Companions are receiving 20, 30, and more Dollars, for a few Months Service, (which is truely the case) it cannot be expected; without using compulsion; and to force them into the Service would answer no valuable purpose. When Men are irritated, and the Passions inflamed,

23. This letter was actually written in the early morning hours of September 25. (See Washington's letter to Congress, Sept. 25, 1776, *post*.)

24. The term of service for almost the whole army was to expire at or before the end of the year. Samuel Adams passed through New York on the 14th, and in a letter to John Adams (August 16) said he found “the General and his family in health and spirits; indeed, every officer and soldier appears to be determined.…I see now, more than ever I did, the importance of Congress attending immediately to enlistments for the next campaign. It would be a pity to lose your old soldiers. I am of opinion that a more generous bounty should be given,—twenty dollars and one hundred acres of land for three years at least.”

they fly hastely and chearfully to Arms; but after the first emotions are over, to expect, among such People, as compose the bulk of an Army, that they are influenced by any other principles than those of Interest, is to look for what never did, and I fear never will happen; the Congress will deceive themselves therefore if they expect it.

A Soldier reasoned with upon the goodness of the cause he is engaged in, and the inestimable rights he is contending for, hears you with patience, and acknowledges the truth of your observations, but adds, that it is of no more Importance to him than others. The Officer makes you the same reply, with this further remark, that his pay will not support him, and he cannot ruin himself and Family to serve his Country, when every Member of the community is equally Interested and benefitted by his Labours. The few therefore, who act upon Principles of disinterestedness, are, comparatively speaking, no

more than a drop in the Ocean. It becomes evidently clear then, that as this Contest is not likely to be the Work of a day; as the War must be carried on systematically, and to do it, you must have good Officers, there are, in my Judgment, no other possible means to obtain them but by establishing your Army upon a permanent footing; and giving your Officers good pay; this will induce Gentlemen, and Men of Character to engage; and till the bulk of your Officers are composed of such persons as are actuated by Principles of honour, and a spirit of enterprize, you have little to expect from them.—They ought to have such allowances as will enable them to live like, and support the Characters of Gentlemen; and not be driven by a scanty pittance to the low, and dirty arts which many of them practice, to filch the Public of more than the difference of pay would amount to upon an ample allowe. besides, something is due to the Man who puts his life in his hands, hazards his health, and forsakes the Sweets of domestic enjoyments. Why a Captn. in the Continental Service should receive no more than 5/. Curry per day, for performing the same duties that an officer of the same Rank in the British Service receives 10/. Sterlg. for, I never could conceive; especially when the latter is provided with every necessary he requires, upon the best terms, and the former can scarce procure them, at any Rate. There is nothing

that gives a Man consequence, and renders him fit for Command, like a support that renders him Independant of every body but the State he Serves.25

With respect to the Men, nothing but a good bounty can obtain them upon a permanent establishment; and for no shorter time than the continuance of the War, ought they to be engaged; as Facts incontestibly prove, that the difficulty, and cost of Inlistments, increase with time. When the Army was first raised at Cambridge, I am persuaded the Men might have been got without a bounty for the War: after this, they began to see that the Contest was not likely to end so speedily as was immagined, and to feel their consequence, by remarking, that to get the Militia In, in the course of last year, many Towns were induced to give them a bounty. Foreseeing the Evils resulting from this, and the destructive consequences which unavoidably would follow short Inlistments, I took the Liberty in a

long Letter, written by myself (date not now recollected, as my Letter Book is not here) to recommend the Inlistments for and during the War; assigning such Reasons for it, as experience has since convinced me were well founded. At that time twenty Dollars would, I am persuaded, have engaged the Men for this term. But it will not do to look back, and if the present opportunity is slip'd, I am perswaded that twelve months more will Increase our difficulties fourfold. I shall therefore take the freedom of giving it as my opinion, that a good Bounty be immediately offered, aided by the proffer of at least 100, or 150 Acres of Land and a suit of Cloaths and Blankt, to each non-Comd. Officer and Soldier; as I have good authority for saying, that however high the Men's pay may appear, it is barely sufficient in the present scarcity and dearness of all kinds of goods, to keep them in Cloaths, much less afford support to their Families. If this encouragement then is given to the Men, and such Pay allowed the Officers as will induce Gentlemen of Character and liberal Sentiments to engage; and proper care and precaution are used in the nomination (having more regard to the Characters of Persons, than the Number of Men they can Inlist) we should in a little

25. See Washington's letter to Congress, Oct. 4, 1776, *post*. Ford quotes from General Greene's letter to Governor Cooke (October 3) on this point: “We want nothing but good officers to constitute as good an army as ever marched into the field. Our men are much better than the officers.”

time have an Army able to cope with any that can be opposed to it, as there are excellent Materials to form one out of: but while the only merit an Officer possesses is his ability to raise Men; while those Men consider, and treat him as an equal; and (in the Character of an Officer) regard him no more than a broomstick, being mixed together as one common herd; no order, nor no discipline can prevail; nor will the Officer ever meet with that respect which is essentially necessary to due subordination.26

To place any dependance upon Militia, is, assuredly, resting upon a broken staff. Men just dragged from the tender Scenes of domestick life; unaccustomed to the din of Arms; totally

unacquainted with every kind of Military skill, which being followed by a want of confidence in themselves, when opposed to Troops regularly train'd, disciplined, and appointed, superior in knowledge, and superior in Arms, makes them timid, and ready to fly from their own shadows. Besides, the sudden change in their manner of living, (particularly in the lodging) brings on sickness in many; impatience in all, and such an unconquerable desire of returning to their respective homes that it not only produces shameful, and scandalous Desertions among themselves, but infuses the like spirit in others. Again, Men accustomed to unbounded freedom, and no controul, cannot not brook the Restraint which is indispensably necessary to the good order and Government of an Army; without which, licentiousness, and every kind of disorder triumpantly reign. To bring Men to a proper degree of Subordination, is not the work of a day, a Month or even a year; and unhappily for us, and the cause we are Engaged in, the little discipline I have been labouring to establish in the Army under my immediate Command, is in a manner done away by having such a mixture of Troops as have been called together within these few Months.

Relaxed, and unfit, as our Rules and Regulations of War are, for the Government of an Army, the Militia (those properly so called, for of these we have two sorts, the Six Months Men and those sent

26. “To attempt to introduce discipline and subordination into a new army must always be a work of much difficulty, but where the principles of democracy so universally prevail, where so great an equality and so thorough a levelling spirit predominates, either no discipline can be established, or he who attempts it must become odious and detestable, a position which no one will choose. It is impossible for any one to have an idea of the complete equality which exists between the officers and men who composed the greater part of our troops.”— *Joseph Reed to Esther Reed* (*his wife*), Oct. 11, 1776.

in as a temporary aid) do not think themselves subject to 'em, and therefore take liberties, which the Soldier is punished for; this creates jealousy; jealousy begets dissatisfaction, and these by degrees ripen into Mutiny; keeping the whole Army in a confused, and

disordered State; rendering the time of those who wish to see regularity and good Order prevail more unhappy than Words can describe. Besides this, such repeated changes take place, that all arrangement is set at nought, and the constant fluctuation of things, deranges every plan, as fast as adopted.

These Sir, Congress may be assured, are but a small part of the Inconveniences which might be enumerated and attributed to Militia; but there is one that merits particular attention, and that is the expence. Certain I am, that it would be cheaper to keep 50, or 100,000 Men in constant pay than to depend upon half the number, and supply the other half occasionally by Militia. The time the latter is in pay before and after they are in Camp, assembling and Marching; the waste of Ammunition; the consumption of Stores, which in spite of every Resolution, and requisition of Congress they must be furnished with, or sent home, added to other incidental expences consequent upon their coming, and conduct in Camp, surpasses all Idea, and destroys every kind of regularity and œconomy which you could establish among fixed and Settled Troops; and will, in my opinion prove (if the scheme is adhered to) the Ruin of our Cause.

The Jealousies of a standing Army, and the Evils to be apprehended from one, are remote; and in my judgment, situated and circumstanced as we are, not at all to be dreaded; but the consequence of wanting one, according to my Ideas, formed from the present view of things, is certain, and inevitable Ruin; for if I was called upon to declare upon Oath, whether the Militia have been most serviceable or hurtful upon the whole; I should subscribe to the latter. I do not mean by this however to arraign the Conduct of Congress, in so doing I should equally condemn my own measures, (if I did not my judgment); but

experience, which is the best criterion to work by, so fully, clearly, and decisively reprobates the practice of trusting to Militia, that no Man who regards order, regularity, and oeconomy; or who has any regard for his own honour, Character, or peace of Mind, will risk them upon this Issue.27

No less attention should be paid to the choice of Surgeons than other Officers of the Army; they should undergo a regular examination; and if not appointed by the Director Genl. and Surgeons of the Hospital, they ought to be subordinate to, and governed by his directions; the Regimental Surgeons I am speaking of, many of whom are very great Rascals, countenancing the Men in sham Complaints to exempt them from duty, and often receiving Bribes to Certifie Indispositions, with a view to procure discharges or Furloughs; but independant of these practices, while they are considered as unconnected with the Genl. Hospital there will be nothing but continual Complaints of each other: The Director of the Hospital charging them with enormity in their drafts for the Sick; and they him, for denying such things as are necessary. In short, there is a constant bickering among them, which tends greatly to the Injury of the Sick; and will always subsist till the Regimental Surgeons are made to look up to the Director Genl. of the Hospital as a Superior. Whether this is the case in regular Armies, or not, I cannot undertake to say; but certain I am there is a necessity for it in this, or the Sick will suffer; the Regimental Surgeons are aiming, I am persuaded, to break up the Genl. Hospital, and have, in numberless Instances, drawn for Medic'roes, Stores &ca. in the most profuse and extravagant manner, for private purposes.28

Another matter highly worthy of attention, is, that other Rules and Regulation's may be adopted for the Government of the Army than those now in existence, otherwise the Army, but for the name, might as well be disbanded. For the most attrocious offences, (one or two Instances only excepted) a Man receives no more than

27. Congress had, before this letter reached it, resolved (September 16) on a bounty of $20 and 100 acres of land to each noncommissioned officer and private soldier; the commissioned officers were to receive bounties in land only, scaled according to rank, September 20 Congress resolved to raise a new army and provided for supplies, etc. In transmitting these resolves to the States, President Hancock made liberal use of this Washington letter, sometimes copying whole sentences verbatim. Ford quotes General

Greene's letter of September 28 as more outspoken in opinion of where the blame should rest. “The policy of Congress has been the most absurd and ridiculous imaginable, pouring in militia-men who come and go every month. A military force established upon such principles defeats itself.…The Congress goes upon a penurious plan. The present pay of the officers will not support them, and it is generally determined by the best officers to quit the service, unless a more adequate provision is made for their support. The present establishment is not thought reputable. The Congress have never furnished the men voted by near one half, certainly by above a third. Had we numbers we need not have retreated from Long Island or New York.…We must have an army to meet the enemy everywhere, to act offensively as well as defensively. Our soldiers are as good as ever were; and were the officers half as good as the men, they would beat any army on the globe of equal numbers.”

In a letter to General Gates (October 14),General Lee expressed his opinion of Congress and of the army in a laconic but characteristic manner. “I write this scrawl,” he says, “in a hurry. Colonel Wood will describe the position of our army, which, in my own breast, I do not approve. *Inter nos* Congress seem to stumble at every step. I have been very free in delivering my opinion to them. General Washington is much to blame in not menacing them with resignation, unless they refrain from unhinging the army by their absurd interference.”

28. On receiving this letter (September 30) a resolution was passed by Congress requesting the several States to appoint skillful surgeons and physicians to examine the surgeons and surgeons' mates who offered themselves to serve in the army or navy, and declaring that no commission should be issued to any who should not produce a certificate from such examiners that they were qualified for the duties of their office.

39 Lashes; and these perhaps (thro' the collusion of the Officer who is to see it inflicted), are given in such a manner as to become rather a matter of sport than punishment; but when inflicted as they ought, many hardend fellows who have been the Subjects, have

declared that for a bottle of Rum they would undergo a Second operation; it is evident therefore that this punishment is inadequate to many Crimes it is assigned to, as a proof of it, thirty and 40 Soldiers will desert at a time; and of late, a practice prevails, (as you will see by my Letter of the 22d) of the most alarming nature; and which will, if it cannot be checked, prove fatal both to the Country and Army; I mean the infamous practice of Plundering, for under the Idea of Tory property, or property which may fall into the hands of the Enemy, no Man is secure in his effects, and scarcely in his Person; for in order to get at them, we have several Instances of People being frightned out of their Houses under pretence of those Houses being ordered to be burnt; and this is done with a view of siezing the Goods; nay, in order that the villany may be more effectually concealed, some Houses have actually been burnt to cover the theft.

I have with some others, used my utmost endeavours to stop this horrid practice, but under the present lust after plunder, and want of Laws to punish Offenders, I might almost as well attempt to remove Mount Atlas.—I have ordered instant corporal Punishment upon every Man who passes our Lines, or is seen with Plunder, that the Offenders might be punished for disobedience of Orders; and Inclose you the proceedings of a Court Martial held upon an Officer, who with a Party of Men had robbd a House a little beyond our Lines of a Number of valuable Goods; among which (to shew that nothing escapes) were four large Pier looking Glasses, Women's Cloaths, and other Articles which one would think, could be of no Earthly use to him. He was met by a Major of Brigade who ordered him to return the Goods, as taken contrary to Genl. Orders, which he not only peremptorily refused to do, but drew up his Party and swore he would defend them at the hazard of his Life; on which I ordered him to be arrested, and tryed for Plundering, Disobedience of Orders,

and Mutiny; for the Remit, I refer to the Proceedings of the Court; whose judgment appeared so exceedingly extraordinary,29 that I ordered a Reconsideration of the matter, upon which, and with the Assistance of fresh evidence, they made Shift to Cashier him.

