

## The Qualities of a Good Military Leader According to Socrates

### *George Washington's Early Military Experience*

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Qualities	Had Experience With (Yes, No, N/A)	Success in (Yes, No, N/A)	Failure In (Yes, No, N/A)	Evidence (except when answer is N/A)
Tactics				
Furnishing Equipment / Supplies				
Being Resourceful				
Staying Active				
Being Careful				
Being Hardy				
Being Quick-witted				
Being Gentle				
Being Brutal				
Being Straightforward				
Being Designing, i.e. Scheming				
Showing Caution				
Being Capable of Surprise				
Being Lavish, i.e. Generous				
Being Rapacious, i.e. Going to any length to get what is needed				
Being lenient				
Being strict				
Defense				
Attack				

## George Washington: Commander-in-Chief

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Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Qualities	Had Experience With (Yes, No, N/A)	Success in (Yes, No, N/A)	Failure In (Yes, No, N/A)	Evidence (except when answer is N/A)
Tactics				
Furnishing Equipment / Supplies				
Being Resourceful				
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Being Designing, i.e. Scheming				
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Being Lavish, i.e. Generous				
Being Rapacious, i.e. Going to any length to get what is needed				
Being lenient				
Being strict				
Defense				
Attack				

## Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Friday, December 27, 1776**  
(*Original text with spelling standardized.*)

### **Group 1**

Resolved, That General Washington be empowered to use every endeavor, by giving bounties and otherwise, to prevail upon the troops, whose time of enlistment shall expire at the end of the month, to stay with the army so long after that period, as its situation shall render their stay necessary:

That the new levies in Virginia, Maryland, the Delaware state, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, be ordered to march by companies, and parts of companies, as fast as they shall be raised, and join the army under General Washington, with the utmost dispatch:

That the foregoing resolution be transmitted by the president to the executive powers of the states before mentioned, who are requested to carry it into execution; to appoint commissaries to precede the troops, and procure provision for them on their march; and that they be empowered to draw money for this purpose from the nearest continental pay master:

That General Washington be empowered to appoint a commissary of prisoners, and a clothier general for supplying the army; to fix their salaries, and return their names to Congress:

### **Group 2**

That General Washington be requested to fix upon that system of promotion in the continental army, which, in his opinion, and that of the general officers with him, will produce most general satisfaction; that it be suggested to him, whether a promotion of field officers in the colonial line, and of captains and subalterns in the regimental line, would not be the most proper:

That the Committee of Congress of Philadelphia be desired to contract with proper persons for erecting at Carlisle, in Pennsylvania, a magazine sufficient to contain ten thousand stand of arms and two hundred tons of gun powder, and also for erecting a laboratory adjacent to such magazine.

That the council of Massachusetts be desired to contract with proper persons for erecting in the town of Brookfield in that state, a magazine sufficient to contain ten thousand stand of arms and two hundred tons of gun powder, and also for erecting a laboratory adjacent to such magazine.

That Congress approve of General Washington's directing the quarter master general to provide teams for each regiment, and for other necessary purposes:

### **Group 3**

That the Committee of Secret Correspondence be desired to direct the Commissioners at the Court of France to procure, if possible, from that Court a hundred thousand stand of small arms.

That the 2d and 7th Virginia regiments, with all the convalescents from the other corps left in that state, and now fit for duty, be ordered to march and join the army under General Washington, with the utmost dispatch, leaving the arms that they have at present, with the governor and council of that state, as they will be provided with others at the Head of Elk:

That three of the regiments, upon the new establishment, in North Carolina, be ordered to march immediately into Virginia, and put themselves under the direction of the officer commanding there; and that during the interval between the march of the Virginia regiment and the arrival of those from North Carolina to join General Washington:

That the state of Virginia be empowered to call into service, at the continental expense, three regiments of militia, or minutemen, if such a measure shall be, by that state, judged necessary.

#### **Group 4**

The unjust, but determined, purpose of the British court to enslave these free states, obvious through every delusive insinuation to the contrary, having placed things in such a situation, that the very existence of civil liberty now depends on the right execution of military powers, and the vigorous, decisive conduct of these, being impossible to distant, numerous, and deliberative bodies:

This Congress, having maturely considered the present crisis; and having perfect reliance on the wisdom, vigor, and uprightness of General Washington, do, hereby,

Resolve, That General Washington shall be, and he is hereby, vested with full, ample, and complete powers to raise and collect together, in the most speedy and effectual manner, from any or all of these United States, 16 battalions of infantry, in addition to those already voted by Congress; to appoint officers for the said battalions; to raise, officer, and equip three thousand light horse; three regiments of artillery, and a corps of engineers, and to establish their pay; to apply to any of the states for such aid of the militia as he shall judge necessary; to form such magazines of provisions, and in such places, as he shall think proper; to displace and appoint all officers under the rank of brigadier general, and to fill up all vacancies in every other department in the American armies; to take, wherever he may be, whatever he may want for the use of the army, if the inhabitants will not sell it, allowing a reasonable price for the same; to arrest and confine persons who refuse to take the continental currency, or are otherwise disaffected to the American cause; and return to the states of which they are citizens, their names, and the nature of their offences, together with the witnesses to prove them:

That the foregoing powers be vested in General Washington, for and during the term of six months from the date hereof, unless sooner determined by Congress.

## **Friday, December 27, 1776**

*(Original text with spelling standardized and some definitions provided.)*

### **Group 1**

Resolved, That General Washington be empowered to use every endeavor, by giving bounties (money) and otherwise, to prevail upon the troops, whose time of enlistment shall expire at the end of the month, to stay with the army so long after that period, as its situation shall render their stay necessary:

That the new levies (required quota of troops) in Virginia, Maryland, the Delaware state, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, be ordered to march by companies, and parts of companies, as fast as they shall be raised, and join the army under General Washington, with the utmost dispatch (speed):

That the foregoing resolution be transmitted by the president to the executive powers (governors) of the states before mentioned, who are requested to carry it into execution; to appoint commissaries (with the job of keeping the army supplied) to precede the troops, and procure provision for them on their march; and that they be empowered to draw money for this purpose from the nearest continental pay master:

That General Washington be empowered to appoint a commissary of prisoners (with the job of raising supplies for use with prisoners of war), and a clothier general for supplying the army (with uniforms); to fix their salaries, and return their names to Congress:

### **Group 2**

That General Washington be requested to fix upon that system of promotion in the continental army, which, in his opinion, and that of the general officers with him, will produce most general satisfaction; that it be suggested to him, whether a promotion of field officers in the colonial line, and of captains and subalterns in the regimental line, would not be the most proper: (The right to use promotions to reward good soldiering.)

That the Committee of Congress of Philadelphia be desired to contract with proper persons for erecting at Carlisle, in Pennsylvania, a magazine sufficient to contain ten thousand stand of arms and two hundred tons of gun powder, and also for erecting a laboratory adjacent to such magazine.

That the council of Massachusetts bay be desired to contract with proper persons for erecting in the town of Brookfield in that state, a magazine sufficient to contain ten thousand stand of arms and two hundred tons of gun powder, and also for erecting a laboratory adjacent to such magazine.

That Congress approve of General Washington's directing the quarter master general to provide teams (horses or other draught animals) for each regiment, and for other necessary purposes:

### **Group 3**

That the Committee of Secret Correspondence be desired to direct the Commissioners at the Court of France to procure, if possible, from that Court a hundred thousand stand of small arms.

That the 2d and 7th Virginia regiments, with all the convalescents from the other corps (the injured who have recovered from their wounds, regardless of their regiment) left in that state, and now fit for duty, be ordered to march and join the army under General Washington, with the utmost dispatch (speed), leaving the arms that they have at present, with the governor and council of that state, as they will be provided with others at the Head of Elk:

That three of the regiments, upon the new establishment, in North Carolina, be ordered to march immediately into Virginia, and put themselves under the direction of the officer commanding there; and that during the interval between the march of the Virginia regiment and the arrival of those from North Carolina to join General Washington:

That the state of Virginia be empowered to call into service, at the continental expense, three regiments of militia, or minutemen, if such a measure shall be, by that state, judged necessary.

#### **Group 4**

The unjust, but determined, purpose of the British court to enslave these free states, obvious through every delusive insinuation to the contrary, having placed things in such a situation, that the very existence of civil liberty now depends on the right execution of military powers, and the vigorous, decisive conduct of these, being impossible to distant, numerous, and deliberative bodies (such as the Continental Congress):

This Congress, having maturely considered the present crisis; and having perfect reliance on the wisdom, vigor, and uprightness of General Washington, do, hereby,

Resolve, That General Washington shall be, and he is hereby, vested with full, ample, and complete powers to raise and collect together, in the most speedy and effectual manner, from any or all of these United States, 16 battalions of infantry, in addition to those already voted by Congress; to appoint officers for the said battalions; to raise, officer, and equip three thousand light horse (cavalry); three regiments of artillery, and a corps of engineers, and to establish their pay; to apply to any of the states for such aid of the militia as he shall judge necessary; to form such magazines of provisions (places to store ammunition, weapons, and other supplies), and in such places, as he shall think proper; to displace and appoint (demote and promote) all officers under the rank of brigadier general, and to fill up all vacancies in every other department in the American armies; to take, wherever he may be, whatever he may want for the use of the army, if the inhabitants will not sell it, allowing a reasonable price for the same; to arrest and confine persons who refuse to take the continental currency, or are otherwise disaffected to the American cause; and return to the states of which they are citizens, their names, and the nature of their offences, together with the witnesses to prove them:

That the foregoing powers be vested in General Washington, for and during the term of six months from the date hereof, unless sooner determined by Congress.

## Congress Expands Washington's Powers

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

What problems was Congress attempting to address when it granted expanded powers to George Washington in 1776? (NOTE: Where an instruction of 1775 is expanded in 1776, fill in both columns. In other cases, a power given for the first time in 1776 will be new, and 1775 will remain blank). **This chart is also available as an [Interactive Assessment Tool](#).**

Instructions (1775)	Enhanced Powers (1776)	Problem Addressed

## Annotated Excerpts from Lesson Two Documents

In the following excerpts from the text of selected primary documents:

- Words in italics are defined in parentheses. If the document is read aloud, the words in parentheses can be used to replace the words in italics.
- Some spelling and punctuation have been standardized.
- Periods of ellipsis indicate missing portions.

