

that 4000 troops chiefly British are embarked for the West Indies or Georgia, though the latter is the most suspected. General Vaughan & Leslie are supposed to take the command. They were to embark this day, and the fleet to sail on their voyage immediately” Original

I also transmit an extract of a letter of the same date from Lt. Col^o Ford on Command at Shrewsbury—“ Twenty seven square rigged Vessels of the Enemy’s fleet and twelve or fourteen sloops & schooners put to sea this evening. They steered a south east course till they got out of sight. By a person from New York who was a prisoner I am informed that the report there was that between 6 & 7000 troops were embarked. He sailed in company with them from New York to the watering place—saw a number of light horse on board, and that the fleet was very full of Men—that the destination was a secret, the officers appeared anxious to know—that their conjectures were various about it. Some talked of Georgia, Some of Maryland, and others of Rhode Island.”

From these several accounts and the particularity with which they are related, there can be no doubt but that a body of troops have embarked and sailed. What their number is cannot be ascertained, but even according to the lowest estimate, which from a consideration of the fleet and many other circumstances I should suppose to be as high as it possibly can be and to exceed their real amount it is formidable. I wish the West Indies may be their object, but from their having horse and other considerations it is to be feared their operations will be on our Southern continent

Your Excellency will be pleased to receive a copy of the report by the Gentlemen appointed on our part to negotiate a Cartel for the general exchange of prisoners or an agreement for a more partial relief.

I have the honor to be, with Great respect & esteem,
your Excell^y mo. obed^t serv^t
G^o Washington

P. S. I have this minute rec^d a Letter from gen^l Schuyler, transmitting Minutes of proceedings in the enterprize against Onondaga, commanded by col. Van Scaick. An extract from the former and a Copy of the latter your Excellency will find inclosed.

Col^o Ford’s account of a fleets sailing out of the Hook is confirmed by others just come to hand. The latter make the fleet something larger, and one says, owing to a sixty-four Gun ship, which had a flag at the topmast head, not getting out, they came to an anchor in the Evening on the sea side, and were there yesterday morning at 9 o’clock. They also