

I.—THE CORRESPONDENCE OF COLONEL
ROBERT ELLISON OF HEBBURN—1733—48.

BY EDWARD HUGHES

The writer of the following letters was the younger son of Robert Ellison, lord of the manor of Wardley near Hebburn, and brother of the more famous Cuthbert Ellison, promoted General in 1759.¹ The letters were sent to another brother, Henry, of Gateshead Park. The originals are now in the library of Columbia University, New York.² Few men could have had such varied military service as Robert Ellison—road making in the Scottish Highlands under General Wade, an unsuccessful "commando" assault on Cathagena, anti-invasion preparations against the French with the father of the man who subsequently conquered Canada, garrison duties at newly conquered Louisburg and in New England. The correspondence is especially valuable for the light it throws on the organization of the Marines and on the American scene.

Fort William, Octobr ye 2nd 1733.

Dear Bro^r

I have been here near Six Weeks and I thank God I never yet saw so disagreeable a place, nor I hope never shall: the Weather has been so bad for ab^t a Month of ye time y^t there was no stirring out of ye Barracks, but when we were obliged to mount Guard (*sic*) w^{ch} comes to my turn every fourth day. We had Gen^l Wade here ab^t three weeks ago he review'd us, and for ye time he was

¹ See my *North Country Life in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 89.

² My acknowledgments are due to the Librarian of Columbia for permission to quote the letters and to the Durham Colleges' Research Fund Committee for generous aid in the purchase of photostats.

here ye Weather was pritty good w^{ch} happen'd very luckyly; ye Gen^l is now at a Bridge he is building Cross ye River Tay for ye Conveniency of marching ye Troops across y^e Country wch together wth y^e Roads already made and what are making have cost his Majesty a Considerable Sum of money, there is above a hundred men out of our Regiment & as many more out of two other Reg^{nts} employed about them: the Roads are as good as any Turnpike Road in England and before were ha[r]dly passable; the Gen^l when he was here told me he wou'd call at Ravensworth & go from thence to see ye partners^p Bridge³ w^{ch} I acquainted my Uncle⁴ wth: he will be there I imagine ab^t ye 18th or 20th of y^s month.

We are five of us in a Mess: we at present have pritty good Beef & Mutton & y^t is all ye Country affords, but in a Month or Six Weeks I doubt fresh provisions will be very scarce, we pick up what fowls we can & feed them, for you may imagine they are very lean when they are bought: in short ye Country is ten times as miserable as you can imagine. My humble Service attends y^e Lady &

I am, D^r Bro^r
You^r most Affectionate
Rob^t Ellison.

Berwick, March ye 15th 1737-8.

Dear Bro^r

I Rec^d yours of y^e 19th of last month & should have answered it sooner: but that I waited till I cou'd give you an Acct of your Snuffs being sent. I sent you by the Newcastle Carrier who left this Place yesterday two small Jarrs of Preston Panns⁷ Snuff which I hope will prove Good:

The two Jarrs hold 3 ^{lb} 13 ^{ozs} at 2 ^s per lb.	7 ^s 7 ^½ ^d
The charge of ye Jarrs & Carriage from Preston Panns	10 ^d

8^s 5^½^d

As the Time of Year for Fishing is now Coming on shou'd be glad to meet you at Woolerhaugh head at any time, when most Convenient for your self: you will let me know ye Post before you intend to set out & shall be sure to meet you. And as there is an Officer of our Reg^t who will come along wth me, who wou'd

³ The famous Causey bridge in the Derwent valley.

⁴ Colonel George Liddell, M.P., whose sister had married Robert Ellison, senior.

have a p^r of silver Spurrs made after ye same fashion as mine, shou'd be obliged to you, if you will allow John to go to Isaac Cookson on ye side & bespeak of him a pr of Silver Spurrs of ye same Pattern as mine, if he remembers it, but if not I wou'd not have him make them, as I Remember I left a Steel Pattern Spur with M^r Cookson w^{ch} will be a Direction to him if he has not lost it; you will desire John^s to pay for them & bring them to Woolerhaughead & I will take care to repay him. My service waits on ye Lady and ye young Gentry.

I am, &c.

London, May ye 5th 1739.

