

DEFECTS IN LAWS GOVERNING MILITIA

Detroit 24 Jan^y 99

D^r Sir I wrote you the 26^h since which I have endeavoured to throw M^r Nortons account into such a State as may induce him to pay you the Ballance. I have taken the liberty to inclose you herewith the copy of my letter to him as also of his Note & account, So that Should he make any further difficulties you will be acquainted how badly they are founded I wish this tedious business was at an end.

pray have you not Some young man of the law in your Quarter who you wish well. If you have I think you should recommend it to him to settle at the River thames or Sandwich, for, tho he may not get much at first, his profession will make his profits daily increase as the Settlement does, in particular If he understands conveyancing, besides only one lawyer in Court gives a poor Chance to him who has not engaged him first. M^r Roe has declared it would be more agreeable to him If there was an other than he alone.

Pray let me ask you If you have not found Some defect in your Militia laws. I command a Batallion but on no occasion whatever unless in conformity to an order from the L^t Governor &^a or L^t of the County, can I order out one man for review, exercise, or any other purpose? but the Captain who is my inferior officer can call his company out 4 times a year. On the 4 June the whole militia is to be out, but it's not me who can give them Orders to appear on that day. the law directs we should be all there, Officers & men, and a fine is to be paid by the absent, I should have been [glad] to have paid a Compliment by ordering some out to fire over Colonel M^eKee, but I make a rule never to do what the law will not support me in doing for fear of being refused without having the means of punishing, others its true order without authority and are sometimes obeyed. Some militia were called out by them to fire over col. M^eKee's Corps & they did so. Another defect I find in the militia law is, that no person can be compelled to serve as a Sergeant, and I assure you so few among the Canadians are disposed to do it voluntarily tho excepted for the time from Serving as Constable, that I have one Comp^y without officer or Sergeant. it's true the law has