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INTERCEPTED LETTERS TO THE DUKE
DE MIREPOIX, 1756.

By D. Bingham

(From the Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission of the American
Historical Association for 1896, pages 660-703.)

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INTERCEPTED LETTERS TO THE DUKE DE MIREPOIX, 1756.

Before his resignation from the Commission, Dr. Douglas Brymner, Archivist of the Dominion of Canada, selected from the materials under his command the following letters, and had them copied for the Commission. The following introduction is due to him. The chairman of the Commission has appended a few footnotes. To him the letters appear to have been written by some one who had a fair but not an intimate knowledge of what was going on, who held no important command, and who, as the Earl of Halifax conjectures in No. 10 of the series, was an Irishman. It is important as well as interesting to observe what imperfect information the Newcastle Government had as to events, preparations, and conditions in America.

In the final struggle for supremacy on the northern part of this continent between Great Britain and her colonies on the one side and France on the other, which culminated in the conquest of Canada in 1760, the success in the first instance was largely on the side of the French. The defeat of Braddock and his death in 1755, the capture of Oswego in 1756, with the capture or destruction of the British fleet there, which gave the command of Lake Ontario to the French; these and subsequent events of a similar nature gave confidence to the French and led to the adhesion of the waverers on Providence who are always on the winning side. On both sides there were serious drawbacks to the vigorous prosecution of the war. On the side of the French there was the amazing corruption which prevailed, the robberies committed by all grades in the public service, robberies by which the officials, from Bigot, the intendant, downward, in every branch of the service accumulated immense fortunes. Such conduct was the rule with scarcely an exception, so that the success of the French troops in the field is almost wonderful. On the other side were divided councils, and generals in many cases far from efficient

in a style of warfare to which they were unaccustomed and against which they were therefore unable to take precautions. The difficulty of manning the navy was extreme, sailors deserting from ships of war and transports in crowds to man the privateers, the prize money being for New York alone not less than £200,000 sterling, and the sailors being harbored in the seaport towns by the inhabitants. It was only by the aid of the military that they could be secured in New York and that Sir Charles Hardy's fleet was able to sail from that port. Nor was this all that the British forces had to contend with, as Lord Loudoun, writing to Pitt in June, 1757, reported that the French received from all quarters information of every movement in the colonies. These and other facts give a greater color of probability to the authenticity of the intercepted letters addressed to the Duke de Mirepoix, although the identity of the writer could not be discovered.

In the letter dated the 12th of January, 1756, the writer states that he has no doubt of obtaining the services of Germans in the United States on behalf of the French, and this is confirmed by the statement of an Onondaga Indian made to Sir William Johnson, that the Germans of Burnetfield had sent by an Oneida to the French governor of Canada an offer of their services. In a letter from Capt. John Butler to Sir William Johnson, dated in March, 1757, the place from which this letter was sent is called the "Great Flatts," and it is said that Capt. Joost Petrie wrote the letter which was sent to Canada. In Wraxall's letter it is called German Flats; all three names, Burnetfield, Great Flatts, and German Flats, no doubt refer to the same place. The French neutrals, also, in Pennsylvania, evidently encouraged by the success of the French at the opening of the war, threatened that they would go to their countrymen in the back country, and that they would all join the French, as they looked on themselves as French subjects.

The efforts made to trace the writer of the letters addressed to the Duke de Mirepoix seem to have been unsuccessful, as, although indications were obtained, no proper means appear to have been taken to follow up the pursuit. The description by the writer of the letters of his own position was evidently given to mislead; otherwise there would have been no difficulty in discovering who he was.

Lord Loudoun was recalled, but his successor was most

unfortunate in his first operations. The first gleam of important success was the taking of Louisbourg in 1758. It is doubtful, however, whether that would have fallen so easily but for the effects of the nefarious conduct of Bigot and his confederates. Next year Niagara was taken, and in the same year Quebec fell; the commanders of both forces dying from their wounds—the one at the moment of victory, the other shortly after his defeat. In 1760 Montreal fell, and with it all Canada, removing from the colonies the black danger-cloud that had so long threatened them, and from which had so often proceeded dire effects on the lives, property, and persons of the unfortunate inhabitants—killed, scalped, or taken prisoners. The power of France in this country was broken, and the settlers and inhabitants of New England could now rest undisturbed by these attacks from the French and Indians to which they had been hitherto continually exposed.

The documents given here from the Canadian Archives are transcripts from those in the Public Record Office, London, where they form part of the series "America and West Indies" from volume 82 onward.

I. HENRY FOX¹ TO THE EARL OF LOUDOUN.²

Secret.]

Whitehall, May 7th 1756

My Lord,

I have the King's commands to acquaint your Lordship with what has been done, in consequence of Two very extraordinary intercepted Letters, from an unknown Person, in America, addressed to the Duc de Mirepoix; of the first Letter I inclose a Copy only, the Original being in the Hands of Colonel Webb; but you will find the second herewith as It was received.

Your Lordship will see by the inclosed Copies of the Earl of Halifax's, and my Letters to Sir Charles Hardy, Gov^r Shirley, and Colonel Webb, together with some papers therein refer'd to, the first steps that were taken here, in consequence of this Discovery:—But, since the Departure of Colonel Webb, a Duplicate of the second of these intercepted Letters, having been sent to Londonderry in Ireland, by a person, under the

¹ Henry Fox (1705-1774), father of Charles James Fox, was Secretary of State from November, 1755, to October, 1756.

² John Campbell, Earl of Loudoun (1705-1782), commissioned commander-in-chief in America, March 29, 1756.

Name of James Allen of Philadelphia, under cover of the inclosed letter to M^r Gamble of that place, and transmitted to me by the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Lieut of Ireland; I immediately desired His Grace would procure the Letters which I send inclosed, to Master Gamble, and M^r Redmond Cunningham, whereby your Lordship may probably be able to discover, by whom the said intercepted Letters were wrote; and will prosecute the Author, or Authors of them, there, or send them to England, as your Lordship shall think most advisable.

I am

H. Fox.

Endorsed:—Dra^t to the Earl of
Loudoun
May 7th 1756
Secret

2. "FILIUS GALLICÆ" TO THE DUKE DE MIREPOIX.¹

America Jan^y 6th 1756 N^o. 1

May it Please your Grace,

This may perhaps be somewhat surprising &c. but let it not offend your Grace, for in the Deepest Humility I beg leave to approach y^r G^c: and let me implore y^r G^{ra}s patience to hear me, I shall not here presume to make an apology, as time not place 'll permitt; but hereafter, when I shall dare to Discover myself, and when I find this 'll be acceptable—I trust your goodness 'll excuse me; I doubt not but I shall find favour and protection with his Majesty, whose Paternal goodness to his subjects I am too sensible off—neither shall I here disclose my whole scheme; but only by hints and Insinuations give y^r Gr. a small Idea of my Designs; (in behalf of his most Christian Majesty agst the English) by w^{ch} y^r Gr. 'll see that what I am ab^t to undertake is easily accomplished—Therefore Let me earnestly beseech y^r Gr. to grant me y^r aid and assistance on this occasion, since the Honour and Glory of our Grand Monarch Lewis the fifteenth is concerned therein—; whose honour &c I shall always think myself justified in, to Defend, tho' I prove false to those who employ me agst his Majesty, or his Subjects and as I place my Confidence in y^r G^r and y^r G^r is the only Person in the world I now Disclose my tho^{ts} to, I rely

¹Mirepoix had been French ambassador in London, 1749–1755.

and earnestly entreat y^r G^r to keep this secret, for should it be discovered and get to the ears of the English; y^r G^r must be sensible what would be the consequence; for although I'm unknown to y^r G^r I am not so to the English I am well persuaded of y^r G^rs: Interest at Court and Loyalty to His Majesty, and beg when y^r G^r has read these imperfect lines (if y^r G^r thinks fitt) to communicate 'em in a better Language to the Prime Minister and let me entreat y^r G^r: to pay a due regard to what I'm ab^t to write; tho' it be done in this ungentle illiterate &c. a manner, and let not my honest and sincere intentions towards his Most Christian Majesty (the best of Kings) be disregarded, for want of a Proper Diction, and for want of properly addressing y^r G^r: for must confess I was not bred a scholar, but a soldier—and even am much hurried in writing this; but rely on y^r G^rs goodness to pardon me hereafter what I now do amiss, when y^r G^r: shall hear of the good effect of it. I take the liberty of writing to y^r G^r in English (as I've my reasons for it) not doubting, but y^r G^r is well acquainted with that Language—but if y^r G^r vouchsafes to write to me in Particular, desire it might be in French, for I understand that Language well; and also most of the Indian Languages in this country,—before I finish this 'll give y^r G^r. proper Directions to me. I am obliged to write this with my own hand for dare not confide in any but shant dare to fix my name or place of abode &c—y^r G^r must doubtlessly be acquainted with North America, it's fine countries, vast extent &c. &c. the considerable advantage it'll be to the Power that conquers it, and y^r G^r must also 'ere this be acquainted with what has lately been transacted in this part of the world. I am looked on in these parts, a faithful true and Loyal Subject of King George, but confess to y^r G^r that my heart is and always was for his Most Christian Majesty, his religion and country. I've some time ago, been very ill used by the English Governours here have within these 15 days, been solicited to be at the head off a considerable army to be raised this Winter in Pensylvania Govern^t &c, to be ready by next spring, to march agst Fort Du Quesne on the Ohio &c^a: I shall take care to chuse out of the Germans, Irish &c^a such officers and men, as I know are of the true Roman Catholick faith and Dis-affected to the Govern^t. NB: even Ohio is a fine Country and worth contending for, it's yet mostly inhabited by Indians—Fort du Quesne is ab^t. 360 miles, back of Virginia and philadelphia, shall have a long march of it, Fort du Quesne is

