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Frederick Town Dec 27th 1777

Dear Sir

Last week I received upwards of one hundred prisoners of war with orders from the Board of war to keep them under proper Guards — after my utmost exertions to procure a guard (except I would give them exorbitant wages) I was compelled to confine them in the publick Jail — Christmas day late in the after Noon they set fire to it — upon the alarm I ordered every man that had arms to arm himself as quick as possible — upon my reaching the Door of the Jail yard it was opened by the Goaler near one third of the Prisoners attempted to make there way out of the yard Door — which compelled the Small party then with me at the Door to Rush in & lay about us upon Knocking down Several of them they gave way & joined the other two thirds who immediately upon my entering the yard obeyed my orders & fell back to the wall — in every Short time I got a sufficient Guard & Removed them to the Tory house (& the fire put out with but Little Dammage) — but to my Great Surprise when I came there found the Locks belonging to it was Cut off which compelled me to Stand on guard myself for Near Six hours with only three more before I Could get the Locks put on again & get a guard at Last Could get only Seven men to Stand — I then gave orders to to the four Militia Captains in Town to furnish me with three men out of each Company with a Serjeant to Stand 24 hours & to be relieved Every day untill further orders on friday Evening there was only Six men appeared & this Evening only four — Tomorrow I expect none — I have already Lost the but part of three Nights Sleep & Cannot Stand it much Longer — therefore I hope you

ARCHIVES OF THE STATE MARYLAND.