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SIR HENRY CLINTON'S
"JOURNAL OF THE SIEGE OF CHARLESTON, 1780"

EDITED BY WILLIAM T. BULGER *

The papers of Sir Henry Clinton in the Clements Library at the University of Michigan contain a manuscript "Journal of the Siege of Charleston."¹ During the siege in the spring of 1780, Clinton kept a diary of the operations covering the period from the beginning of April to the end of May. Clinton wrote not only of the progress of the siege, but also of his relations with his fellow officers in the army and navy. He was especially critical of his second-in-command, Charles, Lord Cornwallis, and of Admiral Marriott Arbuthnot, commander-in-chief of the Royal Navy. The bad feelings which existed between the major officers of the British military services explain some of the future difficulties which the British had in the South. The distrust and poor cooperation between Clinton and Cornwallis were factors in the events leading to Yorktown.

Sir Henry and some seven thousand of his men sailed from New York on December 26, 1779. The fleet arrived at Tybee at the mouth of the Savannah River at the end of January. The army was transported to the North Edisto River, below Charleston, where it landed on February 11, 1780. The British then slowly moved across John's Island and James' Island to the mainland, and on to Drayton Hall on the Ashley River. From here, they crossed to Charleston Neck on March 29 and soon began formal siege operations.

The American forces in Charleston, both Continentals and militia, were commanded by Major General Benjamin Lincoln. The task of defending the city was a difficult one. Commodore Abraham Whipple commanded the eight small ships and the galleys that guarded the entrance to the harbor, but after Whipple announced that this tiny fleet could not keep the British out of the harbor, these vessels were brought

* Mr. Bulger is assistant professor of history at Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, Michigan. His doctoral dissertation, written at the University of Michigan in 1957, was entitled "The British Expedition to Charles Town: 1779-1780."

¹ Small portions of the "Journal" have been printed in the footnotes of Sir Henry Clinton, *The American Rebellion, Sir Henry Clinton's Narrative of His Campaigns, 1775-1782, With an Appendix of Original Documents*, edited by William B. Willcox, New Haven, 1954, *passim*. This is the first time, however, that the "Journal" has been printed in its entirety. For an excellent biography of Sir Henry Clinton based on a thorough study of almost three hundred fat volumes of the Clinton manuscripts at the William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan (hereinafter WLCL), see the lead review in this issue.

up to the city and most of them were sunk in the entrance to the Cooper River.² The American navy was of no value in defending Charleston.

Lincoln, who had expected the major assault to come from the sea, now was forced to put up a hastily built group of fortifications on the north side of the city. The American works consisted of a small fortress, constructed of mortar and oyster shell, connected by trenches with a series of batteries and redoubts. In front of these works were two rows of abatis—sharpened branches embedded in the earth at an angle, so that their points faced the British army and formed a strong barrier. Before this abatis was a canal some six feet deep and twelve feet wide, which connected the large swamps and rivers on each side of the Neck.³

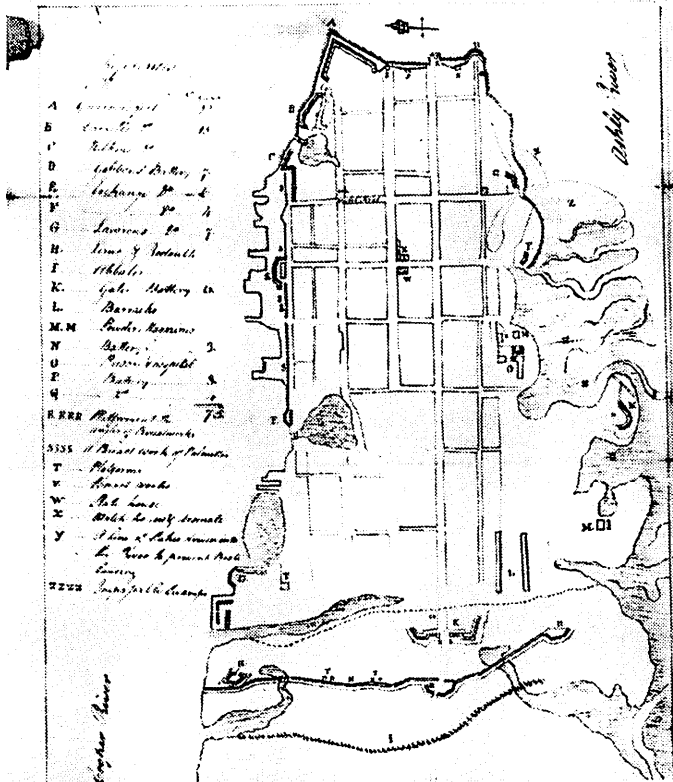
Lincoln's situation would have been difficult under any circumstances, and it was made even more perilous by the attitude of the city fathers. When he suggested evacuating the town, city officials told him that they would open the gates of the city to the British before they would allow the Continental troops to leave. Lincoln had little choice but to defend the town.

Sir Henry Clinton was familiar with the situation at Charleston. He had commanded the British army during an unsuccessful attack on the city in 1776. At that time, the British fleet under the command of Sir Peter Parker was unable to pass Fort Sullivan (Fort Moultrie). Clinton and his men landed on Long Island (now Isle of Palms), but took no part in the attack by the fleet. When the navy failed to pass the fortress, the British gave up their efforts to take the city.

Sir Henry was determined not to fail in his second attempt to seize Charleston, and he decided that the best way to take the town was by a siege, attacking from the land north of the city. He had an overwhelming superiority in troops, reinforcements having raised his numbers to nearly fourteen thousand. In 1780, he exercised extreme caution, made his approach very slowly, wasted much time, but was ultimately successful. With the capture of an army of more than five thousand Americans, Clinton inflicted upon the United States its most disastrous defeat in the War of Independence.

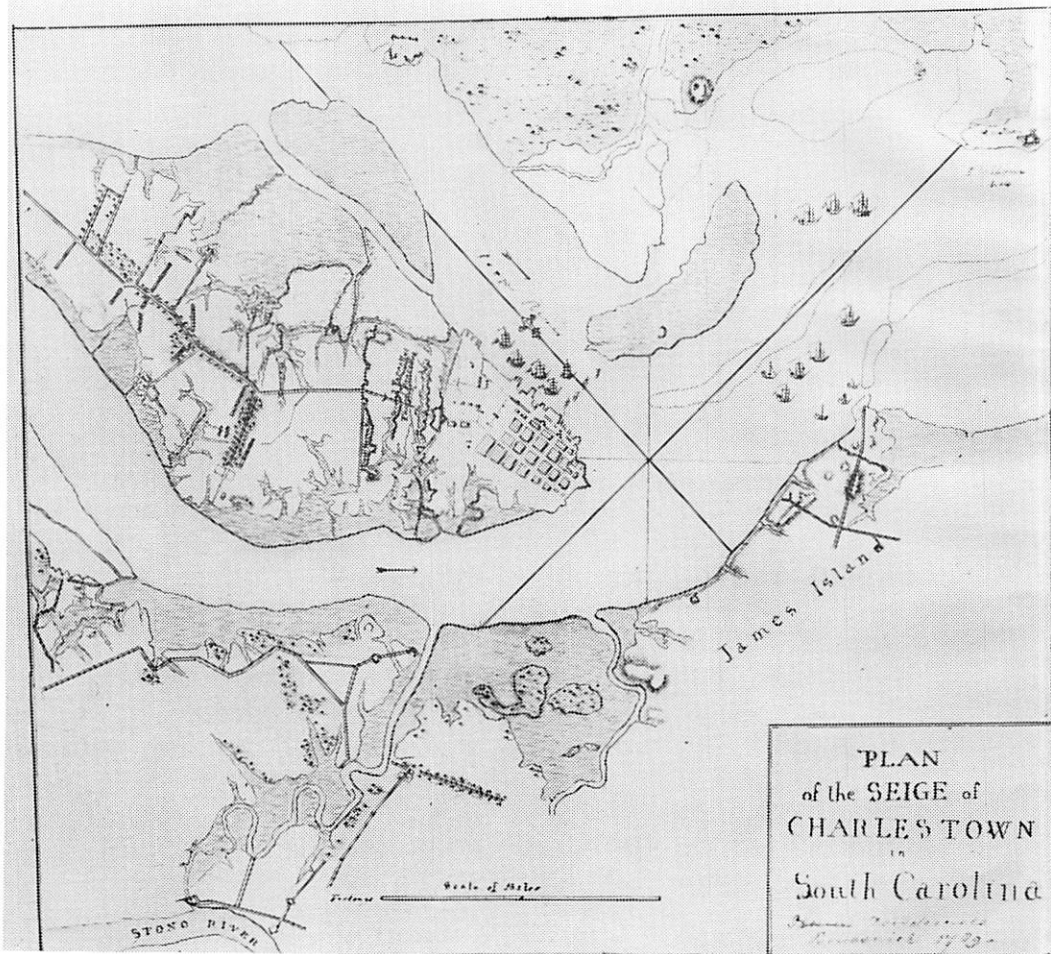
² There are a number of interesting letters exchanged between Benjamin Lincoln and Abraham Whipple in the Whipple Papers, WLCL.

³ The four maps that follow this page have been taken from the maps in the Clinton Papers, WLCL. The first is Clinton Map 314 which presents a plan of Charleston and its defences with two lists of explanatory references. The second is Clinton Map 308 which shows the plans for the siege of Charleston. The third is Clinton Map 312 which gives details concerning the distribution and strength of the British forces. The fourth is Clinton Map 316 in which Wappoo Creek is the center.