Last Post bro^t ye Melancholy Acct of poor Tom Bright's Death.⁶ . . . As to his Distemper I can give you no acct of it, for it has been Called by different names during ye Course of his illness; & I wish ye Physicians may not have mistaken his Case: however his last Attacks was fitts w^{ch} ye D^r called Histrick of w^{ch} he died on Tuesday Morn^s ab^t 6, after having lain Speechless in one above twelve Hours. He has left S^r Harry,⁷ M^{rs} Bright & Jack Bright Joynt Executors.

The Maj^r^s is yet in Town but talks of going assoon as he buys his Recruit Horses which he intends to do assoon as ye Dealer is ready for him.

I have not got on[e] farthing from J^{no} Shutt⁹ since I came to Town; nor indeed can I hear from him tho' I have wrote to him twice, once when I came first to Town & once very lately. I cannot say but it is a little hard upon me (tho' I know this is a bad year) for I have rec^d but £30 since Christmas was Twelve month.

My service waits upon my Sister and ye^c Young Gentry.

I am, &c.

[P.S.]

We Expect to be Reviewed by ye King this Summer so that I shall be at Quarters all this Year I believe: our Company's Qua^{rs} is Dorking in Surry where I go ye^c beginning of next week.

My Uncle Liddell setts forward for Harrogate on Wednesday next.

⁵ Boyn, Henry Ellison's servant.

⁶ Of Badsworth, near Pontefract, Ellison's cousin. See *North Country Life*, pp. 388-9.

⁷ Liddell.

⁸ Cuthbert Ellison.

⁹ The steward at Hebburn.

London, Dec^r ye 21st 1739.

I am I believe indebted to you for a Letter of a Long Date for w^{ch} I beg yo^r Pardon, & beg leave to Congratule you on my Bro^r's Preferm^t¹⁰ & have likewise ye satisfaction to acquaint you that by S^r Harry's application in my behalf I have got a Company of Marines¹¹ in Coll: Robinson's Reg^t: our Quarters are to be at Leeds so that I hope to see you soon, for we shall be sent a Recruit^s soon after ye Hollidays: I shall always think my self vastly obliged to S^r Harry & my Uncle for their kindness to me in this affair.

I have ye Pleasure to acquaint you that S^r Harry is now out of all Danger, having Demised (*sic*) his Physicians y^e day before yesterday: I saw him yesterday for y^e first Time since I came to Town; he was very Chearfull and Eat his Dinner wth a good appetite. D^r Broxholme called while I was there to Enquiré how he was, but found him so well that he did not even feel his Pulse.

I have been very much out of Order wth a Cold since I came to Town w^{ch} prevented my Writing last Post. . . .

London, Jan^{ry} the 7th 1739/40.

Rec^d your kind letter, for which am much obliged & beg you will accept of & make my Sincere acknowledgements to my Sister for your kind Congratulations on my Preferm^t. I likewise Return you thanks for your Application to S^r Harry on my behalf, to whom I am infinitely Obligated, and to whom my Preferment is Intirely owing; for by agreement he Scolicited my Affair and my Uncle Cap^t Harris's, by w^{ch} they both succeeded.

I am vastly obliged to you for your kind Invitation of making Park House my head Quarters; but as Coll: Lowther has got Newcastle for his Quarters, & as y^e 6 Coll^s of Marines have agreed not to Interfere in Recruiting in one another's Quarters, I shall not be able to Recruit so near you as I cou'd wish w^{ch} I am sorry for. But as I shall Recruit in Yorkshire & some Parte of yo^r County, hope to waite upon You at Park House. In the Mean Time if Jno Boyn cou'd pick me up 2 or 3 Men shou'd be obliged to him: they must not be under five foot five Inches wthout Shoes, Strong made; they shall have 6^d per day from the Time of his Agreement with them & please to let him have money on that acct if he is likely to succeed; & please to tell him, he may go as farr as a Guinea & a Crown advance, but as much under as he can.

¹⁰ Cuthbert Ellison had been promoted Lieutenant-Colonel in the Welch Fusiliers.

¹¹ For the Companies of Marines see Cyril Field, *Britain's Sea Soldiers*.

We shall all set forward for Leeds w^{ch} is our Present head Quarters in ab^t a week; from whence shall let you know where I propose to Recruit: I think I told you in my Last that I was in Coll: Robinson's Reg^t.