### Letter to Henry Knox, November 16, 1775 (Readiness, Supplies)

...You are immediately to examine into the state of the artillery of this army & take an account of the Cannon Mortars, Shells, lead & ammunition that are *wanting* (needed); When you have done that, you are to proceed in the most expeditious manner to New York; There apply to the president of the *provincial* (state) Congress, and learn of him whether Col Reed did any thing, or left any orders respecting these things, & get him to procure such of them as can possibly be had there. The president if he can, will have them immediately sent hither; If he cannot, you must put them in a proper Channel for being Transported to this Camp with dispatch before you leave New York. After you have procured as many of these *Necessaries* (necessities) as you can there, you must go to Major General Schuyler & get the remainder from Ticonderoga Crown Point, or St. Johns – ...the *want of* (need for) them is so great, that no trouble or expense must be spared to obtain them ...I have given you a *Warrant* (a requisition to get cash) to the paymaster General of the Continental army, for a Thousand Dollars, to defray the expense attending your Journey & procuring these Articles, an account of which you are to keep & render upon your return.

Go: Washington

Endeavor to procure what Flint you can

### Letter to John Taylor, December 11, 1775 (Strategy)

Camp at *Cambridge* (near Boston in Massachusetts) 11th Dec[embe]r 1775.

Dear Sir,

...their Situation is such (being on two peninsulas very strongly fortified and surrounded by ships of war and floating batteries) that we cannot get to them and they do not choose to come to us. This being the case we have spent the Summer in *drawing Lines of Circumvalation round* (encircling) them – cutting off all supplies of fresh Provisions by Land; and, *latterly* (also) by water; For finding no great prospect of a visit from them, I fitted out ...Six armed Vessels; with which we have *Intersected* (intercepted) their Provision Boats from Nova Scotia & Canada, and taken some others from G. Britain & the West Indies with Stores for the use of the Garrison, to the amount it is apprehended of near £20,000...

### Washington's Order on Profanity, August 3, 1776 (Military Discipline)

Head Quarters, New York, August 3rd 1776.

That the Troops may have an opportunity of attending public worship, as well as take some rest after the great fatigue they have gone through; The General ...excuses them from ...duty on Sundays (except at



the Ship Yards, or special occasions) until further orders. The General is sorry to be informed that the foolish, and wicked practice, of profane cursing and swearing (a Vice heretofore little known in an American Army) is growing into fashion; he hopes the officers will, by example, as well as influence, endeavour to check it, and that both they, and the men will reflect, that we can have little hopes of the blessing of Heaven on our *Arms* (fight), if we insult it ...added to this, it is a vice so mean and low, without any temptation, that every man of sense, and character, detests and despises it.

**Letter to the President of the Convention of New Hampshire, January 23, 1777 (Relationship Between Civil Authorities and the Military)**

Headquartrs. Morris Town (New Jersey). Jany. 23d. 1777

The Situation to which I am reduced for want of a Regular body of Troops on whom I can depend for a length of time, makes it indispensably necessary for me to call upon You and *intreat* (ask) you to *exert Yourselves in levying and equipping the number of Battalions allotted to your State* (work hard to supply your quota of equipped troops) by the Resolution of Congress in September last.

*You must be fully sensible* (understand completely) ...how detrimental it must be to the Public, to have her Farmers and Tradesmen frequently called into the *field as Militia-men* (army as reserves), *whereby a total Stop is put to Arts & Agriculture* (leaving no one to work in a trade or grow food), without which we can not possibly long subsist. But great as this Inconvenience is, We must put up with it, or submit to a greater, the total Loss of our Liberties, until our regular Continental Army can be brought into the Field.

The above Reasons alone I hope will be sufficient to induce you to exert Yourselves; for if our new Army *are* (is) not ready to take the Field early in the Spring, We shall lose all the advantages which I may say we have ...gained this Winter. ...We have a full Army one day & scarce any the next; And I am much afraid, that the Enemy one day or other, taking Advantage of one of these temporary weaknesses, will make themselves charters of our magazines of Stores, Arms & Artillery. Nothing but their Ignorance of our number protects us at this very time. When on the contrary, had We six or eight thousand regular Troops, or could the Militia, who were with me a few days ago, have been prevailed upon to stay, We could have struck such a Stroke, as would have inevitably ruined the army of the Enemy in their divided State.

I am not without hopes, that by creating a powerful Diversion on the side of New York, We may still keep their force divided between that Province & this; If so, and a good body of Regular troops could be thrown in to me before the Roads will be in a Condition for the Enemy with their reduced Wagon and Artillery horses, to move out, it perhaps may not be out of my power to strike a decisive Blow before Spring... *While the men are raising, I beg you will spare me pains to make Collections of all things necessary for their Equipment; not only of such as they carry with them into the Field, but for their use and convenience while they are there;* (Make sure you send the new recruits with all the necessary equipment both for battle and everyday living) such as spare shoes, stockings & shirts; the want of which has been the Ruin of the old Army.

## Letter to the General Officers of the Army, October 26, 1777 (Strategy)

Head Quarters 26th October. 1777.

Sir

You will, very shortly, be called to a council of War, when your sentiments on the following questions will be asked –

1st

Whether it will be prudent in our present circumstances, and Strength, ...attempt ...a ...General Attack, to dislodge the Enemy; & if it is, and we unsuccessful, where we shall retreat to?–

2.d

If such an attack should not be thought *eligible* (an idea worth considering), what *general disposition of* (should we do with) the Army ...till the weather forces us from the Field?–

3 –

Where and in what manner supposing the Enemy to keep possession of Philadelphia, had the Continental Troops best be *Canted* (housed) after they can no longer keep the Field?

4.th

What measures can be adopted to cover the Country near the City, and prevent the Enemy from drawing Supplies therefrom during the Winter?–

...6th

Should Regimental promotions extend only to Captains Inclusively, or to that of the Majority –?

7th

Will it be ...good policy to allow Soldiers the reward offered to others for apprehending Deserters?

8th

The Commissaries Complaining *of* (about)...the rations which are issued to the Troops and at the same time of the *advanced* (high) price of all kinds of Spirits ...what regulation, & Remedy can be applied to rectify the *one* (first problem, that is, the insufficient rations), and prevent the *Other* (that is, the high price of alcohol)?

I am Sir Your Most Obed. Servt.

Go: Washington

## Letter to Henry Laurens, December 14, 1777 (Supplies, Strategy, Relationship Between Civil Authorities and the Military)

Headquarters near the *Gulph* (near Philadelphia), Dec. 14, 1777

Sir:

...On Thursday morning we marched from our old Encampment and intended to pass the Schuylkill at Matson's Ford, where a Bridge had been laid across the River. When the first Division and a part of the Second had passed, they found a body of the Enemy, consisting ...of Four Thousand men under the command of Lord Cornwallis possessing themselves of the Heights on both sides of the Road, leading from the River ...This unexpected event obliged such of our Troops as had crossed to *repass* (cross back), and prevented our getting over till the succeeding night. This maneuver on the part of the Enemy was not in consequence of any information they had of our movement ?? but was designed to secure the pass while they were *foraging* (gathering and confiscating food and supplies) in the Neighboring Country. They were met in their advance by General Potter with part of the Pennsylvania Militia who behaved with bravery and gave them every possible Opposition till they were obliged to retreat from their Superior numbers. Had we been an Hour sooner ...I *am persuaded* (believe) we *should* (would) have given *his Lordship a fortunate stroke* (the enemy some serious damage), or obliged him to have returned without effecting his purpose ...Our first intelligence was, that *it was nearly all out* (there was little left to forage).

Enclosed is a copy of a letter from *General Burgoyne* (who, along with his army, had surrendered at Saratoga, a great victory for the Patriots, after which the British troops were supposed to return to England) by which ...he requests leave to embark his troops at Rhode Island or at some place on the Sound ...and return ...to England. ...Congress will be pleased to ...favor me with their Sentiments by the first opportunity that I may know what answer to give him. I learn from a *Gentleman* (an informer or spy) who has just come from Boston, that *this Gentleman* (General Burgoyne) either holds or professes to hold very different ideas of our power than what he formerly entertained. That without reserve, he has said, it would be next to impossible for Britain to *succeed in her views* (defeat the Patriots), and that he *should* (plans to) with freedom declare his *Sentiments* (opinion) accordingly on his arrival in England, and seemed to think the recognition of our Independence *an eligible measure under a treaty of Commerce upon a large and extensive Scale* (could very likely become part of an agreement to end the fighting and renew trade). How *far these professions are founded in Sincerity* (sincere Burgoyne is) it is not easy to determine: -

...Congress seems to have taken for granted a fact that is really not so. All the Forage for the Army has been constantly drawn from Bucks and Philadelphia Counties & those parts most contiguous to the city, insomuch that it was nearly exhausted, and entirely so in the Country below our Camp. From there too we obtained all the supplies of Flour that circumstances would admit of. The millers in most instances were unwilling to grind either from their disaffection or from motives of fear. This made the supplies less than they otherwise might have been, and the quantity which was drawn from thence was little besides what the Guards, placed at the mills compelled them to manufacture. ...I confess, *I have felt myself greatly embarrassed with respect to a rigorous exercise of Military power* (hesitate to use force to obtain supplies from the locals). ...I have been well aware of the *prevalent jealousy of Military power* (mistrust the locals have for the military) ...Congress may be assured, that *no exertions of mine as far as circumstances will admit, shall be wanting* (I'll do whatever I can, under the circumstances) to provide our own Troops with supplies on the one hand, and to prevent the enemy from them on the Other. ...at a (this) very critical & interesting period. I should be happy If the *Civil authority* (civilian government) in the Several States, ...seeing the necessity of supporting the Army, would *always adopt the most spirited measures, suited to the end* (only adopt policies that would energetically help us with supplies as they are supposed to do).

Sir

Your most obedient servant

George Washington

Notes: Five days after writing this letter, Washington reached his winter headquarters at Valley Forge, where the lack of supplies would worsen. Washington's hesitation to use military force to confiscate provisions proved well founded. In what has become known as the Conway Cabal, members of Congress and other leading figures who were jealous of Washington's military authority, futilely attempted to replace him as Commander in Chief with Horatio Gates. General Burgoyne and his army surrendered at Saratoga on 17 October 1777. According to the surrender terms, the British troops were supposed to be shipped back to England. Congress, however, found reason to doubt British intentions and the troops were held in the U. S. until the war's end.

## George Washington to Continental Congress, December 23, 1777 (Valley Forge, Supplies)

Valley Forge, December 23, 1777.

...I am now convinced, beyond a doubt, that unless some great ...change suddenly takes place ...this Army *must inevitably* (will) ...starve, dissolve, or disperse, in order to obtain subsistence in the best manner they can; rest assured Sir this is not an exaggerated picture, *but* (and) that I have abundant reason to support what I say.

