

Alexander Hamilton to Francois De Marbois

Preakness, New Jersey, October 12, 1780.

Autograph letter signed, 2 pages + address leaf.

In my absence from Camp, the Commissary of Prisoners has no doubt informed you, that your Brothers were not at New York – I am sorry you were so long kept in suspense about an explanation which without a determined disposition to blunder ought to have been long since obtained –

I find, my Dear Sir, on the experiment in several ways, that I cannot regularly procure the New York papers in exchange for those of Philadelphia – The only certain mode would be to send a weekly flag for the purpose, but the General apprehensive of popular jealousies, thinks it would inconvenient. – I shall with pleasure continue to forward them as often as they come into my hands; but I will not give you the trouble of sending regularly those of Philadelphia, as the object you have in view cannot be answered by it –

We are again told of an embarkation on the point of sailing three days since. We have been so often [2] deceived that we are diffident of accounts of this kind; but the present come with a degree of emphasis, that entitle them to attention – No [*inserted*: particulars] The want of money makes us want every thing else – even [*struck*: alle] intelligence.

I have received since my [*struck*: let] return several letters from you – I agree with you my Dear Sir that while we call to our friends for help, we ought to help ourselves; and I am mortified that we seem not to be in a disposition to do it – The late deliberations on our military affairs prove that we have not profitted by experience; – Still the same system of feebleness and temporary expedients. Misfortune may at last [*struck*: make illegible] enlighten us; but it may [*inserted*: come too late to do any thing more] [*strikeout*] than to make our "darkness visible" and discover to us "sights of woe" – I confess I view our affairs in a gloomy light – We hear there is to be a Congress of the neutral powers to meet at the hague this winter to mediate a peace – God send it – we want one.

Permit me to repeat to you the assurances of my attachment.

A Hamilton

October 12th. 80

[*address leaf*]

M^r. De Marbois

Secretary of Embassy to

his most Christian

Majesty &c. &c.

Philadelphia