I adduce this Instance to give some Idea to Congress of the Currt. Sentiments and general run of the Officers which compose the present Army; and to shew how exceedingly necessary it is to be careful in the choice of the New Sett, even if it should take double the time to compleat the Levies. An Army formed of good Officers moves like Clock-Work; but there is no Situation upon Earth, less enviable, nor more distressing, than that Person's who is at the head of Troops, who are regardless of Order and discipline; and who are unprovided with almost every necessary. In a word the difficulties which have forever surrounded me since I have been in the Service, and kept my Mind constantly upon the stretch; The Wounds which my Feelings as an Officer have received by a thousand things which have happened, contrary to my expectation and Wishes; the effect of my own Conduct, and present appearance of things, so little pleasing to myself, as to render it a matter of no Surprize (to me) if I should stand capitally censured by Congress; added to a consciousness of my inability to govern an Army composed of such discordant parts, and under such a variety of intricate and perplexing circumstances; induces not only a belief, but a thorough conviction in my Mind, that it will be impossible unless there is a thorough change in our Military Systems for me to conduct matters in such a manner, as to give satisfaction to the Publick which is all the recompence I aim at, or ever wished for.30

Before I conclude I must apologize for the liberties taken in this Letter and for the blots and scratchings therein, not having time to give it more correctly. With truth I can add, that with every Sentiment of respect and esteem. I am etc.

29. Washington's many difficulties in enforcing discipline in an Army which had to be handled carefully with an eye to reenlistments are pictured in the General Orders. The court decided that Ensign Matthew Macumber, of the Sixteenth Continental Infantry, was not guilty of plundering but was guilty of insubordination and disrespect to his superior officer. The sentence was that he apologize and be reprimanded before the regiment. The copy of the court's proceedings forwarded to Congress bears this note in Washington's writing: “It is to be observed that the Men who were to share the Plunder became the

Evidences for the Prisoner G. W—n." (See General Orders, Sept. 22, 1776, *ante*.) On September 30 Congress directed that the court assign its reasons for the acquittal and that the same be forwarded to Congress. The court. however, attempted to justify its verdict in a report, dated October 7, which was forwarded to Congress by Washington on October 8.

30. On September 20 Congress appointed Roger Sherman, Elbridge Gerry, and Francis Lewis a committee to visit camp "to enquire into the State of the Army, and the best means of supplying their wants." They reached camp the 24th and conferred with the general officers the 26th and 27th. Their report was rendered October 3. In the *Washington Papers* are 12 "Queries to be made at Head Quarters" with answers to the first two in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison, which established the strength needed for the Army at 40,000, exclusive of the Flying Camp. (See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, Oct. 3, 8, and 9, 1776.) The committee recommended that Brig. Gen. Thomas Mifflin should replace Col. Stephen Moylan at the head of the Quartermaster Department.

To BRIGADIER GENERAL HUGH MERCER

Colonel Morris's at Harlem, September 26, 1776.

Dear Sir: If the Troops at this Post, can be prevailed upon to defend it as they should do, it must cost General Howe a great many Men to carry it, if he succeeds at all. If this should happen to be *his* Opinion there is scarce a doubt but that he will turn his thoughts another way, as inactivity is not to be expected from him. Whither his Operations may be directed is uncertain, perhaps an irruption into the Jerseys. Possibly he may bend his course towards Philadela. (for I conceive that 2000 Men with the Assistance of their Shipping will effectually preserve serve New York against our whole Strength,) Or which in my Judgment is exceedingly probable, knowing that the Troops are drawn off from the Southern Colonies, he may detach a part of the Army to the Southward, for a Winter's Campaign, as was recommended to him last Fall by Lord Dunmore.35

In either of these Cases, it behoves us to keep the best look out, and to obtain the earliest intelligence possible of the Enemy's motions, and as it is now the current Opinion, that the Shipping are greatly thinned, I earnestly recommend to you the Necessity of having Sensible and Judicious Persons in different places to observe the movements of the Shipping, among others at the Neversinks, for if they should send out a fleet without our giving notice of it to Congress we shall be thought exceedingly remiss. In short, I intreat you to exert your best endeavours to obtain every useful Intelligence you possibly can of the Enemy's motions by Sea and Land, in doing this Money may be required, and do not spare it. Communicate everything of Importance to me with dispatch and be assured that I am, etc.

35. Ford quotes two letters, written from New York City on September 26 and 28: “On the 23d Gen. Howe left this garrison 4,000 strong under the command of Gen. Robinson, and made a feint as if he intended attacking the rebels at King's Bridge with the main body of the army; previous measures had been taken to embark two squadrons, which was so privately done, that even the troops who were immediately engaged knew not their destination till they were landed at Perth Amboy, which they took without opposition, together with 500 prisoners.”

“The army have, for these last two days, been under orders to hold themselves in readiness to march, but whither no one knows; some think it is to King's Bridge, while others think it is intended to cross the North River, and proceed through the Jerseys towards Philadelphia.”

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

Harlem Heights, September 26, 1776.

Sir: Your favor of the 20th. Inst. is duly received. The Several Regiments of Militia from Connecticut, lately Commanded by Genl. Wolcot, being reduced to almost nothing;

one having returned under twenty and another short of thirty effective Men; they were yesterday discharged. I am full in Opinion with you, that some severe Examples ought to be made of the late deserters; for a Return of their Names, I must refer you to the Several Commanding Officers of the different Regiments. I hope these under Brigadier Saltonstall, may shew a better Spirit.

A proposal for an immediate exchange of Prisoners has been made by General Howe, agreeable to the Resolve of Congress. I am to request a return, as soon as possible, of all those in Connecticut, mentioning their Names and Ranks of all Commissioned Officers, and distinguishing particularly between those of the Army and Navy, as well privates as Officers. It appears to me, their being Marched to some Convenient Post and Coming by Water, will be much the most Convenient; at least it must save expence and will prevent their having a View of the different Towns and their Situations on the Sea Coasts. your Sentiments on the Subject, together with the return of the Prisoners, as early as possible, will much Oblige me. I am etc.

To MAJOR GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, September 27, 1776.

Dear Sir: I Yesterday received your favor of the 23rd. Instant, the Nails wanted by General Gates cannot be sent from hence, our own demands being great and pressing and supplies but small.

In respect to building Barracks in the Town of Schenectady; if they are necessary, I suppose it must be done, however, I do not apprehend I have any power to give directions in the Case, nor do I mean to do it, you had better mention the matter to Congress and have their Opinion and Determination upon it.

A paper, of which the inclosed is a Copy, came to my Hands Yesterday Morning. This Account makes the Enemy's Force in Canada greater than what we supposed it to be,

their Naval Force on the Lakes to surpass any thing we had an Idea of. The person who communicated it is not known, he however I believe is among those sent from Canada by Genl. Carleton and who have lately arrived at New York. I am in hopes it is a good deal exaggerated. I am, etc.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, September 27, 1776.

Sir: I have nothing in particular to communicate to Congress by this days post, as our situation is the same as when I last wrote.

We are now sitting on the business the Committee came upon, which it is probable will be finished this Evening, the result they will duly report, upon their return.

I received Yesterday the inclosed Declaration by a Gentleman from Eliza. Town, who told me, many Copies were found in the possession of the Soldiers from Canada, that were landed there a day or two ago by General Howe's permission. I shall not comment upon it.

It seems to be founded on the plan that has been artfully pursued for some time past.36 I have &ca.

P.S. The Account of the Troops &ca. in Canada comes from a person among the Prisoners sent from Canada. It was Anonymous, nor do I know the Intelligencer; according to him, the Enemy in that Quarter are stronger than we supposed and their Naval force much greater on the Lakes than we had any Ideas of.37 I trust he has taken the matter upon the Enemy's report.38

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, September 25, 1776.

Sir: Having wrote you fully on sundry important subjects this Morning, as you will perceive by the Letter which accompanies this, I mean principally now to inclose a Copy of a Letter, received from General Howe on Sunday Evening, with the lists of the Prisoners in his hands and of those in our possession belonging to the Army immediately under his command, and of my Answer, which were omitted to be put in the other.

His letter will discover to Congress his refusal to exchange Lord Stirling for Mr. McDonald, considering the latter, only as a Major. They will be pleased to determine how he is to be ranked in future.

The Number of Prisoners according to these returns, is greater than what we expected. However I am inclined to believe, that among those in the list from Long Island are several Militia of General Woodhull's party, who were never arranged in this Army. As to those taken on the 15th, they greatly exceed the number that I supposed fell into their hands in the retreat from the City. At the time that I transmitted an Account of that affair, I had not obtained returns and took the matter upon the Officers Reports. They are difficult to get with certainty at any time. In the skirmish of Monday sennight, they could not have taken but very few. Before I conclude, I shall take occasion to mention, that these returns, made with

36. A broadside of Howe's declaration of September 19.

37. A copy of this estimate of the British strength in Canada was also sent to Schuyler on September 27.

38. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

such precision, and the difficulty that will attend the proposed exchange on account of the dispersed and scattered state of the prisoners, in our hands, will clearly evince the necessity of appointing Commissarys and proper persons to superintend and conduct in such instances.31 This I took the liberty of urging more than once, as well on Account of

the propriety of the measure and the saving that would have resulted from it, as that the Prisoners might be treated with humanity and have their wants particularly attended to.

I would also observe, as I esteem it my duty, that this Army is in want of almost every necessary: Tents, Camp Kettles, Blanketts and Clothes of all kinds; But what is to be done with respect to the two last Articles I know not, as the Term of Inlistment will be nearly expired by the time they can be provided. This may be exhibited as a further proof of the disadvantage advantage attending the levying of an Army upon such a footing, as never to know how to keep them without injuring the Public, or incommoding the Men.

I have directed the Colonel or Commanding Officer of each Corps, to use his endeavours to procure such Cloathing as are absolutely necessary, but at the same time I confess that I do not know how they are to be got. I have the Honor etc.32

31. On October 7 Congress resolved that a commissary of prisoners be appointed in each of the states and that the respective States make the appointments.

32. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, September 28, 1776.

Sir: Being about to cross the North River this morning, in order to view the posts opposite [Mount Washington] and the grounds between that and Powles Hook, I shall not add much more, than that I have been honored with your favor of the 24th: and its several inclosures and that since my Letter of Yesterday no important event has taken place.41

As Col: Hugh Stephenson of the Rifle Regiment ordered lately to be raised, is dead, according to the information I have received, I would beg leave to recommend to the particular notice of Congress, Captain Daniel Morgan, just returned among the Prisoners from Canada, as a fit and proper person to succeed to the vacancy occasioned by his

Death. The present Field Officers of the Regiment cannot claim any right in preference to him, because he ranked above them as a Captain when he first entered the service; His Conduct as an Officer on the expedition with General Arnold last fall, his intrepid behavior in the Assault on Quebec when the brave Montgomery fell;—the inflexible attachment he professed to our Cause during his imprisonment and which he perseveres in; added to these his residence in the place Col: Stevenson came from and his Interest and influence in the same circle and with such men as are to compose such a Regiment; all in my Opinion entitle him to the favor of Congress, and lead me to believe, that in his promotion, the States will gain a good and valuable Officer for the sort of Troops he is particularly recommended to command.

Should Congress be pleased to appoint Capt. Morgan in the instance I have mentioned, I would still beg leave to suggest the propriety and necessity of keeping the matter close and not suffering it to transpire, until he is exonerated from the parole he is under. His acceptance of a commission under his present circumstances, might be construed

41. Before September 23 General Greene had been placed in command on the Jersey side of the North River. The Flying Camp, under General Mercer, was stationed in detachments at Newark Ferry, Elizabethtown, Woodbridge, and Amboy; each detachment was supported by two pieces of artillery, except that at Amboy, where there was four pieces and over 1,700 men.

a violation of his Engagement, and if not, the difficulty attending his exchange might be increased: The Enemy perhaps would consider him as a Field Officer, of which we have but very few in our hands and none that I recollect of that rank.42 I have &ca.43

To THE MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATURE

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, September 29, 1776.

Gentn.: Genl. Howe having signified to me, a desire of making a general exchange of Prisoners, both Officers and Privates; it becomes necessary to have an exact return of the numbers in our possession.—You will therefore be pleased, to have all the Continental Prisoners of War (belonging to the land Service) in the different Towns in your State, collected and brought together to some convenient place, from whence they may be removed hither when a Cartel is fully settled. When they are collected, you will please to have made out, and transmit to me, an exact return of the names of the Commissioned and Staff Officers, their Ranks and the Corps to which they belong; the names of the Non Commissioned and privates need not be mentioned, their Numbers will be Sufficient. As it will be more convenient to send them by Water than by land, which may always be safely effected, by means of a Flag; I think you had better order the Prisoners to some place contiguous to a Port, there to remain till you hear further from me. As I apprehend the Number of Prisoners in the State of New hampshire to be too small to make up a freight for a Vessel; I have directed, if that should be the Case, that they would be sent to your State, that they may come forward with your Prisoners. you will be pleased to forward the Inclosed to Lieut. Colo Campbell of the 71st Regt. I am not certain where he is stationed, but think it is at Reading.

42. Congress commissioned Morgan colonel of the Eleventh Virginia Regiment on Nov. 12, 1776, but he was not exchanged until 1777. He joined the Army at Morris town, N.J., late in March; was appointed brigadier general Oct. 13, 1780; was thanked and presented with a medal by Congress Mar. 9, 1781, for his victory at Cowpens, S.C., on January 17 of that year.

43. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The words in brackets are in the draft but are not in the letter sent.

I have the Honor to be etc.

P.S. Be pleased also to make a return of the Prisoners be longing to the British Navy, with the names and Ranks of the Officers. Inclosed you have a Letter from Capt Campbell44 of the 71st Regt. to me; as he seems to acknowledge his Error and promises a more circumspect behaviour in future, I could wish you would consider his Case, and if you think proper admit him to his parole again.45

44. Capt. Patrick(?) Campbell.

45. Practically the same letter was sent to the Legislature of New Hampshire.

To LIEUTENANT COLONEL ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL

Head Quarters, Heights of Harlem, September 29, 1776.