Yesterday afternoon receiving information that the Enemy, in force, had left the City, and were advancing towards Derby with apparent design to forage, and draw subsistence from that part of the Country, I ordered the Troops to be in readiness, that I might give every opposition in my power; when, behold! ...I was not only informed, but convinced, that the Men were unable to stir on Account of *Provision* (the lack of supplies), and that a dangerous Mutiny *begun* (had begun) the Night before, and ...was suppressed by ...some officers

...All I could do under these circumstances was to send out a few light Parties to watch and harrass the Enemy, while other Parties were instantly *detached* (sent in small groups)...to collect, if possible, as much Provision as would satisfy the present pressing *wants* (needs) of the *Soldiery* (troops). But will this answer? No Sir: three or four days of bad weather would prove our destruction. What then is to become of the Army this Winter? ...*what* (if we continue to have irregular supplies all winter, what) is to become of us in the Spring, when our force will be collected ...to take advantage of an early Campaign before the Enemy can be reinforced? These are considerations of great magnitude, meriting the closest attention, ...*my* (the fact that my) own reputation ...*be* (will be) affected by the event, justifies my saying that the present *Commissaries* (supplies) are by no means equal to the *execution* (job required) or that the *disaffection* (unhappiness) of the People is past all belief.

...it is a standing order (and often repeated) that the Troops shall always have two days Provisions by them, that they may [might] be ready at any sudden call, yet, *no* (very) opportunity *has* (we have had) ...has ...been either totally obstructed or greatly impeded.... Soap, Vinegar and other Articles allowed by Congress we see none of nor have ...since the Battle of Brandywine ...besides a number of Men confined to Hospitals for want of Shoes, and others in farmers Houses, we have, by a field return this day *made* (counted) no less than 2898 Men now in Camp unfit for duty because they are bare foot and otherwise naked and by the same *return* (count) it appears that our whole strength in continental Troops (Including the Eastern Brigades which have joined us since the surrender of General Burgoyne...amount to no more than 8200 In Camp fit for duty. ...on Account *of* (a lack of) Blankets ... (*we*) up all Night by fires, instead of taking comfortable rest in a natural [and common] way) have decreased near 2000 Men.

...It is for these reasons therefore I have dwelt upon the Subject, and it adds not a little to my other difficulties, and distress, to find that much more is expected of me than is possible to be performed, and that upon the ground of safety and policy, I am obliged to conceal the true State of the Army

...every thing depends upon the preparation that is made in the several departments in the course of this Winter and the success, or misfortunes of next Campaign will more than probably originate with our activity, or *supineness* (inactivity) this Winter.

## **Letter to the State of New Hampshire, December 29, 1777 (Relationship Between Civil Authorities and the Military)**

Head Quarters. Valley Forge Dec. 29th: 1777

*Gentlemen* (Members of the New Hampshire Legislature):

I take the liberty of *transmitting* (sending) you the enclosed *return* (count), which contains a state of the New Hampshire Regiments. By this you will discover how deficient, how exceedingly short they are of the complement of men which *of right according to the establishment* (legally) they ought to have. This information I have thought it my duty to lay before you, that it may have that attention which its importance demands; and in full hope, that the most early and vigorous measures will be adopted, not only to make the Regiments *more respectable* (better equipped) but complete. ...Should we have a respectable force to commence an early Campaign with, before the Enemy are reinforced, I trust we shall have an Opportunity of striking a favorable and an happy stroke; but if we should be obliged to defer it, It will not be easy to describe with any degree of precision what disagreeable consequences may result from It. We may rest assured that Britain will strain every nerve to send from Home and abroad, [2] as early as possible, All the Troops its shall be in her power to raise... Her views and schemes for subjugating these States, and bringing them under her despotic rule will be unceasing... Nor should we, in my opinion, turn our expectations to, or have the least dependence on the intervention of a Foreign War. Our wishes on this head have been disappointed hitherto and perhaps it may long be the case. However, be this as it may, our reliance should be wholly on our own strength and exertions. If in addition to these, there should be aid derived from a War between the Enemy and any of the European Powers, our situation will be so much the better.

...There is one thing more to which I would take the liberty of *soliciting* (asking for) your most serious and constant attention; to wit, the clothing of your Troops, and the procuring of every possible supply in your power from time to time for that end. If the several States exert themselves in future in this instance, and I think they will, I hope that the Supplies they will be able to furnish in aid of those, which Congress may immediately import themselves, will *be equal and competent to* (meet) every demand. If they do not, I fear, I am satisfied the Troops will never be in a situation to answer the public expectation and perform the duties required of them. No pains, no efforts on the part of the States can be too great for this purpose. It is not easy to give you a just and accurate idea of the sufferings of the Army at large or the loss of men on this account. Were they to be minutely detailed, your feelings would be wounded, and the relation would probably be not received without a degree of doubt & discredit. We had in Camp, on the 23rd Inst. by a Field Return then taken, not less than 2898 men unfit for duty, by reason of their being barefoot and otherwise naked. Besides this number, ...there are many Others detained in Hospitals and crowded in Farmers Houses for the same causes. In a most particular manner, I flatter myself the care and attention of the States will be directed to the supply of Shoes, Stockings and Blankets

...We have taken post here for the Winter, as a place best calculated to cover the Country from the Ravages of the Enemy and are now busily employed in erecting Huts for the Troops. This circumstances renders it the more material that the Supplies should be greater and more immediate than if the men were in comfortable Quarters...

## **George Washington to Marquis de Lafayette, June 25, 1778 (Strategy)**

Kingston June 25, 1778.

Sir: You are immediately to proceed with the detachment commanded by General Poor and *form a junction* (join up with), as expeditiously as possible, with *that* (the detachment) under the command of

General Scott. You are to use the most effectual means for gaining the enemy's left flank and rear, and giving them every degree of annoyance. All Continental *parties* (troops) that are already on the *lines* (front lines) will be under your command, and you will take such measures, in concert with General Dickinson as will cause the Enemy most impediment and loss in their march; for these purposes you will attack them as occasion may require by detachment, and if a proper opening should be given by operating against them with the whole force of your command.

You will naturally take such precautions as will secure you against surprise, and maintain your communication with this army.

### **To Brigadier General Charles Scott, September 1778 (Loyalists, Intelligence)**

Head Quarters, Fredericksburg, September 26, 1778.

Dear Sir: I have *yours* (your letter) of yesterday. There are three facts contained in it, which I would wish you to ascertain if possible. The *embarkation* (boarding) of the Troops, their number and destination. The embarkation of the Cavalry, and whether there was a meeting of the *Refugees* (loyalists) and what was the Business proposed to them. From the correspondence which you say you have now established, I hope for information that will unfold the real designs of the Enemy...

### **George Washington to Continental Congress, November 5, 1779 (Relationship Between Civil Authorities and the Military)**

Head Quarters, West-point, November 5, 1779

Sir: When the plan of the Inspectorship was concluded upon by resolve of the 18th February last it was determined that the duties of Brigade Major, and Brigade Inspector should be exercised by the same person ...As this regulation detaches the Brigade Major from the immediate service of the Brigadier, it was thought necessary and recommended accordingly, "that the Brigadier should in his stead, have an aide...." As nothing has been determined ...on ...this part of the recommendation, several of the Brigadiers are without any other assistants ...I would therefore wish that Congress would be pleased to resume ...consideration of the matter. Should they determine on the measure of ...aides ...an addition to their pay will be necessary, as their duty will be on Horseback, and they must provide themselves with horses at their own charge...

### **George Washington to Continental Congress, November 14, 1779 (Strategy, Cooperation with a Foreign Ally)**

Sir: In my Letter of the 4th Ulto., which I had the honor of addressing Congress, I informed them of the measures I had adopted for a cooperation with His Excellency the *Count D'Estaing* (who commanded a fleet of French ships) ...When I was first honored with the dispatches of Congress on the subject of a cooperation with the Count, I hoped as Congress themselves must have done, that the operations at the Southward would have been soon over, so as to have permitted His Excellency to have proceeded with his Fleet and Land forces in a short time after his arrival there, to this Coast, and, on this ground, that something important and interesting, if not decisive, might have been attempted against the Enemy in this Quarter, with a good prospect of success; but, the operations there having continued so long and hitherto prevented him from coming, I now beg leave to offer it to Congress, as my opinion, that the Count's arrival, even if it were to take place immediately, would be too late on account of the advanced season for any extensive operation ...We are now on the eve of Winter, and enterprises which might

have bid fair for a successful and happy issue, if they could have been begun some time ago ... would at best if commenced now, stand upon a very precarious and uncertain footing; and the more so, as the execution would depend on Troops but *illy appointed* (poorly equipped) ... The Enemy too have had great time for preparation, and their Stores of fuel and forage &c. and their defenses, are infinitely more complete than they would have been found, if we could have begun our operations at a more early period. The state of our flour supplies also ... is much to be feared, they may become so in the extreme. ... a variety of important and pressing reasons urge me to request, that Congress will be pleased to form earliest decision on the point submitted and to favor me with it as soon as possible. Whatever it may be, it will be very interesting that I should know it, without loss of time. I have the Honor, etc.

P.S. The Honble. the Marine Committee, expecting a cooperation with the Count D'Estaing's fleet, were pleased to suspend the sailing of the Frigates from Boston and to direct them and the Continental Armed Vessels to be held in readiness for that purpose. I have never given any orders with respect to them, and if the project of a cooperation is declined, they will be pleased to take such as they think proper.

### **George Washington to Continental Congress, September 8, 1780 (Relationship Between Civil Authorities and the Military, Cooperation with a Foreign Ally)**

Head Qrs. near Hackensack New-bridge, September 8, 1780.

Sir: Since the letter which I did myself the honor to write Congress the 20th. Ulto. I have been more attentively considering the import of *the resolution* (of the Congressional resolution) of the 5th of August, and am at a loss to satisfy myself as to its precise extent, whether it be meant to authorize me to extend my views beyond the present Campaign and even to apply to the Ministers of France and Spain in Europe, or only to *concert* (coordinate) plans for the present fall and Winter with the Ministers and Officers of those powers on the Continent or in the West Indies. The *latter* (to *concert* (coordinate) plans for the present fall and winter) appeared to me the most natural construction and was the one I had adopted, but intimations have been given me by particular Gentlemen that Congress understood the resolve in the *first sense* (to authorize me to extend my views beyond the present Campaign). If, I have been mistaken in my interpretation I request to have the resolve explained in a full and explicit manner. If I am right, no explanation will be necessary.

...I also take the liberty to request to be informed whether Congress in two or three Months from the present period can rely on being able to furnish *Specie* (money in the form of coins as opposed to paper money) for the maintenance of a body of four or five thousand men in a Country where the paper of these States will not serve as a Currency.