much further from Canada, but it's by water down a river; I think it's about 900 miles—I would earnestly entreat y^r G^r to cause to be sent unto me proper letters of his Majestys approbation favour &c: to his People w^{ch} I might show to such of the army when on the March, as I know I shall prevail on; but desire such writings may be done in English and some of em in the German Tongue, as few people here understand the French Language, this I leave to y^r G^r: to order it as it should be, should also be glad y^r G^r's advice to me; and beg y^r G^r: would also order me a sum of money with his most Christian Majesty Impression on it, to Distribute among the soldiers and Indians (and to make presents to some great men) to gain them on my side and also ab^t one thousand swords to present to the Officers; it would greatly influence 'em I would not have y^r G^r imagine, I desire the least of what I now ask for, for my self; on the contrary I assure y^r G^r; that had I ability of myself only; my zeal, for my Royal Master is such that I would go thro' the whole without craving any assistance (or Perish in the attempt) confiding in his Majestys goodness to consider me here after—as I shall render a just acco^t of every thing y^r G^r 'll be pleased to comitt to my care, so I expect his Majesty 'll be repaid the charge I now desire he may be put to.—The raising, cloathing and arming the army 'll be at the expence of the Different Governts for whose service it's supposed I raise it—The money I ask for, is only to gain the army for his Majesty; (that all powerfull Metal gains all things) and if y^r Grace 'll be pleased to order it as I shall mention, it'll come safe to my hands, tho' I should be on the march or at Fort du Quesne, y^r G^r: may perhaps think it a risque to trust a man you don't know, and at such Distance but all the security I can at present give y^r G^r is only my word of honour, and can with a clear conscience assure y^r: G^r: that if you'll venture y^r G^r: 'll find it on a sure Bottom neither would I have y^r G^r, imagine that this writing may be the effect of a wild Brain &c^a because it's jumbled together in an odd manner—N. B: the raising this army is to be done very still and without noise, Least the news might reach Canada, and this serves my purpose best to chuse my men I also acquaint y^r G^r: that I am not to be ready to march till next May, by order of Gov^r. Shirley who is Generalissimo of all the King's forces in these parts—and y^r G^r: may also depend, that I shall delay the march as long as possible, on purpose to hear from y^r G^r: I rely on y^r G^r: to send me

such Letters &c by the first English Vessels next spring, or fear I shant so easily be able to persuade the people: and when I have 'em shall send notice to the Commanding Officer at fort du Quesne of my Intentions and shall also send letters to Canada and urge them also to be ready. The armies of Gov^r. Shirley and General Johnson are Quartered this winter on the frontiers of New York (they consist of ab^t Eight thousand men) to be ready by next spring: when they'll be made up to 15 or 16 thousand, to march agst Crown Point Niagara &c^a. N. B: Shirleys army is intended agst. Niagara, and Johnsons agst Crown Point at the Distance of ab^t. 350 miles from each other; Shirleys army is now Quartered at Oswego ab^t. 260 miles above Albany, and Johnsons at Lake Sacrament, where they've built a strong fort since the defeat of that worthy Gentl^m. Mons^r. Le Baron de Diskau Many of Mons^r. Dieckau's soldiers, since the Defeat are gone over to the English—N. B. the roads to the above Camps are very far and Difficult, particularly to M^r Johnsons, w^{ch} is mostly by Land, so I doubt if they'll be able to carry their Provisions &c^a &c^a from Albany, so early as they expect ab^t 40 waggons went dayly Last summer from Albany to Johnsons Camp, and could only keep 'em in Provisions from hand to mouth, should the above armies not be prevented in their Intentions, I should be in very great pain for Canada. but am in hopes I shall be enabled to turn their force another way—They'll not be able to do any hurt there till ab^t. next June or July, as the season is late there, it being so far to the Northward: The late General Braddock's troops have been Drawn from the frontiers of Virginia &c^a to New York and have been sent from thence up to Albany to join Gen^l. Shirleys Regiment at Oswego, (Albany lies ab^t 150 miles above New York up a very fine and Navigable River) since these troops have been drawn from thence, the Indians in his most Christian Majesty Inter^s: with those w^{ch} had been in the English Int^s before Braddock's defeat, have fallen on the frontiers of Virginia, Maryland, Pensylvania, Jersey's &c^a and Lay waste the Country, murder and scalp many of the people and carry away some captive. This is well pleasing to me, because it excites the Govern^ts. the more earnest to raise the money and soldiers; (who are yet Disputing ab^t furnishing their Quotas of money) Phil^a has already granted sixty thousand pounds towards it. that City is much Divided. the Gov^r and assembly are at such varience, that their Disputes are to be transmitted to England—.

The Indians have advanced to ab^t 60 miles back of Phil^a. and burnt up whole villages; did they but know the condition Phil^a. is in at present they might do the same to that city; The armies of Shirley and Johnson, are also much Devided, striving, who shall get the most money and honour by the expedition, (This is according to the English Disposition) I coud wish they woud get by the ears, as I shoud the more easily execute my scheme—. I am assured of a Collonel, and 3 Capt^s Inter^s in Shirleys Regm^t provided I coud show them encouragement from home—. The Coll. informed me, in a letter that Gen^l Johnson had told him, he woud lay down his comm^s on acco^t of the Disputes between him and Shirley &c^a. (NB: General Johnson was borned in Ireland, and has not been in this Country above 20 years, but on acco^t of his geting in with the Irroquois (w^{ch} the English call the five Nations) and having great Inter^s with them, he is at this time thus promoted; he is a man of ab^t 40 years old, and has his seat in the Mohawk Country—. (N. B: The Gover^{rs} of Pensilvenia Jerseys &c^a have sent out several detachments 2 and 3 hundred men agst the Indians that enrageded (?) them as above mentioned, but the detachments have continually been repulsed and taken by them) The Gove^r of New York is also out with Shirley—. If their Disputes have no other good effect in my Behalf, it will however retard their expeditions—. All last summer Shirley's army was doing nothing else but repairing fort Oswego and building vessels of war to cruise on Lake Ontario; if that had been a french Army, it woud have taken Niagara (if it had been in the hands of the English) and what ever else it wanted—but the English are a most dilatory, indolent people, never in haste, but spend most of their time in drinking and jangling together—. They call themselves (forsooth) a free people; and indeed, I have found 'em so, for the meanest soldier has as much to say as his officer, there is no Govern^t among 'em—but let me not find fault with their Dilatoriness and Indolence &c^a at present since it serves my purpose best, and 'll give time to have y^r Gr^s. answer; and I expect to hear from y^r Grace, before anything 'll be done here to his Majestys Prejudice and trust y^r G^r: 'll be as expeditious in sending to me as possible, as I've been in writing to y^r G^r:—had not Mons^r Dieskaw, (whose defeat I hope to revenge) come agst Johnson there woud 've been no battle faught Last summer; and had not the cannon, w^{ch} the English had and w^{ch}

the french Army was not apprehensive off, put the Canadians and Indians in confusion, in all probability, that worthy Gent^m must have beaten Johnson, for by what I could perceive, the English were struck with a panick, and were near ready to quit the field before that; and what ever the English may boast of Victory, I must say they behaved very ill, considering their advantages and numbers,—and can only impute it to a turn of good fortune in favor of the English, rather than conduct, and altho' the french were beaten, there was considerable more of the English killed in the action, than of the french—. I am credibly informed that the Indians, on the back parts of the countrys above mentioned are become very numerous; if these creatures had arms, and were properly Led forth, they might do great execution; I doubt not but I shall have 'em all with me next summer, provided I can shew them his Majestys letters &c^a w^{ch} I shall impatiently wait for—. but shoud I not have 'em by that time, I shall be obliged, much agst my will and conscience to fight agst my Bretheren the french and those Indians w^{ch} have forsaken the English Int^s since Braddocks Defeat must join me for their own safety—. If y^r Gr: shoud be dubious of the truth of what I here relate of things here, I beg leave to referr y^r Gr: to the late news papers from these parts to this Inst: wherein if y^r Gr: 'll find to agree with what I say (except my design agst the English)

This y^r Gr: may Look on as Idle, as news papers, contain often the Greatest falsities: but I assure y^r Gr: that whatever is therein related of things that happen in these parts, is fact, y^r Gr: may have s^d news papers of y^r correspondances, from London and Holland, as it woud not do to enclose 'em here, for I woud fain have this Packett as small as possible and even as it is, I find it Difficult to have it conveyed to y^r Gr: since y^r Gr:^s return from the British Court, on acco^t of the approaching war, with England and the perfidy of the English; and shoud this letter not get safe to y^r Gr: and I not hear from y^r Gr: in time, I shoud Despair of success, I intended to have sent this under cover to Mons^r. Dieskau's brother in Holland as I've no acquaintance there, but fearing least the name of Dieskau might create suspicion, I shall send it at a venture to some merch^t there and give it here to a friend (who'll not suspect the contents) to send it to New York to be forwarded from thence, and for fear of Miscarriage shall take a copy of it to send p another conveyance—. and now beg

leave to Inform y^r Gr: how, and in what manner to Direct and send to me. I shall appoint a friend to receive all such Letters &c^a as y^r Gr: 'll be pleased to order to me by the name of Pierre Fidel, and shall 've 'em immediately sent to me; this friend shall appoint another at New York, tho' they'll both be Ignorant what they contain; I should also acquaint y^r Gr: that there are great numbers of vessells that trade from these parts to Europe, perticularly to England and Holland (N.B: there is Packet boats to go constant from England to its American Collonies) I woud chuse to have what y^r Gr: wou'd be pleased to order to me come by the English vessells from Holland; (as there is to be a neutrality during a war with England, between his most Christian Majesty and the States Generals) I shoud think it the surest way; and woud chuse to have it come by Different vessells and not all in one Bottom. However, I leave it to y^r Gr:^s wise and prudent conduct to order as y^r Gr: shall judge proper; as I doubt not but y^r Gr: has corrispondences in both places that may be relyed on, but Let me pray y^r Gr: that it may be done privately without witness not to give any suspicion either there or here, and if I might take upon me to advise y^r Gr: It might be ordered among some Lawfull Merchandize and shiped, and the Masters of such Vessells can sign bills Lading to Deliver such goods to the s^d Pierre Fidel or his order—, I am told there are many vessels expected next spring from Holland to New York; I woud chuse to have 'em come to that Port, as t'woud be the safest— there are also several expected from London to that Port—. Be pleased to Direct

To

Mr. Pierre Fidel
to be left at Mr. Romer's
Coffyhouse (untill asked for)
in New York.

If y^r Gr: Directs to Mr Pierre Fidel, as above said, y^r Gr: need not in the least doubt of its being safely conveyed to me.

