

their Service there shall be necessary & I am apt to think I shall be joined by as many as I want before the Rear of the Army is ready to move from Rays Town which perhaps if the General can get thither it might be in about a week from this time. I learn from a Person that left Rays Town the 24<sup>th</sup> Inst. that Sr I St Clair had opened a Road from that place to a River called the Laurel hannon which is about 70 Miles beyond Rays Town & not more than 35 to the Eastward of Fort Du Quesne, that he was building a Fort just on this side the River & that about 3000 men including the working & Covering Parties that Sr John had with him were gone on to take Post there. The Troops left at Rays Town with Colo Bouquet amount to about 1800 & there are some Detachments still employed in convoying up Provisions & Stores to Rays Town & from thence to the advanced Post. I do not find that the General has been hitherto able to get any Intelligence of the Enemy's Strength on the Ohio but a Company of 40 Voluntiers that I have lately raised on the Frontiers of this Province & who are all what we call Woodsmen & excellent marksmen went from the Laurel hannon the 22<sup>d</sup> in order to make Discoveries, All the Indians that were with our Troops except 6 are returned home, it is said that about 40 others are coming thro Virginia to join the Army but I hope the General does not depend at all on Indian Assistance. You have I presume by this time received Advice of General Abercromby's being repulsed in an Attempt to force the French Lines before Ticonderoga, & perhaps a more just Account of that Affair than the Gazetteers have communicated to us, by what I can find the General is exceedingly blamed to the northward for not having taken time to reconnoitre the Enemy & the Adjacent Country before he attacked them, also for having marched his whole Army up to the Intrenchment when he might have landed a Part of them & some of his Artillery on the N. E. Side of Lake George & by that means have annoyed the Enemy & divided their Force, he is likewise censured for having ordered the whole to retreat immediately after they that had made the first Attack were repulsed, but above all he is condemned for having brought his Army back to this Side of the Lake when he was much superiour to the Enemy & when he might have as well remained & entrenched himself on the other Side & thereby have at least kept the Enemy in Awe & have prevented their sending any Detachments to the Ohio which it is expected they have now done. What the General can offer in his Vindication I cannot tell but I suppose you will soon hear as one of his Aid De Camps has taken his Passage for England in a Packett that sailed from N York a few Days after the Action.