

LETTERS FROM OLD TRUNKS

Copied, and contributed by S. Bailey Turlington, Accomac, Va.

Philadelphia 3d May 1811.

Dear Sir,

Being myself at this City, and my friend Mr. John S. Snead communicating his intention of going to New York today or tomorrow, I indulge myself in the pleasure of writing to you, and enquiring after the health and welfare of yourself, Mrs. Jones, and your children—and also to ask of you your opinion, whether a teacher could be employed in New York for the Margaret academy in Accomack. A single man well recommended for capacity and moral character is required, and if such a one could be employed he might expect a liberal salary. The trustees have been gratified in the establishment and advancement of this little seminary until lately. About the last of March Mr. David Comfort the principal left the academy on account of a spell of sickness which he had and an apprehension that he might have his health in the future. Mr. Comfort was fm. Newburg in your state and much approved by the trustees. If you could advise me of such a character it would confer a favor on the institution as well as on the trustees, who have authorized me among others to employ a teacher.

Please answer this letter by Mr. Snead, or by mail to Drummond Town, Virginia.

Reverd. Cave Jones
New York

Your respectful servant,
Jno. Cropper Jr.

Accomack 6th March 1812

Sir,

I received last night a letter from Colo. Sharp of the 54th Regiment, announcing the death of Brigadier General Thomas Mathews and that he departed this life the 20th ultimo. As by the melancholy event the command of the ninth Brigade de-

LI. COL. JONATHAN CROPPER, JR. 2ND REGT. VA. MILITIA
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volves on me, I feel it my duty to give your Excellency immediate official notice thereof.

His Excellency Jas. Barbour Governor of Virga.	I have the honor to be with high respect, Your obedt. Servant Jno. Cropper, Jr. Le. Colo. 2d Regimt. & Commdt. 9th Brigade.
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21st May 1812

Drummond Town Virga.

Sir,

I am requested by Thomas M. Bayly esquire of this place, to write to you, to send him your gazette for the Country, to be left at Drummond Town for him as an annual subscriber. I am well acquainted with Mr. Bayly, consider him very able and as punctual as any man. He says he will send the money by some convenient hand.

Your respectful Servant,

Jno. Cropper Jr.

Mr. Enos Bronson, editor of the United States
 Gazette, Phila. by Mail.

Accomack, 7th June 1812.

Sir,

Your letter of the 4th instant, expressing your appreciation of an instruction, by the slaves of Northampton, was received opportunely at Drummond on the day of its date. Col. Bagwell, Major Bayly, and myself happened to be there, and immediately held council upon the subject. The result of which was the turning out that evening small detachments of artillery, cavalry, and infantry, with orders to look out patrole and examine the situation of slaves, servants, etc. in the several neighborhoods—but nothing appeared in the smallest degree indicative of any ill design. I wish you to report to me in writing, by Major Bayly, on his return fm. Northampton what hath oc-

curred in that county respecting this apprehended insurrection. It will be proper for you to have the return of your draft in order that when Captn. Smith receives those of the 2d and 99th regiments, he may on his way call on you for yours, to carry to the Inspector, for him to make a general return to the Commander of the Brigade.

I am Sir, respectfully,

Your humble Servant,

Jno. Cropper Jr.

Lt. Colo. Commdt. 9th Brigade Virga.
Militia

Colo. Kendal Addison, 27th Regiment.

Accomack County 20th March 1813

Sir,

Colo. Addison the 27th regiment, Colo. Bagwell of the 99th, and myself, had a meeting and a consultation upon the exposed situation of the two counties on this side of the Chesapeake. The militia of the Eastern Shore are willing to a man as we believe, to defend this section of the Eastern Frontier of Virginia, and to annoy the enemy by every human exertion, but this cannot be done without adequate supplies of the implements of war. About one half the 18000 cartridges obtained by me at Richmond in June last prove to be good for nothing except the bullets; they appear to be those of the revolutionary war, the powder and the paper mouldered to the finest dust—without doubt Colo. Pryor knew nothing of their condition. We require the munition and camp equipage contained in the enclosed return, and we are in need of 200 barrels of pork, 100 barrels of beef, and 100 barrels of flour. We are cut off from every seaport in the United States, and are dependent almost entirely on supplies to be sent us by the Executive. At this time we are exposed in the extent of 180 miles to the incursions of the enemy. Accomack and Northampton are indented by navigable creeks at every five miles on the seaside and at every five miles on the bay, so that a large barge may land at almost