- A ...
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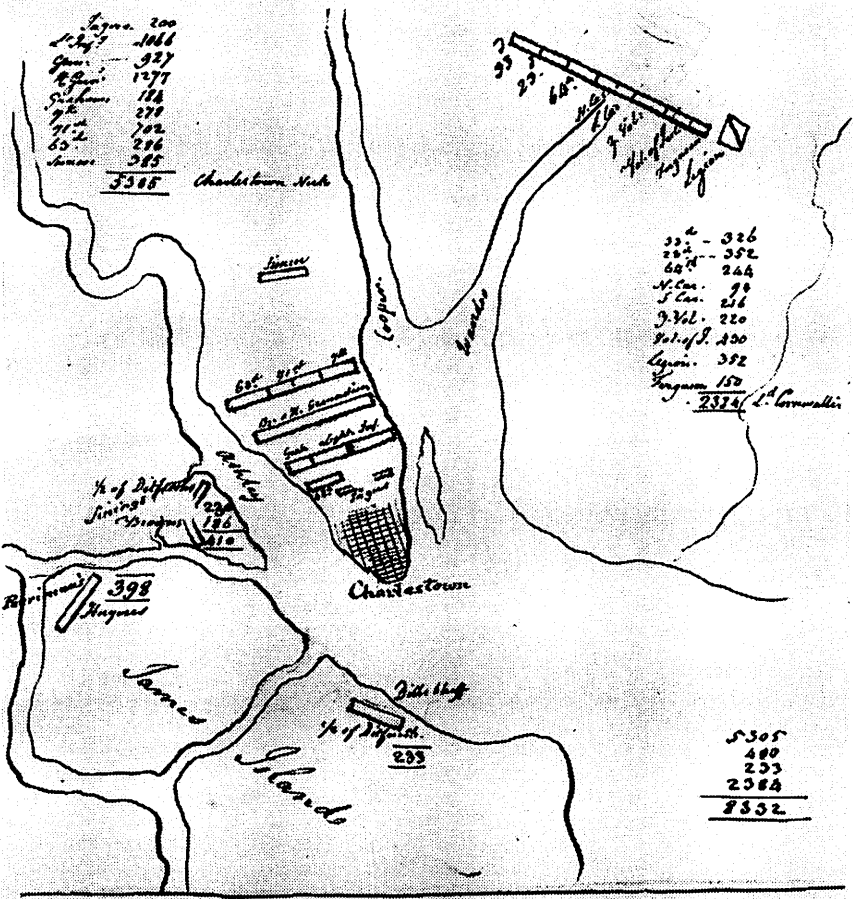
PLAN
of the SEIGE of
CHARLES TOWN
in
South Carolina
By James Oglethorpe
London 1733

Ligno.	200
P. 247	1066
Sh.	927
R. 24	1277
St. 24	188
7 th	278
71 st	702
82 nd	286
Summe	585
<u>5385</u>	

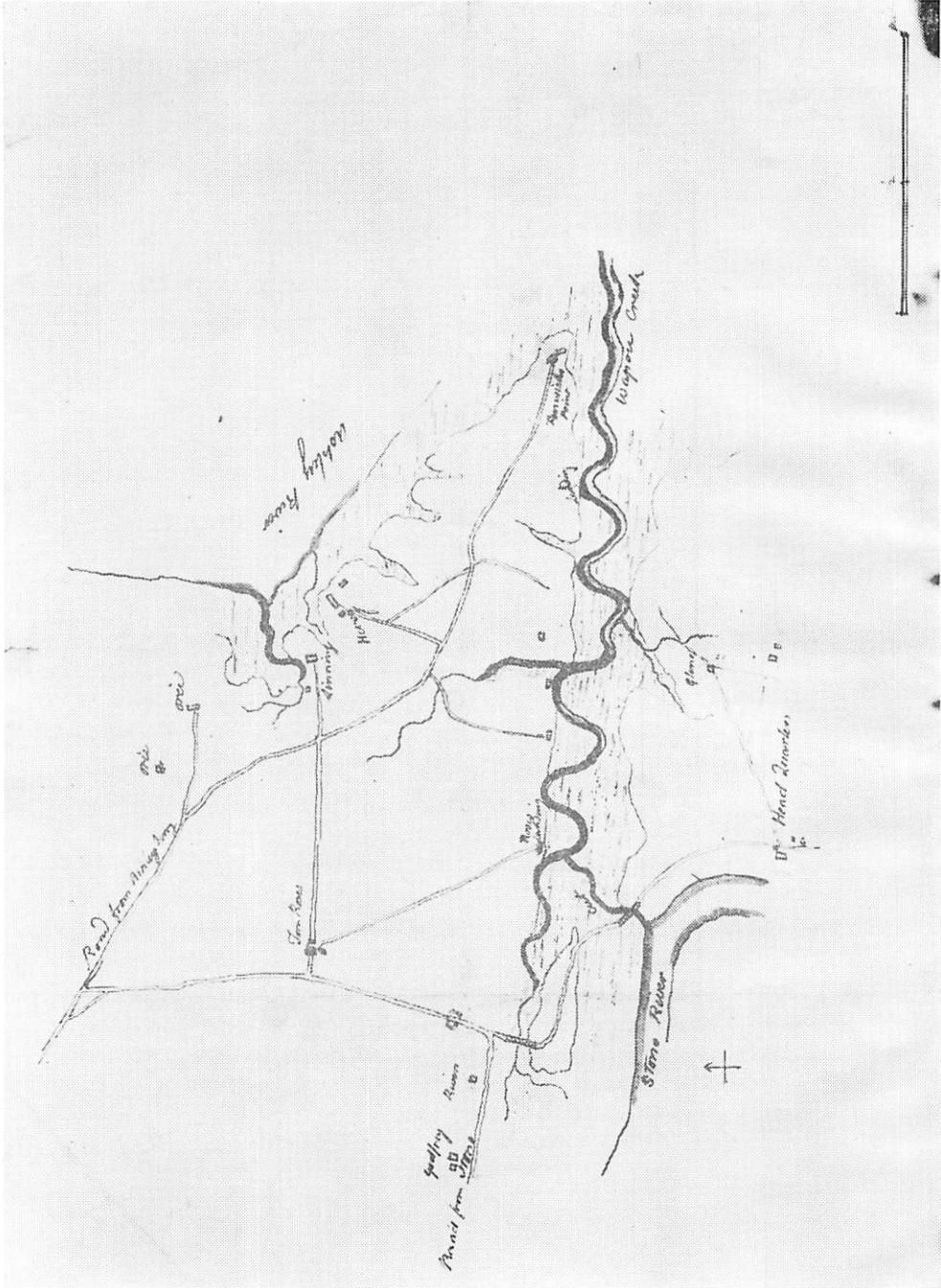
Charlestown Work

4	326
222	352
64 th	244
M. Co.	98
S. Co.	216
J. Vol.	220
Bot. of S.	400
Ligno.	352
Magnum	150
<u>2334</u>	

L. Cornwallis



Anderson's Plan? 1780



Road from ...

Wagon Creek

Headquarters

Stone River

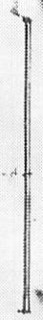
Headquarters

Dug

Wagon Creek



Headquarters



Sir Henry's handwriting is always difficult and at times illegible. He often was carried away by his thoughts and neglected to sharpen his quill. At times he put down his opinions of other officers in a private code; these coded passages are placed in upper-case letters in the following text. Spelling has been modernized and punctuation added where it was necessary to make the text clear. Whenever possible, names or initials mentioned by Clinton have been identified. A small portion at the end of the diary, dealing with conditions in Rhode Island in July and August 1780, and notes added later by Clinton, have been omitted.

SIR HENRY CLINTON'S,
"JOURNAL OF THE SIEGE OF CHARLESTON, 1780"

[On flyleaf:] April '80 to Aug. '81.

Marched to Draytons.

Reconnoitred landing; chose the lower; over-persuaded by Rob[ertson].⁴ Landed at upper without a shot; halted that night at Ashley Ferry.

Marched next day to Gibbs; Lord Caithness⁵ wounded CLOSE TO ME. L[ord] C[ornwallis's]⁶ UNSOLDIERLY BEHAVIOR, NEGLECTING TO GIVE ORDERS IN MY ABSENCE, WHICH IF A[ndre]⁷ DID, HE OWNS HIMSELF WAS WRONG. 'Tis certainly so, for when Andre applied to him he did not ORDER THE L[ight] I[nfantry] NOR CANNON FOR some time. THE L[ight] I[nfantry] W[as] NOT 200 yards from the post attacked. I went to the left on the island, saw rising ground⁸ near the town [which] appeared not above 800 yards from it. It may cost to get it, but when in possession of it we take the town. I showed it to Monc[rieff]⁹ who agreed. I desired L[ord] C[ornwallis] to view it.

Monc[rieff] proposed to throw up redoubts; three he intended, but having tools only for one redoubt, it was thought better to defer till next day. Monc[rieff] first intended a line to support them before he raised the redoubts, but afterwards thought better of it.

At night everything prepared for our move. At 8 o'clock we broke ground within 800 yards of the place, and in one night completed 3 redoubts and a communication without a single shot. I had given directions, in case of interruption, that they should be threatened from the other side.

⁴ Major General James Robertson.

⁵ John Barriedale, eleventh Earl of Caithness, lieutenant colonel, 76th Foot.

⁶ Charles, first Marquis and second Earl Cornwallis, was a major general and second-in-command to Clinton.

⁷ Major John André, aide-de-camp to Clinton.

⁸ Hampstead near the Cooper River.

⁹ Major James Moncrieff, chief of the engineers.