I should also be glad if Congress will have the goodness to *assist me with some lights how far* (help me understand the extent to which) the States of South and North Carolina have ability to contribute to the Support of an Army *in the Articles of* (with) Bread, Meat, ...Horses and Wagons.

I entreat as speedy an answer as possible to these points, which are of the greatest consequence in determining our future plans, particularly I wish for immediate information on the Subject of the money.

But the basis of every plan we can form is an Army and the means of subsistence; without immediate measures to supply the places of the Men who leave us, by the first of January we shall scarcely have any thing that deserves the name of one. Our whole efficient force in this quarter will then probably be less than Six thousand Men. In proposing plans of co-operation, I must engage that something specific

shall be performed on our part. Congress will be sensible that I cannot do this, as to any plan of future execution, when I know that our Army will be reduced one half in less than four Months, and when so far from being certain that we shall have it in our power to replace the Men in time, I do not even know what measures will be attempted for the purpose, nor when they will be undertaken. The honor of Congress and the States as well as my own reputation, forbid me to enter into engagements, which I have no assurances of our being able to fulfill...

**Letter to Governor William Greene, June 2, 1781 (Relationship Between Civil Authorities and the Military)**

*New Windsor* (New Windsor, New York), 2d June 1781.

Sir;

There are certain heavy cannon in the State of Rhode Island, which are exceedingly *wanted* (needed) in the proposed operations of the campaign. These ...belong... to the *Continent* (Continental Army), but it is said some of them are claimed as the property of the State. Your Excellency can determine this matter, and if they are proven the property of the State I must request the loan of as many as will make up the number eight of those which are not disputed, if there are any of that description, if not, the whole of the above number.

The importance of the object in view, and the apparent probability of success, will, I am persuaded, induce the State of Rhode Island to comply with this request, – especially when it shall be considered that our non success may be attributed to the withholding the means in our possession.

Major Perkins of the artillery, who is at Providence, will receive the cannon and superintend the transportation of them to camp. The situation of the Quarter Master General's department, for want of money, will probably oblige him to apply to the State for assistance, which I hope will be given to him, to ensure the transportation of these and other articles which Major Perkins will have orders to bring on from Rhode Island.

I have the honor to be,  
with the greatest respect.  
Your Excellency's  
most obedient Servant  
G:o Washington

**George Washington to William Heath, June 13, 1781 (Supplies, Readiness)**

Head Quarters, New Windsor, June 13, 1781.

Dear Sir: I wrote to You on the 8th. instant urging the Necessity of having the Supplies of Provision, Rum, and Clothing immediately forwarded from the States. These Things are of such immense Importance to all our Plans, that they cannot be repeated too often, or pressed ...too much...

In Addition to the Task already imposed upon You, by your former Commission, I must now entreat You, to turn a Share of your Attention to the Recruits of the several States. Let them be called upon again and again in the most earnest Manner, to fill their Battalions ...instantly. Surely, if the States had a proper Idea of our Circumstances for *want* (need) of Men, our Prospects if we had them, and our fixed



*Designs* (plans) of carrying on offensive Operations ...they would exert themselves beyond any thing they have formerly done. They can, they must complete their Battalions if it is only for the Campaign.

The Recruits and Drafts must be hurried on as fast as possible. The Militia which have been requested of the Eastern States must also be held in Readiness to march when called for, as formerly ordered.

In my last I mentioned forwarding the Clothing which had lately arrived from Spain, I request you will attend to and *expedite* (speed along) this Business, that it may not be stopped a Day on the Road from its leaving Boston to its Arrival in Camp, And that You will advise me when it may be expected. With great regard etc.

**George Washington to David Waterbury, June 13, 1781 (Strategy)**

Head Quarters, New Windsor, June 13, 1781.

Sir: Major General Howe has transmitted to me your Letter of the 11<sup>th</sup>... Should it be confirmed, that the Enemy are meditating an Enterprise for the purposes you suppose I would recommend that the Cattle contiguous to the lines and Boats at Stamford should be removed in such a Manner as to disappoint them of their Objects as far as possible. In the mean time I have ordered Col Scammell, with his Detachment to move towards you, to support your Corps, and annoy the Enemy, as circumstances may require. If it is probable, the Enemy will move in force from Kingsbridge, it would be well to form a *junction between* (union of) Your Troops and Col Scammell's Detachment, or in any case to keep up a constant communication with him.

As the whole Army, will probably take the field in a few days; I have to request that you will hold the Troops under your Command in the most perfect readiness for a Movement: and that you will without delay, make an accurate *Return* (count) to me of the strength of the State Regiments, Watermen, and also of the number of Horse and Artillery attached to your command, or raised by Government for the defense of the State, specifying at what places they are stationed, that I may know with precision the force which may actually be depended upon. I am &c.

## Annotated Excerpts from Lesson Three Documents

In the following excerpts from the text of selected primary documents:

- Words in italics are defined in parentheses. If the document is read aloud, the words in parentheses can be used to replace the words in italics.
- Some spelling and punctuation has been standardized.
- Periods of ellipsis indicate missing portions.

### A Spy Is Sent to Trenton

Head Quarters at Keith's, December 14, 1776.

Dr. Sir: Lest the Enemy should, in some degree avail themselves of the knowledge (for I do not doubt but that they are well inform'd of everything we do) I did not care to be so *particular* (specific) in the General Orders of this day as I mean to be in this Letter to you.

As much Time then would be lost (in case the Enemy should attempt crossing the River... in first sending you notice, and the Troops to wait for Orders what to do, I would advise you to examine the whole River from the upper to the lower Guard of your district; and after forming an opinion of the most probable crossing places, have those well watched and direct the Regiments or Companies most convenient to *repair as they* (head over as soon as they) can be formed, immediately to) the point of Attack, and give the Enemy all the opposition they possibly can, everything ...depends upon the defense at the water edge, ...one Brigade is to support another without loss of time, or waiting orders from me.

I would also have You *fix upon some Central Spot convenient to your Brigade, but in the rear a little* (pick a convenient spot to the rear of the potential fighting) ...on some road leading into the back road to Philadelphia for your unnecessary Baggage, Waggons and Stores, that in case your opposition should prove *ineffectual* (ineffective) these things may not *fall* (fall into enemy hands) but be got off and proceed over Neshamony Bridge towards Germantown... *Cast about to find out* (Look for) some Person who can be *engaged* (hired) to cross the River as a spy, that we may, if possible, obtain some knowledge of the Enemy's Situation, movements, and intention; particular inquiry to be made by the person sent if any preparations are *making* (being made) to cross the River; whether any Boats *are Building* (are being built), and where; whether any are coming across land from Brunswick; whether any great collection of horses are made, and for what purpose... Expense must not be spared in procuring such *intelligence* (information), and will readily be paid by me. We are in a neighborhood of *very disaffected People* (loyalists), equal care therefore should be taken that one of these Persons do not undertake the business in order to betray us.

[Note 1: Stryker's *Battles of Trenton and Princeton* (New York: 1898), pp. 87--89, tells of John Honeyman as the spy of Trenton, but the evidence is not sufficient to identify him as the person selected according to the above direction. A man by the name of Pomroy was sent into the British lines by Reed.]

As your numbers are rather small *endeavour to shew them, now and then to the best advantage, an appearance might be made with those you have as if fresh Troops were coming in...* (make your troops appear as fresh and large as you can...)

If possible get some person in to Trenton, and let Him be satisfied if any Boats are building at that place and on Crosswicks Creek

**“Something Must Be Attempted to Revive Our Expiring Credit”**

George Washington to Joseph Spencer, December 22, 1776

Camp above the Falls of Trenton, December 22, 1776.

[Note 68: On December 22 Reed wrote to Washington from Bristol, Pa., that Griffin had advanced as far as Mount Holly, N.J., with 600 men and that the main body of troops from Bristol would cross the river December 23 and cooperate with Griffin in an attempt on the British post between Bristol and the Black Horse.

"We are all of Opinion my dear General that something must be attempted to revive our expiring Credit give our Cause some degree of Reputation and prevent a total *Depreciation* (loss of value) of the Continental Money which is coming on very fast. That even a Failure cannot be more fatal than to remain in our present Situation ...If we could possess ourselves again of New Jersey or any considerable Part of it the Effect would be greater than if we had never left it. ...I will not disguise my own Sentiments that our Cause is desperate and hopeless if we do not take the opportunity *of the Collection of Troops* ( at present to strike some Stroke. Our Affairs are hastng. fast to Ruin if we do not retrieve them by some happy Event. Delay with us is now equal to a total Defeat.

"Be not deceived my dear General with small flattering Appearances, we must not suffer ourselves to be lull'd into Security and Inaction because the Enemy does not Cross the River. It is but a Reprieve, the Execution is the more certain for I am very clear that they can and will cross the River in spite of any Opposition we can give them. Pardon the Freedom I have used, the Love of my Country, A Wife and 4 Children in the Enemy's Hands, the Respect and Attachment I have to you, the Ruin and Poverty that must attend me and thousands of others will plead my Excuse for so much Freedom."

Stryker's *Battles of Trenton and Princeton* (Boston: 1898), Ch. VI, describes the evidences that Washington's intent to move against the British took shape as early as December 14.

Griffin had moved across the Delaware with a part of the Flying Camp and gathered some New Jersey Militia at Mount Holly. His presence stirred up the British to a watchfulness that nearly defeated Washington's attack on Trenton.]

Sir: When I wrote to you on the 14th instant, I had little doubt of receiving considerable support from the Militia of this State, and was taught to believe, that a large part of the old Troops (coming on with General Lee) had re-enlisted: In the first, I have every reason in the world to fear a disappointment; in the latter, I find myself *woefully* (terribly) deceived. It is easier therefore to *conceive* (imagine), than describe, the situation I am in, left or shall be, in a very few days, with only a very few Southern Regiments (reduced almost to Nothing) to oppose Howe's Main Army, already posted in such a manner as to pour in his whole Force upon us, so soon as the frost affords him a passage over the Delaware, and our numbers such, as to give no *effectual* (effective) opposition.

*Thus Circumstanced* (Under these conditions), it is a matter of concern to me, that in my last, I directed you to take back any of the Militia designed for the support of the Army under my Command, and have to request, that, instead of ordering the return of any of those that were destined for this Department (by order of their respective States) that you will hasten them on with all possible expedition, as I see no

other chance of saving Philadelphia, and preventing a fatal blow to America, in the loss of a City from whence so much of our Resources are drawn.

...P.S. Let me hear from you frequently.

### **Trenton: The Plan of Attack**

George Washington to Israel Putnam, December 25, 1776

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Camp above Trenton Falls, December 25, 1776.

