George Washington Papers, Series 3, Subseries 3A, Varick Transcripts, Letterbook 4

To SILAS DEANE

Head Quarters, White Plains, September 2, 1778.

Dear Sir: I received your favor of the 22d Ulto. by Mr Webb. The regard I have for Colo Webb71 and my wish to oblige you, would urge me most strongly to effect his release, if it were practicable; but our circumstances will not admit of it. The only rule of exchange, now existing between the two Armies, is equality of rank; and unhappily, we have not a Colonel, a prisoner, in our hands. Indeed, if we had, the Enemy have other Colonels of ours, who

71. Col. Samuel Blatchley Webb. He had been taken prisoner in December, 1777, obtained a parole, but was not exchanged until December, 1780.

have been much longer in captivity, and who must have a preference. As from this state, his exchange cannot now be accomplished, his enlargement must depend intirely upon the indulgence of Sr Henry Clinton, and for which I cannot sollicit, with any degree of propriety; having been obliged to refuse him requests of the same nature, and as it would lead to many inconveniences. At the same time I shall be happy, if he can obtain his parole, and from what I told Mr. Jos. Webb, his Brother, I am in hopes he will interest himself thro' the medium of some of his British acquaintances, and that it may be granted. With respect to news, my Letter of Yesterday to Congress, which I presume you will be informed of, contains the last from the Eastward. By General Sullivan's account the Enemy attacked him in his retreat on the 29th Ulto. and after a warm Action, were obliged to retire from the Field, with precipitation, and in disorder. He had not time then, to ascertain either our or

their loss. This was a very interesting event, considering his situation, and it will give me great pleasure to hear, that he and his Troops are on the main again.

I thank you much for your promised visit, and I will thank you still more for the visit itself. I shall consider it, not only as an honorable, but as a very friendly mark of your attention. I have the Honor, etc.72

72. From a photostat of the original, in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison, kindly furnished by Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach, of New York.

On September 2 Washington wrote to Col. William Malcom, at West Point, that the troops were entitled to I gill of rum or whisky per day “when *to be had*. But it was not my intention that they should be allowed tickets for deficiencies.” The militia were to have the same allowance. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, White Plains, September 4, 1778.

Sir: I had the pleasure to hear this morning, by a Letter from General Sullivan of the 31st Ulto. that he had effected a retreat to the main, the preceding night, without any loss, either of men or Stores. As he has written to Congress fully upon the subject, and I feel their anxiety to hear it, I shall not detain Major Morris longer than to observe, that I think the retreat a most fortunate, lucky and well timed event. Major Morris informs me he has heard that Lord Howe82 was off Boston with his fleet, and it appears by a New York paper of the 2d, that Rear Admiral Parker arrived at Sandy Hook this day week, with Six Ships of the line of Seventy four guns each, which is corroborated by other accounts. I transmitted the intelligence to His Excellency, Count D'Estaing yesterday and the day before, as it acquired more and more the appearance of certainty [as I have regularly done every occure., interesting to his Fleet, and our Operations.] I have the Honor, etc.83

82. Richard, Lord Howe.

83. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The part in brackets is in the writing of Washington.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, White Plains, September 4, 1778.

Sir: I have been duly honored with your favors of the 28th, and that of the 30th Ulto. with the several Inclosures, to which they refer.

Congress may rely, that I will use every possible means in my power to conciliate any differences that may have arisen, in consequence of the Count D'Estaings going to Boston, and to prevent a publication of the protest upon the occasion. Several days before the receipt of the Resolution, I had written to the Eastward, urging the necessity of harmony, and the expediency of affording the Admiral every assistance to refit his Ships. This I repeated, after the Resolution came to hand, and I have also taken opportunities to request all the General Officers here, to place the matter in the most favorable point of view, when ever they hear it mentioned.

The Five Hundred Guineas, which Congress were pleased to order, came safe to hand, and shall be appropriated to the purposes they intended, and as the exigency of the service may require. For want of supplies of this sort, we have been very deficient in intelligence, in many important and interesting points. In some cases, no consideration in paper money has been found sufficient to effect, even, an engagement to procure it;

and where it has been otherwise, the terms of service, on account of the depreciation, have been high, if not exorbitant.

The designs of the Enemy, as to their future movements, remain yet entirely unfolded; but the expectation of their leaving the Continent is daily decreasing. The hurricane season seems opposed to their going to the West Indies and the passage to Europe in a little time will become more and more dangerous. Besides these, there is another circumstance of some weight, if true, to induce a belief that they mean to stay. It appears by the papers, that part of the Regiments lately raised in Britain, are ordered to Hallifax. If the Troops here were intended to be recalled, it would seem, that some of them would be sent to reinforce that Garrison, sooner than troops from England or Scotland; and hence I think it may be presumed, that another Campaign will take place in America, especially if Administration are disappointed in their expectations from the commission. Where the theatre of War may be, must be a matter of conjecture, but as it is an acknowledged fact, that an Army acting in the Eastern States must derive flour for it's support, from those more Western, I submit to Congress the Expediency, and in my opinion the necessity, of establishing without loss of time, Magazines of this Article at convenient places, removed from the Sound, in Connecticut and Massachusetts. I am the more induced to wish an early consideration of this point, as by a sudden move of the Army86 should events make it necessary, the departments of Commissary and Quarter Master would be

86. At this point the draft has “to the Eastward.”

greatly distressed. Nor would such Magazines, I should imagine, be attended with any considerable loss, tho' the Army should not operate in that Quarter, as the flour would answer occasionally for our Shipping and the surplus might, in all probability, be otherwise readily disposed of.

I take the liberty of transmitting to Congress, a Memorial I received from the Reverend Mr. Tetard.87 From the certificates annexed to it, he appears to be a Man of great merit and from every account he has suffered in the extreme, in the present contest. His attachment, services and misfortunes seem to give him a claim to a generous notice; but according to

the now establishment of the Army, it is not in my power to make any provision for him. I therefore recommend his case to the attention and consideration of Congress.

6 OClock P.M.

I this minute received a Letter from General Sullivan, of which the Inclosure No. 2, is a Copy.88 I shall be exceedingly happy, if a perfect reconciliation has taken place between him and the Count and all the Officers. His Letter will shew some of the reasons that led to the protest and that it was the hope of our Officers, that it would have operated as a justification to the Admiral, to return against the sentiments of his Council, especially as it coincided, as it is said, with his own inclination. I had these reasons from another hand, when the protest first came.

87. John Peter Tetard, chaplain of the Fourth New York Regiment. He had officiated until May, 1777. His memorial was referred to a committee of three, but the memorial itself is not found in the *Papers of the Continental Congress* nor is there any record of the final action of Congress thereon.

88. This copy of Sullivan's letter of September 3 is filed with Washington's in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*; the original is in the *Washington Papers*. “I have the pleasure to Inform your Excellency That Though the first Struggle of passion are So important a Disappointment were Scarcly to be Restrained: Yet in a few Days by Taking advantage of the Subsiding passion I found means to Restore the former Harmony between the American and French officers of the Army. The Count D Estaing and myself are in the Same friendship as heretofore. The Reasons of the Protest has been Explained to him and he is now perfectly Satisfied. he has offered to come on with his Land Forces and do every thing which I may Request of him and his Troops but This Step has become unnecessary.”

September 5.

I was duly honored yesterday evening, with your favor of the 31st Ulto. Tho' it is not expressed in the Resolution of that date, that any other bounty is to be given to the Men who engage for three years or during the War, than Twenty Dollars, I shall take it for granted they are to receive the usual allowances of Cloathing and Land. There are several Continental Troops, whose time of service will expire at the end of the fall or during the Winter. I shall consider these within the meaning and operation of the Resolve, tho' they are not mentioned and shall direct every necessary measure to be taken to reinlist them. From the exorbitant State, Town and Substitute bounties, I am very doubtful whether Twenty Dollars will be found sufficient to engage so great a proportion, either of the Draughts or Continentals, as was at first apprehended. Our failure in the enterprise against Rhode Island will have its weight and every day, from the approach of the fall and Winter, will add new difficulties. As it is a work of the most essential importance, I will order it to be begun, the instant the Money arrives; and lest on experiment, the sum should prove too small, I would submit it to Congress, whether it will not be expedient to pass another Resolve, authorising a further bounty of Ten Dollars, to be used as circumstances may make it necessary. This can remain a secret, and will not be carried into execution, but in case of evident necessity.

I feel very much interested upon the occasion,

and have submitted this mode, that there may not be the least possible delay, in attempting to engage the men under a second expedient, if the first should not succeed.

The Articles of Cloathing and blankets should also employ the utmost attention to provide them. We are now in great want, particularly of the latter, there not being less than actually wanted at this moment. I have the Honour etc.

P.S. The return of Blankets has not yet come in and therefore I cannot ascertain the deficiency by this conveyance.89

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, White Plains, September 7, 1778.

Sir: I take the liberty of laying before Congress, the inclosed Copies of a paragraph and Schedule, contained in a Letter from Genl. Heath, which I lately received. These will apprize Congress, if they are not already informed, of the supplies of provision and Wood wanted by the Count D'Estaing; and will naturally lead to a consideration of the ways and means to be pursued for furnishing them, as soon as possible.

89. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

On September 4 Washington wrote briefly to Col. James Hogun, of the Third North Carolina Regiment, to postpone inoculating his troops as the danger of infection no longer existed. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

Since I had the honor of addressing you on the 4th and 5th Instant, I have obtained a Return of the Blankets which are now deficient. This and the fast approach of the Fall will suggest, the necessity of the most vigorous exertions being used to procure them. Not a night will pass from this time, without the Soldier's feeling the want. I have &c.6

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, White Plains, September 12, 1778.

Sir: Inclosed, I have the honor to transmit Congress a Copy of a report of a Board of Officers, who were appointed by me to consider what would be the most eligible plan for invading Canada; in case our future prospects and circumstances should justify the enterprise. The pains which General Gates has, for some time past taken to inform himself on the subject, and the knowledge which General Bailey48 and Col. Hazen possess of the country induced me to make choice of these Gentlemen. It appears to me, that the

mode recommended by them, for an expedition of this kind, is liable to fewest objections, and, though attended with many difficulties, affords a reasonable prospect of success. The great

6. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The draft has the notation “Blankets 11067” at the bottom of the page. The original return, dated Sept. 6, 1778, is filed with this letter in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

48. Brig. Gen. Jacob Bayley.

naval force of the enemy on the lakes is, in my opinion, an almost insurmountable obstacle to any attempt to penetrate by the ordinary communications.

The expediency of the undertaking in a military point of view, will depend on the enemy's evacuating these states and on the reinforcements they may send into Canada. While they keep their present footing, we shall find employment enough in defending ourselves, without meditating conquests; or if they send a large addition of strength into that country, it may require greater force and more abundant supplies on our part, to effect its reduction, than our resources may perhaps admit. But if they should leave us, and their other exigences should oblige them to neglect Canada, we may derive essential advantage, from a successful expedition there; and if it should be thought adviseable, there is no time to be lost in making preparations, particularly if the idea of carrying it on in Winter be pursued.

The great importance of the object both in a military and political light demands the sanction and concurrence of Congress, before any steps can be taken, towards it with propriety. The peculiar preparations, which will be necessary, from the peculiar nature of the enterprise is an additional motive with me, for requesting thus early, their determination; as a considerable expence must be incurred in procuring several articles which would not be requisite,

but on this occasion. The soldiery must be clad in a particular manner to fit them for enduring the inclemencies of an active winter campaign; a number of snow shoes must be provided, and extraordinary means of transportation, to convey our stores and baggage through a country covered with snow, and, a great part of it, hitherto unexplored.

Congress will perceive, that valuable Magazines, both of provisions and forage, may be laid up in the upper settlements on Connecticut River. I have given directions for this purpose; because if the expedition in question should be carried into execution, they will be indispensible; if it should not, they will still be very beneficial for supplying the army, especially if the war should be transferred Eastward, which there are many powerful reasons to expect.49

I shall not trouble Congress with more extensive details on the subject, as Colonel Hazen who will have the honor of delivering this, will be able to satisfy any inquiries they may be pleased to make.50 With the greatest respect etc.51

49. In his answer (September 16) to this, President Laurens wrote: “I am directed to intimate That Congress highly approve of laying up Magazines of forage and Provisions at such places as Your Excellency shall Judge proper for prosecuting an Expedition into Canada in the Winter, if the Motions of the Enemy shall render the measure expedient and Your Excellency is desired to make every preparation of Cloathing, Snow Shoes, and other articles for this purpose which you shall deem necessary.” Laurens's letter is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, No. 13, 2, folio 82.

50. A copy of the report of Gates, Bayley, and Hazen is filed with this letter in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. The original, dated Sept. 10, 1778, is in the *Washington Papers*.

51. In the writing of Alexander Hamilton. Read in Congress on September 15 and referred to Mr. Richard Henry Lee and Mr. William Henry Drayton.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, White Plains, September 12, 1778.

Sir: I do myself the honour of returning to Congress the report of their Committee on the subject of an Inspectorship, transmitted in your Letter of the 20th Ulto. which was not received 'till the 31st, with such observations52 as have occurred to me in considering the matter, and which I have made with a freedom, that I trust will be agreeable to Congress. I wish it had been in my power to have returned it before; but the intervention of a variety of other important business from time to time, obliged me to postpone a conclusion upon the points till yesterday. I have already, in a Letter of the 26th of July, delivered my sentiments upon the consequences that would attend the Baron Steuben's being appointed to an actual and permanent command in the line and therefore, I will not trouble Congress with a repetition of them; however, I will take the liberty to add, that I am more and more convinced, that what I then said upon the occasion was well founded; and that I am certain such a measure will produce, at least, infinite discontents and disquietudes among the General Officers.

I have also had the Honor to receive your favor of the 5th Inst., with the several papers to which it refers.

52. See Observations on Congress's Plan for the Inspector General's Department, immediately following this letter.

These shall have my attention as far as practicable. I hope all the Confederal troops are on the March from Philadelphia and if they are not, that immediate orders will be given for their joining the army.

The Inclosed copy of a Letter from General Sullivan of the 10th Inst.,53 will inform Congress, that the Enemy have not relinquished their burning plans, and that in this way they have destroyed several Houses, Stores and Vessels at and near Bedford. I was

advised on Wednesday night, that a body of them, consisting of four or five Thousand, under General Gray had made a landing in that Quarter, and were intrenching. In consequence of this, and from an apprehension that General Clinton might possibly mean to operate at the Eastward and form some project in concert with Lord Howe against the Count D'Estaing's Squadron, I determined to move the troops from this ground to a Rear position, better calculated to afford support to the Works on the North river, in case an Attempt should be made against them, and at the same time more convenient for forwarding Detachments to the Eastward, if the Enemy point their operations that way.

I was the more induced to come to this determination, as most of the accounts from New York seemed to lead to a belief, as they still do, that a considerable movement was and is in contemplation, if not an intire evacuation of the City, and this by Water.

Besides these reasons, the principle Objects for taking

53. In the *Washington Papers*. It gives the account of the British exedition against New Bedford and of the British loss at Quaker Hill.

post here do not now exist. One was to create every possible jealousy in favor of the expedition against Rhode Island; Another, the consuming the forage within its vicinity and towards Kingsbridge &c. The former is now over, and the latter in a great degree accomplished. I have the Honor, etc.54

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, White Plains, September 14, 1778.

Gentlemen: On Sunday night I had the honor to receive your favors of the 5th and 7th Inst, with the papers to which they refer.

It gave me great pleasure to find, that we were on so respectable a footing in the General articles of Cloathing, and I would fain hope, if we can once get the Troops tolerably

supplied, that we shall in future, by proper and timely exertions always keep them well and suitably provided. I have written to Mess. Otis and Andrews, urging the necessity of the strictest attention to the points severally enjoined them and also to General Heath, to give every possible assistance to have the Cloathing forwarded under the care of proper persons to be employed for the purpose. For want of

54. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

a regulation of this sort, It has come on, when it came at all, in the strangest Manner; and the loss I am persuaded has been immense. I have also written to General Greene requesting that he will use his endeavours to expedite the Transportation. The deficiency in Hats, besides taking off much from the appearance of the Men, will be an essential want, in case they cannot be procured. I do not know how good or extensive the Boards prospects may be, of obtaining supplies at Philadelphia, and from the southern States; but I should think, if the order to the Agents in this instance, as well as for Blankets, Stockings and Shoes, was enlarged, no injury would arise from it, as the demand is almost constant. And here I will take occasion to submit to the Board's consideration, whether it will not be greatly to the advantage of the States, to enter into Contracts for the Article of Shoes. It appears to me, that this would produce not only large and certain supplies but such as would be good. I have been told that a Mr. Henry68 in Lancaster would contract for a considerable number and so of others in Jersey; and I dare say there are persons in every State, who would engage in the business and that it might be conducted by an easy and profitable barter of Hides for Shoes, compared to the prices usually paid and the waste of the former. The Board's idea of having all the new Cloathing delivered at one time is certainly right, and the measure will be attended with many valuable consequences. I also think the depositing of the old in proper places of security a beneficial expedient.69 With respect to Overalls, Woolen ones for the Winter and Linnen, of a proper quality

68. William Henry.

69. At this point the draft is confused as to meaning and the confusing words have been stricken out. The suppressed idea was that Washington was not certain what effect this calling in of the old clothing would have “on the minds of the Soldiery as they will consider both their property.”

for the Summer, in my opinion are much to be desired for the Troops. They look well and neat and in the summer at least they will remove the difficulty of furnishing Stockings; In the winter both Overalls and Stockings should be provided if it can be done, as is the case in the British Army; but if it can not, Socks made out of the Old Cloaths, might in some degree answer as a substitute for the latter. I perceive the Board have directed Overalls instead of Breeches, as far as the quantity and quality of the Cloth to be made up will admit. This I wish them to make a standing rule. I have desired Mr. Otis and Andrews to make a distinction in the Cloaths for the Sergeants to let them be superior in quality to that of the Soldiers, and to be more in the Style of Officers. For want of this and some encouraging designating marks, we have been very deficient in this useful and essential order of Men in our Army. I have also suggested to them, that the Drummers and fifers should be uniformed differently from the Soldiers of their Regiment. The Board I observe, have not considered themselves at liberty to direct the purchase of Mittens. These, in case of a late Campaign or a Winter expedition will be of great service and I would recommend the procuring a good many.

I do not find from the Invoice nor from the Copies of the Letters which the Board have been pleased to transmit me, that there is any provision of Cloathing for the Officers. I wish some measures could be pursued for this purpose. At present

it is with infinite difficulty that an Officer can procure necessaries to make him appear decent, and when he can, it is at the expence of all his pay.70

I would also take the liberty to mention to the Board, that we are in great want of Cartouch Boxes. At this time we have many Men without any, and a large proportion of those we

have in use, serve but for little more than to spoil ammunition. This is an object worthy of consideration, and I am well persuaded the waste of Cartridges in the course of a Campaign, independent of their utility and the inconveniences experienced for want of them, is equal nearly in value to the sum necessary to procure a competent supply. The Board are acquainted with the best patterns and the quality of the leather of which they ought to be made; and I trust they will direct the most expeditious measures to be pursued for furnishing the Army with them.

The prisoners confined in Easton jail, were committed by an Officer who had the charge of conducting a party to Valley forge, for mutinous conduct and attempting to escape, as he reported to me. If they could be employed at Philadelphia or about the River defences, it would be the best way of disposing of them. To bring them to the Army, would be to afford them an opportunity of deserting with their Arms and cloathing and perhaps of seducing many Others. I have the Honor &c.71

70. At this point the draft has the following crossed out: “Hence there arises a sort of inconsequential feeling, a want of proper pride, an indifference to the service, and in fine a disposition, at least, to resign his Commission. I will not enlarge upon this Head. If Cloathing could be furnished them in an easy way and on tolerable terms, I am certain, the public would derive advantages from it.”

71. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

On September 14 the Congress committee of arrangement, at camp furnished the following certificate to brevet Lieut. Col. Ebenezer Stevens: “Having done eminent Service to the united States by his great exertions in raising three full independant Companies, of Artillery, which composed the whole Artillery Line in the northern department in the Winter of the year 1776, at a time of great danger and distress; a Corps he has ever since commanded with great Skill and distinguished bravery, is in the opinion of the Commander in Chief and the Committee of Arrangement entitled to the farther Notice of Congress

in Reward of his eminent Services; they therefore recommend his appointment to hold effectually a Lieutenant Colonels Commission in the Artillery with the Pay of that Officer from the date of his Brevat Commission, and that he be entitled to the first vacancy that may fall in the Line; and this Recommendation they inclined to make as well for the above Reasons, as because the Commander in Chief and the Committee, for promotion of the Service, thought it necessary to incorporate the three independant Companies into an incomplete Battalion of Artillery, whereby he was deprived of a Command to which he was much attached."

Go: Washington Roger Sherman John Banister

To THE BOARD OF WAR

West Point, September 19, 1778.

Gentlemen: I have been honoured with the Boards Letter of the 9th Inst.

With respect to inlisting either Deserters or prisoners in general cases, I am decisively of Opinion against it and I am convinced it will always operate against us, or at least till our appointments in Cloathing &c can be placed upon as good a footing as those of the Enemy. With respect to the Count Pulaski's Corps, as the Campaign is yet open and there remain Two Month's in which the Enemy may act in the field, if they incline, I think it will be best for them to join the Army, if Congress should concur with me in sentiment.93 This will be agreeable to the Count's wishes and the ideas of all parties when he was authorised to raise the Corps. His Horse may be of use on the advanced posts and his Infantry can be kept with the main body of the Army or drawn in and be otherwise employed if they discover a disposition to desert.

When the Cloathing arrives I shall take all the care in my power to have a just and œconomical distribution made of it. With respect to the Horse, I believe they have not depended on any of the Cloathing made up and now in the hands of Messrs. Otis and

Andrews. Blands, I think has obtained a supply from Virginia; Moylan's is provided for and Sheldon's appear

93. On September 19 Washington wrote to Pulaski to join the main army at Fredericksburg with his corps if Congress or the Board of War so directed. “If…you hear as you pass thro' Jersey that the Enemy have landed in that State, you will give General Maxwell every assistance you can with your Corps.” This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

not to want any; However where supplies are necessary, the mode suggested by the Board seems to be a good one. I have the Honor, etc.94

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters near Fredericksburg, September 23, 1778.

Sir: Since I had the honor of addressing you on the 12th Inst., I have received your several Favors of the 10th, 12th and 16th, with the Resolutions to which they allude.

I transmitted the British Commissioners the Resolve of the 4th Inst., respecting the Convention Troops, the morning after it came to hand; and also wrote to Sir Henry Clinton upon the subject of passports. I have not received his Answer.

With respect to the Magazines, I have directed the Commissary to form them on the Inland communication from hence to Boston, at proper Intervals. The 20,000 Barrels of flour that Congress have ordered to be purchased, will be a valuable addition, if they can be transported by Water; but it seems to me there will be a great risque of its being lost, if it is sent by Sea, while the Enemy have a superior fleet on our Coast.

As the Campaign is not closed yet, all our Cavalry

94. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

are of use. They lie in the Neighbourhood of the Enemy's posts for the purpose of restraining their parties, and for obtaining and giving intelligence of their movements; and they are subsisted upon the forage, which would otherwise be exposed to them. I am sensible, that these Corps are attended with great expence, and the moment I think the service will admit of it, they or part of them shall be quartered in different places distant from the Army, where they may be provided for on better terms. The price of forage and the difficulty of getting it, are really Objects of great magnitude, and such as should undergo some regulation, if there is any that can be adopted. I received Letters a few days ago from the Commissary and Quarter Master upon this subject, Copies of which and of my Letter in consequence to the several States from Massachusetts bay to Pensilvania inclusive, I take the liberty to inclose.32

The Resolution prohibiting Officers, except such as are specially authorised, to keep Horses in the Army or within Forty miles of it, has been published in orders; and I will take every step in my power to give it effect.

I have considered the practicability of reducing the Teams employed in the Army and find, however desirable the object may be, that it cannot be done. We have not at this time, more than are absolutely and indispensibly necessary, nor so many as would be requisite in case of a rapid movement. Neither does it appear to me, that there can be

32. Copies of Washington's circular letter to the States (September 22) and an extract of Greene's letter (September 16) are filed with this in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. The originals of the other inclosures, to wit, Clement Biddle (September 21) and Charles Pettit (September 10) are in the *Washington Papers*, but copies of them ar not filed with this letter from Washington.

a substitution of Ox for Horse teams, at least, to any great extent, nor that any material advantages would arise from such a measure. There might perhaps be a small saving in the Article of provender, but this I fear would be greatly overbalanced in the loss of Cattle,

that would otherwise be appropriated to the use of the Commissary's department. After a full investigation of the subject, I believe we shall be obliged to adhere to the kind of teams we now employ, and that the only relief we shall have in point of expence, will arise from sending a part of the Horses to places where they may be more easily foraged, when we have fixed our Camp and Quarters for the Winter.

I beg leave to mention to Congress, that there is a necessity for some mode's being established by which claims on the Old Quartermastership, that remain unsatisfied, may be discharged. There are many of this nature and these, however well authenticated they may be, the Gentlemen now in Office, do not conceive themselves at liberty to adjust, without obtaining some special direction for the purpose. I am every day applied to for payment of such accounts, and in many instances have been obliged, as well for the sake of justice to Individuals as for the publick good, to order them to be taken up. It appears to me, that Congress cannot be too early in their Resolution upon the occasion, and that either the present department should be authorised to settle and pay such claims, or that some persons should be appointed and supplied with money for the purpose.

The Army marched from White plains on the 16th Inst. and is now encamped in different places. Three Brigades, composing the Virginia Troops, part of the right wing, under the command of Genl. Putnam, are at Robinson's near West point and two Brigades more, composing the remainder, are with Baron de Kalb at Fish Kill plains, about 10 miles from the Town on the road leading to Sharon. The second line with Lord Stirling is in the vicinity of Fredericksburg; and the whole of the left wing at Danbury, under the command of General Gates. These several posts appear to be the best we can occupy in the present doubtful state of things, as they have relation to the support of West point, in case of an attack in that Quarter and are also on the communication to the Eastward, if the Enemy point their operations that way. Besides these dispositions, Genl. Scot with a Light corps remains below, in the Country about Kings street.33

The Letter from Sr Henry Clinton, which I have the honor of transmitting,34 was sent to me to day by Colo. Baylor, who is posted at Hackinsack. He says he received One for me by the same flag and from his note, supposed he had charged the Horseman with it, who just arrived at Head Quarters. Thro' accident he forwarded yours to me, and I think it probable that you will be troubled with mine. If this should be the case, you will be so obliging as to return

33. At this point the draft has the new date: “24th,” which is omitted in this letter sent.

34. This letter from Clinton is not found in the *Washington Papers*, nor is it filed in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. A copy is in the Royal Institute, London. It was dated Sept. 19, 1778, and demanded that the Saratoga Convention be carried out. Clinton offered to renew, in the King's name, all the conditions stipulated by Burgoyne respecting the troops serving under his command. Clinton meant, he said, to discharge his duty, not only to the King, “But to the unhappy People likewise whose Affairs are committed to you, and who I hope will have the Candour to acquit me of the Consequences that must follow from the new System of War you are pleased to introduce.”

it to me, by the first conveyance. I was also informed by Colo. Baylor, that a considerable body of the Enemy landed at Powles Hook, in the Evening of the 22d and encamped that night in the Wood, between four and five miles from the Town of Bergen. He had not learnt their object, but it is likely they are after forage. I have the Honor etc.35

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Fredericksburg, September 29, 1778.

Sir: The following is an extract of a letter of the 17th inst. which I had the honor to receive from the Count D'Estaing.

I intreat you to promote the exchange of prisoners already planned by Mr. Gerard. The unhappy persons taken before the commencement of Hostilities cannot be lawfully regarded as prisoners, their lot is dreadful. The mode adopted for exchanging them

35. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The letter was read in Congress on September 28.

by means of your Commissary, without introducing the King's name or mine into the transaction, removes a great part of the political difficulties which before subsisted.

I am an entire stranger to the plan above referred to or to the mode that has been adopted for exchanging by means of our own Commissary. He is absent from the Army, and I must therefore beg the favr. of you to obtain, from Mr. Gerard, such information as will enable me to give directions for carrying the Count's desires into execution, if practicable.

The Marquis de Vienne,87 at present at Boston, has requested a Furlough of eighteen Months to enable him to return to France, whither he is called by some domestic Concerns. I do not conceive myself at liberty to grant his request, without the permission of Congress, to whom I would beg leave to observe, that if agreeable to them, he may be indulged without prejudice to the service, as he is not attached to any particular command.88

I have just recd. an account from Jersey, which I fear is too true, that Colo Baylors Regt. of Dragoons were surprised in their quarters89 the night before last, and most of them killed or taken. A few of the straglers have come in, who can give but a very imperfect account of the matter. They think the Colonel and most of the Officers were made prisoners, and that the privates were put to the sword. There were, I imagine, about one hundred Men of the Regiment together when this unlucky accident happened.

The stay of the Enemy in Jersey being longer than I apprehended, and not knowing what their real intentions may be; I have ordered Genl. Maxwell to advance from Elizabeth Town

to the neighbourhood of Acquaquenunk Bridge, and have sent over General Woodfords Brigade,

87. Marquis de Vienne, major in the French Army and brevet lieutenant colonel in the Continental Army.

88. On September 29 Washington wrote to De Vienne that he had referred his application for leave to Congress. He appended a certificate of service to his letter to the marquis which recited that De Vienne's “conduct was always such as became an officer and Gentleman, having embraced every occasion his situation offered to give proofs of his zeal and bravery.” This letter is in the *Washington Papers*. Congress granted him leave to go to France. He did not return to America.

89. At Old Tappan (Harrington), Bergen County, N.J., near the Hackensack River and about 2½ miles from the main body of American troops, then in Jersey.

from this side of the River. I have also ordered Genl. Pulaski to advance, with as much expedition as possible and join the Brigades. Lord Stirling has this day gone over to take the general command of the continental forces and Militia, who are assembling in considerable numbers. If the Enemy mean only to forage, they will be kept from extending themselves, by these troops; and if they have any designs upon the posts in the Highlands, they will be prevented from seizing the passes leading to the Forts, by Lord Stirling, who will be between them and the enemy, and always ready to possess them.

I have made proper dispositions on this side the River for the security of the Highlands, in case that Body of the enemy, who are on this side Kingsbridge employed in collecting forage, should advance.

The sketch of Rhode Island, forwarded by this Express was received from Genl. Sullivan, and left behind, by accident, when the last dispatches were sent off.

I have had the honor of receiving yours of the 20th. inclosing an order for Count Polaski's Legion to advance to Trenton. I have the honor &c.90

90. In the wilting of Tench Tilghman.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Fish Kills, October 3, 1778.

Sir: I am honored with your favour of the 27 of September, with the inclosed resolves of Congress; a copy of which has been transmitted to Major General Lincoln, for his information and direction. Being separated from my papers, I am uncertain, whether I mentioned in my last, that the enemy in the Jerseys having received a reinforcement and made some forward movements, I had thought it expedient to detach another brigade thither to act in conjunction with the one already there, together with Pulaski's corps and the militia, and had sent Major General Lord Stirling to take the command of the whole. That I had also ordered Major General Putnam [with two brigades] across the River for the immediate security of West Point and moved a division of troops to this place, to be near that post. I have also come here myself and propose to remain 'till the views of the enemy in the Jersey's are decided; though I have had no reason to alter my opinion, that nothing more than a forage is intended. By the last accounts, they had drawn in their out parties and resumed their first bounds behind Hackensack River at the Liberty-pole and New Bridge.

That part of Baylors regiment, which escaped, came off in the first instance, and were afterwards brought off

in so dispersed a manner, that the number has not been ascertained; but from what I have learned, I should estimate the loss at about fifty men and seventy [or eighty] horses.

Major Clough is dead of his wounds. This affair appears to have been attended with every circumstance of cruelty.

It is a small compensation for this accident, that Col: Butler, three or four days ago, with a party of infantry and horse, comprehending Major Lee's corps, surprised about an hundred *Yagers* below Tarrytown; killed ten on the spot and took a Lieutenant and eighteen Men prisoners. The roughness of the country facilitated the flight of the rest and prevented the success being more complete.

The proceedings in the case of General St. Clair accompany this letter. I have the honor etc.

P.S. I have received advice of the arrival of a Packet from England.33

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, October 5, 1778.

Gentlemen: By the enclosed Copies of letters to General Sullivan

33. In the writing of Alexander Hamilton. The words in brackets are in the draft, which is in the writing of Richard Kidder Meade, but were omitted from the letter sent.

and Messrs. Otis & Andrews, you will be informed of what I have written on the subject of Clothing, in consequence of the letter which you did me the honor to write on the 29th. Ulto.

The prospect of having the Army amply provided for, by your exertions, affords the highest degree of satisfaction. I am particularly happy to be informed that you have extended your orders for hats and shoes; The Season of the year and the roughness of the roads, should a march eastward become necessary; render the latter an article of immediate and indispensible necessity. I must therefore entreat that every possible step be taken for

procuring a large and instantaneous supply from your factories or elsewhere. The present deficiency in this respect I have reason to think, is greatly increased by the bad quality of the imported shoes; at any rate it is such as will prevent the marching of a great many men, and render them miserable in a state of inaction. I have the honor etc.76

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, October 6, 1778.

Sir: This will be delivered to you by Major General the Marquis de la fayette, the generous motives which first induced him to cross the Atlantic, and enter the Army of the United States,

76. The draft is in the writing of John Laurens.

are well known to Congress. Reasons equally laudable now engage his return to France, who in her present circumstances claims his services.

His eagerness to offer his duty to his Prince and Country, however great, could not influence him to quit the Continent in any stage of an unfinished Campaign; he resolved to remain at least 'till the close of the present, and embraces this moment of Suspense, to communicate his wishes to Congress, with a view of having the necessary arrangements made in time, and of being still within reach, should any occasion offer for distinguishing himself in the field.

The Marquis at the same time from a desire of preserving a relation with us, and a hope of having it yet in his power to be useful as an American Officer, solicits only a furlough, sufficient for the purposes above mentioned; a reluctance to part with an Officer, who unites to all the military fire of youth, an uncommon maturity of judgment, would lead me to prefer his being absent on this footing, if it depended on me.

I shall always be happy to give such a testimony of his services, as his bravery and conduct, on all occasions, entitle him to, and I have no doubt that Congress will add suitable expressions of their sense of his merit, and their regret on account of his departure.83 I have the honor, etc.

P.S. The Marquis is so obliging as to take charge of a Packet containing the proceedings of a Court Martial in General Schuylers case.84

83. On October 21 Congress granted Lafayette leave to return to France; ordered that the President write him a letter expressing the thanks of Congress and that the United States Minister at Paris obtain a sword and present it to the marquis as a gift from Congress; also a letter was ordered written to the King, recommending Lafayette to his sovereign.

84. In the writing of James McHenry. The letter was read in Congress on October 13 and referred to Gouverneur Morris, R. H. Lee, John Witherspoon, Samuel Adams, and William Henry Drayton.

To THE COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENT FROM CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Fish Kill, October 6, 1778.

Sir: I had the honor of receiving, three days since your letter of the 30th of September; and should have answered it at once but was delayed by being separated from my papers, a recourse to which was necessary to assist my memory.

I recollect, that in a conference with the Committee of arrangement on the subject of inlisting prisoners and deserters, I gave my opinion explicitly against the practice; and that a letter was written by them to Congress, agreeable to this idea, though I am not equally clear, as to the precise contents of the letter, or whether I understood the scope of it to comprehend Pulaski's corps. It may have happened in the perplexity of business, that the peculiar circumstances of the establishment of this corps did not occur to me; otherwise

I should have conceived myself bound to make an exception in its favour. A compact made between the publick and the Count, when all the inconveniences of engaging such characters had been fully experienced would have restrained me from recommending a measure, which was a direct breach of it, and might give just cause of complaint. The principal motive for authorizing the Count to raise his corps, was to induce him voluntarily to relinquish the command of the cavalry, with which the officers under him were in general

dissatisfied; and it was thought better to submit to the defect in its composition, than either to leave the cavalry in a state, which occasioned a total relaxation of discipline, and destroyed its usefulness, or to force the Count out of it, whose zeal and bravery entitled him to regard, without compensating in some way that might reconcile him to the sacrafice, he was required to make. When he proposed his plan to me, I informed him of the objections to it and even avoided flattering him with the concurrence of Congress. You will perceive by the inclosed extract of my letter to them on what footing the affair was placed. Their resolve of the 28th of March which sanctioned his raising a corps left the point of engaging prisoners and deserters undecided, but empowered me to dispense in that instance with their resolve against it, if I should deem it not injurious to the service. The reasons before assigned determined me to consent to the Counts views so far as to permit his composing a third of his infantry of deserters.

When the Board of War consulted me on the propriety of permitting this corps to join the army, recurring to the original principle of its formation, my opinion naturally favoured its coming forward, if agreeable to Congress. After all the trouble the Count has given himself to raise and equip the corps, he could not but esteem it a singular hardship to be deprived of the benifit of his exertions from considerations of inconvenience, which existed before they were undertaken and had been in a manner precluded by Contract.

The circumstance of the Count's having exceeded his establishment was a matter to which I did not advert. There would certainly be no injustice in reducing the extra number. But whether as the men are raised and clad and the expence already incurred, it may not be

as well to risk the additional disadvantage which may attend bringing them into the field is a question which Congress will decide.

I am extremely sorry, if any misconception in me should have been the cause of the least embarrassment to the Committee; and I hope the explanation I have now given will remove every difficulty. With the greatest esteem etc.85

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Fredericksburg, October 10, 1778.

Gentlemen: The Committee of Arrangement having determined to annex the Regiment late Patton's to Colo. Hartleys, it will be proper to put them in the same Uniform. I have therefore desired Capt. Prowell,17 the commanding Officer to send an Officer to Philada. with an exact return of the Regiment,

85. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

17. Joseph Prowell. He was then major of Patton's Additional Continental regiment; was transferred to the Eleventh Pennsylvania Regiment in January, 1779; retired in June of that year.

and the Cloathing wanting. Be pleased to give an order to the Cloathier General to have them made up after the same fashion of Hartley's and as speedily as possible, as the Men are in extreme want. I have the honour, etc.18

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, near Fredericksburg, October 11, 1778.

Gentlemen: The Incessant and pressing applications of the Officers and their real distress for Cloathing, obliges me to repeat my wishes to the Board to obtain the earliest direction

of Congress for relieving their wants. They are in a very disagreeable situation in this respect, and, unless some mode can be adopted for speedily supplying them, Many will be obliged involuntarily to quit the service, or if this should not be the case, we shall be involved in perpetual complaints and the most painful applications.

I do not recollect, when the Army was first appointed, that there was any engagement on the part of the public, that the Officers should be provided with Cloathing, thro' their means, nor has there been any explicit declaration since, that I remember, for the purpose, but the measure has become indispensably necessary, and without the intervention of publick aid, they never can

18. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

be supplied; for their pay, if the Articles proper could be found in a private way, from the enormous and exorbitant prices now exacted for every thing, would prove wholly incompetent to the end. There is however, a Resolution of Congress of the 22d of Novr. last, which points to a provision, thro' the public means and those of the States, individually taken. This has encouraged the Officers to look for Supplies in the manner there professed and their not being able to obtain them, makes them more uneasy perhaps, than if the Resolution had never passed. I have written to Messrs. Otis & Andrews to make a Return of the Cloth &c in their hands proper for Officers, and also to advise me what quantities might be procured, in case the Board should direct a purchase. This appears to be the only practicable expedient at this time, from which relief can be drawn, and if it is to be adopted, the Agents cannot be too soon ordered to carry it into execution. I really wish to be informed by the Board, by the first opportunity, whether the Officers may expect Supplies thro the public Stores, that I may be able to answer them decisively upon the point when they apply. As matters now stand, I am in a very aukward and irksome situation.

Since it is evident, that the Officers cannot provide themselves with Cloathing and that there is a necessity for the intervention of publick aid, I would submit it to the Board, whether it may not be proper for them to form an Estimate of Cloathing, proportioned to the number of Officers in the

Army, for the consideration of Congress, and to obtain their sanction for importing the same, if they approve the plan. This measure, it seems to me, is the only one that can insure relief in future, and it appears the more eligible, as the loss to the public will be infinitely less, than if they procure the Articles in the Country, supposing that it could be done. Besides this consideration, the Officers then might be properly uniformed, and all placed on a just and equal footing.

If the Board should be authorised to direct an immediate purchase of Cloathing for the Officers, I will take the liberty to suggest, that it may not be improper for them to enjoin on the part of the Cloathier, a strict compliance with the Resolution of Congress which I have mentioned, in the sale. The Officers say, that hitherto it has not had the necessary and generous operation intended by Congress; but on the contrary, in the few instances, in which they have been able to furnish themselves with Articles from the public Stores, that they have done it, at the current exorbitant prices. Indeed there are many matters in the Department, which require a more perfect and explicit arrangement than has ever been made; and at present there is such a Clashing of Office and of Officers, that it is difficult to determine how or with whom business is to be transacted. I have the Honor, etc.31

31. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The letter was read in Congress on November 30 and referred to the Committee on the Clothier's Department to which James Searles was added.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, near Fredericksburg, October 14, 1778.

Sir: Since I had the Honor of addressing you on the 6th. Inst., by favor of the Marquis Fayette, I received your Letter of the 2d with its Inclosure.

I do myself the honor of transmitting you an Account of the Engagement, between the French and British Fleets on the 27th of July, as published by the British Admiralty Board.51 I received a printed Copy of it last night from New York, which I have forwarded to His Excellency Count D'Estaing. It is evident from Admiral Kepple's own relation of the affair, that he was pretty severely handled, notwithstanding he affects in the conclusion to mention that he wished extremely for an Opportunity to renew the Combat, the next day.

We are still in great suspense as to the operations and designs of the Enemy, tho' every practicable measure has been used and is pursuing to come at them. By late and direct accounts, it would seem, that some Troops at least, are certainly going from New York. A few days I think, must open their conduct decisively.

I have had the misfortune to hear, that the Rawleigh Frigate has become a prize to Two British Ships of War, after a long and very gallant resistance.

51. A copy of Keppel's letter of July 30, 1778, is filed with Washington's letter in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

Capt. Barry finding that the Frigate would fall into the Enemy's hands, run her on a shore on Seal Island, to which he escaped in Boats with about Eighty of his Hands and from thence to the Main. It is said he took measures for blowing her up, but was defeated in his purpose by the perfidy of an Under Officer, who concealed himself and remained on Board.52 I have the honour &c.53

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Fredericksburg, October 18, 1778.

Sir: I am honored with yours of the 9th inclosing a Resolve to extend the Embargo and to prevent forestalling provision.15 I hope the latter will have the desired effect, for unless that most infamous practice of raising the prices of the necessaries of life can be stopped, it will be impossible for any Funds to subsist the Army.

Inclosed you have the Copy of a petition from the Refugees in New York to the Commissioners. You may depend upon the authenticity of it, as it is taken from a New York paper. It should seem by this that they are extremely sollicitous and anxious to know whether New York is to be garrisoned, which implies a suspicion on their part, that it is to be evacuated.

52. The *Raleigh* fell in with the British 50-gun ship *Experiment* and the *Unicorn* of 29 guns, and on September 27 the British, sailing better in the light airs, commenced action off the Maine coast, in the neighborhood of Penobscot Bay. The engagement lasted from 4 p. m. to about midnight. The British Admiralty reported that the *Raleigh's* first lieutenant and 133 men who got ashore surrendered on summons; but Barry and his 80 men escaped and arrived safely at Boston, overland. The *Raleigh* was hauled off the recks by the British and taken into their navy.

53. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

15. See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, Oct. 2, 1778.

All accounts since mine of the 14th confirm the report of a very considerable embarkation.16 It is said to consist of ten British Regiments compleated to their full establishment, and their Grenadier and Light Companies added to them. This will make them amount to upwards of five thousand Men. They have not sailed. I cannot say that I am satisfied, that a total evacuation of the City is intended this Winter, altho' many inhabitants near the lines and several out of the City are of that opinion. I have set every engine at work to procure full intelligence of their designs and I hope to succeed. The

current opinion of deserters and others is that the present embarkation is intended for the West Indies; some few have said that they have a design upon Charlestown. I have the honor &c.17

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, October 18, 1778.

Gentlemen: Major Nicholas has been with me, and reported the state of the Cloathing, and also the forwardness in which it is for coming on. I was sorry to find by his account, that the whole of the shoes will not exceed Seven thousand pair.

16. On this same day (October 18) Washington forwarded, in a brief note to Comte D'Estaing, his latest intelligence concerning the British embarkation at New York. The comte had, meanwhile, received the same information from Ensign De Boubée, of the French Navy, who had visited the British Fleet at New York to effect an exchange of prisoners. Washington's note, D'Estaing's reply (October 23), and an extract of De Boubée's report are in the *Washington Papers*.

17. In the writing o[Tench Tilghman.

This I thought it my duty to inform the Board of, as the supply will not more than answer the Instant pressing wants of the Troops, who are actually barefoot. I fear we shall suffer greatly in this necessary article, unless every possible exertion is used to prevent it. The demands are continual, and too large a quantity cannot be provided. I have the Honor etc.

P. S. Major Nicholas who has returned to the Eastward, informed me the Cloathing were of excellent quality and in very good order. Viz. the Coats, Jackets and Breeches; but from the account of Mr. Kemper, one of Mr. Mease's Assistants, many of the Blankets, which he has just opened, are so small, that four of them joined together, will not exceed the common and necessary size of One. It is reported here, that a Ship from Spain has

just arrived at Baltimore with a very considerable cargoe. Perhaps she may have some Blankets.18

18. The draft is m the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Camp near Fredericksburg, October 22 [–23], 1778.

Sir: I have been Honoured, in due order, with your favors of the 13th and 16th Inst.; the former came to hand on Sunday Evening, the latter to day. The several matters, which are the Objects of them, shall have my attention, as far as it shall be practicable.

With respect to the practices complained of by Governor Livingston, the Extract from his Letter, transmitted by Congress conveyed the first intimation I had of them. I have written to Lord Stirling upon the occasion82 and requested him to inquire into the matter and to report the result.

82. See Washington's letter to Lord Stirling, Oct. 21, 1778, *ante*.

Previous to the receipt of your Letter, inclosing a Copy of Colo. Hartley's, I had determined and ordered another Regiment to march and co-operate with those under Colo Alden and Lt. Colo. Butler, which have been employed on the frontiers of this state for sometime. It was intended that the whole should go against the settlement of Anagquaga, with such Militia as might join; but from the accounts received this morning, I have reason to hope, that Lt. Colo. Butler has already destroyed the Town.83 I am now consulting Govr. Clinton84 and General Schuyler, who are much better acquainted with the frontiers in this Quarter than I am, upon the practicability of an expedition upon a large scale, against Chemung. I dont know what will be the result; but I am apprehensive from the advanced season of the year and the daily increase of the Rivers and Creeks, it will be found impracticable or at least extremely difficult in the execution.

I have written to General Heath to take immediate measures for carrying into effect, the intention of Congress,

83. Butler's expedition had been entirely successful. His journal (October 1–16) was forwarded to Washington by Brig. Gen. John Stark in a letter of October 18. On the margins of tile journal Washington has noted the daily marches made by the troops, who traveled a total distance of 110 miles and destroyed both Anaquaga and Unadilla in 15 days.

84. Washington sent Butler's journal to Governor Clinton in a brief note dated October 24 with the remark that “Perhaps this may be of some service to you in forming some decisive opinion upon the Chemung expedition.” Clinton returned the journal to Washington, as requested. Stark's letter to Washington, Washington's note to Clinton, and a copy of Butler's journal are in the *Washington Papers*.

respecting the removal of the Convention Troops, in case Sir Henry Clinton has not furnished supplies of provision and fuel, according to their Resolution of the 11th Ulto. The matter now rests upon this footing, as passports have not been granted for our Vessels, or any answer given to the application upon the subject. It will not be possible for me to send proper guards from the Army to escort the Troops on their march, and therefore I have requested General Heath to employ a sufficient number of the Massachusetts Militia to conduct them to Connecticut. I shall make a like requisition to Governor Trumbull, and it will be necessary, that the several States in succession, through which they are to pass, be called upon in the same Manner.

With respect to seditious papers calculated to excite dissentions and mislead the people, Congress may be assured, that whenever they may be sent from the Enemy by a Flag and they come to my hands, I shall not fail to suppress them. I fear however, the avenues and channels in which they may be conveyed, are so various and so numerous, that no exertions will be found sufficient intirely to prevent the evil.85

Having mentioned the subject of seditious papers, I beg leave to observe, that the Commissioners in their late Proclamation and Manifesto have touched upon every thing to awaken the fears of the people. They have thrown out an implied threat, to change the manner of the War to one of a more prædatory and destructive kind. They may have done this only in terrorem;

85. At this point the following is crossed out in the draft: “and I am not certain that an ineffectual attempt by Authority, to suppress and seize, would not involve more disagreeable consequences than a free circulation, especially with proper strictures.” (See also *Journals of the Continental Congress*, Oct. 16, 1778.)

but it is possible that it may be intended, as a serious principle of practice. It perhaps may not be imprudent to guard against it, by fortifying our most valuable and most accessible Sea ports. Immediately after the Action of Monmouth I sent General Pot tail to form a plan of fortification for the Delaware. While he was in the execution of this, he was called away at General Lee's instance, as a Witness in his trial. After this was over I thought it necessary, that he should turn his attention to the Highland posts; and lately, the possibility of an Enterprise against the french fleet and the Town of Boston, determined me to send him to that place, to take measures for their common security. Previous to this however he had sent Colo. Laumoy86 to prepare the way, by taking plans of the River and the Adjacent Country near Philadelphia. These points I deemed it material to mention, and submit to Congress the propriety, as Colo. Laumoy is not yet returned, of their directing a number of Men, to prosecute the defences.

October 23.

Congress, I make no doubt, will have heard from Lord Stirling, or thro' some other Channel, before this reaches them, that a considerable fleet sailed from York on the 19th and 20th and put to Sea. According to advices, it consisted of about 150 sail, including transports and Ships of War. The amount of the Troops on board is not known; but from

the current of intelligence, they are those mentioned in my Letter of the 18th, with some additional corps; and it is the general opinion, that they are destined for the West Indies. There

86. Colonel Jean Baptiste Joseph, Cheavlier de Laumoy. He had been a major of French Engineers; was commissioned colonel of Continental Engineers by Congress the latter part of 1777; wounded at Stono Ferry, S. C., in June, 1779; taken prisoner at Charleston, S.C., in May, 1780; exchanged in 1781; retired in October, 1783, with the brevet rank of brigadier general.

are many reasons in favor of this and among them, the taking of Dominica by the French is a very weighty one. However, as Boston and Count D'Estaing's Squadron are capital Objects, and those only on the Continent to which we can hope to afford succour; I thought it prudent and the part of caution, to put three Brigades Viz. Poor's, Pattersons and the late Learned's in motion on the 18, 19 and 21st. Inst. which are ordered to proceed for the present, as far as Connecticut River. Nixon's, Parson's and Huntington's follow to day and are now on their March. These movements will be attended with many great inconveniences, arising particularly from the difficulty of supplying flour; but as I have already observed, tho all reasoning is against an Eastern expedition at this time, especially with a Detachment, they are such as could not be avoided. Besides advancing these troops, I wrote to General Heath yesterday morning, to request as many of the Neighbouring Militia as would make the whole number, comprehending those already assembled, Five Thousand, which I trust with the other forces in the Eastern Quarter, will be sufficient to delay the operations of the Enemy, if they are going against Boston, till we can give further and I hope effectual relief.

I beg leave to inclose an Extract from a Letter of the 20th. Inst. from Genl. Hand, who is going to take the command at Albany, respecting the distressed Inhabitants of the German Flats. In consideration of their sufferings and of the great

importance of the settlement to us, I have consented to his furnishing them with provision, agreable to the propositions between him and Governor Clinton, till Congress shall be pleased to decide whether they arc to be supplied at the expence of the States, or upon what other terms and for how long.

I have the Honor to transmit a Copy of Lieutenant Colo. Butler's Journal, which I just now received in a Letter from General Stark. Congress will perceive by this, that he has effectually destroyed the Settlements of Anaquaga and Unadilla, and returned with the Troops under his command to Schoharie. I hope their destruction will give some relief to the Frontier Inhabitants of this and the States of Jersey and Pensylvania, at least for this year, as they were places of Rendezvous for the Savages and Tories who infested them, and where they deposited a part of their plunder.

We are again distressed for want of Money. The Military Chest is quite exhausted, and near three Months full pay due the Army. I wish a Supply to be sent to the Pay Master as soon as possible. I have the Honor &c.

P.S. I have written to Lord Stirling and requested him as he is much nearer Congress than I am, to transmit them information of any material occurrences that may come to his knowledge respecting the movements of the Enemy.87

87. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, near Fredericksburg, October 24, 1778.

Sir: The letter, which I had the honor of addressing to your Excellency the day before yesterday, would inform Congress of the embarkation and sailing of a considerable detachment of the enemy from New York; and of the measures I had taken, in expectation of, and upon the happening of the event. Whether this will be succeeded by a further

embarkation, or by a total evacuation of the posts, which they hold within the States, in the course of this year or the ensuing one, I cannot pretend to determine. But as it will be right and prudent in us to prepare for every contingency, I would, with the greatest deference, submit it to Congress, whether it may not be proper for them to call upon the States to provide Men in time for filling their respective Battalions before, or at any rate against, the opening of the Spring, in the same manner, as if there was a moral certainty that the War would be prosecuted with all possible vigor on the part of Britain. Should this not be the case, or should any events cast up in the mean time, to render Troops unnecessary, it will be easy to disband the levies, and to keep them from the field, while on the other hand, our relaxations in not providing them, may subject us, at least, to many disagreeable consequences.

The general Return of the Infantry in the

Month of September, transmitted to the Board of War by the Adjutant General, and to which I beg leave to refer, will shew Congress the whole amount of our reputed force at that time; but I am to observe, that large, very large deductions are to be made from it, on account of the Columns of sick and the men said to be on command. Many under the former description, particularly that of sick absent, are actually dead, others unfit for service, and several, who have recovered, have deserted: nor will the latter afford more than one half of its number in time of Action, as various duties such as waggoning, distant Guards, Escorts &c, employ a great proportion of those under this denomination.

Besides the above deductions, Congress will perceive from the Return which I now take the liberty of transmitting,95 that there are 4380 Drafts and others, whose terms of service will expire during and by the close of the Winter. For I am sorry to add that our exertions to re-engage the Drafts and old Soldiers, in this predicament, for the usual Bounty, have proved so far ineffectual and without success. I have not tried what effect the additional Grant of ten dollars might have; but I fear and it seems to be the opinion of all I have consulted upon the occasion, that it would have but little if any influence. I know in the

case of the Drafts and troops of one State; that the offer of twenty dollars on the part of the Continent, with a like allowance and an actual deposit of it by the State has been no temptation. This general reluctance and refusal is founded in the unhappy depreciated light in which the Soldiery

95. This return is filed with Washington's letter to Congress of October 31 in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 152, 6, fol. 431.

view the money, and their expectation of receiving immense State, District and substitute Bounties. Whether grants or bounties by Congress, bearing some proportion to these, to such as should inlist for the War would be attended with better success, I cannot undertake to decide. The experiment may be made, if they judge it proper, and if it proves an inducement to any extent, it will be an infinite saving in the end. I believe however, our surest and only certain aids will be derived from drafting, which I trust may and will be clone by the States on the recommendation of Congress, agreeable to the mode mentioned in my letter to their Committee, when they first honored me with a visit at Valley Forge, The exertions to recruit by voluntary inlistments may still go on, as both modes in all probability will not produce near as many men as may be found necessary.

In the Case of the Carolina Troops, whose service is ending every day, the Officers say, that nothing will induce them to inlist, unless they can be permitted to go home on furlough till the Spring. On this indulgence they seem to think, several might be engaged. The distance is great and there will be some uncertainty as to their returning; besides it will be fixing a precedent for others. If Congress approve the plan, they will be pleased to inform me by the earliest opportunity.

I am under some difficulty about cloathing the drafts and the old Soldiers whose service is expiring and will determine every day. As Congress have never expressed their sense upon

the subject, and this is increased by a letter which I received some time ago from the Board of War, which respects particularly the drafts. I must earnestly request that Congress will favr. me with the speediest direction in the Case, whether they are to be furnished out of the supplies coming on, equally with the other troops. At the same time I will take the liberty to offer it as my opinion, that however inconvenient or expensive it may appear at the first view to cloath them, the measure will be necessary and founded not only in humanity but sound policy. We have no prospect now of levying men in any other way, and if they are not cloathed they will be exhausted by sickness and by death; and not doing it may prove an insurmountable Bar, or at least a great obstacle to our obtaining future Aids, tho' the Exigencies of our Affairs should be never so pressing. Yet, the cloathes may be withheld as long circumstances will permit, as an inducement for them to inlist. In the instance of the old Soldiers, who have not received the annual allowance of Congress, the point seems clearly in their favor. The Board suggested, that the drafts might be supplied out of the best of the old Cloaths, which might be given in by the troops on receiving new ones; but unfortunately there will be few of any worth. I have the honor &c.96

96. In the writing of Tench Tilghman. The letter was read in Congress on October 31 and referred to the committee of William Duer, Roger Sherman, R. H. Lee, and Gouverneur Morris, to prepare a plan for procuring reenforcements, etc.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Fredericksburgh, October 26[–27], 1778.

Sir: I had the honor of your letter of the 22d Instant with its several inclosures to-day, at noon.

I shall pay a proper regard to the Act of Congress respecting Mr. de Vrigny.26

For information on the second resolve, for obtaining a return of the re-inlistments,27 I must beg leave to refer Congress, to my Letter of the 24th. I have complyed with the intention of the 3d and transmitted the act to Sir Henry Clinton, which relates to Mr. Franks.28

The certain intelligence of a large number of Troops having embarked at New-York, the sailing of a considerable fleet, concurring at the moment their departure was expected, left me no room to doubt, that the fleet which went out of the hook, on the 19th and early the 20th instant, contained the embarkation of which I had been advised. In the persuasion of this, my letter of the 23d to your Excellency was written. But from more recent advices, and through various channels, bearing every mark of authenticity, I am to conclude the supposition has been ill founded. The above mentioned fleet appears to have carried away, no other troops than invalids, the officers of the corps lately reduced, with some refugees.

26. De Vrigny served as a volunteer in 1777 and was commissioned lieutenant colonel in the Continental Army Feb. 2, 1778. He acted with Armand's Legion, and resigned Oct. 21, 1778, to return to France. His memorial to Congress was, by the act of October 21, sent to Washington who was “empowered and directed to give Mons. de Vrigny such certificate and testimonial as his zeal and services may have entitled him to.”

27. The resolve of Oct. 21, 1778, for obtaining a return of reenlistments in pursuance of the act of Aug. 31, 1778. (See *Journals of the Continental Congress*.)

28. Another series of resolutions of Oct. 21, 1778, directing the arrest of the British commissary of prisoners, David Franks, then residing in Philadelphia, for clandestine correspondence with the British.

“By direction of Congress I transmit you the inclosed copy of their resolutions on the 21st Inst respecting David Franks…he will not be permitted to act as commissary to the British prisoners after the 10th of next month; and, that if it is their desire that your Excellency will nominate a proper person, who, having received their approbation, may succeed

Mr. Franks in the Office”— *Washington to Clinton*, Oct. 26, 1778. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

The 23d Inst. the troops which had embarked still remained in the harbour. They are fixed at 10 or 12 british regiments and six of the new levies.

This fleet was probably composed of homeward bound victuallers with some merchantmen, and other vessels which chose to take the protection of a convoy. The accounts still say that they were accompanied by fourteen or fifteen sail of the line, and some frigates.

27th.

In my Letter of the 22d. I advised your Excellency of the measures I had taken to ascertain the practicability of an enterprize against Chemung. I have the honor to inclose you the report of Governor Clinton, General Schuyler and Genl. Hand on the subject29 I cannot help concurring with these gentlemen in opinion, and am persuaded from a number of considerations, that we must lay aside all thoughts of an expedition against that place for the present. Besides other necessary preparations, we have not yet been able to get forward the cloathing for the army. The Congress will also perceive, in Lieut. Colonel Butler's journal, transmitted to your Excellency in my letters of the 22d and 23d instant, the great difficulties he had to encounter, in crossing the rivers, at a much earlier season of the year. I have the honor, etc.30

29. A copy of this report, dated Oct. 22, 1778, is filed with Washington's letter in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

30. In the writing of James McHenry.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, October 27, 1778.

Gentlemen: In the Letter, which I had the honor of addressing to you on the 18 Inst. I mentioned the scanty size of many of the Blankets, which had come to the hands of the Cloathier. By this conveyance by Wm. Jones,45 I think it proper to send one for the inspection of the Board, by which they will find, how much we have been deceived, and the publick imposed on in this essential article of supply; and also the necessity there is for purchasing more if it can be possibly done. I do not know whether these were originally imported by the states, or procured in the Country; but it may not be improper for the Board to instruct the Agents to be particularly careful upon future occasions that similar inconveniences may not happen. I have the Honor, etc.46

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters near Fredericksburg, October 29, 1778.

Sir: Yesterday forenoon I had the honor to receive your

45. William Jones, Congress messenger.

46. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

favor of the 23d Inst., with a Resolution of Congress of the preceding day, appointing Major General Gates to command in the Eastern district. A copy of the Resolution was immediately forwarded to him at Hartford, with a request that he would repair to Boston in compliance with it. Your Excellency's letter to him, was also dispatched by the same Express.

