

Governors' Papers: Richard Caswell, Correspondence, March 1777

From Rutledge to Caswell

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Cha'-Town March 10. 1777

D^r Sir

I think it necessary to acquaint
you, that, in Consequence of a Sollicitation
for Peace, by Deputies from the Cherokee
Nation, an Ordinance has been passed
here, for appointing Andrew Williamson,
Le Roy Hammond, George Galphin,
William Henry Drayton, Daniel
Horry Esqr. Commissioners & [impounding]
Them, or a Majority of them, to meet
with Commissioners, as may be appointed,
by North Carolina Virginia, & Georgia,
or any of them, in Congress, with
the Cherokee-Indians, or their Deputies,
to conclude a peace with the Cherokee
Nation, upon such terms as may
be just & equitable.
the Time & Place agreed on, by the Cherokee
Deputies who [carried?] hither for this intended
Congress, and, the seventh Day of May next
& Dewits Corner, of which I have sent [??]
to Georgia, & now send it to Virgina.

Peace with the Indians being a desireable
Object, I doubt not, that your & those States
will appoint proper Commissioners, to [meet]
[on?] Commissioners, & the Indian-Deputies, as
above proposed, furnished with powers to
conclude a Treaty of Peace.

I am with great Esteem

Sir

Y^r obe^d & very hble Ser^t [Your obedient & very humble Servant]

J Rutledge

His Exey [Excellency] Gov. Caswell

From Henry to Caswell

Executive Letter Book, Virginia, as published in DocSouth,
docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.php/document/csr11-0299.

Williamsburg, March 14th 1777

Sir,

Authentic advices from the Cherokee country leave no room to doubt a war with part of that nation this spring. The Dragging-Canoe's party is now 4 or 5 hundred warriors, and they are separated from the rest of the nation with sentiments of determined hostility to the United States. The old men and chief warriors, we are told, are averse to war; and in order to cultivate this good inclination, we are endeavouring to treat at the great Island of Holston, with the Chiefs many of whom express a desire for such a measure. Our Commissioners who attend for that purpose, have it in charge from me to signify to you the time and place of this Treaty, in order that you may cause your State to be represented there, if it is thought necessary. I have ordered four hundred men under Col. Shelby to be assembled from the more interior counties, to guard the frontier and to remain on the defensive for the present, lest offensive measures might defeat the intended negotiation, and unite the whole nation against us. Indeed an expedition at this time would meet with great difficulties on many accounts but more especially on account of provisions. I heartily wish the people of your

State would cooperate with us in the scheme of defence, and, in case of an expedition lend us their aid. Should they attack the Indians while we are endeavouring to treat, 'twould defeat our purposes and complete the scheme of the enemy's agents, which is, to unite all the towns in the British King's interest. On the contrary, if our views in the treaty can be answered, we may so divide the nation, that the disaffected party may be prevented from doing any thing.

I have the Honor to be, Sir,
Your mo. obt. hble. servt.

P. HENRY, JR.

His Excellency Richard Caswell.

From Caswell to Henry

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Sir, NewBern 11th April 1777~

Your several Letter of the 3^d & 14th [???] & 1st Ins^t

I have received and would have done myself this Honor of answering them separately on the rec^t of each, but as they Contained Matter proper for the Consideration of the General Assembly I delayed it until the meeting of that Body which is now Siting here, And hoped before this to have been able to have Acquainted you with their Sentiments respecting the Cherokee Indians, However on account of thiness of the Houses & Settling the Decorum to be observed between them Nothing of that Business has been taken into Considerati-on. When ever they Determine on the Measures necessary for this State to pursue regarding the Indians I will do myself the Honor of Communicating them to you, at present I have not the least doubt but they will appoint

Commissioners to Co-operate with those appointed by your State and the States of the two Southern Colonies.

I have received no intimation from the commissioners appointed in Virginia of the Time & Place of Treaty proposed by them, from S^o Carolina the Seventh of May next, the place Dewits Corner, I shall be glad to be informed by the return of this Express, if you Commissioners will attend there that those who may be appointed in this State may be directed Accordingly, From every account I have received from the Westward I am inclined to think the Intentions of the Cherokees are Hostile, And Perfectly agree with [^]you that holding a Treaty with them may produce something by which the States may be benefited, And if Offensive Operations become necessary, it will not be possible for us to enter upon them, till after planting of corn and And whenever we do ^twill give me pleasure to find the People in the States of Virginia & Carolina Co-operate in the theme of Defence as their Interest in that particular as well as many others are nearly the same, for my own part, give me leave to assure you Sir; that every measure shall be pursued & every means adopted that happens within my power to effect so good a purpose ~

Your Last letter I received but yesterday since which I have made the best inquiry I could from the Gentⁿ [gentlemen] from Edenton & Halifax and can get no information of any Goods being Lodged at either of these places for Col. Meckenburghs Regiment, the Commissary of Stores will be in Town in a few days when this possible I may get the

necessary information from him, if I do shall take the earliest opportunity of acquainting you, as I shall do respecting the Row Gallies, I have only learned that one of them was Launched about a month ago, the other was to have been Launched the first of this Month, Commissioners were appointed by our last Congress to Purchase some Materials, such as Canvas, Cordage, Anchors, Guns & Some of them are purchased but what I can't yet say.

Give me Leave to return your Sir, my most Greatful, acknowledgement for your kind Congratulations on my Appointment to the Government of this State, if in the Discharge of the duties of that Station, I can be of any Service to the State of Virginia, I will be with Pleasure performed by him, who has the Honor to be with the Greatest esteem & regard

Your Excellencys

Most Obedient & Very hble [humble] Servant

R Caswell

His Excell^y Gov^r Henry