Sir: I have been favored with a Letter from his Excellency General Howe of the 21st. instant on the Subject of an Ex change of Prisoners both Officers and Privates. To carry this into Execution it is necessary that the Numbers on both Sides should be exactly ascertained; in order to determine this, General Howe sent me a List of the Officers and Privates of the 42d and 71st. Regimts. of which the inclosed is a Copy. But adds “it is not so correct as I could wish having received no regular Returns of the 42d. and 71st. Regiments taken this year, but beg leave to refer you to Lt. Col: Campbell of the 71st. to rectify any omissions that may be”; I have therefore to desire, that you would as soon as possible make the proper additions or Alterations and return the same to me. I am Sir, etc.

To DEPUTY GOVERNOR WILLIAM BRADFORD46

Head Quarters, Heights of Harlem, September 29, 1776.

Sir: I have been honored with your two favors of the 14th and 23d Inst.; and am to return you my thanks for the Measures you have taken, to forward the two Continental Battalions, from your State. In respect to the Exchange of the Persons you mention, I apprehend it

Cannot be effected, till a general one takes place. This I am trying to carry into execution as well with the Naval, as the Land Service; and, therefore, must re quest the favor of your State, to make out and transmit me a Return, as soon as possible, of all Continental Prisoners in their hands; distinguishing the names and Ranks of the Commissioned and Staff Officers, and the Corps to which they belong, and the Number of non Commissioned and Privates; observing the same Rule in regard to those in the Sea Service. It will be well to have the whole Collected at one or two Convenient

46. Of Rhode Island.

places, in order that they may be sent forward, as soon as the Plan is properly digested, of which I shall advise you, as soon as I obtain the Return.

I have wrote to the other Eastern States upon the same Subject; and to me it appears, that the Prisoners with you had better join those in Connecticut, that they may come together. I would recommend your writing to Governor Trumbull, for Information where their Prisoners are to be Assembled, and for his Sentiments in this Instance. It also seems advisable, that they should come by water rather than by land; but of this you will have due Notice, as I mean to Settle upon some regular Mode with the Admiral, and General Howe, against the time I am furnished with the Returns of the States. I have the honor to be, etc.

To THE BOARD OF WAR AND ORDNANCE

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, September 30, 1776.

Gentlemen: Having considered the inclosed Memorial,57 which you were pleased to transmit for my advice thereon, I beg leave to inform you, that in my Opinion, the service will be most advanced in general cases, by directing promotions in a Regimental line. However, I should think this had better be practised than Resolved on; always exercising a right of promotion on Account of extraordinary Merit, or preventing a succession to Office where it is wanting, and the person claiming unfit for it. I have the Honor to be etc.

57. From the second lieutenants of the First Virginia Regiment. The memorial was dated April 14, is unsigned, and is in the Papers of the *Continental Congress*.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, September 30, 1776.

Sir: Since I had the Honor of addressing you last, nothing of importance has transpired, tho' from some Movements Yesterday on the part of the Enemy, it would seem as if some thing was Intended.

The inclosed memorial from Lieut. Colonel Shephard53 of the 4th. Regiment, I beg leave to submit to the consideration of Congress and shall only add, that I could wish they would pro mote him to the command of the Regiment and send him a commission, being a good and valuable officer, and especially as the vacancy is of a pretty long standing and I have not had nor has he any intelligence from Colo. Learned54 himself, who had the command and who obtained a discharge on account of his indisposition, of his design to return. I have also inclosed a Letter from Captain Ballard,55 which Congress will please to determine on, the Subject being new and not within my Authority. I have &ca.

P. S: A Commission was sent for Col: Learned which is now in my hands, having received no application or heard from him since it came.56

53. Lieut. Col. William Shepard (Shephard, Shepherd, Sheperd), of the Third Continental Infantry. He was promoted to colonel Jan. 1, 1777, to rank from May 4, 1776; retired Jan. 1, 1783.

54. Col. Ebenezer Learned, of the Third Continental Infantry.

55. Capt. Robert Ballard, of the First Virginia Regiment. He became a major, then lieutenant colonel, and finally resigned July 4, 1779. His letter, dated Sept. 26, 1776, requesting leave to resign, is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

56. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To BRIGADIER GENERAL GEORGE CLINTON

Head Quarters on Harlem Heights, Col. Morris's, September 30, 1776.

Sir: Take with you Leiutt. Colo. 65 and proceed immediately to Fairfield, and there in Consultation with Genl. Lincoln of the Massachusetts Bay, Mr. Hobart66 of this State and Lieutt. Colo. Livingston,67 if you can meet with him, concert an Expedition to Long Island, for the purpose of Aiding the In habitants in removing or destroying the Stock, Grain &c. which must otherwise fall into the Hands of the Enemy.

This Expedition is to be performed under the Command of such Officers as General Lincoln and yourself may fix upon and by the Troops from Massachusetts Bay, aided by the three Continental Companies commanded by Colo. Livingston.

If there is a possibility of your seeing Governor Trumbull, without too great a delay of time, I shall much approve of your consulting him upon this Occasion previous to your Concerting any plan, but if this cannot be done conveniently, you will for ward my Letter with your reasons for not doing so, and a Request of such assistance from the State of Connecticut, as you shall find Necessary to apply for.

Dispatch is essentially necessary to the Success of such an Enterprize and Secrecy in obtaining Craft for the Transportation of the Troops across the sound, will contribute not a little towards it. Circumstances and Information must direct you to the Number of Men Necessary for such an Expedition as this, and therefore I shall not biass your Judgments

by any Order or Opinion of mine upon the Occasion, but leave this matter wholly to yourselves, with earnest and best wishes for Success.

65. Name left blank in manuscript. Force, in his *American Archives*, inserts the name Hurlbut, meaning Lieut. Col. John Hurlbert, of the New York Militia.

66. John Sloss Hobart.

67. Lieut. Col. Henry Beekman Livingston.

To MAJOR GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER

Head Quarters, September 30, 1776.

Dear Sir: Your favors of the 20th. and 25th., with their several inclosures I received this Morning. The Letters for Congress, with the rest of the papers, I shall transmit them by the earliest Opportunity. I cannot conceive that their Resolution of the 14th. was calculated or designed in the smallest degree to give you offence. The application for Stores had been made as a requisition from Genl. Gates, which I presume occasioned the Resolve, ordering 'em to be sent to him. Also the Words “for the use of the Northern Army,” Nothing is to be inferred from them. Whenever Stores are sent to any Department, It is said always for the use of the Army there.

I am greatly obliged by the measures you have taken to pro vide us with Boards, as they are so Material and so difficult to procure. Your assurances to execute any Commands I may have Occasion to impose upon you, when out of the Military line, call for a return of my warmest acknowledgements, these I tender you and of these I beg your acceptance.

Since my Letter of the 27th., nothing of importance has occurred. Things remain nearly in the Situation they then were. Yesterday there were some small movements on the part of the Enemy, but as yet they have attempted nothing, nor have I been able to find out

their design. A little time I suppose must shew what plans they mean to pursue for the remainder of the Campaign. I am &c—

To MAJOR GENERAL BENJAMIN LINCOLN62

Head Quarters, Heights of Harlem, September 30, 1776.

Sir: Your letter of the 28th. Instt. noticing me, the forwardness of the Troops under your Command was this day handed me by Major Turner.63 On receipt of this, you'll please to Halt your Men 'till a Conference with General Clinton, who waits on to advise with you, and determine on a Secret Expedition to Long Island, which if properly conducted, I have no doubt will be attended with Success and be exceedingly beneficial to the United States. To carry into Execution the proposed plan I must request a Sufficient Number of the Militia from your State, making choice of (both Officers and Men) those which may be depended on.64 I am, etc.

P.S. You'll be pleased to return to Fairfield with General Clinton to consult on the above Subject.

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

Head Quarters, Heights of Harlem, September 30, 1776.

Sir: Having received authentic advices from Long Island, that the Enemy are recruiting a great number of Men with much success, and Collecting large Quantities of Stock throughout the Island for their Support; I have directed Brigadier Genl Clinton forthwith to repair to Fairfield to meet Genl. Lincoln, on his march hither with a part of the Troops lately Voted by the Massachusetts State, to reinforce this Army; in order to concert with him an expedition to the Island, to check and suppress,

62. Lincoln had been appointed a major general of Massachusetts Militia by that State in May, 1776.

63. Maj. William(?) Turner. He had been aide to Gates in 1776; later a colonel of Massachusetts Militia.

64. Massachusetts had ordered out one-fifth of her militia to march immediately to New York, except one battalion which was ordered to Rhode Island to replace the Continental regiment withdrawn from there to New York. New Hampshire ordered out a thousand men to serve until December 1 under the command of Washington.

if possible, a practice so injurious and detrimental to our Cause. These Gentn. will wait on you for your advice in the Matter, if time and the Situation of things will admit of it, and with a view of obtaining such Aid as you and they may judge necessary to facilitate the Enterprize. However, if it should not be in their Power, personally, to attend you, I must take the Liberty of requesting your good offices upon this Occasion, and that you will afford them every Assistance that you conveniently can and they may require, either in Men, Vessels, &c. for carrying their Scheme into execution.

It is absolutely necessary, that the Measures of the Enemy should be effectually counteracted in this Instance, or, in a little time, they will levy no inconsiderable Army of our own People. The influence of their Money and their artifices have already passed the Sound, and several have been detected of late, who had enlisted to serve under their banner and the particular Command of Major Rogers.58

Being in haste, and having the fullest confidence that your favors will not be wanting in this Instance, I have only time to add, that, I have the honor to be &ca.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 2, 1776.

Sir: I do myself the honor of transmitting to you the inclosed Letter from Lieut Colonel Livingston70 with sundry Copies of General Delancey's Orders,71 which discover the measures the Enemy are pursuing on Long Island for raising Recruits and obtaining supplies of Provisions. In consequence of the intelligence they contain and authentic advices through other Channels, respecting these matters, I have sent Brigadier General Geo. Clinton to meet General Lincoln, who has got as far as Fairfield, with part of the Troops lately ordered by the Massachusetts Assembly, to concert with him and others

58. Maj. Robert Rogers.

70. Lieut. Col. Henry Beekman Livingston. His report, dated Sept. 24, 1776, is filed with Washington's letter in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

71. Brig. Gen. Oliver DeLancey's letter to Col. Phineas Fanning, ordering him to drive all cattle and sheep to Jamaica, dated Sept. 11, 1776, is in the *Washington Papers*.

an Expedition across the Sound with these Troops; three Companies under Colonel Livingston and such further aid as Governor Trumbull can afford, in order to prevent if possible, their effecting these important Objects, and to assist the Inhabitants in the removal of their Stock, Grain &ca. or in destroying them, that the Enemy may not derive any advantage or benefit from them. The recruiting Scheme, they are prosecuting with uncommon industry, nor is it confined to Long Island alone, having just now received a Letter from the Committee of Westchester County, advising that there are several Companies of men in that and Dutchess County preparing to go off and join the King's Army. I have given directions to our Guard Boats and our Centries at our Works at Mount Washington, to keep a strict look out, in case they attempt to come down the North River, also to General Heath at Kings bridge, that the utmost Vigilance may be observed by the Regiments and Troops stationed above there and down towards the East River that they may intercept them, should they take that Route with a view of crossing to Long Island.

I will use every precaution in my power to prevent these parricides from accomplishing their designs, but I have but little hopes of success as it will be no difficult matter for them to procure a passage over some part or other of the Sound.

I have been applied to lately by Col: Weedon, of Virginia, for permission to recruit the deficiency of men in his Regiment, out of the Troops composing the flying Camp, informing me at the sametime, that some of those from Maryland had offered to engage; Colo: Hand of the Rifle Batallion made a similar application to day: If the Inlistments could be made, they would have this good consequence, the securing of so many in the service: However, as the Measure might occasion some uneasiness in their own Corps, and be considered as a hardship by the States to which they belong and the means of their furnishing more than the Quota exacted from them in the General Arrangement and would make it

more difficult for them to complete their own Levies, I did not conceive myself at liberty to Authorize it, without submitting the propriety of it to the consideration of Congress and obtaining their Opinion, whether it should be allowed or not.

I have inclosed a List of Warrants granted from the 2d. to the 30th. Ulto. inclusive, the only return of the sort, I have been able to make since the Resolution for that purpose, owing to the unsettled state of our Affairs and my having sent my papers away. You will also receive sundry Letters &ca. from General Schuyler, which came under cover to me and which I have the honor of forwarding.

By a Letter just received from the Committee of Safety of the State of New Hampshire, I find a thousand of their militia were about to march on the 24th. Ulto., to reinforce this Army in consequence of the requisition of Congress: previous to their march, General Ward writes me, he was obliged to furnish them with 500 lb. of Powder and 1000 lb of Musket Ball and I have little reason to expect that they are better provided with other Articles than they were with Ammunition; in such case they will only add to our present distress, which is already far too great, and become disgusted with the service tho the

time they are engaged for is only till the first of December. this will injure their inlisting for a longer term, if not wholly prevent it.

From three Deserters who came from the Galatea Man of War about five days ago, we are informed that several Trans, ports had sailed before they left her, for England, as it was generally reported in order to return with a supply of Provisions, of which they say there is a want. General Mercer in a Letter informed me, that General Thompson said he had heard they were going to dismiss about a Hundred of the Ships from the service. I am also advised by a Letter from Mr. Derby at Boston of the 26th. Ulto., that the day before, a Trans port Snow had been taken and sent into Piscatawa by a Privateer in her passage from New York to the West Indies. she sailed with five more under the convoy of a Man of war in order to bring from thence such Troops that are there, to join General Howe: they were all Victualled for four months.

From this Intelligence it would seem as if they did not apprehend any thing to be meditating against them by the Court of France.

October 3.