The Letter which I had the honor to write you on the 22d and 23d Inst. will have advised Congress before this comes to hand, of the Troops I put in motion upon the embarkation and supposed sailing of a large Detachment of the Enemy from New York, and that this

was dictated by a principle of caution, as it was possible the Enemy might have in view, an Enterprise against Boston and the French Squadron. Their advance was never intended to be farther than Connecticut river, unless the operations of Sr Henry Clinton should make it necessary; in which case it was my intention to hurry to Boston myself, as Congress will perceive by the Copies of my Letters to Genls. Heath and Sullivan, which I take the liberty to inclose, and to advance other Detachments. It was also equally my intention, founded in the necessity of the case and on the immense expence and difficulties that would attend the subsisting of these Troops, to recall them, the moment I should be satisfied the Enemy were not going upon an Eastern expedition. It so happened, that when the advices of the Enemy's sailing from New York were contradicted by Others, which I was obliged to consider as authentic, the Brigades of Nixon, Parsons and Huntington, which formed the second division

of the Troops which had been put in motion, had not proceeded beyond New Milford, where they were halted and yet remain waiting events. I shall be extremely happy if my views in these instances, accord with the sentiments of Congress; and I would fain persuade myself, that from their knowledge of the scarcity of flour, or at least of the enormous expenditures and almost insuperable difficulties attending the purchase and transportation of it, they will think them prudent, and as having a strict regard to public œconomy.

As the means of transporting provision and the supplying of forage, necessary to this end, fall immediately under the care and direction of the Quarter Master, in addition to what I have said, I beg leave to refer Congress to the inclosed represention, which I received the day before yesterday from General Greene, respecting the difficulties in both cases.52 He has gone largely into the matter, and the observations which he has made, and which arise from his own experience, will clearly evince the inexpediency of our keeping a greater number of Troops at the Eastward, than shall be indispensably required by the probable operations of the Enemy. And to this I would subjoin the transcript of a Letter from Genl. Heath,53 which came to hand last night, as it contains a state of our flour

Magazines at Boston and points out the difficulty of subsisting the Militia I requested him to call in, upon the supposition that the Enemy might be going to that Quarter.

52. This was Greene's letter of October 26, which is in the *Washington Papers*.

53. This letter of October 25 is not found among the *Washington Papers*. Washington's reply is dated October 29: “The want of Flour every where, opens really a distressing prospect. It is much to be feared we shall find the greatest possible difficulty in supplying the demands for that article through the Winter.” This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

The subject of General Greene's Letter is very interesting and important, and I am certain will have the consideration it deserves. How far it may be practicable to transport flour by Sea, considering the circumstances of the Enemy's fleet, for forming Magazines at the Eastward, I cannot venture to determine. If it can be done with a tolerable degree of good fortune, it is certainly very desirable. Many risks must attend it, and it appears to me, either in adopting or rejecting the plan, the real plenty or scarcity of the Article among us, will have great weight. I have been informed and I believe Credibly, that the late crop of wheat in Virginia, below the blue ridge, has been almost generally destroyed by Weavel, and that no Supplies of flour can be procured there, south of the Mountains.

Since my last of the 26 and 27, I have not been able to obtain any material intelligence respecting the Enemy. I have the honor &c.54

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters near Fredericksburg, October 31, 1778.

Sir: Your Excellency's favor of the 23d Inst. was delivered me yesterday, with the Resolution respecting Monsieur L'Eclise.74 As soon as I am notified of the place of his residence, I will give the

54. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

74. Dominique L'Eclise, a Canadian. He had served General Schuyler as a spy and had been imprisoned by the British and his property confiscated. By a resolve of October 23 Congress granted him $600 to pay his debts and $60 and one ration a day “during the pleasure of Congress.” The name was also spelled L'Eglise.

necessary directions, for carrying into execution the humane and benevolent intention of Congress towards him.

I take the liberty to inclose a Letter from Doctor Connolly,75 representing his situation. His case I am persuaded will have due attention and such a determination, as humanity and policy will justify.

By intelligence received yesterday evening it is said, that Transports with Ten Regiments on Board had fallen down from York to the Watering place; that there were several other Ships laden (not said with what); and that there were Others at the Wharffs, taking in Troops. I cannot tell whether this intelligence is certain; for we have been deceived of late in points of information, that seemed to carry equal marks of authenticity. I have the Honor, etc.

P.S. Just as I was closing my Letter, I received one from Lord Stirling dated yesterday at 9 O'Clock A.M. by which he informs me that on Wednesday and Thursday about Eighty sail of Ships, chiefly Transports with Troops, fell down from New York to Staten Island and that Sixty or seventy sail lay there before.76

75. Dr. John Connolly. His letter of October 16 is filed with Washington's letter in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

76. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Qurs., November 6, 1778.

Sir: On Wednesday Evening I received your Excellency's favors of the 30th. ulto. and 1st Inst. with their several inclosures.

I will direct the best and cheapest disposition I can, to be made of the Cavalry for their accommodation in Quarters and will instruct the Forage Master on the occasion.

The remittance to the Pay Master which you mention, I presume has come to hand, having been applied to by him, to issue an order for the payment of the Troops for August and September.

I have transmitted the Letter from Nicholas Dupui and others, with the Affidavits to His Excellency Govr. Clinton and have ordered Colonel Cortland to march with his Regiment towards the Minisinks and to take such Post as the Govt. may point out.

I have made a distribution of the Printed Manifestoes, and there is no doubt, but the Enemy will very soon be possessed of some of the Copies, and of news Papers that contain them.

By a letter from Lord Stirling, of the 3d Inst. he informed me, “That the Fleet at the Hook the preceding day, increased to 108 Sail, and that morning at seven weighed Anchor and stood out to Sea.” I am impatiently waiting for further advices from New York and to learn whether any other, and what movements are likely to take place. I have the honor &c.9

9. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, November 11, 1778.

Sir: On Wednesday afternoon I received a Letter from the Honble. Mr. Lee and Mr. Lovell, of the Committee for foreign affairs,35 inclosing a plan and sundry Resolutions of Congress for attacking Canada the next Campaign, in conjunction with the forces of his most Christian Majesty;36 and requesting my observations upon the same to be transmitted to Congress, and a Copy to be delivered to the Marquis De la Fayette.37 These dispatches, thro' the indisposition of the Marquis, who unfortunately was seized with a fever in his journey from Philadelphia, which still detains him at Fish Kill, were prevented coming to hand till that time, and the great importance and extent of the subject they comprehend, would not permit me the honor of an earlier communication of my sentiments.

I hope Congress will excuse my not complying with that part of the Resolution, which requires me to deliver a Copy of my Observations to the Marquis, as the manner in which I am obliged to treat the subject, opens such a prospect of our wants and our weaknesses, as in point of policy ought only to be known to ourselves.38

I am always happy to concur in sentiment with Congress, and I view the emancipation of Canada as an

35. Dated Oct. 27, 1778. It is in the *Washington Papers*. (See note 45, P. 243, *post*.)

36. For this plan see *Journals of the Continental Congress*, Oct. 26, 1778.

37. In the *Washington Papers*, filed under date of December, 1778, is a folio document in Washington's writing, which lists 10 subject heads of a proposed report on this expedition against Canada, all of which are developed in this letter of November 11. (See illustration, p. 402.)

38. This important letter to Congress, one of the most important that Washington wrote to that body, exists in two forms in the *Washington Papers*. 1. The first rough draft in Washington's writing, which is somewhat disconnected and may be, in reality, parts of

several different drafts. 2. The completed draft in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The letter which was signed and sent to Congress, which is the text given above, is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. Because of its importance the first rough draft, in Washington's writing, is here printed in footnote form in so far as the variations seem of value. The words in brackets were those first written by Washington and afterwards crossed out. An attempt has been made to connect the variants of the draft with their proper places in the finished letter, but the result can be no more than approximate.

“An appology for so often twarting the views of Congress by exposing the difficulties attending the execution of *several* plans proposed by them. duty, requires a candid representation of facts from me the weight of which Congress will judge of. Reason of the Delay.

“Under the present uncertainty respecting the Enemys operations and views, the exhausted State of our Magazines and finances, the immense difficulty of getting Provisions, even from hand to Mouth, infinitely more so to lay up a Store of it, especially of Salted meat which would be absolutely necessary in the execution of the Plan concerted by Congress; the expiration of Service in a number of Men before next June; the distressed Situation of our officers and the consequent resignations which I much fear will take place at the end of this Campaign. The impracticability of Wintering Troops upon the Mohawk and upper parts of Connecticut River without exhausting every necessary supply of Provision for the ensuing Campaign [a knowledge lately come at of this circumstance but] renders the Plan proposed by Congress too extensive, too complexed, and too arduous to be entered upon with a probability of success; much less to [do it in concert] warrant a contract for them with a foreign power tenacious perhaps of Her own views in entering into such an engagement and jealous of her own honour undr. any disgrace or disappoinmt. arising from us. Suspecting ours, or our want of Military knowledge and ability to concert [impracticable] Schemes or want of means and power to execute them from either of which causes disgust and fatal consequences may follow, Congress no doubt are better acquainted with the State of European politics than I am for unhappily I

have no means of information and have good ground to fix the number of French Ships for this Service at of the Line and frigates but from my uninformed view of the matter I shd. look upon them as sent to inevitable destruction if the Expedition into Canada does not Succeed [in all its parts] or, to grace the Port of Quebec only if it should as they cannot get ent. again.

“The Plan proposed by Congress takes 12,600 Rank and file [besides Indians and Carpenters for Ship and Boat Building] great part of whom are to be at the posts designated this Winter; and to insure the remainder early in the Spring you are to call for a much greater number of Militia than are intended to be imployed [this, probably will give an inundation of Useless Mouths in the Supernumerary Officers and Privates who will desert you perhaps if when they come to be seperated from their own Officers wch. must happen in many Instances;] in the height of their Spring Seeding and Corn Planting; this [then] *may* add considerably to the consumption of Provision but supposing you only get the number wanted, when to these are added Cored. and Non comd. Officers, the Staff of the different Departments and their attendants, Sutlers, Carpenters for Ship and boat building, Indians, Batteau men, Waggoners, Bat Men and Servants and Women it will be found that your Number of Eaters will be little if any, under 20,000 and that this Provision except what goes by the way of Fort Schuyler is to be transported in Waggons or by Packhorses some hundreds of Miles the great part of which thro an uninhabited Country affording no other Forage but herbage. the difficulties and the expence attending which in the exhausted condition of the States, present depreciation of Money, and high prices of every Article is easier to conceive than describe and is well worth the most serious attention especially when we recur to (at least) the possibility of keeping up a respectable front on the Sea board, in addition to the above all of whom must be fed and cloathed.

“These difficulties, as far as I am capable of reasoning upon the Subject, are of such a nature and magnitude as to render an enterprize upon the large Scale proposed by Congress extremely precarious, of course an Offer to the Court of France under such Circumstances impoltitic and dangerous for nothing less than a moral certainty of fulfilling

to a tittle every part of our Contract should induce us to call forth the strength of another People for Conquests.

“But conclusive as these reasons are to my judgment, I have one other wch. to me is unanswerable. But on this I shall beg to be silent, it is an important and delicate Subject and shall be left to conjecture, but may not the French subserve the purpose as well in the West Indies as Canada?

“When I argue upon the difficulties attending the extensive Plan of Congress, I am clear nevertheless for undertaking every thing that can in our present circumstances, be attempted with a moral certainty of Success with our own strength and would prepare accordingly as no bad consequences will follow if we do not involve others; the Winter may unfold New Scenes. the Spring may present New prospects, and if we should be left without an Enemy upon the Sea board, or small Garrisons only at New York and Rhode Island, or either; and the French can keep the Enemys Troops employed in the West Indies and to defend their dominion elsewhere, I have no doubt (if we can get over the difficulties on Acct. of Provision, and can obtain a better currency to our Money) but that something may be done next Campaign that will give permanent Peace to our Frontiers and circumscribe the Enemy within such bounds in Canada as to leave as little to apprehend from them till something more decisive can be achieved. The success of which, in a great measure, would depend upon the little knowledge the Enemy could obtain of the real projects in contemplation.”

Object very interesting to the future prosperity and tranquility of these States; but I am sorry to say, the plan proposed for the purpose does not appear to me to be eligible, under our present circumstances. I consider it as my duty and what Congress expects from me, to give my reasons for this opinion, with that frankness and candour, which the importance of the subject demands; and in doing this, I am persuaded, I shall not fail to meet with their approbation.

It seems to me impolitic to enter into engagements with the Court of France39 for carrying on a combined operation of any kind, without a moral certainty of being able to fulfil our part, particularly if the first proposal came from us. If we should not be able to perform them, it would argue either a want of consideration, a defective knowledge of our resources, or something worse than either; which could not fail to produce a degree of distrust and discontent, that might be very injurious to the union. In the present instance should the Scheme proposed be adopted, a failure on our part would certainly occasion in them, a misapplication of a considerable land and naval force, which might be usefully employed elsewhere; and probably their total loss. It is true, if we were at this time to enter into the engagement, we shall be every day better able to judge, whether it will be in our power to accomplish what would be expected from us; and if we should find hereafter, that our Resources will be unequal to the undertaking, we may give notice to the Court of France

39. That France was decidedly lukewarm in 1778 toward repossessing Canada is clear. (See the instructions to John Holker, Nov. 25, 1777, in *Doniol*, ii, 616, and Vergennes to Gèrard, Dec. 25, 1778, *Arch. Aff. Err.*, *E. U.*, 5, 142, a copy of which is in the Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.) Later this lukewarmness became adamant objection.

in season to prevent the sailing of the Troops and the ill effects, which might attend it. But, besides that a project of this kind could not be embraced by France, without its having an influence on the whole system of operations for the next Campaign, which of course would receive some derangement from its being abandoned, a renunciation of this could not fail to give a very unfavourable impression of our foresight and providence and would serve to weaken the confidence of that Court in our public councils.

So far from their being a moral certainty of our complying with our engagements, it may, in my opinion, be very safely pronounced, that if the Enemy keep possession of their present posts at New York and Rhode Island, it will be impracticable either to furnish the men, or the other necessary supplies for prosecuting the plan. They will not attempt to keep

those posts with less than ten Thousand men and a considerable Navy. If it should be thought best, for the advantage of carrying on the expeditions intended, to forego any offensive operations against these garrisons and to leave them in quiet possession of such important places; we shall at least be obliged to provide for the security of the Country against their incursions and depredations, by keeping up a force sufficient to confine them within their own limits. It is natural too to suppose, that the people's expectations of being protected will grow

stronger, in proportion to the diminution of the Enemy's force, and the greater facility with which it can be afforded. They will hardly be content to continue in a state of alarm and insecurity from a force so inconsiderable, while the principal Strength of the States is drawn out in the prosecution of remote Objects. If this reasoning is just, we shall be obliged to have a larger force than the Enemy, posted in different places, to prevent sudden inroads, which they would otherwise be able to make at different points; and the number required cannot be estimated at less than 12 or 15000 men. This will be two thirds as large a force, as we have been able to raise and maintain during the progress of the War; as these calculations, both of the Enemy's strength and of our own, are meant to designate the number of effective rank and file.

If I rightly understood the plan in consideration, it requires for its execution 12,600 Men, rank and file. Besides these, to open a passage through a Wilderness for the march of the several bodies of Troops, to provide the means of long and difficult transportations by land and Water, to establish posts of communication for the security of our Convoys; to build and man Vessels of force, necessary for acquiring a superiority on the Lakes; these and many other purposes, peculiar to these Enterprises, which would be tedious in detail, will demand a much larger proportion of Artificers and persons to be employed in manual and laborious Offices, than are

usual in the Ordinary course of military operations. When we add the whole together, the aggregate number of men requisite for the service of the ensuing Campaign, will be

little less than double the number heretofore in the field; but to be more certain in the calculation it, may be placed at only one half more.

Experience is the only rule to judge by in the present case. Every expedient has been exhausted in the preceding Campaigns to raise men; and it was found impossible to get together a greater force than we had; though the safety and success of the cause seemed absolutely to require it. The natural and direct inference therefore is, that the resources of the Country were inadequate to a larger supply. I cannot then see that we can hope upon any principle, to be equal to so much greater exertions next year, when the people and the Army appear to grow daily more tired of the War and the depreciation of our money continually increasing and of consequence proving a smaller temptation to induce Men to engage.

The State of our supplies for transporting and subsisting the troops, will stand upon a footing equally bad. We have encountered extreme difficulties in these respects, and have found, that it was full as much as we were competent to, to feed the Army we have already had and enable to keep the field, and perform the movements required by the contingencies of the service. It is not likely that these difficulties

will diminish, but on the contrary they will rather multiply, as the Value of our currency lessens; and the enormous prices to which provisions have risen and the artificial scarcity created by monopolies, with what we have to fear from the effect of the same spirit, give us no reason to flatter ourselves, that our future prospects can be much better. In this situation of things we are hardly warranted to expect, that we shall have it in our power to satisfy the demands of numbers so much greater, than we have yet had to supply; especially if we consider, that the scene of our operations has hitherto been in the Heart of the Country furnishing our resources, and which of course facilitated the drawing them out; and that we shall then be carrying on the War at an immense distance, in a Country wild and uncultivated, incapable of affording any aid, and great part of it hostile. We cannot in this case depend on temporary or occasional supplies, as we have been accustomed,

but must have ample magazines laid up beforehand. The labour and expence in forming these, and transporting the necessary stores of every kind for the use of the Troops, will be increased to a degree that can be more easily conceived than described. The transportation must be a great part of the way through desarts, affording no other forage than herbage; and from this circumstance, our principal subsistance of the flesh kind must be salted, which would not only be an additional expence, in the additional consumption of so scarce and dear an Article as salt, but would greatly increase

the difficulty both of providing and transporting. My Letter of the 29th Ulto., transmitting a Copy of one from the Quarter Master General, which I had the honor of addressing to Congress and to which I wish to refer, will point out the difficulties and daily expence attending our supplies of the Article of flour only, in our present circumstances, exclusive of its Cost, and lay the foundation for a sort of comparative estimate to be formed, of those that would attend the support of the Troops when employed at so great a distance.

If in addition to all this, we should have the French fleet to supply during the winter, the likelihood of which I have no sufficient information to ground a judgment upon; it will appear still more impracticable, to furnish the supplies requisite for the extensive operations proposed. But independent of this the improbability of doing it is, in my apprehension, infinitely too great to justify the undertaking.

This reasoning is founded on a supposition that the Enemy do not evacuate their present posts at New York and Rhode Island; nor can we presume upon any past appearances so far as to determine the contrary, and enter into a national contract the fulfilment of which, at any rate in my Judgment, will depend on this event. Opinions on the subject are various and the arguments on both sides cogent; circumstances hitherto very indicisive. At Rhode Island, there is nothing that looks like an evacuation, that I have heard of; at New

York, the length of time elapsed, since the event has been expected, which cannot be satisfactorily accounted for, makes it not a little doubtful and problematical.

But if it were even certain, that the Enemy would shortly leave these States, I should think our ability to carry on the expeditions meditated from the nature of the Country and the remoteness from the source of our supplies, joined to the discouraging State of our finances, too precarious to authorize a preconcerted agreement with a foreign power, binding ourselves to the attempt.

On the other hand, if we were certain of doing our part, a co-operation by the French would in my opinion, be as delicate and precarious an enterprise, as can be imagined. All the reasons which induce France and the United States to wish to wrest Canada and Halifax from the dominion of England, operate with her, perhaps more forcibly, to use every possible effort for their defence. The loss of them would be a deadly blow to her trade and empire. To hope to find them in a defenceless state, must be founded in a supposition of the total incapacity of Britain, both by land and sea, to afford them protection. I should apprehend, we may run into a dangerous error by estimating her power so low.

We have been informed, that a strong Garrison has been lately sent to Hallifax amounting by report to about 4000 men. A part of the detachments, which the Enemy are now making from New York are currently said to be, and in all probability are, destined for that place. If they evacuate intirely, a very considerable

part of their force will no doubt go there; and, in any case we may expect, that reinforcements will be thrown from thence into Canada, early in the Spring. The English are now greatly superior to the French by Sea in America; and will from every appearance continue so unless Spain interpose, an event which I do not know, we are authorized to count upon. However, as I am destitute of information with respect to the present state of European politics, this is a point upon which I can form but an imperfect judgment. But if it should not take place, I think it infinitely probable, from the maritime situation and advantages of Hallifax, which is represented as the finest port and best naval arsenal in America, from the security it is calculated to give to the general trade and possessions of

Britain, both on the Continent and in the West Indies, that it will be a station for a larger naval force, than the one intended to convoy the french Troops. It will naturally be the principal rendezvous of the British Ships of War in America. If this position be admitted, should the English have any knowledge or even suspicion of the design of the French Court, to send a fleet up the river St. Lawrence, nothing will be easier than to intercept this fleet on its way; or to take or destroy it after it has gotten in.

Nor can we flatter ourselves with keeping this business a secret. Congress perhaps will be surprised to be told, that it is already in more hands than they suspect, and, in the progress of the negociation in France, it will get in many more.

The preparations will announce the intention. It is indeed a part of the plan to avow the destination of the French Troops, though this is to be contradicted by the manner of their Cloathing &c. The Stationing Troops this Winter, as is proposed, particularly on the Mohawk and Connecticut river, would be unequivocal proofs of the design. It must at least excite the strongest suspicions; so as to put the English nation upon their guard, and make them take precautions to counteract it.

But if the French troops should arrive before Quebec, I think their success against that strong place, fortified by every advantage of nature and of art would be extremely doubtful. It is supposed this Capital post will be found in so weak a condition as to make its surrender a matter of course, owing to the Enemy's having previously drained themselves for the defence of Detroit, Niagara, St. Johns, Montreal &c. But we cannot depend that this will be the case. They may esteem it the part of prudence rather to sacrifice, or at least hazard the extremities in order to collect their strength at the Heart. Montreal indeed and the posts essential to it must be defended, because the possession of them would throw too large a part of the Country into our hands. But if reinforcements are sent to Canada early in the spring, a circumstance extremely likely, these may be attended to, without too far weakening the garrison of Quebec; and, as before observed, we cannot build upon

their conduct's being regulated by an ignorance of our plans. The french troops instead of a coup de main would, in this case, be reduced to the

necessity of carrying on a blockade.

I will now take the liberty to turn my attention towards the operations of our own troops.40 The one against Detroit, I shall at present say nothing about; if well conducted, I should hope that place would fall without very great difficulty. The case is very different with respect to Niagara. This I am informed is one of the strongest fortresses in America; and can only be reduced by regular approaches or by famine. (In accomplishing this last war and a conquest as far as Montreal, I believe, General Amherst exhausted two campaigns, with all the advantages which he derived from the United efforts of Britain and America; with every convenience for water transportation, including plenty of Seamen, and with money that commanded every thing, which either Country could furnish.)41

The former mode would require great perseverance time and labour and an apparatus, which it would be almost impracticable to transport. The latter is practicable, but very difficult. To effect it we must gain a superiority on the lakes; the Enemy have already a respectable force there. If the suspect our design, which they cannot fail to do from the measures to be taken, they may improve the interval in adding to it; and by providing materials and Artificers upon the spot, they may be able to increase it, so as to keep pace with us. It is therefore easy to see, that we ought not to be too sanguine in the success of this expedition; and that, if a moderate force be employed in the defence of

40. “The expedition to Detroit from Pittsburg I highly approve of being fully convinced from experience and observation that there is no way of opposing Indians effectually, but by carrying the War into their own Country and in the present. Instance stopping the source from whence these disorders and blood shed flow with their Supplies which will be found to originate at the Enemys Posts near the Indian Settlements; but I cannot say that I see into the policy of avowing the intention, because the more covert we act the more distracted are the Enemy which is the great advantage that offensive measures have

over defensive ones and where we have sevl. blows to Aim, and all very desirable, it is best to let them grope, for in that case, by paying attention to every place they are weak at all points where as by reducing one or two operations to a certainty you give a clue to the whole and enable them to make defences accordingly. Nor can I see how the Troops designd for Detroit are to form a junction with those at Niagara unless they subdue the Naval force on Lake Erie as well as the Garrison of Detroit which cannot be so as long as Niagara remains theirs the former being on the West and the latter on the East end of the lake distant Miles wch. is as far as it is from Pittsburg to Detroit and a much more difficult Rout by Land. The distance by Water is less but where are the Vessels? Detroit is upon the edge of the lake and if the Post cannot be defended, the Garrison will immediately ship themselves for Niagara, and with their Armed Vessels (two of which one of 16 and another of 18 Guns they have) scour the lake of Batteaus if you even had them to transport your Troops ”

“The same reasons which lead me to approve the Expedition to Detroit operate equally forceably for one to Niagara but I have too little knowledge of the Rout proposed from Ochnaquaga and the object of that Rout to give an opinion upon the propriety of dividing the force that is to operate against Niagara and without there was some cogent reason for it I should be against it and for this Reason principally, that you may be beaten in detachment by the collective force of the Enemy against either of these bodies. As I have before said I have too little knowledge of the rout from Onaquaga to Niagara to give a decided opinion upon the practicability of a March with the necessary Apparatus for the reduction in that Post; from the Idea I entertain of the Country and a general description I have nevr. understood that Artillery could be transported and without this the Garrison could be reduced no otherwise than by famine. If the destruction of the Indian Settlements is the only end to be answered by the March this body of Troops the conquest of them will be as effectual by the possession of this Post as by any means whatsoever as it is in the heart of or rather covers their Country

“Under my present view of the matter I see no other way of reducing Niagara and making the Iroquois or Six Nations depandant upon us but by obtaining the Mastery of Lake Ontario.”

41. In the *Washington Papers* are eight folio pages, in Washington's writing, of extracts “Taken from the Journal of Lieut. Colo. Bradstreet's Expedition to Fort Frontenac in the year 1759,” which Washington apparently copied out to further clarify his ideas as to this projected Canadian expedition.

Niagara, without degarnishing Quebec and the intermediate posts, its reduction will be a very arduous task.

The body of Troops to penetrate by way of the River St. Francis, must meet with great obstacles. They will have a march of about 150 miles from the Co-os which is about 160 beyond Hartford, a great part of which is through a hitherto uninhabited and tractless Country, with an immense train of Waggons. All the stores and provisions for the whole march and the future supply of the troops, at least till they should get footing in Canada, must accompany them from the beginning. The impediments and delays in such a march almost exceed conception. When arrived at the St. Lawrence, fresh obstacles probably would present themselves. The presumption is, that if the Enemy could not make head there, they would desolate the Country, through which we were to pass; destroy all the provision and forage, remove every kind of Water craft and demolish the materials for building Others. These precautions being taken on the Sorrell and St. Lawrence, would pretty effectually obstruct our progress, both to Montreal and Cadosoqui;42 to say nothing of the rapidity of the current, and the numerous rifts between Montreal and Lagalette.43 While we deliberately consider all the obstacles in the execution; and the difficulties we shall find in preparing the vast magazines required, which have been already enumerated, if within the compass of our Resources, we shall be led to think it not very improbable,

that this body may be unable to penetrate Canada, at least in time to co-operate with the French troops, if a co-operation should be necessary.

42. Cadiroqui (Cataraqui), same as Frontenac, Canada.

43. La Gallette (Lagalette), New York.

The situation of these troops then would be delicate and dangerous. Exposed to a defeat from the United force of the Enemy; in great danger of having their retreat cut off by a superior naval force in the River, they would have every thing to fear.

On the other hand, if our operation should be as successful as we may flatter ourselves, a tempest or a British fleet may deprive us of the expected aid; and, at a critical moment, we may find ourselves in the bosom of an Enemy's Country, obliged to combat their whole force, with one inferior, and reduced by a tedious and wasting march. The five thousand men, when they arrived in Canada, would probably little exceed four capable of service, and would be still less, if, out of them we should establish posts as we advanced to ensure a retreat and to protect escorts of provisions, which must follow for future suport. Thus an accident in either case, would involve the defeat of the whole project, and the catastrophe might be attended with the most unhappy consequences to America.

The plan proposed appears to me not only too extensive and beyond our abilities, but too complex. To succeed, it requires such a fortunate coincidence of circumstances, as could hardly be hoped and cannot be relied on. The departure of the Enemy from these States, without which we cannot furnish the stipulated force or supplies to maintain them. Such a want of power or want of foresight in the Enemy, as will oblige them to neglect the reinforcement of Hallifax and Canada and prevent

them, however conveniently situated, from disputing the passage of four Ships of the line and four Frigates up the River St. Lawrence, or attempting their destruction afterwards. Such a combination of favourable incidents, as will enable several bodies, acting

separately and independently by Sea and land and from different countries, to conform to times and periods, so as to ensure a co-operation; These and many other circumstances must conspire, to give success to the Enterprise.

Congress I am persuaded, had powerful reasons for fixing the convoy at the number they have, and their superior information respecting the affairs of Europe at this juncture, enables them to judge much better than I can pretend to do, of its sufficiency. But, from the imperfect view I have of the matter, I have been led in considering the subject, to look upon it as insufficient. From the general tenor of intelligence, the English outnumber the French in the Channel. In America, both on the Continent and in the Islands, they are greatly superior. If the last Toulon fleet is employed in the Mediterranean, the French may have the superiority there; but upon the whole the ballance of naval force seems hitherto to be on the side of the English. If we add to this, that the number of Ships of War in the french ports, built or building, bear no comparison to the number in the English ports; and that Britain, notwithstanding the diminution she has suffered, is still a Kingdom of great maritime resources, we shall be disposed to conclude, that the preponderance is too likely to continue where

it is. The interposition of Spain indeed, would make a very interesting change; but her backwardness heretofore, seems to be an argument, that she is withheld from interfering by some weighty political motives; and how long these may continue to restrain her, is a question I am unqualified to determine.

Besides these general objections to the plan, which have been stated; there appear to me to be some particular ones, which I shall take the liberty to point out.

In the first place, I observe there are to be 5000 Militia employed in the two expeditions against Detroit and Niagara. The drawing into service so large a number composed chiefly of Husbandmen, in addition to what may be found necessary for other exigencies on the Coast, at so interesting a season of the year, will certainly be very injurious to the culture

of our Lands, and must tend to add to the deficiency of supplies. But this, though not to be overlooked, is not the principal objection. In the expedition against Detroit, Militia perhaps may answer, as it not a post of very great strength, and may possibly be abandonned on, or in a little time after the approach of a force, that cannot be opposed in the field, and the garrison proceed to reinforce that of Niagara; but even here, troops of another kind would be far preferable. However the case will be very different with respect to this last. It is, as I have before mentioned, one of the strongest fortresses of America and demands for its reduction the very best Troops.44 Militia have neither patience nor perseverance for a siege. This has been demonstrated by all

44. “Laying it down as a Position that Militia are totally unfit for the enterprize agt. Niagara (which is of the strongest fortresses upon the Continent) and that, if the Enemy should not abandon their Posts, and thereby require any army below to watch their motions or dislodge them if possible, it will be impossible that Provisions and other necessaries for so extensive a Plan as Congress have sketched out can be provided and very precarious under any circumstances, therefore I would substitute in its place the following plan and proceed to the execution of it in the following manner.”

“Without a moments loss of time (and this I have already given file necessary Orders for) Magazines of Flour and Salt Provisions should be laid up at Albany; and on Connecticut River from No. 4 abe. fort Charles to Newbury in the Co'os Country, and at the former, that is Albany *provide* every Material for Ship and Boat Building, Rigging, Guns &ca. &ca. should be provided. I would also form large Magazines of Flour and an adequate quantity of Salt Provisions at Pittsburg. The Troops in the meanwhile, except such as may be necessary for safe Guards to the Provisions and Stores at the above places to be cantooned (if Circumstances will admit) in such places as they can be easiest supplied, and with the least interruption to the forming of the Magazines here mentioned. By the time Troops could safely take the field in the Spring, we shall know how far the full views of Congress so far as depends up. on our operations (for I am totally against connecting them with any other *operation* for the reasons already mentioned, and the consequences

that might follow) can be carried into Execution; and thus far we proceed upon sure Grounds. If our resources and circumstances then combine we are thus far advanced into the Enterprize upon Canada on the large Scale, but If these should not warrant any capitol movement to the Northward, we may nevertheless extend ourselves from Pittsburg and the North Western Parts of the Frontier of this State into the Indian Settlements as I am fully perswaded that measures of this kind will be found most effectual indeed the only means of putting an end to Indian Ravages. lastly if in the possible event of the Enemy's finding us full imployment in the interior parts of the Country it should be found that our Supplies must be drawn to that Quarter the Magazines will be very properly situated for a removal [anywhere] being on the Rivers and to be Water borne.

“Thus far in general. I will now take the matter up more in detail and begin with the Expedition from Fort Pitt, which I conceive to be indispensably necessary for the peace and safety of the Frontiers of Pensylva. and Virginia; being thoroughly convinced as I have before observ'd that there is no way of putting an entire stop to Indian depredations but by the destruction of their Towns removing them to a greater distance and cutting of their supplies. The most effectual way then of doing this remains to be considered.

“If the Expedition is conducted by the more direct rout to Detroit, it must stand solely on its own bottom; for it can neither give aid to, or receive it from, the Troops which may be employed at Niagara, as Congress [have proposed] seem to expect; but will be convinced of the impracticability of, by adverting to the distance between the two places (upwards of 400 Miles thro an almost tractless rout more than double the distance it is from Pittsburg to Detroit) and, that the Enemy have the entire command of Lake Erie by means of two Armed Vessels which they have there containing 16, or 18 Guns each with which they can stop all Transportation by Water. It appears then that the object of this expedition must be confined to Detroit and to the Indian Settlements in the surrounding Country, if Detroit is the primary object.

“But as it appears to me that the Possession of the Lake is of infinite more importance than the reduction of the Fort (the abandoning of the last being the inevitable consequence of the first) it is an object highly worthy of consideration whether some plan cannot be devised to effect this, for till Lakes Erie and Ontario are in our absolute Possession, or the strait between them at Niagara, which could not well be obtained, or supported, unless we become Masters of the lower lake, it is of little avail to proceed to Detroit; because that place of itself give no opposition to Cannon unless it is considerably strengthened since last Winter; being only a stockade and deriving its importance from its situation and contiquity to Lake Huron and upper Lakes and in as much as it forms file Chain with the Mississipi and its security from the Indians, and the reinforcements to be received from Canada; the common Garrison being under two hundd. Men. If the Enemy cannot oppose our Troops destined for this Expedition in the Field and on their March I have no doubt of their abandoning the Post (after destroying the Works) and Shipping themselves for Niagara upon their approach.

“To remedy this, and strike a more deadly blow, the lake should be our first object; and the Rout, as far as my present knowledge of the Country extends should be up the Ohio in Barteaus or Canoes (which may be built at Fort Pitt in the course of Winter) to Wenango, thence up French Creek to where the French formerly had a Fort (all the way by Water) thence by a good carrying place 15 Miles and good Road to the Lake at Prisquisle another old french fort [on the Lake] about Miles from Niagara from whence, if a superiority could be obtained on the Lake the Expedition to Detroit is rendered more easy, much safer, or could be directed in the first, o Second Instance against Niagara as circumstances may require; for I lay it down a an incontestable fact that if we once obtain the Mastery of Lake Ontario and the Fort at Niagara that all the Indians in the upper Country cease to be hostile as they must from that moment become dependant upon us. the Communication with the upper Lakes by the way of the River Outawais being (undr. my Conception of the matter too intricate and round about for us to apprehend much danger from it till by a little,

breathing spell, we shall recover enough to extend our own views for further security or contravene those of the Enemy, which may be directed to our injury.

“But to obtain this superiority is the difficulty as we are straitned for want of Guns and perhaps for want of every other article for the equipment for Vessells and are two Ships behind the enemy in the outsett and may presume that they can build as fast as we. There is no way of effecting this end, but by hanging out false appearances to mislead the Enemys attention and judgment; and this I think may in some measure be accomplished under these Idea's that to save the expence of Land Carriage from Fort Pitt, the Expedition will be conducted by Water down the Ohio to the Rive Scioto, up that to the small carrying place only 4 Miles and very good to Sandusky. this rout, so far from being chimercal, or even improbable, that I am not clear whether it is not the cheapest, safest, and most expeditious rout they can take to go immediately to Detroit; this therefore will acct. very satisfactorily for the building of the Batteaus or Canoes at Pittsburg and as [it is the desire I know] the opinion of Sore of the Settlers on the East side the Ohio is that nothing wd. contribute more to deter the hostile Indians from crossing that River than [some] armed Vessells to be Sailing up and down to cut of the Retreat of those that did (tho I myself do not think the there is sufficient depth of water for the purpose or that the end would be answered, if there was) yet this, or a hint that they were intended for some operation upon the Mississipi might with the unexpectedness of the real design sufficiently conceal it from the Enemy if none but the Commanding Officer of the Expedition is intrusted with the secret; and he under the strictest ties of honor enjoined not to reveal it. The kind of Vessels proper for the purpose of encountering such as the Enemy have upon the Lakes and the manner of building them, so as to be taken to pieces and transported in bits must be determined by those who are more competent judges of that kind of Service than I am.

“I am equally strongly impressed with the necessity of an Expedition to Ontario and Niagara, and for the identical reasons which have [prevail] been assigned in the case last mentioned but do not see the force or Propriety of dividing the Troops intended for this Service on the contrary can See many capitol evils and a fatal consequence which may

result from the measure, for if each of these columns is not equal to the whole Assembled force of the Enemy they beat you in Detachment; by opposing their whole force to first one, and then the other, of them; besides, you are at the trouble and expence of preparing for two expeditions instead of one. Opening two Roads instead of one and risquing the junction of these columns at a critical moment perhaps even if no disaster should happen to either. If the only object, is the destruction of [a few] the Indian Villages which [may] lye in the Rout between Ouchnaquaqa and Niagara I do not think the object is equal to the risque; the expence, and the difficulties which will attend the Seperation of the Troops designed for this general Service especially when it is considered that if we succeed in the [main] objects of these two Expeditions that all the Indian South of the Lakes lay wholly at our Mercy.

“As the door into Canada, by the way of lake Champlain, is barred by the Naval force which the Enemy have there, every advantage gained by the way of lake Ontario is a step into that Country, by the [only] most practicable rout through which a large body of Troops can be conducted for I consider the movement by the way of Co'os at all end, and the design of it accomplished when the Troops arrive at the St. laurence as the presumption is that the Enemy if they cannot oppose them in the Field that they will remove or destroy all Provisions within their reach, all Vessels, and every material for building Vessels thereby endeavouring to prevent their crossing either the St. Lawrence or River Sorrel, which if accomplished would be an effectual bar to their progress to Montreal and up the River to Caderauki if the rapidity of the Currant and the many rifts which lays between Montreal and la galette were not alone sufficient. The March of Troops however into Canada by this Rout will create a very powerful diversion, distract the attention of the Enemy exceedingly and answer many valuable purposes, for which reason they should secure themselves as they go as well for the purpose of retreat as advance and for the benefit of Convoys as it may be a Channel thro which great supplies of live meat may be drove for the purpose of feeding the Army wch. may have penetrated by the River St. Lawrence.”

the experience we have had. An attempt to carry on One, which should materially depend on them, would be liable to be frustrated, by their inconstancy, in the most critical moments. Agreable to the plan under consideration 3,500 out of 5,600 are to be Militia.

It is a part of the plan, that the Troops sent against Detroit, whether successful or not, are to form a junction with those at Niagara. It appears to me on the contrary, that the expedition against Detroit under the present arrangement, must stand on it's own bottom, and have no other object than the reducing that place, and destroying the adjacent indian settlements. Lake Erie is certainly occupied by Two armed Vessels of Sixteen and Eighteen guns and it is said by five or six Others of smaller size, having two, three or four guns each, which while the Enemy hold Niagara, will prevent the communication of our Troops by way of the lake, to say nothing of the want of batteaus for transportation. A communication by land, must be performed through an extent of more than 400 miles, and great part of this at least, under many disadvantages of route and through tribes of hostile Indians.

My knowledge of the Country is not sufficiently accurate, to enable me to discover the reasons, which determined Congress to divide the force destined against Niagara, and to appoint the march of one body from Ononguaga to that place. It seems to me however, that this disposition might be subject to one great inconvenience, which is, that if each column be not superior

to the whole collective force of the Enemy, they risk being beaten separately and successively; besides the trouble and expence of preparing, as it were for two expeditions instead of one, of opening two roads instead of one, and the uncertainty of co-operation if no disaster should happen to either, at the moment when it might be necessary. The inquiries, I have as yet had it in my power to make, are opposed to the practicability of conveying Cannon in the route from Ononguaga to Niagara, or at least place it as a point infinitely doubtful; and without Cannon, nothing can be effected against that post. Upon the whole, the great matter essential to success against Niagara, is to subdue the Enemy's

force on Lake Erie and Ontario, particularly the latter. This once done, and the Garrison by that means cut off from it's supplies, the fort will be likely to fall an easy prey. Here our effort should be directed; nor do I at present perceive the purposes to be answered by the body going from Ononguaga, unless the devastation of the intermediate Indian villages be the object, which perhaps might not be equal to the risk, labour and expence; and the more so, as they would fall of course, if we should succeed in the general operation.

The cantoning five Thousand troops this winter on Connecticut river, under our present prospects, will, in my opinion, be impracticable, and, in any case unadvisable. When I had the honor of writing Congress in September last, on the subject of a winter campaign into Canada, I had been led by General Bayley and other

Gentlemen acquainted with the Country, to expect that very considerable magazines of provisions might be laid up, on the upper parts of that river; but it appears on experiment, that their zeal for the expedition had made them much too sanguine in the matter. The purchases fall far, very far, short of what was expected. The difficulties of transportation, as represented by the Quarter Masters and Commissaries, supported by facts that speak for themselves, are so great and complicated, that I should have no hope of our being able from remote parts of the Continent, to throw in the quantity requisite for subsisting these troops during the Winter and, at the same time, of forming the Magazines which would be necessary to prosecute the expedition in the Spring. We may be endeavouring to form the Magazines; but the Troops cannot be on the spot this Winter; otherwise they will exhaust the provision, as fast as it can be collected. The same objection applies to the stationing troops on the Mohawk river.

In estimating our force for the next Campaign, it is to be considered, that upwards of Four thousand of the present Army will have compleated their term of service by the last of May next, and, that a great proportion of the remainder will have done the same about the close of the ensuing fall; unless they can be induced to reengage, of which the ill success of our present exertions to inlist those whose engagements are about to expire, affords

but an unfavourable prospect. This and the general temper of the Officers, dissatisfied much with their situation, will suggest a strong argument against the extensive projects in contemplation.

In whatever point of light the subject is placed, our ability to perform our part of the contract, appears to me infinitely too doubtful and precarious, to justify the undertaking. A failure, as I have already observed, would involve consequences too delicate and disagreeable to be hazarded. But at the same time that my judgment is against this, I am clearly of opinion, that we should attempt everything that our circumstances will permit; but as the extent of our power must be regulated by many possible events, I would wish to hold ourselves free, to act according to either possibility, and as a clearer view of our future resources shall authorise. If the Enemy intirely leave these States, it will produce a vast change in our affairs and new prospects may open, of which we can at present have but a very imperfect idea. It would be a great step towards raising the value of our money, which would give a new spring to our military operations. We may be able to undertake much more than we can now foresee.

If the Enemy attempt to keep posts in these States, a primary object will be to expel them, if in our power; if not, we must make proper provision to bar their depredations; and must turn our attention to the security of our frontiers, by pursuing such measures, as shall be within the reach of our abilities.

Though we may not be able to launch into so wide a field as we could wish, something upon a more partial scale may be enterprised. Detroit and Niagara may perhaps be

reduced, though Canada may not be an accession to the confederacy. With a view to what is possible, preparations may be going on, and we can make such an application of them, as we shall find practicable.

As there is no time to be lost in doing this, I shall give the necessary orders, so far as relate to the article of provision, which indeed has been already done in part. Magazines

of forage, materials for boat and ship building, and other articles must also be provided; which will depend on the final arrangements, and more definitive instructions of Congress. These measures will be necessary to be taken, whether the present plan is carried on, or whether something less extensive, depending wholly on ourselves, is substituted in its place. I shall wait the further orders of Congress for the government of my conduct, in delivering the plan to the Marquis, as their resolution seems to require; or in transmitting it immediately to Doctor Franklin, as the Letter to the Committee seems to direct.45 At present I am under some doubt concerning the intention of Congress in this particular. I have the honor etc.

P.S. I shall use every means in my power to obtain intelligence, in the points mentioned in the Resolution of the 26th Ulto.,46 and had taken measures for the purpose, with respect to Canada before. Mr. Livingston,47 an Officer in the Corps of guards will have the honor

45. The Committee for Foreign Affairs, the members of which who signed the letter to Washington (October 27) were James Lovell and Richard Henry Lee. The letter is somewhat ambiguous, but Washington properly chose so to consider it, as by following the instructions literally he would report his observations to Franklin and not to Congress.

46. The date should be October 22. Washington received the resolve on October 26.

47. Lieut. Henry Philip Livingston, of the Commander in Chief's Guard. He was a captain of the Guard m December, 1778; resigned in March, 1779.

of presenting these dispatches to your Excellency. Their importance requiring more than a common Messenger, he very obligingly undertook upon application to give them a safe conveyance.48

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Fredericksburg, November 11, 1778.

Sir: I have been honoured with yours of the 19th, 27th, 28th and 29th Ulto. A tolerable supply of Shoes have lately arrived to the Issuing Clothier's Store from the Eastward, Pennsylvania and Jersey, and if the different persons employed in procuring that article will exert themselves to keep up the supply, I hope we shall not be much distressed during the Winter, provided we remain quietly in Quarters.

It is much to be wished that Congress would come to a speedy resolution concerning the procuring Cloathing for the Officers at a price in proportion to their pay, more especially as they were led to expect this from a Resolve which passed in November 1777. If the Cloathing itself cannot be conveniently procured, I imagine the alternative of allowing an adequate sum of money in lieu thereof would be the next best expedient.

As the Board must undoubtedly have experienced the

48. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The letter was read in Congress on November 19 and referred to the committee on the letter of Marquis de Lafayette. who were Samuel Adams, Gouverneur Morris, and William Henry Drayton. A report was rendered and adopted by Congress on December 5, agreeing with Washington's conclusions and that Congress are “of Opinion that the General should be directed to write to the Marquis de la Fayette upon that Subject, and also to write to the Minister of this States very fully, to the End that eventual Measures may be taken in case an Armament should be sent from France to Quebec to cooperate therewith to the utmost Degree which the Finances and Resources of these States will admit.” (See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, Dec. 5, 1778; also Washington's private letter to Henry Laurens, Nov. 14, 1778, *post*.)

many difficulties arising from want of a proper arrangement of the Cloathier's department, I hope they will press the Committee who have the business in charge to bring in their report, that the new system may be carried into execution without loss of time. Whether it has been owing to want of conduct in the late officer, or his want of proper Powers and

directions I will not undertake to determine; but the regularity in that department has been an endless source of trouble to me, and a great cause of discontent in the Army.

I have given the issuing Cloathier directions to keep an account of the marks and numbers of the Bales of Blankets and of the quality of their contents, from whence you will be able to trace from whom those small ones were purchased. When the issues are compleated you shall have the account. The directions to Mr. Mease were very proper. If any Corps want compleating, in any particular article, which is not to be procured here, I will sign the order myself.

In the present scarcity of Harts, the Caps, of which you have forwarded a pattern, must be used by way of substitute. But an officer very attentive to the health of his men, informs me that he found an inconvenience from the use of Woolen Caps last Winter, instead of Harts. When the men put them off in the Spring, they, many of them, took violent colds from the sudden transition. They also contribute to keep the Head dirty, than which nothing is more unhealthy.

I find it impracticable to carry the recommendation of the Board, respecting calling in the old Cloathes upon the delivery

of the new, into execution. The Soldiers were not to be convinced of the good policy and œconomy intended by the application of the old Cloaths to Hospitals, and the followers of the Army; but looked upon it as an unjustifiable attempt to deprive them of what they had earned by their years service; and what, considering the scanty supply of some kind of covering, Blankets in particular, would help to make them more comfortable during the Winter. These discontents were communicated to me the moment they arose, by some of the best Officers in the line, which determined me to let the matter drop, more especially as another argument was made use of, which was unanswerable, this was, that upon a fair settlement there would be found a considerable deficiency of the bounty Cloathing for a

year or two past, and that therefore it would be more equitable to make up the deficiency than to draw in the remains. I am &c.49

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Fredericksburg, November 12, 1778.

Sir: Inclosed I have the honor to transmit the Copy of a letter from Brigr. General Hamilton57 to Genl. Heath. I did not choose to grant the request without the concurrence of

49. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade and addressed to Richard Peters as a “Member of the Board of War.”

57. Brig. Gen. James Hamilton, of the British Army. A copy of his letter is filed with Washington's letter in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. His request was to allow a few sick and married British officer prisoners to go to Virginia in the flag vessel, to allow some sick privates to remain at Cambridge, and hospital stores to be shipped in the vessel.

Congress; tho' at the same time I think it may be safely done.58 It will save the trouble and expence of another escort at a future day. I shall be glad of the determination of Congress as speedily as possible as the Flag Vessell bound to Virginia with the Baggage of the Convention troops, will perhaps be detained for the answer. I have the honor &c.59

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Fredericksburg, November 13, 1778.

Sir: Baron De Steuben will have the honor of delivering you this. He waits upon Congress on the subject of the Inspectorship, which he is extremely anxious should be put upon some decided footing. He appears to be sensible of some difficulties in the plan formerly

proposed and which I had the honor some time since to transmit my observations upon;70 and desirous, that they should not prove an obstruction to the progress of an institution, which if accomodated to the circumstances and sentiments of the Army, promises very great advantages to the service. The success the Baron had in the beginning and the benefits derived from it makes me regret the obstacles that have so long suspended his exertions; and I should wish he may have it in his power to resume them on principles most advancive

58. On this same day (November 12) Washington wrote to Maj. Gen. William Heath that he had referred Hamilton's request to Congress and sent officers to meet the Convention troops at Enfield. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

59. In the writing of Tench Tilghman.

70. See Washington's letter to the President of Congress, Sept. 12, 1778, *ante*.

of the service. On these I have already fully communicated my ideas; and it is unnecessary I should add. I have the honor, etc.71

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Fredericksburg, November 14, 1778.

Sir: I do myself the honor to transmit you the copy of a letter of the 10th instant, which I received yesterday from Sir Henry Clinton,74 on the subject of exchanging the prisoners of the Convention. Should the proposition be agreeable to Congress, I shall be glad to receive powers to enter into a negotiation as soon as possible, as it may probably relieve our Officers, upon parole, from the disagreeable necessity of returning to New York. I will just observe, that should an exchange take place upon the terms proposed by Sir Henry, I should suppose that we shall not be obliged to give up any considerable number of privates by way of composition, as the Officers of the Convention, should the whole be

suffered to be exchanged, would go a great way towards liberating ours75 at present in the hands of the Enemy.

But it cannot be expected that they will leave their

71. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade.

74. A copy of Clinton's letter is filed with this one of Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. In proposing an exchange negotiation Clinton added: “You have ordered the troops of the Convention to be removed from Massachusetts Bay to Virginia, and I have ordered all the officers of your Army prisoners out on parole to return here.”

75. The draft reads “liberating all ours.”

troops intirely destitute of Officers. Mr. Commissary Clark76 mentioned by Sir Henry Clinton, was permitted by Genl Heath to go from Boston to New York to settle the accounts and procure money for the discharge of the debts of the troops at Cambridge.77 I have the honor, etc.78

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Fredericksburgh, November 16, 1778.

Sir: By the time this reaches you General Du Portail will probably be at Philadelphia. One part of his business is to prosecute the directions given him, some time since, for forming a plan for the defence of the River Delaware, to be submitted to Congress. Another part is to understand from Congress, what may be their views and wishes with respect to his further continuance in America and that of the three other Gentlemen attached to him. He informs me that the furlough, he obtained from the Court of France expires in February next, and that unless there is a certain prospect of his being employed hereafter, in a manner useful to the States and honorable to himself, he intends immediately to return. He

therefore wishes some explicit ideas to be realized on this subject. He is also anxious that something difinitive should be done, with respect

76. Jonathan Clarke, Assistant Commissary General, British Northern Army.

77. “General Scott has my instructions that you may proceed by the most convenient route to Cambridge or the troops of Convention. And that nothing may be wanting which can add to their ease and comfort you may [if you choose it] signify to Sir Henry Clinton that I will receive at Kings ferry the necessaries and money you mention and take immediate measures to have them conveyed to the troops.”— *Washington to Clarke*, Nov. 14, 1778. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*. The draft of this letter is in the writing of James McHenry and the words in brackets were added, in the draft, by Washington.

“Mr. Clarke has my permission to proceed by the most convenient route to the troops of the Convention.”— *Washington to Sir Henry Clinton*, Nov. 14, 1778, This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

78. In the writing of Tench Tilghman. The letter was read in Congress on November 18 and referred to the Board of War.

to the pay and other appointments both of himself and the Gentlemen with him; which have been hitherto undecided and have left them in a very uncertain and disagreeable situation; added to this, he is desirous to have some arrangement fixed for the rules and manner of service in his department.

He delivered me some days since a memorial intended for Congress and which I have now the honour to inclose, containing his ideas on a general system of fortification for these states, and which he requested me to accompany with my Sentiments. But it includes questions of finance and considerations of policy, the most extensive and important; of which Congress alone can form a competent judgment. I shall therefore only

say, that considered merely in a military point of view, the plan appears to me worthy of very serious attention.

It is but justice to General Du Portail to observe, that I have a high opinion of his merit and abilities; and esteem him not only well acquainted with the particular branch he possesses, but a man of sound judgment and real knowledge in military science in general. I have also a very favourable opinion of the other Gentlemen; I will take the liberty to add, that it appears to me they will be extremely necessary and useful in our future operations, whether be directed to offence, or defence, whether to dispossess the enemy of posts in our front, to assist in carrying on the proposed expedition into Canada, or any other, on a less extensive plan, which may be substituted

in its stead, for the mere security of our frontier.

Mr. De Murnon85 has served in quality of Engineer under General Du Portail since the first of March last with the promise of a Majority, by the Committee of arrangement at Valley forge. He has never yet received his commission. This I presume has been forgotten in a croud of more important affairs. With the greatest respect, etc.86

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Fredericksburgh, November 16, 1778.

Sir: I had the honor of receiving your favour of the 6th, yesterday, with the inclosed copy of a letter from the President of the Council of New Jersey, relative to an expected attack upon the Western frontier of that state. I have just received a letter from General Hand,87 giving intelligence of an attack upon Colonel Alden's regiment at Cherry-Valley, effected by surprise, in consequence of which there is too much reason to apprehend, that regiment may fall a sacrifice. I transmit a copy of the dispatches announcing this disagreeable affair.

These depredations of the Enemy give me the most serious concern. I lament that we have not yet had it in our power to give

85. Jean Bernard de Murnand. He received his commission as major of engineers, Jan. 13, 1779, to date from Mar. 1, 1778; brevet lieutenant colonel in September, 1783; resigned Feb. 3, 1784, when Congress resolved that it entertained “a due sense of Lieutenant Colonel Murnan's abilities and services.”

86. In the writing of Alexander Hamilton. The letter was read in Congress on November 21 and referred to the Board of War. The memorial enclosed was referred to the Marine Committee.

87. A copy of Hand's letter of November 13, also one of Col. Frederick Fisher, of November 11, and one of Col. Jacob Klock, of November 12, are filed with this one of Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. The original of Hand's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

them an effectual check. I am perfectly convinced, that the only certain way of preventing Indian ravages is to carry the war vigorously into their own country; but as this is thought impracticable at this late season of the year from the state of the waters and other impediments, I fear we must content ourselves for the present with defensive precautions, for the present. I have already informed Congress, that Col. Cortlandt's regiment had marched towards the Minisincks; but having since directed Count Pulaski to proceed with his corps to Cole's fort in that neighbourhood, Col. Cortlandt will take post somewhere between that place and Rochester. Orders are now given to Col. Spencers regiment and Col. Armands corps to join General Pulaski. This disposition is agreeable to the opinion of Governour Clinton and other Gentlemen acquainted with the Country, whom I have consulted; and is calculated to cover the Eastern frontier of Pensylvania, New Jersey and the western part of New York. I shall also immediately send the remainder of General Clinton's Brigade to Albany; when arrived there if any thing offensive can possibly be

undertaken it shall be done, if not they will be disposed of in a manner that shall seem best adapted for protection and defence. With the greatest respect, etc.88

88. In the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Fredericksburg, November 18, 1778.

Sir: The troops of the Convention have advanced considerably towards the North River. They will be guarded to that place by the Militia of Connecticut and from thence to Delaware by an escort of Continental troops. As I cannot with any degree of convenience send the Continental troops beyond Delaware, I am under the

necessity of desiring the Board to make a requisition to the Executive Council of Pennsylvania, to give orders to the County Lieutenants of Northampton, Berks, Lancaster and York to hold four or five hundred of the Militia of each of those Counties ready agt. they shall be called upon by Colo. Bland, of the 1st Regt. of Dragoons, who is appointed by me to superintend the march of the troops the whole way. The Militia of each County to march to the extent of their own bounds, which will make the duty very light. Be pleased likewise to desire, that the Waggon Masters in each of the above Counties may be ordered to assist the Qr. Masters who attend the troops with Waggons sufficient to transport the Baggage. I could wish that no time may be lost in giving the orders, lest there should be some unnecessary delay on the Roads at this advanced Season. I shall be obliged to you for making the like requisition to Govr. Johnson of Maryland for an escort of Militia and supply of Waggons thro' the County of Frederick in that State. I will give Colo. Bland directions to call for the necessary Guards from Virginia, after he has crossed the Powtomack.

The troops have hitherto come on in very good order and with great expedition and I hope they will continue so to do thro' their whole march. I have the honor, etc.10

10. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Fredericksburg, November 20, 1778.

Sir: Mr. Wheelock33 will have the honor of presenting this letter to your Excellency. He waits on Congress upon the affairs of a regiment under the command of Colonel Bedel,34 which it seems was raised in the Coos Country, or at least has been kept up since March last, upon the recommendation of the Marquis Fayette, when at Albany. This Corps, according to the inclosed state35 by Mr. Wheelock, who is the Lieut. Colo. to which I beg leave to refer Congress, and according to other information I have received, was at first assembled under the direction of Major Genl. Gates about this time twelve Month for the purpose of a sudden enterprise against St. Johns and the Enemy's armed Vessels lying there, and was engaged till the last of March. I cannot undertake to say in what manner or how usefully this regiment has been employed or to what extent in point of

33. Lieut. Col. John Wheelock, of Bedel's Vermont Militia regiment.

34. Col. Timothy Bedel, of Bedel's Vermont Militia regiment.

35. The original statement, written and signed by Wheelock, is in the *Washington Papers*. It is dated from Paulings Precinct, Nov. 20, 1778. A copy is filed in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

men, but Mr. Wheelock says it has been of great service. And the object of his present journey is to obtain the direction of Congress for their being paid, when proper rolls are produced; and their determination whether it is to be disbanded now, or continued till April next, the period for which the men are said to have engaged, tho' the Marquis's recommendation extended only to the end of the present Campaign. The Regt. may or may not be necessary in future. Much will depend on the system of conduct the Enemy

pursue the next Campaign and on our own operations. I would observe under its present engagement, its services were to be local or at least confined to a certain Quarter. If it should be deemed expedient to reinlist it, if practicable it should be done on the general scale of acting wherever it may be requisite; tho' perhaps it may not be possible to accomplish it; and in such case it will also be material for the Public to have a more perfect knowledge of its arrangements than what I apprehend it has hitherto had. I have the honor etc.36

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Fredericksburg, November 21, 1778.

Sir: I had the honor of your Excellency's two favors

36. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade. The letter was read in Congress on November 27 and is indorsed by Thomson: “Ordered that the regiment be disbanded.”

of the 14th and 15th Inst. with their several inclosures.

The consideration of Doctor Conolly's case, with the resolution of Congress, I have transmitted to Sir Henry Clinton.

In my letter of the 16th. I communicated to your Excellency the attempt on Fort Alden, by the savages. I have since received the inclosed dispatches confirming that disagreeable account.78 I also informed Congress at the same time with the steps which were taken for the security of the frontier of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and the Western part of New York, and that the two remaining regiments of General Clintons Brigade were ordered to Albany. I have to regret that the condition of affairs is such, as does not admit of a compliance with repeated detachments from this army. However that every thing possible might be done under our present circumstances, Genl Hand was further instructed, on the 16th instant, to confer with General Schuyler at Albany, and with those persons, in that

part of the Country, who could in any manner assist in forming his judgment on the best measures to be pursued, with the troops which were employed in the several quarters. And yesterday I changed his command to that of the Minisincks and forwarded him an extract from Colo. Hartley's Letter of the 9th that he might accommodate his dispositions to recent events. I have only to add on this subject, that on the 20th. Brigr. General Clinton set out to take the command at Albany, with directions to consult with Genl Hand, and to form with him, such combined arrangements, as may appear

78. Copies of Governor Clinton's letter of November 17, of Brig. Gen. Abraham 'Ten Broeck's of November 12, Lieut. Col, Alexander Webster's of November 11, General Hand's of November 15, Col. Goose Van Schaick's of November 15, Col. Jellis Fonda's of November 14, Lieut. Col. James Gordon's of November 14, and Maj. Daniel Whiting's of November 13—all reporting the massacre in Cherry Valley—are filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

most consistent with their united strength. I am, etc.

P.S. As the troops of Convention are approaching the North River, I am throwing over a part of the army, in order to form a line of posts paralel to their march, for the greater security of the several passes leading to the River.79

79. In the writing of James McHenry. The letter was read in Congress on November 27 and referred to the Board of War.

On November at Washington wrote again to Congress, introducing “young Mr. Penet,” for whom Pierre Penet petitioned a brevet captaincy on condition that young Ignatius Penet would immediately return to France. Washington “endeavoured to discourage the application, but the footing on which he placed it, and the consideration that the house to which he belonged engaged very early in a commercial intercourse with this country, in the present contest induced me finally so far to comply, as to promise that I would communicate his request to Congress.” (This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.) On Jan.