I had a con[versatio]n this day with L[ord] C[ornwallis]. I told him all the reasons I had to be displeas'd with the pains taken to convince the army I was to resign the command. I said I had never declared pub[lic]ly my intentions of requesting leave for that purpose, that everybody was at liberty to say what they pleas'd respecting my wish, but I was told that with a sneer it had been said that if I asked again it would be granted. L[ord] C[ornwallis] declar'd upon his honor that neither he or any of those connect'd with him had ever express'd it in a sneer, repeated what he has so often said, that he had told the King one of his motives for coming to serve under me was that he thought his presence might reconcile me to remain in the command. I complain'd of the behavior of certain officers upon the provincial rank.¹⁰ He said that as to the provincial rank they were all convinc'd I had not advis'd it, but, tho he did not wish to come to me with grievances, there was one he could not help mentioning, and in which he thought they had reason, which was that having received the King's orders last year to oblige all officers to make their option I had not done it. I told his Lordship that the report was false, and calculat'd only to make me enemies in the army; that I was therefore under the necessity of declaring it false *most publicly*. His Lordship seem'd surpris'd, and ask'd, what was the order then? I told him I had received a hint from L[ord] G[ermain]¹¹ that such had been the practice in Europe, and doubting whether it should not be so here; that I had upon that hint put all the officers, excepting chiefs of corps, to their option. **A MOST WICKED REPORT.** He told me that he was at all times ready to take any command with[ou]t considering whether it was equal to his rank. I told him that perhaps I should give him the conduct of one attack if there were two, or, if one, that. He seem'd perfectly satisfi'd.

It was intend'd to have run the parallel to my hill this night, but 'tis thought better to extend to the right first. Arrangements made accordingly. Wrote to Admiral¹² about stores, etc., at A[u]gus[tine]. Gave out the minister's order respecting provincial officers. L[ord] C[ornwallis] told me the offer I employ'd him the better. I understand him in the manner etc. [of] yesterday. G[eneral] Leslie¹³ orde[r]ed to his post this night.

¹⁰ Officers in the regular army who also held commissions in one of the provincial corps were to resign one of their commissions. Clinton did not receive these orders (dated November 4, 1779) until the beginning of April 1780. Clinton to Cornwallis, April 6, 1780, Clinton Papers, WLCL.

¹¹ Lord George Germain was secretary of state for the colonies.

¹² Admiral Marriott Arbuthnot, R. N.

¹³ Major General Alexander Leslie, 64th Foot.

3d. G[eneral] Leslie reported to me that the work was not finished, that they did not begin till eleven, that they had lost the way, and that the troops worked ill, particularly the 71[st], and Cros[by]¹⁴ tells me he said the 33rd, that the work was not defensible, [and] that he had therefore only left troops to cover it.

4th. Andre, who had been with Gen. Kospoth¹⁵ the whole night, reported that a battery having two faces, one to the river, the other to the town, was finis[h]ed on my hill within 500 yards [of Charleston]; early in the morning some ships came down to the mouth of Town Creek and fired at it; some guns at Island Point removed them. Moncrieff proposes to finish right redoubt this night and if necessary to run a communication with left battery. I wish that was a close work with fascines [*illegible*] [not] an open work [with] supposed impracticable flanks. He must do as he pleases. I sent an order to Gen. Pattison¹⁶ to collect forage, to ease the troops, to leave Major McRoth¹⁷ to his arrangements at Fenwicks, and not to subject him to any orders except from himself; to let the 23rd remain tonight with the same orders, and to leave the communication to the provincials. Told Ferguson¹⁸ to propose his plan to Moncrieff, and, if he approved or of whatever he did approve, Ferg[uson] was to execute. Went to the left battery; [it] commands as I supposed it would, but should have been closed. 33rd there. On my return learned from Ld. Corn[wallis] that Moncrieff had determined to work both right and left; when I mentioned in the morning my wish he would do it, he seem[ed] not to think it necessary on the right.

Wrote to the Admiral expressing my wish that he would COME UP. I find by [the] Ad[miral's] letter to Elp[hinstone]¹⁹ he still HARPS UPON DELAYS. He should recollect all the delays occasioned by himself and those unavoidable in the department he presides [over]. I will once more enumerate them here. 1st. Had he sent [a] vessel home to Savannah sooner, which I repeatedly requested him to do, he would have known that the French had left it at least a month before he did, which I requested [him] by repeated times to do. By my information got from Chesapeake [I had] a certainty of their not being in force, and the pilot

¹⁴ Major William Crosby.

¹⁵ Major General Heinrich Julius von Kospoth of the Hessian troops.

¹⁶ Major General James Pattison of the artillery.

¹⁷ Major Robert McLeRoth.

¹⁸ Major Patrick Ferguson, who was the inventor of the first breech-loading rifle used by the British.

¹⁹ Captain George Keith Elphinstone, R. N., later vice admiral and first Viscount Keith. Elphinstone had supervised the landing of the British troops on Simmons Island (now Seabrook's) and was Clinton's chief line of communication with the officers of the navy.

from thence [confirmed it]. His own cruisers never reached the coast. He insisted then, and does now, from information of a blockhead surgeon that de Grasse ²⁰ was there with 7 line of battle. I always said there were only one 74 [and] two storeships.²¹ He changed his mind eternally [as to] whether he would go with us or only cover us, and the day before we finally sailed he had determined to [a]wait us of[f] the Chesapeake; had that happened we must have gone off the coast. When at sea he proposed—beggi[ng] his pardon—an absurd attempt upon what French ships there might be in Chesapeake, which would have delayed us the whole winter probably; for if we could not have easily done our business there without landing cannon, it would naturally have drawn a force there, and we could not have left there without disgrace—and, indeed, as the winter has proved, we must have perished. Here, therefore, I objected. The Admiral certainly did wrong in crossing the gulf [stream], at least when he did owing (as L[ord] C[ornwallis] told me) to an accident happening to his own ship, which made her bear away, and he took the fleet with her. A thousand other things I have enumerated elsewhere.

The only thing he seems to impute to me, and that only by insinuation, is that we ought to have gone into Stono [River]²² instead of N[orth] Edisto [River]. That was Capt. Elphinstone's affair, and if the Admiral wished it, he should have ordered us in there. Had he gone further to the northward the 11th [of February] at night, with the wind of the next morning we could have gone there; but as it was, we could not. The move was totally naval. I have nothing to do with it. Stono has proved a good harbor and bar; it was not known before by C[aptain] Elphinstone. He thought it very narrow and [that it] could not contain many ships. My private, clear opinion is that not a moment was lost by our going into N[orth] Edisto; had we not got in there as we did, all would probably have be[en] lost or drove to sea—and if the wind had been fair for Stono, we could not have gone in safety, as the rebels had two batteries and we [had] only one galley with us—who would not enter N. Edisto even though there was no battery. All the other galleys stopped to plunder in Beaufort, but the injury made there is still another reason why we could have done no good by going into Stono first.

²⁰ Comte Francois Joseph Paul de Grasse, rear admiral in the French navy, who had attacked Savannah in 1779 but was repulsed.

²¹ There were two frigates with the French man-of-war. See Clinton, *The American Rebellion*, p. 153, n. 10.

²² Stono River was closer to Charleston than the north branch of the Edisto River where the British troops had landed.

We had no entrenching tools; those from Savannah detained by the accident of the *Defiance*, tho possibly drove into Providence;²³ and if we had had them we could not have done anything till the Admiral got over the bar, and I appeal to him whether he had any thoughts of doing it till he had assembled his fleet, and whether he could do it before I had sent two 24-pounders and the 71st to occupy Lighthouse Island. The delays since have been his own. Till he returned the 71[st] I could not advance; till he gave me officers and sailors from the Navy, I could not nor ought not to land where great opposition was expected. Till he gave me the gallies, we had not the Ashley, without which we must have been disgraced. Since we have had all this, nothing could be more solid than our advances. We broke ground 800 [yards] from the town, complete a parallel of 2 miles in 3 days, the two flanks of which approach those of the town within 500 yards, and, if there are delays, let them be imputed to the Admiral. I told him at our first meeting, the place could not be invested properly without he came to Fort John[son]; he said he could not lay there in safety from fireships. I told him he was the best judge and was, as all allowed, exceeding liberal with him. He said finally he would come when I was ready to storm, and now pretends to hint he waits for my invitation. He has [it]; *nous verrons*. L[ord] C[ornwallis's] conduct in this business has been very equivocal [and] his counsel. He contended with me the propriety of the Admiral's coming; he thought him better in Five Fathom Hole. He thought possession of Shutes Folly unimportant. He has now changed his tone because, (I suppose), he is not to direct, and [because] his favorite S[ir] A[ndrew Hamond]²⁴ is not to assist us. In short I ought to have seen through him when he betrayed my private conversation with him to S[ir] W[illiam] H[owe]²⁵ in '76. All since is of a piece.

5th. Wrote to L[ord] Corn[wallis] desiring that, as he had told me [he] believed [I had] disobeyed the King's orders to the prejudice of the army, that he would in the most public manner declare to them I had never had such orders. L[ord] C[ornwallis] never writes an answer, but came to me and assured me [he] had been misinformed, and that he was convinced the whole army was convinced that I had not received any orders on the subject. He entered into a long detail of grievances of the army on the subject of p[rovincial] rank. I agreed with him it was im-

²³ New Providence Island in the Bahamas.

²⁴ Captain Sir Andrew Snape Hamond, R. N.

²⁵ Sir William Howe, whom Clinton succeeded as commander-in-chief. In a private conversation with Cornwallis in 1776, Clinton had made some derogatory remarks about General Howe. Later he learned that Cornwallis had repeated these remarks to Howe. Clinton, *The American Rebellion*, p. 65, n. 15.

properly given, but denied it had ever injured any in an horse command, except M[ajor] Delancy, from the pains I had taken to prevent it. He seemed convinced of all I said. Quaere, was it friendly—was it military—for a lieutenant general next in command to me to hear, encourage, and approve discontent in the army without being sure of the fact? 'Tis not time for altercation, but I can never be cordial with such a man.

6th. L[ord] C[ornwallis] came to tell me that Capt. Ross²⁶ had never seen any dispatch of the ministers, and consequently could not know I had never seen such an order. I am satisfied, but—. Received letter from Admiral; mistakes in dates, etc., etc. As usual, it may mean nothing, but [it] looks odd; I must recollect it. N.B.: He tells me that the fleet this instant, the 4th, arrived from Tybee, and will sail the first fair wind. If I mistake not, it has been laying off Ch[arles] T[own] bar these six or seven days. If N[ew] Y[ork] starves 'tis not my fault.

