

My Lord,

The defenceless state of this Borough has been already laid before your lordships and an application has been made for 200 stand of small arms and some pieces of Canon in order that the Inhabitants might have had it in their power when there are no Troops in the Town. Or when there are, in conjunction with them; to make the best defence they possibly could, against the Insults of deprivations of the Enemy - we were however informed by our Representatives that no Small arms could be got, but that the Engineer for Scotland would get an order to view the place where we intend to have the Battery, which when it was reported to be properly made by the Inhabitants, that Government would immediately send the Cannon that might be necessary - We are sorry to inform your lordship that the Engineer has not yet made his Appearance, Altho' within these few days past, this Town had been the greatest danger of being reduced to Ashes- In the Afternoon of Wednesday the 23d Curt we were greatly alarmed with the Appearance of a French cutter Privateer off here- She turned out to be the Fearnought Privateer of Dunkirk Wm Fall Commander mounting about 20 Guns - After Capturing two or three of our Vessels the Privateer came to Anchor close by the Harbour and the Commander sent a Summons to us to go a Board of his Vessel and make an Agreement with him other ways he would set fire to the Town and reduce it to Ashes for such was the will of his Master the King of France and we only got a Quarter of an hour to consider of the matter - As we had but very few soldiers in the Town we immediately dispatched a Messenger to the Neighbouring Town of Montrose for the Assistance of the troops that were living there. And in the meantime sent out a Boat to the Privateer (sic) to know his terms - Soon thereafter the Boat returned with a Letter from the Captain informing that he would accept no less than £30,000 sterling at least, but we could not comply with the request, neither indeed had we any thought of Capitulating with him. All we wanted was to have a little time to Assemble the people in the town and to have the troops from Montrose- The town's people readily Assembled but then we felt the want of Arms - a few could only be procured And these were in so bad order that the people who were to use them ran a great risque of losing their lives by them- How soon the Commander of the Privateer understood that we would not agree to his terms, he immediately began to fire on the town and kept up a very smart firing for three or four hours- During the Cannonading in the Evening of Wednesday the Troops arrived from Montrose and then we made the best Appearance we could for the Defence of the Town- The privateer ceased firing about half past tin (sic), but still continued to ly ar anchor- About half past three in the morning of Thursday the Twenty fourth, the privateer again began to fire on the Town and continued doing so till about half past ten forenoon when the Commander sent another threatening Summons to us to go a Board of his Vessel and treat with him, otherwise he would batter down and destroy the town- We however despised his threats and made it known to him that if he attempted a landing we would give him the warmest reception that possibly lay in our power - A heavy firing then ensued from the Privateer on the town for about an hour, when she thought proper to sheer off.