

(front cover)

# The Letters of George Plater

David G. Brown

The Letters  
of  
George Plater

Compiled and Annotated  
by  
David G. Brown

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## Preface

This collection of George Plater's letters is a companion publication to the book, *George Plater of Sotterley*, published in 2014 by the Chesapeake Book Company.

Like all gentlemen of his age, Plater relied on letters as his primary connection with distant family, friends and acquaintances. As strange as it may seem in the interconnected twenty-first century, letters were the only way to stay connected other than word-of-mouth news conveyed by traveling friends. Letters are also a primary source for historians trying to understand an individual's character and thinking.

Fortunately, some of George Plater's letters have survived the two centuries since his death. These fall into two categories: letters he wrote in various official capacities, for example, as Continental Congress delegate, senate president or governor, and his personal letters.

Many of his official letters are available in original records and collections of documents. But even in this group many no longer exist. Some of those missing are historically significant. An example would be the report he sent to the governor and Assembly in his capacity as president of the Maryland Convention that ratified the U.S. Constitution. When this report was received, the Maryland Senate instructed the governor and council to preserve it. Nevertheless, it has been lost. Other lost official letters reported on important developments with which Plater was involved at the Continental Congress. For example, in October 1780, Congress passed a resolution calling for the western lands to be divided into separate states that would eventually be admitted to the young

nation. As this was a major step toward congressional acceptance of Maryland's views on the western lands, it is inconceivable that Plater and other Maryland delegates did not report it to Annapolis. Since their letter has been lost, we are missing an important source on the role Maryland delegates played in its passage.

The personal letters that have survived indicate that Plater corresponded with many of his colleagues. Unfortunately, very few of these letters exist. The largest number are letters he wrote to Gouverneur Morris, that have been preserved in the Gouverneur Morris Papers in the Special Collections department of the Columbia University Library. Not surprisingly but most unfortunately, no letters exchanged with his wife or children have survived.

This compilation contains all of Plater's letters that have been found as of the time of its publication.

## Letters of George Plater

### Calendar

This book contains Plater's letters in chronological order, noting the date and recipient. An asterisk (\*) after the date indicates a joint letter with other signers. The source for each follows the letter. An (M) after the title of the letter indicates that a manuscript copy of the original letter has been reviewed and transcribed. In transcribing manuscripts, [square brackets] indicate words that were unclear or illegible, or comments by the transcriber. (Parentheses) are used where brackets appeared in the original manuscripts. The title, source and notes for each letter are in Times New Roman font; the text of the letter is in Century Gothic font.

- |                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. August 21, 1759    | Capt. Kinsey Johns      |
| 2. June 22, 1766      | Governor Horatio Sharpe |
| 3. June 30, 1774      | James Russell           |
| 4. January 7, 1775    | James Russell           |
| 5. March 5, 1776      | Council of Safety       |
| 6. March 26, 1776     | Council of Safety       |
| 7. June 8, 1778*      | Thomas Johnson          |
| 8. June 22, 1778*     | Maryland Assembly       |
| 9. June 26, 1778*     | Thomas Johnson          |
| 10. Aug. 18, 1778     | Thomas Johnson          |
| 11. August 25, 1778   | Thomas Johnson          |
| 12. September 3, 1778 | Thomas Johnson          |
| 13. October 6, 1778   | Gouverneur Morris       |
| 14. October 25, 1778  | Gouverneur Morris       |
| 15. November 1, 1778  | Gouverneur Morris       |
| 16. December 4, 1778  | Gouverneur Morris       |
| 17. December 10, 1778 | Gouverneur Morris       |

18. December 11, 1778	Gouverneur Morris
19. December 27, 1778	Gouverneur Morris
20. January 10, 1779	Gouverneur Morris
21. January 24, 1779	Gouverneur Morris
22. March 2, 1779*	Maryland Assembly
23. March 17, 1779	Board of Treasury
24. March 30, 1779*	Thomas Johnson
25. April 6, 1779*	Thomas Johnson
26. May 11, 1779*	Thomas Johnson
27. May 18, 1779*	Thomas Johnson
28. May 23, 1779	George Washington
29. June 1, 1779*	Thomas Johnson
30. June 8, 1779*	Thomas Johnson
31. June 30, 1779	Gouverneur Morris
32. July 23, 1779	Gouverneur Morris
33. August 6, 1779	Gouverneur Morris
34. August 10, 1779	Gouverneur Morris
35. September 4, 1779	Gouverneur Morris
36. December 29, 1779*	Thomas Sim Lee
37. January 5, 1780*	Thomas Sim Lee
38. January 20, 1780	Edward Lloyd
39. February 1, 1780	Thomas Sim Lee
40. February 23, 1780*	Thomas Sim Lee
41. March 7, 1780*	Thomas Sim Lee
42. April 4, 1780	Thomas Sim Lee
43. April 12, 1780	Maryland Council
44. May 11, 1780	Thomas Sim Lee
45. June 4, 1780	Gouverneur Morris
46. July 17, 1780	Gouverneur Morris
47. July 29, 1780	Gouverneur Morris
48. September 26, 1780*	Thomas Sim Lee
49. September 26, 1780*	Governor and Council
50. October 3, 1780*	Maryland Council
51. October 9, 1780*	Thomas Sim Lee
52. October 10, 1780*	John H. Stone
53. November 6, 1780	Thomas Sim Lee

54. November 13, 1780	Thomas Sim Lee
55. December 5, 1780*	Maryland Council
56. December 5, 1780	Thomas Sim Lee
57. December 26, 1780	Thomas Sim Lee
58. January 31, 1781	Gouverneur Morris
59. March 17, 1781	Gouverneur Morris
60. March 26, 1781	Gouverneur Morris
61. April 6, 1781	Gouverneur Morris
62. April 16, 1781	Gouverneur Morris
63. May 6, 1781	Gouverneur Morris
64. May 16, 1781*	Thomas Sim Lee
65. May 31, 1781	Gouverneur Morris
66. June 1, 1781*	Maryland Delegates
67. June 20, 1781	Gouverneur Morris
68. June 27, 1781*	George Washington
69. July 16, 1781	Gouverneur Morris
70. July 30, 1781	Gouverneur Morris
71. August, 1781	Gouverneur Morris
72. October 8, 1781	Gouverneur Morris
73. October 26, 1781	Gouverneur Morris
74. November 12, 1781	Gouverneur Morris
75. November 16, 1781	Gouverneur Morris
76. December 3, 1781	Gouverneur Morris
77. c. December 22, 1781	Gouverneur Morris
78. January 3, 1782	Gouverneur Morris
79. February 18, 1782	Gouverneur Morris
80. March 2, 1782	Gouverneur Morris
81. April 7, 1782	Gouverneur Morris
82. May 10, 1782	Gouverneur Morris
83. May 17, 1782	Gouverneur Morris
84. May 19, 1782	Gouverneur Morris
85. June 9, 1782	Gouverneur Morris
86. July 15, 1782	Gouverneur Morris
87. August 12, 1782	Gouverneur Morris
88. September 2, 1782	Gouverneur Morris
89. September 23, 1782	Gouverneur Morris

90. October 27, 1782	Gouverneur Morris
91. November 12, 1782	Gouverneur Morris
92. December 6, 1782	Gouverneur Morris
93. March 12, 1783	Gouverneur Morris
94. May 4, 1783	Gouverneur Morris
95. July 7, 1783	Gouverneur Morris
96. August 24, 1783	Gouverneur Morris
97. September 14, 1783	Gouverneur Morris
98. October 6, 1783	Gouverneur Morris
99. November 2, 1783	Gouverneur Morris
100. November 10, 1783	Gouverneur Morris
101. December 5, 1783	Gouverneur Morris
102. January 11, 1784	Gouverneur Morris
103. March 10, 1784	Gouverneur Morris
104. April 24, 1784	Gouverneur Morris
105. June 13, 1784	Gouverneur Morris
106. October 20, 1784	George Washington
107. January, 1785	Gouverneur Morris
108. January 20, 1785	Gouverneur Morris
109. July 4, 1785	William Fitzhugh to George Washington
110. October 20, 1785	Gouverneur Morris
111. June 20, 1786	Gouverneur Morris
112. July 30, 1786	Gouverneur Morris
113. September 16, 1786	Gouverneur Morris
114. April 19, 1787	Gouverneur Morris
115. July 10, 1787	Gouverneur Morris
116. December 3, 1787	Richard Potts
117. December 13, 1787	Gouverneur Morris
118. January 10, 1788	Unknown recipient
119. November 17, 1788	Gouverneur Morris
120. May 30, 1789	George Washington
121. August 31, 1789	George Washington
122. November 20, 1789	George Washington
123. July 2, 1790	Gouverneur Morris
124. November 23, 1791	Nathaniel Ramsey

125. November 28, 1791      William Humphreys  
126. December 15, 1791      John Henry

Correspondence of Elizabeth Rousby Plater

127. February 25, 1782      Letter to Gouverneur Morris  
128. November 28, 1782      Letter to Gouverneur Morris  
129. November 10, 1783      Note to Gouverneur Morris  
130. June 4, 1786              Note to Gouverneur Morris

## The Letters

### 1. George Plater to Capt. Kinsey Johns – August 21, 1759 (M)

Calvert County Aug. 21st 1759

Dear Sir,

Inclosed I send you your Bill for £95..18..6. and am ashamed you have waited so long, but remember it is partly your Fault. I go to London [via] Johnstown, and believe me should not be glader to see as my Man in Maryland than yourself. If I should not have that Pleasure, permit me to make my best wishes for you and yours, and assure that I am with great respect.

Dear Sir

Your most obedient humble servant

Geo. Plater

Source: Maryland Hall of Records, Special Collections, SC 5458.

Notes: Johnstown, today called St. Johns, in Antigua, was in the eighteenth century Britain's gateway port to the Caribbean. It appears Kinsey Johns was an officer in the colonial militia as was Plater. Johns was subsequently the Registrar of Wills in Calvert County.

2. George Plater to Governor Horatio Sharpe – June 22, 1766

Sir,

By this Messenger your Excellency will receive the Proceedings of our Court relating to the Trial and Condemnation of a Slave the Property of Mr. Hugh Hopewell, his crime not being of a very heinous Nature, and his Master desirous of saving him as it was his first Offence, and he a very valuable Fellow, I am induced to Solicit your Excellency's Pardon for him. I am not fond of having Rogues escape Punishment, but on the Contrary should rather choose they should Suffer as Examples to others, particularly Negroes, among whom Villainy and Roguery is but too Common. Yet on this occasion I must hope your Excellency will grant what is desired.

I am with great Regard your Excellency's  
Obedient and Obliged humble Servant

Geo. Plater

22<sup>nd</sup> June 1766

Source: Archives of Maryland, Vol. XXXII, page 158.

Note: Hugh Hopewell was a friend and near neighbor of George Plater.

3. George Plater to James Russell, Merchant, London – June 30,  
1774 (M)

Maryland June 30th, 1774

Dear Sir

Your kind Favors by Captains Eden and Coulson are now before me. The latter with some Goods [illegible] for which be pleased to accept my Thanks. I am sorry that Times are such here as to prevent ordering what I most ardently wish and desire, to make you Remittances on the Hannah and [illegible] Accounts but will do my Endeavors to comply with your Request as soon as possible. Tho' the Appearances of things are but bad and I fear will be worse. You will no Doubt have [illegible] accounts of what is [proposing] here [in nature] of Nonimportation and Nonexportation and the like. God send us better Times. Our crops Tob.o in this Part of the Country were so much injured in the House that we lost half. Coulson brings you nine Hogsheads of mine which hope will meet a [rising] Price, at least better than last year, for at that Rate Tob.o is not worth making. I wish sincerely I could have shipped more in him. I have ordered my Taylor to make me a Suit of Cloathes, and apply to you, which hope you will answer, and I beg the Favor of you to ship them as soon as possible, [lest] our nonimportation Scheme should take Place and prevent. Mrs. Plater joins me in sincere Regards to y.ou and your lady and I am

[Dear Sir] Your sincere Friend and Humble Servant

Geo. Plater

Received Aug. [11] 1774 via Capt. Coulson

Source: Virginia Colonial Records Project, Coutts & Co. Russell Papers, UVA Alderman Library, Reel 556, bundle 15.

Notes: James Russell was one of the more important merchants in London handling trade with the Chesapeake. The letter indicates that Plater shipped tobacco to Russell for sale in London and also purchased goods through him. This was a typical relationship for many large planters who sold tobacco on consignment through London merchants. From the text it appears that they had been conducting business for some time, using the named ship captains. "Tob.o" was an eighteenth century contraction of tobacco.

4. George Plater to James Russell, Merchant. London – Jan. 7, 1775 (M)

Dear Sir

Maryland Jan 7th 1775

Your Favors of 20<sup>th</sup> August and 7<sup>th</sup> Sep last are before me, the latter covering Account [illegible] and Bill for my cloathes for which I am obliged to you. The Tob.o sold better than I expected but I find that Commodity has taken a [start] of which I am very glad, as it is the only Way we have of making our Remittances which I intend to do by Coulson, but find that Ships have landed Wheat. By this time you are acquainted with the Resolution of the continental Congress to which every Person is determined to adhere. This will distress both Countries, but greater will the Distress be to individuals, if the Congress at their Meeting in May should stop the Export which I am inclined to think they

will do unless something is done this Session of Parliament from which we have great Hopes. The Americans will never suffer their just Rights to be invaded, they are now aroused and what will be the Consequences Time will show. Should Great Britain obstinately persist it must end in the Destruction of her and her colonies, but I trust there are wise and honest Men enough left to avert this Blow and save them both. Some Gesture from your Side of the Water may be a Means of bringing about a Reconciliation and when once that happy End is affected, the Americans will like most dutiful Children, soon forget the Injury and throw all their Wealth into their Mothers [illegible] again as usual. This Spring I hope will open with a better Prospect, that the Face of Affairs will be much changed for the better and [smiling] Peace once may visit these distracted Colonies. Should any favourable Circumstances happen, I shall be glad to be informed of it by you. In the mean time our best Wishes are offered to you and your Lady and with my Congratulations on your Success with your Ships this year, I am

Dear Sir your Affectionate and Obedient Servant

Geo. Plater

Received 15 Feb. 1775 via Capt. Eden

Source: Virginia Colonial Records Project, Coutts 7 Co. Russell Papers, UVA Alderman Library, Reel 556, bundle 15.

5. George Plater to Council of Safety – March 5, 1776

Sotterley March 5th 1776

Gentlemen,

In obedience to the order of Congress transmitted by you, I have collected what gold I could in Saint Mary's County, and now send it by Col. Fitzhugh, amounting to two hundred twenty four pounds one shilling and three pence, as noted below. You will be pleased to give him an order on the treasurer for the paper money to that amount. I have the Honour to be: Gentlemen

Your most obedient humble servant

Geo. Plater

One hundred and six Guineas 185..10

Twenty three half Guineas 20..2..6

Five half Johannes 15..

One two Pistole Piece 2..15..

One half Pistole 1 3..9

C.S.J £224..1..3

Source: Council of Safety, Archives of Maryland, Vol. XI p. 202.

Note: This brief letter records two firsts. The earliest letter in which Plater identifies the place the letter was written as Sotterley. And second, the earliest letter reporting work Plater had done for the patriot cause.

6. George Plater to Council of Safety – March 26, 1776

Gentlemen,

I have the honor of yours of the 19<sup>th</sup> Inst, communicating your appointment of me with Brigadier John Dent, to cooperate with the Commissioners of Virginia in erecting Beacons on the shores of the Patowmack River. It will give me the highest pleasure to be in any manner serviceable to my country, and I only lament that my abilities are not equal to my inclination. But upon this (and I hope on every) occasion, be assured they shall be exerted and that I am Gentlemen

Your most Obedient Humble Servant

Sotterley Hall  
March 26<sup>th</sup> 1776

Geo. Plater

Source: Council of Safety, Archives of Maryland, Vol. XI p. 291–292.

Note: Brigadier John Dent from Charles County was an officer in the Maryland Flying Camp.

## 7. Maryland Delegates to Thomas Johnson – June 8, 1778

8<sup>th</sup> June 1778 York

Sir,

Your letter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> instant was put into our hands this morning by Col. Smith, and referred to the board of war. We sincerely wish the State of our cloathing at or near the army may be Such as to Suffer that Board to give the order in the extent you desire. Col. Smith will receive their answer tomorrow. We hope, and have the strongest reason to believe, our army will never again be exposed to the same inconveniences and distress they have hitherto suffered from the want of cloathing. We understand 8 to ten thousand suits are in the 50 gun ship latterly arrived in Virginia, and still larger supplies have arrived at the Eastward.

By all accounts from Camp and Philadelphia the Enemy appear to be on the eve of evacuating that city: it is conjectured they will march thro' the Jersies to South Amboy, where it is said a number of boats are in readiness to carry them over to Staten Island.

War between Prussia and Austria respecting the division of the late Elector of Bavaria's territories by the latest accounts from Europe is much to be apprehended: and Mr. Francy informed us that war was certainly declared between Russia and the Porte.

The French court had detained all English vessels in their ports in a consequence of a refusal by the Court of London to deliver up an American vessel captured on the coast of France by an English Privateer.

We inclose you copies of letters from Ld. Howe's and Sir Henry Clinton's letters to Gen. Washington and to Congress and our answer. Those may be printed if you think proper, and we beg the favor of you to lay them before the Assembly. We are with great respect, Your Excellency's Most obedient, humble servants,

Ch. Carroll of Carrollton

Geo. Plater

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 10, p. 49.

Note: The letters of Howe and Clinton concerned peace offers rejected by Congress.

#### 8. Maryland Delegates to Maryland Assembly – June 22, 1778

York Monday P.M. 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1778

Gentlemen,

The Instructions of the House of Delegates of the 18<sup>th</sup> Instant we this morning received in a letter from Mr. Chase, and laid them before Congress; whereupon at our earnest desire, it was resolved to take into immediate consideration the amendments propose by our State to the Confederation, altho Congress had previously determined to take up amendments offered by several States in the order in which the States are ranged in the Confederacy, beginning first with New Hampshire, and so on.

This evening the three amendments offered by Maryland were debated and 11 states out of the 12 present, rejected the amendments of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> articles, so that our State only voted for them. The fate of the most

important amendment is not yet decided, the question being put off by adjournment till tomorrow morning, when it will probably be rejected by a majority of eight States out of twelve.

A Confederation at this critical juncture appears to Congress of such momentous consequence, that I am satisfied a great majority are resolved to reject the amendments from every State, not so much from an opinion that *all* the Amendments are improper, as from the conviction, that if *any* should be adopted, no Confederation will take place, at least for some months, perhaps, years; and in that case many apprehend none will ever be entered into by all of the present united States; the distractions probably consequent on such an event, and the many dangers and evils, which may arise from partial Confederacies (which you may more easily point to yourselves than we can express) have determined some States to accept the present Confederation although founded on principles not altogether consistent, in their opinion, with just and sound policy. For if any amendments should be adopted, it will then be necessary to send the Confederation back to those States, whose Legislatures have empowered their Delegates to sign and ratify it in its present form; for instance to New Hampshire, New York, Virginia and North Carolina, the Delegates of which States are positively instructed to ratify the Confederation, as it now stands, and some of them are directed to admit no alterations, even literary ones, such as would not affect the true spirit and meaning of any article, but only serve to elucidate that meaning and spirit by removing all ambiguity, and doubt.

In debating our second amendment, vizt to the 8<sup>th</sup> article, it was admitted on all sides to be the true meaning and intention of that article, that *all* lands, not only those already granted to, or surveyed for any person, but all lands *hereafter* to be granted to, or surveyed for any person, should be subject to valuation, and considered as a part of

the whole wealth of the State in which they lie. It was contended by several members that the meaning of the 8<sup>th</sup> article is clearly expressed, but confessed by some to be dark and ambiguous, who nevertheless voted against the amendment, for the reasons we have already assigned.

The amendment of the 4<sup>th</sup> article was considered by every State, Maryland excepted, as unimportant; the Article not being liable, in the opinion of any other State to the objections made and consequences apprehended by Maryland.

23<sup>rd</sup> P.M.

Our third amendment has just been rejected by a majority of one state; the division was as follows:

Against the Amendt.	For the Amendment
N. Hampshire	Rhode Island
Massachusetts	Jersey
Connecticut	Pennsylvania
N York divided	Delaware
N Carolina absent	Maryland
South Carolina	
Georgia	
Virginia	

Inclosed you have a copy of Gen. Washington's letter received this morning. We are with great respect, Gent, your most obedient, humble servants

Geo. Plater

Ch. Carroll of Carrollton

We write in great haste to be in time for the post, you will therefore be pleased to excuse all interlineations, erasures, and blots

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 10, p. 175–6.

Note: Although Plater's signature comes first, the letter was written by Carroll.

9. George Plater to Thomas Johnson – June 26, 1778 (M)

Sir,

I have the Pleasure to communicate to your Excellency the following Letter written by Gen. Arnold at Philadelphia 24<sup>th</sup> Inst. and read in Congress that Day.

"The City of Philadelphia was evacuated the 18<sup>th</sup> inst. The main Body of the Enemy's Army was at the Black Horse, seven Miles beyond Mount Holly, last night, their Movements are very slow, about seven or eight miles/day, our Army was at [River] Town and in advance last Night, moving on towards the Enemy with Design on Improving any possible Opportunity of attacking them. Near four hundred Deserters from the Enemy have arrived at this place. The Rear of the Enemy's Fleet was yesterday at [Ready] Island, two Divisions have gone down the River to the Sea. The Quarter Master, Commissary and Cloathier General have contacted with the Merchants here, for a Quantity of Goods for the use of the Army. B Arnold"

I have the Honour to be with the highest Sentiments of Respect, Your Excellency's

Most obedient and humble Servant,

Geo. Plater

York, June 26<sup>th</sup> 1778

Source: Maryland Hall of Records, Maryland State Papers, Red Books 10 #72, S989-15.

