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# MARYLAND HISTORICAL MAGAZINE

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FRED SHELLEY, *Editor*

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## THE MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

H. IRVINE KEYSER MEMORIAL BUILDING

201 W. MONUMENT STREET, BALTIMORE 1

GEORGE L. RADCLIFFE, President; JAMES W. FOSTER, Director

The Maryland Historical Society, incorporated in 1844, was organized to collect, preserve and spread information relating to the history of Maryland and of the United States. Its threefold program includes

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2. Preservation of these materials for the benefit of all who care to enjoy them, and exhibition of items which will encourage an understanding of State and National history; and
3. Spread of historical information relating to Maryland and the rest of the country by means of addresses at the Society's home by authorities in various fields; addresses to outside groups by officers and staff of the Society; publication of the *Maryland Historical Magazine*, a quarterly containing original articles about State history; *Maryland History Notes*, a quarterly bulletin of news of the Society and other local historical items, the *Archives of Maryland* and the record of Maryland in World War II under the authority of the State, and other serial and special publications.

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FROM ORIGINAL PENCIL DRAWING BY ROBERT S. PEABODY,  
IN POSSESSION OF AUTHOR.

# MARYLAND HISTORICAL MAGAZINE

*A Quarterly*

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Volume XLIX

MARCH, 1954

Number 1

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## REVOLUTIONARY MAIL BAG: GOVERNOR THOMAS SIM LEE'S CORRESPONDENCE, 1779—1782

Edited by HELEN LEE PEABODY

THE contents of a chest of several hundred unpublished letters and papers, belonging to Thomas Sim Lee, Governor of Maryland during the American Revolution, form the basis of the following pages.<sup>1</sup> The chest, containing these letters and private papers, together with the rest of his personal possessions, was inherited by his youngest son, John Lee, the only unmarried child still living with his father at the time of his death.

John Lee, my grandfather, left his inheritance, the old family mansion, "Needwood," in Frederick County, and all it contained, to my father, Charles Carroll Lee. In this manner the chest of letters descended to the present generation.

<sup>1</sup> There is no life of Lee. Standard accounts are to be found in the *Dictionary of American Biography*, XI, 132, and H.E. Buchholz, *Governors of Maryland* (Baltimore, 1908), pp. 9-13.

The papers—designated hereafter as the T. S. Lee Collection—when found, comprised over a thousand items. The papers were arranged in packages, tied with tape, and tabulated, which facilitated the onerous task of sorting and reading. Many had to be laid aside, as totally unsuited to a compilation of this kind. These comprised invoices, bills of lading, acknowledgements by London firms of hogsheads of tobacco received, orders for furniture, clothing, household utensils—all, in short, that made up the interchange of life between our Colonial ancestors and British merchants. There is a package of sixty letters from James Molleson, merchant, alone, and perhaps several hundred other business papers. A substantial packet deals with the sale of a tract of land, "Paradise," of which several Lee cousins inherited their share, or moiety. These letters, especially those from Richard Lee, Jr., to his cousin, Thomas Sim Lee, are punctuated with allusions to lighter matters, love affairs, balls, and family gossip, sometimes of an amusing character. Other packets are from friends—forty from William Fitzhugh of Chatham, from Charles Carroll of Carrollton and Archbishop John Carroll, as well as from less conspicuous persons, such as Christopher Richmond and Uriah Forrest.

But the most interesting, of course, are directly concerned with winning the war and are of a public nature. A series of fifty-six are from James McHenry, at that time aide to Lafayette at the front, during the siege of Yorktown, and give the latest details of the fighting, straight by galloping horsemen to the door of Government House at Annapolis and into the hands of Governor Lee.

A certain number of letters from General Washington to Lee, seem to have been part of these personal papers as late as 1861. On May 9 of that year the Governor's son, John Lee, wrote to Jared Sparks of Harvard, asking advice as to publishing a series of some forty letters from Washington to his father, written chiefly during the Yorktown Campaign.<sup>2</sup> Sparks strongly advised the project, but nothing further seems to have come of it, and these particular letters have been scattered. A number of these scattered letters have now been traced to various public and private collections, and have been restored (by photostats) to their original context, as far as possible, in connection with Governor Lee's answers.

<sup>2</sup> This exchange of letters is in the T. S. Lee Collection.

Lee, second governor of the State of Maryland, was born on October 29, 1745, and died October 9, 1819. His life covered, therefore, the entire last half of the 18th century in Maryland, that century which has been called the "Golden Age" of the colonies.

His grandfather, Philip Lee, had established himself, in the year 1700, on the Potomac River in Prince George's County, Maryland. He had been given this tract of land by his father, Richard Lee of Westmoreland County, Virginia, and was the first of the numerous Lee clan to make his home, and that of his descendants, in Maryland. He became a member of the Council of Maryland, a Justice of the Peace, and in other ways proved a solid member of the community. Having been twice married, he left a family of seventeen sons and daughters, and of these, Thomas, the fourth son, was the father of the future governor.

Little is recorded of the early years of Thomas Sim Lee. His mother's maiden name was Christiana Sim. He had one sister, Sarah. His father died when he was four years old. Presumably he spent his boyhood at the paternal homestead of his grandfather, Blenheim.<sup>3</sup> His father was Clerk of the County, and young Lee, still a minor at the time of his father's death, was given the position. His uncle, Antony Sim, was appointed by Lord Baltimore to administer the office until he should come of age. It is said that Lord Baltimore, who had known his father, wished him to be sent to England to be educated at Eton and Oxford.<sup>4</sup> This plan, if conceived, was never carried out.

Young Lee must have been of imposing appearance. He was described as "six foot four in height, every inch of him magnificent." He could never be induced, however, to sit for his portrait. In his early twenties he made a trip to England, meeting British relatives, of which every Colonial family possessed a score, and forming connections which, in some instances, were life-long. A number of letters now in the family testify to these connections.

On October 24, 1771, he married Mary, only daughter of the

<sup>3</sup> "Blenheim," Prince George's Co., referred to in family letters of the time, was burnt to the ground at some unknown date. It was in existence in 1771 for a letter from Richard Lee, Jr., to his cousin, T. S. Lee, is dated Blenheim, Nov. 2, 1771.

See Ethel Roby Hayden, "The Lees of Blenheim," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, XXXVIII (1924), 199-207, and Edmund J. Lee, *Lee of Virginia* (Philadelphia, 1895), pp. 96, 148-153.

<sup>4</sup> Referred to in a letter from Mary Digges Lee Gouverneur to my father, Charles Carroll Lee, dated Needwood, May 15, 1889.

prominent Catholic landowner Ignatius Digges of Melwood Park, Prince George's County. He thus allied himself with a family as distinguished as his own, the Digges family tree going back to its English progenitor, Sir Dudley Digges of Chilham Castle in Kent, Ambassador to Russia in the reign of James the First.

At the outbreak of the Revolution, young Lee professed himself a sympathizer with the patriot cause and organized a band of local militia. We hear nothing further of his military ambitions, however. He served in August, 1776, as a delegate from Prince George's County to the Convention then meeting in Annapolis.

In 1777 he received an invitation from the governor of Maryland, Thomas Johnson, Jr., to make one of the governor's Council of five. He accepted and two years later was himself nominated and elected Governor of Maryland, serving from November 8, 1779, to November 22, 1782.

It is with these three crowded, harassing years of crisis in the Revolutionary cause, crowned by the victory of Yorktown, that the greater part of Governor Lee's correspondence quoted in the following pages deals.

(It will be noted that in certain instances probable complimentary closes are supplied in brackets. The discerning reader will also note that exact chronology has not always been used in the hope that the grouping of letters will aid in an understanding of the subjects discussed. It should be understood that Governor Lee acted in many matters in concert with his Council, thus the use of the expressions "we," "our," etc.)

JOSEPH SIM <sup>6</sup> TO THOMAS SIM LEE  
(T. S. Lee Collection).

[Annapolis, Nov. 8, 1779]

Dear Sir,

The Business of Appointing the Governor is Just now finished, and I have the pleasure to inform you of your having a Majority of Votes,—there was only yourself and Col<sup>o</sup>. Lloyd proposed—for you 39, Col<sup>o</sup>. Lloyd 18.<sup>o</sup>—Mr. Chase <sup>7</sup> warmly recommended General Smallwood, but after a long debate which Continued 'till after night, it was determined by a Question & division of the House that General Smallwood was not

<sup>6</sup> Joseph Sim, Lee's uncle, was a member of the State Senate at this time.

<sup>o</sup> Edward Lloyd (1744-1796), of Talbot County.

<sup>7</sup> Samuel Chase (1741-1811), a member of the House of Delegates for Annapolis.



Eligible under a Resolve of Convention of the year 1776.<sup>8</sup> This determination seems to Mortify Chase & his party greatly as great pains was taken to carry their point.

A Joint Letter from the President and Speaker will be sent you tomorrow to inform you of your Appointment. I have kept my Man in Town to this time on purpose to give you the earliest information of your Appointment, well knowing it would give you satisfaction to be informed of it as soon as possible. Mr. Cannfeild joins me in Congratulating you on this event & I am

very truly, D. Sir your  
 Affectionate Serv<sup>t</sup>  
 Joseph Sim

8<sup>th</sup> Nov.            Annapolis Monday Night 8 O Clock

P. S. I have ordered Tench to leave this place by Day Light & go immediately with this letter to you at Mr. Diggses.<sup>9</sup> J. S.

Mr. Josias Beall Chose[n] Speaker of the House of Delegates without opposition.

JENIFER AND BEALL TO THOMAS SIM LEE  
 (T. S. Lee Collection)

Annapolis Nov. 9th 1779

Sir,

We are directed by the General Assembly to notify you of your appointment of Governor, and to request you will attend and qualify as soon as you conveniently can.

We have the honor to be, Sir, your  
 Obedient Servants  
 Dan. of St. Thos. Jenifer P.[resident] S.[enate]  
 Josias Beall—Speaker H.[ouse] D.[elegates]

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO THOMAS SIM LEE<sup>10</sup>  
 (Maryland Historical Society)

Williamsburg, Dec. 15, 1779

Sir

The inclosed letter which came by a flag of truce from New-York, will, I imagine, inform you that prisoners from your state are sent here for

<sup>8</sup> William Smallwood (1732-1792), who was judged ineligible while he held a commission as brigadier general. He continued in the military service until 1783 and served as governor, 1785-1788.

<sup>9</sup> Ignatius Digges, Lee's father-in-law.

<sup>10</sup> Printed in Julian P. Boyd (ed.), *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson* (Princeton, 1950- ), III, 222-223, and *Maryland Historical Magazine*, V (1910), 256-257.

the purpose of exchange.<sup>11</sup> a copy of a letter from the master of the flag I also take the liberty of inclosing, as it will give you further information of their arrival here & escape from the flag.<sup>12</sup> the master is to await the return of the prisoners whom your Excellency may think proper to give in exchange for these.

After expressing my satisfaction at Your Excellency's appointment to an office, a second time so worthily filled, I take this my earliest opportunity of asking leave to trouble you from time to time with such communications as may be for the good of either state, of praying that you will be pleased to render me instrumental to their common service by honoring me with your commands, & of assuring you how earnestly I wish to see a perfect cordiality maintained between two sister states to whom common interests, manners, & dispositions have rendered a cordial intercourse so easy and necessary.

I am with the utmost respect & esteem Your Excellency's most obedient & most humble servt

Th: Jefferson

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO THOMAS SIM LEE<sup>13</sup>

(Washington MSS, Library of Congress)

Head Quarters Morris town

Dec. 16th 1779

Sir:

The situation of the Army with respect to supplies is beyond description alarming. It has been five or six months past on half allowance, and we have not more than three days bread at a third allowance on hand, nor anywhere within reach.<sup>14</sup>

When this is exhausted, we must depend on the precarious gleanings of the neighboring country.

Our magazines are absolutely empty everywhere, and our commissaries entirely destitute of money or credit to replenish them.

We have never experienced a like extremity at any period of the war.

We have often felt temporary want from accidental delays in forwarding supplies, but we always had something in our magazines, and the means of procuring more. Neither one nor the other is at present the case.

This representation is the result of a minute examination of our resources.

Unless some extraordinary and immediate exertions are made by the

<sup>11</sup> Enclosure not located.

<sup>12</sup> Undoubtedly this letter is the one written by Andrew Stalker, on board the "Mary Ann Flag of Truce in Cherrytons" to the Commissary of Naval Prisoners, December 3, 1779. It was printed in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, V (1910), 256-257. This copy of this letter is now in the Maryland Historical Society.

<sup>13</sup> Printed in John C. Fitzpatrick (ed.), *The Writings of Washington* (Washington, 1931-1944), XVII, 273-274.

<sup>14</sup> See Harold T. Pinkett, "Maryland as a Source of Food Supplies During the American Revolution," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, XLVI (Sept., 1951), 157-172.

States from which we draw our supplies, there is every appearance that the army will infallibly disband in a fortnight.

I think it is my duty to lay this candid view of our situation before your Excellency, and to intreat the vigorous interposition of the States to rescue us from the danger of an event, which, if it did not prove the total ruin of our affairs, would at least give them a shock from which they would not easily recover, and plunge us into a train of new and still more perplexing embarrassments, than any we have hitherto felt.

I have the honor to be etc.

Geo. Washington

THOMAS SIM LEE TO GEORGE WASHINGTON <sup>15</sup>

(Washington MSS, Library of Congress)

Annapolis, December 26th 1779

Sir,

I had the honor to receive your Excellency's Letter of the 16th Ins. in the Evening of the 24th.

The important subject of it was instantly communicated to the General Assembly of this State which happily was then sitting and I have the pleasure to assure your Excellency, the Resolution of that Honorable Body is to make the most Vigorous Exertions in sending forward every supply the State is capable of furnishing. The Enclosure <sup>16</sup> is a Copy of the Law passed for the purpose, which I trust is a clear manifestation of their laudable intentions, and which, judging of the disposition of other States from our own, I flatter myself, affords a well grounded hope that the wants of the Army will be speedily satisfied.

I have the Honor to be with the most respectful Attachment

Your Excellency's Most Obedient  
and  
Most Humble Servant

Tho. Sim Lee

<sup>15</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLIII, 41.

<sup>16</sup> Undoubtedly a copy of "An Act for the immediate supply of flour and other provisions for the army," Chapter XXXII, *Laws of Maryland*, November, 1779, session. See *Votes and Proceedings*, same session, for the Senate and the House of Delegates for evidence of passage of act in the two days preceding this letter.

PROCLAMATION <sup>17</sup>

December 29, 1779

Whereas It is represented by the most unquestionable authority that the Army of the United States is greatly distressed for want of flour and forage, and that they will infallibly disband, unless the most speedy and extraordinary exertions are made by this State to procure these articles for their relief:

And whereas the General Assembly have enacted a law, entitled An Act for the immediate supply of flour and other provisions for the Army, which requires the utmost effort of every worthy citizen of this State to carry the same into full and speedy execution.

I do therefore most earnestly intreat, conjure, require and enjoin all Justices of the Peace, sheriffs and their deputies, constables, and all other good citizens of this State by that love of their country, that patriotic zeal and magnanimity which have hitherto distinguished their conduct in the present Glorious contest for life, liberty, and property; to exert themselves to the utmost at this critical emergency, in procuring and furnishing flour, and other provisions for the immediate relief of the army, in their present alarming distress, and rendering easy assistance to the Commissars, in carrying the said law into execution.

Thomas S. Lee  
Governor

Anne Cesar, Chevalier de La Luzerne (1741-1791) the brilliant and interesting Diplomatic Minister, representing the Court of Louis XVI at Philadelphia, had succeeded Conrad Alexandre Gerard, in 1779.

He had been French Minister to Bavaria, and on leaving the United States was to be transferred to London, where he died.

Governor Lee kept up a friendly correspondence with him, thereby cementing our important alliance with France.

<sup>17</sup> The proclamation is printed in the *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), December 31, 1779, and in the *Maryland Journal* (Baltimore), January 4, 1780. In each case the heading is

By His Excellency  
THOMAS SIM LEE, Esquire,  
Governor of Maryland,  
A Proclamation.

[The concluding lines are:]

THO. SIM LEE.

GOD SAVE THE STATE.  
By his Excellency's Command,  
Tho. Johnson, jun. Sec'y.

The proclamation is also printed in the *Archives of Maryland*, XLIII, 43.

THOMAS SIM LEE TO THE CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE <sup>18</sup>

(Hall of Records, Annapolis)

[In Council, Annapolis December 3, 1779]

We were honored with your Excellency's Letter of the 17th ulto <sup>19</sup> The polite Assurance that you received Pleasure when you understood the Commander of his most Christian Majesty's Squadron had made Choice of this Station because you could rely on us for Succour, communicated the highest Satisfaction. Such is our Inclination to render every Assistance in our Power to the Troops of our illustrious Ally, that nothing was necessary to prompt us to an Exertion for their Relief, but a Communication of their Wants and sufferings. Our Duty seconded by our Attachment to Friends who have bravely fought and bled in the Cause of Liberty, lead us to consider their Distresses as our Own, and make our Exertions to provide the Sick and wounded with suitable Lodgings and proper Sustainance, the most pleasing Task. Victualling the Squadron is certainly an important Object and demands our utmost Endeavours to enable Monsr DeGrasse or any other French Commander, to procure full and Speedy Supplies for the Use of the Fleet. The Congratulation of your Excellency, is flattering. Convinced that America is interested in the judicious Appointments of your King, it gives us infinite Pleasure in felicitating you and United America, on your Excellency's Appointment, which alone can console us for the Loss of your worthy Predecessor, whose Goodness of Heart impelled him, on every Occasion to exert his extraordinary Abilities in promoting such Measures as tended, not only to render the present happy Connexion between France and America permanent, but to secure the Happiness and Independence of the Latter. We have the Honor to be &<sup>ca</sup>

[Your Excellency's Most Obedient

[and

[Most Humble Servants

[Tho Sim Lee]

CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>20</sup>

(Hall of Records, Annapolis)

Philadelphia, Dec. [8?] 1779

[Sir,]

I have the honor of reporting to you a rumor from New York, which can be trusted. His Majesty's vessels and other craft at present in Chesa-

<sup>18</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLIII, 29-30.

<sup>19</sup> The letter of November 17, 1779, is in the Hall of Records, Annapolis. See *Calendar of Maryland State Papers*, No. 3, *The Brown Books* (Annapolis, 1948), nos. 251 and 252.

<sup>20</sup> Translation of letter printed in French in *Archives of Maryland*, XLIII, 383-384. See *Brown Books*, nos. 257 and 258.

peake Bay would seem to be actually menaced by the fleet and debarking troops at Sandy Hook.

In these circumstances I cannot but rely on Your Excellency, and with confidence in the good will you have already manifested, I beg you to act in concert with the Marquis Viomenil<sup>21</sup> (or any other officers commanding His Majesty's Vessels in Chesapeake Bay) and procure him the means of defending the position he may have chosen.

I received, Sir, the letter with which you honored me the 3rd of this month. I was touched by the sentiments it contained, and I beg you to transmit my thanks to the representatives of the State of which you are Governor.

I have no news of the arrival of H.[is] E.[xcellency] the Count de Grasse<sup>22</sup> in your Bay, but I can well count in advance on the proofs of affection and friendship this Officer, and any other French Commander would receive from You and the citizens of Maryland.

I look upon every occasion of consolidating the union that exists between our two nations as a special happiness.

I will transmit to M. Gerard your kind messages to him, and I hope my attachment for United America will justify that which you have so kindly addressed to me.

With respectful attachment I am, Sir, the very humble and very obedient servant of your Excellency

[Chevalier de La Luzerne

[His Excellency Thos. Sim Lee Esq.]