Great disputes between the chiefs of art[illery] and eng[ineers]; I must settle it by an *accordez-vous superieur*. I foresee something likewise arising between the n[avy] and art[illery], owing to an order of S[ir] A[ndrew] H[amond] or rather the Adm[iral], that the sailors must be commanded by their own officers only. I shall settle it by giving the sailors a battery to themselves commanded by their own captains, and if they will not receive orders from us, they shall be requested. If the service is done, I care not how, and I shall write nearly the same to the Admiral respecting what he is to do for us.

The wind not fair for the Admiral, at least scanty. I wish he was here, as our first parallel is now finished. Visited at 3 this morning the trenches; found our firing from Fenwick's and [the] galleys²⁷ had eased the workmen much. Lost my way to the trenches; wrong to go without an escort. Suspect our Fenwick guns were not elevated nor sufficiently charged, and consequently did not go home. Sent C[apt.] St. George²⁸ to be present at [the] experiment; [he] reported it was so of the first gun fired and suspected so of all the rest. Ar[ti]llery officers obstinate as usual. Ordered guns to be mou[n]ted in batteries. Told C[apt.] Tarleton²⁹ if he decided for the Legion, I would give it him, and recommend that he might have the m[ajority] in his regiment as it was vacant; at least rank of major. I have asked for him and his option, [which are] not finally made, for some time; Simcoe³⁰ the same.

²⁶ Captain Alexander Ross, 45th regiment, aide-de-camp to Cornwallis.

²⁷ The galleys and the battery were located near Wappoo Cut where it joins the Ashley River.

²⁸ Captain Richard St. George Mensergh, aide-de-camp to Clinton.

²⁹ Captain Banastre Tarleton, commander of the British Legion.

³⁰ Lieutenant Colonel John Graves Simcoe, Queen's Rangers.

7th. Went to the trenches at 3. FOUND GREAT NEGLECT: BAYONETS NOT FIXED. Found No. 2 tolerably complete but not sufficiently thick in front and [the] gateway quite open; no covered communication between it and 1 or 3, nor indeed any communication wide or deep enough. Capt. MacLeod,³¹ Art[illery], reported to me that he had not been able to mount but one cannon in No. 6 owing to the bad road over [the] causeway. It certainly was the duty of the artillery to visit the road and assure themselves whether it was fit for cannon.

Told L[ord] C[ornwallis] and] G[eneral] Leslie of the neglect of bayonets, and likewise to G[eneral] Kospoth through Maj. Wil[mows]ky.³² Settled with Monc[rieff] that the guns should go this night into No. 2. He told me likewise that he thought it proper to summon when we had our guns in battery, lest we should be abused in [the] future. Told M[ajor] Roth of the 71st [that the] vacancy [was] to be given to another; said he was satisfied [and] should be sorry to have it and [the] chance of half pay.

Told L[ord] L[incoln]³³ about L[ord] C[ornwallis]; [Lincoln] agrees with me totally.

The enemy receive a considerable reinforcement³⁴ by way of the Wando River. N. B. Had the Admiral passed [Fort] Sullivan the first fair wind after he had passed the bar, he might have been in possession of that communication long since. L[ord] Corn[wallis, officer] for the day, describes his works and seems to hint at some alteration in consequence of the reinforcement to the enemy.

I went to visit all the left; found the communication with No. 6 tolerable good, but no banquette. I made a disposition of guns and reinforcement, and described [it] to his Lordship; told him I had now, as the troops were in close works, no objection to their [guns] being loaded. While I was at the left, the rebels fired a *feu de joie* on the arrival of [the] reinforcement, and it has been reported to me that the vessels returned up the Wando with people on board, probably some of the nervous inhabitants. With respect to the reinforcement, I rejoice at it. They will now defend their town and when we take it, we shall take all in it.

8th. Some firing of small arms in the morning. About half past six a heavy gun was fired at Sullivan's Island; I hope a signal for the Admiral's

³¹ Captain John MacLeod.

³² Major Wilhelm von Wilmowsky.

³³ Lord Thomas Fiennes Clinton, subsequently tenth Earl of Lincoln and third Duke of Newcastle-under-Lyme, was Sir Henry's first cousin once removed. He was colonel of the First Guard Regiment and held the rank of brigadier general in America.

³⁴ About seven hundred Virginians commanded by Brigadier General William Woodford.

advancing. At half seven the wind very fair but a little hazy, with rain. At eight a good breeze. At nine [the wind] freshened very much, about e[ast] by s[outh]; I am told as fair a wind as can blow.

Moncrieff proposes to have a battery 30 yards to the right of No. 2, another in the center; four guns are already in No. 2; more will be moved this day. He says 18 [pounders] will do as well as 24 [pounders], and hopes all will be in [the] battery by the 10th. *Alors, nous verrons.*

Told Maj. Traille³⁵ that government powder was bad, and ordered an examination and formal report on it. I understand from Mr. Crosby that both Capt. Elph[instone] and Tonkin³⁶ say the Admiral will come in the n[ext] tide if ebb is begun. At four the Admiral passed the fort with his fleet and went up to Fort Johnson. He did it handsomely, and I hope without loss. At night a vessel burnt near Sullivan's Island.

3 o'clock the 9th, went to the trenches. Battery at No. 2 not finished, nor more than 2 guns carried. The trenches and ground very wet; no battery begun on the left, nor banquette completed on No. 6, nor gun removed from dike. The rebels have not fired a shot this day. They sent off many of their women yesterday.

At six the Admiral came. I congratulated him most cordially, S[ir] A[ndrew] H[amond], etc. The Admiral told me he would send ships, many gall[eyes], and even a frigate through the Hog Island passage; that he would take James Island upon himself, etc., etc. He told me he had detained the ships with vinegar and the oat ships; why I cannot conceive. He told me that he was assured the ordnance ship was lost on Tybee with 14,000 barrels of powder, that he had sent the *Fowey* and another to fetch the powder, and he hoped the cargo would be safe. I told him I desired her not to come with[out] convoy. He said the navy came, had many ships to take care of, etc., did not know she was aground; in short, some neglect as usual. The Admiral said we should not want for powder, but as to shot he was afraid. I told him I had sent for everything from [New] Y[ork]. He told me that he knew the ordnance so well that he was sure of delays, and that we should not get it than three weeks at soonest; and as for Providence, he said there was none there. He said if G. D. was responsible he was highly so, for providing me so ill, for that I could not depend on the large ships for cannon or stores, as it was not known they were to go. I told him I always knew that 50 and 40 [pounders] were to go, and 18 or even 12 [pounders] would do for us. He said he had no shot—why? In short, I perceive he wants to lay blame on us for scarcity of stores, when he has neglected to bring a sufficiency.

³⁵ Major Peter Traille, commander of the Royal Artillery.

³⁶ Thomas Tonkin, agent for the naval transports.

That A[rbutnot] has supplied us ill as to quantity and quality, and that he depended too much on a probability of supply from Savannah and Augustine, is certain. But we were not to expect to want any guns except what the navy of any sort could supply, and 200 rounds for each gun they did give would have been ample. Our loss in the ord[nance] ship³⁷ was, I suppose, unavoidable. These ships gone to N[ew] Y[ork] ought to have given us what we asked. It was [a request] in form to the Admiral for 200 rounds for each gun. I do not think we shall want, but I must ever be on my guard with this man, who, notwithstanding the civilities I have shown him, providing for his ser[vant], and [the] letters I wrote to him on seeing him hurt at my being appointed sole commissioner,³⁸ while he is under the influence of S[ir] A[ndrew] H[amond], will study to dog me.

The Admiral told me that L[ord] S[andwich]³⁹ had said that the other commission would be sent out immediately. I told him, as I ever did, that I thought that the head of such a department should be in the commission; that if the minister had reasons why it should be otherwise, he should have given them to him and accompanied it with a proper letter. He swore he would act with me in every[thing] and lend every assistance to me, & if he ever did otherwise or deceived me, he hoped he should be d[amne]d. The gentleman swears most HORRIBLY and I believe will LIE—NAY, I KNOW HE WILL IN A THOUSAND INSTANCES.

He told me he passed the fort nearer than S[ir] P[eter] P[arker]⁴⁰ was, and he thought he passed it in about 600 yards. He certainly was nearer than S[ir] P[eter] P[arker] was, but I doubt his being with[in] 900 [yards]. He says the *Romulus* had grapeshot on board; grapeshot from 24-pounders will, with elevation, go near a mile. I give him my reasons for wishing to summon the town. He said I had better stay till he sent into the Hog Island Cut and Cooper [River].

At seven I went my rounds. Battery at No. 2 will, I hope, be completed and guns in it this day, [and the] battery on left if possible. But in general the works are too open behind most of them.

10 April. Copy delivered to the Admiral. Detachment from Fort Johnson to join. Engineer to be sent to assist navy in erecting a redoubt

³⁷ The ordnance ship, *Russia Merchant*, sank on the voyage from New York to Savannah.

³⁸ In 1779, Clinton was appointed commissioner for restoring peace. He asked that Arbutnot be made a joint commissioner with him.

³⁹ John Montagu, fourth Earl of Sandwich, first lord of the Admiralty.

⁴⁰ Rear Admiral Sir Peter Parker had commanded the navy during the attempt to take Charleston in 1776.

and battery at Dill's Bluff, to be garrisoned by the navy. Found the Admiral had been consulting with S[ir] A[ndrew] H[amond], etc., etc. I told the Admiral when he had passed the Hog Island with part of his ships, etc., if necessary I would have a battery on one side to protect him. I told him the situation I was upon with L[ord] C[ornwallis] and that I thought [it] hard, as L[ord] C[ornwallis] had withdrawn his advice totally from me, that any of my plans should be made known to him, or he privately consulted by others. The Admiral assured me upon his honor he had never consulted him, nor was he present at any consultation.

