

that our Militia Laws are very defective & that the Officers are not vested with a sufficient power to compel the Men to obey all such Orders as they may think proper to issue &c Letter Bk. III

[Sharpe to Pitt.]

Annapolis the 26th May 1757.

Sir

I do myself the honour to acknowledge the Receipt of your two Letters dated the 4th & 19th of Feb^y last, & in answer thereto to inform you that I have met the General Assembly of this Province & pressed them in the most earnest manner to raise with the utmost Expedition as large a Number of Troops as they could support & as the Earl of Loudoun required for the Service of the ensuing Campaign.

As there was enough Money already raised & in the Treasury to support 500 Men during the Summer the Assembly were prevailed on without much Difficulty to pass a Vote for supporting that Number but as this Colony has been much drained of Men by the Officers of His Majesty's Regular as well as of the Provincial Troops, I am afraid it will be some time before the two New Companies that I have given Orders for raising will be compleated.

In answer to that part of Your Letter whereby You signify it to be His Majesty's pleasure that these Troops should be put under the Direction of the Earl of Loudoun or the Officer that may be appointed to command in these parts I must inform you that I earnestly recommended it to the Assembly & insisted on their coming into this measure so long as it was thought advisable to do so, but I was at length obliged either to give up this point or dismiss the Assembly without obtaining any Supplies for the general Service or the immediate Defence of this Province.

In the Act that was made for the Support of the Men they would insert a Clause directing how they should be posted & disposed of & tho they were persuaded to leave it to Colo Stanwix to march a part of them out of the Province on an Expedition or if the Exigency of Affairs should so require yet they would not agree to their being disposed of while within the Province otherwise than is specified in the Act & I am sorry to say that that Disposition is not quite agreeable to the Earl of Loudoun's Plan or my own opinion. I learn from Fort Cumberland that a Sergeant of the Virginia Regiment & a Catawba Indian who were taken Prisoners & carried to Fort Du Quesne in November last have lately made their Escape & declare that the Garrison of that Fort did not in the Winter exceed One hundred & fifty Men but that a large