THOMAS SIM LEE TO THOMAS JEFFERSON<sup>23</sup>

(Hall of Records, Annapolis)

In Council Annapolis 20th. Decr. 1779

Sir.

The enclosed is a Copy of Intelligence, this Moment received by this Board, from his Excellency the Chevalier De la Luzerne.<sup>24</sup> We have taken the speediest Method of conveying it to your Excellency, under an Impression of the Propriety of giving you the earliest Intimation of the Design of the Enemy

We have the Honor to be &ca.

[Your Excellency's

[Most Humble and Obedient Servants

[Tho Sim Lee]

<sup>21</sup> Antoine Charles du Houx, Baron de Viomenil, (1728-1792) was second in command under Rochambeau at Yorktown. He was fatally wounded when protecting Louis XVI in 1792.

<sup>22</sup> Francois Joseph Paul, Count de Grasse.

<sup>23</sup> Printed in Boyd, *Jefferson*, III, 238, and *Archives of Maryland*, XLIII, 38-39.

<sup>24</sup> The enclosure is a copy of the preceding letter. For Jefferson's reply (December 26) to Lee's letter, see Boyd, *Jefferson*, III, 243-244.

THOMAS SIM LEE TO GEORGE WASHINGTON

(Washington MSS, Library of Congress)

In Council Annapolis 3rd February 1780

Sir:

We have given Permission to Mrs. Chamier, Widow of Daniel Chamier Esquire deceased, to bring her Household Furniture, Wearing Apparel, and other Goods mentioned in a List annexed thereto, from New York, to Hampton Road in Virginia.

We are induced from Motives of Compassion, and the generous Conduct of her late Husband, to many of our Prisoners, to grant her Leave, and to solicit your Excellency's Interposition, to obtain her the desired Indulgence, if you esteem it consistant with Propriety.

We are with the utmost Respect  
Your Excellency's  
Most Humble Serv.<sup>ts</sup>

Tho. Sim Lee

His Exc<sup>y</sup> Gen<sup>l</sup>. Washington

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>25</sup>

(Washington MSS, Library of Congress)

Head Quarters, Morris Town, February 19, 1780

Sir:

About the latter end of December I had the honor to receive a letter from His Excellency Governor Johnson <sup>26</sup> dated 27th October [1779], in which he proposed an arrangement for the three companies of Artillery belonging to the State of Maryland, and asks my opinion upon it.

As General Knox,<sup>27</sup> who is at the head of the Artillery, is, consequently, best acquainted with its interior circumstances and can best judge of the operation of any changes which might take place, I communicated the letter to him to know his sentiments.

I beg leave to add that my sentiments correspond with his, and that the mode he recommends appears to me well calculated to do justice to the State of the three companies and to promote the general good of the service.

It is essential to have the corps that compose the army upon one foundation and regulated by general principles.

The contrary is productive of innumerable inconveniences.

This makes me wish the idea of erecting the four companies into a separate corps under the command of a Major, may be relinquished.

<sup>25</sup> Printed in Fitzpatrick, *Washington*, XVIII, 31-32. ("The draft is in the writing of Alexander Hamilton."—Fitzpatrick.)

<sup>26</sup> Thomas Johnson, Jr. (1732-1819), who served as governor from 1777 to 1779.

<sup>27</sup> Henry Knox (1750-1806), subsequently Washington's Secretary of War.

If this is agreeable to the views of the State, I shall be happy its intentions may be signified as speedily as possible to Congress, that the incorporation and arrangement may be carried into execution.

I have the honor to be etc.

Geo. Washington

THOMAS SIM LEE TO GEORGE WASHINGTON <sup>28</sup>

(Washington MSS, Library of Congress)

Annapolis March 23, 1780

Sir,

We have had the honor of receiving your Excellency's Letters of the 19th & 20th Ultimo. and 10th of the Current Month with their several inclosures, every [one] of which shall be immediately laid before the Honorable General Assembly now about to meet.

The Recruiting Officers in this State have not had the success we wished, yet they have procured a sufficient Number to lessen our Deficiency considerably and should the Legislature continue our Recruiting six or eight weeks beyond the time limited for its Duration, we should have reason to expect our Quota will be nearly if not entirely compleat in that Space.

We have the Honor to be,  
with sentiments of the most  
perfect personal respect,  
esteem and attachment

Your Excellency's  
Most Humble Obe. Servant  
Tho. Sim Lee

To His Ex.

George Washington

THOMAS SIM LEE TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>29</sup>

(Hall of Records, Annapolis)

Sir

In Council Annapolis 23d. Feby. 1780.

We had the Honor to receive your Excellency's Letter of the 30th. Jany.<sup>30</sup> The Necessity which constrained our Assembly to enact a Law, the extensive Operation of which has interfered with the Purchases made

<sup>28</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLIII, 118.

<sup>29</sup> Printed in Boyd, *Jefferson*, 303-304, and *Archives of Maryland*, XLIII, 95.

<sup>30</sup> Jefferson to Lee, Jan. 30, 1780, printed in Boyd, *Jefferson*, III, 279-280. Jefferson complained that some 1,400 barrels of flour purchased by an agent of Virginia had been seized under provisions of a Maryland law, although Governor Johnson had previously granted permission for the purchase of 2,000 barrels for the use of Virginia troops.



by your Agent, for the Subsistence of the Military of your State, we must deplore, and can assure you that an anxious Solitude for the Welfare of the United States and an Opinion that nothing short of the most vigorous and sudden Exertions, could procure an immediate and full Supply for our distressed Army, were the only Motives which prompted them to make it so general. We are satisfied it is not the Intention of the Act, to provide Supplies for State Troops, because, when it was made, it was not known that the Military of any particular State was in Distress. The Object of the Assembly being an immediate and full Supply for the Army, we cannot admit your Exposition of the Law, because it would, in some Degree, counteract the Purpose of it and because we think the Word "others" was inserted with a view of including every Person in whose Possession any Flour or Wheat was found and may well comprehend the Agent of Virginia; and that, unless such Construction is made, as there is no other Person except the Agent of the Marine of France (whose Flour is also deemed seizable) to whom it can relate, that Word would be deprived of its Effect, and a well known Principle in expounding Act of the Legislature, would be infringed, that a Law ought to be so construed that no Word should be rendered void or insignificant if it can be prevented. We must further observe that the Intention of the Assembly ought to prevail, which is to be collected from the Cause or Necessity which induced them to make the Law. We cannot esteem it necessary to enter into a minute Discussion of the present Question or to resort to nice and subtil Reasoning to justify an Exertion which was requisite to prevent the numerous Calamities which must result from the Dissolution of the Continental Army. We are sensible it is the mutual Interest of both States to preserve the Harmony that subsists between them which, added to our Desire to contribute all we possibly can to the Relief of your Distresses, make us wish to receive Information from Congress or His Excellency General Washington, that the Army is supplied, that we may have it in our Power to restore your Flour, before you feel any Inconveniencies from the Seizure of it. Our Assembly will meet the second Day of March, when your Excellency's Letter will be laid before them for their Consideration.

We are &c.

Your Excellency's  
 [Most Humble and Obedient Servants  
 [Tho Sim Lee]

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>81</sup>

(Hall of Records, Annapolis)

Head Quarters, March 10, 1780.

Sir: Since I had the Honor of writing to Your Excellency on the 20th Ultio. I have obtained Returns of some Corps, which I had not then. I

<sup>81</sup> Printed in Fitzpatrick, *Washington*, XVIII, 102.

find there are in Moylan's<sup>32</sup> Regiment of Light Dragoons a few Men belonging to the State of Maryland, of which I inclose You a particular Return, specifying the terms for which they stand engaged.

I have received within a few days past the Honor of Your Excellency's Letter of the 3d of last month. In consequence, I have informed General Gist<sup>33</sup> that a Flag shall be furnished to convey Your passport to New York, respecting Mrs Chamier's furniture &c, and I very much wish that She may receive them safe. Her peculiar circumstances and the generosity of Mr Chamier in his life time to our prisoners, as has been frequently mentioned, seem to have given Mrs Chamier a good claim to the indulgence the Council have granted.

I have the Honor, etc.

[Geo. Washington]

THOMAS SIM LEE TO WILLIAM SMITH<sup>34</sup>

(Yale University Library)

In Council Annapolis 22d. Apl. 1780

Sir:

We have sent Permissions to load the Vessels mentioned in your Letter of the 20th Inst. with Flour for the Use of the Fleet and Army of his most Christian Majesty in the West Indies.<sup>35</sup>

It is not now in our Power to fix the Time of the Delivery of the Flour allotted for the French by the State, but shall endeavour to have it done as soon as possible. We have wrote to Mr. Dallam<sup>36</sup> to deliver to you and your Order, the French Wheat and Flour seized by him and shall direct the Commissioners of the several Counties that have made Seizures of the French Flour, to restore it to you: enclosed is an Order for that Purpose on the Commissioners of Baltimore County

We are Sir

Your mo. obedt. Servts.

Tho. Sim Lee

<sup>32</sup> Stephen Moylan (1737-1811), who organized a regiment of cavalry at Washington's request in December, 1776.

<sup>33</sup> Mordecai Gist (1742-1792).

<sup>34</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLIII, 149-150. The correspondent's name does not appear on the manuscript but is identified in the *Archives*.

<sup>35</sup> The French fleet and army of Louis XVI.

<sup>36</sup> Richard Dallam. This letter, printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLIII, 149, is also dated April 22.

THOMAS SIM LEE TO JOSEPH REED <sup>37</sup>  
 (Historical Society of Pennsylvania)

In Council Annapolis 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1780

Sir

We received your favor of the 16th and have laid it with the Resolution of your Excellency & Council before the General Assembly. As soon as the Result of their deliberation thereon, is made known to Us, We shall communicate it to your Excellency. We are sensible that your design, in laying the Embargo, may be frustrated unless a similar Resolution is adopted by this State, and therefore we should not have hesitated in the Recess of the Assembly, to have imposed such a Restriction, as would have prevented the evil suggested in your Letter.

Nothing has a stronger Tendency to produce that Harmony, so desirable between our States, as mutual Endeavours to facilitate the Execution of Measures, concerted by either, for the General good, and being under that impression, we shall on every occasion cheerfully co-operate with your Board, in furthering them.

We are with perfect  
 respect & Esteem  
 Your Excellency's  
 Mo. Obed. & Mo.  
 Hble. Serv<sup>ts</sup>.

Tho. Sim Lee

To  
 His Exc'y. Jos. Reed, Esq.,  
 President of the State  
 of Pennsylvania

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>38</sup>  
 (Washington MSS, Library of Congress)

Headquarters

Bergen County [, N. J.]

July 26th, 1780

To Governor Thomas Sim Lee

Sir:

I have been honored with your Excellency's favor of the 10th inclosing copies of the several laws passed by the Legislature of Your State, for

<sup>37</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLIII, 203, and *Pennsylvania Archives*, Series 1, VIII, 354. Reed's letter of June 16, printed in *ibid.*, 330, states that the effect of an embargo on shipping designed to fill army quotas and preserve supplies is lost because Pennsylvania men go to the port of Baltimore.

<sup>38</sup> Original in Hall of Records, Annapolis; see *Brown Books*, no. 366. Printed in Fitzpatrick, *Washington*, XIX, 255.

procuring the Supplies of Men, provisions, and Carriages required by the Hon<sup>ble</sup> the Committee of Cooperation in conjunction with me.

The readiness with which these laws were passed, and the pointed attention your Excellency seems determined to pay to the due execution of them, are happy presages that they will be Speedily and fully carried into effect.

I have the honor to be etc.

Geo. Washington

Baron de Kalb, a Bavarian by birth, received his training in the French army, where he was created Major General. On his arrival with Lafayette, whom he had accompanied at the request of Louis XVI, he was appointed Major General in the American army, where his experience proved of great value. His first winter was spent with Washington at Valley Forge.

BARON DE KALB TO THOMAS SIM LEE  
(Washington MSS, Library of Congress)

Camp on Deep River July 9th 1780

Sir.

Major Steward <sup>39</sup> being willing to Employ himself in any one way conducing to the good of the Service, I thought proper to send him to Maryland for various purposes viz:

To Collect all such men as staid behind, or deserted since the Division went to the Southward of your State, together with the Sick or recruits actually in the State or on the Road, and to march them to Camp. He will be able to give an Exact account to your Excellency of my Situation in Respect to numbers and Provisions. The Scarcity of this last Article is very distressing and will in all Probability prevent my going nearer the Enemies Lines. Being obliged to send the greatest part of the Troops out for Supplies I hardly could obtain any thing this long time but by Military Authority. I beg your Excellency's particular attention to what Major Steward will propose on the Subject.

I could wish also the Legislative and Executive Powers of the State would approve of his proposals for a Body of Light horse to be formed for the service, either in this Southern Army or in the Main Army.

He will mention also to your Excellency the reduction of the number of your Regiments, which I think would be very beneficial on many accounts, these to be incorporated to return again to their own respective Corps as soon as they could be nearly compleated. It would save immense Expense, promote the Service and lessen the Baggage. several Methods might be adopted to Effect the same. Major Steward can give my Opinion fully on the Matter, in case it was approved of. Your

<sup>39</sup> John Stewart (d. 1782), of Maryland, who by Act of Congress a year earlier had received a silver medal for distinguished service.

Excellency will prescribe the most eligible way to do it. It will be next to impossible to keep the field if no Method is fastened upon to supply the Troops.

With great respect I have the honor to be

Your Excellency's  
Mo. obed<sup>t</sup>. & very hble. serv.  
Baron de Kalb

His Excellency  
Thomas Sim Lee Esq  
Governor of the State of  
Maryland

THOMAS SIM LEE TO DELEGATES IN CONGRESS <sup>40</sup>

(Papers of Continental Congress, National Archives)

In Council Annapolis 27th July 1780

Gentlemen.

We have enclosed you a Copy of a Letter from the Baron De Kalb, addressed to this Board. He represents the Maryland Division to be in great Distress for Want of Provisions; the Scarcity of which will prevent them from approaching nearer the Enemy's Lines, unless proper Measures are taken to supply them. We esteem it necessary that this Representation should be laid before Congress, in Order that some Mode may be pointed out to furnish them immediately, which is impracticable by this State, the Distance being so great; and if it could be done, the Expense would be enormous. It certainly would not be inconvenient to the States of North Carolina and Virginia to provide for their Subsistence. We have, upon all Occasions, exerted ourselves to take Care of the Troops of other States, marching through this. As we are not invested with competent Authority to carry into Effect, his Proposals of forming a Body of Light Horse for the Service in the Southern <sup>41</sup> or Main Army, and reducing the Number of Regiments in the Maryland Line; we did not think it necessary to consider the Propriety of them, but have submitted those Subjects to the Consideration of Congress.

We are

Gentlemen

with perfect Respect and Esteem

Your obed<sup>t</sup>. Serv<sup>ts</sup>.

Tho. S. Lee

<sup>40</sup> Record copy in Hall of Records, Annapolis. Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLIII, 235-236. For enclosure, see preceding letter (July 9).

<sup>41</sup> The word "Southern" is omitted in the *Archives*.

THOMAS SIM LEE TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON <sup>42</sup>  
 (Papers of Continental Congress, National Archives)

In Council Annapolis 24th July 1780

Sir;

Last Evening We had the Honor to receive by Express your Excellency's Letter of the 29rd ult.<sup>43</sup> with a Resolution of Congress of the same Date directing Warrants to be drawn in Favor of the Treasurer of the United States,<sup>44</sup> on the Treasurer of the several States from New Hampshire to Maryland inclusive for their respective proportions of the ten Million of Dollars specially called for by the Resolution of the 19th May last. When that Resolution, and the Letter accompanying it, were received the general Assembly was not sitting and we were induced, from the urgent necessity of complying with it, to appoint persons, in the several Counties of this State, to solicit a Loan of our proportion of that Sum; and to prevent as far as possible the Evils that might result from a Failure, We convened the general Assembly immediately, in order, that the most efficacious Measures might be adopted to procure it. The Resolution and Letter were laid before them and several Laws enacted for the purpose of obtaining the Quota of this State. In consequence of which and the Assessment Acts not more than 200000 Dollars have been drawn into our Treasury, beyond what, We have advanced for the Use of the Continental Army, which, We can assure your Excellency, though We cannot precisely ascertain the Quantum, is far from being inconsiderable. The 8th Instant We sent by Express 200000 Dollars to the Continental Treasurer and wrote to the Delegates of the State on the Subject of the Requisition of the 19th May.<sup>45</sup>

It is with the utmost regret We inform Congress of our Inability to comply with their earnest and pressing Application; Nothing could in the least alleviate the poignant Anxiety We feel from contemplating the Miseries that must ensue, a Dissolution of the Army, or a Suspension of the Operations of this present Campaign, but a Consciousness that the Failure of the Supply required is not imputable to Supineness or Unwillingness in this State to render every Assistance, but the want of Time

<sup>42</sup> (1731-1796), of Connecticut, president of the Continental Congress, 1779-1780; signer of the Declaration of Independence; and Governor of his State.

<sup>43</sup> On June 20 Washington wrote to the President of Congress (Fitzpatrick, *Washington*, XIX, 34-38), mentioning, among other matters, the shortage of shirts and other necessary supplies. On June 23, the Congress ordered an extract of the General's letter be sent by express to each of the States "from New Hampshire to Maryland, inclusive, and that the executive powers be most earnestly requested to forward on the supplies of men and provisions with the utmost expedition, and transmit to Congress and the committee at head quarters, with all possible despatch, an account of the proceedings of their respective states, on which the Commander in Chief can rely, and by which he may be enabled to regulate his future operations."

<sup>44</sup> Michael Hillegas (1729-1804), of Pennsylvania.

<sup>45</sup> Maryland's share of \$10,000,000 requisition was \$1,234,350. See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, XVII, 437.

to execute the Laws and in some Measure to the Scarcity of Money to answer the various Demands incessantly made on the People to support Government and to provide Men, Money and Provision for the Army of the States. We can assure Congress that the full Sum required will be forwarded to the Treasury of the United States as procured, and that our Attention will not be remitted but every Exertion made to facilitate the procurement of it. The Expedient of borrowing has been resorted to with such frequency and our Credit has received fresh Wound from our not complying punctually with our Engagements, that We can expect to derive little or no Relief from the Adoption of it in future.

We have transmitted herewith a Copy of the Act for sinking the Quota required by Congress of this State of the Bills of Credit emitted by Congress.<sup>46</sup>

We have the honor to be with perfect Respect & Esteem  
Your Excellency's Most Obed. Hble. Serv.<sup>ts</sup>

Tho. S. Lee

His Excellency Sam Huntington  
President of Congress

John Hanson was in 1780 one of Maryland's delegates to the Continental Congress in Philadelphia, of which body he was later appointed President.

A chief duty was to keep Governor Lee informed of the progress of the war, as news of it reached Congress, both as to facts and rumors.

A biography of him, published lately, speaks of very few of his letters surviving.<sup>47</sup> In our collection, however, there are fifty-six, written to Governor Lee during this period.

His statue has been placed in Statuary Hall, in the Capitol in Washington, one of the Maryland patriots chosen, the other being Charles Carroll of Carrollton.

JOHN HANSON TO THOMAS SIM LEE

(T. S. Lee Collection)

Philadelphia

July 25th 1780

Dear Sir

I am favored with yours by the last post; be pleased to present my Compliments to Mrs. Lee, and tell her her Commands shall be executed—  
'Tho' the best kind of Chariot was made a month or six weeks ago,

<sup>46</sup> "An Act to procure a loan," *Laws of Maryland*, June, 1780, Chapter II.

<sup>47</sup> J. Bruce Kremer, *John Hanson of Mulberry Grove* (New York, 1938), p. 134. See also biographical sketches in *D. A. B.*, VIII, 231-232, and *Biographical Directory of the American Congress* (Washington, 1950), p. 1264.

for 150 £ hard money, the price is now from 200 to 220—if you are willing to give this price, be pleased to let me know, and I will engage one of the best kind immediately, and you may get it by the middle or end of September.

