

Fort *Cumberland*, we are informed, was first begun by some Gentlemen of the *Ohio* Company, as a Store House of their Goods, designed for the *Ohio Indian* Trade, and never was Garrisoned by Troops stationed there by the Direction of any Law of this Province, but commonly by *Virginia* Forces. That Fort, we have too much Reason to believe, from an Extract of a Letter from your Excellency to the Secretary of State, laid before the Lower House in *September* Session, Seventeen Hundred and Fifty-six, in which are the following Words, "There are no Works in this Province that deserve the Name of Fortifications; just behind and among our Westernmost Settlements, are some small Stoccoado or Pallifadoed Forts, built by the Inhabitants for the Protection of their Wives and Children; and besides these, there is one larger, tho' in my Opinion not much more capable of Defence, on *Patawomack*, about 56 Miles beyond our Settlements; it has been distinguished by the Appellation of Fort *Cumberland*, and is at present Garrisoned by Three Hundred Men from *Virginia*; it is made with Stoccoadoes only, and commanded almost on every Side by circumjacent Hills; a considerable Quantity of Military Stores that was left by General *Braddock*, still remains there, and Ten of the Carriage Guns that his Majesty was pleased to order to *Virginia* Two Years ago, are mounted therein;" is not tenable against even a trifling Force, should they come with any Cannon; and therefore humbly submit it, whether it might not be a prudent Measure to remove his Majesty's Artillery and Stores (tho' indeed the Provisions, we are told, are chiefly spoiled, from thence to a Place of greater Security.

Tho' Fort *Cumberland* may be constructed, for any Thing we know, near a Place proper for the stationing a Garrison at for his Majesty's Service in general, yet being, as we have been informed, between Eighty and Ninety Miles from the Settlements of the Westernmost Inhabitants of this Province, and in the Truth of that Information are confirmed by your Excellency's Message of the 11th of this Instant, wherein you say, "the Distance from Fort *Frederick* to Fort *Cumberland* by the Waggon Road is 75 Miles," and consequently the Carriage of Provisions thither very expensive; we humbly conceive it cannot be reasonably desired, that the People of this Province should be burthened with the great Expence of Garrisoning that Fort, which, if it contributes immediately to the Security of any of his Majesty's Frontier Subjects, it must be those of *Virginia* or *Pennsylvania*, who do not at present contribute any Thing towards the Support of it that we know of.

We understand the most common Track of the *Indians*, in making their Incurfions into *Virginia* (which have been lately very frequent) is through the wild desert Country lying between Fort *Cumberland* and Fort *Frederick*, and yet we cannot learn that the Forces at Fort *Cumberland* (tho' most of these are in our Pay, the Summer past have been stationed there contrary, we humbly conceive, to the Law that raised them) have very rarely, if ever, molested those Savages in those their Incurfions; from whence we would willingly presume their Passage is below the Ranges, which Troops stationed at Fort *Cumberland* can with Safety to that Fort extend themselves to; and consequently, that any Security arising from those Troops, even to the *Virginians* who are most in the Way of being protected by them, must be very remote, and to us much more so.

When, from the Incurfions and horrid Depredations of the Savage Enemy in the neighbouring Colonies, an Opinion prevailed, that a Fort was necessary for the Defence and Security of the Western Frontier of this Province, it was thought most likely to be conducive to those Ends, to have it placed some where near the Place Fort *Frederick* is now constructed; because from thence the Troops that might be judged proper to be kept on Foot for the Security of the Frontier Inhabitants, might have it in their Power to Range constantly in such Manner as to protect them against small Parties; and in Case any considerable Body of the Enemy should appear, or the Fort should be attacked, the Troops might, at a very short Warning, be assisted by the Inhabitants.

Near the Sum of 6000 *l.* has been expended in purchasing the Ground belonging to and constructing Fort *Frederick*; and tho' we have not any exact Information what Sum may still be wanting to complete it, (if ever it shall be thought proper to be done) yet we are afraid the Sum requisite for that Purpose, must be considerable, and we are apprehensive that Fort is so large, that in Case of an Attack, it cannot be defended without a Number of Men larger than this Province can support, purely to maintain a Fortification. We have raised and supported on our Frontier, at a vast Expence, a Number of Men considerably more than sufficient, we humbly apprehend, for our immediate Defence and Security, had they done the Duty to which they were destined by Law; and yet our Militia has been great Part of the Time out on that Service.

Tho' we did last Spring, in Expectation that his Majesty's Forces would act offensively to the Westward, increase the Number of Troops in the Pay of this Province to Five Hundred, in order that when upon any
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