6, 1781, Congress appointed Ignatius Penet a lieutenant in Armand's Legion, in which he served to the close of the war.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, November 23, 1778.

Sir: John Temple Esqr85 will have the honor of presenting this to your Excellency. I do not know what Mr. Temple's views are; but it seems he has some application to make to Congress. I never had, till now, the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with him, but from the terms in which Mr. Bowdoin86 speaks of him, as your Excellency will perceive by the inclosed letter, and from other recommendations I have had of him, I consider him as a Gentleman of sense and merit and of warm attachment to the rights of his Country, for which he appears to have suffered greatly in the present contest. I have the honor, etc.87

85. John Temple came from England in 1776, with a considerable sum of money furnished him by the ministry. Judge Thomas Jones, in his *History of New York During the Revolutionary War* (New York: 1879), vol. 1, pp. 85–88, speaks rather bitterly of him as an American sympathizer, who was pampered undeservedly by the British Government while staunch loyalists were ignored. “He went to Boston, proved himself a whig persecuted by Great Britain, from there to Congress, never saw the commissioners, spent the money, and returned to England; did no good in America, but much harm, and is now in full enjoyment of an office of great consequence.” He married a daughter of James Bowdoin, but aroused suspicions in several quarters as to his purpose in coming to America. Samuel Adams, and others of the New England delegation, labored strenuously against those suspicions. After the Revolution Temple was appointed consul general to the United States at a salary of £1,500, which was the “office of great consequence” alluded to by Judge Jones.

86. Former president of the Massachusetts Council.

87. In the writing of Tench Tilghman.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Fredericksburg, November 23, 1778.

Sir: I have your favr. of the 12th. inclosing a Copy of the Invoice of the different Articles ordered from Europe for the supply of the Year 1779. The estimate of Cloathing appears to be liberal. I am not so well acquainted with the demands of the Artillery and Quarter Master Departments, but I will consult the Gentlemen at the Head of them and if any thing is deficient, I will acquaint the Board, that they may endeavour to make it up by an after order.

The Cargo of the Frigate Providence90 cannot be better disposed of than at Springfield, from whence the Articles may be brought to the Army as they are wanted.

Major Nicholas arrived yesterday from the Eastward; from him I learn that 20,011 suits of Uniform had been brought on to Springfield which are all of those imported from France, exclusive of those lately arrived in the Frigate Providence. By this account there is a deficiency of upwards of 3,000 suits. There being now a sufficiency of the French Cloathes for the whole Army, the Board may, if they think proper, stop Otis and Andrews from making up any more Cloth, and direct them to bestow their whole attention to making up and forwarding shirts, which are much wanted.

In mine of the 18th. I desired the Board might make a requisition for the Militia of the Counties of Northampton, Berks,

90. “I am greatly pleased with the gallant circumstances of your passage through a blockaded harbour; and much obliged for the detail of your voyage. It was very agreeable to hear of your safe arrival, with the valuable articles of your invoice.”— *Washington to Capt. Abraham Whipple*, Nov. 25, 1778. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*. Captain

Whipple, in the *Providence*, had run the British blockade, after a smart engagement with two British frigates, and arrived at Portsmouth, N.H., from Brest, France, with a cargo of blankets, uniforms, and military and medical supplies.

Lancaster and York for the escort of the Convention troops through Pennsylvania; their route being since changed for the convenience of Forage and provision they will now pass the Delaware at Sherrards Ferry and therefore the Board will be pleased to require the Militia of Bucks and Philada. in lieu of those of Northampton and Berks, as they will pass below those Counties.

I have never seen or had any report from the new Commy. of Hides. Upon the Receipt of your letter I sent for him, but found that he had gone to Jersey. His deputy in Camp knew nothing of any steps that had been taken by him or any arrangements made by him since he came into Office. Upon his return, I will make enquiry of him what he has done and desire him to report to the Board. I am &c.91

91. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Fredericksburg, November 23[–24], 1778.

Sir: Your Excellency's Letter of the 18th with the inclosure referred to, came to hand yesterday. I had before received the intelligence contained in Mr. Dean's97 Letter, and in consequence made part of the detachments, which have been mentioned in my late Letters. It is highly probable, that the late incursions and outrages were committed by the parties comprehended in Mr. Deane's intelligence, and I should hope, that the force already gone from the Army together with the season, will prevent them at least from making further great depredations.

Since I had the honor of addressing Your Excellency on the 21st, I received a Letter from Genl Hand of the 18th an extract from which you will find inclosed, with copies of a Letter from Major Whiting and from a Mr. Clyde.98 These will inform Congress, that tho' the ravages at the Cherry Valley settlement

97. James Deane (Dean), agent and interpreter of Indian affairs in the Northern Department. His letter war that of October 10 to Schuyler telling of the gathering of the Indians for war. A copy of this had been sent by General Stark to Washington in his letter of October 16. Them are in the *Washington Papers*.

98. The originals of General Hand's, Maj. Daniel Whiting's, and Samuel Clyde's letters are in the *Washington Papers*. Copies are filed, with the letter of Washington, in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

were great in the late attack by the savages, yet our loss was much less than we had reason to apprehend it from our former advices. The account of the Enemy's having stormed the Fort and cut off Alden's Regiment happily, turns out premature.

The Inclosure No. 2, which is a Copy of a Letter from Lord Stirling of the 17th.99 will advise Congress, that the Fleet of transports which had lain at the Hook for some days before, came up the preceding night to the watering place; and also that some of the Ships of War had returned to York dismasted. Your Excellency will also see by the inclosure No. 3, which contains an extract from a Letter from Genl. Sullivan of the 18th Inst,1 the latest advices I have respecting Admiral Biron's fleet. From the loss of the Sommerset and these several accounts they suffered severely in their cruise.

Novr. 24th.

I just received from Genl Hand,2 the inclosed petition from Major Whetcomb addressed to Congress and his Letter to General Hand of the same date. My information respecting the Corps under Major Whetcomb's command has hitherto been very imperfect, and even

now I do not know the terms on which it was engaged. Nor had I till these Letters came to hand, any reason to think, that the troops above had not all been equally paid, having sent up a supply of money for the purpose soon after I came to this Camp, and authorised the Pay Master Genl. a few days ago to forward a further quantity. I shall immediately

99. The original of this letter is in the *Washington Papers*. A copy is filed, with the letter of Washington, in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

1. The original of this letter is in the *Washington Papers*. An extract is filed, with the letter of Washington, in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

2. Hand's letter to Washington, dated November 20, inclosing Maj. Benjamin Whetcomb's petition, is in the *Washington Papers*. Whetcomb's (Whitcomb) petition is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 41, 10, fol. 370. His letter to Hand (November 16) is on folio 377.

write to Genl. Clinton, now on his way to Albany, to send a proper Officer to muster the Corps, and also three Companies which he calls provincials, under his direction, said to be engaged to the 1st of next month, after which, both will be paid on his presenting proper Rolls. With respect to Cloathing, the only application I recollect ever to have had from Major Whetcomb, was answered with such supplies both in quantity and quality, as our stores at the time would admit of. It may perhaps be practicable hereafter to put his Corps on a better footing in this instance. The alarm which Major Whetcomb speaks of, in the beginning of his Letter to Genl. Hand was occasioned, Congress will perceive by a Copy of another Letter from him to Genl Hand, by a descent made by a body of the Enemy in the Country about the south end of Lake Champlain, and who according to his report have done considerable damage.

I directed General Du Portail some time ago to take an accurate view of the works carrying on in the Highlands, for the defence of the North River, and to make an estimate of the Cannon necessary for the purpose. This he did, and as he is now at Philadelphia, I have

written to him by this conveyance to present the Estimate of Congress.3 I am sorry the number wanted is so great and the more so, as I find upon inquiry, that the Salisbury furnace in Connecticut, which used to cast many, is much out of repair and could not possibly be put in order and in a proper state of supplies before May. The providing of Cannon is a

3. “The estimate you delivered me sometime since of the Cannon wanted for the works of West Point, having been, by some accident mislaid, I am to request you will deliver a copy of it to the President of Congress, which you will be pleased to do as speedily as possible.”— *Washington to General Du Portail*, Nov. 24, 1778. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

matter of infinite importance and I am persuaded Congress will take every means in their power to accomplish it. Besides the pressing and extensive demand for the Works on the North river, we cannot extend our views too soon to the obtaining further large supplies. We must in the course of things have occasion for a great deal of Artillery, and in any enterprise we may undertake against Canada, whether on a large or a small scale, several pieces of various Calibers will be absolutely essential. Besides arming the Ships and Vessels we shall be obliged to build to gain the navigation of the Lakes, our land operations will require a great number.

A Detachment of Continental troops will conduct those of the Convention, from the North river to the Delaware. The German Battalion is to compose part of the escort, and after the Convention troops cross to Pensylvania, I have directed it, in consequence of the intelligence transmitted of late by Congress respecting the Frontiers, to proceed to Easton with all its baggage, where it is to wait till Genl Hand arrives at the Minisincks, and whence it may be ready to act as circumstances may require.4 At the same time if these frequent detachments from the Army could be avoided, it were much to be wished. The troops will be by these means in a very dispersed state, and besides loosing perhaps some

advantages which might present themselves, if they were more collected, their discipline will be greatly injured, and it will be extremely difficult from a variety of causes to draw

4. On November 24 Washington wrote Baron de Kalb that the German battalion should “take their Baggage with them, because I am not yet certain but they may be ordered upon a detached duty. They are to send their Baggage to Easton, and after they have escorted the Convention Troops to Sherrards Ferry upon Delaware they are to repair to Easton and there wait further orders.” This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

them together again, and if it should be practicable, it is highly probable we shall find their number much impaired by desertion and otherwise. I have the Honor etc.5

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, November 26, 1778.

Sir: Mr. John Dodge will have the honor of delivering this Letter to your Excellency. His history is, that he is a native of Connecticut, and about eight years ago, as he informs me, settled in the Country between Detroit and Pitsburg as an Indian trader. That he carried on commerce till January 1776, when, for his attachment to our cause and the measures he had taken to promote it, he became obnoxious to the Enemy, was seized by order of the Governor of Detroit, was thrown into prison and there continued till the beginning of May last, when he was sent to Quebec. That on the 9th of October he escaped from thence and got into our settlements thro' the aid of a french Cognawaga, who came with him here on friday last.

I find Mr. Dodge an intelligent young man,

5. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

intimately acquainted with all the tract of Country between Pitsburg and Detroit and with that lying on Lake Erie; also with most of the savage Tribes in those parts, and with their

languages. He is likewise well acquainted with the communication from Fort Stanwix to Oswego and Niagara.

I believe Mr. Dodge's history to be true, and from a variety of circumstances, I am persuaded of his firm attachment to us; and I would take the liberty to suggest to Congress, that I think he may be of very important service to us in any enterprise we may undertake in the western Quarter, or against the force on Lake Erie or Lake Ontario. This consideration, with that of his losses and sufferings, which I am inclined to believe have been considerable, seems to make him worthy of notice and attention. His information is good and clear in several points, which I know myself, and in many others, from the manner in which he delivered it, far superior and much more satisfactory than what I have been able to derive from any other person.

As I have observed before, Mr. Dodge appears to me a valuable intelligencer, and if Congress are pleased to honor him with an opportunity, he will give them an account of the state of the Posts at Detroit and Niagara when he left them, and of that at Mishilimackinac; of the Enemys naval force on Lakes Erie and Ontario; and of such other matters in Canada, as he was able to inform himself of, either by his own observation,

or the relation of others.

General Gates supplied Mr. Dodge with some money to defray his expences from Boston to this place, and I have advanced him to day One hundred and fifty dollars more to carry him to Philadelphia. I have the honor etc.

P.S. Mr. Dodge means to call on Colo. Butler of the light Troops, with whom he says he is well acquainted. He also says he is extremely well acquainted with Colo. Wood of Virginia; but he is not in Camp; and he adds that he was in Pitsburg in 1775. when Doctor Walker Mr. Wilson and Lewis Morris Esqr. were there as Commissioners,33 and engaged at that time, to use his influence to keep the Savages quiet &c.34

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Fredericksburg, November 27, 1778.

Sir: I was yesterday honored with your favor of the 20th with its several inclosures. Congress will be pleased to accept my acknowledgements for the communication of the treaties between his Most Christian Majesty and the United States. The Resolve

33. Dr. Thomas Walker, James Wilson, and Lewis Morris were Commissioners of Indian Affairs for the Middle Department in 1775.

34. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade. The letter was read in Congress on December 2 and referred to the Board of War.

respecting the exchange of Prisoners has been transmitted to Sir Harry Clinton, and I have appointed Commissioners if he thinks proper to meet his at Amboy the 7th of next Month.

I have the pleasure to inform Congress that the whole Army` one Brigade and the light Corps excepted is now in motion to the places of the respective cantonments for Winter Quarters. I have thought it prudent to delay this event, a while, to give time for the Convention Troops to make some progress in crossing the North river, to prevent a possibility of accident. The third division passes this day and if no unexpected interruption happens, the whole will be over the 30th instant. When their passage is completed, the remaining Troops kept in the field will immediately retire to quarters.

The disposition of Winter quarters is as follows: Nine Brigades will be stationed on the West side of Hudson's River, exclusive of the Garrison of West point, one of which, the North Carolina Brigade will be near Smiths Clove for the security of that pass, and as a reinforcement to West Point, in case of necessity; another, the Jersey Brigade will be at Elizabeth Town to cover the lower part of Jersey, and the other seven, consisting of the Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and Pennsylvania Troops will be at middle Brook. Six

Brigades will be left on the East side of the River, and at West Point, three of which, of the Massachusetts Troops, will be stationed for the immediate defence of the Highlands, one at West Point in addition to the Garrison already there, and the other two at Fishkill

and the Continental Village, the remaining three Brigades, composed of the New Hampshire and Connecticut Troops and Hazens Regiment, will be Posted in the vicinity of Danbury, for the protection of the Country lying along the Sound, to cover our Magazines lying on Connecticut River and to aid the Highlands, on any serious movement of the Enemy that way. The Park of Artillery will be at Pluckemin. The Cavalry will be disposed of thus, Blands Regiment at Winchester in Virginia; Baylors at Frederick or Hagar's Town in Maryland. Moylans at Lancaster in Pennsylvania and Sheldons at Derham in Connecticut. Lee's Corps will be with that part of the Army which is in the Jerserys, acting on the advanced posts.

This comprehends the general distribution of the Army, except Clinton's Brigade of New York Troops Pulaski's Corps and some detached regiments and Corps, stationed at Albany and at different parts of the frontier, of which Congress have been already particularly advised. Genl. Putnam will command at Danbury, Genl. McDougal at the Highlands, and my own quarters will be in the Jerseys, in the neighbourhood of Middle Brook.

This disposition appeared to me best calculated to conciliate, as far as possible, these several objects: the protection of the country, the security of the important posts in the Highlands, the safety, discipline and easy subsistence of the army. To have kept the Troops in a collected state would have increased infinitely the expence and difficulty of subsisting them, both with respect to

forage and provisions. To have divided them into smaller cantonments, would have made it far less practicable to maintain order and discipline among them, and would have put them less in a condition to controul and prevent offensive operations on the side of the

Enemy, or to assemble to take advantage of any favourable opening, which their future situation may offer, should they be obliged to weaken themselves by further detachments, so far as to invite an enterprise against them.

By the estimate of the Quarter Master and Commissary General it appeared indispensible to have the principal part of the Army on the other side of the North River. It was thought impracticable to furnish the necessary supplies of flour for the whole on this side the river, from the immense difficulty and expence of transportation in the Winter season, and from the exhausted state of the Country, with respect to forage. As this subject has been already fully before Congress, I shall not trouble them with a repetition of the detail.

In order as much as possible to reduce the demand of forage and facilitate the supplies, I have given directions when the several divisions arrive at their cantonments, to send away to convenient places at a distance from them, all the horses not absolutely requisite to carry on the ordinary business of the army.

It is unnecessary to add, that the Troops must again have recourse to the expedient of hutting, as they did last Year,

but as they are now well clad, and we have had more leisure to make some little preparations, for Winter quarters, I hope they will be in a more comfortable situation than they were in the preceeding Winter. With the highest respect, etc.55

To THE BOARD OF WAR

[Head Quarters, November 27, 1778.]

Sir: I have received your favor of the 20th Inst. Colo. Clark's56 procuring of Cloathing for the N. Carolina troops he commands, on Continental account was a measure taken long before it was known, that we should have it in our power to supply the whole Army with that imported from france.

The whole army has been directed, by a general order of the 8th Inst, that all coats, Jackets and breeches, which have been received, either thro' the hands of the clothier or agents or thro' the states on Continental Acct. and which may have been delivered in the course of the fall, or that may remain undelivered, must be returned to the Clothier or agents of the department in case new ones are drawn.57

55. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade.

56. Col. Thomas Clark, of the First North Carolina Regiment. He was wounded at Stono Ferry, S.C., in June, 1779; taken prisoner at Charleston, S.C., in May, 1780; retired in January, 1783.

57. “I have yours of the 18th. inclosing a Return of Continental Cloathing remaining in Your Hands. I desire the whole may be sent as expeditiously as possible to this place [Fishkill] and delivered to Mr Measam or to his Deputy in his Absence. When you make the Return lately called for by the Board of War of the Quantity of Goods purchased by you, and have disposed of; you are to specify particularly what was delivered to Officers, at what price, and by whose order. You are not to suffer the Strouds to be cut up into Blankets as they will probably be wanted for other purposes.”— *Washington to Maj. John Bigelow* (assistant clothier at Hartford), Nov. 19, 1778. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

Whatever therefore Colonel Clark has procured, will be necessarily stored with the Clothier General, as he is completely provided in french clothing.

The old cloathing of the army is not of great consideration however the most pointed attention of the officers is recommended to prevent its misapplication to have their several articles of dress frequently examined and to make the old as useful as possible in saving of the new. I am, etc.58

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Elizabeth Town, December 4, 1778.

Sir: Between Fredericksburg and this place, where I arrived yesterday afternoon, I had the Honor to receive Your Excellency's several favors of the 26th. 27th. and 28th. in due order, with their several Inclosures, which shall have my attention. My being on the road from the time of their coming to hand till yesterday, prevented me from acknowledging them before.

As many inconveniences would attend the removing of the Sick Officers and Men of the Convention troops by Land, and the Officers having families, I have written to General Gates to permit them to proceed to the falls of James River by Water, on the

58. The draft is in the writing of James McHenry.

Officers giving their paroles that they and the Men will perform the voyage. I have also acquainted him of the meeting in contemplation for an exchange of Prisoners, that the Officers may not leave Boston till the result is known.

With respect to Major de Passem of the Regiment of Hesse Hanau,80 I hope he may be released by an exchange, after which it will remain with him to obtain liberty from Sir Henry Clinton to return to Europe; but if the exchange in agitation should not take place, I should be happy if Congress themselves would decide whether he is to be allowed his request. If on my permission he should go to Europe, without application to and the consent of the British Commander, which seems to be his intention, the Enemy might not think themselves bound upon a future occasion to account for him. I have the Honor etc.81

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Elizabeth Town, December 4, 1778.

Sir: I had the honor of receiving yours of the 24th. ulto. on the Road between Fredericksburg and this place. As soon as the Troops destined for the Middle Brook

Cantonment have arrived at that Ground I shall detach one Regiment to Philada. and another

80. Hesse Nassau(?)

81. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

to Trenton agreeable to the desire of the Board. I shall set out for Middle Brook in the Morning, at which place I expect to meet two of the Virginia Brigades; the other and a considerable part of the Pennsylvanians and the Marylanders are employed in escorting the Convention Troops from the North River to Delaware and securing the communication between them and the disaffected parts of the States of New York and New Jersey. I am etc.82

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Paramus, December 7, 1778.

Six: I had the honor of receiving yours of the 2d at this place. I have forwarded the Brevet to Capt. Seminot,12 and shall take such Measures in regard to Colo. Fleury's letter, as shall seem proper, upon my arrival at Middle Brook, for which I set out again to morrow.

Upon leaving Elizabeth-town I directed Colo. Harrison to inform you of the intelligence I had received, and which I thought demanded my personal attention, as the enemy appeared to be going up the River in considerable force. Having put the Troops destined for the Middle Brook Cantonment upon their march back towards the North River, I was proceeding that way myself when an Express met me a few Miles beyond this, informing me

82. The draft is the writing of Tench Tilghman and addressed to Richard Peters as secretary of the Board of War.

12. Lieut. John Simonet de Valcour, of the Second Continental Dragoons. He had been given the brevet rank of captain by a resolve of Congress of Dec. 1, 1778, and permitted to retire.

that the enemys shipping which had been as high as Kings ferry had fallen down again. They landed a party at the Ferry and set fire to a few small Buildings near the Water, but upon a party of ours advancing they immediately debarked13 without attempting any thing further. The Boats and Stores of every kind had been previously secured. I cannot account for this Manoeuvre but by supposing that they have been misinformed as to the quantity of Stores at the Ferry, or that they expected to find the posts in a defenceless situation. Or it may perhaps have been to favor a Forage below.

Finding that the Troops destined for the defence of the Highlands had arrived at their respective posts [agreeable to my orders and expectations,] I have again put those intended for Middle Brook into motion, and I hope they will arrive there while the Roads and Weather are both fine.

Accounts from New York, thro' a good Channel, inform me, that thirty thousand tons of shipping have been suddenly taken up for Government service and that a general Embargo is laid. The occasion has not yet transpired, at least it has not yet reached me. I have the honor &c.14

13. Inadvertently written instead of “embarked.”

14. In the writing of Tench Tilghman. The words in brackets in the draft are in the writing of Washington.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, December 13, 1778.

Sir: In a letter which I had the honor of receiving from Congress dated the 2d instant was inclosed the Copy of one from Lt Colo. Fleury, upon the subject of which the president desired me to express, “my Sentiments, as also of the Merits of Mr. Fleurey during his services in the Army.”

I do not conceive that Congress should request a renewal of Colo. Fleury's Furlough from the French Minister plenipotentiary. An application of that kind ought in my opinion to be made by himself, not only because it is customary, but because sollicitations of a similar nature would in all probability be made by many not having Mr. Fleury's claim to the favr. of the public, and to whom it would be difficult to give a refusal after a precedent had been established. I would not be understood to include the case of Genl. Duportail and the Gentlemen in the Engineering department, who are peculiarly circumstanced, and in whose behalf I have written particularly to Congress.

As to Mr. Fleury's merits as an Officer I can only repeat which I have upon several occasions mentioned to Congress before, that he is brave, active and intelligent, and that should he obtain leave to remain in America I shall take an opportunity (agreeable to my promise to him) of employing him in a manner suitable to his Rank, and in such a way as will not clash with the Officers of the line. I have the Honor &c.25

***To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS**

Head Quarters, Middle brook December 13, 1778.

Sir: It has not been in my power to return an answer to

25. In the writing of Tench Tilghman. The letter was read in Congress on December 17 and referred to Henry Laurens, Meriwether Smith, Gouverneur Morris, Samuel Adams, and Thomas Burke.

“In my opinion, the application to the French Minister plenipotentiary for a renewal of your Furlough would be made with more propriety by yourself than by Congress…the French Officers to whom you allude…are in a very peculiar situation. They were particularly requested from the Court of France and their services granted for a limited time; that time being nearly expired, the States must either sollicit their leave of Absence to be prolonged or they will be under the necessity of returning home. Upon this principle I desired Congress to express their wishes to the Minister plenipotentiary that Genl. du Portail and the Gentlemen of his department might, if agreeable to themselves, be allowed to remain in America.”— *Washington to Fleury*, Dec. 13, 1779. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

On this same day (December 13) Washington wrote to Col. François Malmedy that he had not the information needed to enable him “to make out the Certificate of your services, I must desire you to send me an account of the different Commissions which you have borne in the American Army with their several dates.” On February 9, 1779, according to a memorandum in Varlck's writing, Washington gave the requested certificate to Malmedy “specefying the Dates of his Commissions. Adding that as far as his Conduct had fallen under the Generals Observation it had been that of a brave intelligent Officer.”

Also, on this same day (December 13), he wrote a brief note to Rev. William Rogers, of Philadelphia, referring his application to Congress for an appointment as chaplain to the garrison at Philadelphia. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

your favor of the 6th. Instt. till now. The letter met me on the road, seperated from my papers, and I did not reach this place till late on the 11th; since which I have been much employed, in attending to the disposition for hurting the Army; but in the mean time the objects of the dispatch have engaged my utmost consideration.26

The earnest desire I have to pay the strictest compliance in every instance with the views and instructions of Congress, cannot but make me feel the greatest uneasiness when I

find myself in circumstances of hesitation or doubt with respect to their directions. But the perfect confidence I have in the justice and candor of that honble. body, emboldens me to communicate without reserve the difficulties which occur in the execution of their present order; and the indulgence I have experienced on every former occasion, induces me to imagine that the liberty I now take will not meet with disapprobation.

I have attentively taken up the report of the Committee of the 5th. (approv'd by Congress)27 on the subject of my letter of the 11th. Ulto. on the proposed expedition into Canada. I have considered it in several lights, and sincerely regret that I should feel myself under any embarrassment in carrying it into execution. Still I remain of opinion from a general review of things, and the state of our resources, that no extensive system of cooperation with the French, for the complete emancipation of Canada, can be positively decided on, for the ensuing

26. “I have made the report of the Committee on Canada Affairs the subject of a particular letter which I have the honor of transmitting by this conveyance. … Lieut. Colonels Harrison and Hamilton went to Amboy on Monday last to meet the British Commissioners but the Weather had been so extremely bad that they had not met on Friday.”—*Washington to the President of Congress*, Dec. 13, 1778. This letter is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

27. This committee had been appointed October 30 to consider the letter of October 27 from Lafayette on the proposed Canadian expedition.

year. To propose a plan of perfect cooperation with a foreign power, without a moral certainty in our Supplies; and to have that plan actually ratified with the Court of Versailles, might be attended in case of failure in the conditions on our part with very fatal effects.

It I should seem unwilling to transmit the plan as prepared by Congress, with my observations, it is because I find myself under a necessity (in order to give our Minister sufficient ground to found an application on) to propose something more than a vague and

indecisive plan; which even in the event of a total evacuation of the States by the Enemy, may be rendered impracticable in the execution, by a variety of insurmountable obstacles, or, if I retain my present sentiments, and act consistently, I must point out the difficulties as they appear to me, which must embarrass his negotiations, and may disappoint the views of Congress.

But proceeding on the idea of the enemy's leaving these States before the active part of the ensuing Campaign, I should fear to hazard a mistake as to the precise aim and extent of the views of Congress. The line of conduct that I am to observe in writing to our Minister at the Court of France, does not appear sufficiently diliniated. Were I to undertake it, I should be much affraid of erring through misconception. In this delemma I would esteem it a particular favor to be excused from writing at all, on the Subject, especially as it is the part of candor in me, to acknowledge, that I do not see my way clear enough to point out such a

plan for cooperation as I conceive to be consistent with the ideas of Congress, and that will be sufficiently explanatory with respect to time and circumstances to give efficacy to the measure. But if Congress still think it necessary for me to proceed in the business, I must request their more definitive and explicit instructions, and that they will permit me, previous to transmitting the intended dispatches, to submit them to their determination.

I could wish to lay before Congress more minutely the State of the Army, the condition of our Supplies, and the requisites necessary for carrying into execution an undertaking that may involve the most serious events. If Congress think this can be done more satisfactorily in a personal conference, I hope to have the Army in Such a Situation before I can receive their answer, as to afford me an oppertunity of giving my attendance.

I would only add, that I shall chearfully comply with the directions of Congress, relative to making every preparation in our power for an Expedition against Niagara; and for such further operations to the Northward as time and circumstances shall enable us to carry on.

Measures for this purpose have been taken in part for some time past, and I shall pursue them vigorously. The subject has long engaged my contemplation, and I am thoroughly convinced of the expediency and policy of doing every thing practicable, on our part, for giving security to our Frontiers by the reduction of those places which

facilitate annoying them, and even for accomplishing the annexation of Canada to the Union. I have the honor etc.

P.S. I have detained the letter to the Marquis till your further Instructions. The Waters have been so high as to prevent the Express setting out yesterday, with this dispatch, as was intended.28

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, December 13, 1778.

Sir: In consequence of your favr. of the 5th. I shall take the first opportunity that offers of ordering Israel Dodge29 to Fort Pitt, and shall direct him to call at Philada. on his way.

Mr. Hoogland30 Adjt. of Sheldon's Regt. of Dragoons is employed by the Colonel to provide the Regiment Cloathing for the ensuing Year. He goes to Pennsylvania, as the most likely place of procuring leather Breeches for which I must desire the Board to give him a Credit upon the Makers. As it will be more convenient to draw their Cloth Cloathing from the Eastern department, be pleased to give directions to Messrs. Otis and Andrews

28. The draft of this letter, in the *Washington Papers*, is in the writing of James McHenry, with many alterations and changes and substitutions in the writing of Washington. The letter was read in Congress on December 17 and referred to the committee to which Washington's letter of Dec. 13, 1778, respecting Colonel Fleury, was referred, *q. v*. This committee brought in its report December 18, which was adopted the same day as follows:

"Resolved, That General Washington be directed to attend Congress immediately after he shall have put the army in such order as to admit of his absence from it a few days."

29. "The Board of War have requested that Israel Dodge of Colo. Durkees Regiment may be sent to Philada. from whence he is to go to Fort Pitt to his Brother who is employed in Indian Affairs. Be pleased therefore to have him paid up and give him a pass to Philada."— *Washington to Maj. Gen. Israel Putnam*, Dec. 13, 1778. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

30. Lieut. Jeronimus Hoogland. He was adjutant of the Second Continental Dragoons, and had been promoted to captain on Nov. 20, 1778.

to furnish the necessary quantity agreeable to the Regimental Returns; which will be furnished by the Adjt. I am, etc.31

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Quarters, Middle Brook, December 16, 1778.

Sir: Since I had the Honor of addressing you on the 13th. the Gentlemen appointed to meet Commissioners from Sir Henry Clinton have returned to Camp. Your Excellency will find by a Copy of their Report No. 7, which with the other papers respecting the meeting, is inclosed55 that an Exchange of prisoners has not taken place.

As an exchange has not been effected, and Sir Henry Clinton has called for all our Officers on parole; I shall in consequence of the Resolution of the 19th Ulto. order the Commissary of Prisoners to require the immediate return of the Convention and any other Officers with the Enemy on parole. I do not mean however, to include General Burgoyne in the demand, unless Congress should direct it; as there appears to me, many political reasons for permitting him to remain in Britain in his present temper. But if Congress should differ from me in opinion on this point, I shall be happy to be informed, that measures may be

31. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman, addressed to Peter Scull, secretary to the Board of War.

The next day (December 14) Washington wrote to George Measam at Hartford: “For the present I think it will be best to Store the cloathing forwarded to your charge by Otis and Andrews, where you now are, at least till my further orders on the subject. It cannot be determined precisely what number of Shirts, hose, shoes and hats we shall want in this quarter; however you need not be apprehensive of our having too many of either. You will be pleased to send a proportion of each to this side of the North River, keeping a reserve for those troops on the other.” This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

55. Copy of this report, which was drawn up December 15 at camp, and copies of collateral papers are filed with Washington's letter in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

pursued for his recall. I have the honor, etc.56

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS67

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, December 18, 1778.

Sir: On Wednesday I had the Honor to receive your Excellency's Letter of the 12th. Instant, with the Inclosures. I very sincerely congratulate you, Sir, on the Honorable and important station you are chosen to fill. The opinion I entertain of your public character concurs with every personal consideration to make the choice pleasing to me. At the same time, that my warmest acknowledgements are due for the sentiments you express towards me, and the polite assurances you are pleased to give; I beg you to believe that I shall, by inclination, embrace every opportunity of giving proofs of that respect and esteem; which I have ever been happy to pay to your worthy predecessors in Office. I have the Honor etc.68

56. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The letter was read in Congress on December 22, and that body approved the proceedings of the commissioners the same day. It also ordered“That so much of General Washington's letter as relates to the said negotiations, together with the papers enclosed, be published”

67. John Jay, of New York.

On this same day (December 18) Washington acknowledged Secretary Charles Thomson's notification of the election of Jay as President of Congress. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

68. The copy is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, December 20, 1778.

Sir; I have the honor of yours of the 16th instant. I have directed that only a Captn. and 50 Men of Colo. Hogans may be left at Trenton, that you may have as great a number as possible in Philada. I wish it were in my power to comply fully with your request for Troops, but I have had so many demands upon me from quarters exposed to the Enemy, all of which I have been obliged in some measure to comply with, that I cannot possibly spare any more, without leaving this cantonment in so weak a state as to be liable to an insult during

the Winter.

From the dispersed situation of the Army a considerable time would elapse before the Adjutant General could collect the Returns which you call for. I am happy in having it in my power to furnish you with one immediately which I think will answer your purpose; it includes every man (a few Corps excepted who were at a distance) whose time of service

will expire by the last of May 1779. The remainder of the Army are engaged some to the latter end of the next Campaign, some for further limited times, and a few, comparitively speaking, during the War. The State of Virginia having offered very great Bounties to such of her old Soldiers and levies who will inlist during the War, perhaps five or six hundred of those men included in the return now sent you may be reingaged; but when we take into account the diminution of an army by natural means, we may still calculate upon a decrease, equal to the total amount of the Return, by the month of May next.

I have recd. a letter of the 11th. inst. from the Secy. of the Board inclosing a Resolve of Congress respecting the pay of the supernumerary Officers, which has been inserted in General Orders for the information of the concerned.

Govn. Reed has informed me of the reasons of the delays and difficulties in procuring the Militia of Pennsylvania to guard the Convention Troops. It will be very distressing upon those continental troops who have been under the necessity of going forward, as they will have their Huts to build after they return,

which will bring them to the midst of Winter.

In a letter to the Board of the 14th Sepr. last I advised the employing twenty six Men belonging to Colo. Henleys Regt. then in Easton Goal, upon some of the public Works, rather than let them join their Regt. as they had shewn an inclination to desert to the Enemy. Be pleased to inform me whether they were disposed of in any manner or whether they are still at Easton, as the commanding Officer of the Regt. has lately desired to know whether they are still to be considered as belonging to him or to be struck off the Rolls. I have the honor etc.96

96. The draft, in the writing of Tench Tilghman, is addressed to Richard Peters as secretary of the Board of War.

In an inconsequential note to Israel Putnam, on this same day (December 20), Washington directed that “If there are any public Magazines of provisions or Stores upon the sound I highly approve of your removing them inland and forbidding the Quarter Masters and Commissaries to collect any there (I mean to remain any length of time) in future.” This note is in the *Washington Papers*.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, December 31, 1778.

Sir: I had the honor of addressing Congress some time since on the subject of General Du Portail and the Gentlemen with him. He informs me that his affair has not yet been decided and is extremely anxious that it should be in some way or other.

He assigns many powerful reasons to show that it is very interesting to him, if he is not to continue in our service, to return to France as speedily as possible.

He also informs me, that he has reason to think, in the consideration of his affair, the retaining him in service and the adopting the plan proposed in his memoir are united, and the decision of the one suspended on that of the other; and has therefore requested me to represent to Congress that he should be happy they could be considered seperately; and if his services, abstractedly from the project proposed by him, are deemed necessary, it will be agreeable to him to remain in the Country.

I have already taken the liberty to offer my sentiments on the propriety of engaging those Gentlemen to continue in the service. It really appears to me that they will be essentially necessary to our future operations whether defensive or offensive; and it cannot therefore but give me pleasure, if it shall be consistent with the views of Congress to retain them and to give every encouragement which they may reasonably expect. I have the honor etc.42

42. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Philadelphia, January 1, 1779.

Sir: I take the liberty of transmitting to Congress the inclosed Letter with the papers which accompany it, which I received two or three days ago from His Excelly. Governor Clinton. Mr. McDowel's application seems to merit relief, whether the Barn &c. were destroyed by accident or thro' design. In either case the injury is the same and may equally call for reparation by the Public in the first instance. I did not conceive myself authorized to direct him to be paid the amount of his loss, nor did the Quarter Master Genl. think he had power to interfere in the matter, without a special direction. It may happen that accidents of a similar nature may arise to Others, in the course of the march of the Convention troops, and therefore if some General principle could be adopted to relieve where it may be necessary, it might save Congress the trouble of a variety of applications. Cases of the kind, it would seem, fall more properly within the compass of the Quarter Masters line than within that of any other. I have the Honor etc.52

52. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Philadelphia, January 9, 1779.

Sir: I have the honor. of yours of the 7th. instant. As there is not probably a sufficiency of Mittens for the whole Army, a partial distribution would occasion uneasiness among those who were not supplied. Instead therefore of a general delivery, I should think it better to have them lodged with the Cloathiers attending the Army to be delivered out occasionally to detachments going upon a duty that will expose them to the inclemency of the Weather.

Some little time before I left Fredericksburg I had a very minute inquiry made into the number of Soldiers employed as Officers servants, and I had the satisfaction of finding

by the Report of Colo. Ward, Commy. General of Musters, that the number was not more than common usage and the necessity of the Case required. In some particular instances where he found more soldiers returned as Waiters than was justifiable or reasonable, he mentioned the matter to the Officers employing them, and he informed me that at a subsequent Muster he found the injury redressed.

I cannot think that the measure, of allowing the Officer a sum equal to the pay and Rations of a Soldier, to hire a Waiter would answer, for this obvious reason, that, at this time, no

person can be procured to do the most common drudgery for the pay and Rations of a Soldier, so far from it, that the pay of a labourer now exceeds that of many Officers. The Board must be fully acquainted with the discontents which already prevail in the Army on acct. of the disproportion between their pay and every necessary Article of life, and to enter into a regulation, which would oblige the Officers to pay as much for a servant as he himself receives, and which would deprive him of a priviledge which I believe is allowed in all services, would I am confident be attended with the most disagreeable consequences. That Officers should be limited to a number of servants, in proportion to their Rank I think highly proper, and had I not found from Colo. Wards representation, as before mentioned, that the number so employed was not more than sufficient, I should have made some regulations on that head.

The Board will find by making a strict scrutiny into the Column of Men upon command,88 that the Bulk are employed as Waggoners, Watermen, Artisans and in short in every kind of Work necessary in and about an Army, for in fact the price of labour is so extravagant that the Quarter Master is obliged to draw Men from the line, for most of his purposes or his department must be at a stand.

I have regulated the number of Horses that the Officers of the Cavalry shall be allowed to keep, and have been very particular in the instructions given to the commanding Officers of those Corps gone in to Quarters, to see that the regulation is

88. In the monthly return of the entire Army for December, 1778(?)

observed. I will upon my return to Camp transmit the Board a Copy of the Regulation. I am, etc.89

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Philadelphia, January 12, 1779.

Sir: The day I left Middle Brook I recd. the two inclosed letters of the 8th Decemr. from Major General Phillips to which I returned an answer dated the 25th. which you have also inclosed. I imagined this would have put an end to any further applications of the same nature. But I yesterday reed. the inclosed letters from Lord Stirling and Mr. McHenry one of my Secretarys, by which you will perceive that General Phillips still persists in the desire of a negociation for the Exchange of the Convention Troops. I do not apprehend that the least good can possibly result from a conference between persons unauthorized to treat, more especially as the views of Congress and Sir Henry Clinton have been so clearly understood upon the late meeting of Commissioners at Amboy. As I would not wish to take any further Steps in this Business, without the directions of Congress, I must beg the favr. of your Excelly. to lay the inclosed before them, and obtain their Resolution upon the Contents. Capt. Bibby,1 the bearer of Genl. Phillips's dispatches,

89. The draft, in the writing of Tench Tilghman, is addressed to Richard Peters as secretary of the Board of War.

1. Capt. Thomas Bibbey, of the Twenty-fourth Foot, British Army.

is also charged with a letter to Congress upon a matter of personal concern, which letter I imagine he wishes to present himself, as he would not send it forward. He waits at Middle Brook for an answer, which, as I shall be under the necessity of postponing untill I have

the determination of Congress, I shall be glad to be favd. with as speedily as possible. I have the Honor &c.2

To THE BOARD OF TREASURY

Philadelphia, January 14, 1779.

Sir: Mr. Thomas Reed Deputy Pay Mastr. Genl. for the Troops in the Northern department has made application for 100,000 dollars for the use of that department. As the Sum remaining in the Chest at Middle brook will not be more than sufficient to discharge the pay now due the Army there, and that upon the other side of Hudsons River I am under the necessity of referring Mr. Reed to the Board of Treasury for the above Supply. I have the Honor etc.11

2. In the writing of Tench Tilghman. Indorsed by Charles Thomson: “Jany. 12, 1779 Read the same day. Referred to the comee. appointed to confer with genl. Washington.”

11. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Philadelphia, January 18, 1779.

Gentlemen: In consequence of your letters of the 9th. and 16th. Inst. upon the subject of paying the arrearages of Cloathing due to the Army for the year 1777, I have drawn up the inclosed rough plan, which contains the heads of what, in my opinion will be necessary to establish some general Regulations for a settlement with the line of the Army at large. That justice may be equally distributed to the public and the individual, and that there may be no charge of partiallity in settling and paying off the troops of one state in preference to another, I would recommend that no payments for arrearages be made before some

person or persons are regularly appointed for that purpose, their powers fully defined, and their general rule of conduct explicitly designated. I have the Honor etc.20

PLAN FOR PAYING ARREARAGES OF CLOTHING TO THE TROOPS.

That some proper person (in the Clothiers department if to be had) be appointed to settle and pay all accounts of this nature. He should be a man of business, method, and punctuality.

He must have all the Clothier General's books to know what issues have been made by him and his deputies

20. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

and check the regimental accounts. He must also be authorized to call upon all State Clothiers to know what issues have been made by them on Continental account.

The regimental pay Masters should collect and digest all the accounts of their respective regiments and settle them with the Clothier aforesaid. It should also be their business to pay the arrearages to the soldiers themselves to whom they are due, or to their representatives in case of death and they should be responsible to the Clothier for the money they receive producing the receipt of the soldiers, or their representatives for the due payment.

The Captains or officers commanding companies shall make out the accounts of their respective companies, specifying the names of the claimants and where they are, what they have received and what is still due. These accounts to be drawn into a general one by the Regimental pay Masters.

Perhaps the best way in the first instance may be to comprehend no others in these accounts than those who are still in service, leaving it nevertheless to be understood, that

if the representatives of the dead &c. apply with demands properly authenticated, the Clothier shall have power to pay them.

The Clothier should be authorized to call upon all officers who have received public cloathing to account for their due application.

The Resolves of Congress ordaining the bounties will designate the description of persons entitled to them and must govern

the Clothier.

This plan if approved will have most effect in the form of a resolve of Congress. Besides the Modes of furnishing Cloathing above referred to, Officers have, in a variety of instances been sent to purchase Cloathing for their respective Corps and large Sums of Money have been paid. Cloathing hath also been impressed and delivered to the Troops without going regularly thro' the hands of the Cloathier or any of his Deputies. These matters should be inquired into strictly, as they cannot appear upon the Books of the Cloathier.21

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Philadelphia, January 21, 1779.

Sir: Colonel Rawlins who as well as his officers in general distinguished himself at the affair of Fort Washington has remaining of his Regiment about fifty or sixty men and a few officers.

As the latter are at present an expence to the Continent without being employed, and the Colonel after having deserved well of his Country and suffered a grievous captivity, has some claim to attention, I beg leave to propose to Congress, that the officers be authorised to complete their present number of men being part of three companies, to the

full establishment by recruiting; there is an additional motive in favor of this, which is that the three full companies might be employed in the Western Expedition

21. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton and Tench Tilghman.

under General Mcintosh and by being composed of men enlisted for the War supply with advantage the place of so many Militia; the uncertainty of whose service is often a great impediment to the most important Enterprises.40 I have the honor, etc.41

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Philadelphia, January 27, 1779.

Sir: I am to request that Congress will be pleased to give directions to have the military chest supplied with a sufficient sum of money to enable me to carry into execution their resolve of the 23d instant for recruiting the army during the war. Every moment is so precious, that it is to be wished no time may be lost in improving this important measure to the greatest advantage.

In the papers from Mr. Beatty referr'd to the Committee of Conference, I find it is mentioned, that “by an agreement made between General Philips57 and myself a number of invalids belonging to the Convention army were to be sent into New York.” The agreement referred to was not between General Philips and myself but between him and General Gates. They were permitted to go in,

40. On January 23 Congress, by resolve, authorized the recruiting of three companies of this corps. Washington on January 30 sent a copy of this resolution to Colonel Rawlins, with the note, “I have only to add that the bounty now allowed to soldiers who enlist for the War, is two hundred Dollars, besides Clothing and Land as before.” This note is in the *Washington Papers*.

41. In the writing of John Laurens. The letter was read in Congress on January 23 and “Order taken thereon.”

57. Maj. Gen. William Phillips, of the British Army.

as I have since understood on very strong, if not positive assurances from Genl Philips, that they would be exchanged.

Inclosed is a letter containing an application to me from Capt Stoddard58 of the dragoons for permission to go to France for the benefit of his health. This it appears, by the certificates accompanying the letter, is recommended to him by his Physicians. As I do not think myself authorised to permit an officer to leave the states, I take the liberty to trouble Congress with a referrence of his case. I have the honor etc.59

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Philadelphia, January 29, 1779.

Sir: I do myself the honor to inclose you the Extract of a letter which I recd. a few days ago from His Excellency Governor Clinton,67 and which I am to request you to lay before Congress agreeable to his desire. I have only to add that the settlement and payment of such Accounts as are referred to in the letter, is highly beneficial to our public Credit, and satisfactory to those individuals, who have been obliged to part with their

58. Capt. Josiah Stoddard, of the Second Continental Dragoons. Washington wrote Stoddard, this same day (January 27), that his “request of a Furlough to go for a considerable time beyond Sea is the first of the Kind”; he had therefore referred it to Congress. On this same day Congress ordered that a furlough be granted to Captain Stoddard, who wished to go to France for his health. On January 29 Lieut. Col. John Laurens forwarded this order to the captain. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

59. The draft is m the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

67. This extract of Clinton's letter of Dec. 29, 1778, is filed with this Washington letter in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. The letter itself is in the *Washington Papers*. It asks for the payment for supplies of flour, cattle, and forage taken from the inhabitants on the west side of the Hudson after the capture of the forts by the British.

property at a time when the situation of Affairs has rendered it impossible to pass regular Vouchers. If Congress would be pleased to authorise the present Quarter Master and Commissary General to discharge such of those accounts as are certified by Govr. Clinton, it would be the most ready and effectual manner of doing justice to the public and individuals.68 I have the Honor etc.69

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Philadelphia, January 29, 1779.

Sir: My long and unexpected stay in this city being attended with many inconveniences to the common business of the army, and in other respects; I feel myself under a necessity of requesting the permission of Congress to return; and if consistent with their views, I should be glad to set out for the camp at Middle-Brook, on Monday next. There are several matters, which have been the subjects of conference between the Committee and myself that are yet undecided, and which, with other points that may occur occasionally, may be proper objects for an intercourse of letters, if it should be the pleasure of Congress to continue the Committee for this purpose; the expedience and propriety of which they will judge.

68. “The Opinion of Congress, respecting the continuation of the Committee of Conference, is, as yet, undetermined. To me it appears proper, as well as necessary, that until they become dissolved, by making a Report on the several Matters committed to them, they should consider an epistolary correspondence with your Excellency on those

Subjects to be as much within the Line of their Appointment as personal conferences."—*John Jay to Washington*, Jan. 31, 1779. Jay's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

69. In the writing of Tench Tilghman. The letter was read in Congress on January 30 and "Order taken thereon." (See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, Jan. 30, 1779)

I shall wait the orders of Congress, and have the honor etc.71

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Philadelphia, January 30, 1779.

Sir: In consequence of the authority vested in me by Congress of "directing and superintending the military operations in these States," I was led to make enquiry into the State of the Magazines to the Westward. From a late letter of Genl. McIntosh's to myself, and several to the Board

71. In the writing of Alexander Hamilton. The letter was read in Congress the same day, and on January 30 it was "Resolved, That the Commander in Chief have leave to return to the Army, agreeable to his request."

On January 29 Washington wrote a brief note to Congress, forwarding a copy of Du Portails letter of January 27, on the subject of fortifying Boston. This was referred to the Marine Committee. The original letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

of War, I find that he has been so much distressed for provision, that he has been obliged suddenly to disband all the Militia that were in service, and seems to be very apprehensive that he shall with difficulty subsist the two Continental Regiments and a few Independent Companies, thro' the Winter. I communicated this to the Commissary General of Purchases, and desired him to make an estimate of what Magazines of provisions he could establish at Fort Pitt during the Winter, or time enough in the Spring to commence

operations should they be necessary. In answer to this he informed me, that the supply of the Army in the Western department had never been under his direction, and that therefore he did not conceive himself authorized to take any Steps in the matter. I have thought it my duty to represent this to Congress as early as possible that proper enquiries may be made of those who have hitherto had the charge of procuring supplies, whether they have made the necessary arrangements for establishing proper Magazines at Fort Pitt in the Spring, and if they have not, or cannot engage to do it with certainty, it will be necessary without loss of time to authorize the Commissary General of purchases to extend his Commission so as to include the Western operations. He, from transacting his Business upon a very large scale, is more likely to be acquainted with the general Resources of the Country, and consequently more able to supply our wants, than those who have been confined to a particular district. If the Commissary General is to undertake the establishment of the Magazines, he should immediately be made

acquainted with it, that he may begin to put matters in a train for moving the provision from below as soon as the State of the Roads will admit, as I take it for granted that none can go farther than the foot of the Mountains during the Winter. I fear, notwithstanding our utmost exertions, it will be late before sufficient Magazines can be formed, especially of Flour, the Crops beyond the Allegahany having been generally lost last summer by the evacuation of the Country. The transportation of that Article therefore must be very distant. I hope Congress will view this matter in the same important light that I do, and that whatever their determination may be, it be as speedy as the case will admit. In addition to what I have said, I shall only remark that many good consequences result from having all the Branches of the same department under one head, and that irregularity and want of system generally prevail throughout those that are detached and uncontrouled by a superintending Power.

The Commissary General informs me that he has pressing Calls to the Eastward to regulate some matters in his department. This is a further reason why he should know

quickly if he is to undertake the formation of the Western Magazines, that he may, if it should be so, give the necessary orders before his departure. I have the Honor etc.72

72. In the writing of Tench Tilghman. The letter was read in Congress on February 1. “Acted on.” The *Journals of the Continental Congress* of that day state:

“Resolved, That the Commander-in-Chief give such directions as he may think proper for arranging the commissary's and quarter master's departments to the westward, any resolutions of Congress notwithstanding; and that for his information the secretary be directed to lay before him the several letters on that subject from Colonel G. Morgan to Congress; and that the Board of War communicate to him all necessary intelligence that may have come to them respecting the same subject.”

To THE BOARD OF TREASURY

Philadelphia, January 30, 1779.

Gentlemen: In answer to your question respecting the Sum to be furnished the Military Chest, for carrying into execution the Resolve of Congress of the 23d inst. I am to inform you that Five hundred thousand Dollars will in my opinion be a sufficient foundation to commence upon.

A farther Supply will be required in the ordinary course, as appears from the following State contained in a Letter from the Deputy Pay Master of the 21st inst. he says there are now in the Military Chest 380,000 Dolls. which after the Army is paid for October and the Money of the two Emissions exchanged pursuant to order of Congress, will not leave sufficient for the Month of November. He concludes with saying that five or six hundred thousand Dollars, will pay November and December, allowing for such exigencies as may arise; this I submit to the board and have the honor of being etc.73

73. The draft is in the writing of John Laurens.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, February 8, 1779.

Sir: I am honored with yours of the 2d and 5th instants with the Resolves of the 2d and 4th inclosed. I have dispatched orders to the Infantry of Count Pulaski's Legion to march immediately from Minisink to Lancaster, at which place they will expect a Route and further orders for proceeding. The Horse of the Legion not being in this Quarter will receive orders from the Count himself.

In obedience to the Resolve of the 4th directing Count Pulaski and Colo. Armand to cornpleat their Corps of Infantry to the full compliment, I have informed them of the terms on which Recruits for the War are to be raised: But it will rest with Congress to give them proper authority to recruit, as I do not conceive that any of the States will suffer them to inlist Men within their Bounds without a special licence for that purpose. I have informed them of this, and have desired them to make application to Congress on the subject.

I am informed by Colo. Laumoy7 that he is already ordered by Genl. Duportail to repair to South Carolina.

I shall take every possible measure to compleat the arrangement of the Army as expeditiously as possible and have the honor etc.8

7. Of the Continental Engineers. He was wounded at Stono Ferry, S.C., in June, 1779; taken prisoner at Charleston in May, 1780; exchanged in 1781; retired in October, 1783.

“Col. Laumoy … is instructed to proceed with all possible expedition to take your orders in South Carolina, and his Conduct while he has been attached to this army leaves me no room to doubt that he will give satisfaction.”— *Washington to Lincoln*, Feb. 8, 1779. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

8. In the writing of Tench Tilghman. This letter was read in Congress on February 10 and referred to the Board of War.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, February 17, 1779.

Sir: I have been duly honored with your favour of the 11th. with its inclosure. The general plan of the proposed regulation appears to me to be a very good one. There is however one alteration which I think would be an improvement. Instead of referring the settlement of accounts, with the officers who have given certificates, to the Auditors, they may be left in cases which respect their departments, to the Quarter Master and Commissary Generals, with the main army or their principal deputies in separate or detached commands. The reason of my preferring this mode is, that they from an intimate knowledge of the state of their own departments will best judge of the necessity of the conjunctures, which gave rise to those demands and the proper application of the articles on which they arise. The auditors can hardly be supposed proper judges of either. How far the same principle will apply in the Clothiers department, the Board will best determine.

Though I think it will be proper to leave it discretionary to those who are to pay the certificates to judge of what shall constitute their authenticity, so far as respects the inhabitants; yet it might serve to prevent imposition to appoint some rule for giving certificates to be enjoined upon the officers. This will make it easier to investigate their conduct

and more difficult to deceive the inhabitants. I would therefore propose an *additional* regulation to the following effect.

That certificates given by commissioned officers for articles taken for the use of the army, be signed with their names at full length and the rank they hold; and if under a general officer, that the regiment to which they belong be added.

That the particular articles taken be inserted in the body of the certificate, their supposed value, the time and place, in letters not in figures.

That the certificate be directed to the principal of the department or his nearest deputy; whose duty it is to provide the articles so taken.

That officers keep exact copies of the certificates they give, and transmit other copies to the nearest agents in the department giving him the necessary information respecting the business.

That the deputies shall transmit copies of all such certificates which they pay to their principals, that inquiry may be made, whether the giving the certificates was necessary for the public service and whether the things taken have been properly applied. The papers respecting the arrangement of the army are received, and measures are taking to complete it. I have the honor etc.16

16. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton and addressed to Richard Peters.

To RICHARD PETERS14

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, February 17, 1779.

Dear Sir: I must request the favr. of you to put the Box of Adjutant Generals papers which are at the War Office into the Hands of Mr. Mitchell with directions to forward them to Head Quarters by a careful hand. Be pleased to inform him of their consequence that he may give the stricter charge. I must also trouble you respecting my Box of private papers which are at York Town. If you will inform Lt. Colo. White where they are to be found, and will

give him an order upon the person in whose possession they are for the delivery, he will, agreeable to the instructions in the inclosed, send an Officer for them, who will take charge of and bring them over to me. I am etc.15

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, February 19, 1779.

Sir: I have been successively honored with your two favours of the 8th and 15th instant, with their several inclosures; to all which due attention shall be paid. The Court Martial in the

14. Member of the Board of War.

15. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

case of the officers conducting the public works at Springfield, shall be immediately directed.21

A letter of the 11th Ultimo from General McDougall22 contains the following paragraph,

If Congress will order me one thousand dollars in hard cash without delay, I will pledge myself to make such use of it, as will abundantly compensate for it to the Continent, divert them and the army.

I have since sent him fifty guineas, which were all I could spare out of my stock.

With the greatest respect and esteem, I have the honor etc.23

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, February 24, 1779.

Sir: I transmit you herewith two letters the applications of General Glover34 and Colo. Wigglesworth35 for the acceptance of their respective resignations. Colonel Wigglesworth is particularly desirous to obtain a speedy answer that he may have it in his power to make some arrangements before his proposed departure for France. Congress will also be pleased to attend to General Glovers request for his Commission as Brigadier.

The State of Maryland having remitted

21. A committee of the Massachusetts Legislature had charged the officers at Springfield laboratory with misdemeanors, and Congress, by a resolve of February 11 (not February 15, as stated in the President's letter of that date), referred the matter to Washington. (See Washington's letter to Maj. Gen. Israel Putnam, Feb. 22, 1779, *post*.)

22. McDougall's letter of January 11 is not now found in the *Washington Papers*. He managed a secret intelligence system which produced good results.

23. In the writing of Alexander Hamilton. The letter was read in Congress on February 22 and “Order taken thereon.”

34. Brig. Gen. John Glover had been appointed a brigadier general in February, 1777. He resigned in July, 1782.

35. Col. Edward Wigglesworth, of the Thirteenth Massachusetts Regiment. His resignation was accepted on Mar. 10, 1779.

to General Smallwood £4000 in Bills of the two emissions which Congress have called out of circulation, to repay a loan to the military Chest employed as a State Bounty to its troops, I would wish to know the will of Congress as to the propriety of receiving them in payment. I have the Honor etc.36

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, February 26, 1779.

Sir: I have received the honor of your two favours of the 22d and 23d, with the several papers accompanying them. The measures necessary in consequence shall be immediately taken. I am much obliged by the communication of the intelligence from Martinico.63

Yesterday morning a detachment of the enemy from Staten Island made an attempt to surprise the post at Elizabeth town.64 On receiving information of it, Genl. St. Clair with the Pennsylvania division and General Smallwood with the Maryland division were put in motion by different routes to form a junction at the Scotch plains, and proceed to reinforce General Maxwell and act as circumstances should require. Intelligence

36. In the writing of Tench Tilghman. The letter was read in Congress on February 27, which resolved that same day, “That the Board of Treasury be empowered to exchange a sum not exceeding 40,000 dollars of the money now in the hands of Brigadier General Smallwood, advanced by the State of Maryland to their commissioned officers.”

63. This extract is filed under date of Jan. 27, 1779, in the *Washington Papers*. It described the unhealthy condition of the British forces at St. Lucia, 12 to 15 soldiers dying each day. The British frigate, which carried the news of the capture of St. Lucia, was taken by the French frigate *La Boudeusse*.

64. Mr. Mathias Williamson forwarded the intelligence of the British having entered Elizabethtown.

“If their design should appear to be anything more serious than surprising that post and they should be in force sufficient to approach this army…you will retire gradually, harrassing and delaying them in their march, to give more time for our dispositions here. You will carefully preserve your communication with this post and give frequent advice

of their progress."— *Alexander Hamilton to Brig. Gen. William Maxwell*, Feb. 25, 1779. Hamilton's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

of the sudden retreat of the enemy occasioned their recall before they had advanced far. The inclosed copy of a letter from General Maxwell will furnish all the particulars I have received of this fruitless incursion.

Through hurry of business in Philadelphia and since my arrival here, the papers relating to the inquiry into the conduct of the late Quarter Master General have till now escaped a particular consideration. There is a difficulty in executing the direction of Congress for bringing the affair to a military decision which requires to be explained. It is a received opinion that Major General Mifflin has resigned his commission in the army. If this be true, as he is no longer an officer, I should not conceive that he can be amenable to a military tribunal. I request to be favoured with information on this head.65 With very great respect and esteem I have the honor etc.66

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, February 26, 1779

Gentlemen: I am honored with yours of the 19th, 22d and 23d instants with their several inclosures. General Duportails

65. Mifflin had resigned as Quartermaster General of the Continental Army on Nov. 7, 1777, and as a major general in the Army on Feb. 25, 1779.

66. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

plan for the formation of the Corps of Miners and Sappers shall be immediately revised and returned by himself with the amendments which may be, in my opinion, proper.
I will have the dispute of Rank between Majors Mentges.67 Murray68 and Nichols69

carefully examined and will transmit to the Board such determination as shall seem, upon a full investigation, conformable to justice and the Rules established by Congress for the regulation of Rank throughout the Army.

I will write to Major Burchardt70 commanding the German Battalion and make him account for the total deficiency of Ammunition. I have the Honor etc.71

To THE COMMITTEE OF CONFERENCE

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, February 27, 1779.

Sir: Mr. Beatty, at my desire has made a representation of the state of the Marine prisoners, a copy of which is inclosed.80 They do not seem to be upon so regular a footing as might be wished. It appears that those in the hands of the enemy, captured in state or private as well as in Continental vessels, are subsisted at the expence of the United States; but exchanged for the benefit of the particular states, in whose service they were taken. It also

67. Maj. Francis Mentges, of the Seventh Pennsylvania Regiment. He was promoted to lieutenant colonel in the Fifth Pennsylvania Regiment, to rank from October, 1778, and retired in January, 1783.

68. Maj. John Murray, of the Second Pennsylvania Regiment. He was promoted to lieutenant colonel, to rank from December, 1778, and retired in January, 1781.

69. Maj. Francis Nichols, of the Ninth Pennsylvania Regiment. He resigned in May, 1779.

70. Maj. Daniel Burchardt, of the German regiment. He resigned in July, 1779.

71. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

80. This copy is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 152, vol. 7, fol. 123.

appears that inconveniences arise from the variety of channels through which the business of exchanging those prisoners is conducted; and, that the Commissary of Prisoners is greatly embarrassed in the execution of his office; and has actually incurred a debt of marine prisoners to the enemy, which he has no means of paying.