I have nothing in particular to communicate respecting our situation, It being much the same as when I wrote last. We had an Alarm this morning a little before Four O'Clock, from some of our Out Sentries, who reported that a large body of the Enemy was advancing towards our Lines; this put us in motion, however turned out entirely premature, or at least we saw nothing of them. I have &ca.72

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 1, 1776.

Sir: I have the Honor of your favor of the 27th Ulto. and Note the Contents. The Row Gallies belonging to your State, together with those the property of the United States, and

all other Vessels, on the approach of the Men of War, ran up the North River, under cover of the Battery on Mount Washington, from whence it is now impossible to remove them. As they are now posted, they are serviceable to us, by preventing a Communication with the Ships; and keeping out Row Guards by Night, to give us timely Notice of the approach, or any movements of the Enemy. To take from them their Crew, would be rendering them entirely useless, and to rob them of their Weapons would dispirit the Men; however if it should be thought advisable, after weighing the above Circumstances to have the Crew ordered to Connecticut, or any of the Arms or other Weapons on board to be sent there your Orders shall be attended to. The situation of the Enemy's Ships is very different at this time, from what it was before the evacuation of New York. we then had the Command of a narrow Pass, communicating from the Sound to the East River, commonly called Hell Gate; which is now in their possession, two

72. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

of their Ships came thro' yesterday; one I think a Transport, the other a Frigate mounting 24 Guns.

October 3.

Since the above, I am honored with yours of the 28th, inclosing the Petition from the Gentlemen sent from this State on Parole to Connecticut. They were looked upon as favourers to Govt. Tryon and the British Troops, and were removed, to prevent giving any Intelligence or otherways aiding the Enemy's of our Country. It was intended, that when the Theatre of Action was removed, they might return; but that at present is not the case, nor do I think it prudent they should be permitted to return, during our present Situation; as undoubtedly they may have it in their power, to give Information concerning your State &c. which might be prejudicial to the General good. They particularly mention in their petition, “that they were removed from Long Island into Connecticut, until such time as the Situation and State of Affairs there, should admit of their Return to their respective Families again.”

You will be pleased to inform them, I agree with you in sentiment, that that Period is not arrived. There is no material difference in our Situation since I last wrote you. the Enemy have nearly Compleated their Works from the North to the East River, as the Season is far advanced, we cannot reasonably expect a State of Inactivity; but should they attempt to dislodge us from our present Quarters, I am in hopes to defeat their designs and give a favorable Account to the Public of the Conduct of the Troops under my Command. I have the honor to be, etc.

***To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS**

Harlem, October 4, 1776.

Sir: Before I knew of the late resolutions of Congress which you did me the honour to Inclose in your Letter of the 24th., and before I was favourd with the visit of your Comee., I took the liberty of giving you my Sentiments on several points which seem'd to be of Importance.

I have no doubt but that the Comee. will

make such report of the State and Condition of the Army, as will induce Congress to believe, that nothing but the most vigorous exertions can put matters upon such a footing as to give this Continent a fair prospect of Success. Give me leave to say, Sir; I say it with due deference and respect, (and my knowledge of the Facts, added to the importance of the Cause and the stake I hold in it, must justify the freedom) that your Affairs are in a more unpromising way than you seem to apprehend.

Your Army, as mentioned in my last, is upon the eve of its political dissolution; true it is, you have voted a larger one in lieu of it, but the Season is late, and there is a material difference between voting of Battalions and raising of Men. In the latter, there are more difficulties than Congress are aware of; which makes it my duty (as I have been informed of the prevailing Sentiment of this Army) to inform them, that unless the pay of the Officers

(especially that of the Field Officers) is raised, the Chief part of those that are worth retaining, will leave the Service at the expiration of the present term; as the Soldiers will also, if some greater Incouragement is not offered them than Twenty Dollars, and one hundred Acres of Land.

Nothing less in my Opinion, than a Suit of Cloaths annually, given to each non-commissioned Officer and Soldier, in addition to the pay and bounty, will avail, and I question whether that will do, as the Enemy from the Information of one John Mash, who with Six others were taken by our Guards, are giving Ten pounds bounty for Recruits; and have got a Battalion under Majr. Rogers nearly compleated upon Long Island.

Nor will less pay according to my judgement than I have taken the liberty of mentioning in the Inclosed estimate retain such Officers as we could wish to have continued; the difference pr. month in each Battalion will amount to better than one hundred pounds; to this may be added the pay of the Staff Officers, for it is presumable they will also require an augmentation; but being few in number, the Sum will not be greatly Increased by them, and

consequently is a matter of no great moment; but it is a matter of no small Importance to make the several Offices desirable. When the pay and establishment of an Officer once become objects of Interested attention, the Sloth, negligence, and even disobedience of Orders which at this time but too generally prevails, will be purged off; but while the Service is viewed with Indifference; while the Officer conceive that he is rather confering than receiving an obligation, there will be a total relaxation of all order and Discipline, and every thing will move heavily on, to the great detriment of the Service, and inexpressible trouble and vexation of the General.

The critical Situation of our Affairs at this time will justify my saying, that no time is to be lost in making of fruitless experiments; an unavailing tryal of a Month to get an Army upon the terms proposed, may render it impracticable to do it at all; and prove fatal to our

Cause; as I am not sure whether any rubs in the way of our Inlistments, or unfavourable turn in our Affairs, may not prove the Means of the Enemy Recruiting Men faster than we do; to this may be added the inextricable difficulty of forming one Corps out of another, and arranging matters with any degree of Order in the face of an Enemy, who are watching for advantages.

At Cambridge last year, where the Officers (and more than a sufficiency of them) were all upon the spot, we found it a work of such extreame difficulty to know their Sentiments, (each having some terms to propose) that I despair'd once of getting the arrangement compleated; and do suppose that at least a hundred alterations took place before matters were finally adjusted; what must it be then under the present regulation, where the Officer is to negociate this matter with the State he comes from, distant perhaps two or three hundred Miles; some of whom, without leave or license from me set out to make personal application the Moment the Resolve got to their hands; what kind

of Officers these are, I leave Congress to judge.

If an Officer of reputation (for none other should be applied to) is ask'd to stay what answer can he give, but in the first place, that he does not know whether it is at his option to do so, no provision being made in the Resolution of Congress even recommendatory of this measure; consequently, that it rests with the State he comes from (surrounded perhaps with a variety of applications, and influenced probably by local attachments), to determine whether he can be provided for or not. In the next place, if he is an Officer of Merit, and knows that the State he comes from is to furnish more Battalions than it at present has in the Service, he will scarcely, after two years faithful Services, think of continuing in the Rank he now bears when new Creations are to be made, and Men appointed to Offices (no ways superior in Merit, and ignorant perhaps of Service) over his head. A Committee, sent to the Army from each State may, upon the Spot, fix things with a degree of propriety and certainty, and is the only method I can see, of bringing matters to a decision with respect to the Officers of the Army; but what can be done in the meanwhile,

towards the arrangement in the Country I know not. In the one case, you run the hazard of loosing your Officers; in the other, encountering delay unless some method could be devised of forwarding both at the same Instant.

Upon the present Plan, I plainly foresee an intervention of time between the old and new Army, which must be filled with Militia (if to be had) with whom no Man, who has any regard for his own reputation can undertake to be answerable for Consequences. I shall also be mistaken in my conjectures, if we do not loose the most valuable Officers in this Army under the present mode of appointing them; consequently, if we have an Army at all, it will be composed of Materials not only entirely raw, but if uncommon pains are not taken, entirely unfit; and I see such a distrust and jealousy of Military power, that the Commander in Chief has not an oppertunity, even by recommendation, to give the least assurances of reward for the most essential Services:

In a word, such a Cloud of perplexing Circumstances appears before me without one flattering hope, that I am thoroughly convinced unless the most vigorous and decisive exertions are immediately adopted to remedy these Evils, that the certain and absolute loss of our Liberties will be the inevitable consequence, as one unhappy stroke will throw a powerful weight into the Scale against us, enabling Genl. Howe to recruit his Army as fast as we shall ours, numbers being disposed, and many actually doing so already. Some of the most probable remedies, and such as experience has brought to my more intimate knowledge,

I have taken the liberty to point out; the rest I beg leave to submit to the consideration of Congress.

I ask pardon for taking up so much of their Time with my opinions, but I should betray that trust which they and my Country have reposed in me, were I to be silent upon a matter so extremely Interesting; with the most perfect esteem I have the honour to be etc.74

[PAY INCREASE]75

Present pay Suppose intended Difference 1 Colonel £15 £25 £10 1 Lieut: Colonel 12 20 8 1 Major 10 15 5 8 Captains at 8£ 64 at 10£ 80 16 16 Lieuts at £5 8 86 8 at £7 10 120 33 12 8 Ensigns at £4 32 at £6 48 16 1 Chaplin 10 15 5 1 Adjutant 5 10 10 4 10 1 Quarter Master 5 10 10 4 10 1 Surgeon 10 15 5 1 Mate 4 7 10 3 10 £111 2 0

74. Congress recommended (October 8) that the States send committees to the Army to carry out these recommendations as to the appointment of officers and the principles of promotion; a suit of clothes annually was added to the enlistment bounty of all men who would enlist for the war. (See *Journals of the Continental Congress*.)

75. This table of pay increase, in the writing of Tench Tilghman, is filed with Washington's letter to Congress, Sept. 25, 1776, in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

To BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES CLINTON

Head Quarters on Harlem Heights, October 5, 1776.

Sir: Your Letter of the 1st. Instt., enclosing one from the Committee of New Windsor, and a Deposition against Mr. Conner is duly received. They say the Butter was intended for this Army, I would therefore advise its being immediately sent to Colo. Trumbull Commissary General, who will pay the current price; this step cannot but be agreeable to Mr. Conner, if he is innocent of the Charge, if otherways,

will be secured from going to the Enemy. The Committee should take upon them the further Examination of Conner and Montgomery, and deal with them according to their Crimes; if found guilty, the same steps ought to be taken in regard to the Flour you mention to be in Store at New Windsor. In respect to Intrenching Tools, much time elapses in sending them from here, besides we have not more than are wanted for present use, you must apply to the several Committees in the Country, or send an Officer to pick up

such a number as may be necessary; for the Amount you may draw on the Quarter Master General. I am &c.

To GOVERNOR WILLIAM LIVINGSTON

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 5, 1776.

Sir: The Congress having directed me, by a Resolve of the 26th. Sepr., to procure as soon as possible, an Exchange of the Officers and Soldiers taken on Long Island, for the same Number of British Officers and privates, now prisoners in the United States; it becomes necessary, for me to be informed of the Numbers and Ranks of the prisoners in the different States, in order to carry the same into execution. you will therefore oblige me, by having made out and transmitted to me, an exact Return of the Number of Officers in New Jersey, their Ranks, Names and the Corps to which they belong; The numbers of the non Commissioned Officers and privates without their names will be Sufficient. They should also be Collected from the different Places where they are Stationed, and brought together to

some convenient place (Brunswick I should think), from whence they may be sent to General Howe when the Cartel is fully settled. I am etc.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 5, 1776.

Sir: I was last Night honoured with your favor of the 2d. with sundry Resolutions of Congress. The Officers that concurred in the acquittal of Ensign McCumber shall be called upon, to assign their reasons for their first judgment which shall be sent as soon as they are collected.

In respect to the Exchange of prisoners, I fear it will be a work of great difficulty, owing to their dispersed and scattered situation thro out the States; in order to effect it, I have wrote

to the Eastern Governments to have them collected and to transmit me an Account of their Number, distinguishing the Names and Ranks of the Field and Commissioned Officers, and the Corps they belong to; I have also wrote to Governor Livingston of the Jersey's upon the Subject, and must take the Liberty of requesting Congress to give directions that a similar return may be made of those in Pennsylvania and Maryland, and for their being brought to Brunswick, that they may be ready to be exchanged for an equal Number and those of the same Rank. I observe by the Resolve of the 26th. Ulto., that the Exchange is particularly directed to be made of the Officers and Soldiers taken on Long Island; but should not that follow the exchange of those Officers and Men who have lately returned from Quebec, whose Imprisonment has been much longer, and whose Service has not been less severe and in many instances Conducted with Great intrepidity; I have had many applications since their arrival, by which they claim a kind of preference, as far as their numbers and the circumstances of their Rank will allow, and which I thought it my duty to mention, that I may obtain some

direction upon the subject.77

You will observe, by a Paragraph of a Letter received Yesterday from General Howe, a Copy of which you have at length, that the non-performance of the Agreement between Captain Forster and General Arnold, by which the latter stipulated for the return of an equal number of Officers and Prisoners in our hands for those delivered him, is considered in an unfavourable light and entirely imputed to me, as having the Chief command of the Armies of the States, and a controlling power over General Arnold. The pointed manner in which Mr. Howe is pleased to express himself, could not personally affect me, supposing there had been no good grounds for the Treaty not being ratified, having been nothing more than an Instrument of conveying to him the Resolutions formed upon the Subject; but as there were but too just reasons, his censure could have no weight was it not directed against me. However, I would beg leave to observe, from the Letters from the Hostages; from what has been reported by others respecting Captain Forster's having used his endeavours to restrain the Savages from exercising their wonted barbarities, (tho' in

some instances they did) his purchasing some of the Prisoners for a pretty considerable premium; but above all, from the delicate nature of such Treaties, and because the non-observance of them, must damp the Spirits of the Officers who make them, and add affliction to the Misfortunes of those whom necessity and the nature of the case force into Captivity, to give them a sanction, by a long and irksome confinement; For these reasons and many more that will readily occur and that I could wish Congress to reconsider the matter and to carry it into execution. I am sensible the wrong was originally in their employing Savages and that whatever cruelties were committed by them, should be esteemed as their own Acts: Yet perhaps in point of Policy, it may not be improper to overlook these infractions on their part, and to pursue that mode which will be the most likely to render the hardships incident to War, most tolerable, and the greatest benefits to the State. I have ventured to say thus much upon the Subject, from a regard to the service,

77. On October to Congress resolved that “General Washington be directed to negotiate with General Howe, an exchange of the officers returned from Canada, and that they have a preference to the officers taken on New York and Long Island.” (See *Journals of the Continental Congress*.)

and because such Gentlemen of the Army as I have heard mention it, seem to wish the Treaty had been ratified, rather than disallowed.78

Inclosed is a list of vacancies in the Third Regiment of Virginia Troops in part occasioned by the Death of Major Leitch, who died of his Wounds on Tuesday Morning, and of the Gentlemen who stand next in Regimental Order and who are recommended to succeed to them; You will observe that Captn. John Fitzgerald is said to be appointed to the duty of Major. This I have done in orders, being the eldest Captain in the Regiment and I believe an officer of unexceptionable Merit, and as it was highly necessary at this Time, to have the Corps as well and fully officered as possible.

