

**Letters of Delegates to Congress: Volume 7 May 1, 1777 - September 18, 1777**  
**Richard Henry Lee to John Page, Pages 499-500**

*Philadelphia, 17th Aug. 1777.*

*My dear Sir,*

*Were it not for the very disgraceful evacuation of Ticonderoga and the loss of our Stores there, we should have little but good to relate of this Campaign as far as it has gone. The Generals Schuyler and St. Clair are ordered down to Head Quarters, where an enquiry will be instituted, and the public fully acquainted with the whole of that business. Gen. Gates is reappointed to the command of the Northern Army and by this time has joined it. The Militia is turning out to join that army, and now that they have the General they love and can confide in, I hope our affairs in that quarter will soon wear a better countenance. Already Gen. Hackerman of the N. York Militia has beaten a part of the enemies forces and slain 50 Indians. (1) Gen. Howes fleet was seen off the Eastern Shore of Maryland on the 7th instant, steering southward, but it is somewhat doubtful whether his troops are on board now or not, and if they are, it is surely the strangest Manoeuvre that was ever before put in practice-For, is it not wonderful, that whilst Burgoyne is pushing into the Country on one quarter, Howe should quit it on another? Time will explain this, at present, inexplicable movement. In the meantime Gen. Washingtons forces are so placed as to be ready to meet Mr. Howes visitation if it happens any where but on the two extremes of the United States. Our information from Europe does not promise us immediate war, but we are sure of very substantial aid from thence, whilst the powerful Armaments quickly preparing by France and Spain denote approaching war and certainly will check the British violence against [us?] by the necessity it creates of watching their powerful and dangerous Neighbors. The spirit of France rises with the increase of its Fleet, since we learn that when the British Ambassador lately told the Ministry that if N. America continued to be supplied from France, that the Peace could not long continue-He was answered 'Nous ne desiron pas la guerre, et nous ne le craignon pas.' (2) Dr. Lee is returned from Spain, and set out in May for the Court of Prussia. Gen. Lee is removed on board the Centurion, but we are not certain whether the ship remains at York or is gone with the Fleet. We hear that a Speech of Lord Chathams in the house of Lords lately has come to N. York, but they will not publish it, in which his Lordship advises them to make peace with America . . .*

**Letters of Delegates to Congress: Volume 7 May 1, 1777 - September 18, 1777**  
**Henry Laurens to John Lewis Gervais. Pages 494-495**

*17th August 1777*

*Dear Sir*

*I refer to my last Letter of the 5th Inst & 16th Inst.(1) by the hand of a Georgia Officer dispatched by Colo. Walton. This will be delivered or forwarded to you by Colo. Sumpter who*

*gives me very short warning of his design to leave Philadelphia to morrow morning. I am just going to attend a Committee (2) where I shall be detained till tis very late. Excuse me therefore for crowding together as much as I can in a few minutes.*

*We have heard from the Northern department by a Letter from Gen Schuyler the 10th Inst.(3) Fort Schuyler had been attacked by the Enemy, Colo Gansevort Commandant of the Fort by a timely sortie had taken 4 feild pieces & two royals. General Harkimer in the field near the Fort had engaged them, had suffered some loss but kept the ground, drove them off & counted after the action 50 Indians Iying dead on the Field, many wounded were carried off. That number in one affair will appear considerable to the Surviving Indians & I am in hopes will incline them to go home as their custom is after much blood in order to take breath.*

*As Mr. Burgoyne had made no impossible from the 4th to the 10th we hope General Gates who must have been at the head of the Army about the 12th will put a stop to his further progress. 500 Rifle Men under a Select Commander are ordered by Congress to join General Gates immediately. (4) He cannot yet learn what is become of the Fleet which Sailed from New York the 23d Inst., appeared off the Capes of Delaware the 28th to the 1st August, then vanished, appeared again upon the Coast of Maryland the 7 & 8th Inst. & was last day seen Standing Sotherly. If we do not hear to morrow of their arrival in Cheasapeek Bay many people notwithstanding the forbidding Season of the year will be anxious for Carolina & Georgia. General Burgoyne according to the menace in his extraordinary proclamation has given Stretch to his Savage friends. (5) We received advices yesterday from Colo. Morgan of many murders committed by Indians on the western frontiers of Virginia & Pensylvania, with these Butchers a few Canadians & British are joined. Where they murder they leave Proclamations from the General & say all the Savages on the frontiers of the United Colonies are to attack in that Side while 100000 British Troops are to enter Pensylvania, Virginia, Charles Town & Georgia from the Sea Side.*

*General Hand who Commands at Fort Pitt & Colo. Morgan seem to be under no apprehension of being routed. They intimate that Britain will have the Glory of Murdering many helpless Innocent Men, Women & Children & bring on the destruction of their friends. In preparation for this purpose they recommend to carry the War directly into their own Country & the most Speedy measures are adopted for that purpose. (6)*

*If any thing above mentioned will be acceptable to Mr. Wells please to give it him or to Mr. Timothy if his Gazette is to come first out. I need not Say I dont wish to appear as a News Correspondent. I never write News without good grounds apparently & I believe now every word I have written to be true but to morrow may contradict or vary all that does not proceed from authority.*

*I believe that nothing less than the mode of a parliamentary enquiry into the Conduct of the Officers in the Northern department will content the people. For the purpose of answering Gen Schuyler will be in or near this City in a few days. We hear not a word from Genl. St. Clair nor do we know where he is-probably with the advanced Army.*

*My Compliments to Mrs Gervais & all friends & believe me with great affection & regard &ca.*

**Letters of Delegates to Congress: Volume 7 May 1, 1777 - September 18, 1777**  
**Henry Laurens to Elias Ball Pages 494-495**

