

Letter from Henry Knox to Lucy Knox, October 19, 1781

Camp before York 8 o'clock A.M. 19th October 1781

I have detain'd William untill this moment that I might be the first to communicate good news to the Charmer of my soul. a glorious moment for America! This day Lord Cornwallis & his Army marches out & piles their Arms in the face of our victorious Army. The day before Yesterday he desir'd commissioners might be named to treat of the surrender of his troops, their ships and every thing they possess. he at first requested that the Britons might be sent to Britain & the Germans to Germany. but this the General refused, and they have now agreed to surrender prisoners of War to be kept in America untill exchanged or released – They will have the same honors as the Garrison of Charlestown – that is they will not be permitted to unfurl their Colours or play Yankee doodle We know not yet how many they are – The General has just requested me to be at head quarters instantly – therefore I cannot be more particular – I have a note from Biddle Lucy is well & perfectly contented – I send you the last letter I recd of my Brother by which you will see in some degree the state of our affairs which are not bad.

I wish your situation had been such as to have come with Mrs Washington, Truth is that you might have done it with out the least particle of injury – I shall see you if possible by the 12th, 15 or 20th of next month. how much I long for the happy moment! –

I forgot one circumstance Billy wrote us in a letter which I cant find that the Miss Cummings from Halifax send their love to you by one of your your Cousin Waldos that they had just heard from England and that your dear connections were all well – excuse this hasty scrawl – William will be able to inform you how little time I have had even for sleep

Adieu the best beloved of my heart. and believe me to be your ever affectionate

Love – HKnox

I have informed his Excellency the General, and M^r Custis of Williams journey but they think M^{rs} Washington & M^{rs} Custis are at W^{ms}burg.

Transcript Source: The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History