

Christopher Gadsden to General George Washington

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Philadelphia 10 August 1781

Dear Sir:

The Bearer Mr. John Loveday informs me that he hath had the Honour to be Recommended to an Office in your Excellency's Family by some of your Friends here. I cannot in justice deny him my Testimony of his Character.

He has been Messenger of the Privy Council of our State four or five years during which Time he has always behaved with the greatest diligence, Attention, and Secrecy and is, your Excellency may be assured a strictly honest Man. He was taken by the Enemy a few Days before Chas. Town capitulated, trusted with some important Messages from Mr. Rutledge, was immediately closely confin'd, and when We were shipt off to Augustine sent with us. He is a **sober, prudent discrete** man, very firm and steady to the **Cause**.

Sixty One of us with our Servants arriv'd in two small Vessels from Augustine, part about ten or twelve and the Remainder about five or six Days since, thanks to Heaven all in good Health and Spirits. We were in Augustine from the 15th Sept. to the 17th last Month, forty two Weeks of which I was confin'd in the Castle and none of My Friends permitted to see me, because wou'd not give another Parole. I told them I had kept the first as a Gentleman, defy'd (and do still defy) them to prove the Contrary and was determined never to take a second which wou'd imply a Breach of the first. Their Treatment of me when taken up the 27th of August last, was much more severe, and pointed [than] against any of my Friends, which appears to me more owing to the Station I was in, than as Mr. Gadsden, (tho I believe no Favourite as such), and my not being mention'd in the **Capitulation** gave them an Opportunity to affect treating me with **Rigour** and **Contempt**. I thought it a Duty I owed to the **General Cause** to Refuse to the last giving a **Second Parole**, that I might be as a Standing protest against such outrageous **Tyranical** Conduct.

When in the Castle the Officers were order'd frequently not to **convene** with me; however many, of them often did, and all of them behaved with Decency. I never had the least Insult offer'd me there. Once indeed there was an Order against lighting a Candle In Consequence of which went without for two or three Nights, but the Pitifullness of this they were soon asham'd of themselves.

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Mr. Ferguson and I are waiting for our Families expected in a few Days; as soon as we see them a **little fix'd**, we shall set off for our State as will most of the Carolina Gentleman here, and hope to be gone by the Middle of next Month as farthest. I beg your Excellency's and the **Publick's** pardon for the taking up so much of your precious Time and am with the greatest Esteem. **Yr. Excellency's Most Obedt. & Hble Servt.**

CHRIST GADSDEN

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Glossary (in order of appearance)

sober - serious

prudent - to have good judgment and common sense

discrete (discreet) - a person with prudence and self-control

Cause - the fight for American independence

Capitulation - surrender terms when Charles Town fell to the British

Rigour (rigor) - strictness or severity

Contempt - disdain or scorn

General Cause - the fight for American independence

Second Parole - once Charles Town surrendered, the inhabitants were allowed to remain free as long as they promised not to take up arms against the British. Gadsden refused to give his word a second time because the British had arrested him the first time anyway and shipped him off to St. Augustine.

Tyranical - oppressive

Convene - meet or associate with

a little fix'd - their lodging and needs taken care of

Publick's - the people of the country

Yr. Excellency's Most Obedt. & Hble Servt - Your Excellency's Most Obedient and Humble
Servant - a respectful and common way to end a letter