

ARMY MOVEMENTS

General St. Clair to Henry Knox, Secretary of War

Fort Washington, 6 October 1791

I have now the satisfaction to inform you that the Army moved from Fort Hamilton, the name I have given to the fort on the Miami, on the 4th, at eight in the morning, under the command of General Butler.

The order of march and encampment I had regulated before, and on the third returned to this place to get up the militia. They marched yesterday, and consist of but about three hundred men, as you will see by the enclosed abstract of the muster. I have reason to believe, however, that at least an equal number will be up here by the 10th, and I have left orders for their following us. The monthly return should have accompanied this Letter, but it was not ready when I left camp, and has not been forwarded since. I have hitherto found it impossible to reduce the officers commanding corps to punctuality with respect to their returns, but they are mending. Our number, after deducting the garrisons of this place and Fort Hamilton, are about two thousand, exclusive of the militia. I trust, I shall find them sufficient, and should the rest of the militia come on, it will make the matter pretty certain; but the season is now so far advanced, that I fear the intermediate posts, which would, indeed, have been highly necessary, it will be impossible to establish. In that, however, I must be governed by circumstances, of which I will take care that you shall be apprised in due time. Should the enemy come to meet us, which seems to be expected, and be discomfited, there will be no difficulties, but if they expect us at the Miami villages, the business will wear another face, and the intermediate posts become more essential.

Since the Quartermaster has been here, and got into his geers, which it took him a little time to do, I am very well satisfied with him, and do believe he will answer the description which you was pleased to give me of him; his business seems now to be well arranged.

In order to communicate with some degree of certainty with your office, I have directed Captain Buel, when he arrives, to send a Sergeant and twelve men to a house that has been newly erected, half-way between this place and Lexington, to each of which two men are to be sent off on every Monday morning to carry despatches. Those for the War Office, or any other public letters, to be put into the hands of Mr. Charles Wilkins, merchant of Lexington, who has engaged to forward all I have occasion to send, regularly, once a fort-night; and should you, sir, think proper to use the same route for any of yours, if they are sent to his care, he will forward them to me. I have been led to prefer this channel of communication to that of the river, because it appears to be rather the more certain of two, though it may be a little more tedious, and because desertion continues to prevail among the troops, and the sending small parties to such a distance gives great opportunity to effect it. General Butler informs me that no less than twenty-one went off the night before the Army moved from Fort Hamilton. I am this moment, setting out for the Army, which I hope to overtake to-morrow evening, and will write to you again, as soon after as may be.

With great regard and respect, I have the honor to be, sir, your very humble servant,

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