There is also a vacancy in the 1st. Continental Battalion, by the promotion of Lieut: Clark79 to a Majority in the flying Camp, to which Colonel Hand has recommended William Patten to succeed, as you will perceive by his Letter inclosed.

I have taken the liberty to transmit a plan for establishing a Corps of Engineers, Artificers &ca. sketched out by Colonel Putnam,80 and which is proposed for the consideration of Congress. How far they may incline to adopt, or whether they may chuse to proceed upon such an extensive scale, they will be pleased to determine; However I conceive it, a matter well worthy of their consideration, being convinced from experience and from the reasons suggested by Colo. Putnam, who has acted with great diligence and reputation in the Business, that some establishment of the sort is highly necessary and will be productive of the most beneficial consequences. If the proposition is approved by Congress, I am informed by good Authority, that there is a Gentleman in Virginia in the Colony Service, John Stadler Esquire a Native of Germany, whose abilities in this way are by no means inconsiderable.81

I am told he was an Engineer in the Army under Genl. Stanwix, and is reputed to be of skill and ingenuity in the profession. In this capacity I do not know him myself, but am intimately acquainted with him in his private Character, as a man of understanding and of good behaviour. I would submit his merit to the

78. General Howe had written (October 4): “With Relation to the Non Performance of your Part of the Agreement between Captain Forster and General Arnold, that General being immediately under your Command, from your Situation made known to me under your own Subscription, it rests with you to see them fulfilled, agreeable to the plighted Faith of the General, which, no doubt, to save his Honor, he has a Right to expect, or that you will return the Prisoners given up by Captain Forster. In the mean while I trust, from the Declaration in your Letter of the 23d last past, that you will not allow of any Delay in the Exchange of the Officers and Soldiers in your Possession belonging to His Majesty's

Troops. Brigadier General Woodhull was yesterday reported to me to have died of his Wounds.” Howe's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

A letter from a “gentleman” at Montreal, dated Aug. 18, 1776, stated that when Captain Forster had taken the American party prisoners his provisions proved insufficient for such a number, and he was obliged to put his own men and the Indians with him on half allowance. This made the Indians discontented, and they insisted upon putting their prisoners to death, but were prevailed upon by Captain Forster, after the “utmost entreaty,” to spare them to be sent to the colonies to be exchanged. General Burgoyne allowed the hostages to write to their friends.— *Ford*.

79. Lieut. John Clark had been made major of the Second Pennsylvania Battalion of the Flying Camp on September 14.

80. Col. Rufus Putnam's plan for a corps of engineers, dated Sept. 26, 1776, is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

81. Stadler, later, was a lieutenant colonel of Engineers in the Southern Department.

inquiry of Congress, and if he shall answer the report I have had of him, I make no doubt but he will be suitably provided for.

The Convention of this State have lately seized and had appraised two New Ships, valued at 6229 £ Y[ork] Currency which they have sent down for the purpose of sinking and obstructing the Channel opposite Mount Washington. The price being high and opinions various as to the necessity of the measure, some conceiving the Obstruction nearly sufficient already; and others that they would render it secure, I would wish to have the direction of Congress upon the Subject by the earliest opportunity, thinking myself, that if the Enemy should attempt to come up, that they should be used sooner than to hazard their passing.

I must be governed by circumstances, yet hope for their sentiments before any thing is necessary to be done.

Sundry disputes having arisen of late between Officers of different Regiments and of the same Rank, respecting the right of succession, to such vacancies as happen from death or other causes, some suggesting that it should be in a Colonial line and governed by the priority of their Commissions, others that it should be regimental, and there being an instance now before me, between the Officers of the Virginia Regiments occasioned by the death of Major Lietch, It has become absolutely necessary that Congress should determine the mode by which promotions are to be regulated, whether colonially and by priority of Commissions, or Regimentally; reserving a right out of the General rule they adopt, to reward for particular Merit, or of witholding from Office such as may not be worthy to succeed. I have only proposed two modes for their consideration, being satisfied that promotions through the line as they are called, can never take place without producing discord, jealousy, distrust and the most fatal consequences. In some of my Letters upon the subject of promotions, and in one which

I had the honor of adressing the board of War on the 30th. Ulto., I advised, that the mode should be rather practised than resolved on, but I am fully convinced now of the necessity there is of settling it in one of the two ways I have taken the liberty to point out and under the restrictions I have mentioned, or the disputes and applications will be endless and attended with great inconveniences. I have the Honor &ca.82

To GOVERNOR PATRICK HENRY

Head Quarters, Heights of Harlem, October 5, 1776.

Dr. Sir: Your Obliging favor of the 20th Ultimo came duly to hand and demands my best acknowledgments. I congratulate you, Sir, most cordially, upon your appointment to the Government; and, with no less sincerity, on your late recovery. Your Correspondence

will confer honor and Satisfaction; and, whenever it is in my power, I shall write to you with pleasure. Our Retreat from Long Island, under the peculiar Circumstances we then laboured, became an Act of prudence and necessity, and the Evacuation of New York was a consequence resulting from the other. Indeed, after we discovered the Enemy, instead of making an Attack upon the City, were endeavouring (by means of their Ships and a Superior land force) either to intercept our retreat, by getting in our rear; or else by landing their *forces* , between our divisions at Kingsbridge and those in the Town, to seperate the one from the other, it became a matter of the last importance to alter the disposition of the Army.

These Measures, however, (Although of the most evident utility) have been productive of some inconveniencies; the Troops having become in some Measure dis

82. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The “Letter Book” copy, in the *Washington Papers*, also in Harrison's writing, varies in minor verbal particulars from the letter sent.

pirited, by these successive Retreats, and which, I presume, has also been the case among several of our Friends in the Country. In order to recover that Military Ardor, which is of the utmost Moment to an Army; almost immediately on my Arrival at this Place, I formed a design of cutting off some of the Enemy's light Troops, who (encouraged by their Successes) had advanced to the extremity of the High Ground, opposite to our present Encampment. To effect this salutary purpose, Colo Knowlton and Major Leitch were detached with parties of Riflemen and Rangers to get in their rear, while a disposition was made as if to attack them in front: By some unhappy mistake, the fire was commenced from that Quarter, rather on their Flank than in their rear; by which Means, though the Enemy were defeated and pushed off the Ground, yet they had an Opportunity of retreating to their Main Body. This piece of success (though it tended greatly to inspire our Troops with confidence), has been in some measure imbittered by the loss of those two brave Officers, who are dead of the Wounds they received in the Action. Since this Skirmish, excepting the affair at Montresor's Island, where Major Henly, another of our

best Officers, was slain, there has been nothing of any material Consequence. Indeed, the advantage obtained over the Enemy's Light Troops, might have been improved, perhaps to a considerable extent, had we been in a proper Situation to have made use of this favorable Crisis; but a want of Confidence, in the generality of the Troops, has prevented me from availing myself of that, and almost every other, opportunity, which has presented itself.

I own my fears, that this must ever be the case, when our dependence is placed on Men, inlisted for a few Months, commanded by such Officers as Party, or Accident, may have furnished; and on Militia, who as soon as they are fairly fixed in the Camp are impatient to return to their own Homes; and who, from an utter disregard of all discipline and restraint among themselves, are but too apt to infuse the like spirit into others. The Evils of short inlistments and employing Militia to oppose against regular and well appointed Troops, I strongly urged to Congress, before the last Army was engaged. Indeed, my own Situation at Cambridge, about the Close of the last Campaign, furnished the most striking example of the fatal tendency of such Measures. I then clearly foresaw, that such an Armament, as we had good reason to expect

would be sent against us, could be opposed only by Troops inlisted during the War, and where every Action would add to their experience and improvement, and of whom (if they were unsuccessful in the begining), a reasonable hope might be entertained, that, in time, they would become as well acquainted with their Business as their Enemy's. This method, I am Convinced, would have been attended with every good Consequence; for, besides the Militia's being altogether unfit for the Service, when Called into the Field, we have discovered from experience, they are much more expensive than any other kind of Troops; and that the War could have been Conducted on More Moderate Terms, by establishing a permanent Body of Forces, who were equal to every contingency, than by Calling in the Militia on imminent and pressing Occasions.

I would not wish to influence your Judgment with respect to Militia, in the Management of Indian affairs, as I am fully persuaded the Inhabitants of the frontier Counties in your Colony, are from inclination, as well as ability, peculiarly adapted for that kind of Warfare. At the same time, I should think it would be highly advisable, in case you should conceive yourselves to be in danger from any detachment from the British Army, or from their Marines, not to depend on any Troops, but such as are well Officered and Inlisted during the War.

I make no doubt, but your State have turned their Views towards forming some Obstacles against the Enemy's ships and Tenders, who may go up your Rivers, in quest of Provisions, or for the purpose of destroying your Towns. If they have depended on Batteries to prevent them, without any other obstructions, a tryal of the matter has taught us to believe it will be altogether Ineffectual; as when under Sail, with wind and Tide in their favor, any damage they may receive from a Battery, will be of very little Consequence. At the same time, I must observe that this kind of opposition is exceedingly proper for the defence of a Town, or in any Case, where it is necessary the Ships should come to Anchor before the Batteries, for the purpose of Silencing them. In the first Instance, I would strongly recommend Row Gallies, which, if Officered with brave and determined Men, and Conducted with prudence, would, in my Opinion, be productive of the greatest Advantage, and be the most likely means (in your Situation), of securing your Towns and Houses, on the Navigable Waters, from any impression of the Shipping.

I imagine, before this, Congress has made you acquainted with their Resolutions for raising the New Army,

and that your Colony is to furnish fifteen Battalions, to be inlisted during the War. As this will occasion the choosing a Number of New Officers, I would in the most urgent Manner, recommend the utmost care and Circumspection in your several Appointments. I do not expect, that there are Many experienced Gentlemen now left with you, as, from what I have understood, those who have served in the last War are chiefly promoted; however,

I am satisfied, that the Military Spirit runs so high in your Colony, and that the Number of Applicants will be so considerable, that a very proper choice may be made. Indeed, the Army's being put upon such a permanent footing, will be a strong inducement for them to step forth on the present interesting occasion. One Circumstance, in this important Business, ought to be cautiously guarded against, and that is, the Soldier and Officer being too nearly on a level. Discipline and Subordination add life and Vigour to Military movements. The person Commanded yields but a reluctant obedience to those, he conceives, are undeservedly made his Superiors. The degrees of Rank are frequently transferred from Civil life into the Departments of the Army. The true Criterion to judge by (when past Services do not enter into the Competition) is, to consider whether the Candidate for Office has a just pretention to the Character of a Gentleman, a proper sense of Honor, and some reputation to loose.

perhaps Sir, you may be surprised at my pressing this advice so strongly, as I have done in this Letter; but I have felt the inconveniences resulting from a Contrary principle in so sensible a Manner, and this Army has been so greatly enfeebled by a different line of Conduct, that, I hope, you will readily excuse me. I am etc.

To SIR WILLIAM HOWE

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 6, 1776.

Sir: I beg leave to inform you, that in consequence of my directions, founded on your favor of the 21st Ulto. Governors Brown and Skeene are arrived within the Neighbourhood of this place and will be conveyed to morrow,

between the Hours of one and Two, to one of the Ships of War in the North River, when it is hoped that my Lord Sterling will be permitted to return, as also Mr. Lovell, if he is come from Halifax.

The particular manner in which you rest upon me, by your Letter of the 4th. instant, a performance of the Agreement between General Arnold and Capt: Forster, was entirely unexpected, as I inclosed you some time ago, the Resolutions of Congress upon the Subject, by which you would perceive that they, to whom I am amenable, had taken upon themselves the consideration of the Matter. As to the Prisoners mentioned in my Letter of the 23d, their Exchange shall be effected, as soon as the circumstances I made you acquainted with will admit of.

The inclosed Note for Mrs. DeLancey, you will be pleased to have conveyed by the earliest Opportunity. I am etc.

To THE COMTE D'EMERY89

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, 10 Miles from New York, October 7, 1776.

Sir: I yesterday had the honor of receiving your Letter of the 4th. Augt. and I take the earliest Opportunity of testifying the pleasure I have in complying with your request, by immediately ordering the Release of Monsr. Dechambault. He shall be accommodated with a Passage in the first Vessel that sails from Philadelphia to the French Colonies in the West Indies. Had it not been for your Interposition Monsr. Dechambault must have remained a prisoner till released by a Cartel, but I could not hesitate to comply with a Request made by a Nobleman who by his public Countenance of our Cause has renderedsuch essential Services to the

89. Governor General of the French part of San Domingo.

thirteen united independent States of America, whose Armies I have the honor to command. I have the honor to be, etc.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 7, 1776.

Sir: I do myself the honor of transmitting to you a Copy of a Letter from the Compte D'Emery, Governor General of the French part of St. Domingo, which I received Yesterday and also my Answer, which I have inclosed and left open for the Consideration of Congress, wishing that it may be sealed, if they approve of the Seiur. De Chambeau's releasement, and which I think may be attended with many valuation consequences.
If Congress concur in Sentiment with me, they will be pleased to give directions for his passage by the first opportunity to the French Islands; If they do not I shall be obliged by your returning my Letter.90

I have also the pleasure of inclosing a Copy of a Letter from Monsr. P. Pennet,91 which came to hand last night and which contains intelligence of an agreeable and interesting nature, for which I beg leave to refer you to the Copy.

