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OF
JAMES WOLFE

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Gen. Wolfe.

*From the portrait by Joseph Highmore,
in the possession of J. Lobell Armstrong Esq. Penzance*

THE
LIFE AND LETTERS
OF
JAMES WOLFE

BY
BECKLES WILLSON

AUTHOR OF

'THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY,' 'THE ROMANCE OF CANADA,' ETC.

"Being of the profession of arms, I would seek all occasions to serve"

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS AND PLANS



LONDON
WILLIAM HEINEMANN

1909

THE
LITTLE
GREEN BOOK

BY
WILLIAM HEINEMANN



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WILLIAM HEINEMANN

LONDON

To

LIEUT.-COLONEL

C. A. M. WARDE, D.L., J.P.

OF SQUERRYES COURT

WITH THE NAME OF WHOSE ANCESTOR THAT

OF WOLFE WILL EVER BE INSEPARABLY CONNECTED

I GRATEFULLY INSCRIBE THIS BOOK

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1909

SCOTT

PREFACE

THE singular privilege has fallen to my lot of being so familiar, through birth and residence, with localities, objects and writings associated with the subject of this memoir that I can scarcely recall a time when the man has not been an intimate—when I did not feel I knew this tall, battle-worn young soldier far better than many whose forms moved about me and with whom I spoke in the flesh.

I have sought as far as possible to let the letters tell the story of his life, though I am fully conscious of the responsibility I incur in giving Wolfe's letters to the world thus unabridged; for, in truth, they offer a much more intimate glimpse into this world-hero's character (and into the domestic and official life of his day) than any yet offered, and in so far may expose him to the misapprehensions and the censure of minds little accustomed to appraise genius. *Littera scripta manet.* How many shadowy saints have emerged from the ordeal of publicity as certain sinners? No man is at his best in dressing-gown and slippers, and martial heroes are seldom heroic and often not very martial in the intimacy of the family relation. Scores of these letters of Wolfe's are effusions prompted by the filial duty of a self-educating youth dealing with family and personal topics, and are by no means to be taken as reflecting or illustrating his rarer and public qualities.

But there are others even amongst his letters to his parents of a different character, letters evincing sound sense, the process of his severe self-discipline, a clear insight into human nature. In the epistles to his friend Rickson and notably in the one to Thomas Townshend, there is further testimony to the truth of Napier's dictum that no example can be shown in our military history of a great general who was not also a well-read man.

Taking the letters as they stand, making all allowances for the careless phrasing of some and the obsolete interest of others, with what feelings do we arise from their perusal? We are convinced, if ever we needed conviction, that the hand that penned them was of astonishing precocity and power—that this singular youth was to war what the younger Pitt was to politics or John Keats to letters; we are convinced that through all his vagaries, and there were many, through all his foibles, his passionate dissatisfaction, his impatience of fools, there shines inextinguishably the lamp of genius. Scan the muster of the martial heroes of England, and where will you match such ardour of soul, such purity of patriotism, such zeal for arms, such contempt for danger, such devotion to duty? Perhaps in Nelson, in Gordon, in John Nicholson; and it is amongst such names as these at the head of the scroll that the name of Wolfe must be for ever inscribed.

This book I may call the natural fruit of a long sentimental relationship. When as a child, born in the province which his victory assured to us of British blood, I strayed about the spot where Wolfe's valiant spirit escaped from his frail body, I little dreamt that my destiny would lead me to make a home in my hero's native village on the other side of the rolling seas—nay, in the very house which of old resounded to his boyish laughter.

It was pleasant to me to reflect as I transcribed many of these letters at Squerries Court that I had stood on the rolling meadow where once stood Louisbourg (where, in a flock of peacefully reposing sheep, I could almost have fancied I beheld the army of my keen-eyed brigadier asleep); that the paths he trod in the course of his regimental service in this kingdom from Banff to Exeter, from Bristol to Dover, I also have trod; that I sought out his quarters in Paris and Ghent and Ostend because they were his.

Brief as it is, Mr. Bradley's monograph upon Wolfe deserves always to be read for the fluent charm of his narrative. To Wolfe's first biographer, Robert Wright, I pay a deserved tribute, and by reason of his labours owe to him many notes of interest. Within the past half-century a great fund of *Wolffiana* has come to light, and about the final catastrophe on the Plains of Abraham a whole literature clusters. I have availed myself of all the more

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recent works in my endeavour to clarify the account of the Quebec campaign, especially those of Mr. Doughty (the Dominion Archivist), Mr. Julian Corbett, General C. V. F. Townshend, and Colonel William Wood.

But it is on the unpublished letters of Wolfe himself that I chiefly rely in making my appeal to the public with the present volume, although I am aware that, to many, the portraits and numerous illustrations I have collected and now offer for the first time may vie with the text in interest and value.

*Quebec House, Westerham,
June 15, 1909.*

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I

EARLY KENTISH DAYS

IN the unusually warm summer of 1726, rumour, after industriously speeding through the Kentish lanes and by-ways, brought the news by post to Mrs. Appleby of Streatham Hill that a certain Colonel Wolfe of York was coming to take up his residence in Westerham — “a middle-aged Collonel,” adds the writer, “late married to a young and pretty Yorkshirewoman, Miss Thompson.”¹

One can readily picture the pleasing inrush of interest and speculation on the part of the gentefolk in the secluded little Kentish town concerning the advent from the North of the “middle-aged Collonel” and his bride. Westerham in the last year of the reign of his Majesty George I was in a state of transition. Old families had died out; some few new ones had come in. For centuries society in the place had revolved, as, indeed, it does to-day, about Squerryes Court, and Squerryes had been recently inherited by a petulant young Earl of Jersey who got on ill with his neighbours and dependents, making, meanwhile, little secret of his desire to sell the place to the highest bidder and be quit of Squerryes and Westerham altogether.

Ere that same summer waned, Westerham, destined to be the birthplace of the hero of these pages, saw the arrival of Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Wolfe and his lady, and by autumn the pair were settled in a picturesque, square-built, gabled house at the foot of the hill, called “Spiers,” standing in two acres of meadow long known as the “Parish Meade.”

Gallant soldier and new-made Benedick, the new tenant of “Spiers” seemed destined (road-building and occasional visits to his regiment apart) to a long period of unmilitary repose. The pacific policy of the King’s minister, Sir Robert Walpole, discouraged all hopes of active military employment, and doubtless this reflection had decided him to embark at last upon matrimony. Although more than ten years had elapsed since Lieutenant-

¹ Letter from Mrs. Mary Lewis to her sister, Mrs. Appleby, July 3, 1726.

2 LIFE AND LETTERS OF WOLFE

Colonel Wolfe's last active engagement with General Wade, chastising the refractory Highlanders in the rising of 1715, as his son was destined to do in that of 1745, he could yet look back on a busy and notable career.

Born in 1685, at York, this Edward Wolfe was the son of Captain Edward Wolfe¹ and the grandson of Captain George Woulfe. The family of the Wolfes, or Woulfes, emigrated from Glamorganshire to Ireland in the fifteenth century in company with many impoverished and adventurous English gentry, amongst whom their kinsmen, the Seymours and the Goldsmiths, are conspicuous.²

It seems clear that the Wolfes, before they emigrated to Ireland, were of respectable stock. By the middle of the sixteenth century they had acquired estates in Ireland and a settled position in the western counties of Limerick and Clare, doubtless coming to be, as has been truly observed of the English settlers beyond "the pale," "more Irish than the Irish." It does not appear, however, that at this period they had ever intermarried with any of the native Celtic families, and it is doubtful if their illustrious descendant had any Celtic blood in his veins.

In 1605 we find a James Woulfe one of the bailiffs of Limerick, and eight years later the sheriff, George Woulfe, direct ancestor of Edward Wolfe, was along with his fellow-sheriff and the Mayor of Limerick summarily dismissed for refusing to take the oath of supremacy to the "heretic" James I of England.³

¹ The mystery concerning General Wolfe's grandfather has been effectually cleared up by Mr. Charles Dalton, editor of the *British Army Lists*. He shows Edward Wolfe the elder to have been "turned out of the Irish army by Tyrconnel for being a Protestant." In 1689, William III appointed Edward Wolfe captain in Sir George St. George's Regiment of Foot. He served thirteen years in St. George's regiment and was wounded at Terra Nova in 1695. His commission was renewed by Queen Anne in 1702, the same year his son Edward's first commission was signed.

² Sir Henry Seymour, of Wolfe Hall, who was knighted at the coronation of his nephew, King Edward VI, married Barbara, daughter of Morgan Wolfe, Esquire.

³ I have adopted the genealogy given by Ferrar in his *History of Limerick*, 1787; but there are several omissions and discrepancies in his account. Cromwell, writing from Ireland to the Speaker, December 19, 1749, reports that "Lieutenant-Colonel Wolfe (a person eminently faithful, godly and true to you) is dead at Youghal." The tradition is that this was Edward, the elder brother of George and Francis, who was early engaged in trade between Limerick and Bristol and afterwards joined the Parliamentary Army. There is a letter extant from Captain Edward Wolfe to Sir Thomas Barrington, chief man in Essex on the Parliamentary side, in which this passage occurs: "He did upbraid me, being a tradesman, concerning my profession. I told

A grandson of this contumacious sheriff, Francis Woulfe, joined the priesthood and became head of the Irish order of Franciscan friars, and, with his brother George, was destined to play a turbulent and fatal part in the wars of the Commonwealth. When the Duke of Ormond, eager on behalf of his royal master to defend the city of Limerick against the onset of Cromwell's army, arrived in February 1650, he issued a proclamation to the inhabitants calling upon them to co-operate with his troops and permit the introduction of a military garrison. Within the gates was a priestly faction inimical to the Duke, led by Friar Francis, who contemptuously rejected all the ducal overtures. As the danger grew imminent, Ormond's friends amongst bishops, nobility and gentry induced the people to consent to the quartering of a garrison just outside the walls of Limerick, but the Duke's hope of actually entering the city was frustrated by the friar, his brother George, and their faction, the keys being forcibly taken from the sheriff. Within the gates the well-meaning and zealous Ormond was openly defied as an enemy to his country. Wiser counsels ultimately prevailed, but the Duke, sick of the business, cut the negotiations short by saying he had no mind to venture within a place "where the will of a Franciscan monk was set above ecclesiastical and civil authority." Limerick might go its ways to its doom. Ormond departed to France.

Duly the redoubtable Ireton laid successful siege to the city. In vain Friar Francis and his brother, Captain George Woulfe, urged the populace to protracted resistance: the accepted terms of capitulation secured the lives and goods of all but the fire-brands, the disaffected ones "who had opposed and restrained the deluded people from accepting the conditions so often offered to them." Amongst the twenty proscribed traitors were Friar Francis Woulfe and his brother the Captain, great-grandfather of Wolfe of Quebec. Another, it is not without interest to know, was the great-grandfather of Edmund Burke. So the miserable, plague-stricken garrison laid down their arms and evacuated the city, the citizens standing by helplessly while the Roundhead troopers seized the delinquents and executed summary punishment upon them. Father Francis met his death doggedly, but the Captain, his brother, somehow escaped, slipping through Ireton's fingers and

him, though a tradesman, I could show my coat." Again, October 21, 1648, a draft order was issued for the payment of £100 to Captain Edward Wolfe. (House of Lords Calendar), *Hist. MS. Comm. : Barrington Papers.*

4 LIFE AND LETTERS OF WOLFE

sailing across the Channel to England. Nor did fortune there desert him; he settled in Yorkshire, married, and adopted the Reformed faith. Thereafter the superfluous "u" is erased from his name, as it was from the Gouldsmiths. Of Captain George's son, Edward, we know little. It is believed that he obtained a lucrative appointment in King William's service in Ireland, married, and had several children, of whom Edward Wolfe, father of the future hero, was the eldest.

In the first year of the reign of Queen Anne, when he was only sixteen, Edward was appointed second lieutenant of Marines, then commanded by Viscount Shannon. In 1705 his commission (still carefully preserved at Squerryes Court), shows him to have been made captain in Sir Richard Temple's regiment of foot. Three years later, when but twenty-three, we find him serving as Brigade-major with Marlborough in Flanders. A quiet, capable man, rather than a dashing, valiant one, in whom everybody, from commander to subaltern, seems to have had complete confidence. He continued to serve abroad with Marlborough until the peace of Utrecht, and, as already noted, accompanied Wade through Scotland during the Highland rising of 1715. Here his tact and military knowledge, rather than any influence he could command, bore fruit in a lieutenant-colonelcy a couple of years later, and with this rise, rapid in those days, when lieutenants of fifty and even sixty were common enough, Edward Wolfe had to be content for the next twenty years. One of his brothers, Walter, having also joined the army, was serving in Ireland as a lieutenant, and there, a bachelor, he ultimately settled.¹ The Wolfes were a very clannish race, as we shall see, and very tenacious of their Irish connection both by blood and friendship.

The prospect of further military advancement seeming hopeless, Edward visited his native Yorkshire, resolved to marry and found a family. He was lucky in his matrimonial choice, which fell upon Henrietta, daughter of Edward Thompson, Esquire, of Marsden in Yorkshire, and, on the maternal side, of the ancient family of Tindal of Brotherton, in the same county. Miss Thompson was, at the time of her marriage to Lieutenant-Colonel Wolfe, in her twenty-fourth year, some eighteen years her husband's junior. A tall brunette, with a complexion of great brilliancy, "you have, through your whole time," her son wrote to her a quarter of a century later, "been a match for all the beauties, your contem-

¹ He entered the army in 1704 as ensign in the Earl of Orrery's Regiment of Foot.

poraries." Making all allowance for filial partiality, Mrs. Wolfe may be conceded to have been a handsome woman. One physiological peculiarity she had—obscured, perhaps, by the fine colouring and the bold chiselling of her other features—namely, a marked recession of chin, which peculiarity she bequeathed to her eldest-born as an inheritance which he then, and we now, seem destined never to hear enough of.

Some weeks were spent at the Thompson town-house in York, placed at the disposal of the newly-married couple. We do not know all the reasons why they elected to reside in the south of the kingdom. It is probable that a quiet country town was desired, at a distance convenient both to London and Portsmouth, where there was a likelihood of select, congenial society, and where it would be possible to live inexpensively. Westerham, two-and-twenty miles from the metropolis, fulfilled these conditions, and became for many years the home of the Wolfes.

Two centuries have passed: Westerham has little changed. Its main features are untouched by time; even its population remains stationary. A single long street astride a narrow ridge at the bottom of a valley, a street lined with quaint taverns and many ancient houses, interrupted mid-way by a spacious green, and flanked by a fourteenth-century church capped by a square tower—these to-day strike the eye of the casual visitor. Pasture and blossoming orchard gird it round about, and on the chain of high hills, both north and south, flourishes much woodland wilderness, thick growths of oak, beech and pine. At the extreme western end of the town there lies, on the skirt of its wide estate, the red-brick mansion of Squerreyes Court, bosomed in stately trees, admired of the diarist, Evelyn. At the far other end, but on no flattering eminence, is Quebec House, then called Spiers, last house of all on the Maidstone road. It is a gabled Tudor dwelling, dating in its oldest part from 1507, with panelled hall, winding oak staircase and wide stone fire-places, over one of which is carved the arms of that royal Henry, in whose reign Columbus and the Cabots discovered America. In this house the errant veteran, whose life had been spent in camps and barracks, began to taste again the charms of home. His wife proved herself a skilful housekeeper, and not slow to make friends amongst her neighbours, the Lewises, the Prices, Mannings, and Allinghams.

The months wore on, but the walls of the ancient, gabled house at the foot of the slope were not destined to echo to the first imperious cry of its fair mistress's first-born, who was afterwards

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to command armies. That signal glory was reserved for another dwelling, a stone's throw distant.

Away with his regiment was the Colonel, road-building mayhap, in Surrey, having promised to rejoin his lady on Christmas Eve, 1726. But the days were dark and lonely, and the Vicar's wife, Mrs. Lewis, persuaded her neighbour to pass much of her time with her, the Vicarage being hard by. Thus an engrossing event, daily expected, happened, as such things sometimes happen in defiance of the best-laid plans. On the evening of what in our reformed calendar we call January 2, 1727, but which was then the eve of Christmas, was James Wolfe born into the world.¹

"Claim to have seen Wolfe's birth," says Mr. Gibson Thompson, in his *Wolfe-Land*, "may well be relinquished by the gabled mansion, for, apart from that, has not Thackeray immortalized it in *The Virginians*? He has drawn for us Colonel Lambert and Harry Warrington, riding into Westerham in Wolfe's manhood days, their arrival at Quebec House, their welcome by their hosts—"a stately matron, an old soldier, whose recollections and services were of five-and-forty years back, and the son of this gentleman and lady, the Lieutenant-Colonel of Kingsley's regiment, that was then stationed at Maidstone, whence the Colonel had come on a brief visit to his parents."²

By reason of the reformed calendar we can now twist history into humouring our conceit: for was not January, in the old Saxon calendar, named the Wolf-month? "In this moneth a mighty Wulf was Y-comen," saith the Aylesbury chronicler.

Beneath the Vicarage roof at Westerham the future warrior remained for the space of three weeks, when he was baptized (January 11, O.S.) in the parish church of St. Mary, and brought by Mrs. Wolfe herself to Spiers. Exactly a year later came another son, baptized by the name of Edward, a family name on both sides of the house of Wolfe.

How much later detail, copious and irrelevant, one would give for knowledge of the first twelve years of James Wolfe's life! We

¹ General George Warde (the Younger), writing to the Rev. T. Streatfeild, in 1822, declared "he slept constantly on the bed in which Wolfe was born." "This," says Dr. Pollen, in his interesting little brochure on Wolfe, "could only have descended to him as representative of Mrs. Wolfe's executor, *i. e.* his uncle, the great General George. As the Vicarage was the home of the Rev. George Lewis and his large family, it is not likely Mrs. Wolfe furnished it; so the bed alluded to must have formed part of the furniture of Quebec House (Spiers), which we know was occupied by the Wolfes."—*Vide* will of Frances Ellison, once of Spiers.

² *Wolfe-Land*, p. 33.



THE VICARAGE, WESTERHAM



ROOM WHERE JAMES WOLFE WAS BORN AT WESTERHAM, JANUARY 2, 1727

know that both he and his brother were delicate, sensitive lads, needing and receiving the watchful care of their tall, dark-haired mother, left much alone now, as is the common lot of a soldier's wife. To-day as one roams the ancient house,¹ peering into attics and secret closets, hidden doorways in the wainscotting which once led to mysterious compartments and convenient egresses, it is not hard to conjure up the kind of life the boys must have led at home.

A housekeeper of the old-fashioned sort was Mrs. Wolfe. She had brought her husband but a slender jointure, and he had only his scant savings and regimental pay to live upon. So the strictest economy, consistent with gentility, was demanded. A comprehensive cookery book, written in her own hand, and not always careful as to spelling, for orthography was by no means a needful feminine accomplishment in those days, is still to be read. It is filled, too, with many elaborate potions for the sick and ailing, according to contemporary medical science. One—"A good water for consumption"—deserves to be given here:

"Take a peck of green garden snails," so runs the prescription, "wash them in Bear (beer) put them in an oven and let them stay till they've done crying; then with a knife and fork prick the green from them, and beat the snail shells and all in a stone mortar. Then take a quart of green earth-worms, slice them through the middle and strow them with salt: then wash them and beat them, the pot being first put into the still with two handfulls of angelico, a quart of rosemary flowers, then the snails and worms, the egrimony, bears feet, red dock roots, barbery brake, bilbony, wormwood, of each two handfulls: one handful of rue tumerick and one ounce of saffron, well dried and beaten. Then power (pour) in three gallons of milk. Wait till morning, then put in three ounces of cloves (well beaten), hartshorn, grated. Keep the still covered all night. This done, stir it not. Distil with a moderate fire. The patient must take two spoonfuls at a time."

Was the boy Wolfe the unhappy recipient of many doses of this awe-inspiring mixture? If so, one can readily understand his diffidence in acknowledging any symptoms, pulmonary or other, which would send Dame Wolfe flying to his attic chamber armed with the terrible, malodorous phial and tablespoon!

¹ "Quebec House," wrote Mr. A. G. Bradley in 1895, "suggests infinite possibilities for the hand of some reverent restorer." Since this was written the restoration has been admirably carried out at the instance of its owner, Lieutenant-Colonel Warde, of Squerryes Court.

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The nurse of both boys in their infancy was a devoted young woman, Betty Hooper, whom James never forgot to the close of his life. Betty married and duly brought two sons into the world. A time was to come when these sons were taken into Wolfe's regiment, and as their Lieutenant-Colonel he wrote his mother, "My nurse's sons are two of the finest soldiers in the camp."

One seems to see the slender, alert, eager-faced children (one, the elder, with the light-blue eyes and red hair of his father, the other more resembling his mother), scampering through the house, frolicking in the garden with the dogs, playing hide-and-seek in the coach-house and stables (then new-built, it is said, by the Colonel himself), fishing for minnows in the adjoining brook or sailing a miniature fleet of ships upon its waters. Again, seated in the hall, they are receiving such instruction at their mother's knee as she could bestow; or, else, foregathered in the evening about the great fire-place listening, open-eyed and open-mouthed, to the stout, grim Colonel, their sire, while he tells them stories of his campaigns with Marlborough and Prince Eugene. It may be that the martial ardour of both these lads was fired and that they drank in battle-lore with their alphabet. Yet, truth to tell, in their childish years the career of a soldier was far from gay and full of laborious routine from which appeared no hope of escape for years to come. A momentary hope of fighting gleamed above the horizon when George I died—in the very year of James's birth—but this had flickered out and Walpole was still at the helm, as strong or stronger under George II than under his royal predecessor. There came a new military road to be built from their house southward to Edenbridge, and the Wolfe family had their father at home steadily for a couple of years, for this was the kind of work his regiment was thought fit to do, itself hardly a phase of military life likely to appeal to a couple of high-spirited boys.

To a school in Westerham, kept by a pedagogue named Lawrence, the Wolfe boys, in common with other gentlemen's sons, were duly sent. The school-house did not long survive, but the bell with which old Lawrence used to announce the approach of lesson hours is still intact and sonorous. Of traditions of James Wolfe's school-days none endure. We know, however, that here at Westerham he formed one boyish friendship which was to last through his life, weaving the bonds of that hereditary connection with his fame which still subsists and of which the local Lords of the Manor are with reason proud.

Some five years had the Wolfes been at Spiers when another newcomer purchased Squerryes Court from the third Earl of Jersey. This was John Warde, a widower, eldest son of Sir John Warde, who had been Lord Mayor of London in Queen Anne's time, and nephew of another Lord Mayor, Sir Patience Warde, of Puritan times. John Warde had married a sister of the beautiful Countess of Buckinghamshire and of the equally fair Countess of Effingham, and on her death he wished to retire to the country to bring up his several children. The eldest and heir had seen ten summers when the Wardes came to Westerham, but the second son, George Warde, was just a year older than James Wolfe. A friendship ripened between the Wolfe and Warde families, the widower being no doubt very glad of the advice of such a pleasant, sensible woman as the Colonel's lady, in the upbringing of his little flock. Famous became the intimacy of the two lads, George Warde and James Wolfe. At an early age each disclosed his secret military ambitions, despite parental wishes otherwise. Together they roamed the Kentish countryside on horseback or with their dogs; fought mimic battles, solved problems in strategy and participated in deadly ambushes. The tastes of Edward, the scholar of the family, were supposed to run more upon books than upon battles. A sweet-tempered lad, ever looking up to his elder brother, and miserable when they were separated. Nature had not given him James's ardent disposition, but when the time came he was resolute, in spite of his mother's tears, to follow where he led. He made a sterling young soldier and died, as we shall see, a miserable death in a foreign land. Of his friend George, writing years afterwards, when both were grown men, James tells his mother:

"George Warde paid me a visit of four days. I could not help being astonished at the strength of his understanding, which I never discovered so fully before. To that he has added a just and upright way of thinking, very uncommon, and the strictest morals of any young man amongst my acquaintance. This last won't surprise you, for he was never reckoned vicious. He is extremely indifferent to preferment and high employment in the army—partly from his defect of speech, but principally from an easiness, or rather indolence of temper, that makes him unfit to bear a heavy part in life."

James may have correctly gauged his friend's character at that time, or he may have underestimated his fellow soldier's qualities. Anyhow, we shall see this same indolent George becoming, afte

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Wolfe's death, fired with a new spirit and rising to be a lieutenant-general, commander of the forces in Ireland, and the best cavalry officer of his day.

Walpole and the era of peace under George II were now to be rudely shaken. With the death of Queen Caroline, which occurred in 1737, the powerful influence which had supported the pacific minister in his restraint upon the monarch, suddenly ceased. Affairs were approaching a parlous state on the Continent, and the Elector of Hanover (who happened to be King of England) wanted to lend a hand. A more vigorous foreign policy was inevitable, and in military circles the chances for and against war were discussed with ardour. Our Lieutenant-Colonel began to look forward to employment and promotion; it was decided to move nearer London and the Court, for the stout old soldier was a favourite with the King and the King's Policy, and cordially detested Walpole. Migration was otherwise advisable in that James and Edward might avail themselves of somewhat better schooling. So it was, in the latter part of the year 1738, when James was approaching his twelfth birthday, Westerham was reluctantly given up for Greenwich. The Rev. Samuel F. Swinden, a very estimable scholar and amiable man had lately set up a school at Greenwich, to which a number of naval and military officers had sent or had promised to send their sons, and to Swinden's care in 1739 James and Edward Wolfe were entrusted. It probably required no great degree of acumen on the part of the new tutor to perceive that one, at least, of his new pupils was no ordinary boy. He bestowed upon James infinite attention, taking pains to win his personal regard. The friendship for master towards pupil was reciprocated—it ripened into an intimacy which lasted both their lives. Swinden's prophecies of his pupil's future greatness were not forgotten when all Britain rang with his fame, and his sympathy and understanding made him then the chief confidant and counsellor of a lonely mother, who hugged her sorrow unceasingly at Bath and Blackheath.

Wolfe was indeed no ordinary boy, but even then one of the most precocious geniuses that ever lived. From his tenderest years he had resolved to be a soldier, just as the boy Pitt, a generation or two later, resolved to be a statesman, or Chatterton to be a poet. Everything which could conduce to that end was to be cultivated, everything which might hinder it—even games and pleasures—was to be swept ruthlessly aside. It is almost amusing, if it were not so pathetic, to note how habitually he stifles his feelings; how

through his boyhood and youth he is determined to play the grown man and the stoic, in spite of a feeble frame and delicate constitution, pushing aside obstacles and making light of difficulties, dreaming of glory from the very first, yet resolved that such glory should be no haphazard thing but paid for by hard work. Professional efficiency was, as we shall see, his goal, and this ideal of professional efficiency he partially derived from his father. Let us do the plodding old soldier justice; he was a thorough master of the details of his profession, and those in power knew it.

When Wolfe left his native town, child as he was in years, his character was in all essential respects formed. Decided certainly was his choice of a future career. He was to return to Westerham again and again as boy and man, for besides his bosom friend, George Warde, there were other friends, and was there not at Squerryes an attractive sister of George's whom he admired? We may leave him, therefore, installed at his desk in Mr. Swinden's school at Greenwich, poring over Latin grammar and Euclid, at which performance his brother Edward, in spite of his year's juniority, made far better progress (James's mental culture was to come later on), to glance at affairs in the world outside which were to have a very decisive bearing on his career.

The overbearing dealings of Spain towards British commerce overseas were inflaming the nation. It was alleged that British merchandise was being virtually shut out of the Spanish colonies. A secret compact was generally suspected between Spain and France, in virtue of which the latter was supporting Spain in her anti-English policy. Walpole was at last powerless to resist the clamour. On October 30, 1739, England flung down the gauntlet, and amidst the pealing of bells and blazing of bonfires, war was decreed against the detested Spaniards. In vain did the old Whigs raise their voices warning their countrymen that this fateful decree bade fair to light a general conflagration throughout Europe which years might not extinguish. Turbulent, sick of peace, distressed by bad harvests, the nation was in no mood to listen to such croakings. Four months later came tidings of Admiral Vernon's victory at Porto Bello, and England indulged in all the absurdities of joy. Ballads were bawled in the streets, banners were waved, illuminations and vinous carousings were the order of the day and night. Flushed with this triumph, the nation demanded the total destruction of Spanish power in the Western hemisphere. An expedition under Commodore Anson was got under way to ravage the coasts, while a great fleet foregathered at

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Spithead, wherewith to reinforce the hero Vernon in the West Indies and the Spanish Main. Nor was this all. Ten thousand troops assembled in the Isle of Wight, under Lord Cathcart, with orders to encompass as soon as possible the destruction of distant Cartagena. Colonel Wolfe's employment came at last. A competent Adjutant-General was wanted, and in July 1740 the Colonel was instructed to proceed in this capacity to the Isle of Wight camp.

Of what worth were the Reverend Mr. Swinden's grammars, atlases, manuals, and copy-books, at this juncture? For weeks James had been in a fever of excitement. He had heard the sonance of drums and the fanfarade of trumpets in his ears, music sweet enough to drown the sound of class recitations, and in mid-Thames he had seen sights to blur the characters of arithmetic and algebra from his eager eyes. His father's appointment as Adjutant-General decided him; the soul of the lean and lanky lad longed to be in the thick of the fray. He stated the case earnestly: as he meant to be a soldier, why not begin now? In short, would his father take him with him? He would go as a volunteer—as a member of the Adjutant-General's household. His naïve representations did not fall on deaf ears, for, indeed, the veteran knew the stuff the boy was made of, and secretly indulged his military precocity. Far otherwise was it with Mrs. Wolfe. What she had long dreaded was come to pass. She knew she could not prevent her eldest-born from finally embracing the profession of arms, but was it not madness that a child of his years and constitution should be exposed to the dangers and hardships of foreign service?

He was only thirteen-and-a-half, at an age when most boys are making their first acquaintance with the forms, dormitories, and playgrounds of a public school. But maternal tears and entreaties were in vain, the good-humoured Colonel would not recede from his promise. And so, on a hot July day, father and son took their places in the Portsmouth coach, the boy's heart beating high with the prospect of glory and adventure.

II

FIRST CAMPAIGNING IN FLANDERS

FOR a week after his arrival in the Isle of Wight, our young volunteer had his fill of martial sights and sounds. In the first flush of military activity domestic thoughts and the softer emotions were banished. Poor anxious Mrs. Wolfe had written ere the sun went down on their parting, and he had carried her letter in his pocket some days ere he sat down to indite the following boyish composition, perhaps the first he had ever addressed his mother—

To HIS MOTHER.

Newport, Isle of Wight,
August 6th, 1740.

I received my dearest Mamma's letter on Monday last, but could not answer it then, by reason I was at camp to see the regiments off to go on board, and was too late for the post; but am very sorry, dear Mamma, that you doubt my love, which I'm sure is as sincere as ever any son's was to his mother.

Papa and I are just going on board, but I believe shall not sail this fortnight; in which time, if I can get ashore at Portsmouth or any other town, I will certainly write to you, and when we are gone by every ship I meet, because I know it is my duty. Besides, if it is not I would do it out of love, with pleasure.

I am sorry to hear that your head is so bad, which I fear, is caused by your being so melancholy; but pray, dear Mamma, if you love me, don't give yourself up to fears for us. I hope, if it please God, we shall soon see one another, which will be the happiest day that ever I shall see. I will, as sure as I live, if it is possible for me, let you know everything that has happened, by every ship; therefore pray, dearest Mamma, don't doubt about it. I am in a very good state of health, and am likely to continue so. Pray my love to my brother. Pray my service to Mr. Streton and his family, to Mr. and Mrs. Weston, and to

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George Warde when you see him ; and pray believe me to be,
my dearest Mamma,

Your most dutiful, loving, and affectionate Son,

J. WOLFE.

P.S.—Harry¹ gives his love to Margaret, and is very careful of me. Pray my service to Will and the rest. Papa bids me tell you that Mr. Paterson will give Mr. Masterton two hundred pounds more.

To MRS. WOLFE, at her House in Greenwich, Kent.

The boy-volunteer's confidence in his health was ill justified. The rough-and-ready life on board ship soon brought out his weak points. Colonel Wolfe must have noted the growing pallor of his son's cheek as the weeks wore on, delay succeeding delay in the Solent and far Carthage as far off as ever. It was November before the fleet carrying Lord Cathcart's troops sailed. By that time James was so pitifully ill that the father had no alternative but to put the precocious volunteer on shore at Portsmouth, with instructions for him to be carried home forthwith. Lucky it was that James did not accompany the Carthage expedition. He could hardly have survived. Thousands, including Lord Cathcart himself, perished of fever. A more disastrous expedition probably never sailed from English shores. But it is not necessary to advert here to the gross mismanagement, the bickerings between the naval and military heads, the sufferings of soldiers and sailors, which have all been set forth by Smollett in the pages of *Roderick Random*. We need not dwell on the terrible business except to say that for two years it deprived the Wolfe family of its head, and that the experiences the old soldier then underwent in the tropics were never effaced from his memory, and left their mark even on his rugged constitution. To him the moral was, as he told his son years later, never to have anything to do with joint expeditions. But even he would have been open to conviction that it was all a question of personal character and administration. And James Wolfe was destined to show the world what joint expeditions might become, and himself go down to future generations as "the greatest master of amphibious warfare the world has ever seen since Drake took the art from its swaddling clothes."²

¹ Streton. The Stretons were long neighbours and intimate friends of the Wolfes at Greenwich.

² Corbett: *England in the Seven Years' War*.

Humiliating enough must have been the boy's return into Greenwich. After all his hopes of immediate military service (and his school-fellows would not have been human if they had not rallied him on his foiled ambition), to go back to the daily hum-drum contemplation of desks, books, slates and ferulas! But he made the best of it, probably aware that he would be none the worse for a little more book-learning. He resolved, moreover, to train his weak body in all manner of useful exercises. With his neighbours and school-fellows, whose names figure so frequently in his after-correspondence, he was popular enough. Such a dashing, ardent spirit could hardly fail to be popular. One notes amongst them the names of the Stretons, the Pooles, Bretts, Masons, Cades, Hookers and Allens. Later on, the treasurer of Greenwich Hospital sent his little son, Jack Jervis, to the same school. The Jervises were close friends with the Wolfes. Long ere his day of renown as Admiral, Earl St. Vincent was proud to be the custodian of a sacred trust reposed in him by one of his earliest Greenwich friends, as we shall see in the conclusion of this history.

Although he went back doggedly to his lessons, James warned his mother that he had not relinquished his design of entering the army as soon as any opportunity came. He had written his father, importuning him to exert his influence. The squire of Squerryes also bestirred himself, his own son's military ambitions being now disclosed. There were frequent visits to Westerham, where James Wolfe was always welcome. The fateful moment in the boy's life came at last. To the south of Squerryes Court, not far from the mansion, is a large, circular brick pigeon-house. It was the custom of the two friends to frequent this spot for fencing, pistol-shooting, and other pastimes. A few days before James's fifteenth birthday, the school at Greenwich having broken up for the Christmas holidays, James had ridden over to Westerham for a few days under his friend's roof. One morning the sound of the post-horn was heard at the gates, and a few moments later the squire himself was seen approaching along the gravelled path, in his hand a large official packet "On His Majesty's service." The lads ran to meet him. The packet was addressed to "James Wolfe, Esq." Quickly the boy tore open seal and envelope, disclosing a commission signed by King George II, and countersigned by Lord Harrington, appointing him second lieutenant in his father's regiment of marines. It was dated, "St. James's, November 3rd, 1741." There had been a delay in forwarding it, probably intentional. One can see the two—Damon and Pythias—locked in an

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embrace, and the honest squire shaking his guest's hand, roundly congratulating him on the commencement of a career. Beneath the tall trees on the spot where this pleasing incident, so fraught with possibilities, occurred, the heir of the estate raised long afterwards a pedestal, crowned by an ornamental urn. The visitor to-day may read thereon the following lines—

“Here first was Wolfe with martial ardour fired,
Here first with glory's brightest flame inspired;
This spot so sacred will for ever claim
A proud alliance with its hero's name.”

One might observe that the phrase, “Here first was Wolfe with martial ardour fired,” has no exact reference to the incident just described; for, as George Warde well knew, martial ardour had for many years been a characteristic of his friend.

The joy of the youthful officer was tempered by some disappointment. The Marines, a corps which three-quarters of a century before had grown out of “The Maritime Regiment of the Lord High Admiral of England,” was hardly a body for which such a bad sailor as James Wolfe was fitted. But a beginning had to be made somewhere; it was his father's old corps, and probably where his influence lay strongest. Mrs. Wolfe was ready to move heaven and earth to rescue her son from the terrors of such a service; and James himself soon recognized that as his father's regiment was 5000 miles away there was no immediate chance of military activity. Fighting was what he wanted—fighting at sea if it could not be on shore. All around him the air was charged with war. Armaments for Continental service were in preparation. The neighbourhood of Greenwich was already astir with horses, artillery and red-coats. Eagerly, therefore, he embraced the first opportunity that came to exchange into the line; on March 25, 1742, the King signed a commission creating his impetuous young subject ensign in the Twelfth, then known as Colonel Duroure's regiment of Foot. The business of signing military commissions had become somewhat perfunctory of late, but did not His Majesty make some remark upon this “hüpfend füllen” of the adjutant-general's who only four months before he had sent to join the Marines? “Much too young,” was doubtless his comment then, as it was fifteen years later when he was asked to sign Wolfe's commission as a colonel. Yet the “colt” had qualities rare enough amongst young officers in those days; with a lust for fighting, he combined extraordinary aptitude and a desire to excel. Although a child, he realized that war was a science and



MAJOR-GENERAL JAMES WOLFE

From an engraving by Houston after a drawing by Captain Hervey Smith



MISS ELIZABETH LAWSON, MAID OF HONOUR TO THE
PRINCESS OF WALES

From a miniature in the possession of John Stuart Lawson, Esq.

to be taken seriously. And with such seriousness did he set about his duties as to attract the attention of his superiors almost from the moment of his entrance into the army.

A Continental war in which England should participate had been for some time brewing. In October 1740, when Wolfe was being sent home sick from the Solent, news had reached England of the death of the Emperor Charles VI. Thereupon his daughter Maria Theresa's title to his estates was disputed by the Elector of Bavaria, the Pragmatic Sanction flouted by the chief powers of Europe, and her dominions insolently invaded by an able and ambitious prince who had lately succeeded to the Prussian throne. The first result of Frederick's victories in Silesia was to betray the weakness of the Austrian monarchy and to encourage other nations to share in the spoils. But there were those who regarded with a chivalrous interest the young Queen of Hungary and were ready to support her claims, and amongst such Great Britain soon took a first place. Albeit, in vain Walpole tried to act as intermediary between Maria Theresa and Frederick, in vain the aged Cardinal Fleury strove to prevent France from supporting the Elector's claims with arms. By the summer of 1741 the unhappy Queen had been compelled to flee from Vienna, then besieged by the Elector's forces, and to take refuge in Hungary. There, amongst the faithful Hungarians, who hailed her not as Queen, but as King, she learnt that her rival had been chosen and crowned Emperor under the title of Charles VII. About the same time a large French army was in the field a Spanish armament was sailing from Barcelona to attack the Austrian-Italian domains.

Such was the situation. Throughout Great Britain all this, taken together with the Cartagena and Cuba failures and the King's private negotiation of a treaty of neutrality as regarded Hanover, occasioned a ferment of excitement. The odium, the guilt of all was hurled at the unpopular minister, and "Down with Walpole" became a cry too powerful to be resisted. In February 1742, Walpole resigned. A new Parliament and administration, headed by Cartaret, resolved on vigorous measures to support the Queen of Hungary, and the Pragmatic Sanction which justified her title became a popular toast throughout the country in circles which would have been puzzled indeed to render a definition of that famous pact. The Commons voted Maria Theresa a £500,000 subsidy; and more than five millions were granted to prosecute the war. In the very week of Wolfe's commission as ensign it was

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decided to send a British army of 17,000 men to Flanders as auxiliaries to the Austrian forces. The command of this force was given to Lord Stair, who, after twenty years of unemployment, was made a field-marshal.¹ It was ordered to be assembled on Blackheath, and on April 27 the King, accompanied by his sons, the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cumberland, came to review the troops. Many years had passed since such a martial array had been seen in England. Monster crowds poured from the capital to witness the spectacle. Of cavalry there were three troops of horse-guards, the "Blues," and five regiments of dragoons. There were thirteen regiments of infantry, who to the music of fife and drum, marched and counter-marched before the royal eye that day. Were there any in the vast throng of spectators, apart from relations, friends and school-fellows, who cast eye twice upon the slim, erect, bright-faced stripling who bore aloft gaily the colours of the Twelfth Regiment of Foot? Probably none, for what oracle was there to say what this boy would become? Fifteen years and four months had passed over his head, that head whose red hair was already concealed by a powdered wig; yet his stature was already that of a tall man.²

The sun shone and fife and drum wrought bravely as James Wolfe marched along with his regiment to Deptford, where transports were lying in mid-stream ready to bear him away to Flanders, that ancient cockpit of Europe. No wonder, after so long a peace, there was a spirit of fervour amongst the troops and much eager speculation as to the adventures which awaited them in foreign parts. From the old veteran, his father, the young ensign had long since learnt much of Flanders and the campaigns of Queen Anne's day, and knew something of the character of the country. It was great news to him that his bosom friend, George Warde, was also going out as cornet of dragoons. It was good to have an old friend in foreign parts. Night drew in and the whole fleet was in the Channel, the cliffs of the North Foreland receding before the gaze of the young watcher in the stern. But the wind dropped just off the Nore, and, much to the young ensign's disappointment, there was a delay of some days before they could cross the Channel to Ostend.³ A very different place was Ostend in 1742 to the

¹ Stair had with him Generals Honeywood, Cope, Ligonier, Hawley and the Earl of Albemarle; Brigadier-Generals Cornwallis, Bragg, Pulteney, Huske, Ponsonby, Frampton, Lord Effingham and Lord Rothes.

² Wolfe eventually attained the height of six feet three inches.

³ Brigadier Frampton's Order-book contains the following, May 20, 1742—
"A return of each battalion be given in immediately in the following

pleasant Belgian watering-place of to-day. It had not yet yielded its commercial pretensions founded on its selection by Charles VI as the emporium of the East India Company. That choice had been revoked a dozen years previously, but much trade had been brought to the port in consequence, and traders and mariners of all nations were to be seen on the streets and quays, while on the beach not a solitary mortal, Fleming or other, so eccentric as to plunge into the high-rising surf for mere pleasure.

After a day's halt at Ostend the troops marched to Bruges between two serried lines of peasants who had turned out to see the unaccustomed spectacle of British red-coats. The ancestors of the modern Belgians were not a martial people; what patriotic zeal they had once possessed had been largely crushed out by a long period of foreign rule and by conditions discouraging any deep sense of nationality. They were content to be the subjects of Austria if that would ensure their peace and immunity from military sacrifices. But the cause of the Queen of Hungary was not calculated to awaken their enthusiasm, and the prospect of having Maria Theresia's British auxiliaries quartered upon them was generally repugnant. In fact, the brief march to Ghent by way of Bruges was sufficient to reveal to officers and men the temper of the ignorant, priest-ridden inhabitants.

"They hate the English and we hate them," wrote a captain home, "and the Queen of Hungary holds them like a wolf by the ears."¹

When Ensign Wolfe marched in at the close of a sultry June day into the ancient town of Ghent, he had no idea of the plans of his commander-in-chief or how long his sojourn there would be.²

form:—captains' names, number of officers, sergeants, corporals, drums and private men. No more than five women per company be permitted to continue on board the transports. A commissioned officer on board each transport to see the provisions delivered to the men and that there is no waste made. The commanding officer of each transport is to take care that neither officer nor soldier lie on shore.

"A sergeant, a corporal and twelve men of each transport to be as a guard to keep things quiet and to place centrys on the officers' baggage, and to suffer no man to smoke between decks. To take care of the lights, and to commit any man prisoner that is guilty of any disturbance, and that man will be severely punished.

"The tattoo and Reveille not to be beat on board any of the transports unless a gun is fired by a man-of-war, or till further orders.

"The parole is King George."—Townshend's *Life of Marquess Townshend*, p. 5.

¹ *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1742, p. 528.

² "The city of Ghent," wrote one of the officers, "is very large; I believe nearly as large as the city of London (within the walls) but the inhabitants not

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He could hardly have supposed that Lord Stair intended to remain there for more than a few weeks, or that his battalion would not shortly get a sight of the enemy. The first thing to be done was to find quarters for the troops, which was not effected without difficulty. Encamping the first two nights in the market-place and open spaces of the town, by degrees they became quartered upon the unwilling populace. Affrays were of frequent occurrence. A fortnight after their arrival young Wolfe could write home of a bloody collision between citizens and soldiery which had most of the ugly features of a pitched battle. Thus it happened: the commissariat not being of the best, the soldiers complained of a want of meat. The Ghent butchers' prices were inordinately high, and the prime cuts displayed were doubtless a sore temptation. One day a soldier took up a piece of meat in the market-place "to smell if it was sweet," he said, before buying it. The butcher, suspecting him of thievery, slashed him across the face with his knife. This was going very far, and one of the soldier's companions retorted by promptly running the butcher through the body.

Armed with knives and cleavers, the butchering fraternity flew to avenge the impaled victim; nor these alone, for many of the trading burghers joined in the fray. As fast as the red-coats came up they were surrounded and cut down, until many bodies lay weltering in the market-place. A small detachment of cavalry was ordered out, and by this time the numerous mob was put to flight. It was two hours before the tumult was quelled; several burghers had been slain. The soldiers were locked up in their barracks for the remainder of the day, while the burgomaster summoned a town meeting and at the behest of Lord Stair issued an edict that "whoever should offer the least affront to the subjects of the King of Great Britain should be whipped, burnt in the back and turned out of the town," a sufficient accumulation of penalties to make the burghers more careful in the future about outward exhibitions of temper whatever animosity they might cherish in their hearts.

Wolfe got fairly comfortable lodgings at the beginning, and found much in his new life and surroundings to entertain him. As long as summer lasted the fortifications, the ancient buildings and

the twentieth part. The streets are very regular and well paved, having no carts employed in trade and but few coaches to tear up the pavement. The houses are very irregular and antique, bedizened with paint and whiting on the outside, which makes the insides appear more shocking and dismal; being very large old-fashioned rooms, bare walls, and scarcely any furniture. The churches are many and large, and very antique; richly adorned, and contain the chief wealth of the city."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1742, p. 528.

canals, the quaint, irregular streets were a fund of interest.¹ The people, in their "greasy, ragged cloaks," which were suspected of serving for coat, waistcoat and breeches, and their wooden shoes, offered as strong a contrast to the townfolk of Westerham and Greenwich as could well be imagined. He found amongst the better class, however, some agreeable fellows with whom he could air his as yet small stock of French. As the weeks of detention in Ghent stretched into months, he began to grow a little lonely, especially as George Warde, whom he had hoped to meet almost immediately after his arrival, was for some time delayed with the Horse-Guards. His Colonel showed him every kindness, but there was no one congenial of his age at mess with whom he could form a real intimacy. As a means of diversion in the intervals of reading, strolling and guard duties, he bought a flute and took lessons upon it from a Belgian master. The theatre would shortly re-open, and thus, if the regiment did not march, there was still a prospect of relieving the tedium of inactivity. When George Warde arrived and the two friends embraced, it seemed likely that a speedy farewell to Ghent was imminent. To a letter from his mother telling him that his father had returned from Cuba and was appointed Inspector of Marines he replies—

TO HIS MOTHER.

Ghent, August 27th, 1742.

DEAR MADAM,—I just got your kind letter by Captain Merrydan; I'm very much obliged to you for it, and heartily glad to hear you are all well.

I pity my uncle Tin² much. I think, by what I have heard you say of him, he does not deserve such ill luck. I saw my friend George Warde for the first time, though the Horse have been here these two days, for I happened to be on guard when they came; nor have I as yet seen Captain Merrydan, for my Captain brought me the letters from him. I intend waiting on him this afternoon.

I am vastly obliged to you for your good advice, and will follow it as much as lies in my power, I assure you. I got a

¹ "The fortifications are very strong," we are told; "as is the citadel, particularly the gate called St. Peter's, which opposed the Duke of Marlborough's army eight days, but was then forced to surrender. The works of the siege [in which Wolfe's father had taken part] are yet remaining. . . Our army here makes a gallant figure consisting of the flower of England, brave fellows, fine horses, &c., and all ready for the field at the first notice."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1742, p. 528.

² Edward Tindal Thompson.

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letter from my father two days ago, by Captain Stanhope, which I intend thanking him for next post; and then, perhaps, I shall write to him from camp, for our colonel has desired us to have everything ready against Monday next. I have just now done packing up, and can be ready to march in two hours.

I wish my uncle Brad¹ may be coming home as you heard, for I know it would give you great pleasure to see him. I am very sorry my brother Ned complains of my not answering his letters; I think I have never missed any nor ever will. Pray be so good to give my kind love to him. My shirts are in very good order, and, I hope, will last me a great while; but I fancy (by what people say) not so long as we are in Flanders.

Pray my duty to my father, and love to cousin Goldsmith; and with best compliments to my good friends at Greenwich, and hearty wishes for your healths, I must beg to remain

Your dutiful and affectionate Son,

JAMES WOLFE.

PS.—Cope's Dragoons are expected here to-night. I often play my flute, and am going to it now.

The "Cousin Goldsmith" mentioned in the foregoing was Wolfe's father's sister's son, Edward Goldsmith of Limerick, whose own father was first cousin to the Reverend Charles Goldsmith, the original of the *Vicar of Wakefield* and the progenitor of the celebrated author, Oliver Goldsmith. At this time Oliver, who used afterwards to say proudly, "I claim kinship with General Wolfe, the conqueror of Quebec," was an Irish school-boy of thirteen.²

With George Warde at Ghent we may be sure that the time did not pass unprofitably between the two friends. But Warde as a cavalryman did not have the same incentives to strategical proficiency as the ensign who was already making a study of military fortification as well as trying hard to master an adjutant's duties. He did not propose to remain an ensign longer than uncontrollable circumstances ordered him to be. Both lads took pleasure in the play, seeing all the new French productions as well as the classical ones well acted by French companies. An excellent opera

¹ Lieutenant-Colonel Bradwardine Thompson.

² A reference to Reynolds's famous profile portrait of Oliver Goldsmith at the National Portrait Gallery reveals a curious resemblance in facial peculiarities to those of James Wolfe, suggesting that the Wolfe chin was a paternal as well as a maternal inheritance.

house had been erected at Ghent only a few years before. His mother having written that one of her letters had miscarried and that she would only write in future when she could entrust her epistle to safe hands, James, in his next rallies her, as if her resolution had been inspired by economy—

To HIS MOTHER.

Ghent, *September 12th, 1742.*

DEAR MADAM,—I got yours two days ago by Captain Guy. I'm heartily sorry to hear that the pleasure of hearing from you is now at an end. I fancy the expense is not so great as you imagine! I'm told by several gentlemen that 'tis no more than sixpence, and that, once a month, wouldn't hurt your pocket. I answered the packet you was so good to send me by Captain Merrydan; I dined with him yesterday, and think he seems to be a very good sort of man.

I'm glad you've got a house.¹ Long may you live to enjoy the blessings of a good and warm one!—a thing not easily found in this town, but that we young ones don't mind.

You desire to know how I live. I assure you, as to eating, rather to well, considering what we may come to. For drink I don't care much; but there is very good rum and brandy in this place, and cheap, if we have a mind to take a little sneaker now and then at night just to warm us. The weather begins now to grow coldish: we have had rain for the last two weeks, and the people say 'tis likely to continue till the frost comes in. I have not begun with fire yet, neither do I intend till I know where we shall encamp.

This place is full of officers, and we never want company. I go to the play once or twice a week, and talk a little with the ladies, who are very civil, and speak French.

I'm glad to hear with all my heart that my brother is better. He says he goes to the cold bath and that does him good. Pray my love to him. I hope my father is well, and keeps his health; be so good as to give my duty to him, and to my Aunt Allanson if she is with you, and believe me,

Your dutiful and affectionate Son,

J. WOLFE.

I see my friend George often; he has just left me, and desires his compliments.

¹ The Wolfes about this time took a town house in Burlington Gardens, the Cartagena affair having proved profitable to the Adjutant-General.

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Winter drew in ; fainter grew the hope of marching from Ghent. The time-honoured institution of "winter quarters" was too generally respected in those days (the boy must have conned well that line in Livy about winter being a season "quae omnium bellorum terrâ marique sit quies") for Lord Stair to dream of impugning it. As he lay still, after a good deal of fighting in Bohemia, Marshal Belleisle retreated from Prague, and the other French generals, Maillebois and de Broglie, took up winter quarters in Bavaria. If Hanover were to be attacked by the French (and it was for this purpose the British army, reinforced by 16,000 Hanoverians in British pay, was in Flanders), it would not be before spring. Meantime, there was a prospect that the Wolfes would furnish still another soldier to the army. Edward, now fifteen, was eager to join his brother.

To HIS MOTHER.

Ghent, *December 17th, 1742.*

DEAR MADAM,—I should have answered your letter when I wrote last to my father, had not the business I was forced to write about prevented me. I was heartily sorry you got your new house with a cold. I hope it has left you, and you enjoy perfect health, without which there can be no happiness to you, nor consequently to me. My brother is much to be commended for the pains he takes to improve himself. I hope to see him soon in Flanders, when, in all probability, before next year is over, we may know something of our trade. Some people imagine we shall return to England in the Spring, but I think that's not much to be relied on ; however, I'm no judge of these things.

There is a talk that some of the regiments of Foot will march to garrison two or three towns (the Austrians have quitted to go and join the army in Bohemia) ; they are about four-score or a hundred miles from hence. Their names are Mons, Charleroy, and another I don't know ; but it is not certain.

We have had extreme hard frost for about a fortnight, so that all the rivers and canals, whereof there are great plenty about the town, are frozen, so that no boats can go, nor any commerce be carried on by water. There was a little thaw last night, so that we are in some hopes of its going away.

I shall not miss writing to you every fortnight as you desire.

Be so good to give my duty to my father, uncles and aunts, and love to my brother.

Your dutiful and affectionate Son,

J. WOLFE.

Mr. Warde desires his compliments; mine to the family, if you please. I hope Miss is well.¹

By the time the British army under Lord Stair quitted Ghent early in February 1743, James was joined by his brother, who had succeeded in gaining an ensigncy in the same regiment. They had a terrible march before them, these two delicate lads, before Duroure's and the division of which it formed a part could reach the Rhine—bad roads, bad weather, bad food and bad water—and Edward was of even more tender make than his elder brother. At St. Trond they halted long enough for him to pen the following to his mother :

TO HIS MOTHER.

St. Tron, in the Bishopric of Liége,

February 12th, 1743.

DEAR MADAM,—I got your letter of the 23rd of last month, at Ghent, and should have answered it, as I told my father I intended, at Brussels, but was very much fatigued and out of order, so deferred it till now.

This is our fifth day's march; we have had very bad weather all the way. I have found out by experience that my strength is not so great as I imagined; but, however, I have held out pretty well as yet. To-morrow is a very bad road to Tongres, so if I can I will hire a horse at this place, and march afoot one day and ride the other, all the rest of the journey.

I never come into quarters without aching hips and knees; and I assure you the wisest part of the officers got horses at Ghent, though some would have done it if their circumstances would have allowed it.

We have lived pretty well all the way, but I have already been glad to take a little water out of a soldier's flask, and eat some ammunition bread. I am now quartered at the head man of the Town's house, one of the civilest men I ever met with in my life. The people where I was billeted refused to let me in,

¹ Miss Warde, sister to George, afterwards Mrs. Clayton. Their town house also was in Burlington Gardens.

so I went to the townhouse and complained, and this gentleman took me and another officer that was with me to his house.

I shall write to my father when we get to the end of our march; I'm glad to hear, with all my heart, that he is well. I'm in the greatest spirits in the world; I have my health pretty well, and I believe I shall be very well able to hold it out with a little help of a horse. Pray be so good as to give my duty to my father. This is the best paper St. Tron affords; I have got a sergeant's pen and ink, which are commonly very bad; so I hope you'll excuse everything that is bad in this letter.

Your dutiful and affectionate Son,

J. WOLFE.

But "the end of our march" was still far off, for nearly two months later the younger of the two brothers, who had been sharing a horse between them, was detached on a foraging errand to Bonn, and in the following letter gives us a glimpse of what was passing at that time.

EDWARD WOLFE to HIS FATHER.

Bonn, April 7th, 1743.

DEAREST SIR,—I am sent here with another gentleman to buy provisions, for we can get none upon our march but eggs and bacon and sour bread; but I have lived upon a soldier's ammunition bread, which is far preferable to what we find upon the road. We are within two leagues of the Rhine, which it is most people's opinion we shall pass the 14th and then encamp. I have no bedding nor can get it anywhere; not so much at this place, where the Elector's court is, which I think a little extraordinary. We had a sad march last Monday in the morning. I was obliged to walk up to my knees in snow, though my brother and I have a horse between us and at the same time I had it with me. I seldom see him, and had I had the least thoughts of coming to this place, I am sure he would have wrote to you. This is the first opportunity I have had since I wrote to you from Aix-la-Chapelle, which letter I hope you have received.

I do not expect a letter from you, if it does not come by my captain, this great while. I have often lain upon straw, and should oftener had not I known some French, which I find very useful; though I was the other day obliged to speak *Latin* for a good dinner, which if I had not done, I should have gone with-

out it. Most people talk that language here. We send for everything we want to the priest, and if he does not send what he has, we frighten him pretty much. The people are very malicious here and very poor except the priest and burgomaster, who live upon the republic ; but I have had the good luck to be billeted at their houses, where there is everything good but their bread.

We were here at the worst time, for they kill no meat because it is Lent. They say there are many wolves and wild boars in the woods ; but I never saw any yet, neither do I desire. I think I may end troubling you with my nonsense ; but I flatter myself that you have a pleasure in hearing from

Dear Sir,

Your dutiful and affectionate Son,

EDWARD WOLFE.

Pray my duty to my mother, and I may venture very safely the same from my brother to you both.

Hard canteen biscuit, hard floors and hard weather :—it was a severe trial for the two delicately-nurtured lads.

The idea now was to effect a junction with the Austrian and Hanoverian troops at Hochst, near Frankfort-on-the-Main, which, on account of the winding of the river, was supposed to offer a capital strategic position. From Frankfort a letter from Edward seems to hold out a prospect of a good deal more marching.

EDWARD WOLFE to HIS MOTHER.

Frankfort, *May 4th*, N.S., 1743.

DEAREST MADAM,—I don't doubt but you will think me very neglectful in not writing to you, but I assure 'tis no fault of mine, for whenever I had an opportunity of sending a letter to you I did it with a great deal of pleasure. I don't expect to hear from you till we have beaten the French, and return to Flanders, which time is very uncertain. We are now within a day's march of the French army, which it is reported we shall soon engage, but there is no credit to be given to half is said here. It is likewise said in case the French should go into Bavaria we shall follow them, which is about two month's march ; so I reckon this summer will be spent in that agreeable manner, though I feel no more of it than anybody else, so I am as well contented as if we were marching in England.

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I have at least bought my bedding at Frankfort, which place I think has a little the resemblance of London, though not half so large. I reckon you think I have forgot Mrs. Cade, but I assure you I have not, though I must confess there's not a woman in Frankfort, nor indeed in all Germany, that has half beauty enough to put me in mind of her. Pray be so good to remember me to all our neighbours at Greenwich, and if Mr. Swinden or any one else should ask after me, you will be pleased to mention that was I in a settled place they should have no room to complain of my not writing to them, but now as I am always hurried about in mounting pickets, etc., I am not able to write to any one but where my duty forces me.

I keep my health very well; live merrily, and if it please God that you and my dearest father do yours, nothing else will make me do otherwise. I hope and pray when you write to uncle Brad you will be so good as to make my compliments to them both; and my duty to my father concludes me, dearest Madam,

Your dutiful and affectionate Son,

EDWARD WOLFE.

Since the death of Cardinal Fleury the affairs of France were directed by D'Argenson and his priestly coadjutor Cardinal Tencin, the latter famous for his devotion to the House of Stuart. After Belleisle's retreat from Prague the French army had wintered in northern Bavaria, thereby enabling the new Emperor to pass a brief period in security in his capital. But the Austrians were closing around him, a battle took place, and he was again driven forth, M. de Broglie not caring to risk a battle in his behalf.

The French Ministry felt that some decisive blow must now be struck. The Duc de Noailles was sent with 12,000 troops to Broglie's assistance, and a check offered to the Austrian advance, under their leader Prince Charles of Lorraine, husband of Maria Theresa. The unhappy Emperor took refuge in Frankfort, the neutrality of which as a free city continued to be respected, at the very time the British army was on the march from Flanders. *En route* Stair was reinforced by some Austrian regiments under Aremberg, and the 16,000 Hanoverians who had been wintering in the neighbourhood of Liége. It was to prevent the junction of this army with that of Prince Charles that the French bent all their energies. Marshal Noailles with 60,000 men was to engage Lord Stair's forces, while, at the same time, 50,000 under

Brogie were to guard Alsace and prevent the Austrians from crossing the Rhine. On May 14, Noailles crossed the Rhine six miles below Worms, and marched his army towards the Main, with the intention of seizing an elevated position near Höchst, which would give him a commanding advantage.

This move induced Lord Stair to leave Höchst for Aschaffenburg, twenty miles east of Frankfort, where he established his headquarters and wrote to Aremberg to join him. But Noailles was at his heels, out-generalling him at every point; and as for the Austrian general, he wrote back to say that as Lord Stair had "got himself into a scrape it was his business to get himself out of it as well as he could."

The truth is, Stair was old and incompetent, and Aremberg, besides a natural jealousy, had but a poor opinion of his generalship. In a day or two, deprived of the Austrian help, Stair found himself cut off from his magazines at Hanau and his expected supplies from Franconia, the enemy occupying all the principal fords and passes on the river.

At this moment, with the two hostile armies only a few hundred yards from one another (although Stair's intelligence department was so bad that he actually did not know of the close proximity of the enemy until he nearly stumbled on them in a wood when he went to reconnoitre in person),¹ France and Great Britain were nominally at peace, enacting merely the part of auxiliaries, and with the ministers of the respective countries still resident at London and Paris.

No wonder if our young warriors, like many older and wiser heads, made little attempt to unravel the mazes of international politics, but were content to accept war as a natural dispensation for the exercise of mental talents, of courage and mere physical endurance.

¹ The intelligence department in Lord Stair's army would appear to have been very inefficient, and when that officer became acquainted with this move of the French he determined to advance. Accordingly the allied army marched to Hellinback, between the edge of the forest of Darmstadt and the river Main, where Lord Stair formed, in the opinion of all the generals, an impregnable camp. Want of supplies, however, and the need of securing the communications of the Upper Main, forced him to move on again to Aschaffenburg.—Townshend, p. 11.

III

A LIEUTENANT AT DETTINGEN

VERY black it looked for the British under Lord Stair on June 19, 1743, when King George II, accompanied by the youthful Duke of Cumberland and Lord Cartaret, arrived from Hanover to join the army, now reduced to 37,000 men, on half-rations, and the horses of the cavalry dying for want of forage. They were cooped up in a narrow valley bordering the river Main, between Aschaffenburg and a village called Dettingen. Two days later Wolfe writes his father—

To HIS FATHER.

Camp near Aschaffenburg,
June 21st, 1743, N.S.

DEAR SIR,—Captain Rainsford joined the regiment yesterday; he brought us your letter, and made us both very happy with the good news of yours and my mother's health. We also got a letter from you by the post. Your kindness is better than our best behaviour can deserve, and we are infinitely happy in having so good parents.

My brother is at present very much fatigued with the hard duty he has had for some days past. He was on a party last night, and saw shot fired in earnest, but was in no great danger, because separated from the enemy by the river Mayne. The French are on the other side that river, about a mile from us. We have now and then small skirmishes with those people. They attacked the other night a party of our men, but were repulsed with the loss of an officer and four or five men killed, and some made prisoners. They desert prodigiously; there were yesterday no less than forty deserters in the camp, that came over in the middle of the day, and brought with them great numbers of horses, for the river is fordable. 'Tis said there are 2000 Austrian Hussars come to us; I fancy they will harass them a little. The Hessians, Pulteney's and Bligh's regiments have not yet joined us, as likewise some Hanoverian horse. I believe we only wait for them to attack our enemy. We shall

soon know what we are to do now that our King is come. His Majesty came two days ago. The Duke of Cumberland is declared Major-General.

The Earl of Stair had like to have been hurt by an escort of two squadrons of English and Hanoverian cavalry (when he was reconnoitring the enemy), who retreated with a little too much haste before some squadrons of French hussars, who, upon their retreat fired upon them, and killed a trooper and dragoon of ours. The reason of the retreat, as I heard, was this,—the word being given to a sergeant and twelve men, who were an advanced guard, to go to the right about, the whole did it, thinking they were ordered, and, I fancy, at the odd and unexpected appearance of the hussars out of a wood. However, they were rallied by General Cope, and would have charged the hussars had they been permitted.

Colonel Duroure, who acts as Adjutant-General, was thrown from his horse yesterday by a Hanoverian discharging his pistol just by him, and was much bruised. We are all sorry for it. He has been very good to his ensigns this march; we have had the use of his canteens whenever he thought we had occasion for them. We are now near forty miles from Frankfort, which we marched in two days and two nights, with about nine or ten hours' halt, in order to gain a pass that is here, and now in our possession. The men were almost starved in that march. They nor the officers had little more than bread and water to live on, and that very scarce, because they had not the ammunition bread the day it was due. But I believe it could not be helped.

We have left a very fine country to come to the worst I ever saw. I believe it is in the Prince of Hesse's dominions. The King is in a little palace in such a town as I believe he never lived in before. It was ruined by the Hanoverians, and everything almost that was in it carried off by them, some time before we came. They and our men now live by marauding. I hope we shall not stay here long, if we do I don't know how it will be possible to get provisions. The French are burning all the villages on the other side of the Mayne, and we ravaging the country on this side.

I am now doing, and have done ever since we encamped, the duty of an adjutant. I was afraid when I first undertook it that the fatigue would be too much for me, but now I am use to it, I think it will agree very well with me, at least I hope so. Brigadier Huske inquires often if I have heard from you lately,

and desires his compliments to you. He is extremely civil to me, and I am much obliged to him. He has desired his Brigade-Major, Mr. Blakeney,¹ who is a very good man, to instruct me all he can. My brother intends writing very soon. We both join in love and duty to you and my mother, and I am, dear Sir,
Your dutiful and affectionate Son,

J. WOLFE.

They were always ready enough—then, and since, in the army—to put extra work upon any one, however young, who showed any alacrity for work.

It was clear even to the eyes of the new acting adjutant that something must be done to rescue the British army from the predicament into which the incapacity of its commander had thrust it. It was decided, although by no means a simple move, in view of the superiority both in numbers and position of the enemy, to retreat upon Hanau, where were the magazines and reinforcements of Hessians. But Noailles was on the alert; he at once became apprised of the plan, and under cover of diversions by his hussars, threw a couple more bridges across the Main, making ready to pounce upon the foe, whom he had, as he believed, caught in a trap. On June 26 (N.S.), Lord Stair, at Aschaffenburg, issued the following orders—

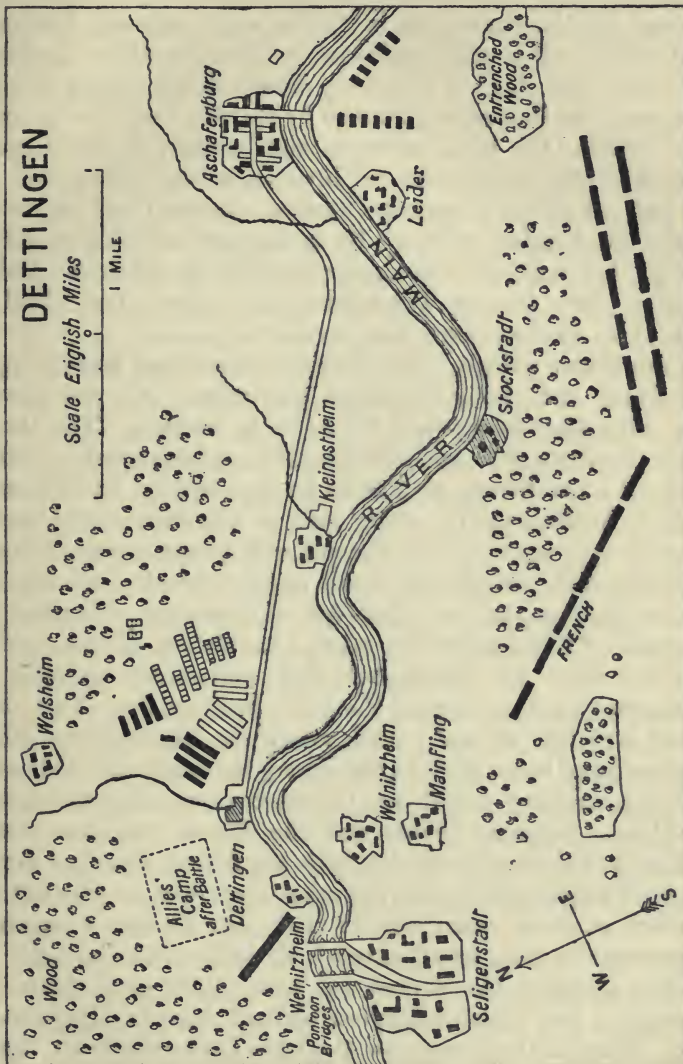
After Tattoo this night the tents of the whole army to be struck without any noise and all the baggage and artillery to hold themselves in readiness to march; the army to remain under arms in front of their encampments.

To-morrow at break of day every regiment to march into their new ground; and as soon as the army are arrived in their new camp, they are to remain under arms in front of the new ground in the same manner as they did the night preceding till further orders, keeping a profound silence, no fires being suffered in the camp.

Stair supposed the French would attack from the Aschaffenburg side. All his injunctions of secrecy were useless, for Noailles knew, quite as soon as Stair's own generals, that the British intended marching on the night of June 26. And knowing this, he ordered his nephew, the Duc de Grammont, to cross the Main at Seilenstadt with 30,000 troops and entrench himself at Dettingen, thus blocking the British retreat. Moreover, the moment the British abandoned

¹ A nephew of General Blakeney.

Aschaffenburg, Noailles poured 12,000 men into it, Stair having courteously refrained from blowing up the bridge in his rear. At four o'clock in the morning of June 27, Duroure's and the other



PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF DETTINGEN, 27TH JUNE (N.S.), 1743

regiments began their march to Dettingen. At seven a French battery posted at a small chapel near Stockstadt opened fire on the British cavalry, putting the baggage-train into a panic, the

drivers escaping from their wagons into the woods. A general loot ensued. At the beginning of the bombardment King George was at the rear. As it grew hotter he rode up to the head in full view of his troops, who cheered him enthusiastically. The French were now visible, drawn up in battle array between Dettingen and Welsheim, all in white uniforms and bearing white standards.

It was a fine day; a few fleecy clouds fitted across the sky. Picturesque was the scene, illumined by the June sun, the red coats of the British, the black cuirasses and helmets of the German cavalry, the blue jackets and red breeches of the Uhlans, and the green and red of the Hungarian hussars. James Wolfe was about to suffer his baptism of fire. By a singular coincidence Jeffrey Amherst, his destined commander-in-chief in America, Robert Monckton and George Townshend, his second and third in command at Quebec, were also present.

It was twelve o'clock. The French artillery had been firing all the morning and doing disastrous execution. All was now in readiness for King George and the Allies to advance. The Duc de Grammont with 30,000 men held the defile, an impregnable position and fatal to the British as long as he remained on the defensive. His chief Noailles on the other side of the river could hardly believe his eyes when he saw Grammont's troops moving towards the British. The impetuous youth could not wait: the sight of the enemy had proved too much for his discretion. Noailles was in despair. "Grammont," he cried, "has ruined all my plans!" He spoke truly, for Grammont had voluntarily quitted his advantageous position to meet the Allies in the plain. The latter, cheering and full of zeal, made ready for the impact. Royal George galloped down the line, flourishing his sword, and addressing the British infantry, called out, "Now, boys, now for the honour of England. Advance boldly and the French will soon run!" The King had chosen his charger with less felicity than his words: the animal began rearing and plunging desperately. Fearing the fate which overtook many officers that day, George dismounted and remained on foot, sword in hand, throughout the battle.¹ As the Allies advanced the French fell back; their cavalry came on impetuously, and General Clayton ordered Bland's Dragoons to charge. Bland's Dragoons (now the 13th Hussars) obeyed, but so

¹ We need not believe the malicious story circulated by Voltaire that the King went through all the sword drill he had been taught by his fencing-master, lunging in excitement at imaginary opponents, alternately advancing and recoiling, and perspiring with his harmless exertions.

fierce was the onset of the French Gens d'Armes that if a battalion of British infantry had not intervened the dragoons would have been cut to pieces. Cavalry charge succeeded cavalry charge before the chance of the infantry came. Wolfe busily doing an adjutant's duties on the field, was in the very thick of the fight, as was his brother. The latter wrote three days afterwards to his mother the following account—

EDWARD WOLFE to HIS MOTHER.

June 30th, 1743.

DEAREST MADAM,—I take the very first opportunity I can to acquaint you that my brother and self escaped in the engagement we had with the French, the 16th of June last [O.S.], and thank God, are as well as ever we were in our lives, after not only being cannonaded two hours and three-quarters, and fighting with small arms two hours and one-quarter, but lay the two following nights upon our arms, whilst it rained for about twenty hours in the same time; yet are ready and as capable to do the same again. We lost one captain and a lieutenant. Captain Rainsford is very well and not wounded; he desires you will send his wife word of this as soon as you hear it. Our Colonel had a horse shot under him, but escaped himself. The King was present in the field. The Duke of Cumberland behaved charmingly. . . . Duke d'Aremberg is dangerously wounded. We took two or three general officers and two princes of the blood and wounded Marshal Noailles.

Our regiment has got a great deal of honour, for we were in the middle of the first line, and in the greatest danger. . . . My brother has wrote to my father and I believe has given him a small account of the battle, so I hope you will excuse it me. The Emperor is come to Frankfort and we are encamped about two leagues from it; and it is said that the King is to meet him there and that there's a peace to be made between the Queen of Hungary and the Emperor.

I hope I shall see you some time or another and then tell you more; but think now that I have given you joy and concern enough. Pray, my duty to my dearest father, who I hope is well.

I am, dearest Madam,

Your dutiful and Affectionate Son,

E. WOLFE.

Pray be so good as to excuse my writing for this time, I am in such a hurry to send you this news.

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Not until a full week after the battle was James able to send the following report of his first engagement to his father—

TO HIS FATHER.

Höchst, *July 4th*, N.S., 1743.

DEAR SIR,—This is the first time that I have been able or have had the least time to write, otherwise I should have done it when my brother did. The fatigue I had the day we fought and the day after made me very much out of order, and I was obliged to keep my tent for two days. Bleeding was of great service to me, and I am now as well as ever.

The army was drawn out this day se'nnight between a wood and a river Maine, near a little village, called Dettingen, in five lines—two of foot and three of horse. The cannon on both sides began to play about nine o'clock in the morning, and we were exposed to the fire of theirs (said to be about fifty pieces) for near three hours, a great part of which flanked us terribly from the other side of the water. The French were all the while drawn up in sight of us on this side. About twelve o'clock we marched towards them; they advanced likewise, and, as near as I can guess, the fight began about one. The Gens d'Armes, or Mousquetaires Gris, attacked the first line, composed of nine regiments of English foot, and four or five of Austrians, and some Hanoverians. They broke through the Scotch Fusileers, who they began to attack upon; but before they got to the second line, out of two hundred there were not forty living, so they wheeled, and came between the first and second line (except an officer with a standard, and four or five men, who broke through the second line and were taken by some of Hawley's regiment of Dragoons), and about twenty of them escaped to their army, riding through an interval that was made for our Horse to advance. These unhappy men were of the first families in France. Nothing, I believe, could be more rash than their undertaking.

The second attack was made on the left by their Horse against ours, which advanced for the first time. Neither side did much, for they both retreated; and our Horse had like to have broke our first line in the confusion. The Horse fired their pistols, which, if they had let alone, and attacked the French with their swords, being so much stronger and heavier, they would certainly have beat them. Their excuse for retreating—they could not make their horses stand the fire!

The third and last attack was made by the foot on both sides. We advanced towards one another; our men in high spirits, and very impatient for fighting, being elated with beating the French Horse, part of which advanced towards us; while the rest attacked our Horse, but were soon driven back by the great fire we gave them. The Major and I (for we had neither Colonel nor Lieutenant-Colonel), before they came near, were employed in begging and ordering the men not to fire at too great a distance, but to keep it till the enemy should come near us; but to little purpose. The whole fired when they thought they could reach them, which had like to have ruined us. We did very little execution with it. As soon as the French saw we presented they all fell down, and when we had fired they all got up, and marched close to us in tolerable good order, and gave us a brisk fire, which put us into some disorder and made us give way a little, particularly ours and two or three more regiments, who were in the hottest of it. However, we soon rallied again, and attacked them with great fury, which gained us a complete victory, and forced the enemy to retire in great haste. 'Twas luck that we did give way a little, for our men were loading all the while, and it gave room for an Austrian regiment to move into an interval, rather too little before, who charged the enemy with great bravery and resolution. So soon as the French retreated, the line halted, and we got the sad news of the death of as good and brave a man as any amongst us, General Clayton, who was killed by a musquet ball in the last attack. His death gave us all sorrow, so great was the opinion we had of him, and was the hindrance of anything further being done that day. He had, 'tis said, orders for pursuing the enemy, and if we had followed them, as was expected, it is the opinion of most people, that of the 27,000 men they brought over the Maine, they would not have repassed with half that number. When they retreated, several pieces of our artillery played upon them, and made terrible havoc; at last we followed them, but too late; they had almost all passed the river. One of the bridges broke, and in the hurry abundance were drowned. A great number of their officers and men were taken prisoners. Their loss is computed to be between six and seven thousand men, and ours three thousand.

His Majesty was in the midst of the fight; and the Duke behaved as bravely as a man could do. He had a musquet-shot through the calf of his leg. I had several times the honour of

speaking with him just as the battle began, and was often afraid of his being dash'd to pieces by the cannon-balls. He gave his orders with a great deal of calmness, and seemed quite unconcerned. The soldiers were in high delight to have him so near them. Captain Rainsford behaved with the greatest conduct and bravery in the world. I sometimes thought I had lost poor Ned, when I saw arms, legs, and heads beat off close by him. He is called "The Old Soldier," and very deservedly. A horse I rid of the Colonel's at the first attack was shot in one of his hinder legs, and threw me; so I was obliged to do the duty of an adjutant all that and the next day on foot, in a pair of heavy boots.

I lost with the horse, furniture and pistols which cost me ten ducats; but three days after the battle got the horse again, with the ball in him,—and he is now almost well again,—but without furniture and pistols.

A brigade of English and another of Hanoverians are in garrison in this town, which we are fortifying daily. We are detached from the grand army, which is encamped between Frankfort and Hanau, about twelve miles off.

They talk of a second battle soon. Count Khevenhuller and Marshal Broglie are expected to join the two armies in a few days. We are very well situated at present, and in a plentiful country. Had we stayed a few days longer at Aschaffenburg we had been all starved, for the French would have cut off our communication with Frankfort. Poor Captain Merrydan is killed. Pray mine and my brother's duty to my mother. We hope you are both perfectly well.

I am, dear Sir,

Your dutiful and affectionate Son,

J. WOLFE.

Such was the famous battle of Dettingen. A hollow triumph had been obtained, when so little lacked to make it an effective victory. The French had been repulsed across the river with 4000 killed and wounded, the losses of the Allies being, perhaps, half that number. Duroure's had twenty-nine officers and soldiers killed and sixty-eight wounded, more than any other regiment. "The French, to the surprise of every one," wrote one participant, "were suffered to escape unmolested. The King halted and the scene of action and military ardour was suddenly turned into a Court circle --His Majesty was congratulated by every military courtesan on



CENOTAPH TO MARK THE SPOT IN SQUERRYES PARK WHERE JAMES WOLFE RECEIVED HIS FIRST COMMISSION



JAMES WOLFE, AETAT 15
From the original at Squerryes Court

horseback, on the glorious Event—the Hanoverian Generals galloped up with their reports—questions innumerable were asked and reports made; the British Generals returning lamented the loss of so interesting a crisis and some of them ineffectually represented upon it, yet the Enemy was suffered to quietly repass their bridge over the Mayne! although 6000 Hessians were at Hanau in perfect order for Action—the greatest part of the British army with great solemnity then passed the rivulet and encamped on the ground to the west of it where the Field Marshal de Noailles had left his first position.¹

After the battle, the Allies spent the night in the open where they had fought. The rain came down in torrents, increasing the sufferings of the wounded. At daybreak the march—or more truly the flight—to Hanau was begun, leaving the maimed and dying to the tender mercies of the French, who behaved with great consideration. By this time Stair was for renewing the attack, but the King and his friends were in no mind to risk another battle. In the afternoon they reached Hanau, where an entry in Lord Stair's order-book explains Acting-Adjutant Wolfe's delay in writing home after the battle—

June 19th, 1743, Hannau Camp.

The commanding officers of troops to examine into the state of their troops and to make a return of what men and horses are now fit for service, what condition their arms are in, what camp necessaries they have lost the day of the action and are wanting in each troop. This examination to be made this day and the return to be given in by eight o'clock to-morrow morning to the adjutant.

Wolfe's ability, despite his years, and it must be remembered that he was but sixteen and a half, was shown so conspicuously at Dettingen that a fortnight later (July 13, N.S.) the King was pleased to appoint him adjutant of his regiment. Before the month was out at Hanau he had got his commission as lieutenant. Amongst those who had noted specially the conduct of Wolfe on the field was the young Duke of Cumberland, who at the age of twenty-two already exhibited a rare talent for command. It is the custom to give royal princes honorary military titles, but of the many such who have received their major-generalships with their majority, few had seemed more likely to become worthy of such high military rank than Prince William Henry.

¹ Townshend's *Journal*.

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Dettingen revealed the weaknesses of the British Army, a thing not to be wondered at after thirty years of peace. But the moral and political effect of the battle upon the situation was marked. While Noailles was recovering at Offenbach, Prince Charles with 64,000 Austrians advanced upon him, compelling his rapid retreat across the Rhine into Alsace, blowing up his magazines as he went. The Allies made no attempt in pursuit, although again Lord Stair urged it upon the King and the military cabal with which he was surrounded. They moved on quietly and safely to Worms, where a new camp was formed. From hence Lieutenant Wolfe writes to his father—

To HIS FATHER.

Camp near Worms, Sept. 1, N.S., 1743.

DEAR SIR,—By a letter I received from you some days ago, I have the happiness and satisfaction to hear that you and my mother are well ; but it being my brother's turn to write (which we intend to do in turns every Saturday), I put off answering until to-day.

The army passed the Rhine the 23rd [N.S.], a little below Mentz, and came to this ground yesterday. It was possessed by the French before the action of Dettingen. The fortifications of the Swiss camp (who would not pass the Rhine) are just by, and those where the bridge was that the French went upon is close to it. The boats that made our bridge below Mentz are expected here to-morrow for the Dutch troops to come over, who, we hear, will be with us in six or seven days. There are numbers of reports relating to Prince Charles's army, so that I won't pretend to send you any account of it, only that most people think he has not passed the Rhine. The French are now encamped between Landau and Wissemburg. Captain Rainsford says if they have any spirit they will attack us here before we are joined by the Dutch, and so I believe our Commanders think, for they have just given orders to have all encumbrances removed from before the front of each regiment, in order to turn out at a minute's warning, and a chain of sentries are to be immediately placed in front of the camp. Our camp is tolerably strong ; we are open in the front, with hills, from which cannon cannot do us much harm. At the bottom of these hills is a little rivulet ; in our rear is the Rhine. The left is secured by the town of Worms, and the right is open ; but neither the front nor right have greater openings than we have troops to fill them up ; so I

believe we are pretty safe. I am just now told that a party of our hussars have taken a French grand guard; they have killed the captain and thirteen men, and have brought sixty-four to Worms. I'm convinced of the truth, because some gentlemen of our regiment saw them go along the line, and are going to buy some of the horses. I cannot tell if the Duke of Cumberland knows what you mentioned in your letter; I have never had any opportunity of inquiring. It is but a few days that he is come abroad: he has marched since we crossed the Rhine, at the head of his second line of English, which is his post. He is very brisk, and quite cured of his wound. His presence encourages the troops, and makes them ready to undertake anything, having so brave a man at the head of them. I hope some day or other to have the honour of knowing him better than I do now; 'tis what I wish as much as anything in the world (except the pleasure which I hope to enjoy when it shall please God), that of seeing my dear friends at Greenwich. Poor Colonel Duroure is, I am afraid, in great danger; we left him on the other side of the Rhine very ill with a bloody flux. Our major is at the same place likewise, very much out of order. Our colonel was never more wanted to command us than now.

I shall say nothing now of the behaviour of the Blue Guards; I wish they may do better next time, and I don't doubt but they will. It would give me a great deal of sorrow if they did not.

We have a great deal of sickness amongst us, so I believe the sooner we engage (if it is to be) the better. I hope you, Sir, and my mother are perfectly well. I heartily wish it, and that you may continue so. My brother joins with me in duty and love to both.

I am, dear Sir,

Your dutiful and affectionate Son,

J. WOLFE.

Three days later Stair, whose position had been one of great difficulty ever since the King's arrival on the scene, resigned his command. Yet he had his adherents still. One officer writing home said, "If the general's advice had been followed we should have been half way to Paris by now." His resignation put an end to all notion of further engagements with the enemy, and soon afterwards the King and his suite returned to London to revel in the applause of the multitude, who magnified the business into

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a glorious victory. While odes and *Te Deums* were thus the order of the day at home, the camp at Worms was broken up, Field Marshal Wade being appointed Stair's successor as commander-in-chief of the British forces in Flanders. The fifth division (which included Duroure's), under Lord Rothes, marched to Brussels, which they reached November 22, and from thence to Ostend for the winter, much to our lieutenant's disgust. Edward, whose health had considerably suffered by the campaign, got leave to go home during the dull season, but his brother's services as adjutant were too indispensable for him to be spared for any length of time. There was a great shortage of officers, and being intensely ambitious he dared not plead any excuse for a remission of his duties. That his promotion had come full early he well knew: it had doubtless occasioned comment: his great object was to deserve it. So he passed the whole winter in Ostend uncomplainingly, making himself meanwhile a thorough master of his work and winning the affection of both his fellow-officers and the men. Christmas and his birthday found him at Ostend. In February he heard with joy that his father had been promoted to the rank of brigadier-general. Thinking that all the Wolfes ought to have a share in titular advancement, he pleasantly promoted his brother, still under the paternal roof in London, to a captaincy in an amusing letter he wrote in the spring—

JAMES to EDWARD WOLFE.

Ostend, *March 21, O.S., 1743.*

DEAR NED,—I got yours yesterday from Dover by a gentleman who was so good to take it up and bring it me from thence. I expected to have had my box at the same time, for I thought our going to England (or rather the appearance of it) was entirely laid aside. I shall be obliged to you if you will take the first opportunity of sending it. I want it very much. I have not a pair of boots I can wear. The regiment will very soon be out to exercise. You and I are to be tented together next campaign. The marquee is making and will cost us about £4. I shall send to Ghent very soon to bespeak a cart, which with harness for two horses I am told will come to ten pounds or thereabouts. I shall get everything I find necessary for us; so you need not be in any pain about your equipage. I think Rainsford is not brutal enough to send you from England, who have done all his duty this three or four months; sure he knows better. I have a better opinion of his understanding.

I hear of no promotion in the regiment, except that "Thick-head"¹ has got his father's company. Stephens is certainly going out, he is to be surgeon to the two troop of Horse Grenadiers and sell his employments with us; so you will get a step by that. Ryder I believe will buy the Surgeonship. I am glad you find the mantua-maker pretty. I thought so, I assure you; I give up all pretensions. Pray use her kindly. Doubtless you love the company of the fair sex. If you should happen to go where Mrs. Seabourg is, pray don't fall in love with her, I can't give her up tamely, remember I am your rival. I am also in some pain about Miss Warde. Admire anywhere else and welcome,—except the widow Bright. Miss Paterson is yours, if you like her, and so is the little staring girl in the chapel² with twenty thousand pounds. Pray give my duty to my mother. I hope her cold is well. The plum cake she gave me was very good and of singular service to me. I do not believe the box would hold any, but—they say 'tis particularly wholesome at Ostend!

I am, dear Ned, sincerely yours,

J. WOLFE.

N'oubliez point mes compliments à les adorables femmes que je viens de nommer.

To CAPT. WOLFE at Brig. Wolfe's
in old Burlington Street,
Burlington Gardens,
London.

"Pray give my duty to my mother," may seem a somewhat cold and formal phrase from a youth of seventeen, even though he be a seasoned soldier and an adjutant, but we must bear in mind the epistolary spirit and filial ceremony of the age, which tempers much that to us seems callous and anti-fervid. There still remains a residue, however, in Wolfe's letters to his mother which discloses something of the peculiar character of their relations. We seem to see a good deal of the antique Roman spirit about them both: each sincerely loved the other, both were chary of expressions of relaxing endearment. Wolfe himself usually takes a stern, self-contained tone towards his mother, easily to be mistaken now-a-days for priggishness. But James Wolfe was no prig: moreover, his

¹ "Thickhead," Lieutenant Romer, whom Edward Wolfe succeeded.—Wright.

² The chapel of Greenwich Hospital, where the Wolfe family at one period attended service.

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effusion of natural spirits is sometimes notable, as in the last quoted letter.

Shortly after this Wolfe got his commission as captain, and was transferred to Barrell's Regiment (the 4th Foot), and his brother rejoined Duroure's as lieutenant. Both regiments marched away to join the army now assembled on the banks of the Scheldt under Marshal Wade, consisting of 22,000 British, 16,000 Hanoverians, 18,000 Austrians, and 20,000 Dutch—in all, 76,000 troops. Afterwards they were reinforced by 18,000 Dutch. While this large army remained inactive on the Scheldt, the French under Marshal Saxe, after being concentrated at Lille, proceeded to overrun the Netherlands.

Wade was, as we see now, a pitiful sort of general, more at home in road-building than in planning and fighting battles. He considered himself too weak to offer any effectual barrier to the French, who took Courtrai, Menin and Ypres successively before their English opponent was spurred forward to action by indignant orders from home. The surrender of Ypres was especially disgraceful, and Wade became so frightened that he sent away his plate for safe-keeping at Antwerp, a fact well known to British officers and men. A letter written by Edward Wolfe, the last of the brief series written by that hapless young officer, throws some light on the situation—

EDWARD WOLFE *to* HIS FATHER,

Camp near Berlingham, *June 17th, 1744.*

DEAR SIR,—I am sorry to inform you of so disagreeable piece of news as Ypres being surrendered after a siege of eight days. No doubt but it gives great spirits to our enemy, who, 'tis said, have lost very few men; but I have not yet heard their loss.

We have some expectations of their visiting us next. They have a party of men very near our advanced guard, on the other side of the Scheldt. However, we are prepared for them; so they won't find it very easy to pass that river. We suspect the designs of Duke d'Harcourt, with his army between thirty and forty thousand men, who, 'tis said, are encamped between Mons and Mauberge. Our last motion, I am told, retarded the siege of Ypres two days. They, expecting we were coming towards them, were under arms a quarter of an hour after we left our ground.

I have a list of our army, which I would willingly send you,

but Major Rainsford gave it me, and desired I would be cautious of showing it, and advised me not to venture sending it over. We are in hopes of the six English regiments coming to join us with 6000 Dutch. The wind has been fair for bringing them to Ostend ; but we don't hear they are landed.

Duke de Chartres was killed at the siege of Ypres. He was one of their chiefs, and a very experienced officer. The French had a hundred pieces of cannon and five or six batteries of small mortars. The taking of the town is really no great feat, if we consider the strength of the garrison, which was said to be but four weak battalions.

I wrote to my dear mother by Sergeant Somerset, who I suppose will be with you before you receive this. I don't doubt but she is in some apprehension, of our being in danger ; but I hope she'll not fright herself while we continue in health, as we are both now. We have had no fatigue yet in comparison of that we had in Germany ; but nobody knows what we may have. We have here a defensive army, and fewer in numbers than we were last campaign ; still we never despair of coming off with laurels whenever we meet our enemy. Our men keep up their spirits. The taking of these two towns and the number of men they imagine the French have does not in the least deject them, but makes them only wish for a meeting. My brother desires his duty to you and my dearest mother.

I am, dearest Sir,

Your dutiful and affectionate son,

EDW. WOLFE.

I return you many thanks for my lieutenancy.

This postscript reminds us that the Wolfes were actively engaged in pushing the fortunes of both their sons in that age of patronage and promotion by purchase.

A month after the foregoing letter was written Wade held a council of war, but although the French raids became daily more daring (on one occasion they nearly carried off the aged marshal himself) little came of it. Inaction ate the heart out of the troops. Some of the generals almost went down on their knees urging Wade to attack, especially when the enemy was obliged to withdraw half his strength to meet the Austrian forces. Nothing was done ; rivalries and petty jealousies abounded. Discipline was relaxed. The two Wolfe brothers being now in different

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regiments, only saw each other occasionally. Already Edward's constitution was undermined by hardships. In September he was ailing and with the advent of the first chilly winds he became seriously ill. Then he went to pieces, and a galloping consumption soon claimed "the Old Soldier," whose sweetness of disposition and military enthusiasm had endeared him to all. In a few weeks the brave boy was dead. He was not yet seventeen. On this melancholy occurrence, James, whom circumstances had prevented from witnessing it, wrote off at once briefly to his parents. The poor mother was overwhelmed, and desperately anxious to snatch her surviving son from a like fate. She desired him to come home on furlough as soon as leave could be granted. In the following letter, awkward enough yet characteristic of the writer at that time, James supplies some particulars of Edward's demise.

To HIS MOTHER.

Ghent, 29th October, 1744, O.S.

I received your letter this morning with a great deal of pleasure, and have with this wrote to my father about coming to England. I hope he will be able to get the better of some obstacles, and I shall be sincerely happy.

Poor Ned wanted nothing but the satisfaction of seeing his dearest friends to leave the world with the greatest tranquility. He often called on us. It gives me many uneasy hours when I reflect on the possibility there was of my being with him some time before he died. God knows it was being to exact, and not apprehending the danger the poor fellow was in; and even that would not have hindered it had I received the physician's first letter. I know you won't be able to read this paragraph without shedding tears, as I do writing it; but there is a satisfaction even in giving way to grief now and then. 'Tis what we owe the memory of a dear friend.

Though it is the custom of the army to sell the deceased's effects, I could not suffer it. We none of us want, and I thought the best way would be to bestow them on the deserving whom he had an esteem for in his lifetime. To his servant—the most honest and faithful man I ever knew—I gave all his clothes. . . . I gave his horse to his friend Parry,¹ with the furniture. I know he loved Parry, and I know for that reason the horse will be taken care of. His other horse I keep myself. I have his watch,

¹ Brother of Rev. Joshua Parry, who afterwards wrote an ode to General Wolfe.

sash, gorget, books, and maps, which I shall preserve to his memory. Everything else that I have not mentioned shall be taken care of, and given to proper persons.

He was an honest and a good lad, had lived very well, and always discharged his duty with the cheerfulness becoming a good officer. He lived and died as a son of you two should, which, I think, is saying all I can. I have the melancholy satisfaction to find him regretted by his friends and acquaintances. His Colonel is particularly concerned for him, and desired I would assure of it. There was in him the prospect (when ripened with experience) of good understanding and judgment, and an excellent soldier. You'll excuse my dwelling so long on this cruel subject, but in relating this to you, vanity and partiality are banished. A strong desire to do justice to his memory occasions it.

There was no part of his life that makes him dearer to me than that where you have often mentioned—*he pined after me*. It often makes me angry that any hour of my life should pass without thinking of him; and when I do think of him, that though all the reasons I have to lament his loss are now as forcible as at the moment of his departure, I don't find my heart swell with the same sorrow as it did at that time. Nature is ever too good in blotting out the violence of affliction. For all tempers (as mine is) too much given to mirth, it is often necessary to revive grief in one's memory. I must once more beg you will excuse my tiresome length and manner of writing, but I know your indulgence. I'm just now going to write to my Uncle Wolfe.¹

Your dutiful and affectionate Son,
J. WOLFE.

By the middle of September the Austrian and Dutch commanders had proposed to Wade to evacuate that part of Flanders and establish themselves in Ghent, where forage was to be had easily. Upon Wade's declining the proposition the Allies left him, and he was quickly under the humiliating necessity of being obliged to follow. So Wolfe was at Ghent once more. The prospect of spending the winter there was so little cheering that it is small wonder he looked forward eagerly to the chances of furlough. But furlough was not to be. This time his father's influence was not sufficient, or he was considered too valuable an officer to be dis-

¹ Major Walter Wolfe, then at Dublin.

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pensed with. Nor is it wholly improbable that his own ambition had again something to do with his remaining with his regiment all that winter at Ghent.

Ghent well deserved to be for ever associated with James Wolfe, for here no inconsiderable part of his military education was formed. It was in the old Flemish town that he had, as an ensign, studied the duties of an adjutant; it was now, as a captain, he prepared himself for the onerous post of brigade-major. We can believe that other young captains and lieutenants easily obtained their furloughs.

While Wolfe sedulously strove to perfect himself at Ghent that winter of 1744-45, a new administration had come into power in England. Carteret had been expelled, and Wade the inglorious was recalled. Amongst the new men of the Opposition from whom much was already expected was William Pitt. This rising statesman, then entering his thirty-seventh year, whose eloquence and high patriotic professions marked him out for office, had had the ill-fortune to provoke the personal dislike of George II. But there were compensations. The aged and eccentric Duchess of Marlborough, had just died, leaving him in her will the handsome sum of £10,000 in consideration of "the noble defence he has made for the support of the laws of England and to prevent the ruin of his country."

Pitt and the Opposition leaders had gained a great deal of credit by their fierce antagonism to the Hanoverian policy pursued by Granville. This antagonism, joined to his resolution to accept no place save that of Secretary of War, kept Pitt out of office. But it was soon seen that the Pelhams had no real intention of subverting the Hanoverian policy which the King had so much at heart. A new subsidy to Saxony of £150,000 was even decreed, and in January 1745, a Quadruple Alliance was concluded between Great Britain, Holland, Austria and Saxony. Nor was this all; besides other and minor subsidies half-a-million sterling was voted to the Queen of Hungary. This advance of £200,000 on her previous subsidy was designed to enable her to pay the Hanoverian and Hessian mercenaries, who hitherto had been paid direct out of the British Exchequer! Thus the popular clamour was quieted for a twelvemonth, when, stirring events having intervened at home, 18,000 Hanoverians were again taken into British pay. This time Pitt the patriot, but also Pitt the politician, did not antagonize the measure so adroitly concerted between his friends and their sovereign.



MAJOR-GENERAL JAMES WOLFE

A posthumous portrait by Gainsborough, from sketches made at Bath, 1758. In the possession of the Corporation of Manchester

IV

AIDE-DE-CAMP AT CULLODEN

IN April 1745, Captain Wolfe was still at Ghent and fighting in Flanders was resumed. On the 10th of that month the new commander of the British and Allied forces arrived in Brussels. William, Duke of Cumberland, was then only just entering the twenty-fourth year of his age. The mere circumstance of its being possible for a youth of his years, even with all the prestige which attaches to a prince of the blood, to be entrusted with the supreme command of 50,000 troops forcibly illustrates the character of contemporary warfare and constitutional ideas. True, there was a check on Cumberland's motions in the person of the Austrian general, Marshal Konigsegg, who had the veto power. On the other hand he possessed, as has already been hinted, very considerable military qualifications. He was of an imperious disposition, full of courage, and inspired confidence. Nor was he ignorant of the technical part of war.

At the time of Cumberland's arrival the French marshal Saxe was busily besieging Tournay, one of the principal fortresses of Flanders. To attempt to raise this siege the commander ordered forward a number of regiments from Brussels. Unluckily, Barrell's not being one of these, Wolfe had to stay behind to garrison Ghent. When Saxe learnt of the British advance he massed four-fifths of his army at the village of Fontenoy, and gave battle to Cumberland and the Allies on April 30. A few days Wolfe sent home the following account of what happened—

To HIS FATHER.

Ghent, 4th May, O.S., 1745.

DEAR SIR,—I'm concerned I must send you so melancholy an account of a great but unsuccessful attempt to raise the siege of Tournay. I shall just tell what a letter before me from Captain Field, who commanded Colonel Duroure's Regiment, says of it:—

“We attacked a numerous army, entrenched with a multiplicity of batteries, well placed both in front and flank. The action began the 30th April, O.S., about five o'clock in the morning, and lasted till two in the afternoon. There has been

a great deal of slaughter, particularly amongst the infantry, officers more in proportion than soldiers. The enemy's army were supposed to be 70,000, and ours about 50,000. The soldiery behaved with the utmost bravery and courage during the whole affair, but rather rash and impetuous. Notwithstanding the bravest attempts were made to conquer, it was not possible for us to surmount the difficulties we met with."

Thus the gentleman speaks of the affair. The army made a fine retreat, in such order that the French did not think proper to pursue them. The Duke, I hear, has shown in this action most unparalleled bravery, but was very sensibly touched when he found himself obliged to give over the attack. The Hanoverians have shown themselves good troops, and the Blues have regained their reputation, having been several times broken by two battalions, as often rallied, and returned with fresh vigour to the charge. The French go on with the siege of Tournay, and will have it very soon. We expect every hour to be ordered into the field, and replaced by a weak battalion. Our army is encamped at Ath, and I'm afraid will make but an indifferent defensive figure the rest of the campaign. I shall write to-day to Major Rainsford for an exact return of the loss our troops sustained. In the meantime, I will give you an account of some unfortunate men that have fallen, and some others that are wounded, down to the majors, though we are not yet exactly sure. I will be particular in your regiment (of which I wish you much joy), because I imagine you will be glad to know how it goes with them, as I had it this morning from the Paymaster. No officers killed, but several wounded, and them you'll find hereafter to be very good ones:—Colonel Keightley; Major Grey; Captains Dallow, Loftus, Hill, Elkins. Subs, Rickson, etc. . . . I don't hear that any of their wounds are mortal.

The old regiment [Duroure's] has suffered very much; 18 officers and 300 men, killed and wounded; amongst the latter is Major Rainsford.

I believe this account will shock you not a little; but 'tis surprising the number of officers of lower rank that are gone. Pray my duty to my mother.

I am, dear Sir,

Your dutiful and affectionate Son,

J. WOLFE.

As it has turned out we may thank providence we were not there.

So heavily had Duroure's suffered in this disastrous engagement (in which the total British loss was 4074 killed and wounded, 620 horses and 21 guns) that Edward Wolfe by his death in hospital at Berlingham narrowly missed in all probability a death on the field of Fontenoy. Owing to the bravery with which the troops fought, Fontenoy has been called a "glorious defeat." After the battle the Allies entrenched themselves at Lessines, and there the Duke of Cumberland sent for reinforcements from Ghent and elsewhere. Amongst the regiments dispatched was Barrell's, and thus Wolfe found himself on May 21 at Lessines. On the same day Tournay surrendered to Saxe. Ghent was threatened, and four British battalions were ordered thither to defend it. Wolfe had a cordial welcome from the Duke, who, not always constant in his friendships, ever afterwards seems to have manifested a cordiality towards the young officer. On June 12 he signed Captain Wolfe's commission as brigade-major.¹

By his departure Wolfe had just escaped sharing the fate of Ghent, which was surprised on the last day of June. As the garrison slept, 4000 of the enemy got over the ditch with fascines and let down the drawbridge. The resistance offered was feeble: one may be sure our hero would never have consented to the disgraceful display of a white flag at the citadel before any effort had been made. Moltke, the Commander of the Allies in that quarter, was so frightened that he fled pell-mell to Sluys, twenty-one miles away, where the governor very properly refused to admit him. After this the fall of Ostend was a foregone conclusion.

Such was the posture of affairs with the British Army on the Continent in the summer of 1745. Not without reason to Prince Charles Edward and his adherents did it seem to offer a heaven-sent opportunity for raising the standard of the banished Stewarts, for making a fresh attempt upon the crown of the United Kingdom. None could say the time was not auspicious. King George was in Hanover, the bulk of the standing army was in Flanders; British generalship was *in nubibus*.

Wherefore on July 25, 1745, the Young Pretender, who seemed destined by Fortune to win hearts by the beauty of his person and the grace of his manner, landed in Scotland. It was three weeks before the news of this audacious attempt reached Sir John Cope, who commanded the forces in the north. Cope set out from Edinburgh with 1500 men for Fort Augustus, thinking to nip

¹ "Captain Wolfe is appointed Brigade-major to Pulteney's Brigade."—*Duke of Cumberland's Note-book*, Townshend, p. 83.

the rebellion easily in the bud. He was provided with a Royal Proclamation offering a reward of £30,000 to any person who should seize and secure the pretended Prince of Wales, and he carried a thousand stand of arms to distribute to native volunteers. He might have spared himself the trouble. On arriving at Dalwhinnie he found an important pass in possession of the rebels, and to avoid a battle changed his course and marched straight on to Inverness. It is unfair, perhaps, to accuse Cope of cowardice; he calculated the chances of success against the forces he found were too slender, and decided to beat a retreat. It may have been a foolish calculation, but such as it was his officers agreed with it. The retreat certainly gave colour to the report which flew about the Highlands that the soldiers of the Elector (as the rebels called George II) had fled before the gallant adherents of Prince Charles. The latter descended upon the Lowlands, entered Perth, was in Stirling on 14th September, and on the 17th reached Edinburgh. Here he took up quarters in his ancestral palace of Holyrood.

No wonder the Government was thoroughly alarmed. Their alarm was still greater when they learnt that the Pretender, so far from being content with his exploits already achieved, had left the capital, offered battle to Sir John Cope and utterly routed that officer at Preston Pans.

Reinforcements must come home in haste from the Netherlands, and Wolfe was not left long in doubt that Barrell's was amongst the seven battalions ordered to cross the Channel to Scotland.

Late in September the passage was made and a march begun northward to Newcastle. There old Marshal Wade had collected 10,000 troops to face the Pretender, daily growing bolder. Wolfe was busy enough at Newcastle, where besides his proper duties as major he would seem to have performed those of Deputy Quartermaster General, if we may judge by an order still extant signed by Marshal Wade directing "Major James Wolfe to be paid £930 for allowance for 93 baggage horses to the seven battalions lately come from Flanders." The pleasure must have been great of meeting his father, who, now at the age of sixty and rather gouty, was seeing active service as general of division. It must have furnished an entertaining picture to see the old general leaving Newcastle with General Bland with a detachment ordered up the East Coast, unable to sit his horse, hurrying along in his post-chaise, hearing at every stopping place all the idle rumours about Prince Charles's movements, his victories, sieges and flights, and the probability of the "confounded Highlanders" making a prolonged

resistance. That post-chaise, had a younger man been inside, would have served as a fitting symbol of the old school. But the rugged veteran within clung to service to the last.

Already it was known that 14,000 muskets and at least 80,000 had come to the rebels from France. In November the Pretender invaded England and laid siege to Carlisle. About this time we get the following letter from Wolfe to his mother.

Newcastle, *November 14th, 1745.*

I received yours the day the last post went out, but as my father was then writing to you I thought it needless. I was under some apprehension for him on the road to Berwick, and was even told he was made prisoner, but not with foundation to give much credit to, as it had fallen out. I really believe you need not concern yourself about my father's safety, for 'tis the opinion of most men that these rebels won't stand the King's troops; and as to marching north and south with the army in his post-chaise, it does him so much service that I never saw him look better.

It is said the Pretender's people made an attack on Carlisle, but have been repulsed with loss; this, however is not to be depended upon.

You cannot doubt the sincerity of my intentions, but to convince you I must beg you will no more think of what you have mentioned in your letter. I wrote to you in a style of complaint, just as the accident happened, but I have now got the better of that, and am in a condition to repair the loss. I know very well the many good uses you have of putting your money to; pray don't let me be the instrument of preventing it. Besides, you give it to a person that ought to give you, by the difference of income. I desire you won't imagine I am so unreasonable a dog as to think of it.

There is one thing that I must beg leave to assure you, that though I don't take it I am not the less obliged to you, and shall always own a proper acknowledgment for this and the innumerable kindnesses I have always received from you. I heartily wish you your health, and am,

Your dutiful and affectionate Son,
J. WOLFE.

Two days after this letter was written Wade, greatly hesitating, set his troops in movement towards Carlisle. The weather was

unusually severe and the roads well-nigh impassable through snow. It took fifteen hours for the men to cover ten miles. Another day's such march and tidings came to Wade that Carlisle had surrendered. This was enough for him: he turned round in his tracks back to Newcastle, leaving the insurgents to do as they please. How sick the Brigade-major of nineteen must have been of Marshal Wade's method of making war!—a capital illustration of how not to do it. The Government was getting to be, though slowly, of the same opinion.

Meanwhile the Duke of Cumberland had arrived in England with the rest of the British army and was quickly encamped with 8000 men at Lichfield. Another army began to be formed at Finchley (the "March to Finchley" of Hogarth is recalled), which the King declared he was ready to command in person. All these forces were likely to be needed, for Prince Charles, finding that Wade did not intend to attack him, came boldly onwards to Preston in Lancashire, where he was received with three hearty cheers, "the first he had heard in England." At Manchester there was a ringing of bells and more cheering, and there several hundred volunteers were enrolled. In the midst of this encouraging progress came news that Wade had at last made up his mind to do something. He was advancing against the invaders through Yorkshire.

This brought Charles Edward to a halt. With Cumberland on one side and Wade on the other the situation needed considering. At first the Prince rejected proposals for a return to Scotland. But he yielded to the counsel of his officers at Derby and sullenly consented to a retreat on the 6th December. It was a momentous decision. It is more than one historian's belief that had Charles marched onward from Derby he would have gained the British throne. Henry Fielding, writing in the *True Patriot*, declared that "when the Highlanders, by a most incredible march, got between the Duke's army and the metropolis, they struck a terror into it scarce to be credited." King George himself prepared for flight and the Duke of Newcastle was paralyzed. So great was the run on the Bank of England that, but for the stratagem of paying out in sixpences, it would have been brought to bankruptcy.

On the heels of the retreating Pretender Cumberland with his cavalry set off straightway in pursuit. At Macclesfield he found the enemy two days in advance. Joined by a body of horse sent across country by Wade the Duke pressed close at their heels, reaching Carlisle the day after the Highlanders had left.

Wolfe had already received orders to march with his regiment on to Scotland to intercept the rebels on their route to the Scottish capital. On the 5th of January 1746, Charles summoned Stirling to surrender. The Castle was in charge of an able soldier, General Blakeney, who, undismayed by the array of battering guns and French engineers at the disposal of the insurgents, bade them defiance. In three days the town surrendered, but Blakeney had hopes of immediate succour from the troops of Wade. The latter advanced rapidly from Edinburgh, Wolfe amongst them, but they were no longer led by the veteran of '15. Wade had been recalled and his successor was General Henry Hawley, nominated by his royal patron, the Duke of Cumberland, who after the reduction of Carlisle, marched southward. History has bestowed upon the new commander the title of "Hangman Hawley," and in this instance Clio, whose pronouncements so often reverse prejudice and occasionally, alas, confirm it, cannot be charged with infelicity or injustice. To mediocre military ability Hawley united a ferocious temper and a genuine love of cruelty. He indulged himself in the pleasure of carrying a couple of gibbets with him as camp furniture. His men hated him. Hawley commanded about the same numerical strength as Charles Edward, namely, about nine thousand men.

On Hawley's approach Charles Edward assembled his troops near Stirling and awaited an attack. To his surprise, Hawley halted at Falkirk, firm in the belief that the "Highland rabble," as he contemptuously termed the Pretender's troops, would disperse in a panic on hearing of his approach. In fact, he had boasted at White's Club not many weeks before that with two regiments of dragoons he would drive the rebels from one end of the kingdom to the other. So little did he anticipate an attack that he rode off some miles to dine with the Countess of Kilmarnock, and his own troops were actually feeding when some rustics flew into camp and gave the alarm. Two officers sprang up a tree and distinctly saw the approaching Highlanders through a telescope. General Huske, left in command, instantly gave orders to beat to arms, and the troops, dropping their rations, were formed in line for action. But owing to the Prince's stratagem of sending round a detachment as a feint in his rear, Huske became confused, not daring to act without Hawley's sanction. The troops began murmuring, "Where is the General? What shall be done? We have no orders." Perchance there was one brigade where the men's confidence in their major quieted their speculations. Suddenly the General, hatless and perspiring, came galloping up. At the

same time a winter storm broke and the icy rain beat full in the faces of the troops. Hawley, pulling himself together and recognizing the inconvenience of his position, desired that the battle, if battle there was, should be fought on the summit of Falkirk moor. But he was too late—the Pretender was before him, and Hawley was compelled to face the foe in a very inferior position. His artillery stuck fast in a morass and could not be extricated, and it was the greatest luck the Pretender had not brought his with him. Hawley then ordered Ligonier to charge. The cavalry was received by the Highlanders with great composure, and men and horses reeled from the impact. Three of Hawley's regiments had no better success. Drunk with their achievement, the clansmen, dropping their muskets, seized their swords and fell on before and behind. It was hardly in human nature for even seasoned troops to stand firm before such an onslaught of both Scotsmen and Scots weather. In vain their officers strove to urge them forward: their centre broke and gradually all fell back.

The three English regiments on the right did their utmost to stand firm, but at length they too were compelled to yield. It must have gone greatly against Wolfe's grain when the orders came for retreat; but at least he had the satisfaction of bringing off his men steadily to the beat of drums and with flying colours—a great feat. We are told that many of themselves as well as some of the enemy, supposed the retreat was a piece of military tactics rather than an affair of compulsion. Otherwise, it is probable an attempt at pursuit might have been made, and under the circumstances the King's troops must have been completely routed. Through the rain and darkness they marched to Linlithgow, on the way to Edinburgh, leaving Prince Charles and his Highlanders rubbing their eyes and undecided whether they had scored a victory or a defeat. Finding Hawley had left his cannon behind him, they concluded they were the victors. Wolfe himself writes thus to his uncle Sotheron—

TO WILLIAM SOTHERON.

Edinburgh, *January 20th, 1746.*

DEAR SIR,—If you have not seen the *Gazette*, you will have heard of our late encounter (for 'twas not a battle, as neither side would fight): and possibly it will be told you in a much worse light than it really is. Though we can't have been said to have totally routed the enemy, we yet remained a long time masters of the field of battle, and of our cannon, not one of which

would have been lost if the drivers had not left their carriages and run off with the horses. We left Falkirk and part of our camp because the ammunition of the army—on which we can only depend—was all wet and spoiled; but our retreat was in no ways molested by the enemy, as affecting our superiority. The loss of either side is inconsiderable, and we are now making all necessary preparations to try once more to put an end to this rebellion, which the weather has hitherto prevented, and in my opinion can at any time be the only objection.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Notwithstanding the young officer's way of treating it, the battle of Falkirk was a decidedly unpleasant episode, and the loss in killed, wounded and prisoners on the Royal side far from inconsiderable, as Wolfe discovered when the muster rolls of regulars and volunteers came to be issued. Instead of resting themselves, the Highlanders, who took possession of Falkirk, passed the entire night, we are told, stripping the dead bodies left on the field, so that in the morning a spectator likened these last to a large flock of white sheep lying upon the slopes of the distant hill. Having loaded themselves with plunder, many of the clansmen retired, as was their wont, to the mountains, thereby weakening the forces at the disposal of the Prince, who now continued his fruitless siege of Stirling castle.

In London the news of Falkirk caused great uneasiness, as well as surprise. Cumberland made no secret of his opinion that the whole business was due to lack of discipline. "Had I been there," he said to a friend, "I would have attacked the rebels with the men Hawley had left." This dictum was repeated in the Royal hearing; whereupon the King requested Cumberland to take charge of the situation in Scotland. The Duke agreeing, he set out with alacrity, arriving on January 30 (a day fatal erstwhile to the Stewarts) in Edinburgh. There he had conferences with Hawley, and inspected the troops, who received him with rapture. Cumberland certainly appeared to know his own mind, and the very next day ordered a march back towards Falkirk and Stirling. With him went, as Lieutenant-Generals, Hawley and the Earl of Albermarle, father of Wolfe's future colonel, Lord Bury. The force numbered about 7,800 men, all now full of zeal, and anxious to erase the blots their reputations had suffered at Preston Pans and Falkirk.

Scarce were they well on the march than grievous dissensions in the insurgent army caused Charles Edward to abandon the siege of Stirling and retreat across the Forth in haste, leaving his wounded and prisoners. He reached Inverness, where he instantly dispossessed Lord Loudoun, reduced the citadel, and took and destroyed Fort Augustus. At his heels soon followed Cumberland, who, having first left Hessian garrisons at Stirling and Perth, on February 28 entered Aberdeen. Here numbers of the nobility and gentry—prudent in their generation—came to offer their services to King George, and the next few weeks saw detachments sent to scour the surrounding country, offering protection to the loyal, and compelling flight on the part of the disaffected. Some of these detachments were overtaken by the rebels and cut to pieces. But it was generally easy work. Major Lafausille, for example (he was afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel of Wolfe's), at the head of three hundred men, spread havoc about the district of Glen Esk, long remembered. Two Aberdeen non-juring churches were burnt by the soldiers, but generally speaking there were no breaches of discipline. The Duke was strictness itself, and had his men well in hand. They had little leisure, as despite the severity of the weather, Cumberland insisted upon so many hours' drill daily.

As for Wolfe, he was, at the Commander-in-Chief's request, appointed aide-de-camp to Hawley. In this capacity there now occurred an interesting episode in the life of our hero which demonstrates his own complete subjection to discipline and his strict obedience to orders, however distasteful. On the arrival of the army in Aberdeen the Duke took up his quarters at the house of an advocate, Alexander Thomson, who, although a Whig and a firm supporter of King George, received no compensation for being thus deprived of his house and furniture. He afterwards complained bitterly that his bed and bed-linen had been abused and spoiled, and that he had been robbed of a stock of sugar which he locked up. Thomson's next neighbour was a Mrs. Gordon, of well-known Jacobite proclivities. The house of this lady Hawley was told to take possession of for his own quarters. The story of what happened is somewhat difficult to unravel, because only Mrs. Gordon's own account, as recited in various Jacobite memoirs, exists; but inferences are obvious. Says the lady, describing the "disgraceful episode" with great circumstantiality—

"The Duke came to my house, attended by General Hawley and several others. The General lay in my bed, and very early on Friday morning sent a messenger to the house where I was, demand-

ing all my keys. . . . That evening, one Major Wolfe, came to me, and after asking me if I was Mrs. Gordon, and desiring a gentleman who was with me to go out of the room, he said that he was come to tell me, that by the Duke of Cumberland's and General Hawley's orders, I was deprived of everything I had, except the clothes on my back. After delivering this message, he said that General Hawley, having enquired into my character of several persons who had all spoke very well of me, and had told him that I had no hand in the Rebellion, and that I was a stranger there, without any relatives in that country, he, the General, therefore, would make interest with the Duke that I might have any particular thing that I had a mind to, and *could say was my own*. I then desired to have my tea, but the Major told me it was very good, and that tea was scarce in the army; so he did not believe I could have it. The same answer was made when I asked for my chocolate. I mentioned several other things, particularly my china. That he told me was, *a great deal of it*, very pretty, and that they were very fond of china themselves; but as they had no ladies travelled with them, I might perhaps have *some of it*. I then desired to have my pictures. He said he supposed I could not wish to have *them all*. I replied that I did not pretend to name any except my son's. He asked me if I had a son, where was he? I said I had sent him into the country to make room for them. To what place? said he. I answered, to Sir Arthur Forbes's. He asked how old my son was. I said about fourteen. Said he, then he is not a child, and you will have to produce him; and thus we parted. This Major Wolfe was aide-de-camp to General Hawley. The next day, after petitioning the Duke," she continues, "Major Wolfe came to me again and told me, that the Duke had sent him to let me know that my petition had been read to him, and that he would take care that everything should be restored to me. Notwithstanding this, when I sent to the house to ask for anything, as, in particular, I did for a pair of breeches for my son, a little tea for myself, for a bottle of ale, for some flour to make bread, because there was none to be bought in the town, all was refused me." She goes on to say, "I should have mentioned above that Major Wolfe did one day bring me my son's picture, but without the frame; and he then told me that General Hawley did with his own hands take it out of the frame, which was a gilt one and very handsome. The frame the General left behind him, and I afterwards found it in the house."¹

¹ Bishop Forbe's *Jacobite Memoirs*, edited by R. Chambers, 1834.

