

## X CITIZEN SOLDIERS

greatest Powers on Earth against a People nobly struggling for Liberty. A Line of Honour would mark out, that these Men should share the Fate of their Country. If your Arms should be crowned with victory, which God forbid, they and their Property will be entirely at the Disposal of your Sovereign. The Loss of their Property, while their Persons are out of your Power, will only make them desperate, and, as I said before, increase your Foes and our Army; and Retaliation upon Tories and their Property is not entirely out of our Power. Be assured that these are the Sentiments and determined Resolution not only of myself, but of all the Officers and Privates under me. My Prayer is, Sir, that this Answer may reach you in good Health and great Happiness.

ELIJAH HAND, Colonel.

### 7 Colonel Joseph Ellis to Governor William Livingston

[George Washington Papers, ser. 4, reel 48, Presidential Papers Microfilm Series (Library of Congress).]

An alarm went out in the early months of 1778 for the militia to rise and resist the incursions of British foraging parties roaming through southwest Jersey. With few exceptions (see Doc. 6), the response was at best disappointing. In the letter that follows, Colonel Joseph Ellis of Gloucester County, who had replaced the slothful Silas Newcomb as commander of the southern militia in January, describes the poor turnout of troops to repel the invaders. The account is not atypical. Throughout the war the commanders of the state militia were frustrated by the erratic behavior of their men and the inadequacy of regulations governing the units.

Haddonfield 23d March 1778

Sir

I received yours of the 21st. Instant & hope the Militia of Hunterdon & Sussex will turn out well, as there cannot be greater Occasion for them than at present. I have repeatedly call'd on the Col[one]ls at Burlington but without Effect: not a single man of them appears, nor do I hear there is any motion of the kind among them. We can get but very few from Salem or Cumberland as they plead the Necessity of guarding their own Coast which I think not unreasonable.<sup>1</sup> Gloucester of late is little better, they being discouraged at the Weakness of the Post in part, & partly for want of their Pay, which with some Companys is several months in Arrear. Col[one]l: Otto's<sup>2</sup> Battalion have chiefly revolted to the Enemy & have made Prisoners of a Number of their Officers, those who have eskaped dare not stay at their Homes; Col[onel]: Somer's<sup>3</sup> Battalion upon the last call for two Classes have not sent

## NEW JERSEY IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

twenty men. The Market to Philadelphia is now open nor is it in my Power to stop it with about fifty men which is all I have at present. I hope the Arrival of a few continental Troops will change the face of Affairs & encourage the Militia to turn out. The few East Jersey Militia that came from Middlesex & Monmouth Countys some time ago—one Company's Time was near expired at their Arrival & the rest deserted in a few days. On the Enemy's first embarking to go down the River I received intelligence of their design which was to forage in Salem & Cumberland County's and sent Express immediately. They have since landed at Salem and are ravaging that part of the Country, of the particulars of which I expect you will be informed of by Express gone thro' here yesterday.<sup>4</sup> I think it not safe for Capt[ain] Cluns<sup>5</sup> Artillery to come here 'till we are reinforced by some Infantry to support them. The Militia from above should come properly equipped as we have not Arms or Ammunition sufficient to supply them. I would just beg leave to remark that without some standing force we have little to expect from the Militia who being alone not sufficient to prevent the incursions of the Enemy, each one naturally consults his own Safety by not being found in Arms, which will I hope be remedied on Col[one] Shreeves<sup>6</sup> arrival. I am,

Sir

Your Most Humble Servt.

JOS: ELLIS.

1. See Sec. XI, Doc. 9.
2. Colonel Bodo Otto of Gloucester County.
3. Colonel Richard Somers of Gloucester County.
4. See Doc. 6.
5. Captain Joseph Clunn of Hunterdon County.
6. Colonel Israel Shreve of Gloucester County.

### 8 “Belinda” Encourages Women to Reject Reconciliation and Support the War

[*New-Jersey Gazette*, May 6, 1778.]

Until recently, the following letter was believed to be the first ever published in the press by a woman from New Jersey, but the identity of its author was unknown. The tone and tenor of the piece suggested that “Belinda” might be a pseudonym for a male cleverly attempting to induce Jersey women to imitate Lysistrata in politicizing the men; the editors of the Papers of William Livingston have now identified the author as Livingston himself. Livingston also used the