I have been to New York to visit Mons^r Dieskau where he lies still Ill of his wounds, but is now Like to recover, he is in a good house, well attended and great care is taken of him (to the honour of the English be this said) he has his aid de Camp with him; Had that unhappy Gentl^m had the good fortune to have beaten Johnson's Army, he woud 'ere this have been in

possession of the City of Albany, and woud infallibly have cut off Shirley's army also as he cou'd prevent all supplys being sent thither, and by reinforcements he might have had from Canada &c^a he cou'd have strengthened himself there this winter, and by next spring sent Emissaries privately thro' the land to^r those who are of the true Roman Catholick faith of w^{ch} there are great numbers who dare not show their heads, and who I know wished and prayed for his success; many of whom since his confinement at New York have Desired to see him, but have not been permitted—he might also have sent to the negro Slaves (of w^{ch} there are some thousands) and promised them their freedom— he would have been joined by Multitudes,—and then have Issued his Proclamation in his Most Christian Majestys name, granting free liberty of conscience, Enjoyments of their Estates, Rights and Privileges &c^a &c^a as afore to those who woud only submitt to his Majestys Clemency and become his Subjects—. I doubt not but most of the herreticks would comply rather than lose their all, and perish, and by next summer he might have been in possession of New York (w^{ch} is ab^t the center of the British Dominions on the Continent) and afterwards it woud be no Difficult matter, if he was supplied with money &c^a from home, to make himself master of all the Jerseys, Pensylvania &c^a and in consequence the English West Indias must fall, as they cou'd not long subsist without these provision Collonies—As woud also the Countries to the Eastward, as far as Boston &c^a:—but that unfortunate Gentleman was deceived in his Intelligences—neither was it in my Power to send him any as I did to Mons^r de Contrecoeur at fort du Quesne when Braddock was marching that way Mons^r Dumas in a letter conveyed to me p an English Indian afterwards returned me, his and Mons^r de Contrecoeurs thanks for the advice I had given them, and said the victory was in a great measure to it. N. B: Mess^{rs} de Beaujen, Carneville and Dumas were Capts that fought agst Braddock. the two former fell in Battle as Mons^r Dumas mentioned to me I well persuaded that did Mons^r Dieskau Know of my writing this he woud, if he were allowed to write, attest it with both his hands, I only mentioned it to him, that I had a letter to be forwarded to france and he immediately recommended me to his Bro^r assuring me he would forward it for me—it grieves me to see the poor french Inhabitants of Mines in Nova Scotia,¹ Dis-

¹The deported Acadians.

persed thro' all the English Collonies, w^{ch} the English have transported from thence. I beg y^r Gr^s. pardon for detaining y^r Gr: with this unlucky turn of Mons^r Dieskau &c^a, it was not my Intention when I first sat down to write to y^r Gr: but assure y^r Gr: that it woud've given me equal pleasure if that Gentlⁿ had succeeded, as if I had done it Myself.—And permit me now to say, I leave y^r Gr: to Judge what resistance they'll be able to make when they have so powerfull an Enemy in the heart of their Country, unsuspected, unguarded and unprovided as they'll be to receive him—. I want not any troops to be sent me, (for here are men enough) but a sufficiency of money to hire them with—. And dare affirm, that half the sum w^{ch} was expended in transporting Mons^r Dieskau and his forces hither woud (in this way) conquer all North America for my Royal Master Lewis XV: and woud bring the English to terms with regard to Limitts here—. I wish y^r Gr: all blessing spiritual and temporal in the Ensuing New York, [sic] and wish success to his Majestys Arms, and am tho' unknown to y^r Gr: with all due reverence and respect, may it please y^r Grace

Your Graces most obedient, most
Hb^{le} and Most Devoted Serv^t

Filius Gallicae.

P. S. before I Close this I must hint to y^r Gr^r: that a few days ago, there has been at New York a Congress of the English Gover^s on the Continent,¹ they've not yet communicated the result of it to me; An Express will soon sail from thence for England—. It's not in my Power to explain myself here as I coud wish to do, nor to write the whole situation of affairs here; for as said afore time nor place 'll permitt. hereafter hope to do it better and in more form—. but thus much I've only now been able to insinuate to y^r Gr^c: in hope of succeeding in my Desigus, and in making myself in part Known to y^r Gr^r: that his Majesty may also know, he has (tho' unknown) a faithfull true and Loyall subject in these parts, and who with his Majestys' expects soon to drive all the English who will not submitt to his Majestys goodness; off the continent—. Therefore let me now at last move y^r Gr^r: by heaven and earth, not to Despise what I say but comply with my request—hereafter, I shall not prove so tedious, nor multiply words as I am now obliged to do.

The British Dominions, from Halifax to Georgia is computed

¹ The writer alludes, no doubt, to the council of war of December 12, 13, 1755.

a tab^t 2000 miles, it Lies in a circle adjoining the sea, with beautiful rivers running through, and fine Harbours, fitt for the Largest first rate Ships. a very plentiful Country of all things, but their Country Lies all open and Defenceless, and the People much alarmed and frightened at the Least acco^t of a french fleet on their Coast, because of their nakedness—The climate here; have found it much the same as in France; The Countrys w^{ch} Lye to the Westward and Southward have their springs very early and scarce any winter, but those w^{ch} Lye to the Northward have their springs late &c^a

N.B: there has latly been discovered in Jersey Govern^t several very good Copper mines, intermixt with silver.

an hour ago a Gentlⁿ arrived from New York, came to visit me, he said, it was reported there, that a french fleet, consisting of 17 men of war and transports with some Bomb Vessells, was arrived at Spanish river in Cape Breton, and ware landing their men &c^a the news was said to come via Boston, from S^t Peters in Newfoundland and from Halifax in Nova Scotia. this news I cou^d wish with all my heart to be true as the English fleet is sailed from thence for England—but I imagine it's only his Majestys fleet w^{ch} sailed down the river St. Lawrence Last fall, homeward bound, w^{ch} might have put in there.

Jan^y 7th

I am informed that M^r John de Neufville merch^t at Amsterdam does business for Gentlemen in New York I've concluded to send it to his care, as from New York by the name of George Spellings and shall pretend to him a recommendation from his friends there on purpose to have it immediately forwarded to y^r Gr. and shall desire him to let me Know by that name of its being sent to your Grace.

Jan^y 8th 1746 [1756]

The Post sets out this afternoon for New York, I shall Deliver this (under cover) to my friend here to be forwarded thither—

I said in my Letter I would not in the Least Discover myself, but thus much I'll now venture to intimate to y^r Gr: trusting that it'll abide only with y^r Gr: untill I have accomplished my Designs—. I was born'd, and all my relations Live, in old france in good repute and Loyall subjects to his Majesty: and assure y^r Gr: some of 'em not unworthy y^r Gr^s notice, and some of 'em not unknown to y^r G^r as by a Letter I received some time ago from one of them. I intended at first to have sent this Letter under cover to him—but I have my reasons

for not doing it, besides I don't believe an English Captⁿ would deliver a Letter from on board his vessell, at this time, that was directed to France— I shall send y^r Gr: a few lines again next spring, in the best manner I can—but expect y^r Gr: 'll be doing for me in the Intrim and if I succeed in my attempt, (as I don't in the least doubt, if I am now granted what I require) I'll return home and Lay myself with gratitude at y^r Gr.'s feet, for I am tired of playing the prodigal, and Long to be home with my friends, and relations again from whom I have strayed these many years; but should not chuse to return to them but in honour—I shall be 38 years old nex August, am still a single man and most part of my Life has been spent in the service of the English, w^{ch} I have always faithfully Discharg'd but now again to be employed and fight agst my King and country I cant any more bear to think off; and yet shall be obliged to do it, for subsistance, as I've no other Dependance here, and no Estate at home I was sent near the close of the last war a commissioner to Canada, where seeing the confidence of the English placed in me, and hearing how much I was in the esteem of all sorts of People among them, and knowing my Principles and from whence I was it was there agreed upon, that if the English shoud at any time thereafter promote me to a general of an army agst them, that I shoud employ my whole force in behalf of his most christian Majesty, and write home ab^t it and I should be immediately assisted. This now is come to pass, contrary to my expectations; it's a fourtnight since I was appointed and am already confirmed (since the evasions of the french and Indians on their frontiers as afore mentioned,) and hope now to be enabled to put my scheme in execution as above said; and hope y^r Gr: 'll excuse me for making choice of y^r Gr: to write to, its not in my power at this time to acquaint the Gentlⁿ in Canada of what has happened to me, neither woud it avail any thing untill I had some assurance of being assisted from home—. Y^r Gr: may perhaps hereafter accuse me of perfidy and Ingratitude to the English, and a person not fit to be trusted; to w^{ch} I beg leave to answer y^r Gr:, that as to Perfidy I have already intimated to y^r Gr: how my heart has always been disposed and coud at any time satisfy y^r Gr: to the contrary, and as to Ingratitude; if the English have given me commissions and promoted me to honours among them it was to serve their own purposes, and they've had my services for it w^{ch} they've never had reason to complain off; Besides I expect greater

prefferments, if I succeed, by his Majesty, and then I shall be among my own people and enjoy my religion freely, w^{ch} I have not dared to do, since I've been among the English, but must tamely bear to hear my religion King and country reflected on by Heriticks, and have never yet been in the Chapel at Phil^a for fear of giving suspicion, however I shall always retain a gratefull sence of the English civilities and good will toward me while they thought me their own, and intend to be kind to them—espetically those I have received great friendships from—, except some of their Gov^{rs} N.B: There is a reward of 700 p 8/8 offered by the Govern^t of Phi^a to any who shall bring the heads of Shingas, and Jacobs, two chiefs of the Delaware Indian Nation who have revolted from the English.¹ I shoud be very sorry to see their heads Bro^t. as they are my very good friends—. but am not in much concern about them as they'll not easily be taken. Most of the back Inhabitants of Phil^a Maryland &c^a are fled to the cities, and have left their Plantations a prey to the Indians.— The sight of one Indian 'll frighten and drive away a score of Englishmen—I must also acquaint y^r Gr: that it was the appearance of the Indians that frightened Braddocks men, and put his army in confusion.— here is a certain acco^t come yesterday from Halifax in Nova Scotia that some of King George's Soldiers who had strayed in the woods; were taken Prisoners by the french and Indians there; that the New England troops w^{ch} were hired to take Mines; were Quarreling with the Governor there, ab^t their pay, and because the Gov^r had not prepared vessells to carry them home according to promiss; that the New England troops, and the Kings troops were fighting with each other &c^a— N. B. I mention the Inroads of the Indians &c^a to Let y^r G^r see the Deplorable Condition most of the British Collonies are in at present, and how easily they may be at this time subdued.

A Mon Seigneur

Mon Seigneur Le Duc de Mirepoix

a

Paris

Copy

The original given to the
Earl of Loudoun.

¹Jacoba was killed about April 1: *Pa. Archives*, II, 612. Shingas survived: *ibid.*, III, 533.

3. "FILIUS GALLICÆ" TO THE DUKE DE MIREPOIX.

Jan^y 12th 1756

The Original I have sent under cover to M^r John de Neufville Merchant at Amsterdam to be forwarded from New York p. the Nightingale Man of War, which I heard was soon to sail the Express to London.

My Serjeants have within these 3 days Enlisted 600 men, my compli^m is to be 15000, and if I shou'd have occasion I believe I cou'd raise 50,000 in Pensilvania Government only, for there has been yearly vast numbers of Germans imported from Holland, who are very poor and wou'd be glad to do anything for a living as most of them are oblig'd to sell themselves to pay their passage thither, These people I am perswaded, it would be a matter of Indifference to them (if they were paid) whom they serv'd; whether the King of France or the King of England, and I know most of them would from principle rather choose to serve my Royal Master:

There has also been from time to Time, transported from England vast Numbers of Irish, to Virginia and Philadelphia for the Peopling The Kings Plantations Most of these are of the true Roman Catholick Faith.