Now, in perusing the foregoing, one has only to bear in mind that Mrs. Gordon was a Jacobite lady of substance, against whom the Duke of Cumberland had decreed no mercy, that she drew up an inventory of the goods in her possession, amongst which were large supplies of salt beef, pickled pork, brandy, rum, tea, chocolate, which naturally excited the suspicion of the Duke. This suspicion was confirmed by a further entry of "One set of blue and white, ten dishes, forty plates and three dozen plates. Note. *These were not my own, but were sent to my house to see if I would buy them.*" Under the circumstances Cumberland, Hawley and Wolfe believed that the lady was artfully endeavouring, as has been observed by Wright,¹ to conceal the property of her proscribed friends. It was not a pleasant task, thus to be obliged closely to interrogate a lady, and Wolfe was no doubt heartily glad to be quit of the affair. Doubtless, too, his concession of the portrait brought down on him a reprimand from "Hangman" Hawley, who was little likely to be influenced by any tender feelings.

On March 12 Barrell's regiment was dispatched to Strath-bogie to make a demonstration against a body of rebels there. Wolfe did not accompany them, but was kept busy for the next few weeks at head-quarters. On April 6 Cumberland was ready to march, but news coming that a French sloop bearing men, money and arms to the rebels had been driven ashore, a detachment was instantly sent to that quarter. A number of French and Spaniards who had thus been forced to land with their belongings were captured, and some £12,000 was brought into Aberdeen. The camp broke up on the 8th, the ships sailing along the coast in full view of the troops. The Spey was duly forded in fine weather. The water came up to the men's waists and the current was strong, but it was part and parcel of a soldier's lot to Wolfe, who felt they were well out of the business with the drowning of only a single one of his dragoons. All along the march the enemy hung about, falling back at Elgin and Forres. On the 15th, being Cumberland's birthday, permission was given for a halt at Nairn. Such rejoicings apparently were anticipated by the rebels, who planned a surprise at Nairn. Unluckily they miscalculated the time required, and dawn overtaking them, they allowed the Royal troops to enjoy in peace their extra royal ration of brandy, biscuit and cheese (paid for out of the Duke's pocket), and fell back again crestfallen to Culloden Moor.

A battle was inevitable. Charles Edward had taken up his

¹ *Life of Major-General James Wolfe*, 1864, p. 81.

quarters four miles east of Inverness, at the residence of the Lord President Forbes, known as Culloden House. His troops were spread out on the surrounding moor, five thousand in number, ill-fed, weary and anxious. At dawn on the 16th they descried Cumberland's force advancing against them on its march to Inverness. Charles Edward at once gave orders for his men to be drawn up in two lines to receive the enemy. Ill-luck, from the first, hung over his banners. He had neglected to place the clan Macdonald on the right of his army, a place they had enjoyed, they said, in all Scotland's struggles since Bannockburn. As a consequence of this slight, the men of that clan were sullen to the point of insubordination.

On his side, Cumberland took every precaution. To diminish the terrors of the Highland claymore he had even invented a new bayonet exercise. Each soldier, he directed, should thrust not at the man immediately opposite him, but at his right-hand neighbour. This ingenious drill, whatever its real value, filled the troops with still greater confidence in the military capacity of the Duke. Their officers must have admired the masterly way in which he formed his force into three lines, having cavalry on each wing and two pieces of cannon between every two line regiments. He then addressed them in a speech to this effect: "If there is any man who, from disinclination to the cause or from having relations in the rebel army would now prefer to retire I beg him in God's name to do so, as I would rather face the Highlanders with 1000 determined men at my back than have 10,000 with a tithe of them lukewarm." Small wonder his speech was greeted by the men with huzzas and cries of "Flanders! Flanders!" When it was proposed, it being one o'clock and the enemy making no movement, that the troops should dine before the battle, "No, no," cried Cumberland, "they will fight all the better on empty bellies. Remember what a dessert they got to their dinner at Falkirk!"

Barrell's regiment was in the first line when the mutual cannonade announced the beginning of a memorable action. The rebel marksmanship was very bad; but the English discharge of grape went home with terrible effect, causing the Highlanders to fall back in disorder. When they advanced again, flinging away their muskets, they were received by Barrell's and Monro's at the point of the bayonet. We are told that "the rebels so obstinately rushed on death that there was scarce an officer or soldier in Barrell's regiment or in that part of Monro's which was engaged

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who did not kill one or two men each with their bayonets or spontoons."¹ But for an account of the battle of Culloden we may turn to a letter of Wolfe's to a friend of the Wolfes at York, Major Henry Delabene, who had promised to convey the news at once to London.

To HENRY DELABENE.

Inverness, April 17th, 1746.

DEAR SIR,—I have the pleasure to tell you that yesterday about one in the afternoon we engaged the Rebel army, and in about an hour drove them from the field of battle; they left near 1500 dead, the rest (except prisoners) escaped into the neighbouring mountains; the action was three miles short of this place on Lord President Forbes' land, and from thence the name of the battle of Culloden. I have never seen an action so general, nor any victory so complete. The Rebels had posted themselves, so they imagined we could neither use cannon nor cavalry, but both did essential service. They waited till we came near enough to fire cannon on them, and were greatly surpris'd and disorder'd at it, and finding their mistake, they charged upon our front line in thick solid bodies, throwing down their arms without exploding them, and advancing furiously with their drawn swords. You must understand before the cannonading they were (I mean the clans) in a very extended thick line, with their right to some houses and a wall on their left, and centre were supported in their rear by the Lowlanders and some few horse. Four pieces of cannon were in their front, which they often fired, but with little effect. The Duke's army had at the beginning six battalions in the first line, commanded by General Albemarle, and Lord Semple; as many in the second under General Husk, and three regiments formed a third line of reserve, commanded by Brigadier Mordaunt; Cobham's Dragoons and two squadrons of Mark Ker's were on the left of the front line, where the ground was firmest; the other squadron and one of Kingston's Horse were on the right, and two pieces of cannon in equal intervals between the battalions of the first line. And a little after the Rebels begun their attack, the Duke observed they intended to extend their line beyond his right by breaking to the left from their centre, and instantly ordered Pulteney's from the reserve and form on the right of his first line, and brought the rest of that Corps towards the right of his

¹ Bigg's *Military History*.

second line to strengthen that wing; these movements obliged them to attack his front. The front line of the Rebel's near approach begun a most violent fire, which continued 8 or 9 minutes, and kill'd so many of their best men that they could only penetrate into our Battalion; that on the left of the line was Barrell's regiment; they were attacked by the Camerons (the bravest clan amongst them), and 'twas for some time a dispute between the swords and bayonets; but the latter was found by far the most destructable weapon. The Regiment behaved with uncommon resolution, killing some say almost their own number, whereas 40 of them were only wounded, and those not mortally, and not above ten kill'd; they were, however, surrounded by superiority, and would have been all destroyed had not Col. Martin with his Regiment (the left of the 2nd line of Foot) mov'd forward to their assistance, prevented mischief, and by a well-timed fire destroyed a great number of them and obliged them to run off.

General Hawley, who commanded the five squadrons of Dragoons on the left, had, by the assistance of 150 Argyleshire, thrown down two stone walls, and was (when the fire of the Foot began) posted with his Dragoons opposite to the extremity of the enemy's right wing, and as soon as the Rebels began to give way and the fire of the Foot slacken'd, he ordered Genl Bland to charge the rest of them with three squadrons, and Cobham to support him with the two. It was done with wonderful spirit and completed the victory with great slaughter. We have taken 22 pieces of brass cannon or near it, a number of colours, and near 700 prisoners, amongst which are all the Irish picquets, most of the remainder of Fitz James's Horse, and a part of Drummond's Regiment, great quantity of powder, muskets, bayonets, broadswords, and plads innumerable. All the troops acquitted themselves as troops worthy the command of a great and gallant General, and no individual corps has been wanting in their duty.

The Rebels, besides their natural inclinations, had orders not to give quarter to our men. We had an opportunity of avenging ourselves for that and many other things, and indeed we did not neglect it, as few Highlanders were made prisoners as possible. Lord Kilmarnock is one, and Brigr Stapleton, with some others you have a list of. The enemy, by their own order of battle, had 8300 men in the field, and our utmost was 7200. Our loss is inconsiderable. Poor Col. Rich had his left hand quite

cut off, and a very bad cut in his right elbow, and six in his head, one or two very bad ones. Lord Robert Ker was kill'd fighting against numbers. Rimon, Edmunds, Hillary, Campbell and Brown are wounded; the last of them obstinately defending one of the colours that was knocked to the ground, but not carried off. Twenty-one old soldiers kill'd and wounded by your former company. The Rebels are much dispers'd, and it is supposed will never be able to collect a body again. The Pretender was in their rear, but soon quitted the field. You must observe it blew and rain'd very hard almost all the time we marched from our camp at Nairn, till just as the battle began. It then became fair, and continued so all the remainder of the day. You must also take notice that the Rebels were, the night before the action, within four miles of our camp, intending to have surpris'd and attack'd us in the dark; but an unforeseen accident and a good deal of circumspection prevented them. This and other lucky circumstances must make every discerning man observe whence 'tis that success can only be expected. We wanted to have fought the 15th, his Royal Highness's birthday, but his charity for the men after many marches prevented it.

Yours,

J. WOLFE.

PS.—I forgot to tell you that the whole loss of the King's troops together was about 20 officers and 300 men kill'd and wounded; so you may see what a share your old Regiment had in it. I likewise forgot to mention the cavalry of the right, who were, I should have said, employed in pursuing and destroying the broken Rebels.¹

“Culloden,” says Mr. Bradley, “changed the fate of Britain in a few moments, just as Quebec changed the fate of the British Empire.” Yet, although the victory was decisive enough, a different result might have been looked for had the Prince Charles Edward chosen his ground elsewhere. Nor did the victors by any means acquit themselves without blunders which against another foe might have cost them the battle. Indeed, Wolfe himself hints darkly at all this in a letter written years afterwards, when, on service in Scotland, he revisited Culloden battlefield, a letter which will be given in its proper sequence. P. 156-7

¹ The original of this letter belonged to the Rev. C. B. Norcliffe, of Langton Hall, Malton.

On the same day Wolfe wrote the following and dispatched it to his uncle Sotheron.

TO WILLIAM SOTHERON.

Inverness, *April 17, 1746.*

DEAR SIR,—I have the pleasure to tell you that yesterday, about one in the afternoon, the Duke engaged with the rebel army, and in about an hour drove them from the field of battle, where they left nearly 1500 dead; the rest, except prisoners, escaped by the neighbourhood of the hills. The action was three miles short of this place, on Lord President Forbes'¹ land, from whence it takes its name, the battle of Culloden.

The rebels had posted themselves on a high boggy moor, where they imagined our cannon and cavalry would be useless; but both did useful service. The cannon in particular made them very uneasy, and after firing a quarter of an hour obliged them to change their situation and move forward some hundred yards to attack our front line of Foot, which they did with more fury than prudence, throwing down their firearms, and advancing with their drawn swords. They were however repulsed and ran off with the greatest precipitation, and the dragoons falling in amongst them completed the victory with much slaughter. We have taken about twenty pieces of cannon in the field, and near it a number of colours, and I believe seven hundred prisoners, amongst which were all the Irish piquets, most of the remainder of Fitz-James's horse, and some of Drummond's regiment; great quantity of powder, ball, muskets, bayonets, broadswords, etc; plaids innumerable.

The troops behaved themselves as they ought to do, and no regiment was wanting in their duty. The enemy by their own order of battle had 8300 men in the field, and the utmost of our number was 7200, of which we had about twenty officers and three hundred men killed and wounded. Barrell's regiment suffered particularly, having out of three hundred and fifty had one hundred and twenty officers and men killed and wounded, fighting in a most obstinate manner against the Camerons, the best clan in the Highlands. Orders were publicly given in the rebel army, the day before the action, that no quarter should be given to our troops. We had an opportunity of avenging ourselves, and I assure you as few prisoners were taken of the Highlanders as possible.

¹ Duncan Forbes, whose son was in the Army in Flanders.

You must observe that it blew and rained very hard almost from the time we marched from our camp at Nairn, till just the battle began, when it became fair and continued so the remainder of the day. Another thing you must take notice of, that the rebels were the night before the action within three miles of our camp, intending to surprise and attack us in the dark ; but some unforeseen accident, together with a great deal of superstition, turned them back. These circumstances with many others I could name, will make every discerning man observe from whence only our success can proceed. I heartily wish you joy of the happy end of so horrid an undertaking. And may they every be punished in the same manner who attempt the like! I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

An anecdote is narrated (on the authority of Sir Henry Stuart Allanton) that riding over the battlefield, the Duke of Cumberland observed a wounded rebel smiling defiance at him. Turning to Major Wolfe at his side he said: "Wolfe, shoot me that Highland scoundrel who dares look on us with such contempt and insolence!" Whereupon the young aide-de-camp replied: "My commission is at your Royal Highness's disposal, but I never can consent to become an executioner."¹

The bloodthirsty injunction is much more in keeping with the character of Hawley than of Cumberland, but the retort, whatever its verity, by no means clashes with our notions of the young officer's independence.

¹ *Anti-Jacobin Review*, vol. xiii. p. 125.

AFTER LAFFELDT

CULLODEN proved effectually the death-blow to Jacobite aspirations. On the one hand we see a hunted fugitive, Charles Edward, with a price set on his head; on the other his victorious cousin, the Duke of Cumberland, taking up his quarters after the battle at Culloden House whence he dispatched his aide-de-camp, Lord Bury, to London post-haste with news of the triumph.¹

Slower than the wings of rumour (for he had taken nine days). Bury found the people of the capital already in an ecstasy of rejoicing. The Duke was hailed as the deliverer of the nation, and Parliament voted him £25,000 a year for life. Cumberland himself remained with the army in the neighbourhood of Fort Augustus until July 18, engaged in those severely repressive measures which have earned him the eternal opprobrium of Jacobite writers. He certainly carried fire and sword ruthlessly through the disaffected districts, resolved that as far as he could help there should be no repetition of the affairs '15, '45. But it was not all bloodthirstiness in the camp about ruined Fort Augustus. Horses and ponies were taken from the rebels, and so plentiful that every private could own his steed, besides oxen, sheep and goats. The Duke condescended to patronize horse races, in one of which "Hangman" Hawley was declared "a winner by about four inches."

Brevet-Major Wolfe was kept very busy while at Inverness.

At Forfar was stationed Cobham's Dragoons in charge of Captain Charles Hamilton, with whom Wolfe had considerable official correspondence, which illustrates the unpleasant character of the work in hand.

¹ "My friend Lord Bury arrived this morning from the Duke, though the news was got here before him, for with all our victory it was not thought safe to send him through the heart of Scotland; so he was shipped at Inverness within an hour after the Duke entered the town. Kept beating about at sea five days and then put on shore at North Berwick from whence he came post in less than three days to London, but with a fever upon him. The King has immediately ordered him £1000 and I hear will make him his own aide-de-camp."—Walpole to Mann, April 25, 1746.

To CAPTAIN HAMILTON.

Inverness, *May 19th*, 1746.

SIR,—I am ordered by General Hawley to acquaint you that he has shown your letter to his Royal Highness, who approves of everything you have done, and desires you will continue that assiduity in apprehending such as have been in open rebellion or are known abettors, and that you will be carefull to collect all proffs and accusations against them, and deliver them to Major Chaban, and let the Major know from General Hawley that he is to receive and keep together all such accusations as shall be sent him from you, or any other officer under his command, that they may be more conveniently had when called for. You know the manner of treating the houses and possessions of rebels in this part of the country. The same freedom is to be used where you are as has been hitherto practised, that is seeking for them and their arms, cattle, and other things that are usually found. These that have submitted to his Royal Highness' Proclamation are to be treated as you have mentioned. The list is to be kept and their arms are to be taken from them.

I am, Sir, your most obedient Servant,

J. WOLFE, Aide-de-Camp to General Hawley.

PS.—You will be so good to show Major Chaban what concerns him in this letter, and also what relates to the possessions of the rebels, that he and the officers under his command may make a proper use of it.¹

To CAPTAIN HAMILTON.

SIR,—The General has shown your letter to his Royal Highness, and both approve your conduct. You are permitted to graze your troop in that neighbourhood, for the reasons you assign as the most effectual means of doing your duty. Major Chaban must be acquainted with the General's intentions in that respect; and you are likewise to let him know that he and the rest of the regiment have no right to claim any share of seizures made by your troop when in separate quarters.

The General is satisfied with what you have done in regard to the meeting house, and the money may be applied as you think proper. Young Fletcher's effects are to be secured, but not disposed of till further orders. If you think the attestation of

¹ I owe a knowledge of these letters to Mr. Charles Dalton, editor of the *English Army Lists*.

Mr. Watson's¹ warrant a sufficient proof of his having acted in treasonable manner, you are to make yourself master of his person, and confine him at Montrose with the rest.

I am, Sir, your most obedient humble Servant,
 JAMES WOLFE, Aid-de-Camp to General Hawley.

Fort-Augustus, *June 11th*, 1746.

To CAPTAIN HAMILTON.

SIR,—General Hawley acquainted the Duke with the purport of your letter, who was very well satisfied with your conduct, and you have leave to dispose of the effects of Brown and Watson, but nothing further is to be done in Fletcher's affairs.

The General bid me tell you that when any seizures were made of cattle or otherwise in this part of the world, the commanding-officer and every person concerned have shares in proportion to your pay. You mention Mr. Doway to me as a person to be recommended, but at the same time say you have very little knowledge of him; as I have much less, and no more interest here than you have, I think if you have found him serviceable to you, will not neglect an occasion of rewarding him, as it is not known when the troops will move from hence, or what road General Hawley will go. I'm sorry to let you know it's impossible for me to appoint any place for your seeing him.

I am, Sir, your most obedient humble Servant,
 J. WOLFE, Aid-de-Camp to General Hawley.

(On the letter is written: "This letter was brought me from Fort-Augustus by Baillie Doway on Tuesday 22nd July, 1746.)

With Cumberland's departure the Royal army began to melt away. Wolfe's, Pulteney's and other regiments accompanied him to Flanders, where a new campaign was beginning. Others were dispatched to Stirling and other Scottish localities. Major Wolfe remained behind, being sent with a company to reconstruct the little fort of Inversnaid, situate between Lochs Lomond and Katrine, which had been wrecked by the insurgents. Here he remained until late in November 1746, when he received orders to rejoin his regiment on the Continent in six weeks' time, with a prospect of further fighting. The interval would enable the brevet-major, who was just completing his twentieth year, to pass the Christmas holidays with his parents in London.

¹ David Watson, afterwards Quartermaster-General in Scotland.

We still may see, on the east side of Old Burlington Street, scarce a stone's throw from the rear of Burlington House, Piccadilly, the town house of the Wolfes. It is one of several plain-fronted, substantial brick mansions built about the very time that James Wolfe was born.¹ Here the old General, now somewhat recovered from the effects of his active service in the North, and his lady, greeted their son on his return to London in the last month of the year 1746.

After the first warmth of the greeting had passed away, and James began to lay before his sire his plans for a Continental outfit, he found the General in a fit of economy and by no means the best of tempers. The Government, he complained, had plenty of money for the Queen of Hungary, and the Duke of Cumberland, and for every petty German Prince who chose to ask it, but not enough to pay its own soldiers. His own salary as Inspector of Marines was three years in arrears. He told James he had memorialized the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, under whose direction he had held office. Their lordships had referred him to Pelham, First Lord of the Treasury, who referred him to the Secretary at War, who referred him back to the First Lord of the Treasury. The General had a horror, he said, of being regarded as a dun, but he seems on the whole to have been a very good business man, or Mrs. Wolfe was a very good business woman, and he ultimately received whatever was owing him. We will have occasion in the sequel of this narrative to see Mrs. Wolfe petitioning with great persistency the ruling powers in order to obtain her celebrated son's back pay and the result of such petitioning. James's income at

¹ Mr. H. B. Wheatley, the topographer, writes me: "When Burlington House was first built the gardens extended to the end of what afterwards became Savile Row, as may be seen from Kip's view of the house and gardens, but when the third Earl rebuilt the house he cut off the gardens where the thoroughfare called Burlington Gardens now exists, and by virtue of an Act of Parliament (1717-18) laid out the ground known as Ten Acres Field in building plots.

"Queensberry House, on the site of Uxbridge House (now the Bank of England), was one of the first buildings (1721). It is probable that the gardens were cut off before this, because Vigo Street ran on to Bond Street and was known as Vigo Lane. As the Battle of Vigo was fought in 1702, the name must have been given when the victory was fresh in public memory.

"Old Burlington Street was called Nowell Street in 1729, but in 1733 had become Great Burlington Street—New Burlington Street was originally Little Burlington Street. Burlington House always fronted Piccadilly (with a large forecourt and wall). I remember the old gardens at the back which extended to Burlington Gardens." The Wolfe mansion might well be indicated by a Tablet, as a place of historic interest.



LIEUT.-GENERAL EDWARD WOLFE

From the portrait by Thornhill, in the possession of Beckles Willson, Esq., Westerham

present was hardly equal to fitting him out for the Netherlands, and his usually liberal father told him flatly, what he wrote to the Duke of Bedford, that in consequence of his Inspector-Generalship of Marines he "was in a worse position than any man who had the honour of having a regiment in His Majesty's service."¹ But this was probably in a manner of speaking. Wolfe got all he needed, and after some weeks in town sailed with his regiment for Holland early in January 1747.

TO HIS FATHER.

Camp near Breda, Feb. 15, 1747.

DEAR SIR,—There is such a dearth at present of everything new and entertaining, it seems no easy task to fill a letter; at least to give it such a turn as may please. We military men, don't accustom ourselves to moral topics, or seldom entertain one another with subjects which are out of the common rôle, from the frequent occasion we have to mention our own affairs, which, in time of war, are of no small extent and concern. Possibly our manner of writing may proceed in some measure from diffidence and modesty, as not caring to attempt things, that we are sensible have been better touched upon, and rather choose to be confined to that particular branch of knowledge with which we are supposed to be well acquainted. Nine-tenths of the letters from hence, I am persuaded, are filled with observations from what occurs in the army in general, or in the particular battalion to which the writer belongs. I know or at least guess by myself, how much every man's attention is taken up with the things about him; and the use of thinking constantly on the same matter weighs greatly with the mind, and in time becomes its first principle, so that setting aside a man's modesty and his diffidence, he has little else to talk of. I am led into this observation by a discourse at Gen. Howard's an hour ago, of the difficulty some people there said they were under for want of sufficient variety of occurrences to fill up their paper; and so put off testifying their love to their friends till next post. Now, I was secure, certain, that you could expect nothing very extraordinary or amusing in the way we are in, and that your good nature and friendship would have been satisfied, to have known your son in health, and to have had a mark of his respect and

¹ *Bedford Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 123; Wright, p. 96.

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affection for his parents expressed in ever so few lines. I heartily wish you health, and am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

My love to my mother.

The British section of the Allies assembled near Maestricht numbered all told 8000 English, 18,000 Hanoverians, and 6000 Hessians. These were under the Duke of Cumberland, who was also given supreme command of the entire forces, including Austrians, Dutch and Bavarians numbering 126,000 men.

Our hero occupied the leisure which the commander's tardiness afforded him to carry on a lively correspondence with a young lady then resident in Brussels.

To MISS LACEY.

Camp of Bonvel, *May 21, 1747.*

DEAR MISS LACEY,—If it is necessary to be convinced of your good sense, I would desire you to write and nobody would doubt it. But as I have been long assured of it, I should be greatly deficient if I did not admire its effects, so I think you may observe it which ever way you converse with me you have the means of pleasing.

I was doing the greatest injustice to the dear girls, your friends to admit the least doubt of their constancy, I mean to your person; perhaps with respect to ourselves there may be cause of complaint. Carleton I'm afraid is a recent example of it. Madam Sawyer has seen variety, is generally admired, and consequently unique. The other young one might admit of an impression at first, but a few more years maternal instruction will divest her of any inclination to unnecessary attachment.

Your time must pass agreeably; nothing from us has yet given occasion to prevent it nor do I see any immediate probability of a change in our situation. We are here the guardians of the Republic, and since their reformation, I begin to think them worth our care.

I hope you have found a sufficient number of men to be of your parties. That "M. Gravesend"¹ supports his credit I cannot doubt, or as I may now properly say, has resumed his tyranny. Your spirit, I think, will never submit to such a sway, how great

¹ A jocosé nickname for one of the English officers.

soever may be the scarcity; if you are moved the object will have merit. This letter you will be so good to direct, and let it be sent to the embroiderer; If you think my manner of correcting too harsh, it is left for you to soften; sure they must be dense if my French is useless, unless it could be in the least thought otherwise by you. That's an acquisition you have at heart, and as you are now placed to advantage in that particular, you certainly won't neglect. I'm your old friend's faithful adherent still, and could hear her talk with pleasure; tho' the tale is long, 'tis harmonious from her tongue.

Mrs. Lee I fancy contributes to soften the Dutch dialect and make rugged seem smooth, at least if I don't mistake her character. The Captain is perhaps one amongst us the most to be envied, within reach of his wishes, and not subject to accidents that might be the consequence of a bold excursion to the Basch from one of us. 'Tis dangerous riding backwards and forwards if a man is not master of his time.

My neighbour Bernard has great pleasure in knowing you are well; he speaks of you with esteem and affection, and bids me be careful to make you his compliments. I heartily make mine to your friends, and am, dear Miss, most sincerely your friend and admirer

J. WOLFE.

His fair correspondent was of Irish birth, the daughter of General Lacey in the Austrian service, himself related to the Russian Field Marshal Count Lacey. A little harmless flirtation of this kind doubtless helped to make the time pass agreeably: and we may acquit Wolfe of having any serious designs on the lady's heart.

To MISS LACEY.

Camp of Westerloo, *June 11th, N.S., 1747.*

DEAR MISS LACEY,—As I have showed great impatience to procure my coat, I conceive how great yours must be to hear I have got it. With that consideration and the great pleasure of seizing the first opportunity to speak my gratitude and return a thousand thanks, I put this into your father's hands for a quicker and surer conveyance, and am, I assure you, infinitely obliged to you. Though it comes late 'tis not less necessary; one strong reason is to convince any amongst us that no views

of preferment shall ever alter my observance of superior duty nor the expense (however unreasonable) shall ever prevent my conforming. I take the liberty to enclose another letter to M. Lebrun in which he may easily observe my sentiments; you will judge of them equity, by the past of his conduct which relates to you.¹

Your affection for your father (one amongst the many estimable points of your character) makes you see dangers at too great a distance, and you too readily admit fears which to me appear groundless. I may be wrong in my conjectures, but, unless the French attempt Maestricht or pretend to act offensively, I think this campaign will not be less inactive than the preceding ones. The implacable enemy may however depend on their former success and use it as a motive to new enterprises; in that case, be assured, that nothing a fine army can undertake in their defence will be wanting for their preservation.

You have left me in a doubt that is hurtful to my repose. Sure it must never happen that a soldier can be unhappy in his love; if so, what reward for great and glorious undertakings, or what relief from despair? Can we be forgot in the midst of danger and fatigue? But worse than this, shall I live to see an inhabitant of the bush succeed to my place and triumph in the frailty of my country-woman? Explain that part as you think me safe, or deny a thought on't.

I have been a fortnight detached from the army. Our situation has been agreeable and might have been honourable, would the enemy have waited our attempts; but their idleness has denied us the pleasure of conquest. I speak rather positively on this subject, but when I speak of war, I'm sensible, tho' a soldier, that there is One who directs.

I write this in a moment of reflection; you'll pardon the style, 'tis unusual and has not in it that turn of gaiety that would perhaps be more pleasing to you; but 'tis nevertheless of the sort you must sometimes expect in your conversation with men, particularly those whose situation should make them often subject to serious hours. I'm glad to catch myself in such a disposition and think it the beginning of reform. My wishes are never wanting for your health and happiness of you and your

¹ This is all pure raillery. Lebrun was the embroiderer in whose hands was the splendid scarlet officer's coat whose elaboration Miss Lac y had volunteered to superintend.

pretty friends. I'll say it to my praise that no man has a greater consideration for the sex than,

Your obedient humble servant,

J. W.

I have directed the fellow to embroider but one waistcoat.

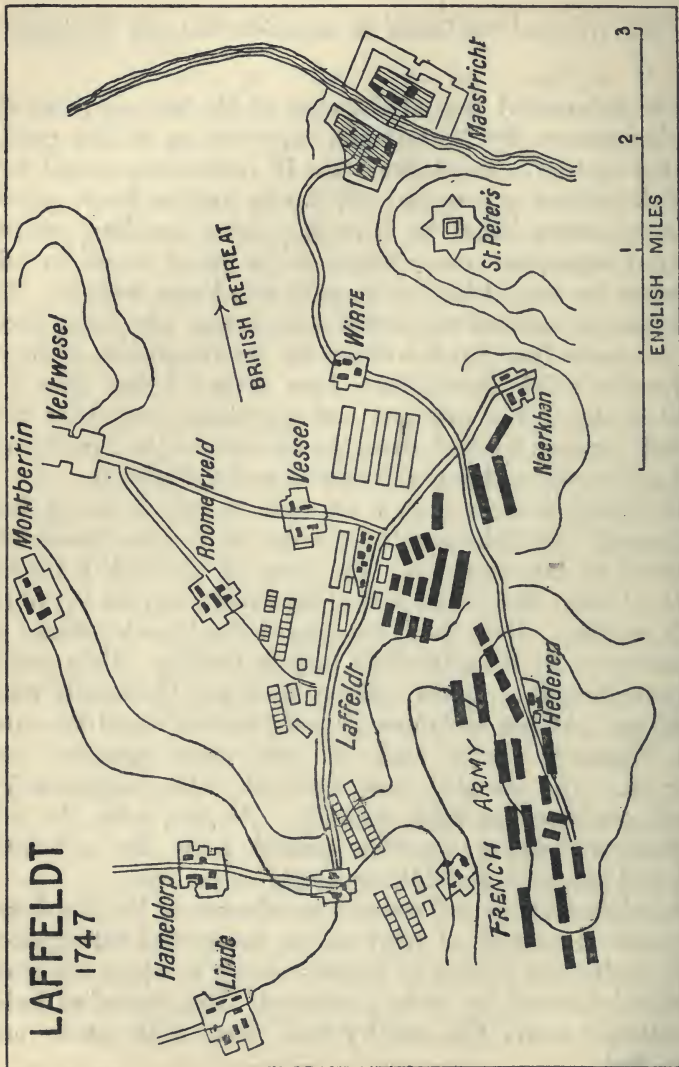
It will be recalled that at the close of the last campaign the French had overrun the Netherlands, largely owing to their greater and earlier activity. Cumberland was in consequence seized with a fit of imprudent enterprise. It is ever unwise for a general to start operations before he is ready. After marching towards Antwerp, Cumberland was obliged to lie many weeks in idleness because he was without siege guns and forage wagons. The weather bitterly assailed the unfortunate troops who hung about a spot ten miles from Breda waiting for the completion of simple arrangements which should have been settled before they had marched a step. Yet exposure and privation could have been borne with greater fortitude than the derision of the French, who had a larger army, well fed, well housed, and well placed.

Cumberland, eventually in a fit state to march, seeing Saxe in movement and believing he intended to besiege Maestricht, set forward to intercept him. On June 19 the British reached Laffeldt, a hamlet three miles west of Maestricht and the key of the enemy's position. Here they encountered the French infantry on the morning of the 21st, the Irish brigade leading. Then ensued a desperate struggle. Again and yet again was the hamlet taken and retaken. As fast as Pulteney's and Crawford's and the other British regiments hurled back the foe, other brigades came pouring in. The slaughter was dreadful. Our brigade-major, wounded, continued to fight gallantly. At last, after the fifth attempt, overwhelming numbers pushed aside the exhausted British and occupied Laffeldt, an empty advantage.

Meanwhile, Cumberland ordered an advance of the Dutch and Austrians, as a measure of relief to the overworked infantrymen. In their centre was a body of Dutch cavalry, to whom was given at a critical moment the order to charge. But instead of facing the exulting enemy, the cavalry was seized with panic, and, turning, fled.

In vain Cumberland tried to rally the retreating Dutch—the entire centre began to give way, and the Allied army was cut in two. A precipitate retreat upon Maestricht followed, which

might have developed into a panic-stricken flight, but for the prompt and gallant action of Sir John Ligonier. This officer, with some British and Austrian cavalry, charged boldly on the



PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF LAFFELDT, 21ST JUNE, 1747

French, well knowing they would be cut to pieces, but checking in the meantime the onset of the foe. Hundreds of splendid fellows and their horses, especially of the Scots Greys, were anni-

hilated, but time thereby was gained for the infantry. Ligonier himself, horseless, was captured by a lucky French carabineer. The cost to the Allies of this day's fighting was 5680 in killed and wounded. Amongst the latter was Wolfe, who had received a ball in the body in the height of the action. Never had he fought with greater zeal and courage: not losing control of his brigade for a single moment. He was several times in great danger through the fight, so much so that his faithful servant, Roland, became alarmed for his safety. "He came to me," wrote Wolfe, long afterwards, "at the hazard of his life in the last action with offers of his service, took off my cloak and brought a fresh horse; and would have continued close by me had I not ordered him to retire. I believe he was slightly wounded just at that time, and the horse he held was shot likewise. . . . Many a time has he pitched my tent and made the bed ready to receive me, half-dead with fatigue; and this I owe to his diligence."¹ For his behaviour on the field that day Wolfe received the formal thanks of the Commander-in-Chief. Henceforward, he was truly a marked man.

The battle of Laffeldt was without any useful result, except to confirm the Allies in the possession of Maestricht. Having reinforced the garrison of the town so coveted by the French, Cumberland crossed the Meuse into the duchy of Limburg, and there encamped. As for his opponent, despairing of taking Maestricht that season, Saxe burned his magazines about the close of August and decamped. Both armies retired into winter quarters in November, twenty transports landing five regiments of foot at Gravesend on the 16th of that month.

After being nursed in field hospital a few days for his wound Wolfe reached home about the same time as the Duke of Cumberland and Sir John Ligonier, the latter having gained his freedom by exchange. Our hero celebrated his coming of age at the house in Old Burlington Street.

Here he saw much of good society. Not only did his parents have the *entrée* into many influential circles, but being himself, young, ardent, of a convivial temper, fond of ladies' society, it is not wonderful that he should have been regarded as a hero in many eyes. Thus far, however, he had not expressed more than a passing preference for any of the fair enchantresses he had met.

Besides Miss Warde, Miss Lacey and others to whom he pays tribute in his letters, there came upon the scene this winter, Miss Elizabeth Lawson, eldest daughter of Sir Wilfrid Lawson, of

¹ See Letter *post*, p. 154.

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Isel. This young lady was one of the maids of honour to the Princess of Wales. Her mother was Elizabeth Lucy Mordaunt, niece of Charles, third Earl of Peterborough, a lady whom the malicious gossips of the town credited with what we, in modern times, have come to denominate *tout court*, a past. Whatever may have been the truth of such slanders (and very few of the court ladies were exempt from such in George II's day), they did not prevent the lady's daughter from being a favourite of her royal mistress. Wolfe was attracted to Miss Lawson from the first, and the more he saw of her the more her charms grew upon him. Her uncle, General Sir John Mordaunt, was an old friend of his father's, and himself took a deep interest in the young brigade-major.

At this time it was not certain whether the Continent was to offer a further field for active service or not. Both sides were weary of a conflict which had already lasted six years. In the spring of 1748, international plenipotentiaries met at Aix-la-Chapelle. Notwithstanding these negotiations for peace the military commanders on both sides resolved to keep things moving with vigour. The Congress opened on March 11, and a week or so later Wolfe was ordered to join a detachment of German troops in the vicinity of Breda. He, therefore, took leave of his parents and London friends, and set sail from Harwich, crossed over to Flushing, and made his way to Osterhout. Here he found that the Duke of Cumberland's illness, and Marshal Saxe's superior strategy, were having their effect upon the army of the Allies. He writes thus in a letter to his father—

To HIS FATHER.

Osterhout, *April 12, N.S., 1748.*

DEAR SIR,—General Fowke is left here with four regiments of Foot, and eight pieces of cannon, to assist in defending this part of Holland. The troops are cantoned in the village, two leagues from Breda and one from Gertruidenberg, and wait the orders of him who is appointed to lead the army here; 'tis at present the Prince of Wolfenbittel, but we are apprehensive of losing him.

As a Major of Brigade, and the first of that rank, I am here, though I took some pains to avoid it. The corps that I hear is intended to assemble in this quarter will be of thirty-five or forty battalions and some squadrons, unless the enemy's

present undertaking should require them upon the Maese. I hear Maestricht is invested. Marshal Lowendahl passed the Maese with some troops at Namur, was joined by those that wintered in Louvain, marched through a country that is almost impassible in the finest seasons, seized Limbourg, and is, we are told, on the other side of the river, where our army lay the greatest part of last campaign; while M. de Saxe moves with the larger part of the French army, and invests Maestricht on this side. If so, the body of Austrians there will be inferior to either of these corps, and will certainly retire, or rather has retired, and leave the unhappy fortress to its garrison and a Dutch commander. I am much at a loss to know whether that place is thought of such worth as to risk a battle with disadvantage, especially in numbers; though the situation is such that a fortunate stroke might be the total ruin of the besieging army, from the extreme breadth of the Maese, and difficulty of retiring with a beaten army over a bridge or two. But if in two or three days these regiments should move, I shall think the attempt a thing determined, and be out of doubt as to our destination.

The Prince of Orange is expected here soon. Marshal Bathiany is laid up with the gout (and in an evil hour) at Bois-le-Duc. H.R.H. has been ill again at Venlo, but is something better, and perhaps gone to Roremonde; the greatest part of the army is in full march to that place. Neither the English regiments to the north, nor that expected from the river, are yet arrived, though never so much wanted as at this unlucky time.

I am preparing to tell you the purport of a conversation with Colonel Yorke, the then Adjutant-General, to whom I addressed myself on being ordered to remain here. He said some civil things in relation to having a person with these people that was acquainted with this country, and the customs of the army; and proceeded to tell me that the Duke, in discourse with him, had expressed great concern at not having it in his power to serve me, but that his intention was just, and he would take an opportunity soon of making it appear. And Yorke, as a secret, told me H.R.H. intended that Field should succeed Cossley, and that he would give me the Major's commission of Bragg's regiment for nothing, and (as he was pleased to say) in order to my being Lieutenant-Colonel to it, for Jocelyn is dying. Cossley, you know, is to go out with a

government, and the sale of his company only. If this be true, you will make the proper reflections on it, and think me not much hurt. I'm sure the thing is yet far off, possibly may fail as heretofore; but with sincerity I assure you, I am out of the reach of disappointment. I heartily wish you both well. I writ to my uncle Wat from Harwich, and foretold the siege of Maestricht. He will be astonished at their early proceeding, and equally displeas'd with us. My duty to my mother.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate Son,
J. WOLFE.

I have bought Jemmy Streton a horse and he has writ to the Captain to pay £7 to my banker or agent.

Wolfe's references in the foregoing to the Duke of Cumberland show that he still retained the good graces of the Commander-in-Chief. Indeed, it is much to Cumberland's credit that he, from the first, detected the merits of the young officer. Wolfe's duties with the foreign corps were very arduous. Existing documents show that he was given control of the commissariat of that detachment, corresponded with bread and beef contractors, and issued orders for forage. In whatever capacity he was employed he evinced his thoroughness. He could be relied upon, and that was probably more than could be said of nine-tenths of the young officers of that day.

Daily some issue was expected from the Congress at Aix-la-Chapelle, to which Lord Sandwich had been dispatched as plenipotentiary. The Duke of Newcastle, the leader of the war party at home, had himself nominated Sandwich for this post, and the two shortly afterwards met in Flanders.

Wolfe writes about the middle of April—

TO HIS FATHER.

17th April, 1748.

DEAR SIR,—The Duke of Newcastle and Lord Sandwich are expected at the army in a few days; they will see the sight, and go off. . . . The Imperialists march to-morrow towards Ruremonde. The neighbourhood of Bois-le-Duc cannot furnish to an army without money. These troops must receive great assistance from the country about them. The conferences at Aix are rather languid; the warlike spirit conceives favourably, from the interest or intrigue perhaps of some mischievous particular, who may

retard the general good, and keep the world in arms. Sincerely I believe you'll think I'm crazy in the brain. In one letter I tell you all is at an end, and in the next that things have a fairer face. I'm sorry to say that my writings are greatly influenced by the state of my body or mind at the time of writing; and I'm either happy or ruined by my last night's rest, or from sunshine, or light and sickly air: such infirmity is the mortal frame subject to. I thank you for the part you are so ready to act in my behalf. Your officers are all well, and free from complaint, as from any cause.

Marshal Saxe having invested Maestricht, drove the Austrians back to Ruremond, with the loss of their stores and powder. But the combined Dutch and English, lacking the reinforcements of the Russians, who had not yet arrived, were too weak to do very much to prevent the fall of the fortress. When it fell, Holland would be invaded. In these circumstances, the British Government were only too ready to accept the terms of peace which France offered at the Congress. So, while the ministers of the other Powers declined to join, late at night on the 30th of April, N.S., the English, Dutch and French plenipotentiaries set their names to the Treaty of Peace.

But while the negotiations were going on, the enemy had approached close to the beleaguered city, which they attacked and carried the covered way, with the loss of 900 grenadiers. Their triumph was brief, however, for Baron D'Aylva, the Governor of Maestricht, sallied forth and put them to flight with heavy loss. All doubt about the result was cut short by the news of the signing of the Treaty of Peace, and orders for hostilities to cease. Cumberland, whose military reputation had hardly been increased by this campaign, dispatched an officer to Baron D'Aylva, instructing him to turn over the fortress to Marshal Saxe until the ratification of the Treaty. In consequence of this, the garrison marched out with all the honours of war on the 3rd of May.

Thus terminated, as far as Britain was concerned, the War of the Austrian Succession. It was an extraordinary contest: England and France had begun as mere allies of the two powers, Austria and Prussia, and ended by being the principals. But what had been gained? All conquests were to be restored, even that of Louisburg. There was no stipulation regarding the first cause of the war, the commercial claims of England upon Spain, and there was a general consciousness that France had the best

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of it, and was only restrained by the present state of her navy and her exchequer. This consciousness was quickened when it became known that two noble hostages were to be sent to France to guarantee the restitution of Louisburg. It gave British pride a sad shock. By no one was it more deplored than by our hero, who little expected when he cried out against giving back Cape Breton and Louisburg, that fate had reserved to him a chief share in the task of reclaiming the one for the Empire and blotting the other, one day, from the face of the earth.

“Never, perhaps,” remarks Stanhope, “did any conflict, after so many great events and so large a loss of blood and treasure, end in replacing the nations engaged in it so nearly in the same situation as they were at first.”¹

All through that summer of 1748 both armies rested in their respective camps. It was then, being assured that no active service was imminent for some time to come, that Wolfe desired ardently to get prolonged leave from his regiment for the purposes of travel. Although more than six years in the army, he had seen little of the world. He had always been too hard-worked to have had many opportunities for enlarging his mind or of acquiring the accomplishments of a gentleman. His great fear was of becoming narrow and uncouth if this course of life went on, and he believed that travel and mixing in cultivated society would make him the more efficient officer. In this opinion he was supported by his uncle, Major Walter Wolfe, with whom he continued to keep up a spirited correspondence. The old Major was a keen soldier, and, having been disappointed, purely through the nature of the times, in his own advancement, took a deep interest in that of his nephew.

Wolfe writes to his mother—

To HIS MOTHER.

August 1748.

When you have anything to grant, or a good-natured thing to say, you don't lose time. I got your letter much sooner than I expected, but upon opening it easily perceived the reason.

There will be difficulties in everything that contradicts a principle or settled opinion, entertained amongst us, that an officer neither can, nor ought ever to be otherwise employed than his particular military functions. If they could beat men's

¹ *History of England*, chap. xxx.

capacities down, or confine their genius to that rule (to be observed with the expected nicety, so as to exclude all other attachments), no man would ever be fitted for a higher employment than he is in. 'Tis unaccountable that who wishes to see a good army can oppose men's enlarging their notions, or acquiring that knowledge with a little absence which they can't possible meet with at home, especially when they are supposed masters of their present employment and really acquainted with it. In all other stations in life, that method is usually pursued which best conduces to the knowledge every one naturally wishes to have of his own profession.

Whether my request will be consented to or not I shan't pretend to say; it depends on them whether even I shall ask it. Pray tell my father that I thank him much for his approbation, but I can't help differing both from him and you in your objection, that I must lay aside all thoughts of preferment; because, if we may judge of what has happened, attendance, or the frequent offer of one's person to their observation, has had hitherto little effect, and I know myself secure of your voices and endeavours whether absent or not; and more particularly that, if I rise at all, it will most probably be by the means of my father's pocket. But, not to be tiresome upon this subject, I'm told that my intended journey will really be put off. I spoke to my uncle Wat in my last letter to him to this purpose. Perhaps he may mention it to you with his sense of such undertaking.

The sum in question puts me into the very state you wish me, and I as truly wish myself, I mean that of independency; and though I dare not pray for money, £10,000 is worth asking for fair purposes, and might be prettily disposed of. None but earthly gods and goddesses are moved far without the precious bane.¹

Sure Palliser can't in honesty be partial to that red head of hers,² and think there is beauty in the motly of white and yellow; he has certainly meant his speech in compliment to some female of the fairer kind, within the hearing of so much gallantry. He can never be so blind as to imagine any perfection, but in the

¹ This is a reference to one of Mrs. Wolfe's match-making schemes.

² Mrs. Wolfe had written to say that one of his old Greenwich comrades had fallen in love with a rather plain damsel, whose beauty, however, he had insisted upon.

just medium between the dismal black and palid white. He has sacrificed his own opinion and Mrs. Highsam's affections in pure civility to the neighbourhood of that same lady, who was, as I said before, undoubtedly the object and first in his thoughts.

I desire you will speak without any reserve, if there is here or within my reach whatever you wish for imagine yourself mistress of it, and tell me how I may endeavour to be of the least use. Though I don't think the troops will any of them embark till the end of October I would not have you lose time in fixing upon what you would have brought over, and if you know anything that would be agreeable to my father pray mention it.

The Duke went suddenly over to Hanover a day sooner than even he spoke of, and express from thence determined his quick remove; H.R.H. is expected back in a week, but one aid-de-Camp, or more properly his travelling secretary (Col. Yorke) is gone with him of all his retinue.

As to the bulk of our correspondence, I know nothing that can justly excuse my putting you to an extraordinary expense. Any inclination to much talk can never be a good reason. A man should shorten his discourse, or learn to write close. Everything that seems to prevent any scheme of economy I am a bitter enemy to. In the notions I entertain at present, spare diet and small beer have a strong place. Nothing but an unlucky knowledge of the immediate necessity of living well and drinking claret could, sure, persuade me to such a practice in opposition to good, close, parsimonious maxims. But what is there one may not be forced to do, where the health is concerned, however averse to inclination? To repel the vapours (as my friend justly terms them), Jemmy Donnellan and I are obliged to have recourse to a couple or three good things every day, and some Bordeaux; the management of all which he has solely undertaken, and calls for my meekly partition.

If Mr. Fox knew how well we feed, and that sometimes the table for four is crowded, he would be jealous of our emoluments and censure our extravagance, refuse perhaps our arrears, and cut off the non-effectives. My duty to my father. I always wish you both well, and am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate Son,

J. WOLFE.

The paragraph in the foregoing which relates to the principles of economy is a good example of the writer's playful mood. As a matter of fact his mother had been fearful that his camp diet was too rigorous for his feeble constitution, and in sending him the sum of £50 had urged him to nourish himself as generously as possible. Wolfe was no *gourmet*, generally taking the mess provisions as he found them, and in this campaign they were very bad. His supposition that the corrupt old placeman Fox, the Secretary of War, would feel scandalized at the Lucullan extravagance of the commissariat, was amusingly fantastic.

By November the definitive treaty had been signed a month, yet Wolfe was still in Flanders with the foreign battalions, nor had the hoped-for leave of absence been granted. When, however, he next wrote his mother, a return to England was only a few weeks distant.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Camp, Nesselroy, 10th November, 1748.

You have given me the greatest pleasure imaginable in your account of my father's situation. He not only can walk well, but I hope does, or at least takes such exercise as fits his inclination and contributes to his health. I would recommend the like to you, if I did not know how sensible you are of the necessity of it, and how ready to give a good example. I have been prodigiously careful of my own thin person, and I think have used all the remedies, plasters, unguents, etc., that were not only useful, but even thought so, in complaisance to your opinion; and I am thoroughly reinstated. Your green oil in particular was of singular service to me, for a hurt I received by the falling of my horse (not from my horse), and that's well likewise.

Captain Thornton is the only one of our countrymen that thinks our army worth looking at; he was present at a review of six Wolfenbuttel battalions, and expressed both satisfaction and astonishment. He is gone away very well pleased with his reception and entertainment. It is really surprising that in the multitude of the idle and curious, it does not enter into any of their heads to be for once spectators at a military show, and amuse themselves some little time with a view of the variety of troops that compose the three separate bodies in the country. The English should accustom themselves to such sights, that they may be less at a loss, and act like men when anything new or extravagant presents itself, and that a plaid, whiskers, or a

ruff cap may not be esteemed by them altogether terrible and invincible.

I received a letter yesterday from my father, and one from Rickson. The little man seems to entertain but a very indifferent opinion of widows, and threatens to be much better acquainted before he engages a second time; he even carries it so far as to suspect some of them of coquetry and deceit, and with great earnestness advises his friends to avoid that species.¹

My father's good designs are seen by me in the very light he means them; but 'tis too late. Other views and interests succeed at the end of a war, and favours are thrown into quite a different channel. For my particular, I wish nothing so much as the means of escaping from the noise and idleness. I never till now knew our army otherwise than I could have desired it (I don't mean as to the successful part), but then I never knew what it was to wait, in smoke and subjection, the signing articles of peace, and till now have always had, or imagined I had, a prospect of better times. I'm even flattered with the distant view of a happy arrival at Gibraltar or Minorca,—a very desirable retreat, and well adapted to my years and inclination!

I have sold my poor little grey mare; I lamed her by accident, and thought it better to dismiss her the service immediately, than wait a long while for her recovery, as has been sometimes the custom. I grieved at parting with so faithful a servant, and have the comfort to know she is in good hands, will be very well fed and taken care of in her latter days. Such another good animal I shall hardly meet with. I shall be very much obliged to you if you will let me know whether a part of a former letter from you relating to my cousin Burcher be true. I hope it is otherwise. Mrs. Inwood may give herself what airs she pleases, and boast all her ability; but I shall return, perhaps, more than her match. I have taken care by practice, and a well-regulated attention to the game, to prepare myself for the greatest trials; and so I think she should be informed, to put her the more upon her guard, and make my attacks (as they are called at chess) less formidable. I heartily wish you both your health, and am,

Most dutifully and affectionately your Son,

J. WOLFE.

I believe we shall remain at least six weeks in this camp.

¹ Rickson did not marry until 1767, when he espoused Miss Euphemia Bremner of Edinburgh.

By Christmas Wolfe was home again, and after the festive birthday and Christmas rejoicings were over, lost little time in renewing his addresses to General Mordaunt's niece. But what courtship there was, was destined again to be brief, for on the 15th of June 1749, he at last read his name in the *Gazette* as a Major of the 20th Regiment.¹ This regiment, then known as "Lord George Sackville's," was then quartered in Stirling. For the next few years, therefore, destiny called him to Scotland.²

Scotland, and particularly the Highlands, was at that time the place in the British Empire which if it did not occasion uneasiness, called for the most alert and prudent statesmanship. Since the effectual repression of the Rebellion, three years before, a system of "reconstruction" was demanded, something similar in character to that undergone by the Southern States of the American Union after 1865. A large part of Scotland was in the hands of feudal chiefs ruling idle, reckless, ill-fed clansmen. In the report made by General Wade after the rising of 1715, he observes of the Highlanders that "their notions of virtue and vice are very different from the more civilized part of mankind. They think it the most sublime virtue to pay servile and abject obedience to the commands of their chieftains, although in opposition to their Sovereign and the laws of the kingdom; and to encourage this their fidelity, they are treated by their chiefs with great familiarity; they partake with them in their diversions, and shake them by the hand wherever they meet them."

Statutes were accordingly passed to put down this undue power and consequent lawlessness. Military tenures were abolished, hereditary jurisdictions were replaced by Crown Courts, the Jacobite clergy were required to take the oath of allegiance, and to pray publicly for his Majesty King George. The clans were to be disarmed and (still more important in Highland eyes at least) the tartan was placed under the ban. The term for the total abolition of the national garb was the 1st of August, 1747, but "Such parts thereof as are called the plaid, philabeg or little kilt," were forbidden after the 25th of December, 1748.

As long as the war was going on in Flanders and the troops were needed on the Continent, not many battalions could be spared

¹ Now the Lancashire Fusiliers.

² There is a letter from John Warde, Esq., of Squerryes, to his brother George, then in Scotland, which shows that Wolfe did not join the corps for some weeks at least. It is dated Conduit Street, 24th Jan. 1749: "I saw Major Wolfe the other day who was going northward, and tells me he will see you."

to see that the Rebellion Statutes were strictly carried into execution. But now that the war was over, the Government began to follow up its initial measures in Scotland. Several battalions were ordered north to garrison the Highland Forts, and to hunt out philabegs, non-juring priests and claymores.¹

This was the state of affairs and these the duties of the soldiery when Major Wolfe returned to Scotland. He found the 20th threatened with the loss of its Lieutenant-Colonel, the Hon. Edward Cornwallis, who had been selected to go out to Nova Scotia as Captain-General and Governor of that new colony. Thus he was at so early an age called upon to act as commanding officer of a regiment. In itself such a position was a trying one, but the circumstance of the troops being in the midst of those speaking their own tongue and resenting their presence, demanded the highest degree of tact and self-control. Stirling must then have been far from an agreeable place in the eyes of an Englishman. It was dirty and the inhabitants much addicted to inebriety. The burghers were narrow and clannish to a degree. We were told that none but a freeman of some of their guilds could embark in any business. No one durst so much as sew a button on his breeks or put a patch upon his brogues unless he were free of a craft of tailors or shoe-makers, and had the barbers been a corporation no one durst shave himself or employ a servant to do it for him, without being entered a freeman of that trade. Even the well-to-do inhabitants were frugal to the point of parsimony.²

Wolfe's first care was for the men under his charge. His regimental minutes are still extant. Nothing we have exhibited so far in these pages so attests the complete soldier. Soon after his arrival at Stirling, under date of February 12, 1749, he wrote that: "The Major desires to be acquainted in writing with the men and the companies they belong to, and as soon as possible with their characters, that he may know the proper objects to encourage and those over whom it will be necessary to keep a strict hand. The officers are enjoined to visit the soldiers' quarters frequently; now and then to go round between nine and eleven o'clock at night, and not trust to sergeants' reports. They are also requested to watch the looks of the privates and observe

¹ If arms were found in a Highlander's possession, or if he wore a philabeg; if a priest officiated contrary to the Act, or if either refused to take the oaths prescribed, he was liable to six months' imprisonment for the first offence, and transportation to the American Plantations for the second.

² *History of Stirling* (1794), p. 161.

whether any of them were paler than usual, and that the reason might be inquired into and proper means used to restore them to their former vigour. And subalterns are told that 'a young officer should not think he does too much.'"¹

At this time he did not know how long he would be stationed at Stirling. It was therefore with infinite relief that in a few weeks he received orders to march to Glasgow. One reason in particular made him welcome the change. It was the young officer's abiding ambition to atone for the deficiencies in his education. Brother officers at mess might have derided this as an unnecessary aspiration after an undue piety, even the common soldiers might wonder to see their acting Lieutenant-Colonel taking to his school books again, but the opportunity was one not to be lost. There was a celebrated college at Glasgow (since grown into a University) and capable teachers, so Wolfe put himself in their hands. He writes to his mother—

Glasgow, *March 25th*, 1749.

DEAR MADAM,—Neither my inclination or interest lead me to do anything that may disoblige either my father or you, much less against both, can I be persuaded, to oppose your wills ; it would humble me indeed if you were once to suppose that I could be biassed in my opinion by either of the gentlemen you mention, though they should receive advice and assistance, from the artificial and fraudulent female ; or that she (prepared as I am against all her attempts) should be able to work upon me with lies and falsehood, her constant weapons ; I had not five minutes' discourse with her, but in company with the others where her intimacy is not yet strong enough to allow the freedom of utterance upon all subjects ; so that, what she might be wanting in truth, must have been chiefly upon indifferent topics, more proper to move one's contempt, than displeasure. One melancholy proof of her pernicious example, I foresee will appear in that child Miss Sotheron ; if Jezebel be suffered to meddle in her education, the girl is undone ; I pressed the father to send her to New York ; his fondness, and Fanny's wickedness, will be her distraction, if she is not quickly removed. It is a pity the poor thing should be neglected, for she appears ready enough on her part to do what is right.

You have mistaken that part of my letter where Masterman

¹ Major Wolfe's Order-book is preserved at the United Service Institution.

is named. Billy Sotheron¹ does not speak of him as any hindrance to his showing the respect due to his aunt, but as one cunning, and insinuating, execrably bent to find his advantages in the ruins of your family: that is the light he sees him in, and I dare say a just one. This Mr. Sotheron's behaviour may easily be accounted for when I tell you that he is the most consummate rake of all my acquaintances, indolent, negligent, and vicious, with a great share of good nature, and quick sense enough, but withal so idle and a victim to debauchery, that I believe you had almost as great a share of his company as any of his relations in London, at least he assures me so.

Col. Cornwallis does certainly go to Nova Scotia for New Scotland: he is to be absent two years: all his share of duty will then fall upon me: six or seven campaigns, and an age in Scotland. I shall be sick of my office: the very bloom of life nipped in this northern climate. I am determined to make the same use of my stay here, at least; two hours every day are given up to application: in the morning I have a time to instruct me in mathematics: and in the afternoon another comes to assist me to regain my almost lost Latin. The College furnishes abundantly all the arts of learning to the inquisitive. My horses will be here in a day or two: they have cost me forty-five guineas. I am half undone with these expenses.

Be so good to pay Mr. Fourmantel for the wig:² it will be about thirty shillings. A Sergeant of this regiment is gone to London: I bid him call upon you: he may bring it. The man is very honest and an excellent sergeant: Edwards is his name.

I must make use of your interest with the General, my father, to bring about my purpose. Will you desire him to let Mr. Fisher give me credit for any sum not exceeding four-score pounds, the money due to me, for my old post? Not that I want it all at present, or would draw for the whole treasure at a time; but a part is absolutely necessary. It would be very easy to make *that* appear, if I were to enumerate the different articles of expense that necessarily attend a supreme command in such a place as Glasgow; and I don't apprehend you would wish Major Wolfe should distinguish himself the worst way. I give you my word that the common demand for my horse, servants,

¹ William Sotheron, his cousin.

² The absurd legend that Wolfe never wore wigs is sufficiently refuted elsewhere.

washing, lodging, and diet, is no less than three pounds ten shillings a week. Judge then what there is over, for many other things not less requisite, at fifteen pounds a month! I reckon myself to have a shilling a day for what they call pocket money. God forbid every part of Scotland should be of the same exhausting nature with this. If my father consents, as I have no reason in the world to doubt it from his constant friendship and goodness, will you be so kind to inform me, and let me know Fisher's christian name and place of abode.¹ My duty to my father.

I am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

PS.—My horses are this moment arrived and both lame, etc., with travelling only.

There were then no barracks in Glasgow, and the house occupied by Wolfe in Camlachie, a suburb of the city, was still standing a few years ago. It had been built in 1720 by Walkinshaw, the father of Prince Charlie's mistress, and was owned in Wolfe's day by a Mr. Orr of Burrowfield.

¹ Thomas Fisher, an Army agent, lived in Axe Yard, Westminster.

VI

LIFE IN GLASGOW

AMONGST Wolfe's most intimate friends whose name has already occurred in these letters was William Rickson, who had been a lieutenant in General Wolfe's regiment, and was now a captain in the 47th Foot (Lascelle's regiment, stationed in Dublin). Rickson was an earnest, ardent young man, considerably Wolfe's elder,¹ and an unbounded admirer of his friend's talents. Many of Wolfe's best letters are addressed to Rickson. Thus he writes from his Camlachie lodgings—

To CAPTAIN RICKSON.

Glasgow, April 2, 1749.

DEAR RICKSON,—When I saw your writing upon the Back of a letter, I concluded it was in consequence of the mandate I sent you by Lt. Herries, of this Regiment (that letter he carried upon your account and mine, not his own, as you will easily discover); but I find myself more in your debt than I expected. 'Twas your desire to please, and to express the part you take in your friends' good fortune. These were the motives that persuaded you to do what you knew would be agreeable. You'll believe me, when I tell you that, in my esteem, few of what we call advantages in life would be worth acceptance if none were to partake them with us. What a wretch is he who lives for himself alone! his only aim. It is the first degree of happiness here below, that the honest, the brave, and estimable part of mankind, or, at least, some amongst them, share our success. There were several reasons concurring to have sent me into Italy, if this had not happened [his promotion] to prevent my intention. One was to avoid the mortifying circumstance of going, a Captain, to Inverness.² Disappointed of my sanguine hopes, humbled to an excess, I could not remain in the Army and refuse to do the duty of my office while I staid in Britain. Many things, I thought, were and still are wanting to my

¹ He was born in 1719.

² His commission as Brigade-major ended with the war: and he had previously only held brevet-rank of Major.

education. Certain never to reap any advantages that way with the regiment: on the contrary, your barren battalion conversation rather blunts the faculties than improves my youth and vigour bestowed idly in Scotland; my temper daily changed with discontent; and from a man become martinet or a monster.

You shall hear in justice (and in return for your confidence) that I am not less smitten than yourself. The winter we were in London together I sometimes saw Miss Lawson, the maid of honour, G. Mordaunt's niece. She pleased me then; but the campaign in view, battledore and dangerous, left little thought for love. The last time I was in town, only three weeks, I was several times with her,—sometimes in public, sometimes at her uncle's, and two or three times at her own house. She made a surprising progress in that short time, and won all my affections. Some people reckon her handsome; but I, that am her lover, don't think her a beauty.¹ She has much sweetness of temper, sense enough, and is very civil and engaging in her behaviour. She refused a clergyman with £1300 a year, and is at present addressed by a very rich knight; but to your antagonist's advantage, he has that of being mad added, so that I hold him cheap. In point of fortune, she has no more than I have a right to expect, viz. £12,000. The maid is tall and thin, about my own age, and that's the only objection! I endeavoured, with the assistance of all the art I was master of, to find out how any serious proposal would be received by Mordaunt and her mother. It did not appear that they would be very averse to such a scheme; but as I am but twenty-two and three months it is rather early for that sort of project; and if I don't attempt her, somebody else will. The General and Mrs. Wolfe are rather against it, from other more interested views, as they imagine. They have their eye upon one of £30,000.² If a company in the Guards is bought for me, or I should be happy enough to purchase any lieutenant-colonel's commission within this twelvemonth, I shall certainly ask the question; but if I'm kept long here, the fire will be extinguished. Young flames must be constantly fed, or they'll evaporate. I have done with this subject, and do you be silent upon it.

¹ This is a lover's whim. Miss Lawson, as her portrait reveals, was a beauty.

² Miss Hoskins, of Croydon.

Cornwallis is preparing all things for Nova Scotia; his absence will over-bother me; my stay must be everlasting; and thou know'st, Hal, how I hate compulsion. I'd rather be Major upon half pay, by my soul! These are all new men to me, and many of them but of low mettle. Besides, I am by no means ambitious of command when that command obliges me to reside far from my own, surrounded either with flatterers or spies and in a country not at all to my taste. Would to God you had a company in this Regiment, that I might at last find some comfort in your conversation. Cornwallis asks to have Loftus with him. The Duke laughed at the request and refused him.

You know I am but a very indifferent scholar. When a man leaves his studies at fifteen, he will never be justly called a man of letters. I am endeavouring to repair the damages of my education, and have a person to teach me Latin and the mathematics; two hours in a day, for four or five months, this may help me a little.

If I were to judge of a country by those just come out of it, Ireland will never be agreeable to me. You are in the midst and see the brightest and most shining in other than in a soldiers character. I wish it were more pleasing to you than you mention, because probably you will stay there some time.

The men here are civil, designing and treacherous with their immediate interests always in view; they pursue trade with warmth and necessary merchantile spirit, arising from the baseness of their other qualifications. The women, coarse, cold and cunning, for ever enquiring after men's circumstances. They make that the standard of their good breeding. You may imagine it would not be difficult for me to be pretty well received here, if I took the pains, having some of the advantages necessary to recommend me to their favour: but . . .

My dear Rickson,

Your affectionate friend,

J. WOLFE.

To CAPTAIN RICKSON, of Col. Lascelle's Regiment.

To be left at Lucas's Coffee House, Dublin, Ireland.

We need have less surprise at Wolfe's impressions of Glasgow if we compare them with those of other visitors, his contemporaries, or even with the animated picture which Sir Walter Scott has painted for us in *Rob Roy*. But Glasgow then and probably now improves upon acquaintance. In 1749, the inhabitants

numbered scarce above 20,000. Here we see, in spite of whatever uncongenial surroundings, the Major attacking his mathematics and Latin with a will. When his father wrote him a letter of fatherly counsel apropos of a military career as the veteran had found it, we find Wolfe responding in a somewhat formal and "literary" vein. He moralizes on warfare, and the "highest joy" he describes he himself was to taste for one fleeting moment.

TO HIS FATHER.

Glasgow, *April 7th*, 1749.

DEAR SIR,—That variety incident to a military life gives our profession some advantages over those of a more even and consistent nature. We have all our passions and affections roused and exercised, many of which must have wanted their proper employment, had not suitable occasions obliged us to exert them. Few men are acquainted with the degrees of their own courage till danger prove them and are seldom justly informed how far the love of honour or dread of shame are superior to the love of life. This is a knowledge to be best acquired in an army; our actions are there in presence of the world, to be freely censured or approved. Constancy of temper, patience and all the virtues necessary to make us suffer with a good grace are likewise parts of our character, and, as you know, frequently called in to carry us through unusual difficulties. What moderation and humility must he be possessed of that bears the good fortune of a successful war with tolerable modesty and humility, and he is very excellent in his nature who triumphs without insolence. [A battle gained is, I believe, the highest joy mankind is capable of receiving, to him who commands; and his merit must be equal to his success if it works no change to his disadvantage. Lastly, a defeat is a trial of human resolution, and to labour under the mortification of being surpassed, and live to see the fatal consequences that may follow to one's country, is a situation next too damnable. But I make my introduction a little too long; however, as you started the subject, and gave me the first hints, you won't be displeased.

Your letter and several others mention Cornwallis's new officers. He will certainly get the regiment in America, and I shall as certainly have a Lieutenant-Colonel put in. In this great demand for employment, Lord George's interest, or even the Duke's own, will hardly be sufficient to keep out a new man. The Ministry must manage their people, and secure them by

obligations. Let it be as it will, the sooner 'tis determined the greater share I shall have of freedom, and be more at liberty to visit you in the south.

I have this morning received a letter from my mother, by which it appears how great your consideration is for your poor Major, and how much I'm obliged to you for your ready assistance. I promise you these sums are not employed but in a manner that you yourself might approve; and I should be ashamed ever to ask, but to such purposes as becomes your son; and that I should be somewhat cramped in a sort of generous notions that are part of my inheritance, you should not hear from me on this subject; for, though I had rather be indebted to you for any kind of aid than to any man alive, yet the name of a debt is more than enough to make it disagreeable in the affair of money only. My duty to my mother, etc.

J. WOLFE.

The old General had enclosed a draft for a substantial sum, which came in very handy to pay for the Major's tuition and other fees. He was living in the quietest manner possible in his lodgings in Camlachie. From thence he writes to his mother.

To HIS MOTHER.

Glasgow, 14th April, 1749.

DEAR MADAM,—It was very kind in you, as soon as you knew my distress; your second letter does not in the least diminish the merit of your first and I'm as much obliged to my father and you as if I had more immediately received your assistance.

At the same time I can't help saying that the fruits of my own labour are perhaps the most proper supplies, and if I should go any length beyond the usual bonds, 'tis just I should pay for it. If ever my opinion differs from my father's, 'tis certain to be in my own favour. I don't believe he ever thought better of me than I do of myself. The same reasoning may serve for the greater part of mankind, so that it does not say that I am right when opposed to his sentiments.

The General says that a lump of wealth will be of more service to me altogether when he is gone (sure he does not mean soon!) than part would be now. For undoubtedly he must observe that, I am as likely to make a good use of it now as I can possibly be at any other time, and much more certain, for who can tell

which of the two shall survive? But suppose I should stay a few years behind would it not be highly pleasing to him that the person he intends for his successor should in his presence and under his eye, flourish while he lives and give him some convincing reason to hope that what he has been at pains to collect would not be idly or basely employed? Would he not receive some additional satisfaction when the very principles he has taken care to instil are generously exercised for his credit more than mine?

I can produce a ready excuse for not attending to the miseries of those that might look up to me for relief when I declare an inability to help them, and that the common expenses of my office at least require the revenue. But this is enough, and more than I intended, since for twenty-two, a Major's pay is pretty well; however, without any extravagance, I could easily find use for more.

My father excepted no one alive wishes you so truly well as I do, however vainly they may endeavour to profess it. Mrs. Inwood's care of you during your illness was very obliging; she deserves everything of me for her love to the house. I wish the boxes ten times more beautiful on her account. She shall beat me at chess, scream in a coach unreproved, or do anything she pleases when I am with her. Don't send any money by the sergeant; you'll find employment for it.

They prosecute the wearers of cambric with great severity in this place, so that I stand in need of some change of stocks (*not* Bank Stocks nor South Sea). If you can get me a dozen made of whatever sort you please, I shall thank you. This place is very far from being so disagreeable as it appeared at first. The ladies are very civil and in great numbers, and they are not so desperately afraid of a soldier as formerly. The inhabitants still retain all the religion they ever had, I dare say, with rather less outward ostentation and mockery of devotion, for which they are justly remarkable.

My uncle Wat has sent a drummer to the regiment; he is not a beauty. I wish Lord George don't dismiss him. The Major writ to me about him; I consented, provided his figure was tolerable.

I do several things in my character of commanding officer which I should never think of in any other; for instance, I'm every Sunday at the Kirk, an example justly to be admired. I would not lose two hours of a day if it did not answer some end.

When I say "lose two hours," I must explain to you that the generality of Scotch preachers are excessive blockheads, so truly and obstinately dull, that they seem to shut out knowledge at every entrance. They are not like our good folks. Ours are priests, and though friends to *venaison*, they are friends to sense.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

With regard to attendance at divine service, there is a regimental minute, July 1, 1749: "Lord George Sackville hopes that decency and a proper sense of duty will for the future prevail upon the officers to attend upon Divine Service, and that the commanding officer of the regiment may not be obliged to order them to church with their respective companies." By that time Lord George Sackville was in Glasgow on a visit to his regiment, although the spirit of the order doubtless emanated from his friend the acting Lieutenant-Colonel. Of this remarkable man, Lord George Sackville, whose character appears such an enigma to the eighteenth-century historians, something will be said later. Meanwhile, on April 28, Wolfe writes to his father. It may be mentioned that the journey he speaks of was made in the new stage coach between Glasgow and Edinburgh, the starting of which enterprise was regarded as an important event.

TO HIS FATHER.

Glasgow, 28th April, O.S., 1749.

DEAR SIR,—I am within this hour returned from Edinburgh, where I was a necessary person in a most disagreeable office. I went there to bury a captain of the Regiment. He died of a spotted fever at his return from Shetland, that same Milbourne, whose fortitude and good understanding, preserved our four Companies, lived to see them safe and then left them for ever. The Regiment has lost an excellent officer and can as little spare a Captain of his abilities at a time like this, as may be imagined. He was our paymaster. His long absence from the corps has thrown the accounts into confusion and there are few men like him capable of setting 'em to rights.

I saw several letters from London which spoke of our affairs. My old master¹ has had ill-natured things said of him. He is

¹ General Huske.

strong to bear up against those sort of attacks, and if they put him upon the staff, will laugh at their sage counsel.

The embarkations are in great forwardness, I hear, it is to be feared that the Mediterranean corps will suffer by desertion. The soldiers have a strange abhorrence of such strict confinement, and the unusual heats they expect to find in that climate. I hope your men will behave steadily upon this as upon many other occasions, and confirm everything by their submission that can be expected from such resolutions.

About 1500 men will be ordered this summer to the roads; our battalion furnishes their proportion. Would you think that they intend to strike off a little extraordinary pay, hitherto allowed to the subaltern officers upon that duty. Such scandalous ill-judged parsimony was never practised in any army before and never can be without creating uneasiness and dislike. These poor gentlemen are slaves to the service, and hardly get bread from it and should they be cut off from this little reasonable advantage? My duty to my mother.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most dutiful and affectionate Son,

J. WOLFE.

It was about this time that 300 men of the regiment officered by two captains and six subalterns were told off for road-building from the Pass of Leny to the head of Loch Ern. From Wolfe's regimental orders we learn that "the Privates were to be provided with coarse shirts for working in, but check ones were on no account to be bought." Checks were too suggestive of plaid. He had not been long in Glasgow before a terrible conflagration occurred on the south side of the Clyde, and of regular town police and firemen there being none, the duties of such fell upon the King's troops. "Major Wolfe and the other officers of Lord George Sackville's regiment," we read in *The Courant*, "were present all the time, and were of singular service by placing guards upon the bridge and at all the avenues to keep off the crowd and prevent their stealing the effects belonging to the poor sufferers. Many of the soldiers exerted themselves in preventing the flames and in saving people's lives." One hundred and fifty families were rendered homeless by this fire at the Gorbals. A little later, on the 21st of May, Glasgow was flung into great excitement by a riot resulting from the exploit of a party of body-snatchers. It seems that about the time that Wolfe arrived in Glasgow a party of body-

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snatchers carried a corpse to the college. Whereupon a mob was incited to attack the building, smash the windows and commit other outrages. The ringleaders of the riot were apprehended, tried, and two only found guilty. These were sentenced to be whipped through the town and banished for life. The populace were outraged at the severity of this sentence, and another riot was threatened. When Wolfe wrote he was far from well.

To HIS MOTHER.

Glasgow, 21 May, 1749.

DEAR MADAM,—This is the most lazy and indolent disorder I have ever been oppressed with; 'tis pain to undertake the slightest business; and what used to give me pleasure in the work, is now tedious and disagreeable. I should hardly imagine it, if I did not really feel it myself, yet the very writing a few words, though to the person I always loved to write to, is now a trouble to me. I must drive off this heaviness by some means or other, and not be thus uneasy to myself, when everything about me looks gay and pleasant.

The sergeant brought me the little bundles, just as you had given them into his hands; they came very seasonably and I thank you much for the relief.

Mr. Gedde too, has furnished me with what his shop affords; I can't say they come at so easy a rate, as some other things, but whoever deals with him, I find must pay well to be well served. We expected a great tumult, and some mischief in a day or two, at the punishment of two men concerned in the mob; but they have prevented all *that* by escaping out of prison. It has saved me a great deal of trouble, though it would have been for the future peace of the place, if these offenders had received what the law intended them. I'm afraid the magistrates will suffer in the opinion of their superiors; though I can't say it appears that they connived at the prisoners' flight: yet their fears of their being rescued and their timorous behaviour throughout the whole of this affair, will not fail to create suspicions to their prejudice. Present my duty to my father.

I am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate Son,

J. WOLFE.

To MRS. WOLFE,
Greenwich, England.

In his next letter he adverts to the impending regimental changes.

TO HIS FATHER.

Glasgow, *July 10, 1749.*

DEAR SIR,—I have but one way of making you any acknowledgements, and that if by endeavouring to deserve your esteem. A number of words and sentences ever so well put together cannot equal a good action, those are only to be paid in their kind; and though I should take the greatest pains to tell you how much I think myself obliged to you, you would be better pleased to hear that I did my share of duty as it should be done; and that every kindness I received from you was felt by the honest and the good; that every addition of circumstance was employed as you yourself would wish, and that the same principles and integrity that have hitherto guided your actions are through you, the rule of mine. All this would be pleasing to hear, and you have taken one more step to bring it about; 'tis now in my power to be both generous and just, and I have an opportunity of owning with great pleasure that both the inclination and ability are from you. Lord George Sackville and Cornwallis are two people whom no sordid or vicious man can succeed without appearing in dismal colours, and a regiment accustomed to genteel commanders, are so many censors to disapprove and condemn a different behaviour; not but certain allowances are to be made between men of high rank and fortune, and those of inferior degree.

I laugh to think of Mrs. Fanny's¹ globes and spheres rolling upon the ground, her drawing pens and brushes dispersed, her shells in disorder, and a goblet broken in the fray. I hope it was her effects and not her person that these rash robbers aimed at; sure they have not run away with her? sweet soul! What a panic she is always in at the sight of a rude man!

General Churchill is so much out of order that the Dragoon reviews are put off for a week in hopes of his recovery. My duty to my mother.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate Son,

J. WOLFE.

TO LIEUT. GENL. WOLFE,
at Greenwich in Kent, South Britain.

His arduous regimental duties, added to his closet studies, were probably a little wearing to his health. Yet he was not wholly

¹ Miss Frances Thompson.

unsociable, as local tradition shows him to have been a frequent visitor at "Shawfield," the residence of Colonel Macdowall, Mr. Barclay's of Capelrig, and others of the neighbourhood.

TO HIS MOTHER.

July 19, 1749.

DEAR MADAM,—I have your two letters before me and by them I perceive myself much in your debt. 'Tis only an addition to the large account that stands against me, and I'm afraid will for ever stand, for there always has been and is likely to be, a vast advantage on your side. There's one article favours me, which is, that the pleasure you feel when you do good offices almost pays the doing, and if I am not quite as grateful as I should be, it will never be in my power to prevent your inclination. The worst on my side will only vary the object, the act is still the same, and the better for being well appointed.

I have already explained the reason of my former wishes about going to England, so, for this summer, my hopes are vanished. In the winter Lord G. Sackville offers to get me leave for three months and was so kind to propose it himself. I have not consented even to his asking; it shall be as my father pleases and as he thinks it more or less for my advantage. Lord George talks of the necessity of keeping up my present acquaintance amongst the heads of our trade and procuring new ones that may be of use. I have no turn that way. If I'm really wanted 'tis well to be prepared. I have not a mean opinion of my friends. My expectations from them are not great enough to be troublesome, and I don't think they'll forget in one year those that have been honoured with their friendship for five or six. My father will see what is to be done. I have a real dependence on him and can confide in his advice; when he thinks fit to call me to him, I'm ready to come.

It is not easy to describe myself in my present state. If I say I'm thinner, you'll imagine me a shadow, or a skeleton in motion. In short I'm everything but what the surgeons call a subject for anatomy; as far as muscles, bones, and the larger vessels can serve their purpose, they have a clear view of them in me, distinct from fat or fleshy impediment.

It is great grief to me that your god-child¹ is not in the right way. She should see more of the world, and then common objects would not strike so forcibly. I wish her well for the

¹ Miss Streton.

friendship that has for so long subsisted between the two families and because her well-being will be a great satisfaction to her good parents.

My Maid of Honour (for I think she should somehow or other be distinguished) you say was not of the party you met, nor do I believe, had she been there, that you would have thought ill of her companions. Such superiority has virtue and good sense over their opposites. It is the greatest mistake to place a young woman of any condition in that office; 'tis but the genteeler way to wickedness, and in truth, with submission to General Mordaunt's notions, his niece need not be for ever in public to be taken notice of, admired and married.

If Mr. Swinden desires it, I will write to him, but he often hears by you, and cannot doubt of my esteem for him. Writing to men of business about trifles is stealing so much necessary time from them.

I reckon myself the General's pensioner from the 1st July 1749. Your letter is of the 30th June. Every three months is most convenient for me. Do you know if he pays as he receives in advance, or do we buy in in October?

I'm surprised to hear you complain of heat. We suffer no inconvenience from it in this country. On the contrary, it has been so excessive cold both yesterday and to-day, that I am now before a large fire, and cannot well stay in my room without it.

I am just now going to write to the famous Barbour for a gun; the game here is a temptation to shoot and this sort of exercise, moderately used, is wholesome enough. Mr. Fisher¹ pays the armourer as he has already done the sadler. My duty to my Father.

I am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate Son,

J. WOLFE.

Glasgow, *July 19th*, 1749.

I blush to think what difficulties you'll have to read my letter.

The arrival of the Colonel of the Regiment relieved Wolfe of his duties as commander. Lord George Sackville, take him all in all, is one of the greatest enigmas of eighteenth-century history. "He had," says Wraxall, "a frame of body naturally robust, and a vigorous constitution secured him almost uninterrupted health.

¹ The army agent.

In his person, which rose to near six feet, he was muscular and capable of enduring much bodily as well as mental fatigue. Though his features were strongly pronounced and saturnine, yet considered together as a whole their effect by no means displeased. An air of high birth and dignity, illuminated by strong sense, pervaded every lineament of his face." He was while on first acquaintance proudly reserved, yet "no man in private society unbent himself more or manifested less self-importance." The Duchess of Dorset, his mother, had been Maid of Honour to Queen Anne, and his father, the Duke, remembered William III. On the whole, Lord George, as his panegyrist avers, owed more to nature than cultivation, although given a good education in the college at Dublin. How he arose from the terrible infamy of Minden to place and power a second time, surviving serenely a second disgrace, is an unparalleled story belonging to the next reign.

To Wolfe Sackville was kindness itself. He saw that the major's health had suffered by the northern climate, as well as by his occupations. The weather that summer had been unusually cold and wet, so that there were few days, even in July, when he could dispense with a fire in his bedroom. Lord George proposed, however, that Wolfe should remain in Glasgow until winter, and then have three months' leave, which he could not better employ, in the Colonel's opinion, than in keeping up acquaintance with "the heads of our trade." Wire-pulling and personal importunities were very important factors in an officer's advancement in those days.

To HIS FATHER.

Glasgow, 2nd August, 1749.

DEAR SIR,—You do for me every day much more than I can justly think myself entitled to, though by your care and anxiety I ought to entertain favourable notions of myself and increase in proportion to your bounty and liberality, the natural opinion each man has of some merit in him; whenever I find you engag'd for me either in the business of advance or otherwise, I cannot but applaud myself for being the object of so many good intentions as I have always observed you very fastidious in the distribution of your favours. I had writ to my mother to tell her that she is too kind to be easily forgot and that it is not in my power (if I was wholly made up of ingratitude) to remove from my mind the reflection, at least of the many instances she



LORD GEORGE SACKVILLE

From the portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds

has given of her affection. I can't promise to repay her in any shape, for I can't foresee the possibility; but the recollection must remain with me as long as I have the faculty of thinking. If *Ld. G. Sackville's* father is again Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, you'll see our colonel a very considerable man in that country; we are to lose him without the hopes of finding his equal.

It is almost sure that we will have *Hamilton's Dragoons*, and unless *Col. Conway*¹ falls to our share among the many that solicit, none will be found that can in any manner make amends for the loss of him. I have seen a letter this day which very nearly confirms his success to him and our unhappiness in that success, not but in justice we should rejoice at any good that befalls him, but that excellency is not found in our natures, and as sufferers, we complain. For my particular, I may expect his assistance whether he is with the Regiment or not; he has given me such strong marks of esteem, that there can be little doubt. He goes to Ireland in 14 days without any thought of returning into this country, for some years.

My shirts are come and fit me every way except that the ruffles make me a greater beau than I desire to be in this part of the world. I'm almost out of conceit with Scotland; the season has been so unusually bad that it has been a summer lost to us. Such rains and winds as you might expect where you are in the month of November. I had very near relapsed for want of sun, and it is more or less cloudy every day. I am neither better nor worse in health.

I heartily wish you both well and am, dear Sir, Your Most obedient and affectionate Son,

J. WOLFE.

My duty to my Mother.

Eleven days later he wrote to his mother. The summer of 1749 would appear to have been a disastrous one in the north.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Glasgow, 13 August, 1749.

DEAR MADAM,—Any disorder that we have been accustomed to for any length of time, tho' not to be perfectly cured, often admits of some alleviation from our acquaintance with it and

¹ Conway, the friend of Walpole and afterwards Field Marshal, had just been made Colonel of the 29th Foot.

the remedies presented; but the uncommon manner in which yours has seized you makes me very apprehensive that the complaint is quite new and deserves your utmost attention.¹

The elements seemed to have conspired against the face of the earth, first by the destruction of every kind of fruit, and now by endangering the harvest. There is not in the country a field of any sort of corn cut down. If the hand of the Lord be not upon them, they are in a terrible latitude.

This is Sunday, and we are just come from Church. I have observed your instructions so religiously, that rather than avoid the word, I got the reputation of a very good Presbyterian, by frequenting the Kirk of Scotland till our chaplain appeared. I'm now come back to the old faith, and stick close to our communion. The example is so necessary, that I think it a duty to comply were that the only reason, as, in truth, it is not.

To-morrow Lord George Sackville goes away, and I take upon me the difficult and troublesome employment of a commander. You can't conceive how difficult a thing it is to keep the passions within bounds, when authority and immaturity go together; to endeavour at a character that has every opposition from within, and that the very condition of the blood is a sufficient obstacle to. Fancy you see me, that must do justice to good and bad; reward and punish with an equal unbiassed hand; one that is to reconcile the severity of discipline with the dictates of humanity; one that must study the tempers and dispositions of many men, in order to make their situation easy and agreeable to them, and should endeavour to oblige all without partiality, a mark set up for everybody to observe and judge of; and last of all, suppose me employed in discouraging vice and recommending the reverse at the turbulent age of twenty-three, when it is possible I may have as great a propensity that way as any of the men that I converse with!

My duty to my father.

I am, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

At last the weather improved: and so had Wolfe's learning, so that he promises himself some recreation.

¹ What an age of ailments, ignorance, quacks, and nostrums it was! Mrs. Wolfe had sciatica, which as time went on became acute. In the mean time she was treated for several diseases.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Glasgow, 8th September, 1749.

DEAR MADAM,—I don't know how the mathematics may assist the judgment, but they have a great tendency to make men dull. I, who am far from being sprightly even in my gaiety, am the very reverse of it at this time. I'm heavier in discourse, longer at a letter, less quick at apprehension, and carry all the appearances of stupidity to so great a height, that in a little time they won't be known from the reality; and all this to find out the use and property of a crooked line, which, when discovered serves me no more than a straight one, does not make me a joy more useful or more entertaining, but, on the contrary, adds to the weight that nature has laid upon the brain, and blunts the organs.

I have been writing congratulatory letters to General Mordaunt and Colonel Rich; they are both quick-sighted men; I wish they don't pass censure upon my labours, and criticize my style of writ (as 'tis termed here); but I could not deny myself the pleasure of assuring the General how glad I was of his success, and the Colonel that he had the fairest title to the gift, large as it is.¹

I have got a gun from Mr. Barbour; now I propose to amuse myself a little in that way, and in a few weeks I shall hunt. The regiment keeps hounds, and my horses are pretty good.

I forgot in my last to speak of Captain Flight; I know him quite well, and can assure those that inquire after him that there is nowhere a man of a better disposition. He is greatly esteemed among us, and by all his acquaintance; 'twas the highest injustice of me not to mention him before, as I could not in truth say anything that was not to his advantage. My duty to my father. I am,

My dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

A Lieutenant-Coloneley was now in sight. Cornwallis not returning to the regiment, Wolfe writes to his father—

18th September, 1749.

DEAR SIR,—Lord Tyrawley said humorously, being asked if the King spoke to him, and how he received his lordship, that

¹ Mordaunt had been appointed to the 10th Dragoons, and Rich succeeded Barrell as Colonel of the Fourth.

“few words are best among friends.” The Duke has not kept you in suspense, from whence we may conclude—according to Lord Tyrawley—that our affairs are well there. I hope his Royal Highness will make such a choice as must oblige us to own his justice. If he is an older officer, it is to be supposed he is a better, and then there can be no complaints on our side. I have attained to such a height of indifference and diffidence together, that a denial sits very easy upon me. Frequent refusals might in time alienate my affections from the service, especially if many years are wasted in exile, with no very entertaining objects to employ the thoughts upon.

The harvest throughout all the west of Scotland is utterly destroyed by the great rains that have fallen. They have a sad prospect for the winter, neither meal nor seed; this destruction must bring a great dearth and the want will occasion vast riot and confusion particularly in this city.

Arthur’s¹ greatest suffering at Gibraltar seems to be the want of claret. I hope I have hit upon a method to send them some supply.

I cannot make an end of my letter without assuring you that the want of success in anything you undertake for me will never lessen the obligation and that one great reason why I would wish better fortune is that I am persuaded you take so large a part in what concerns me that my prosperity would give you pleasure and anything that can increase your satisfaction here will add greatly to mine. My love to my mother. I am, dear Sir, etc.

J. WOLFE.

We can see in his letters at this time the ardent, aspiring young Major eating his heart out in Scotland.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Glasgow, 2nd October, 1749.

DEAR MADAM,—It will not be possible in my circumstances to get leave of absence for four months; we can expect no such indulgence. A less time is not worth asking for, and therefore I’ll pass the winter at Perth. I must hunt and shoot for exercise, and read for entertainment. After Christmas, when the company comes into Edinburgh, and the place is in all its

¹ Loftus.

perfection of dirt and gaiety, I'll repair thither, and stay a fortnight or three weeks. It will help to dispel melancholy, and I have been told that a certain smell is a remedy for the vapours; there I can't fail to meet the cure.

This day fortnight we leave this town, and till we return to it cannot hope to find so good quarters. According to the rotation of the troops in Scotland, the sixth year brings us back: but 'tis a dreadful interval, a little life to a military man; and for my particular, so far from being in love with the country, that I'd go to the Rhine, or Italy, nay, serve a campaign against the Turks, rather than continue in it the time I have mentioned, and that, too, in the very blooming season of our days. It is my misfortune to miss the improving hour, and to degenerate instead of brightening.

Few of my companions surpass me in common knowledge, but most of them in vice. This is a truth that I should blush to relate to one that had not all my confidence, lest it be thought to proceed either from insolence or vanity: but I think you don't understand it so. I dread their habits and behaviour, and forced to an eternal watch upon myself, that I may avoid the very manner which I most condemn in them. Young men should have some object constantly in their aim, some shining character to direct them. 'Tis a disadvantage to be first at an imperfect age; either we become enamoured with ourselves, seeing nothing superior, or fall into the degree of our associates.¹

I'll stop here that you might not think me very uneasy. As I now am, it is possible that I may be better pleased, but my duty and a natural indolence of temper make it less irksome; and then a pretty constant employment helps to get me through, and secures me from excess of debauch. That, too, is enough prevented by the office of a commander. My duty to my father.

I am,

Your obedient and affectionate Son,

J. WOLFE.

Mrs. Hooker's² is a terrible disorder. I know nothing that can alleviate her affliction but kindness and assiduity from her friends. I'm sure she may expect everything of that kind from you.

¹ "Our acting commander here is a Paragon. He neither drinks, curses, gambles, nor runs after women. So we make him our pattern." Letter from Captain Macrae, Glasgow, November 16, 1749.

² His mother's neighbour at Greenwich.

Wolfe had enjoyed no holiday all that year. He left Glasgow with regret, and on October 16 began the march to Perth. On the arrival of the 20th Regiment at Perth they learnt that his friend, Lord Bury, the same who had carried the tidings of Culloden to London, had been appointed colonel. He soon had letters from Lord Bury regarding the regiment which demanded careful attention. But his replies have apparently not been preserved.¹

TO HIS MOTHER.

Perth, 15 December, 1749.

DEAR MADAM,—You give the best reason in the world for continuing in the country so late as you did. Wherever my father and you have your health best, there I would wish you most, and as Greenwich seems to agree with both, the best thing you can do is to make it more agreeable by changing from a bad house, to a good one, from a low situation to a high one, and as near the park as possible. Do not be in any pain about me. When I am well all places will produce something to entertain, and when otherwise, it matters little where one is, the less trouble to our friends the better. You need not hurry yourselves about military promotions, for I take them to be at an entire stand for some time. When these things were to be had, I got my share, and (my necessary confinements excepted) have reason to be well enough satisfied with what has happened.

I am mighty glad Mrs. Hoskins' disorder does not turn out so dangerous as was apprehended. Her sweetness of temper and social disposition makes her too valuable not to fear her loss. The Duke of Montagu's death will be of advantage to the young lady,² since his conversation (in your opinion) was not fitted for her tender ear. There is one kind of converse and discourse with the men that is of great service to the other sex, and another as injurious, but it would take too much time to distinguish the two. However, it obliges me to observe to you that the women in this country partake very much of society with men, and by that means, gain a certain freedom of behaviour, uncommon in England, but which is nevertheless of great use to preserve them from the bad consequences of sudden surprise or novelty, and is a real protection to their virtue, though at times one would imagine that their easiness in some particulars lead

¹ I have made inquiries of the Keppel family, but without result.

² Miss Lawson.

directly to the contrary.¹ 'Tis a usual thing for the matrons to sit at table with the men till very late and concur in everything but the actual debauchery, and as the men warm at wine, they speak openly enough to give offence with us.

This fresh disappointment in love has changed my natural disposition to such a degree, that I believe it is now possible I might prevail upon myself not to refuse twenty or thirty thousand pounds, if properly offered! Rage and despair do not commonly produce such reasonable effects; nor are they the instruments to make a man's fortune by but in particular cases.

We have had the finest autumn season imaginable; it has made us some amends for the bad summer. The month of November, so fatal to our countrymen, far surpassed anything that could be expected.

You won't want diversion in London, if you will only think that it is of use to partake of them. The great secret of happiness in life is to employ every moment of our time, which can only be done with the help of great variety. My duty to the General.

I am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAMES WOLFE.

Very different was Wolfe's Christmas at Perth to that of the previous year in Old Burlington Street. The new year was already under way when he next writes to his mother. In this letter the reference to the young lady of Croydon deserves a word of explanation. It has already been seen that her son's attachment to Miss Lawson was by no means approved of by Mrs. Wolfe, and her objection she prudently based on the grounds of inadequate fortune. She and the General had other views for their son. They had "an eye upon a fortune of £30,000." The accompaniment of this very useful dowry was Miss Hoskins of Croydon.

To HIS MOTHER.

Perth, *January 16th*, 1749.

DEAR MADAM,—Since Lord George Sackville left the regiment I have changed my way of life. When we were at Glasgow together, I had taken that opportunity to acquire a few

¹ This observation has since frequently been made by observers of American life and manners.

things that I was before ignorant of, and in which I might expect assistance from some of the people in the College. I was even so far engaged that I did not give up such a share of time and attention as was due to his Lordship: now all that is vanished, and I am entirely at leisure to prosecute such entertainments as I find of use to my health, and agreeable to my taste; and, as the latter is generally subservient to the first, I have improved and strengthened my constitution beyond what I have hitherto known.

Your letter confirmed some unsteady thought I had had of providing a little coarse linen; and I made the purchase the day after I received it. Seven shirts at three shilling a yard will be durable wear. Yes, I shall be very rich whenever we meet: I have the talent for heaping up wealth; and the temptation must be very great when I am persuaded to part with it. My Lieutenant Partridge came by here a few days since, and delivered Miss Hoskins's compliments. He is her neighbour at Croydon: he tells me he thinks her a complete woman, and advises me (as a friend) to make up to her. This is his counsel, and the manner in which he offered it. But he did not know Miss Lawson, he confessed *that*. I thank you for remembering my birthday. I had almost forgot it myself, and was in dispute about my own age, whether twenty-three or twenty-four. I believe the former. My duty to my Father. I am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

To MRS. WOLFE,

in Old Burlington Street, London.

One more than ever regrets the loss of the Wolfe-Bury correspondence after reading the first paragraph of the next letter because of the light it would shed on Highland affairs in the middle of the century.

To HIS FATHER.

Perth, *January 31, 1750.*

DEAR SIR,—My Colonel [Lord Bury] and I have a very exact correspondence. He is extremely bent upon procuring all the knowledge of regimental affairs that the distance between us will allow of; in order, I suppose, to make such alterations and amendments as seem requisite, and to be the better prepared against he comes amongst us. I answer his letters very

punctually, and endeavour all in my power to satisfy him in such particulars as are properly within my sphere ; confining, however, my judgement of men and things to what is purely military, and belonging to my office. He can give you weekly intelligence as far as the assurance of a letter can go, whenever you are so good as to make enquiry after me.

I have heard very lately from Gibraltar : both my friends, Loftus and Donnellan, seem to detest their situation, and are a little displeas'd with their Governor. They complain (particularly Donnellan) of being too strictly confin'd and of too much duty. These are real grievances at the end of seven campaigns, when men very naturally desire some respite from the fatigue of a soldier's life ; especially as they see almost all their brethren in ease and quiet. I am afraid General Bland is not quite so well-bred and so polite as might be wish'd ; he has a roughness about him that breaks out sometimes into ill-manners, when he is in any authority ; though Sir J. Whiteford's personal merit or ability is not of the most eminent kind, and although there is another objection in some opinions to his success ; I can't help being pleas'd that the King has taken the first opportunity to give the officers of that regiment a mark of his favour ; as the corps in general do deserve well of their country, having given notable proofs of courage and fidelity throughout the war.

I am glad that my cousin Goldsmith has at last got a company, I suppose it is so, and I daresay he is oblig'd to you for some assistance or if you have not done him service, I am sure there was no want of inclination in you to do it. All your relations will, I am persuas'd agree, that, if they have deserv'd well of you, they have not found you backward. I wish you both much health and am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

To LIEUT. GEN. WOLFE,
Old Burlington St.

From the foregoing letter it will be inferr'd that old General Wolfe had some influence at head-quarters and was very benevolent towards his Irish relations. Captain Edward Goldsmith, of the 31st (Otway's Regiment), was about Wolfe's age, a first cousin of Oliver Goldsmith the poet, and a godson of old General Wolfe.

It was not to be supposed that with his disposition Wolfe would yield up his fair charmer without a struggle. Filial piety was one

thing, and some youths now-a-days might think Wolfe carried it to an extravagant extent, but constancy to his mistress was another. Mrs. Wolfe having forbidden her son even to think of an alliance with Miss Lawson, seems to have regarded the affair as settled. She even ventured to say that she had seen the lady, who she averred was certainly about to be married to somebody else.

To HIS MOTHER.

6th February, 1750.

DEAR MADAM,—If I have at any time omitted writing it has never been either to avert it as a trouble or an intentional neglect of the two people in the world that I have the greatest love and regard for, and the highest confidence in, but, I believe, the want of something new may have stretched the interval a little longer than it ought to be. We are here so totally barren of everything that is amusing to ourselves or capable of diverting others, that we are actually almost at a loss for ideas. However, if you can be satisfied with a line or two I have no sort of excuse left.

I believe you'll do me the justice to own that a gentle admonition from you has all the effect of the severest rebuke. I have as great a desire to make a return for your tenderness and friendship as I have to pay reverence to your parental authority. In short, I have a lasting remembrance of what I owe you both in duty and gratitude and am always concerned when you have any reason to think me forgetful.

Your opinion of Miss Lawson has inflamed me anew, and you have exactly hit upon that part of her perfection (her behaviour) that worked the strongest upon me; for I have seen a hundred handsome women before, and never was in love with one. How could you tell me that you liked her, and at the same time say her illness prevents her wedding? I don't think you believe she ever touched me at all, or you could never speak with so much indifference of her ill-health and marriage,—the only things in relation to that lady that could give me the least uneasiness, except that I thought you were adverse to her; and even that you have taken care to clear up by your approbation of her manners and person, and by that means have left me absolutely destitute of relief.

I think I told you in one of my letters that Roland¹ was ill.

¹ His old servant.

He has been in so terrible a condition for four months that I have hardly had any service from him. At length we thought it would be better to get him into Chelsea, which I have endeavoured to do to the utmost of my power. I did not mention it to my father, as I knew he does not love to be troubled with these sort of things; nor did I tell Roland to wait upon you, concluding he would do that of course. But I perceive the poor fellow's modesty is greater than . . . Captain Wilson has undertaken to do his business, and he will tell you where the honest old servant is to be found. 'Twas death to me to part with him. It has made me vastly inconvenienced though accidentally I hired a tolerable English groom who does pretty well.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,
J. WOLFE.

The good lady, Wolfe's mother, finding that her own authority was not sufficient to dismiss all thoughts of Miss Lawson from his mind, brought the General's weight to bear on the business. The old veteran though at heart a doting father wielded a blunt and heavy pen. He was no such suave and persuasive letter-writer as his next-door neighbour at Blackheath, the Earl of Chesterfield. "Enough of this philandering," "this obstinacy and perseverance in error," were phrases which he probably calculated would make the parental meaning clear.

TO HIS FATHER.

Perth, *Feb. 19th*, 1750.

DEAR SIR,—Though I have frequently given you occasion to blame either my neglects or levity, I am not however conscious of ever having intended to give you any uneasiness by obstinacy, or perseverance in an error; the high opinion I have all along entertained of your just sense of things, has always forced me to a proper submission to your will, and obliges me to acknowledge those actions to be actually wrong, when you think them so. Besides, I am so convinced of your sincerity and secure of your friendship that your advice cannot fail of its due weight, nor could I without the highest presumption differ from your sentiments in any of the concerns of life. As what I have said is the exact truth, I mention it by way of making a distinction between that part of my behaviour that is guided by reflection, and such steps as are the consequence of youth and inexperience,

or, that have no rule to go by and are the pure effects of chance ; but the main reason is to induce you not to look upon any slight omission, or inadvertancy as done with design to offend or displease ; so far am I from any such intention, that my greatest satisfaction is the means of contributing in some measure to your happiness.

Lord Bury promises to be with us in a month, by that time the hunting or shooting season will be over, and we shall have little else to do than to march and wheel. My duty to my mother.

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

To LIEUT. GEN. WOLFE,
Old Burlington Street.

He still attempts to propitiate both parents for his presumption in continuing in love.

To HIS MOTHER.

Perth, *March 9, 1750.*

DEAR MADAM,—I hope your long silence does not proceed from the continuance of your indisposition, I had rather it should have any other cause, though ever so unpleasant to myself ; I desire you to think that I have undergone sufficient punishment, and judge, by the pleasure it gives me to hear from you. I'm sure you would not wish that the penalty should exceed the crime.

Because it is probable that old Roland has before now thought of his duty and has been to pay his humble respects to you, perhaps some of your servants may know where the enclosed letter can reach him. I have therefore taken the freedom to put it within this frank, as the readiest and least expensive conveyance. He writes me for two suits of clothing, which he cannot but know are with the company ; my old Lieutenant promised to deliver them whenever they are called for, or send them by some favourable opportunity to London. People of Roland's stamp have their views so extremely narrow and are withal so very diffident, that they can hardly bring themselves to think there is common honesty in man. 'Tis, I suppose, because they meet with so much roguery amongst one another.

There are in the neighbourhood of this place, some fine anti-scorbutic waters; I will try whether they won't be of use to remove a complaint in me; you may remember I have an irruption upon both hands in the summer, which I take to be the scurvy.

If as we are told the two battalions are preparing to relieve part of the Mediterranean, my friends¹ in the King's Regiment will be very fortunate and very happy; their having been at Gibraltar must recommend these more moderate climates; and make them truly sensible of sweet variety and liberty. My duty to my father.

I am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

Naturally he was most anxious about his long-awaited lieutenant-colonelcy.

To HIS FATHER.

Perth, 23 *March*, 1750.

DEAR SIR,—The words of Lord Bury's two last letters seem calculated to make me imagine his lordship wishes me success, at the same time that they express his difference of it. I am not able to extract enough of his real opinion, to determine whether I am, or am not, to be his Lieutenant-Colonel. He says indeed, that the Duke is our friend, but does not affirm that he won't be prevailed upon, to give up this point. Lord George Sackville sent me the first information of the vacancy with the strongest assurances of his aid and service. As I know he is very sincere, I rely chiefly upon him. Whichever way the business turns, I shall be glad to know from you who the persons are that seem the most to concern themselves in it; that I may thank them for their endeavours whether they succeed or not.

I attribute my not having heard from you these three last posts to your earnest desire of sending such an account as I may depend upon, knowing what an enemy you are to the uneasy state of uncertainty and how backward to increase our doubts. I beg my duty to my mother and am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

¹ Loftus and Donnellan.

PS.—There has been nothing uncommon felt in the North, nor more shocking than usual.

This postscript refers to the London earthquakes of 1750. Even as he penned the next letter the news of his appointment arrived.

To HIS MOTHER.

Perth, *March 29th*, 1750.

DEAR MADAM,—'Tis a vast accession to my successes in life that it never fails to give my father and you as much satisfaction as I myself am capable of receiving. That I have the happiness to be so far in your esteem and opinion as firmly to unite our interests I cannot doubt, especially as every day I see both in greater anxiety for what regards me alone, than for the highest of your own concerns. This is what increases and improves my good fortune, by making you partakers of it. The post tomorrow will bring me some positive account. As yet, Lord Bury has only said that the King has consented to the Duke's recommendation. Former examples have taught me not to think the business done till I'm sure of it. The Duke himself has been sometimes disappointed when he has thought every obstacle removed.

If the cause of the earthquakes are natural (which I suppose they are), and to be accounted for, they are in the right who remove at a distance from the danger. There may be more moisture in some parts of the island than in others, and consequently less to be feared in those parts. Though these shocks are very unusual in England, and of course very terrible, I don't hear of much mischief following. It is to be hoped it will have a good effect. Most people imagine these tremblings supernatural, and such consciences as are under the heaviest loads of iniquity will tremble in proportion to that weight, and to the convulsions of the earth.

I left my letter open till the post came in. Everything is confirmed without possibility of repeal. I'm very sensible of the greatness of the favour done me, and receive it with tolerable humility. This you would have a further proof of had you been by when the first advice came. I try to prevent its working too strongly upon me, that I may not disappoint the givers and those that rejoice.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

At twenty-three, therefore, our hero found himself a Lieutenant-Colonel, a rank his father held at twice his age, and to which neither his grandfather nor his great-grandfather, though sterling soldiers, had attained in the army. Yet none who knew him grudged him this success, to celebrate which the officers of the 20th gave a dinner, for which their "paragon" modestly returned his thanks and was a greater favourite with the regiment than ever.

VII

THE UNHAPPY LOVER

THERE is little doubt Wolfe owed his Lieutenant-Colonelcy directly to the recommendation of Lord George Sackville, who was then on intimate terms with the Duke of Cumberland, Commander-in-Chief. But when so many persons of influence had perceived his merit and urged his claims, promotion could not have been long delayed.

To HIS FATHER.

Perth, 6th April, 1750.

DEAR SIR,—The Duke's behaviour to you in the business of my promotion was right noble. As he made you very happy in the main point, your concession to my mother, by satisfying the desire she had of sending me the earliest intelligence, was in imitation of the example given us by that Prince,—that we are not only to enjoy the good that has fallen to us, but make other people partakers of it.

The Duke has employed his power and influence upon this occasion where, at least, it is sure to be remembered. There are not many opportunities in life, and the prospect, as things stand at present, very distant; but if ever he commands the army of this nation in its defence, I shall wish to be with him, and glad to contribute something to his success. This is the only return that can justly be made from me to him, and all, I believe, he would expect. I think myself much obliged to Lord George Sackville, and have writ him the strongest assurances of it. What he said some time ago to his Royal Highness left, no doubt, a favourable impression, and forwarded this succession. I did not forget to tell Colonel Napier¹ that some thanks are certainly due to him. The last three years of the war I was immediately about his person, and without his friendship and approbation things could not have gone on so smoothly.

From a great deal of little trifling business I have fallen into a state of inactivity. If it were possible, while I am capable of improvement, and young enough to apply, I could wish to be

¹ William, Sixth Lord Napier.

allowed an interval to be bestowed upon myself; a year and a half or two years, would wear off the rough, unpolished coat, and give a gloss to all my future actions. It may be reasonably said that I have not for seven years past been at liberty to acquire the common accomplishments, much less to embellish or refine. I'm persuaded you would have thought it necessary, had not the war prevented your intentions, to have sent me from England to some place proper for the purpose. I hope you still think it not too late, and this the fairest opportunity. Turin seems the best calculated to answer my ends. I shall be glad to have your opinion, and to know whether you approve my choice and inclination, and what steps should be taken for effecting it.

I have the pleasure of being known to Captain Wilkinson. He is a man of uncommon good character. I shall take particular care to show him all the civility in my power. It is always a very unfeigned grief to me when you labour under any affliction, but I am pleased to see that you expect some relief from the purer air. Let me only desire you use all the advantages of your situation to procure health. My duty to my mother.

I am, dear Sir, etc.

This was followed the same month by a further letter, in which we find a reference to Jeffrey Amherst, his future chief in America.

To HIS FATHER.

Perth, 27th April, 1750.

DEAR SIR,—Tho' I did not answer your letter immediately, 'twas not because I had not complied with your request, for by the return of that same post I writ a letter to Amherst and said everything that I thought could engage him to use his influence with Sir John Ligonier, and from my knowledge of him do not in the least doubt but he'll do his part to help forward Mrs. Scott's in so interesting a point as that of a provision for her son. I took great care to distinguish that the application was from me to him, and not from you to the General, because I perceive you don't desire to stand obliged to him, as if you did, you are undoubtedly the properest person to address one of Sir John's character and dignity. If I myself had any right to ask a favour of General Ligonier, I should have done it some time ago (in a like case) for a young gentleman of a good race,

near Glasgow, who has in all shapes far superior pretensions to Mr. Scott, at least I imagine so. My Colonel L. Bury I find does not at all care that I should be absent for any considerable time, and so far from consenting to my going abroad he thinks it quite right that I should continue in Scotland till the beginning of November; tho' this is by no means correspondent with my way of thinking. I am forced to submit, having really no choice. I can ask nothing of the Duke but by his will he ask a favour of another, that himself would refuse, so that I must lay aside the thought of any improvement of this kind, which, to speak the truth, I am already almost too old for. I am, nevertheless, still determined to employ some few years of my life in the real business of an officer, and not sacrifice all my time to idling, as our trifling soldierships. Some of the nations of Europe will soon give me an opportunity to put this resolution in practice.

Admiral Boscawen's return brings back my friend Brett. I will write him my sentiments upon his arrival in a few days and recommend them to my mother's care. I wish you both much health and peace, and am,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate Son,

JAMES WOLFE.

I have this day answered a letter from my uncle Wolfe. He says he has writ to you about my journey to Turin. He certainly means well; but I know it to be unnecessary and superfluous. What is to be done for my advantage you were never backward to comply with, nor need you any second application when the first appears reasonable, of which nobody will dispute your right of judging.

Whether or no Wolfe was to go abroad he would certainly not go for the present.

To HIS MOTHER.

Perth, 3rd May, 1750.

DEAR MADAM,—As I told my father in my last letter to him that my stay here for some months longer is determined, I have only to add that I regret the impossibility of any improvement in the way I proposed which you both so readily and cheerfully consented to, and am not a little concerned that it is

not in my power to pass some part of the next summer at Greenwich, where I might expect as much happiness as the conversation of my best friends and so delightful a spot could procure me. Instead of this pleasing prospect my confinement is increased to six months more. By that time I shall be so heartily tired and in such a hurry to get to you that if I stop anywhere it will be at my Uncle Tin's, and entirely in obedience to your commands.

The goat whey is said to have all the virtues mentioned in your letter for correcting the bad juices. I shall make trial of its efficacy in the beginning of June, and may reasonably expect some relief, but nothing would do me so much good or agree so well with my constitution as the air of Kent. It blows nowhere clearer or purer than upon Shuter's Hill or in the Park.

My father's ill-health cannot but be a great concern to you, and is no less so to me. The obstinacy of the disorder seems to baffle advice or care. Nothing is so likely to assist him and alleviate the pains as your tenderness for him. I have only one thing to say, which is, that as my father has already made as competent a provision for us both as is necessary for our well-being, no future views for you or me can any longer be looked upon as sufficient reasons to debar him any enjoyment which it is possible to procure him in this life; so don't wait for me to take such resolutions as you think most agreeable to this inclination.

It gives me vast pleasure that Mr. Swinden is in so fair a way of obtaining the character of a father; his understanding and good temper fit him for the education of children, and Mrs. Swinden is herself so fine a woman that my friend has a right to expect proper objects for his care. I can't imagine anything imperfect can be produced from so complete a woman.

Miss Frances Thompson's marriage¹ is as pleasant a thing as I have heard of a good while past. I suppose the man's a philosopher and has taken her to try how much he can bear and what mankind with the assistance of reason and learning is

¹ Mrs. Wolfe's sister, Frances, married Stephen Abthorpe, D.D., Fellow of Eton, step-brother of William Cole. The latter speaks of his nieces Frances and Anne Abthorpe as first cousins to Wolfe. Mrs. Abthorpe died in 1755.—Wright. Mrs. Abthorpe was very eccentric and soon developed a fatal religious mania from hearing Whitefield preach.

capable of suffering. I hope, as a grammarian, he does not depend upon his rhetoric to keep her in good humour.

In duty to my father, etc.

The Captain Trapaud mentioned in the letter ensuing was afterwards to become the Governor of Fort Augustus and the host of Dr. Samuel Johnson.

To HIS FATHER.

Perth, 29 *May*, 1750.

DEAR SIR,—Though I can say little more to you than that I have no complaint, yet as you are so good to say it is agreeable to you to hear even that, I have no right to dispense with that prerogative, nor inclination to omit what you desire should be done. I am going into the country for a fortnight or three weeks, there I shall drink goat whey, rather to purify the blood from unclean food and irregular living, than as a remedy to any certain known distemper.

A month's easterly wind that has blasted almost every plant and tree, has not been able to make me shake, so I have reason to think there is no remains of an ague in me.

Lord Bury sets out tomorrow for Fort William. He goes through great part of the Highlands, visits and examines most of the fortresses, and new-made roads, (I suppose by order) stays away eighteen or twenty days, and three weeks after his return, flies to England. This regiment has undergone a surprising change in a few months. Trapaud, who waited upon you in September or October last, then the youngest captain, is now the second, or will be so in a very short time. The present vacancy by the death of a captain, we are told, is to go in the regiment, to the great satisfaction of the poor subalterns, who have been often overlooked. Colonel Rich is with his battalion at Fort William in health and great spirits; he does not leave Scotland till they change quarters, and are settled for the winter at Glasgow.

My duty, if you please, to my mother, I wish you all imaginable happiness and am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

His application on behalf of his mother's friend, Mrs. Scott, was not successful at that time.

To HIS MOTHER.

Perth, 31st May, 1750.

DEAR MADAM,—I send you Colonel Amherst's answer to me, that Mrs. Scott may see what is to be expected, and take her resolutions accordingly. I'm very well persuaded that Amherst has done his part, and I hope you will be convinced that I have not been wanting on mine. It was easy to foresee the answer; because nobody I believe, doubts but that H.R.H. disposes of all the employments in the Corps of Artillery, as much as if he was Grand Master, and as he has their well-being vastly at heart, he will take pains to place proper people to the vacancies that men of abilities may appear amongst them. This resolution of his, should not, I daresay, exclude the young gentleman in question, because, as Mrs. Scott is a lady of good sense, she will have prepared her son for the world, by the best education in her power to procure him; but the great difficulty is to convince the Duke of that and get his name enrolled in the book of preferment, though it should be even at the end of the list. As you were very desirous to bring about this affair to Mrs. Scott's satisfaction it gave me great concern to observe that all the sincerity and good inclinations of my friend Amherst could not effect it, and that I got no other return to my request than his wishes to serve us, expressed with much civility and good nature. Accidents have hindered us hitherto from going into the country, there seems no obstacle left now, and I intend to leave this place in two days, and on the third begin drink the goat whey. My duty to the General.

I am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

The old General had had information from one Captain Hindes, whom he met in London, that the 20th was to depart immediately. Wolfe explains that this was an error.

To HIS FATHER.

Perth, June 22, 1750.

DEAR SIR,—When Lord Bury went into the Highlands, I left Perth in order to drink the goat whey. His return has brought me back to the regiment much sooner than I should have come, had I considered my health only, but something is due to him in this country where the want of proper company

makes his stay here very unpleasant. The officers of the regiment are vastly dispersed; and he is sometimes at a loss for people to converse with. He expects leave to retire very soon, and certainly won't stay long after obtaining it.

I drank the whey and went into a cold bath fourteen days, in that time I found such an alteration for the better, that, if I had been at liberty to continue that way of life a month longer, I make no doubt but it would have been of considerable advantage. The march of two companies into Angus has perhaps made Mr. Hindes imagine that the whole battalion was to change their quarters, especially as Pulteney's moved early in the summer to Aberdeenshire, but it is not probable that we shall leave Perth before the middle of October. It will take the remainder of that month to clothe the men, and settle them in their new quarters, and that is what Lord Bury expects I should see done.

Hindes is lately made a Captain Lieutenant in the Artillery; he has risen from a low degree, by constant application and good behaviour. He has uncommon civility in his way, and I believe, many valuable qualities. His successor in the company died a few days after his arrival. I had information from a very safe hand, that it was your intention to make no distinction between the Major and Lt. Colonel in one particular. I proceeded upon those grounds, and have as appears by your letter conformed to your inclination, which in this and everything else I always find to be greatly in my favour. My duty to my mother.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

It will be remembered that Colonel Lafausille, now actual commander of Wolfe's regiment, was the officer who ravaged the country of the rebels after Culloden.

To HIS FATHER.

Perth, 15th July, 1750.

DEAR SIR,—You'll be perhaps surprised that Lord Bury should be refused leave to go to England; the King's absence is given as a reason for keeping as many officers as possible to their duty: and though he had got to Edinburgh in his way to Raby Castle a letter met him there that changed his route.

