

No. V.

*Copy of a Letter from Lieutenant General Burgoyne to Lord George Germain, dated Quebec, May 14, 1777.*

[Private.]

MY LORD,

I TAKE the opportunity of a vessel dispatched by Sir Guy Carleton to England, to inform your Lordship of my arrival here the 6th instant. And though my present situation, as acting under a superior upon the spot, may make an official correspondence unnecessary, I cannot persuade myself I shall not appear guilty of impropriety in assuming the honour of a private and confidential one, relatively to the objects of my destination.

From my present information, I have reason to expect the preparations for opening the campaign to be very forward on our part. Due exertions were used in the course of the winter, and the uncommon mildness of the weather greatly favoured them, to convey provisions to Chamblé and St. John's. One large victualler arrived after I left the St. Lawrence last November; all residues of other victuallers have been collected; I am in hopes of finding a sufficiency of provision to enable me to cross the Lake Champlain at least, without the arrival of the Corke fleet. I hope also to find artillery stores enough to feel the pulse of the enemy at Ticonderoga. Should their situation and resolution be such as to make great artillery preparations requisite, I shall certainly be under the necessity of waiting at Crown Point the arrival of the ordnance ships from England. A good body of the Indians I am assured are ready to move upon the first call, and measures are taking for bringing them forthwith to proper rendezvous.

I cannot speak with so much confidence of the military assistance I am to look for from the Canadians. The only corps yet instituted, or that I am informed can at present be instituted, are three independent companies of 100 men each, officered by Seigneurs of the country, who are well chosen; but they have not been able to engage many volunteers. The men are chiefly drafted from the militia, according to a late regulation of the legislative council. Those I have yet seen afford no promise of use of arms—awkward, ignorant, disinclined to the service, and spiritless. Various reasons are assigned for this change in the natives since the time of the French government. It may partly be owing to a disuse of arms, but I believe principally to the unpopularity of their Seigneurs, and to the poison which the emissaries of the rebels have thrown into their minds. Should I find the new companies up the country better composed, or that the well affected partics can be prevailed upon to turn out volunteers, though but for a short occasion, as they did last year, I shall move Sir Guy to exert further measures to augment my numbers.

The army will fall short of the strength computed in England; the want of the camp equipage, cloathing, and many other necessary articles, will cause inconvenience; I am nevertheless determined to put the troops destined for my command immediately in motion; and, assisted by the spirit and health in which they abound, I am confident in the prospect of overcoming difficulties and disappointments.

Having settled all measures with Sir Guy Carleton, both for this purpose and for the expeditious transport of the stores as they may arrive, and having already dispatched instructions to Captain Lutwidge, who commands the fleet upon Lake Cham-

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