

[Tim Pickering, By order of the Board, Philadelphia war office to Gov. Lee] December 8  
See  
Liber C C  
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Sir Yours of the 2<sup>d</sup> inst was duly received, The North Carolina brigade is gone down the River on their way to the head of Elk. The Virginia troops will follow. It is necessary that you make provision therefore for the transportation of two thousand Men, besides the North Carolina brigade. the latter you will dispatch as soon as they arrive. The Virginians may be at Elk in Ten or Twelve days. Some exertion will be requisite on your part, write us of your prospects; and mention the number of water cask (if any) that will be necessary to be sent with the Virginia troops, during the ten or Twelve days mentioned, the craft you collect for the Virginia troops may be employed in any short trips; but you will be sure to have them ready by that time. We hope there will be no failure in procuring the number wanted.

P. S. the enemy ought not to know of the passing these troops down the Bay: if it can be let it be a Secret, till they are all embarked

[Eph Blaine D. C. G. Philadelphia to Govr Lee]

December 8  
Red Book  
No. 25  
Letter  
No. 44

Sir The distresses of the Army for want of Bread and my great fears respecting their present & future supply will sufficiently Apologize for my troubling your Excellency & Council so often with the Business of my Department.

The depreciated State of our Currency, the Spirit of Monopoly which so generally prevails with mankind, & the temper of the Farmers to hold back from Sale such produce as they have to spare, is very alarming and makes me dread a Disolution of the Army for want of Bread, indeed I despair of being able to procure one third of the quantity demanded for the ensuing Years Supply on any terms without the aid of the Legislative Authorities, and the most vigorous measures adopted to secure every Bushel of Wheat & Barrel of Flour either in the Speculators or Millers Possession & procuring the residue which is to spare. The Millers & Speculators in your State have I presume bought up considerable Quantities, I wish it could be secured and means taken to stop their future purchases while the wants of the Army are so great

As the Season is now at hand in which the Navigation of Chesepeak & Delaware will be obstructed with Ice & cut off all Communication of Supplies by Water which is the only easy mode of transporting Provisions towards Camp.

I have some time ago given directions to my Assistants in your & Delaware State, to rise their utmost exertions to forward every ounce of Flour in their Possession before the 20<sup>th</sup> Instant & have to request your Excellency & Council to order the State Commissioners