Everything in Scotland is in the most perfect calm and quiet. But late discoveries have made it very apparent that the tranquillity of this country is nohow so well secured as by a considerable armed body; and such a body is now so disposed throughout the whole Highlands that any attempt must be crushed in the beginning. The Highlanders are so narrowly watched that they are even forced to abandon their favourite practice of stealing cattle, and are either reduced to live honestly and industriously, or starve through excess of idleness.

Since I writ my last letter to you, I have been in a country where Colonel Lafausille's name is still dreadful in their ears, and where we have a detachment chiefly intended to prevent the officers of the Scotch regiments in the French service from recruiting. I went three days successively a-shooting in the hills from five in the morning till night. I never knew such fatigue. Some amends were made us by the quantity of game and elegance of the sport; but I, who am a very bad shot, had an equal share of the labour and less of the entertainment.

Some officers of other regiments are come to Scotland from Gibraltar. Most of them are very well pleased with the place and don't express any dislike to return there. Indeed they are Scotch, a set of men particularly in the esteem of the present governor (who was thought to be a good deal under that influence here). But it is not much to be wondered at that they are contented in any part of the world; for I'm sure their native lot is fallen in a barren ground.

I have not received a letter from my mother, I think, these six weeks. Your reasons for her not writing are very displeasing ones, as they convince me that she is rather worse even than you describe. 'Tis an unhappy distemper and the pain intolerable. She has my sincere and constant wishes for her welfare. I beg my duty to her and am, dear Sir,

J. WOLFE.

PS.—I have some thoughts of going this winter into Lorraine, to Metz, or Thionville, if you approve the notion. If I am to be absent from the regiment, I suppose it is the same thing to the Duke where I am, but to myself of vast importance. I want to be perfect in the French language. There is a fine academy of artillery and the business of an engineer at Metz. I shall be glad of your opinion, by which I shall always be

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regulated. A winter idly spent in London (and 'tis difficult not to spend it idly) would, at this time, be of sensible prejudice; perhaps infuse such notions and inclinations as are not to be got the better of.

Wolfe's scorbutic trouble grew more pronounced and he made valiant efforts to counteract it.

To HIS MOTHER.

Perth, 25th July, 1750.

DEAR MADAM,—I persuaded myself that this post would have brought me some news of your health, and such as I should have reason to be pleased with; I want to see it under your own hand, 'tis to me the most agreeable proof of your recovery, though one that I could wish never to stand in the need of. I don't think since my first leaving you there ever has been so long an interval of silence on your part, which I am afraid does but too manifestly imply your want of health, you are otherwise too good to refuse me a satisfaction that I have always justly reckoned amongst the greatest of my life. My former complaint, which is now pronounced and declared to be the scurvy, has broken out again with more violence than ever; so that necessarily some more violent remedy must be applied. I am a little surprised at this second appearance, as my way of living has been of late an example of regularity; I have never drank, and do upon all occasions abstain from strong food; and in general eat very moderately, so that there must have been in my constitution a strong propensity to that disorder; all mankind more or less have the seeds of it in their blood, and it discovers itself, I suppose, in proportion to the encouragement it meets with; though this seems to be contradicted in me; to remove all apprehensions on your side, I must acquaint you, that it never has or does, break out, anywhere but upon my hands, a part the least affected by most other distempers. I heartily wish you well and hope to hear soon that you are so.

I am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son

J. WOLFE.

Although a great deal of correspondence had passed between Lord Bury and his Lieutenant-Colonel in the Highlands, yet the former had not yet visited the regiment. Wolfe was snatching a



HENRIETTA WOLFE

From the portrait by Hulson at Squerries Court

brief holiday in the country when he had word that the new colonel was coming to Perth. He, therefore, returned to that city towards the end of June, and got the regiment into condition for inspection. Bury was a man of fashion, and by no means inclined to waste much time in such a God-forsaken spot as the Highlands. Three weeks sufficed for him to leave London, review his regiment, look in at Stirling, Perth and Fort Augustus, and return. He found, as he expected, that he had a good man to take the work off his hands, and was by no means inclined to listen sympathetically to Wolfe's cherished plan of a long furlough or one which could take place immediately. There was a great deal of regimental labour in getting the men properly equipped, and August and September and October wore away and found him still at Perth and its neighbourhood, dreaming of perfecting his military education at Metz or Thionville. As the summer wore on, however, Wolfe's health and spirits improved.

To HIS MOTHER.

Perth, 13th August, 1750.

DEAR MADAM,—Though your letter has in it some unpleasant particulars, the weak condition of your health is by far the more so. It is easy for us all to bear up against attacks of a lesser kind, but to be disabled and cut off by distemper from the enjoyment of life and common tranquillity is the heaviest of all calamities. For some years past we have begun a course of good fortune, preserved and protected where was most need, and, my brother's death excepted, free from affliction. We may make some allowance now, and, for my part, who am likely to be the greatest sufferer by any diminution of the stock, I can easily console myself for losses that way. All I desire is, that you two may meet with no disturbance to your own persons, but pass your days in health and peace. I heartily wish that these lighter accidents may not interrupt your felicity, which I would have fixed upon the firmest foundation.

It is extremely good in you to endeavour to set the business of the mortgage in a clear light, as the motive to that undertaking is of a generous nature. I am persuaded the sums will answer your expectation. If not we are only where we were; for it has long been thought desperate. It will be some satisfaction that we have not been wanting on our side to recover what the neglect of our pretended friends had thrown away.

I have but just returned from Lord Glenorchy's, where I

stayed a week. Lady Glenorchy is your acquaintance, and expresses a great regard for you. She says you have surprising luck at quadrille, and bid me tell you she wishes it may continue. The poor woman is in a state of banishment; she hates the country and dislikes the inhabitants. Her love to her husband, and immoderate fondness of her young son, are just enough to make her stay tolerable. They invited and entertained me with all imaginable civility.¹

George Warde made me a visit of four days. I could not help being astonished at the strength of his understanding which I never discovered so fully before. To that he has added a just and upright way of thinking very uncommon, and the strictest morals of any young man amongst my acquaintance; this last won't surprise you, because he was never reckoned vicious. He is extremely indifferent to preferment and high employment in the army, partly from his defect of speech, but principally from an easiness, or rather indolence, of temper that make him unfit to bear a heavy part in life.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

His next epistle is full of his French project.

TO HIS FATHER.

Perth, 1st September, 1750.

DEAR SIR,—I am glad to have your approbation in whatever I undertake, especially in those things that are most worth your consideration, and are of importance to myself. The assurances you give me of your assistance are kind and friendly. If the request be properly examined, there can be no objection to it; for I ask no more than an opportunity to be better acquainted with the duty of an officer, and to have it in my power to speak the French language correctly,—a language that is now in such general use. For idleness or amusement I need not go out of London, or at least not further than Paris; but as the business I am going upon will require all my labour and attention, I chuse to be at a distance from any temptation. If the Duke consents, it will be with regret; for the perfection of military knowledge, in his Royal Highness's eye, is the command of a regiment to men of our rank, and his notion of care and diligence

¹ Viscount Glenorchy, son of the third Earl of Breadalbane, resided at Balloch Castle, near Perth. His wife was Willielma, daughter of William Maxwell of Perth.

centres entirely in sticking eternally at the same point, viz. the battalion; though I could undertake to make it appear that nothing is more necessary towards doing one's part well than a little respite at convenient seasons.

Lord Bury, too, will with difficulty be brought to hearken to such a proposal. I intend to try him in a post or two, and ask ten months' leave at once. Though I have all the reasons in the world to be satisfied with his behaviour to me, yet there are many circumstances that foretell his opposition; but the manner in which he will express himself will leave me no room to be displeased even with a denial on his part, or rather he'll endeavour to satisfy me of his good intentions, and fix the refusal somewhere else.

I shall be cruelly disappointed if this fails, for my time of application will soon be over, and the sooner by the discouragement and mortification that follow the disappointment. If General Mordaunt is in town, I can write to him. He may say something upon the occasion that might be serviceable.

Donnellan complains bitterly of Gibraltar; he desires me to speak to you in favour of him, but as it is a regimental business, I shall be tender, though I heartily wish he could be indulged.

The letter you enclosed is quite unintelligible. Either the writer meant to be perfectly facetious, or the letter is not come to the proper person, for it is in a character that I am unacquainted with.¹

I beg my duty to my mother,

And am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

The Wolfes at Greenwich were now seeking for another house.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Perth, 23rd September, 1750.

DEAR MADAM,—I am a little later in answering your letter than I ought to be. The truth is, I have been at a gentleman's house in the country, where they would not allow me leisure even to do the most pleasing parts of my duty, and hindered me from writing to you. I'm sorry to hear that knavery has crept into your town, and to your very doors. These are interruptions and inconveniences in life that we are in England very much troubled with, and yet much more to be desired than the

¹ A missive from a lady, complaining of Colonel Wolfe's neglect of the sex.

murdering bloody genius of the other nations. The mildness of our laws does not enough discourage the practice of robbing, but in a great measure prevents the terrible effects of despair.

I hope Lady Vanbrugh will accept your offer, or if she does not, I hope you'll come up to her price. A good and healthy situation can't be purchased at too high a rate, and the Castle you speak of, if I remember right, is so situated.¹ I want to have you well fixed in a comfortable house in a wholesome air, and when you procure that for yourselves, you'll help me to a great share of tranquillity that I am unacquainted with, while there remains anything to be done that can furnish you with the means of happiness. I give you my word that though I have in myself a wandering and unsettled turn of mind, regardless of any fixed condition, and indifferent as to many of the great concerns of life, yet I am perfectly steady when I consider of your well-being, and earnestly bent upon seeing you in quiet possession of the few things that are necessary to satisfy your moderate desires. I am delighted to hear you say my father has been so well this summer. Am I never to eat figs with him in his own garden? How readily could I resign my military authority, and lay down my command, for the pleasure of walking with him upon the dry ground and gathering his fruit!

There's no fish in this part of the world but salmon; in the Orkneys and Shetlands there are various kinds, and well cured. I don't believe it will be difficult to get what you want, though I have not the best talents for those sort of things. In this I resemble a friend of yours most exactly. I wish there was as strong a resemblance in many other respects. I never give anything away that I intend for you, but I think the hood is hardly worth your acceptance. I believe my father did not get the skins I brought from Holland. I have sent to Norway for most elegant furs; enough for linings of all sorts.

My journey to London will be very short, if the Duke gives me leave to go abroad; if not, I move but slowly, and visit my uncle Tin and the rest. It matters little what season of the year I travel in, for I am absolutely as hard as flint, and can

¹ Vanbrugh Castle, Blackheath, built by the famous architect and dramatist. It was occupied by his widow, who survived him fifty years. She sold it eventually to Lord Tyravley, who, in turn, disposed of the property to Charles Brett, the Wolfes' friend at Greenwich.

bear all the extremes of heat and cold that are known in these climates with great ease.

My duty, etc.,
J. WOLFE.

I regret Mrs. Cade's misfortune.¹

At the beginning of October the regiment assembled at Dundee for the purposes of being equipped with clothing, etc., and for the next four or five weeks Wolfe had his hands full. Yet he found time for a long letter to Rickson.

TO CAPTAIN RICKSON.

Dundee, *October, 1750.*

DEAR RICKSON,—You were embarked long before I thought you ready for your expedition (to Nova Scotia) and sailed before I could imagine you on board. I intended to have bid you farewell, and sent my good wishes to attend you. Indeed, I was not without hopes of hearing from my friend before he went off; for upon such changes he seldom forgot to make me acquainted with his destination. I am not entirely indifferent as to what befalls you, and should have been glad to know how such an undertaking as this is, agreed with your way of thinking; and whether, after a good deal of service you would not rather have sat down in peace and rest; or if your active spirit prompts you to enterprise, and pushes you to pursuits new and uncommon; whether this, (the expedition) certainly great in its nature, suits your inclination. Since I cannot be clearly informed of these matters till I hear from you I shall content myself with entertaining some conjectures that are favourable to your interests. You are happy in a governor; and he'll be happy to have one near him that can be so serviceable to him as you have it in your power to be. I dare say you are on good terms together, and mutual aid will confirm your former friendship. He will require from you industry and assiduity; and in return you may expect his confidence and trust. I look upon his situation as requiring one of his very way of thinking, before all things else: for to settle a new colony, justice, humanity and disinterestedness are the high requisites; the rest follows from the excellent nature of our Government, which extends itself in full force to its remotest dependency.

¹ She had been robbed, while under the Wolfes' roof, by a Scotch footman ("James") who decamped.

In what a state of felicity are our American colonies compared to those of other nations; and how blessed are the Americans that are in our neighbourhood above those that border upon the French and Spaniards. A free people cannot oppress; but despotism and bigotry find enemies among the most innocent. It is to the eternal honour of the English nation that we have helped to heal the wound given by the Spaniards to mankind by their cruelty, pride and covetousness. Within the influence of our happy Government, all nations are in security. The barrier you are to form, will, if it takes place, strengthen ourselves, protect and support all our adherents; and as I pretend to have some concern for the general good, and a vast desire to see the propagation of freedom and truth, I am very anxious about the success of this undertaking, and do most sincerely wish that it may have a prosperous issue. I think it is vastly worth your while to apply yourself to business, you that are so well acquainted with it: and without any compliment, I may venture to assert that Cornwallis has few more capable to do him, and the public, considerable service than yourself.

I beg you will tell me at large the condition of your affairs and what kind of order there is in your community; the notions that prevail; the method of administering justice; the distribution of lands, and their cultivation; the nations that composed the colony and who are the most numerous; if under military government, how long that is to continue; and what sect in religious affairs is the most prevailing. If ever you advise upon this last subject, *remember to be moderate*. I suppose the Governor has some sort of council, and should be glad to know what it is composed of. The southern colonies will be concerned in this settlement, and have probably sent some able men to assist you with their advice, and with a proper plan of administration. Tell me likewise what climate you live in, and what soil you have to do with; whether the country is mountainous and woody, or plain; if well watered.

I see by a map (now before me) that you are between 44 and 45 degrees of latitude; in most parts of Europe the air is warmer by several degrees, because we are sheltered by the prodigious forests of Norway and Lapland from the north winds. I am afraid you are more exposed; your great cold continent to the north may exert some severe effects upon you. Direct to me at your agent's . . . If you think I can serve you or be of any use, I . . . I will send you anything you have a mind for, when

. . . directions to have it sent for I expect . . . to go abroad for eight or ten months ; do not let the circumstance prevent you from writing. I set out for London next week if it is allowed, shall be in less than forty days settled at Metz, in Lorraine, where I propose to pass the winter ; you will easily guess my aim in that. I intend to ramble in the summer along the Rhine into Switzerland, and back through France and the Netherlands and perhaps more. I hope you have a good provision of books. Rutherford has published his ; and there is a Frenchman has told me many excellent truths, in two volumes, entitled, "L'Esprit des Lois."¹ It is a piece of writing that would be of great use where you are. Will you have him ?

Tell Cornwallis that I thank him for making me a Lieutenant-Colonel² (which, by-the-bye, you did not take the least notice of) ; if I was to rise by his merit, as upon this occasion, I should soon be at the top of the list. He promised to write to some of us, but has not : they are not the less ardent for his prosperity ; and the whole corps unites in one common wish for his welfare and success. Pray tell him so, as you may do it safely.

Your old corps comes back from Gibraltar next summer. Do you know that Conway has got a company over Thompson by Elkins's death ? I will correspond constantly with you in whatever part of the world we happen to be thrown, provided you do not force me, by neglect, to leave off writing. We have but this one way left to preserve the remembrance of each other as lively as I could wish, and as I hope you do. The old General (his father) your friend, preserves his health, and is . . . he has often wished to have you again in his regiment. Farewell ! I am most affectionately, my dear Rickson,

Your faithful friend,

J. WOLFE.

After all the young officer's hopes and aspirations, it was certainly a little staggering, when his leave of absence came at last to have it accompanied by Lord Bury's intimation that the Commander-in-Chief objected to his going abroad. Farewell then to his dreams of Metz or Thionville. It was a cruel blow, and illustrates either Cumberland's narrowness or else his fear that Wolfe, disgusted with the prospects his profession held out to him in Britain, would be tempted to enter the Prussian service.

¹ Montesquieu's. First published at Geneva in 1748.

² See *ante*, p. 119.

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TO HIS FATHER.

Dundee, 7th October, 1750.

DEAR SIR,—Though I ought never to make you any excuse, because it ought never to be necessary, I can safely say that I have had something to do for this week past. When a regiment moves from one set of quarters to another, you know the commanding officer may find full employment. The last division came to the Town on October 1st, and we have ever since been intent upon getting the companies that are to move in condition to march. It will be the 20th before my part is done and about the 24th, if no accident prevents it, and my leave is granted in form, I shall set out for England. In my Lord Bury's last letter I am told not to think of going abroad, for that H. Pitt is against it. I acquiesce for this single reason: that there is a necessity to submit, though my inclinations lead me a different way. How much does the Duke mistake my sentiments, or how greatly does he oppose the only method that can be fallen upon to preserve any knowledge of military affairs in the army. I shan't say to introduce it, for infinite pains have been taken to make us acquainted with some particular branches, which yet, do not amount to all that may be required from an officer. I believe you would be very glad to see your son from amongst the ignorant, and wish to have a representative something worthy of yourself; from which I conclude, that your concern at this disappointment will not be less than mine.

Spending a couple of days in Edinburgh, on November 4 Wolfe took the stage coach to York, making the journey in about thirty-six hours.

TO HIS MOTHER.

York, 6th November, 1750.

DEAR MADAM,—As I am excessively fatigued you'll excuse my giving you a very short account of myself. I set out from Edinburgh on Sunday the 4th inst, and came that day to Belford with the most favourable weather imaginable. Yesterday I travelled from Belford to Durham in a storm of wind and rain, and this day reached this city by 7 at night, though opposed by many difficulties, of which the overflowing of some rivers were not the least. I beg my duty to my Father, and am

Dear Madam, etc.

J. WOLFE.

From thence he did not fail to call upon his maternal relations the Thompsons and Sotherons¹ at Sotterington, Pomfret and Terry-bridge. On the 14th he arrived in the capital, thinking to go on to Greenwich to join his parents, but they had already changed quarters for town.

No more serious wound could have been given to Wolfe than the thwarting of his dearest wishes which the Commander-in-Chief, abetted and instigated by Lord Bury, had inflicted. It was a serious crisis in our young hero's life thus to be condemned to pass a whole winter amidst the follies and the vices and the idleness of London when the capital was already odious to him by reason of his disappointment in love. Wolfe was a youth of singularly strong character. He had always despised the follies and the excesses of many of his brother officers. Everything in the tone of the age favoured a weakening of the moral fibre; it was the age *par excellence* of the rake, the gambler, and the wine-bibber. Profligacy and idleness, however, offered few attractions to the youthful lieutenant-colonel. Vice was not in his composition. But he was supremely miserable. For a fortnight he sought to drown his sorrow in a flood of Westminster eloquence. He attended the debates in Parliament, and took the measure of the orators and politicians of the day. One debate particularly interested him—that relating to Nova Scotia and the American Colonies, yet, perhaps, with no presentiment of what awaited himself across the Atlantic. He could no longer contain himself. Some hasty words of his provoking a scene with his parents he abruptly quitted their roof, and plunged for the first and only time in his life in the dissipations of London. The cause of the quarrel was, of course, Miss Lawson. He bridled when his mother repeatedly termed it as a senseless passion, but the flood-gates of his anger were opened wide indeed when Mrs. Wolfe hinted at the gallantries of his *inamorata's* mother. He hotly repelled the insinuation, and demanded who dared to say such a thing, and was told that his old friend, Charles Brett, knew all about it. His indignation was scarcely lessened when his mother urged him to pay his suit to Miss Hoskins, the Croydon heiress, and perhaps he felt some malicious pleasure a few weeks later when he heard that John Warde of Squerryes had already proposed for that young lady's hand and been accepted. They were married in February 1751.

¹ "The Sotherons," says Burke, "have been most respectably settled on their own estates at Holm, Spaldingmore, in the East Riding, and Hook in the West Riding, for more than two centuries." William Sotheron, Esq., of Pontefract, had married Mrs. Wolfe's sister Lucy, co-heiress of her brother, Tindal Thompson. The family is now represented by Lord Estcourt.

Meanwhile Wolfe fell ill and lay for some weeks in a state of great weakness and misery. When he had patched himself together, he took a formal leave of his parents and rejoined his regiment in Scotland.

Before his departure he addressed a short letter to his friend Rickson.

To CAPTAIN RICKSON.

Old Burlington Street, *March 19th, 1751.*

DEAR RICKSON,—I writ to you six months ago ; but as you took no notice of my letter, I conclude you did not receive it ; nay I am almost sure you did not receive it, because I ask'd a favour of you which I think you would not have refused me. I desired you to inform me of the condition of your new colony (Nova Scotia, which I have much at heart), and was not a little curious to know your particular employment and manner of living. Though I have a deal to say to you, I can't speak it just now, for I am confin'd in point of time ; but as I have the same regard and friendship for you that I always had, I have the same desire to cultivate our good understanding. Write to me then, and forget nothing that you imagine can give me light into your affairs. I am going to Scotland in ten days ; your agent will forward a letter to me there.

The young gentleman who delivers my letters has served in the regiment with me. Want of precaution and not want of honesty, obliges him to leave it. You'll learn his story from Cornwallis. I desire you to countenance and assist him a little and I hope you may not think any services that you may do him thrown away. May you be healthy and happy. I shall always wish it with great truth.

I am, dear Rickson,

Your affectionate friend,

J. WOLFE.

(This letter is marked "Answered July 22, 1751.")

In April 1751 the head-quarters of the regiment were at far-distant Banff.

Banff at this time was dreary, cold and remote, and the first few weeks of his sojourn there must have required all the philosophy of the young lieutenant-colonel.¹ Solitude brought

¹ "Few places," observes Wright, "were worse calculated to 'pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow.' Exposed to the storms of the North Sea, it

its reaction. Wolfe's eye was turned inward upon himself. He longed for the society of his own friends, and having abundant leisure, if any man with his duties to perform could be said to have abundant leisure, indulged in long letters to them. One addressed to Captain Rickson well deserves to be given in full—

To CAPTAIN RICKSON.

Banff, 9th June, 1751.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am prepared to assist you in your apology whenever you think it requisite; But I desire you will never assign that as a reason for not writing, which, in my opinion, should prompt you for it. Attachments between us of certain characters do generally arise from something alike in their natures, and should never fall from a certain degree of firmness, that makes them the same all the world over, and incapable of any diminution. I have, as you justly acknowledge, a perseverance in friendship, that time, nor distance, nor circumstances, can defeat—nay, even neglect can hardly conquer it; and you are just as warm and as near me, in North America, as you would be upon the spot.

I write to you from London, and sent my letter by one that I recommend for your countenance. I hope what has befallen him will be a shield against accidents of that sort for the future. When I writ that letter, your poor friend was in the most distress, otherwise you should have had more of me. It is not an hour since I received your letter. I shall answer all the parts of it as they stand in their order; and you see I lose no time, because in a remote and solitary part of the globe.

I often experience the infinite satisfaction there is in the only one way that is open to communicate our thoughts, and express that truly unalterable serenity of affection that is found among friends, and nowhere else. I conceive it no less comfortable to you. I believe that no man can have a sincerer regard for you than myself, nor can any man wish to serve and assist you with more ardour. The disappointment you speak of affects me greatly, and the more, as I have been told that you lived with Cornwallis, and, consequently, had some employment near him that must be creditable and profitable, which I imagined you filled with all the integrity, diligence, and skill that I know you

was one of the coldest and dreariest spots in Great Britain, without society or commerce, and approachable only by a ford across the wide river." Contemporary accounts, however, make Banff far less disagreeable.

possessed of. I cannot otherwise than account for the preference given to Mr. Cotterell, that there has been an early promise, or some prevailing recommendations from England that Cornwallis could not resist. However, if I was Governor, methinks I would choose about my person some experience and military ability, as requisite in the affairs of a new colony, situated as yours is, as any branch of knowledge whatever.

This disappointment is followed by a resolution in you that I approve of greatly, because it will release you from a life that cannot but be disagreeable, and place you where you will be well received. But I take it to be a thing much easier conceived than effected; for though I grant that — is a beast, and fit only to hunt the wildest of all wild Indians, yet his consent to the change, I doubt, would be very difficult to obtain, though everything else went smoothly on, and you know without it the matter rests. You have done well to write to my father. He is extremely disposed to do you any good office, and I shall take care to put him in mind, and excite him by all the motives that will touch him nearest, to assist you.

I thank you for partaking with me in the satisfaction of a promotion. You found your expectations, from my future fortune, upon the best grounds—my love and thorough sense for your worth; but I would not wish you should wait for my power. I should blush to see myself in the capacity. Take my inclinations and good wishes in the meantime, and believe that whatever falls to my share you will have a demand upon. If you look round and see my powerful rivals and competitors, examine who and what they are; we must both think that a little moderation in our views is very becoming, and very consistent with my situation. I believe you are of opinion with me, that a great deal of good fortune has fallen to my share already.

You have given me a very satisfactory account of the settlement, as far as you have observed or have had an opportunity to inquire. Till your letter came I understood that we were lords and proprietors of the north coast of Fundy Bay, for there's a vast tract of country between that and the river St. Lawrence. It appears to me that Acadia is near an island, and the spot where you are, a very narrow space between the Gulf and Bay. If so, I conclude your post will be greatly improved; and instead of the shallow works that you describe, something substantial will be erected, capable of containing a large garrison.

with inhabitants trained to arms, in expectation of future wars with France, when I foresee great attempts to be made in your neighbourhood. When I say thus, I mean in North America. I hope it is true what is mentioned in the newspapers, that a strong naval armament is preparing for your assistance. I wish they would increase your regiment with drafts from the troops here. I could send you some very good little soldiers. If our proposal is a good one, I will shorten the work and lessen the expense. The present schemes of economy are destructive to great undertakings, narrow in the views and ruinous in the consequence.

I was in the House of Commons this winter, when great sums of money were proposed for you, and granted readily enough. But nothing said of any increase of troops. Mr. Pelham spoke very faintly upon the subject; wished gentlemen would well weigh the importance of these undertakings before they offered them for public approbation, and seemed to intimate that it might probably produce a quarrel with our everlasting and irreconcilable adversary. This I took to be a bad prognostic; a minister cool in so great an affair, it is enough to freeze up the whole! but perhaps there might be a concealed manœuvre under these appearances, as in case of accidents, "I am not to blame," "I was forced to carry it on," and so forth; in the meantime I hope they are vigorous in supporting our claims. The country is in all shapes better than we imagined it, and the climate less severe; the extent of our territory, perhaps, won't take a vast deal of time to clear; the woods you speak of are, I suppose, to the west of Sheganecto and within the limits that the French ascribe for themselves and usurp.

Yours is now the dirtiest as well as the most insignificant and unpleasant branch of military operations; no room for courage and skill to exert itself, no hope of ending it by a decisive blow, and a perpetual danger of assassination; these circumstances discourage the firmest minds. Brave men, when they see the least room for conquest, think it easy, and generally make it so; but they grow impatient with perpetual disadvantages. I should imagine that two or three independent Highland companies might be of use; they are hardy, intrepid, accustomed to a rough country, and no great mischief if they fall. How can you better employ a secret enemy than by making his end conducive to the common good? If this sentiment should take wind, what an execrable and bloody being should I be considered here in the midst of Popery and Jacobitism!

I don't understand what is meant by the wooden forts at Halifax. I have a poor conceit of wooden fortifications, and would wish to have them changed for ramparts of earth, the rest in time; it is probable that the great attention that must be given at first to building the habitations and clearing the ground about the town, left no interval for other work; but I hope to hear in your next letter, that our principal city (Halifax) is considerably improved in strength. You gentlemen, too, with your parapet three or four feet thick, that a heavy shower would dissolve, you ought to increase it, and put yourselves into a state of security. You appear to be the barrier and bulwark of our settlements on the land, and should be lodged in a sufficient fortress, and with an eye to enterprise. I understand by your account that the post you occupy¹ is a very small distance from the end of the bay; and should be glad to know how far that is from the nearest part of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, or from what in the map appears to be a lake, or harbour communicating with that gulf.

I rejoice much that you commanded that detachment with which your Lieutenant-Colonel marched; the Indians might have had courage, in that case you would have overcome them in battle under the eye of your chief; as it was, he saw you well disposed to fight. Perhaps I am talking at random, but it is conformable to the idea I have of this Colonel Lawrence,² whose name we often see in the papers. I suppose him to be amongst the first officers of the expedition, high-minded himself, and a judge of it in others; his ready march to the enemy marks the first, and his being the head of your undertaking gives one an opinion of his judgment. If 'tis to his advantage, I desire you to let me have his character at full length; perhaps there's a strong mixture, as it generally happens in ardent men: in that case let's have the best fully, and the other slightly touched. I am sorry that you are not so linked in with some of your brethren as to form an intimacy and confidence; without it the world is a soliture, and what must your part of it be? I pity you very heartily, for I am sure you are very ready to mingle with a good disposition. 'Tis doubly a misfortune to be banished without the relief of books, or possibility of reading; the only amends that can be made to us that are sequestered in the lonely

¹ Lunenburg.

² Governor of Nova Scotia, who was afterwards forced to undertake the expulsion of the Acadians.

and melancholy spots, is that we can fill up our time with study. When I am in Scotland I look upon myself as an exile ; with respect to the inhabitants I am so, for I dislike 'em much ; 'tis then I pick up my best store, and try to help an indifferent education, and slow faculties ; and I can say that I have really acquired more knowledge that way, than in all my former life.

I would by all means have you get home before the next winter, but I don't approve in the least of the resolution you seem to have taken rather than continue in that service. Do everything in your power to change, but don't leave the army, as you must when you go upon half-pay. If there is any female in the case, any reasonable scheme for marriage, I have nothing to say ; that knocks down all arguments ; they have other sorts of passions to support them. In reality, the most I can offer (were you unbiassed) would not amount to weighty matter, for I see no early appearance whereon to mould a bait for your ambition ; yet I cannot consent to your leaving us entirely, in the hopes of fairer days. If I did not love you personally, and wish your happiness very heartily, I should advise you to stay where you are, and would say that you ought to be kept there ; and give, as a reason for saying so, that I do think the infancy of a colony has need of able hands, civil and military, to sustain it, and I should be for sacrificing you and all the men of worth to the general good. You speak of Mr. Browse, the engineer ; pray say a word or two of his capacity, and tell me if there are among you any connoisseurs in that business.

Is the island of St. John in the possession of the French, or do we occupy it ? It would be unpardonable in me if I omitted to send you intelligence of what is stirring amongst us ; I mean, if I kept from you anything that comes to my knowledge ; but in truth we are here almost as much in the dark as to public transactions as can be conceived ; however, I picked up some account of the Act for settling the Regency,¹ and as perhaps you have not seen it, it will be worth your perusal ; it is a subject of no small importance.

[An analysis of the statute follows.]

Three large ships of war (guard ships) are sailed with the Scotch Fusiliers and Conway's regiments to relieve the King's and Skelton's, and they, as we hear, are to march directly into Scotland, which, by the bye, is a little out of the way, to carry them from the hottest to the coldest part of the King's

¹ Frederick, Prince of Wales, had died on the 20th of March, preceding.

dominions ; if they come, our regiment goes to Inverness, where I shall remain all the winter ; if one only comes, or neither, I go to Aberdeen. Loftus and Donnellan are both in England. The former had been dangerously ill, is a little recovered. Donnellan too, has been out of order, and is gone to Bristol for health.

I am not sure whether I mentioned it or not in my last letter, but as it is a great grief to me, I will hazard the repetition to tell it you. I got powerful people to ask the Duke no less than three times, for leave to go abroad, and he absolutely refused me that necessary indulgence : this I consider a very unlucky incident, and very discouraging ; moreover, he accompanied his denial with a speech that leaves no hope—that a Lieutenant-Colonel was an officer of too high a rank to be allowed to leave his regiment for any considerable time. This is a dreadful mistake, and if obstinately pursued, will disgust a number of good intentions, and preserve that prevailing ignorance of military affairs that has been so fatal to us in all our undertakings, and will be for ever so, unless other measures are pursued. We fall every day lower and lower from our real characters, and are so totally engaged in everything that is minute and trifling, that one would almost imagine the idea of war was extinguished amongst us ; they will hardly allow us to recollect the little service we have seen : that is to say, the merit of things seem to return into their old channel, and he is the brightest in his profession that is the most impertinent, talks loudest, and knows least.

I repeat it again to you that poor Porter left his regiment with the approbation of all his brethren, and with the reputation of honesty and upright behaviour. It will be a charitable thing to do him any good office.

I went to London in November, and came back in the middle of April. In that short time I committed more imprudent acts than in all my life before. I lived in the idlest, dissolute, abandoned manner that could be conceived, and that not out of vice, which is the most extraordinary part of it. I have escaped at length, and am once again master of my reason, and hereafter it shall rule my conduct, at least I hope so. My father has offered money for the prettiest-situated house in England, and I believe he will have it for about £3000. It is a great sum to be so employed ; but as it procures him the pleasure he likes, and a fine air, it is well laid out. It looks as if he intended to sell his house in Greenwich since the other is upon Black Heath ;

the new bridge¹ will enable him . . . his way easily to St. James's.

I will write to Loftus to send you some porter and the books. I cannot bear to hear you making excuses for imaginary trouble. I will . . . hogshead of claret from Ireland to Gibraltar. You cannot do me a greater pleasure than by pointing out to me a way to relieve you, though ever so inconsiderable. Write to me by the first opportunity, and believe me, dear Rickson,

Ever your affectionate friend,

J. W.

It will be seen that Wolfe believed in the value of two or three independent Highland Companies on active service in North America. At this time this was a highly original notion. But the more Wolfe considered it the more he was convinced of its worth. We shall see how the idea grew until it came to be adopted by the Commander-in-Chief on a scale sufficient to raise the fighting standard of the armies overseas and even to effect the destinies of the Empire. For no doubt should exist as to which officer is due in the first instance credit of sending armed Highlanders to fight the battles of their common country.

This was the day of letters a yard long, and Wolfe was not one to stint himself. Besides, he had his peace to make with his parents, and it was in a spirit of sincere contrition that he penned what follows.

TO HIS FATHER.

Banff, *June 12, 1751.*

DEAR SIR,—I am very glad from the knowledge of your sentiments (which in a case that concerns myself ought justly to be preferred to my own, and indeed in almost all other cases) to be able to make you some sort of apology for every particular instance of vice or folly that has very luckily fallen under your notice while I had the honour to be near you. I say very luckily, for if you or some other perfect friend had not discovered them, so as to make them known to me, I might have continued in the conceit of there being no such thing in my composition, and consequently they must in time have taken deep root, and increased beyond the power of any remedy. Yours is a very lively picture of the impertinence and idleness that is often in people of my years, so that it is not quite new and unexpected;

¹ Westminster Bridge.

and if I do not mistake this is not the first time that you have observed the seeds of imperfections in me, that perhaps only wanted nourishment and proper occasion to break forth. I am quite persuaded (though you express some indifference in the latter part of your letter) that you mean to recover me from the ill habit of mind you have seen me in, and with that view and that only it is that the just remarks you have made upon my conduct are put in their proper light. I am sure at the same time that your course of goodness and indulgence to me is not entirely altered and that you are ready to make such allowances as may be expected from one who has so extensive a knowledge of mankind as you have.

The respect I have for you and strong desire to be better in your opinion than I have been of late, will put me upon pursuing the best means that you can devise, or that I can imagine for such an alteration of behaviour as may conduce to that end. I believe the first step to amendment is to acknowledge our faults, a proof that we think them faults. This I do very heartily and truly, though I must assert that most of them have arisen from inadvertency and not from any ill intention. I am very sensible that many things have appeared with an exceeding bad grace, but am nevertheless quite clear and conscious that no offence ever was, or could be, meant. My mother told me you intended to write. I was desirous to know your thoughts (which I am sorry to say I have been but too often unacquainted with) and that is one reason why I left such an interval between asking you pardon in the short though sincere manner in which I did it, when I came away, and making all the submission that can be made to one that I am very unwilling to disoblige. I hope the former part of my life will in some measure make this appear; and I believe I may venture to say that my future conduct will help to convince you.

I ask only one favour and I think it reasonable, which is, that when things are anyhow wrong you will have so much consideration for my good and your own peace, as to make known your opinion as early as possible; that I may check the mischief in its infancy, and correct one after another those failings that few of us are free from, but that all may remove. You very justly ridicule the situation I was in: it was truly ridiculous, I am as sensible of it as any man can be; but, however, it must be allowed that it is not the first of that kind, and the effects are often very extraordinary. I am concerned

that you had any share of the uneasiness. I wish it had all been mine own since I brought it upon myself. Most of my thoughts and inconsistency of action, receive their bias from hence. I do not say all; for I never heard it accused of producing either pride or vanity. Impatience of temper, restlessness of disposition and an indifference about all, even the most important affairs of life, are the constant attendants of that pernicious distemper. Should I at any other time have neglected the affairs of the regiment, regardless of my duty as an officer in every respect? Or should I have quitted the only pursuit that engages my attention with any ardour and banish all my application without a cause? I don't remember a time of my life that I forsook either the one or the other before, nor can I tax myself with having been wanting in more material matters (my duty to you) till now.¹

I could readily and cheerfully have refused myself the pleasure of conversing with my friends in your house (for few came there upon any other footing) in consideration of your health. I am not indeed excusable for not having done it; since there was room to imagine it might be troublesome; but I should have thought it no hardship, had it been spoke of as a necessary conformity to your inclinations. I am no doubt, much to blame with regard to Donnellan; but there are some circumstances that may perhaps take off a part. I neither saw nor conversed with him half so often as I used to do before he had (as an officer of your regiment) brought your displeasure upon him. We have been long intimate: I knew him to have a good deal of worth and honour, and think he has a better understanding than is commonly met with. He has often done me friendly and kind offices, which I do not immediately overlook or forget. I condemned his behaviour to you, though I could never look upon it as a mark of contempt but rather an error in the way of his profession. I did think him greatly to blame, and told him so, and moreover advised him to conduct himself in such a manner towards you, as might re-establish him in your favour.

The warm expression that fell from me upon the Duke's refusing to let me go abroad, savoured much of ingratitude; the

¹ The story is that Wolfe had made an impassioned public declaration of his love for Miss Lawson at a ball, threatening a rival with immediate chastisement. It is doubtful, however, if his passion really wrought such a change in his character and habits as he here depicts.

words, it must be confessed, were arrogant and vain. I thought them so at the time of speaking. Passion and disappointment produced them. Certainly his Royal Highness could not have so truly convinced me of his kindness as by consenting to a reasonable and salutary request. For if eternal imprisonment and exile is to follow preferment, few will be thankful for the favour.

I am sorry you can think it troublesome to me to read any letter from you, though it should be the mirror of my follies. You say it shall be the last upon this subject; and I am sure you will do me the justice to recollect that it is likewise the first. It shall be my care not to give such large room for reproof hereafter; and from no motive so powerful as a thorough regard for your person, and a sense of what is due to you as a parent. My mother might safely have ventured to send me her blessing, though she should build it only upon the strength of a return from me. I do sometimes leave out in my letter what I least intend, and when I omit expressing my affections for either of you, there remains little else that is valuable. I beg my duty to her and am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

PS.—I think I never could advance that there were no “natural” affections. I believe I said, and still am of opinion, that affections of all kinds spring from mutual good offices done to one another; and that is natural. I likewise said that opposite interests frequently extinguish those affections, which I imagine will be allowed.

His mother required, it seems, considerable placation.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Peterhead, 19 July, 1751.

DEAR MADAM,—I began to give up all hopes of hearing from you, and to think myself exiled to all intents and purposes without the consolation of being so much as thought of in this state of bondage and confinement. I am not addicted by constitution either to the vapours or to despair, and have determined always to leave the cure of present evils to a distant day; imagining that they must be great indeed that have no remedy in the bosom of time; and such I hope never to know. When

I say I put off the cure, I suppose no present application sufficient, and therefore prefer a remote one, rather than give it up, or submit to disasters, and designs, though they should be ever so powerful. Your letter short as it is, unusually so, has nevertheless been of great aid and relief, because it convinces me, that, though deservedly neglected, I am not entirely forgot, alienated or divided from you, as of no further concern. It is fit that some share of evil should fall upon us in this life, to teach us and enjoy the best that we are formed to taste.

I think you are vastly well employed, though laboriously. This I consider as your last labour, and therefore reconcile myself in some measure to the excess of your fatigue; by looking upon it as the end of pain and beginning of uninterrupted quiet. I hope you will fit up your new house with all the elegance and convenience that so lovely a situation, your future residence deserves. How you dispose of your other house, furniture, etc., regards me not, provided you make yourself easy in this you do all that can be wished or expected. When you are quite at rest, I shall be glad to hear you describe the work of your own hands; though, as I never saw the inside of your habitation, it will be difficult to make me understand your operations. I hope you have a little garden.

You refer me to Charles Brett for intelligence and say you will always do so. This I cannot contradict or oppose, but I must say (though he is a valuable correspondent) that many things come much more pleasingly from you than from him. I have but few franks left, so, to save you a little trouble and some expense I put your letter under his cover.

I wish you both much health and beg my duty to my father, and am dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM. WOLFE.

The old General was now entering his sixty-seventh year, and was looking forward to repose, after fifty years of service.

To HIS FATHER.

Peterhead, *July 29, 1751.*

DEAR SIR,—Honest Charles writes me word (with a good deal of concern) that he thinks you are not quite so cheerful as he could wish; this affects me very particularly: first, because

I hate to hear that any of your hours pass unpleasantly, or that anything breaks in upon the usual quiet of your mind, and then starts the disagreeable reflection, that possibly I may contribute to it. I don't think my friend meant to reproach me, but I could not read his letter without feeling remorse and repentance, for any ill acts, or without being shocked at the consequence as far as it regards your person. If it be true that I still create uneasiness, I would endeavour to persuade you, as well as words from me can do it; so far to forget, and overlook me and my irregularities, as not to entertain a thought of pain for what has already appeared or form from thence a judgment of what may be expected hereafter; I had much rather be quite out of your thoughts than take a place in them to torment you. I know it is not easy, entirely to shut out certain objects from the mind, but it is not difficult to accustom oneself to represent them under a pleasing figure: when your son comes into your consideration, I could wish you would imagine him a little recovered from his indiscretion, and determined to contribute all in his power to make his father (for whom he has the greatest respect and tenderness) pass the rest of his days in uninterrupted peace.

The mineral water here is famous for the cure of gravel, I can attest its virtue, as I have found great relief from it; I can't say it agrees with me in other respects so well. I leave this place in a few days and return to Banff; from thence I propose to visit our posts in the Highlands, and amuse myself upon the moors for ten days, or a fortnight. I find the regiment quarters this winter at Inverness, as the two battalions from the Straits either land in Scotland or march directly north. The weather is sometimes as cold as it is in England in the month of November: I could not have imagined that the climate in any part of this island could be so severe: this is the most eastern point of Scotland.

I wish you both much health. I beg my duty to my mother and am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

For Wolfe's bladder ailment soap was prescribed—soap taken internally, a frequently-mentioned (and absurd and barbarous) remedy of those days.

To HIS MOTHER.

Banff, 12th Aug., 1751.

DEAR MADAM,—I came back from Peterhead much better satisfied with the entertainment I found there, than with the famous mineral water. I drank it for near three weeks with some success as to the principal complaint, but soon found it affected me very violently in the lungs and stomach, and left me a fixed pain in my breast that alarmed me a little, but it begins now to weaken and wear away. I consulted a physician of reputed knowledge, who advises soap, a certain sort of diet and moderate exercise; to all which I can easily conform, and much more than this, if required, rather than endure pain; my temper of mind is not fashioned for much suffering; patience is not the leading virtue there. I should tell you how well I have been diverted and how much I have been obliged to your sex for many cheerful hours; in general, there were women of good understanding, others of great vivacity and others very handsome; so that a man could not fail to be pleased with such variety to choose out of; and for my part, I always think a pretty maid either has all the other beauties or does not want them. I know you would be glad to contribute something towards the cure of a bad disease, and perhaps I may put it in your power. Honey is recommended to me—if you get any from Minorca, and can send such a jar as I devoured in London, it will be doing a humane and benevolent act. Fisher or Charles Brett know how to direct it to me, or may enquire of Adair. I must put up a petition to the General for his assistance. That I may not fall away with spare diet, and diminish to a very skeleton, I propose to nourish myself with chocolate and milk, and therefore desire 6 or 8 pounds may be sent from London for that purpose.

Our winter is begun already, I am writing now before a great fire. Dreadful season that lasts from the beginning of August till the middle of May! I understand that your work is done and your trouble at an end, I rejoice with you, and hope you find it well bestowed, since it probably has helped to make your house agreeable and comfortable to both.

If anything can add to the care that people generally take of themselves under any complaint it should be the advice of their friends, and consideration for those they love; for I do assure you both, that it is almost as much pain to me to know that you are afflicted on my account, as to feel the effects of

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the distemper. I beg my duty to my father, and am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM. WOLFE.

PS.—I have but very few franks, and therefore am (in commission for our late Chaplain) obliged to desire you to order his letter to be put in the penny post.

VIII

A WINTER AT INVERNESS

By this time the repentant Lieutenant-Colonel's filial advances had met with their due reward, and for the time being all was peace in the Wolfe household. He heard with deep interest the accounts of the house purchased by the old General at Blackheath, within the wall of Greenwich Park, and next to Lord Chesterfield's summer residence "Babiole," now the Ranger's Lodge. This house was to be much occupied by Wolfe, and we will speak of it hereafter.

To HIS MOTHER.

Banff, 17th Sept., 1751.

DEAR MADAM,—The many obliging things in your letter deserve all the acknowledgments I am able to make. They claim a return of gratitude from me, and equal concern for your happiness and welfare. I hope very few words will serve to convince you that every kindness from you or expression of kindness leaves impressions not easily erased.

Whenever you are found to speak to me in a different strain I am persuaded it is much against your inclinations, impelled by a desire to correct and amend.

It would be a kind of miracle for one of my age and complexion to get through life without stumbling. Friendly aid and counsel are great and timely supports, and reproof is most effectual when it carries with it a concern for the person to whom it is addressed. This is the way I understand it both from my father and you, because I am sure nothing but a base and villainous action could entirely remove your affections; and that I don't find myself capable of.

I am sometimes in the character of a military parent, and am obliged to lay great restraint upon myself that others may profit by it, and I never find my advice so well attended to, as when there goes along with it a mixture of care for the good and reputation of the youth that errs. You'll be apt to think that a man so subject to weakness as I may be supposed to be, can work very little upon the minds of others, or give them a strength and firmness that I do not possess. But a man might

for a time conceal, though not conquer his infirmities, and may direct where he can't execute. The sense of duty, too, in the way of one's profession, may operate strongly in some things, though quite useless and impotent in others.

By the description you give me of your new house, most people will be as well pleased with it as you seem to be. It is the work of your own hands, and you'll be much to blame if anything is wanting to make it every way convenient and to your taste. It has a thousand natural advantages that you may improve till it becomes delightful. All I ask is that in the little detached department, where Charles Brett may laugh at leisure, there may be a very hard bed, upon which I hope to extend my long limbs in twelve or fourteen months, and take a little rest from care.

Old Roland lived five or six years with me, and laid the obligations of faithful service upon me. He bore pretty well the warmth and uncertainty of my temper, though at length, tired of that and eternal wandering, he begged to be released. I can safely say that I have known him very honest, and think he must still be so. He has a wonderful calmness and quietness of disposition, that I sometimes thought degenerated into stupidity. I hardly ever knew him to give offence to any but myself, and then perhaps I was as much to blame as he.¹

Thus much for his valour and honesty; I think myself in his debt. I never intended to abandon him. I propose to take his son when old enough to serve me. . . .

I hope to hear from you now and then; you shall always be as short or as long as you please. Only remember that one side is very agreeable, but four sides, four times as agreeable, and so on in proportion. I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Wolfe was very glad to exchange Banff for Inverness, with which, although then the capital of Jacobitism, Wolfe was familiar and already numbered there several friends. Of Wolfe's strictures here and elsewhere upon Scotland, we may say with a Scotch critic of Dr. Johnson's journey, "What he says of the country is true, and his observations on the people are what must naturally occur to a sensible, observing and reflecting inhabitant of a convenient

¹ See *ante*, p. 77.

metropolis, where a man on thirty pounds a year may be better accommodated with all the wants of life than Col or Sir Allison.”¹ It must be remembered that Wolfe had been sent into Scotland upon a mission which rendered him and his men highly disagreeable to the majority of the inhabitants.

To HIS FATHER.

Inverness, *October 3rd, 1751.*

DEAR SIR,—The preparations and march of the regiment have taken up the time that would have been employed in writing to you and to others that have a title to expect it from me. The post goes hence but once a week, which makes my letter something later than I could wish, as I have been several days in town. A little while serves to discover the villainous nature of the inhabitants, and brutality of the people in its neighbourhood. Those too who pretend the greatest attachment to the government, and who every day feed upon the public purse, seem to distinguish themselves for greater rudeness and incivility than the open and professed Jacobites. With these disadvantages there are many others that concern us as officers, not worth relating to you; and yet, I believe we shall find means to get through the long winter tolerably well.

A gentleman came from Perth the other day and told me he saw Mrs. Wilkinson very disconsolate and unhappy at the bad accommodation she meets with there. I can't wonder at it, as little, dirty, stinking lodgings must be quite new to one that comes directly from London, and was never out of it till now. But I would advise her to prepare for worse places than Perth. By degrees I hope she'll be inured to it, and then become familiar. Mrs. Lafausille, who has served several campaigns, is an older and better soldier than the other, will put up with any inconveniences for the sake of doing her duty with applause, and to the satisfaction of her Lieutenant-Colonel and commanding officer, to whose pleasure she always wishes to contribute; and I dare say never refuses her assistance to make him perfectly happy. I had a long letter from Rickson some days ago. He gives me no great opinion of the settlement, from the want of a more considerable armed force, the present being insufficient for its defence. He seems to apprehend some attempts from the French, who injure and insult us. He laments his own melancholy condition, and wishes it were possible to come again

¹ Dempster, quoted by Boswell, 1775.

amongst his old friends and companions. I imagine your regiment must be in Scotland by this time. In the spring they are to take those parts in the Highlands that we have occupied this summer.

I turned aside to look at the new Fort of Ardersier, or Fort George, and find a vast quantity of earth thrown up for ramparts, and the counterscarp and glacis finished. But I believe there's still work for six or seven years to do. When it is finished one may venture to say (without saying much) that it will be the most considerable fortress, and the best situated in Great Britain. I fancy your neighbour, Mr. Skinner, the architect, thinks it a very good fortification.¹ I dare say he finds it so. I beg my duty, etc.

JAMES WOLFE.

It was now more than five years since Culloden and Wolfe made a survey of the battlefield in a somewhat critical frame of mind.

To HIS FATHER.

October, 1751.

DEAR SIR,—If I was writing to any other than yourself with such slight furniture, two lines would finish my letter.²

I have surveyed the field of battle of Culloden with great exactness, and find room for a military criticism as well as a place for a little ridicule upon some famous transactions of that memorable day. The actors shine in the world too high and bright to be eclipsed; but it is plain they don't borrow much of their glory from their performance upon that occasion, however they may have distinguished themselves in later events. The defects were not so visible there as in the lower agents. I dare say you don't think I strike at the Head. One may safely pronounce that he had a very good title to the command; there was no rival in rank nor in abilities. If you were upon the spot, perhaps you might be tempted to say that this *risk* should not have been adventured, nor this *advantage* neglected. You

¹ It was built from the plans of Robert Skinner of Greenwich and cost £160,000.

² Wright, quoting this letter, prefaces it by a reference to Wolfe's paucity of "furniture," as if domestic and substantial instead of merely epistolary material were meant.

would not have left those ruffians the only possible means of conquest, nor suffer multitudes to go off unhurt with the power to destroy. One must examine the field of battle to judge of the merit of Colonel Rich's great resistance, or, which is the same thing, the behaviour of the battalion under his command. But why this censure when the affair is so happily decided? To exercise one's ill-nature? No; to exercise the faculty of judging,—since I mention this to you, but not to the world. The more a soldier thinks of the false steps of those that are gone before, the more likely he is to avoid them. On the other hand, the examples worthiest of imitation should never be lost sight of, as they will be the best and truest guides in every undertaking.

Besides the multitude of evils that this town contains we have the additional mortification that the country about us affords very little relief; no hunting or shooting,—both healthy and manly diversions that I take great delight in. Instead of these, I ride about for the fresh air and motion, but when the snow falls, we shall have little else to do but to eat and sleep. I wonder how long a man moderately inclined that way would require, in a place like this, to wear out his love for arms, and soften his martial spirit. I believe the passion would be something diminished in less than ten years, and the gentleman be contented to be a little lower than Cæsar in the list, to get clear of the incumbrances of greatness.

Loftus wrote to me, giving intimation of his arrival in Scotland, and desiring that I would go directly to Perth to see him; it is about a hundred miles through the Highlands. One would think my friend Arthur did not know the *carte du pays* by his invitation. Wilkinson writes me word that your clothing is come; that is, he tells me that the present you were so kind to send is safe, and in the same ship.

Ours is as yet at sea, to my sorrow, for we want a great many men, and I can't send off the recruiting-parties till they are clothed. I shall be broke for not completing the regiment; they sent me a reprimand for not doing it last year, though I was all the winter in London. The reprimand was due to my neglect in general, but not at all as it was applied; unless it could be supposed that I had any extraordinary influence over Lord Bury and acted for him, whereas it is notorious that he always acts for himself.

J. WOLFE.

If there was nothing else to do in his leisure at Inverness, there was at least the furnishing forth of a letter home. Few reveal more of Wolfe's character than the following discursive composition. He was a genius, but at the same time very human.

To HIS MOTHER.

Inverness, 6th November, 1751.

DEAR MADAM,—You must not be surprised if this letter does not reach you till a long time after the date of it, for 'tis very possible that the snows will retard the march of our Highland post-boy, who, in the finest seasons, cannot pride himself on much expedition. The winds sometimes drive the snows with such violence that the roads are utterly impassable; and again, when it thaws, the rivers swell so prodigiously that there is no less danger and difficulty on that side. I have not been, from the severity of the weather, able to get on horseback for many days, and can have no manner of diversion out of my own room, unless to shoot woodcocks at the risk of rheumatism. It would be unmanly and very unbecoming a soldier to complain of little evils, such as bad food, bad lodging, bad fire. Whoever finds these inconveniences too hard to put up with will never be a match for a multitude of others that he is likely to meet with in his travel through life, especially if he has taken the trade of war. With these sort of reflections I reconcile myself to Inverness, and to other melancholy spots that we are thrown upon, and find (all things considered and thoroughly examined) there is in reality, to a contented mind, very little difference between one place and another, and that if a man possesses a certain degree of firmness and serenity, he is equal to almost every calamity. Besides, in aid of this disposition, I like a military life, and endeavour to make my actions correspond in some measure with that liking. Not that you are to understand your son captivated with the glare and blaze of our employment. No, there is an object much beyond it that attracts my eye; and it is with some concern that I see those that direct us often miss the proper mark, and set us, their servants, upon wrong pursuits. This is not, I believe, from ill intention, but from other causes. I expect you'll think this sort of discourse a little unnatural, and perhaps may think it discourse only; but you may judge by my former letters and my general manner of acting that I oftenest speak as I am, and that it would not be in this style if I did not sleep sound.

You are thrifty of your paper, pens and ink; it is an economy out of tune: there's room for a quarrel with you on this neglect and if Charles was not alive I should be left to conjectures and somewhat uncertain conjectures.

I have been persuaded to take a lottery ticket; but, alas, I am very unfortunate at all games, and expect no better luck here. 'Tis five or six pounds very ill bestowed. I venture to say that whatever money comes to me it shall be made use of, and if I don't succeed now or another time the disappointment won't set heavily.

The death of the Stadtholder,¹ and the Princess of Orange's ill state of health, I suppose alarm people a little. Two minorities, perhaps, together may give the common enemy some advantage over us. I hope the Duke will do his part steadily and with honour. He has a great task, and I dare say will perform it as becomes a prince.

If I were to advise, as you now live together in the country, you should call some that you like to dine and sup with you often; and above all things, claret for the General. He is never better than when he uses it freely, but without excess. It is vast pleasure to me that your new mansion is now put into good condition, and the garden planted. I know nothing more agreeable than to see our own little improvements flourish in our view, and increase every year in strength and beauty.²

For my part, while I am young and in health all the world is my garden and my dwelling; and when I begin to decline, I hope my services by that time may fairly ask some little retreat, and a provision so moderate that I may possess it unenvied. I demand no more; but while I have vigour, if the country wants a man of good intentions, they'll always find me ready—devoted, I may say—to their service. If my old Lady Lawson (as Charles has been told) had stumbled at her time and in her situation I should doubt my discernment ever after; she appears to have so much good sense and affection for her daughters, that to be deceived in opinion of her I should join with Falstaff and declare that there is virtue extant. Common decency requires that the young ladies should marry first.

¹ The Prince of Orange, George II's son-in-law, died in October, "killed by the waters of Aix-la-Chapelle," said Walpole.

² This passage indicates that the garden of the Wolfe mansion at Blackheath was planted by the elder Wolfe.

The pretty widow Kendal will have more lovers now than she had. With the merit of this vast succession, money is in such repute that though she had a thousand good qualities and a thousand graces, it was wanted, as the great material to recommend her. Lord Bacon (but he's a severe writer) says that if a woman has a bad husband of her own choosing she is sure to make good her folly, and commonly pretends more happiness than she really feels. Is this Miss Warde's case? Or is she pleased with the coxcomb, her companion? I pity her heartily and pronounce from his manner of conducting himself that she'll repent her bargain. You'll see my other reasons for thinking so when I treat of Miss Hooker's match. Though not of the most melting compassion, I am sometimes touched with other people's distresses and participate their grief. Men whose tenderness is not often called upon, obtain by degrees,—as you may particularly observe in old bachelors,—a ferocity of nature, or insensibility about the misfortunes that befall others. There's no more tender-hearted person than a father or mother that has, or has had, many children.

I don't know Dr. Squire at all, and very little of Miss Hooker,¹ but must say that matches purely of interest (as I suppose it is on her side), and made up in a hurry, though with everybody's consent, are purchases too high and hazardous to have my approbation. And then again, at sober times, I have no very high opinion of love affairs except they are built upon judgment. So you'll say, "Where then would you choose?" Why nowhere, to men of whimsical disposition; but otherwise the choice reason directs is the best; moderate fortunes and sense enough on both sides to give aid in ticklish times. If the maid only seeks preferment in the Church or anywhere else, she cuts out her own misery, unless indeed all her passions and affections give way to ambition, and then, no doubt, a doctor, a dean, or a bishop have power to please.

I have a certain turn of mind that favours matrimony prodigiously, though every way else extremely averse to it at present, and you shall know it. I love children, and think them necessary to us in our latter days; they are fit objects for the mind to rest upon, and give it great entertainment when amusements of other kinds have lost their value. Sure, next to being

¹ She subsequently married Wolfe's friend Charles Brett, R.N. Dr. Squire was Vicar of Greenwich and afterwards Bishop of St. David's.



MAJOR-GENERAL JAMES WOLFE

From the posthumous portrait by Schaak in the National Portrait Gallery

an honest man and good citizen, it is meritorious to produce such characters amongst men. Our endeavours here seldom fail of success; for young people are as capable of receiving good impressions and good sentiments as bad ones, and if their nature inclines to evil, custom and education correct them. Two or three manly, courageous, upright sons are a present to the world of the highest estimation, and the father that offers them sees with satisfaction that he is to live in his successors, and that his good qualities will contribute to adorn and illustrate manhood when he is no longer amongst them. Is not this a pleasing sort of reflection? If I don't speak much of the females, 'tis not that they are of less concern to us, or ought to be less prized; but as the management of them belongs chiefly to you ladies, methinks I would not seem to infringe upon your prerogatives.

Lord Bury professes fairly, and means nothing; in that he resembles his father, and a million of other showy men that are seen in palaces and in the courts of kings. He desires never to see his regiment, and wishes that no officer would ever leave it. This is selfish and unjust. They have a way of trifling with us poor soldiery that gives many very honest brave men high disgust. I am sensible it is my duty to be here, and that silences me; otherwise, the care of a regiment of Foot is very heavy, exceeding troublesome, and not at all the thing I delight in, though, as I told you before, the occupation in general is a good one, and hits my genius. My duty to my father. I wish you both much health, and am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate Son,

JAMES WOLFE.

Some of the foregoing will strike a critical reader as penned in a curiously stilted style: and in truth it is not to be denied that Wolfe's solitude and his reading of such literature as came his way occasionally gave his expressions an affected, artificial air, somewhat at variance with the character of a stern and sterling soldier. But this tends to disappear, and some of his later compositions are full of directness and point.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Inverness, Dec. 5th, 1751.

DEAR MADAM,—If a man is not allowed to utter his complaints (and I deny myself this indulgence) what else can he say, or how can he find subject of discourse, when his thoughts

are necessarily taken up with a multitude of sensations? Notwithstanding all this, whether from pride, obstinacy, a vanity to appear firm on one side, or moderation and indifference of the other, I am determined to guard against the inclination that most people feel to communicate their distresses: and that resolution arises from one or other of the above motives, or a mixture of them all. I learn that my good friend Charles is near his departure; his friends and neighbours will feel the want of him, for there is no more valuable person amongst men, than one of his character, active to serve and assist, honest and fair in his dealings, and incomparably merry and sweet tempered, equally disposed for business or society.¹ I reckon his sister will be in great grief, for she loves him very sincerely. If he has gone before this letter gets to you, I must beg you to let his letter follow him, with a frank if you have one to spare, because it is double. I shall lose a good correspondent as to public affairs, and an agent and advocate to be depended upon in private concerns. I owe him one pound three, for the eleventh portion of a lottery ticket,² with the young ladies, Mr. Swinden and others, which, if you will be so kind to pay, (to him or his brother) shall be returned to you, whenever I have the good fortune to find myself in a condition to pay my debts; and that may soon be, since they are not very considerable. The Duke's fall was considered by people here in very different lights, by one party as a lucky event, by the other as a most unfortunate one; but we who feared the consequence were far the fewest.

I hope he will live long in health and vigour and continue as he is at present, a terror to traitors and the enemies of their country. The villains here seem to look upon him as the great opposer of their purposes, and truly I believe they do him justice. I beg my duty to my father. I wish you much health and am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM. WOLFE.

¹ Charles Brett became one of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty when Lord Howe was at the head of the Board, and represented Sandwich in two parliaments. He married the granddaughter of Sir William Hooker, of Croom's Hill, and died, far advanced in years, at his house in Spring Gardens, February 10th, 1799. His brother, Captain John Brett, who was one of Anson's lieutenants in his voyage round the world, lost much tranquillity, as well as money, by being involved in a lawsuit with an itinerant quack, whom he, as a magistrate, endeavoured to prevent from deluding the unwary. The mountebank, however, having a diploma of some sort, obtained damages against the benevolent Captain. Another brother, Timothy, is mentioned by Wolfe on a future occasion.—Wright, p. 186.

² The State Lottery, drawn November 11th, 1751.

We now hear the first of Wolfe's projected Irish journey.

TO HIS FATHER.

Inverness, *December 13th, 1751.*

DEAR SIR,—I dropped a hint to Charles Brett some time since as if I had thoughts of going into Ireland. You may be sure if the thing had been serious I should have mentioned it to you, with my reasons for so doing, and should have asked your opinion and taken it as a guide. I did not imagine that it would have been looked upon by Charles as a matter of easy execution, but only an object of the fancy to play with till some new shadowy project as light as that takes place. I shall not be very frequent in my petitions. Besides, the Highland service next summer will be an excuse for Lord Bury to refuse me leave of absence and if that was wanting he would easily frame another as plausible. I have no other motive to carry me into that country but pure curiosity. I have no expectations from my friend Lord George. He has already done me more service than I had reason to hope and he did it unasked. He could offer me nothing but the same rank in the Horse or Dragoons, which is too idle a life to tempt me.

I did not tell you that we have an assembly of female rebels every fortnight, entirely composed of Macdonalds, Frazers, and M'Intoshes. I had the honour to dance with the daughter of a chieftain who was killed at Culloden, the Laird of Kippoch. They are perfectly wild as the hills that breed them; but they lay aside their principles for the sake of sound and movement. They make no converts, which I chiefly attribute to a strong dialect of the Erse that destroys the natural softness of their notes.

I am, etc.,

JAM. WOLFE.

To a man of Wolfe's temperament, thrust into solitude and addicted from boyhood to inward communings, the advent of a birthday would easily set in movement a train of serious reflections. Already his mind had been tinged with sadness. He had gone further than most men of his age, but such progress had by no means kept pace with his insatiable ambition, and now the prospect was not alluring: he must, as he told his father, "be content to be a little lower than Cæsar in the list." The vanity of

human wishes oppressed him. Thus on his twenty-fifth birthday, alone in his lodgings at Inverness, Wolfe wrote down his inmost thoughts for his mother's eyes.¹

Mrs. Wolfe was a deeply pious woman, and in a previous letter had urged him seek strength and consolation on his knees before his Maker, through faith in God.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Inverness, 22nd-25th December (O.S.), 1751.

[2nd-5th January (N.S.), 1752.]

DEAR MADAM,—The winter wears away, so do our years, and so does life itself; and it matters little where a man passes his days and what station he fills, or whether he be great or considerable but it imports him something to look to his manner of life. This day I am five-and-twenty years of age, and all that time is as nothing. When I am fifty (if it so happens) and look back, it will be the same; and so on to the last hour. But it is worth a moment's consideration that one may be called away on a sudden, unguarded and unprepared; and the oftener these thoughts are entertained, the less will be the dread or fear of death. You will judge by this sort of discourse that it is the dead of night, when all is quiet and at rest, and one of those intervals wherein men think of what they really are, and what they really should be; how much is expected, and how little performed. Our short duration here, and the doubts of hereafter, should awe and deter the most flagitious, if they reflected on them. The little time taken in for meditation is the best employed in all their lives; for if the uncertainty of our state and being is then brought before us, and that compared with our course of conduct, who is there that won't immediately discover the inconsistency of all his behaviour and the vanity of all his pursuits? And yet, we are so mixed and compounded that though I think seriously this minute, and lie down with good intentions, it is likely I may rise with my old nature, or perhaps with the addition of some new impertinence, and be the same wandering lump of idle errors that I have ever been.

You certainly advise me well. You have pointed out the only one way where there can be no disappointment, and comfort that will never fail us,—carrying men steadily and cheerfully in their journey, and a place of rest at the end.

¹ "It is already past twelve o'clock, and I am tired and sleepy. . . . This is my birthday. I am now seven and twenty years of age. What an unprofitable lout I am."—Froude's *Life of Carlyle*, p. 171.

Nobody can be more persuaded of it than I am ; but situation, example, the current of things, and our natural weakness draw me away with the herd, and only leave me just strength enough to resist the worst degree of our iniquities. There are times when men fret at trifles, and quarrel with their toothpicks. In one of these ill habits I exclaim against the present condition, and think it is the worst of all ; but coolly and temperately it is plainly the best. Where there is most employment and least vice, there one should wish to be. There is a meanness and a baseness not to endure with patience the little inconveniences we are subject to ; and to know no happiness but in one spot, and that in ease, in luxury, in idleness, seems to deserve our contempt. There are young amongst us that have great revenues and high military stations, that repine at three months' service with their regiments if they go fifty miles from home. Soup and *venaison* and turtle are their supreme delight and joy, —an effeminate race of coxcombs, the future leaders of our armies, defenders and protectors of our great and free nation !

You bid me avoid Fort William, because you believe it still worse than this place. That will not be my reason for wishing to avoid it ; but the change of conversation, the fear of becoming a mere ruffian, and of imbibing the tyrannical principles of an absolute commander, or giving way insensible to the temptations of power, till I become proud, insolent, and intolerable :—these considerations will make me wish to leave the regiment before the next winter, and always (if it could be so) after eight months' duty ; that by frequenting men above myself I may know my true condition, and by discoursing with the other sex may learn some civility and mildness of carriage, but never pay the price of the last improvement with the loss of reason. Better be a savage of some use than a gentle, amorous puppy, obnoxious to all the world. One of the wildest of wild clans is a worthier being than a perfect Philander.

[He had sat up composing this letter far into the night. Upon reading it in the morning a profound disgust seized upon him and he continued in a wholly different strain.]

I have had a mind to burn this letter. You'll think it too grave, unreasonably so ; or you may suspect I play the hypocrite, with design to lead you into an opinion of our reformation. Charles has bought me a French translation of Thucydides, and has not been paid. I wish you would desire my father to lay

down the money for me till we meet. It is a most incomparable book. I wish I may get £20, to pay these little incumbrances; anything more would be unreasonable to expect.

It is said that Lafausille is preparing to publish a new treatise of Discipline and Reflections upon the Government of Armies. I hope Loftus will add his Notes and Remarks, for the amusement of the public and great diversion of all his acquaintance. There is already so much nonsense upon this subject, and it is in itself so barren and dry (in the manner it is commonly treated), that I wonder at any attempt of the kind. Lord Molesworth and General Kane—two very accurate writers—have expressed their thoughts in a very pretty, concise discourse, to the great advantage and improvement of those persons for whom they were intended. These are the patterns for my brother lieutenant-colonel to imitate. Perhaps you'll imagine that this is all ill-nature in me, and that I envy him the reputation which must follow his labours. Upon my word, I do not; but I could wish that he could be contented with his share of fame. To speak fairly, I don't believe what I have heard, from my opinion of my friend's moderation.

Mrs. Inwood's great vivacity and great good-nature make her an excellent winter companion. She is very well in all seasons, but particularly in cold weather; her lively discourse in December makes some amends for her inactivity in May. One thing grieves me, that you must necessarily keep house while she stays; for I think I have heard you say that her wind won't last her a hundred yards, and that her action soon fails. If you will do me the favour to present my compliments to her, and assure her that I do not *rowll* about the room now, nor am I in that desperate condition that she has seen and known, and laughed at! I was shamefully beat at chess by a Scotch laird about five months ago; this has put me out of conceit of my own play. I must again become a scholar under Mrs. Inwood, to make me attentive to the game and teach me to think. I beg my duty to my father, and am,

Dear Madam, etc.,

JAMES WOLFE.

Wolfe by no means discontinued his studies at Inverness. Realizing the importance of mathematics he engaged a Mr. Barbour, who, like Dr. Samuel Johnson, "kept a schule and ca'd it an Acaademy," and who enjoyed much local repute as a mathematician,

to continue him in principles of Algebra and Geometry. The Lieutenant-Colonel thus humorously describes the effect of his renewed studies.

TO HIS FATHER.

Inverness, 12th January, 1752.

DEAR SIR,—I have read the mathematics till I am grown perfectly stupid, and have algebraically worked away the little portion of understanding that was allowed to me. They have not even left me the qualities of a coxcomb; for I can neither laugh nor sing, nor talk an hour upon nothing. The latter of these is a sensible loss, for it excludes a gentleman from all good company, and makes him entirely unfit for the conversation of the polite world. However, a man may make a neighbourlike appearance in this cold region with a moderate competency of knowledge, and with a degree of gravity that may supply the deficiency. And whoever goes to kirk (as I do) once a week, and there comports himself with more reverence to the priest than consideration for the nature of the business—herein I sometimes fail—will most assuredly and deservedly obtain the reputation of great wisdom and discretion. We are allowed to be the most religious foot officers that have been seen in the North for many a day, and some words are thrown away every Sunday in prayers for our amendment and exemplary life and conversation. See the variety and constant change of things: in most of our quarters we have been looked upon no better than as the sons of darkness, and given up unto Satan; here we are white as the snow that cover all the hills about,—not from want of temptation to sin, you may believe, but from sudden conversion and power to resist.

My uncle Wat has given over corresponding with me,—at least I imagine so. I believe we don't agree in our system of military affairs, and therefore he drops me, as an innovator in discipline. I hear he is very well. Mr. Fisher is empowered to do prodigious things with my prize in the lottery; amongst the rest he will pay for my French Thucydides—*our* historian—I speak as a soldier. I am thinking what a noble balance there will be on my side when our accounts are settled! I beg my duty to my mother, and am,

Dear Sir, etc.,

JAM. WOLFE.

There are worse—and less appropriate—ways of disbursing a prize won in a lottery than by purchasing the volumes of Voltaire.

To HIS MOTHER.

Inverness, Jan. 24th (O.S.), 1752.

DEAR MADAM,—I don't always understand myself and can't therefore wonder that I am sometimes unintelligible to others. However, I don't mean to be obscure in my discourse to you, and so my words generally bear the sense that they are most usually taken in; their common acceptation—when this is not the case, and the meaning not plain, pray be so good to burn the letter. I think your hardest task will be to make out the words. If I did not know the best part of what I had writ it would be sometimes difficult to read my own writing. I am quite sensible that you are nohow concerned in military affairs, and have given me no positive orders to reside here, or there; nor are you the cause of any evil that falls upon me; so I repent me much, if words have dropped from me that are unpleasant and unsuitable—or seem to proceed from a restless and fretful temper inconsistent with the regard due to your peace which I should be sorry to disturb for myself. I do not know what demon possessed me at that unlucky hour; but I have never known my thoughts less confused than of late, and easy stupidity and insensibility seems to have crept into me; and does the part of reason in keeping the vessel steady, with prodigious success. It is so pleasing a state that I prefer it to any conceit that the fancy can produce, any whirlwind of the brain, or violent chase after nothing—the one goes slowly, sedately, and heavily, the other distractedly to the same end. That I am still here, is a proof that you have no power to remove me—but you may be assured by way of comfort, that I can sleep through any mischance and dose away all my complaints.

So many fine people concurring in the same views and disappointed at last; a union so well suited, that they justly obtain the name of agreeable, and get their ticket a blank—is a flagrant proof that these matters are wholly governed by chance and accident, and no sort of regard is had to the just pretensions of the select few: Are all your's blank? There are thousands in the same case, that can less afford the loss—I think it is very good in you to contribute so much to the public expenses. I hope when your houses are sold, you will be enabled to do more, and help to maintain the army and the fleet.

Charles says, there's thirty sail, in the harbour at Plymouth. I got a letter from little Rickson the other day, who never forgets to make grateful mention of the civility he received from my father and you, and to offer his respects; he languishes and sighs for his native country; though the affairs of that province are in a better way than formerly. Parry assures me that he will send some shells to Mr. Fisher by the first ship that goes from Edinburgh and he makes me believe that Major Innes will send sixty or seventy pounds of Minorcan honey from port Mahon as quick as possible. I am sure the jar you were so kind as to give me, has, and continues to be of great service, I can't be too thankful for such a favour.

What hinders you from meeting as usual? I hope your parties are not so scattered but you may collect again. The dull winter hours require some dissipation, people want to be enlivened in such a dead season.

Mrs. Wilmot is the oldest of all my old friends and acquaintance, and I never see her but with great pleasure, and love to hear her name mentioned—is she as merry as heretofore? does she laugh away all her life? I hope her good humour will never forsake her. I have recovered my hearing, within these three weeks—a month ago I could not hear my watch strike with the right ear, and it has been so ever since I left London; exercise and temperance have brought this about, and will do the rest in time. I am pleased to know that you are both in health—I beg my duty to my father and am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM. WOLFE.

To MRS. WOLFE,
Greenwich, Kent, Sth. Britain.

His absence in the Highlands had not caused his influential friends to forget him. His inamorata's uncle, Sir John Mordaunt, tried to get him an appointment as aide-de-camp, fearing that a too long expatriation might put the young officer out of the lists of preferment, but the Duke of Cumberland had other views and the application was refused. Wolfe was not sorry, as the following letter shows.

To HIS FATHER.

February 1st, 1752.

DEAR SIR,—I told you my reasons why I thought there was nothing to be expected in Ireland before I knew your sentiments

on that subject. I may add that as Lord George did not seem to hearken to what was dropped [relative to the aide-de-camp's employ] last winter in London, it is not very probable he has changed his opinion.

It is, no doubt, a ready road to recommendation and preferment, if a man acquits himself as he ought; but to speak truly I am by no means calculated for an office of that kind, upon several accounts, and therefore don't grieve much at the refusal, though not the less obliged to Sir John for proposing it. While I do serve I do not wish to be out of my character, nor receive my pay in idleness.

The snow begins to melt, so that the roads and rivers will be for a while impassable. There are some rapid rivers in this country that have neither bridge or boat, upon the highway from Inverness to Edinburgh, so that when a quantity of water falls from the mountains, the post and passengers are retarded till it runs off. We had no other way of distinguishing Christmas than that we found it, as it commonly is, the coldest time of the year, and made a larger fire than usual, and ate exceeding bad mince-pies that our sutler's wife, who is a very religious woman, begged we might taste. . . . The spring that gives a new face to the whole creation, will enliven us all.

I am, etc., etc.,

J. WOLFE.

To HIS MOTHER.

Inverness, Feb. 14th, 1752.

DEAR MADAM,—It is very pleasing to me, to know that our sentiments agree, let the subject be what it will; but I should be much better satisfied, if all the actions of my life were such as you would approve of; for, it is evident, that our words are no proof of good conduct: they don't always express our thoughts; but, what a man does may be depended upon, and is the true measure of his worth. The lady you mentioned is very fair of speech, and yet you see how little to be trusted to in other respects, and how subtle. I have formerly observed her disposition, (but not so accurately as I might have done) and did not always like the appearances as they struck me; but, I saw how deeply Charles was involved, and therefore forebore to speak too freely, that I might not torment him; the way she treated him, would have opened the eyes of a less amorous

gallant, and turned his love and admiration into perfect contempt. I hope however that you have not divulged what she was pleased to say of me, in obedience to her mother; for these reasons, that it will do her an irreparable injury; and if it should reach Charles's ear, will give him pain; I dare say these considerations have had their just weight with you. As you foretold, Mr. Swinden has written to remind me of my promise, I only stand engaged in case a boy comes forth, and I recommend my little godson to your kindness, if it so happens; and my expense shall be repaid you, when the arrears come in.¹ I did not know the price of the books, but Miss Brett will be soon informed of that. We are not enough acquainted with ourselves to determine our future conduct, nor can any man foresee what shall happen—but as far as one may hazard a conjecture—there is a great probability that I shall never marry. I shall hardly engage in an affair of that nature purely for money: nor do I believe that my infatuation will ever be strong enough to persuade me, that people can live without it: besides, unless there be violence done to my inclinations, by the power of some gentle nymph, I had much rather listen to the drum and trumpet than any softer sound whatever. Fisher gave me early notice of my prize—but alas, that does not make me amends for a horse that I lost in the beginning of the winter by the neglect of the keeper—a beast that cost me five and twenty pounds, though he was not worth half the money.

Loftus has always been an old fashioned coxcomb—a tawdry kind of beau. I suppose he would dress the regiment in his own taste; he's one of those people who think there can't be too much finery, no matter where 'tis stuck.

Miss Brett's kindness for her brother cannot be enough admired; he is going to a strange place, and she is resolved he shall want for nothing. Charles is in reputation for chastity, so she may be sure the girls (though they are handsome) will be quite safe with him. I have just now received a letter from my uncle Walter—he enquires after my father and you, and seems concerned that he has not heard from either for a long while. I hope you will succeed in the

¹ This godson did not survive. Mrs. Wolfe bequeathed £500 to Susannah, daughter of the Rev. S. F. Swinden; but no son of his is mentioned in her will. Wolfe was godfather to many other boys, amongst whom was the late Lord Cringletie, son of Lieut.-Colonel Murray, and father of James Wolfe Murray, Esq., who has three sons, all of whom bear the name of "Wolfe." Wright, 1864.—One of these sons is Sir James Wolfe Murray.

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management of all your London affairs, that you may have an end to such unpleasant business. My washer-woman says she thinks I shall hold out till next autumn with her assistance: she has promised to keep everything very tight, and if she's as good as her word, it will save you the trouble of sending any new linen. My compliments to Mrs. Inwood and to Miss Brett. I beg my duty to my father, and am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM: WOLFE.

To MRS. WOLFE,
Greenwich.

To HIS MOTHER.

Inverness, 6th March, 1752.

DEAR MADAM,—The greatest pleasure your letters can give me is to know that you are both in good health, and, consequently, in the enjoyment of every good that follows it. If I could be always well assured of that, I should not insist any further, but leave it to any moment of your leisure to treat of light matters. An empty house is a very burdensome possession, and you are happy that you have got rid of yours,¹ if there was no other reason than that it eases your mind of an encumbrance otherwise not easily shaken off; for as we accustom ourselves from infancy to measure our real good by the condition of our little affairs, and do often place our happiness or misery in opinion, and the comparing our situation with that of other people, we are apt to torment ourselves with crosses and accidents much more than their nature deserves. This leads one to a conclusion that perhaps there is a possibility of going through the business of the world without any strong connection or attachment or anything that is in it, and with a kind of indifference as to what happens. The danger of this indifference is, that in time it may turn to dislike, and, unless reasonably curbed, may influence our conduct, and make us fall out with ourselves, which of all quarrels is the most dangerous, and the most difficult to reconcile. But, sure, every man of common sense will discover beauty and virtue enough to keep him in good temper; and if not, he will try to possess himself of magnanimity to resist evil, and a certain portion of benevolence that shall incline him to think charitably of what is due to the crowd.

¹ The Greenwich house was sold.

I have lately fallen into the acquaintance (by mere chance) of two young Scotch ladies, with whose conversation I am infinitely delighted. They are birds of a fine feather, and very rare in this country. One of them is a wife, the other a maid. The former has the strongest understanding, the other has the prettiest face; but as I am not disposed to become the slave of either, the matron stands first. I mention this circumstance to clear up all doubt that might arise from the subject, and I speak of these ladies to show that we should not despair, and that some satisfaction may be found even where it is least expected.

Lord George is the man of all my acquaintance that I most wish to see married: he has the necessary qualifications of riches (for we must put that first), honour, prudence and good temper, and is come to years of discretion, as it is called.

Lord Bury comes down in April; he'll stay six weeks, and then swear there's no enduring it any longer, and beg leave to return. "Wolfe, you'll stay in the Highlands; you can't with any face, ask to quit the regiment so dispersed; and when you have clothed and sent them to their different quarters, towards the end of November you shall come to London, my dear friend, for three months." This will be his discourse, and I must say, "My Lord, you are very kind!" Here are people that remember to have seen my father at Fort William. I never heard him mention that. Perhaps he has been silent because there is a circumstance attending it that does him honour. Of all men upon earth, I believe he speaks the least in his own praise, and that's the reason why I never expect to see his name in the *Gazette*. I am, etc., etc.,

JAM. WOLFE.

"There is good reason to conclude," observes Wright,¹ "that the 'matron' alluded to above was Mrs. Forbes, wife of John, only son of the famous Lord President. It will be seen that Wolfe entertained a high regard for that lady, concerning whose health he frequently inquires after he left Scotland. It is much more pleasing to look upon the old historic house as the scene of Mrs. Forbes's genial hospitality towards the as yet comparatively undistinguished officer, than as the temporary abode of the young Chevalier and of his successful rival before and after the bloody battle that terminated the rebellion."

¹ *Life*, p. 198.

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To HIS FATHER.

Inverness, 20th March, 1752.

DEAR SIR,—The meeting of the whole regiment and Lord Bury's presence will put me to the necessity of changing my manner of living, and if I don't acquire more knowledge I shall certainly get more health by the change. I have already mentioned what kind of weather and how severe a winter we have had, and when I add the impossibility of stirring out of the town and the difficulty of finding a conversible fit companion in it, you may believe that my long confinement has perhaps been more from necessity than choice. I can't drink nor play without the fear of destroying the officers, and some of them are already but too much inclined to that ruinous and disastrous vice.

It will be in the middle of May before we are reviewed, and near the latter end when we send out our Highland detachment. June is everywhere a pleasant month, and in July we may begin to shoot. Lord Bury likes his diversion, and so do I. He'll keep me to carry his powder horn and flints; we shall ramble from post to post till he's tired and goes off, and then I shall retreat into Fort William and remain there until further orders. Years roll on in this way, and are (unluckily for us) never to be recalled. Our friends forget us; we grow rustic, hard-tempered and severe, and insensibly fall into a course of thought and action that is more readily observed than corrected. We use a very dangerous freedom and looseness of speech amongst ourselves; this by degrees makes wickedness and debauchery less odious than it should be, if not familiar, and sets truth, religion and virtue at a great distance. I hear things every day said that would shock your ears, and often say things myself that are not fit to be repeated, perhaps without any ill intention, but merely by the force of custom. The best that can be offered in our defence is, that some of us see the evil and wish to avoid it.

I have shut my books and am every fair day on horseback. I am sorry you have entirely given up that sort of exercise, because it is, beyond all dispute, the best. I hope you are persuaded that motion of some kind or other is necessary to your health. I take the freedom to put you in mind of it, because you seem sometimes less solicitous about it than it really deserves. My mother suffers when you do, so that I am doubly interested in your welfare. I beg my duty to my mother, and am, etc.,

JAM. WOLFE.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Inverness, *April 10th*, 1752.

DEAR MADAM,—However I may be disposed of, you may be secure and satisfied that I shall in all things consider my condition; shall bear any ill-treatment with patience and fortitude, and must always think that he who has lost his liberty, or was never free, has nothing worth contending for. If it was left to my choice, I should run away to the Austrian camp at Luxembourg, or to the French army in Lorraine; for I don't think myself quite secure in England, and my course of thought leads me to shun danger and seek improvement.

The Lieutenant-Colonel you speak of (I suppose you mean Aldercron) is near the top of our list; he has been strongly recommended from Ireland, with the title of long service to support the recommendation.¹ My success in that way depends upon events not to be wished or hoped for. I can only rise in war, by my willingness to engage in it. In these cooler times the parliamentary interest and weight of particular families annihilates all other pretensions; when I am amongst the youngest of my own rank, and have had as great favour shown me as I could modestly expect. Don't believe that I am insensible of your affectionate concern and my father's in the matter; I know well from whence it flows, and that knowledge will help me to bear little afflictions without wavering or repining; for I know no better reason to be contented than that you wish it, and when I'm not truly satisfied I'll endeavour to appear so. I must send off my books and recommend them to your care; the weight grows too considerable for long journeys, and a few well chosen is a great library for a soldier.

I am, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Lord Bury appears to have been a somewhat difficult personage. It was in the highest degree improbable that two natures so diametrically opposed could work together without discomfort to at least one of them. Bury was but little Wolfe's senior, but he was the son of a lord and heir to an earldom. He was arbitrary

¹ Lieut.-Colonel John Aldercron, of the 7th Foot, succeeded to the colonelcy of *Richbell's*—39th (East Middlesex) in March 1752. Early in 1754 he embarked for Madras with his regiment,—“*Primus in Indis*,”—and was nominated Commander-in-Chief in India. He became a Lieut.-General in 1760, and died in July 1766.—Wright.

and capricious. Wolfe was conscious that Lord Bury, who had the ear of the Commander-in-Chief, perpetually stood in his way, and there were times when he felt an inclination to cut and run from it all. He was not a peace soldier. If he was to rise very high it must be through active service, and active service was not to be had in the Highlands of Scotland.

An illustration of his Colonel's temper was furnished when Bury finally joined his regiment. To find an instance of such a want of tact would be to ransack history indeed. Wolfe's manners and the behaviour that he had inculcated upon his men had almost entirely removed the aversion which the town of Inverness and the surrounding inhabitants had first felt for the soldiery. The latter had even grown popular. On the arrival of Bury on April 13 the Provost and Councillors requested his presence at a celebration of the Duke of Cumberland's birthday. Bury observed that he was delighted to find the inhabitants of Inverness so loyal. But he believed that there was another occasion at hand whose celebration would give his Royal Highness even greater pleasure. This was the anniversary of the Battle of Culloden. Consternation appeared upon the faces of the deputation; they retired saying that they would consult their colleagues. From men with a particle of manhood, a tame acquiescence in such a suggestion could hardly be expected. They declined to celebrate the fall of their sons, brothers and kinsmen, and a further deputation waited upon Bury with an answer to this effect. Bury's retort was to threaten them with a military outbreak as a result of the disappointment his soldiers would feel. This frightened the poor Provost and deputation into compliance; but what the Lieutenant-Colonel must have thought of the tactlessness of such a proceeding can best be conjectured. It is safe to say he took no part in this impolitic celebration of the Battle of Culloden.

TO HIS FATHER.

Inverness, *April 23rd*, 1752.

DEAR SIR,—I am awakened from a state of indolence and inactivity by the recollection of what is due to you.

This is the first letter that I have penned since Lord Bury came here. His Lordship pays my attendance upon him with fair words and promises; and he thinks it highly reasonable that my long confinement should have an end, though he is far from being sure of the Duke's consent. I tell him the matter of fact, that when I feel any extraordinary restraint, and am kept longer

with the regiment than is equitable, I hate the sight of a soldier ; have, nevertheless, too much niceness to neglect the service, and too much indifference, as to reputation and applause, to exert myself to any high degree. Some of these young men have borrowed their notions of arms, and the people that compose them, from neighbouring nations, and seem of opinion that a stupid kind of obedience and conformity to their will supplies the want of military virtue and ability.

Fifteen companies of Foot are to work this summer at the new fort.

I am, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

The longest winter wears away at last, and Wolfe's departure from Inverness drew near. He had now the prospect of leave of absence at a favourable season of the year, and he determined to take advantage of it. If he could not leave the kingdom he could at least go to Ireland, and for Ireland Wolfe always cherished a warm affection. Early in May, he bade a final farewell to his friends in Inverness. He had still a term to fulfil at Fort Augustus, before he could set out on his travels.

Fort Augustus has been made familiar to us through the Highland journey of Dr. Johnson.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Inverness, 16th May, 1752.

DEAR MADAM,—The best return I can make for your kind inquiry and care about my health is to inform you, as quickly as possible, that I am extremely well, much better than I have been since I came last to Scotland. I wish you would always entertain yourself with cheerful thoughts, believe your friends as you desire they should be, and put off your concern till you are convinced of the contrary. Though I would not willingly be forgot, nor even remembered with indifference, yet, rather than disturb your peace and felicity, I should be content to be not much thought of. Half of our misery arises from self-tormenting imaginations. The apprehension and dread of evil is the greatest of our misfortunes in this life. Take away the mischiefs that the fancy suggests, and it will considerably lighten our burden.

Lord Bury first advised me not to ask leave of absence, but afterwards he changed his opinion. I have reason to think that

it will not be refused. My curiosity and the necessity of riding about will put me upon undertaking a very long journey. I find that a sedentary life is a very dangerous one, and therefore propose this new plan by way of trial, and to refresh and amuse myself. At the end of this tour I shall have the pleasure of seeing my father and you, and if I find you in health I shall find what I most wish for.

Teeth are valuable from their great use; the other day I broke a fine large one all to pieces. At Paris they put in artificial teeth that are every way as serviceable as the natural ones, and perhaps they may do the same in London. I see no harm in repairing any loss of this kind, as we really can't eat or speak properly without them. Don't let accidents of this kind disturb you a moment; there are looks for all seasons of our life. You may stand by any lady of your age in Christendom, and have through your whole time been a match for all the beauties your contemporaries. We have this comfort, that a leg, an eye, or a tooth lost, does not necessarily carry away with it any one good quality. We can be as charitable, as liberal, and as honest, wanting any of these members as with them. There is an old general mentioned in history that had but one left of what everybody else has commonly two; and yet with one leg, one arm, one eye and one ear, he was, for a drunken man, the best officer of his day.¹

You cannot but pass your time agreeably. What addition of happiness could you desire? A pleasant house and garden, fine air, beautiful walks, plenty of good food, books, a sweet-tempered young lady to read to you and help to divert you. You have a great deal of company, you owe nobody a sixpence, and your friends and acquaintances love and esteem you. For my part, I think this a situation to be envied, and that all these fair appearances would be nothing without a conscience free from pangs and an universal benevolence to mankind. With these supports we enjoy the present hours, but are not therefore unmindful of our natural end. You say your trees are in bloom, and you wish not to kill them with too much fruit.

The remedy is very easy; pluck off the superfluity, and only leave as much as they can afford to nourish, and that will be but very little. Let other gardens find you fruit this year and the next, and then your own will supply you.

¹ Josias, Comte de Rantzau of Holstein, died 1650.

Mr. Skinner has brought my shirts, and they please me much. Are not the ruffles a small matter too long? I have wore my old linen to shivers, and do really thank you for this seasonable relief. I sent a trunk to London with books and two pieces of Irish cloth, under the care of an old sergeant of the regiment. You may open it if you please. I beg my compliments to Miss Brydges.¹ My duty to my father, etc.

JAM. WOLFE.

While on the march, Wolfe and the few companies he took with him, heard much of the murder of Colin Campbell of "Glenure." This singularly dramatic crime has since engaged the pens of many historians and novelists from Sir Walter Scott to R. L. Stevenson and Mr. Andrew Lang. The supposed assassin was one Alan Breck, a cadet of the House of Stuart.

TO HIS FATHER.

Fort Augustus, *May 28th, 1752.*

DEAR SIR,—We have been here about ten days, and the garrison at present consists of two field-officers, five or six other officers, and fourscore recruits. Lord Bury was soon tired and went off to Fort William; from thence he goes to Lord Breadal-baine's, and in a little while after to England. I can't find work enough to employ me here, and as the weather is tolerably fair, will visit some of our posts, and perhaps accept of an invitation from the Laird of Macleod, who offers to show me a very extraordinary old castle in the Isle of Skye.² Mr. Collingwood, our Lieutenant-Governor, is an old acquaintance of yours; he expresses great esteem for you, and desires me to tell you so. He is very agreeable to us all in his character of Governor, and if he can't make the place quite pleasant, he endeavours to make it easy.

You have heard of the strange murder that was committed about a fortnight since by two Highlanders, at the instigation, it is believed, of a lady, the wife of a banished rebel. The gentleman was an Argylishire man, and factor upon some of the forfeited estates. Several men are apprehended upon suspicion,

¹ Catherine, fourth daughter of the Hon. and Rev. Henry Brydges, and sister to Mrs. Inwood. She afterwards married Lindley Simpson, Esq., of Babworth, Notts. Mrs. Wolfe bequeathed her the sum of £200, "together with my picture of her sister, and my painted dressing-glass and boxes, in my house at Bath."—Wright.

² Dunvegan Castle.

but I'm sure it will be very difficult to discover the actors of this bloody deed. The factor intended to remove the old tenants and to plant others in their room, and this is supposed to be their reason for killing him.

One of our officers has sent me a roebuck. It is a curious kind of deer, less than our fallow-deer, but seldom fit to eat. I intend to have it tamed and carried to England, as a present to my mother. It will be three weeks or a month before we shall be told whether we may go or must stay. They are more exact and ready in warning us of the expiration of our leave than in granting it. I wish you much health, beg my duty to my mother, and am,

Dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Not all of Wolfe's officers were so little enamoured of the Highlands as he himself was. One of his captains, Alexander Trapaud, known familiarly to him as "Trap," really expressed a preference for Fort Augustus over any other station. They doubtless indulged in much raillery on the subject, but a few months after Wolfe left "Trap" had an opportunity of testifying to his preference in a practical fashion. He applied for and obtained the post of lieutenant-governor of the fort, and there for three and forty years he remained. At Fort Augustus this friend of Wolfe married, reared a family and duly paid the debt of nature at the advanced age of eighty-four, happy in being the principal character in the locality and entertaining all strangers who visited that remote region with the utmost civility. Here in 1773 came Dr. Johnson and Boswell on their route to the Hebrides, and here they passed one August night. "It was comfortable," wrote Boswell, "to find ourselves in a well-built little square and so neatly-furnished house, in good company and with a good supper before us; in short, with all the conveniences of civilized life, in the midst of rude mountains Mrs. Trapaud and the Governor's daughter and her husband, Captain Newmarsh, were all most obliging and polite."

As for Dr. Johnson, he says in his own narrative: "Mr. Trapaud, the Governor, treated us with that courtesy which is so closely connected with the military character. He came out to meet us beyond the gates and apologized that at so late an hour the rules of a garrison suffered him to give us entrance only at the postern."

IX

FROM DUBLIN TO PARIS

WOLFE reached Perth on June 20, and here renewed his acquaintance with some of his old friends, officers in his father's regiment stationed in the royal city. While at Perth he wrote Mrs. Wolfe, but did not complete the letter until he arrived in Glasgow, *en route* for Ireland.

To HIS MOTHER.

Perth, June 26, 1752.

DEAR MADAM,—I stopped three or four days in this place to divert myself with Loftus, who is, I think, rather more humorous and pleasant than he used to be, at least he appears so to me, who am almost grave. He goes with me to Glasgow, where I leave him, and proceed on my journey to Port Patrick. Loftus tells me that the physicians have all along mistaken his case; that so far from having his blood tainted (as they have been pleased to insinuate), it is to his fine habit of body, and strength of constitution that he is indebted for his recovery.

Mr. Pattison sends a pointer to Blackheath; if you will order him to be tied up in your stable, or in Mr. Woodcock's it will oblige me much. The dog is very ugly but very good.

I have not yet determined when I shall go, nor how I shall travel, only in general that I intend to see the North of Ireland and the cities of Cork and Dublin.

If you hear of a good servant that can, or will learn to dress a wig and save me that prodigious expense in London, it will be a favour done me to engage him, at least so far that I may take him or not when I see him; sometime towards the latter end of August or beginning of September. John is dirty and grows impertinent, the other I have turned away for killing one horse and for spoiling the rest.

I have another favour to beg of you, and you'll think it an odd one; 'tis to order some currant jelly to be made in a crock for my use. It is the custom in Scotland to eat it in the morning with bread; I find it not only a very pleasant custom but a very wholesome one.

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You know what a whimsical sort of person I am and how variable and unsteady; nothing pleases me now but the rougher kind of entertainments, such as hunting, shooting and fishing; there's none of that kind near London, and I have distant notions of taking a little, very little house, remote upon the edge of the forest, or waste, merely for sport, and keep it till we go to Minorca.

Perth, *24th June, 1752.*

I writ the above portion of my letter at Perth, and I close it at Glasgow. Loftus is by and makes such a noise that I must finish as quick as possible. I should be glad to have the shirts made like the last as to the collars and sleeves, but a little longer and quite plain, for I must be at some expense for fine ruffles. I am vastly glad to hear that you are both so well—may you long continue so. My duty to my father.

I am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate Son,

J. WOLFE.

Glasgow, *June 26.*

The idea of a sporting lodge in the Highlands, so strikingly novel in 1752, has since become a familiar one to the natives of these islands.

Without lingering at Glasgow many days, the Lieutenant-Colonel set off at the end of June from Port Patrick on his Irish holiday. We must rely upon tradition for Wolfe's itinerary after his landing in the north of Ireland. It appears he visited Belfast and Londonderry, and no doubt spent some days near the scene of his ancestors' feats of arms at Limerick. When our hero arrived in Dublin he saw the Irish capital at the height of its outward splendour and political importance, the seat of an Irish Parliament, and of the Viceregal Court. On the day following his arrival in Dublin he thus writes to his father—

TO HIS FATHER.

Dublin, *13th July, 1752.*

DEAR SIR,—This is the first day of rest since I left Glasgow. I came here last night not a little fatigued, you may believe, with such continued hard exercise, but otherwise in better condition than I have known for fourteen months past, leaner than can be described, and burnt to a chip. I have seen your

letter to my uncle, and am greatly concerned that your health is not so perfect as I always wish it to be. If the season has been of the same sort that they have had in this country,—very wet and cold,—it may be accounted for, and a drier air, and more sun will, I hope, relieve you. My uncle has complaints in his back and limbs, and is obliged to put on flannels; whether it be the rheumatism or gout flying about him, his physicians cannot determine. He is otherwise cheerful and well. I stay here four or five days, and then set out for Cork, where I shall embark in one of the Bristol ships; and if I find myself strong in health and in circumstances shall continue my journey from Bristol through the West, and so home.

I came yesterday from Drogheda, but not till I had seen that ground and the river so remarkable in our history. The protestants have erected a monument in memorial of their deliverance, very near the ford where the King crossed the Boyne. The inscriptions take notice of the happy consequences of the battle, and on one side of the pillar they do honour to the memory of Duke Schomberg. I had more satisfaction in looking at this spot than in all the variety that I have met with; and perhaps there is not another piece of ground in the world that I could take so much pleasure to observe.

The north of Ireland and the neighbourhood of this city are very little inferior for beauty and fertility to any parts of England that I have seen, and others they exceed in both. And there is yet great room for different improvements, particularly in planting and draining the boggy grounds. They have fine clear streams as can be seen, and very large timber where it is encouraged; but I am told that the best estates are involved deeply in debt, the tenants racked and plundered, and consequently industry and good husbandry disappointed or destroyed.

This appears to be a prodigious city, and they continue to build; the streets are crowded with people of a large size and well limbed, and the women very handsome. They have clearer skins and fairer complexions than the women in England or Scotland, and are exceedingly straight and well made. You'll be surprised that I should know this so soon, but I have seen a multitude already, for they take some pains to show themselves. My uncle seems to have preserved his cheerfulness and vivacity. He joins with me in wishing you both all manner of good.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

JAM. WOLFE,

It must have been a source of the most lively satisfaction to Major Wolfe to have his brilliant nephew with him. There is some reason for believing that he was Wolfe's godfather: at all events, the Major stood in a fervently avuncular relation to him. Major Wolfe was an old bachelor. He had often visited his brother's family when James was a child and detected unusual qualities in the boy. He was always urging him forward, and begging him to remember that his purse was ever open to his necessities. "Uncle Wat," as his nephew always affectionately styles him, was a character not unlike "my Uncle Toby." His talk was all of column, square and echelon, convex and concave fronts, and the formal tactics and complicated drill of Marlborough's day. Wolfe, like most young men, and especially those who had seen so much of the actual practice of warfare, was inclined to hold views which the elder man warmly denounced as heterodox. The Major probably resided at Lucas's Coffee House, on Cork Hill, near the Castle. At all events, this was his favourite place of resort, as it was of all officers in Dublin, being indeed a sort of military rendezvous and officers' club. The ground immediately in the rear of Lucas's enjoyed a somewhat sinister reputation in those days, inasmuch as this was the scene of numberless duels. Such affairs of honour commonly drew a crowd of gallant spectators to the windows of the establishment, some of whom were prepared to back their favourite combatant with their money.

It is much to be regretted that we possess no further account of Wolfe's journeyings in the south of Ireland. About the middle of August he crossed the Channel to Bristol and made his way thence to Blackheath. The house which Wolfe now visited for the first time, and by which its owner and builder set great store, still survives with its sombre front facing Blackheath Common in nearly the same state as it was a century and a half ago. The land upon which the house stands and the not very extensive garden behind it are carved out of Greenwich Park, so that in those days, when the Park was not so much frequented by the populace, as it became at a later period, the General may be considered as claiming its beauty and expanse as his own. It is in an elevated situation at the top of Croom's Hill, and before it rose eventually a shaded avenue, now called Chesterfield Walk, out of compliment to the noble lord who established his suburban residence in the fine Queen Anne mansion a stone's throw from that of the Wolfes. Chesterfield was, at the moment of Wolfe's arrival in Blackheath, enjoying an unusual amount of celebrity as the pro-

moter of the famous change in the calendar, by which the 3rd of September, 1752, became the 14th, and the new year was decreed to begin on the 1st of January instead of the 25th March.¹

At Blackheath Wolfe waited somewhat impatiently for a favourable response to his further application for leave to go abroad. Why this should have been withheld was something of a mystery unless it was that the General or Mrs. Wolfe secretly opposed the idea, as fearing that their son might contract an undesirable alliance either marital or military. We have already seen his half-threats to embrace the Prussian service, and it is believed Count Lacey offered him an appointment on his staff. Again, the Duke of Cumberland probably condemned as arrant nonsense the idea of any officer improving his ideas by foreign travel. His Colonel, Lord Bury, discouraged the notion out of purely selfish reasons, until he began to see his Lieutenant-Colonel's temper rising, and fearing to lose him altogether interceded with the Commander-in-Chief. Very luckily for Wolfe, Bury's father, the Earl of Albemarle, was British Ambassador to the Court of Versailles, and this promised to render Wolfe's path a pleasant one. On October 2, therefore, armed with several letters to persons of influence, he set out for Paris. The young officer could hardly have visited the French capital at a more propitious moment. There was an interval—brief enough as it turned out—of peace between the two countries. Louis XV was in the height of his career of luxury, vice and splendour. But it was neither Louis nor his ministers, but the Marquise de Pompadour who governed the kingdom.

This daughter of a humble army commissary, François Poisson, had been some time installed at Versailles, first as mistress and afterwards as *ami nécessaire*. It is amazing to read of the incessant artifices this woman resorted to in order to keep her power—"the everlasting huntings, concerts, private theatricals, late suppers and what not—anything to distract the royal mind and to make it think only of the clever purveyor of gaieties." Being a woman of real ability she gradually became premier of France, and the ministerial council condescended to assemble in her boudoir.

¹ This reform of the Calendar has been fruitful of much confusion as regards the dating of letters: particularly those written by Wolfe. But before 1753 it had been the practice to indicate both years in letters penned between January 1 and Lady Day—thus: 1751-2, or 17 $\frac{1}{2}$, sometimes increasing instead of lessening the confusion. Or the writer forgot the precise year, leaving to posterity to ascertain it, if, in the case of his letters, it were worth ascertaining.

To HIS FATHER.

Paris, 9th October, 1752.

DEAR SIR,—As I am vastly sensible of the many favours and marks of kindness that you have heaped upon me, so I shall endeavour to make you as sensible of my gratitude. Your generous proceeding in enabling me to undertake this business shall never be forgot. I hope and I dare say you have overlooked and forgiven that part of my former conduct you had just reason to be displeas'd with in the belief that it arose more from my distemper than from my natural disposition.

I think it was the 2nd of October that I left Blackheath. I lay that night at Canterbury; an old friend, a captain of Dragoons, supped with me, and helped to deliver me from my own thoughts. The 3rd I went to Dover, and as my old Lady Grey's house was in the way I called on her, and was very graciously received.¹ She pressed me to dine, but that could not be, as the time of the packet's sailing was uncertain. At her house I met a Miss Scott, whom my mother has heard of. The good old lady diverted herself with us two, told each that the other was not married, offer'd her mediation, and thought it a very lucky encounter, for the young lady and I got to the house exactly at the same time. However, I escaped untouched, and left my old friend to make up matters as she pleas'd. The packet did not sail that night, but we embark'd at half-an-hour after six on Wednesday morning, and got into Calais at ten. I never suffer'd so much in so short a time at sea. There were two English gentlemen of condition in the ship travelling my way; we agreed to come together, and on Saturday, the 7th, in the morning, arriv'd at Paris without any sort of difficulty or inconvenience.

The people seem (as their character is) to be very sprightly, and to deal largely in the exterior; for a man can hardly commit a greater crime than to be *mal misé, ou mal coiffé*.

The buildings are very magnificent, far surpassing any we have in London; I mean the houses of the higher nobility and peers of France. The Gardens des Tuileries, that you have heard so much of, is as disagreeable a sandy walk as one would wish. They are indeed near the Seine and the Louvre, but have little else to recommend them. The Mall, or your park at Greenwich, are infinitely superior. There are no fortified towns

¹ Lady Grey of Howick, see *post*, p. 293.

between Calais and Paris ; the country is very beautiful in most places, entirely in corn, and quite open where the woods allow it to be so ; that is, there are few or no enclosures.

Mr. Selwin¹ has recommended a French master to me, and in a few days I begin to ride in the Academy, but must dance and fence in my own lodgings, for fear of a discovery. A letter would miscarry that had any strokes of politics in it, so I shall never touch that matter ; besides, it is neither your taste nor mine. The Dauphin is perfectly recovered,² and I believe the people are very hearty and sincere in the satisfaction and pleasure they profess upon that occasion. The Duke of Orleans, to signify his particular joy, has given an entertainment at St. Cloud, in the highest taste and magnificence, and at prodigious expense.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

The Mr. Haren of the following was an old friend of the Wolfes in Burlington Gardens.

To HIS MOTHER.

Paris, 26th October, 1752.

DEAR MADAM,—Having discovered that I understand but little of the French language, and that I speak it very incorrectly (Notwithstanding Mr. Haren's honourable approbation), I am disposed to fall upon some method that may lead me to a better knowledge of that useful tongue. The first necessary step is to leave off speaking English, and to write it as little as possible. This resolution of mine shall not, however, extend so far as to cut off all communication between us, for I had rather lose this or a much greater advantage than be denied the satisfaction of expressing my regard for you in the plainest and dearest manner ; and I will borrow neither the language nor meaning of these airy people when I speak of that.

Lord Albemarle is come from Fontainebleau to his country house within two miles of Paris, and will soon be fixed for the cold season. I went to Fontainebleau to pay my respects to him, and have very good reason to be pleased with the reception I met with. The best amusement for strangers in Paris is the Opera, and the next to that is the playhouse. There are some fine voices in the first, and several good actors in the last. The

¹ An English banker in Paris.

² Of the small-pox.

theatre is a school to acquire the French language, for which reason I frequent it more than the other. Besides it is a cheaper diversion. You'll be glad to hear that your nephew Whetham¹ is in very good hands; his governor, or companion, is a gentleman of Switzerland, who was formerly in the army, and is very well spoken of. My cousin is expected here in three weeks or a month, and he stays all the winter in Paris. Madame Pompadour is a very agreeable woman. I had the good fortune to be placed near her for a considerable time. I beg my duty to my father, and wish you both health and all the good you deserve.

I am, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Madame de Pompadour observed of the British Ambassador to France, "Milord Albemarle passes his time agreeably here. The King of England who loves him, though I know not why, sends him his lesson all ready, and he comes to repeat it like a school-boy to the minister of foreign affairs." A previous English visitor to Paris, Horace Walpole, wrote, "Lord Albemarle keeps an immense table there with sixteen people in the kitchen: his aides-de-camp invite everybody, but he seldom graces the banquet himself, living retired out of the town with his old Columbine [Mademoiselle Gaucher]. What an extraordinary man! With no fortune at all and with slight parts, he has seventeen thousand a year from the Government which he squanders away, though he has great debts."

One of the first of Wolfe's new English acquaintance in Paris was none other than Philip Stanhope, natural son of General Wolfe's Blackheath neighbour, the Earl of Chesterfield. This young man, who had not yet attained his majority, destined to attain celebrity as the recipient of some of the most extraordinary letters in the language, had arrived in Paris with his tutor, the Reverend Walter Harte, afterwards a canon of Windsor.

To HIS FATHER.

Paris, 2nd November, 1752.

DEAR SIR,—It is very obliging in you to make the continuance of your favour depend upon myself. There is nothing

¹ John Whetham, Esq., of Kirklington Hall, Nottinghamshire, was the only son of Lieut.-General Thomas Whetham and Mary, daughter of Edward Thompson, Esq., of Marston, Yorkshire (Mrs. Wolfe's sister). He was born in 1731; married Elizabeth, daughter of Evelyn Chadwick, Esq., of West Leak; was sheriff of the county of York; and died without surviving issue in 1781.—Burke's *Landed Gentry*.

upon earth that I value so much as your affection and esteem and I hope nothing will ever happen that will force you to withdraw either the one or the other. Your neighbours are kind in their enquiries after me. I believe they think they oblige you in so doing. I would rather owe their civility to a favourable disposition towards you than to any opinion they might entertain of me.

Lord Albemarle has behaved to me in a manner that I could not presume to expect from him. Whenever he comes to Paris he immediately sends for me to his house, and puts me upon so easy and genteel a footing there that I have not language enough to return him proper thanks. If you should see Lord Bury, I beg you'll be so good to take notice of it. I have writ to his Lordship to acknowledge the effect of his letter, and to signify my grateful sense of his and his father's excessive politeness. There's but little company in town at present. In ten days, however, it will be crowded. Mr. Stanhope, Lord Chesterfield's son, is here; he came to visit me the other day, after his arrival, but we have made no acquaintance yet, so that I cannot give you any judgment upon the offspring of so great a man; but I fancy, not without some grounds, he is infinitely inferior to his father. Lord Brudenell is at one of the academies, and is the direct reverse of the Earl. One could hardly believe that a creature of his stamp could have any relation or connection with a man of Lord Cardigan's sweetness of temper. We have had the finest autumn that has been known for many years. The dry air and constant exercise have restored me to a condition to be envied.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

So Wolfe was not long to be without relations in Paris. Whetham was three or four years Wolfe's junior, and, as we shall see, his cousin James forms an excellent opinion of him.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Paris, 14th November, 1752.

DEAR MADAM,—One would imagine that a great city would provide a great deal of furniture for a letter and that with such variety to work upon, a man of an indifferent genius would find his hands full. So much of my time is taken up in different

sort of exercises as to leave very little for anything else. For instance, I am up every morning at, or before seven o'clock, and fully employed till twelve; then I dress and visit, and dine at two. At five, most people (I mean strangers) go to the public entertainments, which keep you till nine, and at eleven I am always in bed. This way of living is directly opposite to the practice of the place; but I find it impossible to pursue the business I came upon and to comply with the customs and manners of the inhabitants at the same time. No constitution, however robust, could go through all. My cousin Whetham is near me, and lives much in the same way that I do. We are a good deal together, and as far as I can perceive he has an exceeding sweet temper. He has been strangely managed in his education, not in point of learning, but in other respects. However, his principles are right, and I hope unalterable.

J. WOLFE.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Paris, November 25, 1752.

DEAR MADAM,—Some days ago I sent for a dentist to examine my teeth, he examined them; told me they were much better teeth and in better order than was common to our countrymen. However he found out that two of them stood in need of his art and he immediately applied himself to redress the evil and stuffed lead where it was necessary. When the operation was over I told him that a lady of my acquaintance whose welfare I had very much at heart, complained of her teeth; he asked me several questions concerning the condition of your gums and teeth, what you had been accustomed to feed most upon, what you had used to clean your mouth with, and what remedies you had hitherto used to preserve your teeth. As I could not satisfy him clearly, he told me that if you would get any surgeon to state the present case of your teeth and gums and omit nothing that could contribute to give him a thorough knowledge of your disorder, he would advise you how to proceed, but he seemed to think by the description I gave him, that there is a humour in your blood that discovers itself in the parts above mentioned. He talk'd of incisions in the gums and other operations that I did not understand. If you think it worth your while to consult with a man at this distance you will do as he desires and leave the rest to me.

I hope the meeting of the Generals will end in the punishment of those that deserve it and that have hitherto escaped

the hand of justice. My father's share in that business must necessarily stir him about, and I hope as he goes often to London, he will take some opportunity of doing what he never did in his life, I mean of speaking a good word for himself. It is extraordinary that a man so just to every body else, should all along forget what is due to his own person.

My way of life that you enquire after is very singular for a young man that appears to be in the world and in pleasure. Four or five days in the week I am up an hour before day (that is six hours sooner than any other fine gentleman in Paris), I ride, and as I told you in a former letter I fence and dance and have a master to teach me French. These occupations take up all the morning. I dine twice or three times a week at home, sometimes at Lord Albemarle's, and some time with my English acquaintances. After dinner, I either go to the public entertainments or to visit, at nine I come home, and am in bed generally before eleven. I can't say I have any idle time; nor do I live in the most agreeable manner, but I get what I came here for, I take great care of my health. I succeed much better in fencing and riding than I do in the art of dancing, for they suit my genius better; and I improve a little in the French language. Lord Albemarle has done me the favour to invite me to his house when he has had the foreign ambassadors and some considerable men of this country to dinner, but I have no great acquaintance with the French women, nor am likely to have—it is almost impossible to introduce oneself amongst themselves without losing a great deal of money, which you know I can't afford; besides these entertainments begin at the time I go to bed, and I have not health enough to sit up all night and work all day. If I had three or four female acquaintances that would be contented with an hour or two of conversation, it is all that I desire. You may perhaps think that my way of going on infers little or no expense, but I must assure you on the contrary, and that without the least extravagance on my side, unless wearing laced ruffles may be reckon'd so, which I am forced to do in conformity to the general practice, and that I may be the better received. I told you in my last letter what kind of a youth my cousin appears to be; we are likely to live well together, he is very peacable and good-humoured, and I have no mind to quarrel with anybody, especially with friends or relations. I thank you for the precaution about my clothes, but I shall be in no great danger. I have been at Lady Browne's, and

have found her to be a very sensible entertaining woman. She sees but little company, takes great care of a little daughter that she has, who appears to be very well-bred and very clever. I have been introduced to Lady Archibald Hamilton too. She is so well known that I need say no more.¹

I'll stand to any bargain that you may make with Mrs. Morris, providing you are to reap any benefit by my sufferings. I'll kiss her till she cries out, if it can be of any service to you, though I think I should have enough to do to make her squeak.

The poor people of this land are going into confusion upon religious matters, and at a critical time, when they might free themselves from an intolerable burden. I hate to see misery or the prospect of misery, even amongst those likely to become our enemies. This is all that can be said upon the subject.

All my letters are come safe. Rickson is lucky in the change and happy. I dare say he thinks himself to have escaped. We shall meet at Edinburgh in the spring; in the meantime I beg you to assure him of my constant friendship. I wish I could send you the finest grapes that can be seen. They are gathered every day fresh for me in the gardens of a convent, and are the same that the King eats. It would be a far greater pleasure to offer them to you, than to use them myself. Fresh grapes in the latter part of November are a curiosity.

I wish you both much health and much diversion. My duty to my father.

I am, dear madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

J. W.

An old lady of fashion, a relation of Col. Lafausille, has been extremely civil to me. If my father ever writes to the Colonel I should be glad, he would take notice of that.

TO HIS FATHER.

Paris, 4th December, 1752.

DEAR SIR,—The post comes in almost as regularly as if there was no water-carriage, so that when you do me the honour to

¹ Lady Jane, daughter of James, sixth Earl of Abercorn, was the second wife of Lord Archibald, youngest son of William, third Duke of Hamilton. Lord Archibald Hamilton, who was Governor of Jamaica and of Greenwich Hospital, died about a year after his wife, aged eighty-two. They had three sons, of whom the youngest was William, who became one of the King's equerries, and M.P. for Midhurst. It almost startles us to reflect that this Ensign Hamilton, Wolfe's "friend and companion," became Nelson's friend, Sir William Hamilton and the husband of the famous Lady Hamilton.

write I get your letter very soon. That of the 27th November came to me on the 2nd instant.

It is, as you say, Sir, some sort of advantage to me to have admittance to the Ambassador, and an honour to be under his protection ; but it does not include all the advantages that one would be apt to imagine. His Lordship does not see so much company as Ambassadors commonly do ; and though he is vastly liked and generally esteemed in France, his way of living and that of the people of the country is somewhat different.

The Duke of Richmond is in Paris. I have met him sometimes at Lord Albemarle's, and by that means have the honour to know him. As far as my discernment goes, he promises to make a considerable figure in our way, to which his genius seems to lead him, and what is uncommon at eighteen he is not entirely taken up with the outward appearances and gildings of soldiership, but aims at the higher and more solid branches of military knowledge.¹

Mr. Haren's nephew is lately returned from his country house. He and a very civil old lady, his mother, have endeavoured to convince me that a recommendation from Mr. Haren has all imaginable regard paid to it. They have received me in a very polite manner, and sufficiently proved their affection for their relation and difference for strangers by that reception. Lady Archibald Hamilton died last night of a fever, after an illness of a few days. She had left her little family in the utmost grief and distress. Lord Archibald is extremely old and infirm ; his son and daughter are both very young, and nobody to direct or assist them—I mean no relation, for I believe Lord Albemarle will do everything that is right and proper. The son is an ensign in the Third Regiment, and my friend and companion. You may believe that if I can be of the least use to him I sha'n't neglect the opportunity.

