

## Letter from George Washington to Charles Cornwallis, October 18, 1781

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Head Qu<sup>rs</sup> before York Oct: 18 1781.

My Lord,

To avoid unnecessary discussion and delays, I shall at once, in Answer to your Lordships letters of yesterday, declare the general basis upon which a definitive treaty and Capitulation must take place: The Garrisons of York and Gloucester, including the Seamen, as you propose, will be received Prisoners of War. The condition annexed of sending the British and German Troops to the parts of Europe to which they respectively belong, is inadmissible; instead of this, they will be marched to such parts of the Country as can most conveniently provide for their subsistence: and the benevolent treatment of Prisoners, which is invariably observed by the Americans, will be extended to them. The same honors will be granted to the surrendering Army as were granted to the Garrison of Charlestown. The Shipping & Boats in the two harbours, with all their Guns, Stores, Tackling, furniture and apparel, shall be delivered in their present State to an Officer of the Navy, appointed to take possession of them.

The Artillery, Arms, Accoutrements, Military Chest and Public Stores of every denomination shall be delivered unimpaired to the heads of Departments, to which they respectively belong.

The Officers will be indulged in retaining their side Arms, and the Officers and Soldiers may preserve their baggage and effects; with this reserve, that property taken in the Country, will be reclaimed.

With regard to the individuals in civil capacities, whose Interest your Lordship wishes may be attended to: until they are more particularly described, nothing definitive can be settled.

I have to add, that I expect the Sick and Wounded will be supplied with their own Hospital Stores, and be attended by British Surgeons, particularly charged with the care of them.

Your Lordship will be pleased to signify your determination either to accept or reject the proposals now offered, in the course of two hours from the delivery of this letter, that Commissioners may be appointed to digest the Articles of Capitulation, or a renewal of hostilities may take place. I have the Honor to be, my Lord

Your Lordship's most ob<sup>t</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>

GWashington.

Document Source: Library of Congress