[Note 86: Stryker, in his *Battles of Trenton and Princeton* (p. 113), states that early on Christmas morning Washington issued the following orders for the march on Trenton. He does not state his source: "Each brigade to be furnished with two good guides. General Stephen's brigade to form the advance party, and to have with them a detachment of the artillery without cannon, provided with spikes and hammers to spike up the enemies' cannon in case of necessity, or to bring them off it is can be effected, the party to be provided with drag-ropes for the purpose of dragging off the cannon. General Stephen is to attack and force the enemy's guards and seize such posts as may prevent them from forming in the streets, and in case they are annoyed from the houses to set them on fire. The brigades of Mercer and Lord Stirling, under the command of Major General Greene, to support General Stephen. This is the 2d division or left wing of the army and to march by the way of the Pennington road.

"St. Clair's, Glover's, and Sargent's brigades, under Major General Sullivan, to march by the River Road. This is the first division of the army, and to form the right wing. Lord Stirling's brigade to form the reserve of the left wing, and General St. Clair's brigade the reserve of the right wing. These reserves to form a second line in conjunction, or a second line to each division, as circumstances may require. Each brigadier to make the colonels acquainted with the posts of their respective regiments in the brigade, and the major-generals will inform them of the posts of the brigades in the line. Four pieces of artillery to march at the head of each column; three pieces at the head of the second brigade of each division; and two pieces with each of the reserves. The troops to be assembled one mile back of McKonkey's Ferry, and as soon as it begins to grow dark the troops to be marched to McKonkey's Ferry, and embark on board the boats in following order under the direction of Colonel Knox.

"General Stephen's brigade, with the detachment of artillerymen, to embark first; General Mercer's next; Lord Stirling's next; General Fermoy's next, who will march into the rear of the second division and file off from the Pennington to the Princeton road in such direction that he can with the greatest ease and safety secure the passes between Princeton and Trenton. The guides will be the best judges of this. He is to take two pieces of artillery with him. St. Clair's, Glover's, and Sargent's brigades to embark in order. Immediately upon their debarkation, the whole to form and march in subdivisions from the right. The commanding officers of regiments to observe that the divisions be equal and that proper officers be appointed to each. A profound silence to be *enjoined* (observed), and no man to quit his ranks on the pain of death. Each brigadier to appoint flanking parties; the reserve brigades to appoint the rear-guards of the columns; the head of the columns to be appointed to arrive at Trenton at five o'clock.

"Captain Washington and Captain Flahaven, with a party of forty men each, to march before the divisions and post themselves on the road about three miles from Trenton, and make prisoners of all going in or coming out of town.

"General Stephen will appoint a guard to form a chain of sentries round the landing-place at a sufficient distance from the river to permit the troops to form, this guard not to suffer any person to go in or come out, but to detain all persons who attempt either. This guard to join their brigade when the troops are all over."]

Dear Sir: I am glad to hear by your Son, that you are getting better again. If I had not been well convinced before of the Enemy's Intention of possessing themselves of Philadelphia, so soon as the frost will form Ice hard enough to transport them, and their Artillery across the Delaware, I have an intercepted Letter which puts the matter beyond a doubt.

If therefore the Citizens of Philadelphia have any regard for the Town, not a moment's time is to be lost in putting it in the best posture of defense possible; but least this should not be done, I would have the public Stores of every kind that can be, removed, except such as may be necessary for immediate use, and except Provisions.

I think the Stores should go towards Lancaster instead of Christeen Bridge, unless they can be water borne (at this time to the Bridge) and readily transported from *thence* (there) into the Country...

I am sorry Colonel Griffin has left the *Jerseys* (New Jersey), some active Officer of Influence, ought in my opinion, *to repair there to inspirit* (go there immediately to revive the flagging spirits of) the people, and keep the Militia from disbanding, and if possible to encourage them to assemble.

Let me know the exact State and Strength of the Militia with you, that I may know how to govern myself, also of the expectation you have of more coming in....

### **Washington Describes the Battle of Trenton**

George Washington to Alexander McDougall, December 28, 1776  
Head Quarters, Newtown, December 28, 1776.

Dear Sir: ...I hope that the late success at Trenton on the 26th. and the consequences of it, will change the Face of Matters not only there but every where else. I crossed over to Jersey the Evening of the 25th. about 9 Miles above Trenton with upwards of 2000 Men and attacked three Regiments of Hessians, consisting of 1500 Men about 8 o'Clock next Morning. Our Men pushed on with such rapidity, that they soon carried four pieces of Cannon out of Six, Surrounded the Enemy, and obliged 30 Officers and 886 privates to lay down their Arms without firing a Shot. Our loss was only two Officers and two or three privates wounded. The Enemy had between 20 and 30 killed. We should have made the whole of them prisoners, could Genl. Ewing have *passed* (crossed) the Delaware at Trenton and got in their Rear, but the Ice prevented him. I am informed, that Count Donnop with the remainder of the Army below Trenton, *decamped* (broke camp) immediately upon this News, and is on his March towards South Amboy. Generals Mifflin, Ewing and Cadwallader have already passed over to Jersey with a Capital Force, and I shall follow with the Continental Regiments, as soon as they have recovered from their late Fatigue, which was indeed very great. I hope you ...will exert Yourselves, in encouraging the Militia, and assuring them that nothing is wanting but for them to lend a hand, and driving the Enemy from the whole province of Jersey. pray watch the motions of the Enemy, and if they incline to retreat [or advance] harrass their Rear, and Flanks; But at all events endeavour to collect a Body of Men to be ready to join me [or act otherwise, as occasion shall require.]

Your Son was mentioned among the first of our Prisoners that I demanded in Exchange; but Genl. Howe (or Mr. Loring in his absence) sent out others than those I demanded. I have *remonstrated to him upon this head* (argued fiercely with him over this point) , and have assured him that I will send in no more prisoners till he sends out the ...Officers taken in Canada.

## George Washington to Continental Congress, January 5, 1777

George Washington to Continental Congress, January 5, 1777  
Pluckamin, January 5, 1777.

Sir: I have the honor to inform you, that since the date of my last from Trenton I have ...moved with the Army under my Command to this place. The difficulty of crossing the Delaware on account of the ice made our passage over it tedious, and gave the Enemy an opportunity of ...assembling their whole Force at Princeton. ...Their great preparations, and *some Intelligence* (according to some intelligence) I had received, *added to their knowledge that the first of January. brought on a dissolution of the best part of our Army* (along with the knowledge that the British believe that we will lose most of our recruits when their tour of duty ends on the first of January), gave me the strongest reasons to conclude that an attack upon us was *meditating* (about to happen).

Our Situation was most critical and our strength ...small; to *remove* (retreat) immediately, was again destroying every dawn of hope which had begun to revive in the ...Jersey Militia, *and to bring those Troops which had firstcross'd the Delaware, and were laying at Crosswixs under Genl. Cadwallader, and those under Genl. Mifflin at Bordenton (amounting in the whole to about. 3600) to Trenton, was [to] bringing of them to an exposed place; one or the other however, was unavoidable* (we either had to retreat or gather near Trenton in exposed positions); the *latter* (that is, remaining) was preferred, and these Troops [they] orderd to join us at Trenton which they did by a Night March...

On the Second, according to my expectation, the Enemy began to advance upon us, and after some skirmishing, the head of their Column reached Trenton about 4 O'Clock whilst their rear was as far back as Maidenhead; they attempted to pass Sanpinck Creek (which runs through Trenton) at different places, but finding the Fords guarded, halted, and kindled their Fires. We were drawn up on the other Side of the Creek. In this Situation we remained till dark *canonading* (bombarding) the Enemy, and receiving the Fire of their Field pieces, which did us but little damage.

[Note 36: Ford quotes from a letter of General Howe to Lord George Germain (January 5): "On the 2dq Lord Cornwallis having received accounts of the rebel army being posted at Trenton, advanced thither, leaving the 4th brigade under the command of lieutenant colonel Mawhood at Princeton, and the 2d. brigade, with brigadier general Leslie at Maidenhead. On the approach of the British troops, the enemy's forward posts were driven back upon their army, which was formed in a strong position, behind a creek running through Trenton. During the night of the 2d. the enemy quitted this situation, and marching by Allen's Town, and from thence to Princeton, fell in on the morning of the 3d. with the 17th and 55th regiments, on their march to join brigadier general Leslie at Maidenhead. Lieutenant colonel Mawhood, not being apprehensive of the enemy's strength, attacked and beat back the troops that first presented themselves to him, but finding them at length very superior to him in numbers, he pushed forward with the 17th regiment, and joined brigadier general Leslie. The 55th regiment retired, by the way of Hillsborough to Brunswick, and the enemy proceeding immediately to Princeton, the 40th regiment also retired to Brunswick. The loss upon this occasion to his majesty's troops is 17 killed, and nearly 200 wounded and missing."]

Having by this time discovered that the Enemy were greatly Superior in Numbers, and that their ...design was to surround us. I ordered all our Baggage to be removed silently to Burlington soon after dark, and at twelve O'Clock (after renewing our Fires, and leaving Guards at the Bridge in Trenton, and other passes on the same stream above Marched by a round about road to Princeton where I knew they could not have much force left, and might have Stores. One thing I was sure of, that it would avoid the

appearance of a Retreat, which (was of Consequence) or to run the hazard of the whole Army's being cut off was unavoidable whilst we might, by a fortunate stroke withdraw General. Howe from Trenton, give some reputation to our Arms; happily we succeeded. We found Princeton about Sunrise with only three Regiments of Infantry and three Troops of Light Horse in it, two of which were upon their March for Trenton; these three Regiments (especially the two first) made a gallant resistance and in killed, wounded and Prisoners must have lost near 500 Men upwards of one hundred of them were left dead in the Field, and with what I have with me, and what was taken in the pursuit, and carried across the Delaware, there are near 300 Prisoners, 14 of which are Officers, all British.

[Note 38: The army marched by the Sandtown road, near what is now Hamilton Avenue; crossed Miry Run near Mercersville, Quaker Bridge to Clarksville, and Stony Brook to Princeton. The British advance from Princeton struck the American skirmish line near Maidenhead and in the face of sharp resistance did not succeed in reaching Trenton until about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The effort to cross the creek by the Queen Street bridge was repulsed. A council of war was held at Alexander Douglass's house, which stood on the site of the present red-brick German Lutheran Church on South Broad Street. The house has been removed to Stacy Park near the old Hessian Barracks.]