*August 17, 1777*

*Dear Sir(1) 17th August 1777 The News paper which I shall Send with this will give you a pretty distinct Account of the State of the War in this quarter. I may add that we have begun to give General Burgoyne's Savage Allies a Check. An attack was made on Fort Schuyler by a detachment from Burgoyne's main body aided by Tories & Indians. Colonel Gansevor Commander of the Fort made a Sally from within & took 4 pieces of Cannon & 2 Royals. General Harkimer of New York Militia had an engagement with them, in which he suffered considerably but kept the field & counted after the Action 50 Indians lying dead. This will give that Tribe some kind of check & we hope a more effectual one will Soon to be given to the head Savage Burgoyne himself. Who can forbear calling him Savage when he boasts of Sending them to Murder Innocent Women & Children, which they have done to a shocking extent & even to many who had taken Shelter under his proclamation. The last Account we heard of the Grand New York Fleet was their Steering southerly from the Coast of Maryland. The Season of the year would seem to forbid it but I am not without apprehensions of a sudden attack on the land side upon Sullivants Island-where else but there or Georgia can that fleet be destined. I am not free from deep feelings for you all.*

*Your Brother John lodges at Doctor Bond's for the benefit he says of taking advice & Medicine for a pain in his Side, he went happily through the Small Pox & left on about the 11th Inst. in a manner not Satisfactory to me, I had taken as much care of him as if he had been my Son & had intended him some essential Service if he had continued longer under my protection.(2) Present me in cordial terms to your Father & Sister. Let me hear from you when you have leisure & believe me with great regard &ca.*

[P.S.] *I forward by Colo. Sumpter the bearer of this a packet from your Brother.*

**Letters of Delegates to Congress: Volume 7 May 1, 1777 - September 18, 1777**  
**Richard Henry Lee to Mann Page , Pages 500-501**

*August 17, 1777*

*My dear Sir, Philadelphia 17th Augt. 1777 We are not able yet to give you any account of the wandering Howe and his fleet, save that they were seen on the 7th instant off Sinapuxen steering Southward. Our accounts from France say that George depends much on the "desperate efforts*

*that Howe & Cornwallis must make to redeem their Bankrupt honor." (1) His present Manoeuvre seems the effort of a despairing Bankrupt. For what good can result from having multitudes of Men & Horses confined on board Ships at this season of the year, exposed to the torrid hell that beams upon their heads? Gen. Washingtons forces are well placed to meet Gen. Howes return, unless he should visit either extreme of the United States. The main body is about 20 miles from hence on the road to Coryells ferry on both sides of which the Carolina Troops & other Corps (about 2000) are stationed. Sullivan with 2000 more is in the Neighbourhood of Morris Town, & Gen. Putnam with about 5000 occupies the Heights at Peekskill. I lately visited the Army here. It really makes a fine appearance. Health, discipline, and good spirits, prevail thro the whole. I wish things lookt as well in the North, however I hope they will soon mend in that quarter. Gen. Gates is reappointed to the command there, and the Militia are turning out. Already Gen. **Hackerman** of the N. York Militia has had an engagement with a part of the enemy and beaten them, having killed 50 Indians on the spot. Congress has ordered 500 Riflemen from this Army to be sent up there immediately to check and chastise the-Barbarian Auxiliaries that Burgoyne has brought with him and who are murdering & scalping all before them, Men, Women, & Children; without sparing those who have taken protection & sworn allegiance to the Tyrant. Even inveterate Tories feel the keen edge of the Scalping Knife, and the barbarous butchery of the Tomahawk. Gens. Schuyler & St. Clair are ordered to Head Quarters that an enquiry may be had into the loss of Ticonderoga and its valuable Stores. Tis a shocking affair and cannot, at present, be accounted for. Our accounts from France, late in May, do not promise immediate war, but substantisl aid most certainly. Both France & Spain are arming powerfully and with great rapidity. The spirit of the former rises as its Fleet grows stronger, since we understand that the Minister lately replied to Lord Stormont, when he said the peace could not long continue if N. America continued to draw supplies from France, "Nous ne desiron pas la guerre, et nous ne le craignon pas." We neither desire War, nor fear it. The potent armaments of two such dangerous Neighbors must infallibly check the efforts of G. Britain against us, by putting her under a necessity of watching them, and being prepared to defend herself. Doctr. Lee is returned from Spain and gone to the Court of Prussia. I suppose William will soon take his place. Lord Chatham is not dead as report made him, but it seems is better in health than usual, and we understand a late speech of his is arrived at N. York, in which he advises the Lords "that Peace be made with N. America immediately and on any terms, assuring them they had no more chance to conquer this Continent with the force they had or could get than he would have to conquer Britain with his Crutch and that the longer they carried on the War the more certain would be their ruin, and the greater their disgrace." Wise and good Old Man, what pity is it that if Kings will be allowed, they cannot be directed by such Men!*

*I believe Manly is certainly taken & the Fox retaken. (2) They were greatly overpowered by superior force. My best wishes attend the family at Mansfield.*

*Farewell dear Sir, Affectionately yours, Richard Henry Lee*

*[P.S.] Colo. Lee & Lady are well.*

*P.S Since neither the Northern or Southern posts of this day bring us any account of Howes fleet I am almost sure that he is gone to Charles Town*

**Letters of Delegates to Congress: Volume 7 May 1, 1777 - September 18, 1777  
John Adams to Abigail Adams Pages 492-493**

*August 17, 1777*

*Philadelphia August 17. 1777*

*My dearest Friend Sunday*

*Yesterday We had a cool Day, the Wind Easterly and cloudy, this Morning there is a brisk northeast Wind and cool Rain, which restores Us, to some Comfort. A Number of People died here with excessive Heat, besides others, who fell Sacrifices to their own Imprudence in drinking cold Water.*

