

Duke of Northumberland to H.R.H.

May 12 1798

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Sir

In Obedience to your Royal Highness's Commands, that I should consider in what way it might be possible to obviate the Difficulties & Doubts, entertained by His Majesty's Ministers, of the Propriety of a Prince in your Royal Highness's exalted Situation holding any specific Commission in His Majesty's Army, as a General Officer, which Difficulties & Doubts, unless removed, might possibly be the means of preventing, to a certain degree, your Royal Highness from being able to exert yourself in so conspicuous a manner, as it was your Wish, & you was pleased to add as you thought it your Duty to your Sovereign & your Country to do, on the Event of an actual Invasion by a foreign Army, I should humbly apprehend that these Doubts & Difficulties might be obviated, if His Majesty should think proper to issue an Order to His Army, signifying, that as it is highly probable,

Dear

if the enemy should land in this Kingdom, your Royal Highness from your zeal to be the foremost in Defence of your King & Country might naturally fly directly to the spot, in order to use your utmost Endeavours to defeat the Designs of the enemy, it was His Royal Pleasure that you should on such an Occasion be received by His Son the Prince of Wales, & that the Command of those Troops, during your Royal Highness's Presence, should be vested in you, in the Absence of His Majesty; your Royal Highness communicating with His Majesty, & receiving your Orders from Him, as far as relates to the great & general Plan of Operations. All other Matters whatsoever to be transacted, as usual, by the general Officer commanding the District.

Or if the Propriety of your Royal Highness holding a specific Commission as a general Officer is doubted (as your Royal Highness now holds the specific

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Commissary of Colonel, I confess I do not feel the objection
to your holding any other His Majesty, if He should be
graciously pleased so to do, might give your Royal
Highness the Commissary of Field Marshall without Date,
issuing to your Royal Highness a general Letter of Service
to Command in His Absence, in the case of an actual Invasion,
in the same manner as mentioned before.

Your Royal Highness will however please to recollect
that my Opinion on any military Subject cannot have
the least Weight with those Ministers, who advised
His Majesty ten years ago virtually to remove me from
His Service, since which time, I, alone of the four Colonels
then reduced, have never been replaced, nor even sum-
-moned as a general Officer to any Board, or Council of War.

I have the Honour to be, with the most profound Respect
and Attachment
North House
12th May 1798.

Sir
Your Royal Highness's
Most Devoted Servant
Northumberland

D. of Northumberland

The Duke of
Northumberland

12th May 1790

[Faint, mostly illegible handwriting, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the paper.]