I have inquired after the Pretender, and can't hear where he hides himself. There are people that believe him to be secreted in Poland with some of his mother's relations. My friend Colonel D—— has got a regiment of Dragoons. There is a sort of interest that man has crept into, better and of more efficiency than service, worth, or honour. It would almost make one forswear open, fair behaviour as lumber, and the impediment

¹ He succeeded to the Dukedom in 1750. His future was distinguished, and he died a Field-Marshal. Entering political life he became in 1765 Principal Secretary of State in the Rockingham administration.

to success and a marischal's staff; but, on the other hand, a man sleeps well that uses moderate exercise, and never dabbles in a dirty pool. There are multitudes of extravagant customs that divert, but there is one that makes me laugh every day. The coachmen here drive with enormous black bear-skin muffs, tied round their waists, and that, when their horses go on are turned behind. The people here use umbrellas in hot weather to defend them from the sun, and something of the same kind to secure them from the snow and rain.

I wonder a practice so useful is not introduced into England, where there are such frequent showers, and especially in the country, where they can be expanded without any inconveniency.¹

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

As my mother has signified her desire to have me dance and as I am very willing to oblige her in every thing I have asked my master, whether he thinks it possible ever to bring that matter about; his answer is that he is not positively sure he shall succeed; but if four months close application does not effect it, he shall give me up. I intend to be beforehand with him and dismiss him by that time, or whenever I find myself incurable.

Close application won the day, and Wolfe became an excellent dancer.

To HIS MOTHER.

Paris, 12th December, 1752.

DEAR MADAM,—I sit down to write a letter to you which, if it does not entertain you, will convince you, at least, that I think of you, and remember your kindness. If I should imitate the practice of this country, I should study how to talk, how to persuade you that I am the thing I am not; but my experience tells me that I shall succeed better by doing what is right than by a handsome speech of empty consequence. There are men that only desire to shine, and that had rather say a smart thing than do a great one; there are others—rare birds—that had rather be than seem to be. Of the first kind this country is a well-stored magazine; of the second, our own has some few examples. A Frenchman that makes his mistress laugh has no favour to ask of her; he is at the top of his ambition. Our

¹ It was not until some years later that Jonas Hanway, defying the jeers of the populace, strolled through London carrying an umbrella, derided, it is true, but dry.

countrymen are too grave, too sanguine, too intent, to be satisfied with such success.

I hear a piece of news from England that gives me, and all of us, great concern. We are told that Lord Harcourt and the Bishop of Norwich have resigned. Could Mr. Stone overthrow two such men? Could he, or anybody else, behave to them so as to oblige them to give up the most important charge in the kingdom?¹ Somebody more subservient, perhaps, is to be placed; somebody who will lead the pupils to proper purposes, and bring them to think that only one set of men are fit to govern the kingdom. *J'enrage*, as the French say when they are provoked, that my trusty Lord Harcourt is deposed. He had the general voice of the people for him, and nobody was thought so proper for that high office.

I told my uncle Wat that I had four masters every day, which he does not think sufficient! His concern for me goes so far as to make him wish that I had no time to eat or sleep. I have been forced to pacify his rage for improvement with assuring him that I can't bear above so much at a time. I'll charge you with an office of great trust. I'll give you power to speak to Mr. Fisher, or anybody else you can think of, to renew my credit, as far as it will go, about the middle of next month. It would be almost as ungracious to want credit in an enemy's country as it would be disagreeable to want money in a friend's. I never think upon this subject without recollecting my good friend Fitz,² and the cries of poor Arthur Loftus, who is afraid he shall starve in my country-house if I stay long at Paris. Your nephew Whetham is the best tempered youth that I know. He offers his respects to you.

I am, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

To HIS FATHER.

Paris, 22nd December, 1752.

DEAR SIR,—I wish I could send a piece of tapestry from the Gobelins, or a picture from the Palais Royal, instead of a letter, either would be a present worthy your reception, as either would be matchless in their kind. I had the good fortune to

¹ The Rev. Mr. Stone was the deputy-governor under Lord Harcourt for the young Prince of Wales (afterwards George III), and his brother Prince Edward. Dr. Hayter, Bishop of Norwich, was tutor and Scott his deputy. A curious dispute arose as to the Prince's education, detailed in the present author's *George III*, 1907.

² Lord Fitzmaurice.

see the manufacture of tapestry at a time when they showed it to an ambassador. Then it is that they produce all that invention and industry can contrive and execute. I was a good deal surprised to find that the principal director of that ingenious workmanship is a Scotchman.

My friend Carleton sends me conjectures about a successor to Lord Harcourt.¹ I am sorry any such person is necessary, because I think that high office was in fit hands before. It is melancholy that in an affair of such trust and importance there should be men so placed and so confided in, that the leaders are in a manner subordinate to their inferiors. The French have their domestic troubles too, as well as ourselves; but theirs are still of a more serious kind. The clergy and people are in opposite sentiments for the present, and it will require the exertion of very great authority to reconcile them to each other. The ecclesiastics have unluckily been the authors of almost all the mischief that has been done in Europe and in America since the first introduction of Christianity, and they do in some places continue their evil practices. It is surprising that there are so few potentates in Europe that are able to keep them in any order, and the more surprising that the example of these few has no effect upon the rest, notwithstanding the visible difference between a well-governed body of clergy and the reverse.

Paris is full of people; that is, all the company is come in from the country, and an abundance of genteel persons of both sexes are every day exposed to public view. The natives in general are not handsome either in face or figure; but then, they improve what they have. They adorn themselves to more advantage, and appear with more outside lustre, than any other people, at least that I have seen or heard of.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

How strange to reflect that a few years before the fall of the French dominion in America, the same small apartment should have contained the real ruler of France, and the man who was to wrest from France its finest jewel. The picture is striking. La Pompadour seated before her mirror, while her coiffeur arranges her massy chevelure, occasionally vouchsafing a word or smile

¹ Lord Harcourt, thus commended by Wolfe, was afterwards chosen by young George III to demand the hand of Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg Strelitz in marriage. He became Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and was drowned accidentally in a well at Nuneham in 1777.

to her entourage. Her eye rests upon the tall, youthful figure of the young English officer. One can fancy her asking, "Who is that young man?" "That, madame, is Monsieur Wolfe, Lieutenant-Colonel of English Infantry." "Wolfe—ah—that is the same as *le' Loup*; a terrible name for those mild blue eyes and kindly mouth! *En vérité, vous me faites peur, M. Wolfe!*"

The offer which came to Wolfe of a travelling military tutorship to the young Duke of Richmond was, although a lucrative berth, not regarded by him as "in his line." If he would not take it himself, however, he took pains to recommend an intimate friend, a young officer who afterwards rose to great distinction, and whose name and fame is hardly less than Wolfe's own, bound up in the history of Canada and the Empire. This was Captain Guy Carleton, who took part in the conquest of Quebec, as Governor of Canada, and died Lord Dorchester.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Paris, January 2nd, 1753.

DEAR MADAM,—I was yesterday at Versailles, a cold spectator of what we commonly call splendour and magnificence. A multitude of men and women were assembled to bow and pay their compliments in the most submissive manner to a creature of their own species. I went through the different apartments with our Ambassador, who did me the honour to allow me to wait upon him, and saw him do his part very gracefully, well received by the Queen, the Dauphin, the Dauphiness, the Infanta, the Mesdames, the Secretary of State, and lastly by the Marquise de Pompadour, who seemed to distinguish him from the rest by her civilities and courtesy. All the courtiers, as in England, go to court upon the New Year's Day, and as they are more numerous here than there it makes a very fine show. The Duke of Richmond offered me a place in his coach, an honour that I could not refuse, especially as Lord Albemarle was so kind as to give me a room at his house, with invitation to sup with him. Lord Albemarle has proposed to present my cousin Whetham and me to the King, which I have no objection to but the fear of the expense of a new coat. However, as it comes from his Lordship in so handsome a manner, I don't think it is to be rejected. This is the first time that I have been at Versailles, and luckily there was an installation of a Knight of the Order of the Holy Ghost, and we were placed in such a manner in the King's Chapel by the master of the Ceremonies

that no part of the ceremony escaped us. The weather was so severe that it was impossible to see the gardens, or to examine the buildings.

Sir John Mordaunt did me the honour to write to me from Bath, where he is, or has been for his old rheumatic complaint. He touches lightly upon a *certain subject* in his comic style, and, with a jest upon the sex, wonders at my perseverance. I have answered his letter, and have given him to understand that as I did not mean to conceal anything from him, I had mentioned the affair to him, but that I was extremely well pleased with my situation, and did not intend to be troublesome. The Duke of Richmond is to have a company in Lord Bury's regiment; he wants some skilful man to travel with him through the fortified towns of the Low Countries and into Lorraine. I have proposed my friend Carleton, whom Lord Albemarle approves of; but as things may take another turn, it must not be mentioned. It is reported at Paris that the Pretender has changed his religion. We are too well governed in England to apprehend that or any other change. I believe he might as well keep his confessor. An acquaintance of mine goes to England in a few days, and takes with him two black laced hoods for you, and a vestale for the neck, such as the Queen of France wears.

I am, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

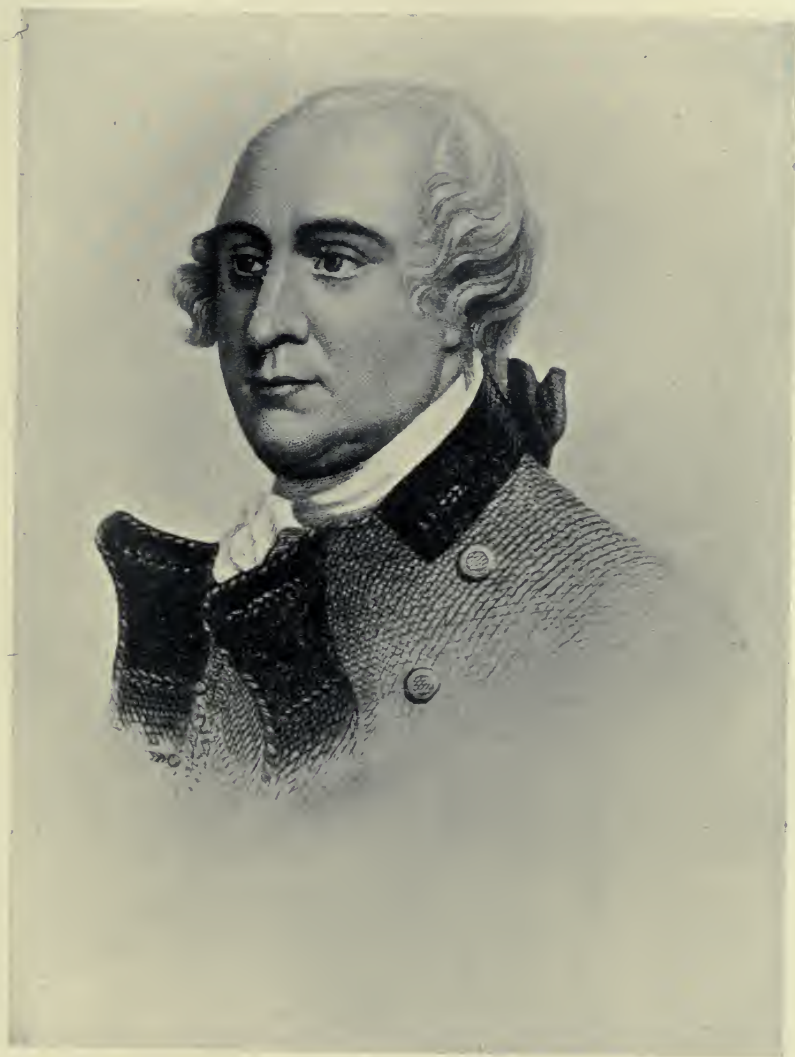
Wolfe's "perseverance" deserved a better fate, but it was hard to erase Miss Lawson's image from his heart.

His friend Carleton got the lucrative post for which Wolfe had recommended him.

To HIS FATHER.

Paris, 10 January, 1753.

DEAR SIR,—There is so much reason to be satisfied and to thank you for what you have already done for me, that it would ill become me to require any further supply, especially as you tell me that the granting of it would be inconvenient. I have no particular attachment to Paris, the reason that brought me here is a sufficient one for my stay, and I am only sorry that my time and circumstances are so limited. Anybody that knows the life I live may give testimony that I am not idle, but if I should break off after three months' close application, my time



COLONEL GUY CARLETON (LORD DORCHESTER)

From a contemporary portrait



will have been entirely thrown away, and your money very ill employed. You know, Sir, what difficulties I have had to get leave to come abroad. I never expect a second indulgence, and therefore must not lose this opportunity though it should cost me many hours of retreat hereafter.

The Duke has consented to Carleton's coming abroad to attend the Duke of Richmond as a military preceptor in his tour through the fortified towns of the Low Countries. It will be of singular use to the young man, and I hope of great service to my friend. Lord Falkland, Mr. Dawnay, Whetham, and myself, were introduced yesterday to the King and the Royal Family, and lastly to Madame Pompadour and Monsieur de St. Coutest, the minister. They were all very gracious as far as courtesies, bows, and smiles go, for the Bourbons seldom speak to anybody. Madame la Marquise entertained us at her toilette. We found her curling her hair. She is extremely handsome, and, by her conversation with the Ambassador and others that were present, I judge she must have a great deal of wit and understanding.

Exclusive of Lord Albemarle's being the English Ambassador, I observe that at Versailles they pay a particular respect and deference to his person, which is a proof that he is extremely in the King's good graces; and I should wonder if it was not so, considering how accomplished a man he is for courts, and how particularly calculated he seems to be for the French nation. I wish you both health, and a happy New Year.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Mrs. Wolfe does not seem to have understood her son's motives in not offering himself as the ducal tutor. He enlightens her.

To HIS MOTHER.

Paris, *January 19th, 1753.*

DEAR MADAM,—You have known me long enough to discover that I don't always prefer my own interest to that of my friends. I was asked if I knew a military man fit to accompany the young Duke, and immediately named Carleton, who is appointed to attend him. It would have been as easy for me to hesitate about the question and afterwards to have offered my services; but, exclusive of my liking for Carleton, I don't think myself quite equal to the task, and as for the

pension that might follow, it is very certain that it would not become me to accept it. I can't take money from any one but the King, my master, or from some of his blood. The Duke of Richmond's friendship will be an honour to me, provided he turns out well, and serves his country with reputation, which I think is very likely to happen. If he miscarries from bad principles, I shall be the first to fly from his intimacy.

Though I suppose myself recovered in a great measure from my disorder that my extravagant love for Miss Lawson threw me into, yet I never hear her name mentioned without a twitch, or hardly ever think of her with indifference. Every good account of her helps to justify me, and the better you know her, the easier you'll find excuses for me. Pray tell Miss Haren that I'm obliged to her for helping to convince you that at least my choice was a good one. A man may be greatly prepossessed in favour of a lady without bringing many people to be of his opinion. My amour has not been without its use. It has defended me against other women, introduced a great deal of philosophy and tranquillity as to all objects of our strongest affections, and something softened the disposition to severity and rigour that I had contracted in the camp, trained up as I was from my infancy to the conclusion of the Peace, in war and tumult.

I am often surprised at the little sensibility that I feel in myself at the sight of the finest and fairest females; though I have seldom supped out, yet whenever I have it has happened that some of the prettiest women in Paris, and particularly one, was at table. An eye to subdue the hardest heart had much the same effect upon me, as if the likeness had been drawn upon canvas, and set up to look at; but don't let this discourage you, or make you believe that I have abandoned the whole sex for one disappointment. There are times that a good constitution overcomes all difficulties.

My exercises go on extremely well. Monsieur Fesian, the dancing-master, assures me that I make a surprising progress, but that my time will be too short to possess (as he calls it) the minuet to any great perfection; however, he pretends to think that I shall dance not to be laughed at. I am on horseback every morning at break of day, and do presume that, with the advantage of long legs and thighs, I shall be able to sit a horse at a hand-gallop. Lastly, the fencing-master declares me to have a very quick wrist, and no inconsiderable lunge, from the

reasons aforesaid. The General will explain the word *longe*, or lunge.

I pronounce the French tongue, and consequently read it, better than when I came; but in the capital of this great Kingdom, I speak more English than French, and therefore don't do so well as I ought. Thus I have made my report to you concerning the reasons of my coming here, and shall conclude my letter with very hearty wishes for both your welfares.

I am, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

It would seem that the old General considered his son extravagant, and from this charge James defends himself in his next letter.

To HIS FATHER.

Paris, *January 29, 1753.*

DEAR SIR,—I am more concerned to be obliged to ask money of you, than you are to give it, and I should leave Paris six weeks sooner than I intended, rather than distress you in the smallest degree, if such a step would not destroy almost everything that I have been doing hitherto. I told you in my last letter how expensive a place this is, and to prove it, I can assure you upon my honour that the articles of play and women (the most extravagant in Paris) have not amounted to 20 Louis-d'ors, that my tailor's bill for two suits of Clothes, a frock and liveries, does not exceed seventy pounds; the ruffles that I have been forced to wear, is indeed a considerable expense—the rest has been paid for my coat and lodgings, food, servants, and for the best masters, in this kind, that this city possesses. I believe there are few men that live in the manner I do, and though the object of my attentions are not in themselves the most essential, they are still such as have their uses in life and may help to advance me in the army.

The fortune of a military man seems to depend almost as much on his exteriors as upon things that are in reality more estimable and praiseworthy. You may be assured I have no more demands to make upon you, already too well convinced of your kindness and generosity to abuse either.

The good Bishop¹ is at last released from the misery and pain that he so long laboured under, oppressed by a disease at his time of life incurable. His death is not to be lamented

¹ The famous Dr. Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne.

otherwise than as concerns his family. If there's any place for good men hereafter, I believe he is at rest, and entirely free from all complaints. By what you have said about matrimony, I judge you are averse to it. However, there's a fit time, and 'tis commonly later with us soldiers than with other men, for two reasons; the first is that in our younger days, we are generally moving from place to place, and have hardly leisure to fix; the other has prudence and necessity to support it. We are not able to feed our wives and children till we begin to decline. It must be a solitary kind of latter life to have no relations nor objects to take up our thoughts and affections,—to be, as it were, alone in the world, without any connection with mankind but the tie of common friendships, which are at best, as you have experienced, but loose and precarious. Our tastes for pleasures and debauchery have an end, or should have, when the excuse or pretext of youth and warm blood is no longer allowed us; and one terrible, frequent, and almost natural consequence of not marrying is an attachment to some woman or other that leads to a thousand inconveniences. Marshal Saxe died in the arms of a little w—— that plays upon the Italian stage,—an ignominious end for a conqueror. Though I think much better of this condition than most young people, and sometimes imagine (perhaps vainly and foolishly) that it would suit my disposition and turn of mind, yet I may safely say that it won't produce any immediate consequence. My little experience has made me cautious and my circumstances and situation in life direct me to step slowly and circumspectly, and to sum up all, it would be sufficient that you opposed it to make me desist as long as I have the possession of my reason.

I hope the severity of the weather is confined to the continent. It has not been known to freeze so hard since the Great Frost. The poor people suffer excessively, not only from the want of fire, but, as the navigation of the river has been stopped, provisions of all kinds are dearer upon that account. I am a sufferer in particular, for as I commonly go out at break of day, till lately that it has been impossible, the cold seizes my nose and fingers, and distresses me considerably. I desire you to accept of my thanks and acknowledgements for the last mark of your favour, and I wish to convince you that my greatest ambition is to deserve your esteem.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

To HIS MOTHER.

Paris, 13th February, 1753.

DEAR MADAM,—I shall make but one step from this place to the foot of the mountains, and I shall hardly give you time to observe how many fine airs and accomplishments I have picked up at Paris. The north-east wind that blows in that country will disperse all my foppery, and ribbons and feathers, and snuff and essence in the air, and disorder my whole person, so that when I return you will hardly discover me to be a coxcomb; at least, if it is so, I shall try to conceal it from you.

I had a letter from my friend Gage¹ last post, in answer to one that I writ him by Lord Albemarle's directions. He says the little Maid of Honour is as amiable, and alas! (as he expresses it, poor gentleman) as cold as ever. What can that lady mean by such obstinate self-denial? or is she as much mistress of her own as of the hearts of all her acquaintances? Is she the extraordinary woman that has no weakness? or happily constructed without passions? or lastly, and most likely, does she bid her reason choose? She may push that matter too far, for common sense demonstrates that one should not be a maid—of honour too long. I writ a long letter to her uncle this post, and send him some books that he desired. I touched upon the tender string some time ago, as I told you; his answer was, that he was sorry to find me so serious upon the old story; and there the matter *rests for ever*.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,
J. WOLFE.

We may assume that something of the foregoing was prompted by a lover's pique. Yet Miss Lawson's conduct was strange, especially in view of the tradition that secretly she had given her heart to Wolfe, but that there were impediments in the way she could not and dared not disclose.

If Wolfe had declined to accompany the Duke of Richmond in a tour of foreign camps, it was not because his desire to acquaint himself with the methods and discipline of foreign armies was not as keen as ever. When he saw a chance of achieving this wish, he jumped at it instantly, dreading at the same time that the stiff-necked Commander-in-Chief, Cumberland, would again stand in his way.

¹ The Hon. Thomas Gage, afterwards Viscount Gage, Commander-in-Chief in North America at the beginning of the colonial revolt.

To HIS FATHER.

Paris, 22nd February, 1753.

DEAR SIR,—Lord Albemarle was saying a few days ago that the French King proposes to encamp a great part of his army early in the summer. His lordship judged that it would be agreeable to the Duke to have an officer of our troops sent to see what they were doing in their camps, and he did me the honour to say that he thought it would be right in me to propose myself, not asking it as a favour, but ready to obey the Duke's command. The proposal agreed too well with my disposition to be neglected, and I writ immediately to Lord Bury to offer myself for the service, and told Lord Albemarle that the least hint from him would have more weight than all that I should be able to say. Whether the project takes place or not, it may not be amiss to be mentioned upon such an occasion by the Ambassador of Paris. The French are to have three or four different camps; the Austrians and Prussians will probably assemble some corps, so that I may, before the end of the summer, have seen half the armies in Europe at least, and that, I believe, at a very little expense. Lord Ablemarle must give me letters to the Commanders if the Duke accepts my offer, but, to tell the truth, I suspect his Royal Highness will not.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Our hero's fears were not groundless, as we shall presently see. Meanwhile he had been in Paris nearly five months and was already beginning to weary of his surroundings. He had attained, to a satisfactory degree, that which had brought him to the French capital; a facility in speaking the language and some skill in fencing and dancing, and felt that he had added a polish to his general deportment. He therefore looked forward all the more eagerly to further travel on the continent which would add to his professional experience. Towards the close of his stay his mother wrote him that his aunt, Mrs. Abthorpe, whose marriage we have before noted, had become a rabid convert to Wesleyism, her conduct being no doubt on a par with many of those who about this time fell under the spell of the great Revivalists.

To HIS MOTHER.

Paris, 1st March, 1753.

DEAR MADAM,—If the air of Blackheath has been as sharp as that of Paris, I don't wonder at your complaints, nor that you

give it as a reason for not writing. We had a little interval of mild weather, and now the cold is returned more dangerously, though less severe. They have little spring in this country; from cold and very wet it suddenly changes to excessive heat. What a melancholy account you give of Mrs. Abthorpe, her unhappy fanaticism preying upon weak nerves. A conscience at rest and free from guilt, with a tolerable portion of health, and moderate circumstances, are the utmost bounds of our felicity. If we would be happy here below, these are the objects, and no further; refinements in religion, or any pursuit of exquisite pleasures, throw us quite out of the road of peace.

Whetham has gone to Flanders; from thence he goes into Holland, back to Calais, and so home. What he will do with himself till he is thirty years of age, or till he marries, I am at a loss to guess. It is a misfortune not to have an employment or profession of some kind or other to fill up the intervals of our time. To live merely for the sake of eating, drinking, etc., without the prospect of any business, or of being useful, is, in my mind, a heavy condition. I was invited to a ball last night, where I saw some of the best company in Paris, and some of the handsomest women. At this season of the year the people of the first condition give balls by turns, and do it in a very genteel manner. Instead of tea and coffee they give ice, orgeat, lemonade, oranges, and sweetmeats, and in the morning (commonly by daylight) they have all sorts of cold meats. I never stay to see them eat, though, I believe, it would not be the least diverting part of the entertainment, for the ladies are well bred, delicate, and genteel. They are, nevertheless, a little inclined to gluttony, and are troubled with frequent indigestions. The women at these balls wear a sort of domino, or rather gown made of that kind of light silk, slightly trimmed, with sleeves of a very particular make, falling near a yard behind them from the elbows. Their hair is either combed behind, with little curls before, or their heads are all over curls, and an abundance of diamonds about their heads and necks. They dance genteelly, and I think their country dances preferable to ours; first because there is a greater variety of figure and step, more easy dancing, and they are not so tedious. They dance four couples at a time and succeed each other, then partners change every dance. Some of the men are prettily-turned, and move easily and gracefully. They have in general good faces and fine hair, but they have generally bad limbs, and are ill-shaped. I speak

of the nobility and those that are born or commonly live in Paris, for in the provinces remote from the capital, men are of a better figure.

The Lent that succeeds the Carnival puts an end to all these pleasures, the delight and occupation of the younger people of Paris. Their thoughts are entirely employed upon the figure they are to make in public, their equipages and dress; and their entertainments within consists of luxurious suppers and deep play. Some of them are elegant enough to be pleased with music, and they all sing well. A few there are—a very small number—that read and think. I begin to be tired of Paris. The English are not favourites here; they can't help looking upon us as enemies, and I believe they are right. The best and ablest men amongst them respect the nation, admire the Government, and think we are the only men in Europe that act like men. This party must be very inconsiderable, and very secret. I forgot to tell you formerly that the laced handkerchief that I bought did not go with the hoods, but you'll have it.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

It would have been impossible for an observer like Wolfe not to have been struck by the entire artificiality of the French social fabric as it then existed in France. Compare his impressions of the dissatisfaction of the community, the admiration of the thinking minority for English institutions with those of later travellers much nearer the brink of the Revolution precipice.

Wolfe was not left long in suspense about the permission to visit the continental armies. It appears in the first place that his parents looked coldly upon the project, for the same reasons that have previously been mentioned, and also because they may have thought that their son's holiday had lasted long enough, and was sufficiently expensive. But it was Lord Bury who conveyed the unwelcome refusal. He too probably thought his Lieutenant-Colonel had had sufficient holiday.

TO HIS FATHER.

Paris, 9th March, 1753.

DEAR SIR,—Lord Bury surprised me a few days ago with H.R.H. the Duke's orders to return to England even before my leave of absence expires. I think I told you that I asked and begged to continue till the 20th of April: this is refused, and I am to hasten home. I dare not disobey openly,

but I will venture as far as a slight reprimand. There's an inconceivable obstinacy in this way of proceeding, a minute exactness that is quite unnecessary and excessively disagreeable. Everybody knows how difficult it is to get out of England, and yet they won't allow us to make use of the opportunity that offers, and that perhaps can never occur again. Twenty days or a month to me at this time is inestimable, the season and situation of my affairs considered. A Major and an Adjutant (if the Colonel is to be indulged himself) are not to be considered as equal to the great task of exercising, in our frivolous way, a battallion or two of soldiers!—men whose duty and business it is, and who must know that. "His Royal Highness expects and orders me to tell you to be with the regiment by the time they assemble." These are the terms of his lordship's letter, and he goes on to inform us that he believes the companies will be collected towards the latter end of this month. Notwithstanding these hints, I sha'n't be in England before the 7th or 8th of April, and the only one thing that gives me any satisfaction or reconciles it to me is, that I shall have the pleasure of paying my duty to you and to my mother; and though the time that I shall be with you will be very short, those few days will make me some amends for the many disagreeable ones that are to follow.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,
J. WOLFE.

There came a further letter from Lord Bury, which makes his return imperative.

To HIS MOTHER.

Paris, 13th March, 1753.

DEAR MADAM,—A second letter that I have received from Lord Bury (in answer to the offer that I made to go to the French and German armies), has cleared up everything and made it very plain, that I must hasten to the Regiment. He tells me that he himself don't go down to Scotland this year, and he mentions a fit of an apoplexy that seized the Major some time ago and has impaired his health considerably. Could I have supposed so much indulgence and so much partiality, or had I known that the Major had been out of order, I should not have begged the small addition of twenty days to my leave of absence, nor proposed what I did. As I shall set out in the beginning of

April and as that time draws near, I must desire you'll be so good to keep any letters that may be directed to me till I come. I hope John has found some opportunity of sending my dog to the Regiment and that he has executed all the other commissions you have charged him with. If you have any commands for me on this side, I beg to know them immediately that they may be obeyed to your wish. I make my letter short because there is several to write. I hope to find you both in perfect health; my duty to my Father.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. W.

On the eve of departure he received a letter from his mother expressing the General's apprehensions about the now abandoned tour. He was afraid his son might have been tempted by an offer in the service of the great Frederick.

To HIS MOTHER.

Paris, March 22nd, 1753.

DEAR MADAM,—I beg you to remember how the undertaking I spoke of was proposed, and by whom, whether it was in my power to refuse it as it was offered, supposing that I had not liked the project. I mentioned to you that the ambassador was to have given me letters for the commanders to our ministers in Germany, and my business was to see only if there were anything new amongst them, and therefore there was no risk. You may believe I should never undertake anything of this kind if there was reason to apprehend what my father seems to think, nor would I throw away my time if it could be no manner of use. As to the article of expense I proposed to do it upon my pay, because I could not in reason require more than has been already done for me.

I should have been oftener at Madame Haren's if her granddaughter's illness had not shut her door. She is the most agreeable lady of fourscore that I have ever met. It is very polite of her to speak handsomely of me, because it is almost impossible to be less known to her than I am. But you know how little it costs the French to be civil. My letters from Scotland came to me. The extraordinary direction covered a petition from a very good woman, who desires me to write to a friend in her favour. The women of the regiment take it into their heads to write me sometimes, and their letters are really

curious. I have a collection of them somewhere that would make you laugh.¹

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

¹ One of these has been preserved: a curious proof of the quasi-paternal relation in which Lieut.-Colonel Wolfe stood toward his men.

COLLONEL,—Being a True Noble-heart'd Pittyful gentleman and Officer your Worship will excuse these few Lines concerning the husband of ye undersigned, Sergt. White, who not from his own fault is not behaving as Hee should towards me and his family, although good and faithfull until the middle of November last. . . . *Petition of Anne White.*

X

ADIEU TO SCOTLAND

WHAT change of environment in Europe then so striking as that from Paris to Glasgow! Wolfe left the French capital before March had drawn to a close, and after a brief sojourn at Blackheath with his parents, set out by post-chaise again for Scotland. The situation there greeting him let himself relate—

To HIS FATHER.

Glasgow, 22nd April, 1753.

DEAR SIR,—It is almost impossible to suffer more than I have done upon the road, and quite impossible to find a regiment in more melancholy circumstances than we are. Officers ruined, impoverished, desperate, and without hopes of preferment; the widow of our late Major and her daughter in tears; his situation before his death and the effects it had upon the corps, with the tragical end of the unhappy man in everybody's mouth; an ensign struck speechless with the palsy, and another that falls down in the most violent convulsions. He was seized with one the first night I came to the regiment (after supper) that so astonished and affected all that were present, that it is not to be described. I should have fallen upon the floor and fainted, had not one of the officers supported me, and called for immediate relief; and this, as well as I can remember, for the first time in my life. Some of our people spit blood, and others are begging to sell before they are quite undone; and my friend Ben will probably be in jail in a fortnight. In this situation we are, with a martinet and parade major to teach us the manual exercise with the time of the First Regiment.

To leave this unpleasant subject for one that concerns me much less. I must tell you that I was beat to pieces in the new close post-chaises; machines that are purposely constructed to torture the unhappy carcasses that are placed in them. I was at length forced to have recourse to post-horses; as they had been accustomed to wear harness, and to be supported by stronger powers than my arms, I was every minute in danger, and fell

twice, at the hazard of my neck. Add to this that the movements of these brutes were so rude, that I bled to the saddle. In short, it is not possible to travel more disagreeably, nor enter into a more unpleasing task than the present; and this, as you may believe, not at all at my ease, without horses, or other means to dissipate or divert.

I saw my uncle Brad. in Yorkshire; he tells me he writ to my mother, but never received an answer from her. He was far from being well when I saw him. I forgot to ask for franks of the senators of my acquaintance, so that you must pay more for my letters, by far, than they are worth. We march out of this dark and dismal country early in August. By that time I imagine that ambition, and the desire to please, will be utterly extinguished and lost from amongst us. I did not hear, till I came here, that his Majesty sent his thanks in particular to Lord Bury's regiment for their behaviour in the Highlands; and immediately, I mean a month or two, or three perhaps, afterwards, Major Wilkinson steps in.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

He lets us see that he is as great a dog lover as ever—*Juvenis gaudeat canibus*—and probably one of the first Englishmen to go in for Highland sport, with rod and gun, before such diversion became a regular feature of the annual round. Although he is far from well and scarce more enamoured of Scotland, he certainly seems in better spirits.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Glasgow, 13th May, 1753.

DEAR MADAM,—We are all sick, officers and soldiers. I am amongst the best, and not quite well. In two days we lost the skin off our faces, and the third were shivering in great coats. Such are the bounties that Heaven has bestowed upon this people, and such the blessings of a northern latitude. My cousin Goldsmith has sent me the finest young pointer that ever was seen; he eclipses Workie, and outdoes all. He sent me a fishing-rod and wheel at the same time, of his own workmanship that are inestimable. This, with a salmon rod from my uncle Wat, your flies, and my own guns, puts me in a condition to undertake the Highland sport in June, and to adventure myself amongst mountains, lakes, and wildest wastes.

It would take time to relate the variety of our amusements here; but my share of the entertainments might be shortly told. We have plays; we have concerts; we have balls, public and private; with dinners and suppers of the most execrable food upon earth, and wine that approaches to poison. The men drink till they are excessively drunk. The ladies are cold to everything but a bagpipe;—I wrong them, there is not one that does not melt away at the sound of an estate; there's the weak side of this soft sex. I have bought a horse for £7, a horse that was never meant to move under the dignity of a commander of an old legion; but there are times when our greatness lets itself down a little,—it was very near walking afoot, and can yet hardly be said to rise above the ground.

I see by the papers that General Guise has got the government of Berwick. My father had better pretensions than that extraordinary person. I wish he would try; there might be some advantage even from being refused.¹ I told Lord Bury that my observation pointed out to me that to do one's duty well, and not to talk of it, was the roundabout way to preferment, and that I did not believe that a man could serve into favour; to which one might have added, that 'tis better to tell a story than fight; better bow than be honest! This is as it always has been in courts, and ever will be. The men that are forward to ask are supposed to have titles, and military men, of all others, should be the oftenest in the path of promotion. I wish you both health and riches; but one may almost as well be sick as poor.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

The horse humorously alluded to in the foregoing may have been the same as that remembered by a venerable Glasgow lady who survived the young Lieutenant-Colonel nearly seventy years. She recollected quite well having seen Wolfe on one occasion at Capelrig (Mr. Barclay's, ten miles from Glasgow), where she was staying when a girl. "He rode up the avenue to pay a visit, on

¹ Although hardly fit for field service, old General Wolfe was a candidate for any lucrative military post that the Government might have at its disposal. General Guise was commonly regarded in the army as an intrepid madman, addicted to uttering the most absurd nonsense. At a London dinner-party, he solemnly maintained that the Newcastle colliers fed their children with fire-shovels in lieu of spoons.—Walpole to Mann, October 6, 1754.

a very spirited grey charger which plunged violently, and the inmates were afraid he would be thrown. He was an excellent horseman, however, and maintained himself well in the saddle; then dismounting gracefully, he entered the mansion, and conversed for some time with great politeness. He remounted his charger and rode off to Glasgow. These circumstances and Wolfe's subsequent fame, fixed his appearance firmly in the lady's memory, and my informant often heard her relate these particulars."¹

TO HIS FATHER.

24th May, 1753.

DEAR SIR,—I begin to have an inconceivable aversion to writing, and to all business that I am not absolutely forced upon, and yet now and then a spark breaks out through the surrounding obstacles, but is almost smothered in the birth. I have hardly passion enough of any kind to find present pleasure or feed future hope, and scarce activity to preserve my health. The love of a quiet life, I believe, is an inheritance which is likely to strengthen with my years; that, and the prospect your example gives me,—that a man may serve long and well to very little purpose, and make a sacrifice of all his days to a shadow,—seems to help my indifference, and to incline me to get off quietly and betimes to the edge of the forest. If a man tries on to forty and something more, I think he does very handsomely; and then, not finding it to answer, he may make his bow and retire. Our sickly infirm General could not proceed to review the corps in the north. He came back to Edinburgh from Perth, and he has since been in extreme danger. People that see him think that he is always a-dying, and yet the good-natured old man struggles with all and still holds out; but this mortal combat can't be for long. Your regiment, is, I hear, upon its march to Fort George. That duty has some inconvenience, particularly to the officers, but it is of great use to the men, and keeps them healthy.

I dined a few days ago with the famous Duchess of Hamilton.² They live about ten miles from Glasgow, and the Duke is civil to us. The lady has lost nothing of her bloom and beauty, is very well behaved, supports her dignity with tolerable ease to herself, and seems to be justly sensible of her good fortune.

¹ Buchanan's *Glasgow, Past and Present*, vol. iii. p. 759.

² Elizabeth Gunning had married the Duke in the previous year, when she was but twenty.

After our detachments are sent out, I propose to go for a month to the Highlands. Our people work upon the side of Loch Lomond, in Argyleshire, where the country is beautifully rough and wild. There's plenty of game, and the rivers are full of fish. I intend to establish myself at the upper end of the lake, and live upon milk and butter, as the inhabitants do.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Here we have some springtime reflections.

To HIS MOTHER.

Glasgow, *June 1st, 1753.*

DEAR MADAM,—Your house and your garden and your park (I call it yours, as you have the possession of it) must be vastly pleasant at this time of the year. Nature puts on her best appearance at this season, and every production of the earth is now in the highest beauty. The beasts have their new coats, and the birds their fine feathers; and even our species, for whose pleasure all these seem to have been intended, are properly disposed for the enjoyment of them. Without doubt you walk a good deal in the fresh air, and taste the blessings that a bounteous Maker has bestowed. Happy those that have justice and piety enough to acknowledge and to thank the liberal hand that gives them! I have had frequent occasions to mention to you the many changes of weather we are subject to in this country, because I have frequently suffered from them. At present I don't complain; I amassed such a store of health in France that I hope it will last during our stay here, though I am persuaded the consumption will be very considerable.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

On the Western side of Loch Lomond, in a picturesque situation, with the slopes of Ben Lomond rising in the distance beyond the lake, is Inverdouglas, or, as now written, Inveruglas. Here in the month of June Wolfe and five companies halted.

To HIS MOTHER.

Camp of Inverdouglas, *June 25th, 1753.*

DEAR MADAM,—We are encamped with five companies of the regiment that are working on the roads. It will be late in August before we return to Glasgow, and consequently we can't begin our

march until September. Though we are not much above twenty miles from the Low Countries, yet I think this part of the Highlands is as wild as any that I have seen. We are upon the side of a great lake, bordered round with exceeding high mountains whose tops are, for the most part, barren—either bog or rock; but at the first of these hills there is a good deal of wood, some grass, and very little corn. A man in health might find a good deal of entertainment in fair weather, provided he has strength to climb up the mountains, and has keenness to pursue the game they produce.

I am, etc., etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Wade, whatever we may think of his generalship, was the pioneer road-builder in Scotland, and deserves due credit for the work he did between 1715 and 1730. He succeeded in convincing his superiors of the importance of the principle which helped, as much as their legions, to make the Romans masters of the world. Soon after the second rebellion had been crushed the authorities resolved to go on with the work on a large scale. Lieutenant-General Watson was placed in charge and a beginning made at Fort Augustus in 1747. Associated with this officer was General Roy, who was ordered to make a preliminary ordnance survey. Parties of soldiers were drafted from the several corps to assist in the work, which lasted in different parts of the Highlands for many years, each season's camp terminating in rude military festivities, eating, drinking and sports. Before these military road-makers moved on they were wont to erect a wayside tablet, commemorating the date and the name of the regiment. One or two of these tablets, put up by Wolfe's men, have since been recovered. One was found many years ago serving as a hearthstone in a farm-house at Ardvoirlich. Others no doubt exist in a similar state or have been used as building materials. One wonders if any of Wolfe's bore inscriptions such as that "Rest and be thankful," and "A good work finished."

This was, on the whole, a happy summer for Wolfe.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Glasgow, 29th June, 1753.

DEAR MADAM,—I think I am not positively blind to my own infirmities, but that I oftener perceive my defects than I have power to correct or even disguise them; and there are times and particular situations in which people are apter to lose that power

than at others. I believe we are so compounded of good and bad that accidents easily incline the balance on either side, and I am sure that none of us, even the most virtuous, are entirely free from faults, though some have the art to hide them. The warmth of temper, which you so justly censure when it breaks out improperly, is what I depend upon to support me against the little attacks of my brethren and contemporaries, and that will find the way to a glorious, or at least a firm and manly end when I am of no further use to my friends and country, or when I can be serviceable by offering my life for either.

Nobody has perhaps more reason to be satisfied with his station and success in the world than myself, nobody can have better parents, and I have hitherto never wanted friends; but happiness or ease, which is all we can pretend to, lies in the mind of nowhere. A man must think himself so or imagine it, or it cannot be; it is not circumstances, advancement, fortune, or good relations or faithful friends that create it, 'tis the temper, or truly the force of overcoming one or more of the leading passions that otherwise must disturb us. These passions seem to be in our first composition or in nature, and the remedy, as you observe, in reason. But this often fails, at least in our younger days. Those tempers are very ticklish that may undergo a considerable change by any alteration of air, diet, or exercise, and this I often experience. It is most true that no one has a better claim to my care and esteem than yourself, and no person is more truly the object of it; but as you have been indulgent and kind hitherto in everything that you believed for my advantage, so now your indulgence must extend to overlook, or forgive at least, those defects that are visibly in the blood, and hard at this time of life to overcome. And if you think I have any good qualities they may be set in opposition to the bad ones and that is what our feeble condition here seems in justice to require.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,
J. WOLFE.

Then comes a letter to the General in which he discloses his impecuniosity.

TO HIS FATHER.

Glasgow, 8th July, 1753.

DEAR SIR,—I do not know which is the greatest distress of the two, to want money or to be forced to borrow it; this I am

sure that it is awkward and disagreeable to ask a favour of this kind even of you, and much more so of anybody else.

I have been obliged to give up my allowance for a time to clear my French accounts and conscience. When I came from London I received a muster's pay from 24th April, a great part of which was spent upon my journey here. Since my coming I have lived at a less expense than is almost consistent with my rank, to avoid the mischief above mentioned, and yet I am not in condition to buy horses for the march without your assistance. I must therefore beg the favour of you to allow me to draw upon your account for £40, which I believe and hope I shall be able to repay you in January, or perhaps sooner. I hate the thought of being in arrear with a paymaster, as it subjects one in some measure to him, and hurts the affairs of a regiment, and yet this must have been my resource upon such an occasion, if I had not a better to apply to. I am ashamed to address myself to you upon the article of money, as you have so recently given me, in the most generous manner more than I could expect or had any title to ask, but, as I mean honestly to return this sum and clear myself entirely by the next spring, I do it with more confidence, and I have to plead that I always pay my debts when I am able.

I go to-morrow into the Highlands for three weeks or a month, for fresh air and exercise. The odours of this place give me continual headaches. My retreat is about thirty miles from hence, near where the five companies of our regiment are at work. I wish you both much health. I beg my duty to my mother, and am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate Son,

J. WOLFE.

After his brief holiday he thus wrote from the new camp—

TO HIS FATHER.

North-west Side of Loch Lomond, 7th August, 1753.

DEAR SIR,—Though there have been great pains taken to put the regiment into order, yet for two reasons we shall make but a very indifferent appearance when His Royal Highness reviews us. The first is, that our clothes are vastly damaged by the work here and by long wear; and the other, that Lord Bury would have changed our exercise from very quick to very slow, so that at present, in attempting to conform to his Lord-

ship's directions, we are between the two, and can neither do one nor the other as they ought to be done. All the soldiers know that it is not very material, but some of those that will be present at our review may have other notions. These are matters that give me as little concern as anybody. If a man does his duty to the best of his judgment and ability, the thoughts and reflections that arise from so doing are, in my opinion, sufficient satisfaction. I have been confined ever since my coming to this place to within the last few days, and now that I am able to go about the bad weather keeps me close. It is strange that neither temperance or exercise can preserve me in any tolerable health in this unfriendly climate. The moisture of this air overmatches all the precautions that I can take to resist its bad effects, and yet we have had a finer season in Scotland than has been known for many years.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

It seems strange to think that the metropolis at this time was without a police force, and wholly at the mercy of such rogues and robbers as chose to ply their vocation. This was more than ever true of the suburbs, and in this letter we find Wolfe anticipating that horse police and foot patrol which followed upon the Bow Street force established by Sir John Fielding.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Glasgow, 26th August, 1753.

DEAR MADAM,—I deferred answering your letter till my return from the Highlands—that is till I got out of a dirty smoky hut, and free from the noise of a camp. My stay upon the side of Loch Lomond would have been extremely agreeable and pleasant but for two or three interfering accidents. This mixture of good and evil waits upon us from our introduction into life to the latest hour; the easiest are those who have no violent pursuits, for they are seldom disappointed. The loss of my poor facetious friend Loftus grieves me; he was preparing to make me a visit just before he went off.¹ Since I came here I learned the death of our good General.² Lord Cathcart has made a judicious choice, and Miss Hamilton has a fair prospect of happiness with a man of his worth and honour. There are

¹ Major Arthur Loftus died of fever July 31st at Fort Augustus.

² Lieutenant-General George Churchill.

very few young ladies that I have met with who, in my opinion, deserve better than she does. If I had not seen Miss Lawson, I should probably have been in love with Miss Hamilton. I can't say the lady would have had a great conquest to boast of, but speak of it as a proof of my good taste.

'Tis an unpleasant thing to be surrounded, as you are, by such numbers of villains; whatever they do without doors, it is to be hoped they respect the inside of houses. There must be some strange neglect in the magistrates and officers of justice in the county, or these robbers would not range through it in this manner with impunity. I am surprised that in the counties near London they don't establish a company of light horse to guard the public roads or pursue these vermin. They need not be military, but people hired for that purpose, with good pay, and entirely under the sheriff's directions. There are abundance of officers that would be glad of such employment, and proper men, if they pay them well, might easily be found. They have what they call *maréchaussé* in France to protect travellers, and people travel there in great security.

Elections are the great business all over the island, and the competitors are struggling, not, I am afraid, for the public good, but for their private interest and advantage. The Parliament House is now the seat of profit, and people generally seek a place there as they would an income. We have everything to fear from these general self-interested views, but one must hope that these very men who are so sanguine for themselves will pay some regard to their posterity, and leave things at least in as good a condition as they find them.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

His Scottish sojourn was now drawing to a close.

TO HIS FATHER.

Glasgow, *September 8th*, 1753.

DEAR SIR,—The first division of our regiment marched out of town this morning, and I stay behind it one day to finish my business and to write letters. I have got myself tolerably well mounted upon a horse of poor Loftus's. Donnellan¹ had bought him at the auction, but resigned him to me, knowing my necessity. I am glad to find that the promotion is gone in your regiment,

¹ Captain Nehemiah Donnellan succeeded Loftus as Major in Wolfe's regiment.

and that Mr. Secretary-of-War has consented to be civil to you on this occasion. Your demands upon them are so just and moderate, that you may very well expect good manners; at least, a person that does not ask favour has a right to fair speech.

I am sorry that Lord Cathcart's affairs require so much attention that he must necessarily quit; he is an officer of such reputation that the army loses considerably by his resignation. I hope, however, that he will preserve his rank amongst us, and that I shall, some day or other, have the honour to serve under him. We are so long absent, and removed to so great a distance, that I am almost surprised to hear that anybody is at the least trouble to inquire about me, especially a Paris acquaintance. I am particularly obliged to Stanhope, because his acquaintance is so extensive that I might expect to be lost in the crowd. He is a lively, civil little man, and has a great store of learning and knowledge. I beg my compliments to him. From time to time you shall hear of our progress.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Wolfe's term in the Highlands was finally over. He could look back upon five years of yeoman service amidst difficult surroundings, where the greatest tact was required.

So with drums beating and colours flying the Twentieth took up its southward march under the September sun. He had six years of life left—six short years in which to carve an imperishable fame. It was the second phase of the young soldier's career. On September 20 he turned his head as he rode along southward with his tanned and dusty troopers and beheld the village of Gretna Green in his rear. Over the Scottish border he never returned.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Carlisle, 17th September, 1753.

DEAR MADAM,—The last division of our regiment passes the Esk to-morrow, and salutes the land of England once more. We begin our march from Carlisle on the 20th, and shall be at Reading the 16th of October, which is a day sooner than my former calculation. The weather has been fair and favourable as possible hitherto, and so warm, that we have more the look of troops that came from Spain or Africa than from the north. We are really a good deal browner and more tanned than the battalion from Minorca that relieve us. We are come thus far

in our military rotation, and a good way in the revolution of our lives. The regiment has undergone as great change as was perhaps ever known in time of peace and in so short a while. There are some fifteen new officers to the corps, besides myself, since the beginning of the year 1749, and there are several alterations to make that may soon take place.

A mile on this side of the river that divides England from Scotland one begins to perceive the difference that labour and industry can make upon the face of a country. The soil is much the same for some space either north or south, but the fences, enclosures, and agriculture are not at all alike. The English are clean and laborious, and the Scotch excessively lazy and dirty, though far short, indeed, of what we found at a greater distance from the borders. Colonel Stanwix is Governor of this place, and I believe you are acquainted; at least, he inquired much after my father's health and yours. He has been extremely civil to our people. The castle of Carlisle is a fortress that ought by no means to have been given up to the rebels in the manner it was. The present Governor would not, nor, I dare say, ever will surrender it into such hands. Our second is just now marching in, and that obliges me to stop here.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

— It was a slow march, as the Lieutenant-Colonel reports—

TO HIS FATHER.

Warrington, 30th September, 1753.

DEAR SIR,—The greatest good-fortune that can happen to people that travel slow is to have fair weather, and we have been particularly lucky hitherto. There has been but one rainy day since we set out. As the season advances we must expect a change; and indeed it has begun this day, with appearances that are much against us. Men harden in the air with marching, as they harden in iniquity with practice. We are to halt at Warwick where Lord Bury meets and reviews the regiment. The men are healthy, and so active, that they have worn their clothes threadbare. We are no politicians, or we should have done as our predecessors the Fusiliers did, that is, clothe four months later than usual, to appear clean. I do believe we shall be the most dirty, ragged regiment that the Duke has seen for some years.

In Cumberland, Westmoreland, and the north of Lancashire

part of the country is almost as rough and barren as the Highlands of Scotland; but there is a variety of well cultivated, beautiful spots intermixed. Every day as we move more south the country appears richer and more delightful; and the women hereabouts, and in this place in particular, are surprisingly handsome. They astonish us that have been accustomed to look at the hard-favoured Scotch lasses. They have very pretty faces (I mean the Lancashire women), but they are not, in the towns, of such stature as I expected. The peasants are straight, well made, tall, good-looking men. There's great quantity of cattle bred in Lancashire, and some horses. The gentlemen seem fond of hunting (by the quantity of hounds I judge), though the country is not best for that sort of sport, as the enclosures and fences are vastly strong, and the corn-ground very deep. Our march is something more than half over, and I heartily wish it was at an end, because these slow movements are not agreeable to my disposition of mind.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

To HIS MOTHER.

Warwick, 16th Oct., '53.

DEAR MADAM,—I had the pleasure of receiving a letter from my father upon my arrival here with such accounts of your healths as I might expect, but not exactly such as I could wish. The approaching winter does not give the barest prospect of amendment, but we shall hope for the best. If Lord Bury had not thought proper to make the Regiment halt at Warwick the first Division would have been to-morrow or the next day at Reading, as it is we shan't all be there till this day sevenight and consequently shall dip further into foul weather, and be later in our quarters. His Lordship is a little obscure as to his intentions concerning me. I don't yet know whether I winter in the Castle of Dover or not, but shall probably be some time there. Warwick is one of the prettiest little towns in England, and Lord Brook's castle for the situation and antiquity of it is as great a rarity as any in the Kingdom. The country about here is extremely beautiful. We hunted yesterday upon a delightful plain and had exceeding fine sport. If there are any letters be so good to put 'em under a trunk and direct 'em to Reading. I wish you both all manner of good. My duty to my Father.

I am, dear Madam, etc.

J. WOLFE.

Leaving "Lord Brook's Castle" behind them the Twentieth continued on to Reading.

TO HIS FATHER.

Reading, 22nd October, 1753.

DEAR SIR,—I have received a very kind letter from my mother, inviting me to her house, and to a warm room that she promises to provide for me; but I am not able to say when I can have the pleasure of paying my duty to you both. If our route leads through Deptford and Greenwich, I shall wait upon you; if not my visit will be deferred till my return from Dover. The Major seems disposed to leave the regiment, in which case I shall be confined to it, because I can't, in conscience, assert that I have any weighty business to call me away. And yet, the prospect of passing a winter in the castle of Dover ought to quicken a man's invention to get free for means. The Duke reviews the regiment on Saturday, in their old clothes; so that if his Royal Highness piques himself upon finery of that kind, we shall inevitably be disgraced. It is true that we have numbers, for there's but five men wanting to complete; but I can't say much for their beauty or fine performance; for many of them have been separated from the regiment, and others ought to be severed from it for ever. If we had any religion or piety or were at all sensible of favour from above, we should be thankful for the finest season that ever was. And though we are not, I am sure, the objects of peculiar care of Heaven, yet, as we have profited by the good things bestowed upon mankind in general, we should join with them in acknowledgements. If I stay much longer with the regiment, I shall be perfectly corrupt, the officers are loose and profligate, and the soldiers are very devils.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

At Reading there was a halt of a fortnight, waiting for the Duke to review the regiment. At last the Lieutenant-Colonel, who was nervous about the ceremony, writes his mother.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Reading, Friday, 4th Nov., 1753.

DEAR MADAM,—The Duke's illness has put off our Review and of course detained us here. I wish his Royal Highness's

martial spirit would submit itself to his state of health, in which case he would not persevere in his resolution of seeing us. It is not a farthing matter, whether we are, or are not reviewed, but it is of consequence whether the Duke is well or ill. His intention is to see the Regiment to-morrow, and I am sorry for it upon many accounts. We are four or five hours at exercise every day; the men of these times have not iron enough in their constitutions for this work; our ancestors would have perhaps done twice as much in colder weather, without coughing; but our debaucheries enervate and unman us.

You are ever very obliging and kind in whatever I ask of you, your visit to Mrs. Brett is a strong proof of it, and they are not more indebted to you for the civility than I am. I have had a letter from Charles expressing the satisfaction that your reconciliation to his family gave him.

The first division of our regiment marches on Monday, so towards the latter end of the week I may hope to have the pleasure of seeing you. I can't stay more than two days, because Lord Bury stops at Windsor, and the Major goes to London—Six Companies of the regiment are to quarter in the Castle of Dover, where I shall pass the winter, the rest are to be at Maidstone.

I beg my duty to my Father, and am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM. WOLFE.

To MRS. WOLFE.
Blackheath.

Wolfe's professional ideals were very high; else we might marvel a little sometimes at the disesteem in which he appears to hold his own men. From other sources we learn that "Lord Bury's Regiment is the best in the Army, so far as drill and discipline go."¹

With many great commanders we find a tendency to depreciate the rank and file under them, notably in the case of the Duke of Wellington, who spoke of them as "dirty rascals" and "the scum of the earth," yet at the same time prepared to defend them warmly as "the finest fighting material on earth." A man may even speak of his own children as "brats" and "rogues," but we must not accept him too literally. Nor must we reprehend our hero for not considering every man in his regiment equal to himself in spirit, intelligence and conduct.

¹ Lansdowne MS.

Failing the expected review, across the south of England marched Wolfe and his men. We have a picture of Wolfe as he departed through the streets of Reading. "A tall thin officer astride a bay horse, his face lit up by a smile and conversing pleasantly with the officers who rode by his side."¹ On through Guildford and Oxted they held their way to Maidstone, where a portion of the regiment was left; but the greater number kept on to Dover where they took up their station in the Castle, on that giddy height which Shakespeare has celebrated and the lovers and enemies of Albion have from time immemorial contemplated with awe.

But a portion of the march was made without the Lieutenant-Colonel, "such slow movements not being agreeable to his disposition of mind." He turned at an early stage off for Blackheath and was able to spend a couple of days there at the family mansion from whence, owing to the fine weather, his parents had not yet flitted, before rejoining his men.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Dover Castle, 19th November, 1753.

DEAR MADAM,—As soon as ever I could get my green cloth spread upon the barrack table, and pen, ink, and paper out of my baggage, I sit down to write to you to inform you that the remainder of our march was as fortunate in point of weather as the former part had been; and here our labour ends, I can't say comfortably or warmly, but in a soldier-like starving condition. The winds rattle pretty loud, and the air is sharp, but I suppose healthy for it causes great keenness of appetite. I lodge at the foot of a tower supposed to be built by the Romans, and cannot help wishing sometimes that they had chosen a snugger situation to erect their fortress upon; or that the moderns, who demolished a good part of the works of antiquity, had been so kind to us, their military posterity, as not to leave one stone upon another.

The strength of our fortification is removed by discord and by time; but caissons are raised upon the ruins as prisons, and a proper mode of punishment for those wild imaginations that prefer the empty sound of drum and trumpet to sober knock of hammer in shop mechanic. Here's a ready deliverance down the perpendicular to such as are tired of their existence. They need not run very far to get out of this world; one bold step frees

¹ *Old Berkshire Memories*, 1827.

them from thought. I'm afraid I shall lose my interest at Court by this distant recluse life, and shall never be *noticed* (as the Scotch say) but to be reprimanded for some dispute with a cobbler who has a vote in such a dirty borough as Dover. Sincerely, I beg you'll make my best compliments to the General and desire him to convince the King and Duke that he is not displeased with them, for otherwise I shall be involved within the resentment that must follow this seeming contempt of majesty and dignity.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Dover Castle was not then the charming place it is now esteemed by tourists. It was shamefully dilapidated, and as to the chapel of St. Mary's, until its restoration nearly a century later at the hands of Sir Gilbert Scott, "roofless, shattered and exposed to the damaging effects of rain, frost and mischief, it was used as a coal cellar; while the Roman pharos at the west end, one of the most interesting landmarks of history in the kingdom, was applied to a purpose that was even more degrading and disreputable."¹

To anticipate a passage in one of Wolfe's letters, "I am sure there is not in the King's dominions a more melancholy dreadful winter station."

TO HIS FATHER.

Dover, December 6th, 1753.

DEAR SIR,—The best and most agreeable service that you can do me (since you are so good to offer your service) is to amuse and divert yourself with such change and variety as the neighbourhood of London, or inconsiderable distance from Bath, or other places of public resort, put within your reach. I know by myself how necessary it is to refresh the mind with new objects to prevent its sinking, and how very useful a fresh collection of thoughts are in supporting the spirits. Let me alone six or seven days in my room, and I lose all sort of sensation, either of pain or pleasure, and am in species little better than an oyster.

Indeed, soldiering, as Wolfe was forced to pursue the art, was a trying business. All his fire and force and talents were being crushed out.

¹ *The Builder*, September 7, 1862.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Dover, 19th December, 1753.

DEAR MADAM,—I find our afternoons hang so heavily that expedients are wanted to divert the time. Our conversation from dinner till five o'clock is kept up with some difficulty, as none of us have any correspondence with the capital, nor communication with coffee-houses or public papers, so that we are entirely in the dark as to exterior things. From five till eight is a tedious interval hardly to be worked through. I have inquired for good green tea in Dover, as an aid, and can find none; it will be some relief and an act of charity if you will send me a pound of the best. I put off my demand until I knew your rents were due, although I should rather wish you could persuade the General to pay for it, as I take his purse to be in better order than either yours or mine.¹

The castle is haunted with the spirits of some of our restless forefathers, the old Saxons, and some of their wives, for here are ghosts of both sexes. Whether these shadowy beings are restless, or our consciences weak and our imaginations strong, you may easily conjecture. But here are people that believe there are spirits to be seen, and others that are ready to swear to the sight; or, in other words, there are minds unable to bear the darkness of the night without trembling. We know that Christmas is at hand, by the sutler's mince-pies. I hope you have all the gaiety and good-fellowship that these times generally produce, to enliven the otherwise cold and dreary season.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

After the Christmas "festivities" Wolfe wrote another letter home.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Dover Castle, 28 Dec., 1753.

DEAR MADAM,—Although I knew you were convinced that I had written to you from Reading, I was not sorry to hear you had received my letter. I was indebted to you for a favour, and meant to send you thanks. Maidstone would have been, as you say, a more comfortable quarter than this; for it is not possible to be in one that is less so, but this place has its advantages that are of some estimation; we have no magistrates or

¹ The price of green tea was then about 30s. a pound.

inhabitants to quarrel with : the soldiers are under our immediate inspection ; and we can prevent them in any evil designs. It would be a prison to man of pleasure ; but an officer may put up with it. People that choose to read have a great deal of time ; the rest play at picquet. In wet weather we are confined to the castle, but when it is fine we get out upon the Downs between this and Deal, which is a very pleasant ride. I have been once shooting in hopes of killing some cocks to present you with ; but there are few or no springs in the woods of this country, so that those birds do not stay long after they land. Capt. Howe who went to London yesterday offered to carry one and leave it at Blackheath. But I declined his civil offer, as I thought it not worth your acceptance. I should be sorry to lose Lieut. Bury at this particular juncture : not at all upon my own account, but because I know he can serve the officers, is inclined to do so, and has just now a very favourable opportunity as there are no less than six, that desire or should be desired to leave the regiment.

I hear that Mr. Conolly¹ has relapsed and is in more danger than ever, probably gone by this time. Carlton and his brother will feel that loss very sensibly ; he is not only their patron and protector, but has a fatherly affection and kindness for them.

I am interrupted, and so must send you my best wishes for both your happiness, and finish with assuring you that I always am, dear Madam, your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM : WOLFE.

¹ The Right Hon. William Conolly, M.P., of Stratton Hall, Staffs., was nephew and heir of his namesake, the Speaker of the Irish House of Commons. He died at Castletown, Celbridge, January 3, 1754. His only son, Thomas, married a daughter of the second Duke of Richmond (Lady Louisa Conolly), aunt of the ill-starred Lord Edward Fitzgerald and also of Generals Sir Charles and William Napier.

XI

EXETER AND THE WEST

ALTHOUGH his letters are filled with a humorous sort of complaints, Dover really agreed with Wolfe or else his constitution was greatly improved since his return from Scotland. His only real grievance seems to be the perennial one of not "being any use in the world," in other words, not seeing active service. But a soldier's life is not entirely made up of battles, and Wolfe was apt to appraise at much less than its real value the efforts he made to improve his regiment, and the influence his example furnished to all other officers. Having more leisure and more congenial surroundings, he took again to his books in downright earnest. He was not able to inculcate all his officers with his own zeal in this respect—that it would, perhaps, be unreasonable to look for—but they did spare a little time from piquet for the purpose, wondering at their commander's strange infatuation. Sometimes Wolfe took a gallop over the Downs, or enjoyed an afternoon's shooting in neighbouring coverts. But his whole heart was in his work—and the subalterns had daily testimony of the almost paternal relation in which this Lieutenant-Colonel of seven-and-twenty stood towards them.

It seems that the officers of the new garrison at the Castle were not considered as sociable as their predecessors, and Miss Brett, who was staying with her father, Sir Piercy Brett, at Dover, had a doleful tale to tell of the ungallant manner in which the Dover ladies felt they were being treated by the "bookish Colonel" and his friends. To his mother's rallyings Wolfe replied on New Year's Eve—

To HIS MOTHER.

Dover Castle, *Dec. 31, 1753.*

DEAR MADAM,—It will be neither expensive nor troublesome to send what you desire, but, on the contrary, cheap and pleasant. My judgement in these matters is very fallible; but I'll employ an abler hand to chase that samphire. If you like what I send, let me know, and you shall have more.

If Nanny Brett's ladies lived as loftily and as much in the

clouds as we do, their appetites for dancing or anything else would not be quite so keen. If we dress the wind disorders our curls ; if we walk we are in danger of our legs ; if we ride, of our necks ; and how can the tender hearted sex expect we should go down unto 'em at such risk and disadvantage ? But there's a truth which my flame must not know, some of our finest performers are at present disabled, and the rest disheartened from attempting it by the terrible example of the sufferers. There are but two of us that can be reckoned to be whole and entire ; both very tall and thin, and we cannot undertake to please all these ladies alone, the task is more difficult than Mistress Anne seems to be aware of. If it was not for fear of offending you, I should almost confess that I think we are grown old, whether constitutionally so, or philosophically resigned, or sequestered from the world, by being almost always deprived and cut off from the common enjoyments of it. Habit by degrees, creating tastes agreeable to our condition and different from those that are most in vogue ; part or all of these joined perhaps together, and years really creeping on ; with notions conformable, cooling the blood and spring of action, till dancing and all its light train of amusement appears vain and contemptible. Notwithstanding this I always encourage our young people to frequent balls and assemblies. It softens their manners, and makes 'em civil, and commonly I go along with 'em to see how they conduct themselves. I am only afraid they should fall in love and marry. Whenever I perceive the symptoms, or anyone else makes the discovery, we fall upon the delinquent without mercy, till he grows out of conceit with his new passion. By this method we have broke through many an amorous alliance and dissolved many ties of eternal love and affection. My experience in these matters, helps me to find out my neighbour's weakness and furnishes me with arms to oppose his folly. I am not however always so successful as could be wished ; two or three of the most simple and insensible in other respects have triumphed over my endeavours, but are seated upon the stool of repentance for the remainder of their days.

Our garrison (to confirm Nanny's intelligence) is not composed of the liveliest body of the Regiment ; the three remarkable men Bouchier, Billings, (with the Belly) and Clements, commonly called Ben, whom I formerly described to you, are apart, and they don't do us any honour with the ladies ; we have three or four under the surgeon's hands for misfortunes, and the rest

walk down the hill about once a month; but if Miss Gunman was here, we that are able, might go oftener.

I believe my cousin Goldsmith is already persuaded that we are a set of the worst correspondents in England. I have been six months in his debt, without rhyme or reason; I owe him a thousand thanks for a pointer, that is my happiness and my very existence here, and I'll acquit myself towards him this very night, and mention your commands. He is the most reasonable man alive, his requests seldom go beyond the desire that he has to know that we are well, he never asks any other favour than to be satisfied in this particular. I am a pair or two of spectacles behind hand with him, and I long to send him that little promised token of my esteem. I find Mr. Conolly is in a lingering way, his liver is affected, and 'tis impossible he can recover, this is a deadly blow to my poor friend and will touch him deeply: but I hope the Duke of Richmond's protection, which I am sure he will deserve, may make him some amends.

Your present is arrived and is extremely valuable, both on account of the person presenting it, and its goodness, and you have my best thanks. We are not lucky in lotteries, but we have other pieces of good fortune that makes us ample amends. A clear and fair conscience and a reputation instained by vice or dishonour is fallen to both your lots, and that you may put in the balance against any other chance, and it will far outweigh them. I beg my compliments to Mrs. Egerton. Tomorrow the new year begins, I salute you upon it and wish you both all pleasure and peace and am, dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

JAM: WOLFE.

To HIS FATHER.

Dover Castle, 6th January, 1754.

DEAR SIR,—I am very glad to find you in a resolution conformable to the rest of your character. If you have ever omitted the performance of that duty which is due from an officer of your rank, and from a man of your attachment and way of thinking to the King, it has proceeded from reasons rather commendable and praiseworthy than blameable. You knew he was environed with a hungry, greedy set. As you had no favour to ask or expect beyond a good reputation, you would not seem (however free from the thought) to augment the number of petitioners that surround the throne. But his Majesty will now

be convinced that no motive of interest direct you to him ; he may easily distinguish you from the rest, because I am fully persuaded that you are the only one, however fair soever your title and pretensions may be, that has not asked something. Such persons are so rare in courts that kings may look upon them as miracles ; and our good old monarch would find out and reward the modesty of some of his subjects if the impudence of others did not prevent it. I am highly pleased that your going to St. James's was graciously received, and that you yourself were satisfied.

I have sent you some birds of my own killing ; few indeed they are in number and small in kind, but quails are a rarity at this season. I had a pheasant and some partridges, but these I durst not send, as we are not authorised by law to kill them ; and as they examine strictly upon the great roads I should be unwilling to be reputed a smuggler. It is a misfortune for a man that likes this sort of sport preferable to any other to be liable to law and fine, or to be obstructed in the pursuit of a very innocent and wholesome diversion. Over the water 'tis death to shoot without license ; here 'tis prosecution, damages, and costs. I suppose you have heard that the French have been working at Dunkirk a kind of reservoir which, with a communication with the neighbouring canals, will be a backwater sufficient to cleanse their harbour. Sir Piercy Brett and an engineer have been there to examine these late dangerous operations. Their report is not yet made public, or, at least, it has not reached the top of our hill. But I think our neighbour's meaning is pretty plain, and I hope we sha'n't misunderstand him.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Admiral Sir Piercy Brett was one of Anson's officers in his celebrated voyage round the world. He was knighted in 1753 and was afterwards one of the Lords of the Admiralty.

To HIS MOTHER.

Dover Castle, 2 Feb., 1754.

DEAR MADAM,—This providential hard frost interposes between us and an ugly malignant disorder that has broken out in our neighbourhood. An infection in the air is best overcome by cold ; and indeed there is no other remedy. We did believe for a time that our companies would be cantoned along the

coast of Kent, to keep suspected vessels from approaching the shore. Such a disposition of the troops would be reasonable and safe in any other country but this : here it must be ineffectual : the villainy of the smugglers would overcome all precautions. We have (besides the apprehension of the plague) sometimes thought ourselves in the way of this East India expedition ; and if they had sent a regiment from England, it could have been none other, but Lord Bury's rank and employment exempts him from these undertakings, and I do suppose he would not think it consistent to let his regiment embark without him ; so we are reserved for more brilliant service.

By a letter that I have received lately from London I am informed that we are to move from this place sooner than was expected ; and that we shall begin to change our quarters early in the month of March. Five companies are to go to Bristol and five to Exeter. If we are reviewed, as I hope we shall be, before we get into the west, I may be able to be sooner with you than I could propose ; and consequently shall enjoy that satisfaction, beyond my expectations and in the finest season. I hear that my cousin, Whetham, has met with a very ugly accident and is in danger of losing an eye. The rage of fox-hunting that seems to possess all the descendants of the old master, has been fatal to that poor lad ; though I hope it is not so bad as has been represented.

I beg my duty to my father. I wish you both much health, and am, dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

JAM. WOLFE.

There was great indecision at head-quarters regarding the further disposition of Wolfe's regiment in the new year. As every motion made by France was looked upon with suspicion, there was at first a scheme for cantoning the men along the coasts of Kent to prevent suspicious vessels from approaching land, and he received orders from the Horse Guards to this effect. Wolfe thought little of this arrangement, which he declared would prove ineffectual, "as the villainy of the smugglers would overcome all precautions," and was neither surprised nor sorry when the order was countermanded, owing to "the hard frost." During February there was a case of a deserter, and for the first time Wolfe had to preside at a court-martial. It appears that recruits for the French service were shipped at Dover, and which also gave an opportunity to deserters.

In a regimental order Wolfe desires certain men who had been, or wish to be, in the French service, to know that he sets no value upon them. He had "much rather they were in the Irish brigade than in the Army of Great Britain; but if any of them, hereafter, should threaten to desert, he shall be immediately whipped out of the regiment as a fit recruit for the rebel battalions hired by the French to serve against their country."

To HIS FATHER.

Dover Castle, 13 Feb., 1754.

DEAR SIR,—It has been so intolerably cold for these last three weeks that I have been hardly able to hold a pen or to do any kind of business; and I am afraid you have not been less sensible of its severity. This welcome thaw will restore people to the use of their limbs, and introduce another and more grateful season. One of the captains of our regiment, whose whole happiness is made up of hunting, came from his quarters at Maidstone with his pack of fleet harriers, to hunt in this neighbourhood; because the country here is better than about Maidstone. He arrived a day or two before the frost and must depart forthwith; so that the unfortunate man, and the whole garrison indeed, have been disappointed of their favourite and much desired diversion. Thus by the breath of a north east wind are the finest prospects of sport and pleasure made to vanish like smoke and pass away like a dream. Pleasures that are enjoyed, leave but a slight impression: they furnish matter for idle talk. But the cooler reflection upon them serves but to convince a thinking person, that we are occupied about small matters and earnest upon trifles. This consideration ought to make this sort of disappointments sit easy; since all that we can have of what is past, is but a faint idea.

I have been appointed to preside at a general court martial, composed of officers of our regiment for the trial of a deserter. This is the first time that I have acted in that grave office, and a very grave one it is, when the matter under consideration is of any importance. These courts of justice should not be assembled too frequently; lest the troops should forget or lose the respect and veneration that they ought to have for such courts. I hope the weather will invite you soon to take the air. The more you breathe the freshness of the morning air in the spring, the better for your health; and the more you stir about and vary your conversation, the more cheerful you must necessarily be.

I hope to hear that some business calls you often to London ; or that your affection for the King's person draws you sometimes into his presence. I am sure you ought to be, and consequently will be a more acceptable courtier than many that go there, merely to ask favours.

I wish you and my mother much health. I beg my duty to her, and am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,
JAM. WOLFE.

To HIS MOTHER.

Dover Castle, 6 *March*, 1754.

DEAR MADAM,—The spring that brings new life and spirits to all things else, will, I hope, have some good effects upon you ; but you must not expect its assistance, unless you strive to procure it. You have your garden and your park to walk in, and your heath for riding ; these are not to be neglected : and if my father or you should be advised, (as formerly you were by very wholesome counsel) to change your situation or your air for a time, such advice is not to be slighted whatever seeming inconveniences may oppose it.

The leave of absence that I have asked (and as it seems not very unreasonable, perhaps it may be granted) is from review till August. I go to the regiment and stay during the months of September, October, November and longer, if it's insisted upon. Then I come up for two months before embarkation, to appoint factors, agents, etc. upon all my estates and settle other weighty concerns ; that my affairs may not run into confusion in my absence. This I hope you will think is a necessary precaution for all that are possessed of any considerable property of lands, houses, manors etc!! Jack Streton's marriage will be no great obstruction to his fortune, nor so inconvenient as to your moving foot officer. In the train, they have good fixed establishments, and their prospect of preferment is entirely within their own corps. In other respects I hope neither Mrs. Streton nor any good mother who values the health and advantage of her children, would oppose the salutary state of marriage, nor encourage their offspring to tread in the paths of sin and wickedness. A great deal more might be said upon this subject to prove the necessity of matrimony ; but, as the men are getting under arms I must put off the rest till another time.

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My duty to my father, I wish you both all happiness, and am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM: WOLFE.

To MRS. WOLFE,
Blackheath, Kent.

At last Whitehall made up its official mind as to the corps, and in March the regiment, or the six companies of it which had spent the winter at Dover Castle, descended the slopes and took the road for Sittingbourne, from which pleasant old-fashioned town Wolfe writes to his mother.

To HIS MOTHER.

Sittingbourne, *24th March, 1754.*

DEAR MADAM,—Although this is not the most agreeable weather to march in, yet we are glad to get out of our old castle upon any terms. It was to no purpose to complain of our condition or quarters, nor becoming the character of a soldier to do it; but since the bad part is over, and we have borne it with patience, a man may be allowed to rejoice at the escape. I am sure there is not in the King's dominions a more melancholy dreadful winter station than that we have just left; and the neglect of the Board of Ordnance adds considerably to the natural horror that the situation and buildings raise in men's minds, and even makes it dangerous to reside in it in cold weather. So much for the vile dungeon!

Our orders of march have been changed two or three several times, but at last it is resolved that we shall bend directly towards Guildford, where five of our companies are to assemble to be reviewed by Lord Bury; the rest are to proceed to Bristol with expedition, being strongly solicited thereto by the magistrates of that place, who, I suppose, are in some dread of the colliers and other riotous persons in their neighbourhood. I told my father the reason why I could not hope to have the pleasure of seeing you before I am dismissed by authority; but it may happen that the cross road from Dartford to Croydon is so bad that we shall be obliged to march over the Heath and by Lewisham, in which case I'll do myself the honour (in the polite phrase) of waiting upon you for an hour, and I wish I may find you triumphing over the inclemency of the season.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

As Wolfe anticipated, the road from Dartford by which the authorities usually led the troops in order to circumvent the metropolis was quite impassable by the spring floods—in fact, before Macadam's time, the roads in this part of England were especially infamous—and so Wolfe did himself the honour “in the polite phrase” of waiting upon his parents in Montagu Walk, Blackheath. One may be sure, that brief as his visit was, he did not neglect to visit the kennels and find out the exact state of health and spirits of each of his six dogs, whose joy at welcoming their master must have been testified to all the surrounding neighbourhood. But a more satisfactory sojourn at home was close at hand. Lord Bury duly came down and reviewed his regiment at Guildford, and the ceremony over Wolfe got a fairly long leave of absence. He returned straightway to Blackheath, where he passed two or three months at the very finest season of the year, when garden and the adjoining park were at their best, and the Lieutenant-Colonel could scamper over the turf with all his dogs to his heart's content or mount his favourite horse, gallop over to visit his friends at Squerryes Court, fifteen miles away, over steep Westerham Hill.

Early in July he received an invitation to visit Freefolk, near Whitchurch in Hampshire, from his old friend, Sir John Mordaunt, uncle of his innamorata, Miss Lawson. There is something in this young lady's rejection of the Lieutenant-Colonel's suit that leads one to believe it was inspired from outside, probably by Wolfe's own parents. It is not as if she had bestowed her heart elsewhere. Although boasting many suitors the late Maid of Honour to the mother of George III remained unmarried, for the rest of her short life. Her death happened only six months before Wolfe's own. News of the young General Wolfe's engagement to Miss Lowther leaked out in Bath before he sailed on his last expedition in February 1759. In the month following, while he was still at sea, she to whom he had so long and with such ardour paid court breathed her last.¹

TO HIS MOTHER.

Freefolk, *July 14th, 1754.*

DEAR MADAM,—Sir J. Mordaunt's civility, good-breeding, and good-humour make his house easy and pleasant to his guests, and the country round about has a variety of charms, especially to those that love sport. As far as my disposition

¹ *Gentleman's Magazine*, Obituary.

will permit, I live everywhere as they live with whom I am, and put off the fixing upon a way of life, or preferring one method to another till I can do it at home,—in all simplicity following nature without control. My mistress's picture hangs up in the room where we dine. It took away my stomach for two or three days, and made me grave; but time, the never failing aid to distressed lovers, has made the semblance of her a pleasing, but not a dangerous object. However, I find it best not to trust myself to the lady's eyes, or put confidence in any resolutions of my own.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Our hero was but an indifferent patron of the turf.

TO HIS FATHER.

Freefolk, *July 21st, 1754.*

DEAR SIR,—I have rambled over several places in this neighbourhood. The Duke of Bolton's park and gardens at Hackwood are well worth a journey to see them. I was there and at Basingstoke races the same day. If I had understood matters of that sort, or had been a more refined politician and better courtier than I really am, I should have carried my pockets off full of money, for there were great odds offered against the Duke's horse, and some of the country gentlemen seemed to propose wagers with more passion than judgment. The Duke was not present. Boscawen managed his interest upon the course, and except him there was not a soul that I had the least acquaintance with.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

The Boscawen mentioned in the foregoing was the Hon. John Boscawen, fifth son of the Earl of Falmouth and brother of the Admiral, who was destined to command the naval expedition to Louisburg in 1758.

A week later Wolfe returned to Blackheath, between which place and Westerham he divided his time until the latter end of September. His leave then coming to an end he travelled across England to Bath and from thence to Bristol, where his regiment was. Mrs. Wolfe was preparing for her own journey to Bath, at which resort she and the General spent several weeks every year. The Mrs. Thornhill of the following letter was the wife of Wolfe's

neighbour at Blackheath, nephew of the eminent painter, Sir James Thornhill. One gets an idea of the multifarious duties of an army agent in those days when one of them is required to engage lodgings for the wife or mother of a client in her travels.

To HIS MOTHER.

Bristol, Sunday, 29 Sept., 1754.

DEAR MADAM,—My journey agreed so well with me the first day that I found myself in condition to put an end to it sooner than I could expect; and I came here early the second day. John and my equipage arrived the third, not quite so happily as one could wish; for one of the horses (my own incomparable steed) fell and has cut his knees severely, and the other has a swelled leg. This and the excellent quality of the waters here for washing away all dregs and obstructions, will keep me till this day or to-morrow se'nnight. I found my new adjutant waiting to go with me but his cloak is at sea, will leave directions concerning it, and it may probably meet you at Bath.

The company has nearly all left the Wells. The few that are still there are kept by the fine weather. Sir Charles Howard is of the number; he has found more benefit this year than formerly, even to be able to get on horseback, and walk upon the Downs.

I am going to see Mrs. Thornhill, who is very well, and would probably fill my letter with compliments if she knew I was writing.

I beg my duty to my father, and am, dear Madam,
Your most obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

Mrs. Fisher has promised to provide good lodgings for you at Reading.

Early in October Wolfe arrived in Exeter, where he took up his winter-quarters in a building within the walls of Rougemont Castle. Exeter was then a stronghold of Jacobitism, as staunch as when, a century before, Fairfax and his Roundheads had demolished the old Castle, after a stout resistance by the Cavaliers.

One of the first incidents following the arrival of the 20th Regiment at Exeter was the drafting of a hundred men to another regiment, Dunbar's, ordered to sail for America to take part in the ill-fated General Braddock's expedition.

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TO HIS FATHER.

Exeter, 25th October, 1754.

DEAR SIR,—I have just received a letter from Lord Bury, concluding with this short paragraph: “I am just returned from the review of your father’s regiment; they did well, and the Duke was very well pleased with him.” Lord Bury never carries his complaisance to his inferiors further than the truth. I wish people would stick to that above as well as below,—to be honest, if possible, at both ends; but that’s foreign to the present purpose. I am extremely pleased that this business has passed over so much to the Duke’s satisfaction and to yours. It is a pity you were not better acquainted; for His Royal Highness only begins to know you,—he has but just found out that nobody means better than General Wolfe.

I begin to flatter myself that we shall soften the rigorous proceedings of our adversaries here, and live with them on better terms than hitherto. It is not our interest to quarrel with any but the French; and they must be devilish minds that take a pleasure in disputing. I hope my good mother will tell me what’s doing at Bath, and I hope I shall hear from her that she is sensible of the good effect of its waters and of its cheerful variety and company. Tim. Brett passed through here some days ago, in his way home; he had company with him, and could not even dine with me.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Exeter was not an easy place for a “Hanoverian” officer and a veteran of Culloden to live in just then—hardly much more congenial than some parts of Scotland had been during Wolfe’s northern sojourn. But fortunately the Lieutenant-Colonel was the right man for a difficult post. At that time the Mayor of Exeter was a pronounced Tory named Arthur. A sense of his position made him reasonable, and very soon under the Colonel’s suasion he began to relax sufficiently in his ultra-Jacobitism as to yield a hearty outward loyalty to the reigning powers and to set an example to his friends and colleagues. Wolfe also struck up a friendship with Bishop Lavington, who found the young officer “singularly engaging.”

TO HIS MOTHER.

Exeter, 31st October, 1754.

DEAR MADAM,—I do not like the account of your health, but

am not much surprised that you should catch cold upon the road. A person that has lain long in the same room, and in the same bed, must be subject to this inconvenience by change. By this time I hope that you have got over it, and are able to drink as much of the water and enjoy as much of the company as you find is for your advantage and entertainment. These public places are disagreeable at first till one falls in with a party to one's taste, but they generally furnish so much variety that we are not long at a loss to find fit companions.

My father said very little upon the subject of his review, just as much as helped me to conjecture that he was not ill pleased, but he did not mention a syllable of the Duke's civility to him which I was very glad to learn from you, and I was much rejoiced to perceive that you had been present at the military show, and had been diverted with it. If I did not profess the business myself, I should follow all the reviewing generals for the sake of seeing the troops. I know nothing more entertaining than a collection of well-looking men, uniformly clad and performing their exercise with grace and order. I should go further, my curiosity would carry me to all parts of the world, to be a spectator at these martial sights, and to see the various produce of different climates, and the regulations of different armies. Fleets and fortifications too are objects that would attract me as strongly as architecture, painting and the gentler arts.

You did not tell me if Mrs. Lafausille was with you at Reading. By the company you had at cards, I conclude that Donnellan's offences are forgiven. I dropt my correspondence with him upon that score, and shall probably never revive it; although I know him to be a whimsical little man of sense and generosity and honour. Have you seen any of our people at Bath? They go over now and then from Bristol for a day to dance, and then return; the poor devils can't stay long, they can't bear the expense. We have one very extraordinary person gone lately from hence, a lieutenant that you have heard me speak of, his name is Hennis, we call him Bardolph. If his figure does not frighten you, it will certainly make you laugh; he will be at some gaming table.

That poor infatuated old fool, Will, deserves compassion. He may now be considered as the most helpless, abandoned wretch upon the earth; blind folly to prefer the momentary satisfaction that ale can give to the solid certainty of care and usage in your easy service; these creatures are insensible of present advantages or prospect of future misery.

Will you believe that no Devonshire squire dances more than I do? What no consideration of pleasure or complaisance for the sex could effect, the love of peace and harmony has brought about. I have danced the officers into the good graces of the Jacobite women hereabouts, who were prejudiced against them. It falls hard upon me, because of my indolence and indifference about it. We were upon such terms with the people in general that I have been forced to put on all my address, and employ my best skill to conciliate matters. It begins to work a little favourably but not certainly, because the perverseness of these folks, built upon their disaffection, makes the task very difficult.

We had a little ball last night to celebrate his Majesty's birthday, purely military, that is, the men were all officers, except one. The female branches of the Tory families came readily enough, but not one man would accept the invitation; because it was the King's birthday. If it had not fallen in my way to see such an instance of folly, I should not readily be brought to conceive it.

"I remember," wrote a lady a generation later, "the great General Wolfe to have been much admired for his talent in this science likewise; but he was generally ambitious to gain a tall, graceful woman to be his partner, as well as a good dancer; and when he was honoured with the hand of such a lady, the fierceness of the soldier was absorbed in the politeness of the gentleman. When thus innocently animated, the General seemed emulous to display every kind of virtue and gallantry that would render him amiable in a private character. Such a serene joy was diffused over his whole manners, mien, and deportment, that it gave the most agreeable turn to the features of that hero, who died for his country."¹

TO HIS FATHER.

Exeter, 5 Nov., 1754.

DEAR SIR,—Sir John Mordaunt hit upon a point in his journey to Plymouth that seems to carry reason and prudence with it. It occurred to him, that, as Lord Bury would probably get the first regiment of Dragoons that fell, and as another colonel of rank or quality or Parliamentary merit would probably succeed him, Sir John thought, that it would be best to wait that event, to propose the other change. He thinks it so difficult

¹ *Miscellanies in Prose and Verse*, by Mrs. M. Deverell, Gloucester, 1781, vol. i. p. 74.

to accomplish that he is willing to have some circumstance of that sort in aid of the request; for although I cannot expect or hope to succeed Lord Bury, yet it is a kind of grievance to put men over the heads of those who have been perhaps more accustomed to command, and have had all the business to do for several years. This is a plea, that would be of very little service in any other case, but may do good in this. Most of my brother Lieut.-Colonels are people who have arrived at the height of their expectations, or, at least will be contented to wait till their turn comes, without murmuring. Sir John offered to begin immediately; but he advised this delay as the most convenient; and you may be sure I did not oppose it.

I shall answer my mother's letter in a few days. I am glad to hear that you are both able to go abroad, and to taste the amusements of the place; and wish your health may still enable you to do so. I cannot say I like my quarters: the inhabitants are of all ill species. I beg my duty to my mother and am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM: WOLFE.

To LIEUT.-GEN. WOLFE,
at Bath, Somerset.

He has another amusing reference to old Lady Grey, whose son was joining the army.

To HIS MOTHER.

Exeter, 16th November, 1754.

DEAR MADAM,—Lady Grey knows so well how to value a constant temper, that she must necessarily encourage such a lover, and keeps his hopes alive. For my part, I don't feel the least disposition to change; but if ever I do, it shall be upon the plan prescribed by her. I will look where she points, but I must warn her that there are little wandering stars of very bright aspect at first, whose beauty and light are soon obscured, and will hardly bear a close inspection; there are others of a nobler nature—fixed and permanent—upon whose friendly aid and guidance a traveller may depend. Now, to distinguish between these heavenly bodies requires a pretty good telescope and strong sight. But, to descend a little from things celestial to things that are material, I must acknowledge her ladyship's great goodness in offering such security to the General as she is possessed of.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Exeter and myself are hand and glove. We drink Church and King together upon extraordinary occasions at the Guildhall; but when he does me the honour to dine, we leave out the divine part of the toast, which makes him suspect my religion, and he cannot help thinking that the officers of the army are no better than they should be. The people seem to be tolerably well disposed towards us at present. How long they will continue in such good humour it is quite uncertain. I hope it will last our time, for as the town has nothing in it either inviting or entertaining, the circumstances of a civil war would make it intolerable. I am in a perfect solitude with a crowd of people around, for all our conversable officers are sent off upon different duties, and the inhabitants are of a species not to be frequented. There are some sensible, well-bred men amongst the clergy that are seldom seen. The Bishop was very civil, but he is gone to Parliament.¹

The night of dreadful thunder which affected you did not in the least disturb my rest. Nothing wakes me, which I reckon a misfortune, and I draw an inference from it to the disadvantage of my future affairs. Sound sleep is the mark of an inactive mind, and such are never great or useful; but, to balance it, quiet rest and a clear conscience are constant companions.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

To HIS MOTHER.

Exeter, Dec. 5th, 1754.

DEAR MADAM,—The good account you give of yourself rejoices me most sincerely. I am almost tempted to go to Bath for the pleasure of seeing you free from pain, and if you stay till next month, I hope it will be in my power to call upon you for a day or two on my way to Bristol, and through the recruiting quarters; the state of our regimental affairs will keep me longer at quarters than I expected, and so long, that I shall not be absent above a month or 5 weeks in the spring; a little before we embark, you can't fill up too much of your time with amusements, it is cheerfulness and ease that will prolong your life and that is not to be had, but in some well suited society. We that are young and in the world have a thousand different ways of employing ourselves and of getting through our time, it is not so with people more advanced in years, and though I am not particularly fond of cards myself, yet I think they are reasonable and very innocent

¹ Dr. George Lavington, Bishop of Exeter.

instruments of diversion ; and I am always sorry when I suffer myself to censure an entertainment that is quite harmless, purely because it is not to my taste ; my meaning when I speak upon that point is, that young folks should be careful of engaging in any pursuit that may sacrifice the hours of their improvement, and that they who have the warmest of tempers are most likely to push into excess that way, as in all things else, which they are bent upon. It is time my Lady Grey should discard me and take a younger lover. I am really not worth a farthing ; but, however, she may be assured that I am now as much in love with her, as with any woman in England, a fact that she seemed to doubt the last time I saw her.

The company at Bath (by your account) may admit of some increase without being sensibly felt ; I suppose they hold out pretty well, till after Christmas, when the shows in the capital begin to be most in vogue, and it is fashionable to be there.

There is a widow at Bristol who has, or seems to have, a kindness for the Major, I wish she may prevail with him to rest in her arms from his military labours. Although we should lose a good officer by the retreat of our Major, yet in favour of one who has as fair pretensions, I hope she will take him to herself. But it is a doubt with me whether if he should marry the widow, he could be brought to quit the service.

Maxwell¹ dances remarkably well for a man of his uncommon size. I suppose he is much liked at Bath, for I daresay he is much known—he is the best humoured man alive. Poor Hennis (alias Bardolph) had such a cold while he was at Bath, that he could not go out of his lodgings, and so escaped being seen. I have so many letters to send to poor subalterns and recruiting officers, that I can't spare a frank ; and I have so much to do before the post goes out that I must make an end with wishing you and my father the best health. My duty to him.

I am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM: WOLFE.

A short note to an old friend was penned a few days later.

To CAPTAIN RICKSON.

Exeter, 9th December, 1754.

DEAR RICKSON,—I was obliged to Governor Trapaud for intelligence of my little friend ; and though I cannot rejoice

¹ Afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton Maxwell.

much in your present situation, yet I think you will make yourself and your acquaintance easy and happy wherever you are. The Governor said you intended to write; let me desire you to put so good a resolve into quick execution, and tell me how it fares with you in that remote quarter. I admire the goodness of Providence in this one thing (amongst thousands that are worthy of admiration), that, in whatever situation a man happens to be placed, the mind is so framed, that it works itself out some occupation and finds something or other to make a pleasure of; supposing that no distant object has taken violently hold of one's affections, or that we are unreasonably bent upon some absent imagined satisfaction. Trapaud thinks he is very happy in having you with him, and I think so too. Pray how do you think upon the matter? and what sort of life do you lead?

I shall be here a month or six weeks longer, within which time I hope to learn good tidings of you from yourself. I heartily wish you well.

I am, my dear friend,

Your affectionate and faithful servant,

JAMES WOLFE.

When the Christmas holidays came Wolfe rode over to Bath, where both his parents then were, and spent ten days with them. Thither came tidings of the death of the Earl of Albemarle, and the consequent succession of his Colonel, Lord Bury, to the peerage. As Lord Albemarle he would probably have sufficient influence to obtain a post of some lucrative nature, and might therefore be expected to relinquish the colonelcy of the 20th. On the 3rd of January Wolfe was back again at Rougemont Castle, where he found a letter from head-quarters awaiting him, ordering him to hold himself in readiness to preside at a court-martial on board the fleet at Bristol.

During the time that Wolfe was at Bristol attending the court-martial which sentenced several men to capital punishment, the weather was especially severe, and the trying nature of his duties had its natural effect upon his spirits as the east winds had over his health.

To HIS MOTHER.

Bristol, 19th January, 1753.

DEAR MADAM,—Folks are surprised to see the meagre, consumptive, decaying figure of the son, when the father and

mother preserve such good looks; and people are not easily persuaded that I am one of the family. The campaigns of 1743, '4, '5, '6, and '7, stripped me of my bloom, and the winters in Scotland and at Dover have brought me also to old age and infirmity, and this without any remarkable intemperance. A few years, more or less, are of very little consequence to the common run of men, and therefore I need not lament that I am perhaps somewhat nearer my end than others of my time. I think and write upon these points without being at all moved. It is not the vapours, but a desire I have to be familiar with those ideas which frighten and terrify the half of mankind that makes me speak upon the subject of my dissolution.

While realizing that the nature of his constitution was such as made long life extremely improbable, at the same time he desired that those years that remained to him should be of use to himself and the country. He therefore by no means was content to remain stationary, and die at home a Lieutenant-Colonel on the retired list. So far all his plans for further advancement had been baulked; but there was still another way and this occurred to his friend General Mordaunt. He suggested that the old General should resign the colonelcy of Wolfe's regiment in favour of his son who would settle an annuity upon his sire. But James did not entertain the proposal favourably.

TO HIS FATHER.

Exeter, 7th February, 1755.

DEAR SIR,—I have writ to Sir John Mordaunt by this post to decline his obliging offers of service with thankfulness and gratitude. A soldier's life in war is too great an uncertainty for you to hazard a necessary part of your income upon. I should be afraid to die, more than is natural, if it left my parents unprovided of a subsistence depending upon my life. Besides, how far an expensive war may affect the funds I know not. Your better judgment upon this point may furnish you with reasons for or against any alteration of your affairs. Some security there should be for my mother if she should outlive you, and me, and the public credit,—a thing, in my mind, not altogether impossible.

As I said in my last letter, we expect to go on board the fleet, and 'tis a service that we all like, from the importance of a success at sea, to which we should be happy to contribute ever

so little. I know, if your health and time of day would allow, you would offer your services to the good old King. He will, however, be pleased to see what remains of his faithful old soldiers, and I hope you now and then appear with the rest, and give those proofs of your attachment. Excuse the freedom I take to say that you can't better exert your strength in the spring than by going a few days to your regiment, to look at them with a cheerful, friendly face, and to see if there be anything wanting which is in your power to supply. Such an attention pleases the troops, and must be acceptable to his Royal Highness the Duke.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,
J. WOLFE.

For some weeks he had been warned to prepare to go on board the fleet for service at sea. But although he held his men in readiness nothing definite arrived. In this state of suspense there seems to have been a suspicion that the Twentieth might be sent to America. The new Earl of Albemarle (Lord Bury) had obtained the command of a troop of cavalry, and the Twentieth was now without a Colonel. Who would be appointed? At this juncture his mother wrote him that his uncle, Major Walter Wolfe, had a plan to secure an East India Company appointment whereby he would be enabled to do his nephew a good turn. What if Wolfe had been induced to serve under Clive's banners in India!

TO HIS MOTHER.

Exeter, 11th February, 1755.

DEAR MADAM,—We are in expectation of sudden orders for some service; what it is we know not. If we are ordered on board the fleet either to cruise, or to Virginia, it will be absolutely necessary that I get myself furnished with a quantity of coarse shirts; and how to do it I really am at a loss to know, and if we were to take the field I should be wholly ruined. This is the state of my affairs,—I am eight and twenty years of age, a Lieutenant-colonel of Foot, and I cannot say that I am master of fifty pounds. My preparations for Minorca have run me a ground and, in short, I am so distressed that I feel myself a little uneasy, and am surrounded with miserable devils in the same circumstances, to whom a battle would be a happy event. Don't trouble yourself about my room or my bedclothes; too much care and delicacy at this time would enervate me, and complete the destruction of a tottering constitution. Such as it is, it must serve

me now, and I'll make the best of it, and the fittest use while it holds.

My uncle Wat's scheme is either very extravagant or a very prudent one. If my uncle means to mend his health by a soft climate, he can't take a better method than what you say he proposes. If his intentions are to be useful to me, I can't but think myself highly obliged to him; although I could well wish that he would not put himself out of his way upon my account as it will not answer the end that I know he proposes. The case, as it appears to me, is this,—that the uncle has much more ambition than the nephew, and that he has a better opinion of me than I have of myself, and far better than I deserve. He wants that I should make a considerable figure in our profession; and as he is a skilful man himself he would willingly contribute to it. His letters are all calculated to answer that end, but he never mentioned a syllable to me of his late project. If he had I should certainly have opposed it.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Of course, Wolfe had merely to hint to his parents that he had pressing need for money in case the expected orders came, to receive instantly a promise of funds. For the old General, having got all his arrears and turned a pretty penny in the usual way with regimental commanders, was now fairly well-to-do.

To HIS FATHER.

Exeter, 18th February, 1755.

DEAR SIR,—By my mother's letter, which came to me this morning, I find that your bounty and liberality keep pace (as they usually do) with my necessities. I shall not abuse your kindness, nor receive it unthankfully, and what use I make of it shall be for your honour and the King's service, an employment worthy the hand that gives it. I cannot bear the thoughts of asking these sort of supplies from any foreign purse, and therefore should have been more distressed without your assistance than can well be described. I would not wish that anything should take off my attention from the most important parts of my duty; nor feel myself cramped and tied down by the narrowness of my circumstances at the time when the thoughts should be free and at large. If a man be ill served, or ill armed in the field, he is deprived of the necessary aids to his well-doing; and

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that spirit will guide others but indifferently which bends under its own wants. I shall husband your gifts with discretion, and be gratefully mindful of your goodness.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Mrs. Wolfe had conveyed from the old General a good deal of counsel founded upon his own long experience in the service. He could never forget the disastrous business of Carthagea fifteen years before, and how ill the country was served by its naval commanders, how miserably the fleet was victualled, and the other horrid details of death and disease which sprang from incompetence and mismanagement. Consequently he was greatly loath to let his son go upon such a service if any other were honourably to be had. After all, the veteran was not to be blamed. He was a soldier of the old school. He saw little as yet to justify confidence in the new. Moreover, he liked his ease and did not believe in courting difficulties. His son was of another stamp: he was unhappy when at his ease; he rejoiced in difficulties and hardships if they led to what his soul craved.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Exeter, 18th February, 1755.

DEAR MADAM,—May I be permitted to say that my father's apprehension, and consequently yours, are not well grounded? He was on board the fleet in the beginning of the war, preceded by a peace of thirty years, in which the sea officers as well as ours had almost forgot their trade. Matters are not now so circumstanced, and there are many commanders in the fleet who are men of high courage and spirit. Let me add that things were inconveniences, and disagreeable ones at his time of life which are not so at mine. I please myself that we are likely to do our country good service by going on board the fleet. The sickness that we feel at first will soon be over, and I flatter myself, if occasion be, that we shall spur them on to their duty. The success of our fleet in the beginning of the war is of the utmost importance, and we shall have great merit in contributing ever so little towards it. It is no time to think of what is convenient or agreeable; that service is certainly the best in which we are most useful. For my part, I determined never to give myself a moment's concern about the nature of the duty

which his Majesty is pleased to order us upon ; and whether it be by sea or by land that we are to act in obedience to his commands, I hope that we shall conduct ourselves so as to command—his approbation. It will be sufficient comfort to you two, as far as my person is concerned, at least it will be a reasonable consolation, to reflect that the Power which has hitherto preserved me may, if it be His pleasure, continue to do so ; if not, that is but a few days or a few years more or less, and that those who perish in their duty, and in the service of their country, die honourably. I hope I shall have resolution and firmness enough to meet every appearance of danger without great concern, and not be over-solicitous about the event.

The dogs are to be disposed of as follows—you are to have Flurry instead of Romp, and Romp is to be given to Sergeant Goodman whenever he calls for her. The two puppies I must desire you to keep a little longer, till I can dispose of them so as not to be troublesome to you. I can't part with either of them, but must find good and secure quarters for them as well as my friend Caesar, who had great merit and much good humour. I have given Sancho to Lord Howe, so that I am now reduced to two spaniels and one pointer, all of excellent kinds. Beckwith is just come into the room. He always puts a stop to my writing ; I must therefore present my duty to my Father.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

PS.—I put both your letters under one cover ; the thanks that are due to one are due to the other, for your intentions and kindness to your son are alike. I am now able to come to you, and may have leave for eight or ten days perhaps. Before I could not undertake the journey without dreading the expense.

Jemmy's conduct astonishes me. He should blush to be anywhere but at his colours at this time. A young lieutenant loitering up and down Greenwich Park ! If he belonged to us I would soon bring him to quarters, and find him full employment. What is my old friend about ? If this comes to be known, Jemmy's reputation must suffer ; the monthly returns of his regiment will publish his idleness. Jack is of other mettle, and has good need of it. It has fallen hard upon that poor lad ; I wish the other had his share. Where does Jack go next ? He will have visited all the remote corners of the earth. I beg you'll

tell him that I wish him well, that I regret his hard lot, and that I should have been much pleased to have seen my old friend and schoolfellow.

The "Jack" of the foregoing was indeed of good mettle, for he lived to be General John Stretton, and survived until 1803.

While Wolfe was still at Exeter expecting orders to embark, he had news that his old friend Rickson had returned from Nova Scotia and had been sent with his regiment to Fort Augustus. Probably no letter that Wolfe ever penned exhibits the fervour of his friendship or his professional zeal in so strong a light as that which he wrote to Rickson in answer to one from the "little Captain."

To CAPTAIN RICKSON.

Exeter, 7th March, 1755.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Just as I received your letter the drum beat to arms, and we have been in a bustle ever since. Now that it has become a little calm again, I will gather my wits together, and collect my friendly sentiments (a little dispersed with the sound of war,) to answer it. Be so good for the time to come to presume with yourself that you have a right to correspond with me whenever you please and as often; and be persuaded that you cannot do me a greater pleasure than by writing to me. I want to persuade you that neither time, nor distance, nor different fortunes, either has or ever will, make the least alteration in my affection towards your little person; and that in all probability I shall die as much your friend as I have lived, whether at the end of one or twenty years, of which disposition in me, if I had opportunity to convince you, you would have sufficient proof. Though I know how reasonable and philosophic a man you are, yet I shall not allow you quite as much merit as I would to another in your situation. The remembrance of Nova Scotia makes Fort Augustus a paradise; your sufferings there will be no small aid to your contentment, for nothing can well happen of greater trial than what you have already overcome.

Since I began my letter to you yesterday, there's a fresh and a loud report of war. More ships are ordered to be fitted out; and we must expect further preparations suited to the greatness of the occasion. You in the north will be now and then alarmed. Such a succession of errors, and such a strain of ill-

behaviour as the last Scotch war (the rebellion of 1745) did produce, can hardly, I believe, be matched in history. Our future annals will, I hope, be filled with more stirring events.

What if the garrisons of the forts had been under the orders of a prudent, resolute man (yourself for instance) would not they have found means to stifle the rebellion in its birth? and might not they have acted more like soldiers and good subjects than it appears they did? What would have been the effects of a sudden march into the middle of that clan who were the first to move? What might have been done by means of hostages of wives and children, or the chiefs themselves? How easy a small body, united, prevents the junction of distant corps; and how favourable the country where you are for such a manœuvre, if, notwithstanding all precautions they get together, a body of troops may make a diversion, by laying waste a country that the male inhabitants have left, to prosecute rebellious schemes. How soon must they return to the defence of their property—such as it is—their wives, their children, their houses and their cattle?

But above all, the secret sudden night-march into the midst of them; great patrols of 50, 60, or 100 men each, to terrify them; letters to the chiefs, threatening fire and sword, and certain destruction if they dare to stir; movements that seem mysterious to keep the enemy's attention upon you, and their fears awake; these and the like, which your experience, reading and good sense would point out, are means to prevent mischief.

If one was to ask what preparations were made for the defence of the forts, I believe they would be found very insufficient. There are some things that are absolutely necessary for an obstinate resistance—and such there always should be against rebels—as tools, fascines, turf or sods, arms for the breach (long spontoons or halberds), palisades innumerable; whole trees converted into that use, stuck in the ditch to hinder an assault. No one of these articles was thought of, either at Fort Augustus or Fort George; and in short, nothing was thought of but how to escape from an enemy most worthy of contempt. One vigorous sortie would have raised the siege of Fort Augustus; 100 men would have nailed up the battery, or carried the artillery into the castle.

I wish you may be besieged in the same manner; you will put a speedy end to the rebellion, and foil their arms in the first attempt; *les Messieurs de Guise se sont très mal comporté!*

If there's war, I hope the General in the North will not disperse the troops by small parties, as has been practised hitherto; but rather make choice of certain good stations for bodies that can defend themselves, or force their way home (to the forts) if occasion require it. At Laggan Achadrom, for example, they should build a strong redoubt, surrounded with rows of palisades, and trees, capable to contain 200 men at least. This is a post of great importance, and should be maintained in a most determined manner, and the MacDonalds might knock their heads against it to very little purpose.

Old dotting Humphrey¹ who is newly married, I find will be a good deal occupied at home, and fondly no doubt; so you must not expect much aid from that quarter; there's our weak side.

My McPherson should have a couple of hundred men in his neighbourhood, with orders to massacre the whole clan if they show the least symptom of rebellion. They are a war-like tribe and he is a cunning, resolute fellow himself. They should be narrowly watched; and the party there should be well commanded.²

Trapaud will have told you that I tried to take hold of that famous man with a very small detachment. I gave the sergeant orders in case he should succeed, and was attacked by the clan with a view to rescue their chief to *kill him instantly, which I concluded would draw on the destruction of the detachment* and furnish me with a sufficient pretext (without waiting for any instructions) to march into their country *où j'aurais fait main basse, sans miséricorde*. Would you believe that I am so bloody? It was my real intention, and I hope such execution will be done upon the first that revolt, to teach them their duty and keep the Highlands in awe. They are a people better governed by fear than favour.

My little governor talked to me, some time ago, of a parcel of musket-balls that belonged to us which he offered to send us. We fire bullets continually, and have great need of them; but as I foresee much difficulty and expense in the removal, I wish he would bestow them, or a part, upon you; and let me recommend the practice, you'll soon find the advantage of it. Marksmen are nowhere so necessary as in a mountainous country; besides, firing balls at objects teaches the soldiers to level incomparably,

¹ Sir Humphrey Bland, Commander-in-Chief in Scotland, married to Miss Betty Dalrymple.

² Evan McPherson, of Cluny, was Lord Lovat's son-in-law. He became an outlaw for years after Culloden.

makes the recruits steady, and removes the foolish apprehension that seizes young soldiers when they first load their arms with bullets. We fire, first singly, then by files, 1, 2, 3, or more, then by ranks, and lastly by platoons; and the soldiers see the effects of their shot especially at a mark, or upon water. We shoot obliquely, and in different situations of ground from heights downwards and contrarywise. I use the freedom to mention this to you, not as one prescribing to another, but to a friend who may accept or reject; and because, possibly it may not have been thought of by your commander, and I have experience of its great utility.

I have not been in London all this winter. If the state of our affairs had permitted it, I should certainly have waited upon your sister. You could not propose a thing more agreeable to me; for I think I must necessarily love all your kindred, at least all that love you. I hope she has recovered the hurt occasioned by that unlucky accident.

Pray ask Trap if he knows anything of Lady Culloden,¹ how she is as to health? for I have a particular esteem for her, am obliged to her for civilities shown me, and interest myself in her welfare. She seemed, poor lady, to be in a very ill state of health when I was in that country.

I could pass my time very pleasantly at Fort Augustus upon your plan and with your assistance. There is no solitude with a friend.

I hope to hear from you now and then, as your inclination prompts or your leisure allows; the oftener the better. I wish you all manner of good, and am truly, my dear friend,

Your faithful and affectionate Servant,

J. W.

My compliments to Mrs. Trapaud and the Governor.

I was interrupted in the beginning of the letter, and the post came in from London before I began afresh.

The second paragraph of the following is significant of the relations with regard to pecuniary matters subsisting between father and son.

To HIS FATHER.

Exeter, 12 *March*, 1755.

DEAR SIR,—I do hope that a proper confidence will always subsist between us. I have no interest distinct from yours, nor

¹ Mrs. Forbes.

many passions to gratify, or if I have any, they shall always be subservient to your pleasure, for now I think I have them under pretty good command.

Whenever I may have occasion to desire the aid of your purse, it will generally be with a view to do you honour, and to enable me to serve his Majesty, as you yourself would serve him. If there is a war, I must either rise or fall, and in either case am provided for; but as I would willingly enjoy the society of my friends without being troublesome to them, I should rather prefer the former, as the means of doing it, and having as yet some little relish of life.

Three Companies of Waldgrave's late regiment are landed at Bideford, a ship with the remaining seven Companies lost her passage by running on shore in the harbour of Corke, but by the latter end of August I hope they will be over.

It seems H.R.H. the Duke looks upon Carlisle and Berwick as places of great importance. Charles Desclouseaux is made Lt. Governor of one, and Billy Billings of our regiment is fort Major of the other. Officers of equal skill and capacity, and entirely calculated for an obstinate and vigorous defence.

The promotions in your regiment and the removal of Wright are marks of the Duke's goodness, and great proofs of his excellent sense. It is a sound piece of politics to put the troops in good humour before a war, and to keep them afterwards so by repeated acts of justice and kindness. The affections of military men are easily won, and as easily kept; they only ask regular preferment and to be treated with common humanity.

I have had a letter from Sir John Mordaunt very lately in which he mentions his having seen you at Court, and I hope he will see you there again before long.

Admiral Mostyn told me that Bockland's Regiment and ours were intended for the fleet. I had like intelligence from London; and till very lately was fully persuaded of the truth of it. Musketry they must have, and till marines are raised or the Irish Regiment augmented I shall think it very possible that they may make use of us.

The two letters that I enclose under your cover are for two friends as you see by the directions. I do not know where Allen now is, nor how to direct to him, therefore beg the favour of you to send it to his mother and desire her to take the trouble to forward it.

I beg my duty to my mother and with wishes for your welfare, cease to write.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM: WOLFE.

We have excessive cold weather here, I am afraid it is still more severe to the eastward.

“Till Marines are raised” reminds us that the old corps of Marines had been largely disbanded at the Peace of 1748.

XII

WAITING FOR WAR

THE orders impatiently expected by the Twentieth and its Lieutenant-Colonel never came. For them there was to be no fighting just yet, but instead they were notified that they must shift quarters from Exeter to Winchester. Thither on March 25 arrived Wolfe and his men, the regiment still without a colonel, the appointment not yet having been gazetted. Such of his friends as had access to the King and Commander-in-Chief urged the justice of appointing Lieutenant-Colonel Wolfe to the vacant post, but the King seems to have thought him, as ever, "too young." If only war were declared Wolfe felt confident he could make his way.

To HIS MOTHER.

Winchester, 26 March, 1755.

DEAR MADAM,—Upon my arrival here yesterday I found your letter and I found a very unsatisfactory account of your health in it. The weather has been so uncommonly sharp, that I feared it would affect you, and you have the misfortune to feel all the changes and rudeness of climate that this country is subject to. I can recommend nothing to you, but the same course that you have hitherto pursued; to be good and religious is the only means of quieting the mind under great afflictions, we have no other comfort here below, nor anything else worth our regard. A little more stirring in fair weather, and in a light machine, if you had one, might help you; but the house and a great chair, is death or a life of misery.

We are impatient to know whether peace or war is resolved on. If the latter, as we suppose, the troops will probably encamp very soon, to be ready for all purposes. In either case I must go to London for a few days to settle my affairs, and then I shall have the pleasure of being with you.

The Marines you speak of, if they do raise any, will be put into Companies of 100 men each, and not into regiments as the newspapers have proclaimed, and these Companies are to have a

field officer to inspect them, and a Lieut. Col. or Major to every ten or twelve Companies. The whole body of Marines will be under the Lords of the Admiralty and entirely out of our way. But do you imagine, if regiments were raised that I should have any, the least chance to succeed? All my hope of success must be grounded upon right and just pretensions. I must serve and serve well or I cannot get forward; for who will be at the trouble to solicit for me out of pure friendship? No man will ask such a favour, but where he promises himself, and expects something in return.

I thank you for all your kindnesses, and for the pains you bestow upon me. I should be sorry if it brought the least distress upon you, or even cramped your compassionate and generous disposition. I have but a little while longer to be troublesome to you, a war of two or three years will, I hope, (though I do not wish it for my own sake, at the public hazard and expense) improve my circumstances.

The sergeant I brought from London does not please me; if you hear by chance of a good honest groom or a servant that can dress a wig, I pray you let me know. I thought I had left a stock with you—'tis what I have most occasion for at present, as mine are actually worn to threads. I am a good deal out of repair.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

JAM: WOLFE.

At last the blow fell: Lord Albemarle had hinted that the regiment was to go to General Fowke, at least an officer of rank. He now learnt to his discomfiture that Lieutenant-Colonel Philip Honeywood, a man of wealth and boasting a good deal of political influence, had carried off the prize, being gazetted April 8, 1755.¹ Wolfe took this not a little to heart, and for a moment entertained a plan for resigning his commission if he could not procure the boon of foreign service. "It was at Basingstoke that Lord Albemarle told me. . . . I thought it was a little offensive. . . . It has indeed saved me some pains and some expense, and I may jog on in one of the easiest posts in the army and sleep and grow fat."

War with France was looming upon the horizon: no man could tell whether the cloud would be dispersed or not. Nominally the

¹ "Honeywood was removed in May the year following to the 9th Dragoons. He rose to the rank of general, and was many years Governor of Hull, M.P. for Appleby, and died in 1785."—Wright.

two nations had been at peace since 1748, but in the far-flung empires of both their subjects and armies had too many causes of dispute to remain tranquil. In India and North America they were, and had been, constantly flying at each other's throats, and Wolfe watched these encounters in the remote parts of the earth with a feeling that there, if all other chances failed, lay his destiny. Those bloody rivalries would never permanently be allayed but by some crushing victory and defeat. For the moment in India there was a truce. The policy of France, so far as Canada was concerned, was to connect the two great territories of Canada and Louisiana, now separated by a thousand leagues of plain and forest, by a chain of forts, winning the intervening territory from the British colonists in Pennsylvania and Virginia.

In 1752 the Marquis Duquesne appeared on the scene. His orders were to arrest the pretensions of the English to the Ohio and Western region and debar them from trade there. The new governor began by dispatching a force of Canadian Militia to build a French fort on Lake Erie and other posts elsewhere. When this aggressive policy was observed by the Indians, who admire vigour and courage, they were led naturally to range themselves on the side of the French. During the next few years battles and skirmishes for the supremacy of the Ohio region were frequent, and it is during this period that we first hear of a youthful Virginian whose name, like Wolfe's, was destined to be world-famous. This was George Washington, who, five years Wolfe's junior, had, at the age of nineteen, at the beginning of the Seven Years' War, been appointed adjutant of the Provincial troops, and in 1754 commanded a regiment against the French at Fort Duquesne. In the Braddock disaster in the following year he was the only *aide* not killed or wounded, although two horses were shot under him. Braddock's defeat made conflict on a large scale in North America inevitable.

To HIS FATHER.

Winchester, 12th April, 1755.

DEAR SIR,—Now that we have a Colonel who will perhaps think it his duty to be sometimes with his Regiment, my prison will be a little enlarg'd. Col. Honeywood's being put to this Regiment is no compliment to me, as I shall explain to you hereafter. If the like civilities are done in time to come, they will likewise be obliged to find out a new Lieut. Colonel; for as

I have told my Lord Albemarle, I am resolved, I shan't serve one moment longer than I can do it with honour, if I should starve. You are not to understand by this that I expected to succeed Lord Albemarle. I knew that was impossible, and I had no right to ask it; but, however I am not at all pleased with what has happened; and yet, I have no objection to Col. Honeywood; which will make it perhaps more mysterious.

I am going to Portsmouth, to see the fleet, and to see how their anchors hold in a haven; for the wind rages most violently. I think they should put us on board, instead of the 300 recruits that are order'd under the name of a Regiment of Foot. You need not take notice to anybody of what is said on the other side. I wish you health and all manner of good.

I am Dear Sir, etc.,

JAM. WOLFE.

To HIS MOTHER.

Winchester, *Apr. 15th, 1755.*

DEAR MADAM, . . . Little Romp is come up, and pretty creature she is. If you would have me keep her in preference to Flurry, I can do it, and you may have her again when you get rid of the rest, which shall be soon. Capt. Boisragon was so good to take a stock for a pattern; it is hardly broad enough—but as the buckle is narrow I must be satisfied, till I can get a new one. . . .

We are soon to be reviewed, and afterwards I may have a fortnight's leave to wait upon you, provided we don't encamp immediately. It is difficult to say, whether there will or will not be a war; the French will determine that, as they please, as it suits their interest or convenience.

If you arm yourself with philosophy, you are mistress of all events; I have a natural indolence of temper, that helps me in some cases; but I have too much impatience for much sharp pain. Will you excuse the shortness of my letter, I am interrupted by the coming in of Officers. My duty to my Father. I wish you both well and am, dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

J: WOLFE.

