

L. Sir,

No. 2

Kaskaskia Illinois Apr: 29th 1779

A few days ago I received certain intelligence of William Morris my express to you being killed near the falls of Ohio news truly disagreeable to me as I fear many of my letters will fall into the hands of the Enemy. at Detroit altho some of them as I learn were found in the woods torn in pieces. I do not doubt but before the receipt of this you will hear of my late success against Governor Hamilton at post S^t Vincennes. That gentleman with a body of men possessed himself of that post on the 15th of December last repaired the fortifications for a repository and in the spring meant to attack this place which he made no doubt of carrying, where he was to be joined by 200 Indians from Metchemachinoi & 500 Cherokees Chicca-

2

other nations. With this body he was to penetrate up the Ohio to Fort Pitt, sweeping Kentucky on his way having light brass Cannon for the purpose, joined on his way by all the Indians that could be got to him he made no doubt but that he could force all West Auguste this expedition was ordered by the commander in chief of Canada. Destruction seemed to hover over us from every quarter detached parties of the Enemy in the neighbourhood every day but afraid to attack I ordered Maj: Bonman to evacuate the fort at the Cohas and join me immediately which he did, having not received a stroke of a pen from you for near twelve months I could see but little probability of taking possession of the country as my number of men was small

3

stand a siege and my situation too remote to
call for assistance I made all the preparations
I possibly could for the attack & was ne-
cessitated to set fire to some of the hou-
ses in Town to clear them out of the way,
but in the height of the hurry a Spa-
nish merchant who had been at S^t Vincennes
arrived and gave the following intelligence
That Mr. Hamilton had weakened him-
self by sending his Indians against the
Frontiers and to block up the Ohio; that
he had not more than eighty men in gar-
rison three pieces of Cannon and some
small mounted that he intended to
to attack this place as soon as the
winter opened and made no doubt of
clearing

4

The western waters by the fall. My situation & circumstances induced me to fall on the resolution of attacking him before he could collect his Indians again. I was sensible the resolution was as desperate as my situation but I saw no other probability of securing the country. I immediately dispatched of a small galley which I had fitted up mounting two four pounders & four snivils with a company of men & necessary stores on board with orders to force her way if possible & station herself a few miles below the Enemy; suffer nothing to pass her & wait for further orders. In the mean time I marched across the country with 130 men being all I could raise after leaving this place garrisoned by the militia. the inhabitants

of the country behaved exceedingly well numbers of
young men turned out on the expedition & every
other one embodied to guard the different towns. I
marched the 4th of February altho so small a bo-
dy it took me 16 days on the route. The incle-
mency of the season high ~~waters~~^{waters} &c seemed to threat-
-en the loss of the expedition. When within three
leagues of the Enemy it took us five days to cross
the drowned lands of the Wawbash river having
to wade often upwards of two leagues to our breast
in water. Had not the weather been warm we
must have perished. But on the evening of the
23^d we got on dry land in sight of the Enemy
and at seven o'clock made the attack before
they knew any thing of us. The Town immediately
surrendered with joy and assisted in the siege. The

a continual fire on both sides for eighteen hours. I had no expectation of gaining the fort until the arrival of my artillery. The moon setting about one o'clock I had an intrenchment thrown up in rifle shot of their strongest battery and poured such showers of well directed balls into their posts that we silenced two pieces of Cannon in 15 minutes without getting a man hurt. Governor Hamilton and myself had on the following day several conferences but did not agree until the evening when he agreed to surrender the garrison (79 in number) prisoners of war with considerable stores. I got only one man wounded not being able to lose many I made them secure themselves well. Seven badly wounded in the fort thro' the posts. In the height of this action a
Indian

7

party that had been to war and taken two pri-
soners came in not knowing of us hearing of them
I dispatched a party to give them battle in the
commons and got nine of them with the two pri-
soners which proved to be Frenchmen. Hearing of
a convoy of goods from Detroit I sent a party of 60
men in armed boats well mounted with swivels
to meet them before they should receive any
intelligence. They met the Convoy 110 leagues
up the river and made a prize of the whole
taking 40 prisoners & about 10,000 worth of goods
and provisions also the mail from Canada to
Governor Hamilton no news of importance. But
what crowned the general joy was the arrival
of William Morris my express to you with your
letters which gave general satisfaction the

8

being made sensible of the gratitude of their country
for their services, were so much elated that
they would have attempted the reduction of Detroit
had I have ordered them. Having more prison-
ers than I knew what to do with I was necessi-
tated to discharge a greater part of them on
parole. Mr. Hamilton his principal officers and
a few soldiers I have sent to Kentucky un-
der convoy of Capt. Williams in order to be
conducted to you: After dispatching mor-
ing with letters to you treating with the
neighbouring Indians & I returned to this
place leaving a sufficient garrison at St.
Vincennes. during my absence, Capt. Robert
George who now commands the company
formerly Capt. Willing had returned
from