There is a second hand Coach to be sold for 200 £ hard. I understand it has seen wear six years—I have examined it, the wheels are almost new, and the Harness altogether so—the Body is very good, and every part of the Carriage appears to be strong and in good order. The lining is a green Silk Damask. The Cushions are a good deal worn, but the man will engage to furnish new ones of the same with the lining. It appears to be rather heavy, and the shape of the Body not altogether in the modern taste—tho' it looks well, being genteely painted. But I would rather advise your having a new one made, or a new chariot, rather than purchase this—you will then be sure of a good one, and agreeable to your own fancy. You will let me hear from you on the subject by the next post. The sooner the better.

There was an Embarkation of Troops from New York last week, and a fleet of Ships of War and other vessels, amounting to 61 to 62, sailed from the Hook, Wednesday last, Steering as far as they could be seen, about a South East Course.

Various are the Conjectures respecting their destination. Some are of opinion they are gone to the West Indies to reinforce Admiral Rodney <sup>48</sup> who, it is said, has lately met with a severe drubbing by the Combined fleets having lost 4 Ships. A 74 sank <sup>49</sup> and three taken, and the rest drove into St. Lucia, some in a shattered condition. Others are of opinion (which I think the most probable) that their object is Rhode Island. The Superiority they have at present, and the number of Troops they may spare from New York for so short an Expedition, may induce them to attempt something before the present fleet and army there can be reinforced. A few days will clear us our Doubts.

With great esteem and respect

I am Dear Sir,

Your most humble Ser<sup>t</sup>.

John Hanson

*(To be continued in the June number.)*

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<sup>48</sup> Sir George Rodney.

<sup>49</sup> A 74-gun vessel.



# MARYLAND HISTORICAL MAGAZINE

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FRED SHELLEY, *Editor*

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## THE MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

H. IRVINE KEYSER MEMORIAL BUILDING

201 W. MONUMENT STREET, BALTIMORE 1

GEORGE L. RADCLIFFE, President; JAMES W. FOSTER, Director

The Maryland Historical Society, incorporated in 1844, was organized to collect, preserve and spread information relating to the history of Maryland and of the United States. Its threefold program includes

1. Collection of manuscript and printed materials, maps, prints, paintings, furniture, silver, fabrics, maritime items, and other objects of interest;
2. Preservation of these materials for the benefit of all who care to enjoy them, and exhibition of items which will encourage an understanding of State and National history; and
3. Spread of historical information relating to Maryland and the rest of the country by means of addresses at the Society's home by authorities in various fields; addresses to outside groups by officers and staff of the Society; publication of the *Maryland Historical Magazine*, a quarterly containing original articles about State history; *Maryland History Notes*, a quarterly bulletin of news of the Society and other local historical items, the *Archives of Maryland* and the record of Maryland in World War II under the authority of the State and other serial and special publications.

The annual dues of the Society are \$5.00, life membership \$100.00. Subscription to the *Magazine* and to the quarterly news bulletin, *Maryland History Notes*, is included in the membership fee as well as use of the collections and admission to the lectures. The library, portrait gallery and museum rooms, are open daily except Sunday, 9 to 5, Saturday, 9 to 4. *June 15 to Sept. 15*, daily 9 to 4, Saturday, 9 to 2.

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# REVOLUTIONARY MAIL BAG: GOVERNOR THOMAS SIM LEE'S CORRESPONDENCE

## PART II

Edited by HELEN LEE PEABODY

(Continued from Vol. XLIX, No. 1, March, 1954, p. 1)

JOHN HENRY, Jr., who was appointed in 1778 to represent Maryland in the Congress at Philadelphia, was Governor Lee's junior, being only twenty-eight years old at the time.<sup>1</sup> He had been trained in law at the Middle Temple in London, and while there, was conspicuous in defending the rights of the Colonies. He entered political life in Maryland, was popular, and was elected a member of the General Assembly in Annapolis. Later, he was elected Governor of Maryland. His few surviving letters to Governor Lee gain in value, as almost all of his papers and correspondence were destroyed by fire, at his country place, "Weston," in Dorchester County on the Eastern Shore.<sup>2</sup>

JOHN HENRY, JR., TO THOMAS SIM LEE  
(T. S. Lee Collection)

Philadel<sup>a</sup>. Sep<sup>r</sup>. 2. 1780.

Dear Sir

Your favour of the 26<sup>th</sup> of Aug: addressed to the Delegates I have had the Honour of receiving.<sup>3</sup> On inquiry I find that the Embargo is continued to the 30<sup>th</sup> of this present month in this State<sup>4</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> of Oct<sup>r</sup>. in Delaware. It has been mentioned in Congress and thought expedient by others, that the embargo in all the States should be taken off. The propriety of the Measure is now under the consideration of a Com<sup>ttee</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Blenheim," the Lee estate referred to in the first installment (March issue, p. 3, fn. 4) was in Charles Co. Mrs. Hayden's article, there cited, appeared in this journal in 1942.

<sup>2</sup> See *Biographical Directory of The American Congress* (Washington, 1950), p. 1300, and H. E. Buchholz, *Governors of Maryland* (Baltimore, 1908), pp. 41-45.

<sup>3</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLIII, 266-267.

<sup>4</sup> Pennsylvania.

of Congress, and till they have reported, and the Determination of Congress is known, it appears to me proper that the embargo should be continued. As other States have continued it for a short time Maryland I suppose will follow their example.

The Fate of the Action on the morning of the 16th of Aug. you must have heard.<sup>5</sup> It is a melancholy and distressing blow for Maryland, and a ruinous and destructive one to the Southern States. I wish it was in my power to give you the Fate of our gallant countrymen, and to relieve the pain and anxiety of those Distressed Families who wait with a sorrowful impatience to hear the Sacrifice of their dearest connections. But it is not in my power. Genl. [Horatio] Gates' Letter, which is wrote two hundred miles from the Field of Battle, gives no other information than, that they were left by the Militia and himself on the first fire, surrounded by a Force infinitely their superior in Numbers: "That their Bravery is highly to be honoured as they made as great and as gallant an opposition as it was possible so small a Force could make against one so vastly superior." This account I suppose the General gives from the known and established valor of the Troops; it could not be from his knowledge of the Action, for he doesn't appear, by his Letter to have seen the regular Troops after two O'Clock in the Morning when the first skirmish took place. As the State of Maryland was deeply interested in this Action, I thought it my duty to move that the Letter should be published, but Congress determined and I now believe very wisely, that it should not: It must be known sooner or later, and when ever it is, you will join with me in pronouncing it a very extraordinary one. I shall forbear at present to make any observation lest my resentment should carry me beyond the bounds of propriety and Justice. Col. Ramsey<sup>6</sup> who will have the Honour of delivering you this Letter will explain to you the line of March, the order of Battle, and the State in which our Troops were left—from the best information we can collect from the Gentlemen sent by General Gates with the Intelligence. It is believed, for my own part I have no doubt, knowing what passed previous to the action, that their Fate is a serious one: Tho I hope it is not so bad as the fugitive General expresses it in the two first lines of his Letter. "In the deepest distress and Anxiety of Mind, I am obliged to acquaint your Excellency with the total Defeat of the Troops under my Command."

Reports, which the two officers bring, say that many officers fell; among the rest General [William] Smallwood Col. Gunby,<sup>7</sup> Majr. Winder,<sup>8</sup> Majr. Roxbury,<sup>9</sup> Capt. Brooks<sup>10</sup> (reduced to a certainty) Col. Amory, etc. etc. I trust this voluminous Catalogue will considerably diminish when we have a more accurate account; some of our officers will no doubt escape.

<sup>5</sup> The Battle of Camden in South Carolina. For details, see Christopher Ward, *The War of the Revolution* (New York, 1952), II, 725 ff.

<sup>6</sup> Probably Nathaniel Ramsey (d. 1817), of Maryland.

<sup>7</sup> John Gunby, of Maryland.

<sup>8</sup> Levin Winder (d. 1819), of Maryland, who was wounded and taken prisoner at Camden.

<sup>9</sup> Alexander Roxbury, of Maryland.

<sup>10</sup> Probably Benjamin Brooks, of Maryland (d. 1800).

Till then, or the return of a Flag sent in by General Gates we must remain in the dark. For further information on this melancholy subject, I refer you to my friend Col. Ramsey.

I am, sir, with the highest respect and

Esteem

Y<sup>rs</sup>, J. Henry Jun<sup>r</sup>

Christopher Richmond was a young man Lee had known for many years, who had the faculty of writing graphic descriptions of anything in which he had been concerned. His letters, however little he has to say, make agreeable reading, even to the point of his entertaining account of selecting a new "Hatt" and gun for Lee in London.

CHRISTOPHER RICHMOND TO GOVERNOR LEE  
(T. S. Lee Collection)

Hillsborough [, North Carolina]

30th. August. 1780

Dear Sir:

I snatch an Opportunity of writing you a few Lines by Col. Malmady,<sup>11</sup> who is on his Way to Phil<sup>a</sup>. You will have heard of our Defeat near Camden,—towards which we had approached with great Rapidity, notwithstanding the violent Heat of the Weather, the Want of Provisions, and other Obstacles. On the 15<sup>th</sup> Ins<sup>t</sup>. in the Night we marched against the Enemy, with the greatest Hopes, nay a moral Certainty of Success—but alas! our fair Hopes, Wishes and Confidence, were withered & blasted, by the uncommon, and most unheard of Cowardice, of the Militia which was with us; and composed at least two Thirds of our Army. The Maryland & Delaware Regimts. behaved like Men—how many of them are saved I cannot at present tell—but believe, between Six & Seven hundred of the Whole that were in, and out, of Action. I have sent the best Account I could collect, of the Officers who were kill'd, wounded and made Prisoners by the Enemy; to Forrest<sup>12</sup> & Hyde,<sup>13</sup> to whom I wrote a hasty and inaccurate Account of the Battle, and to which, I beg leave to refer you, should no particulars thereof, have reached you before. I hope every exertion will be made in your State, to supply Men for our reduced Division; and to supply them well, when raised—that we may again show the Enemy, we are able to make a respectable Head against them. I will do myself the honor of writing by every Opportunity [. ] in the

<sup>11</sup> Francis, Marquis de Malmedy, a French officer.

<sup>12</sup> Uriah Forrest, of Maryland (d. 1805).

<sup>13</sup> Possibly William Hyde, of Maryland.

Mean Time be pleased to make my very Respectful Com<sup>pts</sup>. to your Lady & Family and believe me to be My Dear Sir Your truly affectionate & oblig'd Friend

Chris<sup>r</sup>. Richmond

[His Excellency  
 [Thomas Sim Lee  
 [Governor of Maryland  
 [Annapolis]

Throughout the entire bitter engagement at Camden, the Chevalier du Buysson, General de Kalb's aide de camp, remained at his side, saving him from death, it is said, many times. When the Baron fell, mortally wounded, du Buysson appealed to the British, to allow him to die within their lines. This was done, and every last care given him. In 1886 his statue was placed before the State House at Annapolis. Thomas F. Bayard, later Ambassador to England, delivered the address.

CHRISTOPHER RICHMOND TO THOMAS SIM LEE  
 (T. S. Lee Collection)

Hillsborough [N. C.] 4th September 1780

Dear Sir,

Col. Dubuysson, aide de Camp to the late Baron deKalb will do himself the Honour of delivering this to Your Excellency—he is a brave and amiable young Officer, and highly deserves the Attention of every Well-wisher to the Cause of America. I therefore do myself the Honor of introducing him to your Acquaintance and kind offices—and shall Esteem every mark of Respect you bestow upon him as being done to myself. I am with the truest affection and Esteem.  
 My dear Sir.

You obed<sup>t</sup>. and obliged Servant

Chris<sup>r</sup>. Richmond

His Excellency  
 Governor Lee

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>14</sup>  
 (Washington MSS, Library of Congress)

Headquarters, Bergen County [, N. J.]  
 Sept. 6th, 1780

Sir,

In consequence of the disagreeable intelligence of the defeat of the

<sup>14</sup> Printed in Fitzpatrick, *Washington*, XX, 2-3. Recipient's copy in Hall of Records, Annapolis (see *Calendar of Maryland State Papers—The Brown Books*, item 382.)

Army, under Major General Gates [at Camden, S. C.], which I have just received: I think it expedient to countermand the march of the Troops, which were ordered from Maryland, to join the Main Army.

I am therefore to request your Excellency to give directions for Regiments lately raised for the War, as well as for all the Recruits of your State (as soon as they can possibly be collected and organized) to march immediately to the Southward, and put themselves under the orders of the Commanding Officer of that department.

Although I have not had the particulars of the late disaster, or of how extensive it is; yet it is certain the exigency is such, as will demand the most vigorous and spirited Measures to retrieve our affairs and check the Enemy; and I cannot entertain a doubt, but your Excellency and the State will use every exertion to give Activity and despatch to the march of the Troops; and to all the measures necessary for the protection of the Southern States.

I have enclosed this letter, open, to the Board of War, that in case the Regiment in question is on the march from Maryland, it may be ordered to return without delay.<sup>15</sup>

I have the honor to be etc.

Go. Washington

JOHN HANSON TO THOMAS SIM LEE  
(T. S. Lee Collection)

Philadelphia September 10th 1780

My Dear Sir

This day I had the pleasure of receiving yours of the fifteenth, inclosing 365 Dollars.<sup>16</sup> The Bundle of money which you was so very kind as to procure for me I received. it came in very good time, but will not last long in this most Expensive place, And therefore must beg the favour of you to procure some more for me, as soon as you can, it must be of the old Continental money. The new will not pass here. [I] have been with the Coachmaker, He has promised your Chariot shall be finished by the last week in October.

Our Army continues much distressed for want of Meat. They get one meal only in three days, and how long that Scanty Allowance will Continue is uncertain.<sup>17</sup> The Jersey Inhabitants, in whose State the Army is, are plundered daily by partys from the Army, without a possibility of restraint. are not the worst of Consequences to be dreaded from the Armys thus . . .<sup>18</sup> for themselves—may it not be expected that even the people

<sup>15</sup> "A note dated 'War Office Sept. 11th 1780,' and signed 'B[enjamin] S[toddert]' has been added at the bottom of the above letter enumerating the clothing supplies needed for these Maryland troops."—Fitzpatrick.

<sup>16</sup> Letter not located.

<sup>17</sup> John Henry, Jr., wrote to Governor Lee in the same vein on Sept. 5; this letter is printed in E. C. Burnett (ed.) *Letters of Members of the Continental Congress* (Washington, 1924-1936), V, 360, and in *Archives of Maryland*, XLV, 80.

<sup>18</sup> One word indecipherable. The sense is "foraging."

of the Jerseys, who have upon all Occasions exerted themselves in Support of the Common Cause, will at length have their affections Alienated from the Army, & look upon them as plunderers, and Enemies, rather than the protectors of their Rights—is it not most shameful that our Army should be Starving, when the Country abounds with provisions? to what can it be imputed? is it from a want of inclination in the States, to comply with what has been repeatedly required of them by Congress? or is it from inattention to the public Cause, or inability to render the necessary Supplies? I hope neither of these is the Case. Satisfied I am, that our resources are abundantly Sufficient, and that the bulk of the people Continue firm in the opposition.

From the disjointed and deranged State of our finances proceed all our embarrassments, and how to extricate ourselves is the difficulty—There seems to be a fatality attending every measure, that has been adopted for that purpose. The most probable schemes have by some means or other been rendered ineffectual—The Resolves of the 18th March promised fair, but am afraid will not answer the end proposed.<sup>19</sup> how is the old money to be got in and new put into Circulation, while our Taxes are antiquated and paid off[[f]] in Certificates? Our present situation is truly alarming—our Army in want of every thing; no money in the Treasury, and our Credit exhausted.

Congress had advice today of the arrival of Admiral Rodney at the Hook on the 13th, with twelve Ships of the line, and four frigates, and that they had taken & brought into the Harbor, a French frigate—that 5000 Troops were to be sent from N. Y. to the Southward. it is reported that the Combined fleets from the West Indies is on the Coast—if so, the French will be superior, and may put a stop to the Embarkation at New York. Fryday last General Smallwood was by the unanimous Vote of Congress promoted to the Rank of Major General. Am Sorry to acquaint you that this morning dyed much lamented Mrs. Reed the Presidents Lady.<sup>20</sup> My Compliments to Mrs. Lee and am with the greatest esteem and regard  
Dr. Sir

Your Excellency's most hble Sert.

John Hanson

no late Accounts from the Southward

JOHN HANSON TO THOMAS SIM LEE  
(T. S. Lee Collection)

Philadelphia September 11th, 1780

Dear Sir:

I have been Confined to my room, a fortnight and was so unwell when the last post set out, that I was not able to write. I am now on the

<sup>19</sup> See *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789* (Washington, 1904-1937), XVI, 260 ff.

<sup>20</sup> Esther De Berdt Reed, wife of Joseph Reed, President (i. e., Governor) of Pennsylvania.

recovery and hope to be able to attend Congress in a day or two. You have had I understand as full Accounts from the Southward as any we have had. After the shameful flight of General Gates, it is with great pleasure we are informed that so many of our brave Officers and Soldiers are safe. Generals Smallwood and Gist have gained immortal Honor, to have been able to beat their way through a Surrounding Enemy with a handful of men, equals anything that has been done in this war. Smallwood ought and will I hope, in a few days, be promoted to a Maj. General and ought in my Opinion to take the Command of the Southern Army. General St. Clair<sup>21</sup> or some other brave officers, should Supercede Gates.

We are informed from the Southward that a pretty handsome affair has been lately performed by a Small Body of the Western Militia on the Borders of South Carolina. They were attacked by the Enemy's Cavalry—they Judiciously fell back into a thick wood, Sustained Several Warm Attacks, and at a period of the Action, when the Countenance of the Enemy began to fail, they Issued from their Cover, Charged them with Bayonets, took 40, and it said killed a greater number. This gallant affair was conducted on and in part by a Col. Williams, [of Md.?], Col. Clark of Georgia, and a Col. Shelby.<sup>22</sup>

It is reported & Credited by many, that a french fleet of 10 Sail of the line and some frigates are on the Coast. They were seen it is said a few days ago to the Northward of our Capes. The English fleet has left Rhode Island and steered towards New York. Our new raised Battalion is ordered by the General to the Southward. I have sent Mrs. Lees Shoes—price for making 360 Dolls. most enormous.<sup>23</sup>

With usual esteem & regard, I have the  
honor to be

Your Excellencys most hble Servt

John Hanson

JOHN HANSON TO THOMAS SIM LEE

Enclosing copy of Intercepted Letter from Lord Cornwallis to  
Lt. Col. Nisbet Balfour<sup>24</sup>

(T. S. Lee Collection)

Philadelphia Sept. 23 1780

Dear sir,

For news I refer you to the enclosed paper, and am with the most perfect esteem

Your Excellancy's most hum<sup>b</sup>le Ser<sup>t</sup>

John Hanson

<sup>21</sup> Arthur St. Clair (1736-1818).

<sup>22</sup> Probably John C. Clark of Georgia and Isaac Shelby of Virginia (d. 1826). Probably Otho Holland Williams.

<sup>23</sup> Possibly he meant 3 *pairs* of shoes at \$20 per pair, a total of \$60.