This piece of good fortune, is counter balanced by the loss of the brave and worthy *General Mercer* (General Mercer and other slain officers are mentioned), who with 25 or 30 Privates were slain in the Field and have since died of their Wounds. Our whole loss cannot be ascertained, as many who were in pursuit of the Enemy (who were chased three or four Miles) are not yet come in. Our Slain in the Field was about 30.

The rear of the Enemy's army laying at Maidenhead (not more than five or Six Miles from Princeton) were up with us before our pursuit was over, but as I had the precaution to destroy the Bridge over Stony Brooke (about half a Mile from the Field of Action) they were so long retarded there, as to give us time to move of in good order for this place. We took two Brass Field pieces from them, but for want of Horses could not bring them of. We also took some Blankets, Shoes, and a few other trifling Articles, Burnt the Hay and destroyed such other things as the Shortness of the time would *admit of* (allow).

My original plan when I set out from Trenton was to have pushed on to Brunswick, but the harrassed State of our own Troops (many of them having had no rest for two Nights and a day) and the danger of losing the advantage we had gained by aiming at too much, Induced me, by the advice of my Officers, to relinquish the attempt but in my judgment Six or Eight hundred fresh Troops upon a forced March would have destroyed all their Stores, and Magazines; taken (as we have since learnt) their Military Chest containing 70,000 £ and put an end to the War. The Enemy from the best Intelligence I have been able to get, were so much alarmed at the apprehension of this, that they Marched immediately to Brunswick without Halting (except at the Bridges, for I also took up those on Millstone on the different routs to Brunswick) and got there before day.

[Note 44: Sparks notes that in both the actions at Trenton and Princeton General Washington encouraged the troops by his presence in the most exposed situations. An officer who was in these engagements wrote from Morristown (January 7): "Our army love their General very much, but they have one thing against him, which is the little care he takes of himself in any action. His personal bravery, and the desire he has of animating his troops by example, make him fearless of danger. This occasions us much uneasiness. But Heaven, which has hitherto been his shield, I hope will still continue to guard so valuable a life."]

...I am just moving to Morristown where I shall *endeavor* (try) to put them under the best cover I can, hitherto we have lain without any, many of our poor Soldiers quite barefoot and ill clad...

[Note 45: A large part of the militia, already called out, had been directed to assemble at Morristown, and Washington's letters during the month of December show the general convergence of troops toward that point.]

### **George Washington, September 3, 1777, General Orders**

Head Quarters, *Wilmington* (Wilmington, Delaware), September 3, 1777.

...As the enemy's motions will be sudden, and perhaps rapid, the General positively orders the commanding officers of corps to keep their men in camp, by no means *suffering* (allowing) them to ramble about ...The discharge of two field pieces is to be considered by the Brigadiers and officers commanding brigades as an alarm, and as a signal for getting the men under arms; and to the wagon--masters for putting to their horses. Upon the firing the alarm guns, the general officers, after giving the necessary orders for parading their men, are to repair immediately to Head Quarters.

The division commanded by General Wayne, is immediately to encamp on the left of General Sullivan. General Nash to encamp on the left of General Wayne, and Lord Stirling's division on the left of the whole. General Knox will fix on a proper place for the ...artillery ...wagons that are not absolutely necessary are to be kept on the east side of the Brandywine.

...25 men are to *mount* (stand) guard daily at the Fort at *Christiana* (a nearby location in Delaware). General Knox will see what artillerymen are necessary to place there and give orders accordingly.

It is expected that the officers of every Corps will immediately inspect the men's arms and ammunition, to see that every thing is in order. If any of the Continental troops are without arms, the commanding officer of the Corps to which they belong, is to apply ...for such as are *wanted* (needed).

A detachment of men properly officered are to parade at sunset ...with at least twenty four rounds of ammunition, two days' provision, ready dressed *and* (and with) their blankets.

The officers appointed to overlook the fatigue *to* (and to) keep the men to their duty and see that the work goes on briskly.

The Commander in Chief approves the following sentences of a General Court Martial, held August 30th 31st and Sept. 2nd whereof Col. Johnston was president.

Peter Linch a Matross in Capt. Gibbs Jones's company of artillery, charged with "Desertion"; found guilty and sentenced to have the hair on the front part of his head shaved off without soap, and a quantity of tar and feathers fixed on the place as a substitute for hair, then to run the *gauntlet* (a double line of troops that will beat the man as he runs between them) in the company to which he belongs, provided nevertheless that the *stripes* (blows) which he shall receive while running the gauntlet, shall not exceed one hundred; and then to be sent on board one of the Continental frigates to serve during the war.

Daniel Fennel ...charged with "Deserting from the said regiment," found guilty, and sentenced to receive one hundred lashes on his bare back, and to forfeit one month's pay for the use of the sick.



Daniel Halley ...charged with "Abetting the cause of a deserter from Col Proctor's regiment of artillery, and with collaring Col. Proctor"; found guilty, and sentenced to receive one hundred lashes on his bare back.

James Martin ...charged with "Being drunk and asleep on his post while sentinel over prisoners," found guilty, and sentenced to receive one hundred lashes on his bare back; and to have the hair from the front part of his head shaved off without soap, and tar and feathers substituted in the room of the hair.

Henry Hargood charged with "Desertion from the German regiment"; found guilty, and sentenced to suffer death: But for the reasons mentioned by the court, they recommend him to the Commander in Chief's clemency and mercy. The Commander in Chief pardons the offender.

Godfrid Oxford ...charged with "Desertion, getting drunk and losing his *arms* (rifle)"; found not guilty of desertion; but guilty of getting drunk and losing his arms; and sentenced to receive one hundred lashes on his bare back, and to pay for his arms lost.

#### AFTER ORDERS

The several divisions of the army are to remain in their encampments, as they were this morning, but to hold themselves in readiness to march at a moment's warning; and neither officer nor soldier is to be out of hearing of the drum of his brigade, And the more certainly to get and keep the men in their quarters, the rolls are to be regularly called, and all absent men looked up and brought to their regiments.

#### **George Washington, September 4, 1777, General Orders**

Head Quarters, Wilmington, September 4, 1777.

Parole Culloden. Countersigns Cumberland, Colchester.

As a full supply of hard bread cannot at present be obtained, all that now is in, or shall come to, the hands of the regimental quarter masters, is to remain there, and not be distributed, *but upon the most pressing exigency* (except when the need becomes most pressing), and when the troops are about to march, and then not without orders from their Brigadier. In the meantime the army is to be furnished with soft bread, or flour, which the *Commissaries* (food suppliers) are *enjoined* (ordered) to supply with more punctuality than they have done. The Commander in Chief can no longer excuse the neglect in that department.

Much injury having been done to the soldiers, and some lives lost, by their being taken by their officers from the hospital too soon, and without the *concurrence* (agreement) of the superintending physician; that practice is absolutely forbidden; and henceforward not a man is to be taken from the hospital, 'till regularly discharged by the directing physician, in writing under his hand.

Notwithstanding all the cautions, the earnest requests, and the positive orders of the Commander in Chief, to prevent **our own army** from plundering **our own friends and fellow citizens**, yet to his astonishment and grief, fresh complaints are made to him, that so wicked, infamous and cruel a practice is still continued, and that too in circumstances most distressing; where the wretched inhabitants, dreading the enemy's vengeance for their adherence to our cause, have left all, and fled to us for refuge I We complain of the cruelty and barbarity of our enemies; but does it equal ours? They sometimes spare

the property of their **friends**: But some amongst us, beyond expression barbarous, rob even **them!** Why did we assemble in arms? Was it not, in one capital point, to protect the property of our countrymen? And shall we to our eternal reproach, be the first to pillage and destroy? Will no motives of humanity, of zeal, interest and of honor, restrain the violence of the soldiers, or induce officers to keep so strict a watch over the ill-disposed, as effectually to prevent the execution of their evil designs, and the gratification of their savage inclinations? Or, if these powerful motives are too weak, will they pay no regard to their own safety? How many noble designs have miscarried, how many victories been lost, how many armies ruined, by an indulgence of soldiers in plundering? If officers in the least *connive at* (tacitly approve of) such practices, the *licentiousness* (recklessness) of some soldiers will soon be without bounds: In the most critical moments, instead of attending to their duty, they will be scattered abroad, indiscriminately plundering **friends** and **foes**; and if no worse consequences ensue, many of them must infallibly fall a prey to the enemy. For these reasons, the Commander in Chief requires, that these orders be distinctly read to all the troops; and that officers of every rank, take particular pains, to convince the men, of the *baseness* (evil), and fatal tendency of the practices complained of; and that their own safety depends on a contrary conduct, and an exact observance of order and discipline; at the same time the Commander in Chief most solemnly assures all, that he will have no mercy on offenders against these orders; their lives shall pay the forfeit of their crimes. Pity, under such circumstances, would be the height of cruelty.

#### AFTER ORDERS

The tents of Genl. Sullivan's, Lord Stirling's and Wayne's divisions, and Nash's brigade, are to be struck and packed by five o'clock to morrow morning (if the weather permit) these corps, together with Genl. Potter's brigade, are to hold themselves in readiness to march at a moment's warning afterwards upon receiving orders. For which purpose, each brigade should be paraded, their arms grounded, and the men ready to take them up at the first call. The Quarter Master General will shew the ground they are to encamp upon, in the following order: General Sullivan's on the right, Lord Stirling's on the left; General Nash's on the left of General Sullivan's; and General Potter's on the right of Lord Stirling's; but as General Potter's brigade is without tents, it will be quartered in Newport. General Stephen's division and General Irvine's brigade, when it leaves this place, are to form a second line; Stephen's on the right. The division commanded by General Wayne is to form a third line; General Greene's division remains where it is.

General Knox will fix upon a proper spot for the park of artillery, in this encampment, and direct such spare ammunition as he shall think absolutely necessary, to attend the park and respective divisions; the residue to be left, together with all the baggage that can possibly be spared, on the east side of Brandywine, under a small guard from each brigade, with proper officers, the whole of these guards to be under the care of a colonel.

General Armstrong will recall the troops posted at the different fords on Brandywine, and order them to join their respective brigades.

General Irvine's brigade is to remain in Wilmington 'till further Orders; and to expedite the works there carrying on, as much as possible.

One Colonel from General Nash's brigade will take the command of the baggage guard--This guard is to be composed of the *most indifferent* (least useful) men, and supplied with the arms least fit for service. The Colonel will cause all the baggage wagons left behind, to be collected on the east side of

Brandywine, in the most convenient place, and ranged (those of each brigade by themselves) in regular order.

The men ordered for guards and fatigue will attend that service, but carry with them their arms and ammunition, and all the baggage they intend to take with them to the new encampment, to which they are to march to morrow night, except the guards, who are to remain 'till relieved.

