

George Washington to William Heath, March 19, 1776, Orders, The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799. John C. Fitzpatrick, Editor.

INSTRUCTIONS AND ORDERS TO BRIGADIER GENERAL WILLIAM HEATH

Head Quarters, Cambridge, March 19, 1776.

As you are forthwith to take upon you the Command of the Brigade, now upon their March to Norwich in Connecticut, consisting of the 5th, 16th, 19th, 24 and 25th Regiments, you will without Delay proceed to Norwich, where you will confer with the Persons appointed to provide Vessels for the Transportation of the Troops to New York. Dispatch and secrecy are necessary in embarking and sailing with this Brigade from thence to the Place of their Destination in doing which, you must be intirely governed by the Information you will receive at Norwich, and such Intelligence of the Motions of the Enemy's Ships of War, and armed Vessels, as you will be able to procure at Norwich, and from the Mouth of that River. As you have your own Coast aboard, there will be no Risque in transporting the Troops by Water unless the Enemy's Ships are in Possession of the Mouth of the River previous to your Arrival there. In that Case, you will disembark the Troops, and march the Brigade by Land to New York.

Perceiving that several of the Baggage Carts carried from hence, Tables, and other Articles of Household Furniture you are strictly enjoined to ease the Carriages of all such Trumpery, and positively not to suffer the March of the Brigade to be retarded, by any unnecessary Luggage being put into the Baggage Carts.

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By the Order of March, delivered to the commanding Officers of the several Divisions of the Brigade, now upon their March to Norwich, it is forcibly recommended to them to exert their utmost Diligence, and authority, to prevent all pillaging, and marauding; and every Species of Abuse or ill Treatment of the Inhabitants of the Country. This Order you will continue to enforce, and command to be strictly observed.

Upon your Arrival with the Brigade at New York, you will wait upon the commanding General there, and receive and obey such Orders and Instructions, as he shall think necessary to give but you are not upon any Account to go before your Brigade into that City, nor be at any Time absent from them more than ten Miles, taking particular Care to acquaint the Colonels commanding the Divisions, where you lay of Nights, that they may know where to send upon any Emergency for your Orders and Directions.

If, when you arrive at New York, there is no General of superior Rank, nor no senior Officer to yourself, you will take the Command of the Army there, and with all possible Diligence proceed in executing Major General Lee's Plan for fortifying that Post, and the entrench'd Camp proposed.¹

¹The draft is in the writing of Horatio Gates.