<sup>24</sup> Copy of Cornwallis letter is printed in Jared Sparks (ed.), *The Writings of George Washington* (Boston, 1834-1837), VII, 555-556. For details, see Ward, *loc. cit.*



I have the happiness to inform you that on Wednesday the 16th Instant, I totally defeated Gen. Gates' Army—100 were killed & wounded, about 800 were taken prisoners. We are in possession of 81 pieces of Brass Cannon all they had in the field all their Ammunition, Waggon, a great number of Arms, 136 Baggage Waggon[s,] In short there never was a more complete Victory. I have written to Lieut. Col<sup>o</sup> Turnbull whom I have sent out to join Major Ferguson on little river to push on after Gen. Sumpter to the Waxaws, whose detachment is the only collected force of Rebels in this Country. Col<sup>o</sup>. Tarlton is in pursuit of Sumpter. Our loss is about 300 killed & wounded, Chiefly of the 33 Reg. and Volunteers of Ireland. I have given orders that all the Inhabitants of this province who have subscribed and have taken part in this revolt, should be punished with the greatest Rigour, and also those who will not turn out, that they may be imprisoned, and their whole property may be taken away from them, or destroyed. I have ordered that Compensation, should be made out of their Estates to the persons who have been Injured or oppressed by them; I have ordered in the most positive manner that every Militia man, who hath borne arms with us, and that would join the Enemy, shall be immediately hanged; I desire you will take the most vigorous measures to punish the Rebels in the district in which you Command, and that you will obey in the Strictest manner the Directions I have given in this letter relative to the Inhabitants of this Country—

Cornwallis

August 1780.

Colonel William Fitzhugh of Chatham, grandson of William Fitzhugh of Eagle's Nest, was a neighbor and friend of Washington's, and also a friend of Governor Lee's, from their youth. Five letters to Lee on the subject of the Annapolis races, in which Fitzhugh's horses were entered, are in our collection and are full of interest.

One of Fitzhugh's two sons, Peregrine, wrote to Lee several times from the front at Yorktown, and will be quoted later. His second son, William, joined General Greene's division in the Southern Campaign.

WILLIAM FITZHUGH TO THOMAS SIM LEE  
(T. S. Lee Collection)

Low'r Marlboro ' 28 Aug<sup>t</sup> 1780  
Sunday

Dear Sir

I had the Honor to address you yesterday by Mr. Smith on the subject of Depredations committed by the Enemy at the Mouth of Patuxent &

Potomack Rivers; Since which I have advice by a Flatt immediately from Rousby Hall, that two Schooners & a Large Sloop of the Enemy came into the River & went to Town Creek, where there is a Publick Warehouse, & yesterday about 3 o'clock in the afternoon Fir'd several guns, & there Remain'd whilst my Flatt pass'd up the River; My Skipper says that He heard more firing of guns about 10 o'clock at Night, which he supposes were at the same place—

I think it is Probable that the Enemy have taken the Tob<sup>o</sup> out of Town Creek Warehouse, & that two of the above mention'd vessells were carried up for that Purpose.

When the Enemy surrounded my House on the 15<sup>th</sup> ult<sup>o</sup>, they went off in Hast, Expressing Apprehensions of Danger from the Militia.

But If in many Instances they should meet with no Opposition, as has been too much the case, I should not be surpris'd if they were to proceed up & Plunder every Warehouse on the River at least as far up as Benedict.

I wish the Extraordinary success they have had, may not Encourage a more considerable number of Privateers to come out from N. York. Indeed by the number of vessells they take, and men who enter into their Service, they will themselves soon become Formidable.

I have the Honor to be  
with very sincere Regard

Yr Excellency's Affec & Obed. Sert.  
William Fitzhugh

CHRISTOPHER RICHMOND TO THOMAS SIM LEE  
(T. S. Lee Collection)

Hillsborough [, N. C.,] 16 October 1780

My Dear Sir

I have to acknowledge the Receipt of your very Kind Favor of the 26th. September,<sup>25</sup> and thank you in the fullest Manner for your very Kind Wishes contained therein—You will be pleased to make my most grateful Returns to your Lady for hers—

Whenever there is an Opportunity of communicating Intelligence quickly, I am always the most busy—and therefore can only make my Letters to my Friends very Short—Gen<sup>l</sup>. Gates had early this Morning, Intelligence from Gen<sup>l</sup>. Sumner<sup>26</sup> at the Yadkin [River], that the Enemy evacuated Charlotte at 4 o'Clock on the Evening of the 12<sup>th</sup>. Instant, making their Way to Beggar's Ferry on Catawba River; some people conjecture, with a Design of falling upon the Conquerers at King's Mountain; but it is conjectured here, with better Reasons; that Lord Cornwallis fearing he would be troubled in his post at Charlotte, is retreating, for his own Safety; by the Way of Catawba, towards Camden or Opposite

<sup>25</sup> Letter not located.

<sup>26</sup> Jethro Sumner (1733-1785), of North Carolina.

to it, on the Wateree, Westside:—Our Troops are not fit to march, for want of Shoes and Other Necessaries; however these are expected in a few Days, when I hope our Decampment will take place, and be followed by better Fortune than the Last. I am with Compliments to all Friends  
My Dear Sir

faithfully yours

Chris<sup>r</sup>. Richmond

Governor Lee

Colonel Henry Lee, Jr., better known as "Light Horse Harry," was one of the most picturesque characters of the Revolution.<sup>27</sup> His Light Dragoons are famous. His detailed account of André's execution is one of the most vivid that has come down to us. It is extremely unlikely that it has ever been printed.

HENRY LEE, JR. TO THOMAS SIM LEE  
(Historical Society of Pennsylvania)<sup>28</sup>

Light Camp near Tappan, Oct. 4, 1780

Dear Sir:

Last night has produced the events which will bear a distinguished light in the Annals of America, the infamy of Mr. Arnold<sup>29</sup> and the death of Major André, Ad. Gen. of the British Army.<sup>30</sup>

Mr. Arnold has been a villain on a small scale, as well as on a great.<sup>31</sup>

He has established lucrative connections with Sutton and Sutton's wife, and had made them the instruments of converting into money his embezzlement of public stores. He had deceived his wife, and had betrayed his friend, Major André.

This latter matter was perhaps unavoidable, thou' it is generally attributed to a pusillanimity inherent in the villain's breast, as if determined to exhibit to the world how deep in infamy, human nature is capable of descending; he is now, by violating his confidential communications with the Commander-in-Chief, pointing out to Sir Henry Clinton those characters in the city of New York, friendly to the American cause. He lives, but he lives to misery and anguish. The virtuous André is dead, but died with honor.

Perhaps history does not afford an instance of an execution similar to that of André, just and unavoidable; without the least particle of animosity in the sufferer.

<sup>27</sup> (1756-1818), subsequently Governor of Virginia and the father of Robert E. Lee.

<sup>28</sup> Formerly in T. S. Lee Collection.

<sup>29</sup> Benedict Arnold (1741-1801).

<sup>30</sup> John André (1751-1780).

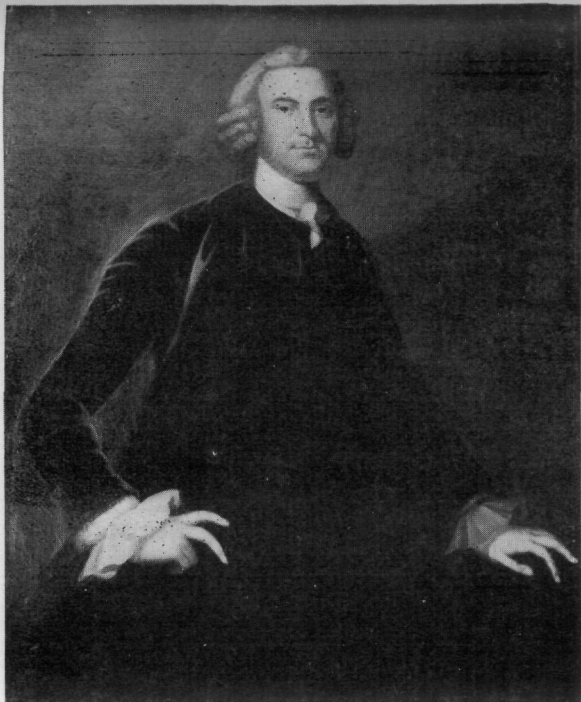
<sup>31</sup> Two recent accounts of this affair are found in Carl Van Doren, *Secret History of The American Revolution* (New York, 1941), and James T. Flexner, *The Traitor and The Spy* (New York, 1953).

The many tales which have gone forth relative to these transactions might render you anxious to hear a special relation of the whole adventure.

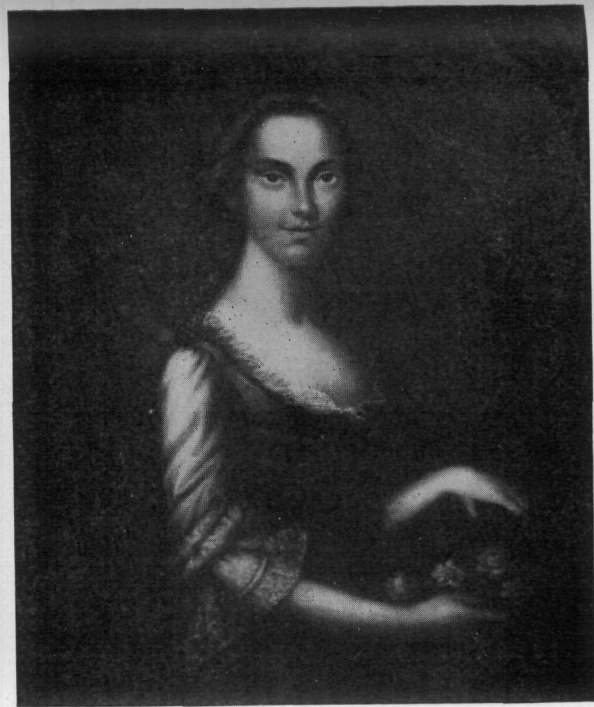
It appears that Gen. Arnold was the proposer of his intentions in a letter to Sir Henry Clinton. The point of time is not ascertained, tho' we have some reason to believe it originated soon after Gen. Clinton's return from South Carolina.

The object in view was the betraying West Point into the hands of the enemy. Appearances were to be kept up, the place was to have been surrendered on terms of capitulation & Mr. Arnold a General in our service on parole. In other words, the object was the subjugation of America. Sir Henry Clinton committed the management of this important business to Major André, a young gentleman equal in eminence to any the world ever produced. Major André came up the North river in an armed sloop, and lay near King's ferry, at which place we have two small lights. This ferry is distant from W. Point between 12 x 16 miles. Gen. Arnold by means of a Mr. John Smith, held a conference with Major André in the night on the shore of the N. river. From the place they adjourned to this Mr. Smith's house, one mile into the country. Here matters were completely fixed, the American Gibraltar betrayed, & the traitor secured, as to the reception of the bribe.

They prepared to return, Arnold to W. point, André to the Vulture. Some embarrassment arose as to getting on board again, the two peasants who had landed Major André, having been up the night before, and most of that night, were loth to assist when called on. It was then proposed to spend the day in secret at Smith's house. André consented. Arnold left him. In the evening, André & his guide Smith set out & by virtue of Gen. Arnold's pass, they uninterruptedly crossed King's Ferry. André left his regimental coat in Mr. Smith's house and wore one borrowed from Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith convoyed his charge safe to a solitude without the line of our usual patrols, and left him pushing on for New York. Fortunately when very near the enemy's advanced post, he met with three young militia men, whom quest of plunder had carried thus far. Major André accosted them, asking them from whence, they replied from below. Above and below are country terms on the lines for the American & B. Armys. André in his transport of joy divulged to them that he was a Br. officer. The lads instantly seized him. He made every attempt on the virtue of his captors. Ten thousand guineas were offered to them, & every necessity of life was lavishly proffered. All in vain. André was brought a prisoner to our advanced guards. Papers announcing the object of his mission were found about him. Arnold's villainy was also discovered, yet so blundering was the officer in his measures that he continued to give the first notice of the capture of the spy to Mr. Arnold, & consequently furnished Arnold with time to escape. This was erroneous, not intentional. Arnold made the best use of this notice, & got to the Vulture in his barge under sanctity of a flag. The four bargemen whom he made use of on this occasion, were at his instance retained as prisoners of war. André & Smith were brought to Camp for trial, the former was condemned, the latter is still under trial. The valorous André, altho' con-



IGNATIUS DIGGES (1707-1785)  
Portrait by John Wollaston  
*Collection Mrs. Outerbridge Horsey*



MARY DIGGES LEE (1745-1805)  
Portrait by John Hesselius

scious of his having become a spy without intention & by accident, yet in a let<sup>r</sup> which he wrote to his general, he approves the propriety of his sentence. Time was given for intercession in behalf of the unfortunate André. Gen. Roberson came to our advanced post with some trifling request, and brought two civilians to prove to Gen. Washington that André was no spy, notwithstanding André's let<sup>r</sup>. to the contrary. In consequence of this overture from the enemy, the execution of the sentence was postponed from Sunday, five o'clock, to Monday twelve. Nothing further was offered by the enemy, & the eminent youth died under a gallows. This officer was the particular favorite of his general & the most promising genius of the army.

How cold are the friendships of men high in power. André's death does honor to human nature; for my part I declare, I would rather be André than be alike to nine tenths of the sentimental world. We have not yet heard Sir H. Clinton's declaration since the execution of his friend. I dare say he will be full of menaces.

Our army continues on their old ground at Tappan. No prospect of any action. A powerful concentration is nearly completed at N. York. I believe they will pay a visit to your neighbor. Wisdom & vigor or destruction, is the watch word for the Southern States. It is said the fleet with troops sail tomorrow.

I have the honor to be with every sentiment of respect  
& esteem Your aff. relation & old friend

Henry Lee Jun<sup>r</sup>

His Exc'y

T. Sim Lee Esq.

[Endorsed in another hand:]

This is a very interesting account of the treason of Arnold & the capture of André & his execution, drawn up by Col. Henry Lee, the celebrated partiz[an] officer of the Revolution, addressed to his relative, Thomas Sim Lee Esq., then Governor of Maryland, given me by his son, John Lee Esq. in 1825

R. Gilmor <sup>32</sup>

JOHN HANSON TO THOMAS SIM LEE  
(T. S. Lee Collection)

Philadelphia Oct<sup>o</sup>. 9<sup>th</sup> 1780

My dear Sir,

I am obliged to you for your favors of the 5th and 6th Instant.<sup>33</sup> The officer who was intrusted by Maj. Giles <sup>34</sup> to procure the necessary Cloathing for our new regiment, has been supplied with Shirts and other Cloathing Sufficient for those Troops, and I believe left this place Eight or

<sup>32</sup> Robert Gilmor (1808-1875), of Baltimore, early American autograph collector.

<sup>33</sup> Council to Delegates in Congress, Oct. 6, 1780, is printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLIII, 317.

<sup>34</sup> Probably Edward Giles of Maryland.

ten days ago. Six hundred Tents are preparing for the Southern Army, and will be ready (the Board of War say) and sent forward in about three or four weeks—these are all that can be had at this place, and will be insufficient to supply the Army to the Southward, and as they will I suppose be immediately sent to Virginia, the regiment at Annapolis will have but little Chance for Coming in for a part of them unless they shall have joined the Army before the Tents Arrive. A great quantity of Canvas is now lying, and has been for some time, at Boston—yet so it has been managed that it has not been brought forward, and the season being so far advanced, our people must, I am afraid, Suffer greatly before it can be transported so great a distance. André was hanged on Monday last. He made no discoveries. He was asked at the gallows if he had anything to say. His answer was that he was not afraid to dye—that he was prepared for it, but was concerned as to the manner—that he would much rather have been shot, and desired that it might be observed that his behaviour was becoming that of a Gentleman and a Soldier. He was dressed in a new suit of Regimentals with his sword by his side.

Smith, it is said, will share the same fate in a little time[.].<sup>35</sup> Old Franks is taken up on suspicion of treasonable practices, and Imprisoned.<sup>36</sup> His son, one of Arnold's Aides, it is said is gone off.

On the 5th Instant the Commander-in-Chief was by a Resolve of Congress directed to order A Court of Inquiry on the Conduct of Gen. Gates, and to appoint an officer to take Command of the Southern Army untill such enquiry be made.<sup>37</sup> Some honorable notice will be taken of the Baron de Kalb who fell so gloriously in the Cause of America—and the thanks of Congress will be returned to Generals Smallwood and Gist, and to the officers and men for their Conduct and bravery in the late action near Camden. All expectations of the Arrival of the French fleet are now at an end. Ternay,<sup>38</sup> by erecting fortifications on different parts of Rhode Island has secured his fleet and the Army against any Attempts of the Enemy. This being the case and Clinton having failed in his designs against West Point, it is more than probable his next object will be to the Southward. The Climate is favorable for a Winter Campaign, and a Considerable number of men may be spared from New York without Hazarding that place, as no attempt can be made on it by us, while the enemy is so far superior at Sea.

I have inclosed you the Crises Extraordinary<sup>39</sup> upon finance and the last papers, and am with Compliments to Mrs. Lee

Dear Sir, With great esteem & regard

Your most hble Ser<sup>t</sup>

John Hanson

<sup>35</sup> Joshua Hett Smith was acquitted on Oct. 26 on charge of complicity with Arnold.

<sup>36</sup> David Solebury Franks, aide of Arnold.

<sup>37</sup> See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, XVIII, 906.

<sup>38</sup> Possibly Jean Baptiste Ternant (d. 1816), a French officer.

<sup>39</sup> Thomas Paine's *Crises Extraordinary*, issued in October, 1780.

The Major Set out this morning on his return home—I write in great haste, indeed there is so little time between the Post coming in and going out, that we have Scarce time to write at all.

His Excellency, Governor Lee

GEORGE PLATER <sup>40</sup> AND JOHN HENRY TO THOMAS SIM LEE  
(T. S. Lee Collection)

Philadel<sup>a</sup>. Oct<sup>r</sup>. 9th. 1780.

Dear Sir

Before Maj<sup>r</sup>. Giles left Town we had some expectations of procuring a number of Tents from the State of Pennsylvania, but they have since informed us, through their Delegates, that they cannot supply us. The Board of War will have in the course of some weeks six hundred for the Southern Army. As many as may be necessary for the New Regt we shall request to be sent to Annapolis or such place as you may direct. If there are other recruits who will stand in need of them, we beg to be informed of it.

The shirt which detained Maj<sup>r</sup> Giles' officer was ready some days ago and we hope he is now on his way to Maryland with the clothing.

Mr. Matlock,<sup>41</sup> the Secretary of Pennsylvania, informed us yesterday that they had received intelligence of an embarkation of all Regiments now going forward at New-York. It is spoken of with some confidence. We have received no intimation of it from the General, which induces me to believe the report is groundless, as we cannot suppose so important a movement would escape his observation.

Maj<sup>r</sup> André, the British adjutant, was executed on Monday last. He disclosed nothing as was reported; but observed to those who were about him that he died like a soldier & a man of honour, lamenting the failure of his undertaking and rejoicing that he died for his King and Country. The General has not informed Congress of the particulars of this transaction. When he does we shall have the Honor of communicating them to you.

Congress has directed the Commander in Chief to hold a Court of inquiry on the Conduct of Maj<sup>r</sup> General Gates, in the late action near Camden and to appoint an officer to take the command of the Southern army. General Smallwood has lately been honoured with the command of all the militia of North Carolina by the General Assembly of that State.

Congress is happy to find that the requisition for cattle is likely to be carried into effect. We hope as little delay as possible will attend this

<sup>40</sup> (1735-1792), of "Sotterley," St. Mary's Co. He was Governor of Maryland, 1791-1792, and was succeeded by Lee.

<sup>41</sup> Timothy Matlack (1730-1829), subsequently member of Congress from Pennsylvania.



business. The distresses of the army still continue and we wish we could point out to you the period when they would probably terminate.