*This Wind will oblige the Knight Errant and his Fleet, to go some where or other. We have had no Intelligence of it, since last Thursday week.*

*We have a Letter from G Schuyler. in which he "is not insensible of the Indignity of being call'd away, when an Action must soon take Place." But I hope, the People will not resent this Indignity, so as not to turn out. G Gates I hope, will be able to find Men, who will stand by him. Never was there a fairer opportunity, than now presents of ruining Burgoigne. By the same Letter, We have confused Hints, that an Attack has been made upon Fort Schuyler, and the Enemy repulsed.(1) The Letter seems to suppose, that he had written a fuller Account of it before. But no such Account has reached Us.*

*The Enemy at Niagara and Detroit, are endeavouring to seduce the Indians, to take up the Hatchet, but as yet, with little success. They seem determind to maintain their Neutrality. I read a Letter last Evening directed to Mr. Serjeant, and in his Absence to me from Mr. Clark a Delegate from N. Jersey who is gone Home to Elizabeth Town for his Health, giving a particular Account of Howes Army, in their late precipitate Retreat from Westfield. They were seized with the Utmost Terror, and thrown into the Utmost Confusion. They were so weak and sickly, and had gorged themselves so with fresh Meat, that they fell down in the Roads, many died, and were half buried, &c. &c. &c.*

*We have many new Members of Congress, among whom are Mr. Vandyke of Delaware, Mr. Jones of Virginia, and Mr. Lawrence of S. Carolina. This last Gentleman is a great acquisition- of the first Rank in his State, Lt. Governor, of ample Fortune, of great Experience, having been 20 Years in their assembly, of a clear Head and a firm Temper, of extensive Knowledge, and much Travel. He has hitherto appeared as good a Member, as any We ever had in Congress. I wish that all the States would imitate this Example and send their best Men. Vandyke is a Lawyer, and a very worthy Man, his Abilities very good and his Intensions very sincere. Mr. Jones also is a Lawyer, but has so lately come in that We have seen as yet no Exhibitions of him.*

**Letters of Delegates to Congress: Volume 7 May 1, 1777 - September 18, 1777  
William Paca to Thomas Johnson Page 517**

*August 19, 1777*

*Phila. 19 Aug. 1777*

*Dr. Sir,*

*I enclose you Genl. Washingtons Letter and doubt not you will make a proper Enquiry into the Arrest he complains of.(1) I wish the Artillery Corp & the 16 Regts. had been apportioned on the States that each State might have known what was it's Quota and the present difficulties in filling up those Corps prevented.*

*We have no Intelligence of Howe's Fleet. The Army we know for a Certainty is embarked. We begin to be apprehensive they have gone to South Carolina.*

*The Militia of Tryon County have had a very smart Engagement with Johnson & his Indians & a Body of British Troops. It is said the Militia consisted of 700. We lost about 100 men some of which are the most active leading Whigs in that County. The Enemy were defeated & lost fifty or sixty Indians and some of their best Officers. There was another Brush by a Party under Capt. Willet who drove another Party of the Enemy and took a considerable Booty. Genl. Schuyler writes that the van of Burgoyne's Army he is informed has moved forward to Saratoga. I wish our affairs in that Quarter bore a more pleasing Aspect. The New England States disgusted with Schuyler & his officers have been very slow in giving him Assistance. Gates perhaps will please them & get them to exert themselves.*

*S.C. (2) says he has wrote you fully and therefore I need not be more particular in my Intelligence. Pray what Success have we with our Salt Works?*

*Wishing you every Success and Happiness, I am, dear sir, yrs aftly.*

*W Paca*

**Letters of Delegates to Congress: Volume 7 May 1, 1777 - September 18, 1777**  
**Richard Henry Lee to Landon Carter? Pages 513-515**

**August 19 1777**

*My dear Sir, (1) Philadelphia 19th Augt. 1777*

*As it is always with pleasure that I obey your commands, so it is perfectly agreeable to me to make use of the opportunity offered by Mr. Butler of furnishing you with the present state of our affairs as well as I am able. Gen. Howe has thrown us all into the field of conjecture by his late embarkation, and various have been the opinions touching his destination. At present however, Many reasons concur to induce belief that he is gone to Charles Town in South Carolina, where unhappily for that place & for the Union in general, he may succeed. They are strong towards the sea, but all their fortifications are weak on the land side, and may be attacked with success in reverse. In fact, it does not seem likely that they can resist the great Land & Sea force that Mr. Howe has with him. It is not absolutely certain that he is gone to Charles Town, and therefore Gen. Washingtons army is obliged to remain inactive, a mere army of observation. This, added to a variety of other causes, gives Burgoyne an opportunity of figuring away in the North, and he uses the opportunity as might be expected from the abandoned servant of an abandoned Master. First he prevails with the people to remain with their Stocks on their plantations and [gives] protections to quiet their fears, immediately follow bands of Indians, some Canadians & Regulars, who scalp and murder all before them, neither age, sex, nor political character makes any difference. Men, women, children, whig, Tory, and Protectiontaker, all promiscuously feel the keen scalping knife and the murdering Tomahawk. This Burgoyne is a true Type of the Court he comes from; Howe & Carleton have some humanity. Very soon I hope his career will be stopt. Schuyler & St. Clair are ordered down to Head Quarters that an enquiry may be had into the loss of Ticonderoga &c. Gen. Gates by this time has joined the Northern Army as Commander of it Gates is able, and he is beloved in the Eastern Countries. The Men will now turn out. Morgans Corps, with some other Troops are sent up to check and chastise the inhuman Butchers of bloody Burgoyne. An affair has lately happened in that Quarter on the Mohock river that gives spirits to the people. Near Fort Stanwix a body of the enemy intending to beseige that place, were attackt by a party of Tryon County Militia under command of a General **Hackerman**. The General was wounded but bravely kept the ground & encouraged his men, several valuable gentlemen of that County were slain, but their enemies were totally defeated with great loss both of officers, men, & baggage. In the meantime the Commander of the Fort sallied out and did considerable execution upon 200 Regulars who made head against him. He brought off some artillery from the enemy, and a good deal of baggage.*