Yesterday the Admiral proposed visiting the works. It was proposed by C[apt.] E[lphinstone] that we should see them from G.L. house; of course he saw nothing. We then went to G. C. with M[ajor] Moncrieff to see the ground; he saw his shipyards. I finally told the Admiral when his vessels, galleys, etc. passed, I would endeavor to land a force and cover his flanks if necessary, or if he could land me safely at Mt. Pleasant and protect me and feed me there, I had no objection to going there. It was agreed he should go inform himself of everything and let me know whether he could pass the Hog Island passage or not. S[ir] A[ndrew] H[amond] was of opinion that the troops should first land and occupy a post, and then the navy try to pass. I thought we should go together, and the Admiral seemed of my opinion. We both agreed that a summons should be sent. It was drawn up by S[ir] A[ndrew] H[amond] and Andre, and Crosby carried it, rather too late. But the en[emy] fired after it entered. Very irregular. Lincoln sent an answer by nine, very proper, very modest; if he is a firm man he will hold out to extremity.

Moncrieff had proposed to have run a boyau 200 yards from No. 2 and within 150 yards of their abattis. I did not object, but advised him to consider whether he was sufficiently advanced to support it; for, if we once started, without we changed our attack, we must push it on to the last. I desired him once more to see the ground, and meet me at No. 2 at 8 o'clock. He did, told me that he could not have a communication with it without escarpments of 30 feet over gullies laying perpendicular to the enemy's fire; he therefore gave it up and thought our battery of six guns enough for the present on the right. He would strengthen that on the left. I asked him when we should be ready. He said his magazines were not made, but would be ready on the 13th.

The Admiral left me with intention of examining what could be done by the Hog Island channel. The Feb[ruary] packet arrived at Savannah; the dispatches [were] taken out and carried to C[harles]town bar in the *Foy*. Very irregular, and I am persuaded with intention of opening the

packet as before, a thing never done by Lord Howe.⁴¹ But this old gentleman must do as he pleases while we are in expedition together.

The ordnance ship, notwithstanding I sent a person on purpose to bring her round (Mr. Gibson)⁴² every way qualified to do it, notwithstanding he represented that there was water enough in Stono, Capt. Henry of the *Fowey* took her, and the packet with him, to Charlestown bar where, as the wind blows fresh southeast, accident may happen to both. Paumier⁴³ says likewise that great mistakes have been made about letters in [the] last packet: those for New York sent to Savannah [and] vice versa, which must ever happen if the Admiral opens packets belonging to the army.

Went to the trenches. The rebels fired some shells too well. ONE BURST CLOSE TO ME. Their fire from cannon trifling. Moncrieff proposes running a trench towards their right, and I proposed to begin with the ships tomorrow, first of the flood.

G[eneral] Leslie reports that everything was very quiet last night, that a mortar of the enemy's burst and they did not fire any shells afterwards. 'Tis said many boats went up the river last night to Scott Ferry. The batteries open at 10 against the rebel ships and finally against the town. Kept up a very great fire. 3 guns on enemy's right said to be dismounted by No. 6. Visited the whole line about one o'clock: the ships not touched. Settled with M[oncrieff] this day, and he is to mount tomorrow early. Tarl[eton] goes this night.

13th. Gen. Kospoth reported much firing in the night; whole vollies from right battery. As there was scarcely a gun opened against them—one only, a few shells—it was wrong to fire so much. I SUSPECT THEY KNOW OUR WASTE.

The Admiral at cross questions with me about passing into the Cooper; [he] does not give me any information, as he promised, whether Hog Island passage is practicable; wants troops and does not say what for. Seeing the little probability there is of his passing, I determine to detach 1500 men on their communication between Cooper [River] and the sea. All will depend on our surprising Biggins Bridge. Col. Webster⁴⁴ to command. Told L[ord] C[ornwallis] I had determined to try the experiment. He said nothing, as usual. Dictated the necessary instructions to C[olonel] W[ebster] and ordered C[olonel] T[arleton] to march

⁴¹ Richard Lord Howe, vice admiral and former commander of the British naval forces in North America.

⁴² Captain John Gibson of the *Jet*.

⁴³ Peter Paumier, deputy commissary.

⁴⁴ Lieutenant Colonel James Webster, 33rd Foot, Cornwallis's own regiment.

by Dorchester, etc., etc. Settled with Moncrieff that he should run two saps supporting each other over the morass in front of middle battery; a bold move.

14th. L[ord] C[ornwallis] reported to me that the sap points and parallel on the other side of the morass had been little interrupted, but was not in forwardness to occupy. Traile told me we had scarce any shot of 24 [pounds] left. [*Illegible*] it seems all a mistake. Everything is very irregular in that office; only 280 24 [pound] shot requested from Augustine. In short, great neglect, and I could not avoid telling TRAILLE so. I reminded him of the conversation we had repeatedly had about his demanding an ample supply from N[ew] Y[ork] and St. Augustine; he owned it. In short HE IS CONFUSED: NO METHOD. I took every step by applying everywhere to get all we wanted, and desired the Admiral to dispatch to St. Aug[ustine] immediately both by letter & *Jetson*; wrote likewise to Gov. Tonym⁴⁵ for 3000 24-lb. [shot]. Requested of Admiral that all ships might in future be sent into Stono. Saw a number of people at Daniel's Island approach landing in some disorder. Soon after received an extract from C[olonel] W[ebster] that Biggins Bridge had been surprised and the cavalry dispersed with great loss; a most fortunate event and will make the Admiral's not going into Cooper [River] of less consequence, for in 3 days I hope we shall be master of all their com[municatio]ns. And if Scott⁴⁶ is on his march from the northward with 600 men and 15 pieces of cannon, as generally reported, W[ebster] will intercept him. Admiral still [*illegible*] about the Hog Island passage. Says nothing positive. In his letter, C[aptain] Elphinstone rejoices, and all the navy, at the town's being on fire, and laments it was put out. Absurd, impolitic, and inhuman to burn a town you mean to occupy. I see S[ir] A[ndrew] H[amond] in all that is done.

I gave L[ord] C[ornwallis] my instructions to C[olonel] W[ebster]. I asked no questions, but of himself he declared it was the best move that could be made. WOULD HE HAVE SAID SO IF I HAD NOT SUCCEEDED? [He said] that if ever there was a time to risk anything, it was now, to obtain—what he made no doubt I should get—a perfect investiture by land. He owned we were now masters of the country. In short, everybody was pleased with it.

Settled with Moncrieff that we should content ourselves this night with completing that of last [night], and erecting a mortar battery on [the] left; on this side advanced marsh. Left the trenches about ten after visiting all. Not so much firing this day as yesterday. Not a gun appears

⁴⁵ Patrick Tonym, governor of East Florida.

⁴⁶ Brigadier General Charles Scott of Virginia.

in rebel right work. If they have any spark, they will attempt the head of our sap this night.

15th. At one o'clock alarmed with much firing of small arms and cannon. Sent to trenches. The rebels had been alarmed and fired from their works. OUR WORKMEN HAD RETIRED A LITTLE TOO SOON. Not a shot from us. All quiet about two; returned after visiting all the batteries. G[eneral] Leslie reported that the advance was tolerably completed and there was 150 jag[ers], light [infantry], and grenadiers in them, but the mortar battery on left was likewise nearly finished. Traile told me everything was done to get 24-lb. shot, that more was off the Stono bar, that [the] 12 [pound] bomb shell was arrived, and that all bore a good appearance as to supplies of everything. I recommended a little method and arrangement. He promised fair; *nous verrons*. Complained of not being assisted by those under him. Quaere; have I not more reason?

The Feb[ruary] packet arrived the 13th. Received from M[iniste]r No. 57, Sept. 14th, ditto 56, dup[licate]; gave them all to the secretaries. Gave Durfee a warrant for £40 for services done, as on the passage, as pilot, etc. He tells me has sounded the channels, and thinks the *Blonde* can be lightened to go into Cooper [River]. Received from Tarleton all the correspondence between Huger⁴⁷ and Lincoln, by which it appears my move has been very important indeed. If Webster forces the post at Cain Hoy, 'tis all over with the r[ebels]—in my opinion.

Visited the trenches at night with Moncrieff; he proposes running a sap to their first abatis this night, in a direction to fall clear of any fire, capping it with a redoubt. The night is hazy and good for the purposes, and we are too near [to] go on with the rapidity we usually do. A Virginia deserter came in, very well informed. Signed 3 bills of exchange on Cox & Muir⁴⁸ of the 15th of April for £150. Signed in favor of Mr. Paumier for 50 doz. of claret. Signed two warrants to former for [£] 2000 for the Hessians and hospital master. Addressed all the bills myself to Cox & Muir, thirty days after sight.

16th. Gen. Kospoth reported that all had been tolerable quiet. Moncrieff told me that sending a sap to the left would be exposed to a great fire from the enemy's left. He had stopped it, and proposed this night to push a sap on the right, from between Nos. 2 and 3, ending with a parallel; put forward the sailors' battery to subdue the enemy's fire, and then proceed by the left. I agreed. The rebels brought a gun against the hospital; sent down the Hessi[an] 3, 2 French 24-pounders, and a 24.

⁴⁷ Brigadier General Issac Huger of South Carolina.

⁴⁸ Agents for the Army.

Much firing all night; why, I cannot guess. Lord Cornw[allis] on service this night.

17th. L[ord] C[ornwallis] sent to report to me that the work has passed the morass. Went to visit it in the evening; the tide too high, no passing. C[aptain] E[lphinstone] told me an artilleryman had been sent to the sailors' battery to stop firing by my order; all deny having sent him. I suspect the commissary of artillery, not having stores ready. Must find out.

G[eneral] Leslie desired an explanation of an order said to come from me respecting the troops in case of a sortie leaving their redoubt and charging. Hand it to Maj. W[ilmowsk]y, who assures me he told Col. Fox that the working parties only were to retire to their arms, that he never said a word about the redoubt. W[ilmowsk]y speaks bad French and WAS THAT NIGHT DRUNK. Went to the trenches at two o'clock; the parallel not finished. We are now going into a flank fire which we must get the better of.