We have the honour to be sir,  
with the highest respect and  
Esteem your obedient servants

Geo. Plater  
J. Henry

Governor Lee had married in 1771 Mary Digges, the only daughter of Ignatius Digges, Esq., of Melwood, descended from a distinguished English family. His great-grandfather Sir Edward Digges, had been Governor of Virginia, in 1665.

MARY DIGGES LEE TO GEORGE WASHINGTON  
(Washington MSS, Library of Congress)

Sir,

I have the honor to inform your Excellency that the Ladies of Maryland have manifested their gratitude, by subscribing a Considerable Sum for the relief of the American army. They are daily depositing the money in my hands, and I flatter myself the collection will be completed in a short time. I must therefore solicit your Excellency's directions, as to the manner in which it shall be disposed of. If for necessaries which may be procured in this State, it will give me pleasure to assist in the execution of your orders. At the same time it may also be necessary that your Excellency should fix their destination—whether for the Northern or Southern army.

I am Sir,  
with the highest  
respect and Esteem,  
your most Humble Servant  
Mary Lee

Annapolis September 27th, 1780.

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO MARY DIGGES LEE <sup>42</sup>  
(Washington MSS, Library of Congress) <sup>43</sup>

Head Quarters near Passaic Falls  
Octobr. 11th, 1780.

Madam,

I am honored with your Letter of the 27th of Septr. and cannot forbear taking the earliest moment to express the high sense I entertain of the patriotic exertions of the Ladies of Maryland in favor of the Army.

<sup>42</sup> Printed in Fitzpatrick, *Washington*, XX, 168. MS in handwriting of David Humphreys; the words "Shirts and Socks (black)" written in by Washington.

<sup>43</sup> Formerly in T. S. Lee Collection.

In answer to your enquiry respecting the disposal of the *Gratuity*, I must take the liberty to observe; that it appears to me, the *money* which has been, or may be collected, cannot be expended in so eligible and beneficial a manner, as on the purchase of Shirts and Socks (black) for the use of the Troops in the Southern Army.

The polite offer you are pleased to make of your further assistance in the execution of *this liberal design*, and the generous disposition of the Ladies, insure me of its success, and cannot fail to entitle both yourself and them, to the warmest gratitude of those who are the objects of it.

I am, &c.

G. W.

Mrs. Lee, Annapolis

HENRY LEE, JR., TO THOMAS SIM LEE  
(T. S. Lee Collection)

Sir

I have the honor to introduce to your Excellency, Captain Rudolph of the Legion Cavalry.<sup>44</sup> He waits on Government for the purpose of negotiating public business.

I take the liberty to request your Excellency's giving him your assistance

I have the honor to be  
with sentiments of singular  
esteem and respect.

Your Excellency's Ob. Serv<sup>t</sup>.

Henry Lee, Junior

Nov. 3, 1780

His Excellency Governor Lee

THOMAS SIM LEE TO NATHANAEL GREENE  
(Maryland Historical Society)

Annapolis Decemr. 9th 1780

Sir

The letter you were pleased to honor me with took the earliest opportunity of laying before the General Assembly of Maryland together with its enclosure.<sup>45</sup>

The deranged state of our finances necessarily engaged the attention of the Legislature previous to their entering fully on the important business you have recommended to their consideration: As yet, your requisition for horse to mount Col. [Henry] Lee's Dragoons is only complied with.

<sup>44</sup> John Rudolph (d. 1782), of Cecil Co., Maryland.

<sup>45</sup> Greene's letter, dated November 10, 1780, with enclosure, is printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLV, 176-177. The originals are in the Hall of Records; see *Calendar of Md. State Papers—The Brown Books*, items 402-403.

The preparatory business being nearly completed, necessary supplies are the matters next in course. Permit me, Sir, to call your attention for a moment from the great scene of business which you are engaged to the situation of Col. Luke Marbury of the Militia of this State, a Prisoner on Long Island. This gentleman, who was taken in the Battle of German Town, unfortunately could not be included in the late exchange because his rank would not apply to any officer prisoner of the United States. His manly sufferings and worthy family influence me powerfully to entreat your interposition in his favor and as I have no doubt of your having the inclination and the power to relieve him from a tedious and irksome imprisonment I beg leave to suggest the propriety of offering one of the Tory Colonels lately captured at or near King's Mountain in exchange

I have the honor to be,  
with great personal  
Respect and attachment  
Sir

The Honorable Major  
General Greene  
Commanding in the  
Southern Department

Your Most Hble Sevt.  
Tho. S. Lee

Viscount de Noailles commanded the Soissonnois regiment, which fought brilliantly at Yorktown. This regiment, one of the proudest and most ancient of France, wore grenadier caps decorated with gay white and rose plumes. After his wife's tragic death on the guillotine, de Noailles departed for the West Indies to fight the British. He was there fatally wounded. His heart, enclosed in a silver jewel box by his devoted grenadiers, was carried into battle on their regimental standard, and finally returned to his sorrowing family in France.

After the Revolutionary Campaign, Count Charles Damas returned to France, and was instrumental, together with Count Fersen, in aiding Marie Antoinette and the King in their ill-fated attempt to escape. While in this country he kept a diary.

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>46</sup>  
(Chapin Library, Williamstown, Mass.) <sup>47</sup>

New Windsor, [N. Y.,] Dec. 8th, 1780

Sir,

I have the honor of introducing to your Excellency, the Marquis de la Fayette, Maj<sup>r</sup>. General in our Army and an officer of rank in those of

<sup>46</sup> Not printed in Fitzpatrick, *Washington*, but referred to, XX, 440 n. Entirely in Washington's handwriting.

<sup>47</sup> Formerly in T. S. Lee Collection.

France—This Gentlemans character, illustrious birth and fortune, can not be unknown to you, though you may be unacquainted with his person.

I should be wanting in that justice which is due to his great merit—to his early attachment to the American Cause—and to his powerful support of it here and at the Court of Versailles, was I to permit him to depart for the Southern Army without this testimony of the Sense I entertain of his worth, & recommendation of him to your attention.

He will probably be accompanied by his brother-in-law, the Viscount de Noailles, & Count Damas, Gent<sup>l</sup>. of Family fortune & Rank in the French Army at Rhode Island, whose zeal to serve America has prompted them to make a Winter Campaign to the Southward, if permission can be obtained from the Count de Rochambeau, to be absent from their respective commands so long.

With much esteem & respect

I have the honor to be

Y<sup>r</sup>. Excell<sup>ys</sup>. Most Ob<sup>t</sup>. & H<sup>ble</sup>. Ser.

G<sup>o</sup>. Washington

His Excell<sup>y</sup>

Gov. Lee.

The Count de Custine had been appointed a lieutenant in the French army at the age of nine. His brilliant career was ended by the guillotine—"a crime committed in the name of liberty."

He kept a diary while in this country, unfortunately lost. The regiment of Saintonge, which he commanded, was one of the oldest in France, with a heroic past, formed in 1684 from an ancient regiment of Navarre. It was one of the seven French regiments taking part in the siege of Yorktown.

CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>48</sup>

(T. S. Lee Collection)

Philadelphia — Dec. 18/80

Sir: This letter will be presented to your Excellency by the Count de Custine, Colonel of the Regiment of Saintonge, now at Newport.

He is employing the leisure of winter in seeing the parts of this continent, meriting the attention of a stranger who has very limited time at his disposal.

He specially desired to devote a few days to seeing something of Maryland.

I much hope that he may enjoy the advantages of this journey which he anticipates, and I cannot wish him a better means of doing so, than to

<sup>48</sup> In French; translation by H. L. P.

address himself to your Excellency, whose friendship and good dispositions towards my compatriots I well know.

I have the honor to be, with the most sincere attachment, Your Excellency's

Very humble and very obedient servant

Chev. de La Luzerne

The Bourbonnais regiment, one of the most ancient and honorable of France, distinguished itself very specially at Yorktown. The Marquis de Montmorency, its colonel, was among the 6000 sent over under Rochambeau by Louis XVI, as allies to our American cause.

CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>49</sup>

(T. S. Lee Collection)

Philadelphia, December 18, 1780

Sir,

This letter will be presented by the Marquis de Laval Montmorency, Colonel of the Regiment of Bourbonnais, now at Newport.

He has wished to profit by the inaction of the Army during the winter, by seeing several of the States of this Continent.

He proposes spending several days at Annapolis, and although circumstances will not permit him to render his stay as long as he could have wished, he has a great desire to be known by your Excellency.

Your favorable dispositions towards my countrymen, do not permit me to doubt that he will receive a welcome reception from you.

I have the honor to be, with the most sincere attachment,

Your Excellency's very humble  
and very obedient servant.

Chev. de la Luzerne

St. Maime commanded the historic Soissonnois regiment, which had been formed in 1598 from a group of "very select gentil hommes." Its motto was "What does it matter? We have won the battle," the words of a sergeant killed in the hour of victory.

St. Maime was entertained by Lee, both in Annapolis and at Lee's country home, "Needwood," as is testified to by a quite long charming letter found among the Lee papers written by St. Maime after this visit.

The Honorable Arthur Dillon, Colonel of the Dillon Regiment,

<sup>49</sup> In French; translation by H. L. P.

after fighting bravely for us in the cause of freedom, lost his life, with so many French aristocrats, on the scaffold in the French revolution.

His daughter escaped from France, and wrote her memoirs, many years later, in the well-known book, *Journal d'une Femme de Cinquante Ans*.

(The spelling St. Maime, rather than St. Meme, St. Mesme, or any other, is used since the gentleman so signed himself in his letters in the T. S. Lee Collection.)

LAFAYETTE TO THOMAS SIM LEE  
(T. S. Lee Collection)

March the 9th, 1781

Sir

This letter will be delivered to your excellency By Count de St Meme and Count de Dillon, Colonels, and Monsieur de St. Victor Captain in the french Army whom I beg leave to introduce to Your Excellency's acquaintance.

They intend to embark on Board the small fleet that carries our detachment—but I have told them, and I Request your excellency to Hold up the idea, that the french fleet Having left the Bay I am ordered immediately to join General Green's Army. I think it should Be well to make some preparations on the Road from Annapolis for the Reception of troops.

With the Highest Respect I have  
the Honor to be

Your Excellency's

Most obedient Humble  
Servant

Lafayette

Admiral Marriot Arbuthnot commanded the British fleet. Commander Déstouches commanding the French fleet stationed at Newport, where General Rochambeau was in command of the French army, had left Newport on March 8th, arriving in the Chesapeake a week later. The issue of his encounter with Arbuthnot was disputed. The French fleet returned to Newport. Marquis de Laval, C<sup>te</sup> de Dillon, & M. de St. Victor, have already been noted.

SAINT MAIME TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>50</sup>

(T. S. Lee Collection)

Philadelphia

3<sup>d</sup> April, 1781

Your Excellency,

I waited until having some good news to announce to you, before having the honour of thanking you for the kindnesses received from you and your family in the country, as well as in town.

The evidences of your kindness are too well engraved on my heart, ever to be effaced. Both my curiosity and my pleasure were entirely satisfied by my trip on the Bay. Only the military side was cause for regret. The most horrible fog, and consequent separation of our ships, caused the French fleet to arrive at the same moment as the British. The combat of the 16th instant, between these two fleets gave great honour to the French. One has only to read the account of the British admiral to judge of the glory acquired by the French Commander. This success was not the whole of his manoeuvres.

The "Conquérant" fought against the "Europa" and the "Royal Oak," but the cost was high.

Marquis de Laval, who was on board was slightly wounded. I lost thirty of my grenadiers and two officers, a precious troop whom I regret infinitely.

I hope the activity of the new Secretary of the Navy in France, will put us in a position to act with greater numbers in a manner to make us more useful to our Allies.

Permit me to offer my respects to Mrs. Lee. Comte de Dillon will be more fortunate than I if he passes through Annapolis on his return. He should return by carriage. I was unfortunately obliged to leave him at Williamsburg, on account of a very severe sore throat.

Permit me to enclose the receipt for the two horses procured from the Quarter Master of Annapolis by M. de Saint Victor and myself. Colonel Dillon still had his when we left him.

Pray do not doubt the sentiments of gratitude and esteem with which I have the honour to be

Your Excellency's

Very humble and very obedient servant

Saint Maime

*(To be continued in the September number.)*

<sup>50</sup> In French; translation by H. L. P.

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FRED SHELLEY, *Editor*

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THE MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

H. IRVINE KEYSER MEMORIAL BUILDING

201 W. MONUMENT STREET, BALTIMORE 1

GEORGE L. RADCLIFFE, President; JAMES W. FOSTER, Director

The Maryland Historical Society, incorporated in 1844, was organized to collect, preserve and spread information relating to the history of Maryland and of the United States. Its threefold program includes

1. Collection of manuscript and printed materials, maps, prints, paintings, furniture, silver, fabrics, maritime items, and other objects of interest;
2. Preservation of these materials for the benefit of all who care to enjoy them, and exhibition of items which will encourage an understanding of State and National history; and
3. Spread of historical information relating to Maryland and the rest of the country by means of addresses at the Society's home by authorities in various fields; addresses to outside groups by officers and staff of the Society; publication of the *Maryland Historical Magazine*, a quarterly containing original articles about State history; *Maryland History Notes*, a quarterly bulletin of news of the Society and other local historical items, the *Archives of Maryland* and the record of Maryland in World War II under the authority of the State and other serial and special publications.

The annual dues of the Society are \$5.00, life membership \$100.00. Subscription to the *Magazine* and to the quarterly news bulletin, *Maryland History Notes*, is included in the membership fee as well as use of the collections and admission to the lectures. The library, portrait gallery and museum rooms, are open daily except Sunday, 9 to 5, Saturday, 9 to 4. *June 15 to Sept. 15*, daily 9 to 4, Saturday, 9 to 2.



# REVOLUTIONARY MAIL BAG: GOVERNOR THOMAS SIM LEE'S CORRESPONDENCE

## PART III

Edited by HELEN LEE PEABODY

(Continued from Vol. XLIX, No. 2, June, 1954, p. 142)

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO THOMAS SIM LEE<sup>1</sup>  
(Virginia State Library)

Richmond January the 15th 1781

Sir

I received some time ago from Majr. Forsyth<sup>2</sup> and afterward from the Board of War a requisition to furnish one half the supplies of Provision for the Convention Troops removed into your State. I should sooner have done myself the honor of writing to your Excellency on this Subject but that I hoped to have had it laid before you more fully than could be done in writing by a Gentleman who was to have passed on other public business by the way of Annapolis. The late events in this State having retarded his setting out I think it my duty no longer to postpone explanation on this head.

Your Excellency cannot be unapprised of the powerful armies of our enemies at this time in this and the southern States, and their future plan is to push their Successes in the same quarter by larger reinforcements. The forces to be opposed to these must be proportionately great, and those forces must be fed. By whom are they to be fed? Georgia and South Carolina are annihilated, at least as to us. By the requisition to us to send Provisions into your State it is to be supposed that none are to come to the Southern Army or any State north of this; for it would seem inconsistent that while we should be sending North your State and others beyond you should be sending your Provisions South. Upon N. Carolina then already exhausted by the ravages of two Armies and on this State are to depend for subsistence those bodies of men who are to oppose the greater part of the Enemy's force in the United States, the subsistence of the German and of half the British Conventioners. To take a view of this

<sup>1</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLVII, 17-19. Not printed but noted in Boyd, *Jefferson*, IV, 371.

<sup>2</sup> Possibly Robert Forsyth, a major in the Virginia militia at this time.

matter on the Continental requisition of Novr. 4, 1780. for specific quotas of Provision it is observable that North Carolina and Virginia are to furnish 10,471,740 lbs. of animal food & 13,529 barrels of flour; while the States north of these will yeild 25,293,810 lbs. of animal food and 106,471 barrels of flour. If the greater part of the British Armies be employed in the South, it is to be supposed the greater part of the American force will be sent there to oppose them: But should this be the case, while the distribution of the Provisions is so very unequal would it be proper to render it still more so by withdrawing a part of our contributions to the support of Posts northward of us? it would certainly be a great convenience to us to deliver a portion of our specifics at Frederick Town rather than in Carolina: but I leave it to your Excellency to judge whether this would be consistent with the general good or safety. Instead of sending aids of any kind to the northward it seems but too certain that unless every substantial and timely assistance is received from thence our Enemies are yet far short of the ultimate term of their success. I beg leave therefore to refer to your Excellency whether the Specifics of your State as far as shall be necessary had not better be applied to the support of the Posts within it, for which your quota is much more than sufficient, or were it otherwise, whether those of the States North of you had not better be called on than to detract any thing from the resources of the Southern opposition already much too small for the encounter to which it is left. I am far from wishing to count or measure our contributions by the requisitions of Congress. Were they ever so much beyond these I should readily strain them in aid of any one of our Sister States: but while they are so far short of those Calls to which they must be pointed in the first instance, it would be great misapplication to divert them to any other purpose: and I am persuaded your Excellency will think me perfectly within the line of duty when I ask a revisal of this requisition.

(Signed) T. J.

THOMAS SIM LEE TO THOMAS JEFFERSON<sup>3</sup>  
(Virginia State Library)

Annapolis, Maryland 27th. Feby 1781

In Council

Sir

We have just received the Resolutions of Congress of the 20th. Instant, recommending it to the Executives of the States of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, to agree upon, and settle on an Arrangement for supplying the Southern Army with Provisions, from the States most contiguous, and for replacing the same with Provisions from those that are more remote, and to establish such mode of Transportation as will be most convenient and least expensive to the whole.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLV, 328, and in Boyd, *Jefferson*, V, 16.

<sup>4</sup> See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, XIX, 178.

It is our Desire, that some place in Virginia should be immediately agreed on, and assigned for Depositing the Quota of Provisions, which We are called upon to supply to the Southern Army: In establishing which, We think the mutual ease, and Convenience of both States should be adverted to, and none has occurred to Us So suitable as Alexandria; If your Excellency should concur with us in Opinion, you will have a proper Person appointed to receive at that Post, the Provisions which we will be able to forward,—Your Excellency will communicate your Sentiments on this Subject, as early as possible, and in the mean Time We shall be preparing to comply fully with the Recommendations of Congress. We are anxious to be informed of the present Situation of Virginia; many Reports have been circulating here, but none so authentic as to deserve entire confidence.

We have the honour to be  
 With sentiments of the highest respect and Esteem  
 Your Excellency's Mo. Hble servts.

Tho. S. Lee

His Excy Gov<sup>r</sup>. Jefferson of  
 Virginia.

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>5</sup>  
 (Virginia State Library)

Richmond  
 March 6th, 1781

Sir,

I had the Honor of receiving yesterday your Excellency's Favour of February 27th and had just before received the resolutions of Congress of February 20th. which were the Subject of the Letter.

I think that we ought not to expect any Cooperation in this Business from North Carolina and that we should be disappointed were we to expect it.

A State in the midst of which are several different armies of Foes & of Friends as destructive from necessity as Foes, which has been consumed by their ravages near a twelvemonth is not in a Condition to give but to expect assistance. It must be evident that from the Presence of our Armies in that State she must furnish more than her Quota for supplies, because she makes up the Failures of all other States; for on these Failures of supply the army will not go to take from the State failing but takes it's necessary Subsistence from that in which they are. I think then that of the States named in the resolution of Congress the object of the resolution rests truly on Delaware Maryland and Virginia and I shall be very happy to concur with them in such equal measures as will effect the intentions of Congress. I do not apprehend it was intended by your Excellency when you proposed to deposit your Quota of Specifics at Alexandria that the

<sup>5</sup> Printed in Boyd, *Jefferson*, V, 77-78.