*I went the other day to see the Army, the main body of which is about 20 miles from this City. 2000 men are at Coryells ferry & Sullivan with 2000 more is placed at Morris Town. Old Putnam with 5000 occupies the heights of Peeks Kill on Hudsons river. This disposition was taken, to be in readiness to turn northward, or to defend this place, as Gen. Howes visit might*

*render necessary. I think the Army is a gallant one, well disciplined, clothed, armed (for they have all bayonets now) and sound in every respect-The Soldiers in good health and spirits, and every thing looks tout en Militaire. Among other curiosities there, I saw the young Marquis de la Fayette, a Nobleman of the first fortune and family in France, the favorite of Court and Country. He left behind him a most beautiful young wife, and all the soft enjoyments that such a situation, with an immense fortune in a polished Country can furnish to fight in American wilderness for American Liberty! After this can there be a Tory in the World? He has rank of Major General in the Continental Army & fights without pay. He is thirsty for glory but the Commissioners at Paris wish the General may restrain the arder of youth and not suffer his exposure but on some signal occasion. He is sensible, polite, and good natured. How this example ought to gall the worthless Nobility & Gentry of England, who meanly creap into the Tyrants service to destroy that liberty which a generous Frenchman quits every delight to defend thro every difficulty! Our intelligence from France is late in May, and tho we are not to expect immediate war in Europe, yet we shall assuredly receive substantial aid from thence. Both France & Spain are powerfully and rapidly arming, whilst the necessary attention to security agst such powerful neighbors, obliges England to incur great expences and prevents her efforts against us. The better opinion is, that the peace of Europe cannot continue a year. With their Fleet, the French spirit rises, for we yearn that when Lord Stormont lately said to the Minister of France "The peace cannot long continue, if America continues to draw supplies from France," he was answered "Nous ne desiron pas la guerre, et nous ne le craignon pas." The truth is, that both France & Spain are most heartily our friends and will give us every substantial aid, but directly going into the war, for which they are not yet ready. Dr. Price told a Gentleman in London the other day, that the Custom House books began to shew great deficiencies in point of duties, and a Ministerial Man said that nothing but the interposition of Providence could save G. Britain from destruction. But the Tyrant relies we hear, upon the desperate efforts that Howe and Cornwallis must make to redeem their "Bankrupt Honor." The Court of London, for purposes very obvious, encourages every kind of amusement and dissipation thro out England. By royal Authority Theatres are licenced in the formerly busy Manufacturing Towns of Birmingham, Sheffield &c &c. Lord Chatham is not dead, as was reported, but lives with better health than usual. He has been figuring lately in the House of Lords, where he advised an immediate peace with America, on any terms; assuring his Hearers, they had no more chance to conquer this Continent with the Forces they had, or could get, than he would have to conquer England with his Crutch. He said they might create distress along the Sea Cost, and seize the Towns there, but the longer they carried on the war the greater would be their disgrace, and the more certain their ruin. Good old Man. If Kings will be suffered in the World, why is it not insisted on that they shall attend to Wise and good counsellors!*

*I hope our friend Parker will soon be about salt making, and I further hope you will find time to assist him in the art of seperating and preparing the Purging Salt.*

*I have trespassed sufficiently on your time, and the little liesure that business allows me, begging therefore [my love?] to Doctor Steptoe I bid you heartily farewell, Richard Henry Lee*

*[P.S.] Poor Manly is certainly taken, and there is too much reason to fear the Fox is also retaken. They are yet much too powerful for us on the Sea. Manlys Frigate was very little*



*superior in force to the Fox, but he made her strike. He could not immediately fight a 44 gun ship. Remember me to all friends. -*

**Letters of Delegates to Congress: Volume 7 May 1, 1777 - September 18, 1777  
Council of Safety**

*Honor. Gentlemen, Philad. 22d August, 1777.*

*Your despatches of the 15th instant we had the honour of receiving, with so minute an account of the situation of our distressed country, and your efforts for its preservation, as you have been pleased to furnish. (1) We left nothing undone to procure the reinforcements which were in our opinion indispensably necessary for your safety. Van Cortlandt's and Livingston's battalions will be a seasonable relief, but Col. Morgan's corps of riflemen will, we flatter ourselves, be of decisive advantages.*

*The battles in **Tryon county** and at Bennington, so favourable to our affairs at the most critical juncture, will undoubtedly raise the spirits of our fellow citizens; and as New-Jersey is called upon for 1,000 men to garrison forts in the Highlands, with an express design to give the militia of our State an opportunity of repairing to the northern frontier and reinforcing the army there, (2) It is to be hoped General Burgoyne will meet with an effectual check, if not a total defeat.*

*General Howe's fleet were seen the 14th instant plying off the Capes of Virginia; what are his real intentions still remains an uncertainty. South Carolina is the only object worth his pursuit; but against such an enterprise the season seems to be an insurmountable obstacle. Should this however be the case, the army must look to the northward, for vain will it be to attempt to follow General Howe through the distant and unhealthy climes of the southern States, from which he can vanish at pleasure . . .*

**Letters of Delegates to Congress: Volume 7 May 1, 1777 - September 18, 1777  
James Duane to Philip Schuyler Pages 536-537**

August 23, 1777

My dear General Philad 23d Augt 1777 I am now to thank you for your kind and confidential favour of the Instt. (1)

With the papers transmitted me by Mr Jay they have and shall be seen by those whose good opinion deserve your Solicitude.

