

# TROOP MOVEMENTS

## General St. Clair to Henry Knox, Secretary of War

Camp, 81 miles advanced of Fort Washington, 1 November 1791

Since I had the honor to write to you on the 21<sup>st</sup> instant, nothing very material has happened, and indeed, I am at present so unwell, and have been so for some time past, that I could ill detail it, if it had happened, not that that space of time has been entirely barren of incidents, but as few of them have been of the agreeable kind, I beg you to accept a sort of journal account of them, which will be the easiest for me.

On the 22<sup>d</sup>, the indisposition that had hung about me for some time, sometimes appearing as a bilious choleric, and sometimes as a rheumatic asthma, to my great satisfaction changed to a gout in the left arm and hand, leaving the breast and stomach perfectly relieved, and the cough, which had been excessive, entirely gone. This day, Mr. Ellis, with sixty militia from Kentucky, joined the Army, and brought up a quantity of flour and beef.

23<sup>d</sup>. Two men taken in the act of deserting to the enemy, and one for shooting another soldier, and threatening to kill an officer, were hanged upon the grand parade, the whole Army being drawn out; since the Army has halted, the country around this, and a-head for fifteen miles, has been well examined, it is a country which, had we arrived a month sooner in it, and with three times the number of animals, they would have been all fat now.

24<sup>th</sup>. Named the fort, Jefferson, (it lies it lat. 50. 4. 22 N.) and marched the same Indian path, serving to conduct us about six miles, and encamped on good ground and an excellent position; a rivulet in front and a very large drain, which would at the proper season afford forage for a thousand horses on the left. So ill this day that I had much difficulty in keeping with the Army.

25<sup>th</sup>. Very hard rains last night, obliged to halt to-day on account of provisions, for though the soldiers may be kept pretty easy in camp under the expectation of provisions arriving, they cannot bear to march in advance, and take none along with them; received a letter from Mr. Hodgson, by express; 1,300 pounds flour will arrive the 27<sup>th</sup>.

26<sup>th</sup>. A party of militia, sent to reconnoitre, fell in with five Indians and suffered them to slip through their fingers. In their camp, articles to the value of \$22 were found and divided. The Virginia battalion is melting down very fast, notwithstanding the promises of the men to the officers. Thirteen have been discharged by Colonel Darke to-day.

27<sup>th</sup>. Gave orders for enlisting the levies, with the condition of serving out their time in the present corps. Payamingo arrived in camp with his warriors. I was so unwell, could only see him and bid him welcome; but entered on no business. Considerable dissatisfaction among the levies about their enlistments.

28<sup>th</sup>. Some clothing sent for to Fort Washington for the recruits arrived; was begun to be distributed, and will have a good effect; but the enlisting the levies does not meet with the encouragement that might have been expected. It is not openly complained of by the officers, but it is certainly privately by some of high rank; and the measure of tempting them with warm clothing, condemned. Mr. Hodgson writes me, that he is sending forward a quantity of woolen overalls and socks, by General Butler's orders. I have ordered them to be deposited at Fort Jefferson. Some few Indians about us, probably those the militia fell in with a day or two ago. Two of the levies were fired upon about three miles off; one killed; two of the militia likewise. One of them got in, and the other missing, supposed to be taken.

29<sup>th</sup>. Payamingo and his people, accompanied by Captain Sparks, and four good riflemen, going on a scout, they do not propose to return under ten days, unless they sooner succeed in taking prisoners.

30<sup>th</sup>. The Army moved about nine o'clock, and with much difficulty made seven miles, having left a considerable part of the tents by the way; the provision made by the Quartermaster for that purpose was not adequate—three days' flour issued to the men, to add the horses that carried it to his arrangements—the Indian road still with us; the course of this day N. 25 W.

31<sup>st</sup>. This morning about sixty of the militia deserted; it was at first reported that one-half of them had gone off, and that their design was to plunder the convoys which were upon the road. I detached the first regiment in pursuit of them, with orders to Major Hamtramck to send a sufficient guard back with Benham (a Commissary) whenever he met with them, and follow them about twenty-five miles below Fort Jefferson, or until he met the second convoy, and then return and join the Army. Benham arrived last night; and to-day, November 1<sup>st</sup>, the Army is halted to give the road-cutters an opportunity of getting some distance a-head, and that I might write to you. I am this day considerably recovered, and hope that it will turn out, what I at first expected it would be, a friendly fit of the gout come to relieve me from every other complaint.

Yesterday I was favored with your's of the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of September. I have enclosed my communications with the old and new contractors, and their answers. My orders from the posts to them are not yet definitive, but they will be very soon. In the mean time, I expect they are both at work.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

P.S. Your Letters for General Wilkinson and General Scott, Mr. Jones and Mr. Brown, are sent back; and the public thanks, in the name of the PRESIDENT, presented to General Wilkinson, agreeably to your directions.

*Annals of Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, House of Representatives:1053–1055.*