

[Capt. S. Gardner to Sharpe.]

Ori inal.

Sir I am enjoyn'd by my Instructions upon any difficulty that rises in the Recruiting Service to make my Application to the Governor of the Province or Colony where I happen to be.

I have met with Opposition from some of the People in these Quarters w^{ch} I apprehend to be a just Matter of Complaint, & I doubt not the Persons concern'd will be severely reprehended by your Excellency.

My recruiting Sergeant sometime in July last was attack'd by Mr. Charles Ridgley & a Number of others his Accomplices, & had six Recruits taken from him by Force & Arms, who had each receiv'd his Majesty's Bounty, on pretence that these Recruits were Indented Servants, w^{ch} turns out not to be the truth as to all of them—besides threatenng the Sergeant & the Party to have them whipt out of Town.

About a Fortnight since M^r Joseph Watkins with a Number of Men arm'd with Clubs rescu'd another Recruit from my Serg^t in his way from Joppa to this Town.

I apply'd to Mr. Bordley the Attorney General who I imagin'd I sho^d find very ready to joyn with me in a publick Resentment of this Method of proceeding by prosecuting the Parties concern'd, but by what I could gather from my Conversation with him, he makes light not to say justifies Attempts of this sort—he put a Case not very much to the Honour of the Recruiting Service—Suppose a Man steals a Horse &c.

If thro' mistake, or in a disputable Point as this seems to be among the Inhabitants, whether the King has not a prior Right to the Service of his Subjects to any after obligation they may lay themselves under, especially in Cases of great Necessity, any Mans legal property is invaded, are not the Steps of the Law to be pursu'd without violence that Justice may be done?—besides I cannot possibly know who are or are not Servants 'till their Indentures are produc'd.

Pardon my suggesting these things w^h is with no other View than to apologize for my own Conduct.

I hope your Excellency will give such Directions & Order a prosecution against the Parties who have been culpable against whom I am ready to furnish the necessary Proofs as may deter others from such a barefac'd Opposition to His Majesty's Service.

I am with great Respect

Your Excellency's most Obed^t Hum Serv^t
Sam^l Gardner

Captain in his Majesty's 47th Regim^t

Baltimore Aug^t 15th 1756