### **George Washington, September 6, 1777, General Orders**

Head Quarters, Wilmington, September 6, 1777.

The General has no doubt, but that every man who has a due sense of the importance of the cause he has undertaken to defend, and who has any regard to his own honor and the reputation of a soldier will, if called to action, behave like one *contending* (fighting) for everything valuable; But, if contrary to his expectation, there shall be found any officers, or soldiers, so far lost to all shame as basely to quit their post without orders, or shall skulk from danger, or offer to retreat before order is given for so doing, from proper authority, of a superior officer, they are to be instantly shot down, as a just punishment to themselves, and for examples to others. This order, those in the rear, and the Corps of reserve, are to see duly executed, to prevent the cowardly from making a sacrifice of the brave, and by their ill example and groundless tales (calculated to cover their own shameful conduct) spreading terror as they go.

That this order may be well known, and strongly impressed upon the army, the General positively orders the Commanding officer of every regiment to assemble his men and have it read to them to prevent the plea of ignorance.

The General begs the favor of the officers to be attentive to all strange faces and suspicious characters which may be discovered in camp; and if upon examination of them no good account can be given why they are there, to carry them to the Major General of the day for further examination; this, as it is only a necessary precaution, is to be done in a manner least offensive.

The General officers are to meet at 5 O'Clock this afternoon at the brick house by White Clay Creek...

...the ...slaughter houses, ...are still ...great nuisances to the army. The Quarter Masters of divisions therefore are to see that they are fixed at proper distances, and that all *offal* (garbage) be well buried once a day. The Commander in Chief will look to these Quarter Masters for the execution of this order, and no excuse can be admitted for the neglect of so necessary a duty.

### **AFTER ORDERS**

Information has been given that many of the wagon horses are suffered to go loose in the fields: the Commander in Chief strictly orders, that every night, all the wagon--horses be put to the wagons, and there kept, and if it be necessary at any time for them to go to grass, that it be only in the day time and then the wagoners must stay by them constantly; that they may be ready to tackle at the shortest notice. The wagon masters are required to see this order carefully executed. The enemy have *disencumbered* (relieved) themselves of all their baggage, that their movements may be quick and easy. It behooves us to be alike ready for marching at a moment's warning: And for the same reason it is absolutely necessary, and the Commander in Chief positively orders, that both officers and men remain constantly at their quarters. *Tattoo* (The drum) is no longer to be beat in camp.

## George Washington, September 7, 1777, General Orders

Head Quarters, Newport, September 7, 1777.

The Commander in Chief approves the following sentences of a General Court Martial, held the 3rd. instant whereof Colonel Lawson was president.

Capt. Lipscomb ...charged with "pillaging an orchard near General Weedon's quarters, and with abusing the guard which Genl. Weedon had set to protect it."

[Note 76: Capt. Reuben Lipscomb. He was transferred to the Fifth Virginia Regiment in September, 1778; died Oct. 3, 1778.]

The Court unanimously acquitted him.

Lieut. Whiting ...charged with "pillaging an orchard near General Weedon's quarters, and with abusing the guard Genl. Weedon had set to protect it." The Court unanimously acquitted them.

...The Commander in Chief also approves the following sentences of the same court martial, held the 5th. instant, and orders them to be put in execution.

Lieut. Alexander Houston ...charged with "Absenting himself from the regiment from the 8th. to the 12th. of August without leave"; pleaded guilty; sentenced to be reprimanded by the Colonel of the regiment he belongs to.

Lieut. Bradford ...charged with "Ordering a soldier to pull apples contrary to General orders." It appearing to the Court the prisoner had been under arrest thirteen or eighteen days, and no witnesses appearing against him the court are of opinion he should be released from his arrest.

...The General has received a confirmation of the intelligence mentioned in the after orders of last night that the enemy have *disencumbered* (relieved) themselves of all their baggage, even to their tents, reserving only their blankets, and such part of their clothing as is absolutely necessary. This indicates a speedy and rapid movement, and points out the necessity of following the example, and ridding ourselves for a few days of everything we can possibly dispense with. As a very imperfect obedience has been paid to former orders on this subject, it is now Once More strictly *enjoined* (ordered), that all baggage, which can be spared both of officers and men be immediately packed up, and sent off this day to the other side of the Brandywine. ...The General is obliged to ...declare, that it is his intention the officers should only retain their blankets, great coats, and three or four shifts of under clothes, and that the men should, besides what they have on, keep only a Blanket, and a shirt a piece, and such as have it, a great coat. All trunks, chests, boxes, other bedding and clothes, than those mentioned, to be sent away, 'till the elapsing of a few days shall determine whether the enemy mean an immediate attack, or not. It is hoped, that none will have so little sense of propriety, as to deem a measure, so obviously for the good of the army, and the service, a hardship. It would be folly in the extreme, to hazard the loss of our baggage, for the sake of a little present convenience; a loss, which at this time would be irreparable. This disadvantage of having that to take care of, at the moment of attack, when we should be preparing for defense, is evident. The attention of both officers and men will then be wholly engrossed for its safety and the enemy will have time to be upon us before we are ready to receive them; the consequence of this will be bustle, confusion and perhaps defeat and disgrace, the loss of our baggage, and not improbably

the ruin of the army. The Commander in Chief in a particular manner looks to the General Officers for the execution of this order in their respective divisions and brigades.

The whole army is to draw two days' provisions exclusive of today and have it cooked, and deposited with the regimental Quarter Masters, provided salt provisions can be drawn; otherwise one day's fresh provisions to be cooked, and deposited as aforesaid, and two day's hard bread, if to be had.

All the horse, except Capt. Lewis's troop are to take post on the right of the army.

The tents of the whole army are to be *struck* (taken down) and packed up in the wagons, to morrow morning, an hour before day; and the horses tackled. All the Corps of horse are to be saddled at the same time; and the whole Army drawn up in their respective lines.

The Quartermaster ...is to spare no pains immediately to provide wagons to carry the men's packs, that they may be perfectly light and fit for action.

No more sick to be sent to Concord, but to Birmingham.

### **George Washington to Continental Congress, September 11, 1777**

At Midnight, Chester, September 11, 1777.

Sir: I am sorry to inform you, that in this day's engagement, we have been obliged to leave the enemy masters of the field. Unfortunately the intelligence received of the enemy's advancing up the Brandywine, and crossing at a ford about six miles above us, was uncertain and contradictory, notwithstanding all my pains to get the best. This prevented my making a *disposition* (gathering of troops), adequate to the force with which the Enemy attacked us on the right; in consequence of which the troops first engaged, were obliged to retire before they could be reinforced. In the midst of the attack on the right, that body of the Enemy which remained on the other side of Chadd's Ford, crossed it, and attacked the division there under the command of General Wayne and the light troops under General Maxwell who, after a severe conflict, also retired. The Militia under the command of Major General Armstrong, being posted at a ford, about two miles below Chadd's, had no opportunity of *engaging* (fighting the enemy). But though we fought under many disadvantages, and were from the causes, above mentioned obliged to retire, yet our loss of men is not, I am persuaded, very considerable, I believe much less than the enemy's. We have also lost about seven or eight pieces of cannon, according to the best information I can at present obtain. The baggage having been previously moved off, is all secure, *saving* (except) the men's Blankets, which being at their backs, many of them doubtless are lost.

I have directed all the Troops to Assemble behind Chester, where they are now arranging for this Night. Notwithstanding the misfortune of the day, I am happy to find the troops in good spirits; and I hope another time we shall compensate for the losses now sustained. The Marquis La Fayette was wounded in the leg, and General Woodford in the hand. ...Other Officers were wounded and some Slain, but the number of either cannot now be ascertained.

[Note 1: Greene's *Life of Nathanael Greene* (vol. I, p. 454) relates that Washington was too fatigued to write to Congress after the battle and directed one of his aides to do it. Harrison was too "distressed," and so it fell to Pickering, the Adjutant General. "I wrote it and gave it to the General to read. He, with perfect composure, directed me to add a consolatory hope that another day would give a more fortunate result."

...Congress had requested Washington (September 9): "to appoint a proper person at headquarters to write to the president twice a day, or oftener if necessary, advising the position and movements of the armies" The Board of War was ordered to appoint expresses to convey these letters.]

### **George Washington, October 3, 1777, General Orders**

Head Quarters, at Wentz's, Worcester Township,  
October 3, 1777.

...The Engineers are to *make dispatch (be quick)*, in throwing up *works* (barricades of dirt), in the front of the encampment.

The Commander in Chief has the satisfaction to inform the army, that at the southward, the Continental Frigate Randolph, lately fell in with a fleet of five sail of the enemy's ships, and took four of them, one of them mounting 20 guns, and another 8, all richly laden. At the northward every thing wears the most favorable aspect, every enterprise has been successful, and in a capital action, the left wing only of General Gates's army maintained its ground, against the main body of the enemy; commanded by General Burgoyne in person; our troops behaving with the highest spirit and bravery, during the whole engagement; which lasted from one o'clock 'till dark. In short, every circumstance promises success in that quarter, equal to our most sanguine wishes. This surely must animate every man, under the General's immediate command. This army, the main American Army, will certainly not suffer itself to be out done by their northern Brethren; they will never endure such disgrace; but with an ambition becoming freemen, contending in the most righteous cause, rival the heroic spirit which swelled their bosoms, and which, so nobly exerted, has procured them deathless renown. *Covet* (Get for yourself) ...a share of the glory due to heroic deeds! Let it never be said, that in a day of action, you turned your backs on the foe; let the enemy no longer triumph. They brand you with *ignominious epithets* (terrible names). Will you patiently endure that reproach? Will you suffer the wounds given to your Country to go unrevenged? Will you resign your parents, wives, children and friends to be the wretched *vassals* (servants) of a proud, insulting foe? And your own necks to the *halter* (noose)? General Howe promised protection to such as submitted to his power; and a few dastard souls accepted the disgraceful *boon* (offer). But his promises were deceitful; the submitting and resisting had their property alike plundered and destroyed. But even these empty promises have come to an end; the term of *Mercy* is expired, General Howe has, within a few days proclaimed, all who had not then submitted, to be beyond the reach of it, and has left us no choice but *Conquest* or *Death*. Nothing then remains, but nobly to contend for all that is dear to us. Every motive that can touch the human breast calls us to the most vigorous exertions. Our dearest rights, our dearest friends, and our own lives, honor, glory and even shame, urge us to the fight. And My fellow Soldiers! when an opportunity presents, be firm, be brave; show yourselves men, and victory is yours.

The Colonels or commanding officers are to see that every regiment be drawn up this afternoon, the rolls called, and these orders distinctly read to them...