PS.—I have been at Portsmouth, or should have answered your letter sooner.

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Wolfe was still a passionate dog-lover, and his letters are full of reference to his canine friends.

To HIS MOTHER.

Winchester, *Saturday, April 19th, 1755.*

DEAR MADAM,—Lord Albermarle has desired to have one of Flurry's puppies; I have told him to take his choice, and that, which he pitches upon will be delivered upon demand; I am many dogs in his debt, and owe him this return; will you be pleased to give orders that the puppy his Lordship demands may be delivered to his servant? There is a musket belonging to the regiment that Goodman should have called for. Whenever he or any person belonging to the regiment or in the regiment's name asks for that firelock, I desire it may be delivered to the person.

I am afraid the cook gives the dogs too much meat; flesh is a very dangerous food for dogs, and spoils their noses. While Ball eats his dinner, the coachman, or one of the servants might lock up the spaniels, and give them a little pot liquor and bread, or milk, or oatmeal and water: servants think that a dog is never well fed, unless he gets scraps of salt beef, pork, etc.—whereas these strong victuals are certain destruction, and they should never want water. I know you like these poor creatures, otherwise I would not venture to trouble you with so much upon the subject. Sir John Mordaunt reviews our regiment next Wednesday—and awhile hence, we are to have that honour done us by H.R.H. the Duke, an honour that every regiment in England will partake of.

I hope to be able to pay you a short visit in the beginning of May, and I hope to find you both in such a state of health as will allow you to enjoy that fine season. I always wish you well, and am, dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

JAM: WOLFE.

In view of the existence of war, even though he may not participate, Wolfe is very restless.

To HIS MOTHER.

Freefolk, *1st May, 1755.*

DEAR MADAM,—You will be a little surprised to find my letter dated from hence, and you will be apt to wonder what I

am doing so far from my duty and from my quarters ; but our review is over, and my friend Sir John did me the honour to invite me here for a day. He sets out for the west country tomorrow ; and I return to my colours. We are but fourteen miles from Winchester. Mr. Honeywood has consented to me being ten days or a fortnight at liberty ; which, if you'll give leave, shall be chiefly passed with you ; and, as I have some business to settle in London, the conveniency of water-carriage, or my own horse, will facilitate my movements from Blackheath to that great capital.

I intend to set out from Winchester on Sunday or Monday next, and to be with you the second day. I have been obliged to turn away one of my servants, and have taken necessary measures to be supplied with another. If a groom or other domestic should enquire for me at Blackheath, pray let him know when he may expect to see me. We have been very gay at Winchester till more serious matters call for our closer attendance, though the place is in itself dull and melancholy enough, yet five or six and twenty young military men are calculated to enliven it. Mr. Guiguer lives within six miles of the city, in a well furnished snug little house, and in a pretty country. I have made him two visits, and have found him a most hospitable and cheerful landlord, and his lady a very agreeable person. The people in general, both of Winchester and the country round about, are extremely civil and obliging ; and but for the burthen of so many soldiers upon particular houses, we should be quite happy in our present cantonments. The change to Blackheath will be to me (notwithstanding these advantages) a very desirable one ; and what I most hope for is to find you both in perfect health and felicity. I beg my duty to my father, and am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

To HIS FATHER.

Freefolk, Thursday, 5 June, 1755.

DEAR SIR,—If I had not rambled from place to place, you should have heard from me sooner. I owe you a particular letter of thanks for relieving me out of trouble and distress, and for putting me in a state of more comfort and ease for the time to come. I shall not take up much of your attention by long and tedious acknowledgements, but I am

glad to feel myself happy by your means, and I have a pleasure in owning it.

Some of us have been at Stewart's review, and were well enough entertained. I return to-morrow to Winchester; there I shall wait Mr. Honeywood's coming, and then retire to Southampton, and try to wash away the scurvy with salt water.

The affairs of my family are a little disordered by John's misfortunes; he is so confoundedly ill that I was forced to put him in our regimental hospital, that he might not drop to pieces—by good luck I found a fellow of character to serve me during his illness.

The Duke reviews the Inniskilling Dragoons to-morrow; and next week Stewart's and, they say, Skelton's; yours and ours are not yet talked of.

Sir J. Mordaunt desires his compliments to you, and to my mother. I wish you both all satisfaction, and am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM: WOLFE.

To HIS MOTHER.

Winchester, *June 12th, 1755.*

DEAR MADAM,—I have heard of a pacing horse, that a lady sold to a farmer, because it paced—the creature is said to be quiet, and sound and good humoured. Have you any objection to a pacing horse? because I am to see him next week, and if he is well and I like him—I shall buy him for you and send him up. If this does not do, further enquiry shall be made, and I won't rest till you are properly mounted.

The shortness of my letter is a proof that I am in the middle of business. I wish you both well, and with my duty to my father, am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

To HIS MOTHER.

Winchester, *June 1755.*

DEAR MADAM,—My first business here, was to enquire about your horse, which unluckily turns out to be a mare, and broken winded: if, with these disadvantages, you would choose to have her, she shall be sent immediately to London by the carrier: but, as I suppose she will not be fit for your purpose, I shall use my best endeavours to get one that will. Guiguer, and other

acquaintances may help me out. I intend to write to my father in a very short time; and am now going to Southampton to regulate the affairs of my Company and of the Detachment. I return from thence to Winchester again on my way to Reading, where Stewart's Regt. is to be reviewed by Sir J. Mordaunt on Tuesday next: I met him by accident at Staines, and he summoned me to attend him at this famous review.

I am to be two days at Freefolk, and come back with Sir John, who is going to his new house near Southampton. Col. Honeywood's brother is very near his end, the Col., I suppose, will try to see him before he dies, he is now at Bath.

We shall execute a deserter next week, which though a necessary sight is yet a very dismal one. I beg my duty to my father and am, dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

The evils which Englishmen then apprehended from war is well brought home to us in the following.

To HIS MOTHER.

Winchester, 20th June, 1755.

DEAR MADAM,—I do not know what news may be stirring in the great world, but we have none that is bad. Our fleet is now more formidable than the fleet of England ever was, and as the regiments are growing every day more and more complete, I don't apprehend that there is the least shadow of danger to the island this campaign.

What I most apprehend, and what 'is very well worth our thoughts, is the excessive expense that a war creates to the English nation. This expense has already involved us so deep in debt that we have not much more credit, and consequently must give up the funds, Bank, etc., whenever the means of raising fresh supplies fail. This consideration should determine every thinking man (when war is declared) to divide at least his substance and take the first favourable opportunity to secure something upon land, for his family in case the other portion should be lost in the public ruin. It is no doubt a little troublesome to begin late in life to manage estates, especially great ones, but a small matter by way of security of two or three hundred pounds a year, is not, nor can be, very inconvenient, and I think I could, with the help of friends, find out a purchase

of that sort, that would be no burthen. I do heartily advise this measure for your particular safety. My father's regiment is certainty for him, and my trade will always subsist me in exigencies, and (sad it is to confess it) rather mends by the distress of others, than falls off. A war is of most uncertain conclusion, and the demands of money prodigious while it lasts. All private accounts should be cleared, and we should not become responsible for other men's affairs, when our own are so precarious.

I have been here since Monday at the races, where there never was less sport in the horse way, but that defect is a good deal made amends for by the vivacity of the other entertainments, which the people here, and I suppose everywhere give into, as if no danger hung over us, nor no war was to be feared.

I have danced incessantly, and mend upon it, which will encourage me to be more the servant of the sex upon these occasions than I have hitherto been.

I would have you persevere in riding, as the most salutary of all exercises, and the very best of all remedies for ill health. Have you two horses? How are you provided? for there is a growth of little cattle here that might produce something to fit you. I have countermanded the pacing horse.

I am going once more to Portsmouth to enjoy the dreadful though pleasing sight of our mighty navy. The Marines are in full exercise to be ready to go on board, and relieve the regiments of Foot now at Spithead.

My duty to my father; you have both my best wishes and
I am, dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

On the whole he was having a pleasant and entertaining holiday.

TO HIS FATHER.

Winchester, 29th June, 1755.

DEAR SIR,—I can't get my Colonel back to his Quarters, and therefore can't reside, as I should wish to do (for rooting out the scurvy), at Southampton. I have tried the Water and the Bath by way of experiment, and find that they entirely answer my expectations, but I am not able to persevere regularly in the use of 'em.

I have been at Portsmouth lately, and shall go there again to-morrow. The Duke is expected: and the show will be most

magnificent ; it is one of those military scenes that should not be neglected. I hope H.R.H. will not be displeas'd with two or three of us for leaving our quarters upon such an extraordinary occasion.

Guiguer invited me to dinner last Thursday ; and I engag'd to go, if it was in my power ; but business carried me far away—I hear he wait'd dinner for me, which I am griev'd at ; may I desire the favour of you to make an apology for me, if you see him, as probably you will. I would not offend him for any consideration, as he has treated me with the utmost civility and kindness.

I have some letters from Braddock's army, giving a very favourable account of the General's proceedings, and of his good behaviour to the People under his command ; this gives me high hopes of his success, if Baron Dieskau does not arrive in time, with his succours, to stop the progress of our Arms.

Our affairs in the East Indies are upon the decline. At the expiration of the truce for three months, it is supposed that hostilities will be renew'd with as much violence as ever. Our military concerns are under the guidance of a very poor insignificant officer, and the death of Scott (confirm'd in these last accounts) is an irreparable damage to the Indian Army.

Bockland's regiment is to disembark soon. Eight hundred Marines are order'd to relieve them, 500 from Portsmouth and 300 from Chatham.

There are seven or eight and twenty great ships at Spithead, fully mann'd with very able seamen. I suppose they wait for news from America, before they fall on, and destroy the French fleets. In the meanwhile they eat and drink very comfortably, and entertain their Friends in a very splendid and sumptuous manner.

I wish you both all good things, etc.,

JAM. WOLFE.

To HIS FATHER.

Winchester, 5 July, 1755.

DEAR SIR,—Happily I had not heard a word of my mother's illness till she was much recover'd. There is nothing more really afflicting to me than any bad account of her health or your's. I wish she would, when she is able, persevere in riding, because I am persuas'd that exercise must relieve her. Sir John Mordaunt commends the waters at Buxton as sovereign for rheumatic pains. Why should she not try everything that can give her any hope, for what is there valuable in life without health ?

I was at Portsmouth when your letter came to Quarters, or should sooner have expressed to you the thanks that are due for so many marks of your kindness. I told you some time ago, and I repeat it now, that I would accept of no preferment or advancement in the military way, that should be attended with the least risk to you, or my mother.

There is a description in the newspaper of the magnificent military scene that was exhibited at Portsmouth to do honour to the Duke, who had great reason to be pleased with his reception, and was I believe, highly entertained, if one may judge by the looks and expressions of princes. I took the precaution to write to Lord Albemarle to know whether it would be agreeable to H.R.H. that any of us should be there, and his Lordship's answer was quite favourable. And indeed the Duke's civilities to me were sufficient proofs, that he did not dislike our coming. After the Duke left Portsmouth, Lord Anson gave a great dinner to all the sea officers to which he did me the honour to invite me and showed me all sort of politeness on board the "Prince." Governor Hanley was at his post to receive the Duke, and seems to have as much vivacity and spirit as at any time of his life that I have any recollection of. As the regt. is to be reviewed by the Duke towards the latter end of August, Mr. Honeywood has thought it consistent with his duty to be a little with his regt. before the review. We expect him in about a week to reside, and therefore I go to-morrow back to Southampton, to fix my quarters there.

I am in the neighbourhood of my aunt, Mrs. Burcher and would wait upon her, if I knew where she lived. The next letter that I receive from Blackheath, will, I hope, direct me in this particular, and give me the satisfaction to know at the same time that all is well there.

I beg my duty to my mother and am, dear Sir,
Your most obedient and affectionate son,
JAM: WOLFE.

Mrs. Wolfe, who had long been ailing, now wrote him of her recovery.

To HIS MOTHER.

Southampton, Sunday 15th July, 1755.

DEAR MADAM,—I must write you a short letter (but a very sincere one) of congratulation upon the return of your health, or

rather I fear, upon the present removal of your pains. Would to God that what you have felt was to be the last of your sufferings, and that a future life of peace and ease was to make you some amends for the many unpleasant hours that are gone by. My wishes for you are truly those of a son for a mother whom he has always found kind and indulgent; for I conclude such mothers cannot have sons that wish them otherwise than well.

My duty to my father,

I am, dear Madam,

Your affectionate and obedient son,

J. WOLFE.

To HIS MOTHER.

Lymington, 19th July, 1755.

DEAR MADAM,—I wish I could say anything that could comfort you or advise anything that would do you good. By gentle exercise and care of yourself I hope your strength will return, and with that your spirits. I have gratitude and tenderness enough to be greatly affected at your distress, and though grief is not to be sought after, yet I would not for the world but partake of all your misfortunes. Would to God that the little moment that is allowed us in this life had some ease and peace in it, or that we had firmness enough to overcome our ills. I know you would be content with a little share of health, and for my part, I have nothing to ask but just as much resolution as fits a soldier. For riches, honours, possessions, and the dazzling advantages of this world, I disregard them; my utmost desire and ambition is to look steadily upon danger, and the greatest happiness that I wish for here is to see you happy. Resignation to the will and disposition of Heaven is so consistent with piety, charity, and a good mind, that I doubt not your thorough resignation. Don't let a thought about me disturb you. You have done more than I am afraid I deserve. I lament that ever I gave you a moment of uneasiness, though, I think, I did not mean it, and of that I hope you will be convinced. I wish you better health with great sincerity, and beg my duty to my father.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

To CAPTAIN RICKSON.

Lymington, 19th July, 1755.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—If I had not been well convinced by your letter that you needed not my counsel to guide you, and

that the steps you were taking were prudent and sensible beyond what I could advise, you should have heard from me something sooner ; for the public service, and your honour and well-doing, are matters of high concern to me. I am sorry that I cannot take to myself the merit of having served you upon this occasion. I would have done it if it had been in my power ; but I knew nothing of your new employment till Calcraft mentioned it to me.¹ You are, I believe, so well in the Duke's opinion, that Mr. Fox had no difficulty to place you where you are, and where, I am fully persuaded, you will acquit yourself handsomely. To study the character of your General, to conform to it, and by that means to gain his esteem and confidence, are such judicious measures that they cannot fail of good effects. If I am not mistaken Lord George² is a very even-tempered man, and one that will hearken to a reasonable proposal.

If the French resent the affront put upon them by Mr. Boscawen,³ the war will come on hot and sudden ; and they will certainly have an eye to the Highlands. Their friends and allies in that country were of great use to them in the last war. That famous diversion cost us great sums of money and many lives, and left the Pays Bas to Saxe's mercy. I am much of your opinion, that, without a considerable aid of foreign troops, the Highlanders will never stir. I believe their resentments are strong, and the spirits of revenge prevalent amongst them ; but the risk is too great without help ; however, we ought to be cautious and vigilant. We ought to have good store of meal in the forts to feed the troops in the winter, in case they be wanted ; plenty of intrenching tools and hatchets, for making redoubts and cutting palisades, etc. ; and we should be cautious not to expose the troops in small parties, dispersed through the Highlands, where there is least apprehension of a commotion. A few well-chosen posts in the middle of those clans that are the likeliest

¹ John Calcraft, originally a War Office clerk, was taken up by Henry Fox and became immensely rich as an army agent. Afterwards he went over to Pitt, in whose confidence he continued for years. Calcraft, although attacked by "Junius" for corrupt practices, is yet believed to have known the identity of that writer. When he died, in 1772, worth more than a quarter of a million, he left £1000 to Sir Philip Francis and an annuity of £200 to Lady Francis : a significant circumstance.

² Major-General Lord George Beauclerk, sixth son of the first Duke of St. Albans, and Colonel of the 19th Regiment. He died in 1768.

³ This "affront" was the capture of two French ships, the *Alcide* and the *Lys*, off Cape Breton, carrying the Governor of Louisbourg, and four other officers. All were made prisoners and treasure to the value of £30,000 sterling taken.

to rebel, with a force sufficient to entrench and defend themselves, and with positive orders never to surrender to the Highlands (though never so numerous), but either to resist in their posts till relieved, or force their way through to the forts, would, I think, have lively effects. A hundred soldiers, in my mind, are an overmatch for five hundred of your Highland militia; and when they are told so in a proper way, they believe it themselves. It will be your business to know the exact strength of the rebel clans, and to inquire into the abilities of their leaders, especially of those that are abroad. There are people that can inform you. There ought to be an engineer at the forts to inform the General of what will be wanted for their defence, and to give directions for the construction of small redoubts, where the General pleases to order them.

Nobody can say what is to become of us yet. If troops are sent to Holland, we expect to be amongst the first. We are quartered at Winchester and Southampton, but turned out for the assizes. The fleet at Spithead expects orders to sail every hour. They are commanded by Sir E. Hawke, who has the Admirals Byng and West to assist him. There are about thirty great ships, and some frigates; the finest fleet, I believe, that this nation ever put to sea, and excellently well manned. The marines embarked yesterday, to the number, I suppose, of about 1000 men; others will be taken up at Plymouth, if they are wanted.

I lodged with a Mrs. Grant,¹ whom perhaps you know. She was very careful of me, and very obliging. If you see her, it will be doing me a pleasure if you will say that I remember it. Do you know Mrs. Forbes, of Culloden? I have a particular respect and esteem for that lady. She showed me a good deal of civility while I lay in the North. If you are acquainted, pray make my best compliments to her, and let me know how she is as to her health. *Au reste*, you must be so kind to write now and then, and I will be punctual to answer, and give any intelligence of what is doing where I happen to be. A letter, directed to me at General Wolfe's, at Blackheath, Kent, will be forwarded to the remotest regions. I am, my dear friend,

Your affectionate and faithful servant,

JAMES WOLFE.

¹ At Inverness in 1751.

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TO HIS MOTHER.

Southampton, *Aug. 7, 1755.*

DEAR MADAM,—If Mr. Warde has any secret that can relieve you I shall revere his art, and esteem his person,¹ but if his remedies should not be so successful as I wish I would have you persuade the General to go with you to Buxton next year—in the meanwhile, as the Bath water is a present relief, why should you not have recourse to it for two months in the winter? Horses for ladies are extremely difficult to find. The little forest horses are wild and shy, and I am unwilling to purchase and recommend a creature of this sort either for Mrs. Cade or you: if I hear of any that may be trusted, that are well known, I shall try to get possession of 'em, and will send 'em up.

I want to change your little favourite for Flurry—because I think you will be better pleased with this, and the other will be more useful to me.

I am obliged to finish my letter now—being interrupted. I heartily wish you better health and am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

PS.—My duty to my father.

TO MRS. WOLFE,
Blackheath.

At Lyndhurst in the New Forest, near Southampton, in a somewhat secluded abode, dwelt his father's sister Anne, who had married James Burcher,² formerly possessed of a good fortune, but in his declining years become somewhat impoverished. The nephew thus describes his visit.

TO HIS FATHER.

Southampton, *14th August, 1755.*

DEAR SIR,—I paid my respects to Mrs. Burcher a few days since, and found a very surprising old gentlewoman. I was struck with the resemblance between my uncle Wat and her. She has not only all his features, but his manner and way of

¹ Major Warde had offered to give Mrs. Wolfe an infallible remedy for gout.

² William Burcher, the son, survived until 1792, and is buried in Lymington churchyard, leaving a son, Edward Wolfe Burcher. His daughter married John Aylward, Esq., from whom is descended Mr. Alexander Wolfe-Aylward, well known for his interest in all that pertains to General Wolfe and the owner of several relics of interest bequeathed to his ancestor by Mrs. Wolfe.



MRS. BURCHER (ANNE WOLFE)

From a miniature in the possession of her descendant, A. Wolfe-Aylward, Esq.

talking, and his gestures. She has a healthy florid look, though a little paralytic, and is full of grievous complaints. Mr. Burcher has the appearance of civility and good-breeding. They live in a lonely miserable mansion in the forest, and all about has the look of indigence and decay. The poor gentlewoman expressed herself in very grateful manner for the kindness and support that she has received from you, and seemed a good deal affected at the sight of me. You may believe I did not stay long there; but I have promised to see her again before we leave this place, if our march is not too sudden.

I find that some of the troops in our neighbourhood are in motion towards the capital; whether we shall follow or march elsewhere is to us unknown, but my private sentiments are that we sha'n't long lie idle. You are nearer to the fountain of intelligence than we are, but I believe you take as little pains to be informed as your son. I don't think there are two men in the kingdom who are at less trouble on that score. I hope my mother continues to mend. Mrs. Burcher sent you a buck last week, which she hopes you received in good order.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

To HIS MOTHER.

Southampton, 27 Aug., 1755.

DEAR MADAM,—Though I hear some unpleasant tidings what grieves me most, that you recover but very slowly; that you recover at all is some comfort; if your strength and health return as I wish it, you would soon be well. I am afraid it is worse with you than I am told, because of late you have not been able to write to me. I am sure you would now and then give me that satisfaction, if it was in your power. In other circumstances and at another time, I would be with you—but we may move suddenly as others have done: and it may perhaps be our lot to come nearer to you in the course of duty.

I have heard of a gentlewoman's horse to be sold. He is broken-winded, but that is of little consequence to one who rides but moderately. Shall I buy him and send him up for you or Mrs. Cade? I beg my duty to my father; I pray that all sort of good may attend you both and am, dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

JAM: WOLFE.

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To HIS FATHER.

Southampton, 4th September, 1755.

DEAR SIR,—The accounts of Mr. Braddock's defeat¹ are not yet clear enough to form a right judgment of the cause of it; but I do myself believe that the cowardice and ill-behaviour of the men far exceeded the ignorance of the chief, who though not a master of the difficult art of war, was yet a man of sense and courage. I have but a very mean opinion of the Infantry in courage. I know their discipline to be bad, and their valour precarious. They are easily put into disorder, and hard to recover out of it. They frequently kill their officers through fear, and murder one another in their confusion. Their shameful behaviour in Scotland, at Port L'Orient, at Melle, and upon many less important occasions, clearly denoted the extreme ignorance of the officers, and the disobedient and dastardly spirit of the men.

Was there ever such a slaughter of officers as upon this expedition? and did ever the Geneva and p—— of this country operate more shamefully and violently upon the dirty inhabitants of it under the denomination of soldiers? I am sorry to say that our method of training and instructing the troops is extremely defective, and tends to no good end. We are lazy in time of peace, and of course want vigilance and activity in war. Our military education is by far the worst in Europe, and all our concerns are treated with contempt or totally neglected. It will cost us very dear some time hence. I hope the day is at a distance, but I am afraid it will come.²

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

To HIS FATHER.

Southampton, 21 Sept., 1755.

DEAR SIR,—Mrs. Abthorp's death may be reckoned rather fortunate than otherwise, since it was hardly probable that she

¹ Braddock was a blustering, peppery officer of the Hawley type, who was sent out to drive the French back across the Canadian border. He was totally ignorant of American warfare and frontier conditions. He took 1000 British troops and 1200 Virginian militia into the heart of the wilderness, fell into an Indian ambush, and was overtaken by crushing disaster and killed together with no fewer than sixty other officers. The infantry, in a panic, abandoned arms, baggage and artillery.

² Dr. Johnson observed as late as 1773 that "it is wonderful how very ignorant many officers of the army are considering how much leisure they have for study and the acquisition of knowledge." He maintained that many of them were ignorant of things belonging immediately to their own profession. "For instance, many cannot tell how far a musket will carry a bullet."

would ever recover from the melancholy state she was in, or that her natural disposition would correct with her returning judgement if she did recover.¹

Two or three of us went to shoot in the neighbourhood of Winchester, and killed some game, part of which Capt. Maxwell has undertaken to send to Blackheath; there are two cock pheasants, that I think will please you, if they get safe and sound—but it must not be told where they came from.

Sir John Mordaunt went to London on Thursday to pay his duty and make his reports to his Majesty, and that day I left Freefolk.

A French ship from Rochelle came into the harbour at Portsmouth, without knowing that there were any hostilities between the two nations; she will furnish matter for a dispute between the Governor of Portsmouth and the Naval Commander in the harbour. I am exceedingly pleased to hear the further success of Mr. Warde's medicine and hope it will have all possible good effects. My duty to my mother and constant wishes for the welfare and happiness of you both, I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM. WOLFE.

From his next letter we may fix the date of Wolfe's temporary abandonment of his white military wig in favour of the hirsute adornment with which nature had furnished him. He had inherited his red hair from his father, both of whom were probably unaware of the association of hair of that colour with genius with which the researches of anthropologists have made us in later days so familiar. The practice of wearing wigs, not perhaps so universal as is supposed (there are notable exceptions) made natural hair, especially when short, almost as much of a novelty in a man of fashion as a beard. But some even then advocated the abolition of wigs on hygienic grounds. Their disuse was certainly a convenience in the country. The letter also once more evinces the son's earnest solicitude for his mother's health.

¹ Mrs. Abthorp (Frances Thompson) became a fanatical Methodist, as a result of Whitefield's preaching, adopting the most extreme doctrines of that sect. Her reason afterwards grew affected, and she had to be placed under restraint.

To HIS MOTHER.

Southampton, 28 September, 1755.

DEAR MADAM,—I am delighted to hear that your sufferings are in some degree lessened; the presence of your friends will become every day more and more agreeable as you acquire strength and spirits for society. How happy I feel myself in your recovery, and with how much more satisfaction shall I see you than formerly, when I almost always found you overloaded with misery! I dare say you were always convinced of my affection for you, and of my gratitude. It was not this melancholy occasion that gave birth to it, though perhaps it brought it more to light. I am fortunate in this respect, and my nature requires some extraordinary events to produce itself. I want that attention and those assiduous cares that commonly go along with good-nature and humanity. In the common occurrences of life, I own that I am not seen to advantage.

You must take care of cold this winter, as the medicine you have used is of very powerful operation, and leaves a weakness behind it that requires the utmost precautions. When you are below in the parlour, the hall-door should always be kept close shut, and you must sit upon carpets. There are many fair days in October that will invite you out, and you should neglect none of them. Prefer that to all other affairs and concerns whatever. You must be extremely careful of what rooms you go to play at cards in, and where you sit; and beware of the Assembly. Have as many parties at your own house as possible, and go little abroad.

In the middle of winter, if you stay much at home, I will come and shut myself up with you for three weeks or a month, and play at piquet from morning till night, and you shall laugh at my short red hair as much as you please. I'm sure you would smile now if you saw me as I am with the covering that nature has given me. I intend to devote myself this winter to my profession, and shall read without ceasing. If you would have me with you for a short while, it must be upon the condition that I never stir out of the house after dinner. With that indulgence, I shall engage to be at home whenever you are in the evening. My mornings are always, as you know, divided between exercise and study. I have been very idle all this summer,—if a man may venture to say so who has given up much of his time to the ladies. If there is to be war, we should be prepared for it; if not, I am entirely at your service. I go back

tomorrow to Sir J. Mordaunt's for a week, after that I shall take up my residence at Winchester.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

To HIS MOTHER.

Winchester, *Sunday, 5 Oct., 1755.*

DEAR MADAM,—Here is a pad to be sold, that is nimble, sure-footed, and very gentle ; if you, or Mrs. Cade would choose to have the horse, I shall secure him for your use, and send him to you by the first favourable occasion ; I must desire to have your answer soon, because the owner intends to part with his horse. I can keep him here till the spring if it be inconvenient to have him home in the winter. I would fain have you ride if possible. In case we move in the cold season, my cloak will be a necessary covering, and thick boots a proper defence—Rymer has directions to send a strong pair of boots, and half a dozen pair of very strong shoes to Blackheath—the cloak, boots and three or four pair of shoes, may be wanted, but I wouldn't have them sent till further notice. I left Freefolk the day before yesterday to meet the regiment here—we are assembled, to be reviewed next week by Sir John Mordaunt, and afterwards, I suppose by his Royal Highness the Duke ; our whole military business seems to be confined to reviews. I hope you find yourself mending and growing stronger every day ; great enquiry was made after you, and great satisfaction expressed for the relief that you have found. I wish you both all happiness ; I beg my duty to my father and am, dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

To HIS FATHER.

Winchester, *19th Oct., 1755.*

DEAR SIR,—When two nations have arm'd themselves to the highest pitch of their strength, I suppose they will try which is strongest. The French are getting their fleet into order and threaten an invasion ; we equip all our ships and increase our Army to oppose 'em. We have begun hostilities both in Europe and America : in these circumstances is it to be suppos'd that a war with such a nation as France can be avoided ? I think it cannot. In this situation of things, give me leave to recommend some precautions to you :—to put no more money into the funds ;

to keep as much as possible by you, in case of exigencies; and above all things to secure at least £100 a year in land, that, should the war turn out to our disadvantage, and the publick credit sink, my mother may not be in danger of starving.

Whenever you can sell 3 or 4 thousand pounds of stock upon tolerable terms, it would be an act of prudence to do it; and tho' you shou'd not see a farthing of rent from a small landed estate, during the war, and shou'd lose the interest of the money it cost you, by taking it out of the funds—yet it is a wise measure for your family and can have no ill-consequence with regard to yourself. Excuse the liberty I have taken; I do not consider myself as anyhow concern'd in it; but I cannot but be apprehensive that the distractions of the publick credit may be the consequence of an unlucky war, that of course all those persons whose property lies in the funds, must be ruined; amongst the rest my mother. Your rank in the army preserves you from any danger of want, and my employment is always bread; but neither may outlive the struggle, and then who will help the poor lady? It will be no difficult matter, nor a very troublesome undertaking to find a purchase of this small value, and it is indifferent when you find it, provided only the right be clear. I think it my duty to recommend this step in the strongest manner, and not as my own opinion only, but as the sentiments of much more knowing persons, and particularly of your acquaintance, Sir J. Mordaunt, who advised me to mention it to you.

I wish you both health, etc.,

JAM. WOLFE.

The whole country rang with cries of invasion, much as it was to ring nearly half a century later when the dreaded "Boney" was meditating a descent upon English coasts.¹ Men in towns and villages, especially in the south of England, were almost in a panic. The most extravagant calls were made upon the public spirit of the nation, and one patriot announced that he would thenceforward abstain from sugar in his tea in order to devote the cost to the purchase of bullets for expulsion into French carcasses. Some of this surely is reflected in Wolfe's next letter to his mother.

¹ It was about this time that Wolfe issued his "Instructions for the Twentieth Regiment in case the French should land," which were afterwards widely circulated.

To HIS MOTHER.

Winchester, Friday, 24th Oct., 1755.

DEAR MADAM,—Before you receive this you will hear that some of the troops are in motion towards the coast: if they have not better quarters, they will be nearer to business, and in readiness to defend the country. I am something at a loss to conjecture whether this is a real or a political invasion; however I hope it will end well. My time does not allow me to enquire after what I would fain have you secure off, nor does it lye much in my way. The lawyers are best informed of these points. I should think that Mr. Fisher might hear of such a thing amongst his law acquaintance. Perhaps Tim Brett might help you, if you were to employ him in such business. Sir J. Mordaunt mentioned a very complete little manor of about £200 a year, which must soon be sold, but some of the neighbours have an eye to that. I will do my utmost endeavour to find out something or other: but we must wait till this cloud is dispersed before we think of selling out of the stocks, which at a time like this is inconsistent with my father's honour.

In case of an invasion, I imagine my father will think it his duty to be at the head of his regiment, at least as much as his strength will allow. Should matters be carried far, and money be wanted, he should be the first to offer his plate for the public service. He might buy a post-chaise, and hire horses to be in readiness; and if ever he is distressed for quarters, he may be sure of mine, or my field-bed in camp. The General should show himself at St. James's with a cheerful, willing countenance, that the King may see how good a servant he has, and how well his inclinations lead him to serve the good old monarch. If ever you happen to be distressed, you will find a certain support in your son. Be assured that you will know me best when you have most occasion for my assistance: but I desire no such proof of my disposition. May you both live long in ease and peace; but I fear there are ugly times at hand. Perhaps we may not see them.

To HIS MOTHER.

Canterbury, Nov. 5, 1755.

DEAR MADAM,—The enclosed letter is from Major Donnellan to the General; I have luckily got an old frank that can cover it. You sent my things very exactly and at a good time—the streets of this town are the dirtiest of all streets—no leather can

resist the damps, unless doubly fortified sole upon sole. It was most obliging in you to give yourself so much trouble; the letter you sent by Maxwell should have come by the post; don't regard the expense, it is sometimes of consequence not to lose a day, and if you have not franks scratch out, and write Canterbury, because we men of business need dispatch. We have two regiments of Foot, and a regiment of dragoons, a crowd of officers and soldiers. General Hawley is expected in a few days to keep us all in order; if there is an invasion, they could not make use of a more unfit person. The troops dread his severity, hate the man, and hold his military knowledge in contempt. I wish you both much health. My duty to my father.

I am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM: WOLFE.

Wolfe has been often spoken of as a man only too conscious of his merit. In truth few men were more modest, as the following evinces.

To HIS MOTHER.

Canterbury, 8th November, 1755.

DEAR MADAM,—The officers of the army in general are persons of so little application to business and have been so ill educated, that it must not surprise you to hear that a man of common industry is in reputation amongst them. I reckon it a very great misfortune to this country that I, your son, who have, I know, but a very modest capacity, and some degree of diligence a little above the ordinary run, should be thought, as I generally am, one of the best officers of my rank in the service. I am not at all vain of the distinction. The comparison would do a man of genius very little honour, and does not illustrate me, by any means; and the consequence will be very fatal to me in the end, for as I rise in rank people will expect some considerable performances, and I shall be induced, in support of an ill-got reputation, to be lavish of my life, and shall probably meet that fate which is the ordinary effect of such conduct.

You have made yourself believe (perhaps it is to excuse your indolence) that you don't write well. But you sha'n't make me believe any such thing; or, if it was so, which is not really the case, you should remember that you are writing to your son, who is your friend, knows the many good qualities of your mind,

and loves you. The Duke of Marlborough has been very civil to us all, and very particularly so to me; he goes to town to-morrow for a short stay.¹ I hope the French have not some mischief in their heads; but it can't reach you. If the General means to show himself, he should remember my former scheme for him. I have made some inquiry for a little purchase for you, but can't hear of anything fit for our purpose; and they are particularly high in their demands in this country, because of the exclusive privileges of a man of Kent who is a freeholder.² I wish it had been thought of two years ago. You may remember that I hinted it, and foretold that a war was not far off.

The letter you sent, came, as you guessed, from Goldsmith. I writ to him by the Duke's directions to enquire after an officer's widow in Ireland, who, he was told, had a son fit to serve, and his Royal Highness, who is for ever doing noble and generous actions, wanted to provide for that child. The father was killed at Fontenoy. If I don't keep a good watch on myself I must be a little vain, for the Duke has of late given me such particular marks of his esteem and confidence that I am ashamed not to deserve it better. We expect the Duke of Richmond next week, and Lord Albemarle. The Earl comes to introduce his cousin to the regiment,³ the Duke to do duty at quarters. That young man will make a considerable figure in our way, because he loves it, and has a strong understanding.

His father's Lieutenant-Colonel absented himself from the regiment, and we find Wolfe interceding for him.

TO HIS FATHER.

Canterbury, 13th Nov., 1755.

DEAR SIR,—I find that poor Lafausille has been extremely out of order. Nothing but the worst health in the world would, I am persuaded, have taken him away at this time. I mention this, because I remember that a sharp expression or two fell

¹ Charles Spencer, fifth Earl of Sunderland and second Duke of Marlborough, grandson of the first Duke. He died of a fever, a Lieutenant-General, at Munster in 1758.

² The cause of the peculiar privileges of a man of Kent is explained in that "the said country was not conquered with the rest of the kingdom, but surrendered itself up to the Conqueror by a peace made with him, saving to itself all liberties and free customs before that time had and used."—See Hasted's *Kent*.

³ The Duke of Richmond obtained a captaincy in the regiment under Wolfe, and his Grace's example was followed by the Marquis of Blandford.—Wright.

from me upon the score of my old acquaintance ; and when one has done a man injustice, but in thought, the quickest and best reparation should be made.

I hear that the French are hard at work in cleaning the harbour of Dunkirk, and that they have got a good number of ships in that port. The English will never bear to have that harbour in its former condition ; that alone is matter enough for a quarrel between the nations, already far advanced towards war. We send a detachment to-morrow to escort our battalion guns (two for each regiment) from Rochester. Our camps necessaries will be with us in a few days. We are commanded to exercise as often as is convenient, that is, as often as the weather will permit. I am vastly distressed for a groom, or, rather, for a servant, who can take care of two horses for £7 or £8 a year, and seven shillings a week board wages. If my mother hears of any such person I beg to have notice, and I beg she will employ somebody to enquire.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

One may incidentally observe that grooms' wages have risen to a somewhat higher figure in the past century and half !

To HIS MOTHER.

Canterbury, *Sunday*, 16 Nov., 1755.

DEAR MADAM,—Lord Albemarle, who knew my distress, has, in his great goodness, sent me a groom, who was well recommended to him ; the early knowledge of this may save you some trouble, and therefore I mention it.

Just so much of your letter was written when the drum major brought me yours. If I was not already provided I should readily accept the services of your footman John, especially as I have no maids to make work for and want no other qualities than sobriety and care of my horses—this includes a little honesty which one can't well do without.

I am highly obliged to you for the steps you have taken in this affair, they are of a piece with your constant practice in regard to me and I am sometimes glad that I have need of your assistance for the pleasure of receiving it. My duty to my father. I wish you both very well, and am, dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

JAM. WOLFE.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Canterbury, 2nd December, 1755.

DEAR MADAM,—I hear of you almost every day, which makes me some amends for the profound silence that reigns throughout the whole house. Donnellan tells you all the news of this place, and yet I believe his letters are short; however, better so than lists of killed and wounded, or the progress of the French arms in Kent. They are extremely concerned that Admiral Smith is so posted as to make their attempts to land a little dangerous. They do not, I am sorry to say, discover the same degree of respect for us; on the contrary, they wish for nothing so much as to be quietly on shore, and then to make a trial of our force. We have the name of the Duke of Marlborough to oppose to them, and some incomparable battalions, the like of which cannot, I'll venture to say, be found in any army. We are about as merry, as easy, and as indifferent as you may be supposed to be who sleep in security under our watch. Nobody seems to think that the French have either will, power, or inclination to resent the affronts put upon them; and some, I believe, doubt whether they are really out of humour with us or not. This melancholy destruction of the city of Lisbon¹ is a great blow, though at a distance. Long may such disasters be far off from us.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

But the Duke of Cumberland's popularity had not long to survive, nor his period of usefulness. A time was close at hand when his military proficiency would be put to a severe test, when he would be forced to return home a beaten man, to resign the command of the army he had assumed at a period of life—too early for him to have mastered by beneficial degrees the difficult art of war. His acumen in discovering and his generosity in rewarding the talents of Wolfe deserve our gratitude. In his renewed intimacy with Cumberland, Wolfe seems to have reverted to the project which General Mordaunt had formerly mooted: of his father's surrendering the Colonelcy of Wolfe's in his favour on condition of securing him an annuity. But he wanted the Duke's promise that if he fell leading Wolfe's into action the command should revert to his father.

¹ The great earthquake, November 1, 1755.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Canterbury, 27 Dec., 1755.

DEAR MADAM,—The great personages that honour us with their presence are so well entitled to a considerable part of our time that a man has but a minute for his own little concerns. Mine shall be employed to thank you for a very kind letter, which I received yesterday and to assure you that all possible regard shall be had to your admonitions. I would not have you write with pain to yourself, but I am always extremely pleased to hear from you, when it is easy to you to write. We have had strange, tempestuous, unwholesome weather, and we are so crowded together that I have been apprehensive of ill consequences from the moisture of the air and open weather; but hitherto we are pretty healthy. Do you know of any young gentleman that you would wish to see an ensign? any relation or friend's relation? I believe I could get such a matter done for you at this time. The letter you sent me came from the widow of a poor officer who was killed at Fontenoy; she has a son fit to serve; and Lord Albemarle has undertaken to get him a pair of Colours. I met with her by accident on my journey through Ireland, so you see I did not go there for nothing!

The Duke's particular civilities to me gave birth, I imagine, to the report Blaquièrè spoke of to my father; but you see it was without foundation. I knew very well that I should not get a regiment, but I did not know that anybody had thought of me in that light till I received your letter. I have no prospect of preferment; nor no right to expect it in the common course; but if I knew how to secure £500 a year to my father in case he should give me his regiment and I miscarry, I believe I could manage to get it done. If the Duke would say that he should have his Regiment again, in case I fell at the head of it, or £500 a year from my successor,—would the General in that case consent to part with it, taking the sale of the Lieutenant-Colonel's commission for his use? You must take the trouble to ask that question, and let me know my father's answer. I wish you both much health,

and am, Dear Madam, etc.,

JAM. WOLFE.

His offer to procure an ensigncy was instantly seized upon by Mrs. Wolfe in favour of young James Adeane, Mrs. Inwood's nephew.

*To HIS MOTHER.*Canterbury, *Jan. 5, 1756.*

DEAR MADAM,—The very moment I received your letter I wrote to my friend Lord Albemarle to recommend little Adeane. The only obstacle that stands in his way is his youth, a difficulty that I hope his Lordship will be able to overcome. However we are not to be quite sure of success, and the disappointment if we should miscarry, will be so much the less; I wish the recommendation may take place because I know it gives you a particular pleasure to serve your friends.

God send you better health. My duty to my father.

I am dear madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM. WOLFE.

*To HIS MOTHER.*Canterbury, *19 Jan., 1756.*

DEAR MADAM,—My Lord Albemarle wrote me word in answer to my letter about little Adeane, that he was afraid the commissions were all filled up; I shall send you his letter upon that subject. I wrote to him a second time but have as yet received no answer. I want to know exactly how old he is, and how tall, and whether the mother would choose to purchase a Cornetcy of light Dragoons or heavy Dragoons; in case the other fails, or whether she cares to purchase at all for her son. Pray tell the General that I shall take no steps in the affair I proposed to him, because I think the risk grows every day greater, at least I would do nothing but with certainty and security to him.

I beg my duty and am, dear Madam,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM. WOLFE.

*To HIS MOTHER.*Canterbury, *Feb. 7, 1756.*

DEAR MADAM,—I must explain to you that my kinsman (as Lord Albemarle calls him) is no other than Mr. Brad Thompson's nephew, who should have come into Colonel Honeywood's regiment, and would now have been the third lieutenant, whereas he is at present the youngest in the Fusiliers. I likewise must explain to you that Lord Albemarle supposes Mrs. Adeane's compliance with her son's military rage, to be

forced ; and that she solicits an enquiry because she can't help herself. My Lord, you see, promises in the handsomest manner, and he will surely keep his word. In the meanwhile, Mrs. Adeane should keep her son to his study, and if possible give him a little mathematical learning ; upon which foundation he may best hope and expect to rise. You may keep Lord Albemarle's letter till I have the pleasure of seeing you, which I believe will be some time next week. Maxwell and I shall beg a dinner on our way to London, where my private affairs oblige me to go ; and I hope to pass the next day, or the day following at Blackheath on my way back to quarters ; and I don't mean to have it known in London that I am there. My duty to my father—I wish you both all happiness, and am, dear Madam,

Your most affectionate and obedient son,

JAM. WOLFE.

PS.—Now our Colonel's seat in Parliament is secure we may hope to get franks.

Wolfe had been fond of his uncle, Bradwardine Thompson, who had long been suffering from a mortal illness, one moreover which injured his intellect. He had never neglected to write or pay him a visit when he was in the neighbourhood of York. But the news of his death affected the nephew with a sense of relief. He had none of that aversion to mortality that many of us have. He always spoke of it dispassionately, as if a long contemplation both in connection with his calling and in his own weakly person had robbed death of its terrors.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Canterbury, Feb. 20, 1756.

DEAR MADAM,—I can't say I am sorry for my poor uncle's death, otherwise than as it is a matter of concern to you, which I hope will not be more lasting than the cause seems to demand.

The Duke's coming here will determine my going to town. I shall want nothing but a suit of black clothes and fringed ruffles, those I have already (I mean the muslin ones) should be lessened in their depth—and two or three more pairs bespoke of a proper size. Will you take the trouble to do this business for me, and I shall thank you ? My duty to my father. I am always,

My dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

JAM : WOLFE.

To HIS FATHER.

Canterbury, *Sunday, March 21, 1756.*

DEAR SIR,—I am sorry to hear that my servant's mistake was the occasion of some trouble to you; half the inconveniences of life arise from their absurdities. I know he has too much respect for you to intend the least disorder in your house; but his conduct like the most of them, is a succession of errors. My mother mentioned your having settled with Capt. Scott, which, at this time, was undoubtedly a prudent step; there are other precautions to be taken, which the state of public affairs, and your judgement upon these matters will naturally point out.

I hear with pleasure today, that my friend Amherst¹ has got a regiment; nobody deserves the King's favour better than that man.

There are 15 or 16 Swiss officers with 30 sergeants quartered at Dover ready to embark for America. They have people employed in Switzerland and Germany to recruit, and I believe they have been pretty successful. These recruiting officers and their men are to be sent over in a second embarkation. The Guards got into Dover Castle about 5 yesterday in the afternoon, after a long fatiguing march. They comfort themselves with the hopes of being soon recalled. I wish you all manner of happiness.

My duty to my mother.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM: WOLFE.

To HIS MOTHER.

Canterbury, *April 4, 1756.*

DEAR MADAM,—Though I have nothing to communicate, nor anything to offer you but my good wishes, still as you desire I write. The fine season will call us all to business and leave no excuse or pretence for the lazy and indolent to indulge their dispositions. Would you believe that there are many who call themselves soldiers, who, to excuse their shameful idleness,

¹ Jeffrey Amherst, born at Riverhead, Kent, in 1717, was early taken into the service of the Duke of Dorset at Knole as page. He showed ability, was educated at the Duke's expense and a commission obtained for him in the army. Riverhead is only about four miles from Westerham, but as Amherst was ten years Wolfe's junior they doubtless never met until Wolfe was in the army.

cry out that they believe there will be no war—no Invasion—and so act, as if they were persuaded of the truth of it. Our Major will call upon you to ask how you are and to take a sword out of a little deal box, which you will be pleased to order to be shut up again, when he has provided himself with a weapon.

Mrs. Beckwith has got another child, so that he is now the father of four sons and I have not one!

My duty to the General,

I am dear Madam, etc. etc.

J. WOLFE.

To HIS FATHER.

Canterbury, 17 April, 1756.

DEAR SIR,—I do not know how to press for favours that have been promised; it is with difficulty that I can bring myself to ask, and still more difficult to repeat the request. Mrs. Adeane must remember that when I mentioned this affair first, the vacancies were not filled up, and then it was easy for Lord Albemarle to oblige me; you have seen his Lordship's letter, his reasons for not doing it, as well as his assurance that it shall be done. The boy is very young, a year more of the school will be time well spent. As the delay is a disappointment to Mrs. Adeane I am sorry for it, but if she is not satisfied with our disinterested good endeavours to serve her, I think she may be called unreasonable.¹

These two unfortunate Ensigns will be proceeded against in common course of Law; one or both of them will be condemned and unless their youth and condition when they committed this ill action, pleads in their favour, they must pay the forfeit of their lives; but till the law has taken place, and his Majesty's pleasure is known, I believe they will still be Ensigns.

When I see Lord Albemarle I will take the freedom to remind him of his intended kindness, and I hope some time or other to succeed. I rejoice mightily at my mother's better state

¹ James Whorwood, son of Simon Adeane, Esq., of Chalgrove, Oxfordshire, and Mary, third daughter of the Hon. and Rev. Henry Brydges (sister to Mrs. Inwood and Miss Brydges). In 1788 he was appointed to the Colonelcy of the 45th Regiment, and became a Lieutenant-General. He was a Gentleman of the Bedchamber to George III, M.P. for the county of Cambridge, and died in 1802.—Wright.

of health, and wish her and you all happiness. My duty to her.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM: WOLFE.

PS.—I have got a famous receipt for the gout and another for the rheumatism which I will send you.

The story alluded to by Wolfe caused a great sensation at the time. Two reckless young subalterns of Lord Charles Hay's regiment, stationed at Dartford, were travelling to the capital in a post-chaise. They had been drinking deeply, professed to be in a tremendous hurry and kept the horses at such a pace that the post-boy was at his wit's end. Both used the most profane language towards the poor lad. At Shooter's Hill, protesting the animals were fatigued, he allowed the pace to slacken, whereupon Ensign Brown jumped out of the chaise and knocked him down. This was followed up by Ensign Lauder's drawing his sword and running it through the post-boy's recumbent body. After this gallant achievement both were apprehended and tried for their lives at Rochester. Lauder was found guilty and three days later was hanged on Penenden Heath. Outrages of this kind naturally tended greatly to lower the military character in the eyes of the multitude. Unluckily they were of no infrequent occurrence, several cases of assault and seduction by officers happening within a comparatively short space of time.

XIII

AGAIN IN THE WEST

ALL winter had Wolfe been stationed at Canterbury. An old resident remembered him as a regular attendant at the Cathedral services, and his straight martial figure, "lean as a greyhound," came to be familiar to all the inhabitants of the ancient Cathedral city. It was May-time in Kent, and the orchards were loaded with blossom, when orders at last arrived for the regiment to march away from Wolfe's native county into Wiltshire.

To HIS MOTHER.

Canterbury, *May 12th*, 1756.

DEAR MADAM,—John tells me that you mentioned my not having writ to you. As I sent him to London he could give you intelligence, and as he had directions to enquire concerning your health, I concluded it was unnecessary to trouble you with letters. He says you were both pretty well when he left you, which I rejoice at most sincerely.

The regt. that has lain awhile at Dover marched very suddenly towards Portsmouth along the coast. I conclude they are to embark on board the fleet. We suppose that one of the other regiments here will be sent to Dover. In the meanwhile Donnellan has marched with 200 men to guard the castle, and carry on the works there. All notions of peace are now at an end. The most discerning people of the country have long been of opinion that a war would be the certain consequence of the steps that have been taken by us, in return for the attempts made by the French.

The embargo laid upon the shipping, the violent press for seamen, and the putting soldiers on board of our fleet, makes me conclude that the maritime strength of our enemy is by no means contemptible; and as we are open to assaults in almost every part of the King's dominions, both here and in America, I am much of opinion that the enemy's first attack will be vigorous and successful. We must, however, hope that fortune will favour us, since we do our best to deserve her smiles.

You have always my good wishes. I beg my duty to my father and am, dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

War had not been declared, but England was momentarily expecting France to strike first by a landing on her shores, when news flew from lip to lip that Minorca had fallen. It appeared that a French fleet had appeared off the island which, owing to lack of all precaution to save it as well as the arrant incapacity, to say the least, of Admiral Byng, fell an easy prey. The cup was now full: no longer could the absurd pretence of peace be maintained, and on the 18th of May, 1756, the famous Seven Years' War began.

Never did a more incapable administration hold the reins of power in England. Nothing was ready, nothing was known of how to get things ready. There was no general, neither was there any admiral in whom the country reposed the slightest confidence.

Both officers and men had hoped that when they moved from Canterbury it would be to embark for foreign parts. For war was declared—two days before the regiment marched.

To HIS MOTHER.

Canterbury, *May 20th*, 1756.

DEAR MADAM,—We go nearer to Blackheath than Westersham so that I can't take my square trunk and hatbox with me; but you will be so good to order them to be delivered to one Grassy, who is hired to serve me instead of an unhealthy groom, that I am forced to dismiss; he will convey them from Greenwich to London by water, and from thence to Newbury, or to the Devizes (where our route ends) in the waggon or stage coach. I am sorry to be so troublesome to you, and still more concerned that I am not likely to have the satisfaction of seeing you again for some time. The first division of our Regiment marched yesterday, and the second and last moves tomorrow under the Lieut.-Colonel's command. You can't imagine how many heavy hearts there are, mine (although not altogether insensible) is the least oppressed of a score. I wish you both all happiness, and am with my duty to my Father, dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

JAMES WOLFE.

To MRS. WOLFE,
Blackheath.

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He had hoped to call upon his parents, but though baulked of this, managed to spend a few hours at Squerryes Court, where he was always a welcome visitor.

To HIS MOTHER.

Basingstoke, *June 1st, 1756.*

DEAR MADAM,—In our march we have met with nothing extraordinary except the Hessian Grenadiers, whom we saw at exercise yesterday near Farnham. We have ruined half the public houses upon the march, because they have quartered us in villages too poor to feed us without destruction to themselves. I saw Mr. and Mrs. Warde at Westerham; they asked much after you and the General, and presented their compliments. The Lisbon mail is arrived, so you may expect some account of the seige of Fort St. Philips, and of Admiral Byng's feats in the Mediterranean. If things take a bad turn, and by our management I don't know what other to expect this war may rout the funds and destroy our public credit root and branch.

For a full fortnight the troops marched. A halt at Basingstoke was made on the 1st of June, whence Wolfe dispatched a letter to his mother, which evinces the keen interest he was taking in the development of the war.

To HIS FATHER.

Bristol, *7th June, 1756.*

DEAR SIR,—As I believe that all the infantry of this nation is not sufficient to retake the Island of Minorca (by this time in the hands of the French), and as six or seven battalions may be thought enough for the defence of Gibraltar,—the Spaniards not interfering,—I conclude we shall lie quiet in our west-country camp or quarters till the enemy thinks to alarm us a second time with design to strike some fatal distant blow, either upon our islands or upon the Continent of North America, or perhaps to complete the ruin of the East Indies. Are the measures taken for the relief of Minorca, or the proceedings of our Admiral, to be most admired? I shall be of your opinion hereafter, that we must have the odds of five to four to secure our success at sea. I flatter myself that the poor little abandoned garrison of St. Philips will do courageously at least,—wisely and skilfully I do not expect; and that the troops in the course of the war will do nothing dishonourable, not betray their country.

I am, dear Sir, etc.



THE THOMPSON HOUSE AT YORK (FROM WHICH MRS. WOLFE WAS MARRIED)



COLONEL WOLFE'S QUARTERS AT DEVIZES (ON LEFT)

TO HIS FATHER.

Devizes, 27th June, 1756.

DEAR SIR,—I wish you joy of Admiral Byng's escape, and of the safe arrival of our fleet at Gibraltar. General Blakeney has no great obligations to the Navy upon this occasion. They have left him in an ugly scrape, out of which, I am persuaded, he will only be delivered by a cannon-shot. The project of succouring Minorca, and the execution of the great design, went hand-in-hand successfully, and may probably end in a disgraceful peace. You are happy in your infirmity, for 'tis a disgrace to act in these dishonourable times. Our new Colonel is expected to-day; his presence makes me a very idle man.

I am, etc.

The new Colonel was William Kingsley, who long gave his name to the Twentieth, and commanded at Minden. He died in 1769, a Lieutenant-General.

At Devizes Wolfe secured lodgings at a quiet inn to which he had been recommended, preferring it to possible harassments such as had attended his quarters at Canterbury, and especially as he hoped and believed his stay in Devizes would be brief. The inn—now no longer an inn—is still pointed out after the lapse of a century and a half, at the back of the town hall.¹ The regiment and its colonel, probably in view of the national posture of affairs, probably made a deeper impression on the townsfolk than they would ordinarily have done. For a royal proclamation was posted up calling for recruits to serve their country against England's hereditary enemy, against whom war had been declared. For a time the Lieutenant-Colonel did a good business in recruiting. His health was anything but good at Devizes, but he kept up his spirits in his home letters. He speaks playfully of his old friend, Lady Grey, the widow of Sir Henry Grey of Howick, whose youngest son was in Wolfe's regiment, and who took the deepest interest in the gallant Lieutenant-Colonel. It deserves to be mentioned that Charles Grey, Wolfe's young fellow-officer, who afterwards expressed what he owed to his superior officer, rose to be a General, and died Earl Grey of Howick, father of the celebrated statesman who carried the Reform Bill in 1832.

¹ The present Mayor of Devizes (1909) writes me that the house has a double interest, in that here, Gibbon, the historian, lodged, when manœuvring with his regiment of Militia in 1761-2.

To HIS MOTHER.

Devizes, 10th July, 1756.

DEAR MADAM,—The demand you make for my receipts looks as if you wanted them for your own use; I rather hope they are for your friends, knowing that you take as much care of them as of yourself. I have distinguished the receipts to do justice to both my old ladies. I have heard of my Lady Grey very lately; she sent me her compliments, and, what was more (as she expressed it), her *love*. You see, I have the art of preserving the affections of my mistresses, and I may be vain of these conquests without offence, or danger to my reputation.

The King of Prussia (God bless him!) is our only ally, and we are solely obliged to the Duchy of Silesia for his friendship. I am sorry that they don't all unite against us, that our strength might be fully exerted and our force known. I myself believe that we are a match for the combined fleets of Europe, especially if our admirals and generals were all of the same spirit.

I am, dear Madam, etc., etc.,

J. WOLFE.

To HIS FATHER.

Devizes, 17th July, 1756.

DEAR SIR,—I am informed by a politician of this country that the loss of the Island of Minorca will not influence the Spanish court, nor engage them in a war against us. I wish my acquaintance may have good intelligence, and that the Spaniards may not be tempted by the cession of that island to become our enemies. But my own opinion is that they will, and the siege of Gibraltar by sea and land, with the combined fleets, will be the first consequence of that formidable union; in which, however, I am fully persuaded they will miscarry; provided always that the Lord Baron of Tyrawley, your neighbour,¹ takes care to have three months' provisions for eight or ten battalions, and 100 pieces of cannon towards the sea, and thirty or forty mortars with very large mouths, by way of sinking the "Foudroyant" and the "Reâl" if they venture too near.

Mr. Byng has been a tedious time beating up to Minorca. These delays either by wind or inclination, are fatal to us, because Sir Edward Hawke can hardly arrive in time to prevent the French admiral from taking away a part of the Duke of

¹ Tyrawley was Fowke's successor as Governor of Gibraltar. He lived at Blackheath, and was something of a wit.

Richelieu's army, and escorting them safe to Toulon. So, upon summing up the whole of our conduct in this affair, both as to the project and execution, it does appear to me that we are the most egregious blunderers in war that ever took the hatchet in hand. But what makes me laugh is our extravagant fears of an invasion at a time when it is absolutely absurd and almost impossible, unless we are to suppose that the Danish fleet is coming out of the Baltic on purpose to escort ten or twelve French battalions to England.

I am, etc., etc.,

J. WOLFE.

No more signal proof of Wolfe's fame at this period, even though he was but thirty, and a simple Lieutenant-Colonel in rank, can be afforded than by the manner in which his counsel was constantly being sought by young members of the military profession, animated by the new zeal for efficiency that Wolfe, more than any other man save Chatham in his epoch, was to render fashionable. One of the letters he addressed to such has been preserved. The applicant was no obscure person, but the future Lord Sydney, whose father, Thomas Townshend, held an important post in the Government. Townshend's young brother, Henry Townshend,^x was desirous of entering the army. It will be noted that Wolfe refers to a previous letter having been addressed to a young officer named Cornwallis. This subaltern of a year's standing was destined to become the famous Marquis Cornwallis, a far abler man than his ill-fortunes in America a quarter of a century later would seem to show. Cornwallis was another soldier who never forgot the early influence of the Conqueror of Quebec.

To THOMAS TOWNSHEND.

Devizes, *Sunday, 18th July, 1756.*

DEAR SIR,—YOU cannot find me a more agreeable employment than to serve and oblige you, and I wish with all my heart that my inclinations and abilities were of equal force. I do not recollect what it was that I recommended to Mr. Cornwallis's nephew: it might be the Comte de Turpin's book,¹ which is certainly worth looking into, as it contains a good deal of plain practice. Your brother, no doubt, is master of the Latin and French languages, and has some knowledge of the mathe-

¹ *Essai sur l'Art de la Guerre*, Paris, 1754.

matics; without the last he can never become acquainted with one considerable branch of our business, the construction of fortification and the attack and defence of places; and I would advise him by all means to give up a year or two of his time now while he is young, if he has not already done it, to the study of the mathematics, because it will greatly facilitate his progress in military matters.

As to the books that are fittest for this purpose, he may begin with the "King of Prussia's Regulations for his Horse and Foot," where the economy and good order of an army in the lower branches are extremely well established. Then there are the "Memoirs" of the Marquis de Santa Cruz, Feuquières, and Montecucculi; Folard's "Commentaries upon Polybius"; the "Projet de Tactique"; "L'Attaque et la Défense des Places," par le Maréchal de Vauban; "Les Memoires de Goulon"; "L'Ingenieur de Campagne." Le Sieur Renie for all that concerns artillery. Of the ancients, Vegetius, Caesar, Thucydides, Xenophon's "Life of Cyrus," and "Retreat of the Ten Thousand Greeks." I do not mention Polybius, because the Commentaries and the History naturally go together. Of later days, Davila, Guicciardini, Strada, and the "Memoirs of the Duc de Sully." There is an abundance of military knowledge to be picked out of the lives of Gustavus Adolphus and Charles XII, King of Sweden, and of Zisca the Bohemian; and if a tolerable account could be got of the exploits of Scanderbeg, it would be inestimable; for he excels all the officers, ancient and modern, in the conduct of a small defensive army. I met with him in the Turkish History, but nowhere else.¹ The "Life of Suetonius," too, contains many fine things in this way. There is a book lately published that I have heard commended, "L'Art de la Guerre Pratique"—I suppose it is collected from all the best authors that treat of war; and there is a little volume, entitled "Traité de la Petite Guerre," that your brother should take in

¹ John de Trocznow, whose military abilities are acknowledged by all historians of his times, rendered himself famous in the religious wars of Germany, in the fifteenth century. He received the sobriquet of *Zisca*, or "one-eyed," from having in his youth lost an eye in battle. He died of the plague in 1424. Zisca has been ranked amongst the Reformers, and a life of him, as such, by W. Gilpin, was published in 1765.

George Castriot, son of an Albanian prince, was born in 1404, and sent as a hostage to the court of Sultan Amurath II, where he was educated in the Mahometan faith. Owing to his strength and courage, he was given the name of Alexander (in Turkish, Scander), which was accompanied with the title of Beg, or Beg.

his pocket when he goes upon out-duty and detachments. The Maréchal de Puységur's book, too, is in esteem.

I believe Mr. Townshend will think this catalogue long enough; and if he has patience to read, and desire to apply (as I am persuaded he has), the knowledge contained in them, there is also wherewithal to make him a considerable person in his profession, and of course very useful and serviceable to his country. In general, the lives of all great commanders, and all good histories of warlike nations, will be instructive, and lead him naturally to endeavour to imitate what he must necessarily approve of. In these days of scarcity, and in these unlucky times, it is much to be wished that all our young soldiers of birth and education would follow your brother's steps, and, as they will have their turn to command, that they would try to make themselves fit for the important trust; without it we must sink under the superior abilities and indefatigable industry of our restless neighbours. You have drawn a longer letter upon yourself than perhaps you expected; but I could hardly make it shorter, without doing wrong to a good author. In what a strange manner have we conducted our affairs in the Mediterranean! *Quelle belle occasion manquée.*

I am, with perfect esteem, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

JAM. WOLFE.

It only remains to be added that Townshend attained the rank of Colonel, and was killed in battle, June 1762. "The favourite of the whole army," wrote Collins, and even Walpole gives him high praise.

There is extant still another letter from Wolfe at this time, conveying friendly counsel to a subaltern. It was addressed to Hugh Lord, a nephew of Rickson's.¹

To HUGH LORD.

[date missing.]

DEAR HUTY,—By a letter from my mother, I find you are now an officer in Lord Chas. Hay's Regiment, which I heartily give you joy of, and, as I sincerely wish you success in life, you will give me leave to give you a few hints which may be of use to you in it. The field you are going into is quite new to you,

¹ This letter is now in the possession of Mr. Charles Dalton. It has the water-mark which all Wolfe's letters to his friend, Major Rickson, bear. An account of this water-mark is given by Mr. Dalton in the *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution* for December, 1902.

but may be trod very safely, and soon made known to you, if you only get into it by the proper entrance.

I make no doubt but you have entirely laid aside the boy and all boyish amusements, and have considered yourself as a young man going into a manly profession, where you must be answerable for your own conduct; your character in life must be that of a soldier and a gentleman; the first is to be acquired by application and attendance on your duty; the second by adhering most strictly to the dictates of honour, and the rules of good breeding; and be most particular in each of these points when you join your Regiment; if there are any officers' guard mounted, be sure constantly to attend the parade, observe carefully the manner of the officers taking their posts, the exercise of their esponton, etc.; when the guard is marched off from the parade, attend it to the place of relief, and observe the manner and form of relieving, and when you return to your chamber (which should be as soon as you could, lest what you saw slip out of your memory), consult Bland's *Military Discipline*¹ on that head; this will be the readiest method of learning this part of your duty, which is what you will be the soonest called on to perform. When off duty get a serjt or corporal, whom the adjutant will recommend to you, to teach you the exercise of the firelock, which I beg of you to make yourself as much master of as if you were a simple soldier, the exact and nice knowledge of this will readily bring you to understand all other parts of your duty, make you a proper judge of the performance of the men, and qualify you for the post of an adjutant, and in time many other employments of credit.

When you are posted to your company, take care that the serjeants or corporals constantly bring you the orders; treat those officers with kindness, but keep them at a distance, so will you be beloved and respected by them. Read your orders with attention, and if anything in particular concerns yourself, put it down in your memorandum book, which I would have you [keep] constantly in your pocket ready for any remarks. Be sure to attend constantly morning and evening the roll calling of the company; watch carefully the absentees, and enquire into reasons for their being so; and particularly be watchful they do not endeavour to impose on you sham excuses, which they are

¹ *A Treatise on Military Discipline*, by Humphrey Bland, Esq., Brigadier-General of His Majesty's Forces, London, 1743.

apt to do with young officers, but will be deterred from it by a proper severity in detecting them.

(*Here unfortunately the rest of the excellent letter has been torn off.*)

Like other men Wolfe had his private and his professional manner. His extraordinary enthusiasm for all that pertained to the making of a good soldier and a good Englishman did not prevent his being intensely human at times. The Wolfe temper could flare up in astonishing fashion, and one cannot help expressing wonder as to exactly what would have happened if he and the “rascal Mr. Philpot” of Canterbury had met each other face to face.

To HIS MOTHER.

Devizes, *Monday, 26th July, 1756.*

DEAR MADAM,—Looking over my papers, I found that rascal Mr. Philpot’s two last receipts and the lawyer’s receipt for what was due after the fugitive had evacuated those quarters. They will convince you of two points, that my landlord is a very great rogue, and that I am pretty exact. If ever I catch him, I will break his bones. To-morrow we march towards our camp, and on Thursday morning we pitch our tents upon the Downs, within a mile and a half of Blandford. If there is an ounce of resolution left, we sha’n’t lie long idle; but I am afraid we have not spirit enough for an undertaking of any great moment. The Duke of Belleisle’s name makes our pusillanimous tremble, and God knows there was never less cause.

I have been but once on horseback this month; however, I find myself well enough to march with the regiment, and shall probably recover apace. Our new Colonel is a sensible man, and very sociable and polite. Little Rickson is appointed to act as Deputy Quartermaster-General in Scotland, a place of great trust, honour, and profit. The Duke recommended him to be Deputy Governor of Pennsylvania, which would have been worth £1500 a year to his Excellency, besides the glory of waging continual war with the wild men of America, but a more fortunate man stepped in with better support, and disappointed our friend.

Wish a great deal of joy to Mr. Aylmer¹ in my name, and tell him if he will breed any soldiers I shall engage them as fast

¹ Brother of Lord Aylmer, of Balrath. Mrs. Wolfe bequeathed £100 to Wolfe’s godson, second son of the Hon. Mr. Aylmer.

as they are able to serve. I hear that Lafausille¹ has been preparing for action, though I did not know with what design until you cleared it up. I'm tired of proposing anything to the officers that command our regiments; they are in general so lazy and so bigoted to old habits; though I must do him the justice to say that he differs from them in that respect, and is industrious beyond measure.

If that Byng had been in haste to retrieve his own honour and the reputation of the British flag, he has had time and strength to do it. But I fear he is a dog, and therefore I hope the fleet did not sail from Gibraltar till after Sir Edward Hawke got there. It would have been of infinite concern to this nation that the castle of St. Philip should hold out till the second or third of this month. If they had been all demolished by their obstinacy they could not die better. You see what haste the Duke of Richelieu made to get for the fort; he foresaw the danger of our fleet's returning with the Admirals that now command it, and therefore, under pretence of doing honour to the garrison for their brave defence, and to Blakeney in particular, he rejected no proposals that were made. His sole aim was to garrison the fort and get back to Toulon with the rest of his army before our squadron could return from Gibraltar, and I am afraid he has succeeded in his wish. If Byng has lost one day at Gibraltar, he is the most damnable of traitors.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

After a month at Devizes the regiment marched away to Shroton, near Blandford, where the troops went under canvas. Here for ten weeks in good weather they lay encamped.

TO HIS FATHER.

Blandford Camp, *August 4th, 1756.*

DEAR SIR,—Our little army collected amounts to 6 Battalions, 6 squadrons and 2 troops of light horse; and we have 12 small pieces of artillery. We are encamped upon a very wholesome and very pleasant dry spot, but as the country round about is extremely open, and our situation high, the winds rather incommode us. To make amends they scour the camp and bring us a constant current of fresh air. The General

¹ "John Lafausille, Lieut.-Col. of the 8th (General Wolfe's) regiment of foot, was promoted to the colonelcy of the 66th in 1758. He was created a Major-General in 1761, and died on his voyage home from Havana in 1763."—Wright.

has seen the Dragoons, and the battalions are preparing to be received one after another. When this is over I imagine he will proceed to another business more to the purpose, after requiring such alterations and improvements in the private discipline of corps, as he shall think needful. There is a great scarcity of gun powder in the camp, so that 'tis like we shall be obliged to do business without noise. The Lt.-General lives about 3 miles off, and the Major-General about 5; but the Duke of Bedford has got a house at Blandford, which brings him within a mile and a half of the army.

There is good care taken of the men in the necessary articles of wood and straw, bread and meat, and the regiment will all be new clothed very soon. We have hospitals for the sick in the neighbourhood of the camp, a physician general and a surgeon to inspect, and bedding delivered to us for 50 men per battalion. The private concerns of our regiment are in good hands, for the Colonel looks into matters and orders every thing for the best. I dare believe there is the same good management under your Lt.-Colonel who is an example of care and diligence, and indeed all the commanders of corps seem to attend in their respective promises to the maintenance of order and discipline. So much for the army; and as for myself this sort of life generally agrees very well with me, and I am much better in health, since I came into the open air. I wish you and my mother all happiness, I beg my duty to her, and am, dear Sir, etc.,

JAM. WOLFE.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Blandford Camp, 7 Aug., 1756.

DEAR MADAM,—The addition of a battalion to every Regiment of Foot¹ makes room for little Adeane and I have written to remind Lord Albemarle of his promise, who was indeed so obliging as to offer his services for any relation or friend that I was desirous of providing for in this way. I have confined my request, singly to this point, which I hope will ensure his success. You must send (or take care that it be sent) his Christian name to Lord Albemarle's in Bolton Street without loss of time; because the officers will be named immediately. I have received a letter from my father this day with a bad account of your health.

¹ By a War Office minute 25th August, 1756, second battalions of 780 men each were to be added to fifteen infantry regiments. These battalions afterwards became regiments, of one of which, as we shall see, Wolfe got the Colonelcy.

As the gout and rheumatism are disorders of the same nature; I should think that the sage wine might assist you. I wish with all my heart that anything could be thought of for your benefit and relief. Pray tell the General that I recommend one of his Lieutenants to him upon this occasion. Hamilton deserves some promotion.

There is a scheme on foot to provide blankets for our men (since the Government will not be at that expense) the officers contribute according to their abilities—now that he has a battalion added to his Regiment he may afford to send them twenty guineas for that purpose—other Colonels have done it, and I have answered for him. My duty to the General.

I am, dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

J. W.

PS.—Little Brown¹ has been playing the very devil, I must write to Tim about him.

To MRS. WOLFE,
Blackheath.

That summer England had a distinguished visitor in the person of the Prince of Nassau, who went about examining all the sights with considerable enthusiasm. He figured as the guest of the Duke of Richmond (whose military tutor had been Guy Carleton) who placed his town house in Whitehall at the Prince's disposal and carrying him off to Newmarket, Epsom and Goodwood. A few weeks after the Prince's arrival his host brought him down to the regiment and introduced him to Wolfe, for whom he entertained a high opinion. About the same time there arrived at Southampton eight regiments of Hessian troops, under Count d'Isembourg. We are told that they made "a fine appearance, being generally straight, tall and slender. Their uniform is blue, turned up with red and laced with white; and their hair plaited behind hangs down to the waist."² But it was their splendid discipline which attracted Wolfe's regard.

To HIS FATHER.

Winchester, 1st September, 1756.

DEAR SIR,—I am afraid you will think me a little idle, and be still more convinced of it when you see my letter dated from

¹ Timothy Brett's brother-in-law, an ensign.

² *Scots Magazine*, May 1756.

Winchester. A lieutenant-colonel forty miles from his camp! What carries him so far from his duty? The case is this:—The Prince of Nassau is going away, and the Duke of Richmond means to entertain him a day or two at Goodwood before his departure, and we see the Hessians exercise as we go along. The Duke proposed this party to me, and undertook to get the General's leave. There was too much pleasure and too much honour in his Grace's offer to be refused. To-morrow morning four of the Hessian battalions and some artillery exhibit the Prussian discipline, after which we are to breakfast with Count d'Isembourg, their General, and dine at the Duke of Richmond's, which is five-and-twenty miles from hence.

VIEWS
PRUSSIAN
ARMY

We had a general review and exercise of our forces yesterday upon Blandford Downs, to the great entertainment of the ignorant spectators; though, according to my judgment, we do not deserve even their approbation. There are officers who had the presumption and vanity to applaud our operations, bad as they were; but I hope the General saw our defects, and will apply a speedy remedy, without which I think we are in imminent danger of being cut to pieces in our first encounter.

We have some suspicion of an enterprise in embryo, and we conclude that it will be in a warm climate. If the least notice is given me, I shall send for all my thin clothes and linen. The Duke of Richmond talks of visiting the two camps in Kent, and he will, if I am with him, do us the honour to drink a dish of tea at your house. He has expressed a desire to see you; whence that curiosity arises I can't imagine, but so it is. I send you both my best wishes.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Our hero got a brief leave of absence and saw his parents at Blackheath during September.

In the following month came news of an outbreak of rioting on the part of the Gloucestershire weavers which alarmed the Government. Wolfe received orders on October 19 to march straightway with six companies—three of his own regiment and three of the Buffs—to help the magistrates suppress the disturbances.

TO HIS FATHER.

Camp near Blandford, 19 Oct., 1756.

DEAR SIR,—The regiments who have the longest march are by our management the longest in camp. Here are two military

battalions of us, up to our knees in dirt, while our comrades are very snug in their quarters. It seems the Adjutant-general sent orders that the Buffs and our regiment should remain till an answer came from Lord Howe in relation to the barracks at Plymouth, and they omitted to give Sir John Mordaunt a proper latitude in case the weather was such as made it necessary to canton the men in this neighbourhood, so that by his exact and literal obedience of orders, we risk the greatest damages, and are already beginning to fall sick.

Lafausille told me that you had mentioned my mother's care of my little affair in a letter to him, for which I am extremely obliged to her, and hope that a fair wind will convey them soon to Plymouth, where I shall pick and choose which I think may be most useful, and leave the rest for my heirs and executors.¹ My duty to my mother. I wish you both the best of health and am, dear Sir,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

PS.—Since I writ my letter, orders are come to decamp, and I have received command to march with six companies into Gloucestershire, to assist the civil power in suppressing riots, etc. I have three companies of the Buffs and three of our own; and I march to-morrow morning.

It was never a pleasant task to a soldier, and one in which no honour is to be acquired, unless he is so fortunate as to attain his ends without spilling blood. Otherwise, in a country like England, the "whiff of grapeshot" is apt to put a stigma upon an officer's character not easily effaced.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Sodbury, *Sunday, 24th October, 1756.*

DEAR MADAM,—I write you this short letter to inform you that the Gloucestershire weavers and I are not yet come to blows nor do I believe we shall. The expedition carries me a little out of my road and a little in the dirt, but I believe there never was a more harmless piece of business, for I have men enough to beat the mob of all England collected. I hope it will turn out a good recruiting party, for the people are so oppressed, so poor and so wretched, that they will perhaps hazard a knock on the

¹ An assortment of knives and silver forks and spoons.

pate for bread and clothes, and turn soldiers through sheer necessity. To-morrow I enter the enemy's country, and dispose my troops in their winter quarters; myself to a straggling dirty village, over the ankles in mud. Bad accommodation and bad company are so familiar to me, that I am almost in danger of losing the taste of anything better. You'll be pleased to send my baggage to Plymouth as before desired, for I hope to get there time enough to look over it before we set sail to retake St. Philip's or to seize the isle of Corsica for our use.

My nurse's sons¹ were two of the finest soldiers in the camp at Shroton. Richard has behaved so well that he has hopes of preferment; the other is an exceedingly able fellow, and strong as ten common men. I furnished them for their march to Plymouth, and gave them hopes of many good things in the profession. You must direct for me at Stroud in Gloucestershire and you must tell me how you are, and what is doing in your neighbourhood. London, I reckon, will soon be in an uproar. You are happy that you are out of the noise of the populace, and out of the smoke of the city. When is the unhappy Admiral² to be judged? When does he offer an apology for the loss of St. Philip's, excuse himself, or pay the forfeit of his life for that inestimable fortress? I, who never read the news, never know what is doing, and my correspondents seem to have intelligence proportioned to my curiosity. Pray tell the General that I triumph in the King of Prussia's success.³ This was to have been a short letter, and if you knew what noise and what companions fill the room, you would wonder that it was otherwise.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,
J. WOLFE.

To HIS MOTHER.

Stroud, *November, 1756.*

DEAR MADAM,—Very little society, and no amusement but walking or riding, forces me to be troublesome to you. The shortest of the two gun-cases contains a little gun for the woods: may I ask the favour of you to send the gun-case to the "George" upon Snow Hill directed to me at Stroud, in Gloucestershire; the other I desire might go to Plymouth with my baggage

¹ Richard and William Hooper of Westerham (see p. 8).

² Byng.

³ The victory over the Austrians under Marshal Brown at Lowositz, in Bohemia, 1st October, 1756.

The obstinacy of the poor, half-starved weavers of broad-cloth that inhabit this extraordinary country is surprising. They beg about the country for food, because, they say, the masters have beat down their wages too low to live upon, and I believe it is a just complaint. Those who are most oppressed have seized the tools, and broke the looms of others that would work if they could. I am afraid they will proceed to some extravagancies, and force the magistrates to use our weapons against them, which would give me a great deal of concern. The face of this country is different from anything that I have seen in England. Numberless little hills, little rivulets running in all the bottoms; the lower parts of the hills are generally grass, the middle corn, and the upper part wood, and innumerable little white houses in all the vales, so that there is a vast variety; and every mile changes the scene, and gives you a new and pleasant prospect. The poor people in this neighbourhood are vastly well affected, further off they are as ill; but their chief, the Duke of Beaufort, is, I hear, upon the point of death, which will probably disconcert the faction.¹

The public papers seem to have taken a turn in favour of our Admiral; but I, who am an eye-witness of the consequences of his fatal conduct, shall never be brought to soften towards him. If he did not personally engage through fear, or declined it through treachery; or if he went out with instructions not to be too forward in relieving Minorca, he deserves ten thousand deaths. An English Admiral who accepts of such instructions should lose his head; but, alas! our affairs are falling down apace. This country is going fast upon its ruin, by the paltry projects and more ridiculous execution of those who are entrusted. Remember how often I have pressed upon for your security, how I have warned my father of the hazards and precarious state of our public funds. I have done my duty to you in that respect, and will do it in every other if it should hereafter become necessary, and I live and have it in my power.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

There was a member of Mrs. Wolfe's household who had mortally offended Wolfe by his insinuations long before against his innamorata, Miss Lawson, and other incidents had lately occurred to

¹ He died October 28, 1756. The faction was the Jacobites, of which the Duke was the head.

stir up his resentment. He therefore wrote this person whom he had denominated "Jezebel," a sharp letter for which he now expresses condign repentance.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Stroud, 13 Nov., 1756.

DEAR MADAM,—I should account myself little less than a barbarian, if I wilfully, designedly, added anything to the great misery that you are forced almost every day to undergo. My duty forbids me to increase your misfortunes, and I am not in my nature disposed to plague and torment people, and more especially those I love. My temper is much too warm, and sudden resentment forces out expressions and even actions that are neither justifiable nor excusable, and perhaps I do not correct that natural heat so much as I ought to do ; but you must have observed that people are apt to resent what they, at first view, (and often inadvisedly) take for injuries, with more than comon quickness, when they come from an unexpected quarter. With regard to myself you must leave to time and exerted reason for the correction of those errors and vices, which may at present prevail most against sense and judgement—pointing them out in the gentlest and friendliest manner, and by that means help to weaken and to destroy them. I have that cursed disposition of mind, (the worst quality that can seize the heart of man, and the devil's great assistant) that, when I once know that people have entertained a very ill opinion I imagine they never change ; from whence one passes easily to an indifference about them, and then to dislike ; and though I flatter myself that I have a sense of justice strong enough to keep me from doing wrong, even to an enemy, yet there lurks a hidden poison in the heart that is difficult to root out. However in this respect Satan is disappointed for I have been so long used to love and esteem you in gratitude for your good offices, and still more in consideration of the many excellent qualities that you are possessed of, that it must be a very great change indeed on your side, that could weaken my affection for you. Now and then I think myself forgot—but still attribute it to some unhappy cause of health, and wish it better. Compassion alone for your sufferings (if all other motives were dead) ought to make me calm under your reproofs, if they were ever so severe ; and may be, if I only pitied your condition, without any mixture of affection, I should be more so. It is my misfortune to catch fire on a sudden, to answer

letters the moment I receive them, when they touch me sensibly ; and to suffer passion to dictate my expression more than reason. The next day perhaps would have changed more still, and carried more moderation with it ; every ill turn through my whole life has had this haste, and first impulse of resentment for its true cause, and it proceeds from pride—I am too much affected with your letter to leave you a moment in doubt about my inclinations, which you may be assured are always tending affectionately towards you and which do in reality make your ease and quiet and welfare of consideration greater than any concern of my own, and I can safely say, that I have always had your well being much more sincerely at heart, than my own interest, and am pleased to find in myself so much merit in my love and regard for you, so well deserving it at my hands. I beg my duty to my father, and am

Dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

J. WOLFE.

PS.—I have reason to believe that our Regiment will march very soon from Plymouth into this country ; therefore, if the baggage is not gone, I beg you will keep it, till we know more.

To MRS. WOLFE,
Blackheath.

We have already seen the strength of Wolfe's friendship for the Hon. Edward Cornwallis, who had been his predecessor in the Lieutenant-Colonelcy. Just at present that officer was enjoying much public disfavour for having, while serving at Gibraltar, joined in the resolution of the Council of War presided over by the governor, Lieutenant-General Fowke, not to send a battalion to help the ill-fated Admiral Byng. Horace Walpole wrote : " By all one learns Byng, Fowke and all the officers at Gibraltar were infatuated. They figured Port Mahon lost and Gibraltar a-going ! a-going ! Lord Effingham, Cornwallis, Lord Robert Bertie all—all signed the council of war and are in as bad odour as possible. The King says it will be his death and neither eats nor sleeps,—all our trust is in the Hanoverians."

Of the court-martial which tried Fowke, the old General, Wolfe's father, was a member. The governor was suspended for a year and then dismissed from the King's service—a severe punishment, but mild as compared with that meted out to Byng. But

Wolfe firmly stood by his friend Cornwallis in his disgrace, writing thus to his father at a time when an investigation into Fowke's associates was pending—

To HIS FATHER.

Stroud, 27th November, 1756.

DEAR SIR,—

I don't suppose there is a man living more to be pitied than poor Cornwallis. As he has more zeal, more merit, and more integrity than one commonly meets with among men, he will be proportionally mortified to find himself in disgrace, with the best intention to deserve favour. I am heartily sorry to find him involved with the rest, of whose abilities or inclinations nobody has any very high notions; but Cornwallis is a man of approved courage and fidelity. He has, unhappily, been misled upon this occasion by people of not half his value.

I am, dear sir,

J. WOLFE.

Wolfe's view of Cornwallis's behaviour was that eventually taken by the authorities, and his friend came out of the ordeal not merely unscathed but so far improved in position that he was advanced a grade in the service and in February was gazetted a Major-General.

Wolfe's own promotion occasionally occupied his thoughts, and his temper just now does not appear to have been improved by the mission he had concluded in the West. He wanted to serve against England's enemies abroad and was only considered good enough to put down a weaver's brawl in Gloucestershire. In the next letter the clannishness which distinguished the Wolfes and himself in particular is brought out by his references to his cousin Goldsmith's impending bereavement. Captain Goldsmith and he corresponded regularly.

To HIS MOTHER.

Stroud, 6th December, 1756.

DEAR MADAM,—I attribute it in some measure to the nature of my employment as well as to the condition of my blood, being everlasting chagrined with the ill actions of the people about me, and in the constant exercise of power to punish and rebuke. I pass so much of my time at quarters, and am so intent upon having everything done in its proper way, that

those aids which are equality of society, the conversation of women, and the wholesome advice of friends are known to give to minds of my cast, are totally cut off from me and denied; and if I was to serve two or three years in America, I make no doubt that I should be distinguished by a peculiar fierceness of temper suited to the nature of that war. I don't know whether a man had better fall early into the hands of those savages, than be converted by degrees into their nature and forget humanity.

It may happen that a second battalion of those regiments may have colonels appointed to them without including your son in the number. A man who never asks a favour will hardly ever obtain it. I persuade myself they will put no inferior officers (unless a peer) over my head, in which case I can't complain, not being able to say that I have ever done more than my duty, and happy if I came up to that. If any soldier is preferred when my turn comes, I shall acquaint the Secretary of War that I am sensible of the injury that is done me, and will take the earliest opportunity to put it out of his or any man's power to repeat it. Not while the war lasts; for if 500 young officers one after another were to rise before me I should continue to serve with the utmost diligence, to acquit myself to the country, and to show the Ministers that they had acted unjustly. But I flatter myself that I shall never be forced to these disagreeable measures.

I don't believe that Mrs. Goldsmith is dead, but dying. They are still at Kinsale, because she is not able to move; for her desire was to be carried to die amongst her own relations. My cousin, whose good nature and gratitude are such that he can refuse nothing to a wife that he thinks deserves everything at his hands, had agreed to carry her to Limerick; but she had not strength for the journey, and I expect to hear every day that she is at rest. I am afraid poor Goldsmith has been obliged to call in some expensive assistance, and therefore conclude that a present from the General would be acceptable. He has distinguished himself by a most considerable regard for the poorer branches of his family, for which, I make no doubt, but that he himself will be considered. All mankind are indeed our relations and have nearly an equal claim to pity and assistance; but those of our own blood call most immediately upon us. One of the principal reasons that induces me to wish myself at the head of a regiment is, that I may execute my father's plan while there remains one indigent person of his race.

Kingsley's and its Lieutenant-Colonel was soon off to Ciren-

cester, where it became quartered for some months. While here he learnt that his firm friend, Sir John Mordaunt, when summoned to the Royal closet, took an opportunity to represent to his Majesty Wolfe's claims to a vacant colonelcy or at least to employment in a post of honour. This was probably not the only quarter in which old King George heard the young officer's praises sung. Wolfe's reputation was growing fast. There was now hardly a quarter of the kingdom where he had not made himself known in the course of his profession and generally loved.

To HIS MOTHER.

Cirencester, 26th December, 1756.

DEAR MADAM,—

The letter you enclosed was from my cousin. His wife declines apace; her illness gives him great concern and I believe may have distressed him in his narrow circumstances. If my father would send him some assistance it might be a timely relief. I don't know what the poor man will do; when his wife dies, he loses £40 a year of his income. I have no house to offer him for shelter or I should be entirely at his service, because I think him to be an even-tempered honest man.

Sir John Mordaunt, who has been in with the King, took that opportunity to recommend me in the strongest terms to his Majesty. I did not ask this of Sir John and therefore am the more obliged to him; but I don't expect it will produce much, because by the King's rule my turn has not yet come. . . . The disagreement between Blakeney¹ and Jeffreys is unfortunate for both; it is an old quarrel revived and will produce no good. We military men are not so much in love with the defence of St. Philips as the mob of London. We think there appeared no great degree of skill, nor the most shining courage. I wish you better health and a more comfortable time than the past.

My duty to my Father,

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

JAM. WOLFE.

Cirencester, Dec. 30, 1756.

DEAR MADAM,—By the arrival of my baggage I am enabled to send you a very good receipt for the gravel. If the oil does not offend the stomach—it can have no ill effects.

¹ “The King of his own motion has given a red riband and an Irish barony to old Blakeney—who . . . has not only lost his government, but was bed-ridden while it was losing.”—Walpole's *Letters*, November 29, 1756.

Receipt.

An ounce of oil of sweet almonds,
An ounce of Syrup of Marsh Mallows in a
large glass of Rhenish wine.

Short ¹ in Jermyn Street has genuine Rhenish.

I wish it may succeed with you. I found great relief at
Southampton by the use of it. I beg my duty to my father and
am, dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,
JAM. WOLFE.

¹ Short, the wine-merchant, was a character in his day. He is said to
have once sent a dozen of Rhenish to Oliver Goldsmith on account of his
having written *The Vicar of Wakefield*.

XIV

THE ROCHEFORT EXPEDITION

FOR six months the war had dragged along, and for that period of time had been disastrous to England.

Not until the accession of Pitt to power did the government begin to be informed by any real knowledge or be animated by a single purpose. But the amount of opposition Pitt had to encounter from the King and the Newcastle cabal was too much even for his patriotism—far too much for his pride. He came in in December: he went out in April following. But in those few months he demonstrated clearly to the reasoning and loyal part of the nation that he was as he described himself, the one man upon whom in its extremity they could rely. England, he had said, was no place for foreign mercenaries; so, while in office, he had sent the Hessians from English soil. Englishmen must learn to rely on themselves; a defensive militia was organized and fostered. If foreigners were to be hired at all, they should serve far afield against the enemy in America. Recruiting had been prosecuted with energy.

There was another neglected source of military strength which Pitt resolved should be drawn upon. The keen eye of the Lieutenant-Colonel of the Twentieth had noted long since the advantage of using the fine fighting qualities of the Highlanders and had pressed the suggestion at head-quarters. The Highland clans were now organized into line regiments who could satisfy their martial instincts to their heart's content by fighting for instead of against their sovereign.

The year before (in May 1756) a plan for conducting the war was submitted to the Duke of Cumberland, who when Pitt came into office sent it to that statesman. The author of the scheme suggested that two battalions of 1000 men each might readily be raised in the Highlands for service in America, if offers of land grants at the close of the war were made. Pitt adopted the idea instantly and its success more than justified his promptitude.

Now, who was the author of this scheme? Wright was the first to point out the probability of its being Wolfe. All we know is that the paper was delivered to Pitt by the Earl of Albemarle.

The Earl was none other than the Lord Bury, Colonel of Wolfe's regiment while in Scotland. Bury's knowledge of the Highlands and the disposition of the Highlanders was of the scantiest, other than that which he received from his Lieutenant-Colonel; for during the whole time the Twentieth was quartered in the north he paid it but a couple of hasty visits. But we do know that Wolfe wrote him copious letters, and we know also that Wolfe's alert mind would certainly have transmitted his views on this matter to his superior.¹

Amongst Wolfe's friends was the Duke of Bedford, who was now Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. Bedford had long been on intimate terms with Lieutenant-General Wolfe, who for some reason or other was always anxious to get his son on the Irish establishment. The posts of Barrackmaster-General and Quartermaster-General of Ireland which had been held by Lord Forbes became vacant on that officer's death. It was customary to look somewhat higher than Wolfe's rank when bestowing a post of such importance as either. But Bedford wished to show in the strongest manner his appreciation of Wolfe's qualities. He therefore offered, through his secretary, Rigby, both these appointments to the young officer, stating his belief that the King would grant their recipient the customary rank of Colonel. Wolfe got the letter on February 6, and his letter to his father the same day shows the touchy state of his mind with regard to the obstructions placed in his path in high quarters.

To HIS FATHER.

Cirencester, 6th February, 1757.

DEAR SIR,—I have writ to thank the Duke for the favour with which he is pleased to honour me; I have told him that although it is an office, quite out of the course of my practice, nevertheless I shall endeavour to execute it properly by a strict and exact obedience to his directions and commands. But I shall give it up immediately and come back to the battalion, if the rank of Colonel is omitted; and I had rather see the King of Prussia's operations the next campaign than accept of this

¹ "It is at least a curious coincidence," observes Wright, "that Wolfe's words are equivalent to the final sentence of that portion of the above-mentioned scheme which relates to the matter in hand:—'No men in this island are better qualified for the American war than the Scots Highlanders.' The issue proved the truth of the assertion. If Wolfe did not incite this military measure, it is remarkable that he should have foreshadowed it, as well as the establishment of county constabulary upon a constitutional basis."

employment with all its advantages. As the matter is not yet completed, I believe 'tis better not to speak of it, lest his Majesty should think proper to refuse.

I am, dear Sir, etc.

He soon was given to understand that the Duke had been prevailed upon to give the separated office of Barrackmaster-General to some one else. This did not disturb him; provided he could procure the coveted colonelcy, he was inclined to fall in with his parents' wishes and accept the post. But he did not disguise from them that the prospect by no means satisfied his soul. He was "too much of a soldier to desire anything but military employment," even putting down weavers' riots or building Highland roads.

To HIS FATHER.

Cirencester, *February 19th, 1757.*

DEAR SIR,—As I have no franks I am obliged to put you to the expense of a double letter, to enclose one that I received this morning from the Duke of Bedford, in so obliging and flattering a style that I should not be ready to show it to anybody else. But as the matter concerns what I formally mentioned to you, it will be the best means of letting you see what steps have been taken, as well as what success has attended them. You'll observe that the Duke makes no mention of the employment of Barrackmaster-General, which I am not sorry for, wishing rather that they might be separated from each other upon this occasion. I won't trouble you with all that I have said to the Duke of Bedford and Lord Albemarle, but only in general that I have conformed to their sentiments in accepting the offer. I am far from being pleased with it otherwise than as a mark of the Duke's friendship and good opinion, being too much of a soldier to desire any but military employment, which this can hardly be reckoned.

I am, etc.,

JAM. WOLFE.

On the same day he wrote the following to the Lord-Lieutenant—

To THE DUKE OF BEDFORD.

Cirencester, *February 19th, 1757.*

MY LORD,—The honour your Grace has done me, and the particular obligations you have conferred upon me, leave me

no choice how to act. That which is most agreeable to your Grace must determine me, and I should be extremely pleased to have it in my power to convince your Grace, by an exact obedience to your commands, that I wish to make myself more worthy of your protection. I am very sensible that there are many gentlemen upon the list whose pretensions are a check on mine, and some of such distinguished merit that I neither desire, nor could hope, to be preferred before them. The only circumstance that could at all lessen my satisfaction on this occasion is, to be in some measure distinguished from the officers who have held this employment before by a rank inferior to theirs, and which seemed to be annexed to the office. Such services as your Grace may expect from the best inclinations, I venture to assure you of; and, as I am ready to receive and follow your Grace's directions, they will be the best and surest rules for my conduct. The moment the officers of this country and of the regiments will permit, which I hope will be early in the next month, I shall pay my respects to your Grace in town. With all possible acknowledgments for these marks of your favourable opinion,

I have the honour to be, etc.,

JAMES WOLFE.¹

Wolfe's patriotism was certainly of an unusual sort, as the following letter testifies.

TO HIS MOTHER.

23rd February, 1757.

DEAR MADAM,—I write you upon a very particular subject. There is reason to think that the Spaniards will make war upon us, and of course that the public expenses will greatly increase as well as the danger. My desire therefore is, that you will interest yourself in behalf of the public as becomes a virtuous, good, disinterested lady, and that you will endeavour to persuade the General to contribute all he can possibly afford towards the defence of the island,—retrenching, if need be, his expenses, moderate as they are. I would have him engage in lotteries and all schemes for raising money, because I believe they are honestly intended; and though he should be considerably a loser, the motive of his actions will overbalance his losses. Let the General keep a little ready money by him for his own use

¹ *Bedford Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 239.

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and yours and with the rest, if he has it, assist the State; nay, I should go so far as to advise him to lend three or four thousand pounds to the Government without any interest at all, or give it, since it is the savings of his salaries and the reward of his services. Excuse this freedom.¹ I beg my duty to the General.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

TO HIS FATHER.

London, 17th March, 1757.

DEAR SIR,—There are rumours of a change of Ministry. In this fluctuating state of affairs military operations must be neglected in the contention of parties. I believe it is pretty certain (though not yet declared) that H.R.H. the Duke will command the army in Westphalia, and, as there is a greater probability of service there than here, I have desired my Lord Albemarle to get me leave to attend his Royal Highness, and I have some prospect of succeeding. This I am persuaded you will approve of, from the advantages to be reaped from an active campaign. There appears to be so general an opposition to sending any of our troops abroad, that I imagine they will have no share of the great war which is now carrying on upon the Continent. If my mother will let me know the hour she will take me up in her chariot at the bridge on Wednesday next, I shall be ready to wait upon her to Blackheath; and if she does not care to come herself, only signify your pleasure as to sending the chariot and I shall be at my post.

Crabbed in temper as she was, Mrs. Wolfe was dotingly fond of her brilliant son and resolved to meet him at the bridge. The appointed day arrives; it is bitterly cold and a blizzard is blowing. Nothing loath the good lady bundles out of bed, mounts her coach, and drives ten miles to Westminster bridge. Her son is not there. She waits there three hours, until she nearly perishes with the cold, and then with thin lips and blazing eyes orders the coachman to drive back to Blackheath. It appears James had written to countermand the carriage, but his letter had arrived too late.

¹ "Far from being absorbed in his own worldly welfare, our hero was deeply interested in everything that concerned the State. Instead of heaping up riches, as he now had the opportunity of doing, it seems to have been his highest ambition to spend and be spent in the service of his country."—Wright.

Sunday Eve, 27 March, 1757.

DEAR MADAM,—I did hope that my letter would get to Blackheath time enough to prevent the chariot's coming for me, and I couldn't conceive that you yourself would venture out such a day—but Mr. Fisher told me you waited God knows how long in the cold, which I was exceedingly sorry to hear. I won't trouble you any more about the chariot, for fear of such another accident, and as the ceremony of kissing hands takes up a deal of time, I hope before it is over, the weather will soften, so as to admit of some navigation upon the Thames.

I hear no kind of news, because I never ask for any, nor ever know what is doing. My duty to my father, I am, dear Madam,
Your obedient and affectionate son,

JAM. WOLFE.

To MRS. WOLFE,
Blackheath.

To HIS FATHER.

Monday, 28 March, 1757.

DEAR SIR,—I am heartily sorry that I am not at liberty to wait upon you next Wednesday, and that I did not know of your being in town till 'twas too late to see you.

The Duke's leg is inflamed,¹ and he is for the present confined.

I shall kiss the King's hand tomorrow for my new office.

My duty to my mother,

I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,

JAM. WOLFE.

To LIEUT.-GEN. WOLFE,
Blackheath, Kent.

On Tuesday, March 29, amongst the throng at the royal levee at St. James's was the figure of the Lieutenant-Colonel of the Twentieth Regiment. At the same ceremony, separated by two or three notabilities, one of whom was the Duke of Bedford, there stood the minister who ere many months had passed was to take the destinies of his country into his hands. Out of this roomful of peers, statesmen and soldiers, there were two men who loved England superlatively and longed to serve her, filled with fervour, with ambition. In this Lieutenant-Colonel twenty years his junior, Pitt the statesman was to find a soldier who would be a worthy

¹ The Duke of Cumberland became corpulent to an unwieldy degree at an early age and also suffered from varicose veins.

instrument to his ends. Old George II, when he gave Wolfe his hand to kiss, may have looked twice at this man ("too young to be a colonel") whom so many of his lieges were praising and resolved to advance in spite of his royal will.

While the nation and the empire resounded with war's alarms, Wolfe was as busy as ever he had been in his life. Most of the home regiments had recruited second battalions, and first amongst them the Twentieth. He never delegated the task of formation and discipline to others. "His regiment was the best drilled and disciplined in the kingdom," afterwards said the third Duke of Marlborough, who at this time as Lord Blandford was one of his captains, and there is ample testimony to the fact. After leaving London, where he had kissed hands on his Irish appointment, our Lieutenant-Colonel travelled to Gloucester, to inspect his second battalion.

TO HIS FATHER.

Gloucester, 13th May, 1757.

DEAR SIR,—I have travelled hither with Lord Blandford, who goes very quick. We got to Cirencester (by Oxford) the first night, stayed a day there: and got here to-day and to-morrow set out for Shrewsbury.

Our second battalion is in very good condition, healthy and forward in their exercises, and the soberest collection of young Englishmen that I ever saw. The Major Beckwith has been extremely lucky in recruiting. The loss of the Austrians is not so considerable as was expected, but it is for the reputation of the King of Prussia's arms to drive them before him. I suppose we may soon expect to hear of a decisive action.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,
J. WOLFE.

For three months England was without a ministry. At last, during June, Wolfe learnt that Pitt was again in power. He became principal Secretary of State, while the Duke of Newcastle took the Treasury.

A few weeks later a general encampment was formed on Bradford Heath, near Dorchester, and thither Wolfe went with both his battalions. While he was there training his troops with an eye to service in any part of the world, Pitt, with his hand on the helm, had decided on a daring move against the enemy at home. This move accorded well with his own genius, but it originated

FOR
FORT
WATES
with Frederick of Prussia. England had been in a shrinking attitude too long and the nation was sick of perpetually acting on the defensive.¹

Pitt's plan was to strike a blow, sudden and unexpected, at the French coasts. Three years before, one Captain Clarke,² travelling through the west of France, had been struck by a spot on the coast vulnerable to a marked degree. Rochefort in Aunis, a few miles from where the embouchure of the Charente pours into the Bay of Biscay, was kept up as an arsenal for naval stores, but maintained so badly that this English observer believed it could be destroyed, together with such shipping and stores as it was supposed to guard. The paper was dispatched to Sir John Ligonier, who now transmitted it to Pitt, whose keen eye fastened upon the salient point at once. Rochefort would serve his ends.

If such an expedition was to succeed, it must be carried out at once. Every day the crisis grew more acute. Ten thousand troops were to take part in the attack, and to transport such a number at such short notice Lord Anson (then at the Admiralty) declared was impossible. Pitt informed him that if the transports were not ready to the day he would lay Anson's dereliction before the King and impeach him in the House of Commons. Anson took the hint and Pitt had no reason to complain of Admiralty co-operation. If there was delay it was not owing to want of zeal on the part of the officials.

Pitt and his Secret Committee hit upon the Rochefort objective about the middle of July. Every department laboured its utmost, but still it was inevitable that precious weeks should slip away before the expedition could sail. The secret of the destination was well kept: but the magnitude of the preparations kept the whole of Europe on the *qui vive*. "Every one of the generals," says a recent French historian,³ "who held commands along the coasts of the Channel or the North Sea felt himself threatened." Marshal Richelieu thought the expedition was intended to

¹ The King of Prussia told Mitchell the British Ambassador "that England's seeming to act upon the offensive will have a greater effect upon the councils of France as well as give a spirit to the English nation who have hitherto been frightened with vain terrors of invasion, and that the only way to prevent like panic is to show by some vigorous act that you do not fear them." — Mitchell to Holderness, July 5, 1757.

² The son of an Edinburgh physician. Walpole speaks of him as "a young Scot by name Clarke; ill-favoured in his person, with a cast in his eye, of intellect not very sound; but quick, bold and adventurous." Entinck describes him as a "worthy, intelligent, skilful officer."

³ Waddington, *La Guerre de Sept Ans*.

relieve Cumberland, whose position was by this time grown very grave.

But while in England ships were being overhauled, provisions for six months laid in, seamen being impressed by thousands, scaling ladders constructed of such size that thirty men might mount abreast, boats built, and a thousand incidental details completed, Pitt was busy choosing the *personnel* of the expedition. From a letter written to Rickson, then acting as Deputy Quartermaster-General for Scotland, we learn that Wolfe had been called to London and informed that he was to serve in the expedition.

To MAJOR RICKSON.

London, July 21st, 1757.

MY DEAR RICKSON,—Though I have matter enough, and pleasure in writing a long letter, yet I must now be short. Your joy upon the occasion of my new employment, I am sure, is very sincere, as is that which I feel when any good thing falls to your share; but this new office does neither please nor flatter me, as you may believe when I tell you that it was offered with the rank of Colonel, which the King, guided by the Duke, afterwards refused. His Royal Highness's reasons were plausible; he told the Duke of Bedford (who applied with warmth) that I was so young a lieutenant-colonel that it could not be done immediately. But I should have known it in time, that I might have excused myself from a very troublesome business, which is quite out of my way. . . .

We are about to undertake something or other at a distance, and I am one of the party. I can't flatter you with a lively picture of my hopes as to the success of it; the reasons are so strong against us (the English) in whatever we take in hand, that I never expect any great matter; the chiefs, the engineers, and our wretched discipline, are the great and insurmountable obstructions. I doubt yet if there be any fixed plan; we wait for American intelligence, from whence the best is not expected, and shall probably be put into motion by that intelligence. I myself take the chance of a profession little understood and less liked in this country. I may come off as we have done before; but I never expect to see either the poor woman my mother, or the General again,—she is at present dangerously ill, he is infirm with age. Whether my going may hurry their departure, you are as good a judge as I am. Besides their loss, I have not a soul to take charge of my little affairs, and expect to find every-

thing in the utmost confusion, robbed and plundered by all that can catch hold of them.

I heartily wish you were fixed in the employment you now exercise; but if David Watson¹ is not misrepresented to me, you have everything to fear from his artifices and double-dealing. I wish I was strong enough to carry you through, I'd take you upon my back; but my people are away. Calcraft could serve you—no man better. He is the second or third potentate in this realm. I may have an opportunity of speaking to Napier, but there Watson governs almost alone; and we are not sharp enough to dive into the hearts of men. The nephew goes with us. I must have succumbed under the weight of some characters of this sort if I had not stood out in open defiance of their wicked powers. A man will not be ill-used that will not bear it. Farewell, my honest little friend. I am ever your

Faithful and affectionate servant,

JAMES WOLFE.

To Hawke was given command of the fleet, sixteen sail of the line, in addition to frigates, fireships, bomb ketches, etc. With Hawke went Vice-Admiral Knowles and Rear-Admiral Brodrick. Lord George Sackville was offered the command of the troops, but it appears he distrusted the expedition and declined. Conway, Pitt's choice, was ready to take the leadership, but he was either not *persona grata* to the King or was thought "too young" (youth was to show what it could do later, when the reign was in its last gasps), and the honour and responsibility then fell upon Wolfe's friend and patron, Sir John Mordaunt. Mordaunt had been a good man in his day and he, at least, was not "too young." He never forgot that he was nephew of that Earl of Peterborough who had performed such brilliant feats ("soldier and sailor too") in Queen Anne's day. At sixty his spirit and constitution were gone and he had lost his nerve. Once, Walpole says, he boasted "a sort of alacrity in daring, but from ill-health was grown indifferent to it." Conway, a man of cold, indecisive temper, little liked in the army, and one, moreover, with little faith in the success of the venture upon which he was now engaged, was second in command. His antipodes, Cornwallis, also accompanied the troops.

But it is upon the Quartermaster-General and chief of the staff that not only our own interest, but the ultimate interest of the expedi-

¹ Quartermaster-General in Scotland.

tion, rests. James Wolfe, in Walpole's words, was "a young officer who had contracted reputation from his intelligence of discipline and from the perfection to which he brought his own regiment. The world could not expect more from him than he thought himself capable of performing. He looked upon danger as the favourable moment that would call forth his talents."

So that it was as Quartermaster-General on Continental service and not as Quartermaster-General in Ireland that destiny called upon Wolfe to serve. The troops were already assembling in the Isle of Wight when Wolfe sat down to write the Lord-Lieutenant the following letter necessitated by the circumstances—

To THE DUKE OF BEDFORD.

August 1757.

MY LORD,—The honour of holding an employment under your Grace, and my particular obligations to you upon that account, make it a point of duty, as well as of respect, to mention that a battalion of Colonel Kingsley's regiment is ordered to be ready to embark; and as Lieutenant-Colonel of that battalion, I embark with it, upon what service none of us pretend to guess; nor ought we to be very solicitous about it, rather desiring to serve well than to know where. If this business did not stand in the way, it would give me the highest satisfaction to endeavour to acquit myself so as to meet your Grace's approbation, being quite assured that you would take it in good part whatever was well intended, and accept of industry to supply the want of skill. I beg to be allowed to wish your Grace most perfect health, and to add that I have the honour to be, etc.,

JAMES WOLFE.

How different were Quartermaster-General Wolfe's feelings on his return to the Isle of Wight after an absence of seventeen years! He was then a pale child of thirteen, racked with anguish because too ill to accompany his father to the Spanish Main and weeping for the lost glories of war. He had since revelled in these "glories" to the full, and had endured many campaigns. He was still little more than a boy, yet he had gone far and his name was known throughout the army as that of a perfect soldier. All this was as nothing. As he entered the farmhouse on the outskirts of Newport, which he well remembered, he probably felt that now as then his career was all before him. He had "done nothing." In this very expedition he was to turn a fresh page: nay, he had

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begun a new volume of his life. From Rochefort dates Wolfe's fame in history.

The army was ready to embark on August 10, so much dispatch had been made on the military side. But the transports were not due for another three weeks.

To HIS MOTHER.

Newport, 10 Aug. 1757.

DEAR MADAM,—Our little army is collected and ready to embark, but the ships are not yet come round, and I think it uncertain when they may. I hope you continue to mend, and that you will soon be strong enough to begin your journey to Bath, where, from experience you may expect relief.

The enclosed letter is an account which belongs to the other letter left with my father; and my little affairs are brought into some order; and under some decent regulation.

I wish you better health, and every good thing of this life; I beg my duty to my father, and am, dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

JAM. WOLFE.

To HIS MOTHER.

Newport, Isle of Wight, August 22nd, 1757.

DEAR MADAM,—I don't expect a letter from you,—I mean that you will not write till you have been a month at the Bath. Then, if ships come our way, whichever route we take, I shall be glad to have news from you. The winds do sharply oppose our enterprise, and so violently at this time, that we are well ashore, in my mind. We have much company, much exercise, a theatre, and all the camp amusements, besides balls and concerts. The General seemed to foresee my habitation. I am possessed of the farmhouse formerly General Wentworth's, which I find to be a dreary lodging; however, it affects me as little as anybody, whose great concern in this life is neither food nor raiment, nor house to sleep in.

I am, etc., etc.,

J. WOLFE.

The weeks dragged on, and still the fleet had not sailed. His mother had written him to say she had heard of his fascinating behaviour at a ball at Newport.

To HIS MOTHER.

Newport, Isle of Wight, *September 3rd, 1757.*

DEAR MADAM,—You know my history better than I could imagine. The ladies call that handsome (when they are well bred) which in reality is very moderate. My temper naturally leads me to that which my circumstances seldom admit of. Money would discover my turn to be rather liberal and social than otherwise. I was this day on board the “Royal George,” when I inquired for Kit Mason,¹ and saw him in perfect health. After the voyage he hopes to see his mother, and was mightily pleased to hear about her from me. He resembles Mrs. Mason; has beautiful eyes of her make, is grown tall, and in my opinion is a very fine boy. He was clean and looked healthy. If we sail in the same fleet, I shall ask after him every now and then. The wind is fair and we expect the transports tomorrow.

I am, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

“Nothing was wanting,” as one historian observes, “to ensure success but a General” when on September 7 the ten regiments weighed anchor. Not until they had been a week at sea did the officers learn their destination and object.

Meanwhile many things had happened abroad which made Pitt’s project of even greater importance than when it was first conceived. On July 24 the battle between Cumberland and D’Estrees had been fought at Hastenbeck, and the British had sustained a severe defeat. All the chief fortresses on the Weser fell into French hands. Hanover had surrendered and the Hanoverian government had fled. Frederick, forced to withdraw from Bohemia, and with hostile Swedes and Russians in movement, was in despair. “The crisis is so terrible,” he wrote at the end of August, “that it can’t last much longer. The month of September will decide my fate for the autumn and winter.”

The truth is the King believed that the hope of saving the situation lay in getting reinforcements to Cumberland, then stationed at Stade, and up to the very eve of the fleet’s sailing did his utmost to get the destination diverted to Stade. Hardwicke thought that when the French had done their worst in Germany they would turn their attention to England.

¹ Afterwards Sir Christopher Mason, who died a Vice-Admiral in 1802. There is a monument to his memory in front of Greenwich Church. Many references to the Masons will be found in Wolfe’s letters.

“For God’s sake,” he urged Newcastle, “insist that the troops should be back by the middle or before the end of September.” And Newcastle prevailed upon his strenuous colleague, Pitt, to agree to this condition, which was included in Hawke’s and Mordaunt’s instructions, although it was afterwards relaxed. But the relaxation came too late for it to be of any use. The leaders of the Rochefort expedition, heedless of Byng’s fate, had already made up their minds to do nothing.

The fleet sailed with Wolfe on board the *Ramillies*, a ship named after a battle in which his own father had fought. On that very day poor William Henry, Duke of Cumberland, the British commander on the continent, had signed the convention of Klosterzeven, and the death-warrant of his military reputation.

Even before he stepped on board the *Ramillies* Wolfe saw enough to convince him that the expedition stood in great danger from the want of co-operation between the military and naval commanders. But between the two it needed little acumen to perceive which was the inferior. As Wright observes, he could not “recognize amongst them a particle of that self-denying patriotism which prompted his own zeal for the service.”

Wolfe was, as usual, extremely sick at sea, and it was ten days before he wrote his first letter home.

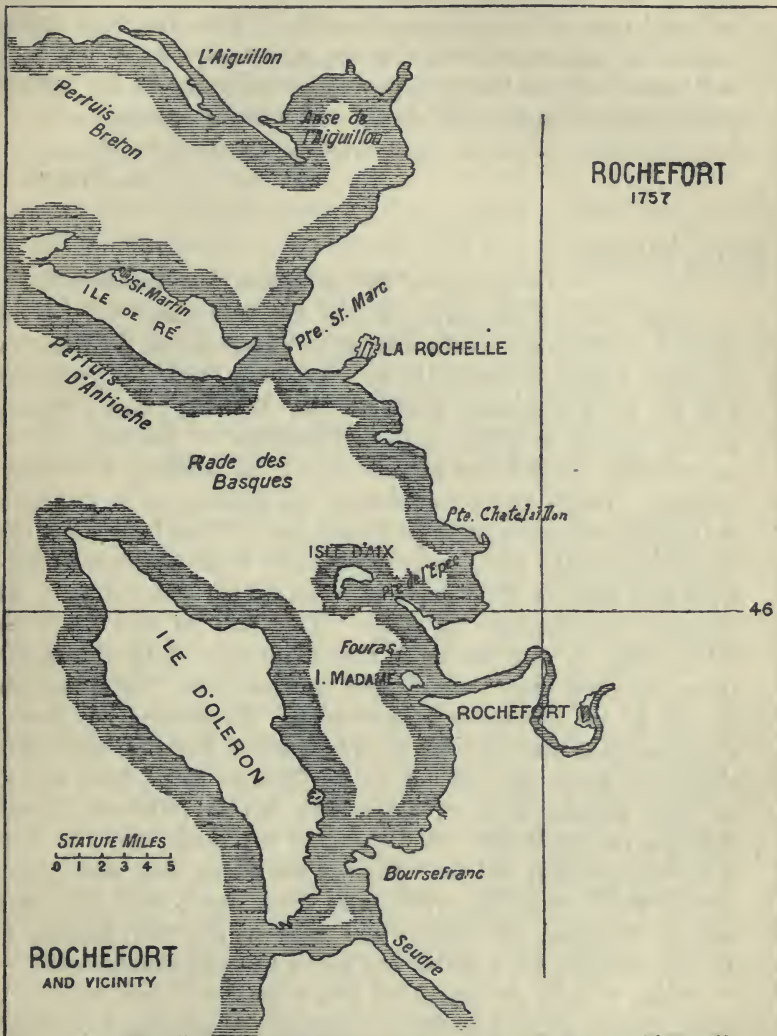
TO HIS MOTHER.

“*Ramillies*,” 17th September, 1757.

DEAR MADAM,—A man should always have a letter writ at sea, because the opportunities of despatching them are seldom and sudden, and a sick, qualmish stomach is to consult the weather. He must write when he can; he may not be able to do it when he would. The progress of our arms has been greatly retarded by calms and fogs, and the formidable Gulf of Biscay; in which we are navigating, is just now as smooth as the river Thames in winter. Perhaps in twenty-four hours the waves may touch the clouds, and then the great machine will roll about like a tub, and we, the inhabitants of it, shall partake severely of the perturbation. The troops are under good regulations and good care, and consequently are all well and healthy. They feed well and lie well, and being in their nature regardless of future events, their minds are in their usual state, roused a little, perhaps, by curiosity and the desire of something new.

For a man that does not feel the ship’s motion, and whose

nose is not too nice for the smells, this life for a little while is tolerable; it is then an easy, commodious conveyance for a distant place, and upon the quarter-deck of a ninety-gun ship a



PLAN OF ROCHEFORT AND LOCALITY.

man may stretch and exercise his limbs. I have not myself been one hour well since we embarked, and have the mortification to find that I am the worst mariner in the whole ship. General,

secretary, and aides-de-camp are all stouter, all better seamen than myself. If I make the same figure ashore, I shall acquire no great reputation by the voyage. The "Royal George" is one of the Sir Edward Hawke's seconds, is constantly on his larboard quarter, and very near, so that I have frequent opportunities of asking for little Mason, and always hear that he is well, which will be the most pleasing intelligence to his mother. Little Gusty is in the "Burford," and a hardy seaman.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

To HIS FATHER.

Off the Isles of Rhé and Oleron, 21st September, 1757.

DEAR SIR,—Yesterday morning the fleet made the land of the Isle of Rhé, and in the afternoon Vice-Admiral Knowles was detached with his division to go within the Pertuis d'Antioche,¹ and see what anchoring there was for the fleet; and I suppose he had orders to attack any fortifications or batteries of the enemy that might incommode us at an anchor, or prevent landing. While the Vice-Admiral was getting on to put these orders into execution, a large French man-of-war bore down into the middle of the fleet,—a ship supposed to be homeward bound from the East or West Indies,—upon which three ships of his division were directed to chase. They did so, and drove the French ship in with the shore above the river of Bordeaux, and there our great ships were obliged to leave her. This chase put an end to the operations of yesterday. As soon as the chasing ships returned this morning, it was resolved that the whole fleet should go down and anchor in the Basque Road, from whence we may attack either of these two islands [Rhé or Oleron], Rochelle or Rochefort. A disposition was made, and the Vice-Admiral's division led in. Just as the whole fleet was getting within the Pertuis the wind took them short, and they were obliged to stand out again; and here we are now, beating on and off, waiting for a better day and a more favourable gale.

