

“PEEKS KILL, Sept. 16, 1777.

“DEAR SIR,—

“Your Favour of 13th I have been duly honoured with; am greatly obliged to you for the assistance you have ordered from the militia. I will take particular care that they shall be Supplied with provision and Ammunition.

“The Enemy's numbers in and about Hackensack, by the best information I have been able to obtain, are between four and five thousand; part came from Staten Island, through Elizabeth Town & Newark toward us [us on?], and three or four thousand crossed from Spliten divel Creek to Fort Lee. I am well assured that they have lately received a reinforcement at N. York, and this is further Confirmed by a deserter who belongs to Col. Bradly's Regt., taken at Danbury after enlisted with the Enemy, & came from the bridge with the party that came to Fort Lee;—he says they told him ten thousand recruits were arrived at York;—that the party which came to fort Lee were not many of them from the bridge;—their numbers four or five thousand;—had deserted at Soubriskey's [Zabriskey's?] Mills, between Paramus and Hackensack, where they lay when he left them;—& had Collected many Cattle and horses.

“Col. Burr, I am informed, Surprised their Piequet last night, killed Sixteen, mortally wounded seven, and took the remainder.

“I have wrote to Connecticut for the militia of that State to be Speedily Sent down.

“Inclosed is a hand-bill containing an acct of the action to the Southward, Since the receipt of which. I have received a letter from Major Putnam, who was at Philadelphia, informing that Gen'l Washington, with his army, had retired this side the School kill, & meant to make a stand there. Gen'l How was busied ye 12th and 13th burying his Dead;—that we had about one thousand killed and wounded;—and it's believed the Enemy have lost double that number;—on the 13th the Enemy were fling off to the left to gain Sweed's ford 15 miles above Philadelphia.—Gen'l Washington Sent a body of Troops to Oppose them. Assailants Generally have an infinite advantage over those who act only on the defensive;—it's my Opinion, & I think the Opinion is Supported by our own Experience, that we shall always be beat untill we learn or venture to attack.

“Gen'l Parsons, with his Brigade, & Col. Ludington, with his detachment from the militia, are at Whiteplains, where they are necessary and serve a double purpose,—to Cover that part of the Country from the ravages of the Enemy, & are as great or greater Security to this post lying between us and them than if they were at this post; they will git the first notice of the Enemy's Motions, & Can retire here or harrass them, as shall be Judged best. Col. Brinkerhoff has applied to me in behalf of his Reg't. I have Ordered the whole to hold themselves in readiness,—and one-third to come in at present.

“With particular respect and Esteem, I have the Hon<sup>r</sup> to be your Excellency's Obed<sup>t</sup> humble Ser<sup>t</sup>.

“ISRAEL PUTNAM.

“HIS EXCELLENCY GOV<sup>r</sup> CLINTON.”

To use the words that Shakspeare puts into the mouth of “melancholy Jaques,”—

“Last scene of all,  
That ends this strange, eventful history,  
In second childishness,”

as to military comprehension of circumstances, contemplate Burgoyne holding “high festival” in the Schuyler mansion,—burned to the ground next morning,—at the junction of the outlet of Saratoga Lake, Fish Kill, and the Hudson, while his faithful subordinates and troops were