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From Saturday September 16, to Tuesday September 19, 1775.

Extract of a Letter from the Honourable Lieutenant-General Gage to the Earl of Dartmouth, dated Boston, August 20, 1775.

MR. Washington, who commands the Rebel Army, has written to me on the Subject of the Treatment of the Rebel Prisoners in our Custody, a Copy of whose Letter I transmit your Lordship, together with a Copy of my Answer. Major Skene, made Prisoner at Philadelphia, is sent into Connecticut, where he is to be confined with some others; and I understand they make War like Savages, making Captives of Women and Children.

The Rebels are very numerous, and continue to throw up Works, in some Points nearer to the Town than before. Their advanced Parties have been drove back both at Boston and Charles Town, and their Posts destroyed. They landed a large Body a second Time at the Light-House, where they made Prisoners of a few Marines, posted there by the Admiral, and ten or twelve Carpenters, who were repairing the House.

A Fleet of Transports, who had been out in Search of live Stock, is just returned with about Eighteen Hundred Sheep, and above One Hundred Head of Oxen, which will be some Relief to the Troops in general, and of great Benefit to the Hospitals.

Copy of a Letter from George Washington, Esq; to his Excellency Lieutenant-General Gage.

S I R,

I Understand that the Officers engaged in the Cause of Liberty and their Country, who, by the Fortune of War, have fallen into your Hands, have been thrown indiscriminately into a common Gaol appropriated for Felons; that no Consideration has been had for those of the most respectable Rank, when languishing with Wounds and Sickness; that some have been even amputated in this unworthy Situation.

Let your Opinion, Sir, of the Principle which actuates them be what it may, they suppose they act from the noblest of all Principles, a Love of Freedom and their Country. But political Opinions, I conceive, are foreign to this Point; the Obligations arising from the Rights of Humanity and Claims of Rank are universally binding and extensive, except in Case of Retaliation. These, I should have hoped, would have dictated a more tender Treatment of those Individuals, whom Chance or War had put in your Power. Nor can I forbear suggesting its fatal Tendency to widen that unhappy Breach, which you, and those Ministers under whom you act, have repeatedly declared you wished to see for ever closed.

My Duty now makes it necessary to apprize you, that, for the Future, I shall regulate my Conduct towards those Gentlemen, who are or may be in our Possession, exactly by the Rule which you shall observe towards those of ours who may be in your

Custody. If Severity and Hardship mark the Line of your Conduct, (painful as it may be to me) your Prisoners will feel its Effects; but if Kindness and Humanity are shewn to ours, I shall with Pleasure consider those in our Hands only as unfortunate, and they shall receive the Treatment to which the Unfortunate are ever intitled.

I beg to be favoured with an Answer as soon as possible, and am, &c.

Cambridge, (Signed) George Washington.
August 11, 1775.

His Excellency General Gage.

Copy of a Letter from his Excellency Lieutenant-General Gage to George Washington, Esq;

S I R, Boston, August 13, 1775.

TO the Glory of civilized Nations, Humanity and War have been compatible, and Compassion to the Subdued is become almost a general System.

Britons, ever pre-eminent in Mercy, have undergone common Examples, and overlooked the Criminal in the Captive. Upon these Principles your Prisoners, whose Lives by the Law of the Land are destined to the Cord, have hitherto been treated with Care and Kindness, and more comfortably lodged than the King's Troops in the Hospitals, indiscriminately it is true, for I acknowledge no Rank that is not derived from the King.

My Intelligence from your Army would justify severe Recrimination. I understand there are of the King's faithful Subjects, taken some Time since by the Rebels, labouring, like Negro Slaves, to gain their daily Subsistence, or reduced to the wretched Alternative, to perish by Famine, or take Arms against their King and Country. Those who have made the Treatment of the Prisoners in my Hands, or of your other Friends in Boston, a Pretence for such Measures, found Barbarity upon Falshood.

I would willingly hope, Sir, that the Sentiments of Liberality, which I have always believed you to possess, will be exerted to correct these Misdoings: Be temperate in political Disquisition: Give free Operation to Truth, and punish those who deceive and misrepresent, and not only the Effects, but the Causes of this unhappy Conflict will be removed.

Should those, under whose usurped Authority you act, controll such a Disposition, and dare to call Severity Retaliation, to God, who knows all Hearts, be the Appeal for the dreadful Consequences. I trust, that British Soldiers, asserting the Rights of the State, the Laws of the Land, the Being of the Constitution, will meet all Events with becoming Fortitude. They will court Victory with the Spirit their Cause inspires, and from the same Motive will find the Patience of Martyrs under Misfortune.

Till