10. George Plater to Thomas Johnson – August 18, 1778

Philadelphia Aug. 18<sup>th</sup> 1778

Sir,

Your last Favor is now before us, and we shall pay all due Attention to the Contents. The Consideration of you last relative to the Vessel sold by Mr. Harrison is before the marine Committee, but it does not appear the Mr. Bingham purchased her for the Continent, perhaps for his own private Use. The Appearance of a Fleet off Rhode Island drew Attention of Count DeStaing from that Object, just at the Time an Attack was preparing to be made – this will consequently retard Operations there for some Time.

I am with due Respect, Your Excellency's most obedient Servant

Geo. Plater

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 10, p. 481–2.

11. George Plater to Thomas Johnson – August 25, 1778

Philadelphia Aug. 25<sup>th</sup> 1778

Sir,

In Consequence of your Letter respecting Bill of Exchange, we applied to Mr. Morris, who recommended us to Mr. Holker Agent for the Marine of France, and from him I expect to get them at the Exchange you mention – when done shall transmit them without Delay. The Commission shall likewise be forwarded. I have desired Mr. Morris to make out his Account against the State, which he has promised to do. We are in hourly Expectation of something important from R. Island.

I have the Honor to be, Your Excellency's most obedient Servant

Geo. Plater

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 10, p. 501.

12. George Plater to Thomas Johnson – September 3, 1778

Philadelphia Sepr. 3<sup>rd</sup> 1778

Sir,

I have the Honor herewith to forward to your Excellency the Bills of Exchange, drawn, I hope, in the Manner you directed and indorsed by Mr. Robert Morris, which I thought best. The Commissions shall be sent as soon as a new Form is made out, which is now under the Consideration of the Marine Committee. I have the Honor to be, Your Excellency's most obedient and very humble servant

Geo. Plater

P.S. Mr. Morris desires (and we promised it shall be done) that you pay Mr. Stephen Steward eight thousand Pounds cur. And we will endeavor to get the other four thousand from Congress, which is the Amount of the Bills.

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 10, p. 555.

Notes: Stephen Steward was a Marylander from Annapolis. He had a shipyard on the West River and built ships for the state of Maryland--so perhaps the payment was related to this activity.

13. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – Oct. 6, 1778 (M)

Dear Morris,

We arrived safe at this Place yesterday and have just parted with our good Friend and Fellow Traveler who is pursuing his journey, which we intend to do as soon as our Cavalry get over the Bay. A Gentleman who left Philadelphia on Saturday brings an Account that the Enemy had wounded killed and taken many of Baylor's Corps – Mrs. Plater had a Brother in that regiment. I need not say how much Uneasiness it gives her and when the Report reaches his Mother's Ears it cannot fail to afflict her in a very sensible Manner. Let me entreat you to enquire into this and inform me of the Truth as soon as possible. The Distress of a tender Parent and the Concern of an affectionate Sister will, I am convinced, prompt you to make the desired Enquiry, and apologize for the Trouble I now give you. Be pleased to remember me to all Friends. Mrs. Plater presents her Compliments to you and wishing you much happiness, I am dear sir,

Your affectionate and obedient Servant

Geo. Plater

Annapolis Oct. 6, 1778

The name of the young gentleman whose welfare I am solicitous about is Peregrine Fitzhugh.

Source: Columbia University Library, Special Collections, Gouverneur Morris Papers. (Hereafter: Gouverneur Morris Papers)

Notes: The British surprised Col. George Baylor's Light Dragoons at Harrington, New Jersey on Sept. 28, 1778. 54 men were killed or captured. The incident became known as "Baylor's Massacre." Lieutenant Peregrine Fitzhugh, Elizabeth Rousby Plater's half brother, was captured and subsequently released. Later he was promoted to Colonel and served as aide-de-camp of Gen. Washington.

14. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – Oct. 25, 1778 (M)

Dear Morris,

Accept my Thanks for your kind Favor of the 8<sup>th</sup> covering the Paper of that day. I think as you do of the intended [Charge] of Baylor's Men and had I been in Congress believe I should have opposed it, unless some special Reason had been adduced in support of the Measure. I wish such a partial Procedure may not have ill Consequences. We are amused here by a Tale that the Commissioners of Britain have made their ultimate Proposals to Congress and given forty Days for the Consideration thereof, at the End of which if they do not accede, Fire, Sword, Desolation and Destruction are to follow. If Gen. Lee's Trial be published, I shall be obliged to you to cover it and forward it to me. Mrs. Plater offers her compliments to

you and begs you extend them to the Miss Bond. My best  
Wishes attend you, and I am with great Regard Dear Sir.

Your most obedient and obliged,  
and humble Servant

Geo. Plater

Sotterley, Oct. 25, 1778

PS. What is the Issue with the Examination of Deane and  
Carmichael? Be pleased to offer my Compliments to these  
gentlemen.

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: Silas Deane was Commissioner to France who had been  
recalled by Congress to explain his actions. William Carmichael  
was a Marylander, who had been Deane's deputy in Paris, was a  
delegate to the Continental Congress and later a diplomat assigned  
to Spain. The issue involved corruption charges against Deane.

15. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – Nov. 1, 1778 (M)

[no salutation]

Thanks to you, my good Friend, for your Favor of the  
20<sup>th</sup> last covering the [illegible] Papers which to me afford a

pleasing Fund of Entertainment. I am at a loss to conceive what could prompt Congress to resolve against Theatrical Amusements, to me they appear harmless and inoffensive, but I presume it took Time in the East, that religious Part of the World. Our Assembly talks of electing Carmichael to Congress, the high Opinion I have of his Abilities, Integrity and Knowledge of Men and Manners would make me desirous of seeing him seated there, and I am satisfied Maryland would be well served by so good a Delegate, but our constitution requires a Residence of five years next preceding the Election, as a necessary Qualification for a Member of Congress and I do not know but that this may operate against him. I have not yet joined the Assembly, but shall go up this Week.

The Commissioners Manifesto has just made its Appearance here and I suppose it to be their last deceiving Speech. Mrs. P bade me present her best Respects to you and desires you to bear the same to Miss. Bond with many Thanks for her kind Remembrance of her. Best wishes from her to the amiable Mr. Morris. She will do every thing that can be reasonably expected to give that Lady Pleasure and Satisfaction. As to Health, I can't say much – nearly in the old Way, sometimes sick and sometimes well following her own Dictates and disregarding Advice from Friends or Physicians. If Duer is with you, please to remember me to him and to all enquiring Friends. Whether I shall ever see you again is uncertain, but whatever may be my Fate or Destiny, I shall ever retain the highest Sense of your Friendship and be assured that I am with the greatest Regard, Dear Morris, your affectionate Friend and Servant.

Geo. Plater

Sotterley Hall Nov. 1, 1778

The Pigeons are well and this Morning were discovered billing and hissing. Eliza says it promises something more. Adieu.

[illegible] my good Friend, I sayd [sic] no such thing.  
E. P.

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Note: William Duer was a delegate to Congress from New York.

16. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – Dec. 4, 1778 (M)

My Dear Sir,

Your practical Epistle of the 18<sup>th</sup> last and that of 29<sup>th</sup> have been duly received, for which accept my Thanks. Could I be permitted, as you point out, to leave the Business in which I am engaged, and return for a short Time, I might in that Case arrive in Philadelphia before the Rigors of Winter set in, but that is denied me, as our House is thin. The Confederation at present engrosses our attention. Mr. Carmichael says Jersey has acceded and Delaware will. This staggers some of our [illegible] Politicians. Our House of Delegates have resolved to cooperate so far in the [illegible] Expectation as to furnish two Gallies provided they can be manned. This I think impracticable, but I do not conceive their Resolution will meet the Assent of the Senate, who [views] the Situation as you do, wild and extravagant and I

cannot but think with you that the Acquisition would prove a Loss. By any Account we have, it does not appear where the Fleet lately sailed are destined. Some say to the W. Indies, some to Europe. Mr. Paca [illegible] the Embarcation from N. York to amount to eleven thousand. If so, they don't mean to act offensively in that Quarter again. By all Means engage the Stable if you think it will suit [illegible]. Mrs. Plater begs to be remembered to you, she will write at [illegible] and therefore you cannot expect her letter by this post. Offer my respects to Mr. Carmichael. And believe me Dear Morris Your [illegible] Friend and Servant.

Geo. Plater

Annapolis, Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>, 1778

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Note: Lawyer William Paca, one of Maryland's signers of the Declaration of Independence, was at the time one of Plater's Senate colleagues and also a Delegate to the Continental Congress.

17. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – Dec. 10, 1778 (M)

My Dear Sir,

Your obliging Favor of the 23<sup>rd</sup> ult. gave me much Pleasure so I shall ever esteem happy when I can communicate anything that will be satisfactory to you.

Our Session of the Assembly, long and tedious, is not yet over. We expect to rise on Saturday. I wish it was in my Power to comply with your Requisitions fully, but I cannot say precisely what is the Number of our Inhabitants black and white. It never having yet been clearly ascertained, tho [Congress] [illegible] required. Such is the Neglect of those who undertake to do the Business for the Public. I do suppose the Number to be near four hundred thousand. We have laid twenty five shillings in the hundred Pound for the Supply of the ensuing Year. The same was laid last, but the Collectors not having [illegible] all their Returns, I cannot say what will be the Product. It is generally thought from two hundred to two hundred and fifty thousand Pounds. We have emitted four hundred thousand, some of which has yet been [illegible]. Likewise two Emissions of our old Money are still out. I can't say in Cancellation for more of it appears. The Assembly has raised all the Officers Salaries of the state and to the Delegates in Congress they give five Pounds per Day. This will do something, better than our late Allowance. I rejoice that any Disaster should have prevented the Enemy from foraging in the Bay. Such a Movement would have distressed our People much especially this Year when the short corps are truly alarming. We have passed an Act to prohibit the distilling [of] Grain to take Operation from one similar being enforced in the neighboring states of Pennsylvania, Delaware and Virginia. Our [leading] gentleman cannot yet agree to Confederate, though your account of Jersey and Delaware coming in has staggered them much. I must take some little Time to turn my Attention to my domestic Affairs and then shall hasten to fill and warm what you call solitary, but think I shall find them cheerful Apartments. Mrs. Plater begs me to offer her Respects to you and I am with great Regard Dear Sir.

Your obliged and very humble Servant,

Geo. Plater

Annapolis, Dec. 10<sup>th</sup> 1778

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: Plater estimated the population of Maryland in 1778 as near 400 thousand. When the first national census was taken in 1790, Maryland was recorded as having 319,728 residents.

18. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – Dec. 11, 1778 (M)

Dear Morris,

I have just Time to thank you for your kind Favor of 6<sup>th</sup> inclosing the Paper. Our friend Deane I see writes plain English. Tis perhaps Time so to do. I have only given it a cursory Reading. My last to you was by Chase, which hope you have received. I leave this Place on Sunday to go home and prepare for our cold wintry Journey. But all Difficulties I trust will be amply complimented by the Pleasure the sight of you and other good Friends will afford. Mrs. P has been [illegible] at a Ball last night and therefore says she cannot write, but commits to me some [Music] for Mrs. Shea, your Niece, which I send under cover to you with her Compliments and desires that you will forward it.

Adieu and believe me Your Friend and Servant,

Geo. Plater

11 Dec. 1778

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

19. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – Dec. 27, 1778 (M)

Dear Morris,

At length have I left public Business and retired for a while to my own Fire [illegible] surrounded by my prattling boys and girls in the midst of which domestic Joy, you see I am not forgetful of my good Friends foremost in which Class I shall ever place you. But as I write my Face burns and my back freezes so extremely severe in the Weather. Our Journey to you too is a serious Consideration. no sooner returned home but must think of leaving it again. Well may I join you in [Manger] Song. What a terrible Life do I lead. Our Assembly have given Instructions to their Delegates in Congress respecting Confederation, which you will see — likewise a Declaration — but what good effect will result therefrom I cannot at present discover. The weaker must allways give Way to the stronger and I suppose we shall be dragged in by and by. Therefore I think we had better have done it with a good Grace and saved our Credit by making a Virtue of Necessity. But pray do not let Maryland be

reflected on for this little Piece of Obstinacy, she thinks her Interest materially concerned therein and when that is the Case, you know it is the Nature and Disposition of Men to be a little restive, ill humored and not easily brought about to any particular Measure not coincident or squaring with what they deem the Rule of Right or Fitness of Things. I have written several Letters to Banister but have heard nothing from him, or about him, save a damned infamous Lie of which I cannot believe a [Twit], but will inform him of it when we meet. I believe Mr. Jenifer, one of my Colleagues, is about to join you. Give me leave to offer him to your Acquaintance, I trust you will find him deserving. He is well disposed, much of the Gentleman and I think I may add an upright downright honest Fellow. Pray remember me to Mr. Carmichael and all inquiring Friends. I wish we may meet where we parted, I mean at Chester. I will announce my coming time enough to affect it. Mrs. Plater presents her Compliments and I trust you to believe that I am with great Truth and Sincerity.

Devoted obliging Friend and Servant,

Geo. Plater

Sotterley, Dec. 27 1778

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: The instructions and Declaration concerning confederation that Plater mentions reaffirmed Maryland's condition that it would not ratify the Articles of Confederation until the western lands were placed under Congress's control.

Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer, a long time colleague of Plater's, was then President of the Maryland Senate. John Bannister was a delegate to Congress from Virginia.

20. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – Jan. 10, 1779 (M)

Sotterley Hall January 10<sup>th</sup> 1779

Dear Morris,

Since my Letter to you by last Post, I have received one from Banister in which he complains much of the scandalous Report concerning him, propagated in that State, of which I made mention to you in my last. It is that he has been concerned in counterfeiting Money — such a low mean villainous Assertion could only have been formed by one of the same Character [sic], but it serves to show that the most virtuous and upright of us cannot at all times escape the Tongue of Slander and Calumny. He has resigned his Seat in Congress, so has Harvey and succeeded by General Nelson and Mr. Fleming, the latter I am unacquainted with, the former you have seen and know. I lament that we shall not have our Friend Banister with us more, but to let you into a Secret, he proposes soon to change his State and become a married Man. He says it is contrary to his Religion to live any longer single. This severe Weather makes me think and fear that we shall have a trying Journey to Philadelphia. We propose to set out as soon after the Middle of the Month as the Weather will permit and had ordered a Vessel to attend which did attend to take our Bed, heavy Baggage etc to the Head of Elk, but to this the Frost says no. The narrow Waters are all congealed and rendered the Scheme aborted. Therefore we must take the chance of procuring a Bed as we can when we get to the City. Another Disappointment which sits heavily upon me and equally affects you is we proposed to send up some

Ham Beef Wine etc. This Weather brings to mind an Ode which I have some where read, written by no contemptible Poet, and in Answer to yours of the 10<sup>th</sup> Nov. and for want of something else here I give to you.

When the Trees are all bare not a Leaf to be seen,  
And the Meadows their Beauty have lost,  
When Nature's devoid of her Mantle of green,  
And the Streams are fast bound by the Frost.

While the Peasant inactive stands shivering with Cold,  
As bleak the Winds northerly blow,  
And the innocent Flocks run for Warmth to the Fold,  
With their Fleeces besprinkled with Snow,

In the year, when the Cattle are foddered with Straw,  
And they send forth their Breath like a Stream,  
And the neat looking dairy Maid sees she must thaw,  
Flakes of Ice that she finds in the Cream.

When the sweet Country Maiden as fresh as a Dove,  
As she carelessly trips often slides,  
And the Rustics loud laugh, if by falling she shows,  
All the Charms that her Modesty hides.

When the Lads and the Lasses for Company joined,  
In a Crowd around the Embers are met,  
Talk of Fairies and Witches, that ride on the Wind,  
And of Ghosts, till they're all in a sweat.

Thank Heaven in this Season that is my Lot,  
With the Nymph whom I love and admire,  
While the Icicles hang from the End of my Cot,  
That I can here in safety retire.

Where in Neatness and Quiet, and free from Surprise,  
We can love and no Hardship endure,

Nor feel any turbulent Passions arise,  
But such as each other may cure.

Thus I have given you the Ode to Winter, if you don't like it send me a better one for which I will thank you. I have seen in some Paper lately, not of Philadelphia, that General Clinton requires thirty thousand Tons of Shipping, and has laid an Embargo at N. York. This seems to indicate, if true, an international Movement. I presume you at the principal Seat of Intelligence can tell when he and the remains of his [numerous] [Host] are [about]. Mrs. [illegible] is now writing by my Side an Epistle to her Friend Mrs. Lee. She lays down her Pen and swears she grows so fat that she bursts all her Cloathes. My Observation is that these are bad Times and this a bad Place to get new ones in. I am apt to think that she writes something about you, however it proves that she thinks of her absent Friends and, as a further Proof, desires me to offer her respectful Compliments. I have almost filled my Paper therefore shall conclude with the following Work.

Oh, May no Cares disturb your peaceful Life,  
Your happy House not intermixed with Strife,  
And may all your days be [white], your Joys serene,  
And [Sorrows] only by your Foes be seen.

Of Your real Friend  
Geo. Plater

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: The ode is an anonymous 18th century poem or song often called "Winter Song." John Harvie was a delegate to Congress from Virginia. The four-line stanza at the end is the only known example of a poetic effort that appears to be by Plater.

21. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – Jan. 24, 1779 (M)

Dear Morris,

Your pleasing and acceptable Favor of Christmas Eve and the 28<sup>th</sup> December are come safe to Hand, for which I thank you. What can prompt you and Carmichael to sit over the Fire till one o'clock? You say it is stupid, but what is not, the worst it will destroy your Health, my Friend and quickly bring on old Age, with all its concomitant Diseases, while on the other Hand early going to bed and early rising will make you healthy active and invigorated. Therefore let me beg you to quit that abominable Custom which has too much prevailed with you of sitting up late. It will produce the Destruction both of your Body and Mind and certainly is the Cause of those shaking [illegible] which you so [illegible] describe. It will [illegible], and I [fear] bring your [fine] [illegible] frame with sorrow to the grave. I recollect to have heard the most eminent Physician that [illegible] was in this Part of the World, say that one Hours Sleep before twelve o'clock was better and did refresh more, than two after. And that it was less prejudicial to Health to go to Bed drunk at eight than sit up sober till one. I remember often to have given you this Advice before and as often had the Mortification to find it spurned at. My great Regard for you has prompted me once more to press it and I am of Opinion, if the bad Weather and worn Roads will permit me to join you again, that I shall be able by my good Advice and better Example to convert you to a regular Way of Life. The most certain Insurance of Health and Longevity. We had been ready to [set] out this week,

but the Roads [illegible] we cannot travel. Mrs. P. having settled all her domestic Affairs begins to fret a little and dread the Journey. I tell her, as the old Woman did her Daughter just married, that she must grin and bear it. Our respects to Carmichael and all inquiring Friends and I am Dear Sir,

Your Friend and Servant,  
Geo. Plater

Sotterley Jan. 24 1779

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

## 22. Maryland Delegates to Maryland Assembly – March 2, 1779

Phila. March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1779

Gentlemen,

We consider it as our Duty to write you during the present Session of the General Assembly such Intelligence as Congress are possessed of and which no Injunction to Secrecy forbids our Communication.

We are sorry the particular Circumstances of the Case will not suffer us to give you a detail of the Intelligence lately received from Europe, it is truly important and favourable to America; but whether the Train our Affairs are

in points to Peace or War it is absolutely necessary that every Exertion be made to have a respectable Army in the Field.

It is with Pleasure we inform you that Great Britain has failed in her Application to Russia for Troops and is deprived of every Prospect of foreign Aid. His most Christian Majesty still continues to act the faithful and magnanimous Ally and we have every Reason to believe that as the Independency of the United States is professed and declared Object of the Treaty so it is the Extent of his most Christian Majestys Wishes in the present War.

A Detachment of the Enemy from New York a few Days ago attempted Surprise at Elizabeth Town but were disappointed with some Loss: The Gazette will give the particulars.

We have the Honor to be Gent., Your most Obedient Humble Servants

Geo. Plater Wm. Carmichael

Wm. Paca J. Henry Junr.

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters of Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 12, p. 136–7.

Note: The letter was written by William Paca.

23. George Plater to Board of Treasury – March 17, 1779

Philada March 17 1779

Sir,

The Committee to whom the Letter from the Speaker of the Assembly of Pennsylvania, upon the subject of borrowing a Sum of Money of Congress, was referr'd, cannot proceed upon that business until they shall be furnished with the State of the Treasury; I must therefore beg that you will furnish the Committee with such information as you have in your Power; and also whether you think it possible for Congress to grant this Requisition and comply with other engagements.

I am sir, Your Obedient Servant

Geo. Plater

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 12, p. 204.

Note: On Mar. 8, Congress appointed Plater, Eliphalet Dyer and Thomas Nelson as a committee to consider a letter from the Pennsylvania Assembly requesting funds from Congress. On Mar. 17, Plater as Committee Chairman writes this letter to the Board of Treasury asking for advice. The Board of Treasury writes to Plater to explain the Board's reasons for being unable to comply. On March 18, the committee reports to Congress that, though PA needs funds, the Treasury is not in a position to supply that money.

24. Maryland Delegates to Thomas Johnson – March 30, 1779

Philadelphia March 30 1779

Sir,

We are to acknowledge the Receipt of your Excellency's Favor with its Inclosures – to all which we shall pay due Regard. I hope in a few Days to be able to give you the Information respecting the Commissary's Department which you and the Council Desire. In the mean Time we have the Honor to be with great Regard Sir Your most obedient humble Servants.

Geo. Plater

J. Henry Junr.

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 12, p. 266.

Notes: The letter was written by Plater. The Council had written on March 26 concerning requisitioning wheat in Maryland.

## 25. Maryland Delegates to Thomas Johnson – April 6, 1779

Philadelphia, April 6 1779

Sir,

We had the honor of receiving in course of the Post your several letters o the 26<sup>th</sup> Ult<sup>o</sup>. with their respective inclosures and immediately made the necessary application to enable us to give you the information you desire. The inclosed letter from Gouverneur Morris Chairman of a Committee of Congress for superintending the Quarter

Master and Commissary Generals departments will point out the present demand for the Army. We must add that if it is in the power of the State to provide for the transportation to this City of the Flower [sic] purchased by their Agents, it will be deemed an essential service rendered to the Public. We are sorry that in fixing the quota of troops for the service in the present year, the distressed and exposed situation of some other States prevent us from availing ourselves of the circumstances pointed out in your letter. Our Endeavors Shall not be wanting to obtain the same discount for recruits raised in the state as hath been allowed to others.

