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1778 Jan. 14

Draft, handwriting of John Laurens

(Bakó)

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Head Quarters 14th January 1778

Sir

Your Letter of the 9th Instant was deliver'd to me yesterday and I immediately acquainted the Forage Master General with such parts of it as related to his department. If proper Magazines for the Subsistence of the Cavalry cannot be formed at Trenton, this is an insurmountable obstacle to their quartering there, and they must of necessity be removed to Flemming town or some other convenient place in that neighborhood, where the proper supplies can be obtained. But if the only objection to Trenton be a little difficulty that may at first occur in procuring the most desirable Quarters for the Officers and men, I would not have any time lost in [illegible] farther. The Barracks and the Town together will certainly furnish ample Quarters for the Galley-men and the Cavalry, the latter may with more propriety be billeted on the Inhabitants in order to have their horses ~~more~~ immediately under their eye.

~~As I am totally unacquainted with the Character and Abilities of Mr [illegible], I can't with any degree of propriety consent to his being appointed to the Office which you nominate for him and indeed I must caution you against introducing foreigners into the service unless in instances where remarkable merit justifies it.~~

As so much has been said of the Character and abilities of Mr Kowatch, I have no objection to his being engaged in the Capacity of Exercise Master for a few months. At the same time I must caution you against a fondness for introducing foreigners into the Service, their ignorance of the Language of the Country