

Robert Dinwiddie to George Washington, November 14, 1757, Letters to Washington and Accompanying Papers. Published by the Society of the Colonial Dames of America. Edited by Stanislaus Murray Hamilton.

FROM GOVERNOR DINWIDDIE.

WILLIAMSBURG Novr. 14th. 1757

SIR

Yr. Letter of the 5th. I duly recd. & I am much surpriz'd at what You write that the Indn. Affairs have been impeded by a Train of Mismanagemt. when I consider Mr. Atkin's Report that he had established every Thing in regard to those People in a most regular Manner I have wrote the Necessary to Ct. Gist on that Head, & order'd up a Qnty of Goods from Petersburg for that Service wch I hope will be at Winchester before this reaches You. I have it much at Heart to encourage the Cherokees & did not doubt but Mr. Atkin had agreeable to his Declaratn. fix'd every Thing in proper Order, if any Deficiency I hope the Goods sent up will supply; & Ct. Gist writes that he sent away the last 20, & nine that came before, tolerably pleas'd, by the Advance of some Goods;—& You write that with the Advice of Yr. Officers You stretched a point in supplyg. them with some Necessaries, wch I suppose was more than what Ct. Gist had given them.

I am glad the last Party had the Success of scalping two & wounding a third of the Enemy, they are to be applauded & rewarded for their Service—Gist complains he has no Goods which surprizes me, when Mr. Atkin says he left upwards of 800£ in Goods, with him; I believe they were design'd for the Catawbas, but on Occasion they shd. be made use

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of for those Indians that may come to our Assistance, & those for the Catawbas may hereafter be compleated, as the Cotry has sent Home for a large Qnty.

The Interpreter Smith left this a Month ago contrary to my Opinion Mr. Atkin sent him by Augusta but I hope he is with You long before this reaches You. Gist's Employmt. is to take Care of the Inds. & to deliver them Presents with discretion, & he has Goods for that Purpose, if not restrain'd by Mr. Atkin's Instructions, but I suppose he now writes him fully how to act.

Mr. Boyd carried up Money to pay Ct. Gist & the others employ'd by Mr. Atkin till the 14th. of last Month:—the Neglect or Delay of the Interpreter has Occasion'd some Difficulties entirely owing to Mr. Atkin sending him by Augusta but I hope he is now with You.

I have formerly wrote You to know the Demands of the poor People on Acct. of the Inds. wch I dare say is but a Trifle if any Thing, Mr. Boyd carried up Money for several of them:—Gordon's Acct. was paid, Brinker was also pd.—& a Person from the So. Branch carried up Money to pay several Accts. there; & if any is now due it is the People's own Fault in not giving them to Mr. Boyd there has been a considerable Sum pd. this Court on that Acct.—besides 220 to Mr. Atkin for the Inds. Expences durg. his Time, & indeed I was in hopes there was no more due.

I am with Respect Sir Your mo. hble Servant ROBT. DINWIDDIE ¹

¹ Governor Dinwiddie sailed for England in January, 1758. His departure was not much regretted, although the Council together with the municipality of Williamsburg addressed him in language expressive of their esteem and respect. Sparks writes of the governor that, however amiable in his social relations, however zealous in the discharge of his public trusts, he failed to win the hearts or command the respect of the people. Least of all was he qualified to transact military affairs. His whole course of conduct was marked with a confusion, uncertainty, and waywardness which caused infinite perplexity to Washington. Every one regarded the change as salutary to the interests of the colony. Dinwiddie's place was filled for a short time by John Blair, President of the Council, until the arrival of Francis Fauquier, the next governor. The Earl of Loudoun had been commissioned as successor to Governor Dinwiddie, but his military occupations at the north prevented his entering upon the duties of his office.