everyman's door, if not opposed by the vigilance and valor of the militia, and it wd. be mortifying to see these unavailing for want of warlike supplies. We want money to buy fresh provisions, bacon, corn meal, and such necessaries as can be obtained for the comfortable accomodation of our guards, and the militia called out to defend their country: to purchase sixteen sailable horses for the eight pieces of artillery, the farmers spare their horses at the greatest inconvenience, and trained horses are indispensable to the good of the service. Your Excellency is the most competent judge, and we submit cheerfully to your judgment, whether it would not be to the interest of the state to appoint some person near to the center of this district commissary, and supply him from time to time with money, to be furnished the regimental paymasters and commissaries, all of whom to be in a regular course of accountability, and to give security. Supplies could be obtained much more easy and cheap for cash than for credit, and impressment is a very unpopular measure. Sooner than resort to the unpleasant business of impressment, the officers of the militia have united and borrowed money on their own credit to purchase provisions for feeding the guards, which they hope the state will speedily reimburse. Two companies have been on duty in Northampton for three or four weeks, and one in Accomack for one week, to which one it will be necessary to add another in a short time. The whole of the militia are harrassed, and liable every day to be called to repel the enemy, especially the 27th regiment, which has already every member called out. On the 9th day of the present month (Northampton court day) a British tender and some barges went into Cherryton harbor took a cargo of flour out of one schooner and set five to another, but as soon as the Militia collected the enemy fled, taking with them however two milch cows from Mrs. Savage. Next day two barges from the ships laying near Cape Charles, boarded a schooner a ground, she belonged to Northampton, and was loaded with brandy & wine Captn. Simpkin's company of infantry belonging to the 27th collected with uncommon celerity, and with a gallantry becoming veteran soldiers, thirty it is said compelled the enemy forty or number to

leave their prize without carrying away or destroying anything except five turkeys. On the 14th instant a letter of marque brig (the America of 250 tons belonging to Baltimore) inward bound run ashore on Smith's Island vessel and cargo chiefly lost. In this vessel was a midshipman and eight men belonging to the British, which had been taken out of a Schooner recaptured by the letter of marque: they were taken possession of by Colonel Addison, and by him sent with a flag to Lynhaven, to be exchanged or receipted for by Admiral Cockburn: and the Colonel wishes the opinion of the Executive to the propriety of his conduct. All the commandants wish for general instructions from your Excellency for their government, cut off as they are from all communication with the chief of the Brigade. We think that if officers for two of the companies of regulars, to be raised for the defense of the Eastern Frontier, were appointed on this shore, they might raise their men, and we should be very glad they could be permitted to remain here. Severn E. Parker requests us to mention in this communication, that himself, Geo. D. Wise, John C. Parramore, and Still Dorsey, wish to attempt to raise a company of artillery or riflemen, for the particular defense of this Shore, as a part of the force directed to be raisen by the act of the Assembly passed at the last session.

Capt. James J. Teackle who hath enlisted a volunteer company of riflemen, and who has received commissions for himself and his officers is the bearer of this dispatch, and goes to Richmond to apply to you for the munitions and camp equipage contained in the enclosed return, and to obtain your Excellency, the equipment of his own corps. He is a young gentleman of great modesty and great worth, who will be able to give you any information you may think proper to make concerning the Eastern Shore of Virginia. I have the honor to be in behalf of Colo. Addison, Colo. Bagwell & myself,

Your Fellow Citizen,

Jno. Cropper Lt. Colo.
Commdt. 2d Regiment Virga. Militia

His Excellency
James Barbour,
Governor of
Virginia

Accomack County 29th March 1813

Sir,

The legislature of Virginia, at their last session, thought proper to place over my head, a gentleman not long since promoted to the rank of a Major, and recently to that of Lt. Colonel; a man without military experience I am informed. I entered the army of the revolution at the age of nineteen, served during the war, and have held the highest military commd. on the Eastern Shore ever since. My capacity and conduct were always approved as I believe. Under these circumstances it becomes my duty to resign the command of the 2d regiment, the right to do so will not I trust be doubted. The 9th brigade in particular, as well as all the militia you command will carry with them my best wishes for their honor & prosperity. Your Excellency will no longer consider me bearing a militia commission: but I beg you to accept my sincere respect for the attention you have paid to that part of the state in which I reside, and to myself as an officer.

I remain Your friend & fellow citizen

Jno. Cropper

His Excellency

Barbour, Governor of Virginia