

MSA SC 6205 1-9

John Steward to William Smallwood

14 April 1782

Summary: [Steward](#) complains that the voters in Maryland have been misled by the state's political leaders; the American army is weakened; reports the location of the British, who would attack "if they Knew our true Situation."

Camp Bacons Bridge S.C.

14 April 1782

Dear General

I have yours of the 16 Jany. now before me and should have thanked you for it by Mr. McCay of my Regiment but his Anxiety to get away made him forget who 'twas obtain'd him leave to go

I shall never Wonder at the weakness of the measures adopted by your People while they are governed by a Faction¹ who will Sacrifice the most important considerations of State to secure an Election, or a Bargain of twice wrought Iron- and who in order to effect their purpose, impose on their blind adherents² shew of Caballistic Mystery, which those infatuated Gulls swallow with as much Avidity as devout Indians do the Surreverence of the great Lama

We quietly Ly within 22 miles of the Enemy without hope of engaging them 'tho' if they Knew our true Situation they would certainly have a touch at us and drove us from nakedness to eternity

Pray tell Mrs. Sprigg that I will convince her that I am not inattentive in ten Days I have been up all night upon duty - it is now Troop Beat and Genl. St Clair³ just setting off

Adieu Dr Genl. Yrs Sincerely

John Steward⁴

¹ I.e a political faction.

² I.e. who support that faction.

³ [Arthur St. Clair](#) (1737-1818), major general in the Continental Army, who was in command of the Maryland troops.

⁴ [John Steward](#) (1753-1783) was a lieutenant in the Fifth Independent Company in 1776, was promoted to major of the Second Maryland Regiment in early 1777, and was captured at the Battle of Staten Island. He died in 1783, just as the war ended.