There has been ye Greatest Delays ab^t ye Marines that can be imagined: we have not yet rec^d one farthing of Money to set ab^t Recruiting nor shall we these 3 or 4 Days, by w^{ch} means we shall loose the best part of the Year for Recruiting.¹² There is actually Transport hiring for a Body of Troops, so that it looks now as if we shou^d have some Business.

S^r Harry is now perfectly well; he does not go to Bray as he intended on Acct of the severe weather¹³ we have here w^{ch} I am very glad of.

[P.S.] The Bath Waters Continue to agree wth my Uncle and he finds him self much better.

Wakefield, Jan^{ry} ye 27th 1739/40.

I got to Leeds last Wednesday; and propos'd writing to you on my Arrival there, but I do assure you have been so busy that I have not had Time to write to any Body. I have got so farr in my way to Sheffield, where I shall be tomorrow & where I shall fix my head Quarters for Recruiting, so beg I may hear from you soon directed to ye care of ye Post Mas^{tr} House in Sheffield.

I thank you for yo^r kind advice in my Sister Jenny's¹⁴ Letter ab^t my accepting of y^e Paym[aster]'s place in Partnership, but I think I can Assure you that I run no Sort of Risque from it because ye Maj^r who shares wth me in y^e Profits has nothing to do wth y^e Money Affair, nor no Body but my Self. Coll: Robinson gave it to y^e Major but Recommended me as a Proper Person to do y^e Business & what induced me to accept of it was, y^t it will be a Certain profit to me of near £50 a year without any Expen^{ce}; however, if you think it not adviseable I believe I can have people Eno['] to take it off[f] my hands wth thanks; but shou^d be glad of yo^r opinion in your next.

I wrote to you in my last ab^t Jno. Boyn's trying to List me some Men w^{ch} I shou^d be glad he wou^d Endeavour to do, because I wou^d willingly Compleat my Company as soon as I cou^d; as I do not know how soon we may be called upon. Therefore shou^d be glad he wou^d try to find out a proper Person in Newcastle for

¹² The winter months.

¹³ The winter of 1739-40 was exceptionally severe.

¹⁴ Robert Ellison's unmarried sisters Jane and Betty now lived with their widowed mother in Rathbone Place, London.

to get me some men who I will allow 5^s per Man to for every Man John Boyn approves of, but desire Jn^o will not allow any man to be absolutely Listed wthout his approbation: they must be full 5 foot 5 Inches wthout Shoes, excepting young Lads of 16 or 17 of 5 foot 4 Inches & $\frac{3}{4}$ wthout Shoes, all strong & well made: I desire they may not beat abt wth a Drum, as it will not be proper as there is a Reg^t Quarter'd in the Town. Be so good as to furnish Jn^o wth Money on y^t Acct. I wou'd not go further than a Guinea & a Crown advance & a Crown to y^e person that brings y^e Man to List, except to a very good man, but désire as much of y^e advance Money as they can be laid out in necessarys for ye Recruits. If they will let me know if they get any Number, shall send a Serj^t for y^m. Each Recruit must be subsisted at 6^d per day.

My humble service. . . .

[PS] I beg pardon for giving you so much trouble & for employing Jn^o Boyn in this way & hope as he is so near ye Town y^e people he Employs will bring any man to him & that he need not neglect your Business.

Sheffield, Feb^{ry} ye 23 1739/40.

I wrote to you by Corp^t Holroide who I hope is wth you 'ere this: I have heard nothing as yet of Hamersly so am afraid he is gone for good, but desire as you say he is known to the Potters that Jn^o Boyn wou'd Endeavour to learn w^t part of Staffordshire he comes from that I may know, in case we ever go near that part of the Country to Enquire for him.

As to y^e Officers of Lowthers takeing it ill that I shou'd send a Recruiting to Newcastle: I am sure they have no Reason, for notwithstanding y^e Agreem^t among the Colonels of Marines we have been broke in upon in a most Unreasonable Manner, even in our very Quarters and Major Edmondson himself told me their Officers had leave to go to any part of England they pleas'd.