18th, morning. Moncrieff proposes comp[letin]g the second parallel, having a strong battery in the center advanced, and mortar batteries advanced on flanks. Ordered the 23rd [regiment] to march to Biggins Bridge to communicate with Col. Webster. Copy of instructions given to Russell;⁴⁹ explained everything to Col. Balfour.⁵⁰ L[ord] C[ornwallis] says he is not under the least apprehension about W[ebster]; says it will require their whole garrison to injure him, but thought my precaution right. Told him Moncrieff's intention. He said when the great guns went into the second parallel, the small, he thought, should go into [the] first. I agreed and ordered Andre to settle it with M[ajor] Traille. Capt. Evans said that he was apprehensive when the galleys went from Wappoo, the r[ebels] would come.

Traille has not explained about the artilleryman causing the order to stop firing; I must have it further inquired into. Visited the trenches. The second parallel not quite finished, but to be done this night. Enemy fire very little except from their right and left batteries, to enflade our parallel. Desired Moncrieff to throw up some traverses in it, and at his leisure to look at some ground on a neck on our right, which outflanks and sees their left very seriously.

Fleet arrived from New York. Desired that they might all come into Stono, and gave the letter to Capt. Elphinstone at nine o'clock. Hope, as wind and tide serve, they will get in this morning, 19th.

⁴⁹ Captain Peter Russel, secretary to Clinton.

⁵⁰ Lieutenant Colonel Nisbet Balfour.

19th. Crosby tells me some guns are heard near Hobcaw.⁵¹ It must be Webster. If so, the Admiral's landing at [Mt.] Pleasant will be uninterrupted. Crosby tells me he thinks he sees them at some distance from Hobcaw. I hope the Admiral, who expects them, will give hints to his sailors and marines that no mistake may happen.

Sent Durfee back to the Admiral to say that if he can come into the Cooper, we can, while masters of it, do what we please, [and that] without it W[ebster's] corps cannot act with vigor, [and] to tell him my instructions to W[ebster] to visit Lemprieres, etc. Durfee tells me that he does not think the Admiral can command a landing on Mt. Pleasant. I have ever thought so and I tremble for him this day, without Webster is at Hobcaw, in which case he will not be interrupted. Letters from New York by reinforcement; I hope it got into Stono. Showed to Moncrieff and R. the flanking point to the right. M[oncrieff] seems pleased with it, R. thinks it difficult to communicate with it; *nous verrons*. L[ord] Cornwallis reports this.

20th. That the works were completed last night with the engineer's approbation, but that we lost of the working men two killed, four wounded by the grapeshot of the enemy. Phillips⁵² tells me that Smith⁵³ writes to him that he will settle the business of the [illegible] of Perkins. Smith does not say a word of the bills paid by Phillips at Swansea, amounting to above £300. The whole I owe Smith now with the [£] 375, I believe, his last bill of sundries from New York [£] 725/11/7, New York currency; owing to Smith besides for me, [a total of £] 1100/1/7. What he has paid at New York to Rivington,⁵⁴ hire of my servants, house in the Bowery, charities, and to my housekeeper.

Showed the Ad[miral's] letter to Sir A[ndrew] Hamond; he explained the odd part by saying the Admiral only wanted a cooperation to enable him to pass or weigh the ships in the mouth of Hog [Island] passage. Sir An[drew] asked me whether it was my opinion that the ships ought to force the boom and go into the Cooper, and whether any opportunity of doing it should be missed. I told him that possession of the Cooper was such an object that I thought no opportunity should be missed, but all I wanted was vessels sufficient to command the Cooper, that he was the best judge how many that was; that if they get into Shipyard Creek they would be safe; that I did not want operation in the Cooper, I only wanted communication with a corps I had in St. Tho[mas]s [Parish], etc.,

⁵¹ Hobcaw Point or Lemprieres.

⁵² Major General William Phillips.

⁵³ William Smith, royal chief justice of New York.

⁵⁴ James Rivington, editor of *Rivington's New-York Gazette*.

and then I should be able to operate very effectually against the enemy. I offered either to march Webster to Mt. Pleasant or march [to] Lemprieres Creek with his corps while the sailors and marines landed there; that when I knew where W[ebster] was, I would let the Admiral know. I said I did not think a moment had been lost by us, either before or since we landed; that if we proceeded cautiously we should take the place in the manner we wished; if we hurried it, we might be affronted; that we must have patience; that we must expect to lose a little; that the place was exceedingly strong and we must proceed with caution; [that] if ever the navy were called upon to act it would be in the Ashley [River] in my opinion.

I desired that an order or request might be made that the C[hief] Eng[ineer], M[ajor] Monc[rieff], might direct the fire of batteries, as he was the best judge of it; by a mistake in the order, it appears as if any engineer might do so. That is not my intention, and I desired this order might be explained.

I [went] into the second battery. Very incomplete, and part of it within 70 yards of their works. [I] RUN TOO MUCH RISK FOR MY STATION. One jager killed with cannon shot. A Creek chief introduced to me. I wish chiefs of the Cherokees had likewise come; it would have been of consequence. In the night a dispatch from [the] no[rth] and [a] letter from Gen. V[aughan];⁵⁵ if S[ir] P[eter] P[arker] has done as I advise, Pensacola may be safe.

21 April. G[eneral] L[eslie] reported that the first parallel is finished completely; ordered guns, etc., into it as Mon[crieff] desires. About 11, Gen. Lincoln sent to propose a cessation and terms as sent to the Admiral. Gave them the six hours asked, but for L[ord] C[ornwallis], who was clear of opinion we should give them the same terms offered at first and not plunder them. Admiral exactly the same. G[eneral] Les[lie] would give no opinion. Some messages passed, but it ended in their sending terms proposed, which could not be listened to. An ultimatum was sent, exactly what we sent before, which they refused by a verbal message, for none other would they send, that G[eneral] Lincoln could not accept the terms offered, and I might begin [to fire] again as soon as I would, which accordingly happened at half past ten, directing all the fire to the banks of the river to prevent their going off by water. The moment the Admiral arrived he told me "that if it had not been for those rascals's sending the message, his small vessels would go into Cooper [River] this night." [I] MUM, of course. I told him finally that if he found that so practicable, he had better send them this night. He said

⁵⁵ Major General John Vaughan, commander at Barbados.

he had or would order it, and he wrote his letter ordering them to proceed, and Capt. Hudson,⁶⁶ if he saw occasion, to obey further orders, which he insinuated was to attack Fort Sullivan with all the large ships. This was all proposed before he received their final answer. Moncrieff reported this.

22nd April. That he [Moncrieff] had run a sap, a 3rd point and 3rd parallel near their canal; that he will endeavor this night to bleed their *batter d'eau* and had a battery of 18 carronades at the edge of the ditch. I said I wish all forward movements within L[ord] C[ornwallis's] or G[eneral] L[eslie's] power are clearly agreed.

The Admiral told me this morning that *now* he was determined not to pass [into the Cooper River] till we took possession of Mt. Pleasant; further, he sees three ships in the mouth of Wando and two more at the wharf, ready to start. WHAT IS BECOME OF HIS BOAST [of] LAST NIGHT? I told him he was the best judge, that it was impossible to spare troops or land them safely till I knew where Webster was. He proposed my landing at Mt. Pleasant—the old story. He contradicted himself frequently, and at last I did not know exactly what he wished me to do. I therefore desired that he would make his requisition in writing and I would answer it; that he would forgive me if I should differ in opinion with him in land movements and act accordingly. In appearance we were the best friends, but I am sure he is FALSE AS HELL, and shall behave in consequence. He talked of his commission. I told him we must act by mine as his, as he called it, was not here. He said that when he had leisure, we must consult upon general plans and determine what one should be about. I said it was impossible to determine on any first plan, as all would depend upon events. I might have added that, as we are separate, every one ought to act by his own opinions, as when absent they alone were answerable. He told me he should approve of all I did respecting treaty with these people. I said I should not call him (a white [flag] flew at staff) without they accepted our terms. We parted with a civil one-two-three, to pursue what was uppermost with [us]. S[ir] A[ndrew] H[amond], the last night, spoke of L[ord] C[ornwallis] and the Admiral as the two chiefs, which I took no notice of.

23rd. Determined to reinforce Col. W[ebster] and send L[ord] C[ornwallis] to command the whole. I gave L[ord] C[ornwallis] his instructions, and inclosed those intended for Col. Webster, in consequence if the Admiral acts, after I gave him fresh [instructions] respecting Mt. Pleasant and Lemprieres. He desired an explanation with regard to the last. I told him if he thought Lemprieres should be carried by a coup de main without great risk, I thought it should be attempted; if it required

⁶⁶ Captain Charles Hudson, R. N.

anything like a siege, he must not attempt it without fresh communication with me. The boats did not arrive till late to pass the corps over to Scotts Ferry, but in the course of the night the V[olunteers] of I[reland], part of the 23rd, and 64[th] got over.

24th. G[eneral] Leslie reported to me that about daybreak the e[ne]my made a sortie; that the third parallel was not completed and that he quitted it; that there were 80 men in the part attacked; that we had lost 10 or 12; that he supposed we were a little off our guard; that he had often told the gentlemen so; in short, it must be inquired into.

Tonkin gave me a message from the Admiral (I desired it in writing) to tell me he intended passing the town at ten if the wind was fair; it appears to be so, though there is not much. T[onkin] told me likewise that one of the officers told him they had discovered a possibility of passing by the town, and the Admiral was determined to do it that way.

