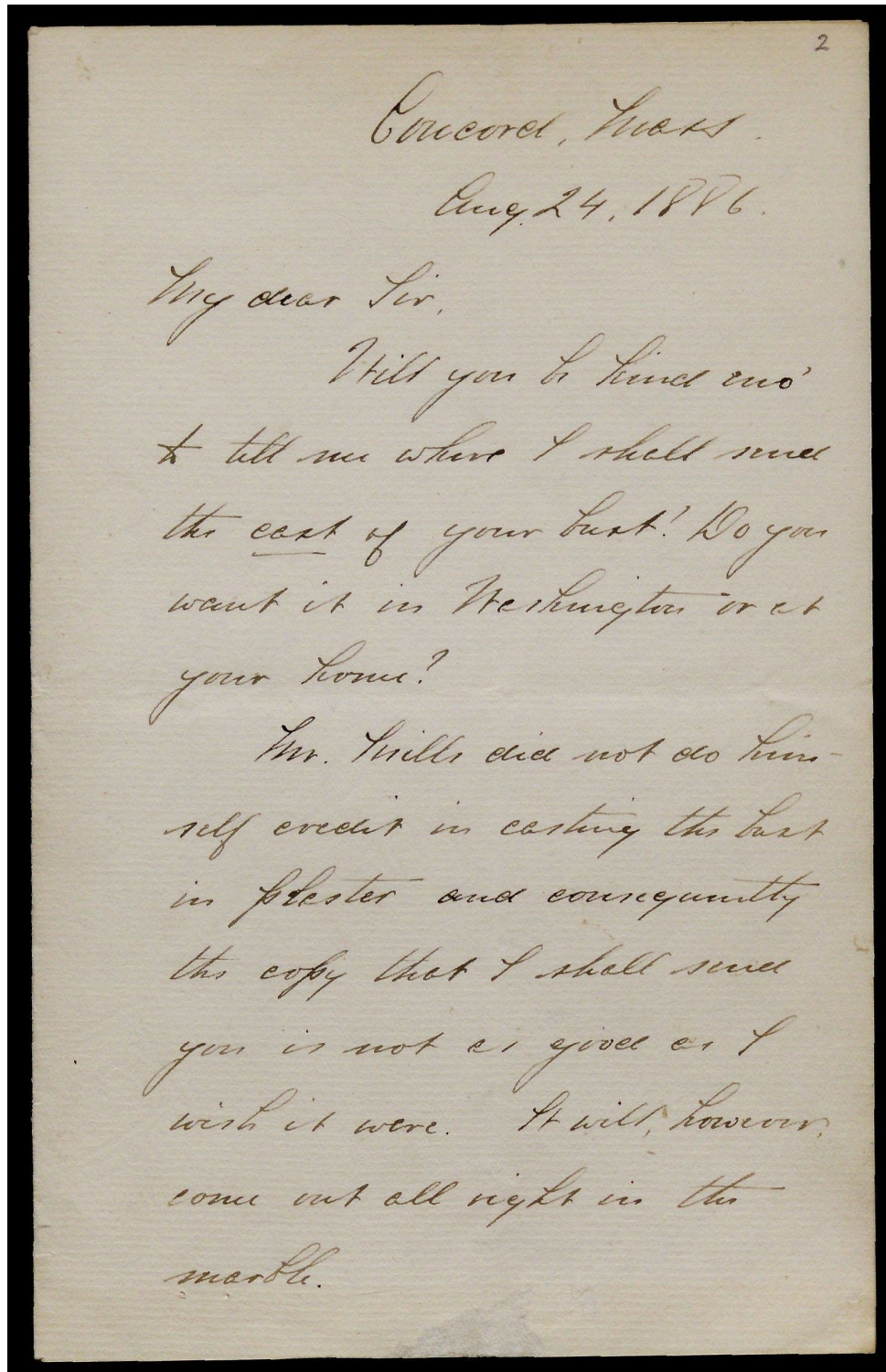
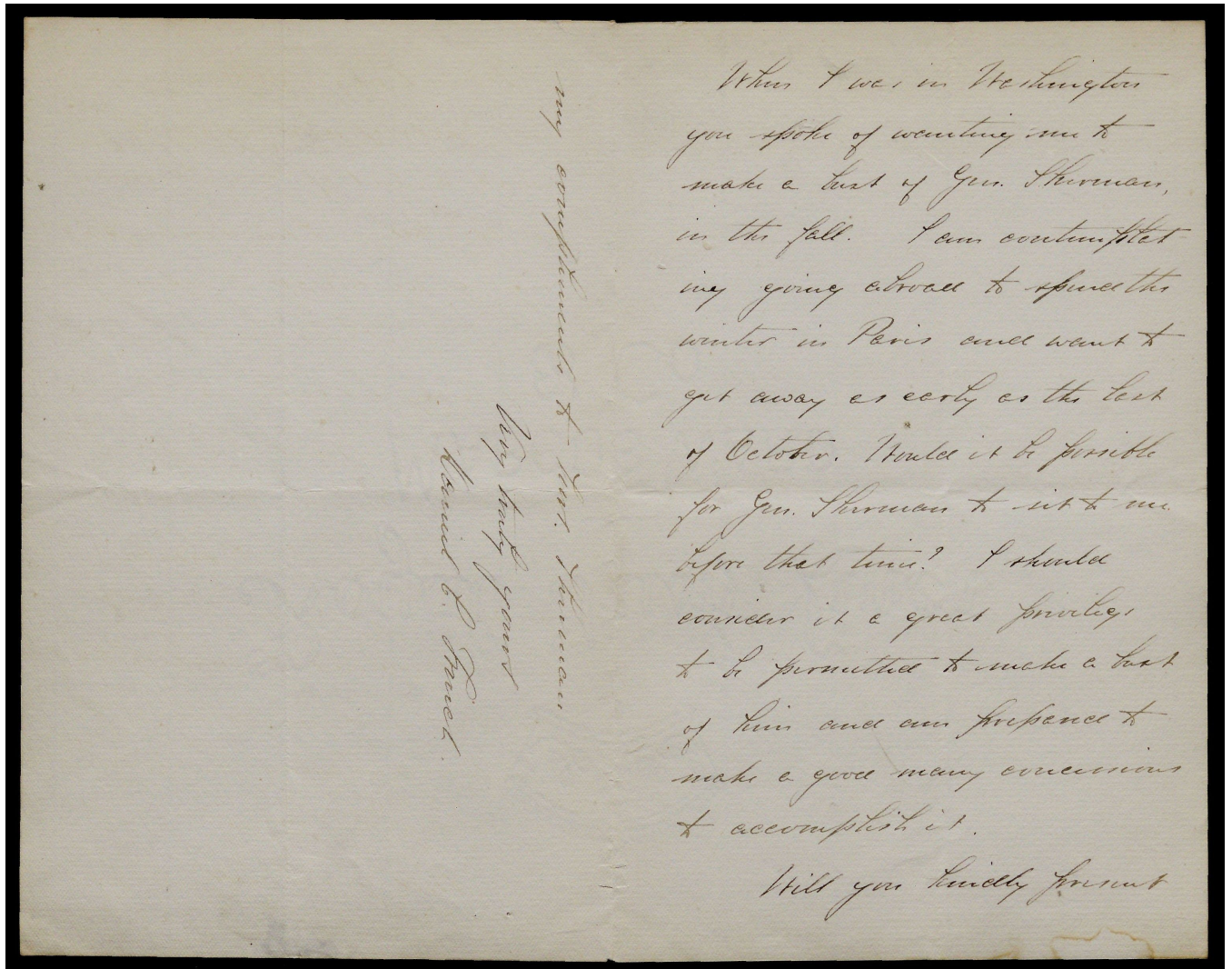