As it would be attended with many inconveniences to require the several states to supply each its own prisoners, it seems best that the supplies should go on in their present channel; but would it not be adviseable to direct some mode for having the States charged with their respective proportions of expence? Our agent residing with the enemy can easily ascertain the prisoners of each state and the quantities of provision and necessaries delivered to them respectively which will make it easy to keep the accounts.

Would it not also be conducive to order and the good of the service to prohibit all state and partial exchanges and have the whole business transacted through the medium of the Continental Commissary of Prisoners, who can keep accounts with the different state commissaries and enter into a mutual responsibility for the prisoners taken and exchanged? I suggest these hints for the consideration of the Committee; and I doubt not will promote some plan for introducing greater regularity, than now exists.

I have also received a representation from

the Qr. Mr. General on the subject of procuring waggoners. His observations are founded in experience; and if the bounty would have the effect of engaging men to serve in that capacity during the war, it would not be ill bestowed. But considering the high encouragements they already have; if these do not prove sufficient inducements; I should not be sanguine in the success of the bounty. It may however be tried, if Congress think proper to authorize it.

It is much to be wished that the several matters submitted to the Committee while I was in Philadelphia, and hitherto undecided could be brought to a conclusion. The arrangement

of the Clothier's department in particular, on some consistent plan is an object infinitely interesting to the service. We every moment experience fresh inconveniences from the disorder in that line: Unequal issues to the troops and continual loss to the public are the necessary consequences.

I apprehend it to be the sentiment of the Committee, that the Resolve of Congress of the 23d. of Janry., so far as relates to recruiting men out of the Army, should be suspended till some other points connected with it could be decided. I have on that principle declined taking measures for carrying it into execution. I shall be happy to receive some explicit instruction on this head. At the same time, I beg leave to add, that whatever salutory effects might have been expected from giving the bounty which has been directed, essentially depended on abolishing the state bounties. If this cannot take

place, it is to be feared our expectations will be in a great measure disappointed. They certainly will, in those places where the state bounties exceed the Continental and the term of service is for a fixed period; unless it be understood that the two hundred dollars continental bounty is to be given in addition to the state bounty; which would bring the expence to an enormous sum. It may not be amiss to remark, that the sending officers on the recruiting service will be attended with a certain, and no inconsiderable expence, whatever may be their success,

My ideas of the different modes of completing our batalions are already fully before the Committee.

With very great respect and esteem, I have the honor etc.81

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, February 27, 1779.

Gentlemen: The inclosed plan for the establishment of a corps of Engineers has been submitted to me by General Du Portail. I now return it to the Board accompanied with my remark on such parts of it as appeared to me to require them.84 These have been first communicated to Genl. Du Portail. With great respect and esteem I have the honor &c.85

81. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

84. These “Remarks” on Du Portail's plan were dictated to Alexander Hamilton and are as follows:

“Section 1st. Article 2d. For the unity of service, it is necessary that all orders to particular departments, should be communicated through the commander in Chief in the main army, or the commanding general in a separate one. It is necessary both for their information and to prevent a clashing of views and measures, which might otherwise happen. The reason applies with equal force to the Engineering department as to any other and it should not therefore be upon a different footing. It will be proper to insert a general clause that the orders of Congress shall be transmitted to the Commandant of the corps or to the principal Engineer in a separate department, through the Commander in Chief or the officer commanding in the department.

“Section 2d. Article 9th. This article is not necessary; as in general it is to be supposed the Engineers will find sufficient employment in performing the functions of their profession; and as it is declared, in the 1st. section, article the 1st. that “the Corps shall take rank in the Continental troops and enjoy the same rights, prerogatives and honors,” if it should be for the good of the service at any time to employ them in the manner here mentioned, it may be done without special provision for the purpose.

“10. When any Engineer, whether the Commandant of the corps or another, is sent for the purpose here specified to any place, he should also be obliged to communicate his plan

to the Commanding Officer of the department, who should transmit his observations to the Commander in Chief upon the same.

Concerning the Corps of Sappers and Miners

“Article 9. This article should be omitted. The Commanding General of the army, or commanding officer of the post must regulate this matter, otherwise it might be made to interfere with his general arrangements.

“10. This corps has already the same pay as the artillery. This is in consideration of extra services and if they were to have an additional allowance besides, it would make too great a difference between them and the other troops, which would serve to create jealousy.

“23. This article had best be omitted. In particular exigencies it might be for the good of the service to employ them in the manner here prohibitted; though it would not be proper to do it on common occasions.

“26. It is a point of no small difficulty to regulate the appointments of this corps; two things are principally to be attended to, not to make too great a disproportion between these and those of the other parts of the army; and at the same time to consult what is customary in other armies and adjust the allowance accordingly. The idea which most naturally arises from our service is to make their pay the same as that of the Artillery. But as they will be employed very much on horseback, it may be proper to add an allowance of horses. I would propose however, instead of keeping them in horses at the public expence, to allow either once for all or at stated periods, what may be deemed an equivalent in money to enable them to provide themselves. The quantum of expence to the public on this plan will be more certain and all complaints with respect to the quality of the horses to be furnished will be obviated. As they will have frequent journeys to make, there should be an allowance pr. day for the expence of travelling. There is a difficulty in determining what this shall be. By a late resolve of Congress, Officers of the Army who are sent to any distance from Camp on duties not incidental to their office are allowed 3 dollars a day for travelling

expences. In the present low state of our currency this is not sufficient. To raise it would be very inconvenient; and if it should remain as it is and a larger allowance should be made to the Engineers (at least to those in the inferior ranks) it would give room for very disagreeable comparisons.

“As there may be some Gentlemen in this line, in peculiar circumstances, to whom the appointments above proposed may be deemed inadequate; rather than incur the burthen of a permanent establishment upon such a footing as might be satisfactory to them and hazard the disgust of the other parts of the army, it will perhaps be preferable to make some private compensation to the individuals.”

85. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, February 28, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have received the letters you did me the honour to write the 22d and 23d inst. In consequence of the first, I have written to Col. Bland appointing him to the command at Charlotteville and inclosing the Resolve of Congress relative to the general superintendence of the Governor and Council of Virginia for his direction. As Col. Bland in my opinion answers the description of the Officer which you think that duty requires, and has already had some acquaintance with the Conventioners, I have every reason to hope that he will give satisfaction.

I have received from the Board's pay Master Specie equal in value to £375 Currency, for which I transmit duplicate Receipts as he desires. I have the honor etc.86

86. The draft is in the writing of John Laurens.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, March 3, 1779.

Sir: I have received the letter which Your Excellency did me the honor to write of the 26th. of last Month, together with the two resolves of Congress and the other inclosures referred to in it.

A plan of offensive operations for the effectual relief of the Western frontier has been some time since determined upon and preparations are making in consequence. I endeavour to observe as much secrecy as possible.

In the late proceedings of the Committee of arrangement respecting the sixteen additional batalions, it has been determined to incorporate Malcolm's and Spencer's regiments into one, and Webb's and Shelburnes22 into another. It is left undecided who shall be the Colonel and Lieutenant Colonel in the first, and who the Colonel in the last. By the resolve of Congress of the 4th frebruary, directing the Commander in Chief

22. Sherburne.

to complete the arrangement of the army, the decision of this matter devolves upon him. In giving this general direction, I am persuaded, the particular case of these officers did not occur to the attention of Congress; otherwise they would have been sensible of the delicacy of my undertaking to decide in an affair of this nature; especially where officers of such character and rank are concerned.

I shall be happy, if Congress think proper to take the matter into their consideration and will favour me with the result, as speedily as possible. The officers interested are very anxious to know their fate and the service will suffer from delay. I have the honor etc.

P.S. In the incorporation of Sherburne's and Webb's regiments, I observe a note, that “Col Sherburne is to command *at present*.” If he is not to be continued in command, he will hardly like to remain in it, 'till Col Webb can be exchanged, then to relinquish it to him.23

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, March 4, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have been honoured with yours of the 25th ulto. inclosing papers relative to the opposition of the Officers of the 1st Penna. Regt. to Capt. McKissacks42 introduction into

23. In the writing of Alexander Hamilton. This letter was read in Congress on March 8 and referred to the Board of War.

42. Capt. William McKissack. He was appointed a captain in the Eleventh Pennsylvania Regiment in January, 1777, to rank from September, 1776. Heitman states that he did not join the regiment.

that Corps, and of the 27th with papers respecting the dispute of Rank between Majors Murray,43 Mentges44 and Nichols.45 I will use my endeavours to have the first adjusted to the satisfaction of the parties, and will direct proper inquiry to be made into the latter.

Inclosed I return you the arrangement of the 1st and 2d North Carolina Battalions with such alterations as have occurred. Be pleased to have the Commissions made out and sent up to me as speedily as possible. As the arrangements are returned in to me with the proper amendments, I shall transmit them to the Board, and I can assure you nothing will contribute more to the satisfaction of the Officers than to have their Commissions granted; which will establish their Rank upon a sure foundation.

I likewise inclose you the Jersey and Connecticut arrangement compleated, the Commissions of which be also pleased to forward to me as quick as possible. The relative Rank of Lt. Colo. Johnston46 and Lt. Colo. Grosvenor47 of Connect. not being fully settled, be pleased to leave the dates of their Comms. blank. By the time the Comms. arrive the dispute will be adjusted and I will inform the Board of the dates.

I recd. yours of the 26 inclosing papers relating to the arrangement of the Army. I have the honor &c.48

43. Maj. John Murray, of the Second Pennsylvania Regiment. He had been promoted to lieutenant colonel in December, 1778, and retired in January, 1781.

44. Maj. Francis Mentges, of the Seventh Pennsylvania Regiment. He had been promoted to lieutenant colonel of the Fifth Pennsylvania Regiment in October, 1778, and retired in January, 1783.

45. Maj. Francis Nichols, of the Ninth Pennsylvania Regiment. He resigned in May, 1779.

46. Lieut. Col. Jonathan Johnson, of the Fifth Connecticut Regiment. He was transferred to the Second Connecticut Regiment in January, 1781, and served to June, 1783.

47. Lieut. Col. Thomas Grosvenor, of the Third Connecticut Regiment. He was transferred to the First Connecticut Regiment in January, 1781; promoted to lieutenant colonel commandant in May, 1782; retired in January, 1783.

48. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, March 6, 1779.

Sir: I herewith transmit your Excellency the last news papers which I have obtained from New York.

I also inclose you an extract of intelligence respecting a fleet of victuallers, with some troops, said to be preparing to sail for Georgia. The fidelity of the writer is hitherto unquestionable.71 The report of the 1500 Troops from Rhode Island, I am induced to suppose is without foundation. Some time ago, I was informed of the sailing of about 1,000

from this place; but these, I believe have all arrived at the garrison at New York. This is confirmed in some measure by Col. Webb, who speaks of two Regiments of Anspach, as having actually landed at New York before his departure from Long Island. Besides these two Regiments, the writer himself mentions two light Infantry companies “landed on Long Island from Rhode Island,” which appear to have been part of the same embarkation, of which I was advised from Providence.

The enemy have recently made an excursion from Kingsbridge as far as Horseneck. I have not received the account officially, but from what I can learn the expedition has been attended with as little success as that to Elizabeth Town. I have the honor &c.72

71. The extract is filed with this letter of Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

72. In the writing of James McHenry.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, March 8, 1779.

Sir: I herewith transmit your Excellency an extract of a letter from Major General Putnam, containing an account of the incursion of the enemy to Horse Neck, which I mentioned in my last. I also inclose you a return of the prisoners we have taken from the enemy in their retreat.79 With great respect, I have the honor etc.80

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middlebrook, March 10, 1779.

Sir: I had the honor of your Excellency's letter of the 2d Inst with its several inclosures.

I have only at present to request the attention of Congress to the inclosed letter from James Reed,89 signing himself Brigadier General. Congress will be pleased to inform me, if he holds the rank of Brigadier General, that some measures may be taken in his case. I have the honor, etc.90

79. In the writing of James McHenry.

80. Putnam's letter of March 2 is in the *Washington Papers*; an extract is filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. The return of prisoners taken shows that the British lost 35 men on this raid. Putnam retook much of their plunder.

89. Reed was from New Hampshire. He was commissioned brigadier general on Aug. 9, 1776, but became blind and retired in September of that year. The letter was read in Congress on March 13 and referred to the Board of War.

90. In the writing of James McHenry.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, March 10, 1779.

Sir: I had the honor of your letter of the 5th Inst. with its inclosures.

I have communicated the resolve of Congress respecting the pay of supernumerary officers to the Auditor of accounts for the government of his conduct.96

In case there are any quantity of shoes at the different manufactories under the direction of the board, I could wish them to be forwarded to camp as soon as possible [as also a number of Shirts and Linnen Overalls]. I am, etc.97

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, March 11, 1779.

Sir: I am to acknowledge the honor of your Excellencys favors of the 4th and 5th, and shall apply the Inclosures to their several intentions.

The Baron Steuben transmitted me his proposed plan of regulations for the Infantry of the American army.

96. See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, Mar. 4, 1779.

97. The draft is in the writing of James McHenry. It is addressed to Timothy Pickering i as president of the Board of War.

I have returned it to the Baron with such observations as occurred on different objects of the work, and my general approbation of the whole.

If the plan should appear agreeable to Congress, it will be necessary that they give it their public sanction, that the regulations may be carried into execution as soon as possible.

The inclosed extract of a letter from General Maxwell, is of the latest intelligence from New York. I would rather presume that Gambier,4 is to re-inforce Byron,5 than the expedition to New-London. However, as an enterprise of this nature was apprehended; it is some time since, that 400 men have been detached from General Putnam's command for the greater security of the vessels at New London.

Your Excellency's letter of the 2d instant covered printed resolves of february the 11th. 1779,6 one of which I return. As they are of the same date; correspond exactly with the old establishment, and contain none of the proposed alterations, I would beg to know, if there has not been some mistake in their transmission. I am, &c.7

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, March 11, 1779.

Sir: I have recd. yours of the 6th instant inclosing the

4. Rear Admiral James Gambler, commander in chief of the British fleet in North America.

5. ice Admiral John Byron, of the British Navy.

6. Jay's letter said “the 11th Ulto.”, but what he inclosed was the resolve of Feb. 11, 1778, on the commissary establishment.

7. The draft is in the writing of James McHenry.

Resolves of Congress relative to the Cloathing due the Army for the year 1777. I have published such parts of it as respect the duties of Officers within the line of the Army, in General Orders.8 I am, &c.9

***To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS**

Middle brook, March 15, 1779.

Sir: I have waited with anxious expectations, for some plan to be adopted by Congress which would have a general operation throughout the States for compleating their respective Battalions. No plan for this purpose has yet come

8. See General Orders, March 12, *post*.

9. The draft, in the writing of Tench Tilghman, is addressed to Peter Scull, secretary of the Board of War.

On March 11 Hamilton wrote, by Washington's direction, to Chevalier de La Neuville, that “The prospect of his having an opportunity to employ you next campaign in a manner

honorable to yourself and useful to the public is too precarious to justify your stay." Hamilton's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

to my knowledge, nor do I find that the several Governments are pursuing any measures to accomplish the end by particular arrangements of their own legislatures. I therefore hope Congress will excuse any appearance of importunity, in my troubling them again on the subject, as I earnestly wish to be enabled to realize some ideas on what may be expected towards the completion of our Battalions by the opening of the next campaign. They are already greatly reduced, and will be much more so by that time; owing to the expiration of the term of Service of the last years drafts.

[At the Posts in the highlands, Nixons, Pattersons and Learneds Brigades alone, will suffer (by the first of April) a diminution of 847 Men, which must be replaced, illy as they can, and reluctantly as they will be spared from other Posts.]

The Committee, with whom I had the honor to confer, were of opinion, that the regimts. now in Service should be continued and completed; this was confirmed by the resolve of Congress of the 23d of Jany. last, which also directed some additional encouragements for recruiting the Army during the War. Aware that this expedient, though a very useful one, could not be altogether relied on, especially if the interference of State bounties, were still permitted; I furnished the Committee with my ideas of the mode which afforded the most certain prospect of success. I shall not trouble Congress with a repetition of these, as I doubt not they have been fully reported by the Committee.

Among the Troops of some States, recruiting

in Camp on the new bounties has succeeded tolerably well; among others, where the expectations of State bounties have had more influence, very ill; Upon the whole, the success has been far short of our wishes and will probably be so of our necessities.36

The measure of inlisting in the Country, in my opinion depends so much on the abolishing of State bounties, that without it, I am doubtful whether it will be worth the experiment. State bounties, have been a source of immense expence and many misfortunes. The sooner the practice can be abolished, and system introduced in our manner of recruiting and keeping up our battalions, as well as in the administration of the several departments of the Army, the sooner will our Security be established and placed out of the reach of contingencies. Temporary expedients to serve the purposes of the moment, occasion more difficulties and expence than can easily be conceived.37

The superior information, which Congress may have, of the political State of affairs in Europe [and of combining circumstances] may induce them to believe that, there will soon

36. At this point in the draft the following is crossed out: “I have not yet made any attempt to recruit in the Country for reasons which will be communicated by the Committee, added to which I have received information from Colonel Rawlins who has been authorised by congress to recruit the three companies still remaining of his batalion, to their compliment, that he could make no progress in the business, on account of the inferiority of the Continental bounty to that of the State of Virginia.”

37. By resolve of Jan. 23, 1779, Congress granted a bounty, for enlistment for the war, not to exceed $200 to each recruit and reenlisted man. Also, by a resolve of Mar. 15, 1779, Congress permitted all officers, noncommissioned officers, and privates, who had enlisted in the cavalry, artillery, infantry, and artillery artificers since Sept. 16, 1776, to be credited to the quota of the State in which they enlisted.

be a termination of the War; and therefore, that the expence of vigorous measures to re-inforce the Army may be avoided. If this should be the case, I dare say the reasons will be well considered before a plan is adopted; which, whatever advantages of oeconomy it may promise, [in] an eventual disappointment, may be productive of ruinous consequences. For my own part, I confess I should be cautious of admitting the supposition that the War

will terminate without another desperate effort on the part of the enemy. The Speech of the Prince, and the debates of his Ministers have very little the aspect of peace; and if we reflect, that they are subsequent (as I apprehend they must have been) to the events, on which our hopes appear to be founded, they must seem no bad argumts. of a determination in the British Cabinet to continue the War. Tis true, whether this be the determination or not, tis a very natural policy that every exertion should be made by them to be in the best condition to oppose their enemies, and that there should be every appearance of vigor and preparation. But if the Ministry had serious thoughts of making peace, they would hardly insist so much as they do, on the particular point of prosecuting the American War. They would not like to raise and inflame the expectations of the People on this subject, while it was secretly their intention to disappoint them. In America, every thing has the complexion of a continuance of the War. The operations of the enemy in the Southern States do not resemble a transient incursion, but a serious conquest. At their posts in this quarter, every thing is in a state of tranquillity, and indicates a design, at least,

to hold possession. These considerations joined to the preceeding. The infinite pains that are taken to keep up the Spirits of the disaffected and to assure them of support and protection; and several other circumstances, trifling in themselves but powerful when combined, amount to no contemptible evidence that the contest is not so near an end, as we could wish. I am fully sensible of many weighty reasons on the opposite side; but I do not think them sufficiently conclusive to destroy the force of what has been suggested, or to justify the sanguine inferences many seem inclined to draw.

Should the Court of Britain be able to send any reinforcements to America the next campaign, and carry on offensive operations; and should we not take some effectual means to recruit our batalions. When we shall have detached the force necessary to act decisively against the Indians, and the remaining drafts shall have returned home; the force which remains for our defence will be very inconsiderable indeed. We must then on every exigency have recourse to the Militia, the consequence of which, besides weakness and defeat in the field, will be double or treble the necessary expence to the public. To

say nothing of the injury to agriculture which attends calling out the Militia on particular emergencies and at some critical Seasons, they are commonly twice as long coming to where they are wanted and returning home, as they are in the field; and must of course for every days real service receive two or three days pay, and consume

the same proportion of provisions.

When an important matter is suspended for deliberation in Congress, I should be sorry that my sollicitude to have it determined, should contribute to a premature decision. But when I have such striking proofs of public loss and private discontent from the present management of the clothing department. When accts., inadmissible if any system existed, frequently remind me of the absolute necessity of introducing one. When I hear as I often do, of large importations of cloathing which we never see, of quantities wasting and roting in different parts of the Country, the knowledge of which reaches me by chance. When I have reason to believe that the money which has been expended for cloathing the Army, if judiciously laid out [and the Cloaths regularly issued] would have effectually answered the purpose. And when I have never till now seen it otherwise than half naked. When I feel the perplexity and additional load of business thrown upon me by the irregularity in this department, and by applications from all parts of the Army for relief; I cannot forbear discovering my anxiety to have some plan decided for conducting the business hereafter, in a more provident and consistent manner. If the one proposed to the Committee does not coincide with the Sentiments of Congress, I should be happy some other could be substituted. [With the greatest respect I have the honr. etc.]38

38. The draft, in the writing of Alexander Hamilton, is in the *Washington Papers* and has numerous changes The words in brackets were added to the draft by Washington. The letter was read in Congress on March 18.

To HENRY LAURENS AND THOMAS BURKE58

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, March 18, 1779.

Gentlemen: I am honored with your letter of the 15th with its inclosure, and shall with pleasure give you my opinion on the points which you have been pleased to suggest.

With respect to the negotiation on the subject of an Exchange of Prisoners; I think the propositions held out on our part are substantially right, and on general principles of justice and policy ought to be adhered to. How far the particular situation of our prisoners in the hands of the enemy may make it an object of humanity to deviate, General Lincoln who is on the spot can best judge. If any arrangement can be made for their supply and accommodation, which will render their condition tolerable, I should think it wrong to depart from any thing that has been proposed.

I am inclined to think with the Committee, that in the present stage of the controversy, the exchange of citizens is impolitic and affords a temptation to the enemy to distress that part of the society more than they might otherwise do. The subjecting them to captivity is, I apprehend contrary to common practice, except with respect to such as are acting in particular civil offices immediately connected with Military duties, as the governors of garrison towns and the like.

58. Members of the Committee of Congress to Confer with the Commander in Chief. This was the committee appointed on Dec. 24, 1778: James Duane, Jesse Root, Meriwether Smith, Gouverneur Morris, and Henry Laurens. Thomas Burke appears in the *Journals of the Continental Congress* as a member of the committee in March, 1779, but there is, apparently, no record of his appointment.

The Committee however will recollect, that a proposition made to Genl. Howe early in 76, by the direction of Congress, admits the exchange of citizen for citizen. Whether that agreement is to be supposed in force, at this time, after the numerous disputes which have existed, and the change of British commanders, is a question which perhaps interest and

convenience will decide. At any rate, I should think it unwise to revive the principle by a new agreement, if it can be avoided; and still more to extend it, by admitting distinction of rank and station, which were not comprehended in the original cartel. But the final difference in the present negotiation does not appear to have rested on this point. It seems to have been given up in the latter conference, so far as to be referred to Commissioners appointed by his Britannic Majesty and the respective states; though perhaps silence on this head would have been preferable. The matter ultimately in dispute, arises on the 7th article; where our Commissioner proposes, that after the prisoners to the Southward; should have been exchanged as far as they would go, the Northern prisoners to complete the ballance, should be delivered at the most contiguous posts of the power receiving. The British commissioner would have them delivered as near as possible to the Head Quarters of the contracting parties; but offers as the ultimatum to receive the ballance which may be due them at Cape Fear in North Carolina, for an equal number to be delivered at the same place. The object on our side, is to procrastinate a reinforcement by delivering their prisoners in this quarter; on their side it is to accelerate it, by receiving them in a more

direct channel. The mode of delivery proposed is a fair general rule and accords with the present situation of our Southern affairs. An additional reason for adhering to it is, that by the same article the prisoners are to have their baggage conveyed to the place of exchange at the expence of the power conveying them. This will be to our disadvantage, as we shall have in general a much greater transportation to make than the enemy; and it is therefore our interest to deliver at their most contiguous posts.

Upon the whole, I should imagine, that instead of going into any formal terms of a Cartel, it might be as well to endeavour to justify the present exigency by temporary expedients; to exchange such prisoners as are in the southern district to the extent of their relative numbers, and to make effectual provision for supplying those who remain. I suppose there is a Commissary of prisoners there with sufficient powers; if not, it will be necessary to appoint one. I prefer this plan; because in obedience to the late resolve of Congress. I have proposed a meeting of Commissioners to settle a general Cartel; and though I am

apprehensive the enemy may frustate the negotiation, if it takes place, by insisting on terms too disadvantageous to be admitted; yet as it may succeed, it would perhaps be advisable to wait the event, before any partial Cartel is framed elsewhere. It will be best to have a general one operating every where on the same principles.

The Committee also wish to be informed “whether

any reinforcements of regular troops can be spared to the Southern department and if, in my opinion, any be necessary.” When I was in Philadelphia, I had the honor of delivering my ideas fully on the first part of this inquiry to The Committee of Conference. I still continue in the same sentiment. I am clear that no part of the army can be spared from this quarter. After we have made the detachment intended for the Indian expedition, and the drafts, whose time of service is expired and expiring have left us, the remaining force will be so inconsiderable as to afford real cause of uneasiness for the consequences. Our prospect of speedily replacing those who leave us is not over flattering; and to reduce our force still more by a detachment to the Southward would be in my judgment altogether unjustifiable. There is another weighty objection to the measure. A great part of the troops sent from here would be dissipated by sickness and desertion in so long a march; and the remainder would not arrive in less than three months from the time of marching, allowing for impediments of weather and other delays incident to the movement of a body of troops.

With respect to the necessity of a reinforcement of regular troops, I clearly give it as my opinion that it will be improper to rely upon the militia, and that every exertion ought to be made in the neighbouring states, to raise a force equal to the demand of a more firm and permanent composition. This can only be done, in time, by a draft, which should be made for as long a term of service, as the governments have energy sufficient

to effect. North and South Carolina should endeavour to complete their batalions on the establishment in this way; and to raise as many more men as they possibly can, to answer this particular emergency. The former has only three batalions with this army one of which

being composed of 9 Months men will soon come to a dissolution. If the war continues any time in the Southern country, unless there should be some sudden stroke of good fortune, Militia will certainly be incompetent to its defence.

With the greatest respect and esteem, I have the honor, etc, P.S. I return you herewith the papers inclosed in your letter.59

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middlebrook, March 20, 1779.

Sir: I am honored by yours of the 12th and 14th insts. with their inclosures. Colonel Wigglesworth's certificate is transmitted to him; and I have published such parts of the resolve of the 5th, for payment of certificates given to the inhabitants for supplies, as relate to the future conduct to be observed by the officers of the line and staff.

I take the liberty of laying before Congress a representation addressed to me by Col. Jackson and others in behalf

59. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

of the officers and soldiers of Henleys, Lee's and Jacksons regiments now incorporated into one, under the command of Col. Jackson. The difficulties under which they labor upon their present establishment are so fully pointed out, that it is needless for me to enlarge on this subject. Should Congress grant their request by allowing the State of Massachusetts to consider them as part of their quota, it would be attended with this inconvenience to the public; a battalion would be added without any real increase of men; but on the other hand, unless some mode can be adopted to place what remains of the 16 battalions on an equal footing, with the battalions belonging to the States, it is hardly to be supposed that the men will be contented, or that the officers will continue in the service. Whether there is any better mode than suffering the different States in which they were raised, to

consider them as part of their alloted quota, I leave with Congress to determine. I shall only add, that if those regiments are to be kept up, this method seems best calculated to give satisfaction, and will in the end be attended with no additional expence; if some state does not undertake to supply them at a rate in proportion to their pay, the public must.

The arrangement for want of which the memorialists complain, has since gone forward to them.

I return by this conveyance the proceedings of the court martial held at Fort Pitt, on Col. Steel71 D. Q. Mr. Genl. If I am not mistaken they were sent to me for my opinion rather than my approbation or disapprobation of the sentence. I shall

71. Col. Archibald Steele.

therefore only say, that from the face of the evidence the sentence ought in my opinion to be confirmed. I have the honor, &c.72

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, March 20, 1779.

Sir: I have the honor of yours of the 13th instant inclosing a Copy of a letter from Colo. Brodhead with an estimate of the Stores necessary for an expedition against Detroit. As there is no probability of an attempt upon that post at this time, I should not think it prudent to send the Artillery required and necessary Stores just now, but as we do not know what an unlooked for turn in the affairs of the enemy may enable us to undertake I think it will be good policy to have such a train prepared at Carlisle which may be moved forward should circumstances require it. The Quarter Master and Commy. General have given directions and are making the necessary preparations in their respective departments.

I imagine that the quantities of Shoes, Shirts, Overalls and hunting Shirts which you propose to send up, were calculated upon a supposition that a larger force would be employed

72. In the writing of James McHenry.

to the Westward than there really will. If you form your estimates of Cloathing upon the supply of 800 Men it will be sufficient. You will, I dare to say, agree with me, that our magazines at that distance should contain nothing superfluous.

In my several conferences with the Committee of Congress it was evident that they wished upon the present prospect of Affairs to decrease rather than increase the Cavalry on account of the immense expence and difficulty of their subsistence. I would not therefore encourage Colo. White74 to inlist any new Recruits. If the Regiment has any spare Horses they will be wanted to remount Baylor's Dragoons, who lost most of theirs when surprised last Fall.

I have just received a letter from Mr. Mease75 informing me that he has forwarded 2000 pair Overalls, 1000 shirts and 1000 pair Shoes. He says should more overalls be wanting he has 10,000 pair ready. As it will be sometime before the season will admit of that kind of cloathing being worn, I would not wish them to be sent forward yet, but as many shirts and shoes as can be procured. Be pleased to order what Blankets are in the Cloathier's Store, to be forwarded to Camp. Many of the Men are destitute and all those who go upon the Indian Expedition must be supplied with that Article. I have the honour, etc.76

74. Lieut. Col. Anthony Walton White, of the Fourth Continental Dragoons. He was made lieutenant colonel and commandant of the First Dragoons in December, 1779; colonel in February, 1780; taken prisoner at Lanneaus Ferry, S. C., in May, 1780; exchanged in October, 1780; retired in November, 1782.

75. James Mease, Clothier General of the Continental Army.

76. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, March 20, 1779.

Sir: I have your favs. of the 15th and 18th instants, with the latter, the Commissions for the Jersey Brigade and 1st and 2d North Carolina Regiments came safe. Capt Ogdens Commission in the 1st Jersey Regiment bears date 2d Febry. 1779.

There was a mistake in the rank of the Capt. Lieut and three oldest Lieutenants of the 1st Carolina Regt. It stands truely as follows.

Robert Varner Capt Lieut 8th March 1777. James King Lieutenant No 1. 3d April 1777. Robt. Nicholson do 2. 19 April 1777. J. G. Scull do 3. 26 April 1777.

I have altered the Commissions accordingly, and you will be pleased to make the same alterations in your list of the Army.

By this conveyance I transmit the Arrangement of the Virginia line compleated. Those Officers who are prisoners are distinguished from the others, and I do not think there is any occasion of transmitting their Commissions at present, as there may possibly be a change in their rank before they are liberated. Those of the Officers in service will be very acceptable as soon as possible. I am, &c.73

73. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman and is addressed to Peter Scull as secretary of the Board of War.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, March 21, 1779.

Sir: As I shall have occasion to remove Colo. Rawlins's Corps from Fort Frederick in Maryland, (where they are guarding the prisoners,) to Fort Pitt, I must request the Board to call upon Governor Johnston of Maryland to furnish a Militia Guard to relieve Colo. Rawlins. I wish no time may be lost in making the requisition, and that the Governor may be informed of the necessity of sending the Relief speedily, as I very much want to have that Corps advanced upon the frontier.

The inclosed directs Colo. Rawlins to march as soon as he is releived. I shall be obliged by your forwarding it to him. I have the Honor, etc.81

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, March 24, 1779.

Sir: I have been honoured, in due order, with Your Excellency's several Favors of the 15, 17 and 19 Inst. with the Papers to which they refer.

81. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman and is addressed to Col. Timothy Pickering, president of the Board of War.

I shall direct the earliest Returns to be made, that circumstances will admit, of the Officers, Soldiers &c, who are the Objects of the Act of the 15th, and will transmit them to the Board of War.14 Captain Greene's15 case shall also have my attention, and his release be effected among the first Officers, if an exchange is agreed on, and there shall be no objections on the part of the Enemy.

With respect to the Act of the 16th for inlisting Waggoners, I beg leave to observe that the Quarter Master General is decided in his opinion, that it is too limited to produce the salutary and beneficial consequences intended by it. A copy of his Letter upon the occasion, I take the liberty to inclose,16 as his reasonings are full and founded in his

own experience. It is an interesting point, and I am persuaded it will receive an early determination. I have the Honor etc.17

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, March 26, 1779.

Sir: When I had the Honor of addressing Your Excellency on the 11th Instant, I transmitted some intelligence I had just received from General Maxwell, respecting Admiral Gambier's

14. The resolve of Mar. 15, 1779, determined that each State should have quota credit for all men raised in the State, no matter to what corps they belonged, and the Commander in Chief was directed to call for the necessary returns which would give the information on this head.

15. Capt. Ebenezer Green, of Bedel's New Hampshire Rangers. He had been taken prisoner at the Cedars, Canada, held as a hostage, and was on parole until Feb. 9, 1782.

16. See Greene's letter to Washington, Mar. 24, 1779, in the *Washington Papers*.

17. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

preparing to sail from New York, and suggesting New London to be the Object of the expedition. How far events may justify this suggestion, I cannot determine; however, by advices which came to hand this Evening, from a Correspondent from whom I have my best intelligence, I am informed that 16 Transports with a flat bottom boat each, and a Sloop of War of 16 Guns and 5 or 6 strong privateers went up the Sound a few days ago, with a view of joining the Scorpion and Thames of 20 Guns. The advices also say, that the Admiral in a 64 with a sloop of War sailed from the Hook about the same time, with a pilot acquainted with Long Island and the Sound; that the supposed design of the expedition is to take the Frigates at New London, and that their determination now is to plunder and distress the Coast. There are accounts besides these, that Troops have been drawing

towards the East end of the Island, and some flat bottom boats building under the direction of Sir William Erskine. It is added that General Clinton is gone there himself. General Putnam is apprized of these movements, but it will be impossible for us to prevent their descents in many instances.

I transmit your Excellency three New York papers and have the Honor etc.28

28. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, March 26, 1779.

Sir: I must request the Board to give orders to have a considerable number of Cartridges made up with Buck Shott and Ball, indeed it might not be amiss to have all from this time made up in that manner.

I wish to be informed what number of Hunting Shirts are on hand and where they are lodged. There are none among the Cloathing in Camp, and but 500 in the Store at Fishkill. If there are any more, they must be either at Boston, Philada. or Springfield, from which places I have seen no late general Return. I am &c.29

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, March 28, 1779.

Sir: I do myself the Honor of transmitting to your Excellency, Two of Rivington's papers of the 24th and 25th, which I received last night. I fear from the accounts contained in the last of them, tho I doubt not but that they are highly coloured, that our people have suffered a good deal in the affair,

29. The draft, in the writing of Tench Tilghman, is addressed to Colonel Pickering.

mentioned to have happened in the Southern Quarter on the 4th Instant.36

Since my Letter of the 26th, I have obtained no further advices respecting Sir Henry Clinton and the Vessels gone up the sound. I have the Honor, etc.37

To THOMAS BURKE38

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, March 28, 1779.

Sir: I am favd. with yours of the 24th inst. If Congress should be of opinion that either Baylors or Blands Regiment of Dragoons in their present situation would render any essential to the Southward, I should have no objection to one of them being ordered thither. The time of the Service of most of the men of Blands expired last Winter, and I fear very few have been reinlisted. They may perhaps have about 80 Men fit for duty, but they are not yet clad for the next Campaign, nor could they possibly move without new Cloathing. Baylor has about 140 men, but they are very weak in Horses, owing to the misfortune they met with last fall: But if Congress are determined not to fill up the Regiments of Cavalry Baylor's dismounted Men might be furnished with some of Bland's spare Horses. I cannot undertake to

36. The battle of Briar Creek, Ga., which, however, was fought on March 3, was a total defeat of the American forces and opened a large area to undisputed British control.

37. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

38. Delegate to the Continental Congress from North Carolina.

say whether the Cloathing of this Regiment has yet reached them, if it has not, it will be necessary before they can move. Your Committee will be able to judge from the foregoing State whether either of those Regiments circumstances as they are, will be worth sending to the Southward, and will make application to Congress accordingly. Should the Volunteer

Horse be preferred, I would have you recommend it to the Governor of Virginia to get them off with as little delay as possible, and not suffer them to wait to be accoutered in the most regular and uniform manner.

I do not think myself at liberty to send either of the letters put under cover to me into New York before they receive the approbation of Congress. That from Mr. Eustace39 proposes an interview with Colo. Campbell which I shall not think myself at liberty to grant without the sanction of Congress, and that from Mr. Iredell40 invites a Gentleman to come into the State of North Carolina by land, who from the proceedings of the Assembly plainly appears to be a disaffected person. I for the above reasons, return you the Letters. I have the honor &c.41

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, March 29, 1779.

Sir: I do myself the honor to transmit the inclosed

39. John Skey Eutace(?).

40. James Iredell, attorney general of North Carolina, and, later, associate justice, United States Supreme Court.

41. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

extract of a letter which I have just received from General Maxwell.51 Whether the Report that the expedition from the East End of Long Island is laid aside, is true or false, I will not undertake to determine. I also inclose the latest New York paper. I have the honor, &c.52

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, March 29, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have had the Honor to receive your favors of the 25th and 26th with the Commissions mentioned for the Connecticut Officers.

The Board's ideas, respecting the difficulties that would attend the introducing Mr. Macpherson53 into the line are certainly right. It cannot be done, or at least without exciting great discontent and producing many resignations. Nor do I think that he could be employed under a Brevet with any satisfaction to himself, or without much uneasiness to the Officers, who conceive that their rights, even in this way, have been very much affected and injured; and if these appointments heretofore, have been viewed with jealousy and disgust, there is stronger reason to suppose that they will not be acquiesced under now, when

51. The extract from General Maxwell's letter of March 28 is filed with the letter of Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. The original is in the *Washington Papers*.

52. In the writing of Tench Tilghman and unsigned.

53. Lieut. William Macpherson, of Miles's Pennsylvania Rifle Regiment. He had been taken prisoner at Long Island in August, 1776, and exchanged in April, 1778; brevetted major in September, 1779; made major and aide to General Lincoln in June, 1781; served to close of the war.

we are reducing and daily dismissing a number of Officers, many of them of long service, and of good reputation. It seems to me, that the Muster Masters department, as suggested by the Board, is the only line in which Mr. Macpherson can be placed. This I should presume, will give no offence, as by the Resolutions for arranging the Army, and which were dictated by the disquietudes such matters occasioned, he will not have rank. I have the Honor, etc.54

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 2, 1779.

Sir: I have had the honor to receive your Excellency's two Favors of the 24th Ulto., with their Inclosures.

I am much obliged by Your Excellency's attention, in communicating the Act for supplying the Oneidas, and Other friendly Indians with provision. Matters in consequence, I flatter myself, will be so conducted, as not to disorder or injure our other arrangements in this Article.

The Act recommending a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer shall be duly attended to. With respect to the Cloathing department, the compleat

54. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

On March 29 James McHenry directed Auditor of Accounts James Johnston, by order of Washington, to issue a warrant to Col. Thomas Seymour “admitting only the allowance established by Congress in the case of forage.” This order is in the *Washington Papers*. (For Seymour's services see Washington's letter to Col. Gold Selleck Sillman, July 6, 1776; Washington's letters to Col. Thomas Seymour, July 8, 1776, and July 16, 1776, *ante*.)

arrangement of it is so very interesting and important, that, I persuade myself, the Board of War will not delay their report of the salaries for the Officers a moment longer than what the subject may require; and I should hope, that the respective states, after receiving the proceedings of Congress, will make the earliest appointment of the subcloathiers; and that their choice will be directed to persons well qualified to fill the Office.

I would take the liberty to mention that the state of the Regiments of Cavalry seems to merit attention. At this time there is nothing fixed respecting them. It appears material that it should be determined, whether they are to be recruited, as they are very deficient both in Men and Horses, or whether they are to remain as they are; or whether they are to be incorporated. Whatever regulation may be thought most eligible, the sooner it is adopted the better. The first mode will be attended with great expence, if practicable in the execution, and yet great advantages will be derived from a respectable Cavalry, particularly if the Enemy should act in the Southern States and they can be subsisted.

I am informed by a Letter from General Putnam that he had received accounts, that fourteen Empty transports in their passage from Rhode Island to Sag Harbour were driven on shore on Gardner's Island in the late storm. I transmit your Excellency a York paper of the 29th Ulto. which is the latest I have received from thence. I have the Honor, &c.

P.S. I shall thank Your Excellency for sending the inclosed to Baron Steuben.86

86. In the writing of James McHenry. The letter was read in Congress on April 5 and referred to the Board of War.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 2, 1779.

Sir: I have been honored with yours of the 27th March. Upon consulting General Knox it is our opinion that the contract with Mr. Hughes87 for the thirty *Eighteen* pounders should be renewed, as the Cannon are absolutely necessary, and it does not appear that they can be procured from any Works so soon as from his, nor I suppose upon cheaper terms. Should a Contract be made between the public and the owners of Salisbury Furnace, it will be a considerable time before any thing can be expected from thence, as the Works are in every respect intirely out of repair. Except the Board have any particular use for the twenty

twelve pounders, I think they may be dispensed with, as they are too heavy for the Field, and too light for Garrison Guns.

Be pleased to direct the 18 pounders to be sent down, as they are finished, that some of them may be got up to the Highland posts, where they are exceedingly wanted, as speedily as possible.

Should the arrangements of any of the Regiments of Artillery be made out, be pleased to transmit them, that I may endeavour to have them compleated. The Officers of Colo. Cranes and Colo. Lambs Battalions are particularly anxious for their Commissions, as by some regulations of the Eastern States,

87. Messrs. Daniel and Samuel Hughes, of Maryland.

such of them as belong to them are to draw supplies in proportion to the Rank they hold. I have the honor etc.88

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 4, 1779.

Gentn.: I have had the Honor to receive your favors of the 30th and 31st Ulto. and two of the 1st Inst. with the several papers to which they refer.

If Lieutenant Colo. Mebane90 was the Oldest Lieutenant Colonel in the North Carolina line when Colo. Hogan91 was promoted to the rank of a Brigadier, he unquestionably, according to the principles of rank recomd. should be appointed Lieutenant Colonel Commandant, and Lt. Colo. Davidson92 should remove to the Regiment in which the former served.

When the arrangements of the several York Regiments come in, the whole shall be transmitted to the Board, which will be better than to return that of Colo. Cortlandts Regiment alone. The arrangement of Colo. Bland's Regiment shall be considered.

It appears to me that Light Blunderbusses on account of the quantity of shot they will carry, will be preferable to Carbines, for Dragoons, as the Carbines only carry a single ball

88. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

90. Lieut. Col. Robert Mebane, of the First North Carolina Regiment. He was commissioned lieutenant colonel commandant of the Third North Carolina Regiment in June, 1779, and was taken prisoner at Charleston, S.C., in May, 1780.

91. Brig. Gen. James Hogun.

92. Lieut. Col. William Lee Davidson, of the Third North Carolina Regiment. He was transferred to the First North Carolina Regiment in June, 1779; served as brigadier general of North Carolina Militia; killed at Cowan's Ford, N. C., in February, 1781.

especially in case of close action.

With respect to the Regulations for the Engineering department, I have perused the Copy, which the Board have been pleased to favor me with, and do not find that they are liable to any objection on my part, unless it is in the 7th Article of those which concern the Sappers and Miners. This I think not sufficiently explicit to exclude claims for gratuities in common cases, which I am of opinion should not be allowed, as it would excite jealousy and uneasiness in the rest of the Army, when ever they are employed with them if they are not paid the same. We have not upon any occasion heretofore ever given our fatigue parties any extra allowances, except in the Article of Spirit. I would propose with all due deference to the Board, that the 7th Article should stand thus

“The Sappers and Miners shall in cases of extraordinary fatigue and danger have such gratuities over and above their pay, as the Commanding Engineer, with the concurrence of the Commanding General of the Army shall think they deserve.”

As to the travelling charges of the Engineers, if they could be comprehended under some general equitable regulation, I should suppose it better than if a particular one were made for the purpose; for discriminations always produce discontent. It is however necessary that their allowance upon such occasions, should be fixed, either by a special or under a general

Resolution. I cannot wish that the matter should remain with me, for the most obvious reasons. The Board having ordered a supply of Horses I shall say nothing on that head. It is to be hoped that the Engineers will not have occasion for more, or at least for but very few. Before I conclude on this subject, I would take the liberty to mention, as General Portail is in Philadelphia, it may be proper to lay the plan before him and obtain his approbation of it, before it is submitted to Congress. If this is not done, and he should disapprove of it, it is probable it will have to undergo some alteration, or at least it will occasion some trouble.

The German Batallion has been considered in the Army, as part of the Maryland Troops, since the 26th of Feby. 1778. It was then included in the Quota of that State, as you will see by the inclosed Resolution. I do not know what part of it was made up from Pensylvania, but I believe the Companies from thence had never been recruited and that they were much reduced. The Batallion at present is at Minisinck. The Assembly of Maryland too has just adopted some proceedings respecting it, and desired that their proportion of that and of the Rifle Battalion should be incorporated and Officered. I am, &c.93

93. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 4, 1779.

Sir: Inclosed you have the Arrangements of eight of the Pennsylvania and the two Rhode Island Regiments compleated, except as to the Field Officers of the former; and as some of those concerned in disputes of Rank are absent, I must request that the Commissions of the Captains and Subs may be made out and sent forward, without waiting for those of the Field Officers. The 4th, 8th, and 11th Pennsylvania Regiments being detached, I have not been able to procure their arrangements. The returns now transmitted differ widely from those sent up by the Board, but as they have undergone very minute scrutinies by the parties concerned, and most of those who had claims have had opportunities of preferring them, I imagine the lists as they now stand will give pretty general satisfaction. To shew that the present arrangement of Rhode Island, is agreeable, I forward Genl. Sullivan's and Colo. Greene's letters. I am, &c.94

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 4, 1779.

Gentlemen: “Capt. Schott waits upon you with a Return of Arms

94. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman, and is addressed to Peter Scull, secretary of the Board of War.

and Cloathing wanting for the several Corps therein mentioned which are ordered over to Wyoming. The Cloathing could have been furnished from hence, but it will be so much more convenient to send it from Philada. to Esterton upon the Susquehannah and from thence to Wyoming by Water, where it will meet the Troops, that I have directed Capt. Schott to proceed to Philada.”

I imagine the Arms and Accoutrements had better be ordered from the Magazine at Carlisle, as the distance from thence to Susquehannah is so much shorter than from Philada. or should there be a sufficiency in the hands of the Armourers at Lancaster it will be more convenient still. Capt. Schott will take the order and see that the Articles are safely conveyed to Susquenhannah. I am, &c.98

To THOMAS BURKE

Head Quarters, April 5, 1779.

Sir: I had not the Honor to receive Your Letter of the 22d Ulto. till this morning. By some means or other it had taken a circuitous route by the way of Peeks Kilns, and most probably thro' the inattention of the person to whom it was delivered in the first instance.

98. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

With respect to the subject of your Letter, after thanking you and your colleagues for your polite attention in referring the matter to me previous to your acting in it, lest it might contravene some general plan of mine, I beg leave to observe, that if the Three hundred dollars bounty pt. Man voted by the State are to be given, it had better be, as you suggest, in addition to the bounty allowed by Congress, and only to such men as will inlist during the War. To give it for a shorter term of inlistment, will be impolitic in the extreme in my opinion, as the consequences which must evidently flow from it will be exceedingly injurious and will greatly overballance any present relief that the measure can produce. For my part I am most clearly convinced of the impolicy of State bounties in all cases. A more pernicious system never was adopted, and a more pernicious one cannot be persevered in. It has occasioned a thousand evils and infinite discontents. Men who inlisted at early and at intermediate periods for the War for moderate bounties have become dissatisfied at seeing such enormous sums paid for short services, and there are numbers on this account, who were always esteemed Soldiers for the War, that are trying

by every possible artifice to prove that their engagements were only temporary. Tho' they should not succeed in this, it is certain there will be great desertions, murmurings, perhaps what will be worse. Upon the whole, I do not know, that an offer of the bounty, even to such as will engage for the War, will be

by any means advisable. I have the honor etc.3

To THE COMMITTEE OF CONFERENCE12

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 7, 1779.

Dear Sir: I have taken the liberty, thro' the Channel of the Committee appointed to confer with me, to lay before Congress the inclosed extract of a letter from General Knox,13 and the Return to which it refers. As the completion of the Corps of Artillery is a matter of great importance, I hope the earliest attention will be paid to that Business.

There are but two ways of keeping up the Regiments of Artillery. One by original inlistments expressly for that service, the other by drafts from the line of Infantry. The latter is attended with great inconveniences. It is a most discouraging thing to the Officers of Infantry, after they have exerted themselves to make their Battalions respectable in numbers, to have their Men drawn from them for the Artillery, in addition to the variety of other calls for Artificers, Waggoners &ca: and if they are obliged to give them up, instead of parting with the most healthy and robust, which the Artillery service requires, they contrive, as is very natural, to divest themselves of the very worst Men under their command.

3. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

12. The Committee of Conference consisted on this date of James Duane, Jesse Root, Meriwether Smith, Gouverneur Morris, and Henry Laurens.

13. This extract of Knox's letter of April 6 is filed with this letter from Washington in the Papers of the *Continental Congress*. The original is in the *Washington Papers*.

The Artillery is, moreover by these means strengthened at the Expence of the Infantry, which would not be the case, were measures taken in time to recruit both corps. There is so little time between the present, and that which we may expect to be called into the Field, that I am convinced I need make no apology for requesting the Committee to urge the Congress to a speedy determination upon the Business of which the foregoing is the subject. In a letter to Congress of the 24th March, I laid before them General Greenes remarks upon the Resolve for inlisting waggoners, in which he points out the insufficiency of the terms held forth, either to engage new or to reinlist the old Drivers. The times of many of the old are near expiring, and it will be too late to set about inlisting new except some effectual measure is speedily adopted. I shall therefore esteem it as a favor if the Committee will inquire what Steps have been or are likely to be taken in the matter. I have the honor, &c.14

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 8, 1779.

Gentlemen: The Board of General Officers to whom were

14. In the writing of Tench Tilghman and addressed to James Duane, as chairman of the committee.

referred the dispute of Rank between Majors Mentges, Murray and Nicholls having made the inclosed Report, I must request the Board to give them the information (thro' me) which they call for respecting the appointment of Major Nicholls to the rank of Lieut. Colonel.

In mine of the 26th March I desired to be informed of the number of Hunting shirts upon hand and where they are deposited. I shall be glad of an answer on that head, as it is time

to have them collected to the quarters where they will be wanted. Be pleased to inform me also whether you have heard from Governor Johnson on the subject of sending a guard of Militia to relieve Colo. Rawling's at Fort Frederick. I have the honor, &c.23

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 10, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have been duly honored with your favour of the 31st of March, which, through hurry of business has been hitherto unanswered. From the relation in several respects between the duties of the office of Adjutant General and those of the Inspectorship; I perceive advantages that would result from uniting them in a certain degree; but I am induced notwithstanding to recommend, that nothing final may be done 'till the Baron49

23. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

49. Baron von Steuben.

arrives in Camp. I will then speak to him upon the subject and after a conferrence between him and the Adjutant General, I will take the liberty to give the Board my opinion more explicitly, whether the two Offices ought to be united, and in what particular manner. With very great respect I have the honor etc.50

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 10, 1779.

Sir: I have recd. your favr. of the 7th, with the Commissions for the Virginia Line. There is an omission in the Commissions of those officers who do the duty of Ensigns but are entitled to the Rank of Lieutenants. They are called Ensigns only. I shall when they are

pointed out send back such for Amendment. In making out the Commissions for the other lines I shall be obliged to you for attending to the above matter. I am etc.51

50. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

51. The draft, in the writing of Tench Tilghman, is addressed to Peter Scull, secretary of the Board of War.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 12, 1779.

Sir: I have been honored with yours of the 4th and 7th instants.

Inclosed you have the proceedings of the Court Martial held, by order of Congress, upon the Officers of the Elaboratory and Deputy Qr. Mr. at Springfield, upon a representation from the Council of Massachusetts. I also inclose a letter which I received two days ago from Majr. Harnage62 in behalf of himself and Capt. Hawker63 both of the 62d Regt. British. Should not an exchange take place in which these Gentlemen may be included, it will be an act of humanity to indulge them, under their peculiarity of circumstances, with a liberty of joining the Corps to which they belong, by making use of a Water Conveyance as far as possible. But as I did not think it proper to comply with the request without the concurrence of Congress, I must beg the favr. of you to lay the Major's letter before them for their determination.64 I transmit you the York papers of the 7th and 8th and have the honor, etc.65

62. Maj. Henry Harnage.

63. Capt. Earle Hawker.

64. On this same day (April 12) Washington wrote to Gates, at Boston, that he had transmitted Major Harnage's request to Congress and “shall be happy to have it in my

power, without delay, to send him such an answer as he wishes." This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

65. In the writing of Tench Tilghman.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 13, 1779.

Gentlemen: I yesterday recd. the inclosed from Capt. Van Heer. As I do not know how he has been supplied heretofore with the Articles he now calls for, I cannot determine upon the propriety of the present application. I can only say, if it appears that they are necessary, he ought to be furnished with them. If the Quarter Master supplied him in the first instance with Horses he can I suppose remember, whether he was, as he asserts, obliged to take such as were not proper for the Dragoon service. If the purchase was left to himself and he bought up such as were not fit he ought to be answerable. At any rate, it is perhaps better that he should make a shift with those he already has, than to give the enormous price at present asked for but indifferent Horses. Should the Quarter Master have any on hand of a lighter kind than those Capt. Van Heer complains of and they can make an exchange, there can be no objection to a thing of that kind.75 I am etc.76

75. Washington wrote, this same day (April 13), to von Heer, inclosing this letter to the Board of War and asking the captain to deliver it. "If your health will not permit you to return to Camp so soon as you expected, you have agreeable to your request, my permission to remain ten or twelve days beyond the limitation of your furlough." This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

76. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 15, 1779.

Gentlemen: I am honored with your favours of the 7th and 9th.

It is infinitely to be lamented that the Clothier's department still remains on so undecided and precarious a footing. The Board's observations on the present expedient is evidently just. Our prospects for the future supply of cloathing from every thing that has come to my knowledge are truly deplorable.

I am happy in the measures pursuing

to provide cannon. This is a point which cannot be pushed with too much vigour. We want them much every where. The having a sufficiency for the posts on the North River is of the greatest importance. The imperfect state of defence in which they have hitherto been has been an inconceivable clogg and incumbrance to our general operations and must continue to be so if not effectually remedied. An estimate of the quantity of ordnance necessary for them, made by General Du Portail was some time since delivered to Congress. I have not a copy; but if the original cannot be obtained, General du Portail will furnish a duplicate at the requisition of the Board.

From the consideration suggested by the Board we had better at present content ourselves with carbines for the cavalry.

With respect to the proposition for a division of the German batalion; The Board will find my sentiments contained in the inclosed extract of a letter of the 8th to Governor Johnson. The inconveniences, as to an interference of rank, pointed out there relatively to the Maryland line, would in part apply to the Pensylvania. The dissolving of some corps and incorporating them with others cannot at this time be safely carried further than it has been. The officers begin to be a little sore upon the subject, and to think that they hold

their commissions on too cheap and uncertain a tenure. We must be cautious therefore how we extend the experiment

too far; our constitution wants vigor, and in many cases palliatives rather than disagreeable remedies are to be used.

The same objection stands against the reduction of the cavalry. But as it is a very doubtful question whether the next campaign will, on the side of the enemy, be productive of very vigorous offensive operations; it may perhaps be adviseable to let the corps remain as they are, without going to the excessive expence of an augmentation. They would be extremely useful, if we could have them; but the saving expence in our circumstances is a capital object.

I coincide in opinion with the Board as to the impropriety of a partial supply of shoes and boots to a particular set of officers. Anything which may heretofore have been done in this way has been without my concurrence.

But I find in several instances by different means, that particular corps have been furnished out of the public stock. This gives a plea to others to expect the same, and being denied, it becomes a source of discontent. The perplexities to which I am exposed for want of a system in the Clothiers department and more ample and determinate provision for the officers are endless. While I am scrupulous of administring to their necessities without proper authority and am waking for some general rule to be established; liberties are taken by others of a partial operation, that serve to embarrass me, and give an air of too *rigid exactness* to my conduct. In this dilemma, I feel myself too

delicately situated either to blame or imitate what is done, and can only lament that the remedy is delayed. I wish it were possible that something final and satisfactory could be adopted.

I have by a late regulation, divested the Brigadiers of the right of making contracts by exchanging hides for shoes and confined it wholly to the Commissary of hides. If some general arrangement for providing the officers cannot at once take place, I wish even a partial and temporary one could be made for supplying them with shoes and boots and putting the whole upon an equal footing. This I submit to the Board.

I think with the Board it will be best that the soldiers from the Maryland line employed in the factory at Newark, should return to their corps. This factory was instituted when we were in peculiar distress for want of the article of shoes. I am sorry however, that the present state of our numbers, or our prospects of future reinforcements, do not in my judgment, authorize a diminution of our force for establishing the factories proposed in Pensylvania and Connecticut. I should hope there is not an absolute necessity for it, and that the army may be supplied otherwise, especially by contracts in the way of barter, giving raw hides for shoes. The numerous demands upon the line for purposes that cannot be dispensed with make it altogether inexpedient to increase them by any other, that can possibly be avoided. I have the honor, etc.10

10. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 15, 1779.

Sir: Inclosed you have the Commission of Major Howell11 of the 2d. New Jersey Regt. who resigned the 7th instant. Be pleased to fill up the vacancy with the eldest Captain in the line and send forward the Commission. The Captain Lieutenat of the Regiment from which the Captain is taken to succeed Major Howell will be entitled to a Company, be pleased also to make out and send a Commission for him, one for the Officer succeeding to the Capt. Lieutenancy and one for the Ensign to be promoted to a Lieutenancy, in consequence of the above.

Lieut. Colo. Grosvenor's12 (of Connecticut) Commission is to be dated 13th March 1778 and Lieut. Colo. Johnsons13 the 15th April 1778.

The arrangement of the 2d Connecticut Regiment is not yet compleated. I am, &c

P.S. I return you the Commissions of six Ensigns of the 11th Virginia Regt. to be amended, they all having the Rank of 2d Lieuts. Instead of the word *such* after the words *to take rank as*, insert *Second Lieutenant* and the Comms. will be sufficient. I also inclose the Commn. of Ensign John Eppes Scott,14 resigned 13th Decemr. 1778.15

11. Maj. Richard Howell. Washington wrote him this same day (April 15): “When an officer determines on leaving the service, it is to be supposed that it is done on substantial motives; and that no others could possibly induce him to lay down his commission….” This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

12. Lieut. Col. Thomas Grosvenor, of the Third Connecticut Regiment. He was transferred to the First Connecticut Regiment in January, 1781; was made lieutenant colonel commandant in May, 1782; retired in January, 1783.

13. Lieut. Col. Jonathan Johnson, of the First Connecticut Regiment. (Heitman gives his lieutenant colonelcy rank as from May 25, 1778.) He was transferred to the Second Connecticut Regiment in January, 1781, and served to June, 1783.

14. Of the Eleventh Regiment.

15. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman and is addressed to Peter Scull, secretary to the Board of War.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 20, 1779.

Sir: I am honored with yours of the 12th Instant with the several Resolves of Congress referred to, inclosed, to which I shall pay due attention and obedience. I have appointed the 1st May for the Court Martial to sit for the trial of Major General Arnold, of which I have given notice to the President and Council of the State of Pennsylvania and to the General. I have the honor, etc.64

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April [23], 1779.

Sir: The Qr. Mr. General has represented to me that unless he can receive an immediate and ample supply of money the preparations for the Indian expedition in particular and for other operations with which we must open the campaign, will not be completed in the time appointed in my orders to him, and required by the exigency of our affairs. The article of horses, for which he will be obliged to pay the money in hand is that on which he lays the

64. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade.

principal stress. Unless those can be provided by the middle of next month at furthest, our whole plan will be defeated. A sufficient number will be wanted not only to carry on the Indian expedition but to move the whole army at the same time; which for very urgent and important reasons is determined.94 From this state of facts, I am persuaded Congress will not hesitate to grant the necessary supply. With perfect esteem and respect, etc.95

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 22, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have been honored with your favr. of the 13th. instant and those of Mr. Scull of the 13th, 15th and 19th. The number of Hunting shirts ordered to be made up by Otis and Henly will be fully sufficient, if they can be provided in time. I yesterday wrote

to Boston and desired that they might be sent forward as fast as finished. Be pleased to direct Mr. Mease to send on to the Camp the ten thousand Overalls which he some little time ago mentioned as being ready, as also what Shirts and Blankets he may have upon hand. The troops destined for the Indian Expedition must be completed in the latter Article, as they will carry but few tents. It will be absolutely

94. At this point the draft first read: “When the detachment to be employed on this service is made, we shall be under a necessity for the security of the army to change our present general disposition and draw the different parts of it nearer to a point.”

95. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

necessary that at least two spare pairs of Shoes pt. Man should be carried upon this expedition, and from the Returns of which I am possessed, the quantities in this Store and that at Fishkill are not more than sufficient, with the addition of occasional supplies to keep, the troops that will remain, shod. I must therefore request, that the Board will if possible have eight or ten thousand pair collected at Lancaster by the 10th of next Month. From thence they can be carried to Susque. hannah and transported up the River with the other Stores. If the above quantity cannot be certainly procured for that time, be pleased to say how many can be depended upon, and I will endeavour to procure the others from the Eastward.

I shall agreeable to your recommendation extend the term of the pardon to Deserters to a further day. I will transmit a Copy to the Board and shall be obliged by their circulating hand Bills besides publishing in the News papers.

Inclosed you have the Commissions of four Ensigns of the 1st No. Carolina Regt. who have the rank of 2d. Lieutnts. Be pleased to desire the Secretary to amend them. You have also the Commn. of Ensign Thellable83 of the 11th Virginia Regt. resigned 9th Novemr. 1778.

There are upwards of one hundred Drums wanting in this part of the Army and I imagine a proportion in the remainder. I shall be obliged by having means taken to procure them if it is not already done, and forwarded as fast as finished. I have the honor etc.84

83. Ensign Robert Thellable (Thelable).

84. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 23, 1779.

Sir: I was, yesterday Afternoon, informed by General Maxwell, that he had received intelligence of a considerable movement of the Enemy upon New York and Staten Islands, and that it was reported, General Leslie was to embark with nine Regiments and to sail in a few days either for the West Indies or Georgia. The actual embarkation of Nine Regiments, with their Stores and Baggage, was confirmed late last evening by Major Lennox,92 formerly of the Pennsylvania Line, just returned from Long Island, whither he had been allowed to go upon private Business. The transports were thought to be upon the point of sailing, but their real destination was unknown to the Major. He understood that the troops were provided with thin Cloathing, which

92. Maj. David Lennox, formerly a captain in the Third Pennsylvania Regiment. He was wounded and taken prisoner at Fort Washington in 1776; had been exchanged; resigned on not being given the rank to which he was entitled. He was aide to General Wayne in 1778–79.

points equally to the West Indies and to Georgia. General Maxwell also adds, it was reported that transports had gone to bring off the Garrison of Rhode Island, but he does not seem to place much confidence in the Channel thro' which this report came. I

expect further intelligence before the sailing of the Fleet, the contents of which shall be immediately communicated. I have the honor, etc.93

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 24, 1779.

Sir: I have received your Excellency's favors of the 14th, 18th and 20th. instants with the Resolves inclosed to which they refer. I shall acquaint Major Hamage and Capt. Hawker with the determination of Congress, and shall pay the proper attention to the other Resolves.

I take the liberty to inclose the Copy of a representation of the Captain Lieutenants of Artillery on account of the reduction of their pay2 This was laid before the Committee of Arrangement at the White plains in August last, but nothing having been done in the matter, the Gentlemen have lately renewed their application through me. I do not recollect the circumstances that led to this

93. In the writing of Tench Tilghman.

2. A copy of the representation of the captain-lieutenants is filed with Washington's letter in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. The original is in the *Washington Papers*.

reduction, but the observations made by the Gentlemen appear to have weight, and to be founded upon the usual establishment of the Corps of Artillery in other Services. I have the honor, etc.3

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middlebrook, April 28, 1779.

Sir: I have been duly honored with your Excellency's favor of the 25th, and its inclosures.

You will perceive by the within resolution of the assembly of the State of Massachusetts, that there are several pieces of cannon (18 pounders) the property of the Continent, now in that state. General McDougall informs me that only two pieces out of the seven have been received.

The defenceless situation of our posts on the North River, considered with respect to their consequence; and the importance of the communication which depends on their security, makes me anxious to encrease this, by every means in our power. I have therefore to request the directions of Congress for their application to this purpose. I cannot suppose them so essentially necessary to the State

3. In the writing of Tench Tilghman. The letter was read in Congress on May 1, 1779, and referred to the Board of War.

of Massachusetts, as to our defences; and more especially since its accession of Cannon derived from the Somerset.

Congress will also observe by the estimate which I had the honor to lay before them, that even with this addition, we still fall far short of the number supposed absolutely requisite at these posts.31

Yesterday I had advice from Lieutenant Colonel Ford, who commands a party in Monmouth County, that a detachment of the enemy supposed to be about 16 or 1700 strong, effected a landing on the 26th instant, in two divisions; the one at Redbank, the other at Middletown. The former attempted by a rapid march to get in Colonel Fords rear, but were disappointed by his gaining Tenton falls. As his flanks were insecure, and the enemy greatly his superior in numbers, after a short opposition he retired further into the country till he could be reinforced by the militia. This body afterwards formed a junction with that at Middletown, where the whole were when my advice came away. The Militia which had collected were hanging on their flanks, with some Continentals.

The cutting off our detachment, forage, and plunder, appear to have been the objects of this incursion. It may however have in view something more permanent; the establishment of a post in some part of that country, for the purpose of drawing greater supplies from this quarter; encouraging the disaffected; and obtaining recruits.

In a late letter of the 23d, I mentioned my

31. When this letter was read in Congress (May 1) Samuel Adams moved that it be referred to the Board of War; but Congress voted this down and resolved “That the Commander in Chief be authorised to call upon the State of Massachusetts bay for such and so many of the continental cannon lent to the said State, as he may judge necessary for the defence of the post on Hudson's river.”

information of nine regiments being under embarking orders; and Major Lennox's notice of these having actually embarked. As I have received no further accounts, confirmative of this matter, I am inclined to doubt whether the nine regiments, and the detachment to Monmouth are not one and the same. However, I expect more decided accounts, which I shall immediately transmit. I have the honor, etc.32

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 29, 1779.

Sir: I have the honor to inform your Excellency, that by a letter from Capt. Burrows41 dated the 26th at Middle Town, it appears, that the body of the Enemy mentioned in my last, as having made an incursion into Monmouth County reimbarked the afternoon of the same day and returned to New York. A small party of fifteen Continental Troops under Capt. Burrows had kept up a desultory fire upon them for a considerable time, both before and during the retreat; this party was afterwards reinforced by Col. Holmes42 with sixty Militia which is said to have accelerated their retreat. The Enemy are supposed to have been

about 800 strong commanded by Col. Hyde43 of the Guard, they left one dead behind them, and

32. In the writing of James McHenry.

41. Capt. John Burrowes, of Forman's Additional Continental regiment. He was transferred to Spencer's regiment on Apr. 22, 1779; made major in July, 1779; retired in January, 1781.

42. Col. Asher Holmes, of the Monmouth County (N.J.) militia.

43. Col. West Hyde, of the First Foot Guards, British Army.

an inhabitant reports to have seen three more dead and fourteen or fifteen wounded put on board their boats. On our side, we had one man slightly wounded; they carried off a few of the inhabitants.

I cannot suppose the Capt. mistaken as to their going off, tho' I have not received any advice from Col: Ford since his letter (the substance of which I communicated) which is of the same date with Burrows. With great respect I am, etc.44

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 30, 1779.

Sir: I have the honor to inclose you an extract of a letter from Major General Gates relative to the complaints among the Troops in the Eastern department for want of their pay.54 It will naturally claim the notice of Congress should not the necessary supply of money have been ordered before this time. I have the honor, etc.55

44. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade.

54.The Gates letter, an extract of which was inclosed, was that of April 22, the original of which is in the *Washington Papers*.

55. The draft is in the writing of James McHenry. The letter was read in Congress on May 4 and referred to the Board of Treasury.

To RICHARD HENRY LEE

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 30, 1779.

Sir: I was duly honored with your letter of the 28th in behalf of the Committee for Southern affairs, with the enclosed copy of one from the Lt. Governor of S. Carolina. The situation of affairs in that quarter has an aspect truly alarming and though our force here after the troops intended for the Indian expedition are detached will be reduced so low as to afford cause of uneasiness; yet as the interior strength of these states is capable of great exertions on an emergency I cannot but concur with the views of the Committee respecting the Virginia levies. I wish they were in greater forwardness than they appear to be by a letter of the 24th. instant from General Scot, a copy of which I transmit, I believe it is one of the terms on which these men are engaged, that they shall be furnished with cloathing, before they march out of the State. This will be a difficulty which no pains should be spared to accommodate. If the cloathing really is not ready, the state should employ its influence to induce the men to proceed with satisfactory assurances that it shall follow as speedily as possible. I doubt not The Committee will take any measures they may think conducive to this end. I shall without delay, send a proportion of officers to take the command.

I think also it will be adviseable to send both

Bland's and Baylors Regiments to the Southward. They should be enabled to engage as many men as they have horses and accoutrements to equip.

We have only two regiments of the Quota of North Carolina in the field. I have already recommended that she should be called upon to complete the rest for the Southern service, in the most expeditious mode; which is certainly that of drafting. I know not what may have been done; but it seems essential this measure should be persued.

I am at a loss what additional measure to advise, troops from this army cannot possibly be sent for the reasons repeatedly assigned. It seems however necessary, that troops of a better consistence than militia, whose time of service expires almost as soon as they arrive at their destination should be provided. This can only be done by laws in the neighbouring states, for drawing out a body for a longer term. I have the honor, etc.

P.S. It will be necessary that arms be sent for the levies from this quarter. The Board of War will take the charge of this matter.56

56. In the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

[H.L.]

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 3, 1779.

Sir: I was duly honored with your Excellency's letter of the 28th of last month, with its inclosures, to which proper attention shall be paid.

I inclose you extracts69 from some letters lately received from General Schuyler, which are interesting in their nature, and require immediate direction. They are rather of a remote date, having been long in coming to hand. Congress will perceive, that some of the hostile tribes of Indians, the Cayugas in particular are desirous of making peace with us, and that it will be necessary to give our Commissioners instructions on this subject. I am inclined to think in our present situation, it may be politic enough to make a partial peace with

some of the tribes, though I should not wish to see it extended to the whole, even if their inclination prompted by their fears should lead them to solicit it; of which however there is no present appearance. A disposition to peace in these people can only be ascribed to an apprehension of danger and would last no longer than till it was over and an opportunity offered to resume their hostility with safety and success. This makes it necessary that we should endeavour to punish them severely for what has past; and by an example of rigor intimidate them in future. But by confining this to those nations who are

69. These extracts are missing from Washington's letter as filed in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. They were, probably, taken from Schuyler's letters to Washington, dated Apr. 27 and Apr. 29, 1779, which are in the *Washington Papers*.

most formidable and mischievous the end will be answered, and by detaching apart from the confederacy, we lessen the force we have to combat, add perhaps to our own and make the stroke intended more easy and certain. This policy seems the more eligible from the account given of the detachment which is designed to be sent from Canada to the Westward. This is a measure, I have all along dreaded, and to prevent it, if possible, have employed every artifice I could think of to excite jealousies of an invasion of Canada, and induce the Enemy there to keep their force at home. I have directed that effectual measures may be taken to ascertain the intelligence of the Western reinforcement. I have the honor, etc.70

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middlebrook, May 3, 1779.

Gentlemen: I had the honor of your favor of the 25th ultimo thro' Col. Pickering.

The extract of a letter from Mr. Measam D.C. G.72 and the several objects to which it refers, will naturally claim the earliest notice. In particular the linen and blankets

70. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade.

72. George Measam's letter of May 1, 1779, is in the *Washington Papers*.

are greatly wanted for the troops; and the necessity of encreasing our supply of both so evident as to stand in need of no arguments to induce the board to take such measures as the present occasion may require, to provide the one and increase the other. I am, etc.

P.S. Since Baron Steuben's arrival in camp I have confered with him on the subject of the Adjt. General as assistant to the inspectorate General, and upon the whole, I would think it advisable that the two offices should be connected by such an appointment.73

73. The draft is in the writing of James McHenry.

To JAMES DUANE

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 3, 1779.

Dear Sir: I am honored with your favour of the 27th. of April, in behalf of the delegates of New York, which hurry of business prevented my answering sooner. So far as the matter respects military prisoners, it is in my province, and I have written to His Excellency Governor Clinton accordingly. The exchange of inhabitants has always been transacted by the States to which they belonged; and I have cautiously avoided confounding civil and military prisoners together or exchange them for each other, for reasons which will not need explanation. I therefore beg leave to return the papers on the subject. It appears to me, that the business belongs wholly to the States concerned; the inhabitants in possession of the enemy are of different states; it is not specified in the list, where those required in return reside. If they are of the State of New York, as I conjecture to be the case, the question then is, whether this state will choose to relieve the subjects of other states by giving its own in exchange. If it will not, it must then only provide for its own and leave it to the other states to take care of theirs. If the persons required in return belong

to different states, Congress will best judge whether they would choose to interfere and authorise the Governor to negotiate an exchange for the whole, according to the number in captivity from each state with the enemy and residing in each

state of those required by them. But as I said before, according to practice hitherto the whole seems most properly to be a State business. With very great esteem and regard I am, etc.71

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 5, 1779.

Sir: Inclosed I have the honor to transmit your Excellency three New York papers of the 28th and 29th April and 1st of May, which I think are interesting.

The last contains extracts from Lord Norths speech at opening the budget which seems to breathe a vigorous prosecution of the war: I have thought appearances for some time past wore this complexion. The English papers have frequently announced considerable reinforcements to the army in America and have even specified the particular Corps intended to be sent over. Nor can I see any sufficient reason to believe this will not be done. While the Government can procure money, men will not be wanting; and while the Nation is unengaged in a Continental war in Europe and can maintain a ballance of naval power, I do not perceive why it should not be able to spare men to continue the war in this country. At least, the probability that they will be able to do it is great enough to demand very vigorous

71. In the writing of Alexander Hamilton. This letter is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 166, fol. 407.

efforts on our part to put the Army upon a much more respectable footing than it now is. It does not really appear to me that adequate exertions are making in the several States

to complete their Battalions. I hope this may not proceed in part from the expectation of peace having taken too deep root of late in this country.

I beg leave to submit it to Congress whether a private pointed address on this subject from them to the respective Legislatures may not be productive of a good purpose.

I imagine it is unnecessary for me to particularize the situation of the army in the present reduced state of the regiments, after we shall have made the large detachment which will be indispensible for the Western expedition and considering that all the Virginia Levies are of necessity, to be sent to the Southward. I doubt not they are convinced it is such as to demand the most serious exertions to make it better.

With the greatest respect and esteem, I have the honor, etc.89

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Headquarters, Middlebrook, May 5, 1779.

Gentlemen: In a letter from Colonel Brodhead, dated Fort

89. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade. The letter was read in Congress on May 8 and referred to the committee appointed to prepare an address to the several States, to which were added Samuel Adams and Thomas Burke. (See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, May 26, 1779, for the address agreed upon. It was printed in broadside form and also published in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of May 29, 1779.)

McIntosh the 3d Ultimo, he has the following paragraph, “There is a prodigious deficiency in Clothing and money in this department; some cloth has indeed been purchased in the State of Virginia, but the means of making it up are not provided; shoes and linen cannot be had at any rate unless they are sent up by the clothier general.” He adds in another

place, “A deputy adjutant general, Deputy pay master Genl. Muster master and Inspector will be necessary in this department.

As the troops under Colonel Brodhead must suffer the greatest inconveniences if a supply is not furnished them, I thought it best to lay his representation as early as possible before the board, that it might have an opportunity to make a proper provision on the occasion.

With respect to an appointment of a Deputy Adjutant General and Inspector, I would beg leave to observe that such officers do not appear to me essential in the Western department. The force is too small to require the one and the mode of war being of the desultory kind does not render the latter very material. Nor is the duties of the office practicable as the troops will be situated.

As to the Deputy pay Master, and Muster Master, they are proper enough, and I would therefore recommend them to consideration. Colonel Brodhead in his letter expresses a desire to have his son appointed to one of these offices. This gentleman was early in the war, made prisoner, and is now in Philadelphia.

But the Board will be able to inform itself better of his merit than I can, as his captivity has put this so much out of my power. I am, etc.92

To RICHARD HENRY LEE, HENRY LAURENS, AND THOMAS BURKE90

Head Quarters, May 5, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have the honor to transmit to your care an Open Letter for Brigr. General Scott, by which you will perceive that I have directed the Levies in Virginia to be formed into three

92. The draft is in the writing of James McHenry.

90. The committee on southern affairs.

Batalions, and to be officered and marched under his command to reinforce the Southern Army, as soon as circumstances will possibly permit. I give you this trouble; lest these directions should interfere with any arrangements you may have made, and that they may be added to or altered if you should think it expedient in any point. The sooner the Letter can reach General Scott the better. He will be it is probable, either at Alexandria or Fredericksburg; but the Express who carries it, should be directed to proceed with it, till he finds him. I beg leave to mention the subject of Arms again and persuade myself the Committee will cause every proper measure to be pursued for supplying these Levies with all possible expedition. Such of the Officers as are mentioned in the list contained in Genl. Scotts Letter, who are in Camp, will proceed to Virginia without delay. I make no doubt the Committee have given orders respecting Blands and Baylor's Regiments, if they choose that they should go. I have the Honor, etc.91

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, May 7, 1779.

Sir: I do myself the honor of transmitting to Your Excellency the following Extract of a Letter from General Maxwell

91. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

of the 5th Inst. which I received last night.

My intelligence from the Enemy is, that 4000 Troops chiefly British are embarked for the West Indies or Georgia, though the latter is the most suspected. Generals Vaughan and Leslie are supposed to take the command. They were to embark this day, and the Fleet to sail on their voyage immediately.11

I also transmit an Extract of a Letter of the same date from Lt. Colo. Ford on command at Shrewsbury.

Twenty seven square rigged Vessels of the Enemy's fleet and twelve or fourteen Sloops and Schooners put to sea this Evening; they steered a South East course till they got out of sight. By a person from New York who was a prisoner I am informed that the report there was, that between 6 and 7000 Troops were embarked, he sailed in company with them from New York to the Watering place, saw a vast number of Light Horse on board and that the fleet was very full of Men; that their destination was a secret the Officers appeared anxious to know; that their conjectures were various about it some talked of Georgia, some of Maryland, and Others at Rhode Island.12

From these several accounts and the particularity with which they are related, there can be no doubt but that a body of Troops have embarked and sailed. What their number is cannot be ascertained, but even according to the lowest estimate, which from a consideration of the Fleet and many other circumstances, I should suppose to be as high as it possibly can be, and to exceed their real amount, it is formidable. I wish the

11. Maxwell's original letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

12. The photostat of Ford's original letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

West Indies may be their Object; but from their having Horse and other considerations, it is to be feared their operations will be on our Southern Continent.

Your Excellency will be pleased to receive a Copy of the Report by the Gentlemen appointed on our part to negotiate a Cartel for the general exchange of prisoners or an Agreement for a more partial relief. I have the Honor, &c

P.S. I have this minute received a Letter from General Schuyler, transmitting Minutes and proceedings in the Enterprize against Onondaga, commanded by Colo. Van Scaick. An Extract13 from the former and a Copy of the latter, your Excellency will find inclosed.

Colo. Ford's account of a Fleet's sailing out of the Hook is confirmed by others just come to hand. The latter makes the Fleet something larger, and one says, owing to a 64 Gun ship which had a flag at the Foretopmast head, not getting out, they came to an Anchor in the Evening on the Sea side, and were there yesterday morning at 9 O'Clock. They also add that Genl. Clinton was on board himself, a circumstance mentioned by the person Colo. Ford saw; this however seems very improbable.14

13. The extract of Schuyler's letter of Apr. 27, 1779, filed with the letter of Washington, is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. It is indorsed by Charles Thomson as “Referred to the comee. of intelligence.”

14. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 11, 1779.

Sir: I have the honor to inclose Your Excellency copies of letters and papers,72 which have passed on the subject of a late remonstrance from the officers of the 1st Jersey Regiment, to the Assembly of their state. This is an affair which Congress will no doubt view in a very serious light. To me it appears truly alarming. It shows what is to be apprehended, if some adequate provision is not generally made for the officers. I have frequently taken the liberty to suggest my sentiments of what ought to be done. The subject was particularly discussed in my late interviews with the Committee of conference. A repetition would be needless. I shall observe that the distresses in some corps are so great, either where they were not till lately attached to particular states, or where the states have been less provident, that officers have solicited even to be supplied with the cloathing destined for the common soldiery coarse and unsuitable as they were. I had not power to comply with the request.

The patience of men, animated by a sense of duty and

72. Copies of Maxwell s letter to Washington, May 6, 1779; of Washington's letter to Maxwell, May 7; of the letter of officers of the First New Jersey Regiment to Washington, May 13; of the address of the officers of the New Jersey brigade to the legislature of New Jersey, April 11; and of Washington's letter to Maxwell, May 10, are filed with Washington's letter in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

honour will support them to a certain point, beyond which it will not go. I doubt not Congress will be sensible of the danger of an extreme in this respect, and will pardon my anxiety to obviate it.73

I view the conduct of the officers concerned in the present instance as highly blameable; and I have signified my disapprobation. I trust the mode will not be thought too mild, when our situation is considered.74 The causes of discontent are too great and too general and the ties that bind the officers to the service too feeble to admit of rigor.

Their letter to me in which they undertake to justify their conduct was embarrassing.75 I thought it best to take no direct notice of it; because I must either have done too much for our circumstances, or too little for the nature of the proceeding. I contented myself with writing the letter to General Maxwell of the 10th.

I have this moment received information, that the Assembly have made some provision for their troops. It seems there was a compromise upon the occasion. The officers withdrew their remonstrance, and the Assembly went into the business. It is lamentable, that the measure should have been delayed, 'till it became in a manner extorted. Notwithstanding the expedient adopted for a saving appearances, this cannot fail to operate as a bad precedent.

Mr. Flint76 has delivered me extracts of some letters, he has lately received, by which it appears that the Commissary's

73. The draft was first written: “I hope the patience of our officers may not be tried too far. Congress will pardon me if I seem importunate.”

74. At this point the draft has the following stricken out: “I hope the officers in general may be found more prudent; indeed a considerable part of them from recent arrangements of some of the states have less reason to complain. But there is much cause for what has been done; how much reason they had for acting as they did, and how natural.”

75. The draft has “peculiarly embarrassing.”

76. Royal Flint, Assistant Commissary General of Purchases.

department is exceedingly distressed for the want of money. The disappointment in the article of cattle mentioned by Mr. Champion77 will sensibly affect our Western expedition, which depended on a supply from the Eastward. If we should be able to feed this army by the help of salt provisions, this is a resource which will not answer for that expedition.

I was duly honored with your favour of the 4th. Congress will be pleased to accept my thanks for the assistance offered in the article of specie for secret services, which I shall draw for as occasion may require.78 With the help of this necessary ingredient, good intelligence might be obtained were not the channel obstructed by a too cautious policy in the states. To enable our correspondents among the enemy to convey their intelligence, we are often obliged to make use of ambiguous characters as the vehicles; and to permit them to carry on some traffic both as an encouragement and cover to their mission. There have been instances of prosecutions in the civil courts against these people; and in order to screen them from punishment, we have been under a necessity of discovering their occupation. This has served to deter others from acting in the same capacity, and to increase the dread of detection in our confidential friends.

I have made an application for the cannon at Boston. With perfect respect and esteem etc.

77. Henry Champion, Deputy Commissary General of Purchases.

78. “I am directed to inform you that if you want Specie for secret Service, you may draw for any Sum, or Sums to the amount of two thousand Guineas upon the treasurer who will pay the same.”— *President of Congress to Washington*, May 4, 1779. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

P.S. Since writing the above your favour of the 5th, is received.79

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 11, 1779.

Sir: Brigadier General Mcintosh will have the honor to deliver you this. The war in Georgia, being in the State, to which he belongs, makes him desirous of serving in the Southern army. I know not whether the arrangements Congress have in contemplation may make it convenient to employ him there; but I take the liberty to recommend him as a Gentleman, whose knowledge of service and of the country promise to render him useful. I beg leave to add, that General Mclntosh's conduct, while he acted immediately under my observation was such as to acquire my esteem and confidence; I have had no reason since to alter my good opinion. I have the honor etc.69

79. In the writing of Alexander Hamilton. The P.S. is in the letter sent, but does not appear in the draft.

69. In the writing of Alexander Hamilton. The letter was read in Congress on May 18, when Congress resolved that Mcintosh be permitted to repair to the Southern army. The draft, in the *Washington Papers*, is dated May 12, 1779.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 12, 1779.

Sir: There either is no particular resolution of Congress; we have received none, or we have lost it, that directs us whether the commissions of the officers who resign are to be lodged with the board of war; or whether the officers will be permitted ted to retain them, with an indorsement signifying the date of their resignation. His Excellency requests to be informed on this subject. I am, etc.98

To MERIWETHER SMITH, RICHARD HENRY LEE, CYRUS GRIFFIN, AND WILLIAM FLEMING6

Head Quarters, May 13, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have been honoured with Your favor of the 6th Inst., inclosing a Letter of the 29th Ulto. and a Copy of a Memorial from Colo. Spotswood to Congress, and requesting my advice upon the subject of introducing him into the Army again and appointing him a Brigadier.

As you have been pleased to ask my Opinion upon the

98. The draft is in the writing of and is signed by James McHenry and addressed to Peter Scull, secretary of the Board of War.

6. Virginia Delegates to the Continental Congress.

occasion, I shall give it with freedom and candor. I cannot advise the measure. I am certain it would be considered as an Act of injustice by the Army at large and particularly so by the Virginia line. The least injurious effects that I can possibly conceive would follow, would be the Resignations of sundry Officers in the latter; but there is every reason to believe, tho' these of themselves would be very distressing, that the mischiefs would be infinitely more extensive. The Officers in general suppose that they have been but too

often affected by irregular appointments, and they are not in a temper now to acquiesce in what they would view as an injury to their essential rights. Colo. Spotswood a day or two after the Action of German Town made an actual surrender of his Commission to me, according to the then prevailing mode of resignation. This was accepted and sundry arrangements and promotions took place in consequence. No reasoning after this would satisfy the Officers, if he were to be reintroduced, and therefore a minute examination of the grounds which led to his resignation is unnecessary. However I cannot but observe, that the case to which he alludes as having been decided against him, was determined by a board of General Officers upon a full hearing, and as far as I could judge, agreeable to equity and the principle which had generally if not universally governed in similar cases. Nor can the expedient of employing him as a Brigadier with the Virginia Levies, destined for southern service, better the case. The injury to the Officers would originate in his appointment, and would not depend, or be redressed either by a

temporary or local command. But if it were possible that either of these circumstances could palliate the injury to the Officers here, and quiet them for a moment; yet his going to the Southward would not be easily submitted to if submitted to at all, by the Officers detached on that service, or by the Officers of the Southern Army, because the injury to them would be immediate. We have been distracted and almost torn to pieces by irregular promotions and disputes about rank from time to time, and I trust there will be no fresh causes of disgust added. The com plaints on these heads which yet remain are but too many for the public interest. Besides these several reasons, it might be added that the state of the Virginia Troops, supposing the full number of Levies to be made up, an event however by no means to be expected, would not require a Brigadier in addition to their present number, and the proposed command would leave the other Virginia Brigadiers but little more than mere Cyphers. These matters I have thought it my duty to mention from a regard to the rights of the Officers in general, to the tranquillity of the Army, and the consequent promotion of the public service. And, abstracted from these considerations,

from the friendship I have for Colo. Spotswood and the opinion I entertain of him as a Soldier, I should be happy to see him again in the Military line. I have the Honor &c.

P.S. I return the papers you were pleased to send me.7

7. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 14, 1779.

Sir: I have received the honor of your Excellency' s favor of the 10th with its several inclosures.

When the order was given for General Glover' s Brigade to be held in readiness to march, the comparitive state of the Enemy' s force and ours, allowing for the troops to be detached on the Western expedition made it indispensible, without risking more important misfortunes in this quarter than could posibly have been hazarded by drawing that Brigade away. But the late detachment sent from New York materially alters the case and has enabled me to suspend the measure, which I have accordingly done. It is however uncertain in the progress of our operations how long it may be in my power to continue those troops where they now are. This I have signified to the State and have taken occasion to urge the necesity of endeavouring to provide other means of defence. The necessity I am under of being guarded at some essential points often obliges me to weaken others where we are less vulnerable; and have only to apprehend partial evils. Till the general state of our force can be made more adequate to our necessities this will be unavoidable.

The deputies from the Delaware Nation arrived at Head Quarters two days ago. They presented me with a long

memorial on various points, which they intend to present also to Congress. I was a little at a loss what answer to give and could have wished they had made their first application there. But as an answer could not be avoided, I thought it safest to couch it in general but friendly terms and refer them to Congress for a more particular one. Though there is reason to believe, they have not adhered very scrupulously to their pretended friendship, it appeared to me to be our present policy at least to conciliate; and in this spirit my answer was conceived. I hope I may not have deviated from the views of Congress. I send a copy of my answer. I have the honor, etc.23

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 14, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have been honoured with your Letters of the 7th and 10th. instant.

With respect to the matters submitted by the first The Commissary General of Military Stores has certainly a right to direct in everything relative to the execution of the public works, under his care, and every Officer stationed at the Laboratories is bound so far, to follow his directions. The rank of Lieut. Colo. which

23. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade. The letter was read in Congress on May 17 and referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

he now holds, intitles him to command in all respects over every Inferior Officer acting with him. Where there happens to be a Superior Officer, this cannot be the case; neither do I see the necessity for him to regulate the duties merely Military. Such Officer will always be responsible for preserving order and any breach he may commit or tolerate can be reported. I also think that the Officers of Artillery and Artillery Artificers should sit together on Courts Martial, for the reasons you have mentioned, and that the oldest Officer in either Corps, should take the command in all Regimental duties. It does not appear to me in the least essential, that Colo. Flowers24 should have any Other rank than he now has. His

Commission as Commissary of Military Stores with the rank of Lieutenant Colo. is fully competent to every purpose. And, convulsed and torn to pieces as we have been, and as we yet are by disputes, founded on particular promotions and appointments, and a Thousand consequent resignations, I cannot advise that he should have any other than the Commission he now possesses. I am satisfied it would not be submitted to, and that we should in consequence, have to establish almost a New Corps of Artillery Officers. I have a very favourable opinion of Colo. Flower; but his present commission is a very honourable one, and in the extremely critical situation of the Army, the most delicate regard must be had to the rights of the Officers. Indeed this should always be the case, but at this juncture from the prevailing dissatisfaction, it is peculiarly necessary. Nor does it appear to me from the fullest inquiry and consideration

24. Lieut. Col. Benjamin Flower.

I am capable of, that his claim to rank in the Artillery line, is well founded, supposing consequences of a political nature entirely out of the question. I shall write him upon the subject, as soon as I have an opportunity.

As the situation of affairs and the exigency of the service will not admit of the least delay, I transmit the Board a Return of the Officers in Colo. Proctors25 Regiment, by which they will be pleased to issue them Commissions. Their relative rank as to themselves, I believe, stands right, and I do not know that the arrangement is wrong with respect to Others. If it should be found so, it must be reformed when circumstances will permit. I would wish the Board to mention this to Colo. Proctor, that it may be clearly understood. By the death of Lieut. Colo. Strobogh26 on the 2d of Decr. a 2d vacant Lieut. Colonelcy has happened in the Artillery line. Major Forrest27 is to be appointed in his place, not however from a principle of regimental succession, but on that of lineal succession, by which all appointments of field Officers are to be made, according to the rules of promotion now established in the Army; the practice in Corps similarly circumstanced, and the ideas which have prevailed for some time past in the Artillery. The promotion motion to Majorities is not

of the oldest Captain in the Regiment where the vacancy happens, but of the oldest in the particular line under consideration. In the case of Capt. Lieut. Emes28 there appears to be an inconsistency, which I can' t reconcile. He is arranged the 8th and yet his appointment is dated 7 or 8 months before the rest. The Board will be pleased to

25. Col. Thomas Procter, of the Fourth Continental Artillery. He resigned in April, 1781.

26. Lieut. Col. John Martin Strobagh, of the Fourth Continental Artillery.

27. Maj. Thomas Forrest, of the Fourth Continental Artillery. His promotion to lieutenant colonel gave him rank from Dec. 2, 1778. He resigned in October, 1781.

28. Capt.-Lieut. Worsley Emes, of the Fourth Continental Artillery. He was made captain in September, 1780, and retired in January, 1783.

advert to the circumstance and obtain a satisfactory explanation. I also inclose certificates in favor of Mr. McGuire.29 Persons in his predicament, may be appointed to Subaltern ranks by the Field Officers of the Regiments to which they belong, or at least on their recommendation; but this power should be exercised with great caution and it would be well if in general cases the exercise of it were not to supersede Other Subalterns. I have experienced an infinite deal of trouble by like promotions, and in the present case, the Board probably will do well to prevent it if they can, or at least the placing Mr. McGuire at the point recommended. If it should not be agreeable to the Officers it is likely all affected by it will leave the service. If he is introduced into the line, his Commission cannot not bear date prior to the Certificates in his favor, nor can he be continued as paymaster afterwards without being elected by the Officers of the Regiment. The Certificates of the Two Field Officers will not do.

I will issue the order you request to prevent applications for supplies at Philadelphia. The arrangement respecting colours is not yet made. I have the Honor, etc.30

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middlebrook, May 16, 1779.

Sir: I have been duly honored with your Excellencys

29. Lieut, and Paymaster Matthew McGuire, of the Fourth Continental Artillery. He was promoted to captain-lieutenant in September, 1780; wounded and taken prisoner at Eutaw Springs, S.C., in September, 1781; prisoner on parole until retired in January, 1783.

30. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

favor of the 10th. instant, and the two resolutions of Congress which shall be properly attended to.

I herewith take the liberty to transmit several papers of a serious nature, which have passed between General Mcintosh and myself.44 I thought it my duty to submit them to the consideration of Congress, that it might decide whether the reasons sons given in my letter from Col. Hamilton, are sufficiently cogent to postpone an inquiry for the present; or till the affairs, or situation of the army, will admit of entering fully into a subject that involves so many and remote evidences.

The inclosed extract of a letter from Lt. Colonel Ford may perhaps contain more recent intelligence from the Southward than what Congress could have received by land. I also send a Charlestown gazette of the 21 of April, three late New York papers, and an English one of the 26th February Ultimo. I have the honor, etc.45

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 17, 1779.

Sir: I was yesterday honored with your favour of the 15th. with the inclosed papers.

44. Copies of McIntosh' s letter to Washington, May 14; charges against Col. George Morgan, Deputy Commissary of Purchases, Western Department, May 14 (?); charges against Indian Interpreter Daniel Sullivan, April 17; Alexander Hamilton' s letter to McIntosh, May 14; McIntosh' s letter to Hamilton, May 14; and Lieut. Col. Benjamin Ford' s letter to Washington, May 13, are filed with Washington' s letter in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

45. In the writing of James McHenry.

The fleet mentioned in Governor Johnson' s letter may contain the detachment which lately sailed from New York, and the object may be, if not to rescue, at least to facilitate the desertion of The Convention troops. This is the prevailing opinion in New York, countenanced among other circumstances by the Goodrich' s and other natives of Virginia being of the party. A rescue, with common prudence on our side would be difficult, I hope this will not be wanting, But it may be no easy matter to prevent very considerable desertion. The enemy may possibly take some convenient and secure post, to afford opportunities. Our obvious policy on an emergency will be to remove the troops, perhaps to divide them.

But the present appearance may be only a diversion, to delay lay the reinforcements going from Virginia to the Southward, while the detachment may in reality have proceeded on its voyage to prosecute the intended operations in that quarter. In this case, the vessels that have been seen may have a few troops on board the better to cover the artifice, and it may be will call at particular places which have been preconcerted to receive deserters, instructed to meet them there. We should be upon our guard against a deception of this kind, which may unnecessarily detain the levies to the injury of our Southern affairs.

In the present uncertainty, and at this distance it is hard to form any precise opinion of what ought to be done; I would only beg leave to observe that the arms destined for the levies should be hastened on to them, that they may be

enabled to act according to circumstances, and that if appearances continue without producing any thing decisive, the Convention troops ought to be effectually taken care of, and every provision made, that the levies may not be improperly detained.

The detachment which sailed from New York, according to the best information I have received consists of one batalion of guards, Lord Rawdon's47 Corps, the 42d Highlanders, a German regiment and fifty bucks county dragoons,48 estimated at about 2000 men. They were convoyed by the Raisonable of 64, the rainbow of 44 and a small frigate.

There remain now at New York, two frigates of 20, two sloops of war, and a few privateers which is all the protection there is to a large number of transports. If our frigates to the Eastward could be speedily collected, I should hope a very important blow might be struck there without much risk. It seems to be well worth the experiment. If Congress view the matter in the same light, they will no doubt give the necessary directions with all possible secrecy and dispatch. I have the honor, etc.49

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, May 17, 1779.

Sir: Since I had the honor of addressing Your Excellency

47. Lieut. Col. Francis (Lord) Rawdon, of the Sixty-third Foot, British Army.

48. Pennsylvania loyalists.

49. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton. The letter sent is not found among the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

this morning, I received a Letter from General Gates, a Copy of which with the packet he mentions I transmit by this express. From Genl. Gates's account it appears indispensably

necessary that a supply of Money should be sent as soon as possible, if it has not been already done to pay the Troops. I have the Honor, etc.50

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 18, 1779.

Gentlemen: Since I had the honor of writing to you on the 14th instant. I have discovered a mistake relative to the succession of Major Forrest to the vacancy occasioned by the death of Lieut. Col. Strobock.60 I then had in eye another vacancy which happened by the resignation of Lt. Col. Oswald;61 and did not recollect that it had been filled by Lt. Col. Stevens. A multiplicity of business caused me to forget this circumstance. It is necessary the mistake should be rectified. Major Forrest cannot succeed, on the principle of Regimental promotion; because though the rule of promotion in the Artillery has not been formerly determined, yet that of lineal succession mentioned in my last is now so generally preferred, that it

50. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The letter sent is not found among the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, but it was read in Congress on May 19 and referred to the Board of Treasury.

60. Lieut. Col. John Martin Strobagh.

61. Lieut. Col. Eleazer Oswald, of the Second Continental Artillery. He had resigned in June, 1778.

would convulse the corps to adopt a different one and as Major Holmer62 of Harrison's Regiment, is elder in commission he must take precedence of Major Forrest on this principle, unless it should be thought best to supersede him on the ground of incapacity.

The Board will judge how far this is adviseable from the following extract of a letter of the 13th, which I had received from General Knox previous to my last. “Major Holmer” says

he,“ is clearly the oldest Major; I wish I could add that his knowledge of his profession and his activity were such, as that I could, consistent with the duty which I owe my country and my conscience recommend him to fill the vacancy but I am sorry this is not the case. Major Forrest is next in rank, Your Excellency knows his zeal and activity. I think he is a proper subject for promotion. But should he be promoted care must be taken to distinguish the principle which influenced it.” It gives me pain to be under the necessity of declaring that the idea here given of Major Holmer is conformable to his universal character, which places his qualifications as an officer far below mediocrity. If Major Forrest is promoted on this principle, it is necessary that it should receive the sanction of Congress.

I transmit an extract from the proceedings of a Board of General Officers in the case of Major Mentges, Murray and Nichols and Cols. Stewart and Craig which has been confirmed in General orders. I have the honor, etc.63

62. Maj. Christian Holmer, of the First Continental Artillery. He retired in January, 1781.

63. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 22, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have been honoured with your favor of the 17th Inst.

Besides the absence of General Hand and the want of a State of his claim, the Resolution of the 4th of February only authorises me to settle the rank of Officers under the degree of a Brigadier, and therefore at any rate, the case between him and General Irvine could not be taken up without special authority for the purpose; which has been customary where General Officers had disputes, who derive their appointments as well as their Commissions, not from any particular State, but immediately from Congress themselves. But these are not the only difficulties, and it appears to me if General Irvine's claim is

to be taken up, that Congress should determine it themselves. It is not a mere personal dispute between him and General Hand, but from its nature and his Letter it is to involve many embarrassing and important consequences and at least is to supersede sundry other Brigadiers, by obtaining a Commission anterior to General Hand's in point of date. This would affect the interests of so many Officers immediately and ultimately that it would not be easy to form a Court to decide it. I cannot tell, nor do I mean to enter upon a consideration of the merits of the question between the Two Gentlemen, or to intimate which of them ought to have been

promoted first; but to establish the claim General Irvine makes, would be to violate and exclude the principle which has been adopted by Congress and which has generally prevailed, that of appointing Brigadiers from the Officers of the line *of each state* in proportion to their Quota's of Troops, without regard to their seniority *in the line of the army* ; and which has made the dates of their appointments the only and absolute criterion to fix their precedence. The idea of relative rank in such cases never existed in our service, and were it to obtain, it might nearly unhinge the whole System of the Army. Priority of appointment, where a *single person* has been promoted, and in the order of appointment, *where several* have been elected together,have constantly decided their precedence unless their were special directions to the contrary; and to introduce a different principle,34 would be to set a float Ten Thousand difficulties, and perhaps to dissolve the Army. If it were, as I have observed a mere question between General Hand and General Irvine on an appointment made at the same time, or if there were no intermediate promotions between theirs as they were both in the same line, the case might admit an investigation and decision without involving such great difficulties, but as matters are otherwise, it is hardly within the compass of human foresight to prescribe boundaries to the mischiefs chiefs to which the claim leads in all its extent.

Colo. Shreve has informed me that there was a mistake in the Commissions issued to Mr. Peck and Mr. Appleton of his Regiment and that he had represented the matter to the Board and requested them to rectify it. They will be pleased to do it, and transmit

34. The word “now” is crossed out.

the Commissions to Head Quarters.

The inclosed is the Copy of a Letter from Mr. Boudinot.35 If the facts are true which it contains, the Chaplain on board the Confederacy appears to be a very improper person for such a Trust and to merit a different kind of notice.

Colo. Broadhead by a Letter of the 3d Inst. mentions that he is in great want of Shoes. The Board will be pleased to give their attention to the matter and direct a supply to be forwarded.

I inclose the Board a List of the remaining Officers of Gist's, Grayson's and Thrustons regiments which are incorporated. They will be pleased to issue them Commissions. As I do not yet know with certainty, who will command the Regiment, the Commissions may appoint them generally to one of the 16 Additional Batallions, without mentioning the Colonel.

I would wish to know in what light the Baron Woolfen as he calls himself, is to be considered, whether as an Officer in Van Heer's Marechaussie Corps or not. He insists himself that he is, while Van heer says that the Board told him he was not, and that they had given him Two hundred Dollars to assist him and that under this persuasion he had omitted to include him in his muster and Pay Rolls. The Baron has preferred an amazing long petition upon the occasion. The Officers of the Corps are desirous to receive their Commissions which the Board will be so obliging as to make out by the arrangement Captain36 Van Heer delivered and if Woolfen is still considered as an Officer. I suppose he will

35. Boudinot inclosed in his letter to Washington, May 18, 1779 (*Washington Papers*), examinations he had taken of Ichabod B. Barnet, of Elizabethtown, N.J., and Lieut. John

Brown, of the Second Continental Dragoons, regarding a Major Hollet, then chaplain on the Continental frigate *Confederacy*, who was said to be in the British service.

36. From this point the draft is missing. The remaining text is supplied from the Varick Transcripts in the Library of Congress.

receive one among the rest. I have the honour, etc.37

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middlebrook, May 22, 1779.

Gentlemen: I herewith transmit the board two letters, one to Colonel Bland, the other to Lt. Col. Washington with the resolve of Congress of the 7th, ordering them to proceed to join the Southern Army.

The inclosed copy of a letter38 from Lt. Col. Washington has induced me to imagine that the resolve has not yet reached him. I therefore send the letters open through the board, lest in their transmission I should contravene any recent orders on this subject, either from Congress, the board, or the committee of Congress appointed for Southern affairs. I am, etc.39

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, May 23, 1779.

Gentlemen: In my letter of the 22d of April I mentioned

37. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

38. This letter is not now found in the *Washington Papers*.

39. The draft is in the writing of James McHenry.

the necessity of having 10,000 pr. shoes for the supply of the troops on the Western expedition. The Board in their answer to mine of the 25th gave me to hope that 4500 pr. would be ready in season at Lancaster for the purpose. I am now to request that these may be without delay forwarded up the River towards Sunbury; and that the Board will immediately inform me what the number really amounts to that I may know how to regulate the supplies from other quarters. If any more have been since provided, I wish them to be forwarded also; as I fear we shall find it extremely difficult if not impracticable to furnish the necessary number. In mine of yesterday's date, I mentioned a supply of this article for the troops at Pitsburgh. This is not to interfere with the present demand which is indispensable.

I know not whether the 10,000 overalls have been all sent on to Camp. If they have not, The Board will be pleased to have 2000 immediately dispatched to Easton; but of this also I request speedy information that I may take measures accordingly.

Some person in the Clothier's line will be wanted to receive and issue them. I shall be obliged to The Board to have him directly appointed and sent to Easton to take General Sullivan's orders.

The expedition is in some measure suspended on these supplies; and I doubt not the Board will use all possible dispatch.

I have the honor, etc.44

44. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 25, 1779.

Sir: I am honored by Your Excellencys favours, one of the 12th two of the 19th and one of the 22d with their inclosures, to all which due attention shall be paid. The predatory war which the enemy now seem resolved to carry on will be very distressing, little aid can be afforded from the army in its present situation and the militia appear to be too ill provided with arms to defend themselves. How this can be remedied and the army supplied, I know not. But it ought to be an essential object of policy with the

particular states to put their militia on a respectable footing and under such regulations as will enable them to assemble with rapidity on sudden emergencies.

I inclose a copy of my instructions to General Scot, on the present occasion, that Congress may know what they are and judge of their propriety. It appears to me that a reinforcement to the Southern army is an indispensable object; at the same time I thought it ineligible to make my directions at this time59 more positive, as it is impossible to determine absolutely what the exigency of affairs in Virginia may require.

By intelligence through different channels from New York, it would seem as if the enemy there have some important enterprise in contemplation. They have been drawing all their force to a point and have collected a number of boats at Kingsbridge, which are so prepared as to indicate an attempt that requires secrecy and silence. The appearances are strong and make it necessary we should be upon our guard; though they may only be calculated for demonstration, perhaps to divert and detain a part of the force we are sending on the Western service. We are somewhat embarrassed on the score of waggons. The preparations for the Indian expedition have retarded those for moving this army. I hope we shall shortly be relieved. With perfect respect etc.60

59. The draft reads: “on this head more positive, than they are.”

60. In the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middlebrook, May 25, 1779.

Sir: I have duly received your favors of the 10th and 19th with their several transmissions.

Inclosed is a report of a board of officers on the relative rank of Captains Finney65 and McClelan66 with their commissions. You will be pleased to alter their respective dates agreeable to the report.

A number of resignations accompany this; you will return commissions for the officers that rise in succession. I am, etc.67

To THE MARINE COMMITTEE61

[Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 25, 1779.]

Gentlemen: In a letter which I had the honor to write to Congress the 17th instant I mentioned to them that the present naval strength in the harbour of New York consisted only of two frigates of twenty guns, two sloops of war and a few privateers, which constituted the whole protection to a large number transports. I intimated at the same time that an important blow might be struck by

65. Capt. Walter Finney, of the Tenth Pennsylvania Regiment, He was wounded at Green Springs, Va., in July, 1781; transferred to the Third Pennsylvania Regiment in January, 1783, and to the First Pennsylvania Regiment, in June, 1783; served to November, 1783.

66. Capt. Joseph McClellan, of the Ninth Pennsylvania Regiment to rank from July, 1776. He was transferred to the Second Pennsylvania Regiment, in January, 1781, and resigned in June, 1781.

67. The draft is in the writing of lames McHenry and is addressed to Peter Scull, secretary of the Board of War.

61. Of the Continental Congress.

collecting our frigates to the Eastward and directing their force to this point. The more I have considered the matter the more it appears to me a desirable attempt, which promises success witht. eminent62 hazard, and which besides the immediate injury to the enemy's fleet may possibly lead to further consequences of an interesting nature. I should be loth materially to risk our little fleet; but the object here is so inviting, as to induce me to renew the subject and press it upon the serious consideration of the Committee. I need not say that the success of such an enterprise would essentially depend on the secrecy boldness and dispatch with which it was executed. If it should be undertaken, the frigates and armed vessels in Delaware may be joined in it.

If the Committee approve the scheme I take the liberty to request they will advise me of the directions they give, that I may judge when the event will probably take place and know how to make some correspondent arrangement. But lest there should be any misconception in the matter, I wish it to be understood, that the destruction of the enemy's fleet is the point on which the merit of the question must turn; any additional advantages are to be considered only as contingent and possible.63 I have the honor, etc.64

62. The word may also be “imminent.”

63. The Committee answered (May 26) that the project was impossible on account of the scattered situation of the frigates. The committee's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

64. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

To GEORGE PLATER, WILLIAM CARMICHAEL, JOHN HENRY, JUNIOR, AND DANIEL OF ST. THOMAS JENIFER68

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 25, 1779.

Gentlemen: I had the honor last night to receive your favor of the 23d. Inst.

In compliance with the wishes of His Excellency the Governor, which you have been pleased to communicate, I have requested General Gist to repair to Maryland as soon as he can, tho his service with the army is now material, and from the train of intelligence I have received from New York for some days past, it may become still more essential. I am sorry that I cannot spare any Officers besides him. And as to a detachment of troops, I have to lament with you, that the circumstances of the army will not admit of any; and what is yet more painful, they would not, even if events of a more pressing nature than any that have arisen, were to take place, if the enemy should continue their present force at New York and its dependencies. We have now a very large detachment, compared with our whole strength, employed in the expedition under General Sullivan, and besides this the operations of the enemy in Georgia and South Carolina have prevented us from receiving any aid here from the Virginia Levies and recruits. It is my first wish, and it shall be my

68. Maryland Delegates to the Continental Congress.

first care to render the States collectively and individually every service in my power; but unfortunately, the present means in our hands are far, very far from being proportioned to the exigency of the times. We are now almost arrived at the end of May, and as yet the army, although it has suffered a severe diminution in the course of the last fall, winter and spring, by the expiration of the inlistments and time of service of many of the Troops and, drafts, has received no accession of force, except the Virginia levies and some from New York. The state of it before was not over respectable, and would justify but little more in general cases, than defensive measures; but at present the most we can hope for after the

detachments already made is to preserve the remainder, by keeping it tolerably well united at one or two important points. To divide it more, would be to expose it to eminent risk. I have the honor, etc.

P. S. It will conduce much to dispatch, in assembling the militia if proper signals could be placed throughout the State to convey an alarm with rapidity on any emergency.69

69. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade.

[MD. H. S.]

To MERIWETHER SMITH, RICHARD HENRY LEE, CYRUS GRIFFIN, AND WILLIAM FLEMING70

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 25, 1779.

Gentlemen: I was last night honoured with your favor of the 21st Instant. From the present condition and arrangement of the Cavalry, I cannot think that Major Lee's Corps can be sent to Virginia, consistently with the general service; nor would I willingly indulge the idea, that their aid can be materially wanted, from any number of Horse the Enemy carried with them. It is but small, and I should hope that there would be more than a sufficiency of Militia or Volunteer Corps of this kind, to restrain their excursions. Major Lee's corps of Horse, from the broken and shattered condition of Moylan's and Sheldon's and the march of Bland's and Baylor's to the Southward, is what I have principally to depend on in this line, and without it we might experience at least, great inconveniences.

With respect to the Virginia Recruits and Levies, I find by a Letter from General Scott of the 12th, at which time it appears he had not received the orders for marching them to the Southward, that not being able to march them this way for want of Cloathing, he had determined, in consequence of the invasion, and a request by the Assembly, to move such

of them as were collected, towards Williamsburg. Before this, he will have received Orders as to their Southern destination,

70. Virginia Delegates to the Continental Congress.

which seems to me a point so very essential, that the Levies should not be stopt but in a case of very urgent necessity. I have written to Genl. Scott upon this subject. Any temporary aid he can afford, to the state, which will not materially interfere with his progress would give me pleasure, but while affairs are in so delicate a situation in Georgia and South Carolina, I cannot think it would be advisable to delay their succour, to give protection against the precarious and desultory attacks of the Enemy who have entered Chesepeak Bay. And I should hope that the State will be able in a little time to make such dispositions of the Militia as will render the detention of the Levies intirely unnecessary. Unable however, to foresee what may take place and confiding in General Scott's judgment and impartial zeal for the true interest of the service, I have left it to him to act according to the exigency of circumstances, at the same time that I have recommended the necessity of proceeding to the Southward to his serious attention. The injury we may suffer in Virginia tho' distressing, most probably would be inconsiderable to that which may befall us in Georgia and Carolina. One principal motive of the Enemy's present movements may be to create a diversion in favour of their operations in those States. From the best accounts I have been able to collect the detachment amounts to about 2000 Men. The want of Arms is a melancholy circumstance, and it is the more distressing after so long a War, and after the most conclusive proofs, that nothing would be left untried on the part of the Enemy to carry their points against us. It would conduce

much to dispatch, in assembling Militia if proper Signals could be placed throughout the State, or at least in the Counties lying on Navigable Waters and those next adjoining and if places for their rendezvous were assigned. By this means an alarm would be conveyed with great rapidity, and the Militia would be sooner collected into a compact body. I have

found great benefits from the measure, and I could wish it were generally adopted. I have the Honor, etc.71

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middlebrook, May 26, 1779.

Sir: Mr. Wadsworth who is just now returned from the Eastward, informs me, that a vessel had arrived there, from Charlestown, S. Carolina, the Captain of which told him, that he slipped out of the harbour, the night of the 5th instant (a fresh embargo being laid that evening on all the shipping, and the sailors ordered on shore for the defence of the Town). The report was that the enemy were on this side of Purisburgh and superior in number to our army.

As this intelligence may not have reached Congress, and as Mr. Wadsworth tells me the Captain is a person of veracity, I thought it necessary to make the communication. I am, etc.81

71. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

81. In the writing of James McHenry.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 26, 1779.

Sir: This letter will be handed the board by Capt. Call of Colonel Blands Light dragoons. As the oldest Captn. in the line of Cavalry he is intitled to one of the Majority's vacant by the death of Major Clough82 and the promotion of Major Washington.

The board will be pleased to make out a Majors commission for Col. Baylor's Rgt. bearing date from the death of Major Clough which happened about the 1st of Octbr. 1778.83

To JAMES DUANE84

[Head Quarters, May 26, 1779.]

Dear Sir: Hurry of business has prevented my having the pleasure of acknowledging sooner the receipt of your two layouts of the 15th and 17th instant.

Application was made to me for dissolving the corps85 you mention and incorporating that part which belonged to Col. Malcoms regiment with the troops of the State of New York. But I did not concur with it for several reasons. The principal

82. Clough was killed on Sept. 28, 1778, at Tappan, N. Y.

83. The draft is in the writing of James McHenry and is addressed to Peter Scull, secretary of the Board of War.

84. New York Delegate to the Continental Congress.

85. “I find myself under the necessity of expressing my wishes that it may be agreeable to your Excellency to transfer the non commissioned officers and Privates, Citizens of New York, late of Col. Malcolm's Regiment, to one of the Battallions of that State.”— *Duane to Washington*, May 15, 1779. Duane's letter is in the *Washington Papers*. Malcom's Additional Continental regiment had been consolidated with Oliver Spencer's in April.

one was that a spirit of mutiny had appeared among the men which I thought it absolutely necessary to suppress rather than encourage. Another was, that it must have produced the dismission of all the officers of the Corps as the remainder of the men on the same principle must have been delivered over to the Jersey Regiments; and the officers could not be introduced into the line of either state without renewing the confusion from which we have been endeavouring to extricate ourselves. I did not like the dismission because the officers are rather dissatisfied with what we have already been obliged to do in this

way, and think their rights are placed upon too precarious a footing. It is a delicate subject and requires caution. I could indeed only have recommended the measure if I had thought it eligible as I do not conceive it to have been within the spirit of my powers to have determined it myself. But as I thought it unadvisable I took no step in the affair.

These reasons still incline me, at least for the present, to wish the continuance of the corps. With the truest regard and esteem etc.86

86. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters Middle Brook, May 27, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have had the Honor to receive Your several favors of the 23d, 24th, 25th and 25th Inst.90

I have spoken to the Quarter Master General upon the subject of Waggons and he has written, I believe, both to Mr. Pettit and Mr. Mitchell91 to use every possible exertion to obtain a supply.

I am exceedingly pained, that we are so deficient in point of Arms. As to the demands you mention to have been made by General Sullivan, I should think, if the troops composing his command, marched properly equipped in the first instance and which I presume was the case, that the Two hundred Muskets ordered from Carlisle, would be sufficient for any contingencies we may reasonably suppose can happen. I have however, to mention an application from him for Fusees for the Officers

90. The letters are in the *Washington Papers*. There were two dated May 25, 1779.

91. Col. John Mitchell, Deputy Quartermaster General.

employed in the expedition. These appear to me to be necessary and if you can furnish them or Carbines, the next best substitute, I would wish it to be done. I desired him to write to you upon the occasion and to transmit a return of the number wanted, and also that the Officers should give receipts for them when they are delivered. There are no Fusees or Carbines here. I have written to Genl. Knox, to send the Old Cartridge Boxes to Philadelphia as you request (reserving however a few for occasional demands), and also such Arms as are in very bad order and which cannot be conveniently repaired in the Army.

Before the receipt of your favor containing an extract92 from Governor Johnston's Letter, I had requested Genl. Gist to proceed to Maryland in consequence of a Letter from her Delegates.

Captn. Topham93 I should suppose might issue the shoes and overalls as you mention, and I am satisfied your Orders upon the occasion will be perfectly right.

I approve the Estimate of Cloathing which the Board have been pleased to transmit me, and have only to wish that the plan may be attended with a happy and speedy execution.94 I doubt not Hats &c will be included or some arrangement for them provided. The Estimate for the Officers cloathing, cannot be too soon completed, or measures pursued to give it effect. Their condition, or at least the condition of a great part of them is really distressing, and if effectual means are not adopted to relieve them, necessity must oblige them to quit the service. I hope besides the plan under consideration, as its operation must be remote, that some expedient

92. The extract from Gov. Thomas Johnson's letter was quoted in the letter of May 24 from the Board of War.

93. Capt. Daniel Topham, of Miles's Pennsylvania Rifle Regiment. He had been taken prisoner at Long Island in August, 1776; exchanged in April, 1778; Commissary of Military Stores of the Continental Army in May, 1779.

94. The estimate of clothing is filed with the Board's letter of May 25 in the *Washington Papers*. It was based on 98,048 suits for the Army and 6,000 additional for wagoners. The ground of the uniform was to be “a strong deep blue, except for the waggoners,” with different colored facing for the different State lines.

On May 27 Washington wrote a brief note to the President of Congress, forwarding two New York newspapers. This note is in the *Washington Papers*.

will be devised for intermediate relief. Without this is also done, I fear many will be compelled to return to their Homes. I have the Honor, etc.

P.S. I transmit you the inclosed arrangement of the 2d Connecticut Regt. for Commissions.95

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 30, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have the Honor to transmit you an Arrangement of the Officers in the Maryland line and have to request, that you will take the earliest Occasion that may offer to make out and forward Commissions agreeable to it, except in the cases of.

No. 46 Benjamin Garnett 1st Lieut. 5 Regt. 13 Oct. 78. 47 Parker Hall Lee do. 4 do 16 do do. 53 William Trueman Stoddart do 5 do 21 May 79. 10 William Adams 2 Lieut. 7 do 14 Apl. 1778.51

whose appointments must be previously confirmed by the State, upon which subject I have written to His Excellency the Governor.

A Board of General Officers have Unanimously determined Lieut. Colo. Hubley's claim to the 11th Pensylvania Regiment to be superior to Lt. Colo. Connor's. You will be pleased to make

95. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

51. See Washington's letter to Gov. Thomas Johnson, May 28, 1779, *ante*.

out a Commission for him and transmit it to Head Qrs. It must be dated when the Regiment was annexed by Congress to the Pensylvania line, unless Colo. Hartley's resignation was subsequent. In such case it must be dated when that took place. The same Board have also unanimously reported that Captain Prowel's promotion to the Majority was irregular. I shall transmit a Copy of their Report to Congress and of the remonstrance of the Pensylvania Captains against the appointment52 that they may vacate and recall the Commission he has received, if they confirm the report.53

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, Middlebrook, June 1, 1779.

Gentlemen: I transmit you the arrangement of the three New Hampshire Regiments which I have just received, and request you will make out and forward me the commissions as soon as it can be done. The Board will perceive the several promotions that are to be made, and the dates which the commissions are to bear.

General Hand writes me of an application for clothing wanted in the 11th Pennsylvania Regiment. Should the board have taken no order on the occasion I am to beg their compliance with it as far as our stores will admit.

52. The Varick transcript in the Library of Congress here inserts “and his promotion.”

53. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

He also mentions in the same letter the great consumption of Shoes arising from the troops being in almost constant motion. The shoes he remarks, which are thrown away after a weeks wear as useless, would by a little repair be rendered very serviceable. To answer this purpose he recommends a set of shoe-makers tools and spare pieces of leather for soles &c to be sent to each regiment. The proposition appears to me very good. I would therefore recommend it to the notice of the board. A proportion of sets of tools, and spare bits of leather &c. should be forwarded as soon as possible, part to Gen: Hand and the rest to Easton; of which the board will be pleased to advise General Sullivan, in case it is thought worth the trial.

Inclosed is two commissions with the dates of the resignations endorsed. The Board will be pleased to return Commissions for the Officers next in succession. I am, etc.76

To THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, June 1, 1779.

