

George Washington to John A. Washington, July 27, 1775, with Map of Boston, The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799. John C. Fitzpatrick, Editor.

***To JOHN AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON**

Camp at Cambridge, about 5 miles from Boston, July 27, 1775.

Dear Brother: On the 2nd Inst. I arrived at this place, after passing through a great deal of delightful Country, covered with grass, (although the Season has been dry) in a very different manner to what our Lands in Virginia are.

I found a mixed multitude of People here, under very little discipline, order, or Government. I found the enemy in possession of a place called Bunker's Hill, on Charles Town Neck, strongly Intrenched, and Fortifying themselves; I found part of our Army on two Hills, (called Winter and Prospect Hills) about a Mile and a quarter from the enemy on Bunker's Hill, in a very insecure state; I found another part of the Army at this Village; and a third part at Roxbury, guarding the Entrance in and out of Boston. My whole time, since I came here, has been Employed in throwing up Lines of Defence at these three several places; to secure, in the first Instance, our own Troops from any attempts of the Enemy; and, in the next, to cut off all Communication between their troops and the Country; For to do this, and to prevent them from penetrating into the Country with Fire and Sword, and to harass them if they do, is all that is expected of me; and if effected, must totally overthrow the designs of Administration, as the whole Force of Great Britain in the Town and Harbour of Boston can answer no other end, than to sink her under the disgrace and weight of the expense. Their Force, including Marines, Tories, &c., are computed, from the best accounts I can

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get, at about 12,000 Men¹ ; ours, including Sick absent, &c., at about 16,000; but then we have a Cemi Circle of Eight or Nine Miles, to guard to every part of which we are obliged to be equally attentive; whilst they, situated as it were in the Center of the Cemicircle, can bend their whole Force (having the entire command of the Water), against any one part of it with equal facility; This renders our Situation not very agreeable, though necessary; however, by incessant labour (Sundays not excepted), we are in a much better posture of defence than when I first came. The Inclosed, though rough, will give you some small Idea of the Situation of Boston, and Bay on this side; as also of the Post they have Taken in Charles Town Neck, Bunker's Hill, and our Posts.²

By very authentick Intelligence lately received out of Boston (from a Person who saw the returns), the number of Regulars (including I presume the Marines) the morning of the Action on Bunker's Hill amounted to 7533 Men; their killed and wounded on that occasion amounted to 1043, whereof 92 were Officers. Our loss was 138 killed, 36 Missing, and 276 Wounded.

The Enemy are sickly, and scarce of Fresh provisions, Beef, which is chiefly got by slaughtering their Milch Cows in Boston, sells from one shilling to 18d. Sterling per lb.; and that it may not get cheaper, or more plenty, I have drove all the Stock, within a considerable distance of this place, back into the Country, out of the Way of the Men of war's Boats; In short, I have, and shall continue to do, every thing in my power to distress them. The Transports are all arrived and their whole Reinforcement is Landed, so that I can see no reason why they should not if they ever attempt it, come boldly out and put the matter to Issue at once; if they think themselves not strong enough to do this, they surely will carry their Arms (having Ships of War and Transports ready) to some other part of the Continent, or relinquish the dispute; the last of which the Ministry, unless compelled will never agree to do. Our Works, and those of the Enemy are so near and quite open between that we see every thing that each other is doing. I recollect nothing more worth

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mentioning. I shall therefore conclude with my best wishes, and love to my Sister and Family, and Compliments to any enquiring Friends, your most affectionate brother.

1age, in July, found from a census of the city population 6,573 civilians and an army of 13,500.— Ford.
2his sketch accompanies the letter, which is in the Washington Papers.