The Polite manner in which Monsr. Pennet has requested to be one of my Aid de Camps,

90. Congress approved this recommendation and voted the release of De Chambault.

91. Pierre Penet.

demands my acknowledgements. As the appointment will not be attended with any expence and will shew a proper regard for his complaisance and the Attachment he is pleased to express for the service of the American States, I shall take the Liberty of complying with his requisition and transmit him a Brevet Commission, provided the same shall be agreeable to Congress. Their Sentiments upon the Subject you will be kind enough to favor me with, by the first opportunity.92

The Enclosed Letter for the Seignr DeChambeau93 you will please to forward to him, if he is to be enlarged, after closing It.

Before I conclude, I must take the liberty to observe that I am under no small difficulties on account of the French Gentlemen that are here in consequence of the Commissions they have received, having no means to employ them or to afford them an Opportunity of rendering that service, they themselves wish to give, or which perhaps is expected by the public. Their want of our language, is an objection to their being joined to any of the Regiments here at this time, were there vacancies, and not other obstacles. These considerations induce me to wish, that Congress will adopt and point out some particular mode to be observed respecting them; What it should be, they will be best able to determine: But to me it appears, that their being here now can be attended with no valuable consequences, and that as the power of appointing Officers for the new Army is vested in the Conventions &ca. of the Several States, it will be necessary for Congress to direct them to be provided for in the Regiments to be raised, according to the ranks they would wish them to bear, or I am convinced,

92. Congress granted the permission, and Penet was appointed a brevet aide-de-camp to the Commander in Chief, the only tach appointment made.

93. Washington did not, apparently, keep a copy of his letter to De Chambault.

they will never be taken in, let their merit be what it may, or to form them into a distinct Corps which may be encreased in time. They seem to be Genteel, sensible Men, and I have no doubt of their making good Officers as soon as they can learn as much of our Language as to make themselves well understood, but unless Congress interferes, with their particular directions to the States, they will never be incorporated in any of the Regiments to be raised and without they are, they will be entirely at a loss and in the most irksome situation for some thing to do, as they now are.94 I have &ca.95

94. Probably the four French officers who arrived in September in the *Reprisal*, Capt. Lambert Wickes.

95. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The letter sent varies in minor verbal details from the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*, which is also in Harrison's writing.

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

Head Quarters, Heights of Harlem, October 8, 1776.

Sir: I was this Morning honored with your favor of the 2d Inst., and beg leave to return you my thanks for the Measures you have adopted, upon my request for obtaining an Account of the Prisoners in your State, and for your Assurance, that I shall be furnished with a Return, as soon as it is procured, in order that I may give further directions about them.

The proposition respecting the Prisoners that wish to remain with us, and about the expence that has been incurred for the maintenance of the whole, that have been in your State; I shall lay before Congress by the earliest opportunity and will transmit you the result of their opinion. However it appears to me; that there will be a necessity for returning the whole of their prisoners, not only because the Ballance is against us, but because I am informed, it was particularly Stipulated on the part of Genl. Montgomery for those that were taken in Canada. the Case will be hard upon those who want to remain and who have all become attached to us, and should Congress determine on their being returned, it will be but right that some pains should be used, to inform them of the reasons leading to the Measure and I doubt not, if they act with proper Caution, that they may afterwards effect their escape, to which they should be encouraged. indeed I think, if they are heartily disposed towards us, that their Exchange may be productive of many good Consequences; they may extend their influence to many others and who perhaps will be induced to desert.

I hope, the resentment which your State mean to Express against those, who have scandalously deserted from the defence of our Cause, will have a

happy effect, and prevent a like Conduct in future; Nothing can be too severe for them. Before the receipt of your favor, I had desired the General Officers to make out a list of such Field and other Officers, as are esteemed worthy of Command and intitled to Commissions in the Service. This is a Consideration of exceeding Importance, for without good Officers, we can never have Troops that will be worthy of the name, and with them we may in time have an Army equal to any. We have good materials to work upon. As soon as the list is obtained, I will forward it by the first Conveyance that may offer. I have strongly inculcated on the Genls., the impropriety of giving in or recommending any, but those who are fit for Service; and you may rest assured Sir, as you have been pleased to honor me with your Confidence, on this occasion, that as far as it shall be in my Power, I will only return those that are well Spoken of, and who from report will Answer, what you have ever had in view, the advancement of our Common rights and the Happiness of the United States. I am etc.

P.S. the following Payments have been made to the Militia of your State, lately here.

1776 Dolls.

Sept. 28. Major Nathl. Torry for his Regiment 5185 9/72

30th Capt Amos Barnes 15th Regt. Commd. by Major Shaw. 5211 38/72

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 8, 1776.

Sir: Since I had the honor of writing you Yesterday, I have been favoured with a letter from the Honble. Council of Massachusetts Bay, covering one from Richard Derby Esquire, a copy of which is herewith transmitted, as it contains intelligence of an important and interesting nature.

As an Exchange of Prisoners is about to take place, I am induced, from a Question stated in a Letter I received from Governor Trumbull this morning, to ask the Opinion of Congress, in what manner the States that have had the care of them, are to [be] reimbursed the expences incurred on their Account. My want of information in this instance or whether any account is to be sent in with the Prisoners, would not allow me to give him an Answer, as nothing that I recollect, has ever been said upon the Subject. He also mentions another matter, Viz. Whether such privates as are Mechanics and others who may desire to remain with us, should be obliged to return:5 In respect to the latter, I conceive there can be no doubt of our being under a necessity of returning the whole, a proposition having

5. The Board of War reported on Washington's letter, and Congress (October 14) resolved that the several States submit their accounts for prisoner expenses. The recommendation “That all Prisoners captivated by the Army of the United States, whether Mechanics or not, be included in the exchange to be made between General Washington and the Enemy” was “postponed.”

been made on our part for a General Exchange, and that agreed to; besides, the ballance of Prisoners is greatly against us, and I am informed, it was particularly stipulated by General Montgomery, that all those that were taken in Canada should be exchanged, whenever a Cartel was settled for the purpose. Under these circumstances, I should suppose the several Committees having the care of them, should be instructed to make the most exact returns of the whole, however willing a part should be to continue with us; at the same time I should think it not improper to inform them, of the reasons leading to the measure, and that they should be invited to escape afterwards, which in all probability they may effect without much difficulty if they are attached to us, extending their influence to many more and bringing them away also.

The situation of our Affairs and the present establishment of the Army, requiring our most vigorous exertions to engage a New One, I presume it will be necessary to furnish the Pay

Master General, as early as possible, with Money to pay the bounty lately resolved on, to such Men as will inlist. Prompt pay perhaps may have a happy effect and induce the continuance of some who are here, but without it, I am certain that nothing can be done. nor have we time to loose in making the experiment. but then it may be asked, who is to recruit, or who can consider themselves as Officers for that purpose, till the Conventions of the different States have made the Appointments.

Yesterday afternoon the exchange between Lord Stirling and Governor Browne was carried into execution and his Lordship is now here; he confirms the Intelligence mentioned by Capt: Souther about the Transports he met, by the arrival of the Daphne, Man of War, (a twenty Gun Ship) a few days ago,

with twelve Ships under her convoy having light Horse on board. They sailed with about Twenty in each and lost about eighty in their passage, besides those in the Vessel taken by Captain Souther: he further adds, that he had heard it acknowledged more than once, that in the Action of the 16th. Ulto.6 the Enemy had a Hundred men killed, about sixty Highlanders of the 42d. Regiment, and 40 of the light Infantry. This confession coming from themselves, we may reasonably conclude did not exaggerate the number.

In pursuance of the Resolve which you were pleased to transmit me, I called upon the Members who concurred in the acquittal of McCumber, to assign their reasons. Inclosed you have their Answer, by which you will perceive the direction has given them great uneasiness, and from the information I have received, it has become a matter of much more general concern than could have been expected, insomuch that I will take the liberty to advise, that it may rest were it is; having heard that most of the Officers have become party to it and consider that the resolve materially affects the whole.7

October 9.

About 8 O'Clock this morning, Two Ships of 44. Guns each, supposed to be the Roebuck and Phoenix and a frigate of 20 Guns, with three or four Tenders got under way from

about Bloomingdale where they had been laying some time and stood with an easy Southerly breeze towards our Chevaux defrize, which we hoped would have interrupted their passage while our Batteries played upon them, but to our surprize and mortification, they ran through without the least difficulty and without receiving any apparent damage from our Forts, tho' they kept up a heavy fire from both sides of the River. Their destination or views cannot be known with certainty, but most probably they are

6. Harlem Heights, N. Y.

7. This report, dated Oct. 7, 1776, is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. In it the court declined to give its reasons for the verdict. (See General Orders, Sept. 22, 1776, *ante*.)

sent to stop the Navigation and cut off the supplies of boards &ca. which we should have received and of which we are in great need. They are standing up and I have dispatched an Express to the convention of this State, that Notice may be immediately communicated to General Clinton, at the Highland Fortifications, to put him on his Guard in case they Should have any designs against them and that precautions may be taken, to prevent the Craft belonging to the River falling into their hands. I have &ca.8

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 9, 1776.

Sir: Agreeable to your request and the Promise contained in my Letter of yesterday; I beg leave to transmit you, the inclosed list, comprehending the names of such Gentlemen as are recommended by the General Officers from your State, as proper persons to be promoted in the Regiments you are about to raise, with the Ranks which they conceive they ought to bear. Sensible that the very existence, that the well doing of every Army, depends upon good Officers; I urged, I pressed the Gentlemen to whom the Business was confided, and whose Situation has given them an Opportunity, of being better acquainted

thro' the different Corps than I am, to pay their most serious attention to the Matter; and to return such and only such, as will in their estimation, by their fidelity, attachment and Good conduct, pro mote the great End we have in View, the establishment of our rights and the happiness of our Country, by that mode which

8. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison, who left out the word within brackets in the second paragraph in the letter sent, though he included it in his “Letter Book” copy, which varies in minor verbal details from the above.

sad necessity has obliged us to pursue. This I hope they have done, they have taken no Notice of any officer in the Northern Army or of those of the 17th. Regt. (Huntingdon's) who were taken on Long Island; whose Imprisonment I should suppose, if they have Merit, should be no Objection to their having pro motion; Nor do they mean by the list they have given in, to preclude others of greater Merit, than those they have Mentioned; if they are to be found. Congress by a late Resolution, have allowed a pay Master to each Regiment, in the appointment of which, I would recommend, that particular Care be had to the Choosing Men, intimately acquainted with and well versed in Accounts and who will be able to keep them in a fair and distinct manner; as they will have not only to receive the Regiments Pay, but to keep Accounts of every transaction incident to them; such as respect their Cloathes &c. In some appointments lately made by the Field Officers to whom I submitted the Matter, they nominated Men who could not write their Names legibly.

As our present Army is upon the Eve of their dissolution; It behoves us to exert every Nerve, to inlist immediately for the New one. Without, I am convinced we shall have none to oppose the Enemy, and who will have it in their power, to spread havock and devastation wheresoever they will; I would there fore submit it to your consideration, whether it may not be proper, as soon as you have made choice of your Officers and which I think should be effected as early as possible, to appoint a Committee, with power to repair to this place and make such arrangements, as may be Necessary with respect to

those who are now in the Service, in order that they may begin to recruit out of the present Corps, without any loss of time.

I perceive the Genls. in the list they have made; have set down the Commissary9 for a Regiment. In this I think they have done exceedingly right and that it is nothing more than a re ward justly due his Merit, in case he should quit his present department; However I hope that the apprehensions, which have given rise to this step, will never become realities, and that he will continue in his office and upon such terms, as may be agreeable to him; but lest he should decline, the provision they have made, is extremely proper.

I this Minute saw Genl. Spencer, who informed me, that they had never taken the Officers, Prisoners on long Island into Consideration, in making out their Arrangement; not knowing whether they could be noticed in their present situation. I have made out a list of them and as I have before observed, If they are Men of Merit, their imprisonment, most certainly should not operate to their prejudice, if it can be avoided. If a principle of that sort was adopted, it would give the greatest discouragement, and have a direct tendency to suppress every brave and manly enterprize, which might be attended with Captivity.
I would also mention Major Sherman,10 Son of Mr. Sherman of Congress, a Young Gentleman who appears to me and who is generally esteemed an Active and Valuable Officer; whom the General Officers have omitted to set down in their Lists, expecting I suppose (if they thought of him at all), that he would be provided for in the Massachusetts Regiments, because he is in one at this time. But as it is probable, promotions in that State will be confined to their

9. Joseph Trumbull, Commissary General of Stores of the Continental Army. He was also Commissary General of Purchases of the Continental Army from June, 1777, to August, 1777, and a member of the Continental Board of War from November, 1777, to April, 1778. He died July 23, 1778.

10. Maj. Isaac Sherman, son of Roger Sherman, of the Twenty-sixth Continental Infantry, He was lieutenant colonel of the Second Connecticut Regiment in January, 1777; lieutenant colonel and commandant of the Eighth Connecticut Regiment in October, 1779; transferred to the Fifth Connecticut Regiment in January, 1781; retired Jan. 1, 1783.

own people, I should apprehend that he should be properly noticed in your appointments, lest we should loose an Officer, who so far as I can judge, promises good Services to his Country.

On yesterday morning, three Ships of War 2 of 44 and the other of 20 Guns, with two or three Tenders, passed up the North River, without meeting any interruption from the Chivaux defrise or receiving any material damage from our Batteries; tho' they kept a heavy fire at them from both sides of the River; their views most probably are to cut off all supplies of Boards &c. which might come down the River and of which we shall have great need. I have given directions, to proceed as fast as possible in carrying on the Obstructions and I would fain hope, if they allow us a little more time, that they will be so far compleated, as to render the passage dangerous, if not altogether insecure. I have the honor etc.

