

be in Readiness to receive Troops, precisely at Ten o'Clock; with this I hoped to pass the Infantry during the Night, abandoning our Baggage, and leaving a Detachment to capitulate for the Town's People, and for the Sick and Wounded; on which Subject a Letter was ready to be delivered to General Washington. After making my Arrangements with the utmost Secrecy, the Light Infantry, greatest Part of the Guards, and Part of the 23d Regiment, embarked at the Hour appointed, and most of them landed at Gloucester; but at this critical Moment the Weather, from being moderate and calm, changed to a most violent Storm of Wind and Rain, and drove all the Boats, some of which had Troops on Board, down the River. It was soon evident that the intended Passage was impracticable, and the Absence of the Boats rendered it equally impossible to bring back the Troops that had passed, which I had ordered about Two o'Clock in the Morning. In this Situation, with my little Force divided, the Enemy's Batteries opened at Day-break. The Passage between this Place and Gloucester was much exposed; but the Boats having now returned, they were ordered to bring back the Troops that had passed during the Night, and they joined us in the Forenoon without much Loss. Our Works in the mean Time were going to Ruin; and not having been able to strengthen them by Abatis, nor in any other Manner than by a slight Fraizing, which the Enemy's Artillery were demolishing wherever they fired, my Opinion entirely coincided with that of the Engineer and principal Officers of the Army, that they were in many Parts very assailable in the Forenoon, and that by the Continuance of the same Fire for a few Hours longer, they would be in such a State as to render it desperate with our Numbers to attempt to maintain them. We at that Time could not fire a single Gun, only One-eight Inch, and little more than One Hundred Cohorn Shells remained; a Diversion by the French Ships of War, that lay at the Mouth of York River, was to be expected; our Numbers had been diminished by the Enemy's Fire, but particularly by Sicknets; and the Strength and Spirits of those in the Works were much exhausted by the Fatigue of constant Watching and unremitting Duty. Under all these Circumstances, I thought it would have been wanton and inhuman to the last Degree to sacrifice the Lives of this small Body of gallant Soldiers, who had ever behaved with so much Fidelity and Courage, by exposing them to an Assault, which, from the Numbers and Precautions of the Enemy, could not fail to succeed. I therefore proposed to capitulate; and I have the Honor to inclose to your Excellency the Copy of the Correspondence between General Washington and me on that Subject, and the Terms of Capitulation agreed upon. I sincerely lament that better could not be obtained; but I have neglected nothing to alleviate the Misfortunes and Distress of both Officers and Soldiers. The Men are well clothed and provided with Necessaries, and I trust will be regularly supplied, by the Means of the Officers that are permitted to remain with them. The Treatment in general that we have received from the Enemy, since our Surrender, has been perfectly good and proper; but the Kindness and Attention that has been shewn to us by the French Officers in particular, their delicate Sensibility of our Situation, their generous and pressing Offers of Money, both publick and private, to any Amount, has really gone beyond what I can possibly describe, and will, I hope, make an Impression on the Breast of every British Officer, whenever the Fortune of War should put any of them into our Power.

Although the Event has been so unfortunate, the Patience of the Soldiers in bearing the greatest Fatigues, and their Firmness and Intrepidity under a persevering Fire of Shot and Shells that I believe has not often been exceeded, deserved the highest Commendation and Praise.

A successful Defence however in our Situation was perhaps impossible; for the Place could only be reckoned an intrenched Camp, subject in most Places to entreat, and the Ground in general so disadvantageous that nothing but the Necessity of fortifying it as a Post to protect the Navy could have induced any Person to erect Works upon it; our Force diminished daily by Sicknets, and other Losses, and was reduced when we offered to capitulate, on this

Side, to little more than 3,200 Rank and File fit for Duty, including Officers, Servants and Artificers; and at Gloucester about 600, including Cavalry. The Enemy's Army consisted of upwards of 8000 French, nearly as many Continentals, and 3000 Militia. They brought an immense Train of heavy Artillery, most amply furnished with Ammunition; and perfectly well manned. The constant and universal Chearfulness and Spirit of the Officers, in all Hardship and Danger, deserve my warmest Acknowledgements; and I have been particularly indebted to Brigadier General O'Hara and to Lieutenant Colonel Abercromby, the former commanding on the Right and the latter on the Left, for their Attention and Exertion on every Occasion. The Detachment of the 23d Regiment and Marines in the Redoubt on the Right, commanded by Captain Apthorpe, and the subsequent Detachments commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Johnson, deserve particular Commendation. Captain Rochfort who commanded the Artillery, and indeed every Officer and Soldier of that distinguished Corps, and Lieutenant Sutherland the Commanding Engineer, have merited in every Respect my highest Approbation; and I cannot sufficiently acknowledge my Obligations to Captain Symonds, who commanded His Majesty's Ships, and to the other Officers and Seamen of the Navy, for their zealous and active Co-operation.

I transmit Returns of our Killed and Wounded; the Loss of Seamen and Town's People was likewise considerable.

I trust that your Excellency will please to hasten the Return of the Bonetta after landing her Passengers, in Compliance with the Article of Capitulation.

Lieutenant Colonel Abercromby will have the Honor to deliver this Dispatch, and is well qualified to explain to your Excellency every Particular relating to our past and present Situation.

I have the Honor to be, &c.  
(Signed) CORNWALLIS.

*Copy of a Letter from Lieutenant-General Earl Cornwallis to General Washington, dated York, in Virginia, October 17, 1781.*

SIR,  
I PROPOSE a Cessation of Hostilities for Twenty-four Hours; and that Two Officers may be appointed by each Side, to meet at Mr. Moore's House, to settle Terms for the Surrender of the Posts of York and Gloucester.

I have the Honor to be, &c.  
(Signed) CORNWALLIS.

*Copy of a Letter from General Washington to Lieutenant-General Earl Cornwallis, dated Camp before York, October 17, 1781.*

MY LORD,  
I HAVE had the Honor of receiving your Lordship's Letter of this Date.

An ardent Desire to spare the further Effusion of Blood will readily incline me to listen to such Terms for the Surrender of your Posts, as are admissible.

I wish, previous to the Meeting of Commissioners, that your Lordship's Proposals, in Writing, may be sent to the American Lines; for which Purpose, a Suspension of Hostilities, during Two Hours from the Delivery of this Letter, will be granted.

I have the Honor to be, &c.  
(Signed) GEO. WASHINGTON.

*Copy of a Letter from Earl Cornwallis to General Washington, dated York in Virginia, October 17, 1781. Half past Four, P. M.*

SIR,  
I HAVE this Moment been honored with your Excellency's Letter dated this Day. The Time limited for sending my Answer will not admit of entering into the Detail of Articles; but the Basis of my Proposals will be, that the Garrisons of York and Gloucester shall be Prisoners of War with the customary Honors; and for the Convenience of the Individuals which I have the Honor to command, that the British shall be sent to Britain, and the Germans to Germany, under Engagement not to serve against France, America, or their Allies, until released, or regularly exchanged; and that all Arms and Public Stores shall be delivered