There has also been continually transported from England to the above places, what they call convicts, for crimes committed there, for which they are Sold in Slavery for seven years—Some of these that I have happened to speak to, have profess'd the true Catholick Religion, but their Religion is much the same with most of the Hereticks in this Country, who (by what I can perceive) mind no other than that of getting Money; and may be hired to do anything.

We have an account here that a Body of Eleven hundred Indians had appeared at Goshen¹ and behav'd very insolently that all the Country thereabouts were in alarm, they were said to be Delawar Indians, who always had profes'd themselves friends to the English—But of late seem'd to be wavering.

Goshen is between New York and Albany up Hudsons River (call'd at New York the North River) back of the Highlands, on the other side the River with New York—at 60 miles from New York—N. B. We've had the Winter hitherto

¹See New York Colonial Documents, VII, 96.

very moderate almost evry day like Spring and can't hear of any snow being fall'n yet to the Northward.

Endorsed:—Copy of an Intercepted Letter—directed a Mon Seigneur. Mon Seigneur Le Due de Mirepoix a Paris.

inclosing the long Letter herewith sent, to the sd. Duc de Mirepoix.—came from N. York, by a English Sloop.

The Original of this Letter was given to Colⁿ Webb.

4. "FILIIUS GALLICÆ" TO THE DUKE DE MIREPOIX.

America March 1st 1756

May it please your Grace

I beg leave to refer your Grace to what I wrote y^r G^r: the 6th of Jan^s last which I sent under cover to M^r John de Neufville Merch^t at Amsterdam, and a copy to M^r Joshua Vaneck in London and now according to my Promise acquaint y^r G^r that I have since Levied 10,000 fine men, such as I woud have and shall soon have my compliment of 15,000. I have by the bye Intimated to my Aid de Camp and some of the officers something of what I wrote y^r G^r: and find, that If I am assisted as requested of y^r G^r: I shall gain my Point; But if I should not hear from y^r: G^r: by the 1st of next July, I shall conclude y^r: G^r: has not Digned me an answer and shan't for the future trouble y^r G^r: any more, but 'll content myself to end my Days in this Country, and Instead of being a friend to my King and Country, I shall be oblided to act agst both and become an Enemy to them but I trust and flatter myself that y^r G^r: 'll answer me and if y^r G^r: thinks me Worthy y^r G^r's Corrispondence I woud now beg y^r G^r's. favour to Inform me how and in what manner to Direct for the future to y^r G^r: to whose care &c^a I must order my Letters &c^a to be forwarded to y^r G^r. for I have been strangely puzzled about sending these I have wroto to y^r G^r: and when I may again write to y^r G^r: it shall be in French w^{ch} is my own Language I would also be Informed by y^r G^r: to whom it woud be proper for me hereafter to send an acco^t &c^a to of these parts &c^a in case y^r G^r should be absent &c^a

I am as afore

Your Grace's Most devoted Servant

Filius Gallicæ

P. S. I was informed that both my Letters w^{ch} were sent to New York was put aboard the Nightingale Man of War Bound to Loudon (there being no other Vessell at the time Design'd for Europe) w^{ch} did not sail from the hook afore the 7th ult: The hook is twenty miles from New York Harbour from whence all their vessells put into Sea, I am not now under the Least Concern in case any of my Letters to y^r Gr: should be inspected; that it woud be a prejudice to me, for I am from my behaviour among the English here in that Vogue among them,—that I should not in the Least be suspected, But it would be Imagined that those Letters were forged by some Malicious Persons, to undermine me and I can easily deny them if they shoud come agst me as my name is not fixed and I in a great measure conterfieted a Different hand from what I naturally write, as I have already mentioned to y^r Gr. to whom I have under cover Directed them. In case they shoud not be come to y^r Gr^s. hands ere this, y^r Grace 'll hereby Know of whom to Demand them. In those Letters I gave y^r Gr: Proper Directions to me &c^a and begged y^r Gr: to be as expeditious to me as Possible and seem'd afear'd that I shoud not be able to hear from y^r Gr: in time,—but now Inform y^r:Gr: that y^r: Gr: 'll have time enough even after the receipt of this for here are not near Arms &c^a enough at present for the number of men I have already reased; and it's but Lately that they have been wrote for; as well from Holland as from England, w^{ch} don't expect 'll be here afore the 1st of next June. Your Grace must know that this army is not reased at the Expencc of the Crown of Brittain, but at the Private Expense of the Different Governments to the Westward here,—who order and Direct everything about it themselves—and when ready as a Comp^{lt}. to M^r Shirley it is to be submitted to his order and Direction w^{ch} will agree with theirs,— But I hope it 'll be Governed by your Grace's orders and commands.

N. B. Pensylvania is not immediately under the Crown of Brittain but is a proprietary Government under Pen.

I beg y^r: Gr: to send to me immediately, and I trust y^r: Gr: 'll be sending to me all next summer, for on Receipt of the first Letters and sum of money from y^r: Gr: I am so persuaded of success, that I shall look on all the Countries to the Westward as our own. I woud not have y^r Gr: be under any apprehensions of fear on my acco^t from the armies of Shirley and Johnson, they being at so great a Distance from me—that I shall be Master of those Countries afore they can in the least

molest me, and they may be cut off afore they can come near me—Besides when I have what I have required of y^r Gr: I doubt not but I shall be able to Draw the greatest part of their armies over to me.

There has lately been three English men taken up who proved to be spies sent from Canada one of 'em was found Listing men among the Germans to send 'em off to fort du Quesne on the Ohio, they are put in Irons in Close Prison. If the Canadians did know what I am about they might spare themselves the trouble.

We've an acco^t here—that they are raising a great force and making great Preparations in Canada agst the English, and have built severall Vessells of force at Lake Ontario.

The French have built a fort not more than 40 Miles from Bethelhem—while the Indians were invading those Parts—there is a body of upwards of 3,000 Shawanese and Delaware &c^a Indians now in the French Interest w^{ch} make these Inroads—these Indians were formerly in the English Inter^s but since the Defeat of Braddock, they have taken up the hatchet agst them—(Bethelhem is a town settled by a People called here—the Moravian Brethern about 60 miles back of Phil^a) but the Cherokees who are very numerous and have never been conquered have entered into alliance with the English and choose (in great form) King George as their King and father—they have offered me 1000 of their men to join me at the Ohio provided I woud take them in the Govern^{ts} pay: this I have mentioned to the Governments—but they rather chuse that Gov^r Shirley shoud allow them the King's pay, I have accordingly Dispatched an officer with this message to Gov^r Shirley (who is now at his Govern^t at Boston) to know his pleasure ab^t it.

The Cherokee Indian Nation inhabit the Countries back of South Carolina. South Carolina is the place where most of the Vessells that are bound from these parts to Holland go to Load with rice.

I have heard that the Indians in his most christian Majesty's Inter^s have also made Inroads on the Western frontiers of Boston.

I have also heard that Mons^r Dieskau's Aid de Camp was sent over to England in the Nightingale Man of War but I fear he'll be more confined there so as not to be able to give any Intelligences of these Parts.

N. B. I mentioned to y^r Gr: on the cover of the copy, w^{ch} was sent to the care of M^r Joshua Vaneck, (the family of M^r Vaneck I was Introduced to when I first Left France and as I soon Left London for these Parts, I scarce knew any other there) of a body of 1100, Indians that appeared at Goshen; a place between Albany and New York; that body has since been Quiet by a threat sent them from the Mohawks—I also on s^d cover mentioned to y^r Gr: the great number of Irish &c^a that have been transported from England to Virginia and Philadelphia for the better peopling of the King's plantations and also of the Vast number of Germans, that have been yearly imported from Holland, who are all very poor and are obliged to sell themselves to the Inhabitants to pay their Passage. Most of the above People are of the true Roman Catholick Religion and I am persuaded they wou'd rather (from principle) chuse to serve my Royal Master. I also mentioned to y^r Gr.: that most of the hereticks have minded no other Religion than that of getting money, &c^a &c^a and that I believed they might be hired to any thing; this I am now the more convinced off even among the best and richest of 'em—for being in club a few nights ago, where the Chief Topick was upon the Desolate Condition the British Collonies to the West ward were in at present, maney of 'em said, in good earnest that it wou'd be the same thing to them who was their King, whether the King of England or the King of France, provided they enjoyed their Estates they had here unmolested—I mention this &c^a to Let y^r Gr: see the Disposition of some of King George's subjects here, &c^a and what encouragement I have of success. but I fear I have again trespassed upon y^r Gr^s patience, and again assure y^r Gr: that it was not my Intention at first to draw this to such length and tho' I make so much time (w^{ch} is very agreeable to me) to write to y^r Gr. I am dayly so much hurried as to 've scarce Leisure to eat my meals—and now bid y^r Grace adieu untill I shall be blessed from y^r Grace, w^{ch} I do soon expect, for I doubt not but y^r Grace 'll be as ready to serve our grand monarch as myself.

3d

Copy

N. B. the 1st and 2^d of this date were Directed under cover to the same hands as the former, but Least they might not be immediately forwarded to y^r Grace, I shall Deliver this Last

¹ See note to No. 3, supra.

copy to one of my officers, whom I can confide in, to be forwarded to any of his friends in Ireland.

Endorsed:—

A Mon Seigneur
 Monseigneur Le Duc de Mirepoix
 a
 Paris

NB: the 1st and 2^d of this date w^{ch} were again sent to New York to be forwarded from thence, I have hear, were put aboard the Packet there, Bound to London.

5. "JAMES ALLEN" TO HENRY GAMBLE.

Copy
 Sr

Philadelphia March 3^d 1756

Having neglected a conveyance I had from hence to Holland, and asking my Friend M^r Redmond Cunnyngnam, if He Knew of any other Vessel for Europe, he informed me that there was one Lying ready at New York bound to Newry, and said, He would take Care to forward the Enclosed for me, But Master Gamble (who without Flattery is a pretty promising youth) desired me to send it to your care, assuring me, it would not be delayed with you, so I have made free to trouble you with it requesting you would have it sent Pst first opp^r and I shall send it to New York to have it put aboard s^d Vessell—. as this Letter to the Duke contains chiefly a complaint made for Injuries suffered by the french you'll greatly oblige the parties concerned, and it shall be acknowledged by,

Y^r unknown Hb^{le} Serv^t

James Allen

Directed
 To

M^r Henry Gamble
 at

Londonderry

Via New York

Endorsed:—Copy of a Letter from
 James Allen to M^r Henry Gamble
 Philadelphia March 3^d 1756

The Original of this Letter was given to the Earl of Loudoun.

6. "FILIUS GALLICÆ" TO THE DUKE DE MIREPOIX.

