

I ordered the Independent ~~Capt~~ on the 11th Inst upon receipt of the Pres^d of Conven-
tion's letter, to hand in their returns of arms, accoutrements, Camp equipages and
utensils, till then I thought this had been done upon their leaving Philadelphia,
where I imagined they had supplied their men with sundry necessaries, and
would of course make the natural returns, as their commands till their arrival
there were distinct and unlimited by any other Control than that of Conven-
tion or Council, however I found this had not been done and I was find from the
train they have kept their affairs in, it will be done with difficulty and perhaps
be subject to loss, for I am apprehensive many things may have been lost upon their
march from Philadelphia and since; which as they were not accustomed to in-
spect and make weekly general returns of arms, accoutrements, clothing, Camp
furniture and utensils &c. some of these at this time they may not be able to
account for; Capt Brant complains he can't obtain a roll of, nor any accounts
relative to his company and that Genl Bell has taken a fiber out of his compa-
ny Burrell by name and keeps him in the Flying Camp. I have wrote Genl Bell
concerning this Boy and his story is lame, but from what I can collect, he says
the Council of Safety allowed him to take the Boy out of, and upon return of the
Flying Camp he will return him to the Company - now if he belongs to, he certainly
ought to be in the Company, as it has no other fiber and if he does not, the Company
can have no business with him after the Flying Camp is discharged; The Council
will please signify whether they saw such indigence, and whether the boy was retu-
med in the Muster roll of the Company and this matter shall soon be set right be-
tween the General and the Capt. I wish this acct may be as easily adjusted. There
are many other charges relative of what articles are and will be enumerated
in the returns, which the Continent is charged with, particularly medicine necessaries
supplied the troops, arms repaired &c. for often on our march and since the Com-
panies could not supply nor could the public armours work, at all events,
soldiers must be fed and have their arms repaired, or else it can't be expected
they will fight, an amount of a libe can't at this time be rendered, for the retreating
and flying disposition which has so much prevailed in our army lately, made it
most safe to send any books, papers &c to Philadelphia lest they should be lost, but be-
fore a true and particular acct shall be rendered, doubt not the province shall
not be injured.

Misprecaution was necessary, for hitherto we have been generally drawn from
one station and Passage to cover the retreat and defend the passage of others, which
has subjected us to much loss, upon the retreat or rather flight from New York. I have
saw an officer myself included, or soldiers who did lose more or less of their
baggage, pillaged by the runaways, indeed I believe many of them never had other
views than flight and plunder, both which they are extremely destitute at. General
Washington was so kind after he left the Command where we were posted, to stop
waggon himself and made one of his aid de Camps attend the rendering of our baggage,
but as I had left but few soldiers as a camp guard, being desirous the Regt upon
this occasion should be as full as possible, then could not guard the Waggon and thus