I beg if Jn^o & ye Corp^t have any Success that y^e men may be Attested as soon after Listing as may be because if you do not carry them before a Justice in 4 days, or at least Summons them within that Time, they may be off of course. As I have had very great success my self & likely to Continue & as I am as forward as any of my Neighbours, I am a little more Nice: therefore desire they may list no full grown man under 5 foot 5in. tho' wou'd not loose young Growing Lads for a Quarter of an Inch. I hope as I have not had any Money from Jn^o Shutt for near a Twelve month that he will be able to furnish you wth what money will be necessary: if not be so good as let me know what money you

have Expended & shall give you an Order on our Agents. I know little or nothing of the Corp^l as he came to us but two or three Days before I sent him to you, but I hope he will behave well, as he seems to be a Sober Modest Fellow: but be so good as let me know his behaviour.

I am now more than Compleat to 70 Men, including y^e Draughts, but as we are to have an Addition of 30 Private men, 1 Serj^t, Corp^l & Drum^r it will take some Time to raise them, tho' hope if y^e men come as fast as they have hitherto done I shall pick up my Complim^t as soon as any of my Neighbours & have a little Time to spend wth my Friends, but do assure you hitherto I have had not a Mom^t to spare, nor shall spare neither Cost nor Diligence till I get my Complim^t & I have ye satisfaction to acquaint you that y^e Recruits I have got are not in the least Inferior to y^e best Parcell I have yet seen belonging to y^e Reg^t. Jno Boyn was right in saying y^e men here are of a low Stature & many of them In Kneed, but I think I have listed between 20 & 30 Men in this Town only: most of them very Clever fellows and I have I am sure refused at least as many more as under size.

My Service waits on my Sister, y^e Young Gentry & all friends who I hope will Excuse me if I am a little negligent in this way at this Time.

Leeds, March y^e 2nd 1739/40.

I Rec^d your favour & since that my Corporal is Returned wth one very good man: you may be Surprised that I have not answer'd your Letters in Course; but assure you I have had very little Time to spare & lately I have been waiting for an Answer to a Letter for leave to pay my Respects to you and y^e rest of my Friends at NewCastle but their seems at Present so great a Likelyhood of our Marching from this Part of y^e Country soon that we are in Continual hurry in getting our men a little Disciplined that I much Question whether I shall be able to get over or not, but if I can spare but a very few Days you may Depend upon my Comeing over. But at present there is no Officer wth y^e Comp^y but my Self. I have however finished my Recruiting w^{ch} was a very great fatigue to me. I shall be able to let you hear more very soon and am

Portsmouth, Oct^r ye 17th 1740.

I Rec^d your most Melancholy Letter yesterday [reporting the death of his uncle Colonel George Liddell, M.P. for Berwick] . . . As I did not Receive yours till yesterday Evening on board our

Ship & having had Orders for unmooring in y^e Morning & ye Wind being fair I was afraid I should not have had an Opportunity of writing to you & y^e Rest of my Relations: but ye Wind being Contrary y^s Morn^g I came on shore for y^s Purpose least I shou'd not have another Opportunity, tho' it is imagined by most People as ye Season is so farr advanced that we shall be Countermanded. . . .

[P.S.] Pray Excuse faults as I have no place to write in but a Noisy Crowded Coffee House.

Port Royal Harbour, Jamaica, May y^e 30th 1741.

Rec^d your favour of y^e 15th Febr^y by the last Ships & was Extreemly Rejoyced to hear that you & y^e rest of my Relations in England were well. I wrote to you by y^e Wolf Sloop w^{ch} we here was lost in y^e Windward passage in her way home, so that I fear you will not have heard from me since I came here & I assure you at this Time it is a very great Chance whether Letters come to hand sent from this Place especially if sent by a man of Warr.