We find by a resolution of Congress inclosed to us by Your Excellency that the amount of the damages sustained by inhabitants of the State from irregularities of the 4<sup>th</sup> George Battalion commanded by Colonel White, is payable to your order. We therefore return the resolution and estimate and intreat you to favor us with an Order, which we will transmit to the Auditors of the Army, for payment with instructions to forward the Money as you shall direct.

The Last Letters from General Washington mention the return of Sir. H. Clinton from an expedition supposed to be intended against New London, the loss of 14 light Transports driven on shore by a Late Storm on Fishers Island in the sound and the arrival at N. York of 28 sail fro Europe and Halifax with some few troops, the number not ascertained. The French Minister hath received dispatches from Martinique dated the 6<sup>th</sup> ulto. The particulars have not yet been communicated to Congress, but we learn that the Intelligence is interesting and agreeable.

We are, with much respect, Your Excellencys, Most Humble and Most Obedient Servants.

Geo. Plater

Wm. Carmichael

Wm. Paca

J. Henry Junr.

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 12, p. 303.

Note: The letter was written by Carmichael.  
26. Maryland Delegates to Thomas Johnson – May 11, 1779

Philadela May 11<sup>th</sup> 1779

Sir,

We should have sent by Col. Hyde a larger Sum than five hundred Thousand Dollars had not the Demands of the Treasury been so pressing and of such a Nature as to render it impossible. We have now a Warrant for the further Sum of eight hundred Thousand Dollars, the greater part of which if not the whole, we expect to send forward to you in the course of this week. This supply we hope will enable your Excellency to prosecute with success the purchase of Flour etc. for the Army.

General Washington at this time stands in need of heavy Cannon, for the further Defence of the North River, and the Necessity of being immediately supplied at least five pieces, has induced Congress to apply to our State, for such Cannon as can be spared either on Loan or purchase, at the Election of the General Assembly. Under the circumstances of this case, and knowing the Necessity, we cannot suppose the General Assembly (if you have not power already) can have any objections against granting the request of Congress. If you should lend the Cannon, Mr. Hughes who has now contracted with Congress for a considerable Number, will be directed to send to Annapolis or such place as you shall direct, the like number and weight of metal, with those that shall be lent by the state.

Your letter of 30<sup>th</sup> April does not clearly express in what way the Emissions of May and April came into the State Treasuries. If by Taxes for the Continent, the several Sums in those Bills to the Continental Treasury; for the Resolve

of Congress are express that they shall be received for Debts and Taxes into the continental Treasury and into the State Treasury for continental Taxes until the first of June. If they came in on any other ground than for a continental Tax (although not strictly within the Resolves of Congress), yet we think the State may, and we are of the opinion you ought or it will be advantageous to the State, to consider them as brought in, in that light; and when the continental Tax is actually raised you may then reimburse the State Treasuries. Congress as they have no Authority, so they never will inquire into the manner by which the State has raised her quota. If however the Emissions alluded to above, were not, expressly levied for Continental Taxes, and you do not, as we conceive you may, consider them in that light, no way is open but to throw them into the Loan office, either on Loan or to be exchanged, the former of these alternatives we do not approve of and the latter will deprive the State of the Money for some Time.

Mr. Harwood's power as a continental Loan office extends no further than to receive these Emissions either on Loan or to be exchange, we therefore think he did right in not receiving them in the way you proposed to him.

Enclosed you have Extracts of Letters from the General. They were received yesterday and will be sent by the president to you, but least his Copy should miscarry, we have thought it proper to send you the one enclosed – their Destination is not known. To rescue the Troops of Burgoyne may possibly be part of their object, tho' the prevailing opinion is that their main design is farther South.

We are Sir with highest Respect and Esteem Your obedient humble Servants.

Geo. Plater    John Henry

Wm. Paca    Dan of St Thos Jenifer

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 12, p. 460–462.

Note: The letter was written by Henry.  
27. Maryland Delegates to Thomas Johnson – May 18, 1779

Phila May 18<sup>th</sup> 1779

Sir,

Your Letter to the Board of War has been delivered.

Our applications to the Treasury Board for Eight hundred thousand Dollars – Order'd by the Resolution of Congress for the purchase of Flour in our State has been almost incessant. We are promised Five hundred thousand to be delivered this day and we shall as soon as possible forward them under guard. With the greatest esteem and respect We are, Your Excellency's most Obedient Servants.

Geo. Plater

John Henry

Daniel of St. Thos Jenifer

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 12, p. 485.

Note: The letter was written by Jenifer.

28. Maryland Delegates to George Washington – May 23, 1779

Phila May 23<sup>rd</sup> 1779

Dear General,

We had the Honor of a Letter from his Excellency the Governor of Maryland last night, by Express, dated the 20<sup>th</sup> Inst. The Devastation and cruelties hourly committed by the Enemy in Virginia, and the probability of their acting the same part in Maryland, unless timely prevented, has justly alarmed the people of that State. We lament that the Army under the Command of your Excellency does not admit of a Detachment from the Maryland Troops. Were it possible to head the Malitia [sic] by a small Body of regular Troops, they would turn out with more alacrity and act with greater vigor thus incorporated, than alone. It may indeed happen, that the present views and progress of the Enemy may render any effective preparations for Defence in Maryland unnecessary. But the Destruction of Portsmouth and Suffolk joined to the Threats of the Enemy are sufficient to induce a belief in the minds of Citizens of Annapolis and Baltimore, that their Cities are not safe unless defended by superior force. We have no accurate knowledge of the strength of your Army, nor any precise Ideas of you Excellencys present plans of operation, and therefore tho' we, as individuals and Citizens of the State of Maryland wish, yet we do not look for any immediate aid from the main Army. Such as is consistent with the good of the whole, should the State be actually invaded, we know we shall receive. The principal Design of our writing to you at this time, is to inform your Excellency of the desire of the Governor of Maryland, to have Genl. Gist sent down to Baltimore to head the Militia.

He is a native of that place, has considerable weight with the Militia and will be of much Service if that City is attacked. Should the State be invaded, we cannot help suggesting in addition to the request of the Governor, considering the inexperience of Militia officers in general, that one or two other regular officers would also be found extensively useful, if the state of the Maryland Troops will admit of it, but the propriety of this step we leave altogether to your Excellency and have the Honor to be, with the most cordial affection, your Excellency obedient and humble Servants.

John Henry Jun.

Geo. Plater

Daniel of St Thos Jenifer

Wm Carmichael

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), *Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789*, Vol. 12, p. 516.

Note: The letter was written by Henry. Mordecai Gist was a Marylander who became a general in command of the Maryland Line in the Continental Army.

## 29. Maryland Delegates to Thomas Johnson – June 1, 1779

Philadelphia June 1<sup>st</sup> 1779

Sir,

We have the Pleasure to acknowledge your Excellency's Favor, by this Post – and in Answer have

observed that the Reason of the last Recommendation was that Congress had appointed a Committee, in Conjunction with the General, to new model and reduce the Number of regimental commissioned Officers – that Regulation took Place in May 1778 – after which the States, it was presumed would resume their Powers conforming to the Regulation adopted in May 1778. A Vessel having a short Passage to Providence brings an Account of the british being defeated near Charles Town, with the Loss of thirteen hundred killed and taken – we sincerely wish it may be true, but at present it wants Confirmation. We have exerted ourselves to get as many Arms sent to our State as we could, but fear the Number will fall far short of what you may expect or want – tho' we flatter ourselves that you will not be under the disagreeable Necessity of using them. In Compliance with your Request we applied to the General who has send down Brigadier Gist to take Command of our Militia, inclosed in his Excellys Letter to us. We have the Honor to be with the most perfect Respect your Excellency's most Obedient Servants.

Geo. Plater Wm. Carmichael

J Henry Daniel of St. Thos Jenifer

[P.S.] We have obtained an Order for 250 Stand Arms in Mr. Wests Hands.

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 13, p. 6–7.

Note: The letter was written by Plater.

30. Maryland Delegates to Thomas Johnson – June 8, 1779

Philadela. June the 8<sup>th</sup> 1779

Sir,

Your Letter of the 4<sup>th</sup> of June we had the Honour of receiving yesterday. We shall prepare by the next post a Summary of the returns of the Army for the inspection of the General Assembly. We have consulted the Board of War upon the latter part of your Letter, and they join in the opinion with us, that Congress will readily allow for the Cloathing furnished the recruiting officers and recruits.

We have no authentic intelligence from Charles Town or the North River.

We are Sir with the highest respect your Obedient Servants.

Geo. Plater J Henry

Wm. Paca Daniel of St Thos. Jenifer.

Wm. Carmichael

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 13, p. 38–9.

Note: The letter was written by Henry.

31. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – June 30, 1779 (M)

Dear Morris,

My sincere Thanks are presented for your kind and obliging Favors of 12<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> inst. which would not have been less acceptable had they covered a New Paper or two. Mrs. Plater supported the Fatigue of the Journey much better than I had any Reason to expect but is at present far from being well. I expected [ere] this a Publication of our Success in Carolina sanctified by the worthy Name of Charles Thomson, but still my Hopes are up, many Accounts coming various Ways tend to enforce a Belief. I most sincerely wish my Friend S Adams a pleasant Journey and happy Arrival at Boston and trust you will be able to conduct the great and important Affairs of the Continent, though he be absent. The Failure of our Money seems to be the only thing dreaded here, some think a Stop to Trade joined with other Measures which Congress may devise will have Effect in appreciating. I hint it because I did not hear it mentioned and do not mean to stop the french or other europeans, but our own People, whose traffick has been deemed rather prejudicial than otherwise. Another piece of bad Policy talked of is suffering Bourgoyne's Officers and Men to be together. In the multiplicity of Business attending Congress, I know many little things escape which to others more disengaged occur, therefore I take the Liberty to mention them. The heavy Tax is pleasing to all thinking Whigs here and our Assembly will meet in a Fortnight to enforce it. There have been several Privateers of the Enemy infesting our Bay, whether they have left it or not I don't know. I wish our

[illegible] know that as I am apt to think they might easily take them. Inclosed you will receive the 249 Dollars borrowed of you at Chester with my warmest Thanks, it stood me in much sted and prevented Application to someone whose Friendship and Regard might not perhaps entitle me to the same Freedom which I used with you. You say not a Word of Mr. Carmichael, nor does he for himself. Pray offer him our warmest Respects and assure him I shall be happy in receiving a Line from him when he can steal himself from the important Affairs of Congress and the Treasury, or his more pleasing and entertaining little Evening Walk. He is talked of by some to fill a Vacancy in our Senate. Mrs. P. desires me to offer her Respects and I beg you to believe that I am with unfeigned Regard and Esteem, Dear Morris,

Your affectionate and obedient Friend,  
Geo. Plater

Sotterley Hall June 30 1779

Mrs. Plater's pigeons have been laying and siting for some Time past, but produce nothing. She draws some droll Comparisons and Conclusions upon the [occasion].

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: Charles Thomson was the Secretary of the Continental Congress and keeper of the great Seal of the United States.

32. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – July 23, 1779 (M)

Dear Morris,

My Thanks are offered to you for your obliging favor dated 29 Jul., which I take to mean June. I pity your [interline] commotion, but think a gentle Purgation followed by a proper Purification may do Congress no harm. Therefore I expect upon my Return, if ever I return, to find them changed for the better, which God grant. I am here still confined by damned politics, [illegible] [permitted] long at a time to enjoy the cool Shade of my own Vine or fig Tree. Upon my Arrival here I had Information of some Letters passing me, which I conclude are from you and my Friend Carmichael. The Pleasure of Reading them is yet to come. We have just got the pleasing Account of our Success upon North River, upon which I beg leave to congratulate. I left Mrs. P at home in a very weak [reduced] State. I will hurry back to her as soon as I can obtain Leave. God bless you and believe me Dear Morris. Our President the Major desires his Respects.

Your affectionate Friend  
Geo. Plater

Annapolis July 23 1779

I understood there was more salt in the Commissary Store than would be wanted for the Army and that the Overplus would be for Sale. If so, and if there be any at Baltimore so circumstanced, I shall be obliged to you for an order for 15, 20 or 30 Bushels with the Price, which shall be

paid to Order. I have just received your favor and its enclosure by the Post for which I thank you.

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Note: "Our President" appears to be a reference to Daniel of St. Tomas Jenifer, President of the Maryland Senate, whom Plater had earlier introduced to Morris.

33. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris - Aug. 6, 1779 (M)

Dear Morris,

This is to introduce to you, as Chairman of the medical Comm., Doct. [Bashon], who has been active in our Service and is much attached to our Cause. He is desirous of getting into one of the Hospitals. If you find he has Merit and Abilities, the latter of which I cannot judge, I trust you will [use] your Endeavor to promote his Desires. All I can say is that he practiced Physics in this Part of the Country for some Years and I heard not any thing against him – nor indeed much for him. God bless you and believe me,

Your Friend and obedient Servant,  
Geo. Plater

Sotterley Aug 6<sup>th</sup> 1779

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

34. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – Aug. 10, 1779 (M)

Dear Morris,

Your Favor of the [13<sup>th</sup>] July I had not the Pleasure to peruse until I returned to this Place. It arrived here, as I observed before, while I was at Annapolis. Your Sentiments respecting our Money coincide with mine and I think as you do that it would be bad Policy to keep Burgoyne's Officers and Men together any longer. It has been much, and the Evil will increase the longer tis suffered. Nor can I see any Inconvenience but the contrary arising from a Separation. You say it must be remembered, and I do well remember, that this was one of the stipulations formed at Saratoga. Another I remember likewise that these Troops should be permitted to go to Britain. Why is not the latter observed as well as the former? Because, I have been informed, the Treaty or Convention was broken on the Part of Burgoyne and if broken in one of the Stipulations, so in all. Therefore, inconsistent, absurd and ridiculous to regard any. This is my Opinion and many entertain the same. If tis erroneous, I shall be glad to be set right; if not I hope soon to see an Evil removed, when ill Consequences of which must stare every Man in the Face. So many and so great are the Inconveniences arising form this Step that neither Time or Paper will permit me to enumerate them, suffice it to say, Desertion under the Circumstances cannot happen. The vigilant Eye of the Officer will prevent it. I am much pleased with the practical Epistle to common Sense. I think I see your Pen moving thereon, but be it whose it may, I am glad to see the impudent Dog handled as he deserves, tho not so often as I could wish or may merit. I am to beg your Care of

the Letter accompanying this and that you will forward it by some of the [Expresses] to the General. Mrs. Plater still continues weak and low. She desires her Respects. The vivacious Mr. [Fox] is very well and I dare say will give Proof at Meeting that he has not forgotten you. The Rains have come and our Fields begin to proclaim the good Effects thereof and to smile forth Abundance. May we have Peace and Plenty most ardently pray.

Your affectionate Friend and Servant,  
Geo. Plater

Sotterley August 10<sup>th</sup> 1779

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: As Morris's letter of July 13 has not survived, it is not clear what views Plater is agreeing with.

After Gen. Burgoyne's defeat at Saratoga, a convention was signed which covered in part the 4,800 British and Hessian officers and men who surrendered there. These became known as Convention troops and were a continuing problem for the rest of the war. During part of 1780–81 convention troops were kept in detention centers near Frederick Maryland.

35. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – Sept. 4, 1779 (M)

Dear Morris,

I am to thank you for your several Favours of 17th and 24th August. For some Time past I have been in the upper Portion of our State and have just returned home from which Circumstances have proceeded my Silence. I am sorry my Sentiments cannot coincide with yours respecting the Convention Officers and Troops and think it no Difficulty to prove that it would be right, proper and good Policy to separate without incurring the Imputation of its being left handed, which I assure you I should abhor as well in public as Private nor does once touching [inform] it by any Means justify a Repetition. The [illegible] we have, however, of two Companies being formed in N York of those Troops and the Publication lately made by the Board of War in consequence of a Remonstrance from Col. Bland cry aloud for some Step to be taken to put a Stop to the honorable Desertion which seems to be going on [merrily] and which in a short Time, I fear, will leave very few Convention Troops to be reckoned upon by me. I doubt if this will meet you at Philadelphia, or I find you intend about this Time to make a little excursion, which you most certainly are entitled to. It gives me real Pleasure, my Friend, to be informed by you that Harmony and Confidence begin again to reign in Congress, without this all your Efforts will be vain. The long Labor of foreign Affairs I trust too is over and that your [Ultimata] are gone forward which ought to have moved six Months ago. I only wish now to hear the Press is stopped for while that is open I fear our Money will not appreciate. Carmichael, I hear has returned to Maryland. If my Information be wrong and he's still with you, be pleased to remember me to him, and give it a Reason for my not writing to him. I thank you for your kind Enquiries after and Anxiety for Mrs. Plater's Health and most sincerely wish as it would be my greatest Happiness that I could say she was well, but not a Day passes over her Head clear of a Fever. It seems to be expected that I should return to Congress, she will try to

come with me, hoping the Exercise and change of Air may operate favorably to her. We both join in warmest Wishes for your Health and Happiness and I am with great Truth and Sincerity.

Your affection Friend and obedient Servant,  
Geo. Plater

Sotterley Sept 4<sup>th</sup> 1779

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Note: What “foreign affairs” Plater was referring to is unclear. It may have been a reference to Morris’s role in fixing Congress’s terms for eventual peace with Britain.

### 36. Maryland Delegates to Thomas Sim Lee – December 29, 1779

Philadelphia Decr. 29<sup>th</sup> 1779

Sir,

We received the inclosed from Major Lee the other Day, and beg Leave to forward it for the Consideration of your Excellency and the Council – being well assured that you will do all in your Power to relieve the Necessities of those valuable Men who are in Majr Lee’s Corps. We have applied to the Board of War, and find nothing can be done here. On the 23d inst an Embarkation took Place at New York, and from the Number of Vessels (one hundred sixty ships) we apprehend it to be very considerable – their Destination not certainly known, but from Circumstances we fear they are intended, in part or in whole, to reinforce their

Troops in the southern Quarter. We are with the highest Sentiments of Respect, your Excellency's most obedient humble Servants.

Geo. Plater

James Forbes

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 14, p. 309.

Note: The letter was written by Plater.

### 37. Maryland Delegates to Thomas Sim Lee – January 5, 1780

Phila. January 5<sup>th</sup> 1780

Sir,

Since our last address to your Excellency we are favor'd with the inclosed from Major Lee which we take the Liberty to forward by General Smallwood, who will give every Information relative to the Subject – to him therefore we beg Leave to refer and are with the highest Sense of Regard, your Excellency's most obedient and very humble Servants.

Geo. Plater

James Forbes

[P.S.] The troops sailed from N York by the last Intelligence are six british Regiments, the Grenadiers and light Infantry of the Army, Rawdon's Corps – the Legion – The Queens Rangers, and Hessian Grenadiers – making about five thousand effectives.

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 14, p. 319–320.

Notes: The letter was written by Plater. William Smallwood was a Maryland planter who served as an officer in the Maryland Line eventually rising to the rank of Major General and later became the Governor of Maryland.

38. George Plater to Edward Lloyd – January 20, 1780

Philadelphia January 20<sup>th</sup> 1780

My Dear Sir,

I am favored with yours of the 8<sup>th</sup> inst. I believe you had not then received my last, in which I mentioned some Rooms which I could get for your Accommodation here, the Owner wishes to know your Answer, which I cannot give until I know your Determination – and tho' you say you have Doubts whether you will enter upon the arduous Task, yet I think that Point must have long been settled with you, or you would have told the Legislature so before they arose, when they had the Power to fill up the Vacancy. Forbes declares, and says he has written the Governor, that he will stay no

longer than the End of this Month, if so it will be indispensably necessary for some of the new to come up, or the State will be underrepresented, how pleasing this may be to our Constituents I must submit to your Judgment. Congress has resolved to leave Philadelphia in April next, but when is not yet determined, perhaps the Uncertainty of being properly, or so well, accommodated in any other Place, may be a Means of their continuing here – but this I do not positively say – was it left to me, I should, thinking it necessary, remove tomorrow, if practicable. Flour is now conveyed with much Facility on Slays, and some has arrived here from Maryland and gone to the Camp. The Depth of the Snow prevented Cattle from being driven, and reduced our poor brave Soldiers to an Herring and Gill of Rice per Day, this they bore without murmuring. The Exertion of the States (upon which we must now solely depend) and the Roads being opened now, afford a Prospect of Subsistence to the Army, and I hope a little Perseverance in this Line of Conduct will fill our Magazines against the ensuing Campaign. Your recommendations will ever have a great Weight with me, because I know you would not recommend a bad Man, and I should be happy to prove it by my Endeavor to promote Mr. Grayson, whom I view as a good Officer and skillful Mariner. But I must inform you that we have more Captains than Ships, our Marine being but in its Infancy. Many of these Captains, deserving in the highest Degree, are now obliged to go to Merchantmen to get a living. It will never do to put a Man over their Heads. The Enemy certainly sailed from N York on 26<sup>th</sup> Decr. With five thousand Troops, and I have good Reason to think Clinton with them, where destined we know not, but tis most generally thought to George and Charles Town. Since their sailing there have been two severe Storms, from the good Effects of which we have much to hope. Since my Arrival here I have received another Letter from Mr. Chamberlaine concerning the Land, I wrote him that I had applied to you for your Determination, and then would give him my Answer, which I wish to be

enabled to do in a Post or two, the Weather may possibly prevent your going to the eastern Shore for some time, and my Delay may be deemed by him neither candid nor polite - therefore shall be glad you will say whether you will purchase or not. The Disposal of the Land at Wye is what I have not thought of, the Right being fully in me, but should such a thing happen, you may be assured it would give me more Pleasure to vest it in you than a stranger, nor can the mention be by any Means deemed offensive, well knowing that you intended none. I find it is my Fate to be detained here this Winter, very disagreeable to me, and inconvenient to my domestic affairs - I presume Mr. Hall cannot think of leaving the vineyard and Bub 'till warm weather gives Motion to Butterflies etc. The weather is cold, but we all agree, who have traveled, that the Roads are very dry and good, perhaps better than you may find 'em in April. Therefore it would give me Pleasure to see you here. Mrs. Plater joins me in Love and Affection, and I am with most perfect Regard and Esteem Dr. Col.

