

Philadelphia arrives. We beg the favour of an imediate Answer & hope that the urgency & Importance of the Business will excuse the trouble we have taken the Liberty to give you.

We are, with much respect Gentⁿ
Your most obd^t Sert^s
G. Mason J. Dalton.

[J. Beall to Jenifer.]

C. S. C.

Prince Georges County 15 Mar. 1776.

Dear Sir. Permit me to trouble you with these lines, on the arrival of Gun powder in Potomack for the public use to inform you of the great desire and expectation of the people, that a part of it will be allotted to the use of this county particularly the Potomack part of it, where the people much wish to be proved as well as may be, from the apprehension of an armed force soon proceeding up the river to Alexandria, which you know lays about opposite to the centre of this County on the Potomack side. We have 5 Companies on this river in the Piscattaway district, and 4 or 5 in that of Bladensburgh. The wisdom of the Council of Safety will direct the quantity, and how to be ordered in the disposition; but I will take leave to submit, whether it may not be thought best to have it lodged under the direction of the Committees of observation at Bladensburgh and Piscattaway; presuming it will not be thought proper to deliver it into the hands of the people, for obvious reasons; I think there is some of the Captains on whose undoubted care dependence might be had, but I fear there is some others whose prudence on such occasion may be doubtful, this causes me to think of its being under the direction of the Committees of observation in each neighbourhood where it is lodged, as the most proper method. The people had began to be somewhat dispirited, on acc^t of want of arms & ammunition (especially the latter) there is an obvious change on the arrival of this powder (the article most wanted) from the expectation of their being furnished therewith; this being done, I make no doubt the inhabitants in these parts will prove as spirited as in any part of the province; they are on a sudden more active in getting their fire arms in order on this prospect of having powder. We are busy casting Bullets & Buckshott; of which I believe we can make out 15 or 1600^{lb} We are also tolerable well of for gun flints; the Committee having last summer purchased all the lead & Flints they could lay their hands on. I am in hopes we can manage to have better than half of our people provided with firelocks, but then several of