Your Conduct in my Judgement wants no Apology. Instead of Censure it merits thanks. Your Friends in Congress echo this Sentiment freely. Your Enemies relentless and bent on your Destruction woud willingly involve you in the Odium of loosing Ticonderoga. The Change of Command was not however founded on this principle but merely on the Representation of the Eastern States that their militia suspicious of your military Character woud not turn out in Defence of New York while you presided in the Northern Department. So Confident were they in these Assertions and such from your Own representations was the gloomy Aspect of our Affairs there, that the Southern members were alarmed, and we thought it prudent not to attempt to Stem the Torrent. It was however agreed and declared, as I hinted before, that the Eastern

prejudices against you were the only motive to your recall, and it was understood that you might take your time in coming down. Indeed to have ordered otherwise, at so critical a Time, wou'd have been inhuman considering your family, fortune and Influence in that Country. Your Resolution to stay & exert yourself while she remains in such imminent danger is worthy of a Virtuous, brave and patriotic Citizen. All your Friends wish that fortune may put it in your power to give some signal Proof of the only military Talent which you have not Evidenced in the Course of your Command for want of an Opportunity. They all pronounce that this woud put your Enemies to Silence and to Shame and elevate you to the highest Rank among the American Commanders.

The Application from the Eastern Generals for your Continuance in the Department, and the respectable Reinforcement from New Hampshire which so palpably contradict the Assertions which were the Basis of your Removal are no small Occasion of Triumph to such of us as predicted that you woud be supported, and will not readily be forgotten. Probably a few weeks will give a decisive and fortunate turn to our Affairs in the North. The Loss already sustained by the Enemy must be severely felt, and Mr Burgoine's Temerity cannot fail of exposing him to inextricable Embarrasment. Shoud his Army be cut off it will be a capital stroke indeed. With God's blessing our Western frontier will be safe for this Season. We long impatiently to hear from our gallant Friend Arnold. We have much too to expect from the Northward. Give us the earliest Intelligence. Every mouth is full of the Praises of **Herkimer**, Stark, Gansevort & Willet. They have established their Reputations effectually.

I beg you'll present my Compts to all our Friends. Excuse my not writing sooner; I saw no messenger I could trust which is the only Reason. Believe me to be with the greatest Respect Dr Genl., your most obedient hum servt. Jas Duane

[P.S.] *Col. Duer joins in respectful Complimts*

**Letters of Delegates to Congress: Volume 7 May 1, 1777 - September 18, 1777**  
**James Duane to Philip Schuyler Pages 499-500**

*August 23 1777*

*My dear General Philad 23d Augt 1777 I am now to thank you for your kind and confidential favour of the Instt. (1)*

*With the papers transmitted me by Mr Jay they have and shall be seen by those whose good opinion deserve your Solitude.*

*Your Conduct in my Judgement wants no Apology. Instead of Censure it merits thanks. Your Friends in Congress echo this Sentiment freely. Your Enemies relentless and bent on your Destruction woud willingly involve you in the Odium of loosing Ticonderoga. The Change of Command was not however founded on this principle but merely on the Representation of the Eastern States that their militia suspicious of your military Character woud not turn out in Defence of New York while you presided in the Northern Department. So Confident were they in these Assertions and such from your Own representations was the gloomy Aspect of our Affairs there, that the Southern members were alarmed, and we thought it prudent not to attempt to Stem the Torrent. It was however agreed and declared, as I hinted before, that the Eastern prejudices against you were the only motive to your recall, and it was understood that you might take your time in coming down. Indeed to have ordered otherwise, at so critical a Time, wou'd have been*

*inhuman considering your family, fortune and Influence in that Country. Your Resolution to stay & exert yourself while she remains in such imminent danger is worthy of a Virtuous, brave and patriotic Citizen. All your Friends wish that fortune may put it in your power to give some signal Proof of the only military Talent which you have not Evidenced in the Course of your Command for want of an Opportunity. They all pronounce that this would put your Enemies to Silence and to Shame and elevate you to the highest Rank among the American Commanders.*

*The Application from the Eastern Generals for your Continuance in the Department, and the respectable Reinforcement from New Hampshire which so palpably contradict the Assertions which were the Basis of your Removal are no small Occasion of Triumph to such of us as predicted that you would be supported, and will not readily be immediately on Any terms, assuring them they have no more chance to conquer this Country with the force they have or can get, than he to conquer Britain with his Crutch, and that the longer they contend the more certain will be their ruin and disgrace.(3) The good old Man, instead of being dead as was reported, is, it seems, recovered to better health and revived powers.*

*Pray my dear Sir urge on our Works near the Falls of James River, we want heavy cannon extremely-And it would be greatly to our advantage if Copper and Calamine could be found in quantity sufficient to furnish us with Brass.*

*My compliment to Mrs. Page.*

*Farewell dear Sir Affectionately yours.*

*P.S. If Government was now and then to stimulate the Managers of the Salt Works, might we not hope for a supply of that necessary. I fear Howe is gone to Charles Town in South Carolina. If so, against such a Land and Sea force no effectual resistance can be made \_\_\_\_ curse on his Canvas Wings.*

**Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789**  
**WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 3, 1777 Pages 709**

**September 3 1777**

*. . . On motion, Ordered, That the Board of War take into consideration the merits of Brigadiers Stark and **Herkimer**, and of Colonel Gansevoort and Lieutenant Colonel Willet, and to report to Congress what testimonies of public gratitude should be shewn to these officers for their late signal exertions in the defence of their country . . .*

**Letters of Delegates to Congress: Volume 7 May 1, 1777 - September 18, 1777**  
**James Duane to Robert R. Livingston Page 598**

