

c. s. c. dont urge altogether thro' inclination (tho' I believe nothing would be more desirable to both officers and men who wou'd more readily than ever return in the Spring) but should it be necessary could point out the expediency of their return, upon a principle that it wou'd contribute much to the benefit of the service, so far as their small force could have any weight.

Our Army in general have been well supplied with good provisions & indeed with more than a sufficiency. Vegetables and some other small necessaries could not be procured, but in general there has not been the least cause of complaint on this head.

You mention my having the command of the Flying Camp, which I have not, altho' we frequently act together and have encamped close by each other for better than a month. I thank the Convention for the resolve in my favor. their intention was good tho it has not had the desired effect, owing to an impropriety in their mode of appointment, tho was I to insist, General Washington has said I ought and should have the command, tho' it might raise some difficulties here perhaps in other commands. M^r Bell without doubt is a brave and an honest man, but I leave you and the Convention to judge, whether with propriety he can expect he will do himself and his country any honour in the character of a General. He is considered here as the second edition of the Eastern Generals and the distinguishing gentlemen here, who now begin to entertain more favorable sentiments of our State, are not a little surprized at the impropriety of this appointment, but their will be done, even tho' I suffer an indignity, where it has not been intended.

Gen^l Lee has just arrived, and is appointed to the command of one of the Divisions, who are to oppose the enemy above King's Bridge. The Enemy have landed their Chief force on Frog's neck, and are making every disposition to march across from the sound to their Ships in the North River, thereby to cut off our communication by land with Albany and the New England Governments and to coop in and starve us, for I am apprehensive it will be in their power by their ships at any time to cut off our retreat into Jerseys, both which should they effect, it will just pin up the Casket. The situation of the Country favors our troops, being very uneven and rocky, interspersed with some few bushes, and abounding in Stone Walls. Were our officers good, and our men well trained, it would be impossible to effect their purpose, for we have now on this side the bridge thirteen brigades, which do not exceed thirteen thousand men (by this you may see how far short the Governments of furnishing their respective quotas, none I believe have compleated but Maryland) but with this force,