

Barfleur off the Chesapeake Oct: 29<sup>th</sup> 1781

My dear General

I am grieved to the heart to acquaint you of the sad hard fate of Lord Cornwallis and his gallant Army, His Lordship was forced to capitulate to the combined force of France & America on the 18<sup>th</sup>. a most melancholly business! and the more so, to my mind, as I shall ever think his Lordship ought to have been succoured or brought off, previous to the return of the French Fleet to the Chesapeake, and which might have been easily effected - and there was a chance of his being relieved, had exertions in their fullest extent been used, in refitting the  
the

the disabled ships, though it would have  
been a trying task I must confess, but desperate  
cases require bold remedies

When we got within New York bar, on the  
20<sup>th</sup> of last month, I much flattered myself  
we should have been in the Chesapeake  
by the 12<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> of this month, but most truly  
lamentable to say we did not leave  
Sandy Hook till the 19<sup>th</sup>.

I feel too much my dear General, and my  
mind is too deeply depressed, with the sense  
I have of my Country's calamities to dwell  
upon the painful subject.

We are I am told now going back to New  
York

York to disembark the Troops, I do not mean  
to go with the Ships of my Squadron within  
the Bar, if I can possibly help it, and have  
requested Admiral Graves, to send a frigate  
on before to have transports ready to  
receive the Troops, that I may not lose a  
moment's time in returning for the protection  
of our Royal Masters possessions in the  
West Indies, but whether my wishes in  
this respect will be complied with, I have  
not as yet been told. I wish Admiral  
Digby could think it right to send a part  
of his Ships with me till the month of March  
as he has no place of safety to put them  
in

During the winter months, except Long Island  
Sound, and I do not apprehend, they can be  
of any use there. I shall suggest the Idea to him  
and trust he will forgive my doing it. My only  
motive is the good of the King's Service which  
I have ever had, and ever shall have greatly  
at heart; The French no doubt will return  
in force to the West Indies, in all haste, and I  
shall endeavour to be there before them.

I have just been told a ship is about to be  
detached to England, and having orders to send  
away immediately to announce my soon going  
to the West India Islands; can only add that I am  
my dear General

Your most faithful and  
obedient humble servant

Wm. Hood.