

Brown
Book No. 8

navy, had they possessed the same in their Stores, but if it was intended in order to supply the immediate wants of the army, then I should beg leave to represent to your Excellency that it was not necessary to extend it so far, since the continental commissaries has Sufficient quantitys of flour on hand to answer the present emergence if they could have procured Wagons and teams to transport the same to head quarters. how much more extraordinary will not this second act appear when I can inform you that in the Run of last summer, it was proposed by Monsieur Gerard and myself, to redeliver to the continental commissaries 7000 Barrels of flour of the Harvest of 1778 purchased by them in the use of the Royal Marine, which was effected in order to multiply the resources of the Army & to second a plan of the commercial committee of Congress, that I have been since authorised to procure 24600 Barrels of flour of the last harvest in Pensilvania & Maryland, that I have actually delivered up all the flour I could command in Pensilvania, in order to supply the army & on the first requisition, that 800 barrels of flour & as much Biscuit are now on board Ships bound in this river by the Ice & could have been employed for the use of the army if it had been necessary or if Congress had thought proper to have indemnified the owners of the Vessels chartered in order to export them, for the above reasons & taking into consideration that all the dependance of his Majestys navy for supplies from America lay totaly with M^r Smith will it not surprise every one, that it should have been thought necessary in order to supply the immediate wants of the Army, to decree the Seizure even of the Wheat purchased by my agents on the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeak bay where all mills have been long at rest by the late droughts & the present frost & where the same will not probably be ground up before the months of March & April next.

it is on account of these various considerations that it is incumbent on me, to request that your Excellency will condescend to inform me if M^r W^m Smith has really exceeded the quantity he was authorised to purchase, & whether it was possible for him, not to give extensive orders so as to Secure the quantity of 12000 Barrels of flour

Your Excellency would also confer on me a particular obligation if you would please to inform me of the motives of the late Acts of your legislature & the grounds on which they have been formed so as I may take every Step in my power, in order to prevent a future misunderstanding, should any have been omitted & to establish the transactions entered upon on behalf of the Service of his most Christian Majesty, on a more respectable and Solid footing and to deserve your aprobation & confidence, as likewise of the hon^{bl} Board at which you preside