

I hope our Assembly will think of returning home & I do not doubt but very soon I shall be able to be in Virginia the beginning of the ensuing week.

Since my Appointment to the Command of the American Forces I don't doubt but every Body on your Side the Atlantic have been in constant Expectations of hearing of some Exploit in America in Consequence of his Majesty's honouring me with such a Commission. On the first Receipt of it tho' the Winter was then unhappily just approaching I was not absolutely without hopes myself of being enabled to satisfy in some measure my Friends Wishes for my Success & Prosperity when I was in Virg. I proposed to Gov. Dinwiddie to raise 700 Men immediately & with them & the Independent Companies to have made an Attempt on the Fort that the Enemy had raised at the Mouth of the Monongahela, but whatever were my Wishes at that time I was soon convinced of their Vanity when I arrived at Williams Creek, there I learnt that the Number of the French at their Fort exceeded 600 beside several Parties of Indians who were at their Devotion & submitted to their Command, The Fort tho' small was rendered pretty defensible by a Ditch & two Outworks before the Guns that faced the Land on the Side of the River it was surrounded with Stockades or Palisades & the Garrison had laid in a sufficient Stock of Provision for at least the whole Winter. The Troops that I must have commanded were three Independent Companies that did not in the least answer the Expectations I had entertained of them, the Remains of the Virg. Forces amounted to about 120 discontented unruly & mutinous; the Maryland Company was at that time incomplete & undisciplined but I may without Vanity declare they were