P. S. In respect to the appointment of officers, I would beg leave to add, that the merit of the officers who went thro' the Canada expedition with General Arnold, should in my opinion be particularly noticed: They are now upon their parole and Cannot Act; but should not suitable provision be made for them against their Releasement, which I should suppose ought to be among the first.

To MAJOR GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 10, 1776.

Dear Sir: I am now to acknowledge your favor of the 1st. Instt, and to inform you, that the two Sachems of the Caughnuagas, with Mr. Deane the Interpreter, have been with me and spent three or four days. I shewed them every Civility in my

power and presented them with such Necessaries as our barren Stores afford, and they were pleased to take. I also had them shewn all our Works upon this Island, which I had manned to give 'em an Idea of our force and to do away the false notions they might have embibed, from the Tales which had been propagated among 'em. They seemed to think we were amazingly strong and said they had seen enough, with out going to our posts in Jersey or the other side of Harlem River. They took their departure Yesterday morning and I hope with no unfavourable impressions.

Your favor of the 6th, came to hand this day by Mr. Bennet, I have communicated the Contents, so far as it respects the Boards, to General Mifflin, who has resumed the Office of Quarter Master General, on Mr. Moylans resignation and the Application of Congress, he will write you to morrow about them, and will send the sum you require, by the return of Mr. Bennet.

It gives me great pleasure to hear the Army is so well sup plied with provision, and I would fain hope, that if the Enemy do not effect any thing in this or the next Month, that they will not attempt to pass the Lakes till early in the Spring, by which time perhaps we may be able to recruit our Army, tho' I have my fears that the Business will not go on with the ease and expedition, that I could wish. I have done all I could and urged strongly the propriety of giving the Soldiers a Suit of Cloaths annually; how Congress will determine on the Subject I know not, I have also advised the raising of the Officers pay.

We are again deprived of the Navigation of this River by three Ships of War, Two of 44 and the other of 20 Guns with three or four Tenders passing our Chivaux de frize Yesterday Morning, and all our Batteries,

without any kind of damage or interruption, notwithstanding a Heavy fire was kept up from both sides of the River. I have given directions to compleat the Obstructions as fast as possible, and I flatter myself, if they allow us a little time more that the passage will become extremely difficult, if not entirely insecure. Their views I imagine are chiefly, to cut off our Supplies and probably to gain recruits. I am, etc.

To MAJOR GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER

Head Quarters, Heights of Harlem, October 11, 1776.

Dear Sir: I this morning received your favour of the 7th. Instt. and am to inform you, that it is not in my power to supply you with a single Nail, nor are they to be procured in Philadelphia, as Genl. Mifflin tells me, who has Just returned from thence. For want of them, we are building here, Huts of Sod Logs &c. to cover the Troops and which I am in hopes will make a tolerable good shift.

Since my Letter of Yesterday, nothing has Occurred, and I have only to add that, I am &c.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 11, 1776.

Sir: I beg leave to inform you, that since my Letter of the 8th. and 9th Instt. which I had the honor of addressing you; Nothing of importance has occurred, except that the Ships of War, which I then mentioned, in their passage up the River, took a Sloop that was at Anchor off the Mouth of Spitendevil, and Two of our Row Gallies, which they out Sailed. The Crews finding that

they could not prevent them falling into the Enemy's Hands, run them near the Shore and effected their own escape. From the Intelligence I have received, the Ships are now laying at Tarry Town, without having landed any Men, which seemed to be apprehended by

some, or attempted any thing else. Their principal views, in all probability, are, to interrupt our Navigation and to receive such disaffected persons, as incline to take part against us; the former they will effect beyond all question, and I fear, that their expectations respecting the latter, will be but too fully answered.24

October 12.

The Inclosed Copy of a Letter received last night from the Convention of this State, will shew you the apprehensions they are under, on account of the disaffected among them. I have ordered up a part of the Militia from the Massachusetts under General Lincoln, to prevent if Possible, the Consequences which they suggest may happen, and which there is reason to believe the Conspirators have in Contemplation; I am persuaded that they are upon the eve of breaking out, and that they will leave nothing unessayed that will distress us and favor the designs of the Enemy, as soon as their Schemes are ripe for it.25

October 13.

Yesterday the Enemy landed at Frog's point about Nine Miles from hence further up the Sound. Their number we cannot ascertain, as they have not advanced from the point, which is a kind of Island, but the Water that surrounds it is fordable at low tide. I have ordered works to be thrown up at the passes from the point to the Main. From the great number of Sloops, Schooners and Nine Ships, that went up the Sound in the Evening full of Men, and from the information of two Deserters who came over last night, I have reason to believe, that the greatest part of their Army, has moved upwards, or is about to do it, pursuing their original plan of getting [with an intent (as I suppose) to get] in our rear and cutting off our communication with the Country. The grounds [leading] from Frogs point [to Kings Bridge,] are strong and defensible, being full of Stone fences, both along the road and across the adjacent Fields, which will render it difficult for Artillery, or indeed [for a] a large Body of foot to advance in any regular [way] order except through the main road. Our

men who are posted on the passes seemed to be in good spirits when I left 'em last night. [When I left our people last night they seemed to be in good Spirits.] I am &c.26

24. Col. Joseph Phillips, of the New Jersey Militia, wrote to Washington (on or about October 12) begging to be allowed to finish the battery he was erecting at Fort Washington to help in such emergencies as this. Lieut. Col. Robert H. Harrison replied for the General (October 12), approving the request and complimenting Phillips upon his motives, which the Commander in Chief “would be happy to see prevail generally through the army.” Phillips's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

25. A copy of the letter of October 10 from the New York Legislature is filed with Washington's letter in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

26. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The portions in brackets show the form of the draft which Harrison altered in those minor particulars when he made the fair copy for Washington's signature. According to indorsement, this letter was read in Congress October 15, It is further indorsed: “nothing to be reported on this Letter.”

To GOVERNOR NICHOLAS COOKE

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 12, 1776.

Sir: The situation of our affairs, and the approaching dissolution of the present Army, calling for every possible exertion on our part to levy a New one; and presuming that your State are about to make an arrangement of Officers, for the quota of Troops they are to furnish, and that they may wish to know those belonging to them, who have served with reputation and bravery; I have thought it expedient, to obtain a return by such means as seemed most likely to be well founded. To this End, I have made inquiry, and the inclosed list which I have the honor to transmit you, comprehends the Names of those, who in public Estimation, and that of the Generals under whom they have more particularly acted,

have behaved themselves well and to good acceptance; and whose past Conduct give a reasonable hope, that their future will render material services to their Country.

The Advantages arising from a judicious appointment of Officers, and the fatal consequences that result from the want of them, are too obvious to require Arguments to prove them; I shall, therefore, beg leave to add only, that as the well doing, nay the very existence of every Army, to any profitable purposes, depend upon it, that too much regard cannot be had to the choosing of Men of Merit and such as are, not only under the influence of a warm attachment to their Country, but who also possess sentiments of principles of the strictest honor. Men of this Character, are fit for Office, and will use their best endeavours to introduce that discipline and subordination, which are essential to good order, and inspire that Confidence in the Men, which alone can give success to the interesting and important contest in which we are engaged. I would also beg leave to subjoin, that it appears to me absolutely necessary, that this business should have your earliest attention, that those, who are nominated, may employ their interest and influence, to recruit Men out of your Corps that are now here, without loss of time.

In respect to the Officers that were in the Canada expedition, their behaviour and merit, and the severities they have experienced, entitle them to a particular notice, in my opinion. However, as they are under their paroles, I would recommend that vacancies should be reserved, for such as you think fit to promote, not wishing them to accept Commissions immediately, or to do the least Act, that may be interpreted a violation of their engagement. Their releasement, I hope, will be soon obtained, as I think them entitled to the first exchange, and which I have mentioned to Congress.

I flatter myself, that the freedom I have taken, in the instances above, will have the indulgence and Pardon of your State, when I assure you, that the list, you will receive, is not intended to exclude Gentlemen of greater merit, or transmitted with other views, than to assist you, and of promoting the General good; and, also, that the measure has been recommended by a Committee of Congress, who were pleased to honor me with a Visit. I

have done the same to Governor Trumbull, at his particular request; and the Officers are making out a Return, to be laid before the Massachusetts Assembly, of the same Nature, so far as it concerns the Officers from their State. ***28

I like to have omitted mentioning of a Pay master to each Regiment, who I perceive are not noticed in the list transmitted you. Congress by a late Resolution, have allowed such an Officer with Captain's pay and as their duty will be not only to receive the Regiment's Pay, but to keep Accounts of their Cloathing and every other incidental charge; I would beg leave to recommend, that attention should be had to their appointment and that Persons may be nominated who are well versed in Accounts and who can keep them in a fair and proper Manner. I am led to advise this precaution to be used, because it will be an Office of a good deal of Consequence, and because in several Instances in the present Army, where the Appointments were made in Consequence of recommendations from the field Officers; Persons have been put in, who so far from being Accountants, and Answering the designs of Congress, can scarcely write their own names.

October 13.

Yesterday the Enemy landed at Frogs Point, ***29 and from the Situation of the Grounds, thro' which they must Pass, if they pursue their Plan, I would fain hope they will sustain considerable Loss, if not a repulse. I have the Honor etc.

28. The omitted paragraph repeats the news of the British ships sailing up the Hudson, as given in Washington's letter to Congress, Oct. 8, 1776, *q. v*.

29. The omitted paragraph is a repetition of the last one in Washington's letter to Congress, Oct. 11 [12 and 13], 1776, *q. v*.

RECRUITING INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLONEL EDWARD HAND

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 11, 1776.

Sir: You are immediately to Inlist such of your Regiment or any other Troops raised in the province of Pennsylvania, as are able of Body and Willing to enter into the Service of the United States of America, upon the following Terms.

1st. You are not to inlist any but Freemen, able of Body and under the age of 50. Carefully avoiding all persons Labouring under any Lameness or other Defect of Body prejudicial to the Service. If any such persons or any Boys or decripid persons are brought into the Service, the Officer inlisting them will be chargeable with the Expence they may be to the publick.

2dly. You are not to inlist any Deserters from the Army of the King of Great Britain, or persons of Disaffected and Suspicious Character, the American Service having already Suffered greatly by the Desertion of such persons.

3dly. You are to inlist Men to serve during the Continuance of the present War, between Great Brittain and the States of America, unless sooner Discharged by proper Authority.

4thly. The Men inlisted by you are to be Subject to the Rules and Articles for the Government of the Army published by Congress the 20th. Septemr. 1776. and are to sign those Articles.

As an Encouragement to such persons as shall inlist in the above Service you are Authorized to

engage besides the Pay and provisions now allowed.

1st. Each Soldier shall receive 20 Dollars Bounty Money, on being approved by a Major General, a Brigadier General or Colo. Comdt., of a Brigade.

Secondly. He shall also be entitled to 100 Acres of Land, at the expiration of his inlistment, and in case of his Death in the Service, his Representatives will be intitled thereto.

When any person is inlisted, you are as soon as Convenient to take him to some person duly Authorized by the above Articles to take the Oath there prescribed. I am &c.27

27. The draft is in the writing of Joseph Reed; the copy in the “Letter Book,” in that of John Fitzgerald, is corrected by Reed.

To COLONEL THOMAS TASH

Head Quarters, October 13, 1776.

Sir: Since I wrote you by Lieutt. Colo. Welch31 upon the Subject of fixing on Quarters for your Troops, I have received from the Committee of Safety for this State, such an account of its alarming Situation, owing to the Number of disaffected, together with the little Confidence that can be placed on the Militia of some of the Counties, that I find it necessary to order a part of the New Hampshire Troops to their Assistance, and do therefore direct you to march your Regiment with all possible dispatch to Fish Kills, where you will receive further directions from the Committee. I think it will be proper to send an Officer forward, to give the Committee notice of your coming, that they may assign you the places where it will be most suitable to post your men. I am &c.

P.S. do not delay your march a moment, nor the sending an Officer to the Convention of this State now setting at the Fish Kills.32

To MAJOR GENERAL ARTEMAS WARD

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 13, 1776.

Sir: I have been favoured with your two Letters of the 3rd. and 6th. Instt. In answer to the first, I am not only willing but shall be much obliged by your Settling with the Gentlemen, to whom Money was advanced for purchasing Arms, and for which purpose, I have transmitted a List of the Warrants that were drawn in their favor. Before I left Cambridge,

some of the Gentlemen, (three, four or more of them) accounted with me, but having sent away my Books, in which their Names and the ballances they paid in,

31. Lieut. Col. Joseph Welch, of the New Hampshire Militia.

32. On October 14 Robert Hanson Harrison wrote to the President of Congress, Washington having gone to visit the posts above Kings Bridge and the passes from Throgs Point:

“Every day's intelligence from the Convention of this State, holds forth discoveries of new plots, and of new conspiracies. Some of the Members seem to apprehend, that insurrections are upon the Eve of breaking out, and have suggested the necessity of seizing and securing the passes thro' the Highlands, lest the disaffected should do it. Their preservation being a matter of the greatest importance, his Excellency, notwithstanding the situation we are in with respect to Troops, has detached Colo. Tash with his Regiment, lately from New Hampshire, in addition to the Militia mentioned in his last, with directions to receive Orders from the Convention as to the Station and posts he is to occupy.

“There are now in our possession Several persons, Inhabitants of this State, who had engaged to join the Enemy, and who were intercepted in going to them; there are also two, who confess they have been with them and that they had actually engaged in their service; but finding the Terms, (the bounty, pay, &c.) not so advantageous as they expected from the information they had received, they were induced to return. As the Affairs of this Government are in a precarious situation, and such as the Convention themselves seem to think, forbid their interposition, farther than taking measures to apprehend them, his Excellency would wish to obtain the sentiments of Congress and their direction, upon a Subject so extremely critical and delicate, and which in the consideration of it, involves many important consequences.”