Gentlemen: This will be delivered you by Major Blodget77 who has served with reputation in the Army since the commencement of the war in the capacities of Brigade Major and Aide de Camp

76. The draft is in the writing of James McHenry.

77. Maj. William Blodget.

to General Greene. The late arrangement of the army, unavoidably places the Gentlemen in this line, of former appointment on a footing comparatively so disadvantageous as in addition to other motives to have determined Major Blodget to leave the army. He is still anxious to be useful in the military line, if he can be more agreeably situated and

has signified to me that there is a vacancy for a captain of marines on board the Dean frigate,78 which he would be glad to fill. In justice to this Gentleman's early zeal and meritorious conduct in the service I take the liberty to recommend him to the Committee, as one who deserves encouragement and who, I have every reason to believe will justify the trust, if circumstances permit its being reposed him. I have the honor, etc.79

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, June 3, 1779.

Sir: I do myself the Honor of transmitting to Your Excellency a Copy of a Report of a Board of General Officers in a dispute between the Captains in the Pensylvania line and Captain Prowell, who has been appointed to the majority in the 11th Regiment. If Congress approve the Report, they will be pleased to revoke Captain Prowells Commission. They will see a Copy of the Memorial against

78. The *Deane*, a 34-gun frigate, was built at Nantes, France. In 1782 her name was changed to *Hague*.

79. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

his appointment,27 which with his claim was before the Board.

I would also take the liberty to return the Memorials of Colonels Cortland and Gansevoort and that of Colo Dubois, which were respectively transmitted in your Excellency's favors of the 22d of April and 25 Ulto. It appears to me that Congress can best decide on the points they contain. The Commission from which Colo. Dubois claims rank, was obtained immediately from them in 1776. A Board of Officers could only report a state of facts already ascertained, by which it appears that Col. Dubois was in the first instance promoted over Officers of superior rank and equal merit. The confirming or revoking his appointment would ultimately rest with Congress. it is essential that the matter should

receive the earliest decision, as the Regiments these Gentlemen command, compose a part of the forces detached against the Indians, and I fear from the information I have received, their disputes may be very injurious to the service. I have the Honor, etc.28

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Middle Brook, June 3, 1779.

Sir: In the letter which I did myself the honor to

27. Contemporary copies of this memorial, which is dated May 8, 1779, are in the *Washington Papers* and the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

28. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

The letter was read in Congress on June 5, and it was resolved: “That Colonel Dubois rank…after Colonel Van Cortlandt and Colonel Gansevoort” and “That the commission of major, granted to Captain Prowell…be vacated….”

write to Your Excellency the 25th of May, I mentioned the appearances which indicated that the enemy had some important enterprise in contemplation. These appearances have since increased 'till they seem to have arrived at a very interesting crisis. The inclosed extracts from the intelligence I have successively received will shew their progress and the point at which they last stood.29

Congress will observe by General St. Clairs letter that he expected to reach Pompton last night. The Virginia division commanded by Lord Stirling marched yesterday for the same place. Baron De Kalb with the Maryland troops follow this morning. We shall press forward with all diligence and do every thing in our power to disappoint the enemy. I expect to set out this day towards the Highlands, by way of Morris Town. I mention the route that any dispatches coming from Congress may the more readily find me.

There are five brigades of Continental troops besides the two Carolina regiments under the Command of General McDougall.

At the first appearance of a movement among the enemy, I redoubled my efforts to put the army here in a state of readiness for taking the field. These have been seconded by the utmost exertions of the Quarter Master General; but the very great difficulty of procuring horses and waggons and the scarcity of forage have unavoidably retarded our preparations.

I beg leave to inclose an extract of a letter I have just received from General Gates of the 25 of May, on the very

29. Hamilton notes, on the draft, that these extracts “were from Hatfield's letter of the 29th May to Genl. McDougall From Col Clarks letters of 31st of May and June 1st General St Clairs of the 2d General McDougals two letters of the 1st of June.” Originals or contemporary copies of Hatfield's, Clark's of May 31, and an extract of St. Clairs of June 2 are in the *Washington Papers* and copies of all of them are in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

important subject of money. I entreat that Congress will be pleased to order him an immediate and adequate supply, as the necessity is urgent and it would be dangerous to risk a revival of the discontent which lately appeared among the troops at Providence for want of pay. It is also much to be desired, that he may be enabled to reinlist the men he mentions during the war. I have the honor, etc.30

30. In the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

Washington wrote again (at 9 p. m., June 3) to file President of Congress, inclosing newspapers stating that the British “Troops and fleet lately employed in Chesapeak bay have returned to New York.” This letter is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Ringwood Iron Works, June 6, 1779.

Sir: On the 3d I had the Honor to address Your Excellency from Middle Brook and Morris Town, and to transmit you all the intelligence I had then received, respecting the movements of the Enemy on the North River; and of the measures I had taken and was about to pursue in consequence. I am now to inform you, according to the advices I have obtained since, that on the 2d in the morning the Enemy opened a Battery on Stony point, which lies on the West side of the Hudson at the landing at Kings ferry, against a small detached works,59 which had been erected on Verplank's point on the East side, and kept up a constant fire upon it in conjunction with their Ships, till four OClock in the afternoon, when the party stationed in it, finding that it was also invested on the land side in force, surrendered by capitulation.60 The next day that part of the Enemy, which was landed on the East-side of the River, computed at Five thousand, advanced to the Bald Hill below the Continental village, when it was expected that they meant to attack our Troops in that quarter, and to gain if possible, Nelson's point opposite Fort Arnold,61 while Sir Henry Clinton with the remainder of the Army should proceed from Haverstraw bay against the Fort, by the routes on the West side. This however was not attempted, and the body of the Enemy that appeared before the village, returned without making

59. Ringwood Iron Works, the same as Ringwood, is in Passaic County, N. J., 30 miles northeast of Morristown and close to the New York line.

60. The British landed on both sides of the Hudson. Knyphausen was reported to command the troops on the west side, who moved against the small work on Stony Point. The fort on Verplanck's Point was called Fort Lafayette. This was garrisoned by a company of 70 men, commanded by Capt. Thomas Armstrong, of the Fifth North Carolina Regiment, who was compelled to surrender when cannonaded from Stony Point, by the British vessels in the river and also attacked on the land side by Sir Henry Clinton. A copy

of the capitulation terms is in the *Washington Papers*, and reads: “On the Glacis of Fort La Fayette, June 1st, 1779. His Excellency Genl. Sir Henry Clinton, and Commodore Sir Geo. Collier grant to the garrison of Fort La Fayette Terms of Safety to the Persons and Property (contained in the Fort) of the Garrison. they surrendering themselves Prisoners of war. The Officers shall be permitted to wear their Side Arms. John Andre, Aid de Camp.”

61. At West Point.

any Attack to the ground from which they had moved. The Enemy have remained since in two divisions on the opposite sides of the River. Their Vessels have generally fallen down below King's ferry, and twelve square rigged with Eight of smaller size and Fifteen flat-bottomed boats with Troops on board, stood down the River yesterday, and were seen till they turned the point which forms the upper part of Tapan bay. The rest of the fleet (the whole of which is reported to have consisted of about Seventy sail and a Hundred and fifty flat bottomed Boats great and small) keep their station, and the division of Troops on this side from the latest advices, were very industriously employed yesterday in fortifying Stony point; which from its peninsula and commanding form is naturally strong; and which from the narrowness of the neck which connects it to the Main, may be insulated and maintained without any very great difficulty. This Sir is a summary of the intelligence and of the situation of the Enemy.62

Their movements and conduct are very perplexing, and leave it difficult to determine what are their real Objects. However, as the posts in the Highlands are of infinite consequence and the points, in which we can be most essentialy injured, I shall take every measure in my power to provide for their security, and accordingly shall make such a disposition of the Army, as shall best promise to answer the end. If they should not operate against those posts, it would seem that one part of their expedition and a principal one, is to cut off the

62. This movement of Sir Henry Clinton was in justification of what he wrote in a letter to Lord Germain on May 22: “Is it to be supposed that I am not on the Watch to profit by

every favorable disposition in any quarter of this Continent, or to improve any Accidental advantage, of Circumstances. I am on the Spot, the Earliest and most exact intelligence on every point ought Naturally from my station to reach me, it is my interest as well as my duty more than any other person's living to inform myself minutely, and justly, of the particular Views, Connections, state, and temper of Every province; Nay of Every set of Men within the limits of my Command, and it is my business to mark every possible Change in their situation. Why then, My Lord without Consulting me, will you admit the ill digested or interested suggestions of people who cannot be Competent judges of the subject; and puzzle me by hinting wishes, with which I cannot agree, yet am loath to disregard. For God's sake, my Lord if you wish that I should do any thing leave me to myself, and let me adapt my efforts to the hourly change of Circumstances: If not rye me down to a Certain point, and take the risk of my Want of success.…I do not wish to be Captious, My Lord; but I Certainly have not had that attention paid to my wishes, and Satisfaction, which the weight of my Situation and the hopes which you held forth from me, gave me reason to Expect." Previously, in this same letter, Clinton had written: "After I had assumed the Command difficulty arose upon difficulty, I, Notwithstanding struggle thro' them, with a Zeal, and activity, which I think your Lordship Cannot arraign. This surely my Lord ought to have increased the Confidence which I was taught to believe was reposed in me: how mortified then must I be my Lord at finding Movements recommended for my debilitated Army which your Lordship never thought of suggesting to S.W. Howe when he was in his greatest force.…It is true your Lordship does not bind me down to the plan which you have sketched for the ensuing Campaign, your Lordship only recommends; but by that recommendation you secure the right of blaming me if I should adopt other Measures, and fail; and should I follow that System with success I appear to have no meritt but the bare Execution." Clinton's letter is in the British Transcripts in the Library of Congress, C. O. 5, 97, fol. 679

communication by the way of King's ferry, by establishing Garrisons. I have the Honor, etc.63

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Ringwood, June 6, 1779.

Gentlemen: I am this moment honored with your favour of the 2d instant. The arrangement of Proctor's corps cannot be confirmed as it now stands. The principles held up in my former letters on this subject are such as must be adhered to, and upon this plan only can I request the Board to issue Commissions. If Congress think proper, on account of incapacity in Major Holmer to promote Major Forrest it will be agreeable to me and I hope no disadvantage to the service. But Capt. Craig64 cannot in my opinion succeed him in the Majority of the regiment. The vacancy must be filled by the oldest captain in the corps of Artillery not in the particular regiment. On these conditions I shall be glad the Board will issue Commissions to the regiment; but it must be understood, that the relative rank of the Captains in the line of the Artillery is liable to a future discussion, agreeable to the rules that have hitherto governed, in the regiment it will be final. As it will be a loss of time and very inconvenient in the present state of

63. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

64. Capt. Isaac Craig, of the Fourth Continental Artillery. He was made major in May, 1781, and served to June, 1783.

things to make a further reference to me, I shall be obliged to the Board to have the arrangement fixed under the limitations here suggested. I have the honor, etc.65

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Smith's in the Clove, June 9, 1779.

Gentlemen: The hurried and moving state of the Army would not permit me the Honor before, of acknowledging your several favors of the 21st, 25th, 27th and 27th and 29th

Ulto. which were duly received. Your favors also of the 3, 4 and 5 Instant have come safe to hand.

I will obtain as soon as I can, the dates of the appointments of the Field Officers in the Pensylvania line, which have not been already ascertained, and the names of the Officers intitled to be promoted to the Lieutenant Colonelcies of the 5th and 20th. Regiments and Majority in the 7th and transmit the whole to the Board by file first opportunity.

The demand of Military Stores by General Clinton and Mr. Rensselaer97 was certainly exorbitant in the extreme and such as merited the animadversions the Board have made. I believe it originated with themselves and probably

65. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

97. Peter van Rensselaer. He was Commissary of Military Stores of the Continental Army at Albany, N.Y.

the local distance the General was from Head Quarters, led him to make a direct application to the Commissary of Stores, without the interposition of other authority. The Board's order to the Commissary and the arrangement of the Ordnance department, which they were pleased to send him, I hope will make him husband the stores with every degree of proper œconomy. A circumstance at all times necessary and in our situation indispensably requisite. I am really pained that our supplies of ammunition should be so miserably low, and trust that proper measures have been taken to place them on a more respectable footing.

The interpretation which the Board have given of the Resolution of the 15th of March,98 in their answer to Governor Livingston and the Honourable Mr. Camp,99 appears to be founded in great expediency and I should be happy if it were to obtain generally: but it seems to me that the letter of the Resolution at least, will easily countenance a different one, and I have not the smallest doubt, but that it will be readily adopted. I am

informed that the State of Connecticut, in their consideration of the Resolve gave it this construction and accordingly, computing the difference between the aggregate amount of their Battalion quotas and that of the Men in the field, including Artificers &c &c, have placed the deficiency for which they are to provide at little more than 600, altho' their Regiments want fourteen hundred to complete them. This too I should suppose was the sense of the Jersey Assembly at the time of their application, and I am inclined to think it will be the sense of the Assemblies in general.

98. This resolve provided that all officers, noncommissioned officers, and privates who entered the service after Sept. 16, 1776, for three years or during the war, not being a part of the 88 battalions, originally apportioned on the States, should be considered a part of the quota of the several States “to which they did or shall respectively belong when so commissioned or enlisted.”

99. Caleb Camp, of Morristown, N.J. He was a member of the New Jersey Legislature from Essex County.

The Infantry Battalions are the only troops that have been explictly required and apportioned on the States, and hence they do not consider themselves obliged to make provision for any other Corps, and under the Act of the 15th. of March, they apply all the Men engaged in them to the credit of their Batallion Complements. As this construction would have a very injurious operation, by greatly reducing the Regiments, it will be advisable for Congress to make an explanatory Resolve to prevent the mischief. In the instance of Jersey, this latter construction would take from her three Battalions, between three and four hundred Men, and in like manner a considerable number from the Battalions of the other States so that they would become a mere handful. If the men engaged in the Army for the War or three Years, not belonging to the Battalions assessed on the States, (no matter under what description) could be placed on such a footing as to receive a proportion of the Supplies furnished by the States from which they came, it

would remove the grounds of complaint, that have hitherto prevailed and which were the foundation of the Resolve.

I entertain a very favourable opinion of Captain Ryan, as an active, intelligent Officer and think with the Board, that he is capable of rendering good services and that there is something of singularity in his case. Yet as there are a thousand or at least a variety of instances in the Army where the plea of hardship might be urged, and as his arrangement in the line was conformable to the general system and his promotion

to a Majority before had given great uneasiness and been decided irregular, I cannot advise that he should obtain the Brevet which he solicits. It is true he solicits a Brevet to have a future operation, but this is unprecedented, or at least contrary to any thing I am acquainted with; and supposing for a moment that it is not, and that the granting it would not immediately affect the rights of Others, it would open a door for many applications of the same nature. If we were to examine all the hard cases in the Army, we should find that Captain Ryan's is far from standing alone and probably not among the first.

In a word, we are now struggling to reduce matters to some order and to get the better if possible, of the confusion which has unhappily prevailed; and it will be with the utmost caution, that I give my concurrence to any measure that may involve the smallest new inconveniences. Those that exist at present, are almost insupportable. The Board's information with respect to the Majors in the line not accepting the Offices of Brigade Inspector and Brigade Major is but too well founded. As yet they have not done it except in a few instances. However as it is of great importance that they should undertake them, I would wish the plan to remain unaltered for some time, that we may make a farther experiment. At the same time I would observe that it may be necessary for Congress to augment their pay forty four Dollars in addition to what they draw in their Regiments. This may be some inducement for them to accept and will not

more than compensate for the extensive and fatiguing duties they must undergo; and it seems the more reasonable as the Two Offices are united and the augmentation proposed will not exceed the extra pay allowed when they were discharged by Two persons.

With respect to Baylor's Regiment, I am at a loss to know what to say. If the Dragoons were remounted their services might be very essential; but as this is not the case, nor can it be effected at any rate, till the Campaign is far advanced and then only on terms of such exorbitancy, I cannot tell how to advise the measure. The Board will be pleased to consider of it, and to decide upon it, in such way as they may think will best promote the public interest.

The limited inlistments of the Troops, or at least of a part of them, and the approach of them towards their end, are certainly matters of very interesting concern, and such as should be provided for in time if it be possible. From the detached and divided situation of the Army at this time, a general state of the inlistments cannot be obtained; but this I should hope cannot operate any great inconvenience, as the Board will be able to derive information on the subject from the Muster Rolls, and to take their measures accordingly. However as the Pensylvania Troops are in Camp and also those from Maryland, among which it is said there are many inlistments “,” I will direct the Commanding Officers to have returns made lest the manner of the inlistments should

not have been explicitly stated in the Muster Rolls. But this must not be considered as an admission of the construction put upon them by the Soldiers, as that of the Officers must be supported. It is but very lately that I heard there was any uneasiness in the Pensylvania line upon this head, and took it for granted from the constant report of the Officers, that the only mode of inlistment was *during the War*. In the month of July August or Sepbr. last, I cannot tell which, (not having any of my papers or baggage with me) I called for a general state of the Inlistments of the Army, that I might inform Congress at what periods the troops would end their service, or at least those whose inlistments would expire by the opening of the present campaign; when the Pensylvanians were returned inlisted,

except in a very few, perhaps not more than four or five instances. The enormous bounties given by the States, Towns and by Individuals to Men for very short temporary services, are the source of the present discontents and of a thousand evils among the soldiery and as long as they continue to be given, so long will they excite dissatisfaction. They induce the soldier who has undergone a long service and who engaged for the War in the first instance on a very moderate bounty to reason upon his situation, and to draw a comparison between what he does not receive and the great emoluments Others get, and put him upon inventing means from which he will be able to derive the same advantages. And from this comparison and these considerations it is I am convinced, that most

of our desertions proceed, especially where the Men do not go to the Enemy. It would have been happy for us if State, Town and Substitute bounties, particularly the Two first had never been thought of, and it would be still fortunate, if they were to be entirely abolished.1 In consideration of the services of the Soldiers who engaged at an early period, to serve during the War, and the great disproportion between the bounties they received, and those given to Others for the service of a few Months, or perhaps not more than a Year at most, I have sometimes thought it might not be improper to give them, by way of gratuity and as an acknowledgement 100 Dollars, which, besides operating as a reward, might have a good effect and quiet their discontents. And perhaps some such expedient, attended with an explicit declaration that the money given was intirely as a gratuity, and to place them upon a more equal footing with respect to Other parts of the Army who had received greater bounties for shorter service they who stand engaged during the War, might compose the Soldiery in the Pensylva. line and those from Maryland, under the predicament the Board have mentioned. The measure if adopted, must be general as to all the Old soldiers inlisted for the War. There is however a powerful consideration opposed to it, the state of our Money, and the quantity the gratuities would require.2 The Board as I have observed, will by recurring to the Muster Rolls derive satisfactory information respecting the inlistments and from them they will

1. New Jersey granted a bounty of $250 to her recruits, which was in addition to the Continental bounty. Georgia gave a bounty of $300 for enlistments for the period of the war. Virginia offered $750, a suit of clothes yearly, and 100 acres of land, though the Continental bounty and clothing were deducted from this.

2. Congress voted, on June 22, a gratuity of $100 to those soldiers who had enlisted before Jan. 23, 1779.

be enabled to determine with tolerable accuracy what part of the present Army we shall have to depend on another Campaign and of course will consider of the steps necessary to be pursued for levying a New one.

I transmit again the arrangement of the New Hampshire line, and request that the Board will make out the Commissions as soon as they can agreable to it as the Officers are very importunate for them. There possibly may be some mistakes in it; if there are, they must be subject to future amendment and alteration. I also transmit an Arrangement of the Captains, Lieutenants and Ensigns in Spencers Regiment, and request Commissions for them. The Arrangement of the German Battallion is forwarded for the same purpose and the Board will return Commissions, as far as it can be done. I have the Honor, &c.

P.S. I request the Board will forward to the Inspector General, as speedily as possible a sufficient number of copies of the new regulations to supply the officers in general. We cannot put the business effectually in train till every officer has the regulations by which he is to be governed in his hand.

I also request the Board will be pleased to forward two or three complete sets of the Printed Journals of Congress as far as they have gone. These will be very useful to me.3

3. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The P.S. is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

To THE BOARD OF TREASURY

Smiths in the Clove, June 9, 1779.

Sir: I had several days ago the Honor to receive the Board's Letter of the 18th Ulto. which I should have acknowledged long since, if I had not been prevented by the hurried and moving state of the Army. I am persuaded, Mr. Auditor Johnston's4 report has but too much foundation and that many Officers have left the service without having previously settled their accounts. This however, has not been with my permission, and I have endeavoured to prevent it as far as it was in my power. I shall continue to do the same, and in all cases where I am applied to on the subject of resigning, proper certificates or information that the parties are not in debt, will be as they have been, insisted on as prerequisites to the measure. I will also issue orders upon the occasion. I have the honor, etc.5

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Smiths Clove, June 11, 1779.

Sir: I am honored with your Excellency's favours

4. James Johnston, Auditor of Accounts for the Continental Army.

5. The draft, which is addressed to James Duane, chairman of the Board of Treasury, is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

of the 4th and 5th, to which due attention shall be paid.

The enemy's situation remains much the same as mentioned in mine of the 6th. One body of about 5000 men is on Verplanks point and another of about 1000 on stony point. They continue fortifying and no doubt mean to keep possession of those posts. The natural strength of the ground with very little help of art will make them inaccessible to us in our

present circumstances. The advantages of holding them will be important to the enemy, the inconveniences to us great. It is a step to further operations against the forts. Our communication by Kings ferry, far the easiest, is at an end. The extent and difficulty of land transportation considerably increased, a new resort and sanctuary afforded to the disaffected in these parts of the country, and a new door opened to draw supplies distress and corrupt the inhabitants. Reasons which need not be explained put it out of my19 power to prevent it before hand or to remedy it now it has happened.

We have taken post for the present with the main body of the army in this Clove where we are as well situated as we could be any where else to succour the forts in case the future operations of the enemy should be directed against them.

The troops mentioned to have returned down the river on the 5th. are said to be principally the detachment that went to Virginia, which immediately on its arrival at New York had been hurried up the river and is now gone back to repose.

I devoutly wish a confirmation of the Southern

19. The draft, in the writing of Hamilton, has “our.”

news though I cannot but say my fears predominate so much time having elapsed.20

I have the honor, etc.21

To MICHAEL HILLEGAS23

Smiths in the Clove, June 11, 1779.

Sir: Some time since His Excellency the President of Congress did me the Honor to inform me that Congress had passed an Act authorizing the public Treasurer to pay to my order any sum of hard money not exceeding 2000 Guineas for the purposes of secret services. This I think was the substance of his letter as well as I can recollect it, for I have not my

papers with me. As I have now occasion for part, and a favourable opportunity offers, I request that you will be pleased to deliver to Major Des Espiniers24 Five hundred Guineas who will convey them to me, and whose receipt will be good for the same. I have the Honor, etc.25

20. See Washington's letter to the President of the Continental Congress, May 16, 1779, *ante*.

21. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade. The letter was read in Congress on June 16 and referred to Elbridge Gerry, John Armstrong, and Henry Laurens.

23. Treasurer of the United States.

24. Maj. Augustin Francois des Epiniers. He was aide to Baron Steuben; nephew to Baron de Beaumarchais; granted leave of absence for six months; returned to France in October, 1779.

On June 19 Hillegas delivered to Major Epiniers in Philadelphia 500 guineas, in specie. His letter of that date is in the *Washington Papers*.

25. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Smiths in the Clove, June 14, 1779.

Sir: On Saturday Evening I was honoured with Your Excellency's favor of the 7th Instant and with the papers to which it refers.

The intelligence from Carolina is very interesting as related, and I should hope from its coming through so many channels and from its being told so circumstantially, that it is not destitute of foundation.

I have nothing to communicate to your Excellency respecting the Enemy. They have made no movements since my Letter of the 11th and I believe their situation is the same that it was then. I have the Honour, etc. P.S. Your Excellency will be pleased to receive three New York papers. If we should be so happy as to receive a confirmation of the South Carolina News, when it is published I think it would be well for the Printer to subjoin the piece, inclosed in black lines in Rivingston's paper of the 9th.48

48. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Smiths in the Clove, June 21, 1779.

Gentn: Your favor of the 14th arrived at Hd. Qrs. about 10 O'Clock on the night of the 18th. but owing to my being absent at West point I did not receive it till yesterday. The Gentn. of the light horse of Philadelphia and Lieut. Col. White will have made report upon the subject of it. If any circumstances should occur indicating a design on the part of the enemy against Philadelphia, I shall communicate the earliest notice after they come to my knowledge. At present there is nothing that seems to point at such an enterprise. The Enemy remain nearly in the situation they were at Verplanks and Stoney Point.

I inclose the Board an Invoice of some cloathes in the hands of Mr. Hunter at Fredericksburg, which Genl. Woodford gave me yesterday, that they may direct them to be purchased; if they should think it necessary. I am, &c.

P.S. I return the Commission of Capt. Finney,87 it must be renewed and dated the 10th of Augt. 1776, which it seems is the time he succeeded to a company. I also return the memorial of Captain Keene,88 he is to be arranged in the 11th Pennsylvania, and his commission dated the 13th Jany. 1777. If he is in Philadelphia he should be directed to join the Regiment.89

87. Capt. Walter Finney, of the Tenth Pennsylvania Regiment. He was wounded at Green Springs, Va., in July, 1781; transferred to the Third Pennsylvania Regiment in January, 1783; transferred to the First Pennsylvania Regiment in June, 1783; served to November, 1783.

88. Capt. Lawrence Keene, of the Eleventh Pennsylvania Regiment. He was transferred to the Third Pennsylvania Regiment in January, 1781: and to the Second Pennsylvania Regiment in January, 1783, served to June, 1783.

89. The draft is in the writing of Richard Kidder Meade.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, New Windsor, June 23, 1779.

Sir: Two days since I removed my quarters to this place99

99. Thomas Ellison's house; not now standing. In Ruttenber's History of New Windsor (Newburgh: 1911) is a picture of this headquarters, and on page 72 is printed a note from Maj. Caleb Gibbs to Ellison on taking over the house for headquarters.

where I am more contiguous to the forts and best situated to attend to the different parts of the army. By my last advices the enemy at Kings ferry were embarking their baggage and some heavy cannon and preparing for a movement either up or down the river.

Your Excellency will find in the inclosed New York Gazette of the 19th two or three pieces of intelligence of a very disagreeable nature and with too much appearance of authenticity. There is a pretty wide difference between their representation of Southern affairs and ours. With very great respect etc.

P.S. Your favour of the 15th reached me yesterday. Lt. Smith1 must comply with his summons.2

To THE BOARD OF WAR

New Windsor, June 23, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have been honoured with Your favours of the 11th and 12th Instant. The point with respect to Monsr. Garanger shall be determined as soon as opportunity will permit.

I transmit the Board a general arrangement of the Officers in the York line to the Captains inclusive, and a

1. Lieut. James Smith, of the Fourth Continental Artillery. He was promoted to captain Lieutenant June 3, 1779, and served to June, 1783.

2. In the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

particular arrangement of each Regiment; also an Arrangement of the Field Officers in the Pensylvania line and of the 4th P. Regiment, upon which 'they will be pleased to issue Commissions. The promotion of Lt. Colo. Commandant Weissenfels took place on the resignation of Colo. Livingston;5 that of Lt. Colo. Commandant Win. Butler on that of Colo. Cadwallader and their Commissions must be dated accordingly. The Board will be able to inform themselves of the time in both cases, by recurring to the Journals of Congress. The date of Captain Tudor's6 Commission depends on the appointment of Colo. Stewart7 in 1776. as Aid de Camp to Genl Gates, which it seems cannot be now ascertained.

If Major Edwards8 is in Philadelphia he should be directed to join his Regiment. I have the honour, etc.9

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, New Windsor, June 25, 1779.

Gentlemen: I was last night honoured with Your favors of the 18 and 19 Instant.

I have directed the Commissary of Prisoners to permit Capt. Fetherston37 (I believe he was only a Lieutenant when taken) to go to New York on parole, subject to be recalled when ever we think

5. Col. Henry Beekman Livingston. He resigned in January, 1779.

6. Capt. George Tudor, of the Fourth Pennsylvania Regiment. He was made major of the Fifth Pennsylvania Regiment and retired in January, 1781.

7. Col. Walter Stewart, of the Second Pennsylvania Regiment. He was sub-inspector of the Continental Army in 1783, and served to end of the war.

8. Maj. Evans Edwards, of the Eleventh Pennsylvania Regiment. He was transferred to the Fourth Pennsylvania Regiment in January, 1781, and retired in January, 1783.

9. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

37. Capt. William Featherstone, of the 21st Foot, British Army.

proper, unless his absolute exchange is effected, which I would prefer.

I have examined and considered the petition of Captain Judd,38 and it appears to me, that his claim has no foundation. He has no right to precedence of the Officers arranged before him by the State, from the Majority he held in the Militia. The appointment of Officers was with the State, and they had an unquestionable right to promote any before him, who was only then introduced into the Army. Besides the Resolution of Congress of the 16

September 1776 which authorized this, those of the 24th. of November last are explicitly against his pretensions in every point of view. He must stand at the point of rank in which he was placed.

I return the Arrangement of Colo. Brodheads Regiment, which I suppose is generally right; However, as there are Two Lieutenants and the whole of the Ensigns of new appointments, it will be proper for the Board to have it approved in these instances by the State, previous to their issuing Commissions. Archibald Reed39 must be arranged before Alexander Graham,40 if these Commissions are dated, when the Vacancies to which they are appointed happened; there is an inconsistency as they now stand. Colo. Brodhead mentions that Captn. Swearingen41 and Lieut. Hardin42 intend to resign. I shall be very sorry if they do, as they are both exceeding good Officers, and particularly calculated as he observes, for a Frontier, desultory service; yet I do not know that any thing can be done for them, or that they have been injured in their promotion, indeed this

38. Capt. William Judd, of the Third Connecticut Regiment. He retired in January, 1781.

39. A lieutenant of the Eighth Pennsylvania Regiment. His resignation is dated Mar. 1, 1779.

40. Lieut. Alexander Graham, of the Eighth Pennsylvania Regiment. His resignation is dated Mar. 1, 1779.

41. Captain Van Swearingen, of the Eighth Pennsylvania Regiment. He had been wounded and taken prisoner at Stillwater, N. Y, in September, 1777; his resignation is dated August, 1779; was promoted to captain in the Kentucky Militia; killed at St. Clair's defeat in November, 1791.

42. Lieut. John Hardin, of the Eighth Pennsylvania Regiment. He served subsequently as brigadier general of Kentucky Militia, and was killed by Indians near Sandusky, Ohio, in 1791.

is not suggested. The Board will see the appointments of Colo. Brodhead and his two field Officers in the arrangement of the Field Officers transmitted in my letter of the 23d.

I am just now favoured with Your Letter of the 21st inclosing one from Mr. Pettingell43 of the Massachusetts line. The arrangement of this will be entered upon as soon as possible, when his case will be considered. The promotion he received from the State is remonstrated against by a number of their Officers, among whom there are Sixteen Field Officers. I believe I shall never have done with disputes of this sort, scarcely a day passes without applications on the subject. If in the course of events it should become necessary to levy New Troops on account of the expiration of the inlistments of the Old, I trust that some mode will be adopted, by which the Arrangements made and making, will be held inviolate. I have the honor, etc.

P.S. Captn. Judd's petition is dated 21st May 1779. It is probable that he is with the Army; but as he addressed the Board, he may expect an Answer from them. If Major Massie is in Philadelphia, The Board will be pleased to have the inclosed delivered to him; if not, they will return it.44

43. Capt. Joseph Pettingill, of the Ninth Massachusetts Regiment. He was made major in July, 1779; transferred to the First Massachusetts Regiment in January, 1779; served to November, 1783.

44. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, New Windsor, June 27, 1779.

Sir: It gives me infinite pain, that the circumstances of the service oblige me to trouble Congress with a frequent repetition of the same subjects. But every hour distracts my attention with fresh instances of the inconveniences, that result from the want of system in

a department which I have frequently mentioned. These compel me again to entreat that Congress will be pleased to take decisive measures to extricate it from the confusion in which it is involved.

I am at a loss to know to whom I am to address myself, as head of the Clothier's department. Every deputy seems to act by a separate and independent authority. There seems to be no person to take a general superintendency, to apportion the stock in hand to the different parts of the Army, their numbers and wants; and to preserve a common rule in the mode of delivery. For want of this, while the troops at one post are amply supplied, those at another are suffering the greatest distress. The pleasure of the commanding Officer is the only standard by which the supplies are regulated; and it has sometimes happened that particular officers either more attentive to the accommodation of the troops under their immediate command, than to the general convenience of the service, or unacquainted with the state of our

resources, have taken steps of a very exceptionable nature for supplying their particular commands at the expence of the Army at large. Even the officers at some posts have been liberally furnished either from the public stores or from private ones by orders on public agents to pay for them, while those at others have seen their most pressing applications rejected. For my own part, as there was no regular provision made, adequate to the wants of the officers in general, I have been deaf to their importunities, even when there have been a few articles in store. Congress will easily perceive how a discrimination of this kind must operate, and will feel the necessity of adopting some plan that will make the distributions more equal and uniform. This can only be done by having a proper head and a regular subordination throughout the members with general regulations for the management of the department. I request to be informed if Mr. Mease is continued Clothier General.

The situation of the Sixteen additional regiments has been all along the most disagreeable that can be immagined. They have been destitute of every advantage the other troops

have enjoyed. The resignations from the extreme necessities of the Officers have been numerous and the spirit of resigning is now become almost universal. Every expedient that could operate upon their hopes their patriotism or their honor has been exhausted. The Regiments for want of a sufficient number of officers and for want of zeal in the few that remain are dwindling to nothing. Several of those, Gentlemen of sentiment and much attached to the service,

lately waited upon me to represent their case. They stated their sufferings in terms the most affecting and supported by facts that could not be questioned. Their expressions of regret at finding themselves obliged to quit the Army had every appearance of genuineness. I prevailed upon them with great difficulty to suspend their determination a little longer to see whether some measures would not be adopted in their favour.

The resolve of the 15th. March has hitherto had no operation nor will it in all probability answer the purpose for which it was intended. If the States should even interest themselves in behalf of these Regiments, the mixture of different men from different States in the same Corps will make the supply very troublesome and precarious. I see no alternative but this, either Congress must make a special provision for them or they must in a little time gradually dissolve. The Cavalry and part of the artillery are upon a similar establishment.

I am informed that some cloathing has been lately provided on Continental account for the Officers and are coming on to the Army, though I have had no regular information on the subject. If this should be true, it is requisite some particular direction should be given for their distribution; I shall be glad to receive the commands of Congress on the subject.

I have frequent applications from the officers for allowances of spirits, supported by a plea that it is done elsewhere. I am informed that the officers at Providence are supplied

with rum at the rate of [Nine Shilgs.] pt. gallon. I think it highly reasonable and necessary, that they should be supplied at a moderate rate proportioned to their pay; but as there

is no proper authority for doing it, I do not think myself at liberty to adopt the measure; at the same time I should be happy to see so reasonable a request gratified, and the whole put upon an equal footing by some general regulation. They cannot possibly furnish themselves otherwise. If Congress should think proper to direct any allowance of this kind, it will perhaps be expedient to make it conditional, to be given when the stock in store will permit and liable to be suspended by the commanding Officer. My situation as the affair now stands is delicate and disagreeable. The Officers of this Army will not be satisfied with less indulgence than is enjoyed by those of the other troops. They may view the refusal on my part as too punctilious and rigid. This concurs with other reasons to make me anxious, a speedy determination should take place either to make the allowance general or prevent it every where.

I was duly honored with your Excellency's favour of the 2oth. Previous to the receipt of it, in consequence of a Letter from the Board of War, I had directed The Commissary of Prisoners to send Capt. Featherstone into New York on parole till recalled or exchanged. He is to be considered as Lieutenant as it has all along been an admitted principle that the rank at the time of capture should govern. With the greatest respect etc.

P.S. At or near the time the resolve of Congress was past for the establishment of the Inspectorship, another resolve was past, to the best of my recollection, providing for the former Brigade Majors, as Aide de Camps to the Brigadiers, and allowing the Brigadiers where they were not supplied in this manner to take Aide de Camps from the line. As I do not find these regulations among my papers, I am obliged to trouble Your Excellency with a request to forward me a copy.55

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New Windsor, July 1, 1779.

Sir: I had the Honor yesterday to receive Your Excellency's Letter of the 24th Ulto. I have ever taken all the pains in my power to prevent plundering, and the practice has

been constantly reprobated and prohibited by my Orders. I will continue to use my best endeavours to suppress it.

I transmit a Copy of a Letter of the 25th and of Two Reports which I received yesterday from General Gates, advising that a number of Vessels with Troops, had left Newport and directed their course up the Sound. It is difficult to tell what are the Objects Sir Henry Clinton has in view; possibly he means to concentre his force in the first instance, or to send a Reinforcement to the

55. In the writing of Caleb Gibbs. The words in brackets are in the writing of Washington. This letter was read in Congress on July 6 and referred to the Committee of Conference.

Southward. The Troops have fallen down from Verplank's and Stoney points to Philips's, except such Garrisons as are necessary to occupy the Works at those places, I am pursuing every means in my power to forward the defences at West point.

As several very respectable Officers have undertaken the important and extensive duties of Sub and Brigade Inspectors, it is thought both just and politick in order to induce them to continue, as well as to engage Others of weight and character in the business, that the Sub Inspectors should be allowed three rations per day and forage for three Horses, and those of Brigade Two Rations per day and forage for the same number of Horses, in lieu of all former rations and forage, both as Officers in the line and as Inspectors. They have applied for this. Their allowance of subsistence as Officers in the line to remain the 2same. There were some Other privileges which they requested, and which, being reasonable and within my authority, I have granted. The allowances of Rations and Forage must be decided by Congress. As I have observed they appear necessary, and in the latter case indispensible. I have the Honor etc.79

79. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The letter was read in Congress on July 5 and referred to the Board of War The draft, also in Harrison's writing, shows that, as first written, this letter ended at the word “West point.” The draft also has a P.S., not in the

letter sent, as follows: “We are very anxious to hear some official Accounts, or such as are deemed authentic respecting our Affairs in South Carolina.”

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New Windsor, July 9, 1779.

Sir: On the 1st Instant I transmitted Your Excellency a Copy of a Letter I had received from General Gates, advising that a number of Vessels with Troops, had left Newport and directed their course up the Sound. I had previously on the 27th, from the intelligence obtained through different Channels that the Enemy intended to draw a part or the whole of their Troops from Rhode Island, requested him in case of the former event, to detach a proportionable part of his force to this Army, and of the latter to march himself with the whole of it. Upon receiving General Gates's Letter of the 25th, which ascertained the sailing of part of the Enemy's force from Newport I wrote him, if he had not detached any troops from his command in consequence of my requisition of the 27th, and if the detachment of the Enemy which he had mentioned to have sailed, had not returned or were not acting in his vicinity, to dispatch Glovers Brigade. I was induced to these measures from a view of the comparative strength of the two Armies in this Quarter, from the precarious if not dangerous situation Our's would be in, if the Enemy's should be reinforced, without an equal augmentation on our part; from a strong probability that they had some serious attempt in contemplation this way; and from the little prospect after such a diminution of their force there, of their acting otherwise than

defensively in that Quarter, or of General Gates's being able to act offensively against them, if no part of his command were withdrawn. The detachment from Newport disembarked at White Stone and according to some accounts came as far as Hell gate.

On the 4th, the Enemy embarked a body of Troops at Frog's neck on the sound, consisting from the best information, of Grenadiers, Light Infantry and a few Hessians amounting to about Eighteen Hundred, tho some accounts make them more, and proceeded Eastward.

I did not receive intelligence of this, till the afternoon of the 7th, having been absent from Head Quarters from the morning of the preceding day on a visit to our out posts below, and those lately established by the Enemy, when, from an apprehension that they might intend a sudden incursion into the State of Connecticut, I dispatched an Express to His Excellency Governor Trumbull, and to the Commanding Officer of Glover's Brigade, advising them of the movement, and directing the latter to proceed by some rout not far from the Sound, that he might with greater facility form a junction with the Militia, and co-operate with them in case the Enemy should make a descent. I have not yet heard what is the Object of this party; but we have it by report, that they have landed at New Haven, and most probably for the purposes of plundering and perhaps burning, as these appear to form a considerable part of their present system of War. Besides plundering and burning, another object may be to distress and injure the harvest, by alarming the Militia and calling them out for the protection of the Coast.

Inclosed Your Excellency will receive a Copy of a Letter50 from Colo. Sheldon to General Heath, containing an account of a skirmish between a detachment of his Regiment, and a body of the Enemy's Horse on the morning of the 2d near Bedford; and of their destroying a meeting and two or three dwelling Houses.51

The main body of the Enemy at present is at and in the vicinity of Philipsburg. At Verplanks and Stoney points, they have sufficient Garrisons to occupy the Works, which appear from a near view, to be very strong, particularly those on the latter. I am exceedingly mortified that the circumstances of the Army in respect to numbers, oblige me to a mere defensive plan, and will not suffer me to pursue such measures as the public good may seem to require, and the public expectation to demand. I hope it will be remembered that the Army has been diminished by the expiration of the term of service of a number of the Troops; that it is daily lessening from the same cause; that a considerable part of our remaining force is detached upon the Western expedition, and that scarcely a single man has taken

the field from any of the States, except from New York and Virginia, and that these are employed in Other Quarters.

I have been honoured with your Excellency's Letter of the 30th Ulto. and with the several papers to which it refers.

The situation of Affairs will not permit Doctor Shippens trial to be entered upon for some time. General Arnolds will of course precede it, which has hither to been and is yet necessarily

50. A copy of Sheldon's letter to Gen. William Heath (July 3), from Salem, is filed with the letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

51. British dragoons, numbering between 200 and 300, attacked Sheldon's detachment of 90 at Pound Ridge Meeting House and forced them to retreat. Reenforced by militia, Sheldon, in turn, pursued the enemy to North Castle Church. Tarleton, who commanded the British, reported his loss at one killed and one wounded; Sheldon reported the British loss at one killed, four prisoners, four horses taken, and one wounded. His own loss was eight wounded and four horses and men missing. Benjamin Hays's house at Bedford and the house belonging to Maj. James Lockwood were burned by the British.

suspended.

From the small exertions that have been made, I have but little hopes, that the Batallions will be filled or even made respectable, tho it is a matter infinitely interesting. The business unhappily has been taken up so late by the particular States, that the Levies, or Recruits which may be raised, will not be of half the service they ought. Instead of being in the field at the opening of the Campaign, they will not join till towards the close, or at least before the middle of it, and the greater part of their time will be in Winter Quarters. I have the Honor, &c.

P.S. Since writing the above I have received a Letter from Govr. Trumbull respecting the Detachment of the Enemy which went up the Sound, of which I inclose your Excellency a Copy.52 I have also heard that the Enemy reimbarked at New Haven, and have relanded at Fairfield. I have directed Glover's Brigade to halt in Connecticut at this interesting Crisis till farther Orders.53

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, New Windsor, July 11, 1779.

Gentlemen: I am this morning honored with your letters of the 3d and 8th. I am happy to hear a reinforcement of cannon is coming on which is very important and was much wanted. The unmounted

52. A copy of Trumbull's letter, dated July 10, 1779, is filed with the letter of Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. It recounts the forays of the British. the burning of Fairfield, and the attempt on New Haven. One of the printed broadsides of Collier's and Tryon's address also accompanies this Washington letter. As Trumbull's letter is dated July 10, Washington's could not have been despatched to Congress until after that date.

53. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The letter was read in Congress on July 13, and referred to Henry Marchant, Samuel Huntington, and John Armstrong.

cannon had best be sent on slung upon waggon wheels; then carriages to follow as fast as they are ready. I recommend this because the transportation of the cannon will be adviseable for the Board to continue their exertions to follow with greater expedition and time will be saved upon the whole. Besides this, orders have been given in this quarter to construct a number of carriages for the use of the fort and perhaps we may have some towards mounting these. But it will be adviseable for the Board to continue their exertions to have the others provided as speedily as possible, as there is no probability of our having more than are sufficient. Garrison carriages which I presume are the same with

Ship carriages will be preferable to the travelling field carriages, which are more easily dismounted and are therefore seldom used in works. Will it not be adviseable to take the eight pieces off the travelling carriages and send them slung as before mentioned? Their carriages would otherwise be much injured by transporting them so great a distance and through this rough country.

I think it will be proper to detain the two 24s for the defence of the Delaware. I shall have the return required prepared and forwarded to the Board without delay. The three eighteens from Maryland are arrived. With the greatest respect etc.76

76. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

New Windsor, July 13, 1779.

Sir: In my Letter of the 9th, which I had the honor of addressing to Your Excellency, I informed you of the proceedings and ravages of the Enemy on the Sound till that time, as far as I had been advised. I now take the liberty to transmit an Extract of a Letter of the 10th (No. 1.) from Governor Trumbull, and of the same date (No. 2) from General Parsons,22 by which Your Excellency will find that they have burnt Fairfield. I also transmit Sir George Collier and Major General Tryon's address to the Inhabitants of Connecticut23 delivered at the time and a Copy of Colo Whiting's Answer. The Enemy's devastations do not stop here; as you will perceive by the Inclosure No. 3 (an Extract of a Letter from Genl Parsons of the 11th) announcing the destruction of Norwalk.24 In the several descents made by the Enemy, the Militia from the Accounts I have received considering their number and the sudden manner in which they assembled, acquitted themselves with great spirit. Besides the measures taken with respect to Glover's Brigade, of which I advised Your Excellency; on the 10th as soon as I heard that a body of the Enemy were moving towards Horseneck, I sent orders to Major General Heath, who lay in the Highlands on the East side of the River, to march that way, as early as possible the next morning with

the Two Connecticut Brigades, on the route by Crompond, Bedford or Ridgefield as circumstances might point out; and to give every aid and countenance, consistent with

22. Copies of Trumbull's and Parsons's letters of Juls' 10 are filed with this letter of Washington's in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

23. A broadside of this address is filed with Washington's letter.

24. This extract it also filed as above.

prudence, to the Militia to repress their depredations. I have requested General Parsons to fix their extent with as much precision as he can. If it is practicable, it seems to me, high time to retaliate by destroying some of their Towns.

I must take the liberty to request that an early supply of money may be sent to the Deputy Pay Master General, for paying the gratuity of 100 Dollars to the Soldiers. From the great uneasiness prevailing among many of the Pensylvania Troops and frequent desertions, occasioned in great measure by the exorbitant bounties given by some of the States for short and temporary services, and which must encrease with the practice, I have been obliged to draw on the Military Chest for a very large sum to pay the gratuity, in hopes that it might have a favourable influence. This may occasion some deficiency of money even for discharging the Regimental demands to the last of May, the latest period to which any Warrants have been drawn; and possibly delaying the gratuity from other parts of the Army, entitled to it, may excite some degree of uneasiness. I cannot tell at this time, for what number of Men to estimate the supply that will be necessary; but no inconvenience will result from a more than ample provision, as the balance in such case will answer other purposes. It may be pretty well ascertained from the Muster Rolls, which, I believe, are deposited with the Treasury Board.

½ past 9 OClock P M

I this minute returned from the Fort and the posts

below when I had the Honor to receive your Excellency's Letter of the 9th. with the papers to which it refers. I have also to inform you that by a Letter from General Heath of the 12th just come to hand, the Enemy have burnt Bedford. I have the Honor, etc.25

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, New Windsor, July 16, ½ after 9 o'C A.M. 1779.

Sir: I have the pleasure to transmit Your Excy the inclosed Copy of a Letter from Brigadier Genl. Wayne,49 which this moment came to hand. I congratulate Congress upon our success, and what makes it still more agreable from the report of Captn Fishbourn50 who brought me Genl. Wayne's Letter, the post was gained with but very inconsiderable loss on our part. As soon as I receive a particular account of the affair, I shall transmit it. I have the Honor, etc.51

25. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The letter was read in Congress on July 19 and referred to Gouverneur Morris, William Carmichael, and William Whipple.

49. The original of this letter from Wayne is in the *Washington Papers*.

50. Capt. Benjamin Fishbourne, of the Fourth Pennsylvania Regiment. He was aide to Wayne and served to June, 1783.

51. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The original is not found in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. In Hazard's *Register of Penna*., vol. 4, P. 54, this letter is printed with a P.S.: “Gen, Wayne received a slight wound in the head with a musket ball, but it did not prevent him from going on with the troops.”

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, New Windsor, July 20, 1779.

Sir: I have had the honor to receive your Excellency's letter of the 13th, with the copies of the letters to which it refers. The British Cabinet may have planned the expedition which Messrs. Lee80 and Johnson81 mention, but I cannot think that it will ever be executed. Perhaps the orders upon the occasion, were not so pointed as not to be dispensed with; and that the late expedition up the Sound was adopted as more eligible. If the plan however is pursued, Congress may rely, that I shall use my best endeavours to defeat it, or to avail myself of any opportunities it may give of distressing the enemy. I have the honor, etc.82

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, New Windsor, July 21, 1779.83

Sir: On the 16th instant, I had the honor to inform Congress of a successful attack upon the enemy's post at Stoney

80. Arthur Lee.

81. Joshua Johnson.

82. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade.

83. The draft is dated July 20, 1779.

Point, on the preceding night, by Brigadier General Wayne and the corps of light infantry under his command. The ulterior operations in which we have been engaged, have hitherto put it out of my power to transmit the particulars of this interesting event. They will now be found in the inclosed report, which I have received from General Wayne.84 To the encomiums he has deservedly bestowed on the officers and men under his command, it gives me pleasure to add that his own conduct, throughout the whole of this arduous

enterprise, merits the warmest approbation of Congress. He improved upon the plan recommended by me and executed it in a manner that does signal honor to his judgment and to his bravery. In a critical moment of the assault he received a flesh wound in the head with a musket-ball; but continued leading on his men with unshaken firmness.

I now beg leave for the private satisfaction of Congress, to explain the motives which induced me to direct the attempt. In my former letters I pointed out the advantages which the enemy derived from the possession of this post and the one on the opposite side, and the inconveniences resulting from it to us. To deprive them of the former and remove the latter were sufficient inducements to endeavour to dispossess them. The necessity of doing something to satisfy the expectations of the people and reconcile them to the defensive plan we are obliged to pursue, and to the apparent inactivity, which our situation imposes upon us. The value of the acquisition in itself, with respect to the men, artillery and stores which composed the garrison; the effect it would have upon the successive operations of the campaign and the check it would give

84. The original of this, dated July 17, 1779, is in the *Washington Papers*.

to the depredations of the enemy at the present season: All these motives concurred to determine me to the undertaking. The certain advantages of success, even if not so extensive as might be wished, would at all events be very important; the probable disadvantages of a failure were comparitively inconsiderable, and on the plan that was adopted could amount to little more, than the loss of a small number of men.

After reconnoitring the post myself and collecting all the information I could get of its strength and situation, I found, that without hazarding a greater loss than we were able to afford and with less likelihood of success, the attempt to carry it could only be by way of surprise. I therefore resolved upon this mode and gave my instructions accordingly, as contained in No. 2..85 In hopes that Verplanks point, might fall in consequence of the reduction of the other, dispositions were made for the purpose, which unluckily did

not succeed. The evening appointed for the attack, I directed Major General McDougall to put two Brigades under marching orders to be moved down towards Vet Planks as soon as he should receive intelligence of the success of the attempt on this side, and requested General Wayne to let his despatches to me pass through General McDougall, that he might have the earliest advice of the event. But, through some misconception, they came directly on to Head Quarters, which occasioned a loss of several hours. The next morning Major General Howe was sent to take the command of those troops, with orders to advance to the vicinity of the enemys works

85. A copy of Washington's letter to Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne, July 10, 1779, *q. v*., is filed with this letter to Congress in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

and open batteries against them. It was hoped, that this might either awe them into a surrender under the impressions of what had happened on the other side or prepare the way for an assault. But some accidental delays in bringing on the heavy cannon and intrenching tools necessary for an operation of this kind, unavoidably retarded its execution, till the approach of the enemy's main body had made it too late. General Howe to avoid being intercepted found himself under a necessity of relinquishing his project and retiring to a place of security. I did not unite the two attacks at the same time and in the same manner, because this would have rendered the enterprise more complex, more liable to suspicion and less likely success, for want of an exact cooperation, which could hardly have been expected.

When I came to examine the post at Stoney point, I found it would require more men to maintain it than we could afford, without incapacitating the army for other operations. In the opinion of the Engineer, corresponding with my own and that of all the general officers present, not less than 1500 men would be requisite for its complete defence. And from the nature of the works, which were open towards the River, a great deal of labour and expence must have been incurred and much time employed to make them defensible by us. The enemy, depending on their shipping to protect the rear had constructed the works

solely against an attack by land. We should have had to apprehend equally an attack by water and must have inclosed the post. While we were doing this, the whole army must have been in the vicinity exposed to the risk of a general action, on terms

which it would not be our interest to court, and out of reach to assist in carrying on the fortifications at West Point, or to support them in case of necessity. These considerations made it an unanimous sentiment to evacuate the post, remove the cannon and stores and destroy the works; which was accomplished on the night of the 18th., one piece of heavy cannon only excepted. For want of proper tackling within reach to transport the cannon by land, we were obliged to send them to the fort by water. The movements of the enemys vessels created some uneasiness on their account and induced me to keep one of the pieces, for their protection, which finally could not be brought off, without risking more for its preservation, than it was worth. We also lost a Galley which was ordered down to cover the boats. She got under way, on her return, the afternoon of the 18th. The enemy began a severe and continued cannonade upon her, from which having received some injury, which disabled her for proceeding, she was run a shore. Not being able to get her afloat, 'till late in the flood tide and one or two of the enemy's vessels, under favour of the night having passed above her, she was set on fire and blown up.

Disappointed in our attempt on the other side, we may lose some of the principal advantages hoped for, from the undertaking. The enemy may reestablish the post at Stoney point and still continue to interrupt that communication. Had both places been carried, though we should not have been able to occupy them ourselves, there is great reason to believe, the enemy

would hardly have mutilated their main body a second time and gone through the same trouble to regain possession of posts where they had been so unfortunate. But though we may not reap all the benefits which might have followed, those we do reap are very important. The diminution of their force by the loss of so many men will be felt in their present circumstances. The artillery and stores will be a valuable acquisition to us,

especially in our scarcity of heavy cannon for the forts. The event will have a good effect upon the minds of the people, give our troops greater confidence in themselves and depress the spirits of the enemy proportionably. If they resolve to reestablish the post, they must keep their force collected for the purpose. This will serve to confine their ravages within a narrower compass and to a part of the country already exhausted. They must lose part of the remainder of the campaign in rebuilding the works, and when they have left a garrison for its defence, their main body by being lessened must act with so much the less energy and so much the greater caution.

They have now brought their whole force up the River and yesterday landed a body at Stoney point. It is supposed not impossible that General Clinton may endeavour to retaliate by a stroke upon West Point and his having stript New York as bare as possible and brought up a number of small boats are circumstances that give a color to the surmise. Though all this may very well be resolved into different motives, prudence requires that our dispositions should have immediate reference to

the security of this post; and I have therefore drawn our force together, so as that the whole could act in its defence, on an emergency. Tomorrow, I remove my own Quarters to the Fort.

It is probable Congress will be pleased to bestow some marks of consideration upon those officers who distinguished themselves upon this occasion. Every officer and man of the corps deserves great credit; but there were particular ones whose situation placed them foremost in danger and made their conduct most conspicuous. Lt. Col. Fleury and Major Steward86 commanded the two attacks. Lieutenants Gibbons87 and Knox88 commanded the advanced parties or *forlorn hopes* ;89 and all acquitted themselves as well as it was possible. These officers have a claim to be more particularly noticed. In any other service, promotion would be the proper reward, but in ours it would be injurious. I take the liberty to recommend in preference some honorary present, especially to the field officers. A

brevet captaincy to the other two (as it will have no operation in regimental rank) may not be amiss.

Congress will perceive that some pecuniary rewards were promised by General Wayne to his corps. This was done with my concurrence; and in addition to them, as a greater incitement to their exertion, they were also promised the benefit of whatever was taken in the fort. The artillery and stores are converted to the use of the public; but in compliance with my engagements, it will be necessary to have them appraised and the amount paid to the captors, in money. I hope my conduct in this instance will

86. Maj. John Stewart (Steward), of the Second Maryland Regiment. He was presented with a silver medal by Congress.

87. Lieut. James Gibbons, of the Sixth Pennsylvania Regiment. He was aide to General Irvine in 1779; brevetted captain by Congress, July 26, 1779, for bravery at Stony Point; resigned in May, 1781.

88. Lieut. George Knox, of the Ninth Pennsylvania Regiment. He was brevetted captain by Congress on July 26, 1779, for bravery at Stony Point, and resigned in April, 1780.

89. So called from being the advance party, the first to attack, and therefore having only a forlorn hope of coming through alive.

not be disapproved. Mr. Archer who will have the honor of delivering these despatches is a volunteer Aide to General Wayne and a Gentleman of merit. His zeal, activity and spirit are conspicuous upon every occasion. I have the honor, etc.

P.S. Congress may possibly be at a loss what to do with Mr. Archer. A captain's brevet or commission in the army at large, will be equal to his wishes; and he deserves encouragement on every account. Lest there should be any misapprehension as to what is mentioned about the manner of sending dispatches through General McDougall, I beg

leave to be more explicit. I directed General Wayne [when he marched of his ground] to send his dispatches in the first instance to the officer of his baggage guard left at the incampment from which he marched who was to inform his messenger where I was to be found. I left word with this officer to forward the Messenger to General McDougall and I desired General McDougall to open the dispatches. The Messenger who was Capt. Fishburn, came directly on, either through misconception in General Wayne, in the officer of the guard, or in himself.

I forgot to mention that two flags and two standards were taken the former belonging to the Garrison and the latter to the 17th Regiment. These shall be sent to Congress by the first convenient opportunity.90

90. In the writing of Alexander Hamilton. The phrase in brackets was interpolated by Washington.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, West point, July 22, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have now to acknowledge the Honor of your Several Letters of the 28th Ulto. and of the 10th. 11th. 14th and 15th Instant with the several papers and Commissions to which they refer.

With respect to the Baron De Geismar's application, I should be very happy to have his Exchange effected; both because it has been uniformly my wish to promote exchanges, and because it would give me pleasure to accommodate the Baron in his peculiar circumstances; but I do not hold myself authorized to indulge him with his parole to return to Germany, which is one part of his request. I wrote to Colo Bland to this effect on the 28th Ulto. and that I would direct our Commissary of prisoners to make a proposal for his exchange, which I have done. What will be the result I cannot tell. If his exchange cannot

take place, Congress alone can grant his request to return to Germany, if they should deem the measure eligible. I inclose the papers containing his application.

With respect to the promotion of Field Officers in the line of the 16 Additional Regiments, I am at some loss to determine how it should be made. Before their reduction and incorporation, and at a time when there was some prospect that the whole would continue, A Board of Genl Officers were of opinion

upon the question being put, that it would be best to consider them as forming a particular line and for the Officers to be promoted accordingly. I do not however recollect that any promotions took place, while they remained in this situation, and perhaps it may be best as the line is reduced and several Regiments are incorporated into one, that they should be Regimental. There is an instance in which it has been so. If the Board please they may appoint Capn. Burrows9 to the Majority in Spencers.

I will ascertain the number of Men of which Captn McLane's Troop is to consist, and appoint such Officers as may be necessary agreeable to the Resolution transmitted.

By a Letter of the 9th Inst. from His Excellency Governor Johnson of Maryland, I find the Council has confirmed the appointments of the Four Officers, mentioned in my Letter to the Board of the 30th of May. A Copy of the Council's proceedings is inclosed, and I have to request, that Commissions may be made out accordingly.

The Board in their Letter of the 19th of June mention, that among the Other printed resolves of Congress transmitted me, they had sent Three setts of Vol 3d. These never came to hand; and as I could not find them on immediate inquiry after the Others arrived, I conclude they were omitted to be put up thro' some accident. They will be pleased to forward them to me by the first Opportunity.

I transmit the Board Returns of part of the 16 Additional Batallions and Corps not attached to the lines of

9. Capt. John Burrowes, of Spencer's Additional Continental regiment. He was made major in July, 1779, and retired in January, 1781.

particular States, agreable to the Resolution of the 15th of March. I have, &c.

P.S. I thank the Board for the Carolina Intelligence. Return alluded to: Hazens, Spalding's Indept. Co., Warners, Sherburns, Colo James Livingstons, Whitcombs, Jacksons.10

To JOHN PENN

West point, July 22, 1779.

Sir: I have received Your favor of the 12th Instant. I was exceedingly sorry for Major Taylor's15 resignation, and used my interest to dissuade him from it, as I deemed him a valuable Officer, capable of rendering his Country good service. But the Major having resigned, I do not see how he can be reintroduced, more especially after so long an absence. Attempts of this sort when they have succeeded, tho the instances are few in which they have never failed to excite great uneasiness and to produce some Resignations. Indeed it is natural enough that this should be the case, as the moment an Officer resigns his Commission, there is a sort of successional right vested in some Other, and to make it give way for the readmission of the party who resigned, when ever it suits him to return, is certainly an injury and a bad encouragement to perseverance. If the vacancy is filled by a

10. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

15. Maj. John Taylor, of the Second Canadian Regiment. He had resigned in February, 1779.

Commission it is absolutely impracticable. I have the Honor etc.16

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West Point, July 24, 1779.

Sir: Since the letter which I had the honor of writing you the 20th instant, I have received your Excellency's of the 15th and shall pay due attention to the contents.

After two or three landings and reimbarkations, the enemy on the morning of the 21st seem to have repossessed Stony Point in earnest and have been since fortifying with great industry. We have received intelligence of a very considerable embarkation near Tarry-town. General Clinton is said to command in person, the troops, and Sr George Collier, the fleet. The shipping fell down the River on the afternoon of the 22d. We have no other intimation of the design than the mere report of some deserters, who say that Baltimore was rumoured among themselves to be the place of destination. General Glover stationed at Ridgefield writes me that on the evening of the 21st, forty sail of vessels, four of which appeared to be large ships, passed by Norwalk, steering an Eastern course. Time alone must develope the objects of these different movements. I have the honor, &c.23

16. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

23. In the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

July 25, 1779.