Copy

America March 19th 1756

May it please your Grace,

I ask your Grace's Pardon for troubling your Grace again when I said I wou'd not, but cannot omit acquainting your Gr: that I have disclosed in a great Measure what I have wrote to Your Grace to ten of my Officers who I know I could confide in, and We have all solemnly sworn to each other (in case my Request to your Grace be granted) not to sheath the Sword 'till all the Country to the Westward and South ward be the Property of His Most Christian Majesty. And as we are all sensible in an Enterprize of this Nature that We must either vanquish or perish in the attempt. We are prepared to meet whatever Fate may attend us in behalf of our King and Country—these Officers assure me that most of the Men they have listed are of the true Roman Catholick Religion and do not in the least doubt but that they'll very easily prevail with them to join them, but we shan't dare to trust them till We hear from your Gr: I wou'd still further request the favour of yr: Gr:, to cause to be sent immediately to The proper Passes from his most Christian Majesty for Liberty to pass thro any of his Dominions either by Sea or Land for Persons and Vessells, I shall have Occasion to employ. there may be Blanks left for their Names. I shall soon be in want of them.

I wou'd observe to yr: Gr: that the Armies of Shirley and Johnson will not be made up to the Number I at first mentioned nor near so soon ready. these generals are obliged to give large Bounties to the Men they now enlist—the New England Troops viz, w^{ch} last year only for a twelve month being sent home during the Winter Season will by no Means be prevailed upon to return and serve again this year, and many of their men have deserted since they've been in Quarters and altho' the Winter has been Exceeding moderate in these parts, there has been scarce nothing done towards the Expeditions to be carried on by said generals this year—they have but lately began to enlist men to compleat their compliment, and raize them very slowly. The Differences between the Different Governments there still subsist; and even in each City there are Parties against each other—I mention this again to let yr: Gr: see the delitoriness &c of the English here, and cou'd wish the Canadians were made sensible of it, the Governments

here to the Westward (notwithstanding the Defeat of Braddock last year, and Major Washington the year afore, and the Invasions on their Frontiers at present) seem to be much the same employed with the other Governments in scribbling one against another and often publicly in their Gazettes, but I don't find that any of their scandalous Disputes were inserted. They are so busied with each other that they leave every thing now with regard to the Army—they have highly applauded the Secrecy and Dispatch in which I have acted, for no mention is scarce made of my enlisting men—and the Printers have been strictly forbid to insert any thing about it in their Papers, lest the French might hear of it, as the above mentioned defeats were chiefly owing to Intelligences the French had got, and must acquaint yr: Gr: that those Defeats are the cause in a great Measure of their exerting themselves thus at this time.

The Quakers of Philadelphia &c cheerfully contribute towards my raising men to free them and country from invasions of the french and Indians but will not, notwithstanding all the Calamities they have already suffered from the War be prevailed upon to have a proper Militia Act pretending it's against their Religion to bear arms (tho' the other Citizens have associated and formed a compleat Regiment) how easily is a country conquered when the People are thus infatuated, and while their Heads and Rulers Keep thus divided—there are some in the armies of Shirley and Johnson in my Interest, who are privately causing discontents among the soldiers—I have complained to the Philadelphia Assembly of Shirley and Dunbar &c having their recruiting Officers in Pensylvania to enlist their Men; at a time when we want them so much for the frontiers to the Westward &c^a. Since my last Letter to yr: Gr: most of the ablebodied Acadians, which have been transported from Nova Scotia and dispersed thro' out these Colonies have flocked to me, and enlisted under me, and this is approved of by the Governors, Oh! Blindness and Stupidity of the English to Imagine such men will fight their Battles who wou'd rather chuse to cut their Throats, but their confidence in me makes them thus careless at this time. My Officers to the Southward and here have enlisted 1800 Germans and Irish &c besides since my last, and now only lack about 2200 which I shall soon get—W^t a fair opportunity has his Majesty at this Time to gain whatever he pleases in America, w^{ch} if neglected will

be too late for me to influence the Soldiery, as I shall now be able to do, and it will never hereafter be in my Power to offer thus again, as I shall be obliged to destroy those Countries and People whose assistance won'd otherwise be of great Service, and those Indians which are now so hearty in his Majesty's cause must join me for their own safety, for my Orders are to carry fire and Sword as far as I can go for which purpose I have chosen men (not such as Braddock brought over to be frightened and put in Confusion by the yellowing and hooping of the Indians) and must acquaint yr: Gr: that Shirley's and Johnson's Armies have also picked men, for altho' the English are jangling together (which considerably delays and Injures their Expeditions) they wou'd seem as if they were determined now to do their utmost endeavours to drive the french (if possible) out of America, that they may no more be under their Invasion and must say that were they heartily united they wou'd be considerably an Overmatch for the french they are much more numerous, and have the best Countries, and much Wealth among them—I have at this Time considerable to communicate to y^r Gr: if I shou'd be assured of what I requested, but I'll content with what I have already intimated to y^r Gr: in hopes of being better able to do it hereafter—and now can thus far rest satisfied to my conscience that I have in part discharged my duty and affection to my King and Country and my Engagements at Canada and now assure y^r Gr: that these shall be my last Letters that yr: Gr: shall receive from me without your Grace's Commands, I wou'd observe to yr: Gr: that my last Letters to yr: Gr: were dated the 1st March, tho' they were writ the 20th ffeb^r for a peculiar Reason to myself, they were again immediately sent to New York (where I had heard were Vessells lying ready to sail for Europe) under cover to Messrs Joshua Vaneck in London and John Neufville at Amsterdam and were put aboard the packet boat w^{ch} sailed the next —— for London, but these is written this Day, my first Letters sent last Jan^{ry} to y^r Gr: were also under cover to said Mess: Vaneck and de Neufville, and were put aboard the Nightingale Man of War, but did not with that Dispatch my last Letters did, for said Man of War lay waiting about 3 weeks for a Wind which is uncommon at that Time of the year, y^r Gr: will be pleased to observe that the chief of what I wrote is hints of my design upon the English, and to shew the great probability there is, and with how much ease his Majesty may

subdue them at this Time (which is the only thing needfull at present to write) and to induce your Gr: to cause me to be enabled thereto, I have wrote y^r Gr: nothing but plain Matters of fact, but must confess I can't so well explain myself this way as verbatim I inform'd y^r. Gr: at first that I was not designed a Scribler, but was bred to the Army, and if my writing is not so elegant and correct as it shou'd be, I trust your Grace's goodness will excuse me, for I dare not yet trust any to copy my Letters: I pray your Gr: notwithstanding the incorrectness of them to pay a due regard to what I have wrote and said I am

With all due deference and Respect to y^r Gr:
your Grace's most obed^t.

Humble Servant

Filius Gallicae

P. S. I have in my 1st Letters given y^r Gr: proper directions for me, and have since wrote y^r Gr: to whose care I had sent them, and if y^r: Gr: will be pleased to direct

To

Mr Pierre Fidell

to be left at M^r Roemers

Coffee House (until asked for)

in New York in America

it will without fail come to my hand—

1st

Endorsed: Intercepted Letter to the
Duc de Mirepoix
March 19 1756

7. THE EARL OF HALIFAX¹ TO SIR CHARLES HARDY.²

Copy]

Grosvenor Square March 19, 1756

Sir Charles Hardy Bart }
Governor of New York }

Dear Sir

This Letter, which I write to you upon a very particular occasion, shall be solely confined to it; and I will not mix any other Matter that may draw your attention from it.

¹ George Montague Dunk (1716-1771) earl of Halifax, afterwards Secretary of State, was from 1748 to 1761, with slight interruptions, President of the Board of Trade and Plantations.

² Sir Charles Hardy (1716-1780), afterwards admiral, served as governor of New York from September, 1755, to June, 1757.

The other day Mr Fox sent me an intercepted Letter, directed to the Duke of Mirepoix, the contents of which, upon a full consideration of them; appear to me of a very extraordinary Nature, and of the utmost Importance. The particulars of the Letter, as the Original will be put into your Hands by Col^o Webb, I will not enumerate, nor trouble you with my notion how the Treason may be best discover'd, as I have given my Thoughts thereon in a paper Col. Webb will deliver to you, you and He will make such Improvements upon my proposal for the Discovery of the Author of the anonymous Letter, as to your Judgements shall appear right and most conducive to His Majesty's Service—But whatever be the method you shall think proper to pursue, I would recommend to you to keep them as secret and entrusted to as few as possible.

The character of Peter Joncourt¹ in many respects seems to agree with the Description which the Author of the Letter gives of himself; But whether that description is a real or fictitious one is doubtful.

In many respects Lydius's² character agrees with it; in some it differs. But that Difference may be made with Design to elude Detection. How such a Fellow as Lydius came to be employ'd last year by Mr Shirley, is matter of astonishment!

What inclines me to think much more seriously of the anonymous Letter than I otherwise should do, is that almost every Fact mentioned in it is, either in the whole or in great part, true. The only circumstance of it that appeared new, was that a large Body of men was to be rais'd in Pennsylvania. But upon looking carefully over the Instructions sent by Mr Shirley to S^r W^m Johnson, when at Mount Johnson (a copy of which we have lately receiv'd from S^r William, and which I have likewise given to Col^o Webb) I find that particular confirm'd. It is wonderful however to me that Mr Shirley should have engaged in such a Plan without acquainting Government at home with it, or with the methods by which he purposes carrying it into Execution.

The Orders given for the Indians to march to the Ohio, to examine Fort du Quesne, to sound the Intentions of the French, and afterwards to return to Pennsylvania, to be join'd by a Body of Forces, are very mysterious, or at least very vague visionary and absurd.

¹ Peter de Joncourt was French interpreter to the Government of New York.

² John Henry Lydius, son of a Reformed pastor at Antwerp, had been agent of Massachusetts at Albany. Shirley made him a colonel of Indians, much to Sir William Johnson's disgust. See post, No. 8.

The Promise that their Wives and children shall be protected in a strong Place, when there is none I know of in those parts, but Fort du Quesne, is very strange to me.

If Orders have been given to raise Forces in Pennsylvania, you probably know of it, or (be they ever so secret) Gov^r Morris, I should imagine, must. If not, the state of Things is rotten indeed! Col^o Webb supersedes M^r Shirley's command, and has a Right to know, and I hope will know every order he has given and the names of every person he has employ'd in America in any shape or character whatever.

But as M^r Shirley is at some Distance and these Matters may not be so soon known by a Correspondence with him, I would strongly recommend to Col^o Webb and yourself, privately to get every Information you can with regard to every particular Measure taken and person employ'd.

You will observe in the Letter that a charge of Treason is laid upon three of His Majesty's Officers. I know none of them, and hope they are innocent. But as the clue is given, you and Col^o Webb will soon be able to form a judgement of them. One guilty person apprehended may and probably will discover more.

