

**Henry Riddell to George Washington, March 2, 1774,  
Letters to Washington and Accompanying Papers.  
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**FROM MR. HENRY RIDDELL.**

PISCATAWAY 2d. March 1774

SIR

I cannot certainly engage to import the number of Germans mentioned in your Letter of the 1st, for owing to my ignorance of the Trade, I have no consistent principle, or anything like a certainty, to induce me, to enter on a positive Agreement, for the delivery of these people here. But should you chuse it, I can forward to Rotterdam the terms you offer such Germans as are able to export themselves,—and also the terms you offer those who are not, and therefore must come under Indenture before exportation. Should the people accept of these terms—the Ship will bring them out—if not, you will be subjected to no other inconvenience than a delay in the settlement of your Lands for a few Months, With regard to those People who are able to export themselves—no money will be required from you or us to set them down here; but in exporting the Indented Servants, some charges which do not now occur to us, may be required—would it not therefor be proper that you inform me of the price per Poll you would be satisfied to give, for the delivery of such Servants here, that in calculating the expense, my Friend might keep within your limits. Altho the number you mention is small, yet if you chuse to be troubled with no more for the present, I will endeavour to get you these, but can make no positive Agreement to deliver them here, It will be necessary that you mention the number of years the Indented

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Servants must agree for, and should you relish this Plan, I will give orders that no others than such as you describe shall be agreed engaged I am

Sir Your most obedt Servant HENRY RIDDELL <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Washington's reply is bound with the manuscript letters to Washington. MOUNT VERNON March 5th. 1774  
SIR The Reasons which you Assign for not undertaking positively to furnish me with the number & kind of Palatines mentioned in my last Letter, I must Confess are cogent; at the same time it obliges me, under that uncertainty, to lay aside the Scheme till I can be advis'd from Phila. (to which place I had written for Information previous to your first conversation with Mr Young) of the expence & certanty attending a measure of this kind: For the disadvantage on my side, of Standing bound to provide for these people if they do come, & haveing no certainty of receiveing them, is, that if any other Scheme Shoud cast up in the mean while, I dare not embrace it, or engage Tenants singly, as they occasionally may offer; as I have no doubt of many doing, when there are Houses and fields prepared to there hands; otherwise I might be involv'd in difficulties from which I could not easily extricate myself; but if it is Necessary to you to know (on Acc. of giveing the earliest Information to your Correspondent) whether these people will be wanting, or not before I can return from Berkeley, Frederick &c. I shall have no objection towards Importing the Number & kinds mentioned in my last, provided they will come indented to me, or my Assigns in the Usual manner for Four years; and be sold, if I Find it my Interest to do so (as they are in philadelphia as common Servants, dureing that term.—I cannot suffer much from the Uncertainty, if they are to be had upon these terms, & I see no reason why they may not as well come here as to Phila. except that the latter is the general rendezvous of them: It may therefore rest with you, Sir, to write immediately, or not, for Eighty or a Hundred of such kinds as I mentioned in my last; as you shall find it your Interest; and I will upon their arrival at Piscataway, pay you the Freight down; as also the contingent charges with Interest as soon after as I possibly can, in case I should not find it convenient to deposit the whole sum at once; — If you should not think this project of consequence enough to the Interest of your Ship, to attempt it, I must decline the importation altogether, for the present.—If on the other Hand you Incline to make the experiment, I shall rely on your Friendship to recommend to the Captn. or person who is to provide the Stores, to lay them in upon upon the best terms, & be governed by the customary allowance; both in respect to quantity & quallity, takeing care to have no stint of the first as the Surplusage can be accounted for upon the delivery here, I shall add no more at present than that I am Sir, Your Most Obedt Hble. Servt GO. WASHINGTON