

c. s. c. We have given Cap^t Woolford an order on Cap^t Robinson for the province, arms which he rec^d from the Committee of observation of Kent County and we hope soon to be able to compleatly arm his & the other Independ^t Companies stationed on your shore. Upon the late alarm some powder was given into the hands of the militia on this side the Bay & we fear it will be difficult to collect the greatest part of it again & that too much of what may remain with the people will be lost to the public. We recommend it to you therefore to deliver to the Cap^t on the Water side as much as you may conceive will be sufficient (taking their receipts) with orders not to distribute it among the respective companies until there is a real necessity & to keep the residue in some convenient part of your county where upon any emergency the other companies may be readily supplied :

Original.

[Mason and Dalton to Council.]

Virginia, Fairfax County March 15th 1776.

Gentlemen. Being employed by the Committee o. Safety for this Colony to fit out three armed cruisers, & two row-gallies, for the protection of Potomack River, we have, in Consequence thereof, bought three sloops; the largest of which (called the American Congress) will mount 14 Carriage Guns, 6 & 4 pounders, & be man'd with about ninety Men. We are now raising her Company of Marines, which will be completed in a few Days; she has most of her Guns mounted, the shot are now casting, at a Furnace in the Neighbourhood, & if we had Powder, she would be very soon fit for Action. We wrote to our Delegates at the Congress to purchase for us in Philadelphia twenty Barrels of Powder, & forward it to us by Land, to serve 'til we could get a larger supply, which they promised to do, so soon as it could be procured there, but none has yet come to Hand, & we are very uneasy, least some of the Enemies Cutters should come up this River, to destroy our Vessels, before they are in a Posture of Defence. As this Equipment will be as beneficial to the Inhabitants on the north side of Potomack as to those on this side, we doubt not the Disposition of your Board to promote it; and under these Circumstance, we take the Liberty to apply to you for the Loan of ten Bar^s of the Powder lately imported for y^r Province, in Capt. Conway's Vessel now in the Eastern Branch of Potomack; which shall be replaced out of the first Powder we receive from the northward, or elsewhere; if ten Bar^s can't be spared, even five or six Bar^s wou'd be very serviceable, & might answer our Purpose, until the supply we expect from