Your affectionate and obedient Servant.

Geo. Plater

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), *Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789*, Vol. 14, p. 353–355.

Notes: Edward Lloyd IV was a wealthy planter, owner and builder of Wye House in Talbot County. He was a member of the Maryland Assembly and also of the Council, who was elected a delegate to Congress in December 1779. Lloyd's wife, Elizabeth Tayloe, was the daughter of Plater's older sister, Rebecca. Despite being elected, Lloyd did not serve in Congress in 1780.

John Hall the owner of “the Vineyard” near Annapolis was also re-elected a delegate to Congress in December 1779, but did not serve in 1780.

Forbes did not leave in January but died in Philadelphia in March. Plater then became the sole Maryland representative. Congress’s rules stipulated that states would only have a vote if two representatives were present. Consequently after Forbes’s death, Maryland was represented by Plater but without a vote until new representatives arrived in August.

Chamberlaine is probably James Lloyd Chamberlaine of Talbot County. What properties Plater is referring to is not clear.

39. George Plater to Thomas Sim Lee – February 1, 1780

Philadelphia February 1<sup>st</sup> 1780

Sir,

At Mr. Holker's Request, who waited on me this Morning, I have the Honor to forward to your Excellency the inclosed. The Enemy on Staten Island have returned Lord Sterling's Visit, burned some Houses near Elizabeth Town, and taken three or four Officers and about sixty privates Prisoners; having surprised the advanced Posts. I have the Honor to be with the most perfect Respect, your Excellency's most obedient and very humble Servant,

Geo. Plater

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 14, p. 386.

Note: Mr. Jean (John) Holker was the French Inspector General for Trade and the Agent for the French Royal Marine (navy) in Philadelphia.

40. Maryland Delegates to Thomas Sim Lee – February 23, 1780

Philadelphia Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup> 1780

Sir,

We herewith forward to your Excellency the Act of Congress relative to furnishing the Officers with Cloathing – and in Compliance with your Requisition, moved that you might have Permission to draw on the Continental Treasury in the State for reimbursing such Supplies. The Congress declined to give their Opinion upon the Subject and committed it to an especial Committee; when they report, we shall not fail to give you the Result of this Deliberation – in the mean Time, we think, no ill Consequence can attend drawing on that Fund for the above Purpose. We have the Honor to be with the highest Sentiments of Respect, your Excellency's most obedient and very humble Servants.

Geo. Plater

James Forbes

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 14, p. 440–1.

Note: The letter was written by Plater.

41. Maryland Delegates to Thomas Sim Lee – March 7, 1780

Philadelphia, March 7<sup>th</sup> 1780

Sir,

We are honored by your Excellency's Favor of 18<sup>th</sup> last. The Minister of France knows very well, however wrong he may have deemed the Measure, that the Seizing of the french Flour was to releave the exceeding great Distress of the Army, and we have never understood, or even heard it suggested, that the Conduct of the State was imputed to any other Motive. We have no Reason to think that he doubts the Attachment of Maryland to the Alliance, and have heard him express Pleasure at the Receipt of your Excellency's late Letter, which he says is fully satisfactory. We have set before him, in the clearest Point of View we could, the Extent of your Powers, which will not permit the suspension of any Law, without any Exception for that Purpose, and that it is your Duty to see all Laws executed in the utmost Extent; of all which he appears fully persuaded. The Consequences which he mentions to have imparted to one of us were, that as he found the Supplies were uncertain, and not to be depended upon, even after being

purchased and stored, he could not, under such Uncertainty, invite a French Fleet to our Coast. We have ever esteemed it our Duty, and hoped we had discharged it, to communicate to the Governor and Council, in Recess of Assembly; all Matters of Importance acted upon in Congress which may relate to Maryland; therefore are at some Loss of the Meaning of your last Paragraph, as we know of no Matter of Importance, relative to the State lately discussed which has not been forwarded – there is indeed a Report of a Committee on the Application of Mr. Holker for three thousand Barrels of Flour over and above the Quantity last assigned, which, when passed, we shall not fail to Communicate. We have the Honor to be with the most perfect Respect, your Excellency's most obedient and very humble Servants.

Geo. Plater

James Forbes

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), *Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789*, Vol. 14, p. 477–8.

Notes: The letter was written by Plater. At the time, the French Minister Plenipotentiary in Philadelphia was Chevalier de La Luzerne. The letter concerns Maryland's seizure of flour purchased for the French navy by John Holker's agent.

42. George Plater to Thomas Sim Lee – April 4, 1780 (M)

Sir,

The inclosed Letter came to my Hand yesterday, and as I find it [in]scribed on public Service, have thought it proper to forward it to your Excellency. I have the Honor to be with the greatest Respect,

Your Excellency's  
most obedient and very humble Servant

Geo. Plater

Philadelphia, Apr. 4th 1780

Source: Maryland Hall of Records, Maryland State Papers, Red Books 5 #71, S989–7.

Notes: The letter is presumably addressed to Governor Lee, but no envelope was included. As John Forbes had passed away in March and no new representatives had arrived, Plater was then Maryland's sole representative in Congress.

43. George Plater to Maryland Council – April 12, 1780

Philadelphia, Apl. 12<sup>th</sup> 1780

Gentlemen,

Since my last we have Intelligence of an Embarkation of two thousand Men at new York destined to Charles Town and some more Transports are at the watering Place which indicates another Movement. Gen. Lincoln writes on the 14<sup>th</sup> March that the enemy had been lying before the Bar of Charles Town with a Number of Ships of War viz. one line of Battle, one fifty, two forty four, two Frigates, two twenty, one Sloop and a Galley, with some Transports which had been lightening the heavy Ships - their Intention to come in the first favorable Opportunity. Our Ships were anchored so as to act in Conjunction with Fort Moultrie. The Enemy had thrown up a Battery opposite the west Part of Town, on the north Side of Wappoo Creek, from which they fired upon our armed Vessels. The Balls reached the Town, but it is at too great a Distance to annoy our Works. It will prevent our Ships lying in Ashley River, which would intercept their Passage, if they meant it by Boats. I have the Honor to be with the greatest Respect, Gentlemen, your most obedient and very humble Servant.

Geo. Plater

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), *Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789*, Vol. 15, p. 32.

Note: Fort Moultrie guarded Charleston, then called Charles Town. The British captured Charleston later in 1780.

44. George Plater to Thomas Sim Lee – May 11, 1780

Philadelphia, May 11<sup>th</sup> 1780

Sir,

The Baron de Calb who commands our Line moving southward and being a Stranger in Maryland, I have taken the Liberty to trouble your Excellency with this Letter to introduce him to you, agreeably to his Inclination and Desire. I am just preparing to leave this Place; and believe I shall find myself under the Necessity of drawing upon our State Treasury for ten thousand Dollars, of which I have thought proper to advise you, that the Bill may meet with no Delay when it appears. Mrs. Plater joins me in Respects to your Lady and self, and I have the Honor to be with the greatest Esteem and Regard, your Excellency's most obedient Servant.

Geo. Plater

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), *Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789*, Vol. 15, p. 109.

Note: Baron de Kalb was a German officer serving with the Revolutionary army.

45. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris - June 4, 1780 (M)

Dear Morris,

It has given me much Pleasure to be informed by a Letter from Mr. McHenry that Day after we left you that you were better, and in a fair Way of speedily recovering — this I hope and long to have from under your own Hand, as soon as you can write with Ease and Convenience. In the mean Time, our best Wishes, the only Offering we can make are offered for your Recovery, and I beg leave to assure you that I am with Truth and Sincerity Dear sir,

Your affectionate and obedient Servant,

Geo. Plater

Sotterley June 4<sup>th</sup> 1780

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: Gouverneur Morris had been seriously injured in a carriage accident and had his leg amputated. James McHenry was a doctor from Maryland who held many positions.

46. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – July 17, 1780 (M)

Dear Morris,

Your Letter of 24<sup>th</sup> last gave much Pleasure, as I concluded, though you don't say so, you were much amended and in a fair Way of Recovery. The late unlucky Affair at Cha. Town seems to have [illegible] us from that Lethargy which had pervaded all Ranks, and I am happy to find the Merchants of Philadelphia exercising that Liberality and Nobleness of Spirit which I ever thought was much in their Power. Our Assembly has complied with all the Recommendations of Congress, in Consequence we have all here become recruiting Officers, and I am busied every Day in looking out for my Men. We are determined to fill up our Quota and raise an extra Regiment with a Company of Horse from every County. I wish our draft may be completed. The N York privateers are swarming in our Bay — a Boat with fourteen well armed Men landed and took a [illegible] at Col. Fitzhugh's Door the other Evening. They surrounded the House and inquired for the Col. who had left home about ten Minutes before to visit us. This has alarmed us, and I wish we may not be put to flight once more by these Rascals. Mrs. P is very busy in getting Subscriptions in imitation of the noble Example set by the fairest of the fair Sex in Philadelphia. She joins me in wishing for your Health and Happiness. Farewell and believe me

Yours sincerely,  
Geo. Plater

Sotterley July 17 1780

Make my respects to the good Dr. Jones

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: Dr. Jones was Gouverneur Morris's personal physician. Mrs. Plater's work was following the example of the Ladies Association in Philadelphia that was raising funds for the Army.

47. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – July 29, 1780 (M)

Dear Morris,

Your Poetical Description of the grand Festival was very entertaining, but nothing gave more Pleasure than hearing you were so much better as to rise from your Couch to a Chair. You suppose the great and glorious Day was remembered with me by flowing Bowls – very different I assure you — on that Day I was riding upon Business from 5 in the Morning till near 4 afternoon, when almost overcome by the excessive Heat and ready to drop from my Horse, I put up at a House where, from its Appearance, some Comfort and Refreshment were promised, but too my great Disappointment found nothing to moisten my parched up Throat but Milk and Water, and this you know is a Liquor I have not much addicted myself to. I am very glad to find the french Fleet is arrived, and hope it will change the Face of our Affairs. Our Friend Carmichael has honored me with a Letter, but it have [sic] references to public Letters which my present Situation forbids me to see. I take the Liberty to trouble you with one for him as you will have many

Opportunities offering which I cannot. By this Time, I hope you are preparing to supply by Cook what you have lost in Flesh, and that we shall soon hear you are about again. I am with Mrs. P's best Wishes joined to mine.

Your real Friend and Servant,  
Geo. Plater

Sotterley July 29<sup>th</sup> 1780

My Respects to worthy Doct. Jones

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

#### 48. Maryland Delegates to Thomas Sim Lee – September 26, 1780

Philadela. Sepr. 26<sup>th</sup> 1780

Dear Sir,

The interval between the coming in and going out of the post is so short, that we have it not in our power at this time, to give you the information which you desire. We can assure you that very inconsiderable quantities have been imported by the Commercial Committee; some Linens have from Time to Time arrived but the quality and quantity we shall endeavor to inform you of in a few Days, as we are at present unacquainted with the amount of the returns. It has always been the object of Congress and the Duty of the Cloathier General to distribute the Cloth that was provided with impartiality, if it has not been the case, we shall be able soon to give your Excellency information upon the subject. The present Cloathier General is a native of Maryland a man

of Honor and a good officer and we believe no partial distribution has been made since his appointment.

We shall endeavor by the first opportunity to inform you of the Cloathing and Military Stores annually imported by the United States. The quantity will be so small that we believe it will give your Excellency very little pleasure; and if the ten thousand Suits which ought to have come out in the Alliance and is now daily expected in the Ariel, does not arrive, and the State cannot furnish Cloathing for their own Troops, they must be in a most deplorable Situation through the whole of the approaching Season; for little or none can be expected from the Board of War; we shall however take every step in our power to secure for our own Troops their share of that little, small as it is.

The Cloathing which Majr, Giles drew at Camp for the new-raised Regt. is now here, and we shall detain the officer, which he employed in this Business for five or six days, in which Time the Secretary of the Board of War assures us they shall be finished; we do this the more readily as it corresponds with the Major's orders.

Your Excellency's Letter to the Board of War we shall seal and deliver; and if our Exertion can avail of any thing, they shall be employed in behalf of our gallant tho unfortunate Countrymen.

Brigadier Smallwood has been appointed by unanimous voice of thirteen States as Majr. General. This will give the State some pleasure tho' it is not all that she has right to expect from Congress; The Troops of other States have received the Thanks of Congress for displaying less gallantry than has lately been exhibited by the Delaware and Maryland Line.

We have no intelligence to communicate; Reports prevail that the French Fleet is arrived at Rhode Island, but it wants confirmation. Admiral Rodney is still at the Hook, and Graves is out. By the last letters from Camp preparations were making for an embarkation. The conjecture

respecting their destination was communicated to a few Days ago.

We are Sir with the highest respect and Esteem, your Excellency's most obedient Servants.

Geo. Plater

John Hanson

Daniel of St Thos Jenifer

J. Henry Junr

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 16, p. 111–2.

Notes: The letter was written by Henry. The Cloathier General was James Wilkinson.

49. Maryland Delegates to Governor and Council – September 26, 1780 (M)

Philadelphia. Sep. 26<sup>th</sup> 1780

Gentlemen,

In consequence of your Letter of the [blank], we inclose for you Resolves of Congress of June 1780 and propose to lay your Letter before Congress this Morning. If any thing is done in Consequence thereof it shall be communicated by.

Your Excellency's and Honors most obedient Servants.

Geo. Plater

John Hanson

Daniel of St Thos Jenifer      J. Henry Junr

Source: Maryland Hall of Records, Maryland State Papers Red Books 5 # 98, S989-7.

Note: The letter was written by Plater.

50. Maryland Delegates to Maryland Council – October 3, 1780

Philadelphia Octo 3<sup>rd</sup> 1780

Gentlemen,

From the last return of the Clothier Gen's, dated in August, there appeared to be about one thousand Suits of Clothing on hand; besides which, there are in the hands of the different purchasing Agents, Cloath enough for 3500 Suits, linen for 20,000 Shirts, Baize (which was a Considerable time Ago ordered to be milled) for 14,000 Blankets, a great Sufficiency of Shoes, and a Variety of Articles for the Summer Season, Such as Linen Over halls, Hunting Shirts etc. Out of the Stock which was on hand in August, the new raised Maryland regiment has be Supplied.

The deficiency of Clothing, which is necessary to be made up, depends principally on the Supplies expected from France, which tis more than probable will not now Arrive in time – be assured we Shall always endeavour to have Strict Justice done our Troops, in the distribution of what Cloathing there is now on hand, and also of Any that, may hereafter be procured, but as most of what is now on

hand, lies in the Eastern States, and will be transported to Head Quarters, it is probable the Army there will be first Supplied.

We have laid your two letters respecting General Gates's drafts, before Congress, who have not yet Come to any determination on the Subject.

We have the honor to be with the most perfect esteem, Your Excellency and Honors most Obedient and Humble Servants.

Geo. Plater

J. Henry Jun

John Hanson

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 16, p. 142.

Notes: The letter was written by Henry. General Horatio Gates was a controversial figure who was to be investigated at the time of this letter for his role in the defeat in the battle of Camden.

#### 51. Maryland Delegates to Thomas Sim Lee – October 9, 1780

Philadela. Octr. 9<sup>th</sup> 1780

Dear Sir,

Before Majr. 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 four weeks six hundred for the Southern Army. As many as may be necessary for the New raised 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 Shirts which detained Majr. Giles' officer was ready some Days ago, and we suppose he is now on his way to Maryland with the Clothing.

Mr. Matlock the Secretary of Pennsylvania informed us yesterday that they had received intelligence of an embarkation of all Regts, 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 us to believe, the report is groundless, as we cannot suppose so important a movement would escape his observation.

Major Andrie 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 and a Man of Honor, lamenting the failure of his enterprizes 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 to inquiry on the Conduct of Majr. 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 in 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 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 honor to be, Sir with the highest respect  
and Esteem, your obedient Servants.

Geo. Plater

J. Henry

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–  
1789, Vol. 16, p. 170–1.

Note: The letter was written by Henry.

## 52. Maryland Delegates to John H. Stone – October 10, 1780

Philadela. Octr. 10<sup>th</sup> 1780

Dear Sir,

We had the Honor of your favour by the last post. The Act of the State of Pennsylvania for prohibiting the exportation of provisions is continued for six months and from thence to the End of the next setting of the General Assembly. The Act continuing the Embargo is in the enclosed paper to which we have the Honor of referring you. For the News of the Day we must refer you to our letter to the Governor and Council, and the honor to be with the most perfect [Esteem] yours.

Geo. Plater

J. Henry

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 16, p. 188–9.

Notes: The letter was written by Henry. John Hoskins Stone of Charles County, the brother of Thomas Stone, was then a member of the Maryland Council and later a governor of Maryland.

53. George Plater to Thomas Sim Lee – November 6, 1780 (M)

Dear Sir,

I am honored by your Favor of the 3<sup>rd</sup> for which be pleased to accept my Acknowledgments. We have various flying Reports of fortunate Events having taken Place in the South, and waited impatiently the Arrival of this Days Post, expecting it to bring Confirmation; but we are as yet without it, notwithstanding some have come in a pretty direct Line. A Letter of short Date from Mr. Curson in St Eustatia mentions a Disposition in the Dutch to War, that they have fifty Sail of Ships, and that the Admiral in that Land pays a great Regard to the American Flag by regularly returning the Salute. A Paragraph in a late N York Paper, complaining of the Perfidy of some Powers which (as they think), ought to be more attached to Britain, seems to give Strength to the above Observation. I am much obliged by your Attention to our Wants, and as you say you shortly expect a considerable Sum, I will take the Liberty to draw. Mrs. Plater begs to be

presented to your Lady, and I entreat you to believe that I  
am with the highest respect,  
your Excellency's most obliged humble Servant.

Geo. Plater

Philadelphia Nov. 6<sup>th</sup> 1780

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), *Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789*, Vol. 16, p. 300–301. Manuscript copy from Maryland Historical Society, Special Collections, MS 1814.

Note: In this letter, Plater is wisely reporting hints that the Dutch were drifting toward war with Britain. During 1778–9, the Dutch merchants had been a major source of supplies for the United States, sent through St. Eustatius in the Caribbean. British efforts to suppress this traffic eventually led to the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War in December 1780, which had some effect in diverting British resources away from the conflict in America. For background see Friedrich Edler, *The Dutch Republic and the American Revolution*, Johns Hopkins Press, 1911.

54. George Plater to Thomas Sim Lee – November 13, 1780

Philadelphia Novr. 13<sup>th</sup> 1780

Dear Sir,

The enclosed I lately received, and beg Leave to lay it before you. Genl Washington writes that the Embarkation is about to take Place at New York, destined southward –

that Rodney is to sail for the West Indies as soon as the Cork Fleet arrives. It seems to be the Plan of the Enemy to push the War in the South, in hope of making more considerable Impressions in that Quarter, it being supposed by them the weaker, than they can in any other. Yet I trust our late Successes in Carolina will in some Measure defeat and frustrate their Intentions. I have for some Time past endeavoured to sell a Bill on Maryland, but can not find a purchaser, therefore fear we must put you to the Trouble of forwarding by Post or otherways the Money for our Support, of which we stand in great Need. Mrs. Plater offers her Respects to your Lady, and I am with the greatest Regard and Strongest Attachments, your Excellency's most obedient and obliged Servant,

Geo. Plater

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), *Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789*, Vol. 16, p. 331.

55. Maryland Delegates to Maryland Council – [December 5, 1780]

Gentlemen,

Your letter of the 22<sup>nd</sup> last relative to the Cattle at the Head of Elk did not come to our Hands 'till the 2<sup>nd</sup> inst., and yesterday we laid it before the Congress – they have refered it to the Board of War with Directions to take immediate Order. We have the honor to be with great respect,

Gentlemen, your most obedient and very humble Servants.

Geo. Plater

John Hanson

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789, Vol. 16, p. 419.

Notes: The letter was written by Plater. Its date can be determined because the referenced letter was laid before Congress (yesterday) December 4.

The Council's September 22 letter concerned 500 head of cattle that the Council raised and sent to the Head of Elk, the Continental receiving depot in Maryland. There, however, Continental agents "refused to receive and forward the Cattle to the Army alleging it to be no part of the Business of their respective Departments." Having no money, Maryland officials were then compelled to sell some of the cattle to buy provision to support and keep the rest alive. The Council complained bitterly of the "Evils" of a system under which the states complied with congressional requests only to have Congress's agents fail to cooperate.

56. George Plater to Thomas Sim Lee – December 5, 1780

Philadelphia Decr. 5<sup>th</sup> 1780

Dear Sir,

The enclosed was this Day put into my Hand which I have now the Honor to forward to your Excellency.

My time being this day expired which by the Constitution I could sit in Congress, I am preparing to get away and hope soon to have the Pleasure of seeing you in Annapolis. I wish some of the new appointed Members would come forward to keep up a Representation. Mrs. Plater offers her Compliments to your Lady, and I am with the highest Respect, Dear Sir, your Excellency's most obedient Servant,

Geo. Plater

Source: Paul Smith (ed.), *Letters to Delegates to Congress 1774–1789*, Vol. 16, p. 419.

Note: George Plater's service in the Continental Congress officially ended on this day, December 5, 1780. However, his wife's illness forced him to remain in Philadelphia until after Christmas.

57. George Plater to Thomas Sim Lee – December 26, 1780 (M)

My Dear Sir,

The last Post brought a Letter for Mr. Hanson, which presuming was written by you, and presuming might contain some public Matter, as Mr. Hanson has been gone from here a fortnight, I took the Liberty to open. The Bill comes opportunely for I have been distressed and not able to receive any Money upon my own Fortune or the Credit of the State, therefore shall take the Freedom to make Use of it, and hope it will meet with your approbation. Long in [illegible] I expected to have been in Maryland, but Mrs. Plater's extreme ill Health hath prevented, she has been for some Time confined to her Bed, and is now scarcely able to hold up her Head, when she will be strong enough to undergo the Fatigue of the Journey in this Inclement Season, Time alone must determine. I am accordingly distressed and unhappy on this Occasion, but must have the Patience and trust my Friends will not easily conclude that I am spending my Time in the Gaiety of this Capital, tis far otherwise, for my Desire of Return added to the Cause of my Detention more and more embitter every moment. You inquire what Exchange is. A Committee has settled it at 75, but hard Money cannot be procured under 90, and tho' the Shop Keepers are obliged to take 75, they lay on in the hard Money to make it up. Thus, it is as hard as tis long, and no good [illegible] will come from complaining, [illegible] in respect to Money. We have Reason to expect that Britain has in Contemplation the sending [illegible] Regiments more to America, this at the [illegible] of Clinton who has desired to be recalled unless better supported. I trust our good Allies will be vigilant and frustrate this Plan. The Troops from N York have not yet sailed. Our Compliments are presented to your Lady and I am with the highest sentiments of Regard and Esteem,

Your Excellency's Most obedient and very humble servant,

Geo. Plater

Phil. Dec. 26<sup>th</sup> 1780

Source: Maryland Historical Society, Special Collections, MS 1814.

