

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL.

BALTIMORE, *December 1, 1930.*

To The Maryland Historical Society.

GENTLEMEN :

This volume of the Archives of Maryland is the forty-seventh of the general series, and the seventh of the subseries relating to the Revolution. The sixth volume of this subseries, which appeared in 1927, dealt with the Journal and Correspondence of the State Council for portions of the years 1780 and 1781. In that volume will be found the Proceedings of the Council and letters emanating from the Council itself for the twelve-month period extending from November 13, 1780, to November 13, 1781, and letters addressed to the Council from July 1st to December 31st, 1780. The present volume is devoted to letters addressed to the Council from January 1st, 1781, to December 31, 1781. The material which goes to make up the present volume is derived in part from the more important letters preserved in the three series of scrap books designated by the color of their bindings, as the Red, Brown and Black Books, and from the mass of loose papers belonging to the State, now on deposit with the Maryland Historical Society. It is to be noted that the correspondence addressed to the Council shows a progressive increase in volume as the Revolution dragged on. The letters themselves deal with a wide variety of subjects, ranging from vital problems involving the conduct of the war to less important personal matters.

Covering as these letters do the critical period of the Revolution, when the troops under La Fayette, and a few months later the army under Washington, were hurrying through Maryland by land and water on their way to Virginia to take part in the operations which were to culminate in the siege of Yorktown and the surrender of Cornwallis, we have brought vividly before us in their reading the efforts of the Maryland authorities to feed and to facilitate the transportation of these armies. Vessels, horses, and food had to be bought or requisitioned on a large scale, and the difficulties which confronted the local commissaries, who had at their disposal only a depreciated currency with which to make their purchases, were almost insurmountable. Perhaps the plight of Colonel Henry Hollingsworth of Cecil County, Commissary for the Eastern Shore, was the most trying, for upon his shoulders fell the task of supplying vessels and food for the numerous American and French troops that embarked