

George Washington to Israel Putnam, September 10, 1777, The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799. John C. Fitzpatrick, Editor.

To MAJOR GENERAL ISRAEL PUTNAM

Chads Ford, September 10, 1777.

Dear Sir: The prospect of a descent from Staten Island on Jersey, by the Enemy posted and collected there, has induced Congress to order Fifteen Hundred Troops at Peeks Kill, with a Brigadier, to be in readiness to march for repelling them. This they have advised you of, as they informed me by Letter Yesterday. As there are many circumstances, proving this invasion likely to take place, from the seeming preparations they are making, their collecting forces from Long Island &ca, You will give orders for the above number of Troops under the Command of a Brigadier, immediately to march to Jersey and to take such posts along and in the Neighbourhood of the Sound between the Main and Staten Island, as will best answer the purposes of defeating the Enemy's views and of securing themselves against any sudden attack or surprise. I would also observe, that as this detachment is ordered from you, I think you should call in all your parties upon out commands, and that you should keep your force pretty well drawn together.

On Monday the Enemy advanced towards our post at New Port, as if they meant to attack us, but it was thought, their then appearance was only to amuse in Front, while their real object was either to pass by our right Flank or to fall upon it. In this conjecture we were right, as their subsequent conduct has proved. Accordingly we changed our Ground Yesterday Morning, and advanced more into the Country to this post. The Enemy pursuing their former plan, moved also. By Light Horsemen just come in, they are advancing upon

Library of Congress

us. We are preparing to receive them and should they come on, I trust, under the smiles of Providence and thro' our own conduct, that we shall give them a repulse or at most, that they will have to enjoy a painful and dear bought victory. I am etc.

P.S. This Letter, His Excellency intended to sign, but was prevented by a report of the Enemy's advancing which called him out.¹

¹his letter is signed "Robt. H. Harrison," and the text is in his handwriting.