Sir: Lt Col Fleury having communicated to me his intention to return to France at the present juncture on some matters interesting to himself, I have thought proper to give him this letter to testify to Congress the favourable opinion I entertain of his conduct. The marks of their approbation which he received on a former occasion have been amply justified by all his subsequent behaviour. He has signalized himself in more than one

instance since; and in the late assault of Stoney point commanded one of the attacks, was the first that entered the enemys works and struck the British flagg (as reported by General Wayne) with his own hand. It is but justice to him to declare, that in the different stations in which he has been employed, he has rendered services of real utility and has acquitted himself in every respect as an officer of distinguished merit, one whose talents zeal activity and bravery alike intitle him to particular notice.

He has intimated to me his desire to obtain a furlough for a few months. I doubt not Congress will be disposed to grant him every indulgence which can be done with propriety. I have the honor, etc.50

50. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, West Point, July 25, 1779.

Gentlemen: I am honored with your two letters of the 15th and 16th. I am very happy to learn the Board have adopted the salutary expedient they mention for reparing the men's cloaths and shoes. Something of this kind has been long wanting; and I hope the present plan will answer very valuable purposes, save much expence to the public and conduce greatly to the comfort and decency of the troops. An extra allowance to the men employed in this way is necessary. That which the Board proposes, considering the depreciation of the money is not too much, and I hope it will not be so great as to occasion any discontent among the other soldiery. Perhaps it may not be amiss to confine it to working days.

The provision of buckels will also be very useful. When they arrive I shall give orders for their distribution agreeable to the wish of the Board. I have the honor, etc.43

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, West Point, July 27, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have the honor to inclose you an extract of a

43. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

letter which I have lately received from Major General Gates, on which the Board will be pleased to direct the necessary measures. I have requested General Knox to send a proper person to inquire into the administration at Springfield; and to have the abuses rectified, so far as it may be done without interfering with the establishment of the department.

General Knox has reported on the subject of Mr. Garanger,73 that he may be usefully employed in the Artillery with the rank of Captain *in the army*, but without any particular rank or command in. The officers of Artillery are very tenacious of their privileges and jealous of the introduction of new men into their corps; and not only their services deserve consideration; but it would be inexpedient to excite any discontents among them. Mr. Garanger, from his knowledge of the theory and practice of Artillery may be useful, but he must be employed with caution and management. He may have an appointment to a captaincy in the army of the United States and the Board may direct the commanding Officer of Artillery to employ him in such manner as he shall judge beneficial to the service. I have the honor, etc.74

73. Capt. Lewis Gatanger, of the Continental Artillery.

74. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West Point, July 29, 1779.

Sir: In mine of the 24th. I had the honor to inform Congress that a considerable embarkation of the enemy had taken place on the 21st. This intelligence I received through Major Lee, a channel in most cases, good; but from all my subsequent inquiries I have reason to believe he was mistaken in this instance. The movement among their Shipping going down the river to New York, and some stir among the troops at the same time which still continues probably occasioned the mistake.

I am informed that there are large Magazines of powder in the States of Massachusets and Connecticut belonging to those States. The Continental magazines are nearly empty, scarcely equal to the ordinary demands of the service; but there are operations, which may hereafter become practicable, and adviseable, that we should not be able to undertake, for want of ammunition; unless we can derive a supply elsewhere. I mention this to Congress that if a loan could be obtained from any of the States and it is thought eligible to have one, measures may be taken accordingly. I have the honor, etc.

P. S. The Act of the 28th of June directing the commanding Officer

of Regiments to give notice to their executive authorities of their respective States of the regimental vacancies that happen transmitted in your Excellency's letter of the 30th., refers to a resolution of the 8th of March last.7 I do not recollect either to have received or to have seen the Resolution, and therefore take the liberty to request a copy of it.8

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West Point, July 29, 1779.

Sir: In my Letter of the 9th in answer to Your Excellency's of the 30th Ulto. upon the subject of Doctor Morgan's charge against Doctor Shippen, I informed Congress, that the situation of affairs would not permit his trial to be entered upon for some time, and that General Arnold's would of course precede it, which had been and still was necessarily suspended. Since this I have been honoured with your Excellency's Letter of the 20th,

transmitting a Copy of a Letter from Doctor Morgan of the 19th, and of three Other papers; in the first of which he urges, that as the movements of the Enemy had made it impracticable for me to appoint an early Court Martial for the trial, the putting Doctor Shippen under an immediate suspension from Office was absolutely necessary. This Letter being referred to me after what I had written, without

7. Resolves respecting making out of officers' commissions and recording same.

8. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade.

any direction as to the line of conduct I was to pursue with respect to Doctor Shippen, placed me under some embarrassment, and induced me to lay the matter and all the papers before a Council of General Officers, called upon another occasion, and to take their sentiments as to the measures to be pursued. The Council were unanimously of opinion that Doctor Shippen could neither be tried now, nor a precise day be fixed with propriety, for the purpose; and also, as the setting of a Court Martial would depend much, if not altogether, upon the movements and operations of the Enemy, and of consequence would be uncertain and precarious, and might be postponed for a considerable time, that it would not be adviseable to arrest him at this time, as the delay might operate not only a great private injury, but also deprive the public of his services at a season, when they might be most material.

I have thought it my duty to inform Congress of these things, that if it is their pleasure that Doctor Shippen should be immediately arrested or suspended, their directions may be signified accordingly.

I inclose Your Excellency an Extract of a Letter from General Gates of the 25th Instant, with some matters of intelligence just now received. It is very probable that he has transmitted the same himself, as the Gentleman who was so obliging as to bring me his Letter, has one for Your Excellency. I am told a New York paper of the 24th announces

Lord Cornwallis's arrival, and contains accounts which corroborate or at least countenance the

information of Capt Potbery,9 as to the sailing of a fleet with Troops; and a Deserter who left the City on Tuesday informed me to day, that it was reported that a fleet was off the Hook, and that he himself heard a firing just before he came away. I have the Honor, &c.10

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West point, August 2, 1779.

Sir: I do myself the Honor to transmit Your Excellency an Extract of a Letter of the 29th Ulto. from a confidential correspondent in New York.52 It contains the latest advices I have had from thence.

By reports from our Officers advanced on both sides of the River, the Enemy broke up their Camp at Philipsburg53 on the night of the 30th and morning of the 31st Ulto. The ac counts received by the Officers on the East side say, that they had all gone below Kings-bridge, those on the West, that their march pointed towards Fort Independance. This movement seems to countenance and to give a greater air of probability to the intelligence from New York with respect to an embarkation and the Enemy's intentions to repair and erect Fortifications.

9. Capt. Henry Potbury (Potbery, Potbary), of the merchant brig *Sally*. His affidavit is filed with this letter of Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

10. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The draft by Hamilton in the *Washington Papers* is changed from July 29 to July 30.

52. The original letter of Samuel Culper, jr., dated July 29, 1779, from which the extracts were made, is in the *Washington Papers*.

53. Philipseburg, N.Y., below White Plains.

I inclose Your Excellency some New York papers, the latest of which is of the 29th of July. I have the Honor, etc.54

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, West point, August 3, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have the honor to transmit you the arrangement of the 11th. Pensylva. Regiment made by a Board of Field Officers of that line, appointed for the purpose, on which the Board will be pleased to issue Commissions. I inclose the old arrangement made out by Colo. Hubley, by which the Board will see what alterations have been made. They will be pleased to forward the Commissions to Colo. Hubley. I have the Honor, etc.

Captain Keene84 of the 11th. is to remain for the present with Genl. St. Clair, as an Aid. The Board will be pleased to send his Commission to Camp.85

54. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

84. Capt. Lawrence Keene. He was transferred to the Third Pennsylvania Regiment in January, 1781, and to the Second Pennsylvania Regiment in January, 1783; 84 served to June, 1783.

85. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West Point, August 5, 1779.

Sir: My doubts as to the intended operation of the Resolution of the 28th. of June, upon the subject of vacancies and the mode of filling them, whether it was meant to take immediate

effect in all cases, or to operate only where arrangements had been made, and my earnest wish not to contravene the views of Congress or the rights of the executive authorities of the States in any instance, have induced me to transmit to your Excellency the inclosed arrangement of the Massachusetts line, which Congress if they think proper, will send to the Board of War that Commissions may be issued upon it. It has been a work of much time, and, even in the last instance from the confusion in which matters were involved, it closely employed seven General Officers seven or eight days. All the Officers or all but a very few, at least I know nothing to the contrary having appointed none myself, obtained appointments, I believe, from the State; or were mentioned in the arrangement begun by the Committee of Congress at White Plains; but many hold different grades from what they did at first, which is the cause of my referring the matter to Congress, being arranged by the Board to vacancies, which have happened by deaths resignations &c. A like conduct with respect to arranging vacancies, has been and was of necessity pursued in the arrangements

of the other lines by the Committee and different Boards which have sat on the business, or it must have been left nearly in the disordered, imperfect, dissatisfactory and injurious state, in which it was found. But those arrangements preceded the Resolution in question, whereas the present has been made since. If it should be the pleasure of Congress to carry this into effect, I would take the liberty to suggest, that the sooner the Commissions are made out the better, as the Officers are incessant in their applications upon the subject. The arrangement in some instances, particularly in the case of the 7th. Regiment (late Aldens) which makes a part of the Army under General Sullivan is incompleat, and no industry or inquiries of the Board could make it more perfect.

Before I conclude I think it necessary to mention the case of Mr. Pettingill, who stands arranged a Major to a vacancy, which happened on the 26th Ulto. and to which he was intitled from his seniority in the line of captains. Some time this year he obtained a Commission from the State, dated as he suggests the 25th. of Novemr. 1777 for the Majority in Colo. Wessons Regiment, which superseded several older Captains of equal

merit, and, as soon as it was known on account of the uneasiness it excited, occasioned a memorial from the field Officers, of which the inclosed is a copy93. The matter was laid before the Board of General Officers, who heard Mr. Pettingill, and found that he had not the smallest pretensions to promotion before the vacancy to which they have arranged him. I would farther observe that Mr. Pettingill, finding that his promotion gave

93. This copy is filed with Washington's letter in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

great dissatisfaction, wrote to the Board of War upon the occasion who referred his case to me by their letter of the 21st of June.

I inclose your Excellency an Extract of a Letter received the 26th Ulto. from Doctr. Shippen.

In my letter of the 2d, inclosed your Excellency an extract of a letter of the 29th Ulto. from a confidential correspondent in New York. As I thought the intelligence contained in it, so far as it respected the Enemy's Ships of War and the embarkation of troops, might prove interesting to the naval expedition to Penobscot. I transmitted on the 3d by express, to the Honble. the Council of Massachusetts Bay, and also the information in the inclosure No. 4 by yesterday morning's Post, which I had just received in a letter from Lord Stirling. The Council were very early advised by letter from General Heath, that several of the enemy's ships of war, which were afterwards detained by the taking of stony point, as mentioned in the confidential correspondence from York, were preparing to sail. I hope our fleet will be on their guard. I have the honor, etc.

P.S. I inclose your Excellency a New York paper of the 3ist of July. You will perceive that an action is mentioned to have happened between Count D Estaing and Admiral Byron, and that the Count had lost 5 ships of the line &c. Before this paper came to hand Mr. Story94 in the Staff department, received on Tuesday, a letter from his Father, informing him “that intelligence was brought

94. Maj. John Story. He was aide to Gen. William Alexander, Lord Stirling.

by a Vessel into Salem, that Count D Estaing had had an engagement with Admiral Byron, in which the Count had taken five Ships of the line and dismasted many others; that the remainder of Admiral Byrons fleet made towards wards Jamaica and the Count was in pursuit." A confirmation of the Counts success is devoutly to be wished.95

***To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS**

West-point, August 5, 1779.

Sir: I have had the honor to receive your Excellency's Letter of the 27th Ulto. The fresh approbation which Congress have been pleased to express of my conduct, by their act of the 27th Ulto.96 is highly flattering, and such as demands my warmest gratitude. And you will permit me to add Sir, that if any thing could have rendered it more pleasing, it would have been the very polite and obliging terms in which your Excellency conveyed their resolution. I shall publish in orders the proceedings respecting the Officers and Troops, whose conduct and valour atchieved the success against Stony-point, and which, more than any merit I can pretend to upon the occasion, has procured me this grateful testimonial from my Country. I have the honor, etc.

95. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade.

96. These were the resolves of Congress on the capture of Stony Point. They were passed on July 26, 1779. (See General Orders, Aug. 7, 1779.)

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

West point, August 6, 1779.

Sir: Your Excellency's Letter of the 28th of July, with its several Inclosures, has been duly received. I shall take the liberty, in a few days, to lay before Congress a state of facts with respect to the Expedition under General Sullivan, by which I trust it will appear, that every measure and precaution in my power has been taken to insure its success; and notwithstanding the difficulties he points out, I would fain hope that it will terminate happily. I have the Honor, etc.

P.S. I inclose Your Excellency a Letter from Genl. Parsons of the 31st of July, with sundry depositions,6 respecting the conduct of the Enemy at New Haven. Also his Returns of the Houses they burnt at Fairfield and Norwalk.7

N. B. Copies of the Returns alluded to are in Genl. Parson's letter of the 20th July 1779.

6. The sundry depositions as to British conduct and the returns of the houses burned in Fairfield and Norwalk are in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 152, 7, fols. 547–571.

7. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

West point, August 8, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have received a letter from Colo. Spencer dated at Wyoming the 22d Ulto. inclosing a List of the Officers that remain in service of his, Malcoms and Formans Regiments. I determined some time ago to incorporate them, and now transmit an arrangement of the whole, upon which the Board will be pleased to issue Commissions where they have not been issued in consequence of the arrangement of the two first which was formerly transmitted. I have arranged Lieutenant Colonel Smith16 of the Regt. late Lee's, in the Corps, and am exceedingly happy there was an opportunity of providing for an Officer of his merit. The Board will be pleased to forward the Commissions to Genl.

Sullivan by the first conveyance that may offer. In my Letter of the 22d. I did not mention from what time Mr. Burrowes17 should rank as Major; they will fix it at that date, unless they have already sent him a Commission and fixed his rank at an earlier day. I have the Honor, etc.18

16. Lieut. Col. William Stephens Smith.

17. Maj. John Burrowes, of Spencer's Additional Continental regiment. He retired in January, 1781.

18. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

West point, August 10, 1779.

Gentn.: I yesterday evening received Your Letter of the 3d and have directed the Commissary of Prisoners to permit Captain Edmonstone to go in to New York upon parole, subject to an immediate and final exchange, by Sir Henry Clinton's releasing One of our Captains now in his hands, who has been longest in captivity and whose name will be mentioned in his parole. Mr. Beatty has written to Mr Adams, Deputy Commissary of Prisoners at Elizabeth Town upon the business. The Board will be pleased to write to Captain Edmonstone to proceed thither and to apply to Mr. Adams for farther directions. I have the Honor, etc.33

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

West point, August 11, 1779.

Sir: I had the honor some days ago to advise Your Excellency, that the Enemy had broke up their Camp at Philips's and retired below Kingsbridge. Since this I have used every

33. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

means in my power to gain information of their designs and future operations, but as yet they remain intirely secret. It is certain or at least the intelligence comes thro so many and such direct channels that it seems unquestionable, that they have been and are busily employed in repairing and strengthening all the Works on the Island of New York. It would also appear from the inquiries and declarations of Lord Cornwallis, according to the intelligence from James Yard, transmitted to Congress by His Excellency Govt. Reed, that his Lordship expected Admiral Arbuthnot had arrived at New York with a considerable fleet and a large reinforcement of Troops when Yard left it. And from what I have heard, it was the expectation of the Officers captured at Stony point that there would be a large reinforcement and that Sir Henry Clinton's operations would be offensive and pushed with great vigor. There are sundry other accounts agreeing with these. One of very recent date from New York, and very particular, in which it is said a very large number of Troops is daily looked for and that the Enemy mean to make a vigorous and they hope, a decisive Campaign. As I have already observed, I have not been able to gain a satisfactory knowledge of their intentions; nor can I pretend to fix the extent of the reinforcement the Enemy may receive, or what will be their system of Operation; [their enquiries extend to our Magazines, our mode of supplies, the condition of the roads between New Windsor and Easton &ca &ca]; but I will take the liberty to suggest that it will certainly be right in us, to prepare in the best and earliest manner that circumstances

will admit of, for every and any contingency. Unhappily it must be confessed that our Batallions in general are exceedingly deficient in their complement of Men; that many scarcely deserve the name, and I fear there is no good ground to hope that they will be on a more respectable footing, or at least in any reasonable time. [Having as yet out of 2000 Recruits to be furnished by the State of Massachusetts recd. only 875 from Connecticut] not more than 20 [and from other States few or none, except New York wch. have joind that part of the Army undr. M. Gen. Sullivan.] The only succour then that

we can expect in case of exigency, must be derived from the Militia. From this view of things, I would humbly submit it to Congress, whether it may not be expedient for them to make an early requisition to the Several States, or at least to such of them, as may not be too remote from the most probable scene of Action, to take immediate measures for arranging their Militia, and putting them in a condition to reinforce the Army for such time and in such numbers as the exigency of Affairs may demand, and to point out the mode of application. This measure appears to me essential, for should the Enemy's present force at York be augmented to any great degree by the arrival of fresh Troops, or should the whole they now have on the Continent, be drawn together, which agreeable to some intelligence is to be done, in either case, without some previous arrangements on our part, the consequences at least might be very disagreeable.

But while I am suggesting the expediency of an Arrangement of the Militia, by which early succour may be given to the Army, Other matters of equal moment and equally deserving attention presented themselves, and on which the proportion of aid from the Militia must in a great degree depend. These are the difficulties with which Supplies of flour are obtained in the first instance, and of getting it afterwards to the Army. From the several Accounts of a reinforcement expected by the Enemy, and other considerations, I have been led in the course of a few days past to speak with the Quarter Master and Commissary General upon these subjects, as they concerned their respective Departments. The latter informed me that from the backwardness and reluctance of the Farmers to part with their Wheat or to have it manufactured into flour, he was much put to it to supply the Troops now in the field, without forming any Magazines; and the former, that he was equally pushed to provide the means of transportation. Hence it seems, that unless some mode can be devised to increase and facilitate the supplies of this Article both in the purchase and transportation, the consequences of calling in or not calling in aid from the Militia, will be almost equally bad. I mention these matters from duty and necessity and I am convinced, Congress will pursue every measure in their power that will remove the difficulties or

contribute in the smallest degree to facilitate the supplies. If this cannot be effected, if the Farmers either withhold their Wheat or refuse to part with it,

when manufactured into flour, and if some more substantial easy and Systematical mode to aid the transportation of necessaries to the Army, is not adopted more generally by the States than what commonly prevails, it really appears, from the representation of those Two Gentlemen that we shall have much to apprehend and particularly so if the Operations on the part of the Enemy should be pushed with vigor. I have the Honor, etc.40

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

West point, August 16, 1779.

Sir: I had yesterday afternoon the honor to receive Your Excellency's Letter of the 6th. with a Copy of the Act of the 8th of March and the Report referred to. It might have been better on the score of supplies and some other considerations, if Captain Wilkie's company26 had been annexed to the 11th Pensilvania Regiment;

40. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The parts in brackets are in the writing of Washington.

26. Capt. John Wilkie, of the Pennsylvania Independent Company, in Spencer's Additional Continental regiment.

but as this was not done, and as the arrangement both of Spencer's and Hubley's Regiments has been made and it may be difficult, if not impracticable, to introduce the Officers with the Men into the Pensylvania line, which would certainly be an act of justice, more especially if they were at the trouble of raising them, it may be best perhaps for things to remain in their present situation. Besides, if the arrangement were to be altered, Spencer's Regiment would want a company and the 11th Pennsilvania have one more than the establishment, as it has I believe, it's complement. The point however is

submitted to Congress, and they will be pleased to determine it in such way, as they may think best and most advancive of the service. The Report of the Board of War upon the occasion is returned.

I intended in my last for the satisfaction of Congress to have transmitted to your Excellency the inclosed Copies of a Letter from Captain Hopkins of Moylan's Dragoons of the 30th Ulto. and from Major General Howe of the 6th Instant, but was prevented thro hurry. I have the Honor, etc.27

27. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, West point, August 16, 1779.

Sir: I am favd. with yours of the 6th. inclosing the instructions of the Board to the different Commissaries of Hides. The directions appear to me to be judiciously drawn and fully adequate to the purpose, and I doubt not, if they are strictly at tended to, but that a sufficient quantity of Shoes for the Army and leather for other uses will be procured. Mr. Garanger is exceedingly impatient to know whether he is to be employed. I must therefore beg leave to recall the attention of the Board to my letter of the 27th July in which I pointed out the mode in which this Gentleman may be introduced into the service without giving umbrage to the Officers in the line of the Artillery. I shall be glad to have the determination of the Board upon this point, that I may be enabled to give Mr. Garanger a final answer. I have the honour, etc.28

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West Point, August 15, 1779.

Sir: In the letter which I had the honor of addressing

28. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman, and is addressed to Peter Scull, secretary of the Board of War.

to your Excellency the 6th. instant I promised a state of facts to show that every thing in my power has been done to give success to the Western expedition. I am sorry to find in the appeal which Genl. Sullivan has made to Congress90 that he has mistated several particulars of importance, and that in providing for his own justification in case of misfortune, he has left the matter upon such a footing as to place me in a delicate situation. In justice to myself I beg leave to make a few remarks on the different parts of his letter.

He says in the first place, “that the plan for carrying on the expedition was not agreeable to his mind, nor were the number of men destined for it sufficient in his opinion to ensure success.”

The plan he proposed was to have two bodies, each superior to the whole force of the enemy to operate both on the Mohawk River and by way of the Susquehannah. This plan might have been desirable if the number of our troops, the state of our finances, and of our supplies had permitted its execution, but it was impracticable on all these accounts. The force actually detached left the army so weak, that I am persuaded every Officer of reflection in it, who knew our true circumstances was uneasy for the consequences; and if a larger force had gone, we should have been absolutely at the discretion of the enemy. This will immediately appear from a recurrence to the returns of the Army at that time. Should we have endeavoured to make up the deficiency from the Militia our experience of the success of the applications which were made will convince us that

90. Sullivan's letter to Congress was dated from Wyoming, July 21, 1779. It was read in Congress July 26, 1779, and bears the indorsement: “Copies order'd for Genl.

Washington." Sullivan's letter is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 160, fol. 249.

the attempt would have been fruitless; to say nothing of the injury to agriculture which would have resulted from calling out so large a body of Militia. But if the men could have been procured we should have failed in supplies. This is evident from what has happened. If we have met with so many difficulties disappointments and delays in providing for the *present force* how would it have been possible to have provided for *double the number* ?

But though, if our resources had permitted, it might have been *convenient* to have had two bodies each superior to the enemy's whole force to operate in different directions for the sake of dispatch, yet this does not appear to me on military principles to have been necessary to insure success: For as the object was only the destruction of some Indian settlements, all that could be requisite to its execution was to be able to march through them; and this purpose was answered if there was at one capital point a force sufficient to beat their collective force.

General Sullivan seemed to prefer the carrying on the principal operation by the Mohawk River. My reasons for preferring the other route are contained in the letter No 3, to General Schuyler.91 General Schuyler was originally of the same opinion as appears by his letters No 1 and 2;92 but he changed it upon hearing the reasons in favour of the plan which has been adopted, as he acknowledges in his letter No 4;93 where he also suggests an additional motive, the want of provisions. General Sullivan relinquishes the former plan himself on this principle; nor did the deficiency

91. Washington's letter to Maj. Gen. Philip Schuyler, Mar. 21, 1779, the draft of which is in the *Washington Papers* and a copy in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 169, vol. 5, fol. 477.

92. Schuyler's letter to Washington, Feb. 4 and Mar. 1, 1779. An extract of February 4 is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 169, fol. 467. The original of March 1 is in the

Washington Papers, with an extract in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 169, vol. 5, fol. 469.

93. Schuyler's letter to Washington, Apr. 3, 1779, the original of which is in the *Washington Papers* and an extract in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 169, vol. 5, fol. 485.

arise from the want of previous dispositions, but from the difficulties in procuring supplies. It was my own idea at first as will be seen by several letters herewith to carry on the principal operation by the Mohawk, and directions were given very early to form magazines for this purpose, which it seems could not be executed. But if this obstacle had not existed, the reasons for penetrating by way of Susquehannah were then, and still are in my opinion, conclusive. The information, on which the facts, stated in my letter to General Schuyler, were founded, is principally contained in the summary No. 16 in packet No. 7.94 The experiment hitherto has confirmed its truth.

General Sullivan says, that his letters to me produced no other effect than to change the route of Clintons detachment. There are only four points on which his letters turn. One is the having two bodies of superior force to the whole strength of the enemy to operate different ways. I have assigned reasons to show that a compliance with this was impracticable, and Genl. Sullivans own concession on the score of provisions is an admission of its impracticability.

Another is, the force necessary to compose the main body. This he estimates at three thousand. It will be seen by my letter No. 3, Packet 1st.95 that my opinion long before corresponded with this idea; and the calculations made, at the time, of the Corps intended for the service, including the aid solicited from Pennsylvania, induced me to believe General Sullivans force would have amounted to about this number. The situation of our troops, continually

94. The original summary is in the *Washington Papers*. A copy is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 169, vol. 6, fol. 34.

95. Washington's letter to Maj. Gen. Philip Schuyler, Mar. 21, 1779, the draft of which is in the *Washington Papers* and a copy in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 169, vol. 5, fol. 477.

moldering in a variety of ways, the disappointment in the expected reinforcement from Pennsylvania, and the unlooked for demands from a want of hands in the Quarter Masters department have occasioned his force to be considerably less than was intended or could have been foreseen. That he has not been gratified in this respect was not for want of my wishes or endeavours, and is as great a disappointment to me as to him. He acknowledges that more Continental troops could not be spared. The Militia applied for were not furnished.

The next point is, a change in the route of the troops under General Clinton. This he confesses happened as he desired. Yet it would have been much against my judgment, had his main body been as large as it was intended to be. I fear too, as matters have turned out, the most critical part of the expedition will be the junction of these two Corps. But it appears to me now from Genl. Sullivans representation that he could not avoid giving the order to Clinton to march with a full supply of provisions.

The last point is, a change of the Corps originally destined for the expedition. In this also he was indulged. The precise Corps he requested are with him; though I was not satisfied of the validity of his reason for desiring a change, as I believe very few more of the troops now with him have been accustomed to the Indian mode of fighting than of those who were first intended; I had two motives for fixing on the Pennsylvania troops; one was,

that I should have been happy an officer of General St Clairs abilities had been second in command, to take the direction in case of accident to the first.

General Sullivan by this change reduced his numbers four hundred men, which could not be replaced without breaking in upon other corps.

On that part of Genl. Sullivans letter which relates to the Quarter Masters and Commissary's department; I shall only observe that there have no doubt been very great delays. Whether these have proceeded in part from a want of exertion or wholly from the unavoidable impediments, which the unhappy state of our currency opposes at every step, I have not sufficient information to determine; but from the approved capacity, attention, and assiduity with which the operations of these departments are conducted, I am inclined to make every allowance, and to impute our disappointments to the embarrassments of the times, and not to neglect. Genl. Sullivan's well known activity will not permit me to think he has not done every thing in his power to forward the preparations. But however the delays may have happened, I flatter myself no part of the blame can fall upon me. The papers contained in the packet No. 2 will show that the necessary orders were given by me, and that I was encouraged to expect their timely accomplishment. Besides what is upon record, my pressing, and repeated entreaties were employed with the Quarter Master and Commissary General in personal conferences. My attention was so much directed to this expedition

that I suspended at a very critical period the necessary preparations for the main army, to give the greater vigor and efficacy to those for that object. To this effect were my Instructions to the Quarter Master General96 when we had the strongest inducements to put ourselves in a moving posture.

General Sullivan in the next place says, “Having been taught by repeated disappointments to be cautious, I early gave orders to Genl. Clinton to supply troops with three months Provisions, and wrote Governor Clinton for his assistance in April last. This has been done, and they are supplied.” The idea here held up is really extraordinary. My letter to Genl Schuyler No. 1,97 will show that so early as the beginning of December Magazines were ordered to be formed in that quarter for 10,000 Men with a view to an expedition to

Niagara. By the subsequent letters to him No 2 and 3,98 these were partly discontinued, and limited to the plan of an Indian expedition; the extent of which was to be governed by his judgment of the force necessary. This being 3000 men the preparations were of course for that number. Schenectady was afterwards made the depository by Genl. Clinton as appears by his letter No. 5,99 in answer to mine No. 4. From the whole tenor of the correspondence on the subject, Congress will clearly perceive, that the magazines which Genl. Sullivan ascribes to his care and caution were formed in consequence of orders given several months before he was nominated to the command, which did not take place, till the 6th of March, by letter; and that they would have

96. Washington's letter to Jeremiah Wadsworth, Nov. 19, I778, the draft of which is in the *Washington Papers* and a copy in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 169, vol. 5, fol. 510.

97. Washington's letter to Maj. Gen. Philip Schuyler, Dec. 18, 1778, the draft of which is in the *Washington Papers* and an extract in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 169, vol, 5, fol. 509, misdated December 1.

98. Washington's letter to Maj. Gen. Philip Schuyler, Jan. 18 and Jan. 25, 1779, the drafts of which are in the *Washington Papers* and extracts in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 169, vol. 5, fols. 510–11.

99. James Clinton's letter to Washington, May 28, 1779, the original of which is in the *Washington Papers* and an extract in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 169, vol. 5, fol. 514.

been equal to the supply of 3000 Men, had not the resources of the country fallen short.

General Sullivan states his force at 2312 rank and file,1 which by a variety of deductions he afterwards reduces to 938, which he holds up as his combatting force. I should be unwilling to overrate the means of any Officer, or to create a greater responsibility than is

just. But at the same time, I think it a duty I owe the public and myself to place a matter of this kind in a true point of light. If almost the whole of the 2300 men are not effectually serviceable in action, it must be Genl. Sullivans own fault. nearly all the men he speaks of as pack horsemen bat horsemen &c &c may be to the full as useful as any others. The number he mentions is only necessary for the sake of dispatch on a march; in time of action the horses and cattle may be committed to the care of a very few, and the rest may be at liberty to act as occasion requires. Should he even be attacked on a march those animals may be made a shelter, rather than an incumbrance. If the operations he is to be concerned in were the regular ones of the field, his calculation would be better founded; but in the loose irregular war he is to carry on, it will naturally lead to error and misconception. Genl. Sullivan makes no account of his Drummers and Fifers and other appendages of an army who do not compose the fighting part of it. I have too good an opinion of his judgment not to believe he would find very useful employment for them. These, and the few drivers and pack horsemen, whom he acknowledges to have, will be nearly if not

1. This return was made from Wyoming, July 22, 1779, and is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 160, fol. 280.

quite sufficient with a small guard, to take care of his horses and cattle in time of action. But as I before observed, his *real force* will be less than it ought to be, to put him out of the reach of contingencies; but I hope with prudent management it will still suffice. The estimate made by Genl. Schuyler of the enemy's force from every subsequent information was not too low; and it is to be hoped the want of provisions will prevent its being exerted in a vigourous and formidable opposition. My chief solicitude is for Genl. Clinton; if he effects the meditated junction there will in my opinion be nothing to fear afterwards. Notwithstanding what may be said of the expertness of Indians in the woods, I am strongly persuaded our troops will always be an over match for them with equal numbers; except in case of surprise or ambuscade, which it is at our own option to avoid.

General Sullivan also makes the application to the State of Pennsylvania a *consequence of his letters*. My letter No. 12 to His Excellency the President will show that this was a part of the plan before Genl. Sullivan was nominated to the command; and my subsequent letters3 will show that I pressed a compliance in the strongest and most pointed manner.

He mentions among other things that “one third of his men are without a shirt to their backs.” The letters No 1 to 5, Packet 5th4 will make it appear that I took every step in my power to afford a competent supply, and I have the greatest reason to believe that the troops with him had more than a

2. Washington's letter to Joseph Reed, Mar. 3, 1779, the draft of which is in the *Washington Papers* and an extract in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 169, vol. 5, fol. 515.

3. Apr. 19, 27, May 8, 20, and July 5, 1779, the drafts of which are in the *Washington Papers* and extracts in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 169, vol. 5, fols. 517–21.

4. Washington's letter to Maj. Gen. John Sullivan, May 19; Sullivan's letter to Washington, May 21; Washington's letters to Sullivan, May 24, May 31; Sullivan's letter to Washington, June 27; Washington to the Board of War, May 23, the drafts of which are in the *Washington Papers* and extracts in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 169, vol. 5, fols. 523–28.

proportion to the general wants and supplies of the army.

The packet No. 65 contains my instructions from time to time to Genl. Sullivan. No. 76 the intelligence received from first to last and No. 87 sundry papers relative to the expedition which do not immediately affect the subjects of the present letter; but all which may serve to shew, that I have paid all the attention in my power to this important object, and made use of every precaution for its success. I hope the event may answer our wishes; but if it

should not, my anxiety to stand justified in the opinion of Congress has induced me to give them the trouble of this lengthy communication.

I most sincerely thank them for the opportunity they have afforded me of entering into this explanation by the transmission of General Sullivans letter, and I shall be much obliged by a similar indulgence upon every occasion of the same sort.8

I beg leave to conclude with one observation. It may possibly hereafter be said that the expedition ought not to have been undertaken unless the means were fully adequate, or that the consequences of a defeat ought not to have been hazarded when they were found to be otherwise. The motives to the undertaking, besides the real importance of rescuing the frontier from the alarms, ravages, and distresses to which it was exposed; and which in all probability would have redoubled this year, were, the increasing clamours of the country and the repeated applications of the States immediately concerned, supported by frequent references,

5. The Washington to Sullivan letters in Packet No. 6 were: May 13, 28, 31, June 4, 9, July 5 and 29, the drafts of which are in the *Washington Papers* and copies or extracts in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 169, vol. 5, fols. 531–43; vol. 6, fol. 10.

6. Washington's letters to Maj. Gen. Edward Hand, February 7, March 16, 21, 24. To Maj. Gen. John Sullivan, February 11, August 1; from Sullivan, July 1. To Maj. Gen. Philip Schuyler, February 26, April 27, July 23; from Schuyler, April 15, May 21, June 30, July 7; from Van Schaick to James Clinton, May 22; from Clinton, June 19. Drafts or originals of these (except Schuyler's letter of June 30, Clinton's of June 19, and Sullivan's of July 1) are in the *Washington Papers* and copies or extracts are in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 169, vol. 6, fols. 12–55.

7. Washington's letter to Gov. George Clinton, March 4. From Sullivan, May 12, 26, 31, June 12; to Sullivan, March 6, August 4; from Ephraim Blaine to Sullivan, May 24; from James Clinton, June 26. Drafts or copies of these are in the *Washington Papers*; and

copies or extracts are in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, no. 169, vol. 6, fols. 55–64.

8. At this point in the draft (which is in the writing of Hamilton) the following is crossed off: “Conscious that I endeavour to avoid the mistake of inattention, while I hope I shall always have candor enough to acknowledge the errors of judgment, I shall be happy to know and to have it in my power to vindicate myself from imputations expressed or implied which I may not deserve. Many things for want of information on the one hand and from misrepresentation on the other may appear to proceed from a defect of care and exertion, which result from the necessity of our affairs. Convinced that Congress have embarrassments enough of their own, I have troubled them as little as possible with mine; when it has been in my power I have laboured to surmount them; when I could not effect it I have in most cases silently submitted; consoling myself with their approbation of which I have received so decisive and honorable testimonies.”

and indications of the pleasure of Congress. The combined force of these motives appeared to me to leave no alternative.

The means proposed to be employed were fully sufficient; the disappointments we have met with such as could not have been foreseen, as we had no right to expect. So far as the business did not depend on me I had the strongest assurances from those who were concerned, and who were to be supposed the proper judges that my expectations would be fulfilled.

After such extensive preparations have been made, so much expence incurred, the attention and hopes of the public fixed, the apprehensions of the enemy excited, their force augmented, their resentment inflamed, to recede, and leave the frontier a prey to their depredations would be in every view impolitic, when there is still a good prospect of success. To avoid possible misfortunes we must in this case submit to many certain evils of the most serious nature, too obvious to require enumeration. I have the honor, etc.

P.S. I inclose a return9 of Genl. Sullivans whole force, from the last particular returns to the Adjutant General. This is exclusive of the party under Colo Pawling [(amounting to 300 Men) it will appear by this return, that the Battalion Officers are included in the Number of Men present, with arms in their hands; this is done because General Sullivan applied for and obtained an

9. Not found in the *Washington Papers* nor in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

order for this purpose10 but I cannot undertake to say whether he got them or not.]11

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, Westpoint, August 17, 1779.

Sir: I inclose your Excellency a list of Officers proposed after examination by General Du Portail for the Companies of sappers and Miners. If Congress approve the nomination I re quest they will be pleased to direct commissions to be sent as speedily as possible. They ought to be dated the second of August 79.

By the Regulations for the corps of Engineers, the men to form these companies were for the present to be drawn from the line; but the large demands upon it for other purposes in the weak State of our regiments productive of much dissatisfaction to the Officers makes me unwilling to add to the number by drafts for these companies. I have therefore advised General Du Portail to endeavour to recruit in the Country; but in Order to this the Authority of Congress will be requisite; and it should if possible be given in such terms as will induce the States to forego the operation of the laws which have been made in most of them for preventing the recruiting of any other corps than those which properly compose their quotas.

10. Fuses for the officers.

11. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade. The part in brackets in the draft is in the writing of Washington. The letter was read in Congress on Aug. 23, 1779, and referred to Samuel John Atlee, John Armstrong, Joseph Spencer, John Dickinson, and John Mathews.

Inclosed is also a memorandum of the money for which I have given warrants to Baron De Steuben in the Course of the present year, it amounts to a considerable sum more than his pay established by Congress. This is a subject which embarrasses me. It is reasonable that a man devoting his time and services to the public and by General Consent a very useful one, should at least have his expences borne. His established pay is certainly altogether inadequate to this; a large nominal sum goes but a little way. But while there is a sum fixed by Congress, I am certainly not at Liberty to exceed it; and though I have hitherto complied, from the delicacy of a refusal, to a foreigner to a man of high rank, to one who is rendering the most indefatigable and beneficial services, yet I shall be under the necessity of discontinuing the practice neither could I recommend that a sufficient allowance should be formally determined; for though there may be less reason to expect foreigners than natives to make pecuniary sacrifices, to this Country and though some of them may have no private resources so remote from home, for their support, yet it would be difficult to reconcile our own Officers to a measure which would make so great and palpable a difference in the Compensation for their respective services. It is true the Baron from the nature of his Office will often have to travel from one part of the Army to another which will occasion extra expence and will justify an extra allowance. It is upon this principle that my last warrant was

granted as he was just setting out on a journey to providence. But perhaps the best mode to enable the Baron or others in his situation to defray their necessary expences in the service may be to invest the Board of War with a discretionary power to grant such Sums from time to time as they Judge reasonable and proportioned to the circumstances of the persons and times. I take the liberty to suggest these hints and have only to request that Congress will be pleased to direct some mode in which the difficulties I have pointed out

may be remedied, consistent with the good of the service and Justice to individuals.49 I have the honor, etc.50

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West Point, August 19, 1779.

Sir: I had the honor to day, to receive Your letter of the 8th by Lt. Colo. Sims58 of the 2d Virginia Regiment, with a Copy of a letter from him to your Excellency, and of an order of Congress on the 7th in consequence. The indulgence requested by Col. Sims, however interesting it may be to himself appears to me so incompatible with the public service, and to involve, and to lead to so

49. A memorandum of August 17 from Deputy Paymaster General John Pierce, jr., shows that four warrants were paid to General Steuben in 1779, totaling $2,500.

50. In the writing of Caleb Gibbs. The letter was read in Congress on August 23 and referred to the Board of Treasury.

58. Lieut. Col. Charles Simms.

many disagreeable consequences, that I have thought it my duty to refuse it. Were the point to rest with him, from the circumstances of his regiment in respect to field officers, his request might be granted, without any material injury; but this can not be expected, as there are many other officers in the same line, who have the same pretensions. And indeed it is difficult, if not impossible for me to determine with precision, where such applications would stop, as they might be made upon the same principles, and, with as much propriety by every Officer and Soldier in the Army. Those who have not already surveyed Lands, or done some act to acquire a title of ownership may urge if they incline so to do, that it is time they should, and insist that they will not neglect the opportunity longer. I have very fully and explicitly pointed out to Col. Sims the probable or at least the

possible consequences which would flow from a compliance with his request; but he says he cannot decline it, and waits on Congress to resign his Commission which I refused to accept. In justice to Lt. Col. Sims, I must observe that he is a brave intelligent and good Officer; and I am sorry that any circumstances should have arisen in his affairs to compel him, either to resign his commission or to make a request so inconsistent with the public interest. I have the honor, etc.59

59. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade. The letter was read in Congress on September 3 and referred to John Mathews, Henry Marchant, and John Armstrong.

To HENRY LAURENS, JOSEPH SPENCER, AND NATHANIEL SCUDDER69

69. Committee of Congress on the Mustering Department.

Head Quarters, West-point, August 20, 1779.

Gentlemen: I was duly honored with your letter of the 5th of last month, which several circumstances have prevented my answering sooner; an attention to other objects of more immediate urgency and the necessity of making inquiries of some delicacy, preparatory to a determination.

As the question related to the continuing or abolishing a department which has [been]70 heretofore looked upon as a very necessary one, I thought it of importance enough to take the sense of a Council of General Officers upon it. The Council71 upon a full consideration of the matter gave it as their opinion that the department was now become unnecessary and the continuance of it inexpedient. The principles upon which they decided were that part of the duties of the inspectorship were substantially the same with those of the Mustering department; and that the objects of this might be fully obtained in the former with very little additional trouble to the Gentlemen in that line and with a great saving of expence to the public. But after this determination it was requisite to ascertain whether the Inspectors would be willing formally to undertake the office; and it was thought best to

70. The word ”been“ was inadvertently omitted. It is in the draft, which is in the writing of Hamilton.

71. The proceedings of this council are in the *Washington Papers*, under date of July 26, 1779.

sound them with caution, as the functions of their present employment are very extensive and it might seem (though in reallity it was not) to be imposing too heavy a burthen; and because the Muster Master's department has hitherto been regarded rather as a civil than a military one. The greatest number have been now consulted and have Chearfully agreed to undertake the business the remoteness of others has prevented their sense being known. The Baron himself thinks it will be advancive of the service. It is thought as the Officers of the inspectorship are among the best in the line, and as they derive weight from their military rank, they will be better able to answer the purpose of the Institution. I took the liberty to throw out a hint that the union of these departments would no doubt be an additional motive to the public to continue and extend their privileges; but no extension need take place at present.

Upon the present plan all the Inspectors yet appointed are attached to Brigades and divisions; there must be one or two appointed not attached to any particular corps to muster occasionally the detachments remote from the Army in garrison &c. These I apprehend from the present establishment of the Inspectorship I have power to appoint.

Congress in establishing the mustering department will have to transfer the duties to the Inspectorship; but it will be proper to provide that no Colonel shall muster his own regiment. Before I conclude I think it a piece of Justice to observe

that Colonel Ward72 has always appeared to me attentive industrious and intelligent in the execution of his duty; and the Conduct of the Officers under him has given satisfaction. I have the honor, etc.73

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West Point, August 21, 1779.

Sir: Since the letter which I had the honor of writing to your Excellency the 17th instant; I have received one from the Board of War inclosing among several others the copy of one from General Sullivan to Congress of the 26th of July in which I find he is still more pointed on the subject of Cloathing than in his letter of the 21st. of the same month.

As I was not sufficiently explicit on this head in my letter of the 17th I beg leave to trouble Congress with a more complete view of the measures taken to supply the troops under General Sullivan. The Corps composing his command (exclusive of Clintons Brigade which are not comprehended in the complaint) as they were originally organized, were Poors Brigade Maxwells Brigade, and Hands Brigade consisting of the several detached Corps on the Susquehannah and Delaware.

72. Col. Joseph Ward. He was Commissary General of Musters and Commissary General of Prisoners of the Continental Army from April, 1780, to the close of the war.

73. In the writing of Caleb Gibbs.

Cortland and Spencers regiments the German battalion Armandts and Shots Corps.

The letters No 3 and 4,80 will show that measures were taken to complete Poors Brigade with a full complement of Cloathing previous to its march; and with two pair of overalls pr man. Maxwells Brigade having taken their route by Head Quarters at Middle Brook, were there fully supplied to my certain knowledge with every particular (including the same number of overalls). No.181 will show that all Hands Brigade except Cortlandts Regiment, were provided for; and this deficiency will appear to have been made up in No 4.

No. 282 will shew that I applied to the Board of War for 10,000 pair of Shoes for this expedition. No. 583 requests them to forward the number they had been able to collect with 2000 pair of overalls. No. 6,84 is an order to General McDougal for 3500 hunting Shirts and 2000 pair of Shoes if circumstances would permit. My letter of the 24th of May to Genl. Sullivan already transmitted to Congress will have informed them that I had ordered the Clothier at Camp to forward 2000 pair of overalls and 2000 pair of Shoes to Easton.

I flatter myself Congress will be satisfied from this state of the matter that General Sullivans troops in the article of Cloathing, so far from being neglected have had a large proportion of the general stock which is far from being adequate to the necessities of the army.

80. Washington's letters to Maj. Gen. Alexander McDougall (May 6 and May 14), the drafts of which are in the *Washington Papers* and copies filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

81. Washington's letter to Maj. Gen. Edward Hand (April 4), the draft of which is in the Washington Papers and a copy filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

82. Washington's letter to the Board of War (April 22), the draft of which is in the Washington Papers and an extract filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

83. Washington's letter to the Board of War (May 23), the draft of which is in the Washington Papers and a copy filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

84. Washington's letter to Maj. Gen. Alexander McDougall (May 23) and also one to George Measam, of the same date, the drafts of which are in *the Washington Papers* and copies are filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

It gives me pleasure in justice to the Board of War, who, I find are also involved in the complaint, to declare that I made no other applications to them on this head than are here mentioned; and that I have every reason to believe these were complied with substantially as far as was possibly in their power. They also inform me, that in addition to what had been done by me, upon the requisitions of General Sullivan they had just sent on 1000 pair of overalls 1000 hunting Shirts and 3000 body Shirts all of which except 1000 of the latter probably reached him in time. Had the expedition gone on as early as was expected, the previous supplies would have been abundant. The delay made this additional provision desirable; and upon the whole I think Genl. Sullivan might have spared the remonstrances he has made upon this subject. I have the honor, etc.

I find I have omitted Hartleys regiment which was at Sunbury and under Genl. Hand. This Regiment was supplied by the Board of War.85

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, West point, August 21, 1779.

Gentlemen: On the 19th. I received the Honor of Your Letter

85. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade.

of the 9th, and knowing how very essential harmony is to promote our affairs and to bring them to a happy conclusion, I was much concerned to find, that there was a cause of difference between You and General Sullivan. I inclose a Copy of a Letter of this date which I have written to Congress in consequences of your Letter upon the subject, in which you will perceive my opinion of your conduct. It is much to be wished, that Mankind

in general were more disposed to accomodate difficulties culties than they are. In the circumstances of our present Warfare such a disposition is peculiarly necessary, and according to my ideas the Man who endeavours to do this, whether Civil or Military, consults well the interest of his Country. The obstacles and difficulties which unavoidably occur are more than sufficient of themselves, and should prohibit any measures to encrease them. I have the honor, etc.86

To THE BOARD OF WAR

West point, August 21, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have had the honor of your Letter of the roth inclosing one from Mr. Hughes89 for obtaining Capt Swan's90 exchange. The only Rule by which equal justice can be done to prisoners, is

86. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

89. Samuel Hughes, of Maryland.

90. Capt. John Swan, of the Third Continental Dragoons. He had been taken prisoner at Tappan, N.Y., in September, I778; was promoted to major in the First Continental Dragoons in October, 1780; served to the close of the war.

to exchange them according to the priority of their capture. This I have invariably directed to be pursued, where the circumstances of rank would apply, and I can never depart from it, unless cases should arise making a departure most obviously necessary. And this Rule ought to operate as well in parole as final exchanges and so I have ordered it. It is so reasonable and so evidently just that all must feel and assent to its propriety. Any other would do injustice and be the source of a thousand well grounded complaints. If Captain Swan comes within this Rule, he will be exchanged of course; if he does not, his exchange cannot take place. I have the Honor, etc.

P.S. I received the Boards letter of the 9th transmitting One from Colo. Bland which I have answered.91

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West Point, August 23, 1779.

Sir: I have the honor to inclose your Excellency Major Lee's report of the surprise and capture of the Garrison of Powles Hook. The Major displayed a remarkable degree of prudence address enterprise and bravery upon this occasion, which does the highest honor to himself and to all the officers and men under his command.

91. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

The situation of the Post rendered the attempt critical and the success brilliant: It was made in consequence of information that the garrison was in a state of negligent security, which the event has justified.

I am much indebted to Major Genl. Lord Stirling for the judicious measures he took to forward the enterprise, and to secure the retreat of the party.

Lieut. McCalister12 who will have the honor of delivering these dispatches, will present Congress with the standard of the garrison which fell into his possession during the attack. Major Lee speaks of this Gentlemans conduct in the handsomest terms. I have the honor, etc.

P.S. The report not having been received 'till this day prevented a speedier transmission. Major Lee mentions twenty men lost on our side.13 Capt. Rudulph14 informs that since the report was concluded several of the missing had returned which will lessen the supposed loss near one half.15

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, August 23, 1779.

Sir: I take the liberty of transmitting to your Excellency

12. Lieut. Archibald McCallister, of the First Maryland Regiment. He was brevetted captain by Congress on Sept. 24, 1779, for bravery at Powles Hook, and died in January, 1781.

13. The original of Lee's report, dated Aug. 22, 1779, is not now found in the *Washington Papers*, but a copy by Tilghman is filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

14. Lieut. Michael Rudolph, of Lee's Dragoons. He was made quartermaster with rank of captain; brevetted captain by Congress on Sept. 24, 1779, for bravery at Powles Hook; full captain in November, 1779; served to the close of the war.

15. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade. The letter was read in Congress on August 27 and referred to William Paca, Samuel John Atlee, and John Dickinson.

the inclosed Copy of a Letter I received from Colo Butler16 of the 21st. Inst. From the character of this Gentleman and the opinion I entertain of him as a Man of strict honour and probity, I am perfectly persuaded the representation he has made of his loss, is true in every part; and I am exceedingly sorry such an accident should have happened to an Officer of his merit, and who has rendered great services to his Country. The only relief I conceived myself authorised to grant him, was to give him an order on the Cloathing Department, to furnish him with such Articles as he has occasion for, if there are any in it, at proper and reasonable rates; and I submit his case to Congress for such further consideration as they may think it deserves. I have the Honor. &c.17

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West Point, August 24[–27], 1779.

Sir: Since I wrote to your Excellency yesterday, I have been honored with your letter of the 18th instant with the papers mentioned in it.75

I am much indebted to your Excellency, for the Copy of your circular letter to the States,76 and I sincerely wish it may have the desired effect, or at least, that the Battalions, in consequence,

16. Col. Richard Butler's letter of August 21 is not now found in the Washington Papers, but a copy of it is filed with the letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. Butler had had 2,316 dollars of public funds and a quantity of private clothing and effects. On September 15 Congress directed the cancellation of the debt. The same day (August 23) Washington wrote to Butler that he had sent his representation to Congress, “having no powers to order payment myself,” and sent Butler “an order on the clothier General for such articles as he may be able to furnish you with, at the usual rates.” This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

17. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison. The letter was read in Congress on August 28 and referred to the Board of Treasury.

75. The inclosures were: The resolve of August 18, paying subsistence money to officers, and ten dollars monthly to noncommissioned officers and privates of the Army “in lieu of those articles of food originally intended for them and not furnished,” and the resolve of August 16, authorizing payment to the soldiers for articles of clothing which were to be supplied by the terms of enlistment, and were not so supplied. (See *Journals of the Continental Congress* of these dates.)

76. This circular to the States was the letter from the President of Congress (August 18) transmitting the resolves of August 17, establishing pensions for the widows and orphans of war casualties, and half pay for the services of those who served to the end of the war.

may be made more respectable than they are at present.

The Act of the 16th is certainly founded in equity; for, if the Soldiers cannot be supplied with the Articles of Cloathing, which made a part of the terms of their inlistment, they ought to receive the value of the deficiency. But I will take the liberty to suggest, that it is of the highest importance that they should receive the specific Articles, and I should hope every exertion will be made that circumstances will admit to procure them. A pecuniary compensation will, in some measure, and possibly may fully satisfy the Soldiers; but, it will by no means put them in a condition to perform the duties essential to the public Service. It should be considered as a secondary expedient, only to be practised after every effort to obtain supplies of Cloathing had failed. The expences to the Continent will be the same in either case, but the advantages produced will widely differ. These considerations lead me to trust, that those employed in the Cloathing department will use their greatest exertions to procure supplies, and that they will not too easily give into the Idea of pecuniary compensations.

As the Battalions apportioned on the States are now generally arranged, and all new appointments and the filling of Vacancies are with them, I would submit it to Congress, from the almost infinite perplexities and difficulties which have attended the Business, whether it may not be expedient for Copies of the Arrangement to be transmitted to the respective States, with a Copy of the Act of the 24th Novr. last, so far as it

recommends the mode of promotion.

I transmit your Excellency a Copy of a letter from General Sullivan of the 15th.77 which will inform Congress, if they have not received a letter from him, of his movements to that time.

August 27th.

In a letter of the 11th which I had the honor of addressing to your Excellency, I communicated the information I had recd. from Colo. Wadsworth, with respect to the difficulties he met with in obtaining supplies of Flour for the Army. I have received a letter from him of this date,78 of which I inclose a Copy, which places the matter in a very serious point of light. I should hope that some relief may be immediately had from Pennsylvania, and that an application to His Excellency Governor Johnson would be attended with further immediate good consequences, as the Harvest in Maryland is pretty early, and a part of the new Crop, admitting the whole of the old should be exhausted, may be already at the Mills.

I transmit your Excellency a New York paper of the 24th: from which there is reason to conclude that Admiral Arbuthnot has arrived before this. Besides the foregoing I have this minute received a letter from Major Genl. Howe,79 of which an extract is inclosed, which places his arrival beyond doubt.

Before I conclude, I would beg leave to inform Congress that in consequence of their Act of the 3d. June, authorising parole Exchanges, the Commissaries of the two Armies had

77. Sullivan's letter of August 15 is not now found in the *Washington Papers*. A copy of it is filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. It was dated from Tioga, N.Y., and gave an account of the destruction of the Indian town of Chemung.

78. Wadsworth's letter is not now found in the *Washington Papers* nor in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, but a copy, by Richard Kidder Meade, is in the Maryland Historical Society, a photostat of which is in the Library of Congress. This copy was inclosed in Washington's circular letter to the States, Aug. 11, 1779, *q. v.*

79. Howe's letter to Washington of August 27. An extract is filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. The original is not now found in the *Washington Papers*.

a meeting at Elizabeth Town on the 20th July, when it was agreed among other exchanges of this nature, that those of Major General Philips and Reidhesel should take place. As Generals Thompson and Waterbury were two of the Officers to be benefitted by the indulgence, and were already released and with their friends, I wrote to Colo. Bland on the 11th instant that General Philips and General Reidhesel and the Gentlemen of their families had permission to go to New York on parole. Since this, Mr. Duane,80 in a visit he did me the honor of making a day or two ago, mentioned the subject so far as General Phillips was concerned, and added that the Treasury Board had sent a Gentleman to adjust with him the accounts of the Convention Troops, which were now very considerable, and seemed to doubt the expediency of permitting Genl Phillips to go in till the same were at least liquidated. These were circumstances of which I was intirely ignorant before, and I have just made a summary state of facts that Congress may direct in the matter as they may think most proper. I have the honor, etc.81

To JAMES LOVELL24

Head Quarters, West point, August 24, 1779.

Sir: I have been favd. with yours of the 14 and 25th

80. James Duane, Delegate to the Continental Congress from New York, and member of the Committee on the Treasury.

81. In the writing of Tench Tilghman. The letter was read in Congress on September 2. “So much as relates to provisions Referred to the Comer for superintending the Quartermaster and comy. genl. department. The rest to the board of war.”

24. Delegate to the Continental Congress from Massachusetts.

(*sic*) instants.25 Immediately forwarded the letter to Mr. Loring inclosed in the former. I am obliged by your communication of European intelligence, which bears a most agreeable aspect. I have the honor, etc.26

To JOSEPH HEWES38

Head Quarters, West point, August 25, 1779.

Sir: I have your favr. of the 14th. I wish it were in my power to fall upon the means of procuring the enlargement of your friend Mr. Granberry; but as I have no Citizen under my controul, who would be a fit subject to propose as an Exchange, either upon parole or finally I have not an opportunity of interesting myself in his behalf. It has been a point determined and invariably persisted in, not to give up a person in the Military line for one in the Civil. Had not this conduct have been pursued, the enemy wd. have been encouraged to have seized many more Citizens than they have done in their several excursions. The most probable mode of obtaining Mr. Granberry's release will be to endeavour to procure some Gentleman, who may be already or may hereafter be captured by a Vessel belonging to the State of which he is an inhabitant. I am, &c.39

25. Lovell's letters are not now found in the *Washington Papers*.

26. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

38. Delegate to the Continental Congress from North Carolina.

39. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

West Point, August 26, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have had the honor to receive Your Letters of the 14th and 17th Inst. With respect to the subject of the first, I beg leave to trouble you with the following state of facts, and to refer you to the inclosures No. 1. 2 and 3.55 to shew how the business of exchanging hides has been conducted and how far and to what end it has been carried on by my permission. When I returned from Philadelphia, in the Winter, I found that Lord Stirling on whom the command of the Army devolved in my absence, had issued the order No. 1 directing the Commissary of hides to issue upon the order of the Commandants of Brigades any number of hides that might be necessary to exchange for *Shoes*. The necessities of the troops and his Lordships expectations that these might be more speedily relieved in this than any other way, were his only motives to this order; but I immediately discovered that it was contrary to the arrangement which had been established, and that it would neither have an equal or (economical operation, and therefore suspended it by the Order No 2. After I had done this many Officers, among them Colo Humpton, represented that they were placed in a very delicate situation and under great embarrassments, as being deprived of the means of complying with the contracts they had made under Lord Stirling's

55. The inclosures are not with the draft. Nos. 1 and 2 were the General Orders of Feb. 6, 1779, and Apr. 3, 1779, *q. v*. No. 3 may possibly have been the order of June 10, 1779.

order. Matters being thus circumstanced, I was obliged to consent to their receiving hides for the purpose, and issued at the same time the order No 3, that the supplies obtained in this way, might be brought into a proper account. I have now given the Board a full state of matters and they will readily perceive that I am intirely in favor of the System that has been established, and that any deviation from it with my consent or permission, has been the effect of necessity; also that the object of the Orders was to procure a supply of Shoes for the Troops. At the same time I will take the liberty to add, that if our stores of Leather will admit of it after a full sufficiency of Shoes are secured which must certainly be

first attended to, I should think it not amiss, that a quantity of Boots for Officers should be provided, as they are generally convenient and often highly necessary.

I am exceedingly sorry to find that the Essential business of Cloathing is still in so disagreeable a train, and that our prospects of supplies are so very precarious and uncertain. I had hoped from the evident necessity of the thing, and the frequent representations upon the subject, that the provision, both for Officers and Men would at least be comfortable; but it would seem, that there is little reason to expect this, and particularly with respect to the Officers, who must I fear, as I have repeatedly suggested, be compelled in a variety of instances to quit the service. Indeed without they can be relieved, or their nature changed, they will have no alternative. As it is a matter of so much importance and upon which so much may still depend, I shall most cheerfully do any

thing in my power that may have the least possible tendency to promote it and will write to the Several States as you request and entreat their exertions upon the occasion; but I should be happy if the Supplies from them, were considered as secondary, in aid of those to be provided by the Continent, which ought to be our chief dependance. I shall endeavour to have the Small parcell of rinnen which the Board have procured and have directed to be sent to Camp, distributed in the best manner I can; but three hundred Shirts which is said will be the amount of it, will contribute so little to the relief of the Officers, that it will scarcely be known, unless by the difficulties and complaints that will attend the distribution.

The Act of the 16th, which the Board have been pleased to transmit, is certainly founded in equity; for if the Soldiers cannot be supplied with the Articles of Cloathing, which made a part of the terms of their inlistment, they ought to receive the value of the deficiency.

But I will take the liberty to suggest, that it is of the highest importance that they should receive the Specific Articles. A pecuniary compensation will in some measure, and possibly may fully satisfy the Soldiers; but it will by no means put them in a condition

to perform the duties essential to the public service. It should only be considered as an expedient to prevent Complaints, after every effort to obtain supplies of Cloathing had been made and failed. The expences to the Continent will be the same in either case, but the advantages arising from an actual supply, and

a pecuniary compensation will widely differ.

The Board will be pleased to receive the inclosures No 4 5 and 6,56 which contain Copies of the proceedings of Two Boards of General Officers on the subject of the rank of the Artillery Field Officers, and of the Copy of the Orders to which No 4 refers, in answer to their request respecting the Memorial of Colo Harrison, and which will enable them to report to Congress.