Thus I leave this matter with you, and should be infinitely uneasy if the Conduct of it was entrusted to any other Hands but yours and Col^o Webb's.—It may be nothing.—It may be an Artifice to draw a little money from France—It may be fraught with some other wicked Design.—But on the other hand, it may be a matter of the highest consequence to the Wellfare of America, the Safety of His Majesty's Subjects, and the Honor and Success of his Arms.

I have never conceived the least suspicion of Disloyalty in those whom His Majesty has vested with command, as you will easily perceive by the other Letters Col^o Webb has in charge for you. But yet there are circumstances so strange with regard to this whole affair, that I hold it my indispensable Duty to recommend the whole of my observations to your most serious Consideration. But I must strictly enjoin you to look upon this Letter and the whole Transaction it alludes to, as matter of Secrecy between Col^o Webb, you and me. I am etc

Dunk Halifax.

P. S. M^r Pownall¹ informs me that one Baron Lake Augustin Davis² (a common Soldier in M^r Shirley's Regiment) was lately

¹ See post, No. 20.

² John Pownall was Secretary to the Board of Trade and Plantations.

taken up as a Spy. The particulars he relates concerning him are of an extraordinary nature and well worthy your attention.

Endorsed:—Copy of the Earl of Halifax's Letter to S^r Charles Hardy, Gov^r of New York dated 19 March 1756

S. EXTRACT OF A REPORT

Made by the Commissioners employed on the part of the Province of Pennsylvania at the Meeting at Albany in 1754.

M^r William Alexander of New York was kind enough to tell us, that M^r Woodbridge, who kept an Indian School at Stockbridge, in New England and two Connecticut Gentlemen, vizt.

Were in Town with Intent to negociate a Purchase from the Indians for the Susquehannah Lands lying within the Latitude of the Connecticut Charter, in favour of some private Persons of that Government, and had with them a Thousand Pieces of Eight, and were busy, conferring with the Indians on this subject, at the House; and thro' the Means of M^r Lydius.

This Lydius¹ is an Inhabitant of Albany known to have abjured the Protestant Religion in Canada, and to be concerned in a Clandestine Trade with the Caghnawaga or French praying Indians, and suspected to carry on a Secret Correspondence with the Government of Canada; and, as M^r Alexander informed us, might not only have lucrative Views, in the Management of this Purchase, but a Design to sow Dissentions, as well between the Indian Nations, as between the Several Colonies, whose Lands lay within the Latitude of the Connecticut Charter.

Endorsed:—Extract of the Report made
by the Commissioners employed
on the Part of the Province of Pennsylvania
at the Meeting at Albany in 1754.

9. COLONEL DANIEL WEBB² TO HENRY FOX.

Portsmouth March 30th 1756

Sir,

In obedience to His Majesty's Commands which I have had the Honor to receive from you by Mitchel the Messenger, I shall proceed to Plimouth the moment the winds will permit, and shall endeavor to execute all things required of me to the best of my power and capacity.

¹ See the preceding letter.

² Colonel Webb was sent out to take the chief command from Shirley and hold it till the arrival of Abercrombie.

I have been also honored with two letters from you, and with a Copy of a second Intercept letter, and no pains shall be spared on my part to endeavor to discover the Author, and to bring whoever may be concerned to answer as they deserve for so bold and destructive an undertaking, the delay in the Messengers returning in proper time, was owing to my going a Saturday evening to the Ile of Wight, to take leave of a good old Aunt and some other relations, and the tempestuousness of the weather a Sunday that, prevented my Servants getting over with the Dispatches, altho' he had a struggle with the winds in the Notinghams long boat for near six hours, this whole day indeed was employed in writing a Copy of the first Intercepted Letter, which I have the honor to send by this Messenger, the Smallness of the writing and closeness of the lines have so strained my eyes, that if M^r P. F.'s was in my custody, few arguments would be necessary to persuade his dispatch.

I am with the greatest respect

Sir

Your most obedient and most humble Servant

Daniel Webb.

P. S. I beg pardon for having omitted to acknowledge the receipt of the extract of a letter from Pensylvania

Indorsed:—Portsmouth

March 30th 1756

Colonel Webb

R^d 31st by Mytton

10. THE EARL OF HALIFAX TO SIR CHARLES HARDY.

Duplicate.

Grosven^r Square March the 31st 1756

Dear Sir

Colonel Webb, to whose care I have already committed two Packetts for you, (the last containing matter of the highest importance to His Majesty's Service) not being yet sailed, gives me an opportunity of acknowledging the Receipt of your Letter by M^r Pownall, and likewise that of the 23rd of February; for both which I desire you would accept my best thanks. I should not however have troubled you again so soon, but that I hold it requisite to embrace the first occasion of acquainting you with some new determinations of His Majestys Servants on the subject of the anonymous Letters lately intercepted.

I think I observed in my last to you, that I consider'd the first anonymous Letter more worthy attention on account of every particular contained in it being either in the whole, or in part true, excepting that of the large Bodies of men raising in Pennsylvania; which is now confirmed not only by the publick American Prints transmitted to England, but by a variety of private Letters, some of which I have seen. This has inclined Ministers to think more seriously of the matter, than they did before, and indeed they all agree in opinion with me, that there is Treason somewhere, and that the utmost expedition and diligence should be used in the detection of it; which from one particular circumstance in the last intercepted Letter will I hope prove matter of no difficulty: The author of it says, "that the Cherokees have made him an offer of some hundred men, and that he has transmitted that offer to General Shirley." Now, if it be no already, it may easily be known, to whom the Cherokees have made that offer, and by whom the offer was transmitted to M^r Shirley; Another Circumstance, which, if true, would lead to detection, is that of his Aid de Camp, which the Author mentions. I can't conceive that any one in Pennsylvania or Virginia (for from one of those provinces the Letters seem to have been wrote) is of a Character to have an Aid de Camp; but if there is, it must surely be known who that person is. Washington, I find, by private Letters is to command to the Westward, but I don't know it authentically, M^r Shirley never having acquainted us of his having appointed any body to such a Command, which to me appears very extraordinary. I know nothing of M^r Washington's character, but, that we have it under his own hand, that he loves the whistling of Bullets, and they say he behaved as bravely in Braddocks action, as if he really did.¹ From the phraseology of the Letters I think it very clear they were not wrote by a frenchman,

¹ Halifax is here amusing himself with a boyish expression in one of Washington's letters. Horace Walpole says (Memoirs of George the Second, 1, 347): "In the express, which Major Washington dispatched on his preceding little victory (the skirmish with Jumonville) he concluded with these words, 'I heard the bullets whistle, and, believe me, there is something charming in the sound.' On hearing of this the King said sensibly, 'He would not say so, if he had been used to hear many.' However, this brave braggart learned to blush for his rhodomontade, and, desiring to serve General Braddock as aid-de-camp, acquitted himself nobly." Sparks, Washington, II, 39, 40, denied that such a sentiment was uttered in any of Washington's letters that have been preserved; but he quotes from Gordon, II, 203, the statement that when a gentleman in Cambridge asked the General about the matter, he answered, "If I said so, it was when I was young." The truth is, that the sentence occurs, exactly as quoted by Walpole, not in the official dispatch, but in a letter to Washington's brother, which was printed in the London Magazine, August, 1754, and which may be found in Ford's Writings of Washington, I, 89, 90.

as they pretend to be; and from certain words (tho' the Letters are in general well spelt) being spelt according to the Irish pronunciation I am apt to believe the Author of them an Irish man. Mr Pownall,¹ tho' his name should not be mentioned on the occasion, gives me reason to imagine that one Croghan is the man, and orders have been accordingly given by the Secretary of State for the apprehending him. The Letter however directed to Peter Fidel will be deposited at the New York Coffee House, and other measures recommended before followed.

No Suspicion at all attends Mr Shirley, but many particulars of the last years Transactions are highly disapproved, and I greatly dislike his present behaviour in his Province; fomenting disputes, promoting ineffectual Enquiries, and countenancing a paper-war against your Province are ill-adapted to the Complexion of the Times, and the Benefit of His Majesty's Service. Orders are given for his return to England as soon as possible, and the reason given for it is, that he may be consulted on Several matters relative to the King's Service in America.

It gives me great pleasure to hear your Province have come to so spirited Resolutions; but I am equally concerned and surprized to find that no steps were taken in 23 days after towards following so good an example in the four Governm^{ts} of New England.

I am happy in the thought of your chief Difficulties being removed by the late Permission given you to wave a part of your Instructions.—That Honour and Happiness may attend you in your Governm^t, will be the constant and sincere wish of Dear Sir,

Y^r most faithfull

and obedient humble Servant

Dunk Halifax

To His Excellency

Sir Charles Hardy.

Endorsed:—The Earl of Halifax's Letter to

His Excell^{cy} Sir Cha's Hardy.

Gov^r of New York.

DUPLICATE

Dated *March the 31st 1756*

¹This might be Thomas Pownall, afterwards governor of Massachusetts, who was in England for a short time this spring; but it is more probably his brother John, secretary to the Board of Trade and Plantations. George Croghan, the Indian trader, was, I am assured, not the writer of the letters.

11. HENRY FOX TO COL. DANIEL WEBB.

Whitehall March 31st 1756.

Colonel Webb,
Secret.

Sir,

The King has commanded me to signify His Pleasure to you, that you should, immediately upon your arrival in North America, make the strictest Enquiry, in Conjunction with Sir Charles Hardy, into the Author, or Authors, of the Two anonymous Letters, lately intercepted from America, addressed to the Duc de Mirepoix, Copies of which have been already put into your Hands; and you will call to your assistance and admit to your Councils, such Governours of His Majesty's Provinces, or such other Persons, as you shall judge necessary upon this Occasion. It has been surmised here, that Mr George Croghan, a principal Trader, and employed in Indian affairs, in Pennsylvania, may possibly have been concerned in these Letters; you will, therefore, make particular Enquiry with regard to Him, and if you shall find there is just cause for this suspicion, you will secure Him, and all other suspected Persons, as soon as possible, and you will send all such Prisoners to England, with the Informations, Examinations, and material Evidences against them. I am to desire you to communicate this Letter, together with those Intercepted Letters, that make the subject of it, to Sir Charles Hardy, acquainting Him, that this is to be considered as an Instruction to Himself.

You will be pleased to return to me, by this messenger, the Blank Warrants I put into your Hands, before you left London, and likewise my Letter to Gov^r Shirley upon this subject, the same being, at present, unnecessary, and indeed improper.

I am &c^a

H. Fox

P. S.

I send you, under Flying Seal, my Letter to recall Governor Shirley

Endorsed:—March 31st 1756

By Blackmore to Plymouth

*Secret.*12. THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE¹ TO HENRY FOX (EXTRACT).

