

[Sharpe to Bouquet.]

Letter Bk. III

Copy of a Letter to Colonel Bouquet. Annapolis 21st April
1764.

Sir

Being favoured with your Letter of the 10th Inst I take the first Opportunity to inform you that in Consequence of Your Application I shall send Instructions to Colonel Thomas Prather who lives near the Mouth of Conegocheague & commands the Militia of Frederick County within this Province to prevail if possible in case you should apply to him on a number of Voluntiers from among such Militia to assist in convoying Provisions & Stores from Maryland to Pittsburg or to any of the Posts on the Communication, but at the same time I think it incumbent on me to tell you that I am apprehensive he will not succeed with many of them. As the Assembly during the late War when we had Troops in pay insisted that none of them should be sent to garrison any post beyond Fort Frederick I believe it would be difficult on any occasion to make the Militia march to garrison any Post westward of that place nor do I conceive it would be now possible under our Militia Law to punish any of them that should refuse to march even so far unless it could be proved to the satisfaction of a Jury by whom Offenders under that Law must be tried that a large Body of Indians was at the time actually committing hostilities within the Limits of the Province for the Lower House of Assembly made some Resolves in the year 1758 relative to the Law which influenced Juries so far as to acquit Persons who had been prosecuted for refusing to march at a time when the Indians were almost every week cutting off some of our Frontier Inhabitants, That you may know on what Footing the Militia of this Province is established I will send you inclosed a Copy of the Act of Assembly under which it is regulated & agreeable to which such as serve in Arms are to be paid when the Assembly shall think fit to grant Money for that purpose but as there have been very large arrears due to the Militia ever since the year 1756 they begin to despair of being ever paid & the Backwardness they have shewn for some time past is I conceive in a great measure owing to that Circumstance. The several Companies in Frederick which you know is the Frontier County amount I believe to 1500 Men & five Companies of them consist of People that live westward of Frederick Town. The Field Officers are Colonel Prather whom I have mentioned two Lieutenant Colonels & as many Majors who reside in different parts of the County, but the Officer who lives farthest westward is Captain Shelby who commanded a Company of Voluntiers in General Forbes's Expedition & will I am