Note: John Hanson was another of Maryland's delegates. Although Plater's service had ended, he chose to deal with this letter from Governor Lee because Hanson had not arrived and no other Maryland delegate was present.

58. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – January 31, 1781 (M)

[no salutation]

This will be handed to you by Mr. Carroll a Delegate from this State, who is a particular Friend of mine, and as much, I beg Leave to recommend him to your Acquaintance in being well assured that, however forbidding his first Appearance may be, a little Time will convince you of his Worth and Merit. He comes [equiped] with Power to accede to the Confederation. This may make him very Welcome to some, tho' perhaps not to you. That Subject and some other great Points have consumed much Time with our Assembly. We are just finishing and I hope

soon to be released, for I have not yet seen my own house since I left it in September. Mr. Johnson our late Governor and Carroll of Carrollton could not be prevailed on to take their Seats in Congress, something may be said in Excuse for the former, but nothing for the latter. We have it from Mr. Arthur Lee that you and he are in Nomination for Secretary of foreign Affairs. He says you have the Tory, and he the whig Interest, I presume he means of the City and not of Congress. Present me to the worthy Doct. Jones, and all other inquiring Friends. I am with great Sincerity.

Your affectionate and Obedient Servant

Geo. Plater

Annapolis January 30<sup>th</sup> 1781

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Note: Daniel Carroll, a cousin of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, was a Maryland senator, colleague of Plater and delegate to Congress 1781–3.

59. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – March 17, 1781 (M)

Dear Morris,

Your Favor of 12<sup>th</sup> ult. I have. You Request that I should inquire how the Letters were disposed of which came with [illegible] via Bilboa, appears too much filled with Difficulties for me to comply with. my Letter came to me by

Post from Phila., who received it there and put it into the Office, Distance of Space and Length of Time [illegible] out of my Power to make Enquiries with any Degree of [promissed] Success. Our good Friend the Marquiss is on his Way I hear with some chosen Troops to [illegible] the involvement of Mr. Arnold, whose Ships and Vessels still continue to infest our Coasts, and prohibit me from being stationary. Cornwallis we are told is [initiating] and Greene [illegible] Turn and Turn about is but fair Play. A Gen. Gregory of N Carolina is said to have been detected in a traitorous Correspondence with Arnold for which I hope he will suffer according to his Demerits, but we are so far from the fountain Head that the [sheaves] of News frequently [may] [illegible] before it reaches us. We thank Mrs. Clark for her kind Inquires and are truly [sensible] of her amiable and friendly Disposition. Mrs. P offers her Respects to you and the good Doct. Jones, to which be pleased to [subjoin] mine and believe me

Your most affectionate and obedient Servant

Geo. Plater

Sotterley March 17<sup>th</sup> 1781

Source Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: The Marquis refers to Marie-Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de La Fayette, known simply as Lafayette. General Nathaniel Greene was the Commander of the Army in the South until Washington's arrival later in 1781. Mrs. Clark may refer to the wife of Abraham Clark a delegate from New Jersey.

60. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – March 26, 1781 (M)

Dear Morris,

I find you complaining in your Letter to Mrs. P that you don't hear from me, I think your Complaints must have [illegible] in this, as I have lately pointed two Letters at you and thought you in my Debt. You have by Situation much Matters both of News and Politics which you may communicate and thereby give me great Entertainment. I have nothing worth relating and only take up my Pen to convince you that I am not dead, nor have the Gout in my Thumb, and that my Regard and Esteem for you is by no Means diminished. The very fine Winter has given you an Opportunity to enjoy the [illegible] of the City in their fullest Perfection, while I have not neglected to get forward in Agriculture, my Sows are nursing their pretty Lambs, some of my Tobo look beautifully grown, others I am sowing, but cannot tell who may reap them, nor do I know how long I may order one Slave to do this or another to do that, but I hate to speak of myself. Therefore begging you to remember me to all Friends shall say no more than that I am

Yours sincerely

Geo. Plater

Leonardtoun March 26<sup>th</sup> 1781

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

61. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – April 6, 1781 (M)

Dear Morris,

Your two Favours of 6<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> March are before me. Your Conclusion that I am out of the World is pretty right, altho I am not dead. I thank you for your Congratulations upon my Disquietudes being removed. I wish I could say it was that Case, it is far otherwise, the french Fleet I am induced to believe has received a thrashing and precipitately removed, leaving the british Plunderers Masters of these Waters and to carry on their devilish Machinations and [illgible]. This affords a melancholy Prospect to us who at present form the Frontier, but we have removed from the River to a humble Cottage distant four Miles where in the Evening we are serenaded by the beautiful Notes of the Frogs, and undisturbed by Guns in Quiet sleep. God grant the Congress may continue to make good Appointments, they stand much in Need of them. The Hostilities commenced by Britain against the Dutch give me Pleasure. The Effort may in the End be glorious for us, their Measure was not quite full before, I hope this Step will compleat it. Mrs. P bears the Damage done to her Cape [illegible] with more than female Fortitude and returns her Thanks to you for your attention thereto. Be pleased to remember us to Doct. Jones and all Friends. I had lately a letter from Constable who is Commander of Horse in Virginia...another from the Judge who will probably soon see you in Phila. God preserve you, [prays].

Yours sincerely

Geo. Plater

Abellton April 6<sup>th</sup> 1781

What has become of my friend Griffin? If you know personally

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: Cyrus Griffin was a delegate to Congress from Virginia. The “judge” may be a reference to John Hanson, a Maryland planter and patriot then serving as a delegate to Congress. Abellton may be an early name for the community of Abell in St. Mary’s County.

62. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – April 16, 1781 (M)

Dear Morris,

Your two friendly Letters of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> inst. are come to hand. I shall if possible guard our Persons against the Insults of the worst of Enemies, as I call the Pirates who at present infest our Coasts, for that Purpose have, as I wrote you, removed my most valuable Effects, and ourselves from the Water, my blacks are still exposed not having Opportunity to determine with Respect to them, indeed their Removal in a Country like this is not only difficult but next to impracticable. However, I am about to take some hope for them. Those Rascals, lately visited Col. Fitzhugh's Family forty Miles up the River Patuxent and in conjunction with, and I believe, at the Instigation of some blacks who left him last Fall took from the Col. forty Slaves young and old without doing further Damage. You will perhaps say this was too much. Your new coined Term pleases me much. The

derivation is good. I wish we may not often have Occasion to use it, but I hope not. Without some considerable Aid, I mean by Sea, I fear we shall be put to our [Trumps] this summer. I hear Arnold is reinforced and that Clinton is coming to take Post at New Castle, should this be effected will make the Inhabitants of your City a little uneasy. Leonard Town, from whence I date this, is a Place not very serene, tho' it is our County Town, where we have a constant Guard, and where I am obliged often to be, yet I do not [trust] myself here in [illegible] but retire to my snug Lodge. Your good Wishes are most thankfully received, be pleased to take ours in Return and believe me

Yours most sincerely,

Geo. Plater

Leonard Town April 16 1781

I have the Gout and therefore cannot dance but I can sing for Joy that my Wine, fine old Madeira as ever flowed in Col. Fitzhugh's Cellar escaped, is not this a alternative?

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: New Castle was then the capital of Delaware.

63. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – May 6, 1781 (M)

Dear Morris,

We are all alive but Mrs. P is ill with a violent Cold. She talks of writing to you but I doubt if she will be able this Post. The Picaroons have been quiet for the Week past, but we expect their Return. You say in your Letter to Mrs. Plater that you hope we shall not be so much disturbed as before you had reason to apprehend. I wish you had given the Ground of that hope. Nothing will prevent it but Naval aid from our Ally. [there] such my Hope too, but as you observed Hope is a thin Diet, really thinner than [illegible] was on thursday last. The Marquiss with his Troops has proceeded to Virginia to oppose the british, their men made stronger by the Junction of Philips's Reinforcements. It has been said here that the Confederacy with fifteen thousand Suite of Soldier Clothes was taken off Delaware, but as you do not mention it on 22<sup>nd</sup> ult., I give it no Credit. Is Griffin dead or alive? I have heard nothing of or from him since I left Philadelphia. Should he be in town make my Respects to him. To Doct. Jones likewise present me and to all inquiring Friends. And believe me

Yours sincerely

Geo. Plater

Sotterley May 6<sup>th</sup> 1781

Source: Gouverneur Morris papers

Notes: Marquis Lafayette had been sent south intending to attach the British at Portsmouth. Brigadier General William Phillips had

been sent from New York in March to reinforce British forces in Virginia.

64. George Plater & J. A. Thomas to Thomas Sim Lee – May [16], 1781

St. Mary's County

From the particular Situation of our County, we are induced to request, that your Excellency would suspend the Draft of the Militia of that County for fitting up the Quota of Troops until the third day of June next.

Source: Journal and Correspondence of the Council of Maryland, 1781, Archives of Maryland, vol. 47 page 245.

Notes: Gov. Lee received this letter on May 17 and sent the requested instructions to the draft official in St. Mary's County the same day. A similar action was taken the same day in Charles County.

James Allen Thomas was a prominent citizen in St. Mary's County who had served under Gen. Smallwood and was elected to the House of Delegates in November 1781.

65. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – May 31, 1781 (M)

Dear Morris,

Several Favors of yours are now in my Pocket, and I should proceed to apologize for not having written you lately, but as I know you do not require it I shall only observe that when the two last Posts came in and went out, I was much engaged. This will be delivered to you by Capt. Fitzhugh who is happy enough to join the northern Army as an extra Aid to the General. He, I am sure, while in Philadelphia will again experience your accustomed Friendship and Politeness. It is not to be doubted that Cornwallis and Philips have formed a Junction at or near Petersburg in Virginia, which makes their Force very strong and formidable when that in Opposition is very weak and inconsiderable. Gen. Green I fear too is in a bad Situation. All these things give us Concern, more especially when we are at a Loss how to remedy. Our new Money depreciating very rapidly, staggers and confounds, but to me it was not unexpected. We hear it is appreciating in Philadelphia, this I suppose by the Operation of the new Financer, write more about it and give me your Opinion thereon. Our Enemies, I well know, have long leveled their wicked Devices against our Money, and by the Assistance of our own People who prefer Riches and Wealth to any thing else, I fear, are too likely to succeed, yet I flatter myself it is not too late to strike out something that may frustrate their Designs. If our good Friends and Allies could at this critical Conjunction throw in some naval Aid so as to give us a Superiority by Sea, it would much, very much, change the Face of Affairs, but if this is not to be expected till the latter End of July, there may be Time enough for the british to extend their Operations considerably and greatly to our Disadvantage, Such an Opportunity they will not fail to improve, and to exert every [Nerve] to extend their Arms before the Arrival of the French,

whose Movements and Intentions may be as well, perhaps better, known to them than to us, I beg you to remember me to all inquiring Friends and to believe me.

Yours sincerely,

Geo. Plater

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

June 1<sup>st</sup>

We have certain Advice that Cornwallis in force is making a rapid March thro Virginia and I fear will go on to Baltimore before he makes a Stand. [Wagner's] Troops have moved slowly but they are expected this Day at George Town. They will strengthen the Marquis who I believe is weak. I wish they may be able to check the Enemy at Patowmack. The uncertainty of Capt. Fitzhugh's Departure hence induces me to send this by Post.

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: Peregrine Fitzhugh, Eliza's half brother, was then a captain selected to be an aide to General Washington. General Nathaniel Greene was then commander of the Southern Army. The new financier is a reference to Robert Morris whom Congress had appointed Superintendant of Finance.

66. George Plater and William Bruff to Maryland Delegates – June 1, 1781

Annapolis, June 1, 1781

Gentlemen,

The General Assembly and the Governor and Council have wrote you several letters within these two days, and requested you to inform Congress of the Movements of the Lord Cornwallis, and to urge them in the most pressing manner to order all the Force, which can possibly be spared, to march immediately to the assistance of the Marquis de Lafayette. We are informed by Letter from Alexandria, dated yesterday Afternoon, that the Enemy, from their last information, were at Pages Warehouse; and that the Marquis would be in Fredricksburgh last Evening; it is the general opinion in Virginia, that the object of the Enemy is Alexandria; where it is supposed Genl Leslie is to meet them and thence to Baltimore. Our Brethren in Virginia are very desirous of defending their Country, but in the most distressed Situation for the want of Arms, at George Town there is a very considerable Quantity of Flour, which we doubt cannot be removed in Time.

We wish you would communicate the Intelligence you receive to his Excellency Genl Washington, whose Presence with a Body of Regulars, would effectually stop the Progress of the Enemy. We desire you to wait on his Excellency the President and the Council of Pennsylvania, and communicate to them the several Letters received from us, or our Executive, and request them to order One Thousand of the Militia to our assistance as we are apprehensive the stand must be made on the North Side of the Potomack. The Destruction of the grain in Virginia and this State will be a very considerable Object with the Enemy and may be effected by their marching thro' the Country, or

by calling the greater part of our Farmers into the Field. We are [Gentlemen your most humble obedient servants].

Geo. Plater, President of the Senate  
W. Bruff, Speaker of the House of Delegates

Source: Founders Online, National Archives  
(<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/00-01-02-05986>, ver.2013-08-02) accessed Aug. 28, 2013.

67. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – June 20, 1781 (M)

Dear Morris,

I some time ago prepared a Letter for Capt. Fitzhugh to bear to you, but some Considerations have prevented the young Aid de Camp going so soon as I expected, another Conveyance offering I embrace it to thank you for your last Letter without Date, but presume it was written on ye 30<sup>th</sup> last. We are very busy in preparing to prevent Cornwallis from crossing the Patowmack. I think we shall be able to turn out three thousand Infantry pretty well armed and perhaps three hundred Horse. I do not believe the Enemy mean to evacuate N York, notwithstanding all that is said about it. Gen. Green I think from late Accounts is in a fair Way to bring the Garrison of [Carrolden] to Submission, if

so what they boast of having gained in S Carolina must be lost to [him]. Present me to my Friends and believe me.

Yours sincerely

Geo. Plater

Annapolis June 20<sup>th</sup> 1781

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

68. George Plater and William Bruff to George Washington – June 27, 1781

In General Assembly Annapolis 27<sup>th</sup> June 1781

Sir,

We are desirous that Major General Smallwood should be permitted to stay in this State, if not inconsistent with your arrangements and the service; and we wish him to remain as long as you can permit; his advice and assistance is wanted to call forth the strength of this State and to put it in a proper posture for defence. We know no Gentleman, who for his personal influence, and the universal good opinion entertained by the people of his integrity, and military abilities, so proper to command our militia in case of Invasion of the State. We have resolved immediately to raise and March to the assistance of our sister State of Virginia two Battalions of our Militia, and a number of light Horse, and we think General Smallwood can greatly assist to

arrange them, and to expedite their March to the Southwest.

We must acknowledge the service rendered by General Smallwood in the raising and equipping and disciplining a body of Recruits, about four hundred, which we expect will march from this place in a few Days.

We present to your Excellency our warmest wishes for your health and happiness, and are with great respect and regard Sir your most obedient servants.

Geo. Plater President of the Senate  
W. Bruff Speaker of the House of Delegates

Source: Founders Online, National Archives  
(<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/washington/99-01-02-06188>, ver. 2013-08-02, accessed August 28, 2013).

69. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – July 16, 1781 (M)

Dear Morris,

Your last Favor received while I was at Annapolis I now thank you for. It was not Want of Friendship or Inclination that occasion my Interruption of our [illegible] Correspondence, but really Hurry and Attention to many things which I am very unfit for. Therefore you must excuse it. Our Preparations here to resist Cornwallis have been pressing and have demanded the Exactions of every one, but as you say we may I hope laugh at him, he has [tended] his Course

towards Portsmouth, either to come up Chesapeake or go to N York, where perhaps Clinton may want some of his Army. Be pleased to offer my Remembrances to all Friends and believe me

Yours sincerely,

Geo. Plater

[Len] Town July 16<sup>th</sup> 1781

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

#### 70. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – July 16, 1781 (M)

Dear Morris,

I have received your Favor of the [illegible] post of which seems to refer to a Request you made in a former Letter, which by some Mischance or other is not come to hand, but I gather this much that you desire me to send you Copies of our Acts legislative and executive. I presume you mean those which have been enacted since the Revolution or the Formation of our new Government. Your Request will soon be most practically complied with by me, but I fear in this I shall meet with Difficulty not easily [surmounted]. It has so happened that in my Absence from the State, Copies of the Laws to which I was entitled were either not sent to me or if sent [picked] up by somebody who kept 'em for his own Uses, by this my Set is incompleat, and I doubt if I can obtain 'em from any other Person [nor] from our Printer, whose

Inattention to such Matters is so great, that I am apprehensive his Office cannot supply those Copies I may want. However when I go to Annapolis my Endeavors shall be exerted to answer your desires. The Siege of N York you say is in good [moment] commencing. God send ['em] Success, but is it practicable without a Superiority of Naval Forces. I should doubt it. Green has [failed] at [Ninety six]. [Reardon] is reinforced and I wish he may not quickly rebuild, what Green has been [pulling] down. A Letter from Constable of the 10<sup>th</sup> informs me of some [skirmishing] in that quarter, in which the Virginia Army has gained Honor and Applause, he speaks of [Walt] Stuart in the highest Terms. Cornwallis [illegible] intentions are dark, he has [recrossed] James River, for what purpose we can't find out, perhaps to make a Movement by Water up the Chesapeake or to strengthen N York. Mrs. P writes to you. adieu and believe me

Yours most sincerely

Geo. Plater

Sotterley July 30<sup>th</sup> 1781

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

71. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – [Probably August 1781]  
(M)

Dear Morris,

Your Favor of 26<sup>th</sup> June is just come to hand, where it has been sleeping I know not. This I find in the Letter referred to in your last, and that you do not desire to see all our legislative Act, which are pretty voluminous, but to be informed on some particular Subjects, and our internal System in general. The Paper we have in circulation consists of two Kinds... State Emission and what is vulgarly called State Continental. The former (fifty thousand Pounds) emitted last year upon a Fund of Bank Stock in England, the Payment of which upon Bills drawn has been refused, upon which the State has seized Property lieu of the Trustees in England being british, fully to make good the Sum, which is directed to be sold. And tis generally thought this Money, which was to be redeemed in six Years, will be immediately locked up, as the Fund is indubitably good. The Depreciation of this has been equal with the other, from six to seven and an half. The latter, Seventy five thousand, was issued agreeably to the Recommendation of Congress for calling in the old Continental, and its Depreciation not more or less than the other, nor have I known any Difference made between the two Kinds, but am inclined to think that some Difference will arise in future, as the Property upon which is funded will be sold immediately. We have no tender Laws, or any of the Family, and God forbid we ever should. In last Winter Session, a tax of thirty Shillings Specie on every hundred Pounds worth of Property was laid, and fifteen Shillings thereof payable in April last and fifteen shillings in October next. All Lands and Tenements with their Improvements to be valued as they would have sold in 1774. Male Slaves from fourteen to forty five Years of Age at Seventy Pounds each, female Slaves from twelve to thirty six

Years of Age at sixty Pounds each. Male Slaves under fourteen and female under twelve at twenty five Pounds each. Plate eight and four pence per ounce. Bar Iron at twenty five Pounds per Ton. Other articles left to the Determination of the Assessors. Next January fifteen Shilling more is to be paid by Law of 1st May Session. It being considered that Provision would be wanted for the Army, Permission was given by the Law to People having Wheat Pork Beef Flour, indeed they were directed to pay in those specific Articles. in Consideration of the Tobacco [Makers], they were permitted to pay Tobacco at twenty Shillings per hundred weight. [thus], the first Payment being made, we have in Store Wheat Flour Beef Pork and a large Quantity of Tobacco, but no Money. All this I know you disapprove as you do not like Payments in specific Articles, but for your more full Information I enclose your own Supply Law. By this you will perceive that at the Commencement of the last Session in May, we had but one hundred and twenty five thousand Pounds Paper, a Sum by no means sufficient as a circulating Medium for this State, especially as some of the State Continental had left us, and some that I know of came out our Treasury, as I observed above, was empty. Large Demands for Money to move Troops already raised, to embody others, to form Cavalry, and perform a thousand [other] other things in Opposition to Mr. Cornwallis, who at that Time was making rapid strides through the Commonwealth of Virginia. Under the Circumstances, the Legislature [Manuscript stops here,]

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Note: This partial manuscript does not contain a date or location. Context indicates the letter was written in August, or possibly September, 1781.

72. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – October 8, 1781 (M)

Dear Morris,

Upon my Return from our western Country I received the Pleasure your Favors of 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> Sept. afforded me. As you well observe, Events are splendid indeed, and I hope we shall have wisdom enough to profit by them. Gen. Washington at the Head of sixteen thousand well appointed Troops, [illegible] Militia, have begun the Siege of York. We have already at this Place heard the sound of his cannon. Should Cornwallis fall in Virginia, don't you think the ancient Dominion will hold its head very high. Mrs. P writes to you, I beg you to present me to all inquiring Friends and to believe me.