We have had a very warm attack at Cartagene w^{ch} I suppose you will have heard of before this comes to hand. It is a very Strong place and y^e Entrance to its Harbour defended by Six Forts, all of w^{ch} we took: their names were S^t Phillip: S^t Jago: S^t Joseph: Fort Lewis: Castellio Granda & Mansinilia. We afterwards attacked a fort called S^t Lazarus situated on y^e Top of a very Steep Hill w^{ch} Commands y^e Country round it & is a kind of Citadell to y^e Town of Cathagene w^{ch} it likewise Commands. But as its Strength was not, I am afraid, sufficiently known before we were ordered to Storm it, we were obliged to Retreat with the loss of 640 men killed and wounded, among whom many more Off^{rs} suffred in proportion than private men, for as y^e Spaniards had Trenches with out ye Walls of ye Fort w^{ch} secured them from ye Fire of our men, they had an Opportunity of Levelling at whom they pleased: among those who dyed of their wounds were Coll: Thompson our L^t Coll & Capt Harris of Wolf's Reg^{ts}¹⁵ who was a Nephew of old M^{rs} Hills & who I fancy you may have seen at my Uncle Liddells. Fort Lazarus has Regular out works wth a Ditch & y^e walls were too high for our Scaling Ladders by several feet. We are now preparing to go to Sea again & they say upon Action, but as our force is very greatly lessen'd by Sickness & death inso-much that out of 8 Reg^{ts} bro^t from Engl^d I beleive 1000 men are as many as can be muster'd up fit for immediate Service. I cannot think

¹⁵ Edward Wolfe, *D.N.B.* and *Army Lists*.

we can attempt any thing of Consequence, but hope we may be sent against some place on (*sic*) no great Strength in our way home for I assure you I am heartily tyred of this place.

I am, I thank God, very well again, but I had a very severe bloody flux & since that a fever w^{ch} few or none Escaped after our great fatigue against Fort Lazarus, w^{ch} was as great I believe as troops ever underwent, for besides ye Sun's being then in its Zenith & ye place lying in Latitude of 10° S^o Our Duty was so hard we had but one Night in bed and y^e other on Duty throughout y^e Army w^{ch} occasion'd our looseing ab^t 100 Men a Day by Sickness & Death for some days before we came away. . . .

[PS] Cap^t Gwynne desires his Service & poor Cap^t Robinson of y^s Reg^t was among y^e killed at S^t Lazarus.

COLONEL CUTHBERT ELLISON TO HIS BROTHER
HENRY

Colchester Camp, 29th July 1741.

On Saturday last I received a Letter from a Friend of mine in London to acquaint me that he had seen Lord Elibank who is just arrived from the West Indies & who assured him that my Bro^r Bob was very well when he left Jamaica & that he was one of the Oldest Captains remaining, so that if he has the Good Fortune to return to England, he will come back a Field Officer if he is not one Already. As there are several Men of War soon expected from that part of the World, I hope some of us may have a Letter from the Cap^t, indeed I wonder we have not heard from him by the Ship that brought my Lord over, tho' I am told she sailed two days before 'twas given out she wou'd, which possibly was the reason that there were so few private Letters.

We have now here Seven regiments of Foot with the Generals Honywood & Howard and Brigadier Cornwallis. How long we are to remain here, or where we are to be sent from hence is a Secret still I believe to our Generals as well as our Selves. But we expect to know our Fate in a very few days as their was a Courier went thro' our Camp last night from Hannover who probably brought his Majesty's Orders how the Troops encampt here are to be disposed of.

Kingston, Jamaica, Jan^{ry} y^e 20th 1741/2.

I hope you Rec^d mine of the 11th of last Month wth 4 Bills Inclosed & an Ord^r on Maj^r Sawyer for my 12 Months Arrears.

10 CORRESPONDENCE OF COLONEL ROBERT ELLISON

Inclosed I send you y^e Duplicates of those Bills least y^e Others may miscarry. I desire you will Receive y^e Money for me & apply it for my use as you think proper.

The Bills are as underneath:

20 th Jan ^{ry} 1741	D ^a Patton on his father Crown Court, Duke Street, Westminster. 30 days Sight.	£30
20 th June	D ^o Boteler Hutchinson on ye Rev Charles Hutchinson at Nottingham. Ten days after sight.	£50
11 th Decem ^r	My Bill on Maj ^r Sawy ^r Brewer Street, Golden Square. 10 Days after D ^o	£68 12 6
11 th „	D ^o on D ^o Ten Days after D ^o	£44 12 2
		£193 4 8

Our Reinforcem^t from England arrived ab^t a week ago: & we are prepareing to go out again: it is unlucky for me their Coming now as I was y^e Eldest Cap^t on y^e Expedition before they came, now there are sev^l who I fear will be all pro[v]ided for before me. Please to Excuse me as I have but very little Time to finish my Letters & I wou^d not omit this Opportunity as I take it to be a safe one. . . .

