

In Virtue of the Resolution of the General Assembly passed the 31<sup>st</sup> of May last, Charles Beatty of Montgomery County and Normand Bruce of Frederick County are appointed to examine, and report their Opinion of opening, clearing and making navigable the River Potomack from the Mouth of the Eastern Branch to the Line of this State, the Time the work would take, and the Expences, and compute the expence of making the said River navigable at each Fall.—

August 1  
Liber C. B.  
No. 24  
p. 435

[Ben Stoddert Pres<sup>t</sup> in Council to Thomas Harwood Esq<sup>r</sup>]

We are favored with your's of the 15<sup>th</sup> Ult<sup>o</sup>. It is necessary for Us to observe that we have no power of dispensing with a Law—Nor can We undertake to Justify you in doing it, altho' We think in the present instance, the measure would be highly agreeable to the General Assembly for the reasons which follow. It is certainly bad policy to distress the Citizens who are purchasers of Confiscated Property, by issuing executions against them when the Money arising therefrom cannot be applied to the Service of the State, but must remain locked up in the Treasury, 'till after the last of December 1784 the time of the redemption of the Bills of Credit, to redeem which the property was sold. We think it would be highly oppressive because from the Scarcity of Specie the Debtors can with difficulty procure sufficient to discharge their Assessments (of which the General Assembly were so strongly impressed, that at their last Session, they extended the time of collection to this Month) and there is not more than Twenty five thousand pounds of the last Emission in Circulation, a Sum greatly inadequate to the satisfaction of the first payment, which too is dispersed through the State, and not attainable by the Debtors; from whence it must be evident to the most undiscerning that their property, if executed, will be sold for little or Nothing, whereby they and their families will be greatly injured, if not reduced to Beggary, without the prospect of benefit to the Public; an event which would be much lamented by the General Assembly, and might excite a general disgust against the Government—

August 1  
Liber No. 78  
p. 447

We are &<sup>ca</sup>

[W<sup>m</sup> Paca in Council Annapolis to Charles Beatty & Normand Bruce Esquires]

p. 448

In consequence of the enclosed Resolution of the General Assembly, We have appointed, you to execute the Duties therein specified, and to make the Report required, to the General Assembly at their Annual meeting in November—

The base Payment of your Expences, is a reward so inadequate to the trouble you will be at, that we should have little hopes of your undertaking this Business, did we not entertain an high opinion of your Zeal to render the Public a Service so essential as laying the foundation for opening the Navigation of Potomack.