9

new Orleans which greatly added to our strength. It gave great satisfaction to the inhabitants when acquainted with the protection which was given them, the alliance with France &c. I am impatient for the arrival of Colo. Montgomery but have heard nothing of him lately. By your instructions to me I find you put no confidence in Gen. M'Kintosh's taking Detroit as you encourage me to attempt it if possible. It has been twice in power. Had I been able to raise only 600 men when I first arrived in the country, lastly when I was at St. Vincenne could I have secured my prisoners and only had 300 good men I should have attempted it and since learn there could have been no doubt of success as by some gentlemen lately from that post we are informed

10

that the Town and country kept three days
in feasting and diversion, on hearing
of ^{my} success against M^r Hamilton and was
so certain of my embracing the fair
opportunity of possessing myself of that
post that the merchants and others pro-
vided many necessaries for us on our
arrival the garrison consisting of only
eighty men not daring to stop their diver-
sions. They are now completing a new
fort and I fear too strong for any
force I shall ever be able to raise in
this country. We are proud to hear Con-
gress intends putting her forces on the
frontier under your direction. A small
army from Pittsburgh conducted with
spirit

may easily take Detroit and put an
end to the Indian war. Those Indians
who are active against us are the six na-
tions part of the Shawnee the Meamories
and about half the Chesaways Ottomaw Jorocis
& Pautawatimas nations bordering on the Lakes
Those nations who have treated with me
have behaved since very well to wit, the
Peankishaws Kicapoues Oreaottonans of the
wabash river, the Maskias, Pessians me-
Augamies, Foxes, Socho of rays Illinois
& poues nations of the Mississippi & Illinois
rivers part of the Chesaways have also
treated and are peaceable. I continually
keep agents among them to watch
their motions & keep them peaceably
inclined.

12

many of the cherokees chiccawans & their
confederates are I fear ill disposed. It would
be well if Colo. Montgomery should give them
a dressing as he comes down the Tennessee. There
can be no peace expected from many nati-
ons while the English are at Detroit. I strong-
ly suspect they will turn their arms against
the Illinois as they will be encouraged. I shall
always be on my guard watching every
opportunity to ~~the~~ take the advantage of the
Enemy & if I am ever able to muster six
or seven hundred men I shall give them a
shorter distance to come & fight me than at this
place. There is one circumstance very disap-
-ing which is that of our money being
discredited to all intents and purposes by
the

13
great number of traders who come here
in my absence each out bidding the other
giving prices unknown in this country by
soonest by which the people conceived it to be of
no value and both French & Spaniards refused
to take a farthing of it. Provision is three times
the price it was two months past and to be
got by no other means than my own bonds
goods or force. Several merchants are now ad-
vancing considerable sums of their own property ra-
ther than the service should suffer by which I am
sensible they must suffer greatly unless some me-
thod is taken to raise the credit of our coin or
a fund sent to Orleans for the payment of
the expences of this place which would at
once reduce the price of every species of
provisions

92
money being of little service to them un-
less it would pass at the ports they trade at. I men-
tioned to you my drawing some Bills on Mr.
Pollock in New Orleans as I had no money
with me he would accept the Bills but had not
money to pay them off tho the sums were trifling so that
we have little credit to expect from that quarter.
I shall take every step I possibly can for laying up a
sufficient quantity of provisions & hope you
will immediately send me an express with
your instructions. Public expences in this country
have hitherto been very low and may still con-
-tinue so if a correspondence is fixed at New Orleans
for payment of expences in this country or gold
and silver sent. I am glad to hear of Colo.
Todds appointment I think Governem^t has taken
the

only step they could have done is to make this coun-
try flourish and be of service to them. No a-
this regulation could have suited the people. The
last account I had of Colo. Rogers was his being in
New Orleans with six of his men, the rest he left
at the Spanish Orack above the natchez I shall
immediately send him some provisions as I learn
he is in great want. I doubt he will not be a-
ble to get his goods up the River except in
Spanish bottoms. One Regiment would be able
to clear the Mississippi and do great damage
to the British interest in Florida and by pro-
perly conducting themselves might perhaps gain
the affection of the people so as to raise suf-
ficient force to give a shock to Pensacola.
Our alliance with France has entirely devoted
this

16

this people to our interest. I have sent several
copies of the articles to Detroit and do not
doubt but they will answer the desired effect—
Your instructions I shall pay implicit regard to
& hope to conduct myself in such a manner
as to do honour to my country.

I am with the greatest respect

your hb^l servant

W. Clarke
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I understand there is a considerable quantity of
Cannon ball at Pittsburg we are much in want
of four & six pound ball I hope you will imme-
diately order some down.

His Excellency Patrick Henry.