25th. At one o'clock an alarm. False, however, and owing to the TROOPS NOT BE[ing] STEADY ENOUGH; in short, FIRST A[nd] SECOND PARALLEL FIRED: THE OFFICERS, I FEAR, WERE NOT AT THEIR POSTS. Col. Hope⁵⁷ and MacPherson⁵⁸ of the 42nd. Col. Ab[ner] came to explain for his corps. I was satisfied, though the disposition was not a proper one. I found by Col. Abner[']s conversation he seemed to think that a redoubt should be defended by fire alone. I told him in my opinion whoever attempted it would lose his redoubt; that it was with fire and bayonet it was to be defended. He seemed convinced, and likewise that at night the bayonet alone is to decide. Explained to Col. Dend. and Maj. Graham⁵⁹ my wishes that all firing should stop; that if they could answer for it, I had no objection to the troops' [muskets] being loaded. They seemed not to wish that. I therefore ordered them not to load; agreed with Moncrieff that the third parallel should be completed as much as possible, banquette and traverse.

26th. Gen. Patisson reported that all had been quiet and only one man killed. Answered L[ord] C[ornwallis]'s letter giving my ideas of the operation he is to direct, exactly the same as I gave Webster. His Lordship's line very different, and if he pursues it, he will do less with near 3000 men than Webster by his letter acknowledged had been done by 1500. I REPENT THAT I SENT HIM. HE WILL PLAY ME FALSE, I FEAR; AT LEAST ROSS WILL.

Rob[inson]⁶⁰ could not get over this morning, so my letter to L[ord] C[ornwallis] must go this night. 'Tis pity, for the sooner he sees it, the

⁵⁷ Colonel Henry Hope, 42nd Regiment.

⁵⁸ Lieutenant Colonel Duncan MacPherson, 42nd Regiment.

⁵⁹ Major Charles Graham, 42nd Regiment.

⁶⁰ Colonel Beverly Robinson, loyalist organizer of the Loyal Americans.

better. Saw Futter's Landing; am sure that a battery there and another at Scott's Landing will complete the business and shut the Cooper effectively. Went to visit the trenches. Very near indeed. We are now entered into a deep flank fire; we must subdue it before we pass their canal, which we can, however, block when we please. Settled with Monc[rieff] that the parallel shall be complete.

Examined, not formally however, Col. Hope, Col. MacPherson of 42[nd]; it appears that part of the second parallel did fire; they both confess it. Col. Hope says it was the Hessians, Col. MacPherson does not know which. I did not think it right publicly to condemn, though these gentlemen must have been very NEGLIGENT to have suffered such INFAMOUS CONDUCT. I explained my idea of the different stages of a parallel, and when it is to be quitted, supported, or re-enforced. Col. Fox⁶¹ and Col. Yorke⁶² as last night, but Gen. Leslie reported it to me as their wish that the third parallel should load, to give the men confidence. As he and they wished it, I agreed; but I wish troops would have confidence in [the] bayonet alone at night. However, if officers will take pains, I am sure they can prevent fire; and when it happens I shall make them answerable.

One jager killed on the canal. The artillery officers object to cannonades; ILLIBERAL: we may still try them first. Gen. Leslie reported to me, 27th, that only one grenadier had been wounded, and the works [had] been partly complete. Desired C[aptain] Elph[instone] to mount two 18 [pounders] in the sloop at Shipyard, which he says will command that river. Rob[inson] thinks another may be placed at Scott's.

28th. Gen. Kospoth reports all well. Reported to me that in the course of the night, the rebels had quitted Lemprieres. At 12:00 or 1, it appeared we had taken possession at night. Capt. Hudson wrote to say he was there. The fact is this: the Admiral's rowboats take a sloop with 90 men who by mistake had got into Hog Island passage. The Admiral finds by her the place is evacuating. He lands at Mt. Pleasant, marches to Lemprieres to take possession. All this appears by Capt. Hudson's letter, for though in one part he wishes it to appear the move was his own, in the other he tells me he acts by the Admiral's orders; and their having a [union] jack ready to hoist proves it. Refer Capt. H[udson] to Lord Cornwallis.

29th. Gen. Patterson reports that the works were finished at third parallel, but the dike not cut. Received a letter from Admiral declining sending vessels in the Cooper, at least making it very doubtful. The fact

⁶¹ Lieutenant Colonel Henry Fox, 38th Foot.

⁶² Lieutenant Colonel John Yorke, 22nd Foot.

is he cannot, if Hog Island lays too near Sullivan's and they have not yet been able to sound the hither end of the passage. The *Comet* is lost by going aground, and was fired upon from S[ullivan's] Island. The *Margery* likewise aground, and a sloop is now aground. The ships cannot come by the other passage, as all the captains are now at Lemprieres.

30th. Gen. Leslie reports that there was a very heavy fire of grape-shot last night. 2 Hessians deserted. Many come in from the enemy. The guns mounted in [the] third parallel. Violent wind rendered the trenches very inconvenient to the troops. I went there about 5 o'clock last night; [they are] rather too low in many places, and the banquettes not complete. No appearance of ships coming through the Hog Island passage, *tant pis*. Capt. Elph[instone] says that he thinks we shall be able to get some vessels, enough to keep both rivers, if we occupy Lemprieres; I doubt. Went to the trenches at 5.

1 May. Gen. Kospoth reported nothing extreme except deserters from the enemy. 2 men killed and 4 wounded by grapeshot. UP THE GREATEST PART OF THE NIGHT. Visited the trenches at 5. Went out again at 2. Little firing from either side. The canal runs off apace.

2 May. Capt. Elp[hinstone] told me the Admiral seemed to have no intention of sending [ships] into Cooper [River], and that he was desired to consult me about arming sloops, etc. I advised C[aptain] El[phinstone] to report to the Admiral the delay that might be occasioned, and still press him to send a force into Cooper. Visited the trenches at night. Many deserters come in, among others one of the 7th [regiment] who left us three days since. Gen. Les[lie] reported much sound in the night.

3rd. Received a letter from the Ad[miral], who never acknowledges the receipt of any letter by description. In mine of the 1st, I particularly mention my ideas in what manner the navy can co-operate. The letter went by an officer, Col. Westerhagen, under a [illegible] & the Admiral must have received it. But he is all CHICANE.

Agreed with Monc[rieff] that we should not attempt a lodgement till 4 more guns were mounted, in all 12, besides mortars, etc. Went to visit the canal; goes off slow; I suspect 'tis fed. Rutledge⁰³ and three more taken. Much firing all night.

4th. Gen. Kospoth reported all tolerable quiet. Much rain; the canal filled again. Went to the trenches at 6. Very wet; no work can be done.

⁰³ Clinton thought he had captured Governor John Rutledge of South Carolina. Rutledge left Charleston on April 13, but escaped seizure by the British. Perhaps the Rutledge referred to was the governor's brother, Edward, who was in Charleston during the siege.

5th. Received a letter from A[dmiral] saying he could not take a serious share. C[aptain] E[lphinstone] ADVISED ME T[o] BE EXPLICIT WITH ADMIRAL. Some ladies came to desire I would permit them to go into town to take leave of their sons, as they knew I intended storming in a day or two. *Tout est permis aux dames* Much firing in the night. Many deserters come in; they say that Wayne⁶⁴ with reinforcements is expected. Went to look at Futters post and beyond it; gave Simcoe my ideas if the rebels should attempt to pass it.

May [6]th. Monc[rieff] says when there are 12 guns mounted, he will begin by sap, laying hold of their 2d abattis and making a lodgement on each of their detached works. [He] is clearly of opinion with me that we had better proceed as we began; the success of a storm is uncertain. Our method [is] sure, though perhaps not so quick; but as there is no necessity for hurry, better proceed as we do. Rob[inson] agrees also, and I think we are sure of the place upon our own terms, and with it I think we conquer the southern provinces and perhaps more.

Sent Capt. Hanger⁶⁵ with a letter to the Admiral this 6th of May. Still pressing his taking a solid part in the intended assault.

May 10th, 1780. The Admiral told me that with respect to coming into Cooper, it was utterly impossible; that when I judged it right to make the assault, he would make every endeavor to go into Ashley with all his fleet if he had a mast standing, and assist the operations of the army, but he must give it as his opinion, well-considered, that his movement would not ease us in the least. I told him that I requested I might likewise give my opinion: in the first place, that his attacking their batteries in either river would make a most useful diversion in our favor, but he knew it was always my intention to threaten at least with troops, boats, etc., which would certainly operate to effect, as they would certainly expect a landing after their batteries were silenced, and upon the whole I thought his cooperation of the utmost concern. He told me I should have [it], but still repeated his opinion. I said if he was so clear, I advised him to assemble a council of each service.

He showed me a paper from C[aptain] Maxwell with a note about the French fleet. He said he was now under no apprehension, as he had got Sullivan's Island. I agreed totally with him, but observed [that] if the rebels had expected a French fleet, they would not have ungarrisoned Sullivan's Island. He perfectly agreed. He advised me to proceed with caution. I told him I had ever done so. He said if I still went on by sap, then I should be a week longer about; that week would be the best I

⁶⁴ Brigadier General Anthony Wayne of the Continental Army.

⁶⁵ Captain George Hanger.

ever spent. I agreed. He offered me anything I wanted. I told him, if he could, [to] spare a few 12 [pounders]. He said, "yes" and desired Major Traille[s] requisition might be in writing. He told me that when this was over, it was his intention to go to Cape Fear. G[overnor] MARTIN⁶⁶ HAS BETRAYED MY PLAN. I said nothing. I desired to know whether the sailors deployed in batteries were not under my orders. He said all that was ashore from him certainly were. I told him of a mistake represented by Col. Hope. He seemed to express astonishment. He talked much of the friendship he had for me and his zeal in this cause. I bowed, of course; of the sec[ond], however, I never had any doubt.

Settled with Moncrieff that we shall proceed as we began, cautiously and by sap. This night he continues it to their abattis. Settled with him that [the] light inf[antry] alone are on right and left of front parallel. [He] approves of orders respecting firing at batteries and in trenches all day. G[eneral] officer, of course, at night, will not seize my spot till last night [sic].

The 12th the place surrendered. Lord Corn[wallis] confesses this ought to have been the attack before.

