

If any Militia should be necessary to cooperate with your Troops they shall be ordered out as soon as we have such an Information.

Colonel Howe?

In Council, 14 March, 1781.

Sir, Last Night all the Transports from Elk got into this Harbour and  
 N<sup>o</sup> 255. this Morning, at Day light two Ships appeared off Head and one at  
 Anchor, Measures are taking by mounting Cannon and landing the  
 Troops to oppose any Designs of the Enemy, if they should prove feet  
 and securing the Transports and Stores. Commodore Nicholson is gone  
 off to reconnoitre, we expect him to return in an Hour, the Marquis  
 had Intelligence of these Ships and is perhaps pursuing his Journey  
 by Land. Vessels coming down the Bay should be on their Guard  
 Since writing the above Commodore Nicholson is returned and  
 informs that they are British Ships, the Smallest of eighteen Guns  
 and the largest of twenty eight Guns. They are now under way  
 an easy Sail, the Smallest Ship is now up the Bay out of  
 Sight, the other following. Their Designs seem to have been to  
 intercept our Transports and Troops, and more perhaps to continue  
 in the Neighbourhood to ravage the Shore and keep the Troops  
 confined in this Harbour.

M. Donaldson Yesterday.

In Council, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 1781.

Sir, We have the Honor to inform your Excellency that the  
 transport Vessels from the Head of Elk with Troops on Board  
 256. commanded by the Marquis de la Fayette arrived Yesterday  
 Evening in this Harbour, by Day light two Ships appeared  
 at Anchor off the Mouth of the River supposed to be the  
 Enemy and their Intention to intercept the Transports.  
 Effectual Measures are taken for their Security. The Vessels  
 supposed to be the Enemy are under way and stretching up  
 the Bay of Chesapeake, we thought it necessary to communicate  
 this Intelligence, and if any thing material occurs shall immediately  
 transmit it. Since writing the above Commodore Nicholson  
 has returned from reconnoitring the Ships and discovers they are