Yours truly and sincerely

Geo. Plater

Sotterley Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> 1781

Source Gouverneur Morris Papers

73. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – October 26, 1781 (M)

Dear Morris,

I ought to have written to you by the last Post, if it had been only to congratulate you on the Capture of Cornwallis

and his gang. I do it now most sincerely and hope the Advantages you point out will result, I doubt not many more will, which at present we cannot foresee. Your Congratulations upon my being chosen President of the Senate are rather premature. [Tis true] I acted last Session [illegible] in the Absence of Mr. Jenifer, but a new Senate lately elected will make it necessary for that Branch to elect another President. Your Observation that Providence has clearly and signally interposed in our Affairs is very just. I have often thought so, and in this the worthy Chaplain of Congress agrees. Given success is great and miraculous, and at this time will have a most happy Effect, indeed I think our Prospects in general were never so bright. The particulars of Cornwallis, his surrender, I suppose you have, we are indeed to believe it was attained with trifling loss on our side. Mrs. P wrote to you lately, I communicated what you desired, she gives you much Trouble but I believe you don't think so. Pray remember me to the Doct. and all Friends and continue to believe me.

Your friend and Obedient Servant

Geo. Plater

Sotterley Oct. 26 1781

Mrs. Plater desires her Remembrance. She has not been in such perfect Health for [even] [illegible] has grown very fat, and such an appetite, that in attempting yesterday to take a large Slice from a Round of Beef she almost cut her Finger off. [illegible]

Mrs. P begs you to deliver the enclosed to Baker who is to do a small Piece of work for her which she begs you to forward by next Post

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

74. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – November 12, 1781 (M)

Annapolis 12<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1781

Dear Morris,

A Letter from you to Mrs. P passed through my hand on Friday. I expect her to join me in this place tomorrow Evening. She will be impatient to hear from Doct. Baker and I am to contact you to expedite his Answer, for many Reasons too long to be here inserted. I am likely to be confined here for some Time in a legislative Capacity. Our Money distracts me. We must I believe call it all in. [three] different currencies [passing] at their different Rates perplex and confuse exceedingly. I find Congress changing their President oft. [McMann's] Reign in Open Violation of the Pennsylvania Constitution, and expressly against a Resolution of the Assembly, is, I suppose, at an End. I sent this Letter to a private Hand and begging my Remembrance to all Friends assuring you that I am.

Yours sincerely

Geo. Plater

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

75. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – November 16, 1781 (M)

Dear Morris,

I had the Pleasure to address you the other Day by a private hand which I hope you have received. I hear it is in Contemplation with those in Power to set up a Mint and [recoin] the Money just received from France. What Advantage may come from this Measure I am at a Loss to conceive. I can only view one, the [keeping] the Money with us, but will not Depreciation, so very fashionable in America, ensue and counterbalance? What signifies whose Image or Superscription the Money bears? Whether it be [Cesar's] or not. However, I suspend any Opinion till I hear more on the Subject. Mrs. P will be anxious to hear from Baker, likewise to receive her Cloak. Mr. Carroll and Mr. Jenifer will be coming down and offer a good Conveyance. I expect the Pleasure of hearing from you soon. In the mean Time, I am

Yours sincerely,

Geo. Plater

Annapolis Nov. 16<sup>th</sup> 1781

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Note: “Those in power” was probably another reference to Robert Morris, Superintendent of Finance, who was in this period considering establishing a mint. As Gouverneur Morris was his deputy, Plater was probably taking advantage of an opportunity to question the idea. A mint was not established.

76. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – December 3, 1781 (M)

Annapolis Dec. 3. 1781

Dear Morris,

I have received your Letter by the last Post. This will be handed you by Mr. Forbes and Mr. Tubman. The former you have seen. They are about to purchase Goods and will have occasion to consult Mr. R. Morris. In that case, I beg you to introduce them to him. His and your Advice and [illegible] will be useful to them, and I am sure you will give it with Pleasure. The Letter from Baker which you committed to Mr. Carroll is not yet come forward. These gentlemen will offer an excellent conveyance for that or anything else. We have no News here worth communicating. I am pleased to hear you are well. our Friend [Craig] is here and says you are as wicked as ever, for that you advised him to use Indian meal instead of Rice and Bay Water [instead] of [Salt]. God bless you and believe me

Yours

Geo. Plater

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: Daniel Carroll was then a delegate to Congress.

77. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – [c. December 22, 1781]  
(M)

Dear Morris,

Having a [leisure] Moment I embrace it to inquire how you are. I am detained here longer than I expected to prepare and press a Law to raise Supplies for 1782, to reconcile many jarring Interests which exist in our Legislature and to comply with the very great Requisitions from the higher Power, are Works of Difficulty, and require Time. We all here seem disposed to do all we can and perhaps shall attempt too much. The five percent Impost recommended by Congress, I fear will not go down this Session, the great Men in the other Branch are against it, their Reasons not conclusive with me. Mrs. P is in the Fidgets about Baker's Letter which [Manuscript ends here.]

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: As the Senate took up the Supply Bill for 1782 on December 22, context indicates this letter was written around that time.

In 1781, at Robert Morris recommendation, the Congress proposed the first federal impost, a five percent import tax, to support the Confederation's finances. Maryland eventually adopted the proposal. However, to be enacted all states had to agree and Rhode Island rejected the idea.

78. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – January 3, 1782 (M)

Dear Morris,

Your two agreeable Favors of 30<sup>th</sup> Nov and 11<sup>th</sup> Dec are come to hand. I wrote you that I doubted if our Assembly would pass an Impost Law, I cannot yet say they will or will not. They have adjourned for the Hollydays and are just now met again. We have passed a Supply Bill laying forty five Shillings on every hundred Pound, much of it paid in specified Articles, of which I think we must have some Stock on Hand, having [arisen] from the last Collection. I have never understood that what you said about Indian Meal and Sea Water had given Offense to any Person. [Craig] mentioned it to me in a jocular Manner and in the same Way I gave it to you. had I known you had been [inflicted] on for such an Hint, it should never have dropt from my Pen. Your Observations on the Subject are very just. We have received the Tea, Doct. Baker's Letter and all the Matters in which you were concerned, for which give me Leave to offer my warmest Acknowledgements and to hint to you to make [Mollihon] [replace] the Money into your Pocket, which by this Time I think he is enabled to do. Mrs. P threatens to throw a Letter towards you, but when Tea Parties, Balls, Dinings etc. etc. etc. will give her Time so to do I cannot determine. Therefore you must take the Will for the Deed and expect one when she retires from the Scene of Gaiety which prevails here in a higher degree than it has for ten years past. Adieu and believe me

Yours most sincerely  
Geo. Plater

Annapolis Jan 3<sup>rd</sup> 1782

Present me to Doct. Jones and other Friends

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

79. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – February 18, 1782 (M)

Dear Morris,

I have been honored by your Favor of 21<sup>st</sup> January, for which I thank you. Our Paper Money has answered in the Course of the last Summer a very good Purpose, it enables us to equip and send southward a compleat Regiment which we could not have accomplished without its Aid, but whether it will answer any further good Purpose we doubt and therefore shall call it all in this year by Taxes. Your thoughts on a state Bank are coincident with mine. 'Tis true that Propositions were made to the Legislature on that Subject, but they were made by an excentric Genius, a young Man in Politics, and one who had just entered this Business of Legislation and were instantly rejected. I observe in the State of Articles purchased for me you have omitted the Charge for Mrs. Plater's Shoes. This and the other Bills which you have advanced and say are mislaid, I hope you will find and present to Molihon for Payment, as it will be unkind and unfriendly too, in my Opinion, to give you the Trouble of purchasing and longer to keep you out of your Money. 'Tis near the Time when we may expect to hear something form Britain. Their political System I think must be a little shaken and deranged. Should any think turn up, I rest in Expectation of having it from you, Leave the taking up Tippetts and the like to those who have more firm Supporters. Be Healthy and Happy, and believe me ever yours.

Geo. Plater

Sotterley Feb. 18<sup>th</sup> 1782

Source: Gouverneur Morris papers

Note: The young man in politics is probably James McHenry, then a Maryland senator, who had made a proposal for a state bank.

80. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – March 2, 1782 (M)

Dear Morris,

The Receipt of your obliging Favor of the 9<sup>th</sup> last, I have the Pleasure now to acknowledge, that you may no longer say you have not heard from me. My long Confinement to public Business and necessary Attention to domestic Affairs upon my Return home, did not give me Leizure to write to you so often as I wished to do, tho' I thought of you as frequently as ever. I find Philadelphia has been very gay this season, pray how does my Country Man the President discharge his several Functions, I mean without Doors, for I do not presume you are acquainted with them within, I [had] it is much to the Satisfaction of all, and that he cuts a very shining Figure, especially with the Addition of his goodly Lady who I flatter myself, far exceeds the late Duchess, particularly in the Etiquette of a dinning Table. We have it here that the French have taken St. Christopher, that the british Fleet are beaten in the W Indies, but wanting Confirmation. We have likewise the King's Speech to the Parliament of England. It does not appear to contain so much Acrimony as formerly. I believe and hope that my Namesake is a little cooled. Mrs. Lloyd I find has pleased much in Philadelphia, I do not wonder at it, for she is really a fine Woman. I am sure you think so. Mrs. Plater wrote to you by last Post. She now joins me in good Wishes for your Health and Happiness, and I am

Yours most sincerely

Geo. Plater

Sotterley March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1782

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: The “countryman” was Plater’s fellow Marylander, John Hanson, who had recently been elected the first President of Congress under the Articles of Confederation. The Mrs. Lloyd then in Philadelphia was probably Mrs. Richard Bennett Lloyd; Richard Lloyd was Elizabeth’s first cousin.

81. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – April 7, 1782 (M)

Dear Morris,

I believe I have received three or four of your kind Letters since I wrote you. I have been very busy and much hurried, to this I beg you to attribute my Silence, and to no other Cause. I have lately seen the London and Westminster Remonstrance, it is bold and energetic, I promise myself some good Consequences from it. The Remonstrants are equal in Respectability to all England beside, the Example will be followed. You have just applied to Congress for more Revenues, you say we must give them, I know not where Maryland will find them. Many Parts of this State have

not hard Money, some have. And this you say Money will diffuse itself like Streams from a Fountain, yet the most languid and slowly flowing have not yet reached this Part, nor perhaps some others. your Observation on specific Supplies is just, but the Impracticability of People, remote from a Market, as we are, to pay hard cash, you do not attend to. Your Ideas I fear flow too much from Philadelphia and its Environs. I find you are gone upon Business to Elizabeth Town, I expect some important Intelligence from you on your Return. The trip will be of service to you after having been sedentary so long. I think it probable our Assembly the next Session may pass the Impost, and in the Terms of Pennsylvania, to hesitate and weigh Matters, altho' all circumstances require Dispatch, you know some People think shows wisdom. Mrs. P intends to write to you and our worthy Doctor, to whom be pleased to remember me. I wish you Health and Happiness and am

Yours most sincerely

Geo. Plater

Sotterley April 7<sup>th</sup> 1782

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Note: Gouverneur Morris had been dispatched to Elizabeth Town to negotiate with the British concerning prisoners.

82. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – May 10, 1782 (M)

Dear Morris,

It is some Time since I had the Pleasure of hearing from you, owing I presume to having been employed for some Time past in a piece of Business distant from Philadelphia. Accounts from N York vague and uncertain seem to announce a Change in the british Measures and british Councils, and to induce an Expectancy that the Corner Stone for Peace was about to be laid. I suspend any Opinion thereon and shall be glad of your Sentiments on the Subject, as it is probable you have more certain Advice than can yet have reached me. I left Mrs. Plater a fortnight ago at home, not very well. we are again met in Assembly, whether we shall do any better than we did last Session, I will not undertake to say, but will assure you that I am with great Sincerity.

Yours most affectionately

Geo. Plater

Annapolis May 10<sup>th</sup> 1782

Source: Gouverneur Morris papers

83. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – May 17, 1782 (M)

Dear Morris,

Your two Favors by Post have come to Hand. Mr. Carroll is not yet arrived and of course I have not seen your Letter which he bears. I view the late ministerial Transactions in the some Light you do. The enclosed will show you the Sentiments of the Assembly on the Occasion, they may be thought by some to be premature, but they will I hope show their Zeal. I expect Mrs. P to join me next Week, I will then deliver your Favor, and I do as you desire. I am in great Haste.

Yours sincerely

Geo. Plater

Ann. May 17<sup>th</sup> 1782

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

84. George Plater and Thomas Cockey Deye to Chevalier de la Villebrun -- May 17, 1782

The General Assembly of the State of Maryland, being determined, as far as it lies in their power, to put a stop to the depredations committed by the enemy's barges on the property of the inhabitants, living upon or near the shores of this bay, and of the navigable rivers emptying themselves into it, have resolved, to equip and man, with the utmost dispatch, four barges, each mounting two pieces of cannon, and carrying, in the whole, two hundred and fifty men.

As the Commonwealth of Virginia is as deeply interested as this state, in repressing the depredations of the enemy's picaroons, and the annoyance by them given to the trade and to the inhabitants of both states, we intend to send a member of the general assembly to Richmond, to concert with that government a combined operation of what naval forces each state can speedily equip against the common enemy. But we are fearful, that without the concurrence and cooperation of some part of the French Marine stationed at York, the combined efforts of Maryland and Virginia will not have the fast and desired results.

The letters not long since received by the governor and council from Captain la Villebrun and the Count de Kergarion de Leaumaria, and now before us, afford the pleasing expectation, that every assistance in your power will be yielded by you, to extirpate the enemy's cruisers which infest our bay.

As to the barges, which we propose to fit out immediately, and which we hope will be ready for action in four weeks time, you would join an armed brig and sloop, to cover and protect our barges, in case of need, or to encounter the enemy's armed sloops, or other vessels, if any such they have cruising with their barges. We have the most sanguine expectation, that by a well combined and

prompt operation of our joint force, we should easily succeed in taking or destroying all the enemy's barges, or other small cruisers, now in this bay.

Such an enterprise, if successful, would render the enemy more cautious in venturing hereafter into the Chesapeake, to plunder our inhabitants, or interrupt our trade, and would compel them to fit out a larger force for such expeditions, than the object of them would be worth, or than they could well spare, in their present circumstances, without neglecting armaments of more importance.

But lest an unprovided state of defence should encourage the refugees to attempt further depredations, it is our intention to keep in constant pay a number of barges, properly equipped and those we propose to have stationed among the Tangier islands, and to be subject to your command and direction.

We propose to form a magazine at York, under the protection of your batteries and shipping for the constant revictualling of our barges, as likewise to erect a hospital for the reception of the sick and wounded.

When the barges want repairing and cleaning, they may run into York River, to be cleaned, or repaired. It is not our wish or intention, that they should return into this state, or cruise above the Tangier islands unless in pursuit of the enemy, until the first of January next, unless sooner recalled on proper authority.

We have been informed, that there are several of the enemy's barges, now in your possession, taken at the surrender at York-town, which might be easily and speedily repaired. If this fact be true, we entertain the hope, that you will man with part of the crews of your vessels such a number of these barges, as you may think, in conjunction with ours and with the assistance of the armed brig and sloop above mentioned, will be sufficient to capture or destroy the enemy's barges and small cruisers, now infesting the bay.

The time it would take to fit out a galley, or a vessel of greater force than barges, has induced us to give the

preference to the latter, which draw little water, and may be much more speedily equipped, and supported by your vessels, will pursue and attack the enemy's barges on the shoals, or in small creeks, where probably they will endeavor to shelter themselves from the fire of gallies, or vessels of superior force.

The protection and security, which this enterprise will give to a very great number of our inhabitants, who are kept in perpetual alarms and apprehensions, not only for the safety of their property, but of their persons (being liable to be seized in their beds at all hours of the night, and carried off into captivity, or barbarously murdered) will, we are satisfied, be a sufficient inducement with you to afford us all the assistance in your power, to accomplish the destructions of these free booters, for they scarcely deserve the dignified appellation of enemy.

In addition to the obligation to which you will lay the people of this state, the advantage will not be inconsiderable which you yourselves will derive from the secure navigation of the bay, in receiving supplies from Baltimore-town, and other parts of the state.

We request as speedy an answer to this letter as the subject will admit of, and that you will be pleased to signify to the governor and council what force it will be convenient for you to join to ours, and express your opinion freely of the proposed operation against the enemy's cruisers.

We are with the greatest esteem, Sir,  
Your most obedient humble servants,

Geo. Plater

Thomas Cockey Deye

Source: Votes and Proceedings of the Maryland Senate, April 1782 Session pp. 41–42, Archives of Maryland, MSA SC M 3185.

Note: The continuing actions of British ships in the Chesapeake led the Maryland Assembly to make these proposals. The letter was prepared by a joint committee and signed by Plater and Deye in their capacities as President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Delegates. Villebrun's favorable response reached the Assembly on May 28.

85. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – June 9, 1782 (M)

Dear Morris,

I am to acknowledge the Receipt of your two Favors, the last by Mr. Clymer. Our House of Delegates have at last passed the Impost, but with Limitation. They have likewise passed a hard Money Tax. I shall say nothing of the Politics, I do not approve them, therefore I refer you to Gen. Cadwalader, who has promised to to present this. Excuse this Blot on the Paper, a young Lady fond of overset my Ink. God bless you and believe me ever

Yours

Geo. Plater

Ann. June 9<sup>th</sup> 1782

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: George Clymer was a Pennsylvania delegate to Congress who had been sent to Annapolis to persuade Maryland to approve the Impost. John Cadwalader was a commander of Pennsylvania troops during the Revolution.

86. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – July 15, 1782 (M)

Sotterley July 15<sup>th</sup> 1782

Dear Morris,

Thank you for the pretty Ode from I assume Joannis secundus and have expressed in translation, as well as I could, to Mrs. P the Beauties of it. This says her [illegible] Fit not being over, she will not write to you by this Post. She has been engaged in writing an Answer to the Minister's [invitatory] letter and that you know is enough for now, therefore you must excuse it. The French Army is marching northward to what Place or what about I know not, you at the Fountain Head can tell me all about it. Adieu and believe me

Yours sincerely

Geo. Plater

Give us an History of the  
Entertainment. we thought of you.

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Note: *Joannis Secundus* was a collection of poems published in Latin in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

87. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – August 12, 1782 (M)

Dear Morris,

I thank you for your Letter of News of 29<sup>th</sup> ult. The Behaviour of the Dutch at this Time amidst the Temptations of the british is noble and does 'em the greatest Honor. I was much afraid the english would have succeeded and patched up a separate Peace, but I see the french have outdone them in Policy in this Instance as in many others. A commercial Intercourse with Holland and her Fleets combating those of our Enemy cannot but be productive of great Advantages to America. I suppose it is a Certainty that thirteen French Line of Battle Ships are arrived, tis said they were joined off Chesapeake by twenty seven more, but this is not confirmed, what is expected from them? Is N York the Object? by the french Army marching northward our Politicians give it out. I have long apprehended that De Grasse was used ill in the late Action by some of his Captains, if so I hope they will meet Punishment equal to their Demerit. We have nothing from the South late, except that the british are about to evacuate, or have evacuated Charles Town, which I do not believe. Mrs. P wrote to you by last Post, she writes to you again by this. My best Wishes attend you, remember me to Doct. Jones and all inquiring Friends, particularly to Clarkson, who I think ought to have

saved the Life of Galvan, as he was mad, and might in a short Time have returned to his Senses, and continued a successful Officer

I am yours sincerely

Geo. Plater

Sotterley Aug. 12<sup>th</sup> 1782

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: Count de Grasse was a French admiral best known for his command of the French fleet in the Battle of the Chesapeake, which led directly to the British surrender at Yorktown. Matthew Clarkson was an officer in the Revolutionary war from New York. He was serving as Assistant Secretary of War at the time of this letter. William Galvan was a French man who obtained an army commission in January 1780 while Plater was in Congress. Galvan committed suicide on July 24, 1782, leaving a note for Matthew Clarkson.

88. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – September 2, 1782 (M)

Dear Morris,

Your Favors of 8<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Aug. are come to hand for which I thank you. In the former by Mr. Stone you seem to think that those who flatter themselves with the Hope of Peace may be deceived. Tis possible they may, but I think

there are stronger Appearances than I have yet seen. Independence in the first Instance I did not expect to be admitted. I do not and never did think that the Enemy was so weakened by the War as to be despised, but I believe they, as well are we, tired of this War. And I pray Night and Morn that we may soon have a good Peace. Pray has the Affair of Lipincut blown over, I have nothing of it. We are honored by the Company of Mr. and Mrs. Richd. Lloyd, I am called off to play Piquet with the fair Lady, and therefore must conclude with informing you that I am

Yours most sincerely

Geo. Plater

Sotterley Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup> 1782

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Note: Capt. Richard Lippincott was a loyalist who fought for the British. On April 12, 1782, Lippincott had hung a prisoner whom he had been sent to exchange, for which he was court martialed, but eventually acquitted.

89. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – September 23, 1782  
(M)

Dear Morris,

Your most acceptable Favor of the 9<sup>th</sup> demands my Thanks. I thank you too for the pretty little poetical Piece enclosed. I never trust much to Appearances, and I agree with you that if we could have made more Exertions after Cornwallis's Fall, they might have had an happy Effect, but I do not see how this was to have been done, without adding Wings to our Armies. The Operations before York I think brought on October 19<sup>th</sup> the Distance the Army had then to move to any other Scene of Action, suppose to N York, would inevitably have thrown them too far into the winter Season to have done any thing then effectually, especially when the french Fleet had left our Coast. It is said here that there is another Change in the british Ministry, that Mr. Fox is out. This comes by Way of the W Indies. If true it shows great Instability in their Councils. The fairest of the fair had left us before the Receipt of yours, or I should have taken much Pleasure in presenting your Compliments. Whenever I play at any Game with a fair woman be assured I always take care to point properly, but enough of this, let me bid adieu for the present, and believe me

Yours most sincerely,

Geo. Plater

Sotterley Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup> 1782

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Note: Charles Fox was an anti-war Whig politician serving as Foreign Secretary in Prime Minister Rockingham's government. After Rockingham died July 1, 1782, Fox was forced from office.

90. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – October 27, 1782 (M)

Dear Morris,

On my Return home the other Day from the western part of our State, where I had been on Business and which has been the Reason why you have not heard from me lately, your agreeable Favors of 25<sup>th</sup> last and 2<sup>nd</sup> of the present Month were put into my Hand, for which be pleased to accept my sincere Thanks. Your Observation that the States have not done their Duty with respect to the War, so as to have brought about a speedier Peace, is very just, but whether they can be persuaded to do more I doubt. Trade and an Expectation of Peace, without taking the proper Steps to procure it, seem to have pervaded the Hearts of almost all Men. However, if we cannot have Matters as we could wish, we must put up with them as they are. Our fretting, my Friend, will answer no good Purpose. People will follow the Dictates of their wild Imaginations tho' the Apostle Paul was here preaching against them. I do not believe there is more Virtue in America than elsewhere, if so much, but this is a Theme that neither you nor I like to dwell on, therefore, for the present I will pass it over. Mrs. P intended to write under cover of this, but she has heard that a Sloop and Barge are in the River and a Ship at the Mouth, which has a little discomposed her, and no Wonder. Our best Wishes ever await you, and I am

Yours most sincerely

Geo. Plater

Sotterley Oct. 27<sup>th</sup> 1782

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

91. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – November 14, 1782 (M)

[no salutation]

Your last Favor that I have received [illegible] 22<sup>nd</sup> ult., a short Note as you call it, containing some Intelligence, which I will endeavor to answer as well as I can. I am in perfect Health. I do not intend you a Visit this Winter. As a Senator I am doing nothing. I do not intend any more Resolutions, and hope I shall never be engaged in another War, for I am almost tired of this, and wish most ardently for Peace, which I doubt not will come some Time or other, and if our Friends have been successful [in] the east Indies, as I am willing to believe they have, it will perhaps draw that Event nearer to us. We have just met in Assembly, what we shall do I will not undertake to say, I wish we may do right. Mrs. P desires to be remembered to you, she is now somewhat more taken up than in the Country, and therefore you may not hear from her so oft, she is anxious to know if you have received her Letter concerning the Measures for Shoes. Adieu believe me

Yours most sincerely

Geo. Plater

Annapolis 14<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1782

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

92. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – December 6, 1782 (M)

Dear Morris,

I thank you very sincerely for your Favor by this Days Post, you have no News. We have a Flag here which left N York last Saturday, the Captain says all the Ships of War have left that Port excepting [three], I suppose to the W Indies where I expect will be warm Work this Winter. He further says that tis believed there that Gibraltar has fallen. You sir, I give you all the News I have, and shall only offer my best Wishes and assure you that I am ever yours

Geo. Plater

Annapolis 6<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1782

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

93. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – March 12, 1783 (M)

Dear Morris,

I am happy that I have it in my Power once more to salute you and thank you for your obliging Favor some Posts ago. The Advice there is good, I allways did and ever shall endeavor to steer the middle Course, not only because 'tis the safest but perhaps the most pleasant. I am not yet able to dance, tho' Peace come, of which we have heard a great Deal, and been finely amused for some Time past. Pray write what you know or have Reason to expect about it. I am again driven from my home by the Enemy's Barges, being obliged to have every thing moved away, when they come and hung my Overseer, and the same Fate I should probably have met had I been there. Therefore, I am for Peace. Adieu

Yours

Geo. Plater

Annapolis March 12<sup>th</sup> 1783

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: Although some transcriptions date this letter March 14, the manuscript states March 12.

Plater had been absent from the Senate in mid-December 1782 and been granted a leave on December 24 being "unable to attend." From this letter, it appears that he suffered a long period of ill health. His comment that he was not yet able to dance may indicate that he was again in part suffering from gout.

94. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – May 4, 1783 (M)

Dear Morris,

That you may not think me unpardonably negligent, I take up my Pen to acknowledge the Receipt of your last [illegible] Favor. I am not yet well, and don't know when I shall be, but look forward with no small Degree of Pleasure to that happy Month of June when we expect to see your smiling Face in this our old, tho' I trust most hospitable Dome. Let me not be thought remiss in failing to offer my Congratulations on the late happy Change in our Affairs. I can now look on my Possessions as my own, I can view my rising crop with Satisfaction, and I can lay down on my Couch without Fear of Molestation. O happy happy Times, let it be our first Care to endeavor to improve them. Let no misty Cloud of Discontent or Animosity intervene in the least to [adumbrate] this glorious Sun-shine of Liberty and Independence, but whither am I going with this Rhapsody? I will say something more pleasing. I will say that I am with unfeigned Truth and Sincerity.

Your Friend etc. etc. etc.

Geo. Plater

Sotterley May 4<sup>th</sup> 1783

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: The next extant letter in July makes no mention of having seen Gouverneur Morris. From this it appears that Morris had to cancel any plans he had to visit Sotterley.

95. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – July 7, 1783 (M)

Dear Morris,

I have the Pleasure of two Letters from you, the last of 24<sup>th</sup> June in which you are pleased to congratulate me upon my Resurrection. I cannot say what induced Mr. [James] to kill me, but this I can say that the Health of my Body is perfect. I eat heartily, sleep soundly and have every [illegible] [*Salutis*]. I ride with much Love and Pleasure but find Difficulty only in mounting and dismounting, this owing to Sourness and Weakness in my Feet, which Time alone can take away. I had the Pleasure lately to address you by a letter which Doctor [Brehon] one of the physical [illegible] of the Army, and that Letter I wished to have reached you before you had paid your Visit to N York, but he finding you not in Phila. and thinking it related merely to himself, [falsely] brought it back. I wished it because I flattered myself you could have done something in the procuring four Slaves I have there, or their Value. they were taken from me since Signing the Treaty, and I know not under what Pretence they detain 'em, especially as the same Treaty stipulates in express Terms that no Negroes shall be carried away from the United States of America. I am not surprised to hear the mutinous [Disaffection] of Soldiers, it is what I expected, and find it [pervades] poor old England as well as America. Col. Totenham has had a troublesome Piece of Business with his Regiment, but I hope it will be checked as speedily as possible in this Country. I believe the Pennsylvania Line has not many Americans in it and from the low outlandish Rascals we can expect no [illegible] Behaviour. Should you see [illegible]-[Pend], I beg you to make my Respects to him and tell him I wrote lately to him at Charles Town by Lieutenant Fitzhugh, and that I shall be happy to hear from him. Mrs. Plater says she will cure him by Sheepshead and

Crab Sauce, which in her Opinion is better than all the milk  
[Diets]. Adieu and believe me

Yours most sincerely

Geo. Plater

Sotterley 7<sup>th</sup> July 1783

had you much Mirth on Friday last.

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: After the victory at Yorktown, the army moved to Newburgh New York pending the peace settlement. In the early spring 1783, elements in the army, encouraged by the Newburgh Addresses, threatened to march to Philadelphia to demand their wages. Plater's comments are realistic and sympathetic to the army. However, the incident involved dangerous political maneuvering and only through Washington's intervention was the incipient rebellion quieted.

Washington had sought earlier to persuade Gen. Guy Carleton, the British Commander in New York, that slaves detained there should be returned to their owners as stipulated in Article 7 of the Peace Treaty. However, Carleton had told Washington in a decisive meeting on May 3, 1783 that he would not hand over the people and that owners could seek compensation if they wished, even though the treaty did not mention compensation.

Sheepshead is a fish that feeds on oysters and other mollusks.

96. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – August 24, 1783 (M)

Dear Morris,

Tis some Time since I had the Pleasure of a Line from you, not since my last to you. By your Letter to Mrs. Plater you suppose I have the Gout in my Hand, not so my Friend, I have been [coursing] up the Chesapeake for a Month past, and visited Doct. [Weimerthall] at Baltimore to try if his Assistance with Change of Air could restore my shattered Frame. I think I have received Benefit. Knowing your Fondness for sailing we often wished for you. This Bay is one of the finest Pieces of Water in the World, excellently adapted to afford the most pleasing Variety in sailing, come and see it. Just before my Excursion, I wrote to you, but fear my Letter has miscarried. Some blame the Congress for their precipitate Departure from Philadelphia. Where will they go? I should think they cannot stay with convenience at Princeton. Maryland is central, and I think she has made them a polite Offer, and given a very genteel Invitation. Adieu, believe me

Most sincerely Yours

Geo. Plater

Sotterley Aug. 24<sup>th</sup> 1783

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Note: The Maryland Assembly had invited Congress to Annapolis, and Congress convened there from November 1783 to June 1784.

97. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – September 14, 1783 (M)

Dear Morris,

I thank you for your last two Favors, and wrote you by last Post which I doubt not you have received. We should have had much Pleasure in seeing you at Baltimore, and could I have flattered myself with such Hopes, should most certainly have intimated our Design to you. I am at a Loss what Proofs may be necessary to the Recovery of my Negroes at N York, by one lately returned I am told they are still there, to send a Person to prove the Identity of them would be difficult if not impracticable, all I can do is to assert that three Negroe Men viz. Charlie, Nace and Phil, the first an elderly Man, the second middle aged, the third just come to Manhood, left me and joined the Enemy last Winter. If you think any thing further and more necessary, I shall be obliged by the Hint and thank you for using your Endeavor to procure 'em. We have a very sickly Season here, the autumnal Fevers rage violently, the younger Part of our Family have felt their Effects, I myself have not escaped, and Mrs. P. is complaining. She would have written to you but is not well enough, she begs to be remembered to you, promising a long Letter, and says she has much for you to do which will prove her not forgetful. If my Friend Griffin be with you remember me to him in the most affectionate Term. I hear no more of him or about him then if he was planted in [Elysium]. To Doct. Jones likewise present me.

I am most sincerely Yours

Geo. Plater

Sotterley Sept. 14 1783

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: Cyrus Griffin was a lawyer and judge from Virginia who had served in the Continental Congress in the same years as Plater. The letter indicates that Morris had been in Baltimore, but not come further to Sotterley.

98. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – October 6, 1783 (M)

Dear Morris,

I am much obliged by your friendly Intention to write to N York about my Slaves, and am sorry to find that you are almost convinced that it will be pointless, but I entreat you not to take much Trouble about them. Their Conduct in refusing to give up Negroes when so enjoined by the Treaty is of a Piece with the general Tenor of their Behaviour. Mrs. P writes to you, the Part of your Letter relative to her I showed her, and don't doubt but she will give you Pleasure enough as you feel so much in executing her Commands. I have not yet recovered the [Use] of my feet, am only able to hobble. May you enjoy all you wish.

Yours sincerely

Geo. Plater

Sotterley Oct. 6<sup>th</sup> 1783

Source: Gouverneur Morris Paper

99. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – November 2, 1783 (M)

Dear Morris,

By our Governor, who is so advised, I am informed that the Congress have resolved to meet at Annapolis on the 25<sup>th</sup> inst. I presume you as a public Officer will accompany them. This raises my Expectation of seeing you, and tho' I am unable to move up to the Session which meets tomorrow yet I hope fortune will favor my weak Limbs, and give me Strength to meet you there and then. In the mean Time, I wish you a pleasant Journey down and am most sincerely.

Yours

Geo. Plater

Sotterley Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup> 1783

Turn over

[on the back]

Mrs. P is prevented from writing by Company. She begs me present her Respects and Request that you will get her as much of the Sattin [illegible] the Pattern as will make her a fashionable Dress and a handsome proper Trimming for it, which she begs you will enquire of some of your Friends the Ladies of Taste. Mrs. P hopes to be in Annapolis some time next week and begs it may be sent to that Place. If no better opportunity offers, it may be sent by the Post to Mrs. Richard Lloyd.

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

100. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – November 10, 1783  
(M)

Dear Morris,

I have your Favor of 21<sup>st</sup> ult. And thank you for your Hint with Respect to consigning Tobacco. It is a Business I never did approve, and have not got into again and believe I never shall, tho' some of our People seem fond of it, and I care not if they do burn their Fingers. My Infirmities prevent me from attending the Assembly, but if you come to Annapolis with Congress, I will endeavor to meet you there and greet you on your Arrival in Maryland, hoping to draw you still further. Till then adieu, believe me.

Yours most sincerely.

Geo. Plater

Sotterley Nov. 10<sup>th</sup> 1783

Turn over

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Note: The text on the reverse side was a note from Elizabeth Plater. Her note is included in this collection.

101. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – December 5, 1783 (M)

Dear Morris,

I thank you most sincerely for your late Favor including an Extract of a Letter from your Correspondent at N York. It is favorable to my Vision. Mrs. P desires me to thank you for the things you procured for her, she is in this Place rather too much engaged to write to you at this Time, but desires me to say that she will not Trouble you to purchase the Silk which I wrote to you about as she can get one to her Hand here. As Congress are now here, we hope likewise to see you. Till then adieu.

Yours most sincerely

Geo. Plater

Ann. Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> 1783

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

102. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – January 11, 1784 (M)

Dear Morris,

We are all shut up in Ice, and Communications of every Sort almost cut off, yet I will venture to [hint] this Letter to Fate, and if you never get it tis no Matter, as it only contains Repetitions of sincere Wishes for your Health and Welfare, and thanks for your introducing to my Acquaintance so pretty a young Gentleman as Mr. Laborde. I only lamented that we could not be longer together and that I could not have the Pleasure of seeing him in my own House, his stay at Annapolis was short, he told me he had a long Journey in hand and but little Time to perform. And in adieu, may you see many happy Years.

I am Yours sincerely

Geo. Plater

Sotterley Jan. 11<sup>th</sup> 1784

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

103. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – March 10, 1784 (M)

Dear Morris,

I had the Pleasure to write to you some Time ago, but by yours of 11<sup>th</sup> ult. which reached me yesterday, I find you had not then received it. I am sorry you want any fresh Assurance of the Joy and Gladness a Visit from you would give us after I have so repeatedly told you that we should be most happy to see you here in our old Habitation, where indeed we have been this Winter [illegible] you [illegible] almost [congiated], but not quite so as to loose all Remembrance of our Friend, for if I forget thee, O Morris, may my right Hand forget [where] [illegible]. I have been told that Mr. Financier Morris would be at Annapolis in the Course of the Winter, with him, I expected you would have come and then I flattered myself with the Hope of seeing you here, for believe me I want to see you, I wish to talk with you as we used to do, and laugh with you, I think it would raise my almost exhausted and drooping Spirits. Mrs. P writes to you the enclosed, therefore I shall say no more about her thanks, I know she entertains the same Warmth of Friendship for you that she ever did, and that you have not heard oftener from me has been owing to the Post not riding, for our southern Folk do not travel in Snow like you northern Men. Adieu, continue to believe me

Yours most sincerely

Geo. Plater

Sotterley March 10<sup>th</sup> 1784

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Note: The enclosure is no longer together with the letter.

104. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – April 24, 1784 (M)

Dear Morris,

Some considerable Time has elapsed since I had the Pleasure of hearing from you, tho' I have written to you several Times in the Course of the last dismal Winter. I now take up my Pen to let you see that I have survived it, and tho' turned old and decrepit, I can never never forget that I have such a Friend as you. The hope of seeing you here has almost vanished, Circumstances I fear will not permit you, the Congress I hear means still to be a moveable Body and think of leaving Annapolis, I wish them to be well accommodated, and wish them to become stationary for their own Honor, and for the honor of the United States. I have the Pleasure to enclose a Letter from Mrs. P and to assure you that I am

Yours most sincerely

Geo. Plater

Sotterley Apr. 24<sup>th</sup> 1784

Source: Gouverneur Morris papers

Note: The enclosure is no longer together with the letter.

105. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – June 13, 1784 (M)

Dear Morris,

Your Favor of 1<sup>st</sup> June is now before me. The Letter you mention was delivered by Mr. DeMacbain to Gov. Paca who told me he put it under Cover and sent it to the Post, he was very much surprised when I told him I had not received it, our Post and Postmaster are become very careless, I have lost several other Letters this Year, and some of Consequence. Our Friend AL [tis] [said] has thought himself in Love with the fair one you mention, by which he has been inspired to write Poetry, a Specimen of which Mrs. P will send you. I understand he is appointed Commissioner to wait upon Indian Sachems. It will be a Change from the Court of Versailles. Maj. Jenifer I hear is to become Mr. R Morris's Successor, so that I suppose you will soon see him in Philadelphia. What a lucky Dog is the Apostate Arnold, driving in the Carriage one day near London he was met by an old Gentleman of the same Name, who observing his own Arms upon the Generals Carriage made Enquiry who and what he was, and I suppose for [Name's] Sake and his [manyfold] and great Virtues, shortly after made over to him his Estate of 1500 [illegible]. this has set the Rascal up and made him I presume as compleat a Gentleman as any about the Court of St. James. I shall expect to see you this Summer, but wish to appoint the Time that I may be in Place to receive you, some Time in July. I have business that calls me to Wye on the eastern Shore, but any other time may suit me as well, I would have you come sooner. Farewell, believe me.

Yours sincerely

Geo. Plater

Sotterley June 13<sup>th</sup> 1784

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Note: The friend referred to is Arthur Lee of Virginia, who had served in Paris before being appointed a Commissioner to negotiate with the western Indians in 1784.

106. George Plater to George Washington – October 20, 1784 (M)

Dear Sir,

Since I had the Honor of hailing you, I have been revolving in my Mind the Subject of our Communication respecting the opening the Patowmack, and drawing the Lands of the back and now settled Counties in this these [sic] middle States, and the more I consider it, the more I am impressed with the Utility and Advantages resulting therefrom. So much so that I am determined to press the Measure in our Assembly which will soon meet and I hope we shall be joined by Virginia. To enable me to do so with most effect, I take the Liberty to entreat the favor of you, in some leisure Moment, to give me as concisely as you please, some Description of the Waters in the back country, the Land Carriage unavoidably necessary and what other information you may deem important. Your Letter sent to Mrs. Digges will come safe to hand. Mrs. Plater joins me in warmest Respects to Your Lady and you. And I have the Honor to be with highest Regard and Esteem, Dear Sir,

Your obedient and humble Servant

Geo. Plater

Oct. 20, 1784

Source: W. W. Abbot (ed.) *The Papers of George Washington* Confederation Series No. 2 July 1784 – May 1785, University Press of Virginia, 1992, p. 102–103.

Notes: Washington sent Plater a long letter on the Patowmack Company on October 25, 1784. Mrs. Digges is probably the wife of Ignatius Digges of Melwood in Maryland.

107. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – [January 1785] (M)

Dear Morris,

All Communication between us seems to have subsided and ceased for some Time past. The only Reason for Silence on my Part has been the pleasing Expectation of seeing you in Maryland. This was formed upon your own Letters and strengthened by Report. What Reason you have is but known to yourself. I begin now to despair of the Pleasure of taking you by the Hand at this Place, and have again taken up my Pen to assure and convince you, if it be thought necessary, that my Regard and Esteem for you is still the same, nor can ought diminish it. I presume some new Place of Business confines your Attention, for I know you cannot be idle, which have forbidden your intended [Text ends at this point.]

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: Only one page available. The date of this letter is uncertain. Context makes January 1785 a possibility.

108. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – January 20, 1785 (M)

Dear Morris,

Finding a favorable Opportunity, for we have no Post now from this Place to Annapolis, I embrace it to acknowledge the Receipt of several of your Favors from Virginia, the last I think was from Dumfries, you don't know how great our Disappointment was at not seeing you on your Return. We [persevered] for you, as long as we could, our Brocoli, our Lettuce, and all the good things which we thought [d'would] please your Palate, and make you happy here, but alas, you passed us without partaking of any, indeed I went so far as to command the sheepshead to bite, and they did, for a time, obey. You told me that you'd see me again this Fall, this Time a Trip to the southward. Let me know what it is, and inform me, if you still have an Intention to let me see you. I know not whether I shall ever go further North than the Limits of my State. I have grown old and infirm, and cannot now ramble as I used to do. That you may enjoy all earthly Felicity in the sincere Wish [oft].

Yours most affectionately  
Geo. Plater

Sotterley Jan. 20<sup>th</sup> 1785

Mrs. Plater writes to you.

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

109. William Fitzhugh to George Washington – July 4, 1785  
(Extract)

Millmont [Md.] July 4<sup>th</sup> 1785

Dear General,

I had the Honor of your favor by Mr. Bolton of the 21<sup>st</sup> of May.

I was at Colo. Platers yesterday, who says that Bolton, immediately on his return acknowledged his Contract, and at the same time Declar'd he had no Intention to comply with it. The Colo. is of opinion that the Excuse he offers is without foundation, & that he has no reason for disappointing you, than his unwillingness to separate from His Idle and Drunken Associates Here. I am Extremely Sorry that I recommended so Intemperate and Imprudent Man to you.

I have the Honor to be with every Sentiment of respect & Esteem Your Excellencys Affectionate and Obliged Humble Servant.

Willm Fitzhugh

Source: W. W. Abbot (ed.) *The Papers of George Washington* Confederation Series No. 2 May 1785 – March 1786, University Press of Virginia, 1Ma, p. 102–103.

Notes: William Fitzhugh, George Plater's friend and stepfather-in-law, had recommended Richard Boulton to George Washington as a craftsman whose work equaled the best. Boulton is credited with the design and supervision of the expansion of Sotterley that created an elegant entry hall and drawing room around 1770 as well as with work on other residences and churches in St. Mary's County. Boulton signed a contract with George Washington in May 1785 to finish the large room at the north end of the first floor at Mount Vernon. Washington had undertaken to send a wagon to pick up Boulton's tools at Sotterley. However, Boulton wrote back almost immediately saying he could not fulfill the contract because his creditors threatened to have him arrested if he tried to leave Maryland. Plater did not himself endorse Fitzhugh's recommendation nor write Washington about Boulton.

110. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – October 21, 1785 (M)

[manuscript begins]

now come, and I look for you daily, I hope your Visit will be before November, when I shall be called to Annapolis on public Business. Mrs. P has been very ill for some Time past, and tho' better is exceedingly reduced. She bade me tell you that Col. [Frankin] Seed does not thrive well in our Soil, and hopes you will not forget the Savory Cabbage. There

are strange Stories told here of your Operations in Virginia, such as your ruining my Friend Braxton, and driving his Lady to Madness. I do not believe them, for, whatever [illegible] might have required, sure I am your Humanity would not have suffered you to do such things. This Letter I expect will be handed to you by Cap. [Charley], a Friend of mine, whom you saw here, he will be made happy by your Smiles and by your Notice. He has had the Misfortune to lose his Father in Law, Mr. Vanbrant of long Iland, who came here this Summer on a Visit to him and his Daughter. Mrs. Plater and the Girls join me in every friendly Wish and I am with the strongest Affection and greatest Sincerity, Dear Morris,

Yours

Geo. Plater

Sotterley, Oct 21<sup>th</sup> 1785

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: The first page(s) is/are missing. Robert Morris had obtained a contract in 1785 with the Farmeres General in Paris to supply 60,000 hogshead of tobacco. During 1785 and 1786, Gouverneur Morris travelled to Virginia and Maryland to purchase tobacco for Robert Morris. This fed George Plater's hope that he would visit Sotterley. Carter Braxton was a Virginia planter who was engaged in business dealings with Robert Morris during the Revolutionary War and subsequently. Braxton was often in debt and had to sell his estate in 1786.

111. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – June 4, 1786 (M)

Dear Morris,

My Expectation, which I have long kept up, of seeing you here on your Way to or from Virginia, seems now to be at an End. I suppose you have [desolved] your Trip. I have written to Mr. Robt. Morris recommending Mr. John A Thomas as an Assistant in his Purchase of Tobacco, as you have seen that Gentleman, who is of your Profession, I shall say nothing to you about him, but submit it to you to give your Opinion of the Subject to Mr. Morris. There is much Tobacco in this Part of the Country to be purchased, and such as will suit the French Market, and as Mr. Morris has no Purchaser here the People carry it to another Market. My best Wishes attend you, and I am most sincerely.

Yours

Geo. Plater

Sotterley 4<sup>th</sup> June 1786

Turn over

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Note: The text on the reverse is a note from Elizabeth Plater. The text of her note is included in this collection.

112. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – July 30, 1786 (M)

Dear Morris,

Your Favor of 3<sup>rd</sup> inst., I have received, and thank your for the good Disposition you express to [receive] my Friends. Mr. Thomas desired a Letter from me to Mr. R Morris because he thought I was more intimately acquainted with him than he was, to which Mr. Morris has made no Answer. The Profit arising from the Purchase of Tobo was by no Means an Object with Mr. Thomas, to which you will agree when I tell you he has considerable Practice in the Law, producing from one hundred to a thousand Pounds per An., but he thought that he might thereby bring about a Convenience to the People of this Part of the Country by raising a Market nearer to them, and circulate here a Sum of Money which might be useful. Your Reasons why Mr. Morris should not increase the Number of his Agents are forcible and conclusive, and therefore I shall advise Mr. Thomas to think no more about it, for sure I am his other Avocations will not permit him to attend to Shipments [etc.] which you call essentials. The Kitefoal Tobo is made at the head of Patuxent River, and there to be purchased, tho' some, I believe, may likewise be procured at Elk Ridge. This would be quite out of Mr. Thomas's Way, and what he could not, consistently with his other Business, execute. His Plan was to purchase the brown heavy Tobo in his own Neighborhood upon Patowmack and Patuxent Rivers. I am happy to find that you still think of writing me, be assured then in me and we shall be more [illegible] to see, till then, keep yourself as cool and temperate as the Season will admit, and believe me.

Yours most sincerely

Geo. Plater

Sotterley July 30<sup>th</sup> 1786

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

113. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – September 16, 1786  
(M)

Dear Morris,

Mr. Forbes kindly handed to me your Favor of 23<sup>rd</sup> ult., for which accept my thanks. He is a Retailer of Goods, what People generally call here a Merchant, whether he may answer your Purpose or not, you know best. I have committed this to my Son Thomas, who is placed at Newcastle under the Auspices of the good Doct. Wharton, should you see him there or at Philadelphia, I am sure you will take him by the Hand, I have directed him to give a speedy Conveyance to this Letter. Mrs. P and the whole family are well, she bids me present her Respects to you. The Weather being now cool we hope shortly to see your mirthful Countenance. Till then believe, believe me

Most sincerely yours

Geo. Plater

Sotterley, Sept. 16<sup>th</sup> 1786

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: George Plater's youngest son, Thomas, was then age 17.  
New Castle was then the capital of Delaware.

114. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – April 19, 1787 (M)

[no salutation]

How came it, my dear Friend, that I have heard nothing from you for so long Time? I wrote to you by my Son last September, since which I have not enjoyed the Pleasure your Favors always afforded. I now take up my Pen, having a fair Opportunity by Mr. Chase, to enquire after you, to assure you that I still retain the most perfect Regard and Esteem for you, and that I am

Yours most sincerely

Geo. Plater

Annapolis Apr. 19<sup>th</sup> 1787

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

115. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – July 10, 1787

Dear Morris,

I thank you most cordially for your last Letter, and accept most cheerfully the Apology. This I suppose will find you seated in the federal Convention, may God prosper your Undertakings, and may your Deliberations have the wished for success. The Eyes of all Ours, and I presume elsewhere, are upon you, great are our Expectations, and I hope we shall not be disappointed, but my Fear is that the several States will not adopt what you in your Wisdom may think right to propose. Why New York turns her Face against the five per cent Impost you can perhaps better explain than I can conceive. The Measure, had it been generally entered into, would in my Opinion, have lessened much our Difficulties and Entanglements. We are in a bad State, and if something is not speedily done, I know not what may be the Consequence. The Delegates to the Convention, from most of the States, seem to be their best Men, I wish I could say the same of this. However, I doubt not from their united Wisdom some thing great and good will most certainly result. I shall be made happy if the Rules of Propriety will now and then permit you to favor me with any of your Communications on this great and important Subject. Mrs. P enjoys a good State of Health and desires to be remembered. We hope to see you here once more, whenever it may be convenient, in the mean Time I am with great Friendship and Esteem

Yours most affectionately

Geo. Plater

Sotterley 10<sup>th</sup> July 1787

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

116. George Plater to Richard Potts – December 3, 1787 (M)

Sir,

I have the [peculiar] Satisfaction to inform you that this Day you were chosen a Member of the Senate from the Indisposition of some Gentleman who could not attend. The Senate have been so thin that for some Days there were not a sufficient Number to proceed on the necessary Business of the Session. This Communication, joined to the strong Desire of getting you're able Assistance, prompt me to to (sic) solicit you to join us as soon as your other Vocations may permit. I have the Honor to be with the highest consideration, Sir

Your most Obedient Servant

Geo. Plater

Annapolis Dec 3<sup>d</sup> 1787

Source: Maryland Historical Society, Special Collections, Potts Papers, MS 1392.

Note: Richard Potts was a lawyer in Frederick Maryland. He was a member of the House of Delegates in 1787 and declined the appointment to the Senate.

117. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – December 13, 1787  
(M)

Dear Morris,

I have heard of your passing thru Maryland, and am concerned that I have not the Pleasure of seeing you, but I put this into the hand of my Friend Mr. Campbell that he might catch you in your Flight back and present it, to show my Respect for you and introduce him, as well as to you, as to your Companion Mr. R Morris. This I am sure you will do, and I beg you to continue to believe me, Dear Morris.

Yours most sincerely

Geo. Plater

Anna. Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> 1787

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

118. George Plater to [no addressee] – Jan. 10, [1788]

A Friend of mine has lately communicated to me your Intention to offer yourself for the proposed Convention, to adopt the new Plan of federal Government - It is with much Pleasure I hear of Gentlemen of Steadiness and Experience stepping forth on this important Occasion – important it truly is – for, than if this plan [is] not adopted, we shall be in a much

worse situation than if it had not been agitated - we shall be an Object of Ridicule at home and of Contempt abroad – Our present Government is found, by sad Experience, to want Energy and Efficacy; and tho the proposed, formed by the wisest and best Men of the Continent, (who, we may readily see, and must agree, had many difficulties in reconciling the discordant Interests of the different States) may not please every Man or Set of Men, yet I believe it must be granted, by every dispassionate and disinterested Considerer, to be the wisest and best System under all Circumstances, that could be proposed, and far better perhaps than could now be formed by any Convention – Deeply impressed with these Sentiments, were I a Member of Convention I should not hesitate, (for the good of the United States in general, and my native State in particular) to adopt it – trusting, as there is a proper Door open, that the Congress may in the future make such Amendments as to render it unexceptionally good and effectual – for Perfection is not to be found in any Work of Men, especially at first – should the County [think] proper to send me upon this Business, I shall not, as I never [illegible], refuse my Service, tho I foresee and well know, that it is a Subject of more Magnitude, than has been under our Consideration for some Time – A Service in public for upwards of thirty Years (in which Time I flatter myself no one can with truth say I ever [will]fully, or through private Views, did any thing injurious to the true Interest of my Country) will, I hope and trust, at this Day, shield me against the Imputation of any thing sinister, which may be thrown out by the turbulent or malevolent – I take the Liberty to send herewith a few Copies of the Form of Government, and the Proceedings of the general Assembly thereon, which you may distribute among those of your Friends who may not have seen them.

Geo. Plater

Sotterley, 10<sup>th</sup> Jan. [1788]

Source: John Kaminski and Gaspare Sasdino (eds.) *Commentaries on the Constitution: Private and Public*, Vol. 3 p. 329.

Notes: This appears to be a letter Plater sent to others in St. Mary's County, and perhaps elsewhere, who were considering being a candidate in the election for delegates to the constitution ratification convention. Those from St. Mary's who were ultimately elected, in addition to Plater, were: Richard Barnes, Nicholas Lewis Sewall and Charles Shelton.

119. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – November 17, 1788  
(M)

Dear Morris,

Pardon my not having replied to your obliging favor from Baltimore of the 17<sup>th</sup> July last before this. Your pleasing Introduction of Dr. [Renton] I received yesterday. I wish I was situated so as to show that Gentleman more Attention than I can here, being only a Sojourn at this Place, but I hope I can truly say that every Attention will be paid by the Legislature of Maryland to his Claim, and I doubt not his meeting with that Justice which it may merit. Virginia seems to set out a little wrong with respect to the new Government. I wish we may go right in this State. I think I may venture to say that we shall send good Senators, as to the Representatives Time must show what they may be, but the stronger federal

Endeavors will not be wanted to render them such as they ought to be. I am with the highest Regard,

Dear Morris Yours most sincerely

Geo. Plater

Annapolis  
Nov. 17<sup>th</sup> 1788

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

120. George Plater to George Washington – April 30, 1789

[Dear Sir]

I have lately been informed that a Petition is forming to remove the present Naval Officer of the Patuxent District in this State – the ostensible Reason (as I understand) that he lives and keeps his Office at a place inconvenient to the Merchants and Importers – I will beg Leave to observe, that his Office is at the Door of the District, where it has been kept from Time immemorial, and no Objections made till lately – to satisfy which, and to gratify some particular Persons, he will agree to place a Deputy wherever it may be thought most conducive to the Trade in general – I will further beg Leave to observe, that Mr. Biscoe, the present Officer, acted as a Deputy before the Revolution, ...that he is well acquainted with the Duty of his Office, which (as far as I know) he has always discharged with Reputation.

[Geo. Plater]

[Sotterley, April 30 1789]

Source: The date and text are given in a footnote in W. W. Abbot (eds), *The Papers of George Washington* Presidential Series No. 2 April –June 1789, University Press of Virginia, p. 145 footnote.

Notes: On April 29, 1789, George Biscoe, then serving as Naval Officer of the Patuxent, wrote Washington applying to be reappointed under the new Constitution. Richard Barnes and William Fitzhugh, Plater's friends also wrote letters of recommendation.

Washington replied to this letter on May 14, 1788 without indicating how he would act. The response ends with the following: "My compliments to Mrs. Plater and your family and with very great regard, etc." quoted in John Fitzgerald (ed.), *The Writings of George Washington*, Government Printing Office 1939 vol. 30, p. 324

121. George Plater to George Washington – August 31, 1789

Sotterley Aug. 31<sup>st</sup> 1789

Dear Sir,

I have lately understood that Mr Robert Young appointed Surveyor of Nottingham District Patuxent River has declined to accept the Appointment – I therefore take the Liberty to recommend to your Excellency Mr James Hopewell. A Friend of mine, a Gentleman who I think will

discharge the Trust with the strictest Fidelity and punctuality, and who, being situated on the very Spot, at Town Creeke, is in every respect perfectly qualified – Mrs. Plater unites with me in offering our Respects to you and your Lady, and I am with the highest Consideration of Regard and Esteem, Dear sir, Your most obedient humble Servant.

Geo. Plater

Source: The date and text are given in a footnote in W. W. Abbot (ed), *The Papers of George Washington* Presidential Series No. 3 June–September 1789, University Press of Virginia, p. 572 footnote.

Note. James Hopewell was a son of Hugh Hopewell, one of Plater's closest friends.

## 122. George Plater to George Washington – November 20, 1789

Sotterley Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> 1789

Dear Sir,

Mr. Johnson, who was appointed Judge in the federal Court for the State of Maryland, having declined to accept – I hope I shall be excused for taking the Liberty of recommending to your Excellency Mr. John Allen Thomas, an old practitioner of Law, and who has frequently served his Country both in the Cabinet and the field – You are not a Stranger to him, and therefore it becomes unnecessary for me to say more than that I am, with the highest

Consideration, Your Excellency's most obedient humble  
Servant.

Geo. Plater

Source: Founders Online, National Archives  
(<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-04-02-0216>, ver. 2013-08-020, accessed August 28, 2013).

123. George Plater to Gouverneur Morris – July 2, 1790 (M)

Dear Morris,

Your Letter dated Amsterdam March 22<sup>nd</sup> came safely to my hand, but the person to whom you addressed it is, alas! no more. It gave me much pleasure to hear from you and to find that amidst all the Gaities of the different parts of Europe which you have visited, you have not forgotten your American friends, who I believe esteem you as much as ever. I direct this Letter to you in London, not knowing to whom particularly to recommend it, therefore tis uncertain whether you may receive it. The Uncertainty of finding you, not having your address, has prevented my writing before. A Letter from Mrs. Beckford, formerly Mrs. Lloyd, last autumn, informed me you even then in London. should you see that Lady I entreat you to present me to her and inform her that I did myself the honor to write to her last December. I flatter myself with the pleasure of seeing you again some Day or other, if I cannot enjoy that shortly, do in

the mean time indulge me with the [next] of sometimes hearing from you. Great is the Change in my Family since I saw or heard from you, I am not the same I was then. Adieu, may heaven smile on you is the wish of

Your affectionate Friend and [humble Servant]  
Geo. Plater

Sotterley July 2<sup>nd</sup> 1790

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes: On the envelope addressed by Plater to Morris in London was written "Mrs. Plater is no more." The Mrs. Beckford may be a reference to Mrs. George Beckwith who on May 5 informed Morris of Eliza's death.

124. George Plater to Nathaniel Ramsey – November 23, 1791 (M)

In Council 23 November 1791

Sir,

The Senate by their Resolution of yesterday having requested the Executive to procure either from you or the Executive of the United States a certified copy of the enumeration of the inhabitants of the several Counties of this State distinguishing the number of slaves in each. Presuming that the copy may be more readily had from you than from the Executive of the United States, we request you to favor us with it as far as you conveniently can. We apprehend it

to be the object of the Senate to obtain it during their present Session.

We are sir

Geo. Plater

Nathaniel Ramsey Esq.

Source: Journal of the Council, Nov. 1791–Nov. 1793, Archives of Maryland, SC M 3167, p. 157.

Notes: Nathaniel Ramsey was a revolutionary patriot from Cecil County Maryland who was appointed by President Washington in 1789 as U.S. Marshal for the District of Maryland. U.S. Marshalls were responsible for conducting the first census. Ramsey apparently did not reply to this letter.

125. George Plater to William Humphreys – November 28, 1791 (M)

In Council Novem. 28 1791

Sir,

We have received yours of the 14<sup>th</sup> instant respecting the valuation of the appurtenances to C Mills vacant or escheated such as [illegible] [Stones]. It is our opinion, it is our direction to you to return a valuation of every thing that is in any manner [illegible] to any [illegible] vacant or

escheated as we conceive all [illegible] in [such] cases as part of the freehold and the property of the State.

We are [illegible]

Geo. Plater

William Humphreys Esq.

Source: Journal of the Council, Nov. 1791–Nov. 1793, Archives of Maryland, SC M 3167, p. 157.

126. George Plater to John Henry - December 15, 1791 (M)

In Council December 15, 1791

Sir,

The Senate of this State on the 22<sup>nd</sup> ult. ordered that the Executive be requested to procure either from the Marshall of the District of Maryland or the Executive of the United States a certified copy of the enumeration of the inhabitants of the Several Counties of this State, distinguishing the number of slaves in each. Trusting that we might get the enumeration from the Marshall and unwilling to give you the trouble if we could otherwise procure it, we wrote immediately to him and have since sent a duplicate without effect. But the Senate having repeated their request we are under the necessity of making application to you for it. We hope you will do us the favor to procure and

forward it as soon as possible.

We have the honor to be  
with great respect your [illegible]

Geo. Plater

The Honorable John Henry Esq. in Congress

Source: Journal of the Council, Nov. 1791–Nov. 1793, MSA SC M  
3167, p. 158.

127. Elizabeth Plater to Gouverneur Morris – Feb. 25, 1782 (M)

[No salutation]

My good Mr. Morris's friendly letter was sent me two days ago by [Dr.] [Molahon] with some Poems which are very beautiful, and let me pray you to accept my thanks for them. I am very happy to find you are so much recovered from your dreadful fall as to be about again, but those nervous head aches which you have must proceed from too close attention to business, you know how to remedy it, indeed were you to suffer as much as I do with them you would quit business and fly to any thing that would give relief. Take care of your health, be well and happy. It would add much to my pleasure to see you here with Mrs. Lloyd, you certainly have it in your power and why will you not make your Friends so happy. There is nothing at [illegible] as you suppose that can bring to my

remembrance any [illegible] that can make me happy, those pleasures we have had at the dear Little [Cadxxx] will never be forgotten by me. I shall always remember them. Mrs. Lloyd I hear is paid great attention to in Philadelphia, I am glad of it, I suppose she has left it before this. The purse I promised has given me much uneasiness not because I was unmindful of my promise, but because I could not compleat it for want of gold thread. I will try again to get it. Let me beg of you to take care of yourself and always believe me.

Yours

Eliza Plater

Sotterley, Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> 1782

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Note: Richard Bennett Lloyd was Elizabeth's first cousin. Richard's wife was Joanna Leigh Lloyd.

128. Elizabeth Plater to Gouverneur Morris – Nov. 28, 1782 (M)

Annapolis Nov 28<sup>th</sup> 1782

[No salutation]

Accept my good Mr. Morris my sincere thanks for your several favors particularly for the two last. They speak just the language I always wish you to write. My thanks too are

offered for the trouble you have had in getting my Shoes [illegible] [illegible], they are very pretty, The silk Shoes I would wish to be made like the last stuff, I mean slippers. I had the Pleasure of seeing Mr. & Mrs. Griffin on their way to Virginia. Mrs. G. obliging answered me a thousand questions that I wished much to know. She told me your health was very good and that you were very fat, You may easily suppose how happy I was to hear it, take care of yourself my dear Sir and that you may always be well and happy is my constant wish. You say you wish much to see me, this wish is in your own power, but I will say no more on this subject lest I should go too far, as I have once or twice done, only be assured that nothing would give me so much pleasure. I must Trouble you once more, will you make Miss. Smart make me a handsome dress bonnet, Mrs. Cadwalader got a very handsome one for Mrs. Lloyd of her [make], Miss. Bond who has a Pretty [illegible], I am sure will be obliging enough to choose the materials and have it made. I would wish it beautiful and as light as possible. Mr. Cadwalader is in Philadelphia and is to come to Annapolis as soon as he returns. He, I am sure will take charge of it, and should he have left [illegible] before you receive this letter, I beg you will send it by the first safe opportunity, will you have a box made for it and let me know the prices of it. I have been twice called off since I began this Letter and it is now half after twelve and I am afraid the post is gone. I will write you by next post. I am believe me always most sincerely

Yours

Eliza Plater

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Notes. Mr. Cyrus Griffin was a Virginian who had served in the Continental Congress at the same time as George Plater. Mrs.

Cadwalader may be Mrs. Williamina Cadwalader the second wife of John Cadwalader, an army officer from Philadelphia. John Cadwalader's first wife was Elizabeth Lloyd, the daughter of Edward Lloyd III.

129. Elizabeth Plater to Gouverneur Morris (M)

I have but a moment to thank you for your Favors which I received by last post, and I shall only say it will give me much Pleasure to see you in Maryland. You will have frequent opportunities to Annapolis, I must again entreat you to send my things down by the very first safe one that appears. The silks which [Mdm.] Plater wrote for last week I wish most anxiously to get, indeed I hope to meet with them all next week at Annapolis, You will be so kind as to direct them to be left with Mrs. Richard Lloyd.

Farewell

E. P.

Source: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Note: This note was enclosed with a letter from George Plater to Morris dated Nov. 10, 1783

130. Elizabeth Plater to Gouverneur Morris (M)

Suffer me to ask my good Friend how he does, not a word have I heard from or of you since your Letter from Dumfries last July. Possibly, you have entirely erased from your memory your Sotterley friends, or it may be possible you have grown [illegible] and [illegible] for my answering your Letters, if the latter be the cause, only permit me to remind you I strictly complied with your request. I shall always be extremely happy to hear of your health and happiness.

Adieu adieu

Eliza Plater

Source: Gouverneur Morris papers

Note: This note was enclosed with a letter from George Plater dated June 4, 1786. However, that letter by Plater is not among the Gouverneur Morris Papers.

Example of a manuscript letter  
showing Plater's signature

Dear Sir  
Gosport Gosport Aug<sup>r</sup> 29<sup>th</sup> 1757

I enclose I send you your bill for  
£95. 18. 6 I am assur'd you had waited so  
long, but remember it is partly your own Fault  
I go to London in September, I believe me what  
I sh<sup>d</sup> be glad to see any Man in Mansfield  
that you yourself; if I should not have that I sh<sup>d</sup> be  
gladly to make my best Wishes for you &  
your Affairs that I sh<sup>d</sup> with great Respects  
Dear Sir  
Y<sup>r</sup> most Obedient Servant  
Gosport 29<sup>th</sup> 1757

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Selected items related to George Plater are listed by the number of the letter in which they appear. Particular attention is given to items that bear on Plater's character and personality. Individuals whose first and last names are known are included. Instances when individuals are co-signers of letters with Plater are not included, except in the case of particularly important letters.

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