According to General Heath (*Memoirs*): The nonarrival of the post was the reason for not writing Congress since October 12. On the 14th the officers reconnoitered the British

at Throgs Neck. When Washington placed Lee in command above Kings Bridge he requested him not to exercise his authority for a day or two until he could make himself acquainted with the ground and the situation.

were inclosed, sometime before the evacuation of New York, I cannot particularize them, and therefore have forwarded a List of the whole.

In respect to the latter and the Invoice it contains, as the Articles seem all to be necessary, and many of them are much wanted, I think you cannot do better, than to order them to be sent to the Quarter Master General for the use of the Army here.

We are again deprived of the navigation of the North River, and the supplies which used to come thro' that Channel, by means of the Enemy's fleet, three of their Ships of War with three or four Tenders having passed our Batteries and Chiveaux de frize on the morning of the 9th ***33 They now lay at Tarry town, twenty five or thirty Miles above this. *** I am etc.34

33. The omitted portions recite the same information as to the ships and the British landing at Throgs Point as in Washington's letter to Congress, Oct. 11 [12 and 13], 1776, *q. v*.

34. The letter sent is in the possession of Judge E. A. Armstrong, of Princeton, N. J., to whose kindness the editor is indebted. It varies from the “Letter Book” copy only in capitalization.

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 15, 1776.

Sir: I was last night favored with your Letter of the 6th. Inst., with the return of Prisoners in your State, for which I thank you. It is properly made out.

Every day's intelligence, from the Convention of this State, mentions Plots and Conspiracies, that are in Agitation among the disaffected. The inclosed Copy of a Letter, which I received yesterday from Robert R Livingston Esqr.; one of the Members and who is of the Continental Congress, will shew you his Idea of the Situation of Affairs in this Government, and their apprehensions of insurrections.42 The observations he has been pleased to favor me with, thro' the whole of this Letter, seem to me, to be too well founded; the movements of the Enemy; their having sent up some of their Ships in the North River; their landing a large proportion, if not the main Body of their Army on Frog's Point, (or rather Island, as it is surrounded

42. Livingston's letter, dated Oct. 12, 1776, is in the *Washington Papers*. In it he sketches out the danger of a British advance from the north and the need of a force in the Highlands.

Water every Flood tide) Nine Miles above this on the Sound; added to these, the information of deserters, all afford a strong presumption, nay almost a certainty, that they are pursuing their Original Plan of getting in our rear and Cutting off all our supplies. Our situation here is not exactly the same as it was at New York; it is rather better. However, as we are obliged to divide our force, and guard every probable place of attack as well as we can—As most of our Stores are here and about Kingsbridge, and the preservation of the Communication with the States on the other side of Hudson's River, a Matter of great importance; it will not be possible for me to detach any more assistance, than what I have already done, for the purpose of securing the passes in the Highlands. I have sent Colo. Tash, lately from New Hampshire with his Regiment upon the Business, and as it is of the utmost consequence to possess those passes, and to hold them free and open, I would beg leave to submit to your consideration, whether you can spare any aid upon this interesting occasion. I know your exertions already are great; I know you have a large number of Men engaged in the Service, in this and the Northern Army; and nothing could have induced me to mention this Matter to you, were it not for the Alarming and

melancholy consequences, which will result from the Enemy's possessing themselves of those Communications. The Regiment I have ordered up, are to receive directions from the Convention, as to the Posts they are to occupy; supposing them to be much better acquainted, with the Places, where they should be stationed, than I am. If it is in your Power to afford any Assistance in this Instance, you will be pleased to give such instructions to those you send, as you shall judge necessary. I am just dispatching an Engineer to the Convention, to throw up some small Works. I have the honor etc.

P.S. I have sent Two Regiments of the Massachusetts Militia up the

River to watch the Motions of the Ships and to oppose any landing of men that they may attempt. I am also extending every Part of my force that I possibly can, towards East and West Chester, to oppose the Enemy and prevent their effecting their Plan, if it shall be practicable; but our numbers being far inferior to the demands for men, I cannot Answer for what may happen, the most in my Power shall be done.

To GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

Head Quarters, Heights of Harlem, October 16, 1776.

Sir: I have been favored with your several Letters of the 11th. and 13th. Instant with their Inclosures. The first that I received, would have been Answered sooner, had I been able to have furnished the necessary Intelligence respecting the Enemy's Ships of War, in the Sound above Hell Gate. This induced me to detain the Express a day, in expectation of gaining a more Certain information of this fact, than what had then come to my knowledge. By some deserters who came a shore from their Shipping at Frog's Point yesterday, and who (from what I could discover on their examination) I think in this Instance are deserving of Credit; “I am acquainted that there are now between Hell Gate and Frog's Point five Ships of War; The Fowey of 24 Guns, The LeBrune of 32, The Carysfort of 28, The Niger of 32. and Halifax of 16, and that the Mercury and one other Ship are cruising off Block Island”; whether their Number may be augmented or diminished in a short time, is more

than I can say; though I must observe, that the Enemy's Frigates of 28 Guns, (as we have found from experience) are not deterred from passing through Hell Gate. I would therefore strongly advise, in case an attack on the Ships of War near Frog's Point, should be determined on, that Tenders or other small Craft

should be sent a head, for the purpose of discovering with certainty the Number and Strength of the Enemy; who from the circumstances I have mentioned, may be easily reinforced. As to furnishing any Soldiers from this Army, towards Manning your Ships, it is what I am sorry under the present appearances of things, I cannot comply with, the Enemy being too powerful on this Quarter to admit of any diminution of the Troops who are to oppose them. For this reason also, I cannot afford any reinforcement to Colo. Livingston,43 to augment his detachment, from Twelve hundred to two thousand, which you think would be necessary; indeed, as we have received information, that the Enemy have been considerably reinforced by the arrival of Hessians; and as they have from Accounts, drawn almost their whole force to Frog's Point, I think it would be highly advisable (unless the expedition to Long Island is in such forwardness, as to be carried into execution immediately), to send forward the two Massachusetts regiments, who were detained for that particular Service; should it be determined to proceed to Long Island, I cannot interfere by any means in giving the Command to a younger officer. With respect to the Stores at Norwalk and the other Towns you have mentioned, I have ordered them from thence; thinking this method more eligible than to furnish Troops (of which we are in such want) for their defence. I did myself the pleasure of writing to you a few days ago, which I imagine you have received. I am etc.

P.S. I have just received the examination of another deserter, who says he came away from the Dolphin (last Thursday) a Sixty Gun ship, in the Sound above Hell Gate, but this I am in doubt about; at any rate (I imagine) if it is true, it must be known to you by information of the Inhabitants living on the Sound.

43. Col. Henry Beekman Livingston, of the Third New York Regiment.

To THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 17, 1776.

Gentn.: Judging it a Matter of the utmost importance, to secure the passes thro' the Highlands, I have sent up Monsr. Imbert46 a French Gentleman, who has been placed in the Army, as an Engineer by Congress, in order to take your directions respecting the passes and such Works as you may Esteem necessary to preserve them. as the situation of affairs in this State is rather alarming, I would beg leave to recommend your earliest attention to this Business, and that no time may elapse before the Works are begun. I have no acquaintance with Monsr. Imbert, and his abilities in his profession remain to be proved; However, I trust under your care and advice, that whatever maybe essential will be immediately done. I have the Honor etc.

P.S. I can spare no other Engineer, having but one besides.

To GOVERNOR NICHOLAS COOKE

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 17, 1776.

Sir: On Monday last I was honored with your favor of the 5th Instt. and beg leave to inform you, that the reasons which you assign for Countermanding Colo Richmond's45 march appear to me strong and Substantial. As to the expedition to long Island, it is impossible for me to give any direction about it, it must be governed by a Variety of Circumstances; nor will it be in my power, to appoint any Person to Command it; the situation of our affairs here, requiring the presence of every Officer of the least merit, for the government of this Army.

In respect to your request, to have a list

46. Capt. Jean Louis Imbert, who was commissioned by Congress September 19. He returned to San Domingo in April, 1777.

45. Col. William Richmond, of the Rhode Island Militia.

transmitted, of such Officers as have served to good acceptance; I am happy that I had anticipated your views and those of your Honble. Assembly in this instance, before the receipt of your favor, I wrote you fully on the subject in a Letter I had the Honor of addressing you on the 12th, sending you a list of such Officers as were particularly recommended for the two Battalions you are to raise, to which I beg leave to refer you as it contains my Sentiments at large. I have the honor etc.

To LIEUTENANT COLONEL JACOB BAYLEY

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 17, 1776.

Sir: I have yours of the 15th. Instt. by Mr. Wallace, with an Account of the Expence incurred in cutting a Road from Coos to St. Johns, the amount £932..16..5½ lawful Money.44 There are some few Errors in casting out the different Articles, but they may be easily rectifyed when a Settlement is made.

I have it not in my power to make objections to any part of the Account, as I cannot but suppose that it is all just and what has really been paid or agreed to be paid, but proper Vouchers should accompany all public Accounts, and these Mr. Wallace tells me you can furnish. The most Material is a Muster Roll of the Men employed, shewing the time of their Engagement for the Service and that of their Discharge. It is probable no Receipts may have been taken for some of the Articles, but you will please to furnish them for as many as you are able. I beg I may be clearly understood, I do not call for Vouchers, because

44. Bayley's letter and accounts, dated Oct. 15, 1776, are in the *Washington Papers*.

I Suspect you of charging more than is Justly due, but because it is necessary that they should accompany all public Accounts that pass thro' my Hands. When this is done the Accounts shall be adjusted and paid by, Sir, &c.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 18, 1776.

Sir: I was yesterday Morning honoured with your favor of the 15th. with the Resolutions of the 11th and 14th; the latter by which Congress have authorized me to appoint Monsr. Pennet a Brevet Aid de Camp, claims a return of my acknowledgements.

Last night I received a Letter from Mr. Varick53 Secretary to Genl. Schuyler, inclosing a Copy of one from Genl Arnold to Genl. Gates. The Intelligence transmitted by Genl Arnold being of an extremely interesting and important nature, I thought it advisable to forward the same immediately by Express. You have a Copy herewith, which contains the particulars and to which I beg leave to refer you.

The Accounts transmitted yesterday by Post, will inform you of the Movements of the Enemy, and of the Measures judged necessary to be pursued by us to counteract their designs. I have nothing to add on this Head, except that Ten or Eleven Ships which have been prevented passing Hell Gate for two or three days for want of Wind, are now under way and proceeding up the Sound. Amongst them appear to be Two Frigates, the rest probably have in Stores &c.

Inclosed is a Copy of the last General Return54 I have been able to obtain. It only comes down to the 5th Inst. The situation of our Affairs and the almost constant

53. Richard Varick.

54. This return is printed in Force's *American Archives*, Fifth Series, vol. 2, 907–910. It shows a rank and file strength of 14,145 present fit for duty, not counting the Artillery Corps and the Connecticut and Rhode Island Militia.

necessity of sending detachments from one place to another, to watch the Enemy's Motions have prevented the Officers from making them with regularity. I have &c.55

55. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To JOSEPH TRUMBULL

Head Quarters, Kingsbridge, October 20, 1776.

Sir: This is designed to inform you of our alarming situation on account of the State of our provisions. From the last Intelligence I have been able to obtain, there are not more than Fifteen hundred Barrels of Flour here and at our posts on the Island of New York (including three Hundred that came from the Jerseys last night) and about Two Hundred Barrels of pork, nor do I learn, that there are many or but very few live Cattle collected at any place within the Neighbourhood. As the passage across the North River is precarious, and much, if not intirely in the Enemy's power, but little or no dependance should be had in Supplies from that Quarter. I must therefore request and entreat your every possible exertion to have large Quantities of provisions carried to the interior parts of the Country, with the utmost expedition, out of the reach of the Enemy, who are trying to penetrate from the Sound and to form a line in our Rear,56 from whence proper supplies may be immediately drawn for the Subsistence of our Troops. If this is not done, I fear, I am certain that the fatal consequences attending on Mutiny and plunder must ensue; indeed the latter, will be Authorized by Necessity. I cannot undertake to point out the particular places where stock should be drove to, But it is

56. At half past 1 on the afternoon of October 20 Robert Hanson Harrison wrote to Congress: “The Enemy are pursuing with great Industry their plan of penetrating the

Country from the Sound, and of forming a Line in our Rear. They are now extended from Frog's Point to New Rochelle, from whence it is generally conjectured they mean to take their Route by way of the White Plains, and from thence to draw a Line to the North River. We on our part, have drawn our whole force, except the Regiments intended to Garrison Fort Washington, from the Island of New York, and have possessed ourselves of the Heights, passes and advantageous Grounds between New Rochelle, where the Van of their Army now lies, and the North River. They will in all probability attempt to effect their purpose by moving higher up, if they do, our Forces will move accordingly, it being a principal object to prevent their out flanking us. On Friday One of their advanced parties near East Chester fell in with part of Colo. Glover's Brigade and a smart and close Skirmish ensued, in which I have the pleasure to inform you our Men behaved with great coolness and Intrepidity and drove the Enemy back to their main body.”

absolutely Necessary that large Quantities should be kept in our Rear, to be killed or moved, as occasion may require. If the Enemy advance from the Sound, so must we. They must never be allowed, if it is possible to avoid it, to get above us, and possess themselves of the upper Country. As soon as I heard that they had landed at Frogs point, and that they had digested a plan of getting into our Rear, I gave Orders that the provisions and other Stores should be removed from Norwalk &c. into the Country to the White Plains as the first and most convenient Stage: Whither they have, I have no certain information. In short Sir, I beg that you will have supplies immediately in our Rear, to be drawn or moved back, as Circumstances may be, or the most fatal and alarming consequences to this Army, and the Liberties of America may and will in all probability follow. You must not stop on Account of expence, nor to collect large Quantities before they are sent off. Ten in a drove will be of material consequence.

I have ordered a respectable force for the protection of the provisions now at the plains. I am &c.