

at Elkton on their way down the Chesapeake. To secure the necessary supplies he and other patriotic citizens actually pledged their private fortunes to obtain cattle, flour, and boats.

The arrival of the French squadron under de Grasse in the Chesapeake late in August, and its successful encounter with the British fleet, had not only made safe the transport of Washington's army down the bay by water, but had put an end to the depredations by raiding parties from the British ships upon the settlements and plantations along the water front of the bay and its tributaries, to which many of the letters refer. The letters also tell us of the occasional revival of Tory activities, especially in Worcester and Somerset counties on the Eastern Shore, but these never assumed formidable proportions and were largely confined to the clandestine sale of cattle and supplies to the British ships, while they were in control of the bay. After this volume went to press, and unfortunately too late to include here, there came to light a number of letters and other papers relating to the Tory conspiracy in Western Maryland referred to in Orendorff's letter of June, 1781, printed on page 328. The apprehension and execution of the ringleaders put an end to this abortive movement. Letters from the south during the earlier part of the year tell us of the magnificent service rendered by the Maryland Line at Cowpens, Guilford, Camden, and other battles in the Carolinas.

When the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, on October 17th, 1781, brought active military operations to an end, it became extremely difficult to hold the American army together. The correspondence tells us of the efforts of Washington and Congress to maintain the military organizations until peace was definitely in sight, and of the cooperation which they received from the Maryland authorities. Not only did the number of desertions increase, but it now became more and more difficult to purchase with the rapidly depreciating paper money the food and military supplies which Maryland was called upon to send to the army in Virginia.

One of the difficulties encountered in the editing of this volume has been the selection of the letters which it seems most worth while to print. Those that appear here are really but a small fraction of the letters addressed to the Council during the year 1781 which are still preserved in the State archives. As it is impossible to print all of these, the editor's efforts have been directed to the selection of those that are of some especial interest, from the great mass of manuscript material of the period now on deposit with the Maryland Historical Society. The editor is indebted to Mr. Charles Fickus, Librarian of the Society, for the conscientious care with which he has gone over these old letters