Since I writ my mother's letter we have had variety of winds, but in general moderate weather, and nothing remarkable but the circumstance of that ship's running in amongst us, and escaping by half an hour. It is believed that she would have been a very rich prize. The inhabitants are alarmed; they

¹ The channel between the islands Rhé and Oleron. See map, overleaf.

fired guns all along the coast last night, and we now see the smoke rising upon the sea-shore, as a signal, no doubt, of our appearance. These delays on our side, after notice given to the enemy, may have ill consequences; but they are such as, I suppose, were not easily to be avoided. We are come to an anchor in the Bay of Biscay (a thing uncommon), off the Isle of Rhé, in readiness to push in early in the morning. Sir Edward [Hawke] seems determined to do everything that can be done upon this occasion consistent with his orders and instructions, and the safety of the fleet.

22nd,—We are now at an anchor within the Pertuis d'Antioche, between the isles of Rhé and Oleron, waiting for a breeze of wind to go down upon the Isle d'Aix, which is in sight; but it is a perfect calm, and our whole force immovable.

23rd, in the morning,—All still at an anchor, the inhabitants of Rhé working hard at their entrenchments along the shore, to prevent our landing. The "Medway," "Achilles," and a fire-ship ordered to burn a French Ship-of-war behind the Isle d'Aix as soon as Admiral Knowles' division begins the attack.

Howe greatly added to his reputation by his conduct in this business. In spite of their youth, had these two men the conduct of the Rochefort affair it would have had a very different ending. Of Howe, Walpole says he was as "undaunted as a rock and as silent; the characteristics of his whole race. He and Wolfe soon contracted a friendship, like the union of a cannon and gunpowder."

Wolfe's prognostications were to be fulfilled to the letter. Mordaunt knew from a report in his possession that the enemy had only 10,000 men on the entire coast, yet he and Conway persisted in thinking a landing desperate, although the chances were that they would be opposed by only a handful of men. Enormous importance was attached to surprising the enemy, as if surprise were an essential part of the plan. Ligonier, his chief at the Horse Guards, had reminded Mordaunt that it was not an essential point. But what was vital was to land and strike at the enemy, whether he knew the British were coming or not. As a matter of fact, we know now the defenders of Rochefort were in a panic: and had Mordaunt struck, it would, as they said themselves, have been "all over with the port of Rochefort." Hawke hung about for two precious days.

"It is difficult," says Mr. Corbett, "conceding all that can be urged in Hawke's favour, to avoid the impression that in the

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handling of the fleet at this time there was to some degree a lack of that hardness of grip, that directness of aim, that colour of audacity which are the soul of such operations.”¹

In his letter to his father Wolfe continues—

Isle d’Aix, 23rd, in the evening,—The fort of the Isle d’Aix taken by Captain Howe, in the “Magnanime,” with a few distant shot from the “Barfleur.” There were five great ships upon this business; but as Captain Howe led, he saved the rest the trouble of battering, and confounded the defendants to that degree with the vivacity of his fire that they deserted thirty pieces of cannon and eight mortars, and struck after thirty-five minutes of resistance. There were 500 men in the fort of which very few were killed; and the “Magnanime” lost but three killed, and eight or ten wounded. Mr. Howe’s manner of going down upon the enemy, and his whole proceeding, have raised the opinion people had of his courage and abilities to a very high pitch. The ship which Sir Edward ordered to be burned was further off than he imagined, and even now we perceive her to be within the mouth of the Charente.

We are preparing to land somewhere between Rochelle and Rochefort, for the sake of mischief more than any success we can propose to ourselves after such long preparations and notice to the enemy. I believe the expedition will end in our landing and fighting, and then returning to our ships; and we may bombard Rochelle, put the isles of Rhé and Oleron under contribution, blow up the fortress of the Isle d’Aix, and spread terror all along the coast. If we had set out upon this business in time, I believe we should have been thought very troublesome. This is a most pleasing climate, and the grapes upon the Isle d’Aix are exceedingly delicious, especially to a sick stomach. I have been told that General Conway, with three battalions, went down with Mr. Knowles’ division to assist in the attack; but they were not wanted, only to take possession and guard the prisoners, who were used with all possible humanity by Captain Howe.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Wolfe resolved to do something. It was intolerable that nothing should be done. His friendship with Sir John Mordaunt enabled him boldly to prefer a request which in ordinary circum-

¹ *England in the Seven Years’ War*, p. 212.

stances would not have been granted. It might have been considered presumptuous to a degree. He asked to be allowed to go ashore and reconnoitre the country the moment the fortress of Aix fell. Mordaunt, fearing to deny any request to such an ardent soldier, granted his wish. Wolfe therefore got into a boat and hung about until the white flag flew and then landed. He went straight to that part of the fortifications facing the mainland, climbed alone up to a battered bastion and pointed his telescope carefully for an hour. In the near distance he examined the sandy promontory of Fouras, guarded by a small fort. It was useless to attempt to capture Rochefort while this fort was in the way. Moreover, northward lay another low promontory midway between Rochelle and Rochefort which his trained eye saw at once would furnish an excellent landing for the force. This was marked "Chattelaiellon" on his chart. Hastily jotting down the result of his observations he got back into the boat and rowed back to the *Ramillies*, where he made his report to the leaders of the expedition, Hawke and Mordaunt.

Briefly, his opinion was that Fouras, whose situation and strength he detailed, must be battered to pieces. This could be compassed by a single man-of-war; the attempt would cause a sufficient diversion, under cover of which the troops could land at Chattelaiellon. The Admiral was instantly struck by the plan; the General also gave his adhesion, expressing a hope that the Huguenot pilot Thierry knew just what was the depth of water off Fouras, to enable the *Magnanime* to approach close to the fort. Wolfe now broke in with a further suggestion, to the effect that a diversion by means of bomb ketches on the Rochelle side would still further divide the enemy's attention. On Hawke's assenting to this, Wolfe observed, "Then, sir, not a moment is to be lost." Sending for Thierry, the pilot, while the bomb ketches were being got ready, the Admiral questioned him closely. The pilot grasped Wolfe's idea at once; it would be quite possible to take the ship close up to Fouras and under cover of it land troops on both sides of the fort. But Hawke was not wholly convinced, probably hating to be "rushed" by a mere land officer. That was where Hawke made his mistake. Wolfe was not merely a land soldier. He was a warrior with a genius for amphibious warfare, destined shortly to leave "the reputation of being the greatest master of combined strategy the world had seen since Drake took the art from its swaddling clothes."¹

¹ Corbett, p. 221.

Wolfe was a believer in the moral impetus, and it fretted his soul to see the chances of success slipping away. Hawke finally agreed to the proposal as regards Fouras but not to the Rochelle diversion. He sent up Brodrick to find a landing-place for the troops, this being in Mordaunt's opinion purely "sailor's business." Brodrick came back on the day following (the 24th), to say he had found a place where Mordaunt could land his troops without so much as wetting their shoes. Hawke expected Mordaunt would avail himself of the opportunity. But what Mordaunt actually did was to call a council of war for the following morning. Here they discussed the chances for and against escalading the ditch at Rochefort, and finally decided the chances would be against them. Hawke, it was thought, would be unable to get the troops back safe again on board in case of a failure. Their decision was confirmed by Hawke's detachment to take Fouras getting aground.

Not alone in his exasperation was Wolfe. The common soldiers and sailors were infuriated at being brought up to the very nose of their prey and having to sail back to England without even an attempt to thrust at him. True, Hawke for his part wished the troops to land, but instead of exerting a cordial co-operation and so making a unit of the expedition, he held aloof on the ground that he "was no judge of land operations" and the military arm must get out of the business as best it might. This was the old attitude of Cathcart and Vernon and the Cartagena expedition; in fact it was the attitude of most military and naval commanders serving in joint expeditions. What a different spectacle was Wolfe to bequeath to history!

So intense was the feeling now manifested in both Army and Navy that the generals resolved at last to make the attempt that very night. Mordaunt, to prove that he was not animated by cowardice, announced his intention to lead the first division in person. Brodrick was told off to superintend the landing of the men. At midnight on the 28th the boats were filled. There was a high wind and surf, but the troops were eager to land and could not understand why they should remain tossed about in the billows for three mortal hours for the word to be given. When it came they could hardly believe it. The astonished Colonel in command insisted on examining the General's signature by lantern light. It was "Return to the transports." It is useless to pierce the motives for such vacillation and pusillanimity.

Conway and Wolfe were ordered to make still another reconnoitre at daybreak. Such foolery as this was too much for

Hawke. If, said he, the military part of the expedition had no further use for his services he would sail back to England. In vain Mordaunt besought a joint council to consider the matter. As if the matter had not been enough considered! As if every seaman and soldier was not sick unto death of such insane procrastination! Hawke refused, and at another council Mordaunt, Conway and Cornwallis decided finally to give up the attempt.

TO HIS FATHER.

Rade des Basques, 30th September, 1757.

DEAR SIR,—By the “Viper” sloop I have the displeasure to inform you that our operations here are at an end. We lost the lucky moment in war, and are not able to recover it. The whole of this expedition has not cost the nation ten men, nor has any man been able to distinguish himself in the service of his country, except Mr. Howe, who was a great example to us all. We shall follow close if the weather favours, and return to England with reproach and dishonour; though, in my mind, there never was in any troops, sea and land, a better disposition to serve.

So all sailed home, and the miserable Rochefort expedition came to a miserable end. It was not all in vain. England cried out at the folly and expense of it all, for it had cost a million of money. Pitt was in an agony, the King was furious, Frederick was disgusted. But the lesson of it had sunk deep into one man’s heart and brain—so deep that it took root and blossomed forth with results full of use and glory to the Empire, and this man was James Wolfe.

XV

ORDERED TO LOUISBOURG

THE failure of the Rochefort expedition upon the success of which he had set so much store bade fair to unseat Pitt just as he had got well into the saddle. But his sincerity and enthusiasm prevailed. When Parliament met he proved to the satisfaction of the country, if not to that of the Old Gang, that the Rochefort design was in Rodney's phrase), "wise, prudent and well-timed,"¹ and ought to have succeeded but for the "determined resolution of both naval and military commanders against any vigorous exertion of the national power." He declared that he could scarce find one man to whom he could confidently entrust any design which carried the least appearance of danger. With a force much greater than the nation had ever maintained and a government ardently desirous of redeeming her glory and promoting her welfare, a shameful dislike to the service everywhere prevailed.

Out of the disaster, upon which an inquiry was ordered to be held, Pitt wrested signal advantage in putting the services more thereafter on their mettle and in instituting an instant reform of current abuses. It was not his fault, but the fault of the instruments at his hand, bequeathed him by his predecessors. Such he was resolved not to employ again. He had told Parliament he could scarce find one reliable man. He soon found one. His glance had fallen upon his Quartermaster-General at Rochefort, and he knew now where to find a capable officer when he wanted him.

On landing Wolfe went straight to Blackheath only to find his parents at Bath. Already become a notable man, he found people eager to learn his version of the fiasco. Concerning his next step, he was uncertain. He believed the Colonelcy he regarded as inseparable from his Irish appointment was yet remote, because another Lieutenant-Colonel, his junior in service, if not in years, had been preferred instead. He thereupon instantly wrote to Barrington, the Secretary at War, resigning his post of Quartermaster-General of Ireland. He also wrote to his mother—

¹ Almon, vol. i. p. 332.

To HIS MOTHER.

Blackheath, 17th October, 1757.

DEAR MADAM,—To save myself the trouble of answering questions, and for the sake of fresh air and exercise, I have taken up my quarters at your house, and, with Miss Eleanor's¹ assistance, am like to do well. By the bye, her husband was very useful to me on board the "Ramillies." I was glad you were gone to the Bath, though I lost the pleasure of seeing you for a time. It is a little melancholy to be left alone, especially to one who was a witness of our late miscarriage. By this trial I find that the cheerfullest temper requires the aid and prop of society. When Françoise comes to know what I would have for dinner, he distresses me with the question. Whenever I keep house, somebody must direct, for I cannot.

As to the expedition, it has been conducted so ill that I am ashamed to have been of the party. The public could not do better than dismiss six or eight of us from the service. No zeal, no ardour, no care or concern for the good and honour of the country. I have began to dismiss myself by surrendering up my office of Quartermaster-General for Ireland. They thought proper to put a younger lieutenant-colonel over me, and I thought it proper to resign. My Lord Barrington says he has nothing to do with Irish affairs, so refers me to Mr. Secretary Rigby;² but his Lordship desires me to suspend my operations for a few days, which accordingly I do. I will certainly not go to Ireland without the rank of Colonel, and am indifferent whether I get it or not. I can't part with my other employment, because I have nothing else to trust to; nor do I think it consistent with honour to sneak off in the middle of a war.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Naturally, "Uncle Wat" was anxious to hear all about Rochefort from his nephew, and was not disappointed.

To MAJOR WALTER WOLFE.

Blackheath, 18th October, 1757.

DEAR SIR,—"Nous avons manqué un beau coup," as the French prisoners told us, after we had loitered away three or four

¹ Eleanor White, a domestic to whom Mrs. Wolfe bequeathed, in 1764, an annuity of £20.

² Richard Rigby, the son of a linendraper who had enriched himself as a South Sea Company factor, was now Secretary to the Duke of Bedford in Ireland.

days in consultations, deliberations, and councils of war. The season of the year and nature of the enterprise called for the quickest and most vigorous execution, whereas our proceedings were quite otherwise. We were in sight of the Isle of Rhé, the 20th September, consequently were seen by the enemy (as their signals left us no room to doubt), and it was the 23rd before we fired a gun. That afternoon and night slipped through our hands,—the lucky moment of confusion and consternation among our enemies. The 24th,—Admirals and Generals consult together, and resolve upon nothing between them but to hold a council of war. The 25th,—this famous council sat from morning till late at night, and the result of the debates was unanimously not to attack the place they were ordered to attack, and for reasons that no soldier will allow to be sufficient. The 26th,—the Admiral sends a message to the General, intimating that if they did not determine to do something there, he would go to another place. The 27th,—the Generals and Admirals view the land with glasses, and agree upon a second council of war, having by this time discovered their mistake. The 28th,—they deliberate, and resolve to land that night. Orders are issued out accordingly, but the wind springing up after the troops had been two or three hours in the boats, the officers of the navy declare it difficult and dangerous to attempt the landing. The troops are commanded back to their transports, and so ended the expedition! The true state of the case is, that our sea-officers do not care to be engaged in any business of this sort, where little is to be had but blows and reputation; and the officers of the infantry are so profoundly ignorant, that an enterprise of any vigour astonishes them to that degree that they have not strength of mind nor confidence to carry it through.

I look upon this as the greatest design that the nation has engaged in for many years, and it must have done honour to us all, if the executions had answered the intentions of the projector. The Court of Versailles, and the whole French nation, were alarmed beyond measure. “*Les Anglois ont attrape notre foible,*” disent-ils. Alas! we have only discovered our own. I see no remedy, for we have no officers from the Commander-in-Chief down to Mr. Webb and Lord Howe; and the navy list is not much better. If they would even blunder on and fight a little, making some amends to the public by their courage for their want of skill; but this excessive degree of caution, or whatever name it deserves, leaves exceeding bad impressions

among the troops, who, to do them justice, upon this occasion showed all the signs of spirit and goodwill. My health is a little injured by this summer's inactivity, as I have not been able to get ten times on horseback; and I am here alone, partly to save myself the trouble of answering questions, and partly for air and exercise.

I am, dear Sir,

Your obedient Nephew,

JAMES WOLFE.

A few days later he learnt that his grounds of complaint against the higher powers were unfounded. It was far from the King's intention, after Wolfe's conduct at Rochefort, to refuse him the long-wished-for Coloneley. A new regiment should be called into existence, the 67th (Hampshire), and Wolfe should command it.

To HIS FATHER.

Blackheath, 21st October, 1757.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Fisher writes me word that the King has been pleased to give me the rank of Colonel, which at this time is more to be prized than any other, because it carries with it a favourable appearance as to my conduct upon this late expedition, and an acceptance of my good intentions. I am something indebted to Sir Edward Hawke for having spoken to Lord Anson, who took the trouble to repeat it to the King. I shall ask Sir John Ligonier's commands to-morrow whether I go to the regiment or to Ireland.¹ There is a storm gathering over the head of my unfortunate friend [Cornwallis], such a one as must necessarily crush him; though, in my mind, he acted in this affair but a second part. That, as far as I am able, I shall always be ready to assert, and will give him the best hints in my power for his defence. This must remain a secret between us, because I know he is ill-used and artfully ruined, after suffering himself to be misled by an over-fair opinion of his guide.²

Amongst the regiments taking part in the late expedition was the 8th, Lieutenant-General Wolfe's regiment, actually com-

¹ Ligonier had been appointed Commander-in-Chief in succession to the Duke of Cumberland. Not long afterwards he was created an Irish peer, Viscount Ligonier of Enniskillen.

² The Hon. Cornwallis escaped, together with Conway, any further penalty. He rose to be Lieutenant-General and died Governor of Gibraltar, 1776.

manded by Lieutenant-Colonel Lafausille. The latter officer had spent most of the time between the 20th and 29th September in his cabin suffering from lumbago. Disgusted with the whole affair, the old General wrote to his lieutenant-colonel for a report. Lafausille, perhaps equally disgusted, referred the General to his son. Lafausille and Wolfe had long been friends, but this was a little more than the new Colonel could brook.

TO HIS FATHER.

Blackheath, 24th October, 1757.

DEAR SIR,—’Tis an admirable circumstance for Lafausille to ask me about an expedition that he himself was engaged in. His lumbago left him very à propos for just as he got to the Basque Road he revived. One’s native air has surprising effects ! All that I can tell about it is, that we blundered most egregiously on all sides—sea and land ; that we lost three days without and three within, and consequently couldn’t propose to march to Paris this season. I believe the country is not able to bear many jokes of this sort ; nor have the fleets and arms of this nation reputation enough to excuse now and then a *faux pas*. However, let justice be done to the executive-part ; the seamen and soldiers in general were most desirous and most earnest for employment. These disappointments, I hope, won’t affect their courage ; nothing, I think, can hurt their discipline—it is at its worst. They shall drink and swear, plunder and massacre with any troops in Europe, the Cossacks and Calmucks themselves not excepted ; with this difference, that they have not quite so violent an appetite for blood and bonfires.

Sir John Ligonier’s commission, appointing him Commander-in-Chief of the armies of Britain, is come out, or to come out suddenly under the broad seal of England. I shall pay my duty to our new General, and inform myself whether I may set out for Ireland or not, taking the Bath in my way. I dine with Sir Gregory¹ to-morrow ; he and my Lady Page are very solicitous for your welfare.

But it is in the letter to Rickson that Wolfe opens up his heart about the Rochefort expedition—

¹ Sir Gregory Page, Bart., a wealthy Indian merchant, whose splendid seat, Wricksmarsh, was near Blackheath. On Sir Gregory’s death in 1775, his nephew and heir sold the estate, the mansion was pulled down and the pictures and sculpture dispersed.

To MAJOR RICKSON.

Blackheath, 5th November, 1757.

DEAR RICKSON,—I thank you very heartily for your welcome back. I am not sorry that I went, notwithstanding what has happened; one may always pick up something useful from amongst the most fatal errors. I have found out that an Admiral should endeavour to run into an enemy's port immediately after he appears before it; that he should anchor the transport ships and frigates as close as he can to the land; that he should reconnoitre and observe it as quick as possible, and lose no time in getting the troops on shore; that previous directions should be given in respect to landing the troops, and a proper disposition made for the boats of all sorts, appointing leaders and fit persons for conducting the different divisions. On the other hand, experience shows me that, in an affair depending upon vigour and dispatch, the Generals should settle their plan of operations, so that no time may be lost in idle debate and consultations when the sword should be drawn; that pushing on smartly is the road to success, and more particularly so in an affair of this nature; that nothing is to be reckoned an obstacle to your undertaking which is not found really so upon trial; that in war something must be allowed to chance and fortune, seeing it is in its nature hazardous, and an option of difficulties; that the greatness of an object should come under consideration, opposed to the impediments that lie in the way; that the honour on one's country is to have some weight; and that, in particular circumstances and times, the loss of a thousand men is rather an advantage to a nation than otherwise, seeing that gallant attempts raise its reputation and make it respectable; whereas the contrary appearances sink the credit of a country, ruin the troops, and create infinite uneasiness and discontent at home.

I know not what to say, my dear Rickson, or how to account for our proceedings, unless I own to you that there never was people collected together so unfit for the business they were sent upon—dilatatory, ignorant, irresolute, and some grains of a very unmanly quality, and very unsoldier-like or unsailor-like. I have already been too imprudent; I have said too much, and people make me say ten times more than I ever uttered; therefore, repeat nothing out of my letter, nor name my name as author of any one thing. The whole affair turned upon the impracticability of escalading Rochefort; and the two evidences brought to prove

that the ditch was wet (in opposition to the assertions of the chief engineer, who had been in the place) are persons to whom, in my mind, very little credit should be given; without these evidences we should have landed, and must have marched to Rochefort, and it is my opinion that the place would have surrendered, or have been taken, in forty-eight hours. It is certain that there was nothing in all that country to oppose 9000 good Foot—a million of Protestants, upon whom it is necessary to keep a strict eye, so that the garrison could not venture to assemble against us, and no troops, except the militia, within any moderate distance of these parts.

Little practice in war, ease and convenience at home, great incomes, and no wants, with no ambition to stir to action are not the instruments to work a successful war withal; I see no prospect of better deeds. I know not where to look for them, or from whom we may expect them. Many handsome things would have been done by the troops had they been permitted to act. As it is, Captain Howe carried off all the honour of his enterprise . . . notwithstanding that scribbling . . . been pleased to lie about that fort and the attack of it.

This disaster in North America,¹ unless the French have driven from their anchors in the harbour of Louisbourg, is of the most fatal kind; whatever diminishes our naval force tends to our ruin and destruction. God forbid that any accident should befall our fleet in the bay! The Duke's resignation may be reckoned an addition to our misfortunes; he acted a right part, but the country will suffer by it.

Yours, my dear Rickson,

Very Affectionately,

J. W.

Of this letter a modern critic of strategy, especially of naval warfare, remarks—

“It would be impossible to measure with more masterly succinctness the sacred principles, both practical and moral, which should govern such an expedition. The whole is a priceless document, coming as it does from the hand of one who was to carry those principles to such glorious fruition.” He adds with reference to warfare to-day, that “every commander to whom such operations are committed, might do worse than lay it under his pillow.”²

¹ The capture by the French under Montcalm of Fort William Henry and the subsequent massacre. See *post*, p. 443.

² Corbett, *England in the Seven Years' War*.

Two or three days after Wolfe wrote Rickson a Board of Inquiry into the Rochefort Expedition met. To Wolfe, who was summoned to give evidence, nothing could have been more distasteful.

To HIS MOTHER.

Blackheath, 8 November, 1757.

DEAR MADAM,—My not hearing from Bath does not alarm me so much as it does some of the neighbourhood, for they do not know that your fingers won't always obey your inclinations, and that the General desires to be excused from the trouble. I have been told that you were both in the rooms lately, which makes me easy about your health; it proves the efficacy and goodness of your medicine, and I hope you will persevere in the use of it, as long as it can be of the least service to you.

I have a summons to attend the Board of General Officers, who are appointed to enquire into the causes of the failure of the late expedition; they begin their examination to-morrow, and I suppose will not end it soon. Better and more honourable for the country if the one half of us had gone the great road of mortality together, than to be plagued with inquiries and censures and the cry of the world.

I wish you both well—beg my duty to the General and am, dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

JAM : WOLFE.

To MRS. WOLFE,
Bath, Somerset.

The board consisted of Lieutenant-General the Duke of Marlborough, Major-General Lord George Sackville, and Major-General Waldegrave, and before them when they assembled at the house of the Judge Advocate-General appeared the delinquents Mordaunt, Conway, and Cornwallis. Not until the 14th was Wolfe examined.

Colonel Wolfe was then called in at the General's request and examined as to his opinion about landing and the attack of Fort Fouras, which was intended as a place of retreat if the troops should not succeed in the attack of Rochefort. On this examination the Colonel said the men might have landed near Chatelaiellon notwithstanding the battery of six guns at Fouras Point; but that their landing might have been prevented by so small a force as one thousand foot and three or four hundred horse, because there were many sandhills, which the forces at landing would be obliged to

climb. As to Fort Fouras, he said it was his opinion that it might have been carried by storm, as to the best of his knowledge it was a weak one, there being only a platform of twenty-four embrasures toward the water side, and as it was on a peninsula it might be attacked on all sides, while the ships lay before it; that Howe had offered to take it with his ship, and that he proposed a feint towards Rochelle and the isle of Rhé during the landing and attack. The Colonel was then ordered to withdraw, and the board proceeded to the examination of Admiral Knowles, who affirmed that Fouras could not be annoyed or battered by the ships, for that a bomb could not be thrown more than two miles and three-quarters.¹

On the 21st the board rendered its report to the King. The expedition against Rochefort had been frustrated, chiefly, they said, because the plan of attacking Fort Fouras by sea and land simultaneously had not been followed. This plan of Colonel Wolfe's "certainly must have been of the greatest utility towards carrying your Majesty's instructions into execution."²

Another cause of the failure was that "instead of attempting to land when the report was received on the 24th of September from Rear-Admiral Brodrick and the captains who had been sent out to sound and reconnoitre, a council of war was summoned and held on the 25th in which it was unanimously resolved not to land," although there were neither troops nor batteries on shore to prevent such a landing. As to the council of war on the 28th, the board found that "no reason could have existed sufficient to prevent the attempt of landing the troops previous to that day, as the council then unanimously resolved to land with all possible dispatch." There were other contributory causes, but in the board's opinion the expedition had failed from the time the great object of it was laid aside in the council of war on the 25th.³

TO HIS MOTHER.

Blackheath, 1st December, 1757.

DEAR MADAM,—I could not tell what was to become of me when I left Portsmouth, because I did not know; but finding

¹ *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1757, p. 491.

² *Ibid.*, p. 628.

³ It is interesting to read that "the inquiry being ended, Lord George Sackville made a short speech signifying that the most disagreeable thing, next to being tried himself, was that of being appointed to sit on an inquiry into the conduct of gentlemen whose courage and fidelity had been so often tried." In less than three years Sackville was himself court-martialled and expelled from the army.

myself confined to the neighbourhood of London, and not being able to live there altogether, partly for health, and partly to save trouble, I came here. Mrs. Scott¹ assisted me with the few things that were wanting. My demands were very moderate, and the way of life here is exemplary, and without vanity I may say there is as good order almost, preserved in your family, in every respect, as if you yourself presided. I lie in your chamber, dress myself in the General's little parlour, and dine where you did. The most perceptible difference and change of affairs (exclusive of the bad table I keep) is the number of dogs in the yard ; but by coaxing Ball, and by rubbing his back with my stick, I have reconciled myself with the new ones, and put 'em in some measure under his protection. For this fortnight past I have lodgings in town, and live for the most part there ; and am glad when a fine day invites me to get on horseback and come here. My servants, clothes, etc., are all in London. When I mean to dine here, Ambrose, who is my running footman, comes before upon his legs (for we have Crichton's borrowed horse between us), and gets me something to eat. The next day he runs back with the same alacrity, and by that means preserves his own health and my money.

This Court of Inquiry has kept us close, and now they talk of a general court-martial to try Sir John Mordaunt, who is in such a miserable state of health that I don't believe he will go through with it. Till that is over I'm still a prisoner, expecting, as before, to be called upon in evidence. When my family was here, Nelly made soup and Monsieur François made *bouilli* ; so, between your maids and my men, I lived very elegantly and very cheap. To-morrow I dine *tête-à-tête* in London, with my old friend Rich, who wants to know the short history of the expedition. At night I am to meet his guest, who is sent by the King of Prussia : Mr. Keith,² our late envoy at Vienna ; a son of Field-Marshal Count Lacy's ; and Colonel Clarke, the engineer.

¹ To Mrs. Elizabeth Scott, mother of Major Scott, Mrs. Wolfe on her death bequeathed an annuity of £30.

² The Prussian envoy was Major Grant, aide-de-camp to Marshal Keith, who arrived with dispatches announcing the victory of Rosbach on the 5th of November. Robert Keith was made Ambassador to Russia in 1758, and died in 1774. Count Lacey, whose son is here mentioned, was of Irish extraction, and a General in the Austrian service. He was brother of the Miss Lacey to whom Wolfe wrote just a decade before. Colonel Clarke was the author of the original report which led to the Rochefort expedition (see *ante*, p. 320).

These, with myself, make five very odd characters, and for the oddity of the mixture I mention it to you.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

The court-martial of Mordaunt duly took place, but the unhappy General's state of health and the uncertainty whether Hawke was not equally deserving of censure, perhaps also Pitt's desire not to press matters further now that the lesson had been laid to heart by the joint services, resulted in his acquittal. For a week the King hesitated over approving the verdict, but eventually acquiesced.

Before the Christmas holidays, according to his practice whenever possible, Wolfe rejoined his parents, who were then at Bath. The General was seriously considering taking a house at that fashionable resort. His fighting days were over, and gout crept upon him apace. While at Bath, Wolfe is deeply interested in the progress of his new regiment, and delighted to get letters from one of the trustiest of his captains, Henry Parr, then recruiting at Wigan, Lancashire. Parr writes to tell him he is meeting with extra success owing to the reputation Wolfe has, by his late conduct, gained for himself.

To CAPTAIN PARR.

Bath, 29th December, 1757.

DEAR PARR,—I must proceed in a regular way to answer your letters, but concisely, because, like other great men, I have many to answer, and much business upon my hands. I have always time enough to read a friend's letter, therefore pray no attempt hereafter to excuse yourself from writing upon the supposition that I have not leisure to read. I look upon the proceedings of the Bay of Biscay as flowing from natural causes, and could have told you in the Isle of Wight (what I actually did to some who were in the secret), either that we should attempt nothing, or execute ill what we did attempt. I will be open enough and vain enough to tell you that there might be a lucky moment to be seized for the public service, which I watched for ; but it came too late, and there ended the reputation of three bad Generals. You must burn this insolent letter.

Your success gives me double satisfaction, for the regiment and for yourself, and I know full well that you will omit nothing that may tend to improve or to continue it. I thank God our officers, and those who have left us, profess a sense of duty and

spirit that needs no quickening, nor urging. I explained the nature of our discipline some days ago, to the Prince of Wales, who is extremely desirous of being informed of these sort of things. I told him that there was in the corps a necessary degree of obedience, joined with high spirit of service and love of duty, which he appeared to be greatly pleased, knowing well that from good indications, joined with order and discipline, great military performances usually spring.

As I profess to introduce as many young gentlemen as I possibly can into the service, and to exclude *canaille* as much as in me lies, I am ready to give all possible assistance to the young man you speak of. I shall be glad to see him in London, and will put him in a way of succeeding as he desires; but his relations should beware of sending him too soon into the world, and more especially as he has not some steady friend in London, by whose advice he may be guided, and by whose authority he may be led. A good education is the first thing to be thought of; after that, a profession suited to the inclinations or abilities of the young man. In the army, as well as in other professions, learning is absolutely necessary, and a year or two of improvement is better than one with the insignificant duty of the capital. You did not name the tutor in your letter. As to the Roman Catholic, if he is young and expresses a great desire to serve, I would overlook his mistake in point of faith. Maybe, by our good doctrine, life, and example, we may work his conversion! One thing is certain, that we shall shake his present belief, whether we give him better and sounder notions or not.

Yours affectionately,

J. WOLFE.

The interest of the foregoing letter is in the allusion to Wolfe's meeting with the patriotic and noble-hearted prince who afterwards became George III. Always taking a deep interest in the progress of the nation's arms, the Prince had sent for the Colonel to come to Leicester Fields and give him a full account of Rochefort. In fact, Wolfe was getting to be a little sick of Rochefort, so many people there were wanting to know the exact story of that wretched business. But he could not but be sensible to the honour done him by the heir-apparent, who afterwards testified to his regret that fate had claimed him before he could shed lustre on his own reign. We to-day may ask ourselves what would have happened had Wolfe survived to be the protagonist of Washington in

America! How differently would the scroll of history be written! The blunders of Gage and Howe and Clinton and Cornwallis would at least never have been perpetrated by Wolfe, to whom war was always war conducted with zeal, *élan*, and knowledge, no matter who the adversary.

Wolfe's eye was always upon America. His letters show that he recognized to the full as much as Pitt that yonder was the important theatre of operations—that there and not elsewhere the destinies of Europe must be fought out. And in America, where the French and English had been pitted against each other for months, the failure of the King's army was hardly less conspicuous than it had been in Europe. The results, indeed, were far worse.

At present the Earl of Loudoun was Commander-in-Chief in America, whither he had been sent the previous year. But Loudoun, on his arrival late in the summer, quickly showed that he was no dashing soldier. While he did nothing but garrison a few forts the French showed more initiative, and with their redskin allies kept up a fierce guerilla warfare all winter. Settlements were raided and burnt, English settlers were scalped or carried off. Moreover, the French in Canada were now under the direction of an able, experienced and sympathetic soldier, later ordained by destiny to be the great protagonist of the hero of these pages, Louis Joseph de St. Véran, Marquis de Montcalm.

In the summer of 1757 Montcalm marched his troops towards Fort William Henry, which was the outpost of the Colonies towards Canada, and driving the British army under Webb before him, attacked and captured the stronghold.

This success naturally put the French in high feather and correspondingly depressed the British in America. The latter everywhere began to feel that a victory was necessary to restore their prestige.

The French power in America was intolerable, and must be annihilated. "In America," wrote Pitt to his colleague, Newcastle, "England and Europe were to be fought for." To attempt this operation on a more extensive scale than it had ever been attempted was reserved for Chatham. He resolved to leave no stone unturned that would achieve his end. Loudoun's incapacity being manifest, that General was therefore recalled, and an entirely new scheme of campaign devised, as well as instruments to carry it out. In this scheme three objects were comprehended, the separate reduction of Fort du Quesne, Ticonderoga and Crown Point, and Louisbourg. The first two tasks were entrusted respectively to

Brigadier Forbes, Loudoun's successor, and to General Abercrombie. As to the third object, the nature of the undertaking made the choice of leaders far more difficult and important. Louisbourg must be regained. Upon this fortress, built 1720-30, it was the boast of the French that a million and a quarter sterling had been expended. It was regarded from its position on the island of Cape Breton as the key to the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the bulwark of Canada. Although supposed to be impregnable, yet it had been captured by a New England force in 1745, owing to the feebleness of the garrison; but three years later it had been restored to France, a proceeding much against the grain of popular opinion.¹

The military force of 11,000 destined for Louisbourg was less than Abercrombie's, but it was to be a naval as well as a military expedition. It must not prove another Rochefort. Moreover, if Louisbourg were taken with dispatch, the combined naval and military force was designed to move at once on Quebec.

To Admiral Edward Boscawen the minister entrusted the naval part of the business with some confidence; but he was resolved to have nothing to do with the titled incapables pressed upon him by the War Office authorities. In Colonel Jeffrey Amherst, late commissary to the Hessian contingent in British pay, he believed he had an officer who would do his work. Under Amherst, forthwith created a Major-General, three brigadiers were appointed, Whitmore (Governor of Nova Scotia), Lawrence (commander of the New York contingent), and James Wolfe (at present a Brevet-Colonel).

From Exeter the new Brigadier wrote.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Exeter, 7 Jan., 1757.

DEAR MADAM,—Part in chaise and part on horseback I got myself conveyed to this place yesterday by 2 o'clock; and this morning received a letter from London, that hurries me back to town. I set out to-morrow at 6 o'clock and shall hardly stop till I arrive at the great capital. Necessity obliged me to ride the same post horses for three and thirty miles, till we were all heartily tired; and till my skin was thoroughly laid bare—however with the help of cooling diachylum, I shall proceed with all dispatch, and give you the earliest notice of my journeys end. The taking of Breslau completes the ruin of the Austrian arms,²

¹ Louisbourg, we have been reminded, was to French Canada what Port Arthur was lately to Russia in Eastern Asia.

² Breslau had surrendered to Frederick on December 19, following upon the battle of Leuthen.

and before the month of June, I conclude that the French will be driven over the Rhine.

My duty to my father. I hope I did not disturb your pretty neighbours—you will be so good to make my excuses for any little annoyance of that sort unavoidable, though I gave strict orders not to interrupt their sleep.

Your affect. son,

J. WOLFE.

To MRS. WOLFE,
Bath.

This reference to Mrs. Wolfe's pretty neighbours is interesting in that one of them was none other than the beautiful and accomplished Miss Katherine Lowther, sister of Sir James Lowther, afterwards first Earl of Lonsdale, a lady whose name will ever be linked with Wolfe's own.

Wolfe's journey from Exeter to London was an almost record-breaking performance. The reason of his haste and an account of his journey he gives in his next letter.

→ To HIS FATHER,

London, 8th January, 1758.

DEAR SIR,—You won't expect to hear from me so soon, though you will not be much surprised at the celerity of my movements. Yesterday at five o'clock, I left Exeter, and was in town this day by one,—the distance 170 miles. I have seen nobody about business except Carleton, who informs me that things are going on. I met Amherst's regiment upon the march towards Portsmouth; the first division at Bagshot. It was pretty dark last night, and I was obliged to have lights all over Salisbury Plain. About midway our candle went out, and we seemed at a stand, when the provident François provided a tinder-box, struck a light, and we proceeded happily to our journey's end. He offers his services to go along with me, which I am glad to accept of, and so my equipage stands complete. I was hurried from Exeter by a letter, intimating the sudden departure of our forces for North America. Tomorrow will fix my affairs, and in a few days my baggage will begin to move. Prince Ferdinand retires before the French, who have passed the Aller in force.

His friend Rickson had been for some time performing the duties of Deputy Quartermaster-General in Scotland and was very

anxious to procure the regular appointment. The second paragraph of Wolfe's letter to him is in his most reckless vein.

To MAJOR RICKSON.

Blackheath, 12th January, 1758.

DEAR RICKSON,—

My services in this matter, and my credit with the reigning powers, are not worth your acceptance ; but such as they allow it to be, you are as welcome to as any living man. I can assure you that Davy [Watson] is double, and would shove you aside to make way for a tenth cousin : it becomes my Lord G. Beauclerk to confirm you in your office by asking and procuring a commission. If he is satisfied with your management, it is his duty to do it ; these mealy chiefs give up their just rights, and with them their necessary authority. The Commander in Scotland is the fittest person to recommend, and the best judge of the merits of those that serve under him.

Though to all appearance I am in the very centre of business, yet nobody (from the indolent inattention of my temper) knows less of what is going on where I myself am not concerned. The proceedings in Parliament, intrigues of the parties, and the management of public affairs, are as much unknown to me as the business of a divan or seraglio. I live amongst men without desiring to be acquainted with their concerns ; things have their ordinary course, and I pass on with the current unheeding. Being of the profession of arms, I would seek all occasions to serve, and therefore have thrown myself in the way of the American war ; though I know that the very passage threatens my life, and that my constitution must be utterly ruined and undone, and this from no motive either of avarice or ambition.

I am, dear Rickson, etc., etc.,

J. WOLFE.

To HIS MOTHER.

Blackheath, 17th January, 1758.

DEAR MADAM,—I seldom have business enough to excuse my not writing to you, and now have as little as most men. The public affairs are pretty much fixed, and my private matters are so far advanced that I reckon to be ready at least as soon as the squadron, which will hardly be in a condition to be put to sea till the latter end of next week, or the beginning of the following one. The General's letter of credit has enabled me to proceed vigorously, and the more so as my correspondent in Ireland

affects some delay, which, without the timely interposition of Mr. Fisher might prejudice or check my proceedings.¹ The two gentlemen with whom I transact business in that Kingdom, do not, I think, use me quite kindly, as one who has not neglected their interests might well expect; but the members of a corrupt office are seldom free from the infection, and we are to look for such fruit as the soil and cultivation naturally produce.

I don't deserve so much consideration or concern as my father and you are so good as to express for me. He wishes rank for me; and you, my preservation. All I wish for myself is, that I may at all times be ready and firm to meet that fate we cannot shun, and to die gracefully and properly when the hour comes, now or hereafter. A small portion of the good things of this world will fully satisfy my utmost desire. I would not be tempted to set an unjust value upon life; nor would I wish to be thrown in the way of those trials which nature has not provided for. I mean that it would give me some concern to rise into a station that I knew myself unequal to. Upon recollection, it costs me dear to serve. £200 the last affair; £500 or £600 now; and an employment that I am about to resign, so that if we should miscarry, my condition will be desperate, and my finances exhausted. The ladies, too, will despise a beaten lover, so that every way I must be undone. And yet I am run readily, heartily, and cheerfully into the road of ruin. If my thoughts could be greatly diverted from their present object, the youngest of your neighbours might rival my Lady Bath. My duty to the General. I wish you both all happiness.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

It is evident that his thoughts are even now beginning to turn towards Miss Lowther, but Cupid with him always gives way to the behests of Mars.

To MAJOR WALTER WOLFE.

Blackheath, 21st January, 1758.

DEAR SIR,—Though I have no reason to love the seas, or to wish to be employed upon expeditions of any kind, since I do not enjoy one hour's health from the moment I go on board till my return, and am not only disabled from all kinds of business, but suffer pain that cannot be expressed; yet I readily

¹ His pay as Quartermaster-General.

engage in anything that is going on, for the sake of employment, flattering myself that in time I shall be able to overcome it, though hitherto I have found no relief. Another motive, too, pushes me on, which is, the desire of seeing some favourable change in our affairs, and the ambition of contributing something towards it. This far outweighs all considerations of advantage to myself, and gives me patience to bear my sufferings at sea. The King has honoured me with the rank of Brigadier in America, which I cannot but consider as a peculiar mark of his Majesty's favour and confidence, and I intend to do my best to deserve it. The squadron is almost ready to sail; by the end of this month I reckon we shall get to sea. The reinforcements from England and Ireland consist of about five-or-six-and-twenty hundred men, two very good battalions we have, and the rest is *la canaille* from the second battalions upon this establishment. The regular forces in America amount already to upwards of 20,000 men, an army far over-matching the force of New France, and which undoubtedly should conquer Canada in two campaigns, if it was possible to subsist so great a corps together.

You know in what a handsome manner the Duke of Bedford had offered me the employment of Quartermaster-General of Ireland. The handsomest thing I can do in return is to resign it, not being able to give that attention to it which the Duke had reason to expect, and had a right to expect from me. Accordingly I shall resign that appointment into the hands from whence I had it, and trust to Fortune for future provision. She is no great friend to the family, but has distinguished me at times by her smiles and favours; so encouraged, I put myself entirely in her power. I am totally ignorant of the state of our private concerns here, and have taken no precautions in case any accident should happen in my absence. I trust you will give the best advice to my mother, and such assistance, if it should be wanted, as the distance between you will permit. I mention this as the General seems to decline apace, and narrowly escaped being carried off in the spring; and that proceeding from a cause which still subsists and will in time work its natural effects,—I mean his excessive indolence and inactivity. On my mother's side there is no friendship or connection, nor do I know anybody to whom she can apply but yourself. She, poor woman, is in a poor state of health, and needs the care of

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some friendly hand to prop up the tottering fabric. She has long and painful fits of illness, which, by succession and inheritance, are likely to devolve on me, since I feel the early symptoms of them. I wish you health and peace.

I am, dear Sir, etc., etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Five days after the date of this letter Wolfe resigned his Irish appointment. He could not, he said, in his letter to Bedford, give sufficient attention to the duties now that the King had been pleased to allow him to serve in America.¹

To THE DUKE OF BEDFORD.

London, *January 26th, 1758.*

MY LORD,—The manner in which your Grace honoured me with the employment of Quartermaster-General of Ireland, would have engaged me to make the best of my power, in that my duty and inclinations went heartily together, and should have been happy in every opportunity of paying the readiest obedience to your Grace's commands; but, as his Majesty has been pleased to allow me to serve him in America, I think it right to resign my employment in Ireland into your Grace's hands, from whom I received it; and to whom I shall upon that, and upon many other accounts, always look upon myself to be highly indebted and obliged. It is a mortification to have been so long in that office, and so useless, and the more especially as under your Grace's government such reformatations are more likely to be brought about, which are most necessary. Every occasion of paying my respects to your Grace and of acknowledging with gratitude the favour and honour you have done me, will be most readily embraced by me.

I beg to be permitted to offer your Grace my sincerest wishes for your health, and to assure your Grace that I have the honour to be, etc., etc.,

JAMES WOLFE.²

Although one of Mrs. Wolfe's nephews, a son of Tindal Thompson, had not reflected much credit upon the family, his aunt was nevertheless anxious to have him enter the army through her husband's or her son's influence. But Wolfe could never overlook

¹ Wolfe's commission as Brigadier-General is dated "St. James's, 23rd January, 1758," and is countersigned "W. Pitt."

² *Bedford Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 319.



JAMES WOLFE

From the portrait painted by Gainsborough for Miss Louther, and now in the possession of Mrs. Horace Pym, Brasted, Kent

weakness or meanness of character even in his relations. In a letter to his mother he uses some pretty plain speaking, for which he was certain of sharp rebuke.

To HIS MOTHER.

January 25th, 1758.

DEAR MADAM,—You cannot doubt my readiness to oblige you in anything that is of immediate concern to yourself; but you must not put me upon actions that I should blush to engage in, and that my uncle should blush to ask. I never can recommend any but a gentleman to serve with gentlemen. There is little prospect of a low dog's doing any shining act. When such a thing does happen a regard is due to merit; so unexpected courage alone is no sort of recommendation to put a private soldier upon the footing of an officer. I don't apprehend that Mr. Thompson addresses himself to me, or that he has any just right to expect that I should interest myself in behalf of an idle vagabond; for such he must be, by the expression of his letter. I will write a civil letter to my uncle, which may serve as an apology for the General and myself.

I shall pay every shilling that I owe upon the whole earth, and shall leave all the receipts with Miss Brett, directed for you; so that the only running open account is Mr. Fisher's, and that, I believe, if my Irish remittances come in time, will not go very deep. Of late, no thought of matrimony; I have no objection to it, but differ much from the general opinion about it. The greatest consideration with me is the woman, her education and temper. Rank and fortune never come into any competitino with the person. Any bargain on that affair is base and mean. I could not with any satisfaction consider my children as the produce of such an unnatural union. I shall set out for Portsmouth in four or five days. The King has refused Carleton leave to go, to my very great grief and disappointment, and with circumstances extremely unpleasant to him. Lord Fitzmaurice asked to serve the campaign in North America. His Majesty did not absolutely refuse it, but spoke handsomely, and put it upon the footing of service nearer home.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Wolfe had been very keen on having his friend Carleton accompany him. The other friend he mentions, Lord Fitzmaurice, then a lieutenant of twenty-one, became, three years later, Earl of

Shelburne, and was afterwards Prime Minister and the first Marquess of Lansdowne.

A few days further elapsed and the new Brigadier had got his outfit together in London and set out for Portsmouth. There he found a letter awaiting him from his mother, upbraiding him in measured terms for his harsh expressions concerning young Thompson.

To HIS MOTHER.

Portsmouth, 1st February, 1758.

DEAR MADAM,—I take nothing ill from you, nor from anybody, that is not meant as ill. What I said upon my uncle Tin's letter arises from the frankness of my temper. When I have good reasons I don't conceal them. It is a public loss Carleton's not going. Prejudices against particular people often hurt the common cause. Misrepresentations, falsities, injustice, are too frequent to create any degree of surprise. Princes, of all people, see the least into the true characters of men. I came here this morning, two or three days sooner than was necessary; but a man in London, upon the point of his departure, leads a weary life, so I was glad to get out of town. The transports, with Amherst's regiment and those for Ireland, are supposed to have got out of the channel, and 'tis well, for the wind, as it blows here, would otherwise force them back again.

Our hero could hardly leave England without anxiety for his parents. His father was now approaching his seventy-fourth year and rapidly failing, and his mother's health was much affected. With these feelings of solicitude again he writes to his earliest and still his warmest friend, George Warde, now major of a troop of cavalry stationed at Winton.¹

To MAJOR GEORGE WARDE.

London, 1 Feb., 1758.

MY DEAR MAJOR,—As the time of my sojourning in North America is uncertain, accidents may happen in the family that may throw my little affairs into disorder, unless some kind friend will take the trouble to inspect into them. Carleton is so good as to say he will give what help is in his power. May I ask the same favour of you, my oldest friend, in whose worth and integ-

¹ It is much to be regretted that the correspondence between General Warde and Wolfe was never preserved, save in a few cases, as it must have been voluminous.

ity I put entire confidence. I believe there should have been some powers drawn out and some formality in this business all which I am a stranger to, but I am no stranger to the good will and honour of the two persons to whom I recommend my concerns. I wish you much health and prosperity and am, my dear Major,

Your faithful and affectionate servant,

JAM: WOLFE.

At this time Lord George Sackville was Master-General of the Ordnance. The friendly relations of Wolfe with his old Colonel in the Twentieth continued, gathering even strength with years. Wolfe was not to live to hear of how by inexplicable conduct on the field of Minden he inflicted upon his reputation a terrible disgrace, which in his friend's eyes would have been unpardonable, but which he himself lived to retrieve.

Wolfe and Lord George corresponded freely, and having time on his hands at Portsmouth the Brigadier indited a long letter, in which breathes absolute confidence in the success of the project upon which he is about to embark. From the first passage in the letter it would seem that Sackville had hinted that Wolfe had a chance of so distinguishing himself as to earn the chief command in an expedition against the capital of New France.

Portsmouth, 7th February, 1758.

MY LORD,—If I had any constitution to spare, I should certainly desire to succeed Monsieur de Vandreuil in the Government of Canada; but I can't trust to it. Your lordship must let me put you in mind that one campaign in North America is as much as I can afford, though I hope to have mettle enough left for the siege of St. Philip's, or for a stroke in the bottom of the Bay of Biscay!¹ Any long absence at this time would reduce me and my affairs to the lowest ebb. I can't help wishing that Louisbourg should be totally demolished, and all the inhabitants of those islands sent to Europe. It is said that the French were thirty years in putting that fortress into any tolerable condition of defence; we shall reduce them by other attacks to make peace with us, and to restore the Island of Minorca. I should think it possible to shelter the island at the entrance of the harbour in such a manner with mines, as to make it very difficult to raise any batteries there for the time to come. If indeed we think

¹ A reference to Minorca and Rochefort.

Louisbourg worth Minorca, and resolve to keep it,—that's another affair!

It is of consequence, my Lord, not to confine the Admirals and Generals too much as to the number of men to land with; five or six thousand men are sufficient for the preparations; it is of vast importance to get on shore before the fogs come on, and still more not to lose time. Amherst should inform himself of the rates established for works done at a seige. He will tell your Lordship his opinion of Carleton, by which you will probably be better convinced of our loss. I shall begin to write to your Lordship the day we sail, and continue writing until the end of the campaign. Whatever occurs worth your notice shall be transmitted to you; and when you have a leisure half-hour in the country, I shall beg the honour of a letter from your Lordship. If you seriously intend to attack the French in Europe, remember that boats should be procured to land at least 4000 men at a time, and sloops and cutters that may carry as many more close in shore, or upon occasion run aground to land them. Some small flat or round-bottomed vessels, carrying four to six heavy cannon, and boats fitted up with swivel guns or light field-pieces, will be found most useful in landing and bringing off the troops, and in all attacks upon small forts situated near the water. It is believed that the transports for Anstruther's regiment have got round to Cork.

There has been a most unaccountable delay in regard to the East India ships; they are like to be six months longer in India, or more, from those delays. Our squadron is all at Spithead, except the "Lancaster," and that ship is ready to go out of the harbour. The naval preparations at this port are pretty expeditious; but those great ships take more time to fit out than is commonly believed. The East India people here assure me that the loss of Chandernagore is a mortal blow to the French commerce, and that they will hardly be able to subsist at Pondicherry, because their provisions come chiefly from the Ganges. I hope Mons. Lally will not get in time to repair the damages done by our fleet before our own reinforcements arrive. Here is an officer of Amherst's with some sergeants and recruits, to the number of forty-three persons; three more officers are expected to-night. I shall apply to Mr. Boscawen for their passage. I am told that not one soldier of Amherst's regiment deserted upon this occasion; they want 160 men to complete. Mr. Boscawen gave directions to embark them in the most commodious manner.

The condition of the troops that compose this garrison (or rather vagabonds that stroll about in dirty red clothes from one gin-shop to another) exceeds all belief. There is not the least shadow of discipline, care, or attention. Disorderly soldiers of different regiments are collected here; some from the ships, others from the hospital, some waiting to embark—dirty, drunken, insolent rascals, improved by the hellish nature of the place, where every kind of corruption, immorality, and looseness is carried to excess; it is a sink of the lowest and most abominable of vices. Your Lordship could not do better than to get the company of Artillery moved out of this infernal den, where troops ought never to be quartered.

Give me leave to observe two or three things to your Lordship in relation to our last new exercise. The side-step has been introduced by mistake, I imagine, instead of the oblique step; one is as absurd as the other is useful. Wheeling by divisions to the right or left may be called a principle of motion; this excellent evolution is abolished, and the ridiculous wheel upon the centre introduced in its place. The ranks are opened to a very inconvenient distance for no reason that I can conceive, unless to double the ranks by the side-step with more ease. Here one absurdity has produced another. Practising the platoon firing with the ranks open, as front ranks, as centre ranks, etc., is all nonsense; every soldier should be trained to fire in each rank, and obliquely. A company or battalion should as readily fire to the rear as to the front, and this they acquire in learning the platoon exercise,—that is, they should be so taught. When soldiers are the masters of the use of their fire-arms and of their bayonets, the next great object is their marching in battalion, as your Lordship knows full well. For this, no good instructions have ever been given in my time, nor any principles laid down by which we might be guided. Hence the variety of steps in our infantry, and the feebleness and disorderly floating of our lines. General Drury, I think, has the merit of the late inventions; 'tis unlucky, however, that our great master in the art of war, Frederick of Prussia, was not preferred upon this occasion. He has made the exercise simple and useful; we cannot choose so good a model.

I am credibly informed that at a council of war held at Calcutta, after the recovery of that settlement, Captain Speke was single for the attack of Chandernagore, declaring that nothing was done, nor could there be any security till that settlement

was destroyed; and by persevering in his opinion, the rest were brought at length to agree to the enterprise. This I believe is a fact that may be depended upon.

Your Lordship has taken Beckwith, Maxwell, and the 20th regiment—your old battalion—under your immediate protection, and they cannot be better; but I have another friend to recommend to you as a very deserving and a very active officer, —Captain Rickson,—who is doing duty as Deputy Quarter-master-General of Scotland. He wishes to be confirmed in his office by commission, as usual, and as it ought to have been long ago, if (as I believe) some bye-views and artifices had not prevented it. That employment has usually the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel annexed to it, which Rickson may pretend to in point of merit with almost any man in the service. Your Lordship, I think, is persuaded that I never did, nor ever will, undertake to establish any man in your good opinion but from a thorough conviction that he deserves your esteem.

We expect Mr. Boscawen every hour, and people think that he will not wait for a fair wind, but endeavour to beat down the Channel if the weather is moderate, so that we are likely to be soon under way. I wish your Lordship much health, and have the honour to be, with great respect, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient and most humble servant,
J. WOLFE.

PS.—Tuesday afternoon.—Our Admiral is arrived, and is in haste to sail. I wish the voyage was over and that we struck soundings upon the Banks. Take care to reinforce the fleet if it be necessary; don't let us be beat. Barré, who knows Whitmore better than anybody, assures me that he has no health nor constitution for such business as we are going upon; he never was a soldier, but otherwise, a very worthy gentleman. I pray you beware how you employ him near the top; this prevented, we may jog on tollerably. Here is a lieutenant of Foot going with Draper¹ to the East Indies, who would be a most valuable man to Amherst. He seems to understand the war in America well, and speaks of it clearly and judiciously. Alas! there are but few such men, and those too often neglected. He has been at Montreal and Quebec, and has navigated down the river St. Lawrence. If I commanded in America, I would give

¹ Lieutenant-Colonel (afterwards Sir) William Draper, K.B., who captured Manila and defied "Junius."

him a company and £500 to go with me,—a modest, sensible, manly young officer. His name is Cheshire. I hope your Lordship will be the patron and protector of every deserving man of our profession.

The Barré of the foregoing was destined to earn great distinction as a political character, although perhaps not altogether in the manner Wolfe, as a patriotic Englishman, would approve. As Colonel Isaac Barré, M.P., he came to be the opponent of the King and Lord North and the upholder of the American Revolution. Albeit, Barré never forgot that his first real patron was not Shelburne or Burke, but that “noble-hearted soldier, James Wolfe.”

To MAJOR GEORGE WARDE.

Portsmouth, *February 11th*, 1758.

DEAR MAJOR,—Though I thank you for the assurances contained in your letter, yet I needed not that proof to be secure of your kind offices to an absent friend. I don't even make you an apology for the trouble it may give you, because, from a consciousness of a readiness on my side to engage warmly in your interest, there is not a doubt of your inclinations to forward mine. If my father should die in my absence, I desire that you and Carleton will let my mother know that, jointly with her, you are empowered to transact my business, as the enclosed letter of attorney sets forth; and if you will assist her with your good counsel, I shall think of it with satisfaction, and acknowledge it with more gratitude than anything done to myself, though of every mark and testimony of your kindness not at all insensible. I knew you were in town, and that you had called, but not remembering where you lodged, I was obliged to come away without seeing you. We may live to meet; and to find you well and happy will be one very sincere pleasure at my return. I shall collect all the particulars of our campaign for your amusement. I wish you all manner of good, and am, my dear Major,

Your faithful and affectionate servant,

JAM. WOLFE.

To MAJOR WARDE, at the *White Hart*, Winton.

On the same day he wrote to Lord George Sackville the following further interesting letter. The Carden he mentions was eighteen years later sent by Carleton, then Governor of Canada, to dislodge the American rebel, Ethan Allen, from Long Point, near Montreal. He succeeded, but at the cost of his life, September 24, 1775.¹

¹ Bradley: *Lord Dorchester*, p 88.

To LORD GEORGE SACKVILLE.

Portsmouth, *February 11th*, 1758.

MY LORD,—Carden the American has a great deal of merit, but wants bread to eat. He is an excellent fellow for the woods; I am sure of my intelligence and therefore wish the field mareschal wou'd give him leave to serve the campaign with us, as he himself desired—5 or 6 shillings a day for the campaign (till other provision can be made) wou'd satisfy him fully. If this is thought too high a price for his services I am ready to find him in food and shelter at my own expense. Hotham has a letter from Murray recommending him in the strongest manner upon former acquaintance in war. My information regards some later acts of his upon which I venture to present him to your lordship and to the public as a good servant and a brave soldier, and beg he may be sent to us or after us. He is bold, circumspect, and more artful than his appearance bespeaks—has experience in the method of the American war beyond anybody that I can hear off; I hope we shan't lose such a subject so particularly adapted to this kind of work. I am at more trouble to find out proper people to forward the service than almost anybody, and succeed so ill when I have found 'em that I am discouraged from proceeding in my discoveries. Carden was Lieut. of Shirley's or Pepperells, I know not which, and has but one threadbare uniform to cover an indefatigable body spurred on to action by a daring mind.

Death, wounds, sickness, and a necessary garrison, will diminish our numbers. I give 3,000 men for these different articles. Would it not be a wise measure to send a reinforcement of a good old battalion of 900 men to join us about the middle of June? With such an increase of strength, we might undertake the great object, at least I see no reason at this distance to hinder it. Of the 800 men drawn from the second battalion under major Hardy's command I can venture to say that we shan't land 400, but the mischief they will do in the fleet by introducing diseases amongst them is still more to be apprehended. No nation in the world but this sends soldiers to war without discipline or instructions.

I am, my Lord, etc., etc.,

J. WOLFE.

PS.—The wind labours hard against us. Adam Livingstone of the Scottish Fusiliers, and Delaune of Kingsley's, are formed by nature for the American war.

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He also penned an epistle to Bath—

To HIS MOTHER.

Portsmouth, *February 11th*, 1758.

DEAR MADAM,—When any matter of importance to a country is resolved on, the sooner it is carried into execution the better. Delays are not only productive of bad consequences, but are very tiresome and very inconvenient, as every unhappy person, whose lot it is to be confined for any length of time to this place, can certify. The want of company and of amusement can be supplied with book and exercise, but the necessity of living in the midst of the diabolical citizens of Portsmouth is a real and unavoidable calamity. It is a doubt to me if there is such another collection of demons upon the whole earth. Vice, however, wears so ugly a garb, that it disgusts rather than tempts. The weather begins to be more moderate than it has been for some days past, and I fancy we shall go on board this afternoon, to be ready to get under sail with the first favourable turn of the wind. I should be glad if we were at sea, though I have no very agreeable prospect before me; however, I hope to overcome it, and if not, have a mind strong enough to endure that, and still severer trials, if there are any more severe. I heartily wish you all the benefit that you yourself can hope for from the Bath. The General will be kind enough to put up with some inconvenience for your sake. I beg my duty to him, and am, dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate Son,

JAM. WOLFE.

PS.—You shall hear from me by all the opportunities that offer.

On the day following Wolfe embarked. As usual there was a hanging about the Channel for a week.

To HIS FATHER.

“Princess Amelia,” *St. Helens, 18th Feb.*, 1758.

DEAR SIR,—Our Captain sends me word that a boat is just going ashore, and that I have time to write three or four lines. Mr. Boscawen, impatient to get out to sea, left Spithead the 15th, and brought his squadron here to be ready for the first favourable change of wind, which has blown for some days directly against us, and with great violence. The weather is now mild, and the moon old enough to light us in the night, but our mariners see no immediate prospect of sailing. We are

extremely well in this ship, have great room, and much kindness and civility from the commanders, and hitherto the motion has not had any very great effect upon me.

I am, dear Sir,
J. WOLFE.

To HIS FATHER.

Plymouth Sound, 22nd February.

DEAR SIR,—Some very bad weather, and the appearance of still worse, forced Mr. Boscawen to anchor in this place,—a berth that the mariners are not very fond of. The wind blew violently yesterday in the afternoon and good part of the night, so as to try our anchors and cables a little; but 'tis now calm, and promises to be fair. You may believe that I have passed my time disagreeably enough in this rough weather; at best, the life, you know, is not pleasant. We left the "Invincible" upon a sand, and believe she is lost: the finest ship of that rate (74 guns) in the Navy, well manned and well commanded.¹ By what fatal accident this happened we cannot guess. The boat waits for my letter, so I will only add my best wishes for your health and my mother's.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,
J. WOLFE.

Boscawen's delay, however, was nothing to Amherst's, who was not ready to embark until the middle of March, when he set out from Spithead in Captain Rodney's *Dublin*. We shall see that he did not arrive at Halifax until Boscawen, having been there ten days, was actually leaving that port.

¹ This fine ship was wrecked at St. Helens on the 18th. No lives were lost.

XVI

THE CONQUEST OF LOUISBOURG

ON May 9, 1758, Boscawen's flagship entered Halifax harbour with two and a half battalions of the Philadelphia contingent, which he picked up at sea. He found that Lawrence had three other English battalions, but Whitmore and the Irish regiment were not yet arrived. Boscawen instantly wrote to Chatham that though he was disappointed as to numbers, he had enough to establish a preliminary footing on Cape Breton, in accordance with the minister's instructions.

After a couple of days ashore, at what is to-day the capital of the Canadian province of Nova Scotia, Wolfe, in conformity with his promise to keep his friend Sackville completely *au courant* with affairs as he found them, wrote¹—

TO LORD GEORGE SACKVILLE.

Halifax, May 12th, 1758.

MY LORD,—From Christopher Columbus' time to our days there perhaps has never been a more extraordinary voyage. The continual opposition of contrary winds, calms, or currents, baffled all our skill and wore out all our patience. A fleet of men of war well manned, unincumbered with transports, commanded by an officer of the first reputation, has been eleven weeks in its passage. We made the Madeira Islands, the Canaries, Bermudas, and lastly to crown all the Isle of Sable. Two or three of the ships are sickly, the rest are in very good condition. The Admiral, who has omitted no care of precaution to advance the service, is labouring to fit the fleet for the sea with all possible despatch.

We found Amherst's Regiment in the harbour in fine order and healthy. Fraser's and Brigadier Lawrence's Battalions were here, and both in good condition. The Highlanders are very useful serviceable soldiers, and commanded by the most manly corps of officers I ever saw. Webb's, Otway's, and part of Monckton's battalions from Philadelphia came in with us. The detachments from this garrison are not joined, so that these

¹ Wright says "he was not able to resume his pen for some days," indeed, until the 19th. The existence of this letter was then unknown.

battalions are very weak, scarce exceeding 300 men a regiment. About 500 Rangers are come, which to appearance are little better than *canaille*.

Brigadier Whitmore is expected every day with the artillery and troops from New York and Boston, Bragg's from the bay of Fundy, and Anstruther's from Ireland.

A great quantity of facines and gabions are made and other preparations of that sort, and a kind of small wooden fort (that takes to pieces), to secure our communications, instead of redoubts, which it seems the ground does not admit of. I have recommended a provision of palisades that the troops may lie quiet in their camps and to fortify our different magazines. We are to expect opposition at our landing. It is supposed they have about 1,500 irregulars, and that their garrison is augmented because seven ships (three of which are said to be men of war of two decks) have got into the harbour. The battalions are in general healthy, and I dare say will do their duty well. They are irritated against the enemy and have a quarrel of their own to decide besides the public cause. As I foresaw long ago we shall find work to do. We are preparing a body of Light Foot to join to the Rangers, and I believe the whole will be put under the command of Captain Scott (Major of Brigade), who is an active officer and used to that kind of war. Captain Raess came in yesterday from Sir C. Hardy's squadron off Louisbourg. They have had the severest weather imaginable, and the snow is still upon the ground of Cape Breton, though here the weather is fair and dry and warm. We don't entertain a right notion of L'Isle Royale in England; it is not possible to encamp there early in the year and to preserve the army. I wouldn't be understood by that to mean that we are prevented by the season at this time. We only await the arrival of Brigadier Whitmore and the equipment of the squadron to set sail, and certainly we shall struggle against all difficulties and push the affair with vigour. As I told your lordship we will put your cannon in proof.

PS.—General Hopson delivers over the command of the troops this day to Brigadier Lawrence.

On May 19 there is a letter addressed to his Uncle Walter, but the substance of it is identical with the one written on the following day to his father.

To HIS FATHER.

Halifax, 20th May, 1758.

DEAR SIR,—General Hopson does me the favour to carry this letter. The King has thought proper to recall him, on account, I suppose, of his age, with which, and the assurance given him of a good reception at home, he is well pleased.¹ Our fleet and army have gathered together from many different places without any material accident. Sir Charles Hardy has been cruising off Louisbourg ever since the 2nd or 3rd of April, or thereabouts; but, notwithstanding Sir Charles's vigilance and activity, the French have contrived to get in three or four men of war, and as many small ships. Others intended for the port, laden with stores and provisions, have been taken by our squadron. We shall be ready to sail in four or five days. Mr. Boscawen has been indefatigable on his side, and we have not been idle. Our army consists of fourteen regiments, and our fleet of about twenty sail of the line, and I believe, as many frigates. Our General is not yet arrived, but we shall proceed without him. When the army is landed, the business is half done; and I hope it will be all done before you receive this letter. The troops are very healthy, and so are most of the ships; four or five are otherwise, and so will the French fleet be if they come upon this coast.

You will hear it said in England that Mr. Abercrombie has an army of 7000 regulars and 20,000 provincials. Of this last account you may deduct one-half, and depend upon it that the remaining 10,000 are not good for much. Lord Howe is in high esteem with the troops in Albany. You may expect to hear of some handsome performances of his. The nature of the war there requires all his abilities, spirit, and address. The harbour of Halifax is a most excellent port, and of infinite consequence to us, both from its situation and goodness. If you saw in what manner it is fortified, you would hardly think that we judge it worth our care. There are guns indeed in different spots, but so exposed from behind, that the batteries would soon be abandoned. I wish you and my mother a great deal of health, and am, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate Son,

JAM. WOLFE.

In the letter to Major Walter Wolfe there occurs, however, a most

¹ Hopson died the following year.

characteristic passage. After saying that the French have managed to get a small number of ships into Louisbourg, he added: "If they had thrown in twice as much we should not hesitate to attack them; and for my part, I have no doubt of our success. If the French fleet comes upon this coast, the campaign will I hope be decisive."

Time still dragged, and the indefatigable letter-writer again puts pen to paper.

To LORD GEORGE SACKVILLE.

Halifax, *May 24th*, 1758.

MY LORD,—The latter end of May and the fleet not sailed! What are they about? Why are they not landed at Louisbourg? The troops have been all embarked these three or four days (except Bragg's and two hundred men from Lunenburg, who we suppose to be at hand), but the war ships are not quite ready, and, if they were, the wind, rain, and fog of this last week would have kept us here. The Admiral means to sail with the first air breeze and leave some of the ships of war to follow. He has reinforced Sir Charles Hardy with the Royal William and Prince Frederick and is impatient to be gone. The enemy we are told has entrenched the shoar of the bay of Gabarus and has planted his artillery upon the beach thereof. If we find him strong in that part, we must try him at a greater distance, and where perhaps he is less prepared. Our present notions are to land 3000 men at Miré and march towards Gabarus, attack at the same time the further L'Orembeck and La Balleine, get footing in one or other of those little harbours, land a considerable body and march to the nether L'Orembeck which is not above a mile from the end of the North East Harbour. A small body of men (by way of diversion) are likewise to be detached to the bottom of Gabarus Bay, there land and entrench themselves. While these operations are carrying on the Admiral threatens them at the harbour's mouth and the gros of his squadron and makes all possible show of attack with the rest of that part of the Bay of Gabarus where the Americans landed. If neither of these succeed we must fall upon some other method for we must get on shoar or perish altogether in the attempt. It will be my part to command the body that goes round to Miré (3 battalions of the Light Foot). Monckton has L'Orembeck with two battalions, and Lawrence manages the rest. Nothing, however, is yet

fixed upon or can be fixed till we see the object, and perhaps General Amherst may arrive in the meanwhile time enough to improve the present plan. When the troops, &c. are landed we shall possess the Light House Point, cannonade and bombard the Island Battery and destroy the shipping; then we proceed to open the trenches, and I should imagine the attack will be directed against the Bastion Dauphin for reasons that the Engineers will give your lordship hereafter. General Abercrombie has withheld the haut-vitzers that were at New York amongst the stores intended for the siege of Louisbourg last year, and comprehended in the preparations of this year by which we shall be great sufferers. I hope Mr. Abercrombie has sufficient reasons to give for depriving us of so essential an article. We ought to have had a dozen of the largest sort for this business. I am told, too, that his Excellency had a great mind to keep the tools, in which case there was an end of the siege of Louisbourg altogether, and I believe it will now be found that we have not one pick axe too many.

As here are no spare arms, nor no rifled barrel guns, the firelocks of these regiments will be so injured in the course of the siege that I doubt if they will be in any condition of service after it is over. Some of them are already very bad.

Upon enquiry into the affairs of this country it appears evidently that the two principal posts and frontiers indeed of America are Halifax and Oswego, one of which we have already lost, and the other we must lose in 12 hours whenever it is attacked. This is a most excellent harbour, is situated happily for the protection of our fishery and the interruption of the enemy's and for the annoyance of their navigation up the river St. Lawrence.

The position of Oswego manifests its great utility. You secure an interest with the Indians and awe them; share the furr trade with the French; make war upon their colony from thence with great ease, cut off the communication with the Ohio by a squadron of armed vessels upon the lake, and, by obliging them to defend themselves at home, prevent the bloody ravages made upon the frontiers of our colonies. Hitherto there has been the most profound ignorance of the nature of the war upon this continent and several abuses in regard to the troops. Lord Howe will remedy the first if he outlives this campaign, and it belongs to your lordship to do the rest. The army is undone and ruined by the constant use of salt meat and rum. They might often be provided with fresh meat as cheap as the other,

and by stopping 2d or 3d a day for their provisions they would have no more left than was of use to them, and the extravagance hitherto unknown of furnishing an army with provisions without making them contribute a part of their pay towards it, would be at an end. The women, too, can very well afford by their industry to pay 2d a day for their provisions; the idle ones that cannot are better away. The men's necessaries indeed are at a higher price in America than in Europe, but still in time of war they can afford 2d a day for provisions, and in time of peace 3d.; the same at sea and at Gibraltar, which would be a considerable saving and a very considerable one to the public.

Work done by the soldiers for his Majesty's service is paid at a most exorbitant rate. We are indebted to Mr. Knowles for this piece of economy. Besides their provisions and their pay, the soldiers had a shilling a day for working at the fortifications of Louisbourg while he was governor of the town, and which has been continued in this province ever since.

Some of the regiments of this army have 3 or 400 men eaten up with scurvy. All of them that are wounded or hurt by any accident run great risk of their lives from the corrupted state of the blood, so your lordship may rest assured that the enterprize of Louisbourg will cost a multitude of men, as contemptuously as the Marshal¹ treated that subject. There is not an ounce of fresh beef or mutton contracted for even for the sick and wounded, which besides the inhumanity is both impolitic and absurd. Mr. Boscawen, indeed, has taken the best precautions in his power by ordering 600 head of live cattle for the fleet and army the moment he arrived. The curious part of this barbarity is that the scoundrels of contractors can afford the fresh meat in many places and circumstances as cheap as the salt. I think our stock for the siege full little, and none of the medicines for the hospitals are arrived. No horses or oxen for the artillery, &c.

Too much money and too much rum necessarily affect the discipline of an army. We have glaring evidence of their ill consequences every moment. Sergeants drunk upon duty, two sentries upon their posts and the rest wallowing in the dirt. I believe no nation ever paid so many bad soldiers at so high a rate. My Lord Loudoun, whose management in the conduct of affairs is by no means admired, did adhere so literally and strictly

¹ Lord Ligonier.

to the one—two and the firings by the impracticable chequer, &c., that these regiments must necessarily be cut off one after another unless they fall into some method more suited to the country and to the kind of enemy they have to deal with.

I expect to be attacked upon the march by the Mickmacs, Abenakis and Canadians. I have made the best preparations in my power (and that the time permits), to beat 'em off; but I can't be sure that we shan't presently run into confusion and be very ill-treated, altho' I have with me some of the best of our battalions.

Our clothes, our arms, our accoutrements, nay even our shoes and stockings are all improper for this country. Lord Howe is so well convinced of it that he has taken away all the men's breeches.

There are in America three or four excellent men in their way. Bradstreet for the battues and for expeditions is an extraordinary man; Rogers is an excellent partisan for 2 or 300 men, and young Clarke under my Lord Howe, whom nature has formed for the war of this country, and will make a good figure as an engineer for the field.

One of the engineers, Green, is sick upon the continent and instead of Matt. Clarke and Gordon, who I suppose were far off, we have got two boys, Montrésor and Williamson, and to make up the 300 artillery we must carry off all that are here. Among the officers of the infantry we have picked six or seven assistant engineers, enough to make out three brigades, six in each, besides the active Bastide and Major Mackellar. Delaune and Carden would be more useful here than can be conceived. We want just two such men to throw into the light infantry, and we want grave Carleton for every purpose of the war. Anstruther's regiment is sickly, and two or three of the ships are in so terrible a condition that they are hardly fit for sea.

I am told that a certain Lieutenant-Colonel of this army drew up a kind of representation and gave it to Colonel Munro (signed by others I suppose as well as himself) setting forth the condition of Fort William Henry; how incapable it was of further resistance, and giving it as their opinion that Colonel Munro had made a very good defence and might with honour capitulate, &c., &c. But Cunninghame can tell you more of the matter.

I am, my Lord, etc., etc.,

J. WOLFE.

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While the great fleet rested in Halifax harbour waiting for General Amherst's arrival, Boscawen held supreme command of the combined force, which was soon reinforced by Whitmore's arrival and the Irish regiment. Lawrence, Wolfe and Boscawen met in council and decided to proceed to Cape Breton without waiting longer for the tardy Amherst. They got to sea on May 28, and met Rodney's ship, with Amherst on board, coming in, much to the general satisfaction.

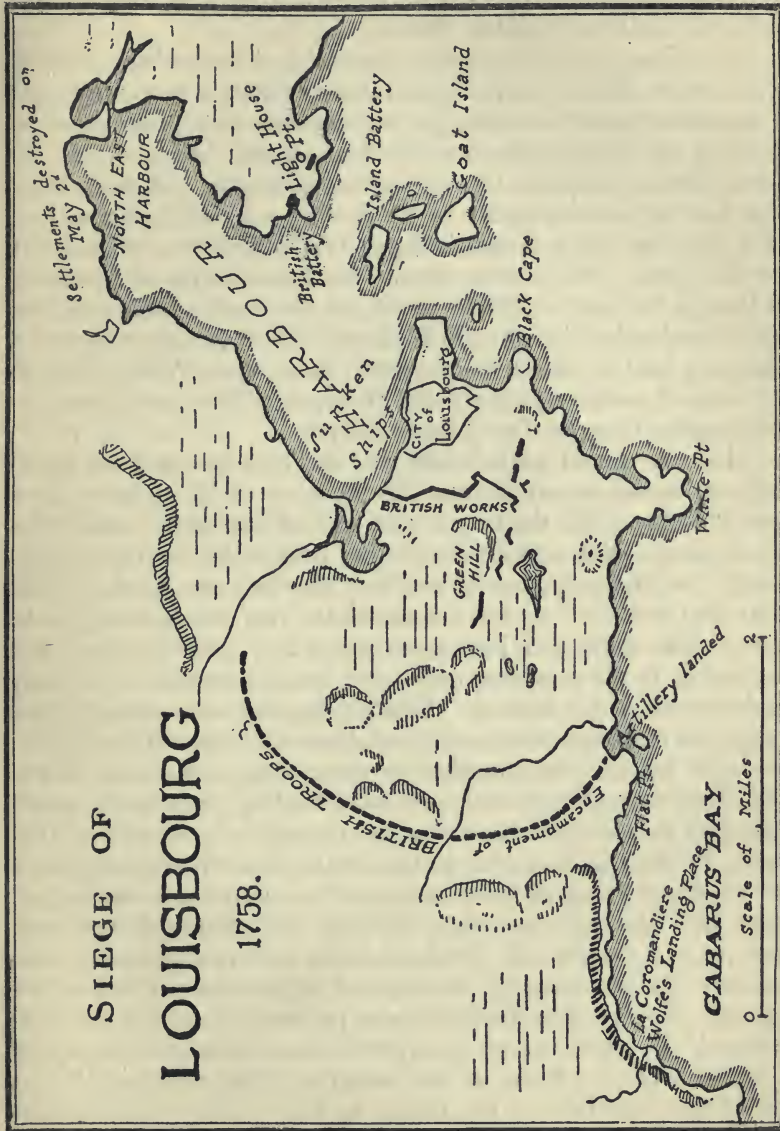
The force of which General Amherst now assumed command numbered fourteen battalions of infantry, 500 Rangers, and a detachment of Royal artillery, altogether an army of nearly 12,000 men. There was probably a similar number of marines and seamen in the fleet of more than 150 ships. Such was the preponderating strength of armament descending to crush Louisbourg, blotting the fortress from the face of the earth. †

Louisbourg, situated on a rugged promontory south-west of the harbour, was some two miles in circumference. The houses were built of stone, the streets broad and regular, with a spacious parade adjoining the citadel. Facing the parade was the church and Governor's house; opposite were the barracks, where, being supposed bomb-proof, the women and children took refuge, until the shells began to make havoc of the building. At one end of the harbour was an excellent wharf, and on the opposite side were fish-drying stages sufficient to accommodate the product of 2000 fishing-boats. In the minds of most of the officers and men little doubt was expressed as to the ability of the combined force to succeed in their object, in spite of the reinforcements which, eluding Hardy's squadron, had got into Louisbourg harbour. The question was, would Louisbourg be taken in time to push on to Quebec? That would remain to be seen.

The fleet came in view of the town on June 2nd. Notwithstanding his sea-sickness, for there was a high sea running, Wolfe accompanied Amherst and Lawrence in a boat, to reconnoitre the coast.

In council, before Amherst had arrived, Wolfe had already produced his plan for the impending operations. He was to land with three battalions of light infantry in Miré Bay, ten miles northward from Louisbourg, and march towards Gabarus Bay to capture the French landing-place there. In this exploit he was to be seconded by Monckton, who, landing on the opposite side of the peninsula, would march overland to his support. Meanwhile, two separate diversions were to be made by Boscawen and Lawrence, so

that the enemy would be utterly confused as to the precise point of the chief attack, and thereby divide fatally their defence.



Amherst now produced a plan to supersede Wolfe's. His idea was the straightforward, familiar frontal attack, with two side diver-

sions. By June 8, and not sooner, owing to tempestuous weather, was the chief business of the expedition begun. And whosoever plan was adopted it appeared that the chief fighting business was to be entrusted to Brigadier Wolfe.

To him were allotted twelve companies of Grenadiers, Fraser's Highlanders, Major Scott's Light Infantry Corps of marksmen, and a company of provincial Rangers, mostly men from Massachusetts, of whom we have already had Wolfe's opinion. At midnight on June 7 the embarkation into the boats was begun. At dawn, after a preliminary bombardment by the fleet as a diversion, the seamen conveying the three divisions began to ply their oars with spirit for the shore. Whitmore's division on the right rowed eastward, as though to land at White Point: in the centre Lawrence's six battalions headed straight for Freshwater Cove, to make the enemy suppose a landing was to be attempted there, while Wolfe's brigade on the left made vigorously for the spot of the real descent—Kennington Cove or La Coromandière.—

Men who served under Wolfe that day have recorded the extraordinary confidence which was felt by men of all ranks in their young leader. All the troops were full of enthusiasm and eager for the fray. Not without danger and discomfort was the passage made. As they approached not only the batteries belched forth their shot and shell against them, but the very waves conspired to repel. The angry surf beat upon the boats, upsetting some and shattering to pieces others, many men being drowned before they could secure a dry footing. Wolfe's flagstaff was actually shot away, and it seemed utter madness to face such fire. But a boatful of Light Infantry, commanded by two young lieutenants, Brown and Hopkins, sighting a half-protected landing-place on the rocks, managed to run their boat straight on shore in advance of the rest. Wolfe, standing erect in the bows, cried out encouragement to the others to follow their example. In another moment he had leapt into the surf, now only knee-deep, and scrambled, unarmed, with only a cane in his hand, over the intervening rocks.¹ He reached the men already landed, and asked who were the first ashore. Two Highland soldiers were pointed out to him. "Good fellows!" he cried, and going up to the men presented them with a guinea apiece. Then, to the sound of their cheering, he set about the formation of the troops as fast as they arrived on the lower beach. From a masked battery on the slopes twenty feet

¹ The spot of Wolfe's landing is pointed out to-day as "Wolfe's Rock."
—O. Macdonald, *Last Siege of Louisbourg*, p. 149

above them a raking fire was dealt out. Many fell while forming ranks, but so far from daunting, only made the rest fiercer for their prey. At a signal Wolfe himself led the advance up the steep rocks. The first battery was carried by storm, and still Wolfe pushed on to other entrenchments of the enemy. Behind him in support came Lawrence and his division. The French, who opposed this unceremonious landing, now feared their retreat would be cut off, and forsaking their cannon and stores broke pell-mell for Louisbourg four miles away, followed hotly over swamps and hillocks by Wolfe and Amherst. The fugitives reached the fortifications from whence now a terrific cannonade was opened. This, whatever its lethal effect, at least served to show the British precisely the area of safety in beginning a siege. Unluckily, the siege train was not landed, and the difficulties of the process considering the weather were very great. Meanwhile the troops took possession of ground before the town and formed a camp, although three days passed before they got artillery, tents, provisions or ammunition. Valuable time was thus lost. "It was soon evident," says Corbett, "that there was one operation which alone could reduce the place within the appointed time, and that was that the fleet should enter the harbour. Yet in spite of Pitt's hint, Boscawen seems never to have entertained the idea." Far too cautious was the Admiral, in Wolfe's opinion, as we shall see.

By the 12th it was known to Amherst that the French had called in their outposts and were concentrating all their strength upon the fortress itself. The harbour containing the enemy's fleet had been protected by two batteries, one, the Batterie Royale, far within the inlet, and another on Goat Island at its entrance.¹ When Brigadier Wolfe heard that the French had dismantled Batterie Royale he thought he perceived a chance not to be lost. If the ships and Goat Island battery could be attacked from the land shore of the harbour Boscawen would be enabled to enter the port with his fleet. He laid his scheme immediately before Amherst, who ordered him to advance with his brigade upon Light-house Point, commanding the sea-wall of the town, and capture it. The artillery and stores for this movement were at the same time dispatched by sea to meet Wolfe at L'Orembeck. On arrival at the Lighthouse Wolfe sent the following to Amherst ²—

¹ There has been much historical confusion between Goat Island and "Battery Island." The island battery was already dismantled.

² It is endorsed by Amherst, "Brigadier Wolfe's Intentions at the Lighthouse Point."

“Brigadier Wolfe proposes to establish a post of 200 regulars and a company of Rangers at L’Orembeck ; he intends likewise to establish another post of 200 regulars and a company of Rangers at the end of the North-east Harbour. The regular troops are to fortify their camp, and the irregulars are to keep a constant patrol, to endeavour to intercept any of the inhabitants of the island, Canadians or others ; at least, to give notice of their march to the officer commanding the regular troops, who will inform the Brigadier of it, and give the earliest notice he can to Brigadier Lawrence upon the left of the army, who will report it to the Commander-in-Chief.

“Another post of fifty regulars and ten Rangers will be established at the nearest L’Orembeck ; the two L’Orembeck parties will be supplied with provisions from the sea, and the party at the end of the harbour will be supplied from the camp or from the Lighthouse. . . . The remaining body of Light Infantry and the irregulars, must take post upon the Miré Road, about half way between the camp and the North-east Harbour, and communicate with both the one and the other by posts and patrols.”

Wolfe kept steadily at it in spite of severe weather, but all was not in readiness until the 18th. On that day he wrote the following orders to the brigade—

“Two batteries are to be constructed this night, for one iron 24-pounder each, with a firm, well-rammed parapet, and the platform laid with the utmost care. These must be finished before daybreak, and whatever remains to be done at the Great Mortar Battery must be completed this night ; every engineer and every officer of artillery exerting himself in his proper department. Tomorrow at sunset, it is proposed to begin to bombard and cannonade the French fleet ; the Captain of Artillery to dispose his party so that all the ordnance may be equally well served, according to the following distribution :

“The battery at the end of the North-east Harbour, one 24- and one 12-pounder.

“Hautbitser (*sic*) Battery, under the hill near the careening wharf to fire a *ricochet*.

“Great Bomb Battery, in the bottom before Goreham’s camp, of four mortars and six royals.

“Two 24-pounders, to fire a *ricochet* at the masts and rigging from the bottom before Goreham’s camp and the Lighthouse Hill.

“One 24-pounder and two 12 ditto, from the right of the Lighthouse Hill, to fire likewise a *ricochet* at the masts and rigging.

“Two 24-pounders to be placed in battery, to fire at the ships’ hulls or lower masts.

“The Captain of Artillery may demand as many men as he thinks necessary to assist in serving the artillery, and as many pioneers as are requisite, and they shall be furnished from the army. The troops are all to be under arms time enough to march to their respective posts before the firing begins. Colonel Morris is to take post, with the detachments of the right brigade, upon the hills above the careening wharf, where the Highlanders now are. Lieut.-Colonel Hales (with three companies of Grenadiers) is to post himself behind the little hills and rising grounds where Captain Goreham’s company is encamped, in readiness to support the Great Bomb Battery, if the enemy should think fit to attack it. The remaining company of Grenadiers is to be placed in small parties, nearer to the Bomb Battery, in the safest situation that can be found. Goreham’s company (if it returns in time) is to be concealed in proper places to the right of this company of Grenadiers, as near the sea as they can lie in safety. As the three companies of Grenadiers are placed near the magazine of the Grand Battery, Lieut.-Colonel Hales must take care that no fire be permitted. Colonel Rollo, with the detachments of the left and centre, is to take post upon the Lighthouse Hill in readiness to march down to the enemy in case they are disposed to land.

“All the detachments are to be placed with the greatest possible regard to their security; because the French ships in their confusion and disorder may probably fire their guns at random, and if the men are properly concealed we shall suffer very little loss. The two youngest companies are to be left for the guard of the camp and the rest to guard the magazine. The officers commanding these companies are to make proper detachments and place a necessary number of sentries for the preservation of the tents, huts, magazines, stores, etc., and they are not to allow their men to get in numbers upon the tops of hills, that no accident may happen.

“The firing of the mortars, hautbitsers, and *ricochet* shot is to cease a little before daybreak, that all the troops, except a company at each station, may return to their camp to take their rest and refreshment; and the officers will conduct them back with the utmost caution. The battery at the end of the North-east

Harbour, and the two iron 24-pounders that are placed in battery upon the upper part of the Lighthouse Hill, are to continue firing all day at the masts and rigging of the ships, that the enemy may have no rest, nor time to repair their damages. Although it seems improbable that the French should presume to land and attack any of our batteries, yet it is right to be prepared to receive them, or to drive them back to their boats; therefore, when two sky-rockets are fired immediately after each other from the Brigadier's station, all the troops are to move down the hills, and forward with quick pæce, and charge the enemy with their bayonets, endeavouring to gain their flanks by detachments made on purpose; Colonel Morris to their left, supposing them to land anywhere near the Bomb Battery, and Colonel Rollo to their right, while the Grenadiers attack them in front without firing a shot.

“The Brigadier-General will be all night upon the hill where Colonel Morris's detachment is to be posted, unless some particular business should require him in another part; in which case, he will leave word where he is to be found. One hundred Highlanders will be posted along the shore of the North-east Harbour, from Colonel Morris's post to Major Ross's. Part of the left wing and Light Infantry of the Army will be in motion during this attack, ready to sustain the detached posts, to alarm the enemy on every side, and to increase their confusion. A sky-rocket will be fired from Colonel Morris's post, which will be answered by Sir Charles Hardy's squadron and the grand army; and when a second sky-rocket is fired from the same hill, the batteries begin, with short intervals at first, as will make their fire regular and constant. The officers of artillery, the engineers, and Major Ross's detachment, are to have copies of these orders.”

Wolfe's first objective was the French fleet and he pinned his faith to the British gunners. A few hours before the bombardment he wrote Amherst—

— To MAJOR-GENERAL AMHERST.

End of North-east Harbour, 19th June, 1758.

DEAR SIR, — My posts are now so fortified that I can afford you the two companies of Yankees, and the more as they are better for ranging and scouting than either work or vigilance. My whole affair now is the spade and pickaxe, and one hundred more pioneers would be of great assistance. I shall recall my out parties, and collect within my entrenchments, in order to carry on the work with greater vigour. I mean to take post on

your side the harbour, and erect a battery, provided you will give me any countenance by seizing and entrenching the rising ground above the Grand Battery. I'm very sure that the artillery with me can be carried with greater ease to the *Queue de Franchée* than yours from Gabarus Bay. You call Green Hill, Green Island, but I understand your meaning. The excess of rum is bad, but the liquor delivered out in small quantities—half a gill a man, and mixed with water—is a most salutary drink, and the cheapest pay for work that can be given. Mr. Boscawen is a very judicious man, but in this particular he is much in the wrong; and he proceeds from his confounding the abuse with the use, and sailors with soldiers.

There is a fine brew-house, between us and the Grand Battery, for spruce beer; copper all in good order and very valuable. I see the smoke of L'Orembeck, and therefore conclude that the stragglers have rashly attacked our people, and are punished for their insolence. I have ordered Sunderland to bring off any good shallops he can find for the use of the army, when you would have fish.

About ten this night you will see my signals. Are you not surprised to find that I have a battery here? The ground upon which I propose to erect a formidable battery against the Island Battery is so much exposed, that I must wait for a dark night or a fog to get it up. In the meanwhile the same bomb-battery that annoys the shipping can be turned upon the island, and shall be when I see what effects we work upon their men-of-war, who, I believe, are in a confounded scrape; that is if our bombardiers are worth a farthing. I have the honour to be,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

JAM: WOLFE.

To HIS EXCELLENCY MAJOR-GENERAL AMHERST,
Commander-in-chief.

Although the Brigadier was disappointed somewhat in the skill of his bombardiers, yet it was enough to frighten the French Admiral, Des Gouttes, nearly out of his wits. He wanted to escape out of the harbour while there was still a chance of success, but Drucourt, the Governor, backed by a council of war, refused leave.

To MAJOR-GENERAL AMHERST.

June 20th, 1758.

DEAR SIR,—The hautbitser carriage broke after firing about ten rounds, so that we were soon *hors de combat* in our strongest quarter. Two pieces of 24 stuck so fast, as they were carrying down to our battery, that human strength could not move them time enough for service; then my two batteries near the Lighthouse Point were not quite in condition of service; to which an extraordinary circumstance may be added, that one of my 24-pounders—iron—was so stuffed in the touch-hole that it could not be employed all night, besides the distance was rather too great from the end of the North-east Harbour. I enclose you Captain Strachey's¹ letter, and beg you will be pleased to provide us with what is necessary to repair these hautbitser, which we are all convinced are a most tremendous ordnance. The injury they received, proceeded, I believe, from the want of a platform of wood, and we are in great want of plank, because a good deal has been used to get the cannon through the bogs. We reckon that the ships were struck with about three shells, and one of them appears to be somewhat damaged; and now that we have got their distance better, I hope the firing will be more effectual. I intend to erect a battery of one 24- and two 12-pounders on the other side of the water, to fire red-hot shot; but I can't hope to get it done, nor to support it, unless you will be pleased to take post nearer to the Grand Battery.

I send you an account of the behaviour of my party at L'Orembeck,—I mean the subalterns, which, I believe, will surprise you. They were, as far as I can find, all drunk and asleep,—sentries, guards, and all. The rum was sold to them by the masters of the ships they went in, whose names you shall have, and who should be made an example of. Our earth and sod are so very bad that I am obliged to have recourse to sand-bags, and our wood for pickets is extremely unfavourable; notwithstanding which difficulties I shall persevere till we demolish these gentlemen, and then fall to work upon the island. They have thrown away a vast quantity of shot without hurting a man; and indeed, unless by an extraordinary accident, we are not likely to lose many. Mr. Strachey complains also of his fuses, and he complains that he has no relief for his men, and

¹ Afterwards Sir Henry Strachey, Bart. In 1764 he went out to India as Private Secretary to Lord Clive.

that as the batteries are augmented and extended, he will hardly be able to serve them. We give them all possible assistance. Their confusion last night when we began was inexpressible, and their ships were lumbered; prepared, I suppose, to sail. They cleared and made ready, and are now altering their position, in order to bring all their broadsides to bear against the hills. I shall work night and day to forward this business. Fascines, sods, etc., must be heaped up in immense quantities. As our fire increases, theirs will perhaps weaken. I found there was no manner of necessity for keeping the men out, so contented myself with small guards to give the men rest.

I am, dear Sir, etc., etc.,

J. WOLFE. ✓

The bombardment was rigorously maintained against Goat Island until the 25th, when the battery there was silenced. Wolfe then rejoined Amherst, leaving a detachment of artillery behind to defend it against its former possessors. Yet even now Boscawen did not make the incursion Wolfe expected, and very soon the enemy sank four of their five remaining frigates¹ at the mouth of the harbour in order to obstruct the British entrance, bringing the crews ashore to reinforce the garrison.² The main besieging army were now about to push approaches against the west gate of the great fortress, and commence a real attack. On the morning of July 1 a skilful sortie was made from the town, but Wolfe was alert and ready for the foe, who were driven back with loss. Later in the day Wolfe set up a powerful battery on the hills overlooking Louisbourg to the north and began a new bombardment. In reporting the governor's complaints that civilians and women were being killed by shells, Wolfe wrote—

TO MAJOR-GENERAL AMHERST.

DEAR SIR,—When the French are in a scrape, they are ready to cry out in behalf of the human species; when fortune favours them, none more bloody, more inhuman. Montcalm has changed the very nature of war, and has forced us, in some measure, to a deterring and dreadful vengeance. I shall set

¹ Out of six frigates one, the *Echo*, had been captured while essaying to escape to Quebec. There were now in Louisbourg harbour five French ships of the line and one frigate.

² Thirty men had been detached under Lieutenant Crosbie to L'Orembeck to protect the ships carrying fish for the army. New England rum bought from a Boston man named Stone was their undoing.

about getting things in readiness for this battery, and must be excused for three or four days from other duty. J

It was hard work for the next fortnight—the hardest most of the officers present had ever known. An approach was being formed, involving the construction of roads across bogs, and the making of fascines in the midst of thick fogs or heavy downpours of rain. As if the work were not enough, the terrible small-pox raging in the garrison communicated itself to the besiegers. At one time a hundred carpenters under Colonel Messervey were *hors de combat*, that officer and his son both succumbing. Luckily, the utmost unity prevailed between the navy and army, and Boscawen constantly sent men to do soldiers' work in the batteries.

Sorties took place frequently from the fort. His favourite Light Infantry had been highly trained by Wolfe. Their fiercest onsets were followed by instant retreat behind the dunes for shelter, so that such skirmishes invariably told against the enemy. This style of guerilla warfare, which then seemed novel and won much admiration, was the result of Wolfe's reading in history. At mess one day one of the captains remarked that these tactics reminded him of Xenophon's description of the *καρδοῦχοι*, who in his retreat over the mountains harassed his rear. Wolfe smiled. "I had it from Xenophon," he said simply, "but our friends here are astonished at what I have done because they have read nothing."

On the night of the 9th the French enjoyed a stroke of good fortune. A company of Grenadiers commanded by Captain Lord Dundonald, and occupying a small redan on shore, were surprised by them. Dundonald and some of the others were killed, and but for the hasty intervention of a company of Highlanders who drove the assailants back, the rest would have been made prisoners. Four days later the Brigadier reported to Amherst that he was not satisfied with the work of the Engineers. "The parapets in general are too thin and the banquettes everywhere too narrow. The trench of the parallel should be wide, and the parapets more sloping. . . ." There were no accidents in the trenches to report, "very few shots in the night; but this morning they threw several shells very near the lodgments."

The siege continued to be pushed forward vigorously, in spite of heavy rains. On the 16th Wolfe led a body of Highlanders and Grenadiers to the heights in front of the fort, captured them and got a footing in the glacis, from which he poured down musketry on the parapet and embrasures. Things were going

forward with certainty when on the 21st a lucky bombardier sent a bomb straight on the poop of the *Célèbre*, her magazine exploded and set fire to two other ships. The unhappy crews could not escape to the town, owing to the brisk play of the British batteries. Soon Des Gouttes had only two ships left. On the following day shells set the citadel in a blaze, but Amherst gave orders that the town was not to be destroyed. The French barracks caught next, and it was seen both within and without that Louisbourg was doomed. Nor had Brigadier Wolfe paused in his besieging work. He writes Amherst—

To MAJOR-GENERAL AMHERST.

Trenches at daybreak, 25th July.

DEAR SIR,—The five-gun battery is finished, and the cannon in readiness to mount. We want platforms, artillery officers to take the direction, and ammunition. If these are sent early, we may batter in breach this afternoon. Holland has opened a new boyau, has carried on about 140 or 150 yards, and is now within fifty or sixty yards of the glacis. The enemy were apprehensive of a storm, and fired smartly for about half an hour, which drove the workmen in; but when the fire ceased they returned to their business, and did a great deal. You will be pleased to indulge me with six hours' rest, that I may serve in the trenches at night.

I am, dear Sir, etc., etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Lest one wonder why Drucour held out so long in the face of such a forlorn hope it must be understood that it was in the highest degree important to French interests on the continent to gain time. In this particular his doggedness eventually succeeded. As long as he could make a resistance to the main British army the chances of Quebec's safety for that season would be increased, and Amherst could not reinforce Abercrombie. Moreover, succour might at the last moment reach him either from France or Canada. Wherefore the Governor turned a deaf ear to the representations and entreaties of the townfolk, and steeled his heart against the sufferings of his garrison. For more than a week the soldiers had not slept; when wounded they had no secure spot to lie where the shells of the besiegers would not reach them. Ammunition was growing scarce. Knowing something of this Boscawen resolved on a bold step, the first of that character he had ventured upon since

the beginning of the siege. On the night of the 25th a flotilla under Captains Laforey and Balfour, consisting of 600 seamen, crept into the harbour and surprised both the remaining French vessels, the *Bienfaisant* and the *Prudent* yielding almost without a blow. The *Prudent* they were forced to burn when she ran aground, but Des Gouttes' flagship they towed off under Wolfe's batteries. A crowning misfortune for the French in Louisbourg this, for it left the harbour front of the fortress completely exposed. On the following day a message came from Drucour offering to capitulate. The joint commanders returned a reply that they did not wish any further bloodshed, but that a capitulation was not enough; they required a surrender at discretion. Otherwise the French would pay the penalty of further resistance. Drucour declared that rather than accept such terms he would suffer the consequences. But seeing the hopelessness of the situation, the garrison and inhabitants prevailed upon the Governor to alter his mind. The French officer once more sought the British camp. Trusting to the honour of a generous foe, ran Drucour's latest message, he would submit to the law of force.¹

So fell Louisbourg, the most costly and most elaborately constructed fortress in the New World. With it all Cape Breton and Isle St. Jean (Prince Edward's Island) passed into British hands. On the morning of the 27th July Porte Dauphine and the west gate were opened, and at noon three thousand gallant French soldiers, drawn up before Whitmore, laid down their arms on the esplanade, besides nearly three thousand sailors made prisoners.²

Wolfe writes to his mother, to whom he had not penned any letter since leaving Halifax, two months before—

To HIS MOTHER.

Camp before Louisbourg, July 27th, 1758.

DEAR MADAM,—I went into Louisbourg this morning to pay my devoirs to the ladies, but found them all so pale and thin with long confinement in a casemate, that I made my visit very short. The poor women have been heartily frightened, as well they might; but no real harm, either during the siege or after it, has befallen any. A day or two more, and they would have

¹ "Letter of Chevalier de Drucour. Andover, Oct. 1."—*Annual Register* 1758.

² Of fifty-two cannon used against the besiegers forty were dismounted, broken, or spiked.

been entirely at our disposal. I was determined to save as many lives, and prevent as much violence as I could, because I am sure such a step would be very acceptable to you, and very becoming. We have gone on slow and sure, and at length have brought things to a very good conclusion with little loss. If the rest of the campaign corresponds with the beginning, the people of England will have no reason to be dissatisfied. Kit Mason paid me a visit yesterday, in perfect health; Gusty is very well; little Herbert has never had an opportunity of coming near me. His ship goes home with the French prisoners, which Mrs. Herbert will be pleased to know. I hope to be with you by Christmas, though I protest to you that I had much rather besiege a place than pass four weeks at sea. If you are acquainted with Mrs. Bell of the hospital, I beg you will signify to her that her son has been of great use to me during the siege, has carried on business with great spirit and dispatch, and is an excellent officer.¹ He got a slight scratch upon his right arm, but is quite recovered, though I have forbid his writing for fear of any inflammation. If he does write, Mrs. Bell must not take it amiss that it be an unusual scrawl. His next letter will be writ with a fine hand. I wish you all manner of happiness, and am, dear Madam,

Your very affectionate Son,

JAM: WOLFE.

That day in Louisbourg must have been very favourable for letter-writing, for two other epistles came from the Brigadier's pen, the first to his father, and the other to his uncle.

To HIS FATHER.

Louisbourg, 27 July, 1758.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you two or three letters from Halifax in relation to our voyage and preparations for the siege of Louisbourg. We got out as soon as possible, and came without any accident into the Bay of Gabarus, made a disposition for landing, and had very near been foiled in the attempt. By great good fortune, however, we got ashore, proceeded to attack the town and the shipping, and at length have succeeded in both. We burned four ships of the line and took one: the enemy sunk two frigates, and our squadron has caught a third, so that we have hurt their marine a little and possessed ourselves of Louis-

¹ He afterwards made Captain Bell one of his aides-de-camp.

burg. Our loss in all this affair—notwithstanding the most violent fire from the shipping, does not amount to much above 400 men killed and wounded: that of the enemy at least three times as much. The garrison to the number of about two thousand men, are prisoners of war; they laid down their arms this morning; and we took possession of the town. Two of our captains of grenadiers are killed and 6 or 8 subaltern officers, and about as many wounded. The Indians and Canadians gave us very little trouble. I believe their chief was killed the day we landed, and the rest who are veritable canaille were a good deal intimidated.

We have a report this day from the continent that an attack has been made upon some advanced post of the enemy with success, but that my Lord Howe¹ was killed in the beginning by a cannon shot; his loss is irreparable, because there is not such another soldier in his Majesty's service, and I do not at all doubt but that, in two campaigns, he would have driven the French out of North America. We have been rather slow in our proceedings but still I hope there is fine weather enough left for another blow, and as our troops are improved by this siege, the sooner we strike the better. Two of the French men of war were boarded in the night by the boats of our fleet, and both taken. This coup was quite unexpected and astonishing, and indeed, if we had not been very well informed of their negligence and security, would appear to be a rash attempt. I see my name among the new Colonels;² I hope Fisher will take care of my affairs, as he is intended for my agent. The climate is very healthy, though the air is foggy and disagreeable. I have been always very well since we landed, and have got through this business unhurt. My love to my mother.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,
J. WOLFE.

To MAJOR WALTER WOLFE.

Camp before Louisbourg, 27th July, 1758.

DEAR SIR,—It is impossible to go into any detail of our operations: they would neither amuse nor instruct, and we are all hurried about our letters. In general, it may be said that we made a rash and ill-advised attempt to land, and by the greatest

¹ Brigadier-General Viscount Howe, elder brother of Captain Howe, of the *Magnanime*, "a character of ancient times," declared Pitt, "a complete model of military virtue."

² *Gazette*, April 21, 1758.

of good fortune imaginable we succeeded. If we had known the country, and had acted with more vigour, half the garrison at least (for they were all out) must have fallen into our hands immediately we landed. Our next operations were exceedingly slow and injudicious, owing partly to the difficulty of landing our stores and artillery, and partly to the ignorance and inexperience of the engineers.

The Indians of the island gave us very little trouble. They attacked one of my posts (for I commanded a detached corps) and were repulsed, and since that time they have been very quiet. I take them to be the most contemptible *canaille* upon earth. Those to the southward are much braver and better men; these are a dastardly set of bloody rascals. We cut them to pieces whenever we found them, in return for a thousand acts of cruelty and barbarity. I do not penetrate our General's intentions. If he means to attack Quebec, he must not lose a moment. If we have good pilots to take us up the River St. Lawrence and can land at any tolerable distance from the place, I have no doubt of the event.

There is a report that Abercrombie's army has attacked the enemy's detached posts, and forced them,—that my Lord Howe is killed. If this last circumstance be true, there is an end of the expedition, for he was the spirit of that army, and the very best officer in the King's service. I lament the loss as one of the greatest that could befall the nation; but perhaps it is not so, though I fear it much from the forward, determined nature of the man. Louisbourg is a little place and has but one casemate in it, hardly big enough to hold the women. Our artillery made havoc amongst them (the garrison), and soon opened the ramparts. In two days more we should have assaulted the place by land and by sea, and should certainly have carried it. If this force had been properly managed, there was an end of the French colony in North America in one campaign; for we have, exclusive of seamen and marines, near to 40,000 men in arms. I wish you a great deal of health and peace, and am, dear Sir,

Your obedient Nephew,

J. WOLFE.

It was provided in the capitulation that the garrison was to yield as prisoners of war, but that the inhabitants of Cape Breton and its appurtenances, including Louisbourg, were to be conveyed

to France. On August 15, no fewer than 5637 French soldiers and seamen were carried prisoners to England. During the siege the enemy had lost more than 1000 men. The British loss was twenty-one officers and 150 privates killed, and thirty officers and 320 men wounded. Amongst the spoil were 240 pieces of ordnance and 15,000 stand of arms.

“Short by comparison as is the story of the New World,” remarks Mr. Bradley, “he would be a dull soul who could stand unmoved by that deserted, unvisited, surf-beaten shore, where you may still trace upon the turf the dim lines of once busy streets, and mark the green mounds which hide the remains of the great bastions of Louisbourg. It has not been given in modern times to many centres of note and power to enjoy within the short space of a century and a half, at once such world-wide fame and such profound oblivion.”¹

Two days afterwards Wolfe wrote to the Commander-in-Chief's brother² concerning the construction of roads for the removal of the artillery and the embarkation of the troops and stores. In this letter he alludes to Lord Ligonier's promise that he could return at the end of the campaign.

TO CAPTAIN WILLIAM AMHERST.

Louisbourg, 28th July, 1758.

DEAR AMHERST,—

We have been guilty of a blunder in transporting the French arms to the camp; they should have been deposited, under a guard, in the town, and kept there in readiness to embark. We have given ourselves a great deal of unnecessary trouble, and might have employed the waggons much more to the purpose. Put the General in mind of *pilots*; I daresay there are plenty in Louisbourg; their names should be known, in order to their being carried on board the men-of-war a day or two before we sail. Troops that have lost their arms, or have bad arms, may be supplied from these in the garrison. Please to hint to the General that the French flints are very good, and may be useful in his army. I write this by way of memorandum, knowing how many matters the general must have upon his hands in this hour of business. When does our express go off?

¹ Bradley, *Fight with France for North America*, p. 230.

² “Captain William Amherst, whose son became Earl Amherst, was subsequently a Lieutenant-General, Adjutant-General of the Forces and Governor of Newfoundland. He died in 1781.”—Wright.

As I am pretty much resolved not to stay in America more than this campaign, I hope the General will not put me to the necessity of insisting upon the Field Marshall's promise that I should return at the end of it. The corps of Light Infantry requires some regulation; they should have a captain to every 100 or 120, and exact equal numbers from every regiment, thirty per battalion. The volunteers should be again joined to that corps, with command of their respective regiments; by this method they will be formidable. Their powder-horns are good things.

I am, dear Amherst, etc., etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Wolfe's belief, expressed in the course of a long letter to Sackville, that Quebec might that summer have fallen was justified. For Montcalm would then have had no time or warning to make the dispositions he subsequently made.

To LORD GEORGE SACKVILLE.

Louisbourg, 30th July, 1758.

MY LORD,—Amherst will tell your Lordship the history of the siege of Louisbourg. It turned out much as I expected in every particular. We treated the town with shot and shells, made a breach in the Bastion Dauphin, got the scaling ladders and everything ready for a general assault, and should have cut 'em to pieces in 24 hours if they had not surrendered. Three of their men of war were burnt by an accidental shot that is supposed to have struck upon iron and fired some powder between decks. The other two were boarded by the boats of the fleet with incredible audacity and conduct, and taken under the guns and within reach of the musquetry and ramparts. All the five were disabled before these accidents happened. They had a numerous garrison, but ill-regulated and ill-conducted. There appeared very little judgment and still less spirit in their defence. Our landing was next to miraculous. In all encounters since the day we came ashore the enemy has been worsted, or as they call it—*ils se sont battu en retraite*. Our trenches were carried within 40 or 50 yards of the glacis without mantelets, blinds or sap.

If the whole fleet of France had been in the harbour (with a superiority without, *bien entendu*) they would have been all destroyed, contrary to the opinion of most people here, sea and land, who had a terrible notion of their broadsides. By

augmenting the artillery upon the shore in proportion to their numbers we could not fail of success.

The French had 12 great mortars in readiness to bombard our fleet if they had come into the harbour, notwithstanding which the place in its best condition is not tenable against a squadron of men of war, and on the land side 'tis an affair of 10 days to people that knew the country.

The French have lost a considerable number of men and we on the contrary have suffered very little, so little that if we are carried directly to Quebec, notwithstanding the time of year, I am persuaded we shall take it.

Murray, my old antagonist,¹ has acted with infinite spirit. The public is indebted to him for great services in advancing by every method in his power the affairs of this siege. Amherst no doubt will do him all manner of justice, and your lordship will get him a regiment or the rank of colonel. Little Smith,² your acquaintance, has been with me the whole siege (for I have had the honour to command a detached corps posted from the Light House to the Baruchois). He is a most indefatigable, active, and spirited man and has a just claim to your favour and friendship. He is slightly wounded with a musket ball, but will soon be well.

The Highlanders have behaved with distinction, their company of Grenadiers has suffered, 3 of the officers killed and the fourth dangerously wounded. Amherst's regiment lost twenty or two and twenty Grenadiers the day we landed, most of them were drowned. I wouldn't recommend the Bay of Gabarus for a descent, especially as we managed it.

Your lordship will have heard the story of my Lord Dundonald's surprise, defeat, and death. Whitmore's Grenadiers took satisfaction for the affront that was put upon us by the neglect of this young officer, and beat the French back into the town with loss. Our troops scalped an Indian Sachem the day we landed, and have killed some of the black tribe since. They are intimidated and scarce dare appear before the most inconsiderable of our parties.

The Admiral and the General have carried on public service with great harmony, industry, and union. Mr. Boscawen has given all and even more than we could ask of him. He has furnished arms and ammunition, pioneers, sappers, miners,

¹ Lieut.-Col. the Hon. James Murray and Wolfe had had a dispute during the Highlands' campaign, 1746.

² Hervey Smith, his aide-de-camp at Quebec.

gunners, carpenters, boats, and is I must confess no bad fantassin himself, and an excellent back-hand at a siege. Sir Charles Hardy, too, in particular, and all the officers of the navy in general, have given us their utmost assistance and with the greatest cheerfulness imaginable. I have been often in pain for Sir Charles's squadron at an anchor off the harbour's mouth. They rid out some very hard gales of wind rather than leave an opening for the French to escape, but notwithstanding the utmost diligence on his side, a frigate found means to get out and is gone to Europe *chargé de fanfaronades*. I had the satisfaction of putting two or three haut-vitzer shells into his stern, and to shatter him a little with some of your lordship's 24 pound shot before he retreated, and I much question whether he will hold out the voyage.

The French troops and Marine *se sentent un peu mortifié de leur disgrâce*, and think the terms hard that are imposed upon them. This blow well followed will give a blow to the American War, and tho' I am neither inhuman nor rapacious yet I own it would give me pleasure to see the Canadian vermin sacked and pillaged and justly repaid their unheard-of cruelty. If my Lady George knew my sentiments "*Homme brutal et sanguinaire!*" she would cry. If his Majesty had thought proper to let Carleton come with us as engineer and Delaune and 2 or 3 more for the light Foot, it would have cut the matter much shorter, and we might now be ruining the walls of Quebec and completing the conquest of New France. So much depends upon the abilities of individuals in war, that there cannot be too great care taken in the choice of men for the different offices of trust and importance.

Before I finish my letter it may not be amiss to observe that to defend the Isle Royale¹ it is necessary to have a body of 4 or 5 thousand men in readiness to march against whatever force of the enemy attempts to land. In short, there must be an army to defend the island; the re-inforcement (to form a corps for this purpose jointly with the Garrison) should be sent in May and carried off in October. We must not trust to the place, or to any of those batteries now constructed for the defence of the harbour. When the ground is surveyed I shall do myself the honour to point out to your lordship some proper spots for the construction of new batteries which may be done in ten days with facines, and be much stronger than any of

¹ Prince Edward's Island.

those constructed with masonry. We have a report among us that my Lord Howe is killed. I will not believe such bad tidings. That brave officer will live, I hope, to contribute his share of courage and abilities to support our reputation and carry on our affairs with success.

Whitmore is a poor, old, sleepy man. Blakeney lost St. Philips by ignorance and dotage: take more care of Louisbourg if you mean to keep it.

The fascines and gabions made at Halifax were articles of the last degree of extravagance and bad economy, in the style of that Colony; but in other respects this must have been the cheapest siege that ever was carried on. The soldiers worked with the utmost cheerfulness, and upon one occasion several women turned out volunteers to drag artillery to the batteries. If the enemy had waited for the assault they would have paid very dear for their presumption. The men were animated with perfect rage against them, and asked impatiently when we were to storm the town.

I believe we might have cut off at least one half of the garrison the day we landed, if the country had been as well known to us as it is now; but our measures have been cautious and slow from the beginning to the end, except in landing where there was an appearance of temerity.

You know I hold Mr. Knowles in the utmost contempt as an officer, an engineer, and a citizen. He built a useless cavalier upon the Bastion Dauphin which fell to my share to demolish, and we did it effectually in a few hours. The famous marine cavalier was so constructed that the artillery of the bastion upon which it stood had hardly room to work, and the people were so sheltered that we drove 'em from their guns with our musquetry.

I have just learnt that the "Shannon" is under sail, and I have learnt a great deal of bad news—that my Lord Howe is certainly killed, and Clarke killed, and Abercombie's army repulsed with considerable loss. We are told too that the fleet wants provisions, that the anchors and cables of the transports have been so damaged in Gabarus Bay that an expedition up the River St. Lawrence is now impracticable.

7th August.

As the sea officers seem to think that no attack can be made from Quebec nor no diversion up the River St. Lawrence, why

we don't send immediate reinforcements to Abercrombie I cannot divine. I have told Mr. Amherst that if Lawrence has any objection to going, I am ready to embark with a brigade or whatever he pleases to send up to Boston or New York, and if he does not find me some employment at Gaspé or somewhere else (supposing Lawrence goes to the Continent) I shall desire my demission to join my regiment upon the expedition, although I can hardly hope to get home in time unless you are all gone to St. Philips. The ministry of England do not see that to possess the Isle of Aix with 5 or 6 battalions and a fleet, is one or other of the most brilliant and most useful strokes that this nation can possibly strike. It stops up at once the harbours of Rochefort and Rochelle, obstructs and ruins the whole trade of the Bay of Biscay, inevitably brings on a sea-fight which we ought by all means to aim at, and is the finest diversion that can possibly be made with a small force. St. Martin's, against which (by the preparations) your force is probably bent, is difficult to take, and of little use when you get it, whereas the other has every advantage that I have mentioned and is besides of easy defence. If you will honour me with the command of 4,000 upon that island and give me a good quantity of artillery, fascines, and sand-bags, I will establish myself in such a manner as to make it no easy matter to drive me out, and I am very sure the French would exchange Minorca or anything else to get it back again.

We hear that Mr. Provost has got a Commission as Brigadier. He is most universally detested by all ranks of people, and the ministers cannot do worse than let him serve in the army. He is fit for no sort of command, and does not know how to obey.

The arms, stores, etc. for Forbes' corps were so long in getting to him that the Cherokee Indians went off just as he was prepared to march. They were tired on waiting for such tardy warriors.

Notwithstanding the unlucky accident that has betaken the troops under Mr. Abercromby I am fully persuaded if we act vigorously here for one summer more and can get people who will venture up to Quebec—and if you will afterwards (in the autumn) exert your utmost force in the West Indies by joining the superfluity of this army to troops from Europe—such advantage might be made of our present superiority as the enemy would not easily recover, and a peace may be procured upon your own terms; and better push on a year longer, or

even two, if it be possible, than have the business to begin again—six or eight years hence.

I am afraid that this time Mr. Abercromby is left to defend himself with the remains of his regular troops. The Americans are in general the dirtiest most contemptible cowardly dogs that you can conceive. There is no depending on them in action. They fall down dead in their own dirt and desert by battalions, officers and all. Such rascals as those are rather an encumbrance than any real strength to an army.¹

I find that a lieutenant of the first Regiment is put over Carleton's head. Can Sir John Ligonier allow his Majesty to remain unacquainted with the merit of that officer, and can he see such a mark of displeasure without endeavouring to soften or clear the matter up a little? A man of honour has a right to expect the protection of his Colonel and of the Commander of the troops, and he can't serve without it. If I was in Carleton's place I wouldn't stay an hour in the army after being aimed at and distinguished in so remarkable a manner.

