

Lord North
Buckingham Palace Nov. 15th 1779.

Capt. Johnston
M. Widdowson.

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Lord North has the honour of writing to his Majesty upon a subject on which he intended to trouble him before, but he was always interrupted by business of a more important & urgent nature. Lord North has received the most pressing applications to lay before his Majesty a request in favour of Captain Johnston a very old officer in the Marines, who wishes to be appointed Major in Col. Blythes new regiment.

It seems that Colonel Johnston is a
very skilful Officer at forming a
Regiment; He disciplined & commanded two
battalions of Marines for a considerable time
in America. Lieut. Col. Whyte who was a witness
to the excellence of those corps, is very desirous
of having Capt. Johnston to assist in forming &
disciplining his regiment. Lord Percy presses it
with an unconceivable earnestness, as a parti-
-cular favour & obligation to himself, & seems
to have it so much at heart, that Lord North
believes that his political good or ill-humour
will greatly depend upon it; altho he ~~must~~
do Lord Percy ^{the justice} to say, that there is not the
most distant hint of his raising any consider-

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= rather of that nature with his solicitations.

Lord Percy, ^{Mr} Col. Whyte, & Capt. Johnston hope

that the rule which excludes marine officers from

the line except in particular cases, may be

dispensed with in a new corps, & in favour of

an officer of long standing, who has served

much on shore, & has been much approved by

his superiors. Lord Sandwich spoke of him to L^d

North in the highest terms, & mentioned two or three

late instances in which Marine officers had been

promoted in the Line. Lord North, upon all

these circumstances, takes the liberty of

laying the matter before his Majesty, & of

soliciting his royal favour in behalf of Mr

Johnston.

Lord North has received a message

from the Attorney General summoning him
to perform his promise of recommending him
him to be Chief Justice of the Common Pleas,
& a Peer. Undoubtedly, if the Attorney should
quit, or withhold his support at this time,
it would greatly add to the heavy burthen
that is at present almost too much for Lord
North to bear. Lord North believes, however, that
for many reasons, the Att.^g Gen.^l cannot wish
to separate himself from government at
this time. It would be neither for his interest
or his honour, &c. &c. Lord North can not
deny the promise, which he repeatedly made,
he is obliged to mention the Att.^g Gen.^l letter
to his Majesty, but takes the liberty, at the

same time to say ~~that he believes~~, that, if his
 Majesty would admit the Att.^y Gen.^l to an
 audience, & after expressing the importance
 of his continuing in the H.^o of Commons to his
 Majesty's service, would give him hopes of
 a perage if he succeeds in a regular course
 to one of the great places in the Law, &
 of being remember'd & secur'd, if the adminis-
 tration should be overthrown, Lord North
 believes, that the Att.^y would return to give
 an active & cordial support, which, indeed, is
 the wisest part he can act for himself.

Lord North will have the honour of
 speaking to his Majesty upon this

subject when he comes to Town; He has
look'd over the state of the H^o of Commons,
& believes that, if the Country gentlemen
will attend, there will be certainly a
good majority on the side of Government
before Christmas, but the party of Government
must be shaken by the retreat of Lord
Gower & Lord Weymouth, & the Majority
of votes, unless it is well supported by Speakers,
will sink in the course of the Session.

Brook Park. Nov. 15. 1773.