

plan for defeating the American army which Lee drew up for the British during his captivity in 1777.

Oswald remained on the best of terms with Benedict Arnold during the early years of the war and he probably came to know him intimately as his secretary during the Quebec expedition. Arnold wrote Washington on November 6, 1776 urging the exchange of Oswald.¹² Shortly after he was freed he rode with his former commander from Providence to Boston in an open sleigh.¹³ He probably sympathised with Arnold's determination to resign in 1777, because of a flagrant inequality in rank caused by the commissioning by Congress of five men to positions superior to his. Later in the year he informed Lamb of the unfair treatment which Arnold received from Gates.¹⁴ Relations between the two men soon became less cordial for Arnold neglected to return a portmanteau and a large case of valuable French mathematical instruments which Oswald left in his care. Shortly after Arnold's treason was disclosed through the capture of the unfortunate Major André, Oswald wrote Lamb:

"... I never knew, or heard of any Man who had acquired by his merit, so distinguished a Rank in Life, so totally lost to every honorable and virtuous Principle—to the World—to his Friends—and to himself."¹⁵

On another occasion he mentioned Arnold and his former military reputation:

"Happy for him, and for his Friends, it had been, had the Ball which pierced his Leg at Saratoga, been directed thro' his Heart.—He then would have finished his Career in Glory...."¹⁶

Oswald did not remain in the army long after the Battle of Monmouth. The relative rank of officers holding the same title depended on the date of their commission. This emphasis on seniority frequently caused disputes and did much to create ill will among the officers. Oswald was involved in one of these controversies and when a board of officers made a ruling against him, he sent in his resignation to Washington. Apparently he was not satisfied with Washington's reply¹⁷ for he submitted his case to Congress on November 2, 1778, hoping to re-

¹² Letters to Washington (MS. at Library of Congress), Vol. 12, 169.

¹³ The Lamb Papers, Box I, No. 88. Oswald to Lamb, Providence, 16 Feb. 1777.

¹⁴ The Lamb Papers, Box I, No. 238. Oswald to Lamb, 18 Dec. 1777.

¹⁵ Lamb Papers, Box III, No. 241. Oswald to Lamb, Fishkill, 22 Nov. 1780.

¹⁶ Lamb Papers, Box III, No. 258. Oswald to Lamb, Poughkeepsie, 11 Dec. 1780.

¹⁷ For text of letter see *The Writings of George Washington* ed. by J. C. Fitzpatrick. Washington, 1936. Vol. 13, p. 76-77.