*September 3 1777*

*My dear Sir [September 3? 1777](1) I recd your favour of the written at a time our dear natale Solum was in the greatest distress, and our Friends had every thing disagreeable to expect. Thro' the Bravery & good Conduct of **Herkimer**, Gaansvoort, & Willet, our Western Hemisphere is changed, the Clouds are dispersd, and we can view it without discomposure. To the Northward too the prospect brightens. The compleat Victory gaind by Stark with his militia over the large Detachment of Burgoine's Army sent to savage our North Eastern Frontier, cannot, under Heaven, fail of being productive of a variety of good Consequences. It has undoubtedly disappointed and depressed our Enemies; not less than it has encouraged and elated our*

*Friends; And very probably deliverd our State from Ravage and Destruction which a vigorous Exertion of the Enemy, unsustained as you then were, might easily have affected. Let us, my dear Sir, adore most thankfully that gracious Being whose Interposition on this trying Occasion seems to have been So manifest in our favour. At the same time the brave Men who so happily conducted those several Enterprizes ought to be forgotten.(2) On the Contrary they ought to experience the Gratitude of their Country by sensible Effects. Herkimer first reversd the gloomy Scene and with a Courage and perseverance that do him infinite Honour. But it is his misfortune to want the powers of Description, and we have a most lame and imperfect account of this great Event-great I call it, since, from thet severe Loss the Savages sustained, it will not only give peace to our State with respect to the Indians but probably overawe all the Indians to the Southward. In this Light it appeard to General Washington who with a Benevolence peculiar to himself lamented that a more distinct Relation was not obtained of this action, that the merit of the Commander & the militia might be properly understood by the world, & the former rewarded by his Country. I recommend this matter to your attention and any Letter you communicate for the purpose shall have its' full weight. It is difficult to fix a Reward for Herkimer. He does not want a Continental Command nor money. The Thanks of Congress and a sword will be readily granted. Can you think of any thing more suitable? (3) Gansevoort & Willet are in the highest Degree of Fame We have had such a train of disgrace at all our Forts, & lost them so unexpectedly-Let me except Sullivan's Island-that the brave Defence of Fort Schuyler has made the deepest Impression. The Reward due to these Gent. is not yet determined, but it is generally talked to raise Gansevoort to the Rank of Brigr. General, & Willet to that of Colonel.(4) Stark will also be provided for tho' he is something under the Clouds for refusing to serve under General Lincoln to whom he refusd the Command of the Troops, assigning as a Reason that Congress had done him Injustice in not promoting him.(5) General Schuyler prevailed on him to submit to Lincoln: but before that General's Arrival at Bennington he took Care to attack and defeat the Enemy. You'll allow this to be a handsome Apology for intemperate Expressions.*

*Doubtless you are anxious to know the Situation of the two grand armies. General Howe's main body lies South East of the Head of Elk about two miles. An Advancd party of about 2000 lie about the Head of Elk. General Washington's main Army lies on the Heights of Wilmington; an advanced party of 1000 picked Regular Troops and a number of militia hang on the Enemy's advanced party. The grounds about Wilmington are tolerably advantageous but the Country between that & Philad does not admit of any strong Post. Take for the rest an Extract of Hamilton's Letter to me of last Saturday. "We must rely wholly upon our Numbers; the goodness of our Troops and our own good managemt of them. I see clearly we must either beat the Enemy in a general Action, or they will carry their point with respect to Philadelphia. It will not be very difficult. I am in hopes, to give them a handsome drubbing if we only have time to bring our whole army together assisted by 5 or 6000 militia well embodied, and I think we shall not want time for the purpose." I only add that there have been some slight Skirmishes & our Army have taken about 70 Prisoners without loosing more than 2 or 3 men. About a dozen Deserters have come in. By every Account a powerful militia from Pensa., Delaware, Maryland & Virginia are collecting to Join General Washington; so that numbers will not be wanting. People appear here to be in perfect security-not a family has movd. The Conjecture is that General Howe will not risk a Battle. His situation, whatever may have been his Hopes, is certainly much worse than when he was at Somerset Court house, & ours infinitely better on every Account. He has issued another Proclamation to try the Affections, or, as Ld North expressed it, to sound the Country.(6) It has no Effect. Nothing but a superiority in Arms will now serve his purpose. John*

*Dickinson is once more in the field & with George Reade accompanies Caesar Rodney the General of the Delaware Militia. The want of Horses & Desire of securing a Retreat by Lines or Forts are supposed to detain General Howe which gives General Washington immense advantages; as he has not yet all his regular Troops assembled.*

*Present my affectionate Regards to Mrs Livingston and all our Friends at both Mannors & believe me with the utmost Respect, Dear Sir, Your affectionate & most obed huml Servant,  
Jas Duane*

*P.S. Col. Wilson, Mr Morris, Mr Duer, the President &c &c present their Respects to you.*

**Letters of Delegates to Congress: Volume 7 May 1, 1777 - September 18, 1777  
James Duane to Philip Schuyler Pages 536-537**

August 23, 1777

My dear General Philad 23d Augt 1777 I am now to thank you for your kind and confidential favour of the Instt. (1)

With the papers transmitted me by Mr Jay they have and shall be seen by those whose good opinion deserve your Sollicitude.

