

9 Lieutenant Shepard Kollock to Colonel John Lamb

[New Jersey Letters, Alexander Library, Rutgers University; original manuscript in the John Lamb Papers, New-York Historical Society.]

The ostensible reason for which Shepard Kollock threatened to resign his lieutenant's commission in Colonel John Lamb's Second Continental Artillery was not unusual; many officers quit the army piqued by what they considered inadequate or inequitable promotions. While Kollock's specific grievances are unknown, political and personal considerations often outweighed merit when it came to advancement in the military. After leaving the service, Kollock went into business for himself, establishing the *New-Jersey Journal* at Chatham as a rival to Isaac Collins's *New-Jersey Gazette* (see Sec. XIII, Doc. 1). A publisher without peer and a staunch republican who believed in the efficacy of public education, Kollock subsequently launched two other newspaper enterprises in the state and organized a lending library in Elizabethtown in 1786.

New Windsor, May 15, 1778.

Sir

As there is now a Prospect of a Termination of the War, and its more than probable there will be no Campaign this Year,¹ beg I may be indulged to resign my Commission, my domestic Affairs requiring my personal Attendance. I have very cogent Reasons for making this Request; Reasons which, in my Oppinion, would justify the most abrupt Resignation; but as I entered the Services from a patriotic Principle, was not willing to discourage the same, therefore passed over, with impunity, several very ungenerous Promotions. I would not wish to wound your Ears with a Repitition of Grievances, which, I believe, are repugnant to your Sentiments, and did not originate from you, however I can't help observing that I look up on it as an unprecedented hardship of four Supernumerary Captain Lieutenants² being appointed to your Regiment; also my Commission dated in February, though appointed in December; Second Lieutenants and Serjeants appointed to Captain Lieutenants, and, to my knowledge, not from Acts of Merit. These are Grievances of such a Glaring Nature, I find it difficult to digest them. I look upon the present Commission I hold a tantamount to my Abilities, but when I take a Survey of some above me, have the Vanity to think I could fill the important Post of Captain Lieutenant and with equal Applause, therefore beg, if I am not Capable of Promotion in my Turn, I may be discharged from the Service. I am Sir,

Your's with Respect,
SHEPARD KOLLOCK

1. Actually, the British and American armies were on the eve of a campaign through New Jersey. See Sec. IX, Doc. 7.

2. Captain lieutenant: a rank between first lieutenant and captain no longer in use.

10 “Molly Pitcher” at the Battle of Monmouth Court House

[Joseph Plumb Martin, *A Narrative of Some of the Adventures, Dangers and Sufferings of a Revolutionary Soldier*. . . (Hallowell, Maine, 1830), pp. 96-97.]

New Jersey's most famous heroine of the revolutionary war is the legendary “Molly Pitcher,” who gained notoriety for her courage at the battle of Monmouth Court House on June 28, 1778. Surrounded by myth and legend, “Molly Pitcher” comes to life as Mary Hays McCauly of Carlisle, Pennsylvania, a rough, tough woman who reportedly smoked and chewed tobacco and swore like a trooper. During the war she accompanied her first husband, William Hayes, artilleryman in the First Pennsylvania, on his tours of duty. At Monmouth she was busily carrying water to the weary cannoneers when her spouse fell wounded; she took over operation of his piece with what was reported as great skill and courage. Mary McCauley belongs properly to Pennsylvania, but New Jerseyans since 1778 have adopted “Molly Pitcher” as their own. The account which follows is the only extant firsthand report of the incident; the author, New Englander Joseph Plumb Martin, was a private in the Light Infantry, Continental army.

[June 28, 1778]

One little incident happened during the heat of the cannonade, which I was eye-witness to, and which I think would be unpardonable not to mention. A woman whose husband belonged to the Artillery, and who was then attached to a piece in the engagement, attended with her husband at the piece the whole time. While in the act of reaching [for] a cartridge and having one of her feet as far before the other as she could step, a cannon shot from the enemy passed directly between her legs without doing any other damage than carrying away all the lower part of her petticoat. Looking at it with apparent unconcern, she observed that it was lucky it did not pass a little higher, for in that case it might have carried away something else, and continued her occupation.