

Letter Bk. III 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 & N. 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 therewith & 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. Tho I cannot entertain very sanguine hopes of being able to get to Fort Du Quesne yet as it is not absolutely certain that these Colonies will determine to continue inactive the whole Summer I should be glad if Your Excellency could send a Howitzer or Mortar or two & some Shells for them which perhaps tho no Field-Pieces can be spared you will be able to order from some of the Northern Govern^{ts} & as no Attempt can be made on a Fort with any probability of Success without something of this Sort I take the Liberty to request your Excellency if it be in your power to favour us so far. Your Excellency directs or recommends it to me to march about 1000 light-armed Troops with some Indians immediately to blockade or invest Fort Du Quesne & prevent the Garrison's being reinforced or receiving any Supplies of Provisions; I have already intimated that no Indians have yet joined the Troops, & have also informed you how far the Forces under my Command fall short of the Number that your Excellency desires may be detached on such Service: for my own part I do not apprehend that the Garrison at Fort Du Quesne is at this time in want of Provisions, for was that the Case they may easily have supplied themselves from our Frontiers, & I am apt to think that instead of killing the Cattle in the Fields & burning all the Grain in our Barns they & their Indian Allies who have committed such Devastations would have driven off the first to the Ohio alive & loaded with Corn the Numbers of Horses which We know they have taken from our Settlements to the Westward. how strong the