Your Conduct in my Judgement wants no Apology. Instead of Censure it merits thanks. Your Friends in Congress echo this Sentiment freely. Your Enemies relentless and bent on your Destruction woud willingly involve you in the Odium of loosing Ticonderoga. The Change of Command was not however founded on this principle but merely on the Representation of the Eastern States that their militia suspicious of your military Character woud not turn out in Defence of New York while you presided in the Northern Department. So Confident were they in these Assertions and such from your Own representations was the gloomy Aspect of our Affairs there, that the Southern members were alarmed, and we thought it prudent not to attempt to Stem the Torrent. It was however agreed and declard, as I hinted before, that the Eastern prejudices against you were the only motive to your recall, and it was understood that you might take your time in coming down. Indeed to have ordered otherwise, at so critical a Time, woud have been inhuman considering your family, fortune and Influence in that Country. Your Resolution to stay & exert yourself while she remains in such imminent danger is worthy of a Virtuous, brave and patriotic Citizen. All your Friends wish that fortune may put it in your power to give some signal Proof of the only military Talent which you have not Evidenced in the Course of your Command for want of an Opportunity. They all pronounce that this woud put your Enemies to Silence and to Shame and elevate you to the highest Rank among the American Commanders.

The Application from the Eastern Generals for your Continuance in the Department, and the respectable Reinforcement from New Hampshire which so palpably contradict the Assertions which were the Basis of your Removal are no small Occasion of Triumph to such of us as predicted that you wou'd be supported, and will not readily be . . .

**Letters of Delegates to Congress: Volume 8 September 19, 1777 - January 31, 1778  
James Duane to Philip Schuyler Pages 52-53**

October 5 1777

Dear General York Town 5t Octr. 1777 I did not receive your favour of the 16th Instant 'till this day. In the Interim Major Troup arrived with an Account of the Battle between the American & British Armies near Saraghtoga on the 19th and of some advantages gaind by Col. Brown near the Lakes. It amounts at least to a Check of General Burgoine in his Career towards Albany. I am however sensible that the Fate of the British Army can not be decided but at the Hazard of another Battle: the Event of which I wait with an anxious Heart; hoping however that with the Blessing of Providence the superiority which we have in numbers may be improv'd to the salvation of my dear Country

General Howe has had the good Fortune to make himself master of Philada. without our Army's being able to give him a second battle or oppose His progress. A Deluge of Rain which fell the Instant the two armies were ready to engage a second time, and which besides completely destroying General Washington's ammuniton, reduced him to a necessity of retiring to some distance from the Enemy- gave General Howe the wishd for Opportunity of marching towards Philad. uninterrupted; and the dispersion of General Waine's division (which had been left to harrass the Enemy in the Rear while our main body was endeavoring by forced marches to present themselves in the front, to dispute the passage of the Schuylkill) suddenly effected by a Successful Attack of a superior party of the Enemy in the night, in which he was in fact routed tho' without any considerable Loss; left it in Gl. Howe's power to improve to the utmost Advantage the good Fortune he had Just before deriv'd from the Deluge. General Washington is reinforcing his Army by an Accession of Troops from the Southward and New Jersey, in addition to General McDougald's Brigade. His Troops have not been much diminished by Battle, but have suffered extremely from the fateigue of Severe marching. Indeed I am of Opinion he must in the Course of a week have more men F than he commanded when he went out to meet G Howe, While all accounts agree that in the bloody battle of the Brandywine the Enemy lost in killed and wounded 1970; besides Desertions & those who fell in skirmishes before & since. General Washington's Army is mov'd down near German Town. When his Reinforcements are arrived he will endeavour to repair his past misfortunes & I sincerely hope I maybe able to send you some more agreeable Intelligence than At present in my power.

General St Clair is neither tried nor Arraigned. How can it be expected in the critical situation of our Affairs: & when his Hearing is to be preceeded by the Report of a Committee who are to collect materials from A Variety of distant Sources for the purpose? With respect to yourself I think you have determined wisely: I advise you however to write a civil Letter to Congress requesting them to give you a Copy of your Charge and assign a day for the Hearing, hinting that a delay in your painful Situation is a Severity which you neither merit from your Country, nor have any Reason to expect from Congress.(1)

Give my Compl's to Maj. H.B. Livingston & tell him he is promoted to the Rank of Lieut Colonel as is Col. Troup for the news from the northern Army.(2) I shoud first have said that a Monument is ordered to be erected in Honour of the Memory of Genl **Herkimer**-Genl Stark advanced to the Rank of Brig. Genl. in the Continental service. Gansevoort has the Thanks of Congress; & is appointed Col. Commodant of Fort Schuyler-Willet the Thanks of Congress & a Sword.

Present my Compl's to Mrs. Schuyler, the young Ladies & all our Friends, and believe me to be, Dear Sir, with great Regard, Your most Obed & very huml Servant, Jas Duane

P.S. What became of my Crop? Were the Barrack's or Barn finished? Where is J Ellice? I have not a word about my Farm; & am banished (contrary to the promises of them who prevailed on me to come to this State) already six tedious months. Am I never to be relieved?

**Letters of Delegates to Congress: Volume 8 September 19, 1777 - January 31, 1778  
Commissioners at Paris Pages 61-62**

October 6, 1777

(In Committee for foreign Affairs) Honorable Gentlemen. York Town Pennsylvania Octr. 6th 1777

Since ours to you by return of the Packet from New Hamshire and duplicates by Mr. McCreary from Maryland, we have not written, nor have we received any of your favors during the last two months, except a letter of old date (Apr. 29th) signed by Mr. Deane & Doctr. Lee.(1) Capt. Hammond being not yet arrived, altho he sailed in April, makes it too probable that he has either fallen into the hands of the enemy or miscarried at sea. Two reasons have prevented us from writing hitherto-because from your assurances we had room to expect a monthly packet, and because the progressive state of the war gave us reason to look daily for some more decisive event than had happened, and which might warrant the expence of a particular packet, as the usual conveyance by merchant vessels is almost intirely stopt by the number & vigilance of the British cruisers.

