

Letter Bk. I. been expended in building Forts & keeping Troops on the Frontiers of that Province the Settlers have for many Score Miles deserted their Houses & retired to the more populous parts of that Colony. Several of the small Forts that were built in Virg<sup>a</sup> & Pens<sup>a</sup> have been attacked by large Parties of Indians, & some reduced; Capt. Mercier of the Virg<sup>a</sup> Regiment with a Detachment of 60 Men from Fort Cumberland was fallen upon & defeated about a fortnight ago many Miles on this Side Fort Cumberland; the Captain, His Lieutenant & 15 Men were killed & left to the Enemy the Rest of the Detachment retired to a little Stoccardo Fort near Cacapetion which runs into Potowmack. two of Capt Dagworthy's Company that were with the abovementioned Detachment were found tied to Trees & their Bodies most horribly mangled, it is supposed that they were tied while living & put to the most cruel Death. Ensign Bacon of Capt Dagworthy's Company was scalped as he was returning from Colo Cresap's to the Fort; & one of Colo Cresap's Sons who put himself at the head of a party of Voluntiers & went in pursuit of the Indians is also killed. At present the Garrison at Fort Cumberland consists of no more than 150 Men, 30 of the Carolina Company & the Rest of the Virg<sup>a</sup> Regiment which consists of about 450. I cannot learn that the Pens<sup>a</sup> Assembly have as yet come to any Resolution neither can I hear certainly whether the Virginians have determined to raise any more Troops. Governor Dinwiddie has informed me that the Commissioners which he had sent to the Cherokee Nation advise him that those Indians make strong professions of Friendship but will not take up the Hatchet against the French or join any of the English Troops till we have built a strong Fort among them for the Protection & Security of their Wives & Children; in this Governor Dinwiddie has promised to gratify them & sent a Command of 60 Men to build such a Fort. The French it seems have made a Settlement within a few Days March of their Town & been tampering with them to declare ag<sup>st</sup> Us; I hope this Step however will prevent that for the present, tho unless His Majesty's Arms are successful this Campaign I am afraid these people will not be long kept firm in our Interest. We have for some time past been in pain for Oswego which the French it was said were preparing to attack before the Garrison could be reinforced or receive fresh Supplies of Provisions, of which they were in want. but as we have not received any late News from that Quarter I hope the Danger is over for the present, & I hear that the Regiments are now on their march thither. Lord Loudon we are told is coming over with some more Regiments, their speedy Arrival is prayed for by all His Majesty's American Subjects. &c.