Burthen of Transporting it thence to North Carolina should be left on us solely, because as on the same plan we should be entitled to deliver our Quota on our Southern Boundary which would bring up our share of Burthen to an equality of yours; Were we moreover to transport your quota and that of Delaware across our Country it would be so much more than equality. I take the Liberty of mentioning this because your Excellency's proposition has been I think misunderstood in this particular. The Desire of Congress is that we should settle an arrangement for procuring supplies for the Southern Army in the States most convenient for procuring supplies from other States, and for transporting the whole. All this supposes a joint Concern. I should think therefore that it ought to be executed jointly, or if divided that the division of the whole that is of the procuring Supplies in one Place replacing them by others and transporting both should be equal, by which I mean proportioned to our abilities as rated in the Continental Scale. This may be done in several different ways: 1st. by dividing among us the Line of Transportation into such parts as when combined with the quantity to be transported along each part will produce a total duly proportioned between us: 2d by putting into the hands of a Quarter Master due Proportions of Money or means of Transportation to be by him employed in carrying on our Specifics from their respective States: 3d For each State to appoint it's own agent & to procure their quota of Specifics as near as they can to the army, replacing their money by Sale of such Specifics as might be raised within the State by Taxation. The first & second modes are liable to this objection that the Transportation will cost very considerably more than would purchase the Articles in the Vicinities of the Army.

Should these nevertheless or any other which can be thought of be more agreeable to your Excellency and the President of Delaware we shall be ready at any Time to proceed to settle the arrangement or as the settlement of it by Way of Letter might draw it to a great Length, I would propose to refer it to be done by the Delegates from the respective States in Congress. Should the third mode suggested above be preferred as it would be carried into separate Execution, no Reference would be requisite.

{With sentiments of high respect & attachment,}

I have the Honor [to be, dear Sir,

{Your most obedient and most humble servant}

T[h]. J[efferson]

James McHenry, who had been one of Washington's secretaries for four years, was appointed aide to Lafayette in the Spring of 1781. His series of letters to Governor Lee, 49 in number, from the Yorktown front, form one of the most valued parts of our collection. Many of these will be quoted later. Washington appointed McHenry Secretary of War in 1796, a position he held until 1800.

JAMES MCHENRY TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>6</sup>  
(Hall of Records, Annapolis)

Baltimore 3d February 1781  
11 o'clock A. M.

Dear Sir,

I have a letter this instant from the Marquiss de la Fayette, in which he signifies that the detachment under his command will be at the Head of Elk this day or tomorrow at furthest; and presses sending forward the Vessels designed for their transportation, with all possible dispatch. As the shipping collected here is altogether inadequate to the purpose, and as inconveniences may attend their going in detail, I have taken the liberty to promote the Marquiss intentions, by making this communication to your Excellency; that, if there should be any shipping at Annapolis, no moments may be lost in ordering them to the Head of Elk.

I have the honor to be, etc.

James McHenry

THOMAS SIM LEE TO MORDECAI GIST <sup>7</sup>  
(Gist MSS, Maryland Historical Society)

In Council, Annapolis Feb. 26, 1781

To the Hon. Gen. Gist.

Sir

Though we have not been favored with any authentic Intelligence of the Situation of Virginia, yet, what we obtained convinces us that very essential Services would be rendered by sending to their Succor all the Regular Soldiers in this State that can be expeditiously collected. Our wish to give every Aid to Virginia at this trying Emergency and Conclusion that very important Consequences will result from it, induces us to request you would have all the Regular Soldiers in this State assembled immediately and put in Readiness to be transported in vessels which we will order to be procured here and at Baltimore as soon as you intimate to us your Acquiescence in what we have proposed.<sup>8</sup>

We think some of the experienced Supernumerary Officers in this State would be very serviceable in Virginia.

We are  
Sir  
With Esteem  
Your obed<sup>ht</sup> Sernt  
Thos. S. Lee

General Gist

<sup>6</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLVII, 49-50.

<sup>7</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLV, 327.

<sup>8</sup> Gist's reply is printed in the *Archives of Maryland*, XLVII, 89-90.

LAFAYETTE TO THOMAS SIM LEE<sup>9</sup>  
 (Hall of Records, Annapolis)

Head of Elk, March 3d, 1781

Sir

I Have the Honor to inform your Excellency that the troops, Artillery, and Stores destined to embark under my orders are safely arrived at this place and to my Great disappointment are now detained for want of Vessels. This Affair is so important Sir, and My Last orders from His Excellency General Washington are so positive, that I am afraid the Least delay may be attended with very Bad Consequences.

Our detachment Being accompanied By a Large Quantity of Horses and Heavy Artillery it will Require a Vast number of vessels, and from what I Hear at this place the totality of the Vessels at Annapolis and Baltimore will Be Requisite for our Embarkation. Another important Article is to collect every Armed Vessel that can Be Had for the safety of our Navigation in the Bay. A sufficiency of Boats to Land the detachment at once, and of dispatch Boats to Carry intelligence are very essential.

Was I not sensible, Sir, of the importance of this Expedition, of the Happy effect it may Have for the advantage of all the states and the more particular interest of some, I would not presume to trouble your Excellency with a minute details of our boats. But unless the afore mentioned articles are sent to this place with the Greatest dispatch, it is my duty to observe to Your Excellency that delay will Render our expedition very precarious. My uneasiness on this Head Has Been increased By a Late Letter Received from the Commander in chief, wherein he urges the necessity of Embarking immediately, and from the nature of His plan observes the Great inconvenience of delay.<sup>10</sup>

Having laid our circumstances before your Excellency and Having taken the liberty to observe [damaged].

THOMAS SIM LEE TO LAFAYETTE<sup>11</sup>  
 (Hall of Records, Annapolis)

March 5, 1781

Sir,

We had the Honor of addressing you on the third Instant<sup>12</sup> since which we are favored with yours of the same Date. We are fully impressed with the Advantages which the States in general and Maryland in particular will derive from the Success of the Expedition which you have the Conduct of, and truly lament the Difficulties which have occurred.

<sup>9</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLVII, 101-102.

<sup>10</sup> See Washington to Lafayette, February 25 and 26, 1781, Fitzpatrick, *Washington*, XXI, 228-290, 295-296.

<sup>11</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLV, 399.

<sup>12</sup> Council to Lafayette, March 3, 1781, printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLV, 337.

We however flatter ourselves the Movement of your Detachment will not be much retarded on that Score, as the wind has been so favorable for some Time past as to give a Number of Vessels impressed in this Port and Baltimore Town an opportunity of getting to the Head of Elk.

We beg leave to renew the Assurances already given that every Execution in the Power of this State shall be cheerfully made to remove the Difficulties you may apprehend in transporting the Troops down the Bay.

It will give us the highest Pleasure to have any share of the Accomplishment of your Projects attributed to the Exertions of Maryland. We have prepared a Ditpatch Boat to convey your Letter to the Commanding officer near Portsmouth which will be sent off as soon as the winds will permit and have given Directions to the Master to throw it over Board if he should be in Danger of being taken.

I have the honor to be etc.

Tho. S. Lee

Frederick William, Baron von Steuben (b. in Prussia 1730, d. in New York 1794) had been aide de camp to Frederick the Great, afterwards offering his services to the American colonies and was appointed Major General in the Continental Army.

He gave military training and discipline to the citizen soldiers who achieved the independence of the United States.

LAFAYETTE TO THOMAS SIM LEE

(Hall of Records, Annapolis)

Head of Elk March 6th 1781

Sir,

I have received your Excellency's Letter of the 5th inst., and for the assurance it contains, beg leave to offer my very respectful acknowledgements.

If in the course of tomorrow, we can get a sufficiency of Vessels, I intend to embark the Troops immediately, but upon the intelligence we receive of British Privateers in the Bay, I more than ever feel the want of an Armed force for our security.

By a Letter from Baron De Steuben, I find he was not gone with the Detachment sent to the Southward; that General Officer is now preparing matters for the expedition, and as I expect also to hear from a Naval Officer in the same quarter, I beg leave to request, that any dispatch be sent to me with the greatest rapidity.

Having been told, that there was at Baltimore a number of heavy Peices, I could not help thinking, that six of the eighteen pounders, with 300 rounds each might be of service, but from the aversion I feel to give any

useless trouble to the State, I would only propose that they be put in readiness, as upon information from below we could better determine their utility.

With the greatest respect  
I have the honor to be  
your most obedient  
Svt.

Lafayette

His Excellency  
Governor Lee

THOMAS SIM LEE TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>13</sup>  
(New-York Historical Society)

Annapolis, In Council  
March 7, 1781

Sir:

The Marquis Lafayette has requested this State to furnish armed Vessels for the Protection of the Transports and Troops under his Command, and destined for the Expedition against the Enemy at Portsmouth.

We have only been able to procure a Brig of fourteen fourpounders, a Schooner of eight threepounders, and a sloop loaded and bound to Sea, of ten threepounders.

From various accounts we are apprehensive this force is inferior to the Enemy's Privateers in the Bay.

We have wrote to the Commander of the Ships of our Ally at the Capes,<sup>14</sup> and if he cannot spare one of his Vessels to convoy the Marquis, you will see the necessity of Your State immediately procuring a force, which in conjunction with ours, would certainly be superior to the Enemies Cruisers.

The Marquis with the Troops, Cannon and Stores, are now at Head of Elk.

We have impressed and sent to him every Vessel at Baltimore, and this place, and fear they will not be sufficient.

The Marquis has requested us to procure Boats to land the Cannon and Troops, which will not be in our Power, but we hope you will be able to obtain any number he may want.

General Wayne,<sup>15</sup> with a second Detachment from the Pennsylvania Line, is expected at the Head of Elk, and he is to join the Marquis, as soon as Vessels can be procured to transport him to Portsmouth.

<sup>13</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLV, 342, and Boyd, *Jefferson*, V, 85-86.

<sup>14</sup> Charles Hector, Count d'Étaing, French Admiral commanding the fleet sent over by our ally, France.

<sup>15</sup> General Anthony Wayne, although ordered south by Washington as early as February of this year, 1781, with 1,000 men of the Pennsylvania Line, had trouble with disaffected soldiers, bordering on mutiny, and was not able to join Lafayette until June. See Wayne Papers, Phil. Casket, 1829.



We have therefore thought proper to give you this information, and at the same Time beg Leave to suggest the Propriety of your Strengthening the Convoy.

We have the honor to be  
with very great Consideration  
Yr. Excellency's mo. Ob<sup>t</sup>. & mo. H<sup>ble</sup> Servant  
Thos. S. Lee

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>16</sup>  
(Virginia State Library)

Richmond  
March 12, 1781

Sir,

Your Excellency's Favor of the 7th came to Hand last night. We have been endeavoring to procure what armed vessels we could, but they are in James river, and of course cannot possibly get out of that river but under countenance of naval power superior to that of the Enemy, and indeed they are so trifling that they could not venture up the Bay, were they out of James river. From the best accounts I have received, the enemy have three ships of Force within the Bay, in addition to those Arnold had before; the French Squadron has withdrawn from the Bay some considerable Time.

We are doing our utmost to procure the boats necessary for landing the Cannon and Troops, that is, we are taking every one in James River, but they will fall very far short of what Baron Steuben deems necessary. The boats in the upper part of the river cannot navigate the lower Parts, nor can any be carried round from the other Rivers.

We feel ourselves so much interested in the Enterprize in contemplation, that we have set every Instrument into motion which can possibly avail us. Our exertions are much circumscribed by the want of means.

I have the Honor to be etc  
Thomas Jefferson

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>17</sup>  
(Virginia State Library)

In Council March 12, 1781

His Excellency Governor Lee—

Sir,

The prisoners of Convention, & those taken at the Cowpens, having been ordered, on the Approach of Lord Cornwallis, to move on to our Northern Boundary, while Congress could be consulted as to what should

<sup>16</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLVII, 118-119, and Boyd, *Jefferson*, V, 131.

<sup>17</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLVII, 119, and Boyd, *Jefferson*, V, 131-132.

be done with them, I have received a letter from the President from which the enclosed is extracted.<sup>18</sup>

They have, I believe, reached as far as Winchester, from which place they are now ordered to move into Kneelands Ferry, where the President in another letter informs me, your Excellency will have made Provision for subsisting them and quartering them further on.<sup>19</sup>

According to the Desire of Congress expressed in the President's letter, I have taken the liberty of Communicating this to your Excellency.

I have the Honour to be, with sentiments of the highest respect  
Sir,

Your, etc.

T. J.

THOMAS SIM LEE TO THOMAS JEFFERSON<sup>20</sup>  
(Hall of Records, Annapolis)

Annapolis, March 15, 1781

Sir,

The Arrival of our Express with your Excellency's Letter of the 12th this Moment received gives us an Opportunity of informing you that all the Transports with the Troops from Elk got safe into Harbour on Tuesday Evening. The next Morning at day Light two Ships apparently British of the rate of eighteen and twenty eight Guns came to an Anchor opposite to the Mouth of our River Severn at 12 o'clock they made Sail up the Bay and by the last Account were at Anchor near the north Point of the River Patapsco we judged that you would be anxious for the Safety of the Troops but they are fortunately safe and the armed Vessels which conveyed them down are prepared for Defence.

Your Favors of the 6 and 8th are come to Hand, and we thank you for your Intelligence respecting General Greene in that of the 8th.<sup>21</sup>

We are, with great Personal respect &  
Esteem,  
your Excellency's Mo. H<sup>l</sup>e Ser.

Tho. S. Lee

<sup>18</sup> The enclosure (not located) was extracted from Jefferson to Samuel Huntington, March 4, 1781, Boyd, *Jefferson*, V, 56.

<sup>19</sup> See Huntington to Lee, March 4, 1781, *Archives of Maryland*, XLVII, 105-106.

<sup>20</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLV, 352, and Boyd, *Jefferson*, V, 150.

<sup>21</sup> The letter of March 6, 1781, is printed in this installment; Boyd, *Jefferson*, V, 150, did not locate a letter of March 8.

THOMAS SIM LEE TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>22</sup>  
 (Virginia State Library)

Annapolis 17 March, 1781

Sir.

We beg leave to refer your Excellency to our Letter of yesterday, giving a Short Account of the Transport and Troops from the Head of Elk being safe in this Harbour.

We shall adopt such Measures to guard and subsist the Convention Troops and British Prisoners captured in the Action of the Cowpens on their March through this State, as may be necessary and consonent to a Resolution of Congress of the 3d instant, and such as the Means in our Power may afford.<sup>23</sup>

We have wrote to the President of Pennsylvania fully on the Subject of the March of these Troops.<sup>24</sup>

Matters remain in the same State as yesterday respecting the British Ships and the Forces here. We are extremely anxious to hear from the Marquis and the Situation of the Southern Army.

We have the Honor to be  
 with great Consideration  
 your Excellency's Mo. Obd. & Mo Hble  
 Serv t

Tho. S. Lee

THOMAS SIM LEE TO ROBERT PURVIANCE, MATTHEW RIDLEY,  
 AND WILLIAM PATTERSON <sup>25</sup>  
 (Maryland Historical Society)  
 In Council

Annapolis 20th March 1781

Gentlemen

We received your letter of the 10th covering the Engagement of the Gentlemen of Baltimore and an Extract of a Letter from Mr. McHenry of the 6th.<sup>26</sup>

We very much applaud the zeal and activity of the Gentlemen of Baltimore, and think their readiness to assist the execution at a Time when they were destitute of the means of providing those things which were immediately necessary for the Detachment under the Command of the Marquis de la Fayette justly entitles them to the thanks of the Public.

We cannot but approve of the Proceedings of those Gentlemen, and

<sup>22</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLV, 355, and Boyd, *Jefferson*, V, 168-169.

<sup>23</sup> See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, XIX, 229-230.

<sup>24</sup> Lee to Joseph Reed, March 16, 1781, *Archives of Maryland*, XLV, 353-354.

<sup>25</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLV, 358.

<sup>26</sup> Purviance *et al* to Lee, March 10, 1781, *ibid.*, XLVII, 115-116; the extract from McHenry's letter, *ibid.*, 116-117.

assure you we will adopt any expedient to prevent every Individual of that Body, from suffering, or being in the least embarrassed by his engagements for the State.

As soon as we are informed by the Committee of the amount of the Sum advanced by their Constituents and the extent of their Engagement to procure the numerous articles required for the use of the Detachment we will transmit orders for the Collector of Baltimore County for such a sum as will cover the whole.

We think it reasonable the State should pay the value of money advanced and interest thereon until paid, and do agree to pay the value with interest, to those Gentlemen who have made advances, and will give an Order on the Collector of Baltimore for their reimbursement.

We are, Gentlemen, with very great respect and Esteem

Your Mo. Obent Sernt

Thos. S. Lee

THOMAS SIM LEE TO GEORGE WASHINGTON  
(Washington MSS, Library of Congress)

Annapolis February 18:<sup>th</sup> 1781

Sir:

Col<sup>o</sup>. Luke Marbury who Was Made Prisoner at the battle of German Town, and still remains in the hands of the Enemy, expresses the utmost anxiety & Solicitude for a speedy release, his friends too, who are respectable are no less importunate for his return; and have repeatedly desired me to apply to your Excellency to favor him should an opportunity offer for exchanging Officers of his Rank.<sup>27</sup> As yet I believe none have Fallen into our hands that would apply, unless it should be those Tory Colonels lately taken at King's Mountain in Carolina. The peculiar Circumstances of this Gentleman are alone sufficient to recommend him to your Excellency's attention & if there should be no impropriety in the measure I flatter myself your Excellency will instruct Major General Greene on the Subject of negotiating the Desired exchange. It may not be improper to inform your Excellency that Col<sup>o</sup> Marbury with a Competency has felt, in his present situation, the pressure of of indigence in addition to the rigour of a Close Confinement for a Considerable length of time after he was carried in Captivity & the Sufferings of his Wife & several small Children in his Absence has Contributed to increase his distresses.

With the highest personal Respect & esteem

I have the honor to be

Your Excell<sup>ys</sup> Mo. Obed<sup>t</sup>.

Tho S. Lee

<sup>27</sup> Governor Lee wrote on this same subject to General Greene, Dec. 9, 1780, q. v.

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>28</sup>  
 (Outerbridge Horsey Collection)

Head Quarters  
 New Windsor [, N. Y.]  
 22 March, 1781.

Sir,

Your Excellency's favor of the 18th ulto. came to Head Quarters during my visit to Count de Rochambeau at Newport, from whence I only returned two days ago.

You may be assured that every attention shall be paid to the Exchange of Col. Marbury in his due turn, more than that I cannot promise without deviating from a Rule of Conduct which I myself have ever observed, and which has lately been confirmed by an order of Congress.

I have however the pleasure to learn that Col<sup>o</sup>. Marbury is admitted to parole, and as he is, I believe, the oldest Officer of his rank unexchanged, I hope his final release will ere long be accomplished.

I do not know what Officers were taken at Kings Mountain or in any part of the Southern Quarter, but should a general exchange take place, due consideration will be had to the remaining prisoners at New York.

I have the Honor to be with very great Respect and Esteem

Your Excellency's Most ob<sup>t</sup> Ser<sup>nt</sup>

Go. Washington

THOMAS SIM LEE TO GEORGE WASHINGTON  
 (Washington MSS, Library of Congress)

Annapolis March 31<sup>st</sup> 1781

Sir;

Count Chalus <sup>29</sup> who does me the honor to bear this, gives me an opportunity to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's favor of the 22<sup>d</sup>. Instant. Colonel Marbury is now with his family, on parole; and if I am rightly informed without limitation as to time: in that case, I have no doubt he is perfectly satisfied with the indulgence and will wait with patience & convenience his turn for exchange.

I have the honor to be  
 with Sentiments of perfect  
 Respect and Esteem  
 Your Excell<sup>ys</sup> Mo. Hble Serv<sup>t</sup>.

Tho. S. Lee

<sup>28</sup> Printed in Fitzpatrick, *Washington*, XXI, 353.

<sup>29</sup> Count Charlus de la Croix, son of the Minister of the French Navy, the Duc de Castries.

CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>80</sup>  
 (Hall of Records, Annapolis)

Philadelphia, March 23,  
 1781

Sir,

I have just received the news of the arrival before long of a second Fleet, destined to co-operate with the forces of the Thirteen States, against our common enemy.

It is impossible to fix the time of its arrival on the shores of this Continent, but I presume that time will not be very far off, when you receive my letter.

I thought it my duty to share this news with Your Excellency but I beg you to make no use of it except to bolster up the courage of your fellow citizens in assuring them that they can count on the most efficacious assistance on the part of H[is]. M[ajesty]. without telling them the exact nature of the aid they will receive.

The cause of Independence cannot cease being dear to the King, and he is determined to make the greatest efforts to support it.

I have the honor to be with respectful attachment, Sir,

Your Excellency's  
 Very humble and very obedient servant  
 Chevalier de La Luzerne

COLONEL HENRY LEE TO THOMAS SIM LEE  
 (T. S. Lee Collection)

Dumfries, March 28th, 1781

Dear Sir,

I had the honor of your letter by Mr. Fitzbugh.<sup>81</sup> That gentleman's merit would of itself command my best services, but your recommendation added an obligation for my attention, which I shall consider indispensable.

Will you be pleased to inform me what time & which mode is most opportune for the settlement of the money advanced by the State of Maryland for the supply of horses to the Legion.

I beg my most profound respects to Mrs. Lee, & pray you to receive my best wishes for your health & happiness.

I have the honor to be, Sir,  
 Your Excellency's  
 Most Attached & Obligated  
 Henry Lee Jun<sup>r</sup>.

His Excellency Tho. S. Lee Esq.

<sup>80</sup> In French; translation by H. L. P. Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLVII, 143-144.

<sup>81</sup> Son of Colonel William Fitzbugh, before mentioned.

JAMES MCHENRY TO THOMAS SIM LEE

(T. S. Lee Collection)

Baltimore 7th April 1781

Sir,—

The money to pay for the boats etc. mentioned in the letter <sup>32</sup> written at the instance of the principal inhabitants of this Town is to be raised by a general subscription. Almost every one seems willing to be a contributor; and I dare say the result will be handsome provided it is carried under the present fears of the people.

I have taken the liberty to add this private letter, because I presume the money might be applied to a more extensive purpose, comprehending all the objects of local or particular protection.

I mean that administration has it in it's power to employ it in the purchase and outfit of the galley at this place; and, these kind of war vessels, your Excellency knows, afford the only effectual security we can expect or provide.

I believe (I may however be deceived) that a proposition or hint from your Excellency or Council on this head, could turn the money that may be collected into this channel.

Perhaps it might even be obtained as a free gift.

With the greatest regard and esteem, I have the honor to be most respectfully,

Your Excellency's  
Obt. & hble Ser.

James McHenry

His Excellency  
Governor Lee

*(To be continued in the December number.)*

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<sup>32</sup> McHenry to Lee, April 7, 1781, *Archives of Maryland*, XLVII, 167.

# MARYLAND HISTORICAL MAGAZINE

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FRED SHELLEY, *Editor*

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## THE MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

H. IRVINE KEYSER MEMORIAL BUILDING

201 W. MONUMENT STREET, BALTIMORE 1

GEORGE L. RADCLIFFE, President; JAMES W. FOSTER, Director

The Maryland Historical Society, incorporated in 1844, was organized to collect, preserve and spread information relating to the history of Maryland and of the United States. Its threefold program includes

1. Collection of manuscript and printed materials, maps, prints, paintings, furniture, silver, fabrics, maritime items, and other objects of interest;
2. Preservation of these materials for the benefit of all who care to enjoy them, and exhibition of items which will encourage an understanding of State and National history; and
3. Spread of historical information relating to Maryland and the rest of the country by means of addresses at the Society's home by authorities in various fields; addresses to outside groups by officers and staff of the Society; publication of the *Maryland Historical Magazine*, a quarterly containing original articles about State history; *Maryland History Notes*, a quarterly bulletin of news of the Society and other local historical items, the *Archives of Maryland* and the record of Maryland in World War II under the authority of the State and other serial and special publications.

The annual dues of the Society are \$5.00, life membership \$100.00. Subscription to the *Magazine* and to the quarterly news bulletin, *Maryland History Notes*, is included in the membership fee as well as use of the collections and admission to the lectures. The library, portrait gallery and museum rooms, are open daily except Sunday, 9 to 5, Saturday, 9 to 4. *June 15 to Sept. 15*, daily 9 to 4, Saturday, 9 to 2.

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# REVOLUTIONARY MAIL BAG: GOVERNOR THOMAS SIM LEE'S CORRESPONDENCE

## PART IV

Edited by HELEN LEE PEABODY

(Continued from Vol. XLIX, No. 3, September, 1954, p. 237)

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>1</sup>  
(Washington MSS, Library of Congress)

June 7th 1781

Sir—

By a Resolve of Congress of the 31st. of May two Battalions of Infantry and a Corps of Horse consisting of Sixty four Dragoons are required of the State of Maryland to serve for three Months from the Time of their respectively rendesvousing at the Place or Places directed by me.

Your Excellency has, no Doubt, been made acquainted that the fore-going Requisition is founded upon alarming Progress which the Enemy are making in Virginia.

You will be pleased therefore to give orders to the officers commanding the respective Corps to march by Detachment as they are raised and equipped to whatever Place may be the Head Quarters of the American Army in Virginia or in Maryland (should the enemy have advanced into that State) and take their further Commands from the General or other commanding Officer.

I need but refer Your Excellency to the Circular Letter of the President of Congress of the 1<sup>st</sup>. inst., for the Reasons which ought to influence the Exertions of Your State most particularly at this Moment.<sup>2</sup>

I have the honour to be, etc.

Go. Washington

The following is the first of the series of 49 letters written by James McHenry to Governor Lee in great part from the Yorktown front, inherited by the Lee family and at present in their posses-

<sup>1</sup> Referred to in Fitzpatrick, *Washington*, XXII, 171-172, and printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLVII, 275.

<sup>2</sup> See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, XX, 585-587.

sion, referred to in the September issue (p. 226). The letters were privately printed in Southampton, N. Y., in 1931 under the title, *A Sidelight on History, Being the Letters of James McHenry, Aide-de-Camp of the Marquis de Lafayette, to Thomas Sim Lee, Governor of Maryland, written during the Yorktown Campaign, 1781.*

JAMES MCHENRY TO THOMAS SIM LEE

(T. S. Lee Collection)

Bal. 9 June 1781.

My dear Sir:

When I have joined the Southern army (for which purpose I set out in less than two hours) I hope you will not forget that there is in it, one, who has the most sincere esteem for your Excellency. I know not any thing I have done to deserve the attentions you have shown me; but if I did not regard good men, I should cease to respect myself. This must always insure you my warmest attachment.

I cannot at this moment say whether I shall make the campaign with the Marquiss [de Lafayette] or Gen. Greene. It is most likely, however, that it will be with the latter, as he has written to General Washington and to myself very pressingly on this head. He will also, I suppose, have the most difficulties to encounter; and if so, this will determine me.

Let me beg your Excellency to present my compliments of leave to Mrs. Lee; and to believe me, your sincerely and with the greatest regard and attachment,

James McHenry

His Excellency,  
Governor Lee.

JAMES MCHENRY TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>4</sup>

(T. S. Lee Collection)

Headquarters, Col. Dandridges House,  
23 Miles from Richmond.

19 June 1781.

Dear Sir:

I am not sure that the Marquiss writes you, and therefore I do. When the Marquiss was obliged to move, Cornwallis took a position at Cook's fork, which enabled him either to return to James river or to gain our northern communication. To prevent him from destroying the stores arriving from Philadelphia was a necessary attempt on the part of the

<sup>3</sup> Printed in *A Sidelight on History*, pp. 16-17.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

<sup>5</sup> Apparently Baron von Steuben.

Marquiss. The Baron,<sup>5</sup> with about 500 Virginia levies and some militia, covered the stores at the fork of the James river.

Tarleton's<sup>6</sup> legion penetrated to Charlotteville, dissipated the Assembly, and destroyed about 150 stand of arms and some powder. Simcoe, with his corps, proceeded to the point of fork and destroyed the stores which the Baron deserted. In the meantime, Cornwallis approached the point of fork with intention to strike our magazines at Albemarle Old Court House. But before he could reach them the Marquiss effected his junction with the Pennsylvanians, and by opening a march through a road deemed impassible, gained a position on Michunk Creek between the enemy and our magazines, where he was joined by some riflemen. The day following, Cornwallis retired towards Richmond, where he now is. We are in this neighborhood. In this war of marches, the Marquiss is the victor, because he obliged by a very happy manœuvre his Lordship to return without completing his principal object. Commodore Baron<sup>7</sup> writes that on the 17th, in the afternoon, 35 sail of the enemy's vessels anchored in Hampton Road from sea. He supposes them the same that sailed from thence thirteen days ago. Four, he says, appeared to have troops on board.

With the greatest respect and attachment, I have the honor to be, dear Sir, your Excellency's

Most obst. [*sic*]

James McHenry.

His Excellency  
Governor Lee

LAFAYETTE TO THOMAS SIM LEE<sup>8</sup>  
(Hall of Records, Annapolis)

Mr. Savages house 13 Miles from  
New Kent Court House [Va.]. 25th June 1781

Dr Sir.

Yesterday morning the enemy renewed their March from Kent Court house to Williamsburg. This morning a light corps, that was in advance, and the Pennsylvania line moved after them. Lord Cornwallis has not, as yet, explained himself clearly enough, for one to determine upon his immediate objects. I would suppose however, that a post at Williamsburg, and a small one, perhaps, at York, may be intended. Heretofore his cavalry have covered his manœuvres, and rendered him almost impenetrable.

I have been for some time past flattered with accounts of an approaching succour in cavalry from your State; but their not joining me, makes me fear lest they should be prevented by some obstacle that had not been foreseen. If it is to be removed by the Executive, I pray your Excellency to give such orders for this purpose as may effect it with as much expedition as possible.—Where an army consists chiefly in militia, a large and

<sup>5</sup> Sir Banastre Tarleton (1754-1833).

<sup>7</sup> James Barron, who commanded part of the naval forces of Virginia.

<sup>8</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLVII, 315.

good cavalry is of the last importance. It is our misfortune that our is chiefly in militia, and that the enemy's cavalry renders every effort of ours that may produce an equality, a primary object. With an Army of this description and without cavalry to oppose to the enemy, you can easily conceive his advantages. But notwithstanding these, his Lordship has the credit of having moved with great caution.

I have the honor to be with the utmost respect, D. Sir  
Your Excellency's most obt. Servt.  
Lafayette

His Excellency  
Governor Lee

JAMES MCHENRY TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>9</sup>  
(T. S. Lee Collection)

7th July 1781.  
10 o'clock P. M.

Dear Sir:

We have received certain advice that the rear of the British army crossed from James Town to the Cobham side at noon. Part of the army is in motion to take possession of the place.

I have the honor to be

Your Excellency's most obst.  
James McHenry.

Governor Lee.

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>10</sup>  
(Hall of Records, Annapolis)

July 10, 1781

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the Receipt of Your Excellency's favor of the 29th of June.<sup>11</sup>

It is with very great satisfaction that I observe the proceedings of the General Assembly of your state which you have been pleased to communicate to me.

The exertions of that Legislature have heretofore been laudable, and I am exceedingly glad to see the same spirit still prevailing.

For my part I have not a doubt but that if the States were to exert themselves with that spirit and vigor which might be reasonably be expected at this favorable period, they might not only drive from the Con-

<sup>9</sup> Printed in *A Sidelight on History*, pp. 21-22.

<sup>10</sup> Printed in Fitzpatrick, *Washington*, XXII, 350-351, and *Archives of Maryland*, XLVII, 342. ("In the writing of Peregrine Fitzhugh."—Fitzpatrick.)

<sup>11</sup> See *Archives of Maryland*, XLV, 491. This letter was in answer to the General's letter of June 7, q. v.

tain the remains of the british force now among us, but obtain to themselves their independence, with the enjoyment of Peace Liberty and happiness to their numerous Inhabitants, an event which you will be assured I most ardently wish.

I have the honor to be  
Your Excellency's Mo. Ob. Ser.  
Go. Washington

JAMES MCHENRY TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>12</sup>  
(T. S. Lee Collection)

Holt's forge, 11th July 1781  
11 o'clock P. M.

My dear Sir:

The express does not go off till morning, and we have received a dispatch from General Greene dated Little River in the district of 96, June 23. The General writes me, "Fortune is my enemy, or at least not much my friend. We were contemplating the reduction of all the enemy's posts in South Carolina and Georgia, except Charlestown and Savannah, when the enemy received a reinforcement at Charlestown, which enabled them to raise the siege of 96. It was mortifying, indeed, to be obliged to leave a place which we had labored so much to reduce, and which we were within four days of effecting, and to be in possession of one of the enemy's works, when Lord Rawdon <sup>13</sup> arrived and obliged us to retreat. Could I have collected a large body of militia, I would have fought him, but our numbers were too small to hazard an action, especially as this little army is all we have to depend upon. We prosecute the war upon such unequal terms in this country that I have nothing better to expect than disgrace and ruin, and unless a few of my friends can convince the sensible part of mankind that it is not the misapplication, but the want of means which is the cause of our misfortunes, I am sure that will be the case. Greater abilities might improve our force to greater advantage; but as for men, I can do no more than I have done. If my conduct is not satisfactory, I shall submit with pleasure to public censure."

He attacked two of the out works, one of which he carried. His loss was between 40 and 50. He retired on the 19th, when the enemy were within a few miles of 96.

The act of our late session of Assembly to raise a body of horse is one of the wisest measures which could have been adopted. It remains to prosecute its execution with vigor. Under our present circumstances, they are the most serviceable army we can raise. The enemy, sensible of this, have turned all their attention to it in South Carolina, and from their superior means must exceed us in cavalry. Among your exertions, my dear Governor, for our country, let this be a principal one. I believe we

<sup>12</sup> Printed in *A Sidelight on History*, pp. 27-29.

<sup>13</sup> Lt. Col. Francis Rawdon.

must risque everything here in order to succour Greene. Should no new charges arise, I shall urge the step.

I am, most respectfully, my dear Sir,

Yours,  
James McHenry

His Excellency,  
Governor Lee.

12th July  
10 o'clock morning.

We have a dispatch from General Greene just now, dated 29th ult., by which we find he was rather intending opposition than a retreat.

J. McH.

JAMES MCHENRY TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>14</sup>  
(T. S. Lee Collection)

Malvern Hill  
29 the July 1781

Dear Sir:

It is not easy to make anything out of Lord Cornwallis' present movements. The fleet with about thirteen hundred troops on board (and some say 2000) were by our latest advices still in Hampton road. Since taking this position, there have been winds that would have carried them out of the Capes or up the Bay. They have pilots on board acquainted with the navigation of the upper parts of the Chesapeak. The fleet is watered; and the enemy give out that Baltimore is the place of destination. I know not well what to say in this case. To deceive more effectively, generals sometimes announce their real intentions. Lord Cornwallis has done this in some instances. Going up the Bay is also agreeable to the ministerial system. The composition of the troops is likewise calculated for such service, comprehending the light infantry or a regiment of cavalry or the Queen's rangers. On the other hand, New York seems to call for their assistance. And they may be waiting for a convoy or a second embarkation. In fine, if I dared to conclude any thing, it would be that they are destined for New York. Nevertheless, precautions might not be improper in your quarter. But I state the intelligence, and you will be the best judge of the measure. It appears to me that this State will not be evacuated, nor their design of penetrating Maryland even suspended at this moment unless the French have obtained such a naval superiority as to place New York and Charlestown in the last degree of danger. Such an event only, or a certainly that the enemy here will be too exposed to capture from such a superiority, can, or will, force them from this State. The Maryland dragoons have been ordered to return, and I suppose have commenced their march this morning.

<sup>14</sup> Printed in *A Sidelight on History*, pp. 38-39.

With the most perfect respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, your  
Excellency's

Most obt. Serv.

James McHenry.

His Excellency  
Governor Lee

LAFAYETTE TO THOMAS SIM LEE  
(Hall of Records, Annapolis)

Malvern Hill 30th July 1781

Sir:

As I have had no advice of the March of the Maryland levies, I take the liberty of informing myself, through Your Excellency, whether it has yet taken place. Circumstanced as we are, a very small reinforcement is very sensibly felt. The enemy too, appearing to waver in their movements, makes additions more consequential; not only to this State, but to Maryland. I have long been of opinion, that, if we can but collect a respectable army in this quarter, we have little to fear, for yours. It is, therefore, I hope, that the calling out, or arranging the select body of militia, to act in Virginia, is still vigorously pursued. Langour in our public exertions for this campaign, may not, perhaps, be balanced by the most strenuous in future.

It is some time since an embarkation was made at Portsmouth, and since the vessels fell down to Hampton road. The troops on board may amount to about 12 or 1300. My last accounts are of the 28th. It is said, pliets have been taken on board, acquainted with the upper part of Chesepeak; and, they give out, the armament is destined for Baltimore. It has for several days, had the most favorable winds to proceed up the Bay. But, as it seems to be complete, its not going, is one proof, that, its destination is elsewhere.

Were I to conjecture on this occasion, it would be, that it is designed for New-York; but, that some recent circumstance, has suspended its sailing. It is true, however, that the plan of the British ministry is to carry their arms into Maryland; and without great exertions here, and further Southward, or a naval superiority, I do not see how it is to be prevented.

Permit me again, therefore, to suggest to your Excellency, the vast importance of preparing the powers of your State, for the support of this. It is true, the uncertainty which appears in the enemy's movements, may be construed differently. If we suppose that, in order to secure their two principal posts, they mean only to leave a garrison at Portsmouth, it may present us with an opportunity of acting against it. In such a case, we should not have our succours to collect, lest we should lose the moment. And, if their whole force remains, we shall have a yet stronger call for reinforcements. The only event which can render this unnecessary, is their

<sup>15</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLVII, pp. 374-375.

evacuating the State. But we know of no facts upon which to build this conclusion.

I beg you to direct the levies to join this Army.

With the greatest respect, I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your Excellency's

Most ob<sup>t</sup>. Serv<sup>t</sup>.

Lafayette

His Excellency  
Governor Lee

JAMES MCHENRY TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>16</sup>  
(T. S. Lee Collection)

Malvern Hill 30 July 1781

My Dear Sir

The intelligence which remains after the Generals letter is fit only to excite conjecture.

On the 27th Nineteen flat bottomed boats with horse and foot crossed from Portsmouth to Norfolk. The Troops there marched towards Kemps Landing. The day after, two Companies of Hessians took the same rout. This, one would say, looks to the Southward.

We have nothing official from General Greene, but it is reported that affairs are again in his favor. His fortune is a perfect resemblance of life.

General Wayne and General Morgan <sup>17</sup> are at Goodbridge on the South side of James River. Col. Moylan and one Regiment of Light infantry will cross to day to take a Post in front. The Militia and the remainder of the infantry on this side.

With the most sincere respect and attachment I have the honor to be  
D<sup>r</sup>. Sir:

Your Excellencys

Most obedient serv<sup>t</sup>.

James McHenry

His Excellency  
Governor Lee.

THOMAS SIM LEE TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS <sup>18</sup>  
(Papers of the Continental Congress, National Archives)

Annapolis 4th Aug<sup>t</sup>. 1781

Sir

The enclosed copies of letters <sup>19</sup> this Moment received from the Marquis de la Fayette and Doctor McHenry communicate the designs and movement

<sup>16</sup> Printed in *A Sidelight on History*, pp. 39-50.

<sup>17</sup> Daniel Morgan (1736-1802).

<sup>18</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLV, 541-542.