Kingston, Jamaica, Sep^r ye 5th 1742¹⁶

I Rec^d yours of the 7th of May & am Extreemly glad to hear you & your Family are all well. I am sorry Major Sawyer shou^d Trifle wth you ab^t y^e Bill for £68 : 12 : 5 for I am very well assured he has long ago rec^d Maj^r Robinson's ye late Pay^{rs}' acct by w^{ch} it appears that I had not Rec^d my Pay here from 24th April was Twelve month.

I have now ye good fortune to acquaint you that there has a Vacancy happen'd wthin these few Days of a Majority w^{ch} ye General has been so kind as to Promise to me but he has been so busy for these few Days past that my Com^{ission} is not yet Signed, tho it is ready wrote out. I am in Effect ye Eldest Cap^t on y^e

¹⁶ On September 13th, Miss Jane Ellison wrote from London: "We have seen in the Newes Papers y^t there is 11000 Letters come from Jamaica & as wee have had no Letters from the poor Capt wee are a good Deal uneasy. Upon his account I've sent Unknown to my Mother y^s morning to y^e Agent who says they have had no Letters from thence so wee live in hopes y^t the Letters is-not yett Delivered out."

Expedition there being only one Elder and he is gone home as an Invalide, so that you see this Climate Affects all new Comers as well as it did us; nay I think more of Officers who came out lately died in Proportion in y^e Time than there did of those came out first, tho ye last have been in no Service here. We old Standards now keep our healths pretty well.

Since I wrote ye [above] I have rec^d my Comission as Major to the first Battalion of Collonel Gooch's American Reg^t: p[er] Inclosed I send you a Bill on Maj^r Sawyer pay^{ble} to your Self or Order for £91 : 2 : 6 being my Subsistence to y^e 24th of June 1742 being y^e Day I left Collonel Fraser's Reg^t. I have been from y^t time to ye. Date of my Present Comission in Gen^l Guise's Reg^t. I likewise send you a Certificate from Maj^r Lee our Pay^r. that I have rec^d no Subsistence During his being Pay[master] & Maj^r Sawyer has long ago Rec^d Maj^r Robinson's Acc^{ts} our late Pay^r so y^t he can have no Excuse for not paying either this or y^e former Bill on y^r Producing ye Certificate. I shall by y^e next opportunity send you y^e Duplicate of y^e Inclosed Bill & Certificate & shall write to Maj^r Sawyer by this Ship.

You will have heard before this reaches you that ye Spaniards have landed in Georgia to y^e N^o it is said of 3000: it is likewise said M^r Oglethorp¹⁷ has beat[en y^m]: there is however a Detachm^t of 500 Men from our Army ordered to be got ready for y^e Assistance of M^r Oglethorp. Neither ye Marines nor ye Reg^t I am now in are to be sent wth this Detachm^t they being Employed solely for y^e Service of y^e Ships of Warr here. . . .

[PS] Please to acquaint my Sister Airey¹⁸ wth my Promotion not having time to write my Self.

Rochester, March y^e 6th 1743/4.

Since I wrote to you last we have been in the Greatest hurry Imaginable on acct of the Invasion intended by the French¹⁹ w^{ch} has occasion'd my coming down to this Place as Brigade Maj^r to Brigad^r Wolfe who was sent down to command here. I hope I may now give you Joy of a Victory obtained over the French & Span^{ds} in the Mediterranean by Admiral Mathews w^{ch} I hope you will have a Certain acct of from London by this Night's Post: at Present we have here only a Verbal acct of it from a Messenger who went thro' here yesterday Evening who says Mathews had

¹⁷ General Oglethorpe, Governor of Georgia.

¹⁸ Kate Ellison had married Joseph Airey, a Newcastle attorney: she was his third wife.

¹⁹ For the serious invasion scare in 1744 see *Commons' Journal*, 568.

taken & Destroyed 17 Sail of French & Spaniards & has taken y^e Spanish Admiral and was in Pursuit of the rest of the Fleet. I hope in God the acc^t is true & shall impatiently wait for to morrow's Post w^{ch} I hope will bring us a Confirmation of it in the Gazette. If this Acct proves true w^{ch} I think there is no Reason to Doubt, I fancy the French will lay aside their thoughts of Invading this Island: at least it will be great madness in them to attempt it as they have not a Fleet strong enough to support a Desent when opposed by our Fleet in the Channel w^{ch} is greatly superior to theirs & is daily increasing.