13th. Sent for L[ord] Corn[wallis]. Proposed a plan against G[eorge] Town.

14th. L[ord] C[ornwallis] told me the Admiral could not give the galleys and that therefore it [Georgetown] was only to be attacked in front. *Of no use.*

15th. L[ord] L[incoln] dispatched. Ordered transports round.

16th. L[ord] L[incoln] sailed. Wrote to everybody; show[ed] as to past, present, and future. D[uke of] N[ewcastle] & G[ermain], L[or]d Percy, sisters, L., Pemb[roke], Rainsford, C., Tomson, Pearson, Perry, Bull, Cox, VERGILL.

17th. Col. W[ebster] told me of the quantity of INDIGO HERE. Ordered.

18th. I went to the Admiral carrying with me my letter of this day requesting that a convoy be sent with the troops to Canada. He read the letter [and] told me it was what he wished, that thi[s] was what he intended, and if the ships from Beaufort did not arrive soon, he should send her. He still says there are not transports sufficient at New York. I showed him the Minister's letter, wherein I am particularly desired to send troops immediately. Still he hesitates. I asked him whether the *James* would not go; he said "no," and still seems to say the transports

⁶⁶ Josiah Martin, the last royal governor of North Carolina.

are not ready. If they are not 'tis because the men of war have taken all their men. I told him I should probably be obliged to leave more troops here than I at first intended, and as the operations of the army were very important at this hour, I requested that a convoy might be ordered from them on or about the 24th of June. He told me that a proper convoy should positively be ready at that time without there were such reasons at that time against it as I myself should be satisfied with. He took it down in a note and said further that the three rebel frigates here would be ready by that time.

19th. Went to the Admiral, showed the mistake about the instructions as commissioner. He agreed and called in his block head.⁶⁷ Offered to show me the right [one]. I told him it was enough he said he had it. I did all I could to keep him in good humor. He repeated over and over that it was necessary for him to assemble his fleet at N[ew] York, and therefore that the expedition should not go in the Che[sapeake] till he could go in force. Traile, Rochfort, and Andre were present.

20th. The Admiral dined with me. Threw out many hints against ELPHINSTONE, which I took up in perfect good humor and excused. Andre rec[eive]d a note from Mr. Green in the Admiral's name; the Adm[ira]l said it was with[ou]t his order. He likewise said that he left instructions [for the] sailors to lift the guns back to his ships. I did all I could to put him in good humor but in vain. I at last declared that, if it was necessary, to have the assistance of soldiers for it. The sailors must take theirs. I have all [the guns] unmounted.

21 at night. The [*Triton*] arrived from England with duplicates of dispatches. Sent my intended proclamation for the Admiral's perusal. Sent me word by Crosby he would give it *due* consideration.

22nd. No answer from the Admiral respecting proclamation notwithstanding all waits for it.

Went in a boat to see Shute's folly.

Observed an excellent place for a battery against the town on an oyster bed directly opposite where the ships are sunk, with a deep creek behind it for the convenience of carry[ing] materials and stores for the battery. The bed extends above 200 yards and is exactly what I thought it at the time I proposed a battery to the Admiral.

Recollected since of those few last days.

Capt. Knowles declared on the 22nd while with me on Shute's Folly that there was four fathoms between it and the first sunken brig, and that any frigate might have passed. He likewise declared that there was

⁶⁷ Captain William Green, aide-de-camp to Arbuthnot.

a good passage through Hog Island and possibly straight from Mt. Pleasant.

Col. Balfour told me, 22nd, that it was *generally* reported that Ferguson was violent tempered and treated his men with harshness, and therefore he represented against his having a command in the militia.⁶⁸ I told him I had never heard that report of Ferguson nor suspected it, that it was not my custom to attend to general reports. I quoted two instances of general report about his humble servant that I myself declared to be false. In short, I see infernal party still prevails. I wish this remark of BALFOUR'S turns out lucky, as by an expression he dropped I think he means to throw cold water on OUR PAST ENDEAVORS to re-establish THE PROVINCE.

23rd. Col. B[alfour], on hearing the V[olunteers] of I[reland] marched part of his route and my lamenting that was not true, effected to understand me that I apprehended that corps' plundering. I told him that was not my apprehension. L[ord] C[ornwallis] was with them but that they would delimit his march if some of the conveniences of rice, etc. [were found]. Col. Bruce⁶⁹ went to the Admiral and gave me a note on his return of all that had passed respecting his approbation of the proclamation.

24th. I went to the Admiral. He told me of the proclamation; he had received it late and had not considered it till just before Col. B[ruce] came in; that he thought it the properest thing possible and the sooner it went out the better. I mentioned to him that I waited for his answer relative to boats to pass the troops from Sullivan's Island. He said he had no boats or men, that all his captains were at court martial. In short he forgets all he says and does, and talks nonsense by the hour. Can any thing be so absurd as saying the move cannot go on because his Captains are sitting on court martial? Are there not l[ieutenan]ts in all the ships? At a time when we want the troops to be relieved from Sullivan[s] Island] to make part of L[ord] Cornwallis's corps, the troops are laying on their arms for want of 2 or three boats to pass them, while the Admiral[s] sec[retary] sends in his name for us to assist the Navy in getting their frigates to the wharves. All the public letters are likewise left behind owing either to Mr. Crosby's neglect or Mr. Green's; as the Admiral is so ill I avoid mentioning it to him.

The Admiral told me that his orders were to assemble his fleet at New York and when I represented the necessity of a fleet going into Chesapeake he said he could not spare one frigate for that purpose, that

⁶⁸ This was Major Ferguson, who was to be defeated at King's Mountain.

⁶⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Bruce, 54th Regiment, aide-de-camp to Clinton.

in time perhaps something might be spared from hence—but he differs every time in the number of vessels he intends leaving here, and I can never get anything under his hand. With respect to Ches[apeake] he says he is determined to go there as soon as he can. I told him I approved—that we all approved—but gave him no ideas of going myself, for I have determined never to serve with such an OLD WOMAN. He wanted as usual to CAJOLE me, but I shall never be upon any other terms than strict formality.

25th. Met him [the Admiral] on the wharf going on board. Went up to him and received him in high form. He asked me where I was going. I told him to see the garrison of Sullivan's Island, who had been waiting under arms these 3 days in hopes of being relieved. He seemed heartily ashamed and ordered Gayton⁷⁰ & Berk[le]y to send men and boats. They both told him had they known there was any want, they would have spared as many men as he pleased; in short, 'tis sufficient that I propose anything for it to be rejected and service must suffer.

[Captain] Berkeley told me that the generality of the navy were displeased with the Admiral's conduct upon the division of the prize money, that they had hoped he would at least have spoke to me about it, but on their proposing it, he flew in a passion more extreme, (he always does), that he would have no conference with me, that he was determined to insist on his claim; so be it. That blockhead of a secretary does all he can to keep us at variance that his misconduct may not be discovered. He tells the capt[ains] of the Navy that they have a right to pass people into the country and not subject to my control, a thing so absurd I cannot conceive how they can attend to him; some however do and I am much against my will obliged to send them back, for at a time when our moves are in every part of the province, is it common sense to suppose that any man can move except such as I or the superior officers of the Army name? The people sent out are chiefly rebels which, if permitted, are as common spies. If this same secretary continues to rule, all must be confusion, tho I shall do all in my power to prevent it.

Berkeley told me things was such during the prize business that he quitted it, and Capt. Gambier was appointed in his room.

I told Gen[eral] Leslie and Col[onel] Balfour that since the generality of the army had expressed themselves [as to] doubts of the legality of risking public stores, and the Admiral was with the opinion of theirs to be transmitted to the K[ing] and C[ouncil], it was time for their c[ommander]-in-c[hief] to be on his guard also, for he was the only person liable, and that I knew the temper of the army so well that I was

⁷⁰ Captain George Gayton, R. N., commander of the *Romulus*.

sure if I blundered, though with intent to serve them, I should be only laughed at for my pains, and that as I did not intend to be ruined or called fool, I should be cautious how I engaged in the business.

I put out my proclamation.⁷¹ I permitted Gen. Leslie to open the town whenever he pleased. I gave my orders to the Com[missioner]s of Capt[ure]s to secure all public stores or receipts from the different departments for what they have, and I said I would likewise order all doubtful property to be secured also. When the Admiral, by app[ointin]g another person for that purpose, of the town, had made himself equally responsible with myself. Sent Capt. Greene to the Admiral to say that I did intend to have made a formal complaint that the papers had not been sent by the ship of war, but as he was so ill I begged no notice might be taken of it, but that it might be sent by the next ship. He justly answered that the Admiral had ordered it himself not to go by the first.

26th. Dispatches arrived from N[ew] York. Dispatched Col. Balfour at night.

27th. Went to Sullivan's Island. Had the navy attempted a storm, in all opinions they would have been repulsed with great loss, notwithstanding there was only 60 reg[ular] and 80 militia in that place. A few cohorn, shells, or carcasses would have done the business.

Sounded the anchorage within 50 yards of Sullivan's Island Fort at low water and found 5 fathoms and a quarter!!! What say you now, S[ir] P[eter] Parker! Simpson, Russel, &c were with me and C[olonel] Watson.

May the 30th. Major Hay,⁷² I found, had availed himself of some hints given him by Major Andre and called them instructions tho they were not signed. It was explained to him they were not to be looked on as instructions, and to get Mr. Lawton to form a commission upon them. Hay never collected anything but rice, butter, boards, &c for the use of the army. If he received those things seized by the Legion, it was by Lord Cornwallis' orders, and he received them in guaranty of a part to the army, and if he had taken anything in town, 'tis contrary to my notification order, as he asked leave to go in there Wed[nes]day and was told he must not. Therefore care must be taken that in his commission it appears he has no authority to seize anything in the town.

⁷¹ The proclamation, dated May 22, 1780, called for the restoration of peace and ordered all citizens to aid the King's troops. Clinton Papers, WLCL.

⁷² Major George Hay, commissary of captures.