If you have been upon any business,² as I believe you have, I heartily hope that you have been successful, and sorry since we have so little to do here that I couldn't assist at the head of my young battalion.

I am, my Lord, etc., etc.,

J. WOLFE.

There was a fortnight of repose for Wolfe and the army after the heroic exertions of the siege.

TO HIS FATHER.

Camp near Louisbourg, 7th August, 1758.

DEAR SIR,—We are gathering strawberries and other wild fruits of the country, with a seeming indifference about what is doing in other parts of the world. Our army, however, on the continent wants our help, as they have been repulsed with loss. My Lord Howe, the noblest Englishman that has appeared in my time, and the best soldier in the army, fell by the hands of a couple of miscreants that did not dare to stay long enough to see him fall. Poor Mrs. Page³ will die of grief; and I reckon

¹ This is not the only testimony we have to the undisciplined character of the Colonists, even then ripe for rebellion. See Sparks' *Washington*.

² Sackville had been appointed to high command in Germany.

³ Judith, daughter of the first Viscount Howe and wife of Thomas, son of Sir Gregory Page, Bart. The third Lord Howe was her nephew.

my good friend Sir Gregory will be greatly concerned. Heavens, what a loss to the country! the bravest, worthiest, and most intelligent man among us! I thought his brother would have been starved. For several days he refused to eat, and could not bear to have anybody near him, even of his most intimate friends. The excess of grief is at length worn off, and I hope he will do well again.

I am in a kind of doubt whether I go to the continent or not. Abercromby is a heavy man, and Brigadier Provost the most detestable dog upon earth, by everybody's account. These two officers hate one another. Now, to serve in an army so circumstanced is not a very pleasing business. If my Lord Howe had lived, I should have been very happy to have received his orders; or if I thought that I could be useful or serviceable, the ugly face of affairs there wouldn't discourage me from attempting it. If the King had not been pleased to give me a regiment, I should have ruined myself and you; for we are at a vast expense, and you know I never plunder,—except some dried cod which Captain Rodney¹ is so good to take for you and your friends. I much doubt if it will be worth your acceptance; the Madeira, if it gets home, will be a better present. Amongst other good things that are derived from my new honours, that of paying back to Fisher the kindness he has done me is not the least; of course he is my agent. I send the letter of attorney by this conveyance. The account you give of my mother's improved state of health, and the good condition of your own, is the most pleasing part of your letter. If you will send the like intelligence to the continent I shall help to make war very cheerfully, though my carcase is not of the toughest.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Wolfe was by no means, as we see, satisfied with the simple capture of Louisbourg, and urged vehemently upon his friend Amherst that, late as the season was, an attempt on Quebec should be made. Amherst replied on the 6th: "La belle saison will get away indeed; what I most wish is to go to Quebec. I have proposed it to the Admiral, who is the best judge whether or no we can get up there, and yesterday he seemed to think it impracticable."

¹ Afterwards Lord Rodney.

Wolfe's reply to this is strong enough, and left no doubt as to his own views.

To MAJOR-GENERAL AMHERST.

Tuesday morning, *August 8th*, 1758.

DEAR SIR,—All accounts agree that General Abercromby's army is cut deep, and all the last advices from those parts trace the bloody steps of those scoundrels the Indians. As an Englishman, I cannot see these things without the utmost horror and concern. We all know how little the Americans are to be trusted; by this time, perhaps, our troops are left to defend themselves, after losing the best of our officers.¹ If the Admiral will not carry us to Quebec, reinforcements should certainly be sent to the continent without losing a moment's time. The companies of Rangers, and the Light Infantry, would be extremely useful at this juncture; whereas here they are perfectly idle, and, like the rest, of no manner of service to the public. If Lawrence has any objection to going I am ready to embark with four or five battalions, and will hasten to the assistance of our countrymen. I wish we were allowed to address the Admiral, or I wish you yourself, Sir, would do it in form. This d—d French garrison take up our time and attention, which might be better bestowed upon the interesting affairs of the continent. The transports are ready, and a small envoy would carry a brigade to Boston or New York. With the rest of the troops we might make an offensive and a destructive war in the Bay of Fundy and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. I beg pardon for this freedom, but I cannot look coolly upon the bloody inroads of those hell-hounds the Canadians; and if nothing further is to be done, I must desire leave to quit the army.

I am, dear Sir, your most obedient servant, etc., etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Adopting Wolfe's suggestion Amherst had a meeting with Boscawen, who agreed to support the plan and send a detachment to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Quebec being impracticable. For Ticonderoga had fallen, and Abercrombie's retreat made it incumbent on Amherst to send him reinforcements *viâ* Boston. The commanders believed they would be able to send three battalions to the St. Lawrence and two to the Bay of Fundy.

¹ This deserves to be quoted as an example of Wolfe's penetration, together with his famous prophecy of empire for America, in his next letter.

To HIS MOTHER.

Louisbourg, 11th Aug., 1758.

DEAR MADAM,—To show you that Mr. Herbert and I are acquainted (though not so well nor so long as I would wish) he carries home this letter, in return for that I brought him. The poor child has had a severe campaign and would (if Mr. Collins his Captain had not taken great care of him) be perished with the scurvy long since, but he has fallen into good hands and seems to be pretty healthy.

The early season in this country,—I mean the months of April and May,—are intolerably cold and disagreeable; June and July are foggy; August rainy; September has always a tempest; October is generally a dry, fair month; and the winter sets in early in November. Further to the south, and along the continent of America which we possess, there is a variety of climate, and, for the most part, healthy and pleasant, so that a man may,—if he gives himself the trouble, and his circumstances permit—live in perpetual spring or summer by changing his abode with the several changes of the seasons. Such is our extent of territory upon this fine continent, that an inhabitant may enjoy the kind influence of moderate warmth all the year round. These colonies are deeply tinged with the vices and bad qualities of the mother country; and, indeed, many parts of it are peopled with those that the law or necessity has forced upon it. Notwithstanding these disadvantages, and notwithstanding the treachery of their neighbours the French, and the cruelty of their neighbours the Indians, worked up to the highest pitch by the former, this will, some time hence, be a vast empire, the seat of power and learning.

Nature has refused them nothing, and there will grow a people out of our little spot, England, that will fill this vast space, and divide this great portion of the globe with the Spaniards, who are possessed of the other half. If we had been as lucky this campaign as we had reason to expect, and had not lost the great man, whom I shall ever lament, the corner-stone would probably have been laid of this great fabric. It is my humble opinion that the French name would soon have been unknown in North America, and still may be rooted out, if our Government will follow the blows they have given, and prosecute the war with the vigour it requires. We have been extremely fortunate in this business. If Abercromby had acted with half as much caution and prudence as General

Amherst did, this must have been a dear campaign to the French.

I am, dear Madam, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

To HIS FATHER.

Louisbourg, 21st August, 1758.

DEAR SIR,—I write by all the ships that go. Sir Charles Hardy and I are preparing to rob the fishermen of their nets, and to burn their huts. When the great exploit is at an end (which we reckon will be a month's or five weeks' work), I return to Louisbourg, and from thence to England, if no orders arrive in the meanwhile that oblige me to stay. The fleet do not go up the river St. Lawrence, nor southward to the West Indies, so that of necessity they must get away from hence before the bad weather sets in, leaving, I suppose, a few ships in the Harbour of Halifax, where they may winter very commodiously. The army is about to disperse. General Amherst carries six battalions to the continent; Monckton takes two up the Bay of Fundy; and I have the honour to command three in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, to distress the enemy's fishery, and to alarm them. We are very earnest to hear what has been doing in Europe, or whether anything has been done at all by us.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

So Sir Charles Hardy, seven ships of the line and three frigates, carrying Wolfe and three regiments—Amherst's, Bragg's and Anstruther's—parted on their mission of spreading the terror of the British arms through the French gulf settlements. It was hoped that Montcalm at Quebec would be sufficiently alarmed not to detach any of his force for the assistance of Abercrombie's opponent. This measure, distasteful as it was, Wolfe carried out with great thoroughness. Quebec was spared for the present to the French.

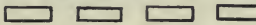
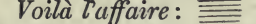
Amherst left with his division for New York, whither Wolfe sent the following on his own return to Louisbourg. This letter exhibits the very intimate relations between the two men, as Wolfe herein undertakes to advise his chief.

To MAJOR-GENERAL AMHERST.

Louisbourg, 30th September, 1758.

DEAR SIR,—Your orders were carried into execution as far as troops who were limited in their operations by other powers,

could carry them. I have made my report to General Abercromby, to which (as it is pretty long) I beg to refer.¹ Our equipment was very improper for the business, and the numbers, unless the squadron had gone up the river, quite unnecessary. We have done a great deal of mischief,—spread the terror of His Majesty's arms through the whole gulf; but have added nothing to the reputation of them. The Bay of Gaspé and the harbour are both excellent, and now well known to our fleet. By the beginning of the month of July, I hope the river of Quebec will be as well known; although the aversion to that navigation, and the apprehensions about it, are inconceivably great. If you do business up the river, you must have small craft and a number of whale-boats, two at least to each transport. Pilots are easily had for sloops and schooners; every fisherman in the river can conduct them up. If you had sent two large empty cats,² I could have loaded them with 30,000 pounds' worth of the finest dried cod you ever saw; but you won't make money when it is in your power, though there are such *examples* before your eyes. The two regiments are gone to Halifax, except fifty or sixty recovering men, who followed the squadron.

Frontenac is a great stroke. An offensive, daring kind of war will awe the Indians and ruin the French. Block-houses, and a trembling defensive, encourage the meanest scoundrels to attack us. The navy showed their happy disposition for plundering upon this, as upon all former occasions, and I indulged them to the utmost. I wish you success. Cannonade furiously before you attack, and don't let them go on in lines, but rather in columns:—  *Cela ne vaut rien pour les retranchements. Voilà l'affaire:*  Mr. Boscawen is in haste to get back. No return to the express of the surrender of Louisbourg. If you will attempt to cut up New France by the roots, I will come back with pleasure to assist. I wish you health, and am, dear Sir, with great regard,
Your most obedient and most humble servant,

JAM. WOLFE.

For the present Wolfe's work was done. Boscawen being about to sail for home in the *Namur*, Wolfe, not receiving any orders to the contrary, offered to accompany him, leaving his officers and

¹ I also omit as repetition his lengthy report to Barrington.

² Catamarans, flat-bottomed boats.

men with Whitmore, the new Governor of Louisbourg, M. Drucour's successor in the governorship.

Not then did Wolfe know that Chatham's intention was that he should remain in North America, that he was already in the great minister's eye as the man who was to carry out the next and final *coup* for the mastery of the continent. They had a long passage, but it was enlivened towards the close by the *Namur* and her consort's meeting off Land's End with a French fleet of seven men-of-war lately in the St. Lawrence, homeward bound like themselves. Wolfe hoped for an action which would make the enemy a prize, but after a few shots had been exchanged the French got away at night. On the 1st of November the British squadron anchored at St. Helens, and Wolfe rowed across to Portsmouth, where he landed on the Hard that evening.

To HIS MOTHER.

Wednesday night.

DEAR MADAM,—A messenger is dispatched to the Admiralty with an account of Mr. Boscawen's arrival, and that opportunity serves me of letting you know that I am safe ashore, notwithstanding rocks currents and other mischiefs and perils of the sea. Kit Mason is perfectly well and like to become an able mariner of which I beg you to acquaint his mother. I am extremely sorry to hear that my father is not so well as I wish him. My duty to him.

I am, dear Madam,

Your affectionate son,

JAM: WOLFE.

*To Mrs. WOLFE,
Blackheath.*

XVII

THE QUEBEC COMMAND

ON Wolfe's arrival in his native land after the brilliant exploit of Louisbourg (of which he was generally regarded as the hero) he at once wrote to the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Ligonier, requesting furlough. He was anxious to see his regiment and his regimental friends, so, instead of going straight up to London, posted off to Salisbury. Since his promotion to the Colonelcy of the 67th regiment, the Lieutenant-Colonelcy of his old regiment, the Twentieth, passed to Major Beckwith, whose rank was given to Captain Maxwell. The Twentieth was now in Germany, fighting under Prince Ferdinand, and shortly to win distinction at Minden. A few days later he writes to Blackheath.

To HIS FATHER.

Salisbury, 6th November, 1758.

DEAR SIR,—Somebody told me that you were seen in London within these few days, which I was particularly pleased to hear, because at Portsmouth there was a report of your being out of order. You might well expect that I should have been to pay my duty to you before this time; but it seemed right to wait for the Marshal's leave to go to town, and nowhere so properly as at the regiment. His Excellency hath not done me the honour to answer my letter yet, and I cannot stir till he does; so I must content myself with wishing you and my mother all imaginable good.

I am, dear Sir, etc.

JAM: WOLFE.

The expected leave came a few days later; he was once more at Blackheath, revelling for a brief interval in the open air of the park and in his dogs. His aged father had now only a few months to live.

To MAJOR WALTER WOLFE.

Blackheath, 17th November, 1758.

DEAR SIR,—I wish I could say that my health was such as a soldier should have. Long passages and foggy weather have

left their natural effects upon me. The people here say I look well. No care shall be wanting to get ready for the next campaign. They can propose no service to me that I shall refuse to undertake, unless where capacity is short of the task. We met a squadron of homeward-bound French men-of-war, and did our utmost to engage them, though with inferior force. Their destruction would almost have annihilated the French navy. My father looks well, and is well for the time of life; and my mother does not complain. I hope you continue to enjoy a share of health. My father tells me that he has added something to my cousin Goldsmith's little income: his liberality towards such of our relations as need it is most commendable. If fortune smile upon us, I shall endeavour to follow his example.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

But London claimed him. Although his name was not mentioned in the Parliamentary vote of thanks tendered to Boscawen and Amherst, he being a subordinate officer, yet in military and political circles he was credited with the lion's share of the achievement. He soon learnt, however, that Pitt was rather disconcerted at his sudden return with Boscawen. On receiving the report of the fall of Louisbourg, orders had been sent to the young Brigadier to remain on the other side of the Atlantic, with a view to his assumption of chief command of Pitt's next venture. These orders had not arrived when Wolfe left. When the Minister's expectations had been explained to him after a dinner with some military friends, including Sackville, at White's Club, he wrote at once.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE WILLIAM PITT.

St. James St., Nov. 22, 1758.

Sir,—Since my arrival in town, I have been told that your intentions were to have continued me upon the service in America. The condition of my health, and other circumstances, made me desire to return at the end of the campaign; and by what my Lord Ligonier did me the honour to say, I understood it was to be so. General Amherst saw it in the same light.

I take the freedom to acquaint you that I have no objection to serving in America, and particularly in the river St. Lawrence, if any operations are to be carried on there. The favour I ask is only to be allowed a sufficient time to repair the injury done

to my constitution by the long confinement at sea, that I may be the better able to go through the business of the next summer.

I have the honour to be, with the utmost respect,
Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

JAM. WOLFE.

This letter cleared the air, and it also confirmed the great minister in his original intentions to "defy the claims of seniority" in the impending campaign. "Had he consulted those claims only," says Stanhope, "—had he, like many Ministers before and after him, thought the Army List an unerring guide,—he might probably have sent to Canada a veteran experienced and brave, but no longer quick and active, and might perhaps have received in return a most eloquent and conclusive apology for being beaten; or for standing still!" When he wrote the letter Wolfe might easily have supposed he would serve with Amherst, then in America; when he received it Pitt's mind was made up to give the leadership of the new project to Wolfe.

Pitt was confirmed in his choice by the opinion which the officers who had just served with Wolfe in America entertained of him. Not long since a document came to light amongst the Colonial Archives in which three of the most able of the colonels serving there applied to Pitt to retain Brigadier Wolfe as commander in the St. Lawrence. A plan of attack by that river was outlined, together with the forces necessary. Amherst being now Commander-in-Chief on the continent, the signatories to the letter strongly recommended Wolfe for the command.¹

That same evening, in St. James's street, Wolfe began an epistle to Rickson, which, however, he did not finish then, but carried it with him on the morrow, when he set out to rejoin his regiment at Salisbury.

What he had accomplished with the 20th, Wolfe had already begun to do with the new regiment (the 67th) he had raised, and of which he was the first Colonel. Sir James Campbell, who ten years later was in command of the corps, marched them before Count Butterlin, the Russian General at Minorca, who expressed himself astonished at their appearance and discipline, as well as "the precision and rapidity with which they performed their evolutions." "The regiment," Campbell observes, "was undoubtedly in a high state of discipline; but the only merit which

¹ S. P., Colonial (America and West Indies) 76, Dec. 29, 1758.

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on that account was due to me was the attention and strictness with which I followed the system which had been introduced by its former colonel, the hero of Quebec.”¹

To COLONEL RICKSON.²

Salisbury, 1st December, 1758.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Your letter, dated in September, as well as the last you did me the favour to write, are both received, and with the greatest satisfaction. I do not reckon that we have been fortunate this year in America. Our force was so superior to the enemy's that we might hope for greater success; but it pleased the Disposer of all things to check our presumption, by permitting Mr. Abercromby to hurry on the precipitate attack of Ticonderoga, in which he failed with loss. By the situation of that fort, by the superiority of our naval force there, and by the strength of our army, which could bear to be weakened by detachments, it seems to me to have been no very difficult matter to have obliged the Marquis de Montcalm to have laid down his arms, and, consequently, to have given up all Canada. In another circumstance, too, we may be reckoned unlucky. The squadron of men-of-war, under De Chaffrueil, failed in their attempt to get into the harbour of Louisbourg, where inevitably they would have shared the fate of those that did, which must have given an irretrievable blow to the marine of France, and deliver Quebec into our hands, if we chose to go up and demand it.

Amongst ourselves be it said, that our attempt to land where we did was rash and injudicious, our success unexpected

¹ *Memoirs of Sir James Campbell of Ardkinglass.*

² Rickson afterwards settled in Scotland, where he was highly esteemed. In 1763 he was appointed by Government to superintend the formation of roads through the shires of Dumfries, Galloway, and Wigton, a duty which he performed with remarkable industry and talent. In 1767 he married Euphemia, daughter of Dr. Bremner of Edinburgh, and was promoted to the office of Quartermaster-General of North Britain, though only with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. The Duke of Queensberry was endeavouring to obtain a Colonel's commission for him, and the matter was nearly settled, when this active and amiable officer was attacked with paralysis, and died without issue at Broughton, near Edinburgh, on the 19th July, 1770. His remains were interred in the churchyard at Restalrig, where a handsome tomb was erected by his widow, who survived him many years. The letters addressed to him by Wolfe were discovered in the year 1849 in an old military chest supposed to contain only army reports and useless documents. The letters were presented by their then owner, a distant connection of Rickson's, to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, in whose museum at Edinburgh they now are. See Buchanan's *Glasgow, Past and Present*.

(by me) and undeserved. There was no prodigious exertion of courage in the affair; an officer and thirty men would have made it impossible to get ashore where we did. Our proceedings in other respects are as slow and tedious¹ as this undertaking was ill-advised and desperate; but this for your private information only. We lost time at the siege, still more after the siege, and blundered from the beginning to the end of the campaign. My Lord Howe's death (who was truly a great man) left the army upon the Continent without life or vigour. This defeat at Ticonderoga seemed to stupify us that were at Louisbourg; if we had taken the first hint of that repulse, and sent early and powerful succours, things would have taken, perhaps, a different turn in those parts before the end of October. I expect every day to hear that some fresh attempts have been made at Ticonderoga, and I can't flatter myself that they have succeeded, not from any high idea of the Marquis de Montcalm's abilities, but from the very poor opinion of our own. You have obliged me much with this little sketch of that important spot; till now I have been ill-acquainted with it. Bradstreet's *coup* was masterly. He is a very extraordinary man; and if such an excellent officer as the late Lord Howe had the use of Bradstreet's battue knowledge, it would turn to a good public account.

When I went from hence, Lord Ligonier told me that I was to return at the end of the campaign; but I have learned since I came home that an order is gone to keep me there; and I have this day signified to Mr. Pitt that he may dispose of my slight carcass as he pleases, and that I am ready for any undertaking within the reach and compass of my skill and cunning. I am in a very bad condition both with the gravel and rheumatism, but I had much rather die than decline any kind of service that offers. If I followed my own taste, it would lead me into Germany; and if my poor talent was consulted, they would place me in the cavalry, because nature has given me good eyes, and a warmth of temper to follow the first impressions. However, it is not our part to choose, but to obey. My opinion is, that I shall join the army in America, where, if fortune favours our force and best endeavours, we may hope to triumph.

¹ "The engineer who directed the approaches [at Louisbourg] was a very formal man, of whose slowness Wolfe did not scruple greatly to complain. 'My maxim,' said the engineer, 'is slow and sure.' 'And mine,' instantly replied Wolfe, 'is quick and sure—a much better maxim!'"—*Quarterly Review*, vol. 185, p. 104.

I have said more than enough of myself. It is time to turn a little to your affairs. Nothing more unjust than the great rank lately thrown away upon little men, and the good servants of the state neglected. Not content with frequent solicitations in your behalf, I writ a letter just before I embarked, putting my Lord George Sackville in mind of you, and requesting his protection; his great business, or greater partialities, has made him overlook your just pretensions. If you come to town in January, I shall be there, and will do you all the service I am able, but Lord Ligonier seems particularly determined not to lay the weight of any one obligation on me; so you may hold my good inclination in higher value than my power to assist. You have my best wishes, and I am, truly,

My dear friend,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

JAMES WOLFE.

To a letter of congratulation from one of the captains of the 20th, then on the Continent, he wrote—

To CAPTAIN PARR.

Salisbury, 6th December, 1758.

DEAR PARR,—Your remembrance and congratulations upon my return to Europe are most acceptable, and I shall always set a value upon your friendship and good opinion. It gives me the utmost satisfaction to hear of the good behaviour of your regiment, and I don't at all doubt but they will be still more distinguished when they are more tried. They are led by the same captains who have assisted in establishing the sound discipline that prevails amongst you; and there is no reason to suppose other than the natural effects whenever it comes to the proof. My people, I find, are much out of humour with your chief.¹ I hope you have no such temper amongst you. It is my fortune to be cursed with American service, yours to serve in an army commanded by a great and able Prince, where I would have been if my choice and inclinations had been consulted. Our old comrade, Howe,² is at the best trained battalion in all America; and his conduct in the course of the last campaign corresponded entirely with the opinion we had all entertained of him. His

¹ Lord George Sackville, the Duke of Marlborough's successor as Commander-in-Chief in Germany.

² Sir William, afterwards Lord Howe, afterwards to surrender at Yorktown.

Majesty has not a better soldier in those parts,—modest, diligent, and valiant. His brother was a great man; this country has produced nothing like him in my time; his death cannot be enough lamented. You must continue to be upon good terms with the Hanoverian Guards; they deserve your esteem. Your quarters are not, I believe, amongst the best, nor, I fear, amongst the cheapest.

The first news that I heard at Portsmouth was the death of M'Dowall;¹ what a loss was there! I have hardly ever known a better Foot officer, or a better man,—clear, firm, resolute, and cool. My health is mightily impaired by the long confinement at sea. I am going directly to the Bath, to refit for another campaign. We shall look, I imagine, at the famous post at Ticonderoga, where Mr. Abercromby, by a little soldiership and a little patience, might, I think, have put an end to the war in America. General Amherst thought the entrenchments so improved as to require more ceremony in the second attack than the season would allow of. You will always have my best wishes. I asked immediately,—Did Kingsley's come into action? How did they behave? The answer was,—There is no doubt that they would have done well, but there was no enemy to try them. My compliments to the corps. I hope Grey has his health, and Carleton.² Fare ye well.

I am, dear Parr,
Your faithful and obedient servant,
J. W.

To CAPTAIN PARR,
Of the 20th Regiment, at Münster, Westphalia.

On the day after writing this letter the men were ordered out and their commander inspected them for the last time. He then bade them farewell, hoping they would conduct themselves in his absence so as reflect honour upon their officers and credit upon themselves. It was seen then that he was far from well; his pallor was particularly noted, and a lack of the usual briskness in his gait. That afternoon he engaged a post-chaise to Bath.³ From lodgings

¹ Alexander McDowell, Captain of the Grenadier Company of the 20th.

² Thomas, younger brother of Lieut.-Colonel Guy Carleton.

³ It may be as well to correct the impression which prevails in some quarters concerning Wolfe's residence at Bath. The house in Trim Street, where his parents had stayed at their last visit, was only taken for a season, and not yet purchased.

in Queen Square, then on the very outskirts of the town, he wrote two days later—

To HIS FATHER.

Bath, 9th December, 1758.

DEAR SIR,—If I had not been scrambling over the country, you should, by this time, have known my state and condition. A man can't write well till he gets into his lodgings; nor is one much inclined to write with self only for a subject. I find a few acquaintances, but no friends since George Warde went away. This is my third day at Bath. My continuance here will be no longer than is pleasant, and as long as it is either useful or convenient. I have got in the square, to be more at leisure, more in the air, and nearer the country. The women are not remarkable, nor the men neither; however, a man must be very hard to please if he does not find some that will suit him. Cheerfulness and good humour recommend as strongly to some tempers as qualities of a stronger cast. There are a number of people that inquire after you and my mother, and some that wish you well wherever you are. I hope health and tranquility will be with you.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

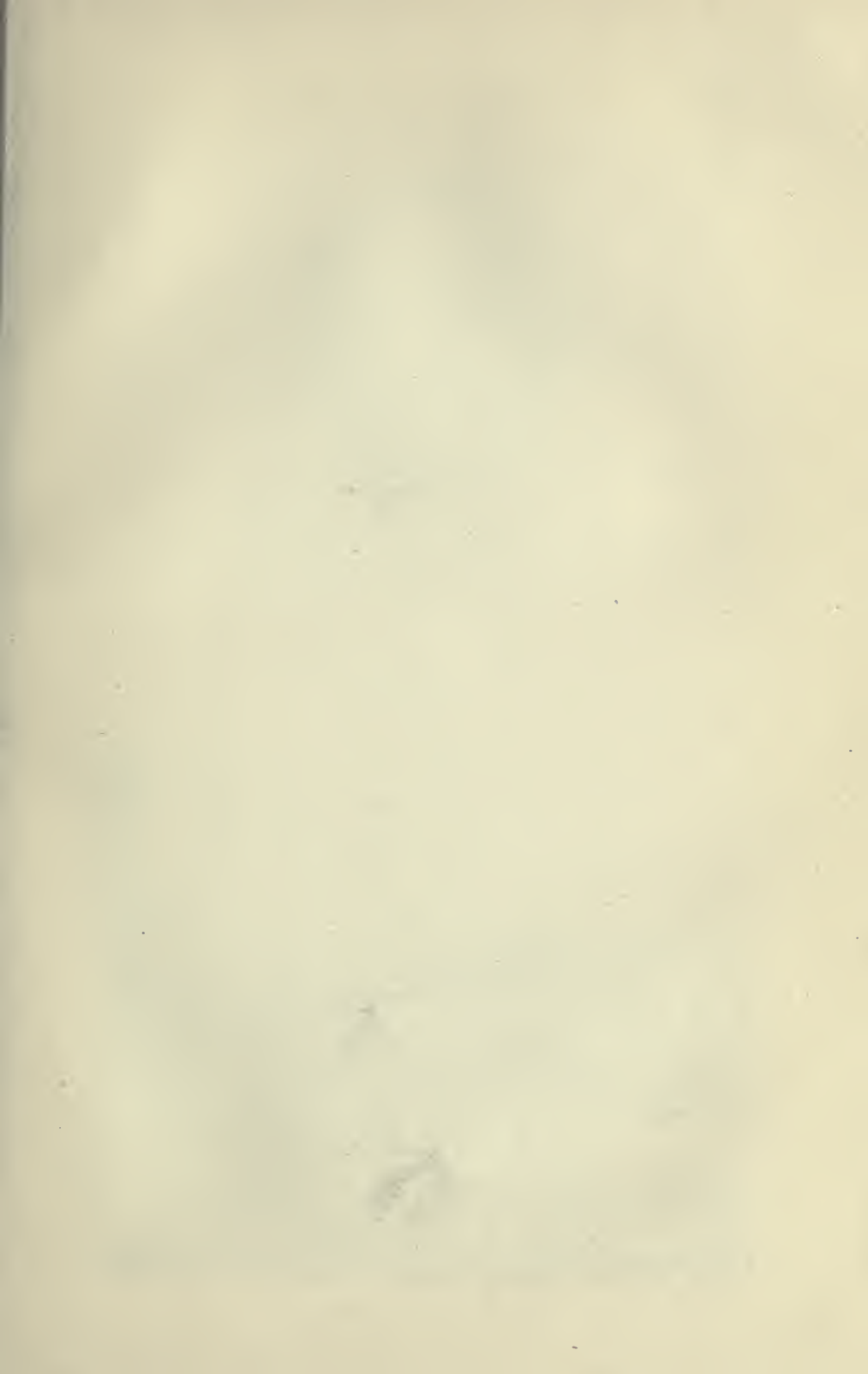
J. WOLFE.

Perhaps it was just after penning the foregoing that Wolfe's interest in his neighbours at Bath was quickened by meeting again with the young lady who had so captured his fancy a year before. He was now a hero by general consent, and especially so in the eyes of the fair sex. Miss Lowther was at Bath with her mother, the widow of Robert Lowther, Esq., formerly Governor of Barbados, and perhaps accompanied by her brother, Sir James. Our hero must have thrown himself into the courting of this lady with his usual ardour, but the siege was suddenly interrupted by a message from the Secretary of State summoning the young soldier to Hayes. He went, and there he received from Pitt the command of the expedition to Quebec, and a full statement of the minister's intentions. From Hayes he rode over to Blackheath, whence he wrote his friend, Warde, now Lieutenant-Colonel, in very guarded terms—

To COLONEL GEORGE WARDE.

Blackheath, 20th December, 1758.

MY DEAR COLONEL,—I need not ask you if you desire to serve I know your inclinations in that respect; but let me





COLONEL WILLIAM RICKSON

*From a miniature in the possession of Mrs. Robertson
of Rosebank, Partick*



SQUERRYES COURT, WESTERHAM

know if I may mention you for distant, difficult, and disagreeable service, such as requires all your spirit and abilities. 'Tis not the Indies, which is as much as I can say directly; but if the employment of Adjutant-General, or perhaps of Quartermaster-General to a very hazardous enterprise be to your taste, there are people who would be extremely glad of your assistance. There is no immediate advantage arising from it. That of being useful to the public at the expense of your health and constitution, is an argument that cannot be strongly urged. Write to me by return of post, and send your letter to the Bath, where it will find me.

I am ever your

Faithful friend,

J. WOLFE.

On the 21st he was back again at Bath to renew his courtship, and to set forth his views for the minister's benefit, which he did three days later—

TO THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM PITT.

Bath, December 24, 1758.

SIR,—In a packet of letters from North America, there are two which contain some interesting circumstances, as they throw a light upon the state of men's minds in those parts. They are a confirmation to me of the thorough aversion conceived by the marine of this country against navigating in the river St. Lawrence. The letters are from two gentlemen recommended to act as Assistant Quartermasters-General,¹ and do in some measure point out the hardy, active disposition of the men. I will add, from my own knowledge, that the second naval officer² in command there is vastly unequal to the weight of business; and it is of the first importance to the country that it doth not fall into such hands. Mr. Caldwell in autumn proposed to attempt bringing off the pilots from the Isle aux Coudres, after the French fleet came down, or was supposed to be come down the river. The seeming danger of the enterprise, and other causes, put a stop to so great an undertaking.

¹ Lieutenants Caldwell and Leslie, then at Louisbourg.—*Chatham Correspondence*, vol. i. pp. 381–4. A letter from Leslie concerning the battle of Quebec has recently come to light. See Appendix.

² Rear-Admiral Durell, who afterwards justified Wolfe's poor opinion of him.

What Caldwell observes in regards to the fleet's anchoring at the Isle Bic is certainly very proper. A squadron of eight or ten sail stationed there, in the earliest opening of the river would effectually prevent all relief; and it would be a very easy thing for the remainder of that squadron to push a frigate or two, and as many sloops, up the river, even as high as the Isle of Orleans, with proper people on board to acquire a certain knowledge of the navigation, in readiness to pilot such men-of-war and transports as the commanders should think fit to send up, after the junction of the whole fleet at Isle Bic. Nor does there appear any great risk in detaching the North American squadron to that station, as it is hardly probable that a force equal to that squadron could be sent from Europe to force their way up to Quebec, because it is a hundred to one if such a fleet keeps together in that early season; and if they were together, it is next to a certainty that they would be in a very poor condition for action. Besides, it would effectually answer our purpose to engage a French squadron in that river, even with the superiority of a ship or two on their side, seeing that they must be shattered in the engagement, and in the end destroyed.

If the enemy cannot pass the squadron stationed in the river, and push up to Quebec, a few ships of war and frigates would do to convoy the transports from the Isle Bic to Quebec, and to assist in the operations of the campaign; and, in this case, the gross of the fleet remaining at the Isle Bic is at hand to prevent any attempt upon Louisbourg or Halifax; whereas, if the whole went up to Quebec, intelligence would be long in getting to them, and their return in proportion. You must excuse the freedom I have taken, both in writing and sending the enclosed papers. If you see one useful hint in either, my intent is fully answered; if not, I beg you will burn them without any further notice.

I beg to be, Sir, etc.,
J. WOLFE.

There is an interesting letter extant from Lord Heathfield (then Colonel Elliott), who was at this time at Bath, and who was a mutual friend of both Wolfe and George Warde, but especially of the latter. To Elliott Warde wrote telling him that he had received an intimation from Wolfe of the expedition and an offer to accompany him in it, and that he had decided to accept, but

feared official permission would be withheld. In his reply Elliott, whose attitude towards the brilliant officer, his junior in years, was probably shared by most of the aristocratic guards and cavalrymen of the day (Townshend was an example) replies—

The subject is not unexpected by me, as I knew Wolfe's opinion, though he has not opened his lips to me about any particular service. He will certainly command, and by his own account I should imagine him well prepared; which will, of course, make the campaign agreeable to his friends, and no doubt very instructive. At all events, 'tis better than Scotch quarters or an ill-digested project on the coast of France.

To Warde thus writes Wolfe the day after Christmas—

To COLONEL GEORGE WARDE.

Bath, *December 26th, 1758.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have told the leading men that if they charge a young soldier with weighty matters they must give him the best assistance. I know none better than those I took the freedom to mention, and if there be any obstacles on the side of Government I shall desire to be excused from taking the first part. Another circumstance might oblige me to decline these dangerous honours, viz. any situation of affairs that might make it disagreeable for you and another friend to engage in this business with me. The readiness you express encourages me to hope that our united efforts may at least be useful. Nothing shall be pressed upon you, although I know of nothing that you need decline. We shall meet in London towards the middle of next week, and talk the matter over; till then I bid you farewell.

I am, as ever, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

Lieut.-Colonel Warde did not accompany the expedition to Quebec. Sent instead to Germany, he distinguished himself in various engagements during the remainder of the war. He was an excellent regimental officer, and brought the 4th Dragoons to so high a state of discipline that George III, whenever he reviewed the corps, invariably complimented their Lieut.-Colonel. In 1773 he was promoted to the colonelcy of the 14th Dragoons, subsequently was colonel of the 4th Dragoon Guards, and passed through

the several grades to the ranks of General. In 1792 he was appointed Commander of the Forces in Ireland, where he devoted much of his attention to bringing the cavalry into a perfect condition for active service. General Warde was considered the first cavalry officer of his time, and introduced what is known as the Wardonian system of discipline. He disliked slow movements, and when seventy years of age, frequently led his men across the country, over hedges and ditches, to the great marvel of spectators. After losing her husband and her son, Mrs. Wolfe found in General Warde a faithful friend and sound adviser; and appointed him her principal executor. He died, unmarried, on the 11th of March, 1803, and was interred at St. Mary's Abchurch, London.¹

Besides Warde, the newly-appointed commander also wrote to several other of his friends, as he particularly desired, he said, to have the power of choosing his own staff. We have seen how he wished Carleton to accompany him to Louisbourg, and how the King had drawn his pen through that officer's name. He now proposed that Carleton accompany him as Quartermaster-General. But the King had not so ill a memory as to forget Carleton's indiscreet allusion to his beloved Hanoverians. On the 12th of January Wolfe's commission as Major-General was signed.² Soon afterwards he drew up the names of his chosen officers and submitted them to Pitt and Lord Ligonier. The list included Colonel Carleton. Once again, the inveterate old monarch promptly drew his pen through the name, and refused to sign his commission. In the royal closet Ligonier twice represented that it was the Minister's express wish. But to no purpose, until Pitt, insisting on a third attempt, added,

¹ "In his seventy-eighth year, in the literal as well as the titular sense of the words, the *Right Honourable* General Warde, of inviolable, disinterested integrity, public and private, Colonel of the 4th Dragoon Guards, whose benefactions were scarcely less secret than extensive." (*Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. lxxiii. p. 292.)—Wright, p. 476.

² "The original of Wolfe's commission as Major-General, etc., dated 'January 12, 1759,' is not in Lieutenant-Colonel Warde's possession. Wright thinks it was sent to the War Office by Mrs. Wolfe, and never returned to her. It appears that in making out the warrant for the payment of the staff employed in the expedition to Quebec, which, by the way, was not till February 1761, no record of Wolfe's appointments could be traced in either the Secretary of State's or the War Office. The informality is stated to have arisen from Mr. Pitt's having delivered the commission to Wolfe before registering it in his own department, and to Wolfe's having omitted to enter it at the War Office. (Letter to Mrs. Wolfe from her agent, Mr. Thomas Fisher, dated 'Axe Yard, Westminster, 19th February, 1761.' Extant at Squerries Court.)"—Wright.



GENERAL GEORGE WARDE

From the portrait by Opie at Squerryes Court

“And tell his Majesty likewise, that in order to render any General completely responsible for his conduct, he should be made, as far as possible, inexcusable, if he should fail; and that, consequently, whatever an officer entrusted with a service of confidence requests should be complied with.” The King signed Carleton’s commission.¹

There was still an awkward predicament awaiting the new Commander-in-Chief of the expedition against Quebec. The acceptance of such rank and duties involved expenses which he was ill able to afford. The honours awarded him were brevet honours. In England he was still only Colonel Wolfe, which did not carry much monetary reward. In an age when every backstairs courtier could amass huge wealth, £2 a day was considered adequate pay for a major-general of the army. The pay of a Commander-in-Chief (such as Amherst) was £10 a day, yet although now Amherst was in practice to play second fiddle to Wolfe in North America, yet Wolfe was regarded as nominally serving under that general. There existed, however, a precedent for granting a special sum for contingencies when any officer was appointed to lead an expedition. Aware of this, Wolfe sought Lord Barrington, the Secretary at War, and explained that what he demanded was for a public, not a private, purpose. “He asked nothing for himself,” he said, according to Barrington, “that he had no money himself, but he could borrow some of his father so that he should not be distressed; that perhaps I should not think it unreasonable, however, to allow him some public money to defray a necessary public expense. His modesty touched me; I acknowledged the equity of what he said, and procured a warrant signed by the late King for £500. With this sum Mr. Wolfe declared himself perfectly satisfied. However, I told him that if he should be obliged to expend a still larger sum, over and above his pay, I would move the King to allow it.”

In this instance Wolfe’s arguments overleapt the vexatious official barrier. But he was not so successful in other requests. Political patronage, as represented by Pitt’s colleague, the Duke of Newcastle, was aghast at the idea of turning all these captains, colonels and majors into colonels, generals, and major-generals without patronage being consulted, and merely on account of merit. So in this point the Minister yielded, and all these officers had merely local rank.

¹ This rests on the authority of Wood, the Under-Secretary of State.

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TO MAJOR ALEXANDER MURRAY.¹London, *January 28, 1759.*

DEAR MURRAY,—I wish it was as much in my power to assist you as I am inclined to do, and as I know you deserve. In speaking of the transactions of our short campaign, it has fallen in my way sometimes to do you justice; the consequence of which is, that you are to command a little battalion of Grenadiers, with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in America. This is an honour and a distinction leading to more solid advantages, for which the best foundation is laid; and if fortune favour our good inclinations and our united efforts, it shall be confirmed to you as you would wish. Boscawen has been pushing for Mr. Hussey, and has such immoderate weight that I consider he will succeed. I have spoke to the Marshal upon it, and begged he would reflect and consider how mortifying a circumstance this must be to a man of honour and service, older in rank and experience than the gentleman in question. Such a torrent of family interest, and the merits of Mr. Boscawen's services, bears down justice itself before it. My poor endeavours to serve you may be useful in some respects, though I am afraid they will be very ineffectual in this.

We shall have, if we can get together, a powerful fleet, and an active, vigorous army, formidable from their spirit and experience more than from their numbers. With this force we shall assist General Amherst's operations in the river St. Lawrence. The French are arming in all their ports with a view to the preservation of their colonies, and will endeavour to throw in succours and provisions early in the year. I hope to be with you in May, and find you in health, with resolutions equal to the task that has fallen to our share.

I am, dear Murray, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

He was ever ready to give his voice for merit, as the following, amongst other letters, shows.

TO CAPTAIN MARTIN.²[Blackheath, *December 1758.*(?)]

DEAR SIR,—I have written by this post to Lord George Sackville to let him know that you have served with me at the

¹ "Major Murray had not only greatly distinguished himself at Louisbourg, but had been actively engaged for three or four years previously in America, where he still remained."—Wright.

² Of the Royal Artillery.

seige of Louisbourg, and that I had the greatest reason to be satisfied with every part of your conduct. If this testimony be of any use to you, I am glad you put it in my power to give it.

Nothing pleases me so much as to do justice to the gentlemen who have distinguished themselves under my command; and if it were as easy to reward as to praise, they should have no reason to complain.

I am, dear Sir, &c.,

JAMES WOLFE.

Wolfe, having *carte blanche* from Pitt, chose two men to form his staff that he knew he could rely upon. At the head of the first brigade he resolved to put the Hon. Robert Monckton, second son of the first Viscount Galway, a young and capable colonel who had previously earned distinction in America and conducted the difficult and painful expulsion of the Acadians with much tact. The third brigade was given to the Hon. James Murray, son of the fourth Lord Elibank, of whose conduct at Louisbourg Wolfe had, as we have seen, entertained a high opinion. These were Wolfe's own special men; but Pitt had intimated that there was a promising colonel, heir to a famous political house, who would gladly serve under him. He recommended the appointment of Colonel the Hon. George Townshend. The character of this aristocratic soldier had been presented in varying lights. For some years he had been out of the army, owing to a quarrel with the Duke of Cumberland, whose aide-de-camp he then was; but he had served in most of the campaigns in which Wolfe had figured of the Seven Years' War. A sarcastic manner, an egregious self-sufficiency and a showy person obscured such valuable qualities as he possessed. Latterly he had taken to politics, supporting Pitt with the Militia Bill, which Townshend introduced in the House of Commons. On the fall of Cumberland and his succession by Ligonier, Townshend returned to the army, was given the rank of colonel and made aide-de-camp to the King.

He seems to have been anxious for an opportunity to distinguish himself in war, and Wolfe could hardly fail to be impressed by the compliment of such a man's desiring to serve under him. We find many of Townshend's friends regarding his action as a condescension. Sir Richard Lyttelton, the Adjutant-General at the War Office, writes in this vein: "I congratulate you most sincerely upon the honour this spirited and magnanimous acceptance of yours will do you in the world as soon as it becomes

known, and upon the glory you will obtain, and I flatter myself the short time you will be absent and the small risk you will probably run in this enterprise will in some degree reconcile Lady Ferrers¹ to it."

To Townshend the Commander-in-Chief of the Quebec expedition wrote a frank and cordial letter.

WOLFE to TOWNSHEND.

London, 6 Jan., 1759.

SIR,—I came to town last night and found the letter you have done me the honour to write. Your name was mentioned to me by the Marshal and my answer was, that such an example in a person of your rank and character, could not but have the best effects upon the troops in America and, indeed, upon the whole military part of the nation; and I took the freedom to add that what might be wanting in experience was amply made up, in an extent of capacity and activity of mind, that would find nothing difficult in our business. I am to thank you for the good opinion you have entertained of me, and for the manner in which you have taken occasion to express your favourable sentiments. I persuade myself that we shall concur heartily for the public service—the operation in question will require our united efforts and the utmost exertion of every man's spirit and judgment.

I conclude we are to sail with Mr. Saunders' squadron. Till then you will do what is most agreeable to yourself. If I hear anything that concerns you to know—be assured of the earliest intelligence.

I have the honour to be,

With the highest esteem, Sir,

Your most obedient and faithful Humble servant,

J. WOLFE.

So far, therefore, in the relations between Wolfe and Townshend all was well. Unhappily, this cordiality was not destined to continue.

So high stands Wolfe's name that, as Wright points out, no incident in his life which does not accord with popular estimation of his character, is ever related without a doubt and an apology. But if we have been able in these pages to reveal anything of Wolfe, and he has been able in his letters to reveal anything of

¹ Lady Ferrers was Townshend's wife.



BRIGADIER-GENERAL HON. GEORGE TOWNSHEND

From the portrait by Thomas Hudson

himself, it is that he was intensely human, subject to error, not without vainglory, quick of temper, sanguine, emotional, vehement to a fault. In short, we may with some confidence draw a parallel between Wolfe and the only warrior in English history whose peculiar glory resembles his, Nelson, to discern the same faults and the same virtues in each. Both were impatient; impetuous: neither was averse to indulgence in that frankness of self-confidence, mistaken by duller spirits for gasconade. Both were fond of ladies' society, both were the idols of their men, both were reckless in danger, both utterly fearless of death. Both Wolfe and Nelson, too, had that alertness of mind which led them frequently to say more than they meant, more at least than a phlegmatic man would have regarded as discreet. We may easily believe the story of the first and only meeting of the Duke of Wellington and Nelson in the Downing Street ante-room, when the former formed his famous "double estimate" of Nelson—first as a "vapouring and vainglorious charlatan," and afterwards as "a well-informed officer and statesman" and "really a very superior man."¹

Why, therefore, should we refuse all credence to the story, as "repugnant to the character of the hero," which Lord Temple told to Grenville, and which, after the lapse of a generation, Grenville told to Stanhope, who printed it with many apologies in his history? It must be confessed the story is come by in rather a roundabout fashion and bears marks of heightened colouring, but by no means deserves to be rejected *in toto*.

"After Wolfe's appointment," we are told, "and on the day preceding his embarkation for America, Pitt, desirous of giving his last verbal instructions, invited him to dinner, Lord Temple being the only other guest. As the evening advanced, Wolfe, heated perhaps by his own aspiring thoughts and the unwonted society of statesmen, broke forth into a strain of gasconade and bravado. He drew his sword, he rapped the table with it, he flourished it round the room, he talked of the mighty things which that sword was to achieve. The two Ministers sat aghast at an exhibition so unusual from any man of real sense and real spirit. And when at last Wolfe had taken his leave, and his carriage was

¹ There is, in fact, abundant evidence that Nelson not infrequently displayed the unblushing and self-asserting vanity of a child, with all a child's love of praise and a woman's love of flattery, and that Lady Hamilton used to administer both to him in abundance. That Nelson could, on occasion, act as an officer and judge as a statesman, we knew before the Duke's story was made public.—J. K. Laughton, *Nelson*, p. 207.

heard to roll from the door, Pitt seemed for the moment shaken in his high opinion which his deliberate judgment had formed of Wolfe; he lifted up his eyes and arms, and exclaimed to Lord Temple, 'Good God! that I should have entrusted the fate of the country and of the Administration to such hands!'"¹

Now Temple was hardly the man to understand Wolfe, who was probably very different from the officers of his acquaintance, who were not supposed to exhibit zeal at the dinner-table, nor any particular enthusiasms unconnected with women, horse-racing and cards. He himself was sedateness and apathy personified. As Pitt bitterly (but anonymously) wrote years afterwards, when he quarrelled with his brother-in-law, Temple "might have crept out of life with as little notice as he crept in, and gone off with no other degree of credit than that of adding a single unit to the bills of mortality," had he not derived lustre from his association with himself. Nor had Temple any very high reputation for veracity, if his contemporaries are to be believed, his *forte* lying in misrepresenting private conversations. The incident as it actually occurred we take to be this: Wolfe, understanding the situation in Canada thoroughly, and appreciating the character and importance of the work he had to do, opened his mind with great freedom, expressing the indignation he felt at the bloody deeds of the French and Indians and the necessity of putting a stop to the crimes committed against the English colonists, a subject which might make the blood boil of any man of sensibility.² As he related these things and the curse which the French *régime* was to Canada and the Thirteen Colonies, we can see colour mount to his cheek, the flash of his blue eye, the vehement gesture with which he fortified his speech. When he adverted to the task accorded his own hands it was the talk of a soldier—of a man with red blood in his veins. If it was an "ebullition," it was an ebullition resulting from the fire of a heroic soul. Temple expressly stated to Grenville that Wolfe's fervour could not have arisen from any excess, as he "had partaken most sparingly of wine."

But it is when we come to Stanhope's comment that we reach the real misconception of the man Wolfe. "This story," he says, "confirms Wolfe's own avowal that he was not seen to advantage in the common occurrences of life, and shows how shyness may at intervals rush, as it were, to the opposite extreme."

It is perhaps unnecessary to state that Wolfe made no avowal

¹ Stanhope, *History of England*.

² See his letter, *ante*, p. 389.

in this sense, so remote from the truth. As to his shyness in the presence of Chatham, it is hard to believe that a man who dined and conversed freely with such men as the Duke of Bedford, the Duke of Richmond, Lord Shelburne, Lord George Sackville and Lord Blandford, who was regarded with prodigious favour in numerous drawing-rooms, and had just courted successfully one of the handsomest and most fashionable young women of the day, could have been quite overpowered and abashed even by a prime minister.

Chatham, full of theatricality though he was, did not really misinterpret Wolfe. He knew the difference between unselfish zeal and madness. But his colleague, Newcastle, who probably got wind of the story, could not fathom such patriotic enthusiasm not based on the hope of tangible reward. He, too, could be guilty of extravagant conduct, as when he flung himself down on his knees before royalty and burst into tears, but it was when his own power was threatened. He ran to tell the King that Wolfe was mad. George was not without sagacity and biting wit at times. "Mad, is he?" he retorted grimly, thinking of the failures of Mordaunt, Loudoun, Abercrombie and his own son, Cumberland; "then I hope he will bite some of my other generals!" Madness of that kind is a virtue in war, as his Majesty well knew, and though Wolfe never bit the generals, he had already inoculated a dozen lesser officers with the virus. It is no extravagance to assert that Wolfe's influence on the British Army was visible on the field of Waterloo.

Turning to Wolfe's correspondence, nothing could be more rational and modest than the hopes and plans expressed in the epistle to his uncle less than three weeks before he sailed.

To MAJOR WALTER WOLFE.

London, January 29th, 1759.

DEAR SIR,—You had a right to expect to hear from me sooner and I am to blame that you did not. These omissions of mine are too frequent even with those I love and honour most. Mr. Lynch delivered me your letter and proceeded directly to North America, where in the course of the campaign I doubt not he will find an opening. Our force is considerable upon that continent and except the Garrisons of Louisbourg and Halifax will all be employed this year, and as early as possible. If the Marquis de Montcalm finds means to baffle our efforts another summer, he may be deemed an able officer; or the colony

has resources that we know nothing of; or our Generals are worse than usual. We had Canada in our hands last year; with common prudence on one side, and a little spirit of enterprise on the other, it appears to me that Abercromby might have cut off the enemy's retreat from Ticonderoga, and in the end forced them to lay down their arms. If the siege of Louisbourg had been pushed with vigour, Quebec would have fallen. The French are arming in all their ports; their object, no doubt, is the defence of Canada; ours to attack it, and the fleet for that service is formidable. I am to act a greater part in this business than I wished or desired. The backwardness of some of the older officers has in some measure forced the Government to come down so low. I shall do my best, and leave the rest to fortune, as perforce we must when there are not the most commanding abilities. We expect to sail in about three weeks. A London life and little exercise disagrees entirely with me, but the sea still more. If I have health and constitution enough for the campaign, I shall think myself a lucky man; what happens afterwards is of no great consequence.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

It was now time for Wolfe to depart. We shall probably never know what parting scene took place between Miss Lowther and himself, and so cannot judge whether the description given by Charles Johnstone in *Chrysal* has any merit of fidelity. Johnstone, as a Limerick man, is believed to have had a personal acquaintance with the Wolfe family. He says—

“As soon as he had recovered from the softness into which his mother's tenderness had melted him, he went directly to his mistress. She received him with the freedom proper in their present situation, but soon perceived an alteration in his countenance, that showed her his heart was not at ease. This alarmed her tender fears. ‘What,’ said she, looking earnestly at him, ‘can make a troubled gloom overcast that face, where hopes and happiness have, for some time, brightened every smile? Can anything have happened to disturb the prospect so pleasing to us? Can you feel a grief that you think me unworthy or unable to share with you? It must be so; that faint, that laboured smile betrays the sickness of your heart.’

“‘Oh, dearest wish of my heart,’ replied he, taking her hand



MISS KATHERINE LOWTHER

*From a miniature by Cosway, in the possession of General Wolfe until the eve of his death,
and now owned by Lord Barnard, of Raby Castle*

and kissing it in ecstasy, 'how shall I merit such perfection? It is impossible; I am unworthy; but let my soul thank Heaven for blessing it with this opportunity of rising nearer to a level with your virtues—a hope that will soften the severity of absence, and make the delay of happiness seem shorter.'

"'What canst thou mean?' said she, a jealous doubt alarming her delicacy. 'Delay! I understand thee not! I urge not!'

"'Mistake not, O my love, the inconsistencies which anguish extorts from my bleeding heart. How can I say it? Our happiness is delayed—delayed but to be more exalted. Honour, the service of my country, call.'

"'And am I to be left?'

"'But for a time, a little time, the pain of which shall be overpaid by the joy of meeting, never to part again. Oh, spare my heart, restrain those tears; I am not worthy, I am not proof to such a trial. The interest, the glory of my country demand my service, and my gracious master has honoured me with a station, in which my endeavours may be effectual, to accomplish his commands—nay, must be effectual—where love urges duty, where you are the inestimable reward.'"

"'Go! go! and Heaven guide and guard your steps'—waving her hand, and turning from him to hide her tears. 'I shall no longer struggle with the sacred impulse that leads you on to glory.' Then turning to him. 'But remember how you leave me: think what I feel till you return. . . .'

"'This is too much,' said he, 'this is too much. I never can repay this excess of goodness.' Then breaking from her arms in a kind of enthusiasm—'Heaven gives my soul,' continued he, 'this foretaste of happiness, as an earnest of success. I go to certain victory; the prayers of angels must prevail!'

"Saying these words he rushed out of the room, leaving her half dead with grief. Nor was he in a much happier state; the thought of parting from her damping the ardour that had enabled him give that proof of his resolution, and obliging nature to pay the tribute of a flood of tears to such a sacrifice."¹

One fears that Wolfe, ardent as he was at times, was not always to be relied on for a scene of sentiment. If, however, he acted the impassioned lover towards Miss Lowther, it is certainly undiluted

¹ I cannot resist the temptation to give at such length this perfect example of the eighteenth-century sentimental novel-writing manner.

fiction that he ever, as Johnstone describes, knelt for his mother's blessing, as the following letter demonstrates—

To HIS MOTHER.

DEAR MADAM,—The formality of taking leave should be as much as possible avoided; therefore I prefer this method of offering my good wishes and duty to my father and to you. I shall carry this business through with my best abilities. The rest, you know, is in the hands of Providence, to whose care I hope your good life and conduct will recommend your son.

Saunders talks of sailing on Thursday, if the wind come fair. The "Arc-en-ciel" is either arrived or expected at Spithead. Brett has been directed to negotiate our affair there. I heartily wish you health and easy enjoyment of the many good things that have fallen to your share. My best duty to the General.

I am, dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate Son,

JAM: WOLFE.

London, Monday morn.



VICE-ADMIRAL SIR CHARLES SAUNDERS, K.C.B.

From a contemporary portrait

XVIII
IN THE ST. LAWRENCE

WOLFE, when he sailed from Spithead on the 14th of February, 1759, had been given the command of eight thousand troops to achieve a feat which should change the destinies of a hemisphere. Such a force, even under such a general, would have been inadequate had it not been supported by ships and sailors and a naval commander of experience and sagacity. Boscawen was out of the question: as an influential member of Parliament he had insisted on promotion to the Mediterranean fleet. Hawke was not physically fit and aspired to command the Channel fleet. The man chosen was Sir Charles Saunders, one of Lord Anson's favourite officers, who had accompanied that famous admiral in his voyage round the world. Saunders was a capable officer, very reserved in manner, who had lately been engaged in blockading Brest. He was now appointed Commander-in-Chief of the naval part of the Quebec expedition, while under him were Rear-Admiral Holmes and Rear-Admiral Durell.

Wolfe sailed in Saunders' flagship. He and the Admiral were not acquainted personally, and although he doubtless perceived that his naval colleague was a man of ability, he yet felt some anxiety through the entire voyage as to the exact degree of co-operation which would mark their relations on their arrival at the seat of war.

It was no simple dashing for a goal as at Rochefort. Chatham's plan of campaign was designed "to improve the great and important advantages gained in the last campaign, as well as to repair the disappointment at Ticonderoga." The Minister had prescribed a most complicated and delicate set of operations which many circumstances might conspire to frustrate, which indeed in its entirety only by the most fortuitous chance could hope to succeed. Quebec, in his scheme, was only the point of junction and ultimate object of three separate expeditions. From the west a Colonial army under Brigadier Prideaux, together with a few regiments of regulars and Sir William Johnson's native warriors, were to move on Niagara, capture that stronghold and advance to Montreal by Lake Ontario. From the south Amherst's army of

12,000 men was to demolish Ticonderoga and Crown Point, gain the Richelieu river, join forces with Prideaux there, and meet Wolfe at Quebec.

And this great end, it was hoped, final attack on the French position at Quebec was to be two-fold, by land and sea. Naval men held then and have held since that the naval half was equally important: military men scoffed at these pretensions. Chatham's instructions to Amherst show that he attached the chief value to the army commanded by Wolfe, and that Admiral Saunders was merely to co-operate with Wolfe, whenever that military commander should stand in need of such services as the Navy only could give. Otherwise, he was to "cover" Wolfe's army, and keep control of his communications. It is true that Saunders exceeded this and gave a warm and loyal support: but it is as well to understand at the outset just what the Admiral's place and functions were in the Quebec expedition, because some zealous partisans of the modern "blue-water" school have endeavoured to prove Saunders equal in genius and power of initiative to Wolfe, and therefore deserving to share half the honours of the conquest of Quebec.

We have seen that Wolfe attached great importance to that part of the work which lay before them entrusted to Durell. He had a poor opinion of Durell, who was to carry out the ideas he had imparted to Pitt on Christmas eve, *i. e.* to block the entrance to the river St. Lawrence the moment the ice began to melt and before any of the enemy's ships could get in or out.

The rendezvous of both Army and Navy of the home and colonial contingents was Louisbourg. The date fixed was April 20. They had scarce got under way from Spithead when an order came for Saunders from Chatham. He was secretly to detach, when off the Spanish coast, a couple of his ships (one was the *Stirling Castle*) to reinforce Boscawen's fleet. Saunders' decision to substitute another vessel, as this "sixty" "was handy for rivers," shows that he then expected to sail up the St. Lawrence and actually second Wolfe, and not merely cover Wolfe's army and keep control of the communications. The *Stirling Castle*, which he thus so nearly lost, came to be his flagship before Quebec.

Late as was the date for the rendezvous, it was still too early for the *Neptune* to enter the ice-locked Bay of Gabarus. The winter had been unusually severe, so Saunders steered for Halifax, where, on April 30, the joint commanders found Durell's squadron riding at anchor, the commander explaining that he was waiting to

hear if the ice would permit him to enter the Gulf of St. Lawrence. He had been ready to sail some weeks. Wolfe's heart sank at this evidence of half-heartedness and incapacity, and Saunders ordered the Rear-Admiral to sea at once. Even though Louisbourg harbour was inaccessible, it by no means followed that the Gulf passage was also. Even now it might be too late, and the French ships anxiously expected by the enemy at Quebec might have got in. Durell was enjoined to push on at the first chance with his ships as far as the Isle of Bic, and from thence to detach some small vessels to the Quebec basin. Durell said his crews were short, and asked for three hundred troops to complete the number. Wolfe gave the three hundred troops, and with them, as commander, his friend, Colonel Guy Carleton. Adverse winds blew, and it was May 5 before Durell was off. Wolfe felt his plans were in great danger of spoiling.

On the day after his arrival, Wolfe wrote the minister—

TO WILLIAM PITT.

“Neptune,” Halifax Harbour, 1st May, 1759.

SIR,—An officer of Artillery who is called to his corps gives me an opportunity of doing myself the honour to inform you of what I have learnt or seen since yesterday, that the squadron came to an anchor. Mr. Amherst has used the utmost diligence in forwarding all things that depended upon him, and I hope that the two battalions from the Bay of Fundy will get round in good time. Schooners, sloops, whaleboats, molasses, and rum are provided, and hourly expected. Governor Lawrence and the Brigadier-Generals have omitted nothing that could possibly forward the service, and our engineers have been employed in some useful preparations. By the “Ruby” ordnance ship (the only one of Mr. Holmes's convoy yet arrived in this port), we have learnt that the transports were scattered in a hard gale of wind: but as the “Ruby” observed only one ship without masts, we conclude that the greater part are safe at New York.

Mr. Durell applied for troops to strengthen his squadron, which were readily granted by the commanding officer here, that there might be no impediment to his sailing. I have added 250 men to the first detachment, and have put the whole under the command of the Quartermaster-General, Colonel Carleton, to assist Mr. Durell's operations in the river St. Lawrence, where perhaps it may be necessary to land upon some of the islands, and push a detachment of his fleet up the basin of Quebec, that the

navigation may be perfectly free from transports. By this early attempt, it is more than probable that the Canadians will not have time to prepare a defence at the Isle aux Coudres and at the Traverse—the two most difficult and rapid parts of the river, and where the pilots seem to think they might and would (if not prevented in time) give us a great deal of trouble. If Mr. Durell had been at sea, as we imagined, I did intend to have sent Colonel Carleton with this additional force, some artillery and tools, with the first ship that Mr. Saunders might have ordered to reinforce the Rear-Admiral's squadron. The battalions in garrison here were (till very lately that the measles had got amongst them) in very good order, and in health recovered by the more than common care of the officers that command them. They have managed so as to exchange the salt provisions for fresh beef, and have had constant supplies of frozen beef and spruce-beer all the winter. This excellent precaution, their great and generous expense in the regimental hospitals, and the order that has been observed amongst them, have preserved these battalions from utter ruin.

But I believe, Sir, you will be surprised to find that, when the 500 men for the defence of Nova Scotia are deducted from the two American battalions, these four regiments have no more than 2000 men in a condition to serve, including the detachment with Mr. Durell. The levies upon the Continent have prevented their recruiting. Otway's and Bragg's, who cannot have fared so well as these, and have lost in proportion since the siege of Louisburg, are, by all accounts, in a worse condition; so that, if those from General Amherst should not be very complete, our number of regular forces can hardly exceed the half of my Lord Ligonier's calculation, and yet the Marshal must know that every man in Canada is a soldier. Our troops, indeed, are good and very well disposed. If valour can make amends for want of numbers, we shall probably succeed. Any accidents on the river, or sickness among the men, might put us to some difficulties. The six companies of Rangers will be pretty near complete. They are in general recruits without service or experience, and not to be depended upon; and the company of Light Infantry from the three battalions in garrison at Louisburg has, I believe, been omitted in the directions sent to General Amherst.

I beg to be, Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

On the same day he wrote to his titular chief at New York

To MAJOR-GENERAL AMHERST.

Halifax, 1st May, 1759.

I am glad of this opportunity to inform you of our arrival and in tolerable good order the length of our passage consider'd. We were astonished to find Mr. Durell at anchor; he demanded troops to complete his squadron, which were given without loss of time. I send Carleton with the Rear Admiral and have reinforced the first detachment, because it may be necessary to land upon some of the Islands in the river, and Mr. Durell may think it right to push a detachment of his squadron up to the very bason of Quebec. Our four battalions are at a very low ebb and I believe, if Mr. Murray, Mr. Howe and the other gentlemen had not taken more than common precaution, and been at more than ordinary expense, and pains for the preservation of their men, assisted by Mr. Russell's skill and diligence, these regiments would have been annihilated. Otway's and Bragg's are still worse, as I am informed. So that you see, Sir, what a numerous body of men are here for the conquest of Quebec. I believe they feel stout, and so they had need, seeing there is not a multitude. . . . Mr. Saunders made many attempts to get into Louisbourg, but there was such a crust of ice all along the shore from Scutari to St. Esprit, that it was by no means safe to push in, nor, indeed, possible at that time. Our ships are in general healthy.—I hope you have ordered Whitmore to give me the company of light Infantry from his three battalions, etc. The least loss in the river, or sickness among the men, reduces our undertaking to little more than a diversion—and I can assure you, that I think we are very liable to accidents. It can't be doubted that the French have thrown succours in, or will do it, before our squadron gets to its proper station. The harbour of Louisburg being as yet closed up—it is to be wished that any troops coming from the continent, or the Bay of Fundy within this fortnight, might put into Halifax and take the security of Mr. Saunders' convoy to Louisburg.

I wish you health and success—of the former I have but a small share; of the latter as little hope, unless we get into the river first. However, trust me they shall feel us.

If you would send even the small number of 300 Pioneers, it would be infinite relief to the soldiers, because these (the militia) could be constantly at work having no other occupation.

There is a great siege to be undertaken and not a farthing to pay the workmen. I am not possessed of a single dollar of

public money; and yet, it is much a question among the military men, whether *we* shall not be obliged to fight first and besiege afterwards.

I am, etc.,¹

J. WOLFE.

While at Halifax Wolfe was most alert in considering the welfare of both troops and seamen. He had found Saunders a man after his own heart, in his singleness of purpose, and he resolved that this unanimity should extend throughout the service. On May 7 he issued the following order—

“As the navigation of the river St. Lawrence may in some places be difficult, the troops are to be as careful as possible in working the ships, obedient to the Admiral’s commands, and attention to all his signals. No boats are to be hoisted out to sea, but on the most urgent occasions.”

On May 9 he says—“After the troops are embarked, the commanding officers will give all necessary directions for the preservation of the health of their men. Guards must mount in every ship, to keep strict order and prevent fire. When the weather permits, the men are to be as much in the open air as possible, and to eat upon deck. Cleanliness in the berths and bedding, and as much exercise as the situation permits, are the best preservatives of health. . . . If any ship by accident should run on shore in the river, small vessels and boats will be sent to their assistance. They have nothing to apprehend from the inhabitants of the north side, and as little from the Canadians on the south. Fifty men with arms may easily defend themselves until succour arrives. If a ship should happen to be lost, the men on shore are to make three distinct fires by night and three distinct smokes by day, to mark their situation.”

Not until the 13th did the troops leave Halifax for Louisbourg. On Wolfe’s arrival there he found a letter announcing the death of his father, the “brave and benevolent” Lieut.-General Edward Wolfe. The veteran had succumbed at last to his infirmities on the 26th of March, in the 75th year of his age. The body was removed from Blackheath and buried in a vault in Greenwich Parish Church (St. Alfege’s), which had been recently acquired by the General for his family.

¹ Endorsed : In Major-General Amherst’s letter of June 19, 1759, to Pitt—dated from camp at Fort Edward; acquainting the General with his arrival; the state of the troops and fleet; the military chest empty; and desiring a reinforcement of 300 Pioneers from the Provincials.

This event Wolfe refers to in the following letter to his uncle. Its interest for posterity lies in a masterly description of the situation.

To Major WALTER WOLFE.

Louisbourg, 19th May, 1759.

DEAR SIR,—Since our arrival in this country the news of my father's death has reached me. I left him in so weak a condition that it was not probable we should ever meet again. The general tenor of his conduct through life has been extremely upright and benevolent, from whence one may hope that little failings and imperfections were overbalanced by his many good qualities. I am exceedingly sorry it so fell out that I had it not in my power to assist him in his illness, and to relieve my mother in her distress, and the more so as her relations are not affectionate, and you are too far off to give her help. I have writ to Mr. Fisher to continue the pensions which my father had assigned to his kindred, my easy circumstances enabling me to fulfill all his intentions.

We are ordered to attack Quebec,—a very nice operation. The fleet consists of twenty-two sail of the line and many frigates, the army of 9,000 men; in England it is called 12,000. We have ten battalions, three companies of Grenadiers, some Marines (if the Admiral can spare them), and six new-raised companies of North American Rangers—not complete, and the worst soldiers in the universe; a great train of artillery, plenty of provisions, tools, and implements of all sorts; three Brigadiers under me,—all men of great spirit; some Colonels of reputation, Carleton for Quartermaster-General, and upon whom I chiefly rely for the engineering part. Engineers very indifferent, and of little experience; but we have none better. The regular troops in Canada consist of eight battalions of old Foot—about 400 a battalion—and forty companies of Marines (or colony troops), forty men a company. They can gather together 8,000 or 10,000 Canadians, and perhaps 1000 Indians. As they are attacked by the side of Montreal by an enemy of 12,000 fighting men, they must necessarily divide their force; but, as the loss of the capital implies the loss of the colony, their chief attention will naturally be there, and therefore I reckon we may find at Quebec six battalions, some companies of Marines, four or five thousand Canadians, and some Indians; altogether, not much inferior to their enemy.

Rear-Admiral Durell, with ten sail, is gone up the river, and has orders to take such a station as will effectually cut off all succours; but as he sailed late from Halifax (4th May) there is reason to think that some store-ships have already got up. If so, our difficulties are like to increase. I have sent a detachment with Mr. Durell to assist his first operations, and to seize the islands in those parts of the river where the navigation is most dangerous. The Admiral has positive instructions to watch the first opening of the river St. Lawrence, so as to push with his squadron as high as the Isle de Bic,¹ and from thence to detach some small ships to the basin of Quebec, that all might be free and open behind. The Admiral Commander-in-Chief of the fleet is a zealous, brave officer. I don't exactly know what disposition he intends to make in the river after the junction of the two squadrons; but I conclude he will send four or five of his smallest ships of the line to assist us at Quebec, and remain with the rest at an anchor below the Isle aux Coudres, ready to fight whatever fleet the enemy may send to disturb us.

The town of Quebec is poorly fortified, but the ground round about it is rocky. To invest the place, and cut off all communication with the colony, it will be necessary to encamp with our right to the River St. Lawrence, and our left to the river St. Charles. From the river St. Charles to Beauport the communication must be kept open by strong entrenched posts and redoubts. The enemy can pass that river at low water; and it will be proper to establish ourselves with small entrenched posts from the point of Levi to La Chaudière. It is the business of our naval force to be masters of the river, both above and below the town. If I find that the enemy is strong, audacious, and well commanded, I shall proceed with the utmost caution and circumspection, giving Mr. Amherst time to use his superiority. If they are timid, weak, and ignorant, we shall push them with more vivacity, that we may be able before the summer is gone to assist the Commander-in-Chief.² I reckon we shall have a smart action at the passage of the river St. Charles, unless we can steal a detachment up the river St. Lawrence, and land them three, four, five miles, or more, above the town, and get time to entrench so strongly that they won't care to attack.

If General Amherst can manage to have a superiority of

¹ A pilot station 170 miles from Quebec.

² He found the enemy "strong and well commanded," and the audacity was chiefly his own.



BRIGADIER-GENERAL HON. ROBERT MONCKTON

From the portrait by Benjamin West

naval force upon the Lake Champlain (as he proposes), all the troops within the entrenchments and fort of Ticonderoga will probably be soon obliged to lay down their arms. The least conduct there, or the least spirit of enterprise on our side, would have finished the war last year. It is impossible to conceive how poorly the engineering business was carried on here. This place could not have held out ten days if it had been attacked with common sense. The army under my command is rather too small for the undertaking, but it is well composed. The troops are firm, and were brought into fire at this siege. Those that were with me are most excellent pioneers. If the French had had twenty sail of men-of-war in the harbour (as they intended), and had not gone out early to fight Mr. Boscawen, they must have been all destroyed. If they can collect a sufficient force, they are sure to find us in the River St. Lawrence any time between this and the month of October, and may fight if they choose. The prize seems to be worth the risk of a battle. If their Mediterranean squadron gets out, I conclude we shall see them.

You may be assured that I shall take all proper care of my own person, unless in case of the last importance, where it becomes a duty to do otherwise. I never put myself unnecessarily in the way of danger. Young troops must be encouraged at first. What appears hazardous sometimes is really not so to people who know the country. The separate corps which I commanded last year, divided as they were into a number of posts—encamped within cannon-shot of the ships or town, and often within the reach of grape-shot—suffered hardly any loss at all, because the ground is so uneven that we could place them everywhere in security. We are every hour in expectation of seeing the regiments arrive which are to compose the army. Most of them are actually at sea, and upon this coast; but the fogs are so frequent and lasting, that ships are obliged to stand out to sea waiting for fair weather. I hope we shall be able to sail in about ten days, and if no accident happens in the river, I hope we shall succeed. I wish you your health; mine is but indifferent; and am, dear sir,

Your obedient nephew,

J. W.

Nearly four months, then, before the great *coup*, and before he had even set eyes on the theatre of war, he anticipated the smart action below the city and the eventual landing above it.

On the same day he wrote to Brigadier Whitmore who had been left the previous autumn in command of Louisbourg.

To BRIGADIER WHITMORE.

19th May, 1759.

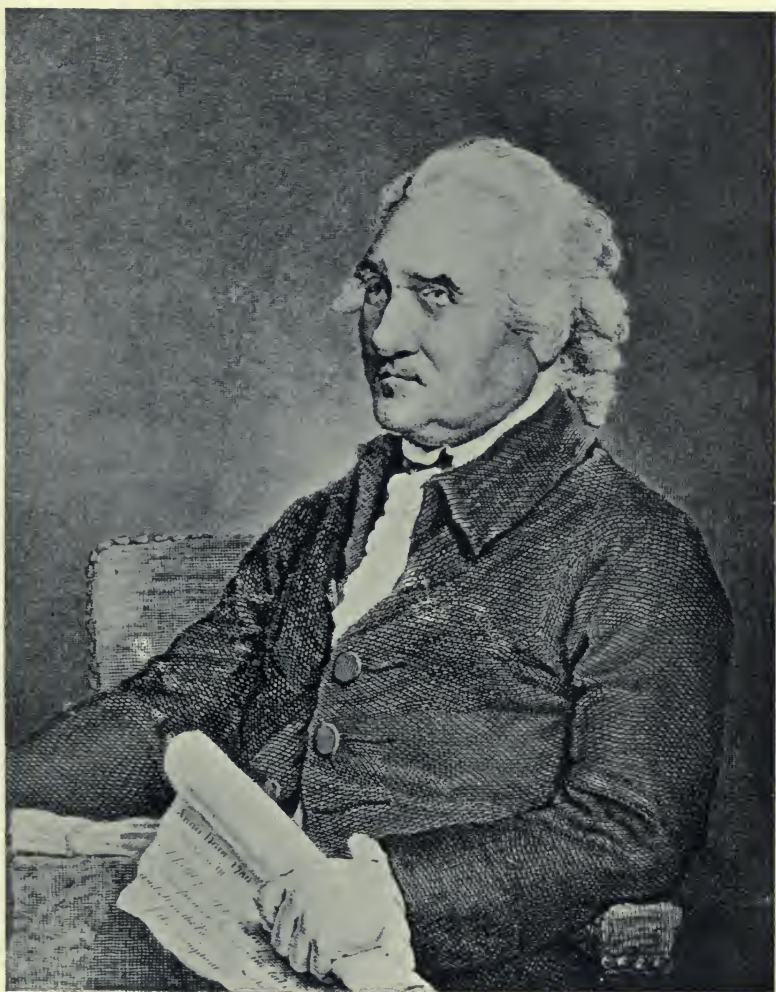
SIR,—In the distribution of forces for the invasion of Canada, my Lord Ligonier had regulated that Bragg's regiment, three companies of Grenadiers, and one company of light Infantry, besides the Rangers, should be taken from Louisbourg, and replaced by 1000 of the Boston Militia. By some accident, the company of light infantry has been omitted in the orders sent from England; nevertheless, as I know it was designed, his Majesty's service requires that I should apply to you for that company; and I do it the more readily, as your garrison will be rather more numerous after the arrival of the Boston Militia than before. We are disappointed of the recruits which were intended to be sent from the West Indies to join us; and as several regiments are much weaker than they were thought, in England, to be, I must further represent to you that good troops only can make amends for the want of numbers in an undertaking of this sort. It is therefore my duty to signify to you that it would be much for the public service to let the other two companies of light infantry embark with the army under my command, upon condition of being replaced, man for man, by some of the Rangers and some of Frazer's additional companies, who are not so proper for the field, though very sufficient for the defence of a fortified place. If there was any reason to apprehend that this change might have the least ill consequence I should not venture to propose it. Mr. Lawrence, who has a very bad fortress and a very weak garrison, accepted of the sick and recovering men of the two American battalions as part of the 500 regulars intended for the defence of Nova Scotia, knowing very well that upon the success of our attacks in Canada, the security of the whole continent of North America in a great measure depends.

I am, Sir, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

When Wolfe came to muster his troops on shore at Louisbourg he found he had exactly 8,635 men, whereas Pitt had planned for his having 12,000.

Besides Carleton, the Major-General's staff was composed as follows. Adjutant-General, Major Barré; Chief Engineer, Major



RIGHT HON. ISAAC BARRÉ, M.P. (WOLFE'S DEPUTY ADJUTANT-GENERAL
AT QUEBEC)

From a contemporary engraving

Mackellar; Aides-de-camp, Captains Hervey Smith and Thomas Bell; Deputy Quartermasters-General, Captains Caldwell and Leslie; Majors of Brigade, Captains Guillem, Spittal and Maitland. In addition to the three brigades, there was a corps specially formed of picked men denominated by Wolfe, the Louisbourg Grenadiers, and led by Lieut.-Colonel Alexander Murray; a Light Infantry corps under the Hon. Lieut.-Colonel Howe and another commanded by Major Dalling. Then there were Major Scott's Provincial Rangers.

Up to the 1st of June the troops landed daily for exercise and review by the Commander-in-Chief in alternate battalions. "I flattered myself," writes Knox, a captain in the expedition, who came to be its first historian,¹ "that I should have seen the Grenadier companies of this garrison reviewed by General Wolfe, but it was over before I could get there. I was told they went through all their manœuvres and evolutions with great exactness and spirit, according to a new system of discipline; and his Excellency was highly pleased with their performance. Some commanding-officers of corps, who expected to be also reviewed in their turn, told the General by way of apology, that by their regiments having been long cantoned, they had it not in their power to learn or practise this new exercise; to which he answered, 'Poh! poh! new exercise—new fiddlestick! if they are otherwise well disciplined and will fight, that's all I require of them.'"

By the 6th of June the entire fleet was clear of Louisbourg, the movement out of the harbour lasting six days. Cheering soldiers packed the decks of each transport, and at mess the toast was "British colours on every French fort, port and garrison in North America." On the first day Saunders announced to the General that he had orders to send a vessel home with dispatches. Wolfe urged delay until they had news of Durell, to whose movements he attached extreme importance. For should Quebec be reinforced he might have to wait on Amherst and Prideaux instead of throwing the weight of his own attack with a prospect of success. But Saunders could not wait, and the vessel went home, bearing the Major-General's report to Pitt.

To THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM PITT.

On board the "Neptune," June 6th, 1759.

SIR,—By the report which I have the honour to enclose, you will see the strength of the army under my command, when

¹ Captain John Knox: *Journal of the Campaign in North America*, vol. i, p. 270.

they embarked, and when they came to Louisbourg. The fogs on this coast are so frequent and lasting, and the climate in every respect so unfavourable to military operations, that if we had been collected a week sooner, I doubt if it would have been possible to sail before we did. One company of Rangers (the best of the six) is not yet arrived, and a very good engineer, by some mistake, has had no orders to join us. General Amherst forwarded everything to the utmost of his power, and the officers employed by him were indefatigable. Finding that several regiments were weak, and that no recruits were likely to come from the West Indies, I applied to Mr. Whitmore for three companies of light infantry of his garrison:—my letter and the Governor's answer are enclosed. If Brigadier Whitmore did not consent to my proposal it has proceeded from the most scrupulous obedience to orders, believing himself not at liberty to judge and act according to circumstances. The four new companies of Rangers are so very bad that I expect no service from them, unless mixed with the light infantry, and it was with that view that I applied to the Marshal for a company of volunteers from Louisbourg. Five field-officers of these regiments and several captains are either sick or employed upon the continent; forty men of Bragg's regiment, upon duty at St. John's. We leave eighty sick at Louisbourg, and a hundred invalids. Several transports have not yet joined us; their provisions and their boats are very much wanted. However I have taken 3000 barrels of flour and biscuit from the contractor's store at Louisbourg. I writ to General Amherst for money, but he could send me none; this is one of the first sieges, perhaps, that ever was undertaken without it. The camp equipage of three regiments is supposed to be either lost or taken upon the passage from Philadelphia. We have supplied them with tents from the ordnance stores, and must make the old kettles, etc., serve the campaign. There are 1000 of the Boston Militia at Louisbourg. I desired Brigadier Whitmore to complete our companies of Rangers from them, and to give me 100 labourers solely as pioneers. The men were asked if they chose to go, and as it seldom happens that a New England man prefers service to a lazy life, none of them seemed to approve of the proposal; they did not ask it, and the General would not order them.

If the Admiral had, as I wished, deferred sending his letters till the fleet got up to the Isle of Bic, and till we knew what progress Mr. Durell had made, (of which we are at present

entirely ignorant) you, Sir, would have been able to form some judgment of the state of affairs. There we might learn what succours (if any) got up before the Rear-Admiral, and other circumstances of moment. Since the fleet came out, I have received a letter from the Lieut.-Governor of the Massachusetts Bay, acquainting me that he is preparing to embark 300 of the militia of his province to serve with us. These are the pioneers which I desired Gen. Amherst to send. Colonel Burton and Major Barré, who were employed by the General at Boston, have spoke of Mr. Hutchinson's zeal for the public service, and very great knowledge of the affairs of his province, in a manner much to his advantage. We expect to find a good part of the force of Canada at Quebec, and we are prepared to meet them. Whatever the end is, I flatter myself that his Majesty will not be dissatisfied with the behaviour of the troops.

I have the honour to be, etc.,

J. WOLFE.

The dispatch ship bore also another missive from Wolfe. When he had hastened home from Louisbourg the previous autumn he had greatly offended Barrington, the Secretary of War, who had written him to stay there in a letter which Wolfe, by his hurried departure, missed. Barrington had afterwards been soundly rated by Pitt for allowing Wolfe to return home. The letter missed the Major-General either at Bath or Blackheath, was subsequently forwarded to Louisbourg, and there Wolfe read and answered it.

TO VISCOUNT BARRINGTON.

"Neptune," at Sea, 6th June, 1759.

MY LORD,—Since my arrival in America I have had the honour to receive two letters from your Lordship, one of an old date concerning my stay in this country. In answer to which, I shall only say, that the Marshal told me, I was to return at the end of the Campaign, and as General Amherst had no other commands than to send me to winter at Halifax under the orders of an officer, who was, but a few months before, put over my head, I thought it was much better to get into the way of Service, and out of the way of being insulted. And as the style of your Lordship's letter is pretty strong, I must take the liberty to inform you, that though I should have been very glad to have gone with Genl. Amherst to join the Army upon the Lakes, and offered my services immediately after the reduction of

Louisbourg to carry a reinforcement to Mr. Abercrombie if Quebec was not to be attacked; yet rather than receive orders in the Government of an officer younger than myself (tho' a very worthy man) I should certainly have desired leave to resign my commission; for I neither ask nor expect any favour, so I never intend to submit to any ill usage whatsoever. Your Lordship's letter with the Cartel concluded between his Majesty and the French King is come to my hands; Brigr. Genl. Murray and Colonel Howe having represented to me, that an Ensign of Amherst's Regiment, and two of Anstruther's had not joined their Corps, since their commissions were out, and that General Amherst's intentions were to supercede these officers, and put others in their room more disposed to serve, I have therefore taken upon me to appoint officers to these commissions in conformity to the General's intentions, and for the good of his Majesty's service, waiting however to within a few days of our sailing for the arrival of these gentlemen. There are no less than 100 invalids, absolutely unfit for service in this Corps of Troops (47 of Fraser's Regt.) 60 are to go home in the "Night-gale," and 40 in a Cartel Ship appointed by the Admiral to carry prisoners to France. I have filled up the vacancies in these regiments, and enclose my report of it.

I have the honour to be, with great Respect my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient and most Humble Servant,

JAM. WOLFE.

PS.—The 3 Ensigns Commissions are dated before the letters; but this is to give their proper rank to the Volunteers who succeeded.

Owing to the thick fogs it was a week before they could enter the Gulf, and the fleet did not reach the Isle of Bic, where they were to meet Durell, before June 18. That officer had, it appeared, sailed on up the river after capturing a French storeship and a Quebec sloop. From them he learnt what Wolfe had dreaded most. Three frigates and a score of storeships had preceded the procrastinating Durell. Wolfe himself, on board the *Richmond* frigate, in advance of Saunders' flagship and the main fleet, got the unwelcome tidings. Although the blow was a serious one he did not know all, for in the first ship to pass the straits was Montcalm's ablest lieutenant, Bougainville, who had just recrossed the ocean to make representations to the French Court. Bougainville bore an intercepted letter from Amherst revealing the whole of

Pitt's plan of campaign. But for the timely information Montcalm thus received he would have been unable to make his preparations, and Wolfe, instead of the long and dreary task before him, might have fallen on the enemy's weak point and won victory in July instead of September.

Meanwhile, bad as the news was, Wolfe hoped for the best, and it was certainly a satisfaction to know that Durell had pushed on up the river and got as close to the French lines as possible—indeed, farther than many of the French pilots believed possible. With him had gone Carleton, from whom Wolfe expected but received as yet no tidings.

Although the situation was not fortunate in one respect, in another it was more than Wolfe had ever dared expect. He had won Saunders over to a co-operation between sea and land forces as perfect as it could be, more perfect than it had ever been in any previous expedition. The Admiral's thoughts and resources were not to be primarily (as Wolfe had once feared) with Halifax and Louisbourg, to cover the rear of the army, but he and his ships were to be at the General's right hand. Anson supposed he would linger with his fleet at the mouth of the Gulf, having put the transports and guide frigates on the safe path. Saunders, too, it appeared, was a fighting man, and agreed to accompany Wolfe with his entire battle squadron to the walls of the fortress which Wolfe meant should be taken.

This feat of sailing up his battle squadron appeared easier to resolve than to accomplish. The St. Lawrence to the Isle of Orleans was only navigable by trained pilots. For a stranger to sail such a stream was to court certain destruction. Daily the men of the fleet were employed anchoring, weighing and tacking, while the view on either side of the river was quaint and attractive enough to draw many of the soldiers on deck¹ to get their first glimpses of the Canadian villages, with their spired churches and curious architecture. The approach of the fleet was heralded by signal fires which were lighted on the shore, and which, in the case of St. Joseph's, aroused the hostility of the *habitants*, who fired

¹ As considerate as he was courteous, the young commander had provided for the recreation and health of the soldiers by ordering that each regiment should be supplied with fishing-hooks and lines, and that a certain quantity of ginger should be given to every man daily for the purpose of mixing with the water they drank. By the 20th most of the ships had doubled the Point of Tadoussac, where the powerful current from the dark and deep tributary Saguenay drove back several of the transports and forced others from their anchors.—Wright.

upon one of the sounding boats. It was thought well to make an example of this assault, and, although no lives were lost, a detachment of troops from before Quebec was sent to burn and lay waste the settlement.

One of the transports in the van was the *Goodwill*, whose master was an old seaman named Killick. The assertions of the French pilot that, owing to the terrors of the passage through the river, Canada would prove the grave of the most of Wolfe's army, so disgusted this honest fellow that, but for the Admiral's stern orders, he would have thrown him overboard. At it was, he decided to dispense with his unwilling services.

"I'll convince you," he cried, "that an Englishman shall go where a Frenchman dare not show his nose!" So, careless of the sounding boats which lined the stream, he took the helm and drove ahead with great coolness and (it must be added) great luck. When he had successfully negotiated the fatal Traverse, he exclaimed to his cheering audience on deck, "D——n me if there are not a thousand places in the Thames fifty times more dangerous!"

The French pilot asked Knox "if the old seaman hadn't been there before, and on hearing that he had not, he lifted his hands and eyes to heaven with fervency." As for the French, we may learn what they thought by a passage in a letter from Vaudreuil to his Government. "The enemy," he wrote, "have passed sixty ships of war where we durst not risk a vessel of a hundred tons by night and day."

Travelling in this manner, the transports reached the east end of the Isle of Orleans. Over twenty miles long is this fertile island (though but four wide), a narrow strip of land dividing the St. Lawrence into two channels. The upper end bounds the Quebec basin, and faces the city four miles away. Off St. Laurent the troops were charmed with the scenery. "Here," says Knox, "we are entertained with a most agreeable prospect of a delightful country on every side—windmills, water-mills, churches, chapels and compact farm-houses, all built with stone and covered, some with wood and others with straw. The land appears to be everywhere well cultivated, sowed with flax, wheat, barley, pease, etc., and the grounds enclosed with wooden pales. The weather to-day agreeably warm. A light fog sometimes hangs over the highlands, but in the river a fine clear air."

On the 26th the fleet anchored off St. Laurent. That same afternoon Wolfe, on board the *Richmond*, issued his orders for

the landing upon the Isle of Orleans at six o'clock the following morning. At midnight he sent a body of forty Rangers under Lieutenant Meech to reconnoitre on shore. Their presence caused a stampede of the peasantry and Indians, and although one of their number was scalped and butchered, they reported at dawn that the island, so far as they could ascertain, was deserted. The troops duly landed, and, with the exception of a detachment or two, were encamped about a mile inland.¹

The parish *curé* of St. Laurent, having first removed every ornament or movable which might tempt the cupidity of the British soldier, stuck up a placard beseeching "the worthy officers of the British Army" that from their well-known humanity they would protect the sacred building as well as his house and tenements adjoining, adding with charming irony, that he regretted their not arriving earlier in the season, as they might have enjoyed his asparagus and other products of his garden, now unhappily gone to seed.

Having seen the army encamped, Wolfe, with Major Mackellar, the engineer-in-chief, and an escort of light troops, strode off to reconnoitre the enemy's position at Quebec and the features of the surrounding country. From St. Laurent no view was possible, but a couple of miles brought the party to the western end of the island and there they were rewarded with the prospect in all its grandeur.

Quebec! What must have been in the heart and brain of the young general when the great rocky fortress first "swam into his ken"! Did he flinch when those massive heights, seemingly so impregnable, flashed in the sun upon his wondering gaze? "Three or four thousand men," boasted Bougainville, "could hold it against all comers." There were now over four times that number behind the frowning walls and the surrounding entrenchments.

But it was not the cannon-studded fortress itself, from whose citadel floated the flag of the lilies, but that which greeted the British commander on his right hand which gave him pause—which made him realize instantly that he must wholly change his

¹ Sparks relates an anecdote of the landing. One of the ensigns in Bragg's regiment was William Henry Fairfax of the noble Virginian family, the friends of Washington in early life—a youth of much promise, who had been educated in England. Wolfe saw him as the army landed, seated near the bank of the river, and touching him on the shoulder, said, "Young man, when you come into action, remember your name!" The injunction was not forgotten. The worthy inheritor of his noble name, young Fairfax of the 78th, ere long fell on the same glorious field, about the same time, and close by his commander.

plans. The French were not holding the fort in Quebec. Their line of battle extended all along the north shore for eight miles, from the fortress to the River Montmorenci, whose famous falls glittered white and sparkling before him. Every spot on that elevated bank was defended by a redoubt, and behind that redoubt were the white-clad regiments of Bearn, Guienne and Royal Roussillon, the trained men of the colonial marine, the militia and their bloodthirsty Indian allies. In the centre of this line stood the village of Beauport, which gave its name to the shore. On this Beauport shore Wolfe, as we have seen in his letter to his uncle Walter, meant to have landed. He expected a "smart action" at the St. Charles river, whence he would fall boldly upon Quebec at short range. His field glass now showed him how his hopes were frustrated. The French, not content to rely solely upon the strength of Quebec itself, had put formidable barriers in the way of attacking the city at close quarters. Montcalm and his army must be defeated before the British general could even approach the fortress. As for any hope of surmounting the heights higher up the river past Quebec, it must surely be abandoned.

It was all so different in reality from what he had heard by report or seen on paper!

When the truth of the situation burst upon him, Wolfe turned away back to St. Laurent—disappointed it may be, but as resolute as ever. On the return journey the sky suddenly darkened, a terrific storm of wind sprang up and the rain descended with great violence. A typical Laurentian hurricane wrenched several of the transports from their moorings, causing the men-of-war to strain heavily on their cables. In the middle of the camp the flag of England, drenched, but stiff in the gale, greeted Wolfe on his return. He may have smiled in the conviction that, difficult as the enterprise was, bloody as the issue might be, fatal even to himself, that solitary flag so placed would henceforward over Canadian soil float for ever. The storm was spent: the sun went down Quebec-wards in a gold and crimson sky. The men lit their camp fires, supped, and in still air and under a gleaming moon slept soundly in their tents. The hand was laid to the work: to-morrow would see the work in earnest begun.

The damage done to the ships by the storm made it clear to Saunders that St. Laurent was a bad anchorage, and he resolved to move the fleet two or three miles nearer to Quebec. While the Admiral reconnoitred, Wolfe busied himself establishing posts

throughout the island, and in drawing up orders to the troops. "Once for all," he directed peremptorily, "the men must not wander about in a disorderly manner." For men who had been boxed up on shipboard for months it was perhaps but natural that they should first revel in the comparative freedom of land. But the general was resolved on the strictest discipline. "The army must hold themselves in readiness always to get under arms, either to march or fight, at the shortest notice." He also on this day composed a manifesto in the French language, which was afterwards posted up by Monckton on the door of the village church of Beaumont.¹ The translation by Knox is as follows—

By his Excellency James Wolfe, Esq., Colonel of a Regiment of Infantry, Major-General, and Commander-in-Chief of his Britannic Majesty's Forces in the River St. Lawrence, etc.

The formidable sea and land armament which the people of Canada now behold in the heart of their country, is intended by the King, my master, to check the insolence of France, to revenge the insults offered to the British colonies, and totally to deprive the French of their most valuable settlement in North America. For these purposes is the formidable army under my command intended. The King of Great Britain wages no war with the industrious peasant, the sacred orders of religion, or the defenceless women and children; to these, in their distressful circumstances, his royal clemency offers protection. The people may remain unmolested on their lands, inhabit their houses, and enjoy their religion in security. For these inestimable blessings I expect the Canadians will take no part in the great contest between the two crowns. But if, by a vain obstinacy and misguided valour, they presume to appear in arms, they must expect the most fatal consequences—their habitations destroyed, their sacred temples exposed to an exasperated soldiery, their harvest utterly ruined, and the only passage for relief stopped up by a most formidable fleet. In this unhappy situation, and closely attacked by another great army, what can the wretched natives expect from opposition?

The unparalleled barbarities exerted by the French against our settlements in America might justify the bitterest revenge in the army under my command; but Britons breathe higher sentiments of humanity, and listen to the merciful dictates of the Christian

¹ Wright says "a translation in French of the following manifesto," and then gives the document as if it were the original. It is, of course, itself only a translation of the manifesto penned by Wolfe, with Barré's assistance.

religion. Yet, should you suffer yourselves to be deluded by an imaginary prospect of our want of success; should you refuse these terms, and persist in opposition, then surely will the law of nations justify the waste of war, as necessary to crush an ungenerous enemy; and then the miserable Canadians must in the winter have the mortification of seeing their very families, for whom they have been exerting but a fruitless and indiscreet bravery, perish by the most dismal want and famine. In this great dilemma let the wisdom of the people of Canada show itself. Britain stretches out a powerful yet merciful hand; faithful to her engagements, and ready to secure her in her most valuable rights and possessions. France, unable to support Canada, deserts her cause at this important crisis, and during the whole war has assisted her with troops, who have been maintained only by making the natives feel all the weight of grievous and lawless oppression.

Given at Laurent, in the Island of Orleans, this 28th day of June, 1759.

Even as Wolfe penned this proclamation and Saunders searched for a safer anchorage, the enemy was preparing a *coup* from which great results were hoped. At midnight on the 28th a sentry at Pointe d'Orleans observed a number of black objects floating on the water. Thinking them some craft belonging to the enemy approaching the island he gave the alarm to his comrades. As he did so, a flash lit up the darkness accompanied by a deafening discharge of shot and shell. In a moment a whole fleet of flaming fireships stood revealed. As one after another of these terrific engines of destruction become ignited, explosion after explosion rent the midnight air. So startled by the apparition was the picquet, scarce half awakened, that they fled in a panic to their comrades in the main body, reinforced by other picquets as they ran. The whole army sprang to arms, as if the French were upon them, and not until dawning day allayed their fears was order in the ranks restored. The troops then discovered what it was which had so startled them.

Elaborately and regardless of expense the French had prepared seven fireships which, in the hopes of setting ablaze Saunders' fleet, they had launched from beneath their batteries at Quebec. The distance to be traversed was six miles and the navigation difficult; yet had the officer in command, Delouche, kept his head, Vaudreuil's fond hopes might not have been baffled. But he did not keep his head: prematurely he applied the match and fled to his boat; his

companions in the other fireships did the same. And so the seven belching messengers of destruction were left to the hazard of the tide to reach their destination before their destructive power was exhausted. In this exploit one French captain and six marines perished. That which had cost the enemy a million livres proved utterly futile. Having timely notice in the terrific premature cannonading off Orleans Point, the cool-headed tars of Saunders' picquet-boats rowed out to the flaming monsters and, with loud huzzas, towed them ashore. There they blazed harmlessly till dawn, brilliantly illuminating the sky for miles around.

“They were certainly,” says Knox, “the grandest fireworks (if I may be allowed to call them so) that can possibly be conceived, many circumstances having contributed to their awful, yet wonderful, appearance, and afforded a scene infinitely superior to any adequate description.”¹

But the incident of the fleeing picquets roused Wolfe's indignation, and in his orders on the 29th severely did he reprimand such conduct. Their officer was arrested and ordered to be tried by court-martial, but as he bore an excellent character and was only technically responsible for the panic, he was subsequently pardoned at Monckton's intercession. Wolfe's opinion was spread broadcast. “Next to valour,” he wrote, “the best qualities in a military man are vigilance and caution.” There probably never lived a soldier who more strikingly combined in himself all three of these virtues.

Meanwhile Admiral Saunders was intent on getting his ships out of the narrow channel off St. Laurent to a securer anchorage. He found such opposite Point Lévis, but believed that the French were erecting a battery there. Informing Wolfe instantly of his surmise, he begged him to dispatch sufficient troops to dislodge the enemy. The General complied with this request with a promptness which might well have made old Vernon and Cathcart turn in their graves.

Monckton, with his four battalions, was ordered to cross the river to Beaumont, a village lying immediately to the south. On the 30th Monckton gained Point Lévis, and brushing aside a handful of Canadian militia seized it almost without a blow. Here, in full view of Quebec, with the assistance of the Marines, Monckton threw up entrenchments for his brigade. Townshend was ordered to march his brigade to Pointe d'Orleans, on the island just opposite Monckton, and there encamp. When Saunders had moved up his

¹ *Journal*, vol. i. p. 298.

fleet into the basin, the situation ere sunset on July 1 may be said to have been clearly revealed to both Admiral and General. Besiegers and besieged confronted one another.

We may therefore seize this opportunity to pierce through the bastions and entrenchments of the enemy, and briefly describe the men, and more particularly the man who, on this day afterwards to be celebrated by millions as the birthday of the Canadian Confederation, was pitted against the hero of these pages in a life-and-death struggle for the possession of Canada.



MAJOR-GENERAL MARQUIS DE MONTCALM

From the family portrait in the Château d'Avèze

XIX

THE REVERSE AT MONTMORENCI

NEVER before had Canada boasted so many French soldiers as had now been for some seasons arrayed under the command of Louis Joseph, Marquis de Montcalm-Gozon.¹

In the three years during which this eminent soldier had been Commander-in-Chief of the Canadian Army he had, in spite of manifold difficulties and the dishonesty or maladroitness of his superiors, managed to set several important successes to his credit. He had fallen upon Oswego and destroyed it, taking 1,400 prisoners and great booty. He had brought about the retirement of Lord Loudoun and his army, and from the strong French fortress of Ticonderoga he had led 6,000 troops against Fort William Henry and compelled the commander, Colonel Munro, to capitulate. In this siege Montcalm had been assisted by a horde of savage followers, who understood nothing of terms of capitulation or the French code of honour. The consequence was that as the garrison, with the women and children, fled through the woods on the way to Fort Edward, the Indians fell upon them, and one of the most dreadful massacres in New World history ensued. Having given up their muskets to the victors, the soldiers had nothing wherewith to defend themselves; they were scalped by hundreds, helpless women and children were brained by tomahawks or against the trunks of trees. Montcalm was horrified at the disgraceful business; but there were others amongst the French who anticipated it, and it was this which made Wolfe's gorge rise when the news reached England.²

¹ Montcalm was born in the Château de Candiac, near Nimes, February 29, 1712, and was thus fifteen years Wolfe's senior. While still a boy he wrote to his father that he was resolved to be a brave and Christian gentleman, a good scholar, a good horseman, a good fencer and dutiful and submissive to his parents and tutor: a lengthy list of resolves which his after life shows he endeavoured to carry out and with success.

² "There is no doubt," remarks Wood, "that the French are absolutely clear of any suspicion of foul play in this affair; but with 6,000 troops near by it seems that they might have taken more precautions to safeguard their prisoners from 1,800 Indians. The divided command was probably the cause of their disastrous negligence."—*The Fight for Canada*, p. 72.

Subsequently the French, under Montcalm, had triumphed on Lake Champlain, where General Abercrombie had tried to take Ticonderoga with 15,000 men, failing miserably.

But behind the confident aspect Quebec offered to the foe was a strange scene of despair and corruption. The Viceroy was Pierre François de Rigaud, Marquis de Vaudreuil, who had been born in the colony during the long vice-royalty of his father more than half-a-century before. Amongst the officials of the colony reckless extravagance prevailed, and the chief of these officials was the Intendant, François Bigot. In two years alone it is estimated that Bigot's robberies amounted to nearly a million pounds sterling.¹

Montcalm was wretched because of the vices and irregularities around him, but in his capacity of merely military commander was powerless to check them. Jealous of Montcalm, Governor Vaudreuil answered his warnings haughtily, and the breach between the two men widened.²

When Bougainville rejoined Montcalm in the spring of 1759, after his mission to France, he brought out the King's orders to defend the colony to the last with the forces at the Commander-in-Chief's disposal, and at least not to yield Quebec.

"How small soever the space you are able to hold may be," wrote Marshal Belleisle, "it is indispensable to keep a good hold in North America, for if we once lose the country entirely, its recovery will be almost impossible. The King counts on your zeal, courage and persistency to accomplish this object, and relies on you to spare no pains and no exertions. I have answered for you to the King."

¹ Bigot's is one of the most infamous names in French-Canadian annals. He was a lawyer, ambitious, intelligent and fond of luxury and display. Yet with all his intelligence he fell easily a prey to the wiles of a certain Madam Péan, who turned the King's service to her private advantage. Servants, lackeys, upstarts were, by her influence, placed in responsible positions. If they happened to be ignorant and dishonest it was no bar to their promotion. Taxes were multiplied, and the poor people of Canada were made to suffer. Bigot and his official band of robbers held office to the last moment of French dominion in Canada.

² In his *Journal*, under date of January 1757, Montcalm wrote, "I left for Quebec on the 3rd. M. l'Intendant lives there in grandeur, and has given two fine balls, where I have seen over eighty very charming ladies, beautifully dressed. I think Quebec a town of very good style, and I don't believe we have in France more than a dozen cities that could rank higher as regards society. As for numbers, the population is not more than 12,000. The strong taste of M. l'Intendant for gambling, the extreme complaisance of M. de Vaudreuil, and the regard that I must show for two men vested with the King's authority, have caused gambling of the most dangerous kind to take place. Many officers will feel it bitterly before long."

To this Montcalm replied, "I shall do everything to save this unhappy colony or die."

It was certainly not his fault that the British had been allowed to entrench themselves so cheaply at Point Lévis. He had suggested that 4,000 men should take possession of this spot and erect batteries; but he was over-ruled by the Governor, who laughed at the idea of the British artillery carrying across the river so as to inflict any serious damage upon Quebec. Now that Monckton was actually entrenched the enemies sent three floating batteries to dislodge him. Met by one of Saunders' frigates they hastily withdrew.

Wolfe now crossed over with a detachment and surveyed the scene. On July 2, under escort of the 48th, he marched to Point des Pères, two miles to the westward and only the river's width from Quebec. At close quarters with the fortress he had determined to take or perish, he ordered gun after gun into position with barbet batteries close to the water's edge, while Montcalm, less than a mile away, looked on in mingled admiration and concern.

The following days were spent in landing siege guns and mortars, in which both soldiers and sailors toiled with enthusiasm. The safety of the fleet depended upon the strength of Pointe d'Orleans and Point Lévis; but it was from a third point that Wolfe was resolved to make his chief onset. This was Beauport, a post on the north side of the river, near Montmorenci Falls, and just opposite the spot where Carleton had been sent to make a camp.

Wolfe thus laid himself open to the charge of splitting up his small force, but in so splitting it up he knew precisely what he was doing. He wished to tempt the enemy into making an attack upon any one of the three divisions, when he knew he could rely upon his transports to make the units cohere before Montcalm could deal him any very damaging blow. Although he had many conferences with Saunders on this very point, it is to be feared he did not always take his brigadiers into his confidence, much to the disgust of two of them, as will shortly be seen.

For example, when Monckton's troops were attacked by a French scouting party, several hundred Canadians and Indians, after a brisk encounter, succeeded in scalping twenty British soldiers and taking one prisoner. This prisoner, taken before Vaudreuil, declared that the British intended to make an immediate descent upon Beauport, and that their occupation of Lévis was really a covering diversion. As a consequence of this information the French scouts were hurriedly withdrawn from Lévis, and

his troops strengthened at Beauport. The attack never came, but the prisoner's warning may have been true enough at the time. Wolfe changed his plans, as he did frequently during the siege, and, says Doughty, "so far as his letter-writing critics could see, without the colour of a reason."¹

On July 5 Wolfe issued the following orders—

Camp at the Island of Orleans.

The object of the campaign is to complete the conquest of Canada and to finish the war in America. The army under the Commander-in-Chief will enter the colony on the side of Montreal, while the fleet and army here attack the Governor-General and his forces. Great sufficiency of provisions and a numerous artillery are provided; and from the known valour of the troops, the nation expects success. These battalions have acquired reputation in the last campaign, and it is not to be doubted but they will be careful to preserve it. From this confidence the General has assured the Secretary of State, in his letters, that whatever may be the event of the campaign his Majesty and the country will have reason to be satisfied with the behaviour of the army under his command. The General means to carry the business through with as little loss as possible, and with the highest regard to the preservation of the troops. To that end he expects that the men work cheerfully and without the least unsoldierlike murmur or complaint, and that his few but necessary orders be strictly obeyed. . . .

As the safety of the army depends in a great measure upon the vigilance of the outguards, any officer or non-commissioned officer who shall suffer himself to be surprised by the enemy, must not expect to be forgiven. False alarms are hurtful in an army, and dishonourable to those who occasion them. The outposts are to be sure that the enemy are in motion before they send their intelligence. . . . In most attacks by night, it must be remembered that bayonets are preferable to fire. . . . No churches, houses, or buildings of any kind are to be burned or destroyed without orders. The persons that remain in their habitations, their women and children, are to be treated with humanity. If any violence is offered to a woman, the offender shall be punished with death. If any persons are detected robbing the tents of officers or soldiers, they will be, if con-

¹ A. Doughty, *The Siege of Quebec*, an exhaustive work of six volumes dealing with these operations. Quebec, 1901.

demned, certainly executed. The commanders of regiments are to be answerable that no rum, or spirits of any kind, be sold in or near the camp. When the soldiers are fatigued with work, or wet upon duty, the General will order such refreshment as he knows will be of service to them, but is determined to allow no drunkenness nor licentiousness in the army. If any sutler has the presumption to bring rum on shore, in contempt of the General's regulations, such sutler shall be sent to the Provost in irons, and his goods confiscated. The General will make it his business, as far as he is able, to reward such as shall particularly distinguish them, and, on the other hand, will punish any misbehaviour in an exemplary manner.

On the 12th the firing of a rocket was Wolfe's signal for the batteries at Point Lévis to begin the bombardment of Quebec. At first the shells, falling short, were greeted with the derisive cheers of the French. Their laughter was of short duration; the gunners quickly got their range, and the destructive rain of shot and shell tore through the roofs and walls of the doomed city. The Commander-in-Chief well knew that the grim fortress was not to be won by his cannon, and that to destroy the city was only to render the after-work of reparation more arduous when it finally fell into his hands. But to weaken the enemy and to exert a moral effect he did not spare his powder.

It was now high time for Wolfe, entrenched on the south shore and on the Isle of Orleans, to get a firm footing on the north shore. To accomplish this a feint was made by some troops and ships higher up the river, while Wolfe crossed over from the island with 3,000 of Townshend's and Murray's troops and established his head-quarters on the heights east of the Montmorenci river. He hoped at some point or other of the Montmorenci to find a fordable spot from which he could penetrate into the enemy's entrenchments, and so precipitate what his soul hungered for, a general engagement.

For some time past strained relations had existed between Townshend and the Commander-in-Chief. It is probable that the spoilt, satirical brigadier had under-estimated the master-genius of Wolfe, or that Wolfe had pierced through the shallowness of Townshend.¹ Whatever the cause, we find Townshend complaining

¹ His descendant, Brigadier-General Charles V. F. Townshend, who has so ably defended his ancestor in the course of his biography, writes me from Bloemfontein, South Africa: "With my knowledge of the world and the

in his *Journal* of the manner in which he was treated. Once, when apprehensive of a night-attack, he constructed some elaborate breastworks at Montmorenci.¹

“The next morning the General having gone early to rest in the evening, I reported to him what I had done, and in the evening he went round the front and disapproved of it, saying I had indeed made myself secure, for I had made a fortress; that small redoubts were better than lines; that the men could not man these lines, nor sally out if they pleased. At the same time that he said this he had one battalion of my brigade and two which had arrived that morning (10th July) from the Isle of Orleans, encamped upon the descent of the hill with their front to the River St. Lawrence, and their rear to the rear of our 1st Line; exposed to the cannon-shot of the enemy, the first of which went through their tents and raked their encampment from right to left.”²

Townshend felt himself a far better general than Wolfe.

“The next day (11th July) I perceived with my glass an officer with an escort very much answering the description of M. Montcalm, examining our camp from the same spot. I acquainted the General with this, who rather laughed at it and at my expectation of any annoyance from that part.”

This was bad enough—to laugh at the brilliant Townshend—but worse was to follow. On the 13th the second brigadier was industriously making the spot chosen for the new camp cannon-proof.

“Whilst I was directing the work, I heard that the General had set out for the Point of Orleans, thence to pass over to the Point of Lévis, leaving me, the first officer in the camp, not only without orders but also even ignorant of his departure or time of return. Upon this I ran down as fast as I could to the water-side, and having desired Mr. Caldwell to stop him till I could come up with him, he received me in a very stately manner, not advancing five steps. I told him that if I had suspected his intentions of going

army now, I can see so plainly why Wolfe did not hit it off with his brigadiers. They were all very young men, and Wolfe was the youngest. Monckton and Townshend had been aides-de-camp on the Duke of Cumberland's staff at Fontenoy when Wolfe, as a Brigadier-Major, had gone over their heads in the army. That explains the friction and consequent misunderstandings.”

¹ We are told that Townshend had a dangerous gift for pictorial caricature. On one occasion the victim was Wolfe himself at the Generals' mess. The caricature (of Wolfe reconnoitring a disreputable out-house) being passed along, finally came to the General, who changed colour at the indignity, and crumpled the paper into his pocket. “If I live,” he said, with a dangerous smile, “this shall be inquired into; but we must beat the enemy first.”

² *Military Life of Townshend*, p. 177.

your troops to encamp on their new ground, or not to do it until the enemy's battery begins to play?'”

Wolfe regarded Townshend's fastidious performances very properly as a waste of time, although his biographer thinks they proved that Townshend was “far more advanced in his views than Wolfe.” But is it any wonder Townshend's cup of humiliation nearly overflowed?

Beneath the fury of Wolfe's shells the lower town became much damaged, and on the 16th shells set fire to the upper town as well. Fanned by a strong wind the flames spread rapidly, consuming many buildings, including the cathedral. Yet as far as ever from a coming-out spirit was Montcalm. There were frequent exchanges of sentiments under flags of truce. Once Montcalm's aide-de-camp observed to Wolfe: “We do not doubt but you will demolish the town; yet we are determined that your army shall never get a footing within its walls.” Wolfe replied: “I will be master of Quebec if I stay here until the end of November.”

On another occasion, a French officer having expressed his surprise that the English were so infatuated as to undertake the conquest of Quebec with a mere handful of troops: “Though we are few and scattered,” was the answer, “your army, in spite of its superior numbers, is afraid of us. You do not dare to leave your strong entrenchments to attack any of our camps and batteries.”

If he could only draw the French out of their trenches! That was Wolfe's most ardent hope. But so far Montcalm resolutely declined to be so drawn. True, Wolfe's batteries at Montmorenci soon began to be most inconvenient, and there were hurried counsels in the French camp as to whether they should not be driven forth. But “drive them thence,” said Montcalm, “and they will give us more trouble. While they are there they cannot hurt us. So let them amuse themselves.”

Hurrying constantly from camp to camp was Wolfe. On the night of the 18th, from Pointe d'Orleans, he awaited anxiously the result of a bold move he had concerted with Saunders. A small British squadron, under cover of a terrific cannonade from Point Levis, actually succeeded in passing the fortress into the upper river unharmed, thereby cutting off the water communication of the enemy with Montreal. This was a blow indeed to Montcalm, who immediately detached 600 men to proceed along the cliffs, watch the British movements, and check any attempt to land.

Wolfe, thinking he might get a footing on the north bank above the city, sent orders to Townshend, at Montmorenci, for

nine companies of grenadiers, with all his howitzers and guns. Saunders wrote Townshend at the same time, "I have sent you three long boats for the hautbitzers great and small, and the royal mortars. I shall soon send for cannon, as the General designs to make his attack above the town." When Townshend had complied with this order all was in readiness.

On the 21st, during a miserable downpour, Wolfe crossed over to the Point Lévis batteries. From thence, with an escort, he proceeded westward along the south shore with his most advanced post. Embarking in a ship's boat he examined the upper river for the first time carefully. There was little to encourage him. The long line of almost vertical cliff as far as his eye could reach appeared impregnable. Revolving the situation silently in his mind he returned and spent the night on board the *Sutherland*. He had changed his mind about the landing. Not only Townshend, but other officers, were puzzled by this apparent indecision. "Within the space of five hours," wrote Gibson to Governor Lawrence, "we received at the General's request three different orders of consequence, which were contradicted immediately after their reception . . . to the no small amazement of every one who has taken the liberty of thinking . . . I am told he asks no one's opinion."¹

Here, at least, was a General who could keep his own counsel.

He doubtless was of the opinion that dividing and harassing the enemy was of considerable advantage in war. Besides, there was always the chance of procuring intelligence; so Wolfe sent Carleton sixteen miles up the St. Lawrence to attack the small town of Pointe aux Trembles. Hither many French families of distinction had taken refuge, and it was rumoured that in addition to stores and valuables, papers of consequence would be found. A number of prisoners were duly made, but as for the papers, Carleton found only private correspondence which told the General what he already knew, namely, that the inhabitants of Quebec were very sick of the situation. One priest wrote, "The English are too many for us; and who could have suspected it? Part of their fleet passed all our batteries, and are riding in safety above the capital. They have made this town so hot, that there is but one place left where we can with safety pay adoration to our most gracious, but now wrathful and displeased God, who, we fear, has forsaken us."

Amongst the hundred and fifty women so captured were several ladies to whom Wolfe, in his rôle of *preux chevalier*, showed the

¹ Doughty, ii. p. 112.

most delicate attention. He invited them all to dine in his tent and was in the highest spirits, exchanging with them reminiscences of Paris and the *beau monde*, and inquiring of them gaily when M. le Marquis would take pity on his generalship and come out and meet him in the field. May not, on this occasion, a priest or one of the cultured ladies responded with the apt quotation from ancient history—"If thou art a great general, Marius, come down and fight." "If *thou* art a great general, Silo, *make me* come down and fight"!

The next day Wolfe ordered his aide-de-camp, Captain Hervey Smith, to escort the ladies to Quebec, where it must be added they were by no means welcomed, and where the gallant captain was subjected to somewhat rude treatment at the hands of the Quebec burghers.¹ The British General wrote at once to Montcalm to complain of this incivility. Meanwhile, parties of British infantry were scouring the surrounding country. One of these parties under Major Dalling brought in some two hundred and fifty male and female prisoners. After being entertained by Brigadier Monckton the non-combatants were escorted under a flag of truce to Quebec, a proceeding which brought old Johannès, the Town Major, in a rage to the British lines. It was all very well of M. le General Wolfe to make war on old men, women and children and return them afterwards to the French, but M. Wolfe ought to be informed that the people of Quebec had hardly enough food to maintain themselves. Wolfe replied that since M. le Vaudreuil and his staff viewed the British commander's leniency and generosity so unfavourably, he would not thenceforward trouble himself to restore any captives. He himself had plenty of provisions, and would generously accommodate them in the transports.

One might have thought the French would have been contented with the sequel of their first attempt at fire-ships. But no,—on the 27th they once again tried to burn the British fleet. A number of schooners, shallops and barges, were chained together into a line two hundred yards long, loaded with grenades, tar-barrels, shells, swivels and guns, full to the muzzle with waste iron and metal fragments. As this infernal contrivance approached on the ebb tide picket-boats detected it, and the fearless bluejackets instantly grappled with, and towed it ashore before the slightest damage was caused. "Damme, Jack," one was heard to call out, as he pulled hard at his oar, "didst thee ever take hell in tow before?"

¹ Doughty, vol. ii. 116.

This sort of thing Wolfe felt must be stopped. Next morning he sent a flag of truce to the French commander, and this message, "If you presume to send down any more fire-rafts, they shall be made fast to the two transports in which the Canadian prisoners are confined in order that they may perish by your own base invention." After that there were no more fire-rafts.

Nevertheless, war is war—and we know that Wolfe was not the man to shrink from pushing it to extremity. The humanest warfare is that often which ends it soonest. After a council of war held on board Saunders' flagship, it was decided to take an important and necessary step, however repugnant to feelings of pure humanity. On his arrival, it will be recalled, he had issued a proclamation offering the Canadians immunity for person and property if they observed neutrality. This had produced no effect. Old men and boys fired on his soldiers from ambush, and he had daily evidence of the hostility of the inhabitants. He now issued another proclamation which he hoped would prove more impressive. Unless by August 10 the inhabitants accepted his previous offer of neutrality, he swore he would lay the whole country waste and make prisoners of every one he caught.

