

Since my connection with the British Army I have received many flattering assurances of friendship from some very respectable persons now in England. To avail myself of their offers was my only motive for asking a leave of absence at this time having no other possible resort to save my friends from wretchedness. I repeat that this is my only motive. I affirm that I am so attached to the army that I should quit it with reluctance even for a few months. From the Lexington engagement to the present time I have omitted no opportunity of serving as a volunteer when I had it in my power. and I declare that I eagerly anticipated opportunities of exerting myself in the situation proposed for in my memorial in preference to an application in England for civil office, or the gratuitous bounty of government which others have obtained whose pretensions were by no means superior to mine, unless they have acquired that superiority by begging instead of earning their bread.

These facts so peculiarly interesting to myself & friends must apologize for the confidence in your humanity again to represent my situation to the Commander in Chief. Satisfy that when it is known to his Excellency he will indulge me in improving the interest of my friends for the purposes mentioned.

The singular advantages which would attend my going ^{in this Fleet}, compels me to be thus importunate.

I have the Honor
to be, with every

Sentiment of respect

Your most obed^t

Robt. Smith

Wm. M. G.

New York 23 Jan^y
1781.