

To General Shirley the 14th of April 1756

I do myself the honour to acknowledge the Receipt of your Letter dated at Boston the 28th last but am sorry that the Measures taken by the Assembly of this Province the Delay of those of the two neighbouring Colonies to grant any Supplies obliges me to acquaint your Excellency that I have now very little hopes of being such a Sumner of Men raised by them this Summer as would be able to carry your Excellency's Scheme for the Reduction of Fort Duquesne into Execution; By a Return made me by the Lieut Colonel of the Virg^a Regiment the 22nd of March I find that it does not exceed 400 Men, Capt Dagworth's Company of fifty that has been kept up by this Province the Assembly will lay me under a Necessity of disbanding, unless you will chouse to take upon yourself to support it during the Campaign or order them to New York & take them into the Regiments under your own Command. I cannot find that the Commissioners who went from Virg^a to the Cherokees are yet returned or have been lately heard of; neither have we any account from Major Lewis who marched so long since with a Party of Cherokees some of the Virg^a Rangers to attack one of the Shawanese Towns. Perhaps when the Virg^a & Carolina Troops shall join they may make a Body of about 800 effective Men; as the Communication between Fort Cumberland & our Westernmost Settlements has been for some time cut off & the Country laid waste for 60 Miles on this Side the Fort the Inhabitants instead of uniting & meeting the Enemy, flying from Danger as it approaches & deserting their Habitations on every the least Alarm; Part of those 800 must be left at Fort Cumberland to garrison that Place & with the Remainder I am ready to march wherever your Excellency shall think proper to order me or his Majesty's Service shall in your Opinion require; as the North Carolina Forces will expect to be supplied with Provision as they were the last & preceeding Summer I will if your Excellency thinks fit to empower me take Care to have them supplied & accordingly draw on whomsoever your Excellency shall be pleased to direct for Payment; as I shall also be obliged to do for Money to defray the Expence of all the Carriage as well by Water as Land. We cannot entertain very sanguine hopes of being able to get to Fort Duquesne yet as it is not absolutely certain that these Colonies will determine to continue inachieve the whole Summer I should be glad if your Excellency could send a Hundred or two of some Shells for them which perhaps the no Field Pieces can be repaired you will be able to order from some of the Southern Govern^{ts} for no Attempt can be made on a Fort with any Probability of Success without something of this Sort I take the Liberty