There appears to be a difficulty in the exchange proposed, between Captn. Randolph57 and Colo. Billop58 as the Board observes, on account of the uneasiness it may excite among our Officers from the desparity in their rank; and yet the former seems to have a sort of claim to the latter, from having captured him upon a former occasion. I almost wish the question from its delicacy had not been referred to me. In our late negotiations with the Enemy on the subject of prisoners, we have insisted that persons not in Arms, were not subject to Military capture, or Military exchange. Conformably to this doctrine Billop should not have been taken, and since he has been, he can only be considered in the light of a Citizen. In this view perhaps the exchange might be conducted without giving uneasiness, especially if Mr. Billop was given to the State, who had before permitted him to be exchanged for a Continental Officer. If the measure is determined upon, I think it had better be managed by the State and under the description of Mr. Billop for Mr. Randel.59 There are several of our Citizens now with the Enemy taken as Mr. Billop was, whom we deny to have been legal subjects of

56. The inclosures are not found in the *Washington Papers*. The proceedings of the board of general officers (August 8) and published in General Orders of August to appear to

be one of them. Col. Charles Harrison's memorial to Congress is in the *Papers to the Continental Congress*, no. 41, vol. 4, fol. 87.

57. Capt. Nathaniel Fitz Randolph, of the New Jersey Mihtia. He had been wounded and taken prisoner at Long Island; exchanged in May, 1780; died in July, 1780, of wounds received at Springfield, N.J., June 23, 1780.

58. Col. Christopher Billopp, of the New York loyalist militia.

59. Harrison's draft has “Randel” in this as in the former mention of Randolph; but Tilghman has scratched out the name the first time written and substituted “Randolph.”

capture and refuse their exchange as Military men, and therefore we should not be consistent with ourselves, if we were to hold Billop in that light.

I inclose the Board a Return of Captain Lee's60 Artillery Company; under the Resolution of the 15th of March.

By some means or other some difficulties have occurred in the Virginia line with respect to promotion and some other points. I have not a Copy of the Arrangement transmitted from *Middle Brook Camp* by which the Officers were commissioned. I shall be much obliged by the Board's transmitting me one, as soon as they conveniently can, that things, if possible, may be kept in av right train.

I have the honor, etc.61

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, West-point, August 27, 1779.

Gentlemen: The state of our magazines in the article of powder is truly distressing. We have scarcely a sufficiency for the ordinary demands of the service; and should be utterly

unable to undertake any enterprise which might require a more than common expenditure however necessary it might be, or however

60. Capt. James Lee, of the Second Continental Artillery. He resigned in December, 1779.

61. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

other circumstances might invite to it. An interesting question was lately agitated respecting an operation of an offensive nature, which in certain contingencies might become advisable; the want of powder was found an insuperable objection. In a late estimate of the quantity requisite for this important post to enable it to maintain itself against a seige, or any operation besides a mere assault, our supply was reported to be totally inadequate. In addition to these considerations the arrival of reinforcements to the enemy, which from the strongest appearances may be momently expected, may put it in their power to enter upon a series of operations which would oblige us to increase our force, by calling in an aid of Militia in which case our stock of ammunition already scanty must prove altogether incompetent. In this situation, I cannot but feel a great degree of anxiety, nor can I forbear to repeat my intreaties that the Board will be pleased to make every possible exertion to relieve our necessities. I am led to hope this will not be found impracticable from the information lately transmitted me, through Mr. Tilghman, by Mr. Searle71 member of the Commercial Committee of the expected arrival of 1000 barrels of powder. Should this quantity luckily arrive, a large proportion of it cannot be too soon forwarded to camp.

But as this is rather a precarious dependence, it is much to be wished that loans could be obtained from those states which have magazines of this article, and I have been informed some of them are pretty well provided. I, some little time ago, desired

71. James Searle. He was Delegate to the Continental Congress from Pennsylvania.

Genl. Knox to make a representation of the above kind to the Board, but the matter is of so much importance, that I hope they will excuse me for repeating it. I have the honor, etc.72

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West-point, August 29, 1779.

Sir: I have the honor to inclose your Excellency the Manifesto of His Most Catholic Majesty delivered at the Court of London by his Ambassador the Marquis D'Almadovar and the message of the British King thereupon to the House of Commons, with some other articles of intelligence copied from a (borrowed) Boston paper of the 23d instant.96 As this paper has come on with a good deal of dispatch, this may reach Congress sooner than any other notice of it, which has induced me to transmit the Copy by express. I sincerely congratulate Congress on this further confirmation of an event the most interesting and agreeable. With the highest respect etc.97

72. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton.

96. The inclosures mentioned are filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. The Spanish manifesto was dated June 16, 1779; delivered the same day and, by the King, referred to the House of Commons, which after warm debate adjourned, without coming to a conclusion other than the House “assuring his Majesty that his faithful Commons were ready to assist him with their lives and fortunes against his Enemies.” On June 17 the King issued “a Proclamation, making reprisals of all Spanish Vessels, property &c. comprehending much the same purpose, as that which took Place some time since against France.”

97. In the writing of Caleb Gibbs.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

West point, August 31 [–September 1], 1779.

Sir: I have been duly honoured with Your Excellency's letters of the 20th and 24th with the papers to which they refer.

The Acts of the 16th, 17th and 18th21 have been communicated to the Army, in a manner calculated to inspire a proper sense of them. I hope they will have a good effect. As far as my information extends, they have given great satisfaction. It is only to be lamented, that the state of our money should make such large grants necessary and still more so, that they may contribute to encrease the evil which produced them. I am happy to hear, that there are farther Resolutions on the same subject under consideration, as it will be essential to place the whole Army on the footing of equality, in proportion to their respective situations and advantages.

Without knowing that an application had been made to Congress on the subject of Officers going to Canada, I had given such directions to Colo. Bland, as in my judgment appeared proper. I am sorry to find they differed from the views of Congress: But in compliance with their sense, I now inclose a Letter to Colo. Bland22 countermanding my former Orders, which if Congress think proper, I request the favour of Your Excellency to transmit. I also send an Extract from my former Letter to Colo. Bland23 respecting this affair, by which Congress will perceive, that

21. See General Orders, Aug. 29, 1779, *ante*.

22. See Washington's letter to Col. Theodorick Bland, Aug. 31, 1779, *ante*.

23. See Washington's letter to Col. Theodorick Bland, July 27, 1779, *ante*.

General Philips's request was not consented to, in the form in which it was made for the Officers to go by land. I have the Honor, etc.

P.S. Septr. 1st: I transmit Your Excellency a York paper of the 28th., and also an Extract from a Letter received from Lt Colo. Taylor at Elizabeth Town of the 30th. They contain more particular information with respect to Admiral Arbuthnot's arrival and his Fleet, than any I have obtained before.24

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West Point, September 5, 1779.

Sir: Your Excellency's several letters of the 26th, 29th, and 30th have been duly received.

The Commissary of Prisoners being absent from Camp, on business respecting his department; I cannot give Congress the satisfaction I wish on the subject of Major General Phillips's Letter. As soon as he returns the matter shall be taken up; however, I am inclined to doubt whether there is any ground for complaint on the part of Genl. Phillips, and think it highly probable that the Prisoners he mentions to have been sent from Canada, have been

24. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

duly accounted for, tho not in the way, which might have been the most agreeable to him. With respect to Lt. Col. Bellinger,58 he is among the Officers, summoned by the British Commissary to return to New York. Capt. Martin59 it is likely, is under the same circumstances. I have been always willing to exchange Major Harnage and Capt Hawker absolutely, and the matter has remained intirely with Sir Henry Clinton. They are now among others, the subjects of Parole exchanges, and when these are settled they will be allowed to go to Rhode Island or New York, and if they are not exchanged to Virginia by Water, in the manner requested, if they wish it.

The fresh mark of the approbation of Congress of my con duct, contained in their resolve of the 27th. Ulto,60 is a new source of satisfaction to myself, and has a new claim to my gratitude and thanks.

I hope the account of the Enemys reinforcement, mentioned in the Extract your Excellency has been pleased to transmit me from Mr. Lee's61 Letter of the 26th. of April, will be found to exceed its real number. No advices that I have received of late, place the Troops which arrived with Admiral Arbuthnot at more than one half of it; and some make the amount less.

I inclose your Excellency an Extract of a letter from Genl. Sullivan of the 20th Ulto. which contains the last intelligence I have received from him. I have the honor, etc.62

58. Lieut. Col. Frederick Bellinger (Ballinger), of the New York Militia. He had been captured at Oriskany, N.Y., in August, 1777.

59. Capt. Daniel(?) Martin, of the New York Militia.

60. The resolve approving the plan and measures taken for the Western Expedition against the Indians.

61. Arthur Lee.

62. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, West Point, September 6, 1779.

Gentlemen: I am honoured with your letter of the 28th of August with its inclosures. I am very happy the testimony given to Congress of the conduct of the Board is satisfactory to them, as it will always give me pleasure to do justice to their exertions.

I have attentively considered the regulations proposed for the department of Prisoners. They appear to me to be judicious and proper, such as I have for a long time wished to see take place. My only fear is about the concurrence of the particular states; but the

experiment can be tried. I return you the regulations with one or two remarks annexed. I have the honor, etc.

P.S. Inclosed you will find the Returns of the following Corps agreeable to Resolution of 15th. March last. Colo. Harrison's Regt. of Artillery; Capt. Jno. Kingsbury's65 Compy. No. Carolina Artillery; Capt. Noah Nicols66 Compy. Artillery Artificers.67

Remarks on Regulations68 of the Prisoner's department. No. 1. It appears to be the intention of the Board to make a distinction between *Prisoners* and *Prisoners of War* ; which is no doubt a proper and necessary one; but it is to be apprehended, the distinction

65. Capt. John Kingsbury, of the Independent North Carolina Artillery Company. He was taken prisoner at Charleston, S.C., in May, 1780.

66. Capt. Noah Nichols. He resigned in April, 1780.

67. The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton; the P.S. is in that of Tench Tilghman.

68. The text of the proposed Regulation has not been found.

may not be clearly understood by the different States. If any clause could be introduced to make it more explicit it would be desirable; But there will be a difficulty in this without making use of language not agreeable to the principles commonly received; for properly there can be no prisoners but *Prisoners* marked * the words not *included in the 1st Article of this resolve* be added, If it is thought however the distinction will be understood without it it may be best to leave it as it is.

2. The expediences of this is rather questionable. If the Captns. of such Ships and Vessels comply with the injunction, it may often occasion delay, injurious to them, and of course in proportion to the sea service; and as the prisoners are appropriated to the benefit of the United States, they will deem it a hardship to be put to this expence in addition to the risk and trouble of capturing them. They may be tempted by it to throw their Prisoners ashore

at the first place where they think they can do it without discovery and leave them to shift for themselves, by which the Public may lose the Prisoners; perhaps it may be better to let the delivery of these Prisoners, be upon the same footing as with respect to those captured by Vessels in the service of the States?69

69. The draft is in the writing of Richard Kidder Meade.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West Point, September 7, 1779

Sir: The current of intelligence from New York makes the late reinforcement under Arburthnot amount to about 3000 troops principally recruits and rather in an unhealthy situation. It also speaks of preparations for an expedition and some recent rumours point to the Southern States, though the enemy have thrown out menaces against this post. If the reinforcement does not exceed this estimate they may not think them selves able to operate effectually this way, in which case, the unpromising situation of their affairs may tempt them to make an effort to get hold of some of the southern States, to counterballance their losses in the West Indies and favor negotiations in the Winter. They have been for some time past fortifying across New York Island; and it is said are going to erect a strong work at Brookline on Long Island: all this may be to have it in their power to secure their present posts with a small force and make large detachments with the greater confidence. A part may go to the West Indies and a considerable number still be spared for the purpose I am supposing; the more so, if Rhode Island, which [is] now become to them a very inferior object should be evacuated.

An apprehension of the Spaniards may be an objection to this plan; but they may not be deterred by this danger, from the probability that the Spaniards will rather direct their

attention to Jamaica than to this Continent; besides which if they have a large force operating in the southern States, it may easily enough be turned to the defence of their

own possessions that way, or if these should be lost, they will be amply compensated by the full acquisition of Georgia and South Carolina, both of which are so weak as to be in no small danger.77

I take the liberty to suggest these hints, as it seems to me to be the part of prudence to be upon our guard against a plan of this nature and to take every precaution in our power to disappoint its success. By a letter I have received from General Lincoln his force is insignificant and his prospects of an addition feeble. No exertions should be omitted to make them better.

Though our force here is far from making a diminution desirable; yet as I think we have more to apprehend to the south ward than in this quarter, if Congress should be of opinion for sending the two North Carolina regiments that way, I should hope they might now be spared without material injury. The distance is a very discouraging circumstance; but the troops shall be in readiness to move the moment the pleasure of Congress is known.

I have the honor to inclose the copy of a letter which I have just received from General Sullivan and to congratulate Congress on the agreeable and important success it announces.78 I have the honor, etc.79

77. Clinton's letter (August 21) to Germain shows the accuracy of Washington's surmise: “I now find myself obliged by many cogent reasons,” he wrote “to abandon every view of making an effort in this Quarter. The precautions, which Mr. Washington has had leisure to take, make me hopeless of bringing him to a general Action; and the Season dissuades me strongly from losing time in the attempt. The weather will admit of our acting in Carolina, in the beginning of October; … if we do not conquer South Carolina; every thing is to be apprehended for Georgia. We have flattering hopes of assistance from the Inhabitants held forth to us by Mr. Simpson. … In order to give the effort a fair trial it is necessary that the Corps destined for that Service should get there before Mr. Washington can throw any considerable reinforcement to the Southward: Before also, before any part

of the French fleet. … shall have come upon the Coast. I am therefore employing the Army to perfect the defences of this post, which at all events must be left out of reach of any probable insult. I shall then give the Enemy every jealousy at the Eastward, and without losing a Moment the expedition will proceed to South Carolina. … Having seized on the stations of Verplanks and Stoney Point. … with a view to offensive operations in this Country, their principal importance must cease when that design is discarded: And as without great reinforcements which we cannot expect, nothing of consequence can be carried on again in this quarter. I shall probably abandon those posts; not having Troops sufficient without hazard and difficulty to maintain them thro' the Winter."

78. A copy of Sullivan's letter to Washington (Aug. 30, 1779), giving an account of the victory at Newtown (Chemung or Elmira, as it is variously called), is filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

79. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade. The letter was read in Congress on September 13, when it was agreed that the North Carolina troops should be sent to South Carolina, and that the Continental frigates, *Providence*, *Queen of France*, and *Ranger*, should proceed thither; the troops to go in them, and a transport if necessary.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West point, September 8, 1779.

Sir: I had the honor to address your Excellency yesterday, since which I have received the within intelligence9 It comes from a person who in general has been exact and authentic in his accounts, and in whose information I place a principal confidence. The counterfeit sixty dollar bill which he mentions is also inclosed. I have the honor, etc.10

9. A copy of the intelligence accompanies this letter from Washington and is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. It informs of British preparations to send troops to the West Indies and "of a new emission of the bills of sixty dollar lately done in New York. The

person from whom I received it informed me that a great quantity of this kind is put into the country by way of Kingsbridge and Bergen."

10. In the writing of James McHenry.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Headquarters, West point, September 11, 1779.

Gentn: I do myself the Honor to transmit you the Copy of a Letter of the 16th Ulto.19 which I received from Win. Gardner Esqr, Agent Cloathier at Portsmouth, and of the foot of the Invoice to which he refers. I don't know the terms on which the Cloathing Agents act; but there appears to me to be something obviously wrong in the present instance, and which has induced me to trouble the Board with this Letter. It is said by Mr. Gardner, that the Articles contained in the Invoice are part of the Continental moiety of the prizes taken by the Warren, Queen of France and Ranger. If so, and the Continent was entitled to a moiety of the Goods, I cannot perceive any necessity there was for Mr Langdon's20 turning the Sterling ling amount into currency, or at any rate for doing it at an advance of 3900 per Cent. On this and 33:6:0 £ paid for Casks and packing the Goods, Mr. Gardner charges a Commission of £ 341:9:5 lawful money, so that he is to receive within a mere trifle, 20/ lawful for every 20/ Sterling Cost in the Invoice, barely for his trouble, in sending the Goods off for Camp. And even unwarrantable as this appears to me, it is possible that it may not be the only Commission, with which the public may be burthened on account of these Goods; for Mr Gardner, according to his Letter, is the second Agent thro whose hands they passed. If Mr Langdon, who he says is the Agent for prizes and made the advance of 3900

19. Gardner's letter is in the *Washington Papers*, and is indorsed by Tilghman: "A concise mode of making Money by chargg. exhorbitant Commissions." An extract from the Board of War to Gardner (September 13), in the *Washington Papers*, reads: "You in part mistake our meaning as to your commissions. Such materials as you received from the Contl.

Agent and make into Cloathing, are to be considered in the same light as if purchased, and your Commission of 2½ pr. Cent charged on their value; such articles as you receive and send on in the same state in which you receive them, you have no further trouble with them than that attending the mere transmission, unless you have them to pack, or repack in which case Commissions will be allowed on the monies laid out for packages, labour, cooperage, transportation &ca; this we conceive to be a proper distinction, and is the footing we are with others."

20. John Langdon. He was Continental Agent for Prizes at Portsmouth, N. H., and New Hampshire Delegate to the Continental Congress.

per Cent and delivered the goods to him, receives a like commission, the States will pay about 679 or 80 £ lawful, for the mere charges of commission on 340:12:9 Sterling Cost of Goods taken by their own Ships, exclusive of the future charges of transportation, Storage and delivery. I am the more at a loss to account for the necessity which led to this advance and discount into Currency, as it could never be supposed that the Army, after Congress had so decidedly and so justly declared that Officers and Soldiers should have Cloathing on reasonable terms proportioned to their wages, that they were to pay such exorbitant prices. But *whatever* were the reasons with Mr. Langdon, profits to Mr. Gardner strike me as insufferable. I have the Honor, etc.

P.S. If the Massachusetts arrangement has been committed to the Board, they will be pleased to forward the Commissions as soon as they can, as the Officers are frequently applying for them.21

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West Point, September 12, 1779.

Sir: Since I had the honor of addressing you yesterday I have received the inclosed pieces of intelligence, thro Genl. Gates and Genl. Huntingdon. Genl. Gates's letter inclosing Mr. Prouds30 was dated

21. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

30. An extract of John Proud's letter is filed with the letter from Washington and is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

at Providence the 6th. instant whence we may conclude that Sunday the date of Mr Prouds was the 5th.

Tho' these accounts differ as to the number of Ships of War, they seem clearly to indicate a french fleet of some kind standing towards our Coast. It is more than probable that the intelligence above referred to may appear in the Eastern prints, but as advantages may accrue by keeping it from the enemy in New-York as long as possible, I have not communicated it publicly. Congress will judge of the expediency of doing the same.

I do myself the honor of inclosing your Excellency four English prints tho' not of a very late date, they contain parliamentary debates somewhat more at large than we have seen them. I have the honor, &c.31

To HENRY LAURENS, JOSEPH SPENCER, AND NATHANIEL SCUDDER44

Head Quarters, West point, September 13, 1779.

Gentn: I have had the Honor to receive Your polite and obliging Letter of the 3d Inst. and inclose by this conveyance, the papers which you request. They ought to have been transmitted before, but it is likely the circumstance of their being Original, was not attended to

31. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade.

44. Committee of the Continental Congress on the Mustering Department.

at the time I wrote, and produced the omission. I have the Honor, etc.45

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West point, September 14, 1779.

Sir: I have the honor to inclose your Excellency a copy of a Letter from Lt Colo Taylor stationed at Elizabeth Town to Mr Beatty, respecting the sailing of three Regiments from New York.54 After writing this, he sent me a verbal message that he had receive positive intelligence of their being destined for the West Indies. I believe there must be a mistake in the name of the Ship, as the Ardent was not to my knowledge, upon this coast. Tis said the embarkation continues. I think our friends to the Southward ought to have notice of these movements. I have the Honor, etc.55

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, West Point, September 14, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have been honoured with yours of the 31st Augst and

45. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

54. A copy of Taylor's intelligence dated the 12th [of September] is filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

55. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

3d instants.56 Hallet was safely delivered to me by Lt. Colo. Washington and I sent him up to Govr. Clinton, with an account of his conduct, similar to that which you have transmitted to me.

I agree with you in opinion, that the Standard, with the Union and Emblems in the Centre, is to be preferred; with this addition the number of the Regt. and the State to which it belongs inserted within the curve of the serpent, in such place, as the painter or designer shall judge most proper.

Lt. McCallister, who brought me your favr. of the 3d, informs me that you desired him to tell me, that you had recd. an Acct. after sealing, that the Vessel with powder had arrived in the Delaware. This is a most agreeable piece of intelligence, and General Knox will inform the Board what quantity of the powder it will be necessary to have sent forward immediately to the Army.

Inclosed you have the Return of Major Gibbs Corps of Guards57 agreeable to the Resolve of 15th March last. I have the honor, etc.58

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

West point, September 18, 1779.

Sir: I have the honor to inform Your Excellency, that the Chevalier de la Luzerne, who was so obliging as to honour me

56. The Board had written (September 3): “The enclosed Drafts of a Standard for the Army are sent for your Approbation, Rejection or Alteration. The Officers will be by and by pressing for Colours and if Materials can be procured they shall be made when you send us your Ideas of the Plan of the Standard. The one with the Union and Emblems in the Middle is preferred by us as being variant from the Marine Flag.” The Board's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

57.The Commander in Chief's Guard.

58. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

with a visit in his way from Boston, set out yesterday morning for Philadelphia. He will cross the Delaware at Trentown,, and if nothing occurs to impede his journey, he will probably arrive at Philadelphia on Thursday or Friday.

I inclose Your Excellency a Copy of a Letter88 from Lt Colo Van Dyck to Colo Vanschaick, with which I have been favoured by Governor Clinton. I have had no intelligence on the subject of it from General Sullivan himself, or any advices from him since those transmitted in my Letter of the 7th, so that the accounts it contains must rest upon their own credibility. There are however circumstances that make part of the intelligence at least, highly probable, as Colo Brodhead was to march from Fort Pitt on the 7th or 8th Ulto. for the Senecca Country. I inclose your Excellency Two New York papers of the 7th and 11th Inst. I have the Honor, etc.89

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, West point, September 18, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have been honored with yours of the 9th: inclosing an abstract of the powder brought in by Capt. Ashmead.90 It is to be regretted that the quantity falls so far short of the estimate, but I am

88. A copy of this letter, dated from Fort Schuyler, Sept. 7, 1779, is filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

89. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

90. Capt. John Ashmead, of the Pennsylvania privateer *Eagle*, which had been sent to the West Indies for powder by the Marine Committee.

in hopes that the above, with the three hundred Barrels forwarded before, will answer our present purposes. I would however wish that the Marine Committee may be requested

not to lose sight of the object, but take the earliest opportunity not only of making up their disappointment by Ashmead, but for procuring a stock adequate to any future contingencies. I have the honor, &c.91

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, West Point, September 22, 1779.

Gentlemen: I was yesterday honored with yours of the 16th; the general Return of Military Stores accompanying it was delivered safely to me.19

I have directed the few things forwarded by Mr Gardner, to be delivered out to those Officers of the Staff and line, who are not supplied by the States, at moderate prices, agreeable to the direction of the Board. I have the honor, etc.20

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West point, September 19 [–20], 1779.

Sir: On the 12th. instant I had the honor of communicating

91. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

19. The Board of War's letter of Sept. 16, 1779, and the return of stores are not found in the *Washington Papers*.

20. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

two pieces of intelligence respecting the fleet under the command of Admiral Count D'Estaing. Hearing that one of the Captains arrived at New London was a Man of intelligence and veracity, I dispatched Lt. Lee5 of the 1st Connecticut Regt. to gain a circumstantial account of the matter. The inclosed is a Copy of Capt. Leisters6 relation, which seems too particular to admit of a doubt. Mr Lee adds, that Capt. Leister informed

him further, that Watlins Island was the point at which the 50 sail of Merchantmen and 5 sail of the line parted with the grand fleet, to proceed to France. He also says that before the fleet sailed from Cape Francois, a Captain belonging to Charles town South Carolina was often sent for on Board the Counts Ship, but his business with him was kept secret.

From the course which the Count was standing, when Capt Leister left him, he is of opinion that he was bound for the southward. Should that be his destination, a very little time must inform us of his arrival there. I have the honor, etc.

20th: Since writing the foregoing I have recd. the following intelligence from a person in whose information I place considerable dependance. “The enemy are still engaged in strengthening the City on all parts, they have raised three lines all picketted in the rear of the City across the Island; are still employed at their fort at Brooklyn. The Light Horse are assembled in force at Brooklyn ferry where Vessels are lying at Anchor to take them on Board, a large quantity of Hay packed and put on board for their use. 55 transports have watered

5. Lieut. Ezra Lee. He was transferred to the Fifth Connecticut Regiment in January, 1781, and was paymaster of same until retired in June, 1782.

6. A merchant captain. A copy of his intelligence accompanies this letter from Washington and is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

and anchored in the East River and Bay, more taking in Water. From the best accounts near eight thousand Men are preparing to embark, their destination unknown, but generally believed for the West Indies or Carolina. Three frigates cruising out to discover the first approaches of a French fleet. By accounts recd. last Thursday from Jamaica, the inhabitants had removed their stores and Women and Children to the Mountains being fearful of the approach of the french. A deserter from Sandy Hook reports that part of the

fleet that saild last Monday with the 44th. and two Hessian Regiments had put back in a storm, they say they were bound for Hallifax." This intelligence dated the 17th Inst.7

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West Point, September 25, 1779.

Sir: I have been honored with yours of the 15th. covering a Resolve confirming the arrangement of the Massachusetts line, and a printed Copy of a circular letter from Congress to their constituents. I sincerely hope, that the measures pointed out may be pursued, and that every good effect, to be wished for, may be the result.

Since mine of the 19th. I have recd. several pieces of intelligence from my confidential Correspondents in New York and upon Long Island, and from persons in other quarters: The following

7. In the writing of Tench Tilghman.

are substantially the contents of their different letters, from which you will perceive, they all agree that a very considerable embarkation is in agitation, tho' there are a variety of opinions respecting the numbers and destination.

New York 11 Septr. "It is generally believed that the 44th. and 3 Hessian Regiments which embarked and sailed a few days ago, went to Quebec.40 Sir James Wallace in the Experiment of 50 Guns sailed at the same time for Georgia, having under his convoy a Store ship and two or three other Vessels, but no troops. The Europa 64. Russel 74. Renown 50. and four or five Frigates in the harbour of New York. It is thought the large ships will be sent to the West Indies to reinforce Admiral Byron. The general opinion that nothing further could be done in Georgia without a reinforcement, which it was thought will be sent about the beginning of October.

From the same Septr. 18th. “The 54th: 77th: Rawdons or Irish Volunteers, Queens Rangers, Cathcarts Legion, all the Grenandiers and Light Infantry and the greater part of the Horse under orders for embarkation. It is generally believed they are bound to the southward, and that Charles town will be the great object this Campaign. Every 6th Man from King and Queen County at work upon the Fort at Brooklyn. The inhabitants of Suffolk County having refused to turn out for the same purpose, were threatened with military execution in case of further non compliance. The gorge or pass at Fort Washington strongly fortified, and the Works upon Bayards Hill, in the Rear of the City, were repairing. The grand Battery

40. The draft has “Halifax or Quebec.”

repairing, and to be mounted with 40 twenty four pounders.

Long Island Septr. 10th. “An account is just recd. from General Prescott at Rhode Island, that a Vessel had arrived there which left a French Fleet in latitude 25 or 35 (not certain which) steering N. W. this had occasioned great confusion, and the immediate call of a general Council of War.

Monmouth County Septr. 21st. “A fleet of 30 sail went into the Hook this day, from whence, or whether any troops on board not known. When they hove in sight, they appeared to come from the Eastward. A deserter from the fleet at New York mentions that the press had been exceedingly hot, and that Admiral Arbuthnot was to sail in a few days with three sixty four Gun ships with a fleet under Convoy.

Elizabeth Town 22d Septr. “On the 20th a Mr Edward Fox of Philada. an exchanged prisoner, came out of New York. He says the embarkation was by accounts to consist of seven thousand Men, and that a number of Hessian and English Regiments had embarked before he came away, their destination said to be Virginia.”

From the foregoing, Congress will readily perceive, that the destination of the embarkation referred to, must be merely conjectural; this however seems to be certain, that the Enemy, from their preparations for defence upon New York Island, and upon the heights at Brooklyn upon Long Island, mean to put themselves in a situation to hold the City and its environs with their remaining force.

From the movements of the enemy upon Stoney and Verplanks points for a few days past, an evacuation of the latter

seemed probable, but an intelligent Deserter yesterday informs, that one Regiment from Verplanks and two from Stoney point had gone down to New York, which was the occasion of their demolishing some of the old Works, and contracting themselves within new. I have the honor, etc.41

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, West Point, September 29, 1779.

Sir: I have duly received your favor of the 23d Inst. The clothing which is packed up and ready for transportation you will be pleased to ordered on to New-Windsor by way of Morristown, Pompton and Ringwood. I expect the clothier General will be at New Windsor before it arrives.

We suffer so much at present for the article of shoes that should any be within the order of the board, I wish them to be sent forward as soon as possible.

The blankets we have on hand are greatly inadequate to our wants. If any supply of these can be had it will be a very desirable attainment. I am &c.91

41. In the writing of Tench Tilghman.

91. The draft is in the writing of James McHenry.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West Point, September 30, 1779.

Sir: I have been honored with your Excellency's favors of the 22d and 23d instants, with the Resolves to which they refer. In obedience to the latter, I have put the North Carolina Regiments under march by the shortest Route to South Carolina.

I yesterday received the inclosed intelligence,4 it is said “to be obtained from a public Office which has the best opportunity of determining the numbers, the Commander in Chief has kept the destination unknown even from his own Aids.” I cannot undertake to engage for the authenticity of this intelligence in its full extent, the numbers I am certain must be exaggerated. I should suppose, the Corps mentioned may amount to between 5000 and 6,000 Men.5

I hope I shall, in a few days, receive a more particular account of the above, from a quarter in which I place great confidence, and which shall be communicated to your Excellcy. the moment I obtain it.

I have just recd. a South Carolina paper of the 8th instant, by which it appears, that the Count D'Estaing had arrived near that Coast. I learn by a private letter from Philada. that Monsieur Gerrard had received dispatches from the Count informing him of his intended operations. Perhaps, upon this change of affairs to the Southward, Congress may think it

4. This intelligence is filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

5. At this point the draft has the following crossed off: “The first division said to be under the Command of Lord Cornwallis, seems from the number and the quality of the troops, to be destined for some particular enterprize, and may be thought to point to the

southward. But the heavy Convoy of stores and provisions which the information tell us is to accompany or follow the Fleet looks as if they had a more distant and lengthy expedition in View."

unnecessary to continue the march of the North Carolina Brigade. I shall however order it to proceed slowly towards Trenton, and should Congress be of opinion, from the advices which I presume will be communicated to them, that the service of these troops may be dispensed with, I shall be obliged to your Excellency for directing an Express to meet Colo. Clarke with countermanding orders. There are possible operations in this quarter, which may render the presence of that Brigade very useful. Congress will judge how far the probability of their being necessary to the southward may overballance this consideration. I have the honor, etc.6

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West Point, October 1, 1779.

Sir: Major Noirmont De la Neuville, who will have the honor of delivering this, has signified to me the necessity he is under from his private affairs of returning to France this Winter; and his desire to obtain from Congress a furlough for that purpose. The whole tenor of this Gentlemans conduct in the different capacities in which he has acted has been so meritorious as to give him a just title to the attention and favour of Congress. The certificates in his

6. In the writing of Tench Tilghman.

possession from the different Officers with whom he has immediately served are ample testimonies of his zeal intelligence and bravery. He has sought every occasion of distinguishing himself which circumstances would permit; and that part of his conduct and character, which has come within my knowledge and observation has given me so favourable an impression of him, that I cannot but wish the situation of the service had

afforded him more frequent opportunities of exercising those qualities of which he has given such handsome specemins. If Congress are pleased to comply with his request, and he should return to this Country, his merit as modest as it is genuine will always secure him a cordial reception from me. I have the honor, etc.27

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, West Point, October 1, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have the Honor to transmit you the Arrangement of the Virginia line as corrected and newly formed on the 23d Instant, in consequence of which sundry Commissions are wanted; occasioned by former omissions, deaths, resignations and promotions into the State Regiments. The instances in which Commissions are

27. In the writing of Richard Kidder Meade.

required are, as I understand by the Memorandum at the end of the Arrangement, where the word *promoted* , the dos. following, and asterisms are set against the Officers Names. In other cases they have been issued. By some means or other, the Arrangement at Middle Brook was conducted upon principles different from those the Officers of the Virginia line with the approbation of the Committee of Congress had established at White plains, which produced some confusion. I have struck Captn. Israel28 out of the 4th Regiment and made the consequent promotions, upon the Report of the Officers of his long absence. I have also charged Generals Woodford and Muhlenburg to call upon all Absent Officers, not employed with Genl. Scott, in the most pointed and preemptory terms, as I had often done before, to rejoin their Corps. The irregularities mentioned to have taken place with respect to the Commissions of the Officers of the 9th. Regiment cannot be rectified at present. I return Lt. Colo. Cabell's and Major Waggoner's Commissions, as they require to be renewed or altered in their dates. I wish it were in my power to be more particular in the causes of vacancies; but they happen frequently in such a way that I cannot ascertain them or their dates. Of such however in the different lines, as have been

regularly made since the transmission of the Arrangements, I now inclose a list. I have allowed the Officers who have resigned latterly to retain their Commissions, as I found it a matter generally wished and deemed right, and have indorsed their Resignations.

As all promotions from Captains and their

28. Capt. Isaac Israel. He had been taken prisoner Sept, 11, 1777, at Brandywine, and was dropped from the rolls Sept. 29, 1779, with the remark “never joined.”

Superior Officers are lineal, and their Original appointments having frequently happened on the same day, it is necessary to number their Commissions, to determine in such case their precedence, and as by the changes which must inevitably take place by reason of resignations &c. some confusion may arise without a regular and Uniform principle is established in the case; I would submit it to the Board, whether in the instance of Captains and of Superior Officers, their Commissions had not better be numbered as new promotions arise in regular succession. For example if a State has 30 Captains, Numbered 1. 2 &c to 30, one dies, resigns &c and a New One is appointed, his Commission might be numbered 31 &c. and so in the instance of Field Officers. It is true, there will appear some inconsistency in Commissions bearing higher Numbers, than the real number of Officers in the line; but it will not be attended with any injury, and it is the best mode that has occurred to me, to prevent confusion, so long as the circumstance of date itself, will not be sufficient to decide the precedence, which must be the case, while there remain Two or more Officers of the same rank and same appointment. And with respect to Subalterns, as they do not rise lineally, but Regimentally, their Commissions may not be Numbered, but their Regimental precedence, which with Officers of their class is most material to be adjusted, may be designated in the body of the Commission by calling them the 1. 2 &c (no matter how high the numbers proceed) Lieut. or Ensign of the Regiment of. If a question of precedence between Officers of this Class, of different

Regiments, or of the line at large should arise, the dates of their Commissions where dissimilar will determine it, and if not, some other mode must be recurred to. If the Board have not adopted some better principles and approve these, they can apply them to the Commissions to be issued in consequence of the Arrangement now transmitted; having regard to the numbers of those made out under the former arrangement, in the case of the Captains and Superior Officers. I have the honor, etc.

P. S. I forward by this conveyance a Return of Colo. Lamb's Regiment, agreeable to the Resolution of the 15th of March.29

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

West Point, October 2, 1779.

Sir: I have the honor to transmit Your Excelly. an Extract from a Letter of the 24th of last month, which I have received from Major General Gates.39 In Answer to his question, so far as it respects the time from which the Resolve, the subject of his Letter, is to operate; I have written him, that it operated from the time it passed: but I have not given him any opinion, with respect to the claims of the Militia, which he mentions. Congress will be pleased to determine whither they are or are not, to receive

29. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

39. This letter is not found in the *Washington Papers*. The extract, however, is filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

the subsistence granted by the Act,40 and to honor me with their decision, as it will be the rule to govern my Answer in this and in similar cases. I have the Honor, etc.41

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, West Point, October 2, 1779.

Gentlemen: In mine of the 29th ulto. I barely expressed our want of shoes. I did not then know the extent of our wants, or that there was not a single pair in the hands of the Cloathier at Camp to supply them. A considerable part of the Army is now returned unfit, even for fatigue duty in these stony Grounds, and should circumstances require a move we must inevitably be deprived of the services of a number of Men fit for duty in every other respect but that of want of shoes. I have undertaken to write to Messrs. Mehelm,42 Hatfield43 and Starr44 the three Commissaries of Hydes nearest to the Army, and have pressed them to send in every pair they have upon hand and to call upon those with whom they have made Contracts to compleat the quantities for which they have agreed with the utmost expedition. I must entreat the Board to urge Mr. Henry45 or any others more immediately under their Eye who may be engaged in this Business to

40. The militia officers who turned out for the month of August demanded this subsistence increase. (See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, Sept. 18, 1779.)

41. In the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

42. John Mehelm. He was commissary of hides in New Jersey.

43. Moses Hatfield, at New Windsor, N. Y.

44. George Starr, at Danbury, Conn.

45. William Henry, of Lancaster, Pa.

exert themselves in making up and forwarding a supply to Camp.

I cannot help thinking that there must be some mismanagement in conducting the Business, by those at present engaged in the Hide department. While the Brigadiers, thro' the necessity of the Case, undertook to make contracts of Hides for shoes, the Brigades

were not only well shod, but generally had a stock on hand. Why matters should have taken a contrary turn the moment they were put into the hands of persons who have nothing else to attend to, deserve some investigation.

I have this moment received yours of the 28th inclosing a Resolve of the same date directing the detention of Majors General Phillips and Reidhesel and their families untill the further order of Congress. I immediately dispatched an Express to Mr. Skinner deputy Commissary of prisoners at Elizabeth town, desiring him to conduct those Gentlemen to Bethlehem, should they not have gone into New York previous to the orders which you inform me you had forwarded to Elizabeth town. I cannot but feel great regret that this measure was not sooner determined. I have the honor, &c.46

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West Point, October 4, 1779.

Sir: I had the honor of receiving your Excellency's letter

46. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

of the 26th and 27th ultimo at half after twelve O'Clock yesterday. I immediately upon the Receipt of it, I set about concerting the measures necessary for cooperation with His Excellency the Count D'Estaing, agreeable to the powers vested in me by the Resolve of Congress of the 26th ulto. I have called upon the State of Massachusetts for 2000 Militia, Connecticut for 4000, New York for 2500, New Jersey for 2000 and Pennsylvania for 1500; the last is below the quota that she ought to furnish in proportion to her strength, but I was induced to make a requisition of that number only, upon a consideration, that we shall be obliged to call largely upon that State for the means of transportation of provision and supplies of all kinds. I have also taken the liberty, to press the States abovementioned, to use the most vigorous exertions in procuring supplies of provision, especially of Flour, for the want of which, I fear we shall be much embarrassed, should we

draw such a head of Men together as will be necessary to give our operations a tolerable prospect of success. I have not heard from General Sullivan, but by report, since the 30th August. I have however dispatched an Express to him (upon a supposition that he has compleated the object of his expedition and is upon his return) desiring him to hasten his march, and directing him to leave as few Men as he possily can in the frontier Garrisons. I have also wrote to Genl. Gates, desiring him to hold all the Continental troops under his command ready to March this way, should the Count D'Estaing, upon settling a plan of operations, determine upon an attempt against New York: But as there is a possibility that he may, upon

being made acquainted with the numbers and situation of the enemy, prefer an attack upon Rhode Island, I have desired General Gates to be looking towards and preparing for such an event. I had, upon the first report of the Counts standing towards this Coast, stationed Major Lee in Monmouth with a letter for him69 to be carried on board upon his first appearance, in which, I informed him of the enemy's force by Sea and land, their position at that time, and pointed out to him70 the measures which I thought it would be advantageous for him to pursue upon his arrival. I am preparing fresh letters for him, in which, I shall inform him fully of all posterior Events,71 and the measures I am taking for a cooperation. I am also engaging and sending down proper pilots to him.

I have taken the liberty to countermand the march of Colo. Clarke with the two Regiments of North Carolina, upon a presumption, that, from the favorable aspect of affairs to the Southward, I shall stand justifiable for such a measure.

I observe by a Resolve of Congress lately transmitted to me, that three of the Continental Frigates were ordered to South Carolina. I do not know the views of Congress in making this disposition, but should they have no particular object in contemplation, I would venture to recommend their being ordered to join the Counts Fleet, which in my opinion would be much benefitted by an additional number of Frigates, especially for the Navigation of the North River and the sound. I think it would be also well,

69. See Washington's letter to Comte D'Estaing, Sept. 13, 1779.

70. At this point the draft, which is in the writing of Tilghman, has the following crossed off: “advantages that would result from his being able to enter the harbor of New York suddenly and if possible passing some of his lighter Vessels up the north River, which would effectually prevent the evacuation of Verplank and Stoney points by water. Could this be done, troops will be in readiness to intercept them in a march upon either side of the River. I also recommended to the Count to throw a few ships into the sound, which would not only prevent either an evacuation of or a reenforcement being sent to Rhode Island, but would prevent the escape of such of the enemy's vessels as could be carried thro' the passage of Hell Gate.”

71. At this point the draft has crossed off: “and shall after giving a general view of the enemy's strength at New York and Rhode Island, and the force that we shall probably be able to draw together to cooperate with him, leave it with him to determine which of the two enterprizes it wall be most convenient to him, all circumstances considered, to undertake.”

should the Marine Committee be directed to turn their attention to the transportation of Flour from the Delaware and Chesapeak by Water. Should we obtain the command of the Sea, Vessels may, without the least danger, be introduced into the Hook, thence to Amboy, from whence their Cargoes might be easily conveyed in Boats up Newark Bay. Or should some of them run round into the Sound it would be equally, nay, more convenient. Should we operate to the Eastward, measures of this kind will be indespensibly necessary, as the length and difficulty of land Carriage will render the support of any considerable Body of Men almost impossible. The Wheat of Maryland being in more forwardness for grinding than any other, I could wish that Governor Johnson may be requested to push the purchases within that State. The Commissary General gives the fullest encouragement on the score of Beef, but of Flour he continues to express his fears. I have the honor, etc.72

To THE MARINE COMMITTEE90

West point, October 6, 1779.

Gentn: I had the honor yesterday to receive your favor of the 28th of September, accompanied by a Copy of your Letter of

72. In the writing of Tench Tilghman. Endorsed: “recvd 8 at half past 9: A. M.” Read October 8. Referred to the delegates of Delaware, Maryland, South Carolina “to take order thereon.”

90. Of the Continental Congress.

the same date to the Commissioners of the Navy Board at Boston; and am happy in the correspondence of your ideas, with mine upon the subject of it. I wrote Congress on the 4th. Instant, and suggested to them the eligibility of the plan which you had already adopted.

I take the liberty to transmit the inclosed Letter91 for his Excellency Count D'Estaing to your care, and request that it may meet him, on his earliest arrival off the Capes of Delaware. The contents of it are very important and interesting; which considerations will induce the Honourable Committee not to confide it to the care of any person, who is not a trusty and good friend. It cannot reach His Excellency the Count too expeditiously.

Two pilots Capn. Dobbs and a Mr Redfield set out a few hours ago for Philadelphia, and I should hope from the measures I have taken, that there will be Others immediately with you, or on the Coast of Monmouth, ready to embark on board the Count's Squadron. I have the honor, etc.92

91. Oct. 4, 1779.

92. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

Alexander Hamilton also wrote the Marine Committee, by Washington's direction, this same day (October 6), that Pilots Dobbs and Redfield were engaged to go on board the French Fleet, which was expected to call in the Delaware River. Dobbs knew the Sandy Hook Channel and Redfield the navigation of the North River. Washington “was just setting out with Mr. Gerard on a visit to the works when these persons arrived at Head Quarters; and to avoid detaining them, left orders with me to despatch them with a letter to you.” Hamilton's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, West point, October 8, 1779.

Gentlemen: I have been honored with yours of the 30th ulto. on the subject of Major Francis Murray's14 exchange for the Hessian Major Stein,15 lately captured. Had Major Stein been taken by a continental Vessel, a preference in favr. of Major Murray would have been totally inadmissible; but all circum stances considered, I do not think our Officers who are prisoners, should look upon themselves injured, when they are acquainted with the claim which Mr. John Murray, one of the owners of the Mars, seems to have, of demanding his Brother for Major Stein, more especially as the remainder of

14. Of the Thirteenth Pennsylvania Regiment. He was exchanged in December, 1780, and did not rejoin the service.

15. Maj. Johann Fredrich von Stein, Regiment Knyphausen, German allied troops.

the prisoners taken by that Vessel have, as you report, been generously given up for the Benefit of the Continent. This being in the nature of a private Exchange, Major Stein must undertake to negotiate it himself, by making the proposition either to Genl. Clinton or his own commander in Chief as he may judge most proper; and I could wish, that he may, in

his application, set forth that Major Murray is Brother to the owner of the private Vessel of War that captured him, and that the exchange is effected upon the particular interposition of Mr. Jno. Murray.16

The inclosed Return of Men, detained in Philadelphia as Artificers of various kinds, has been made to me by Brigr. Genl. Irvine, with a request that they may be ordered to join their respective Regiments if not very materially employed. You will observe that the 10th Regt. returns no less than 18, a number very severely felt in the weak state which most of our Regiments are in. Besides this, the Men, by being long absent, become debauched and intirely forget all their military duties. Under the present prospect of Affairs we may shortly have occasion for every continental Soldier that can be collected; I shall therefore be glad that the above mentioned per sons may be delivered to Captn. Ziegler of the Penna. line, unless they are employed in a manner that renders their serv ices more essential in Philada. than with their Regts.

Mr Wilkinson is now here endeavouring to organize and reduce to a regular System the Cloathing department. He seems to think, and I agree with him, that one of the first things

16. At this point the draft has the following crossed off: “This will serve to convince Officers that nothing irregular has been done by me, or any undue preference given.”

to be done, is to stop all partial Issues, by purchasing Agents or any other Authority without his privity, other wise he never can determine, at a view, with what the troops of any particular State, or those who do not come under that denomination, have been furnished, and consequently, he will be much at a loss in apportioning equally the general Stock. I have made him acquainted with the necessity which there has heretofore been of deviating from this rule, merely for want of some person at the Head of the department with competent powers to transact the whole of the business, but I now think it will be proper that Mr. Wilkinson should be acquainted with all the orders that have been given

in the course of this year, for Cloathing for the next, that he may have a check upon the future applications of those who have been furnished. I have the honor, &c.17

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS23

Head Quarters, West-point, October 9, 1779.

Sir: I have been honored with your Excellency's favor inclosing two acts of Congress of the 24th and 25th Ulto.

While I express my sense of the approbation with which Congress have honored me, and my pleasure from the manner in which it has been communicated, permit me to

17. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

23. On October 7 Washington wrote to Charles Thomson, Secretary of Congress: “I have been honored with yours of the 28th Ulto., informing me of the election of the Honble. Samuel Huntington Esq to the presidency of Congress on that day.” This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

congratulate you on the presidency with which you are vested.

The army must feel the motives to a discharge of their duty encreased, by the flattering marks of honor and attention, with which their endeavours have been received.

Since my last intelligence which I communicated to Congress, I have been advised from New-York, of the sudden return of the division of troops under Lord Cornwallis. A number of Transports on his Lordships return to the Hook, were immediately ordered for Rhode Island; part of which sailed on the 27th, and the rest on the 29th Ulto. My correspondent supposes to withdraw the garrison. The advice says further that the troops under Lord Cornwallis were still on shipboard; and that the reinforcement, in the fleet under convoy of Sir Andrew Hammond,24 which arrived the 22d of last month, does not exceed, six

hundred men, and these chiefly Hessian recruits. Other accounts speak of them much higher.

In order to give the Count d'Estaing a more comprehensive detail of my intentions in case a co-operation can be undertaken against New-York; and to obtain the necessary information of his views, I have dispatched General du Portail, and one of my aides (Lt. Col. Hamilton) to meet him off Lewis town,25 for this purpose.

I have to regret that circumstances would not admit of some definite, or preconcerted plan, that might have enabled us to proceed with certainty in our measures. In the mean time, however, I am taking every necessary step for a co-operation, as far as our conjectures of his designs, and our situation will authorise.

24. Sir Andrew Snape Hammond. He was a captain in the British Navy.

25. Lewes, Del.

The inclosed letter from Major General Sullivan,26 and the other papers herewith transmitted, came to hand on the 6th instant. I have taken the first moment of leisure since their receipt to send them forward. I congratulate Congress on his having completed, so effectually, the destruction of the whole of the Towns and settlements, of the hostile Indians, in so short a time, and with so inconsiderable a loss in men. I have the honor, etc.27

To THE MARINE COMMITTEE

Head Quarters, October 9, 1779.

Gentn: By the inclosed Extracts from Genl Orders, which I have the honor to transmit, you will perceive that a certain John Springer has been tried for seducing Soldiers to inlist in the British Army, and sentenced in part, to be employed in some department of the Army or Navy, where he would not have an opportunity of deserting. Being fully persuaded

that he cannot be employed in the former, without affording him such an opportunity and putting it in his power to seduce others to go with him, I have sent him to Philadelphia under guard, to be subject to your Orders, and I should hope he may be made to make the States some reparation, by His services on board one of their Ships

26. Sullivan's letter, dated from Chemung, N.Y., Sept. 28, 1779, is not now found in the *Washington Papers*. A copy of it is filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. The account of the Indian expedition therein varies somewhat from that in Sullivan's letter to Congress, Sept. 30, 1779.

27. In the writing of James McHenry.

of War, for the injuries he has done them. In the Spring 1777 he inlisted in one of the Continental Regimts, presently deserted and engaged with the Enemy. About the Month of June last he returned and as he said, to claim the benefit of a proclamation I had issued. I accordingly pardoned him, and affecting great contrition for his delinquency and apprehension lest he might fall into the Enemys hands, if placed in a situation exposed to the common accidents of captivity, he was put in the Waggon Masters department, and in the course of one or two nights began to inlist our Soldiers for the Enemy's service; and there was every reason to believe he occasioned several desertions which happened in the Corps with which he was tampering. From this trait of his character, the Honble. Committee will readily think that he is not intitled to farther indulgence, and that he cannot with any prospect of advantage be retained here. I have the honor, etc.28

To THE MARINE COMMITTEE

West point, October 10, 1779.

Gentn: I must take the liberty to request, that the Letter I have the honor to transmit inclosed,47 may be forwarded

28. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

47. For inclosure see the following letter.

by a safe and early conveyance to Brigadr Genl Duportail and Lt. Colo Hamilton, who it is probable will have left Philadelphia when it arrives in order to meet Count D'Estaing. I have the Honour, etc.48

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, West Point, October 12, 1779.

Gentlemen: On the 2d instant I addressed you particularly on the subject of the want of shoes, and informed you that

48. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

Washington also wrote again to the Marine Committee this same day (October 10) that Abraham Martlings, pilot for the North River, was sent to Major Lee to wait Comte D'Estaing's appearance off Sandy Hook. “Of this you will be pleased to give information to the Count should he be at the Capes of Delaware.” This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

I had made application to Messrs. Mehelm, Hatfield and Starr the three nearest Commissaries of Hides, and desired to know what quantity of shoes I might depend upon immediately, and what were their future prospects. I have only recd. answers from Mr. Mehelm and Capt. Starr. Copies of whose letters you have inclosed. By these you will perceive, that the quantities, which they can engage to furnish between this and the latter end of November, are most trifling, in comparison with what we may reasonably suppose will be the wants of the Army. Should Mr. Hatfield and Mr. Henry of Lancaster return ac counts, not more promising, the Army must be again reduced to a miserable situation for

want of Shoes. Indeed should we be called upon to move to morrow, I believe I may say without exaggeration that we should lose the service of one third of the Men who could not march from this Ground, unless bare looted, and we may expect that the troops under General Sullivan will be in a similar condition. This is a matter of so important a nature, that I hope the Board will excuse me for60 mentioning it again; and more especially when I add that I am perfectly convinced they have taken every measure in their power to procure supplies, and that they will leave nothing untried to effect it. It is however to be regretted that the moment we attempt to introduce System in this business, that our supplies become scanty and uncertain.

Inclosed you have the Return of Captain posts61 Company of Artillery Artificers agreeable to Resolve of Congress

60. At this point the draft has the following crossed off: “repeating it so often. I do not mean to throw the least imputation upon or charge the least neglect to them. But it is my wish to endeavour, in conjunction with them, to find out some mode of extricating ourselves from the difficulties in which I perceive we shall shortly be involved, unless a supply of shoes should come in from an unexpected quarter with which I am not at present acquainted.”

61. Capt. Anthony Post, of the Second Continental Artillery, Artillery Artificers. He was retired in June, 1781.

of 15th March last.62

Upon the repeated applications of the Officers of the Massachusetts line for their Commissions, I must request the Board will transmit them as speedily as possible. I have the honor, &c.63

To THE BOARD OF WAR

West point, October 12, 1779.

Dear Sir: Yesterday Evening I received your favor of the 5th and am exceedingly obliged for the Extracts it inclosed.64 The intelligence they contain is both interesting and pleasing. It fixes some points with much greater precision with respect to the Enemy than was before known, and also shows that there is not the most perfect harmony prevailing among them. I am Dr Sir etc.65

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West point, October 17, 1779.

Sir: I have been honored with your Excellency's favors

62. For crediting troop quotas to the several States.

63. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

64. Timothy Pickering's letter, as president of the Board of War, is in the *Washington Papers*. The extracts were from letters taken in the British armed cutter, *Royal George*, 14 guns, from New York to St. Christopher.

65. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison and is addressed to Colonel Pickering.

of the 5th. 8th. and 9th. instants. Neither of the former reached me till yesterday, and the latter this day. I am happy that my countermanding the march of the two North Carolina Battalions met the approbation of Congress. I am waiting with the utmost anxiety for further accounts from the Southward.95 By a letter from General Gates, of the 13th Inst., I am informed that 56 sail of transports, in Ballast, had arrived on that day at Newport. This circumstance, corroborated by accounts from New York, look as if an evacuation of Rhode Island was intended, or at least, that they mean to hold themselves in readiness to effect it, if necessary.

A letter from a confidential Correspondent at New York, dated the 9th. inst., mentions, “that the first division of troops are to reimbark immediately, and its generally believed that they are destined for Georgia.” My other advices all tend to shew, that the enemy are making every preparation for the defense of the harbour of New York. I have the honor, etc.96

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, West Point, October 18, 1779.

Gentlemen: In consequence of yours of the 9th instant I have

95. The draft at this point has the following crossed off: “Every preparation that could possibly be made, under our present state of uncertainty, has been made, and I hope should His Excellency Count D'Etaing incline to undertake a joint operation, that we shall be in tolerable forwardness to second his efforts.”

96. In the writing of Tench Tilghman.

wrote to Mr. Hatfield to come to Head Quarters. I have not yet received an answer from him to mine of the 2d instant, and am therefore still at a loss to know what shoes may be expected from him.

It is possible that a requisition of Cloathing for the troops to the Westward may have been already made to you by Colo. Brodhead and that measures may have been taken to supply them. If not, be pleased to put the inclosed into the hands of the Cloathier General, who I doubt not, will immediately do what is needful upon the occasion.

I have recd. the Commissions for the Maryland Company of Artillery and for Ensign Harris13 of the 5th Maryland. I have the honor, etc.

P.S. It is possible that Colo. Brodhead may be enabled to undertake something against Detroit in the course of the Winter. Should he therefore make a requisition of any Stores necessary upon such an occasion the Board will be pleased to comply with his demands without waiting for my concurrence, by which so much delay might be occasioned, as to defeat the enterprise. I have mentioned this to Colo. Brodhead. Be pleased to let no hint of this intention escape you.14

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West-point, October 21, 1779.

Sir: I have been honored with your Excellency's favor

13. Ensign Arthur Harris, of the Fifth Maryland Regiment. He was transferred to the Second Maryland Regiment in January, 1781, and served to April, 1783.

14. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

of the 14th inclosing an act of Congress of the same date, expressive of their sense of the plan and execution of the expedition under the command of Major General Sullivan. I feel it a principal satisfaction, that the discharge of my duty, and the conduct of the troops, should meet with the approbation of Congress.

Herewith your Excellency will receive an extract of a letter from Colonel Brodhead, relative to his expedition against the [Mingo and] Muncy Indians, and that part of the Senecas, on the Alleghany river.1 I congratulate you on his success.

By very recent accounts from the posts at Kings ferry, it would appear that every thing is in the utmost readiness for an immediate evacuation of Verplank's and Stoney-points. It is however by no means evident, whether the evacuation is to be immediate (tho' this would

rather seem the intention) or only to be executed, in case of the Counts appearing against New York.

The enemy at New-York continue their preparations, to provide against a combined attack, and for a concentration of their whole force. They are taking measures also, to render the passage to them, by water, as difficult as possible. A letter from Elizabeth Town, mentions that “eight ships2 (one of which is the Strumbulo an Indiaman) are sunk on the buoy, on the point of the East-bank, an exact S. West course. Ten others are lying ready to sink from the point of the West bank in a line to where the others terminate, leaving a space only for one ship to pass at a time.”

1. This extract of Brodhead's letter of September 16 to Washington is filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

2. The draft has “large ships.”

In a letter from General Gates of the 15th instant, he writes me that, “my intelligence from all quarters, and reports from all stations, announces the enemy are preparing to evacuate Newport; monday or tuesday it is imagined they will take their departure. A deserter from the 22d Regt. mortally wounded, but rescued by a party of our soldiers, declares, the whole of the troops, now on Rhode Island, are bound to the West Indies; this may be; but I believe they will first visit New-York.”3

This is the substance of my intelligence since my last communication with Congress. I have the honor, etc.4

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West-point, October 21, 1779, ½ past 5 O'clock P.M.

Sir: Since dispatching the inclosed, which I recalled, I have received information, that the enemy have left both points,14 having burnt and destroyed their works. I have the honor, etc.15

3. Rhode Island was evacuated October 25, and the British troops reached New York October 27.

4. In the writing of James McHenry. The words in brackets were inserted by Washington.

14. Stony and Verplanck's.

15. In the writing of James McHenry.

To WILLIAM VERNON AND JAMES WARREN26

West Point, October 24, 1779.

Gentn: I have been honoured with Your Letter of the 13th and should be exceedingly happy if it were in my power to comply with your requisition, but so far from this being the case, on account of the scantiness of our supplies of Powder, I have been obliged to apply both to your State and Connecticut to obtain a loan. Of this application you will probably have heard before this. On recurring to our last General Return in July, the whole quantity in all the public Stores lying East of Hudson's river, but very little exceeded the amount of your requisition, which must have been greatly diminished since, and the remainder not unlikely collected at the Laboratory at Springfield and made up for the use of the Army. These considerations are very disagreeable and the detention of the Ship for want of a proper supply of this Article will be a mortifying circumstance. You will now permit me to make you a return of my warmest acknowledgments for the very polite terms of your Letter and your kind wishes for my success, and to assure you that I have the honor, etc.27

26. Of the Eastern Continental Navy Board, at Boston, Mass.

27. The draft is in the writing of Robert Hanson Harrison.

To THE BOARD OF WAR

Head Quarters, West point, October 25, 1779.

Gentlemen: Mr. Hatfield yesterday sent a person to communicate the several matters respecting his department to me. He himself being very unwell. Finding that he has near ten thousand Hides upon hand, I have directed him to send 2000, the number mentioned in yours of the 9th, immediately to Philada. He has delivered 1400 pair of shoes to the Cloathier General within thirty days past, and expects to turn in above 1500 pair more in November, he says perhaps near 3000. By the instructions to the Commy. of Hides they are “to confine themselves in the purchase of leather or shoes to their own districts as many inconveniences will arise from extending their business beyond the limits thereof.” This regulation is very proper for the Reasons assigned therein, but would it not answer a good purpose, if the Commy. of the State or district, in which the main Army may happen to lie, and in which of course there is the principal slaughter of Cattle, was directed to correspond constantly with the Commissaries in the States or districts nearest to him, and to supply them with Hides when *he* has more than he can dispose of by way of exchange or otherwise, that *they* may endeavour to barter them within their limits. Mr Mehelm mentioned that few Cattle having been lately slaughtered in his district, he had been fearful of extending his contracts lest he should not have the means of complying with them.

This shews the good effects which would result from some such measure as I have recommended above. The Board will undoubtedly order down a further parcel of Hides from this post if they see an opportunity of disposing of them, or direct Mr. Mehelm and the others to draw from this stock if they can find an opportunity of exchanging them. I have the honor, &c.42

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Head Quarters, West point, October 30, 1779.

Sir: I do myself the honor of transmitting to Congress the Copy of a letter which I recd. yesterday from Governor Clinton.79 I have agreeable to his request directed the Massachusetts Militia to rendezvous at Albany instead of Claverack, not for the purpose of making use of them against the Indians should the incursion prove serious, but to give the appearance of an immediate collection of force in that quarter. Should the expected cooperation take place, the can, with great ease, be brought down again to join the Army.

Genl. Greene has this moment recd. a letter (of which the inclosed is a Copy) from Mr. Bowen,80 announcing the evacuation of Rhode Island. The authenticity of the report is not to be doubted. I have not yet recd. an express from General Gates on the occasion. I have the honor, &c.81

42. The draft is in the writing of Tench Tilghman.

79. Clinton's letter to Washington, Oct. 28, 1779. A copy is filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

80. Ephraim Bowen, deputy quartermaster general to Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene, Oct. 26, 1779. A copy is filed with this letter from Washington in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*.

81. In the writing of Tench Tilghman.