I have sent you, by this night's Post, a very extraordinary Letter, which came in a Merchant Ship to Newry, consigned

¹ William Cavendish (1720-1764), duke of Devonshire, was lord lieutenant of Ireland from March, 1755, to November, 1756, when he became First Lord of the Treasury.

to one M^r Gamble at Derry; He opened it, and then sent it to me; I at first thought it was a Counterfeit, as the Contents, at the Beginning, seemed very improbable, but It is so circumstantial, and so much knowledge of the Country contained in it, that I imagine It must be genuine; The Letter sign'd Allen, if you observe, you will, find to be the same, Hand Writing as the other; and He is thought to be a Popish Priest.

I have intercepted a Letter from Hatzell to Zobell, directed to Meister Josep Muller at M^r Brownell Shoemaker in Chequer Lane, Dublin: It is wrote partly in French, and some German in it; I have sent it to Dublin to be translated, and question whether It will be done time enough to send by this Night's Post; as soon as we can get to know His Person, I will take care to have Him seized, and all his Papers.

Endorsed:—Extract of a Letter from
the Duke of Devonshire
to M^r Fox

Carton April 10th 1756

13. HENRY FOX TO THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.

Whitehall April 20th 1756

Duke of Devonshire

Secret.

My Lord

I received, yesterday, the Honor of your Grace's Letter of the 10th Ins^t, together with That to M^r Gamble of Londonderry, inclosing a very extraordinary one to the Duc de Mirepoix from America; and, in order to assist your Grace in your further Enquiry I have the King's Commands to acquaint you, with what has lately passed Here, concerning the same unknown Correspondent.

A Letter, dated America, the 6th of Jan^y, and another, the 1st of March last, having been intercepted Here, were lately brought to me; The Latter was in the same words with that your Grace has now transmitted; and Both these Letters, being of the most dangerous Nature, the King ordered me to give copies of them to Col^o Webb, who was then setting out to take the Command of His Majesty's Forces in America, and to suggest to Him the most probable means, that had occurred to the King's Servants Here, for the immediate Discovery of the Authors of them:—One Cap^t George Croghan,

an Intriguing, Disaffected Person, and Indian Trader, in Pennsylvania, was very much suspected, nor does the name of James Allen, (probably a Fictitious one) subscribing the Letter to M^r Gamble of Derry, remove the suspicion, there not being any considerable Person, as I am informed, in Philadelphia, of that name; But I beg your Grace will inform yourself, upon what Foundation He is thought to be a Popish Priest; Master Gamble being mentioned, in the Letter, to have desired It might be addressed to M^r Gamble of Derry, your Grace will endeavor to get from Him some account of that young Man, and of M^r Redmond Cunningham of Philadelphia, in case He is also known to Him, and if He will write a Letter or Letters to this Master Gamble, and M^r Cunningham, requiring them to acquaint the Bearer, who He was, that delivered to them, in Philadelphia, the Letter, directed to Him, at Derry, It may tend greatly to the Discovery of the Person concerned, and it is the King's Pleasure that your Grace should send me those Letters, and the Result of your Enquiries, by Express, that Lord Loudoun, who is still here, may be instructed accordingly.

I have the satisfaction to acquaint your Grace, that the King extremely approves your Diligence in Endeavouring to discover M^r Zobel, and in Examining His Correspondence; But indeed there is Reason to imagine, from Baron Hatzell's Letter to Him, that He is rather trying to get a Subsistence by some wild Chymical Undertaking, than by any Political Intrigue; nor does His having been formerly employed by the King of Prussia now give Reason for suspecting him; yet, It may not be improper for your Grace to continue your attention to His Correspondence, till His real Occupation and Designs are entirely cleared up

I am &c^a

H. Fox

P. S. The King has, this Day, signed the Instrument for your Grace's Leave of Absence, and the Appointment of the Lords Justices, Agreeable to your Recommendation, But It cannot be sent to you, till next Post, on account of the Stamp Office being shut, during the Holidays.

Endorsed:—Dra^t to the Duke of

Devonshire

April 20th 1756

Secret.

14. THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE TO HENRY FOX (EXTRACT).

I have this moment received your Letter of the 20th: I will endeavour to obey His Maj^{ty's} commands, with regard to M^r Gamble, with all the Expedition, and Punctuality in my Power.

Endorsed:—Extract of a Letter from
the Duke of Devonshire to
M^r Fox.
Dublin April 26th 1756

15. WILLIAM GAMBLE TO ROBERT GAMBLE.

Copy) Dublin April 28th 1756
D^r Cousⁿ

Your Father received a Letter from one James Allen of Philadelphia, covering a Letter to be forwarded to the Duke de Mirepoix; To this Allen He (your Father) is a stranger; but with Him you are well acquainted: therefore I intreat you will take the Bearer hereof to said Allen, that he may transact with him some Business.

I shall be very glad to hear soon and often from you, being,
D^r Bob, Your Affect^t Uncle

W^m Gamble

Directed

To

M^r Robert Gamble
at M^r Redm^d Coningham's Merch^t
in
Philadelphia.

Endorsed:—Copy of a Letter from M^r
W^m Gamble to M^r
Rob^t Gamble

Dublin April 28th 1756

The Original of this Letter was given to the Earl of Londoun.

16. WILLIAM GAMBLE TO REDMOND CONYNGHAM.¹

Copy. Dublin April 28th 1756
Sr.

In a Letter of the 4th Curr^t, which I received from my Brother Henry Gamble of Londonderry, He sent me Two Let-

¹ Redmond Conyngham, esq., of Letterkenny in Ireland (whose nephew became the Lord Chancellor Baron Plunket) came to Philadelphia in 1755, and was a member of the firm of J. M. Nesbit & Co. He returned to Ireland in 1767. Pennsylvania Magazine, vi, 18, 19.

ters, which he desired I should read, and consider well, as possibly they may be proper to lay before His Grace the Duke of Devonshire Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; I accordingly perused them carefully, and consulted some Gentlemen of Distinction and Judgement about them, and they agreed with me, that they ought to be laid before His Grace, which was accordingly done.

One of these Letters is from one James Allen of Philadelphia, Covering a Letter for the Duke of Mirepoix; which he begs of Him to forward; He acknowledges Himself a stranger to my Brother, but says He is well acquainted with you, and His son (whom he calls a promising youth) and on the recommendation of you Two, He has wrote to Him, and committed the care of forwarding the Letter to the Duke de Mirepoix; therefore It's reasonable to think that you and my Nephew (to whom I now write) are acquainted with said Allen; and as It's thought necessary to examine this man closely, in regard to his Inclosure, I now intreat your taking the Bearer hereof to said Allen, that he may be brought before proper people, who may pick from Him things of Consequence to the Country you live in. To a man of your Principles, I need not urge your Readiness to a Discovery of a very evil Intention in this Affair, because I am convinced you will go about it with the greatest alacrity. On this Head, or any other, I shall be glad to hear from you, being,

Dear Sr.

Your most Obed^t Serv^t.

W^m Gamble

Directed

To

Mr Redm^d Coningham, Merch^t

in

Philadelphia

Endorsed:—Copy of a Letter from Mr

W^m Gamble to Mr

Redm^d Coningham

Dublin April 28th 1756

The Original of this Letter was given to the Earl of Loudoun.

17. THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE TO HENRY FOX (EXTRACT).

I send you a copy of another Letter from the same Person to the D. de Mirepoix: Mr Gamble at Derry opened it, and sent only a Copy; I have wrote for the Original, and desired, that, if any more Letters come, He would send them to me unopened.

Endorsed:—Extract of a Letter from the
Duke of Devonshire to Mr Fox
Dublin May 5th 1756

18. THE EARL OF HALIFAX TO HENRY FOX.

Bushey Park¹

May the 9th 1756

Dear Sir

I am obliged to you for the sight of the last intercepted Letter transmitted to you by his Grace the Duke of Devonshire in his Letter of the 3^d of May, which I this day received at Bushey; and will trouble you with a few Remarks I have made on it, necessary for My Lord Loudoun's Information, tho' very probably you have already made the same.

I think we had so many data in the former Letters, that it wou'd not have been possible for the author to Escape Detection, but in the last there are some very remarkable ones.

In the first Place he says he has communicated the Plan of his Treachery to ten of his Officers, by which (if true) it appears that he must have the command of a Regiment at least.

He says the said ten Officers assure him that most of the men they have enlisted are Roman Catholicks; upon which I would submit to you whether it woud not be right to recommend to Lord Loudoun to send an officer or two whom he can trust to Examine into the Character of the men enlisted by the ten Officers under the Author's Command, and to dismiss such as are known or strongly suspected to be Papists.

He says the Governments to the Westward have highly applauded the Secrecy and Dispatch with which he has enlisted men, it will be easily known whom the Governors to the Westward have so applauded, and who has been authorised to raise men in their Governments.

He tells the Duke of Mirepoix that the Quakers in Pensylvania have given their consent to his raising men there; by

¹The Earl of Halifax was ranger of Bushey Park from 1739 to 1771.

which the Doubt we were in concerning the Province in which the Gentleman was employ'd in raising men is cleared up.

If he has complained, as he says he has, to the Assembly of Pennsylvania of Shirley and Dunbar's officers raising Recruits in that Province, when they are wanted for the Service to the Westward, it will be very easily known who the Gentleman is who has made these Complaints to the Assembly.

if he has already raised, as he says he has, 1800 men, Germans and Irish, and expects soon to have 2000 more, he must be of a Character and Authority not to be mistaken.

If most of the able bodied Acadians as he assures the Duke of Mirepoix, have flocked to him, I submit it to you whether My Lord Loudoun should not be directed to make diligent Enquiry into the matter, and immediately discharge them from his Majesty's Service. And as he likewise says that some in Shirley and Johnson's Army are in his Interest, and are now privately fomenting Discontents among the Soldiers, I would submit to you whether My Lord Loudoun should not have an Hint to be in an Extraordinary manner watchful on this Head.

I have but one other remark to make, and that is on his saying he is order'd to carry Fire and Sword as far as he can; which, if true, seems to intimate pretty clearly that he is to have the Command of the Expedition.

In the Letters you sent me the other Day M^r Shirley tells you that M^r Sharpe Governor of Maryland is to Command the Western Expedition.