Five weeks had now slipped away. At the end of those five precious weeks Quebec was as far from being taken as ever. Another similar period of such barren results and the British fleet and army would have to retire in humiliation. Already many lives had been lost and much ammunition spent. A bold stroke was necessary. Montcalm's lines should be pierced at the Montmorenci river. He had tried for practicable fords above the falls in vain; but at low tide there was a possible passage below the falls. It was a desperate chance, but he must do something to justify the trust reposed in him by Chatham and his countrymen, even at the risk of life and reputation. "Standing still" was a military manœuvre he despised, even though at that very moment Amherst and the main army were on their way to reinforce him. At this weak point in the long French lines bordering the St. Lawrence the foe had thrown up a four-gun redoubt at the foot of the cliffs. If he could take this by assault with his grenadiers and force a way to the high ground he might precipitate a general action. And he must rely almost wholly upon himself, for in such a shallow draught of water Saunders could not help him.

But let Wolfe's own pen describe the events of that disastrous 31st of July, which we can do by anticipating a portion of his celebrated dispatch to Pitt.

To WILLIAM PITT.

Headquarters of Montmorenci
in the River St. Lawrence.

SIR,—I wish I could, upon this occasion, have the honour of transmitting to you a more favourable account of the progress of his Majesty's arms, but the obstacles we have met with in the operations of the campaign are much greater than we had reason to expect, or could foresee; not so much from the number of the enemy, (though superior to ours) as from the natural strength of the country, which the Marquis de Montcalm seems wisely to depend upon. When I learned that succours of all kinds had been thrown into Quebec, that five battalions of regular troops of the colony, and every Canadian that was able to carry arms, besides several nations of savages, had taken the field in a very advantageous situation, I could not flatter myself that I should be able to reduce the place. I sought, however, an occasion to attack their army, knowing well that with those troops I saw able to fight, and hoping that a victory might disperse them.

We found them encamped, along the shore of Beauport, from the river St. Charles to the fall of Montmorenci and intrenched in every accessible part. The 27th of June we landed upon the Island of Orleans; but, receiving a message from the Admiral, that there was reason to think that the enemy had artillery and a force upon the Point de Levi, I detached Brigadier Monckton with four battalions to drive them thence. He passed the River on the 24th at night, and marched the next day to the Point; he obliged the enemy's irregulars to retire and possessed himself of that post; the advanced parties on this occasion had two or three skirmishes with the Canadians and Indians, with little loss on either side. Colonel Carleton marched with a detachment to the westernmost Point of Orleans, whence our operations were likely to begin. It was absolutely necessary to possess these two points, and fortify them; because from either the one or the other the enemy might make it impossible for any ship to lie in the bason of Quebec, or even within two miles of it. Batteries of cannon and mortars were erected with great dispatch on the Point of Levi, to bombard the town and magazines, and to injure the works and batteries, the enemy perceiving these works in some forwardness, passed the river with some sixteen hundred men to attack and destroy them. Unluckily they fell into confusion, fired upon one another and went back again, by which we

lost an opportunity of defeating this large detachment. The effect of this artillery has been so great, though across the River, that the upper town is considerably damaged and the lower town entirely destroyed. The works, for the security of our hospital and stores upon the isle of Orleans, being finished, on the 9th of July, at night, we passed the North Channel, and encamped near the enemy's left, the river Montmorencie between us. The next morning Captain Dunk's company of rangers, posted in a wood to cover some workmen, were attacked and defeated by a body of Indians, and had so many killed and wounded as to be almost disabled for the rest of the campaign; the enemy also suffered in this affair, and were, in their turn, driven off by the nearest troops. The ground to the eastward of the fall seemed to be, as it really is, higher than that on the enemy's side, and to command it in a manner that might be made useful to us. There is beside a ford below the fall, which may be passed for some hours in the latter part of the ebb, and beginning of the flood tide; and I had hopes that possibly means might be found of passing the river above, so as to fight the Marquis de Montcalm upon terms of less disadvantage than directly attacking his entrenchments.

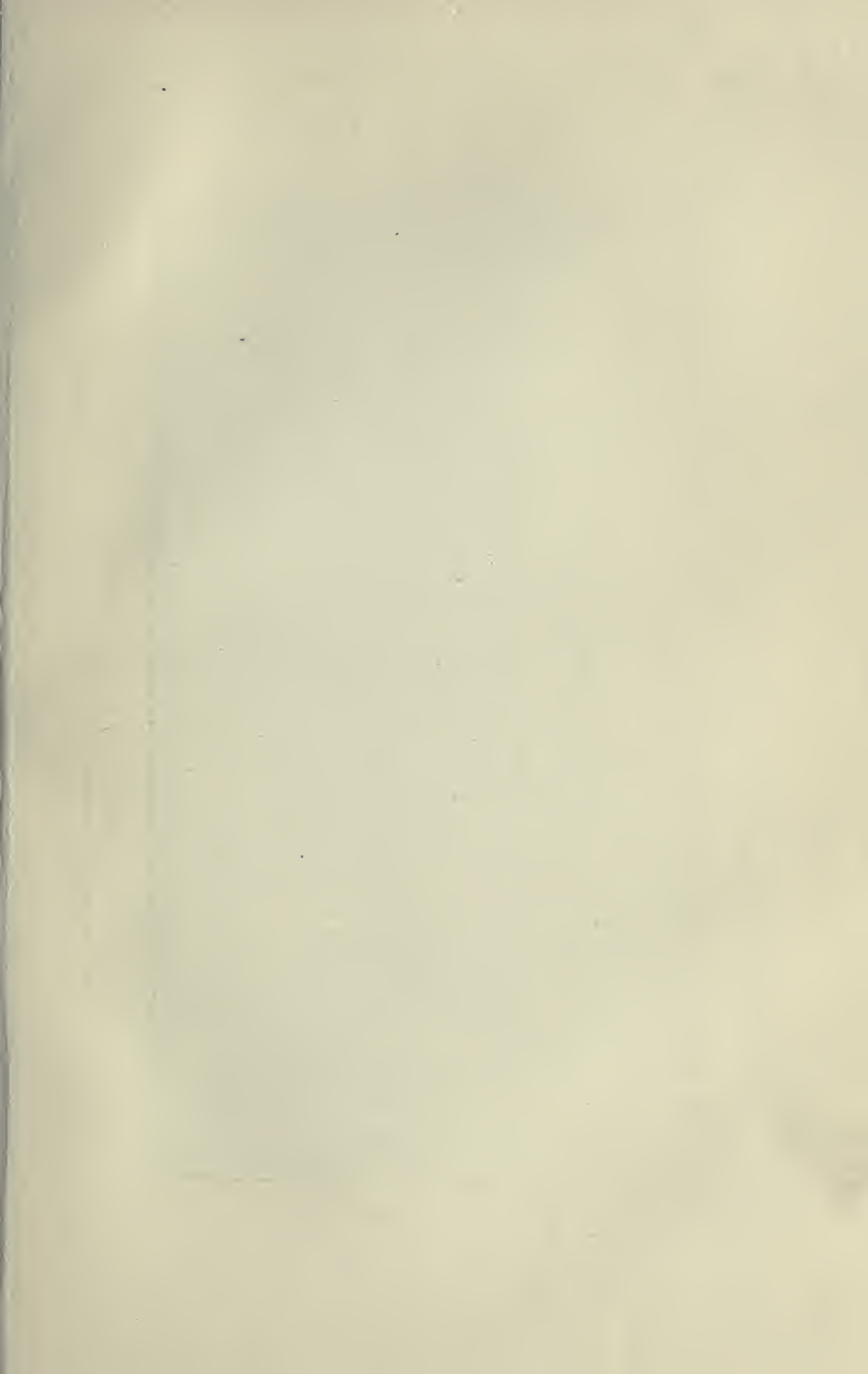
In reconnoitring the river Montmorenci, we found it fordable at a place about three miles up; but the opposite bank was entrenched, and so steep and so woody, that it was to no purpose to attempt a passage there. The escort was twice attacked by the Indians, who were as often repulsed; but in these rencounters we had forty officers and men, killed and wounded.

The 18th July, two men of war, two armed sloops, and two transports, with some troops on board, passed by the town without any loss, and got into the upper river. This enabled me to reconnoitre the country above, where I found the same attention on the enemy's side, and great difficulties on ours, arising from the nature of the ground and the obstacles to our communication with the fleet. But what I feared most was, that if we should have landed between the town and the river of Cap Rouge the body first landed could not be reinforced before they were attacked by the enemy's whole army. Notwithstanding these difficulties, I thought once of attempting it at St. Michael's about three miles above the town; but perceiving that the enemy were jealous of the design, were preparing against it, and had actually brought artillery and a mortar (which, being so near to Quebec, they could increase as they pleased) to play on the shipping, and

as it must have been many hours before we could attack them—even supposing a favourable night for the boats to pass by the town unhurt,—it seemed to me so hazardous that I thought it best to desist.

However, to divide the enemy's force, and to draw their attention as high up the river as possible, and to procure some intelligence, I sent a detachment, under the command of Colonel Carleton, to land at the Point aux Trembles, to attack whatever he could find there, bring off some prisoners, and all the useful papers he could get. I had been informed that a number of the inhabitants of Quebec had retired to that place, and that probably we should find a magazine of provisions there. The Colonel was fired upon by a body of Indians the moment he landed; but they were soon dispersed and driven into the woods; he searched for magazines but to no purpose; brought off some prisoners and returned with little loss. After this business I came back to Montmorenci, where I found that Brigadier Townshend had, by a superior fire, prevented the French from erecting a battery on the bank of the river whence they intended to cannonade our camp. I now resolved to take the first opportunity which presented itself of attacking the enemy, though posted to great advantage, and everywhere prepared to receive us. As the men of war cannot for sufficient depth of water come near enough to the enemy's entrenchments to annoy them in the least, the Admiral had prepared two transports, drawing but little water, which upon occasion could be run aground to favour a descent. With the help of these vessels, which I understand could be carried by the tide close in shore, I proposed to make myself master of a detached redoubt near to the water's edge, and whose situation appeared to be out of musket shot of the entrenchments upon the hill; if the enemy supported this detached piece it would necessarily bring on an engagement, what we most wished for; and if not, I should have it in my power to examine their situation so as to be able to determine where best to attack them. Preparations were accordingly made for an engagement.

The 31st July in the forenoon, the boats of the fleet were filled with Grenadiers, and a part of Brigadier Monckton's brigade from the Point Levi; the two brigades under the Brigadiers Townshend and Murray were ordered to be in readiness to pass the ford, when it should be thought necessary. To facilitate the passage of this corps, the Admiral had placed the "Centurion"





THE FALLS OF MONTMORENCY, SCENE OF WOLFE'S ATTACK, JULY 31, 1759
Contemporary engraving from sketches made by Wolfe's aide-de-camp, Captain Hervey Smith

in the Channel, so that he might check the fire of the lower battery which commanded the ford; this ship was of great use, as her fire was very judiciously directed. A great quantity of Artillery stores were placed upon the eminence so as to batter and enslave the left of their entrenchments. From the vessel which ran aground nearest in, I observed that the redoubt was too much commanded to be kept without very great loss; and the more, as the two armed ships could not be brought near enough to cover both with their artillery and musketry, which I at first conceived they might. But as the enemy seemed in confusion, and we were prepared for action, I thought it a proper time to make an attempt upon their entrenchment. Orders were sent to the Brigadier General to be ready, with corps under their command; Brigadiers Townshend and Murray to pass the ford. At a proper time of the tide, the signal was made, but in rowing towards the shore many of the boats grounded upon a ledge that runs off a considerable distance.

This accident put us in some disorder, lost a great deal of time and obliged me to send an officer to stop Brigadier Townshend's march, whom I then observed to be in motion. While the seamen were getting their boats off, the enemy fired a number of shot and shell, but did no considerable damage. As soon as this disorder could be set to rights, and the boats were ranged in a proper manner, some of the officers of the navy went in with me to find a better place to land. We took one flat-bottomed boat with us to make the experiment; and as soon as we had found a fit part of the shore, the troops were ordered to disembark, thinking it not too late for the attempt. The thirteen companies of Grenadiers and two hundred of the second Royal American battalion got first on shore. The Grenadiers were ordered to form themselves into four distinct bodies, and to begin the attack, supported by Brigadier Monckton's corps, as soon as the troops had missed the fort, and were at hand to assist, but, whether from the noise and hurry at landing, or from some other cause the Grenadiers instead of forming themselves as they were directed, ran on impetuously towards the enemy's entrenchments, in the utmost disorder and confusion, without waiting for the corps which was to sustain them, and join in the attack. Brigadier Monckton was not landed and Brigadier Townshend was still at a considerable distance, though upon his march to join us, in very great order. The Grenadiers were checked by the enemy's first fire, and obliged to shelter

themselves in or about the redoubt, which the French abandoned upon their approach. In this situation they continued for some time, unable to form under so hot a fire and having many gallant officers wounded, who, careless of their persons, had been solely intent upon their duty. I saw the absolute necessity of calling them off that they might form themselves behind Brigadier Monckton's corps, which was now landed, and drawn up on the beach, in extreme good order. By this new accident, and this second delay, it was near night, and a sudden storm came on, and the tide began to make, so that I thought it most advisable not to persevere in so difficult an attack, lest, in case of a repulse, the retreat of Brigadier Townshend's corps might be hazardous and uncertain. Our artillery had a great effect upon the enemy's left, where Brigadiers Townshend and Murray were to have attacked; and it is probable that, if those accidents I have spoken of had not happened, we should have penetrated there, whilst our left or centre, more remote from our artillery, must have borne all the violence of their musketry. The French did not attempt to interrupt our march. Some of their savages came down to murder such wounded as could not be brought off, and to scalp the dead, as their custom is. The place where the attack was intended, has these advantages over all others here about; our artillery could be brought into use, the greater part, or even the whole of the troops, might act at once, and the retreat in case of a repulse, was secure, at least for a certain time of the tide; neither one nor other of these advantages can anywhere else be found. The enemy were indeed posted upon a commanding eminence; the beach upon which the troops were drawn up was of deep mud, with holes, and cut by several gullies; the hill to be ascended very steep, and not everywhere practicable; the enemy numerous in their entrenchments and their fire hot. If the attack had succeeded, our loss must certainly have been great, and theirs inconsiderable, from the shelter which the neighbouring woods afforded them. The river St. Charles remained still to be passed before the town could be invested. All these circumstances I considered, but the desire to act in conformity to the King's intentions enduced me to make this trial, persuaded that a victorious army finds no difficulties.

This staggering reverse at Montmorenci Falls was a terrible blow to the young Commander. He had never intended it as a

real attack on the enemy's position, but as a challenge for him to come out of his trenches and fight. He calculated on being met, not by grenadiers, but by the Canadian militia. When by reason of the delay in carrying the redoubt he discovered that the weight of Montcalm's army of veterans was being thrown on his handful of men, he saw that the chances were greatly against him. But with Wolfe, as has been well said, for all his science, "the moral force in warfare was always for him the master element." And the worst of it was that he had infected his men with his own impetuosity.¹ He had lost 443 men killed and wounded, including thirty-three officers, chiefly grenadiers. No wonder that the English camp that night was sunk in gloom or that the French rejoiced. "I have no more anxiety about Quebec," wrote Vaudreuil.

That night the sorrowful commander, upon whose delicate frame sickness was already beginning to lay a dread hand, went from tent to tent visiting his wounded officers. He himself had been thrice struck by splinters and his cane had been dashed from his grasp by a round shot. But he never thought of himself as long as he could stand upright. Those who were able to limp to the General's tent he invited to sup with him, and more than one aspiring ensign lived to describe the sad pale face and tender smile of their leader as he sat at the head of the board. When all had departed and he was left alone, he called for paper and vented his feelings of bitterness in the following manifesto, which on the morrow was read out to the troops.

"The check which the Grenadiers met with yesterday, will, it is hoped, be a lesson to them for the time to come; such *impetuous, irregular* and *unsoldierlike* proceedings destroy all order, make it impossible for their commanders to form any disposition for an attack, and put it out of the General's power to execute his plan.

"The Grenadiers could not suppose that they alone could beat the French army, and therefore it was necessary that the corps under Brigadier Monckton and Brigadier Townshend should have time to join, that the attack might be general; the very first fire of the enemy was sufficient to repulse men who had lost all sense of order and military discipline; Amherst's and the Highland

¹ "I am convinced," observes Townshend, "that the cause of this disaster, as in so many other cases, was the burning thirst for battle on the part of the troops, officers and men like, such as one sees in men, who, never having been on active service before, are impatient to find themselves engaged."—*Military Life of the Marquess Townshend*, p. 196.

regiments alone, by the soldierlike and cool manner they were formed in, would undoubtedly have beat back the whole Canadian army, if they had ventured to attack them.

“The loss, however, is inconsiderable, and may be easily repaired, when a favourable opportunity offers, if the men will show a proper attention to their officers.”¹

“By failure his military error,” says Warburton, “had been thrown into strong light, and yet it is probable that he would have succeeded but for a strange adversity of circumstances.”

There is extant a long letter of Wolfe’s, concerning this very battle of Montmorenci, of the highest interest and importance. It must be remembered, however, that it was penned in a moment of great physical weakness and depression, which accounts for the tone of the close of the letter. He had drafted his dispatch to Pitt and sent a copy to Saunders, who took exception to one or two passages relating to the “cat-boats,” or catamarans, and naval responsibility for the affair, suggesting emendation.

To VICE-ADMIRAL SAUNDERS.

Banks of the St. Lawrence, 30th August, 1759.

DEAR SIR,—I did not see the letter you did me the honour to write till just now, nor indeed could I have answered it before, if Major Barré had shown it me. I shall leave out that part of my letter to Mr. Pitt which you object to, although the matter of fact to the best of my recollection, is strictly as I have stated it. I am sensible of my own errors in the course of the campaign; see clearly wherein I have been deficient; and think a little more or less blame to a man that must necessarily be ruined, of little or no consequence. If you had recollected the purport of my letter you would not have found “that it throws any difficulties I met with in landing on the two cats not being placed so to annoy the two small batteries with their great guns.” On the contrary the cats did annoy the upper battery with their great guns, and performed that part of the service as well as could be expected; and yet that battery was not abandoned by the enemy, but continued firing till the Grenadiers ran (like blockheads) up to it. However, its fire was of no consequence

¹ “Amongst those who shared his confidence,” says Smollett, “he was often seen to sigh, and he was often heard to complain; and even in the transports of his chagrin declare that he would never return without success to be exposed, as other unfortunate commanders had been, to the censure and reproach of an ignorant populace.”—*Hist. of England*.

and not worth mentioning, nor the least impediment to landing. Mr. Cook¹ said he believed the cats could be carried within 40 or 50 yards of the redoubts. I told him at the time, that I would readily compound for 150 or 200 yards, which would have been near enough, had the upper redoubt been as far from the enemy's entrenchments as it appeared from our camp to be, and had I judged it advisable to attack it with a view to lodge in it, which I did not upon seeing that it was too much commanded. You will please to consider the difference between landing at high water with four companies of Grenadiers to attack a redoubt under the protection of the artillery of a vessel, and landing part of an army to attack the enemy's entrenchments. For this last business, a junction of our corps was necessary; and to join, the water must fall a certain degree. I gave up the first point (that of the redoubt) upon finding my mistake as to the distance from the entrenchment, and determined upon the latter, (which I always had in view) upon observing the enemy's disorder, and remarking their situation much better than I ever could do before. The fire of the lower redoubt was so smart during the time that we were on board the "Russell" (I think it was) that, as neither her guns, nor the guns of the other cat could be brought to bear against it, I thought fit to order the Grenadiers out of her, by which I saved many lives. I was no less than three times struck with the splinters in that ship and had my stick knocked out of my hand with the cannon-ball while I was on board reconnoitring the position and movements of the enemy; and yet you say in your letter they did (the cats) great execution against the two small batteries, and on your first landing you did not lose a man.

With regard to the "Centurion," I am ready to do justice to Cap. Mantle; but I am very sure, whatever his merit may be, the approbation would be more to the purpose coming from you than from me. In reality the position of the ship was in consequence of your orders, and I am very sure that, if you could have placed the whole fleet so as to have been useful to us, you would have done it. The "Centurion" had no enemy to encounter; her position was assigned, and her guns were fired judiciously. The fire of that, and of the four-gun battery near the water-side,

¹ Later the famous Captain Cook, then master of the *Mercury*. Cook took the soundings of the channel between the Isle of Orleans and the north shore, facing the French camp, preparatory to its being occupied by Saunders' ships, an arduous and risky operation, accomplished entirely at night.

together with the want of ammunition, kept their lower battery silent for some time, but yet we received many shot from that battery at landing; and Brigadier Townshend's corps was fired upon particularly in returning over the ford, though with little damage.

When I had resolved to attack the French army I sent Mr. Leslie to see how the water fell, that I might land at a proper time to join with Townshend, and when he made me his report, I made the signal to Col. Burton. Many of the boats ran upon the ledge; and the delay occasioned by the accident was such, that I sent Captain Smith, my aide-de-camp, to stop Townshend, who was then crossing the ford; and yet, Sir, you assert that there was no delay by this accident. None indeed that would have had any consequence if the strange behaviour of the Grenadiers had not lost us more time and brought on the night, and perhaps very luckily for the army, considering the disadvantageous nature of the attack. I remember you did me the honour to call to me from your boat to go in and see for a landing place; and I remember some gentleman's calling out at the same time from the boat that it was a proper time to land; and you may remember I went in, and made the experiment with a flat-bottomed boat, and one of the captains (I believe Capt. Chads,) and when we had found what we sought for, I desired him to bring the boats forward. The rest makes up the remaining part of the story of that unlucky day; the blame of which I take entirely upon my own shoulders, and expect to suffer for it. Accidents cannot be helped. As much of the plan as was defective falls upon me; and it is, I think, a matter of no great consequence whether the cats fired well or ill; were well or ill placed; of no great consequence whether an hour or two were or were not lost by the boats grounding; and of as little consequence whether the "Centurion's" gunner directed his shot well or ill. In none of these circumstances the essential matter resides. The great fault of that day consists in putting too many men into boats, who might have been landed the day before, and might have crossed the ford with certainty, while a small body only remained afloat; and the superfluous boats of the fleet employed in a feint that might divide the enemy's force. A man sees his error often too late to remedy. My ill state of health hinders me from executing my own plan; it is of too desperate a nature to order others to execute. The Generals seem to think alike as to the operations, I, therefore,



BRIGADIER-GENERAL HON. JAMES MURRAY

From a drawing by Gilray

join with them, and perhaps we may find some opportunity to strike a blow.¹

I am, dear Sir, etc.,
JAM. WOLFE.

He had failed at Montmorenci, but Wolfe did not believe his plan unsound. He would try again under more favourable conditions. He concerted with Saunders a plan of action for the upper river. Holmes, in command of the flotilla beyond Quebec, was to act in conjunction with Murray, who was given 1,200 men to destroy the French shipping up stream, and to harass the enemy on shore as much as possible. Murray found the whole line of cliffs on the alert. Two attempts did he make to land, but each time was met by a fire too hot to stand, but at the third attempt he surprised the river post, pushed on and captured the village of Dechambault. Here the French, in conformity with the General's manifesto, were made to feel his hand. But the greatest advantage he obtained was to intercept some important letters, which told of the occupation of Crown Point by Amherst, and Johnson's capture of Niagara. This was good news indeed, and, as there was nothing else to be done, Murray hastened back to Wolfe. Scarcely was his back turned when Montcalm arrived in Dechambault—too late!

¹ "This failure," remarks Doughty, "caused a temporary abatement of the enthusiastic regard in which Wolfe was held by officers and soldiers alike." There is nothing whatever to justify such an assertion. Wolfe's general orders sufficiently explained the cause of the disaster to all. The Grenadiers alone were to blame.

XX

THE FINAL PLAN

Good tidings could not have come to Wolfe at a more fitting moment. Fatigue, disappointment, and disease were overcoming his body, if not his spirit, and this revived him.

At mess one day one of his officers spoke of one whose delicate constitution might be an obstacle to his career. "Don't talk to me of constitution," he said, "he has spirits, and spirits will carry a man through anything."

Yet he soon saw that there was little or no hope of succour from Amherst and Johnson. All this time the bombardment of Quebec never ceased. On the morning of August 10, a shell ignited some brandy in a wine-cellar, the flames spread and quickly the whole of that part of the city, including the church of Notre Dame des Victoires, was destroyed. Nor did a day pass without a bloody skirmish between British and Canadians or Indians, accompanied by the horrible details of Redskin butchery. Daily, too, prisoners were brought into camp. The flames caused by British torches fulfilled Wolfe's threats to the letter as they rose over cottage and barn. The corn withered on its stalks, and there were no reapers, save where British gun or musket could not carry. The townspeople of the beleaguered city were in a sore plight; well they knew that if anything happened to their supplies from Montreal they would perish of hunger. To hold out a month or two longer would ensure their safety for that winter, perhaps for many winters.

On August 19 Captain Smith came sorrowfully out of the low stone farmhouse that served the General as headquarters at Montmorenci, to announce that the General could not rise that day. The news spread like wild-fire through the whole army, causing the most anxious concern through all ranks. There Wolfe lay stretched on his rude military cot, racked with pain and fever for days. He seems no longer to have cherished any illusions as to his own health. "I know perfectly well," he said to his surgeon, "you cannot cure my complaint; but patch me up so that I may be able to do my duty for the next few days,

and I shall be content." He told those about him he would "cheerfully sacrifice a leg or an arm to be in possession of Quebec."¹ In the midst of his illness his mind was torn with apprehension. Upon him alone hung the fate of the campaign; he knew the disposition of some of the officers towards him, especially since the affair at Montmorenci. The absence of Murray on his expedition to the upper river fretted him. To Monckton, who wrote that he heard firing, he sent a note.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL MONCKTON.

19th August, 1759.

DEAR SIR,—The cannon you heard is probably what you imagine, a vessel coming down to open the communication. The Admiral has heard a different account of the woman's report. He sent for the man on board to examine him; and he there declared that she had spoken handsomely of the treatment that she and the rest had met with. 'They are certainly distressed—it is everybody's story, that leaves the army.

On languit dans ce Camp the deserters say. What shall I do with this Cotton? Better send him on board and let the Admiralty settle his affairs hereafter. Our batteries alarm them, you may be assured.

I wish we had Murray's corps back, that we might be ready to decide it with 'em.

I have the honour to be with much regard,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful and humble servant,

JAMES WOLFE.

He had information that the enemy's force at Beauport was weakened through Montcalm, Bougainville, and Levis all being absent. In the midst of his illness he dictated another letter to Monckton.

TO HON. ROBERT MONCKTON.

Montmorency, 22nd August, 1759.

DEAR BRIGADIER,—Murray, by his long stay above and by detaining all our boats, is actually master of the operations—or rather puts an entire stop to them. I have writ twice to recall him, but you tell me the midshipman is yet at his old post. I intend to burn all the country from Camarasca to the Point of Levis. Scott's Rangers and some volunteers are to

¹ Knox, vol. ii. p. 29.

execute a part of this. You know I promised Mr. Cameron the first vacancy in the army, or no recommendation whatever should have interfered with yours in your own regiment. The next ensigncy Mr. Tren shall have, unless you choose a lieutenantcy (if a vacancy happen) should be given to poor Engel who has been hardly used.

I have the honour to be with great esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

J. WOLFE.

On the 26th Murray got back, but the General was prostrated, and could then do nothing. In view of this serious state of affairs, Wolfe requested his brigadiers to consult together, dictating with difficulty the following letter—

To THE BRIGADIERS.

That the public service may not suffer by the General's indisposition, he begs the Brigadiers will meet and consult for the public utility and advantage, and consider of the best method to attack the enemy. If the French army be attacked and defeated, the General concludes that the town would immediately surrender, because he does not find they have any provisions in that place. The General is of opinion that the army should be attacked in preference to the place, because of the difficulties of penetrating from the Lower to the Upper Town; in which attempt, neither the guns of the shipping nor our own batteries could be of much use.

There appear to be three methods of attacking the army—

First. In dry weather, a large detachment may march in a day and night, so as to arrive at Beauport,—fording the Montmorenci eight or nine miles up,—before day in the morning. It is likely they would be discovered upon this march on both sides of the river. If such detachment penetrates to the intrenchments, and the rest of the troops are ready, the consequence is plain.

Second. If the troops encamped here [on the north shore] pass the ford with the falling water, and in the night march on directly towards the point of Beauport, the light infantry have a good chance to get up the woody hill; trying different places and moving quick to the right, would soon discover a proper place for the rest. The upper redoubt must be attacked,

and kept by a company of Grenadiers. Brigadier Monckton must be ready, off the point of Beauport, to land where our people get up the hill ; for which signals may be appointed.

Third. All the chosen troops of the army may attack at Beauport at low water. A diversion must be made across the ford an hour before the second attack.

N.B.—For the first attack, it is sufficient if the water begins to fall a little before daylight, or about it. For the other two, it will be best to have the low water half-an-hour before day. The General thinks the country should be ruined and destroyed, as much as can be done consistent with a more capital operation.

N.B.—There are guides in the army for the detachment question.

The brigadiers accordingly met at Monckton's quarters on Point Levis, afterwards consulting Saunders on board his flagship. The following reply to Wolfe's letter was concerted—

Point Levi, *August 29, 1759.*

Having met this day in consequence of General Wolfe's desire, to consult together for the public utility and advantage, and to consider of the best method of attacking the enemy ; and having read His Majesty's private instructions which the General was pleased to communicate to us ; and having considered some propositions of his with respect to our future operations, we think it our duty to offer our opinion as follows—

The natural strength of the enemy's situation between the rivers St. Charles and Montmorenci, now improved by all the art of their engineers, makes the defeat of their army, if attacked there, very doubtful. The advantage which their easy communication along the shore gives over our attack from boats, and by the ford of the river Montmorenci, is evident from late experience ; and it appears to us that that part of the army which is proposed to march through the woods nine miles up to Montmorenci, to surprise their camp, is exposed to certain discovery, and consequently to the disadvantage of a constant wood fight. But allowing that we could get a footing on the Beauport side, the Marquis de Montcalm will still have it in his power to dispute the passage of the river St. Charles, till the place is supplied with provisions from the ships and magazines above, from which it appears they draw their subsistence.

We are therefore of opinion that the most probable method of striking an effectual blow is to bring the troops to the south

shore, and to carry the operations above the town. If we can establish ourselves on the north shore, the Marquis de Montcalm must fight us on our own terms; we are between him and his provisions, and between him and the army opposing General Amherst. If he gives us battle and we defeat him, Quebec, and probably all Canada, will be our own, which is beyond any advantage we can expect by the Beauport side; and should the enemy pass over the river St. Charles with force sufficient to oppose this operation, we may still, with more ease and probability of success, execute the General's third proposition (which is, in our opinion, the most eligible), or undertake anything else on the Beauport shore, necessarily weakened by the detachments made to oppose us from the town.

(Signed) Brigadiers { MONCKTON,
TOWNSHEND,
MURRAY.

Thus all three of Wolfe's plans were summarily rejected, including his cherished one of Beauport. Murray and Townshend took the letter to Wolfe at Montmorenci, which camp it was proposed that he should abandon. Being ill, he could do nothing. At the same time he saw clearly that the fact of Holmes' and the ships getting up the river had changed the situation completely. And the plan of the brigadiers for carrying the attack up the river was, although far from original with them, as he had contemplated it from the first, very different from that which was afterwards successfully adopted by Wolfe.

On the 31st the Admiral came on shore and Wolfe and he and the three brigadiers had a consultation. That night the evacuation of Montmorenci began, and Saunders dispatched a small squadron up stream past Quebec. Wolfe evacuated in his own way, doing it by degrees so as to tempt Montcalm into a trap.¹

In the last letter which he wrote his widowed mother he reveals plainly, not his physical illness, but his dejection of mind—

To HIS MOTHER.

Banks of the St. Lawrence, 31st August, 1759.

DEAR MADAM,—My writing to you will convince you that no personal evils, worse than defeats and disappointments, have

¹ “Wolfe, as he withdrew his force from Montmorenci, had in fact laid a cunning trap for him—his last despairing effort to bring on an action in his own way.”—Corbett, ii. p. 457.

fallen upon me. The enemy puts nothing to risk, and I can't in conscience, put the whole army to risk. My antagonist has wisely shut himself up in inaccessible entrenchments, so that I can't get at him without spilling a torrent of blood, and that perhaps to little purpose. The Marquis de Montcalm is at the head of a great number of bad soldiers and I am at the head of a small number of good ones, that wish for nothing so much as to fight him ; but the wary old fellow avoids an action doubtful of the behaviour of his army. People must be of the profession to understand the disadvantages and difficulties we labour under, arising from the uncommon natural strength of the country.

I approve entirely of my father's disposition of his affairs, though perhaps it may interfere a little matter with my plan of quitting the service, which I am determined to do the first opportunity,—I mean so as not to be absolutely distressed in circumstances, nor burdensome to you, or to any body else.

I wish you much health, and am, dear Madam,

Your obedient and affectionate son,

JAM : WOLFE.

If any sums of money are paid to you, of what is due my father from the Government, let me recommend to you, not to meddle with the funds, but keep it for your support until better times.

We may now continue the narration of affairs since Montmorenci in Wolfe's own letter to the Prime Minister.

To WILLIAM PITT (*continued*).

The enemy have been fortifying ever since with care, so as to make a second attempt still more dangerous. Immediately after this check I sent Brigadier Murray above the town, with twelve hundred men, directing him to assist Rear-Admiral Holmes in the destruction of the French ships if they could be got at, in order to open a communication with General Amherst. The Brigadier was to seek every favourable opportunity of fighting some of the enemy's detachments, provided he could do it upon tolerable terms ; and to use all the means in his power to provoke them to attack him. He made two different attempts to land upon the north shore, without success ; but in a third was more fortunate. He landed unexpectedly at Dechambault, and burned a magazine there, in which were some provisions, some ammunition, and all the spare stores, clothing, arms, and

baggage of their army. Finding that their ships were not to be got at, and little prospect of bringing the enemy to battle he reported his situation to me. I ordered him to rejoin the army. The prisoners he took informed him of the surrender of Niagara ; and we discovered by intercepted letters, that the enemy, having abandoned Carillon and Crown Point, were retired to the isle au Noix ; and that General Amherst was making preparations to pass the Lake Champlain, to fall upon Monsieur de Bourlemacque's corps, which consists of three battalions of foot, and as many Canadians as make the whole amount to three thousand men. The Admiral's dispatches and mine would have gone eight or ten days sooner, if I had not been prevented from writing by a fever. I found myself so ill, and am still so weak, that I begged the general officers to consult together for the public utility. *They are all of opinion*, that, as more ships and provisions are now got above the town, they should try, by conveying up a corps of four or five thousand men, which is nearly the whole strength of the army, after the Points of Levi and Orleans are left in a proper state of defense, to draw the enemy from their present situation, and bring them to an action. *I have acquiesced in* their proposal, and we are preparing to put it into execution. The Admiral and I have examined the town, with the view of a general assault ; but after consulting with the chief Engineer, who is well acquainted with the interior parts of it, and after viewing it with the utmost attention, we found that, though the batteries of the lower town might be easily silenced by the men of war, yet the business of an assault would be little advanced by that, since the few passages leading from the lower to the upper town are carefully entrenched, and the upper batteries cannot be affected by the ships, which must receive considerable damage from them, and from the mortars. The Admiral would readily join in this, or in any other measure for the public service ; but I would not propose to him an undertaking of so dangerous a nature and promising so little success.

To the uncommon strength of the country the enemy have added, for the defence of the river, a great number of floating batteries and boats ; by the vigilance of these and the Indians round our different posts, it has been impossible to execute anything by surprise. We have had almost daily skirmishes with the Savages, in which they are generally defeated, but not without loss on our side.



QUEBEC HOUSE, WESTERHAM



HALL OF QUEBEC HOUSE, WESTERHAM

By the list of disabled officers¹ (many of whom are of rank) you may perceive that the army is much weakened. By the nature of the river, the most formidable part of this armament is deprived of the power of acting, yet we have almost the whole force of Canada to oppose.

In this situation there is such a choice of difficulties, that I own myself at a loss how to determine. The affairs of great Britain, I know, require the most vigorous measures; however, you may be assured that the small part of the campaign which remains shall be employed (as far as I am able) for the honour of His Majesty, and the interest of the nation: in which I am sure of being well seconded by the Admiral and the Generals. Happy if our efforts here can contribute to the success of his Majesty's arms in any other part of America.²

I am, Sir, etc.

JAMES WOLFE.

On the 3rd the abandonment of the camp was completed, and the troops, all but Carleton's small force, which still held the Isle d'Orleans, were assembled at Levis in readiness to move still further westward. Montcalm could not understand these tactics. He could not believe that Wolfe really intended to shift his base from Montmorenci. He therefore sent a messenger to Bougainville, who was watching with his large force from the northern heights, warning him that "Mr. Wolfe is just the man to double back in the night."

¹ "Return of killed, wounded, and missing—

	Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.
Officers	11	46	0
Sergeants	9	26	0
Drummers	0	7	0
Rank and file	162	572	17
Total	182	651	17

Colonel Burton, Colonel Fraser, Major Irving, Major Prevost, sixteen captains, twenty-four lieutenants and three ensigns were wounded; and three captains, six lieutenants and one ensign were killed between the 27th of June and the 2nd of September.—Doughty, vol. ii. p. 253.

² "Upon the publication of Wolfe's dispatch of the 2nd of September, Charles Townshend is said to have declared that it was written by his brother; 'for,' said he, 'Wolfe is a fiery-headed fellow, only fit for fighting'; and the falsehood was credited by those who knew nothing of Wolfe's abilities. But when the Honourable Brigadier had occasion to write to the Secretary of State, giving an account of events subsequent to Wolfe's death, the inferiority of his dispatch was generally remarked. And George Selwyn, meeting Townshend one day at the Treasury, facetiously inquired, 'Charles, if your brother wrote Wolfe's dispatch, who the devil wrote your brother George's?' (*The Soldier's Companion*.) The composition has likewise been absurdly attributed to Colonel Barré. (See Britton's *Junius Elucidated*.)"—Wright.

The labour and anxiety of evacuation had told upon the British general severely. On the 4th, having inspected his entire forces drawn up on parade at Levis, he braced himself to dine with the officers of Monckton's brigade. He seemed to be much better. But when he gained his tent his faithful friend Barré perceived him to be deadly ill. The next day his men feared that he would not be able to lead them in person, and the rumour ran that their beloved general was dying. But Fate stayed her hand; the end of the young warrior was not to be that day. One may pause and reflect what would have happened had Wolfe succumbed. Not that year would the fortress of Quebec have been taken: next year Pitt had a new master, and Lord Bute was all for peace with France. When would England again make the attempt had she then failed?

Owing either to the skill of the surgeon or his own indomitable spirit, Wolfe got on his feet once more. On the evening of the 6th all the troops were got on board the transports, and Wolfe joined the army afloat off Cap Rouge.

On the following day he reconnoitred in the Hunter sloop of war as far westward as the Point aux Trembles in order to find a suitable landing for the troops. Here again he kept his counsels. He knew that every motion he made was watched by the lynx-like eyes of the French, that Montcalm regulated the disposition of his troops entirely by the movements of his antagonist. On the 8th he ordered Monckton and Murray with 1500 men to be ready for a feigned attack on the north shore by night. A storm came on of such violence that nothing could be done, and the order was countermanded. Meanwhile Wolfe went on board the *Sutherland* and composed the following letter to the Earl of Holderness, one of Pitt's colleagues. It was the last of his dispatches.

TO THE EARL OF HOLDERNESSE.

On board the 'Sutherland'
at anchor off Cape Rouge,
September 9, 1759.

MY LORD,—If the Marquis de Montcalm had shut himself up in the town of Quebec, it would have been long since in our possession, because the defences are inconsiderable, and our artillery very formidable; but he has a numerous body of armed men (I cannot call it an army) and the strongest country perhaps in the world to rest the defence of the town and colony upon. The ten battalions and the Grenadiers of Louisbourg are a chosen body of troops, and able to fight the united force of

Canada upon even terms. Our field artillery brought into use would terrify the Militia and the savages, and our battalions are in every respect superior to those commanded by the Marquis, who acts a circumspect, prudent part, and entirely defensive, except in one extraordinary instance—he sent 1600 men over the river to attack our batteries upon the Point Levi, defended by four battalions. Bad intelligence, no doubt, of our strength induced him to this measure; however the detachment judged better than their General, and retired. They dispute the water with the boats of the fleet by the means of floating batteries, suited to the nature of the rivers, and innumerable battoes. They have a great artillery upon the ramparts towards the sea, and so placed that shipping cannot affect it. I meant to attack the left of their entrenchments, favoured by our artillery, the 31st July. A multitude of traverses prevented, in some measure, its effect, which was nevertheless very considerable. Accidents hindered the attack, and the enemy's care to strengthen that post has made it since too hazardous. The town is totally demolished, and the country in a great measure ruined, particularly the Lower Canada. Our fleet blocks up the river, both above and below the town, but can give no manner of assistance in an attack upon the Canadian army. We have continued skirmishes; old people seventy years of age, and boys of fifteen fire on our detachments, and kill or wound our men from the edges of the woods. Every man able to bear arms, both above and below Quebec, is in the camp at Beauport. The old men, women, and children are retired into the woods. The Canadians are extremely dissatisfied; but, curbed by the force of the Government, and terrified by the savages that are posted round about them, they are obliged to keep together to work and man the entrenchments.

Upwards of twenty sail of ships got in before our squadron, and brought succours of all sorts, which were exceedingly wanted in the colony. The sailors of these ships help to work the guns, and others conduct the floating batteries. Their ships are lightened, and carried up the river out of our reach—at least out of the reach of the men-of-war. These ships serve a double purpose; they are magazines for their provisions, and at the same time cut off all communications between General Amherst's army and the corps under my command, so that we are not able to make any detachment to attack Montreal, or favour the junctions, or, by attacking the fort of Chambly or Boulemargue's

corps behind, open the General's way into Canada,—all which might have been easily done with ten floating batteries, carrying each a gun, and twenty flat-bottomed boats, if there had been no ships in the river. Our poor soldiery have worked without ceasing, and without murmuring; and as often as the enemy have attempted upon us, they have been repulsed by the valour of the men. A woody country, so well known to the enemy, and an enemy so vigilant and hardy as the Indians and Canadians are, make entrenchments everywhere necessary, and by this precaution we have saved a number of lives; for scarce a night passes that they are not close in upon our posts, watching an opportunity to surprise and murder. There is very little quarter given on either side.

We have seven hours, and sometimes,—above the town after rain,—near eight hours of the most violent ebb tide that can be imagined, which loses us an infinite deal of time in every operation on the water; and the stream is so strong, particularly here, that the ships often drag their anchors by the mere force of the current. The bottom is a bed of rock, so that a ship, unless it hooks a ragged rock, holds by the weight only of the anchor. Doubtless, if the equinoctial gale has any force, a number of ships must necessarily run ashore and be lost. The day after the troops landed upon the Isle of Orleans, a violent storm had nigh ruined the expedition altogether. Numbers of boats were lost; all the whaleboats and most of the cutters were stove; some flat-bottomed boats destroyed, and others damaged. We never had half as many of the latter as are necessary for this extraordinary and very important service. The enemy is able to fight us upon the water whenever we are out of the reach of the cannon of the fleet.

The extreme heat of the weather in August, and a good deal of fatigue, threw me into a fever; but that the business might go on, I begged the Generals to consider amongst themselves what was fittest to be done. Their sentiments were unanimous, that, as the easterly winds begin to blow, and ships can pass the town in the night with provisions, artillery, etc., we should endeavour, by conveying a considerable corps into the upper river, to draw them from their inaccessible situation, and bring them to an action. I agreed to the proposal, and we are now here, with about 3600 men, waiting an opportunity to attack them when and wherever they can best be got at. The weather has been extremely unfavourable for a day or two, so that we

have been inactive. I am so far recovered as to do business, but my constitution is entirely ruined, without the consolation of having done any considerable service to the State, or without any prospect of it.

I have the honour to be, etc.,

JAM. WOLFE.¹

At the very moment when the dispatch to Holderness was penned, Wolfe's brain harboured, unknown to a living soul, the one scheme which was to lead him to victory and to an eternal niche in the fane of British heroes.²

He had given up hoping for help from Amherst, whose conduct, by the bye, in not coming to Wolfe's succour at this juncture, when he could easily have done it, is inexplicable. In Kingsford's opinion it "can only be attributed to his belief that Wolfe would fail in his enterprise." We do not know what Wolfe thought of his chief's inactivity, but eighteen years later Carleton (Lord Dorchester) strongly denounced Amherst's failure to co-operate with Wolfe.³

It will have been understood what was the object of his tactics. It was to separate Montcalm's forces. With his alert intelligence department he knew how utterly perplexed the French commanders were.⁴

Wolfe was thoroughly apprised of the situation of the enemy. That is one important fact to bear in mind in considering his movements in the week prior to the battle. He knew that the man in charge of the outposts on the summit of those heights, Vergor by name, was a true product of the Bigot *régime*, and no more vigilant than a man would be who was thinking how he could work his farm with the aid of his soldiers. Besides the Foulon post Wolfe knew of another obstacle in the Samos battery of four guns and a mortar three hundred yards nearer Sillery, but he

¹ From Chatham Correspondence.

² He had already written to Saunders August 30th—"My ill-state of health hinders me from executing my own plan: it is of too desperate a nature to order others to execute."

³ Canadian Archives Report, 1885, p. cxxxiii.

⁴ A good deal has been written about a certain Major Stobo, a Scottish officer who, after Washington's defeat at Fort Necessity, had been sent as hostage to Quebec. There he had actively employed his eyes, broken his parole and escaped to the British, to whom he gave valuable information. He is said to have pointed out the Anse du Foulon to Wolfe, and to have been present in the general attack. As a matter of fact Stobo, who was not in very good repute, left Quebec on the 7th September.—See Doughty, vol. ii. p. 114.

felt this could be taken in reverse, once the troops could get a footing on the heights.¹ Had the Guienne regiment remained overlooking the river, where it had been stationed by Montcalm, Wolfe might have hesitated. But he knew that Vaudreuil had withdrawn it on the 7th, trusting to the natural inaccessibility of the heights, and so the coast between Cap Rouge and Sillery was clear.

On the 9th, keeping his counsel, he landed from a ship's boat just below the Etchimin river and surveyed the opposite shore through a glass. He saw the tents of the enemy on the summit of the cliffs—scarce more than a dozen of them at one point—the point which from its natural features riveted his attention most. It was about a mile from Quebec. At this point the lofty banks take an inward curve, and a narrow path wound up the heights from the water's edge. It was called *Anse du Foulon*. It was the solitary access to the plains above, and yet so inaccessible that one would have said only a foolhardy commander would have thought of it as negotiable even by light infantry. Montcalm was evidently much of this opinion, for he had stationed but a hundred men at the post here on the summit.

Here, then, was Montcalm's weak point—here, having drawn off the enemy's forces to right and left, Wolfe could deal him the blow for which he had waited so many long, dreary weeks. On his return he kept his own counsel. The opinion of his brigadiers was not asked. Stanhope was therefore right in his assertion, since impugned by various partisans and upholders of "family interest" that, "The honour of the first thought belongs to Wolfe alone."

On the following day Wolfe took Monckton, Townshend, Holmes, Carleton, and Delaune of his staff, to make a survey of the spot he had selected. In order that their uniforms should not betray their rank to the enemy, they threw on grenadiers' overcoats as a disguise; but they must have worn them loosely, the disguise being far from perfect. The French officer in command at Sillery reported to Bougainville seeing "three boats of the enemy, carrying many officers in gay uniforms, one in particular in a blue surtout, with much gold lace." After a reconnaissance they planted some javelins and regained their boats about six in the evening.

¹ "Its guns could not be trained through a sufficiently wide arc to afford any flanking fire, and there were no embrasures at all towards the rear."
—Wood, p. 217.



THE HEIGHTS OF ABRAHAM

Wolfe's landing-place in the foreground

XXI

THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM

STILL were the brigadiers kept in the dark as to the plans of their commander, although Holmes and Carleton were both probably informed of the exact landing-place, and the letter which, on that very evening, the 10th, Wolfe wrote Burton, shows how everything was clearly settled in his mind.

To COLONEL BURTON.

“Sutherland,” above Cap Rouge,
Monday, 10th September, 1759.

DEAR COLONEL,—You perfectly understood my meaning in every particular. Goreham’s first post is under the point of a hill, where there is a little road running from Dalling’s old quarter up to the river; the way down is very steep, but I believe the troops can march at low water all along the beach from the Point of Levi. I think it is not above a mile and a half, or two miles, from our batteries. The deserter’s intelligence in respect to Mons. de Vaudreuil’s movements agrees in part with our observations; but it is absolutely impossible that the Marquis can have so large a corps; I don’t believe their whole army amounts to that number. That De Levi may be gone towards Montreal is likely enough, and seems to mark our General’s progress: the more necessity for vigour on our side to second his endeavours.

Sixteen hundred of our men are upon the south shore, to clean and refresh themselves and their transports; and, indeed, to save the whole army, which must have perished if they had continued forty-eight hours longer on board. To-morrow the troops re-embark, the fleet sails up the river a little higher, as if intending to land above upon the north shore, keeping a convenient distance for the boats and armed vessels to fall down to the *Foulon*; and we count (if no accident of weather or other prevents) to make a powerful effort at that spot about *four* in the morning of the 13th. At ten or eleven, or twelve at night, sooner or later, as it may be necessary, of Wednesday, the 12th,

we get into our boats. If we are forced to alter these measures, you shall know it; if not, it stands fixed: be you careful not to drop it to any, for fear of desertion; and it would not be amiss for Carleton to pass his troops [from Orleans] in the beginning of Wednesday night. Crofton can file along the shore to his right, and meet you at the post you take; let the men have their blankets, and let the tents be struck, bundled up, and ready to bring over. If we succeed in the first business, it may produce an action, which may produce the total conquest of Canada; in all cases it is our duty to try the most likely way, whatever may be the event.

What the deserter says of the bread made of new wheat is exactly what has been told me by other deserters, and I believe the scarcity in the colony to be excessive. Their army is kept together by the violent strong hand of the Government and by the terror of savages, joined to a situation which makes it difficult to evade. The Canadians have no affection for their Government, nor no tie so strong as their wives and children; they are a disjointed, discontented, dispirited peasantry, beat into cowardice by Cades, Bigot, Montcalm, and the savages.

Yours affectionately,

J. WOLFE.

Admiral Holmes, who was in the secret, writing five days after the battle was fought, thus refers to Wolfe's change of plan—

“A plan was immediately set on foot, to attempt a landing about four leagues above the town, and it was ready to put into execution when General Wolfe reconnoitred down the River and fixed upon Foulon, a spot adjacent to the Citadel, which, tho' a very strong Ground, being a steep Hill with abbatis laid across the accessible parts of it and a Guard on the Summit. He nevertheless thought that a sudden brisk attack a little before day-break would bring his army on the plain, within two miles of the town. The alteration of the Plan of Operations was not, I believe, approved of by many besides himself.”

As a matter of fact the brigadiers had, on the 8th, themselves decided that a landing at Pointe aux Trembles would offer the best chances of success; and while they were reconnoitring that distant part of the shore on the 9th, Wolfe, as we have seen, was making up his mind alone as to Foulon.

Townshend in his *Diary* wrote: “By some intelligence the

General had he had changed his mind as to the place he intended to land," but knew nothing more himself than was announced in the Orders of the 11th.

Enough, therefore, has been said to expose the utter baselessness of the contention of Warburton and others that "the merit of this daring and skilful proposition belongs to George Townshend, although long disputed and withheld by jealousy and political hostility." When Wright argued for Wolfe's sole authorship of the plan he was unaware of documents which have since come to light showing the ignorance of the brigadiers on that very point.

The Orders issued on the 11th referred to by Townshend were as follows :

To the Army before Quebec.

"The troops on shore, except the light infantry and Americans, are to be on the beach, to-morrow morning at five o'clock, in readiness to embark ; the light infantry and Americans will embark at or about, eight o'clock ; the detachment of artillery to be put on board the armed sloop this day. The army to hold themselves in readiness to land and attack the enemy. As the *Lowestoffe* and *Squirrel* frigates are ordered to follow the flat-bottomed boats, the troops belonging to those ships are to remain in them, and the boats intended for these corps are to take in others, according to the following distribution :—

<i>Stirling Castle</i>	2	} To take fifty into each boat of Bragg's regiment, out of the <i>Ann and Elizabeth</i> transport, instead of Amherst's.
<i>Dublin</i> . . .	3	
<i>Aleide</i> . . .	1	
<i>Pembroke</i> . . .	4	} To take in Kennedy's regiment, out of the <i>Employment</i> transport.
<i>Vanguard</i> . . .	4	
<i>Trident</i> . . .	4	} To take in Colonel Howe's Corps of light infantry, out of the <i>Jane and Mary</i> transport.
<i>Centurion</i> . . .	2	
<i>Shrewsbury</i> . . .	4	} To take in Anstruther's, out of the <i>George</i> transport.
<i>Medway</i> . . .	2	
<i>Captain</i> . . .	4	} To take Lascelles's regiment, in five boats, out of the <i>Ward</i> transport, and fifty of the Royal American Grenadiers, out of the <i>Sutherland</i> , in the sixth boat.

"There remain to be taken into the boats of the fleet two hundred Highlanders, of which *The Terror of France* schooner takes fifty from the *Ann and Elizabeth* ; the remaining one hundred and fifty Highlanders, in the *Ward* transport, will be taken by the following boats : *Sutherland's* long boat, forty ;

Aleide and *Medway*, forty each; *Admiral's* flat-bottomed boat, fifteen; *Sutherland* cutter, fifteen. Ships that carry troops immediately after the flat-bottomed boats. *Lowestoffe* frigate, three hundred of Amherst's; *Squirrel*, two hundred and forty of Louisbourg Grenadiers; *Seahorse*, two hundred and fifty Highlanders; *Hunter* sloop, one hundred and twenty Highlanders; three armed vessels, two hundred Light Infantry; *Laurel* transport, four hundred Royal Americans; *Adventure* transport, four hundred of Otway's. Ordnance vessels, with tools and artillery men. The *George* transport to be evacuated, and Highlanders being one hundred and fifty, to be removed into *Seahorse* frigate; and one hundred of the same corps from the *Ann* and *Elizabeth*, to be removed also on board the *Seahorse* to-morrow morning, after the reimbarcation of the first body of the troops from Brigadier Monckton's corps, at St. Nicholas.

ORDER OF TROOPS IN THE LINE OF BOATS.

Number of Boats.

8 . . .	1st Light Infantry leads.
6 . . .	2nd Bragg's regiment.
4 . . .	3rd Kennedy's regiment.
5 . . .	4th Lascelles's regiment.
6 . . .	5th Anstruther's regiment.
1 . . .	6th Detachment of Highlanders and American Grenadiers.

“Captain Chads, of the navy, has received the General's direction in respect to the order in which the troops move, and are to land; and no officer must attempt to make the least alteration, or interfere with Captain Chad's particular province, lest, as the boats move in the night there may be disorder and confusion among them. The troops must go into the boats about nine to-morrow night, or when it is pretty near high water; but the naval officers, commanding the different divisions of boats, will apprise them of the fittest time; and as there will be a necessity for remaining some part of the night in the boats, the Officers will provide accordingly; and the soldiers will have a jill of rum extraordinary to mix with their water; arms and ammunition, two days' provisions with rum and water, are all that the soldiers are to take into the boats; their ships, with their blankets, tents, etc. will soon be brought up.”

The night of the 12th was fixed upon for the movement of the troops, and on this day Wolfe was very busy. The brigadiers—Townshend and Murray at least—were distrustful of the whole business, and angry at the rejection of their own plan. Holmes, who probably shared their views, afterwards wrote—

“This alteration of the plan of operations was not approved by many besides himself [Wolfe]. It had been proposed to him a month before, when the first ships passed the town, and when it was entirely defenceless and unguarded. . . . He now laid hold of it when it was highly improbable he should succeed. . . . The care of landing the troops and sustaining them by the ships fell to my share—the most hazardous and difficult task I was ever engaged in. For the distance of the landing-place, the impetuosity of the tide, the darkness of the night, and the great chance of exactly hitting the very spot intended without discovery or alarm, made the whole extremely difficult.”¹

Wolfe’s perpetual anxiety lest any part of his plan should be disclosed was justified. Had it not been for his precautions, a private of the Royal Americans who deserted on the 12th would have had it in his power to betray him to Montcalm. He in turn from a French deserter learnt that the French General was still within his entrenchments, Levis marching with a large detachment toward Montreal, and Bougainville’s force overlooking the upper river waiting in expectation of an attack.

Wolfe thus described the situation in his last general orders on the eve of his great and last *coup*—

TO THE ARMY.

On board his Majesty’s ship “Sutherland,”
September 12, 1759.

The enemy’s force is now divided; great scarcity of provisions is in their camp, and universal discontent among the Canadians. The second officer in command is gone to Montreal, or St. John’s, which gives reason to think that General Amherst is advancing into the colony. A vigorous blow struck by the army at this juncture may determine the fate of Canada. Our troops below are in readiness to join us; all the light artillery and tools are embarked at Point Lévi, and the troops will land where the French seem least to expect it.

¹ Doughty, vol. iv. p. 296.

The first body that gets on shore is to march directly to the enemy, and drive them from any little post they may occupy. The officers must be careful that the succeeding bodies do not by any mistake fire upon those who go before them. The battalions must form on the upper ground with expedition, and be ready to charge whatever presents itself. When the artillery and troops are landed, a corps will be left to secure the landing-place, while the rest march on, and endeavour to bring the French and Canadians to a battle. The officers and men will remember what their country expects from them, and what a determined body of soldiers, inured to war, is capable of doing against five weak French battalions mingled with disorderly peasantry. The soldiers must be attentive and obedient to their officers, and the officers resolute in the execution of their duty.

It was his farewell message to his brave and devoted troops. "Duty—remember what their country expects." Is not this the fore-runner of Nelson's farewell signal at Trafalgar?

To cover his master stroke it had been arranged that Saunders' guns and batteries should threaten Beauport, while far above the city Holmes was to advance some of his fleet so as to attract the attention of Bougainville. In addition to these two demonstrations the batteries at Point Lévis renewed their bombardment of the lower town.

Twilight came on; it is brief in these latitudes. It was succeeded by a sombre night to which the stars lent but little radiance. All at once the echoes, stilled for some hours, were re-awakened by the booming of guns. Noiselessly the lighter ships of the squadron swept past the city, while every soldier that could be spared and could shoulder a musket, marched from Lévis up the right bank of the river in the darkness as to where their comrades in the transports lay, and taking boat, rejoined them. Hushed and expectant were these thousands of men, awaiting the signal when they were to launch themselves in the boats, and cast off down the river to the unknown landing-place. No one slept; no one felt like slumber.

On board the *Sutherland*, the General sat in his cabin. He had sent a note to his early friend Jervis, the commander of the *Porcupine* sloop, to come aboard to spend an hour or two with him.

Jervis found the General had a trust to repose in him—one he would have given to Carleton—but no soldier might call himself

Niptone added 8th June 1759.

I desire that Miss Leather's Picture may be set in Jewels to the amount of five hundred Guineas, and returned to her.

I leave Col^l. Doughty, Col^l. Carlisle, Col^l. Howe, & Col^l. Wards, a thousand Pounds each.

I desire Admiral Bunder to accept of my Right of Service of State, in remembrance of his Guest.

My Camp Equipage, Kitchin, Turnishers, Table Linens, Wine & provisions, I leave to the Officer who succeeds me in the Command.

All my Books & Papers both here & in England, I leave to Col^l. Carlisle.

I leave Major Barre, Capt^l. DeLaune, Capt^l. Smith, Capt^l. Belle - Capt^l. Lepleu & Capt^l. Lutwale each a hundred Guineas, to buy swords & rings in remembrance of their Friend.

My servant Francis, shall have one half of my Cloaths & Linen here, and the three Footmen shall divide the rest amongst them.

All the servants shall be paid their year's Wages, and their board Wages till they arrive in England, or till they engage with other Masters, or enter into some other profession. Besides this, I leave fifty Guineas to Francis, twenty to Ambrose, and ten to each of the others.

Every thing over and above the Express I leave to my good mother, entirely at her Disposal -

Witness

Will^m DeLaune

Thos^l Belle

Jam: Wolfe,

WOLFE'S WILL

From the original at Somerset House

safe on the morrow. Gravely he handed the young sailor the will¹ he had made three months before at sea, his note-book and papers, while from his bosom he drew a portrait of Miss Lowther, which was to be returned to her in case he fell. And Wolfe believed he would fall; he had a presentiment of death.

To the will he had added a codicil, penned on the eve of the battle of Montmorency, and witnessed by Barré and Hervey Smith, by which he left £1,000 each to his uncle, Major Walter Wolfe, and his cousin, Captain Edward Goldsmith.

“Neptune” at Sea,
8th June, 1759.

“I desire that Miss Lowther’s picture may be set in jewels to the amount of five hundred guineas and returned to her.

I leave to Col. Oughton, Col. Carleton, Col. Howe, and Col. Warde a thousand pounds each. I desire Admiral Saunders to accept of my light service of Plate, in remembrance of his Guest. My camp equipage, kitchen furniture, table linen, wine and provisions, I leave to the officer who succeeds me in the command.

All my books and papers, both here and in England, I leave to Col. Carleton.

I leave Major Barré,² Capt. De Laune, Capt. Smyth, Capt. Bell, Capt. Leslie, and Capt. Caldwell, each a hundred guineas to buy swords and rings, in remembrance of their friend. My servant François shall have half of my clothes and linen here, and the three footmen shall divide the rest amongst them. All the servants shall be paid their year’s wages and their board wages till they arrive in England, or till they engage with other masters, or enter into some other profession. Besides this, I

¹ Of this will Colonel Wood says truly that “it throws a good deal of light on his character, more especially of the unvarying kindness to those in humble positions under him, which earned him the name of ‘The Soldiers’ Friend.’”

² Barré, there is reason to believe, was introduced to Wolfe by their common friend Lord Fitzmaurice, afterwards Earl of Shelburne. “You may be sure,” wrote Wolfe to Rickson, “that my information came from the best hands.” And, from a letter written in 1762, cited in “The Chatham Correspondence,” it appears that Barré was “found out, pushed, and brought into Parliament by Lord Shelburne.” His conduct as Adjutant-General of the expedition was so highly appreciated by his commander, that, when the success of the campaign seemed hopeless, Wolfe regretted his want of power to serve him, and only wished for an opportunity to make him the messenger of good news,—an honour of which the battle of Quebec deprived him. In the following year, however, Barré was the bearer of General Amherst’s dispatches announcing the surrender of Montreal.—Wright.

leave fifty guineas to François, twenty to Ambrose and ten to each of the others.

Everything over and above these legacies I leave to my good mother, entirely at her disposal.¹

JAMES WOLFE."

" Witness

WILL DE LAUNE,

THO. BELL."

While the two friends still sat together in the cabin a messenger entered with a note signed by the three brigadiers. Monckton had been induced to sign—probably sorely against the grain.

To GENERAL WOLFE.

On board the "Loestoft,"
Sept. 12, 1759.

SIR,—As we do not think ourselves sufficiently informed of the several facts which may fall to our share in the execution of the descent you intend to-morrow, we must beg leave to request from you, as distinct orders as the nature of the thing will admit of, particularly to the place or places we are to attack. This circumstance (perhaps very decisive) we cannot learn from the public orders, neither may it be in the power of the naval officer who leads the Troops to instruct us. As we should be very sorry, no less for the public than our own sakes, to commit any mistakes, we are persuaded you will see the necessity of this application.

(signed)

ROBERT MONCKTON,
GEORGE TOWNSHEND,
JAMES MURRAY.

He must have smiled grimly as he read this missive. It would have been easy to ignore it. He, however, seized his pen once

¹ Joshua Parry knew Wolfe personally. "I will send you," he wrote Lord Bathurst in 1760, "an anecdote I have heard of poor Wolfe. His father was excessively fond of him and always allowed him rather more than he could afford or than the young man wanted. When he heard his father was very ill, he was extremely uneasy for fear he should leave everything to him and neglect his mother, telling his friends that though it would be the same thing to her in respect of his fortune, for he was determined to give it all to her, yet he thought it was a most disagreeable circumstance for a parent to stand under obligations to a child. He immediately sent her £300, which was all that he could command, and expressed extreme satisfaction when he heard that his father had provided well for her."—*Quarterly Review*, vol. 185, p. 104.

more. With admirable self-control he again went over the ground to Monckton, and Monckton alone.¹

TO BRIGADIER MONCKTON.

“Sutherland,” 8½ o’clock,
12th Sept. 1759.

SIR,—My reason for desiring the honour of your company with me to Gorham’s post yesterday was to shew you, as well as the distance would permit, the situation of the enemy, and the place where I meant they should be attacked; as you are charged with that duty I should be glad to give you all further light and assistance in my power.—The place is called the *Foulon*, distant upon 2 miles or 2½ from Quebec, where you remember an encampment of 12 or 13 Tents and an abbatis below it.—You mentioned to-day that you had perceived a breastwork there which made me imagine you as well acquainted with the place as the nature of the thing would admit of. I took Capt. Chads with me also and desired the Admiral’s attendance, that as the former is charged by Mr. Saunders with conducting the boats, he might make himself as much a master of his part as possible; and as several of the Ships of War are to fall down with the troops, Mr. Holmes would be able to station them properly after he had seen the place. I have desired Mr. Holmes to send the boats down, so that we may arrive about half an hour before day, as you desired to avoid the disorder of a night attack, and I shall be present myself to give you all the aid in my power.

The officers who are appointed to conduct the divisions of boats have been strictly enjoined to keep as much order and to act as silently as the nature of the service will admit of, and Capt. Chads will begin to land the men a little of this side of the naked Rock, which you must remember to have seen, within which (to the east-ward) the enemy is posted.

It is not a usual thing to point out in the public orders the direct spot of our attack, nor for any inferior Officers not charged with a particular duty to ask instructions upon that point. I had the honour to inform you to-day, that it is my duty to attack the French Army. To the best of my knowledge and abilities I have fixed upon that spot where we can act with the most force and are most likely to succeed. If I am mistaken I am sorry

¹ “These letters, written a few hours before the battle, after final arrangements for the enterprise had been made, are surely a sufficient answer to the numerous critics who have asserted that Wolfe simply carried out the plans of his brigadier.”—Doughty, vol. iii. p. 28.

for it and must be answerable to his Majesty and the public for the consequences.

I have the Honor to be, Sir, etc.,

JAMES WOLFE.

Townshend was briefly dismissed. He had no longer power to try Wolfe's temper.

To BRIGADIER TOWNSHEND.

"Sutherland," 8½ o'clock,
12th Sept., 1759.

SIR,—General Monckton is charged with the first landing and attack at the Foulon, if he succeeds you will be pleased to give directions that the troops afloat be set on shore with the utmost expedition, as they are under your Command, and when 3600 men now in the Fleet are landed I have no manner of doubt but that we are able to fight and to beat the French Army, in which I know you will give your best assistance.

I have the Honor, etc.,

JAM. WOLFE.

These letters to Monckton and Townshend were being written when at nine the first division of the troops took to the boats.

Midnight came and a lantern from the maintop of the *Sutherland* was shown as a signal. Noiselessly did the troops of the first division get into the flat-bottomed boats. An hour and a half later they were ranged round the *Sutherland* ready for the signal to cast off. The tide had already begun to ebb as Wolfe and his officers clambered into the craft already loaded to the water's edge. The General sat in the stern with one of his aides-de-camp, and Major Barré by his side. At two o'clock the boats were cast off. Stealthily, scarce needing the movement of an oar, the flotilla carrying 1600 men stole down the river, keeping near the north bank. Above those precipitous heights the enemy slept.

Half-an-hour later the armed sloops followed, then the other frigates and transports.

In the van was Wolfe, at the supreme crisis of his life. As all sought in vain to pierce the darkness, his mind travelled across the ocean to his mother and his betrothed. He thought of the brevity of life, the vanity of fame, and in an uprush of feeling the stanzas of Gray's *Elegy* came to his lips—

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour,
The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

There was a pause. All were silent. "Gentlemen, I would sooner have written that poem than take Quebec!"¹

This burst of sentiment was but momentary. The boat was rapidly drawing near the spot he had marked at the foot of the dark heights. Four and twenty officers under Captain Delaune had volunteered to be the first to land. Along the line of beach the French had at intervals posted sentries, who had been instructed to expect commissariat boats from Montreal that night.

But a little incident now occurred which was almost fatal to the whole enterprise. In mid-channel lay the sloop *Hunter*, whose captain, informed by a French deserter, was at that moment more on the alert for the enemy's provision boats than mindful of what the military Commander-in-Chief was doing. The route of the boats lay close to the *Hunter*, and when half a cable's length away Wolfe's quick ear caught the sound of an unwonted stir aboard, and his quick suspicions pointed to what proved true, that the crew mistaking him for the enemy were on the point of turning their guns on his boat. Another ten seconds it would have been too late, but he quietly hailed the *Hunter* and explained.

The report about the enemy's provision boats was too useful not to be turned to advantage.

Before De Laune's men could step on shore they were challenged in the darkness. "*Qui vive!*" Instantly one of the officers, the

¹ It seems to me a most perverse whim on the part of certain recent writers to seek to demolish the authenticity of this anecdote. It rests on the unimpeachable authority of Professor John Robison of the University of Edinburgh, who had been a volunteer in Admiral Saunders' fleet. Amongst others to whom he related it was Sir Walter Scott, who conveyed it to Southey. "I have," he wrote, "repeatedly heard the Professor say that during part of the passage Wolfe pulled out of his pocket and read to officers around (or perhaps, repeated) Gray's celebrated 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard.' I do not know if the recitation was not so well received as he expected, but he said with a good deal of animation, 'I can only say, Gentlemen, that, if the choice were mine, I would rather be the author of these verses than win the battle which we are to fight to-morrow morning.' It must not be supposed that this was a matter of serious election, but it was a strong way of expressing his love of literature. I have heard Mr. Robison tell the story repeatedly, for his daughter became the wife of my intimate friend Lord Erskine."

Mr. Doughty also points out another and long-previous authority for the anecdote.

There is nothing intrinsically improbable in it, and it is, besides, very characteristic. Nor does it reflect upon the greatness of the mission of himself and his men. Carlyle gets at the heart of the matter when he paraphrases, in his fantastic way, Wolfe's praise of the "Elegy": "Oh, these are tones of the Eternal Melodies, are not they? A man might thank Heaven had he such a gift: almost as *we* might for succeeding here, gentlemen."—*Frederick the Great*, vol. v. p. 555.

younger Simon Fraser, who spoke excellent French, responded, "*La France.*" "*A quel regiment ?*" demanded one of the sentries. "*De la Reine,*" the quick-witted Highlander made answer. "We are the provision boats. But, hush, we may be heard by the enemy's ship yonder." They were permitted to pass. Quebec and Beauport were on the brink of famine; men who brought the army supplies of food were welcome indeed.

The spot which Wolfe had hit upon for a landing (then called locally Anse du Foulon, now Wolfe's Cove) is a small inlet made by two projecting points of land just high enough to be dry at high tide. From this point the cliff, some 200 feet in height, may be gained by a narrow, zigzag path bordered by stunted trees and bushes. But even this path had been filled by the enemy with obstructions.

It was four o'clock. Wolfe, the first man to leap ashore, after anxiously scanning the heights, said to De Laune's men about him, "You must get up, my lads, as you can." Some of the boats had overshot the mark, but as all had to clamber up the face of the slope as they could, it made little difference. Up to the summit, still wrapped in silence, clambered De Laune's volunteers and three Light Infantry companies, all keeping as near together as they could. As they neared the top the enemy's picquet was aroused and Captain Macdonald, a Highlander, began a fresh parley in French. But the troops were too impatient to parley: they flung themselves upon the French sentries, and before many shots were exchanged, put them to flight. Two batteries were taken in reverse before they had given much trouble.

All this while Wolfe was at the bottom of the slope. No sooner did he hear the discharge of weapons and the ringing cheers above than, by his orders, the rest of the division flung themselves upon the face of the cliff, and, helped by the bushes, tore a way somehow to the top. There they joined their comrades, who had already made several prisoners.¹

Dawn was just breaking as the General himself climbed the height, and gathered around him his 1600 men. Did no fleeting thought come to him as he stood there of the terrible risk he had run? From the plateau, known as the Heights of Abraham, he could discern the return of the boats laden with the second division commanded by Townshend. By this time the path had been cleared, and an ascent was made double file. Then the

¹ "These men gave Wolfe some valuable information, which practically confirmed the truth of his own forecast in every particular."—Wood, p. 231.



WOLFE AT QUEBEC

From a pencil sketch by Capt. Hervey Smith, in the possession of Lieut.-Col. C. A. M. Warde, J.P.

bluejackets, hastened across the river, where Burton and his 1200 men were eager to embark. Long before the sun arose Wolfe had 4800 men on the heights, awaiting the onset of the astonished enemy. Each man carried seventy rounds of ammunition, but the labour of dragging the guns up the cliff was heavy and tedious, so that only one had gained the summit when the action began. Excited and eager, but preserving the strictest discipline, they stood, while Wolfe examined the position carefully. He gave the order to march in files, and on the Plains of Abraham they halted.

No sooner had Holmes emptied his transports than he swung his squadron down the river to Beauport, where the arrival of the ships made Montcalm suspect an attack upon his position there. Montcalm had spent a sleepless night, perplexed at tactics he could not fathom. He had taken every precaution against attack at Montmorenci, and trusted Bougainville and his 2000 troops with the task of defending the cliffs above the city. The idea of a force from below smashing his centre never occurred to him. Between himself and the city lay Vaudreuil, who had promised instantly to report any news from the outposts. Montcalm had heard firing at Sillery about daybreak, which made him uneasy, but little was he prepared for the tidings which now burst upon him. Several Canadian picquets, pale and disordered, announced that the whole British army was parading on the Plains of Abraham.

The news seemed preposterous. As the French General got into the saddle he murmured to the Chevalier Johnstone that there must be some foundation for the rumour—a small party of British had come to burn a few houses and retire. From Vaudreuil's quarters in the misty morning light the distant tableland behind the city was visible, and there upon Montcalm's astonished sight the thin red line, so often figuring in British history and romance, stretched across the dull emerald of the heights. "I see them," he said bitterly, in a low voice, "where they ought not to be. This, my friends, is a serious business."

He ordered up instantly all the troops that could be spared from the Beauport lines, and soon thousands of men were hurrying pell-mell over the bridge of boats that traversed the St. Charles, the regiment of Guienne in the van, on into the beleaguered city. "Since they have got to the weak side of this miserable garrison," said Montcalm, "we must give battle and crush them before midday." He sent ahead 1500 Canadian militia to engage the enemy until he had disposed of his forces. Messengers galloped

off to Bougainville, at Cap Rouge eight miles away, to come to his chief's assistance.

On the approach of the Canadian militia, Wolfe drew up his army in battle array.¹

Here, on this "almost ideal open battlefield,"² he would cast the die for the possession of Canada. On the extreme right, near the precipice, slightly wooded near the brink, he placed the 35th Regiment and the Grenadiers of Louisbourg, whose impetuous conduct at Montmorenci six weeks before had cost so dear. The 28th continued the line to the 43rd, which, with the 47th, formed the centre. On the left the 58th just reached the brow of the ridge overlooking the St. Charles Valley, joined on the right by the 78th. This formed the First Division, which Wolfe, at the head of the Grenadiers, commanded; Monckton commanded the right, Murray the centre.

Behind was drawn up the Second Division under Townshend, consisting of the 15th Regiment and two battalions of the 60th, or Royal Americans. As a reserve, a third line was formed by Colonel Burton with the 48th in four columns of two companies each, some light infantry under Colonel Howe covering the flank and rear. The Grande Allée, or road to Cap Rouge, passed through the centre of the plain. The whole of these dispositions were made by Wolfe with unerring judgment and great celerity.

Three-quarters of a mile away lay the city's western wall. In the interval on the plain, while the British troops were being drawn

¹ The total strength was 4829 of all ranks, and 2 guns.

Major-general	1
Brigadiers	3
Divisional Staff	9
Louisbourg Grenadiers—From 1st Royals; 17th, 22nd, 40th and 45th Regiments	241
15th—"Amhersts," now East Yorkshire Regiment	406
28th—"Bragg's," now 1st Bn. Gloucestershire	421
35th—"Otway's," now 1st Bn. Royal Sussex	519
43rd—"Kennedy's," now 1st Bn. Oxfordshire Light Infantry	327
47th—"Lascelle's," now 1st Bn. Loyal North Lancashire	360
58th—"Anstruther's," now 2nd Bn. Northamptonshire	335
48th—"Webb's," now 1st Bn. Northamptonshire	683
2nd Bn. Royal Americans—"Monckton's," now 2nd Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps	322
3rd Bn. Royal Americans—"Lawrence's," now 3rd Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps	540
78th—"Fraser's," now 2nd Bn. Seaforth Highlanders	662

² Wood, p. 234.

up, the advancing sharpshooters of the Canadian militia poured forth a harassing fire from behind scrub and thicket. On the flanking woods and coppices other militiamen and Indians were hidden. Men began to fall so fast in the British ranks that Wolfe advanced some light infantry to drive them out. At seven o'clock the enemy mustered in greater numbers, bringing up three field guns which caused some mischief, but by no means ruffled the discipline of Wolfe's men. Colonel Howe, with the light infantry men, soon cleared the coppices at the point of the bayonet. The General, we are told, seemed to be in all parts of the field at once, instructing and encouraging by turns. At one point his eye fell on a captain shot through the lungs. He stopped to press the hand of the wounded man, told him not to give up hope, and assured him of leave of absence and early promotion. Nay, more, at such a critical moment, with the fate of Quebec in the balance, he send an aide-de-camp with a message to General Monckton to carry out his wishes in case he himself fell in the action. The captain survived and to Monckton's credit the promise was kept. Do not such actions as these yield the secret of Wolfe's popularity with his men and show why his memory was ever cherished as the "Soldier's Friend"?

Thus far not a shot had been fired from the British lines. At eight o'clock the heads of the enemy's columns could be discerned ascending the slope which led from the St. Charles to the Plains of Abraham, skirting the northern ramparts of the city. After halting within reconnoitring distance they were formed by their leader into three powerful divisions, numbering altogether, exclusive of Indians, 7,520 men. On the right were one half of the Canadian militia, supported by the battalions of La Saare and Languedoc, the rest of the militia being on the left with the Royal Roussillon Regiment. In the centre, commanded by Montcalm himself mounted on a black charger, were the regiments of Béarn and Guienne. Although the Indians were present on the field in numbers they did not distinguish themselves by much fighting.

Meanwhile, Wolfe, noting that Montcalm was making an attempt to outflank his left, ordered Townshend to form the 15th *en potence*, and so show a double front to the French right.

Bougainville, though far distant, had sent a force of infantry and a troop of cavalry to attack Wolfe's rear-guard. These had been repulsed by Townshend; while in front the sharpshooters had also been compelled to fall back.

Realizing the value of a brief rest after such heroic exertions, he then told his men to lie down. Thus they remained until nine

o'clock, when seeing the French army at last in motion, at a signal they sprang to their feet. At the same time the solitary gun of the British opened fire. The two armies were barely six hundred yards apart.



PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF QUEBEC

The hands of the great clock in the Basilica pointed to five minutes past ten when the French advanced with loud shouts, and at about two hundred yards' distance began firing obliquely towards the extremities of the British line. The rain had ceased, although the sky was still lowering. Wolfe had given the strictest orders

that not a single shot of the enemy was to be returned, but with shouldered arms as if on parade the British lines stood grim and silent, a triumph of one man's superb discipline. When a soldier received a bullet and dropped, his fellows closed ranks like so many machines. Wolfe himself was shot in the wrist, but hastily binding a handkerchief about the wound, which must have been agonizing as the tendons had been severed, he moved along the front ranks, exhorting them to be steady—to stand firm. The enemy was less than forty yards away after pouring in a full first broadside.

The moment for the British had come.

“Present—fire!” rang out the word of command, and like a single monstrous shot the deadly volley thundered out. So precise was the fire of those three front ranks into the oncoming foe that French veterans after the battle said they had never known anything like it. Bradley calls it “one of the most tremendous and effective volleys that had ever been delivered since the invention of gunpowder.” The advancing columns reeled like aspen saplings caught in a gust, and then the smoke obscured the horror of what had happened, and only their cries of agony showed how remorseless had been the blow. Before the white clouds cleared away the British had reloaded and repeatedly fired. The French were soon seen lying in heaps, and the gaps in that phalanx that came on so gallantly a second before were far wider than the groups of dazed survivors. General de St. Ours had been struck dead; de Senezgues, the second in command, was stretched on the ground mortally wounded.

Less than fifteen minutes had elapsed since the enemy had sounded an advance; not a single British soldier had moved, and yet Montcalm's trained eye must have told him that all was lost. As Wolfe gave the order to charge, the whole body of the Canadian militia, unused to fire in the field, broke and fled. Thus deserted, and their ranks thinned, the veteran battalions of Béarn and Guienne could hardly keep their ranks. Montcalm, still unhurt, galloping hither and thither did something to allay the panic. But his charge was broken, and Wolfe, at the head of his grenadiers, is coming on. The wavering foe shall feel bayonet as well as bullet, and with gleaming eyes and tense muscles the British advanced. A conspicuous figure was Wolfe over six feet high in his bright new uniform, and several French marksmen had already marked him for destruction. In the act of waving his sword a shot struck him in the groin—a dangerous wound—but heedless still he pressed

on. Nor could the ardour of his troops be restrained as they saw the French give way: their steady pace broke into a run, trampling over dead and dying, and scouring the plain before them of every living foe. Most of the attacking column was now a mass of fugitives, although here and there a stout resistance was offered, in which the British suffered severely.

A third ball smote Wolfe in the breast. On he staggered a few paces, trying hard to keep his feet. The charging grenadiers swept past him. "Support me," he gasped out to Lieutenant Brown of the Grenadiers who was close behind; "let not my brave fellows see me fall. The day is ours—keep it." Before Brown's arm could encircle his General's waist he sank down. A young volunteer named Henderson and a private soldier were close at hand; they rushed forward, and these, with an artillery officer,¹ lifted up the throbbing, helpless form and carried it a short distance towards the rear. None else of all those desperate, battling men had seen. The three bearers reached a small redoubt which the enemy had held just ere dawn that day, and there they lay their stricken leader down. One proposed to run for a surgeon. "It is needless," came from the bloodless lips, "it is all over with me." Then came a stupor, and the sorrowing group thought him dead. There was a brief pause, ten seconds perhaps, when in the distance a cry was heard from a messenger sent to the rear: "They run—they run!"

The dying General started up with the wide-open gaze of one roused from slumber. "Who run?" he asked earnestly. Did he for a fleeting instant think his men had been by some miracle overborne by Montcalm? "The enemy, sir," came the answer. "Egad, they give way everywhere." At this the young hero summoned all his strength. "Go one of you, my lads," he said, "with all speed to Colonel Burton, and tell him to march Webb's regiment down to the St. Charles River, and cut off the retreat of the fugitives to the bridge."² He then turned on his side, and murmuring "Now God be praised, I die happy," in a few moments expired.

¹ Colonel Williamson.

² Needless to say, Townshend, on taking command, instantly rescinded this order. This account of Wolfe's death follows Knox in every important particular.



THE DEATH OF WOLFE

Drawn in 1760 from materials supplied by an eye-witness

XXII

CONCLUSION

WHEN an aide-de-camp hastened to inform Monckton of the leader's fall he found that officer stretched on the ground with a severe wound, which he had received while leading Lascelles.¹ The command therefore by a singular chance devolved upon Townshend, who instantly checked the disorder into which the troops had lapsed owing to their ardour for the fray. Some of the Highlanders had pursued the enemy to the verge of the St. Charles River, and the 58th had actually reached the St. John's gate of the city. Into these victorious pursuers the enemy, still master of a gun or two entrenched in ambuscade, poured a fusillade of bullets, and continued firing until the copses and thickets were cleared. Townshend therefore, although Quebec might then and there have been taken by storm, sounded the recall. He was doubtless justified, for in the clear, warm sunshine which now supervened, the white-coated troops of Bougainville were seen approaching the British rear from Cap Rouge. Townshend re-formed his battalions into line and opened on the new arrivals with a couple of their own field pieces. Bougainville, on his part, was quick to appreciate the altered situation of affairs. The demonstration of the victors was enough, and he retreated in precipitation to Cap Rouge. Townshend did not follow, but set about entrenching his position and getting his guns up to bombard the city.

At the moment Wolfe fell, with the tide of fugitives struggling to reach the city gates, borne along on his black charger in his own despite by the very force of the torrent, was the luckless Montcalm. As he drew near the gates a shot, perhaps from one of his own men, passed through his body. Although the blood flowed in a crimson stream down his clothes he kept his seat, and inside the city was assisted from his horse and carried to a convent. When his wound was examined he asked the surgeon if it was

¹ The wound was not serious. Three days later Monckton was able to write Townshend: "I am so well as to sit up—and never in better health." Nevertheless, Townshend persisted in regarding his chief as an invalid, hurried through the terms of capitulation on his own account, and signed them. "I did suppose I should see the capitulation before it was signed," complained Monckton. Townshend took this as an affront, and insisted on going home at once.—*Townshend*, p. 248.

mortal; the surgeon gave a reluctant assent. "I am glad of that," said Montcalm; "I shall not live to see the surrender of Quebec."¹

But the surrender could not be long postponed. Within the city Ramésay and his garrison of fifteen hundred men, Vaudreuil and his cowering band of fugitives across the St. Charles, Bougainville and his three thousand were now of no avail to save Quebec. Five hundred French and Canadians were dead on the field: a thousand had surrendered or were made prisoners.

"I will neither give orders nor interfere further," said the stricken Montcalm to the commandant of the garrison. "I have business to attend to of greater moment than your ruined garrison and this wretched country. My time is very short, so pray leave me. I wish you all comfort and to be speedily extricated from your present perplexities."

One can well understand the words and the bitter reflection which provoked them. On the following day he died.

Before nightfall on the 17th, four days after the battle, a French officer with a flag of truce and proposals of surrender came from M. de Ramezy, and on the following day the keys of Quebec were delivered up to Townshend. So fell the great stronghold of the French in North America.

Let us return to the mortal remains of the conqueror. Hastily down the slope was the body borne to a place of safety. In the log book of the *Lowestoft* there is this passage under date of September 13: "At 11.0 was brought on board the corpse of General Wolfe." After being embalmed it was transferred to the *Royal William* for passage to England.

When the army first learnt of the death of its beloved leader, grief showed itself above all other feelings. As one officer wrote—

"Our joy at this success is inexpressibly damped by the loss we sustain of one of the greatest heroes that this or any other age can boast of." Another wrote: "Our loss has been inconsiderable, separate from our dear, courageous, yet mild Wolfe, whose fall added revenge to intrepidity."

¹ In the battle one general, one captain, six lieutenants, one ensign, three sergeants, and forty-five rank and file killed; one brigadier, four staff-officers, twelve captains, twenty-six lieutenants, ten ensigns, twenty-five sergeants, four drummers, and five hundred and six rank and file wounded. Of the artillery company, one gunner was killed and seven were wounded. Amongst the wounded officers were Carleton and Barré. Barré lost an eye, and his sight was so severely injured that he subsequently became totally blind.

On the 14th the following General Orders were issued by Townshend—

GENERAL ORDERS.

14th September, 1759,

Plains of Abraham.

Parole—Wolfe.

Countersign—England.

“The remaining general officers fit to act take the earliest opportunity to express the praise which is due to the conduct and bravery of the troops: and the victory, which attended it, sufficiently proves the superiority which this army has over any number of such troops as they engaged yesterday. They wish that the person who lately commanded them had survived so glorious a day, and had this day been able to give the troops their just encomiums. The fatigues which the troops will be obliged to undergo, to reap the advantage of this victory, will be supported with a true spirit, as this seems to be the period which will determine, in all probability, our American labours.”

Whatever it may have been morally and strategically—and volumes have been written upon it from the military standpoint—politically the battle of Quebec was one of the great battles of the world. By adding Canada to the British Empire it established the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon race in North America. But in assessing its results we do not now stop there. Who then could have lifted the veil and discerned that on the Plains of Abraham were sown the seeds of the American Republic? Had Wolfe not then perished it had been otherwise, but into this we may not enter here. “The infinite significance of the achievement was, of course,” says Mr. Bradley, “in great part hidden from the eyes of those who shared in or applauded it.” But we see now more clearly as the years of this twentieth century lapse, what influence the battle of Quebec had on the history of mankind.

There has arisen of latter years a school of writers in Britain and America who, while appraising at its highest the achievement of the 13th September, 1759, urge that Wolfe should share his glory with another—that the laurel wreath placed upon his brow by the suffrages of mankind should be divided in twain, the second fragment to adorn a hero of greatness fully equal to his own.

It is not to Townshend, or Monckton, or Murray that the new school would award this lofty honour, but to Wolfe's naval colleague, Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Saunders. It is enough, per-

haps, to say that such a contention would have surprised none so much as Saunders himself, who, during the next twelve years of his life, always attributed the sole merit to Wolfe and Wolfe alone.

If Wolfe and the siege had failed, Saunders would have had no blame, which is the crucial test. The responsibility of the naval commander for success or the reverse was very trifling. Nor were there any French ships or sailors to meet in the river. The fleet loyally co-operated and showed great skill in an awkward enterprise; but their part was of an utterly different kind and their risks slight compared to those of Wolfe and his soldiers. Moreover, the stroke of genius, daring, and good-fortune that comprises the whole incident, with its far-reaching effects, is surely a thing to itself. Nor is it in the least relevant that there were 10,000 sailors on board the ships in the river, and only 9,000 troops, or that one, two, or three naval officers had senior rank to Wolfe. One might as well assert that Waterloo was won by sea power. If it had not been for Nelson and his successors, the British army could never have been transported across the Channel.

There is something else to be added before we take a final leave of the scene of Wolfe's glorious death and victory. How was his memory regarded by those of his officers who, while he lived, had been jealous of his control and doubtful of his genius? Monckton, his second in command, was loyal, but it will ever remain a blot upon the fame of Townshend and Murray that their loyalty was chiefly lip service, and each has to meet the accusation of attempting to depreciate their late leader to advance their own repute. The moment the capitulation had been signed—a capitulation whose terms reflected little credit upon Townshend—the latter was anxious to proceed at once to England and there parade his own part in the achievement. But Monckton, who was naturally a little piqued at the way Townshend had rushed through the capitulation, was opposed to Townshend's departure and told him so. It then appeared that Townshend feared that Wolfe's partisans, such as Carleton, Barré, and, he suspected, Saunders, would make too much of the brigadier's opposition to the *coup* which had led to victory, and he wished to counteract it in person. This view he communicated to Murray, who, doubtless feeling that he was open to the same charge, wrote—

Since so black a lie was propagated I think myself very happy that you will be on the spot to contradict whatever ignorance or faction may suggest.



THE DEATH OF GENERAL WOLFE, BY BENJAMIN WEST

Engraved from the picture now in the possession of the Duke of Westminster

I have no copy of the paper I sent by you to General Wolfe concerning his scheme of landing between Point au Tremble and St. Augustin, but the public orders are a sufficient proof of his intention to do it, and likewise of the suddenness of the thought of landing when we did. Indeed his orders throughout the campaign show little stability, stratagem or fixed resolution; I wish his friends had not been so much our enemies, his memory would probably have been dearer to his country than now it can be. We are acting on the defensive, you have the execution of the plan, and I am well persuaded you will manage it with as much tenderness to the memory of the poor General as the nature of things will admit of.

I find I am not to have the honour of a visit from you so I must take the opportunity of wishing you a good voyage and a happy meeting with your friends.¹

So Townshend and Murray believed themselves to be acting "on the defensive" in the execution of their plan of belittling their leader and exalting themselves. Townshend's aristocratic friends in England lost no opportunity of pressing him forward. Poets came forward to sing his praises, painters solicited the honour of a sitting from the "second hero of Quebec." On the news of the battle the Adjutant-Gen. Lytellton wrote to Pitt—

The loss of Wolfe is ever to be lamented, but Providence gives not the cup of joy unmixed, and were it not for a little ingredient of bitterness, it would be too intoxicating. Townshend still remains, and many a gallant officer animated by your spirit and by you brought forward into action.

Whether Townshend was really animated by Pitt's spirit we leave the reader of the foregoing narration to judge.

Only three days after the receipt of Wolfe's discouraging dispatch to Holderness, penned four days before the battle, came the news of the victory. A *Gazette* extraordinary was immediately issued, and the nation went wild with joy over the glorious tidings, so quickly succeeding. No wonder all Britain was stirred by the thrilling story, that ten thousand bonfires blazed, that bells pealed and cannon fired salvos of joy.

The effect of so joyful news (wrote Burke), immediately on such a dejection, and then the mixture of grief and pity

¹ *Townshend.*

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which attended the public congratulations and applauses, was very singular and affecting. The sort of mourning triumph that manifested itself on that occasion did equal honour to the memory of the General and to the humanity of the nation.

He added—

However glorious this victory was, and however important in its consequences, it must be admitted that it was very dearly bought. Soldiers may be raised; officers will be formed by experience; but the loss of a genius in war is a loss that we know not how to repair. The death of Wolfe was indeed grievous to his country, but to himself the most happy that can be imagined, and the most to be envied by all those who have a true relish for military glory.¹

Walpole's words have been often quoted—

The incidents of dramatic fiction could not be conducted with more address to lead an audience from despondency to sudden exultation, than accident prepared to excite the passions of a whole people. They despaired, they triumphed and they wept, for Wolfe had fallen in the hour of victory. Joy, curiosity, astonishment, were painted on every countenance; the more they enquired the higher their admiration rose. Not an incident but was heroic and affecting.²

On the 14th of November Parliament met, and a week later the House of Commons resolved to address the King, praying that his Majesty would order a monument to be erected in Westminster Abbey to the memory of Wolfe. At the same time, the thanks of the House were given to the Admirals and Generals employed in "the glorious and successful expedition against Quebec." Pitt proposed the address, and in a "low and plaintive voice, pronounced an elaborate panegyric on the dead warrior." "It was perhaps," according to Walpole, "the worst harangue he ever uttered. His eloquence was too native not to suffer by being crowded into a ready mould. The parallels which he drew from Greek and Roman story did but flatten the pathetic of the topic. . . . The horror of the night, the precipice scaled by Wolfe, the empire he with a handful of men added to England, and the glorious catastrophe of

¹ *Annual Register*, 1759, p. 43.

² *Memoirs of the Reign of George II*, vol. ii. p. 385.



ADMIRAL SIR JOHN JERVIS (EARL OF ST. VINCENT)

From the painting by Hoppner

contentedly terminating his life when his fame began,—ancient story may be ransacked, and ostentatious philosophy thrown into the account, before an episode can be found to rank with Wolfe's."¹ The Prime Minister's motion was seconded by Alderman Beckford, who remarked, that in the appointment of Wolfe neither parliamentary interest, family influence, nor aristocratic views had been consulted, and that the General and the Minister seemed to have been made for each other.

Nor did Great Britain alone exult. Her transatlantic colonies, where the shadow of the French had long been laid across New England and the northern settlements, exulted also. The colony of Massachusetts, in the exuberance of the moment, voted a marble statue to the hero, to be erected in Boston, a monument was actually erected in New York, and a hundred pulpits resounded with panegyric and congratulation.

From this we turn to a different scene—a scene not of joy but of sorrow. At Blackheath, in the mansion where the young hero had spent so many pleasant hours, his widowed mother received the tidings of the battle which robbed her of her only son. That night while other towns were radiant with bonfires and illuminations, Blackheath was dark, for there the townsfolk respected the mother's grief, and Westerham, which gave him birth, likewise refrained from expressing the national joy. From Squerryes John Warde wrote to his brother George, then Lieutenant-Colonel of the 4th Dragoons: "Amidst the public great events, you know I have lost too much in your friend to partake of the fulness of its joy. I sincerely condole with you on the loss of poor Wolfe; but, as I know you always foresaw some such calamity from his too great intrepidity, conclude you received the fatal event with less surprise. You will not, I believe, subscribe to my opinion; but, honourable as the expedition proves, I rejoice you was not there. To have seen your friend fall would have been bitter to yourself, and to have shared his fate how grievous to us all! His poor mother bears it heavily; how should she do otherwise? And the public funeral which is talked of for his remains will (if true) possibly overset her quite."

By this time the remains of the hero were on the bosom of the broad Atlantic.

Leaving ten regiments or most of Wolfe's army behind to garrison Quebec, Saunders and the fleet sailed on the 18th of October for England. Amidst the solemn booming of cannon, the

¹ *Memoirs of the Reign of George II*, vol. ii. p. 393.

Royal William, with the flag of England flying at half-mast, its cross of St. George scarce ruddier than the crimson maples which lined the St. Lawrence, bore slowly down the mighty stream the corpse of the late leader. On the 16th of the following month she anchored at Spithead, and early next morning, to the firing of signal guns, the coffin was lowered into a twelve-oared barge, towed by two other boats and followed by a funeral cortège of twelve others. Sombrely, silently but for the booming of the minute guns of the fleet, it was towed to shore at Portsmouth, where the regiment of Invalides and the company of Artillery in the garrison received it. The coffin was put into a travelling-hearse, attendants in a mourning coach following.

The two faithful aides-de-camp, Captains Hervey Smith¹ and Thomas Bell, joined the cavalcade, the troops marching with arms reversed, and the bells tolling muffled peals and thousands of spectators paying a last tribute of respect to the illustrious dead. From Landport gate the hearse and coaches passed through the ranks of the halted escort and proceeded on to Blackheath alone. In the Wolfe mansion in the wide hall it lay for a whole day in state, its black velvet pall heaped with laurel wreaths, and on the 20th was the body of James Wolfe laid beside his father's in the family vault of the parish church of St. Alfege at Greenwich. Not until 149 years later was a simple bronze tablet affixed above to tell the chance passer-by whose ashes lay mouldering below.

No sooner did it become noised abroad that the dead General was the affianced husband of Miss Lowther, than many directed their condolences to that young lady, then on a visit to Raby Castle.² There is a letter from Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to Miss Bute, in which she says, "General Wolfe is to be lamented but not pitied. I am of your opinion that compassion is only owing to his mother and his intended bride, who I think the greater sufferer, however sensible I am of a parent's tenderness. Disappointments in youth are those which are felt with the greatest anguish, when we are all in expectation of happiness perhaps not to be found in life."

¹ Afterwards Sir Hervey Smith, Bart., died 1811. See notice in *Examiner*, October 22, 1811.

² "It is curious coincidence," remarks Mr. Bradley, "that the heroines of both Wolfe's love-affairs should have come, and that from no connection with each other, from the same group of families in a remote corner of England. Isell Hall, whence came Miss Lawson, is still a residence of the family. Meaburn Hall, Kate Lowther's early home, though now a somewhat inaccessible farmhouse, between Shap and Appleby, on the Lowther estates, remains a most interesting and picturesque specimen, both inside and out, of the Tudor manor house of the Border country."—*Fight with France*, p. 317.



HALL OF WOLFE HOUSE AT BLACKHEATH, WHERE
WOLFE'S BODY LAY IN STATE



SILK DRESSING-GOWN WORN BY GENERAL WOLFE AT MONT-
MORENCY CAMP, IN WHICH HIS BODY WAS
BROUGHT TO ENGLAND

Now in the possession of A. Wolfe-Aylward, Esq.

The miniature which Wolfe had the night before his death entrusted to his friend Jervis was duly carried to his mother by his aide-de-camp, Captain Bell. According to the request made in his will, she had it set in brilliants and restored to Miss Lowther. This was not, however, until the following spring. Meanwhile Miss Lowther addressed a letter of condolence to the bereaved mother's late companion at Bath, Miss Aylmer, intended for Mrs. Wolfe's eyes. This drew forth a lengthy reply—not, however, from the lady addressed but from another friend now with her at Blackheath, Mrs. Scott. To this Miss Lowther replied.

MISS LOWTHER to MISS SCOTT.

Raby Castle, 18th December, 1759.

MADAM,—Miss Aylmer's having once answered a letter I wrote Mrs. Wolfe, drew me into the error of addressing her again; but I now desire you to accept my sincere thanks for your obliging tho' melancholy epistle. I'm not surprised to hear the patient sufferer submits with calmness and resignation to this severe trial, because I could never doubt the magnanimity of General Wolfe's mother; but I wish, if her health would permit, she could by degrees be brought to bear new objects; perhaps they might call her attention one moment from the melancholy subject which engrosses it, and in time dissipate, though not efface or drive away from the memory so just and deep a sorrow:—not that I shall ever attempt intruding my company, since (though I feel for her more than words can express, and should, if it was given me to alleviate her grief, gladly exert every power which nature or compassion has bestowed)—yet I feel we are the last people in the world who ought to meet.

I knew not my picture was to be set; but I beg, Madam, you will tell Mrs. Wolfe I entreat her to take her own time about giving the necessary directions. I can't as a mark of his affections, refuse it; otherwise would willingly spare myself the pain of seeing a picture given under far different hopes and expectations. Mrs. Wolfe will, I hope, accept my acknowledgments for her good wishes, and that Almighty God may comfort and support her, is the earnest prayer of, Madam,

Your obliged, humble servant,

K. LOWTHER.

A tradition is mentioned by Warburton that Miss Lowther, who six years later became Duchess of Bolton, "always wore,

henceforth, a pearl necklace which he [Wolfe] had given her, covered with black velvet, in memory of the departed."

The foundation for the story is probably that the young lady was loath to parade upon her person a portrait of herself, but exhibited the jewelled miniature with a black velvet cover.¹

Mrs. Wolfe was a woman cast in the antique mould. Although she could not bring herself to reply to letters of condolence, she was not blind either to the dignity or the duties of her position as mother and chief surviving representative of her celebrated son. On November 6 she addressed a letter to Chatham, observing, "As you did my dear son the honour to entrust him with so great and important an office as the taking of Quebec, which you, Sir, planned, and he executed, I hope to his Majesty's, your and his country's satisfaction, though to my irreparable loss, it occurs to me that there may be some papers or orders of yours relating to the Government service which will come to me. If you will honour me with your commands, I shall send them by a faithful and trusty gentleman, who carries this, Lieutenant Scott; and no eye shall see them but your own."

But it was over a fortnight before the papers reached her at the hands of Captain Bell, who no doubt thought he was doing his duty by examining and sorting them beforehand, not realizing either the capacity or the imperiousness of the old lady at Blackheath. She was as angry as if a slight had been intentionally put upon her.

Her patience had much to endure. It will be recalled that Wolfe had made a will disposing of some seven or eight thousand pounds which he supposed he had inherited on the death of his father. It appeared, however, that the old General, seeing his son well and profitably employed in the service, had given his wife a life interest in his small fortune, which, as her health was but poor, seemed to offer but little injustice to his son. When the nature of James's will was revealed, Mrs. Wolfe once again addressed Chatham.

¹ Wright made every endeavour to discover the existence of this miniature, but in vain. Lord Barnard of Raby Castle courteously writes me: "The miniature now at Raby is always considered to be a portrait of the Duchess of Bolton, by Cosway. It has some hair at the back, and is mounted in a gilt metal frame set with stones. At the time Katherine Lowther wrote the letter to Mrs. Wolfe, she was no doubt staying with her sister Margaret Countess of Darlington." The Duchess of Bolton's daughter married her cousin, Lord Darlington of Raby, who became Duke of Cleveland and ancestor of Lord Barnard. The number of stones corresponds with the jeweller's bill at Squerryes.

MRS. WOLFE to CHATHAM.

Blackheath, *November 30th*, 1759.

SIR.—The great honour your letter of the 28th of Nov. does me, has given me resolution which no other consideration could do to make an application which I hope you will not disprove. My dear son, not knowing the disposition his father had made of his fortune—which was wholly settled on me for life and magnified by fame greatly beyond what it really is—has left to his friends more than a third part of it; and though I should have the greatest pleasure imaginable in discharging these legacies in my lifetime, I cannot do it without distressing myself to the highest degree. My request to you, good and great Sir, is that you will honour me with your instructions how I may in the properest manner address His Majesty for a pension to enable me to fulfil the generous and kind intentions of my most dear lost son to his friends, and to live like the relict of General Wolfe and General Wolfe's mother. I hope, Sir, you will pardon this liberty. I have the honour to be, etc., etc.

CHATHAM to MRS. WOLFE.

St. James's Square, *January 17*, 1760.

MADAM.—I think myself much favoured by your letter wherein you are pleased to desire my advice in a matter that concerns your ease. Had I more than information in my power to offer on a subject so interesting, I beg you will be assured, Madam, that your trouble would be rendered very short, as well my own satisfaction become very sensible. But the thing you are pleased to mention being totally in the Duke of Newcastle's department, I can only desire leave to apprise you that it is to his Grace that all applications of such a nature are to be addressed. If you shall judge proper to take that step (with regard to which I cannot venture to advise), you will command, in that, as well as every other occasion, all good offices and sincerest endeavours for your service from him who has the honour ever to remain, with the truest respect, Madam,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

WM. PITT.¹

It only remains to add that the hero's mother was not only unsuccessful in this application to the Government, but also in another transaction which redounds little to the credit of the

¹ From original at Squerryes Court.

Government or the nation. It was supposed that Wolfe, being a Commander-in-Chief of an expedition, would be entitled to a Commander-in-Chief's pay. Not until February 1761 were the warrants made out for the payment of the staff of the Quebec expedition. As Mrs. Wolfe's agent, Fisher based his demand at the rate of £10 a day from the date of his last commission until his death—a matter of nearly £2500. Promptly was the claim rejected by the War Office, then presided over by Charles Townshend, a brother of Wolfe's brigadier. Acting according to the counsel of friends, amongst whom were Lord Shelburne and Sir Robert Rich, Mrs. Wolfe addressed a memorial to the young king, George III. But the representations of Barrington were successful, and after a melancholy correspondence lasting three years, Townshend's successor, Wellbore Ellis, wrote finally to say that the application was refused.¹

It is to be feared the old lady got a reputation for eccentricity by the tenacity with which she clung to her claims and to the memory of her son and husband.

In March 1760, while retaining her Blackheath residence, Mrs. Wolfe rented a house in Trim Street, Bath, where she caused some military emblems to be cast to adorn the façade, and gathered together many portraits and trophies of father and son. In her correspondence, which for some weeks was voluminous, she had been assisted at first by her nephew, Captain Edward Goldsmith, to whom, on his leaving her to return to Limerick, she presented with the £1000 willed him by his cousin.²

At Blackheath her neighbours, the Masons and Scotts, visited her frequently, but her closest adviser was her son's early tutor and the friend of the family, the Rev. Francis Swinden, F.R.S., Rector of Stifford, Essex, and master of the school in Greenwich. Swinden died less than three months before his friend, who passed away on September 26, 1764. She had previously (February 25, 1763)

¹ It is only fair to mention Barrington's contention that the payment asked for on behalf of one who was not technically a Commander-in-Chief would set a precedent whereby a dozen other claims would be lodged at the War Office.

² Goldsmith's first letter after his return to Ireland was from Dublin, where he spent some time endeavouring to obtain half-pay, but was unsuccessful. He suffered much from the ague, on which account he left Limerick in 1761, and settled at Finglass, near Dublin, where he died in 1764. His letters, which amused his aunt, exhibit a degree of humour not unlike that of his cousin Oliver. They were sealed with Wolfe's seals, one of which bears the family arms—three wolves' heads erased, with chevron, etc.—the other a female head.

A Memorandum for Mr Townden

Whenever it shall please God
to call me hence I desire to be
buried in my Vault at Greenwich
church the shift I have ^{on} at that
time I desire to be buried in a
hearse to carry my body and one
Coach for 2 or 3 Horants to follow
the Hearse no Es cutheons or Ornaments
what ever no Pall Bearers but all
as private as Possible

This is the request of me
A: Wolfe

May the 31st 1763

If I die at Bath, let my body be sent away
early in the morning; & Mr Selby make my
Coffin.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MRS. WOLFE'S BURIAL

From the original memorandum at Squerries Court

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made a will, and in a curious document, still extant, given directions as to her remains and obsequies.

Her property after her death was found to be worth some £17,000, the surviving executors of her will being Colonels Carleton and Warde. Besides the bequests made by her son, she bequeathed £3000 to her nephew William Burcher,¹ and £2000 to the children of another of the old General's sisters named Langley, and various legacies to her own relations, friends and domestics. She also left £1000 to the Incorporated Society for Promoting Protestant Schools in Ireland, £500 to Bath Hospital, £500 to Bromley College, and lesser sums to other charities. What remained it was her wish should be given to the widows and families of poor officers who had served under her son. It is a curious fact that none applied, and ten years later the executors, believing it to be consonant to her wishes, handed over the amount, £3000, to the Hibernian School for Soldiers' Sons.

The monument of white marble which Parliament had decreed, the commission for which was given to the sculptor Wilton, was not unveiled until 1773. It is in a sequestered situation in the north transept of Westminster Abbey. A large oval tablet in the middle of the sarcophagus contains this inscription—

TO THE MEMORY OF
JAMES WOLFE,
MAJOR-GENERAL AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
OF THE BRITISH LAND FORCES
ON AN EXPEDITION AGAINST QUEBEC,
WHO, AFTER SURMOUNTING BY ABILITY AND VALOUR
ALL OBSTACLES OF ART AND NATURE,
WAS SLAIN, IN THE MOMENT OF VICTORY,
ON THE XIII. OF SEPTEMBER, MDCCLIX.,
THE KING AND PARLIAMENT OF GREAT BRITAIN
DEDICATE THIS MONUMENT.

Mention has already been made of the cenotaph in Squerryes Park erected by the Warde family to mark the spot where the young warrior received his first commission. Some of his Westerham friends, the year after his death, placed a marble tablet to his

¹ In Lymington, Hants, churchyard: "Sacred to the memory of William Burcher, gent., first cousin to the late General Wolfe, who died February 13, 1792, aged 79 years."

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memory in the parish church where he was baptized, containing these lines—

“ While George in sorrow bows his laurell'd head,
And bids the artist grace the soldier dead ;
We raise no sculptur'd trophy to thy name,
Brave youth ! the fairest in the list of fame.
Proud of thy birth, we boast th' auspicious year,
Struck with thy fall, we shed a general tear ;
With humble grief inscribe one artless stone,
And from thy matchless honours date our own.
I DECUS I NOSTRUM.”¹

And in 1762 Earl Temple, at the suggestion of his brother-in-law, Chatham, raised a lofty obelisk at Stowe, inscribed—

TO

MAJOR-GENERAL WOLFE,

OSTENDUNT TERRIS HUNC TANTUM FATA.

On the exact spot where Wolfe expired a stone rolled on the field before nightfall that day was replaced in Sir Guy Carleton's time by another in which a meridional line was carved. This gave way in 1832 to a small granite shaft upon which Lord Aylmer, then Governor, caused to be inscribed—

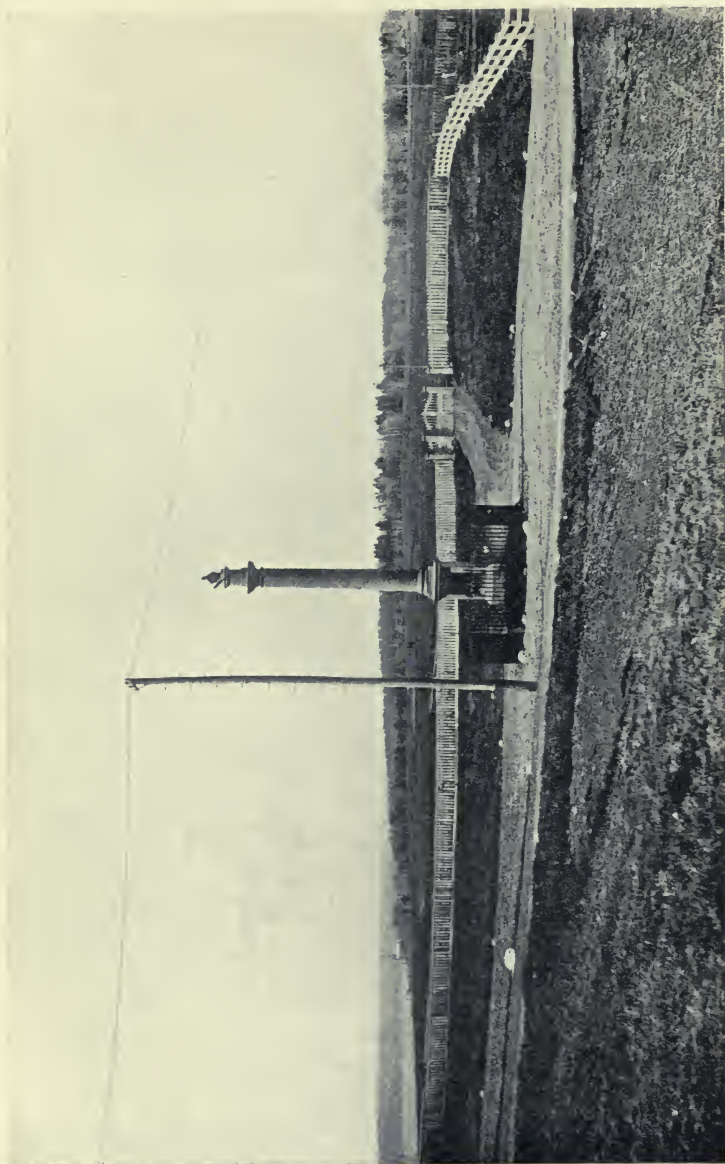
HERE DIED WOLFE VICTORIOUS.

It unhappily became defaced, and ninety years after the battle the column now standing was raised in its stead and enclosed by an iron railing, the cost being borne by the British troops then stationed at Quebec.

But years before then, in 1827, Canadians of both French and English descent subscribed, at the instance of Lord Dalhousie, to a stone obelisk to the memory of both Montcalm and Wolfe. It stands on the borders of Dufferin Terrace, and is conspicuous from the river. On one side is the name “Montcalm,” on

¹ Lord Braybrooke quotes with approval these lines under a bust of Wolfe in the old castle at Quebec—

“ Let no sad tear upon his tomb be shed,
A common tribute to the common dead :
But let the good, the generous and the brave
With godlike envy sigh for such a grave.”



THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM, SHOWING MONUMENT TO WOLFE

the other "Wolfe," while the obelisk further bears the striking legend—

MORTEM . VIRTUS . COMMUNEM
FAMAM . HISTORIA
MONUMENTUM . POSTERITAS
DEDIT.

The site of the battlefield was acquired by public subscription in 1908 and formally handed over by the Prince of Wales to Earl Grey, the Governor-General, to be kept for all time as sacred ground.

Although Chatham's funeral oration on the conqueror of Quebec was thought in the opinion of those who heard to fall short of his best efforts, yet in poetry is Wolfe's memory enshrined in stanzas which deserve to be more widely known than they are, for they have still power to fire the heart and call aloud to the spirit of an England whose boundaries are wider than the brave and prescient soldier who helped to widen them could ever have dreamed—

"England, with all thy faults, I love thee still !
Time was when it was praise and boast enough
In every clime, and travel where we might,
That we were born her children. Praise enough
To fill the ambition of a private man,
That Chatham's language was his mother-tongue,
And Wolfe's great name compatriot with his own.

For Wolfe, the poet tells us—

". . . Wolfe, where'er he fought,
Put so much of his heart into the act,
That his example had a magnet's force,
And all were swift to follow whom all loved.
Those suns are set. Oh, rise some other such !
Or all that we have left, is empty talk
Of old achievements, and despair of new."¹

¹ Cowper, *The Task*, Book II. In one of his letters the poet says: "Nothing could express my rapture when Wolfe made the conquest of Quebec."

APPENDIX

THE subjoined interesting letter, which I owe to the kindness of my friend Mr. Bradley, has recently come to light: and confirms many of the salient points in the published documents, collected with so much patience by the Canadian historians of the siege.

“Medway,” off Quebec, *September 13th, 1759.*

DEAR SIR,—By the “Lowestoft” who brings you the agreeable news of our success, I have the pleasure of giving you joy on the occasion. Affairs have taken a most amazing turn since my letter by Captain Perceval, who could give you but small hopes of what has happened since, by our making a number of feints. It divided the enemies’ force above and below the town, that on the 13th past. Mr. Wolfe determined to land, made a feint in the night fourteen leagues above the town which drew the enemies’ attention that way, drop’d with the tide down the river, and landed at four o’clock in the morning in Sillery bay, about three miles from the town, with little opposition, the light infantry soon getting up a steep bank and drove what Indians and Canadians were there, in number about a hundred, off; then taking a four gun battery that opposed to landing, the rest of the army soon followed.

An alarm was given the town, who sent to Monsieur Montcalm, the French General, that the English were landed; he marched directly across the river St. Charles, where all the regulars were encamped (as thinking himself we should at last land there). At ten the two armies were in sight; the French march’d up to Mr. Wolfe boldly, thinking themselves sure of the victory. The French gave the first fire at about a hundred yards’ distance; our troops marched on at about twenty-five yards gave their fire. Mons. Montcalm detached the Canadians on each flank, and some to cut off our people’s retreat; but Mr. Wolfe so managed that all his schemes were defeated, and fairly out-generaled him, which they all own. We gave a few fires, then charged with the bayonet, which broke the French army. Then the Highlanders and Light Infantry went in sword in

hand and entirely routed them, gaining a complete victory. The French own to have brought into the field 10,000, of which 3,000 were regulars according to their own account. Our army consisted of 4,500. To their eternal honour be it spoken, our loss about 600 killed and wounded. The French, by their accounts, 1,700 killed and wounded.

This stroke has given them such an instance of the difference of fighting in woods and on the plain, that they have never dared to look our troops in the face since, though they are double or nearer treble their numbers. They left two pieces of cannon in the field, but their colours got off. The town has not had a gun fired at it since by our army; but they were preparing batteries, and on the approach of our ships they desired a truce which was to capitulate; but their first terms were rejected.

The loss of General Wolfe to the army is irreparable. He had three balls in different parts of the body, one in his arm which was the first, one in the belly, and one in the breast. He lived just long enough to hear he had gained the day, on which he answered "Thank God, I die easy." General Monkton wounded in the breast, and Carleton in the head, but no danger is apprehended; yet the officers in general suffered greatly. The General's corpse comes home in the "Royal William." On the French side, Montcalm killed and one more General officer, with many other considerable ones. There are but few regulars in the town, the rest, with Vaudreuil, gone towards Montreal, where we hope General Amherst is near. We are far from any scarcity of provisions in this country, having found great quantities of cattle of all kinds and grain in abundance. We have burned near three thousand houses here or more. By the accounts there are as many more; but whether they share the same fate I cannot tell; but the rascals deserve it for their cruelty.

If Mr. Amherst gets no more than he has already, one year more would complete our conquests in America, of which I hope not a foot will be returned to the French Government. If I was to make a peace my way, it would soon be settled. They might keep what they have and we do the same; and so rest till we quarrelled again.

The limit of paper obliges me to bid you adieu.

I am, Sir, your dutiful Son,

CHARLES LESLIE.

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