<sup>19</sup> Enclosures are the two preceding letters.



of the enemy. The state is making every exertion to collect such a force as with the regulars here amounting to about 600 under skilfull and experienced officers will enable us to confine them within very narrow limits. Our people are resolute and determined; they feel that animating spirit which diffused itself through all ranks at the commencement of this Contest. The Approach of the Enemy has apparently banished every sordid, avaricious and selfish View, and we trust our People will act like Men sensible of the Blessings they are struggling for and the miseries which by an abject and dastardly conduct they most deservedly will feel.

If our militia could be well armed and accoutred they would acquire a confidence which would stimulate them to a conduct which would not disgrace regulars and on Congress we rely for that aid and most earnestly solicit your Excellency to supply us immediately with what can be spared and forward them: The field pieces intended for us, would be very serviceable.

Congress has not often been troubled with applications from this state and we flatter ourselves the Exertions of our people upon all occasions merit every assistance that can be afforded, especially at this Crisis.

We have taken every possible precaution to prevent the stores provisions and valuable property belonging to the continent and state falling into their Hands.

We have the honor to be with  
the most respectful attachment  
Your Excellency's most Obedt Servt.  
Tho: S: Lee

THOMAS SIM LEE TO PRESIDENT OF THE SPECIAL COUNCIL <sup>20</sup>  
(Hall of Records, Annapolis)

Annapolis, 4 August, 1781

In Council

Gent<sup>men</sup>

With Enclosure

We have this Moment received the enclosed intelligence, so that the destination of the Enemy against this State no longer remains doubtful.

We are taking every possible measure for defense.

We have about 600 Regulars at this City and have advised all the select Militia and all the Companies of Light Horse at the Shore, and all the Draughts and Recruits, to rendez-vous at this Post and Baltimore Town, and shall order out the Militia in the Vicinity of those Posts.

You will observe that the Marquis' Pieces are marching to enlist to assist us. We think there is a Strong probability that this Movement is a Consequence of the Ministerial plan mentioned in Lord George Germain's <sup>21</sup> Letter and after ravaging our Coasts and Towns they will attempt to establish themselves at Elk.

<sup>20</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLV, 542-543.

<sup>21</sup> Intercepted letter from Lord George Germain to Sir Henry Clinton, dated Feb. 7, 1781. See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, XXI, 821.

We have the Honor to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. [Tench] Tilghman's Letter of the 1st Instant and thinking it absolutely necessary your Honor should be immediately informed of the Movements and Designs of the Enemy, I have taken the Liberty to direct the Commodore to return without Delay with this Letter. Your assistance in having the Draught forwarded from the several Counties of your Shore, will oblige us.

We have the honor to be with the most respectful

Attachment, Gentlemen,

Your Most Obed. & Hum<sup>ble</sup> Serv<sup>ant</sup>

Thos. S. Lee

LAFAYETTE TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>22</sup>

(Hall of Records, Annapolis)

New Castle [Va.] 6th Augt. 1781.

Sir:

In my last dispatch to your Excellency I inclosed you a report from Commodore Barras <sup>23</sup> of the naval movement of the enemy, of which Baltimore was supposed to be the object. But instead of proceeding up the Bay the fleet stood into York river. The troops have been landed and are fortifying on the Gloucester side. York town is made a place of arms. Lord Cornwallis is present, and has with him his whole force, except the garrison of Portsmouth.

From my intelligence it appears that a principal part of this fleet, was originally intended for New York; but in consequence of the arrival of a vessel with letters from Gen. Clinton, its sailing was suspended, and the present arrangement on the whole succeeded.

Maryland being thus relieved, I have to request your Excellency to give the most instant orders for the March of the levies. I need not mention to you the small force we have to oppose to Lord Cornwallis's command; or what may be the consequences should we not be reinforced. —That I may be enabled to regulate my motions upon certainties, I pray your Excellency to inform me, what number of levies you expect to have together in a given time; and when and where the select body of militia is to rendezvous. I wish also to be acquainted with the progress made in the collection of cavalry and draught horses, and whether you have agreed upon their appropriation.

With the greatest respect, I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your Excellency's Most obt. Ser.

Lafayette

His Excellency

Governor Lee

<sup>22</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLVII, 393.

<sup>23</sup> Count Jacques Melchoir Barras St. Laurent, French naval officer.

JAMES MCHENRY TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>24</sup>

(T. S. Lee Collection)

New Castle [Va.], 6th Augt. 1781.

My dear Sir:

Maryland is relieved by the enemy's establishing themselves in York river. But as this is a movement not of choice, there is no saying how long you will be safe. The measure, there is good reason to believe, is in consequence of advice of a superior naval power expected on this coast. So you see upon what you have to depend. Under these circumstances, your military preparations are as necessary as ever. You will either want them for your own defense or to assist us. Believe one who is not apt to judge rashly, who has long since told you of what has been so near taking place, that relaxation may involve evil to the State of the most permanent nature. There was a time when we could blunder with impunity, but a blunder now may prove fatal. I need not be more explicit to your Excellency. You must be aware of the very critical situation of affairs, both in America and Europe.

You are filling up the Continental line, but something might also be attempted for internal security. The enemy do not lose sight of Baltimore, and that place may not be unworthy a little attention. I will give you my sentiments in a few words. If the works for the defense of the harbor cannot be repaired, they should be levelled. If at least one gally, and a boom, cannot be provided, nothing of value should remain in the town. But if the works can be put in a state of defense, a gally completed, and a boom established with a proper militia garrison, the place will be secure from any small detachment; and with an equal army in their neighborhood the enemy will not venture to send a large one. At this moment, measures of this nature would have the most happy effect.

With the sincerest regard and the most perfect respect and attachment I have the honor to be,

Your Excellency's most obst.

James McHenry.

His Excellency

Gov. Lee

(Marked private.)

Daniel Carroll (1730-1796), brother of Archbishop John Carroll, was one of the delegates in Congress from Maryland. Among other duties, he apprised the Governor of what was happening in Congress. Carroll signed the Constitution in 1787, served in the House of Representatives, and was a Commissioner of the District of Columbia.

<sup>24</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLVII, 394, and *A Sidelight on History*, pp. 43-45.

DANIEL CARROLL TO THOMAS SIM LEE  
(T. S. Lee Collection)

Philadelphia, August 7. 1781.

Sir,

The express delivered me your Favour of the 3d & 4th of Aug<sup>st</sup>. The movement of the Enemy up the Bay is contrary to the judgment of the Learned in War at this place; but I have thought it probable his gallant Lordship would not leave our State unvisited in his tour, if New York does not appear to him to be in such imminent danger, as to make a reinforcement immediately necessary.

Our affairs in the South must fret his Lordship severely. Several flags have arrived here from Augustine & Charles Town within these few days.

The Gentlemen by these Vessels inform us that "96" has been evacuated, (this acknowledged by Rivington)—that a Body of the Enemy have been attacked and driven from Monk's Corner with considerable loss of men & all their baggage, which they were obliged to destroy, (the Charlestown Gazette says almost as much,) that our parties are almost every day within 5 or 6 miles of Charlestown, & have cut off several small parties of the Enemy. That the body of troops left at Orangeburgh (the remainder of Lord Rawdon's force that relieved "96") were surrounded & likely to fall into our hands.

If this last be true, what will prevent Gen<sup>l</sup> Greene from making a triumphant entry into Charles Town, unless Cornwallis turn his face that way immediately?

The Gentlemen, by these flags, many of them of character, say that intelligence was received at Charles Town, (I believe by a Packet), that a considerable part of the homeward bound fleet have been taken, and carried into France by La Motte Piquet, and that Commodore Johnson has been severely beat by some French Squardon, supposed to be near the Cape of Good Hope.<sup>25</sup>

They speak of this with much confidence.

I seldom trouble you with reports—these are so important & come in such a manner, I could not avoid mentioning them. It gives me much pleasure to find such a spirit prevailing among my Countrymen, as you mention.

Mr. Ridgate took charge of your hat & of Mrs. Digges' stays & shoes. Pray let her know this,—I will write her in a day or two.<sup>26</sup>

I have heard only once from Mullahon, not more than 39 hogsheads came to hand,—the sale is dull for ready money. We have advised him to take some measures to secure the Tobacco at Elk.

Present my Compliments to yr. Lady & believe me

Yours with the greatest regard

Dan<sup>l</sup> Carroll

<sup>25</sup> Piquet and Johnson not further identified.

<sup>26</sup> Probably Thomas H. Ridgate (d. 1790), merchant, of Port Tobacco; Mary Carroll Digges, second wife of Ignatius Digges.

N. B. Gen<sup>l</sup> Washington writes that the account he sent of the arrival of some troops at the Hook proved not true.<sup>27</sup>

LAFAYETTE TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>28</sup>  
(Hall of Records, Annapolis)

Camp Pamonkey Aug 10, 1781

Sir:

The Enemy are fortifying York, in such a manner as if it was their intention to make it a place of Arms. I beg leave again to mention that the State of the troops makes your levies of great consequence as a reinforcement. I hope they have started, but in case they have not, let me request that they may proceed to Fredericksburg and there wait further orders. This is an intermediary post.

I begin to fear when we can Augment our army to a number to give us consideration, that we shall not be able to supply it from this State. To obviate this evil and to enable me to continue the force which I may call on I must entreat Your Excellency to inform me what provisions I am to expect from Mayriland. I mean both Kind and Quantity.

You will see by the inclosed letter to Colonel Temple <sup>29</sup> (which I beg you to forward) that He is ordered to Fredericksburg with His dismounted Dragoons to wait for one hundred Horses from Your Excellency of those collected for such service. I need not add anything on this head as you must be fully sensible how little can be done without cavalry. General Greene writes me to complete Col<sup>o</sup>. Moylans Regiment from the Mayriland Horses.

I know not for my part How we are to be furnished accoutrements for the Horses unless individual States will give us this help. If Your Excellency has any under your orders, or could find means to provide them it would be a most essential piece of Service.

I have the honor to be Sir Excellency's Obt Ser.

Lafayette

His Excellency  
Gov. Lee

<sup>28</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLVII, 406.

<sup>27</sup> See Washington to the President of Congress, July 30 and Aug. 2, 1781, Fitzpatrick, *Washington*, 428, 450.

<sup>29</sup> Letter, not located, was probably addressed to Col. Benjamin Temple (d. 1802), of Virginia.

WILLIAM FITZHUGH TO THOMAS SIM LEE  
(T. S. Lee Collection)

Calvert County, Aug. 20, 1781

Monday afternoon

Dear Governor,

I had this Moment the Honor to receive your very acceptable fav<sup>r</sup> of the 17th Inst. and cannot too gratefully acknowledge my obligations for your friendly recomendations to my Son William, who, I hope will retain a due sense of Your Excellency's kindness, and endeavor to merit it.

The Letter from my son Perry is of the 5th Inst.<sup>30</sup> He presents his respectful Compliments, is thankful for your Conveyance of his letters which I communicated to him, and promises to address you, so soon as any Events occur worth your Notice. I hope it will be by the next packet or mail. He says he is not at Liberty to say anything of the Intended Operations or Prospects, but let it suffice to say they are very flattering.

I have a letter from General Washington of the 8th Inst. inclosing letters of Recomendation of my son to General Greene, & Governor Nelson.<sup>31</sup>

The General complains of not being properly supported. He says that levies which he expected in January last, are not yet arrived, & deplors with Great Justice, in my oppinion, the raising of men for a short Term.

His Lady is at Philadelphia waiting for advices, when she may return to Mount Vernon with safety.

General Clinton is recalled, & Lord Cornwallis daily expected to Command at New York, where no reinforcement had arrived from Virginia on the 8th Inst.

I am much obliged to your Excellency for the Current Intelligence. I believe the Enemy are Embarrassed in every Quarter & know not well to what Particular Point to bend their Divided & shattered Force.

I think it probable that a Post will be Fix'd at York in Virg'a & the Remainder of Lord Cornwallis's Force, proceed with Him to New York; leaving the Southern States to the *Chance of Accidents*, which I hope will possess Our Great General Greene with the whole of them before Xmas Day.

My Son William will take leave of Us Early Tomorrow Morning, & will have the Honor to wait on you on His way to Baltimore, from whence He is to march with Gen. Gist.

Mrs. Fitzhugh joins with me in respectful Complts & Affec<sup>te</sup> wishes to you, your Lady, and Family.

I have Honor to be  
with Perfect respect & Esteem

Your Excellency's  
Affec<sup>te</sup> & Obliged H<sup>ble</sup> Ser<sup>t</sup>

William Fitzhugh

<sup>30</sup> Peregrine Fitzhugh.

<sup>31</sup> Thomas Nelson, Jr. (1738-1789), Governor of Virginia in 1781.

JAMES MCHENRY TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>32</sup>  
 (T. S. Lee Collection)

Mrs. Ruffins, 25 Augt. 1781

My dear Sir:

The garrison, baggage, cannon, refugees, and negroes from Portsmouth have been landed at York, and his Lordship begins to look as if he wished to do something.—'Tis a maxim with him that ruin to Great Britain or a loss of the Southern conquests must be the consequence of defensive measures. Be assured, Cornwallis is a modern Hannibal. A few days since, Tarleton struck at a small body of our militia on the York side, and took ten or twelve. He is now on the Gloster side, where the whole horse of the enemy are collected.

I have the honor to be, most respectfully and with the greatest attachment,

Your Excellency's most obst.

James McHenry.

His Excellency

Gov. Lee.

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO THOMAS SIM LEE <sup>32a</sup>  
 (Washington MSS, Library of Congress)

Head Quarters, Chatham [N. J.] 27th August 1781

Sir—

Official Accounts which I have received, giving me reason to expect the Arrival of a powerful Fleet of our Allies very soon in the Chesapeake, if not already Arrived; this Expectation, together with some other Circumstances not necessary at present to detail to you, have induced me to make a total Alteration in the concerted operations of this Campaign. In consequence, I am now marchg. a very considerable Detachment from the American Army, with the whole of the French Troops, immediately to Virginia.

As our Hopes of Success against Ld Cornwallis in a great Measure depend on the Dispatch and Celerity of our Movements, I have to request in the most earnest Manner all the Aid and Assistance from your Excellency that we may have Occasion for and have Reason to expect from your State; among these the Means of Transportation from the Head of Elk to the Point of our operations, will be among the most Essential; all the Water Craft, that can be procured suitable for the Carriage of an Army, with their Artillery, Baggage, etc., will be needed, and should be ready at the Head of Elk by the 8th of Sept. A quantity of Forage will also be necessary for the Cattle which will unavoidably attend the Army. As I shall probably be disappointed of a Quantity of salted Provisions, which

<sup>32</sup> Printed in *A Sidelight on History*, pp. 54-55.

<sup>32a</sup> Printed in Fitzpatrick, *Washington*, XXIII, 57-58.

cannot with safety be conveyed from the Eastern States, I must beg your Excellency to pay particular Attention to that Article, if any is to be obtained in your State. Other Aids as well in Provisions as other Articles, will probably be needed, which cannot at this moment be particularly specified.

I communicate My Intentions to you, and have Confidence, that I shall receive every Aid and Assistance that is in your Power, towards their Execution.

I expect to have no Occasion to call on you for the Aid of Men, further than your State Troops which are ordered to be raised, and which I hope you have already compleated.

Mr. Robert Morriss<sup>33</sup> will have the principal Agency in procuring the Water Transportation mentioned in this Letter; perhaps nothing more will be expected from your Excellency in that Article, than to afford Mr. Morriss every Aid which he may stand in need of in their Procurement of the Craft, which I am persuaded you will do with Readiness and Decision.

The Moment is critical, the Opportunity is precious, the prospect is most happily favorable. I hope that no Supineness, or Want of Exertions on our own part may prove the Means of a fatal Disappointment.

I have the honour to be, with great sincerity of esteem and regard, Your Excellency's most obedient and humble servant,

Geo. Washington

P. S. Our Forage will be principally wanted at the Head of Elk, and from thence on the Route to George Town.

To his Excellency Governor Lee, of Maryland

JAMES MCHENRY TO THOMAS SIM LEE<sup>34</sup>  
(T. S. Lee Collection)

Ruffins Ferry,  
28 Augt. 1781.

My dear Sir:

If you will keep a secret, I will tell you one; but if you do not choose to keep it, read no further. The 30th of this month, the Count de Grasse was to sail from the West Indies with a large fleet and troops for the Chesapeak. You know that he is superior to Rodney. He may not, however, have sailed on the day fixed. His arrival is very important to Maryland. But there must be a race between him and his antagonist. If the latter gains Chesapeak first and the British squadron now at New York should remain there, Clinton and Cornwallis may be both out of our power. For I do not conceive that the French can effect an entrance in the harbor of New York or lay long enough before it to reduce the place by blockade, while Rodney in the Chesapeak may hold out against

<sup>33</sup> Robert Morris (1734-1806), Superintendent of Finance, 1781-1784.

<sup>34</sup> Printed in *A Sidelight on History*, pp. 55-56.



any possible force. In this case, the experiment may fall upon Charlestown. You see, my dear Governor, upon what a thread great good or great evil to our country is suspended.

As this is a communication of the most confidential nature and of the utmost importance to be kept secret, I am well assured it will be sacredly preserved.

The enemy appear to be apprized with respect to their danger, and even to be waivering with respect to their conduct. But they are making York very strong, and we are taking measures to prevent his Lordship from retreating by land to Carolina. This would be a daring attempt; and circumstanced as he is, and delighting in difficulties as much as a Hannibal, a Scipio, or a Caesar, he may not think it too hazardous to put in practice. However, I do not believe he will rest his safety on such an issue; but that he will rely upon his troops where he is, the arrival of Rodney, or a relief, should the Count de Grasse gain the Chesapeake.

Adieu, my dear Sir.

Most affectionately and respectfully,  
James McHenry

A propos, should the State make me a civil man, I must beg a week or two's indulgence in this quarter, but this will be a hereafter consideration.

THOMAS SIM LEE TO GEORGE WASHINGTON <sup>35</sup>  
(Hall of Records, Annapolis)

Aug. 30, 1781  
In Council

Sir:

We are honored by your Excellency's letter of the 27th and we receive with the greatest Satisfaction the Intelligence of the Approach of the Fleet of our generous Ally.

You may rely Sir, on every Exertion that is possible for us to make to accelerate the Movements of the Army on an Expedition, the Success of which must hasten the Establishment of the Independence of America, and relieve us from many of the Calamities of war.

Orders have been issued to impress every Vessel belonging to the State, and forwarding them without delay to the Head of Elk.

But we are sorry to inform your Excellency, that since the Enemy has had Possession of the Bay, our Number of sea Vessels and Craft, has been so reduced by Captures, that we are apprehensive what remains will not transport so considerable a Detachment.

We have directed the State officers to procure immediately by Purchase or Seizure, five thousand Head of Cattle and a large Quantity of Flour.

There is very little salt Provision in the State, [what] can be obtained, we trust will be collected.

Part of the Provision will be deposited at the Head of Elk, Baltimore Town, and George Town.

<sup>35</sup> Printed in *Archives of Maryland*, XLV, 588.

Most of the Cattle will be kept in good Pastures, not far distant from the Bay and Rivers, so that they may with Ease be forwarded to any Point where they may be required.

We have directed sufficient Quantities of Forage to be laid in, at the Head of Elk, Baltimore Town and George Town for the use of the Army.

The third regiment consisting of about six hundred Men under the command of Colo Adams<sup>36</sup> marched from this City last Tuesday; and about seven hundred of the new Levies will move in a few Days.

Every Aid that can be given Mr. Morris will be afforded with the utmost Chearfulness and Alacrity.

I have the honor to be. . .

Thos. S. Lee

<sup>36</sup> Lt. Col. Peter Adams, of Maryland, who commanded the 3rd Md. Regt. from Jan. 1781, to Apr. 1783.