We shall now give you an accurate detail of the war in the northern & middle departments where alone it has raged since our last. You were before apprized of the evacuation of Tyconderoga and of the retreat of our army from thence towards Albany. Genl. Bourgoin was rapid in pursuit of his successes, and pressed quickly on as far as Fort Edward upon Hudsons' River about 20 miles above Albany. Here his progress was interrupted by the American army which halted & was reenforced a little below him. This circumstance with the following events have continued that interruption, and bid fair to render abortive at least the great advantages expected by our Enemies from their first successes on the Lakes. The better to effect his purpose, Genl. Bourgoine had detached General St. Leiger, with a body of regular troops, Canadians and Indians, by the Oneida Lake & Wood Creek to take fort Schuyler, (formerly Stanwix) and to make an impression along the Mohawk river. This part of the plan has been totally defeated by the Bravery of Genl. Harkimer with the Tryon County militia, and by the gallant defence of Fort Schuyler by Coll. Gansevort & Lt. Coll. Willet. The former of these met the Enemy in the field, defeated them, and killed a great number of their Indian Allies. This defeat being obtained by militia, they dispersed as usual, and left the enemy to collect & lay seige to Fort Schuyler; which was defended with great gallantry by the two Officers above mentioned, untill the approach of Genl. Arnold with a body of troops occasioned the enemy to raise the seige of that fortress, & retreat with great precipitation, leaving their baggage, ammuniton, provisions & some artillery, wch. fell into our hands. Another body of troops was detached by Genl. Bourgoine under command of Lt. Coll. Baum to the Eastward, for the purpose of collecting horses to mount the Troopers, provisions & Teams for the use of the army. This detachment was met, attacked &

defeated by the brave Genl. Stark and the New Hampshire Militia at a place called Bennington, and now rendered famous by the total overthrow of 1500 regular troops (posted behind works & fortified with cannon) by 2000 militia. The two wings of Mr. Bourgoin being thus cut off his body remained inactive until the 19th of last month when he moved on to attack Genl. Gates who commands the northern Army and was well posted at the Heights above Behmus's. The Consequence of this attack you will see related by Genl Gates himself among the inclosures, as well as the account of our successes in the rear of the enemy on the Lakes George & Champlain by Col. Brown who had been detached for the purpose by Genl. Lincoln, who is also in Genl. Bourgoin's Rear with a strong body of troops. Thus surrounded on all sides, with little prospect of safe retreat, and a strong army in front growing stronger every day by reenforcemts we hope e'er long to be able to give you information of definitive success over the British army in that quarter. An aid of Genl. Gates who brought these last accounts tells us that, by the concurring testimony of prisoners, deserters, & our own people who have escaped from the enemy their loss could not be less than 1000 or 1200 Men, in killed, wounded & missing, and that Genl. Bourgoine himself was wounded in the shoulder by a rifle-ball. In the middle department the war has been less favorable to us, as you will see by what follows. About the middle of Augst. the British Fleet appeared in Cheseapeak Bay and landed Genl. Howe's army at the head of Elke, about 50 miles from Philadelphia. Genl. Washington's army, which had crossed the Delaware on the embarkation of the British army and the appearance of the Fleet off the capes of that . . .

Wednesday September 3, 1777

Journals of the Continental Congress Page 709

September 4, 1777

*On motion, Ordered, That the Board of War take into consideration the merits of Brigadiers Stark and Herkimer, and of Colonel **Gansevoort** and Lieutenant Colonel Willet, and to report to Congress what testimonies of public gratitude should be shewn to these officers for their late signal exertions in the defence of their country.*

Journals of Continental Congress Pages 770-772



October 12, 1777

*Resolved, That the governor and council of New York, be desired to erect a monument, at continental expence, of the value of 500 dollars, to the memory of the late Brigadier **Herkimer**, [commanding the militia of Tryon county, in the state of New York,]<sup>2</sup> who was killed fighting gallantly in defence of the liberties of these states.*

[Note 2: 2 Words in brackets were added by John Hancock.]

*Resolved, That a letter be written to General Gates, informing him, that Congress highly approve of the prowess and behaviour of the troops under his command, in their late gallant repulse of the enemy under General Burgoyne.<sup>3</sup>*

[Note 3: 3 This report, dated October 1 and 2, and in the writing of Richard Peters, is in the Papers of the Continental Congress, No. 147, I, folio 349.]

*Resolved, That the thanks of Congress be presented to General Stark of the New Hampshire militia, and the*

Page 771

*officers and troops under his command, for their brave and successful attack upon, [and signal victory over,]<sup>1</sup> the enemy in their lines at Bennington: and that Brigadier Stark be appointed a brigadier in the army of the United States.*

[Note 1: 1 Words in brackets were added by John Hancock.]

*On the last clause, the yeas and nays were required and taken, as follows:*

[edit in the table]

*So it was resolved in the affirmative.*

*Resolved, That the thanks of Congress be given to Colonel Gansevoort, and to the officers and troops under his command, for the bravery and perseverance which they have so conspicuously manifested in the defence of Fort Schuyler:*

*That Colonel Gansevoort be appointed colonel commandant of the fort he has so gallantly defended.*

*That Congress have a just sense of the distinguished*

[Note 1: 1 The original report here added: "*subject to the Orders of the Commander in Chief in the Northern Department.*"]

Page 772

*merit of Lieutenant Colonel Willet, for a repeated instance of his bravery and conduct in his late successful sally on the enemy investing Fort Schuylers; [and that the commissary general of military stores be directed to procure an elegant sword, and present the same to Lieutenant Colonel Willet, in the name of these United States.]<sup>1</sup>*

[Note 1: 1 Words in brackets were added by John Hancock.]

*That a Letter be written to General Gates informing him that Congress highly approve of the Behaviour of the Troops under his Command in their late gallant and spirited Repulse of the Enemy under General Burgoyne.<sup>2</sup>*

[Note 2: 2 This paragraph was struck out. In margin, Peters has written: "*Qy. if not reported before?*" See page 770, ante.]