### **George Washington, October 5, 1777, General Orders**

Head Quarters, Perkiomy, October 5, 1777.

The officers commanding regiments are to make *returns* (a count) of the cartridges *wanted* (needed) for their men, to complete them to forty rounds each, and draw the materials for making them at the park of

artillery, early tomorrow morning; one attentive officer from each regiment is to be present, to superintend the making of the cartridges for the regiment, and see that they are well made up, and the materials not wasted. The arms are to be cleaned and put in good order immediately; such as are charged and cannot be drawn, are to be discharged at noon, to morrow, under the direction of their officers. Each regiment is to draw 12 cartridges a man, ready made, at the park of artillery, besides the above materials.

All the detachments of horse, are to be collected as soon as possible to one place, as near as may be to the army...

Returns as exact as possible are to be made of the killed, wounded, and missing in the action of yesterday, and delivered to the Commander in Chief at 4 o'clock to morrow afternoon. The Brigade Majors will be punctual in this matter, and where there are no Brigade Majors, the Brigadiers or officers commanding brigades are without delay to appoint persons to do their duty. One set of columns are to show the killed, of the different ranks, a second the wounded, and a third set of columns the missing.

The Commander in Chief returns his thanks, to the Generals and other officers and men concerned in yesterday's attack, on the enemy's left wing, for the spirit and bravery they manifested in driving the enemy from field to field; And altho' an unfortunate fog, joined with the smoke, prevented the different brigades seeing and supporting each other, or sometimes even distinguishing their fire from the enemy's, and from some other causes, which as yet cannot be well accounted for, they finally retreated, they nevertheless see that the enemy are not proof against a vigorous attack, and may be put to flight when boldly pushed. This they will remember and assure themselves that on the next occasion, by a proper exertion of the powers which God has given them, and inspired by the cause of freedom in which they are engaged, they will be victorious. The Commander in Chief not seeing the engagement with the enemy's right wing, desires the General officers who commanded there, to thank those officers and men who behaved with becoming bravery; and such in either wing who behaved otherwise are to be reported.

### **Richard Henry Lee to Patrick Henry October 8, 1777**

My dear Sir, York 8th Octr. 1777 ... We have had another general engagement with the enemy at and near Germantown. ... we attacked their Army. The plan was well concerted, and the execution was so bravely conducted, that a most brilliant victory was on the moment of being obtained, when accident alone removed it from us. The morning was so foggy, which with the state of the Air keeping down the Smoke of the Cannon &c effectually prevented our people from knowing their success, *occasioned* (caused a) delay, and gave the enemy time to rally and return to the charge which they did five several times. But this was not the worst. Our right & left Columns mistook each other for enemies and *apprehending a* (believing they were seeing) fresh re-enforcement gave way too soon to a last effort of the enemy, and quitted a glorious victory absolutely in their power. However, they retired in order, and had so severely *handled* (manhandled) the enemy that they dared not pursue, and our wounded with every thing valuable were brought off. Our Army is now upon the ground they left before the battle, in the high spirits, and satisfied they can beat the enemy. I hope they will quickly have an opportunity, as the reinforcements from our Country have reached the Army since the engagement. Our loss is pretty well fixed to 700 killed, wounded and missing. That of the enemy not certainly known, but surely very great, as you may judge by the following intelligence ... that *General Howe* (the British general) had sent about 2000 Hessians over Schuylkill ... and that he refused to let any of the Inhabitants of Philadelphia to go to see the field of battle.(1) Gen Schuyler writes us the 29th [i.e. 27th] of September, that if superior numbers, health, and spirits can give success, our army in the Northern department will have it this Campaign. For my part I do not despair of success on this quarter also. Another such battle

as the last, will totally unfit Gen Howe for pursuing further hostilities this Campaign and again possess us of Philadelphia...

### **George Washington to Continental Congress, October 16, 1781**

Head Quarters Before York, October 16, 1781.

Sir: ...The Engineers having deemed the two *Redoubts* (temporary fortifications) on the left of the enemy's line sufficiently injured by our shot and shells to make them practicable, it was determined to carry them by assault on the evening of the 14th. The following disposition was accordingly made. The Work on the enemy's extreme left to be attacked by the American Light Infantry under the command of the Marquis de la Fayette. The other by a detachment of the French Grenadiers and Chasseurs commanded by Major General the Baron Viomenil. I have the pleasure to inform your Excellency that we succeeded in both. Nothing could exceed the firmness and bravery of the Troops. They advanced under the fire of the Enemy without returning a shot and *effected the business* (completed their assignment) with the Bayonet only. The reports of His Excellency the Count de Rochambeau, The Marquis de la Fayette and Lt. Colonel Hamilton, copies of which I enclose, enter more particularly into a detail of the mode in which the attacks on the part of the French and American Columns were Conducted. We made prisoners in both Redoubts one Major, 2 Captains, 3 subalterns and 67 privates.

The Works which we have carried are of vast importance to us. From them we shall *enfilade* (attack) the enemy's whole line and I am in hopes we shall be able to command the communication from York to Gloucester. I think the Batteries of *the second parallel* (the line of cannon behind the cannon in the front line) will be in sufficient forwardness to begin to play in the course of this day.

The enemy last night made a *sortie* (attack) for the first time. They entered one of the French and one of the American Batteries... They had only time to thrust the points of their Bayonets into four pieces of the French and two of the American Artillery and break them off, but the spikes were easily extracted. They were repulsed the moment the supporting Troops came up, leaving behind them seven or eight dead and six prisoners. The French had four officers and twelve privates killed and wounded, and we had one sergeant mortally wounded.

I enclose your Excellency a Return of the killed and wounded of both Armies up to the present time. It is much smaller than might have been expected.

[Note 32: Copies of Rochambeau's report [October 16], Lafayette's report, [October 16], Hamilton's report, [October 15], and of the French killed and wounded from the beginning of the siege, are filed with Washington's letter in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. The originals are in the *Washington Papers*. No return of the American losses is now found in the *Washington Papers*, but Washington's Diary under date of October 14 contains a tabular statement of them, which fixes the total from the beginning of the siege at 38 officers and men killed and 130 wounded.]

### **George Washington to Charles Cornwallis, October 18, 1781**

Head Quarters before York, October 18, 1781.

My Lord: To avoid unnecessary Discussions and Delays, I shall at Once, in Answer to your Lordships Letter of Yesterday, declare the general Basis upon which a Definitive Treaty and *Capitulation* (surrender) must take place. The Garrisons of York and Gloucester, including the Seamen, as you



propose, will be received Prisoners of War. The *Condition annexed* (conditions which you tried to attach to the agreement), of sending the British and German Troops to the parts of Europe to which they respectively belong, is inadmissible. Instead of this, they will be marched to such parts of the Country as can most conveniently provide for their Subsistence; and the Benevolent Treatment of Prisoners, which is invariably observed by the Americans, will be extended to them. The same Honors will be granted to the Surrendering Army as were granted to the Garrison of Charles Town. The Shipping and Boats in the two Harbours with all their Guns, Stores, Tackling, Furniture and Apparel, shall be delivered in their present State to an Officer of the Navy, appointed to take possession of them.

...The Artillery, Arms, *Accoutrements* (other supplies), Military Chest and Public Stores of every Denomination, shall be delivered unimpaired to the Heads of Departments, to which they respectively belong.

The Officers will be *indulged in retaining* (allowed to keep) their *Side* (small) Arms, and the Officers and Soldiers may preserve their Baggage and Effects, with this Reserve, that Property taken in the Country, will be reclaimed.

With Regard to the Individuals in civil Capacities, whose Interests Your Lordship wishes may be attended to, until they are more particularly described, nothing definitive can be settled.

I have to add, that I expect the Sick and Wounded will be supplied with their own Hospital Stores, and be attended by British Surgeons, particularly charged with the Care of them.

Your Lordship will be pleased to signify your Determination either to accept or reject the Proposals now offered, in the Course of Two Hours from the Delivery of this Letter, that Commissioners may be appointed to digest the Articles of Capitulation, or a Renewal of Hostilities may take place. I have the Honor etc

### **George Washington to Continental Congress, October 19, 1781**

Head Quarters near York, October 19, 1781.

Sir: I have the Honor to inform Congress, *that a Reduction* (of the surrender) of the British Army under the Command of Lord Cornwallis... The *unremitting Ardor* (unceasing efforts of) every Officer and Soldier in the combined Army on this Occasion, has principally led to this Important Event, at an earlier period than my ...Hopes had induced me to expect.

The singular Spirit ...which animated the whole Army from the first... has filled my Mind with the highest pleasure and Satisfaction, and had given me the happiest *presages* (prior indications) of Success.

On the 17th instant, a Letter was received from Lord Cornwallis, proposing a Meeting of Commissioners, to consult on Terms for the Surrender... This Letter (the first which had passed between us) opened a Correspondence, a Copy of which I do myself the Honor to enclose; that Correspondence was followed by the *definitive capitulation* (final surrender), which was agreed to, and Signed on the 19th. Copy of which is also herewith transmitted, and which I hope, will meet the *Approbation* (consent) of Congress.

I should be wanting in the feelings of Gratitude, did I not mention on this Occasion, with the warmest Sense of Acknowledgements, the very cheerful and able Assistance, which I have received in the Course

of our Operations, from, his Excellency the *Count de Rochambeau* (commander of the French troops), and all his Officers of every Rank, in their respective Capacities. Nothing could equal this Zeal of our Allies, but the emulating Spirit of the American Officers, whose Ardor would not suffer their Exertions to be exceeded.

The very uncommon Degree of Duty and Fatigue which the Nature of the Service required from the Officers of Engineers and Artillery of both Armies, obliges me particularly to mention the Obligations I am under to the Commanding and other Officers of those Corps.

I wish it was in my Power to express to Congress, how much I feel myself indebted to *The Count de Grasse* (commander of the French fleet) and the Officers of the Fleet under his Command for the distinguished Aid and Support which have been afforded by them; between whom, and the Army, the most happy Concurrence of Sentiments and Views have subsisted, and from whom, every possible Cooperation has been experienced, which the most harmonious Intercourse could afford.

...Colonel Tilghman, one of my Aides ...will have the Honor to deliver these Dispatches to your *Excellency* (the President of Congress Assembled); he will be able to inform you of every minute Circumstance which is not particularly mentioned in my Letter; his Merits, which are too well known to need my observations at this time, have gained my particular Attention...

Your Excellency and Congress will be pleased to accept my Congratulations on this happy Event, and believe me to be With the highest Respect etc.

P.S. Tho' I am not possessed of the Particular Returns, yet I have reason to suppose that the Number of Prisoners will be between five and Six thousand, exclusive of Seamen and others.