I send you these Remarks as short as I can because I would not take up more of your Time than is necessary and am

Dear Sir

Your Most Faithfull
and Obeient Humb^l Servant

Dunk Halifax

Endorsed:—E. of Halifax

May 9, 1756

To be sent to Lord Loudoun

19. COLONEL DANIEL WEBB TO HENRY FOX.

New York June 17th 1756

Sir,

Having sailed in the Gen^l Wall Packet from Falmouth the 13th of April, and having had a passage of eight weeks, I did not arrive here till the 7th inst; but immediately on my arrival

forwarded by express, the Dispatches I had the Honour to be charged with for General Shirley, to Albany, where he has been for about a month, I at the same time informed him of my intentions to proceed thither in five or six days, his expecting to see me so soon, has probably been the cause I have not yet heard from him, or it may be for want of opportunity as there is no post established betwixt this place and that, all letters going by the Sloops that so frequently pass and repass. I should have proceeded according to my first intentions if a ship from Carolina had not assured us of having seen the fleet from Plimouth fifty Leagues from the Coast and becalmed, and his intelligence has seemingly proved true, by the arrival yesterday of Major Genl Abererombie¹ and all the transports excepting one with two Companys of the Highland Reg^t, which was seperated in a hard gale ten days ago, another ship with five Companys of that Reg^t was seperated at the same time, but she is come into the mouth of the river this morning.

The Harriot Packet that took up the Germain Commission and non Commission Officers at Dover, arrived the day before the transports, and were on the point of proceeding to Pensilvania under the care of Major Rutherford, when we had an account of Gen^l Abererombies being Anchored at the entrance of this harbour.

On my communicating the intercepted letters to Sir Charles Hardy, he was very much surprised, and equally pused, and is still at a loss what to conclude on the whole, and will give a fuller account by the Packet which he proposes to Dispatch for England a Monday next the 21st instant, than it would be prudent to trust by a common merchant ship, I shall trouble you with a Duplicate by the Packet, in order to have a double chance of y^r receiving it the sooner, this is the first ship for England since my arrival,

I have the Honor to be
with the greatest esteem, Sir,
your most obedient and
most humble servant

Dan^l Webb.

Mr Fox

Indorsed:—New York

June 17th 1756

Col^l Webb

R^d July 26th

¹ Abererombie was to take the chief command from Webb and to hold it till the arrival of Loudon.

20. THE EARL OF LOUDOUN TO HENRY FOX (EXTRACT).

I have not had it in my Power to do anything about the Intercepted Letters; before I arrived Mr Webb had talked that affair over with Sir Charles Hardy, but they could find nothing from any lights it gave them, nor could I on my first arrival, but lately I find from Mr Cragon, that there were some People in Pensilvania, who were going off to the French, and some of them were stopt; but this scene lies in Pensilvania, and as some of the People, I am informed were brought before Magistrates, it must be known both to Mr Shirley and Governor Morris, so you certainly must have had accounts of it, since I left London.

I do not chuse to make a noise till I have further lights, but the moment I can get to Pensilvania, I will endeavour to bring to light, whatever I can come at in this affair.

I find Barron Leake &c &c¹ who was a soldier in Major General Shirley's Regiment, was taken up in Jersey, and Papers and Plans found on him, and Commissions, but was discharged, as a Soldier on Furlough in Mr Shirley's Regiment, he went then back to Pensilvania, and I have never been able to learn, whether he went to the Regiment at Oswego, or deserted, but when we come to make an Enquiry, into the affairs of that Regiment, I shall endeavour to find this out."

Extract of a letter from the Earl of Loudoun to The Right Hon^{ble} Henry Fox.

Dated Albany Oct^r 3^d 1756

21. THE EARL OF LOUDOUN TO HENRY FOX.

New York January 4th 1757

Sir,

I have the honor of your Letter of October 2^d, by the Packet, in which you acquaint me, that His Majesty had been pleased, to Order Major General O'Farrell's Regiment, and the twenty four additional Companies from Ireland, to New York. I have prepared Quarters for them here, and in the Villages on Long Island, and in this Neighbourhood.

I shall immediately on their Arrival, compleat Major General O'Farrell's Regiment, to one thousand Men, and altho' I have reason to Imagine, that the three Regiments in Nova Scotia,

¹ See postscript to No. 7, ante.

are very near compleat, if not quite so, as by their returns to me of the 1st of October, they wanted but two hundred and eighty two men to compleat them to the numbers expected; and one Regiment there Has since that, received one Hundred Men, and a great many Recruits gone to the other Regiments the numbers of which I do not exactly know, but after enquiring of Captain Coterell, who is Secretary to the Province, at present here, for the Recovery of his Health, I shall reserve for those Regiments three hundred men, and shall send them to Halifax as soon as I can with safety; the remainder shall divide among the Troops here, according as I find them, when they arrive.

Last night, one of the Transports was off the Land and got a Pilote on board; as it blew very hard off the Land, she could not get in; but I do not apprehend any danger; the People in the pilote boat acquaint me, that they told them, they had parted from the Fleet about ten days ago, and that they had two hundred and Fifty soldiers aboard, which was all he could hear.

On the first of this month we got Intelligence from a Merchant in New York, that a Gentleman at Philadelphia, in the Coffee House, about a fortnight ago enquired if there was a Letter at the Post Office here directed for Pierre Fidel, and on being told there was, said he wished he would forward it to him, as the Gentleman for whom it was directed, is now on the Frontiers. the Merchant did not know the Man, but says, he was dressed like an Officer, and thinks he is a Stranger. This Intelligence came to Sir Charles Hardy, and on Sunday morning I sent off Colonel Stanwix, and the Merchant to point out the Man, with Orders, if he is still there, to secure him and his Papers, and all such Persons as appear, either from examining him, or from his Papers, to be engaged with him.

Before the Information arrived, M^r Webb was going to Philadelphia, to take command of the Troops, and to enquire after an Account, I mentioned to you in a former Letter, I had of a number of Men, that had assembled and marched off, to join the Enemy, that they had been pursued and taken; but I do not find, that any one was ever punished for this, or that it has ever been reported to the Government at home; but M^r Webb has been so much out of order, for ten days, that it was not in his Power, to undertake the journey. I hope Colonel Stanwix may be there this night, tho' the snow is very deep,

all over the Country, which makes Travelling very tedious at present.

On the 5th at night, the Transport I mentioned above, arrived here; she proves to be the Baltimore; Colonel Rolls is on board, by whom I am informed, they sailed from Cork November 6th, and parted with the Fleet on the 18th, in a hard Gale of Wind, before they reached the Western Islands; they have in her, one hundred and Seventy Eight Soldiers, and acquaints me, that the whole amount to Seventeen hundred. They have taken in their Voiage, the S^t Vincent, of Bourdeaux, and retook the Muscovy belonging to London, coming from Jamaica, and bound to London.

I shall mention nothing of the drafts, till I see them, and when Colonel Prevost arrives, who has the different returns of them, from their Regiment, I shall send you a proper return of their numbers, and what they are.

As I must set out on Saturday Morning for Boston I shall only add, that I am most impatient to know, how the General plan I proposed for next Campaign is approved of, because, according to the plan that is to be executed, the preparations must be made, and will be extremely different for different Plans.

I have the honor to be, with the greatest Respect.

Sir,

Your Most Obedient and
Most Humble Servant

Loudoun

The Right Hon^{ble} Henry Fox

Endorsed:—New York, Jan^y 4th 1757

Earl of Loudoun

R Feb^y 11th

22. THE EARL OF LOUDOUN TO HENRY FOX (EXTRACT).

“Last night, I had a Letter from Colonel Stanwix, dated Philadelphia, January 10th, by which I find, the Person he went in search of, had not then appeared; that he was still in Search after him, privately:”

Extract of a letter from the Earl of Loudoun to the Right Hon^{ble} Henry Fox

Dated Boston Jan^y 25th 1757.

23. THE EARL OF LOUDOUN TO HENRY FOX (EXTRACT).

“When I was at Pensilvania, I found the French Neutrals there, had been very mutinous, and had threatened to leave the Women and Children, and go over and join the French in the back Country. They sent me a Memorial in French setting forth their Grievances; I returned it, and said I could receive no Memorial from the Kings Subjects but in English, on which they had a general Meeting, at which they determined, they would give no Memorial but in French, and as I am informed, they come to this resolution, from looking on themselves entirely as French Subjects.

Captain Cotterell, who is Secretary for the Province of Nova Scotia, and is in this Country for the recovery of his Health, found among those Neutrals, one who had been a Spie of Colonel Cornwallis,¹ and afterwards of Governor Lawrence,² who he tells me had behaved well, both in giving accounts of what those People were doing, and in bringing them Intelligence of the Situation and Strength of the French Forts, and in particular of Beausejour: by this man I learnt, that there were five principal leading men among them, who stir up all the disturbance these People make in Pensilvania, and who persuade them to go and join the Enemy, and who prevent them from Submitting to any regulation made in the Country, and to allow their Children to be put out to work.

On finding this to be the case, I thought it necessary for me, to prevent as far as I possibly could, such a Junction to the Enemy; On which I secured those five ringleaders, and put them on board Captain Falkinghams Ship, the Sutherland, in order to his carrying them to England, to be disposed of as His Majestys Servants shall think proper: but I must inform you, that if they are turned loose, they will directly return, and continue to raise all the disturbance in their Power; therefore it appears to me, that the Safest way of keeping them, would be to Employ them as Sailors on board Ships of War.”

“In a former Letter I acquainted you of the Intelligence we had received, of a Person at Philadelphia, enquiring for the Letter directed to Pierre Fidel, and the steps taken to discover and apprehend him; that miscarried, and we could never dis-

¹ Edward Cornwallis (1713-1776), afterwards general (brother of the archbishop and uncle of the famous marquis), was governor of Nova Scotia from 1749 to 1752.

² Col. Charles Lawrence governed Nova Scotia from 1753 to 1760.

cover, who the Person was that made the enquiry, or what is become of him.

By the Indian Intelligence, from Sir William Johnson enclosed, you will see, that there are reports, of the People at the German Flatts negotiating with the French; They are there at a great distance, and still more disobedient to Government, than those that live nearer; but as yet we have not been able, to fix on any of them with certainty: Ensign Wendel, who is named there, came to me a few days before this Intelligence arrived, and threw up his half pay, rather than run the risk of being employed again as an officer: On this Intelligence, I sent immediately and secured him and his Papers, and was in hopes by him, both to have discovered what there was in that correspondence, and likewise to have got some lights, into the affairs mentioned in the intercepted Letters.

When he arrived, Sir Charles Hardy, Major General Abercromby and I, searched his Papers, but nothing appeared. I then acquainted him, of our having discover'd his correspondence last Summer with the enemy, from the German Flatts; and likewise of his Correspondence and Engagements the year before.

He immediately acquainted us with the Letter he writ, which was to a Cousin of his, Ensign Schuyler, who was taken Prisoner at Oswego, telling him, that all his friends were well, and employed building a Fort; told us of the Indian he gave it to, who was going to Canada from the Indians, which agrees with the Information; Said he was sorry if that gave offense; That he writ the Letter at the Table, in the Place where he Messed with several other Officers of the Regiment there.—As this seem'd to be an Imprudence, arising from Ignorance, and nothing further appearing against him, we have dismissed him."

Extracts from a letter from the Earl of Loudoun to the Right Hon^{ble} William Pitt

Dated New York, April 25th 1757.





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