

From the SALEM MERCURY.

ANECDOTES of *Daniel Shays*, Leader of
the Insurgents.

THIS personage, lately so much talked of, is descended from a poor family in the County of Worcester, and served his apprenticeship to the farming business, at Brookfield—From his youth he was remarkable for subtlety and duplicity, which, notwithstanding his want of education, was conjectured would one day or other make him famous—the following occurrence will demonstrate the augury was not ill-grounded—At the commencement of the late war, our hero, then about 23 years of age, entered the Continental army, where his activity gained him a serjeantcy. From a knowledge of his abilities, his Colonel thought him a proper person for the recruiting service, and as an inducement to his activity, was promised an Ensign's commission, provided he enlisted a certain number of men—this

was an opportunity which the ambition of our hero would not permit him to pass unimproved—He applied himself with all diligence to his duty, and soon, by promises and intrigue, obtained the number, he had now something more in view than an Ensigncy—and continued enlisting men, but upon the express condition that he should be their commander—When arrived at camp with his recruits, and the Inspector was proceeding to distribute them among the several regiments, Shays presented him the enlisting paper, requesting at the same time a commission to command them, as without it they were not bound to tarry—The army being then in want of recruits, a commission as Captain was given him—in which grade he continued, until a new arrangement of the army took place—when an opportunity was given his superiors of rewarding his duplicity by a derangement.

Added to the foregoing, another anecdote, related of our hero, places his character as a soldier, and as a man, in a most disagreeable light—In the year 1780, that distinguished nobleman, the Marquis de la Fayette, presented the officers of the army, each, with an elegant sword: this pledge of his affection, which a man of honour and spirit would have sacredly preserved, and handed down to his posterity as a jewel of high price, he was mean enough to dispose of for a trifling consideration.

After our hero left the army, he sunk into his original obscurity, where he probably would have continued, had not the tumult of the times given him an opportunity to display his activity, by joining a mistaken multitude, with a design, *as he professed*, of “reforming government;” by obstructing the regular administration of law and justice—What his real designs are, time must bring to light—thus much is certain, his ambition is unbounded—and his fortune such as has sometimes urged men to desperation.

Though Shays’s honour has been called in question, his personal courage is unimpeached—During the time the parties under Gen. *Shepard* and himself were at Springfield, an interview was appointed by them, to be held in the interval between the lines—At meeting Gen. *Shepard* complimented our hero with the title of General—to which he instantly demanded an explanation, adding at the same time, that as he claimed no other rank than Captain, should the General persist in giving him any other, he should consider it as an affront, and would demand immediate satisfaction.