Image



Mercy Otis Warren to Catherine Macaulay, August 24, 1775.
(The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC01800.02)

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Transcript

Excerpts from
Mercy Otis Warren to Catherine Macaulay

Plymouth, New England, 24 August 1775.

Autograph letter signed, 4 pages.

At a time when all Europe is Interested in the fate of America you will forgive me Dear Madam if I lay aside the ceremony usually observed...& again call of your Attention...to my Last in that I hinted that the sword was half drawn from the scabbard. Soon after which this people were obliged to unsheathe it to repel the Violence offered to individuals, & the impotence of an attempt to seize the private property of the subjects of the king of England. And thereby put it out of their power to defend themselves against the Corrupt Ministry of His Court.

You have undoubtedly, Madam been Apprized of the Consequences of this Hostile Movement which compeled the Americans to fly to arms in Defense of all that is held dear & sacred among Mankind. And the public papers as well as private accounts have Witnessed to the Bravery of the peasants of Lexington & the spirit of freedom Breath'd from the Inhabitants of the surrounding Villages. You have been told of the distresses of the people of Boston. ...

[2] Famine & pestilence began to Rage in the City permitted the Most of them to Depart Leaving their Effects behind, & to quit their Elegant and Convenient Habitation, in the Capital & fly [illegible] into the Hospitable army of their Brethren in the Country.

And the Conflagration of Charlestown will undoubtedly Reach Each British Ear before this comes to your Hand. Such instances of Wanton Barbarity have been seldom practiced even among the Most Rude & uncivilized Nations. The ties of Gratitude which now Broken through by the king, troops, in this base transaction greatly enhance their Guilt. it was the Inhabitants of that town who prompted by Humanity Generously opened their door, to the Routed Gage, on the Nineteenth of April & poured Balm into the Wound, of the Exhausted & dying soldiers after their precipitant retreat. Had they observed a Different Conduct on that Memorable day. Had

Mercy Otis Warren to Catherine Macaulay, August 24, 1775

they assisted in cutting [inserted: off] s'd [illegible], Retreat it might not have been in the power of General Gage to have Wraiped that town in flames & driven out the miserable inhabitants the prey of poverty & despair.... I shall therefore only give a short account of the present situation of American affairs in the Environs of Boston. We have a well appointed Brave and Hgh spirited Continental army. Consisting of about twenty two thousand Men. Commanded by the Accomplished George Washington [illegible] Gentlemen of one of the first fortunes in America. A man whose Military Abilities & public & private Virtue, place Him in the first Class of the Good & Brave & are Really of so High a Stamp as to do Honor to Human Nature. this army as it be originally recruited & to be supported & paid at the Expense of the United Colonies of America. And were Britain

[3] powerful & infatuated Enough to find out a force sufficient to Cut of to it Man this little Resolute army [illegible], than the [illegible], of it would exhibit in the field thrice their Number. Ready to Avenge the stroke & to cut down the justice of Heaven on the Destroyer of the peace, Liberty, & Happiness of Mankind. ...

The great Council of America have once more petitioned His Majesty to devise some Methods of Reconciliation. This is a final proof with what Reluctance the progeny of Britain draw forth the sword against their unnatural parent. Both the Ministerial & the American army seem at present to be Rather on the Defensive as if Each were wishing for some Benign Hand to Interpage & heal the Dreadful Contest without letting out the Blood from the Bosom of their Brethren. ...