

both the Eastern and Western shores; supplies and funds were low or nonexistent. On October 18 Richard Peters, Secretary of the Continental War Office, informed Gov. Thomas Johnson that Congress could now replace the "thousand stands of Arms...borrowed by Congress of your State," certainly welcome news, but the same day that letter was received another from Peters arrived stating:

I am directed by the Board of War to represent to you the very low state of the article of Lead in the Continental Magazines, & the great risque and danger the Army will be exposed to, without the speediest supply of that article. It is painful to the Bord to be reduced to the necessity of interfering with the private stock of any particular State, nor would any but the most urgent Demands with which they can not otherwise comply induce them to do it. I am therefore earnestly to request that you and the Council will consent to a Loan of what Lead belonging to your State, you think can be spared.

And then there was the matter of a slave named Gambo, murdered by his master's brother, a birth-right Quaker. Something that would make the front page of newspapers today, but which, in October 1777, surfaced in the form of a petition for leniency from the acknowledged murderer to the governor.

For both the Americans and British the month was terrible and tiring, exhilarating and humiliating. On October 30 Nathaniel Folsom wrote to his fellow delegate to Congress representing the state of New Hampshire, Josiah Bartlett: "my Duty is Very hard, and if you have any Comepashon left for me [I] hope you will Joyne Congress Soone, as the buisness is too much for one to live under." Dr. Bartlett, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, could not relieve the semiliterate Folsom, because he had been forced to retire to his New Hampshire home in an effort to recover from the effects of serving in Congress the previous two years. America's attempt to wrest independence from Great Britain took a turn for the better in October 1777, but it also required enormous efforts that brought many men--not just Congressman Folsom--to the breaking point.