We are greatly obliged to Providence w^{ch} has given us time to gather our Troops together & send for Assistance from our Neighbours the Dutch, for it has blown very hard at West every day since we had an Acct of the Invasion w^{ch} has kept y^e French in their Harbour at Dunkirk, if it has favour'd us no more, but I saw a Letter from London today w^{ch} says ye news of yesterday was that 4 Sail of French Men of Warr & 14 Sail of Transports were on Shore near Dunkirk & that ye French were Disembarking their Troops; if this is true we shall be easy for some Time, but we shall certainly be alarmed all this summer in ye Same Manner. . . .

[PS] As my stay here is very uncertain I can hardly expect to hear from you till I am settled.

Lond^{on}, Sep^r ye 5th 1745.

Notwithstanding my Letter of last Post I find I am likely to be appointed a L^t Coll^l to one of the N^o America Reg^{ts}. I own I was a good deale Surprised this Morn^g when y^e Coll^l told me my L^d Stair²⁰ Informed him last night that I was named as a L^t Coll^l to one of them & on going down to S^r W^m Yonge²¹ this Morn^g, S^r W^m imediately wished me Joy & said he was going to Kensington to take y^e King's final Directions ab^t those Reg^{ts}: as this is likely to be the Case I shall go wth a great deal of Pleasure & must therefore desire you will imediately order my Trunks to be sent up by the Carrier, as I fancy that will be the most Certain & Speedy way of having them up. I have a Gun at Eslington but as I have one in Town, unless there is an Opportunity of getting it before the first Carrier Comes up, it need not Come: as to my Horses I must beg y^e favour of you to let Robin Dispose of them for me either at October Fair or at any Time he can have an Opportunity: if either of them will suit my Neice Hannah²² (w^{ch} I shou^d think the Mare might do, if not too much Spirit) I must desire she will accept of

²⁰ Colonel Cuthbert Ellison was on Lord Stair's staff at this time.

²¹ Secretary-at-War.

²² Henry Ellison's daughter.

w^{ch} she likes & let ye other be Sold—As to my Doggs w^{ch} are at Eslington²³ I shall desire M^r Liddell will make use of them. The Occasion of my being in so great a hurry for my Trunks is that I fear we shall be sent away immediately in Order to get there before the Winter, w^{ch} I own gives me great Concern, as I shall not have the Pleasure of seeing you & y^e rest of your Family to whom I wish all health & happyness till I have y^e pleasure of seeing you again, w^{ch} I hope will be in a year or 18 Months. As I have Commission'd the Coll^l to treat wth any Body of the same Rank who is willing to take Money to Exchange I shall go wth the more Pleasure as I am promised to have an Intimate Acquaintance appointed Major to y^e same Reg^t. There will be two Reg^{ts} ordered from Gibra[ll]ter to Cape Breton: Coll^l Warburton's & Gen^l Fuller's. Coll^l Warburton and y^e Lt Coll^l to Fullers, Coll^l Hobson, who is an Acquaintance of the Coll^s are in Town & go wth us—My Service waits on my Sister Airey & pray tell her I hope She will Excuse my not writing to her by this Post, as I have not Time & Communicate that part of my Letter relating to my going to her & let her know I have p^d Miss Jenny on her Acct £6 : 7 : 8½ w^{ch} I desire she will pay you for me. I must likewise desire you will take the trouble to distribute 5 Guineas among your Serv^{ts} for me. . . .

Boston in new England, Jan^{ry} the 31st 1745/6.

We arrived here safe this Day fortnight after a Passage of 10 weeks: we met with extream bad Weather & were parted from our Convoy in a fortnight after we left England & in two or three Days after that we saw no more of any of the fleet & as neither our Master nor any of the Ship's Company were acquainted wth the Coast near Cape Breton we Steer'd our Course for this Place & were so fortunate as to get in here where we found two of our Fleet & two days after us came in the Transport wth most of our Officers & the Cloathing for the Reg^t w^{ch} was the most Lucky circumstance that cou'd happen to us as we found our Coll^l here & will be able to get our Cloathing made w^{ch} we shou'd have found very difficult at Louisb^{urgh}, we shall likewise be able to employ a N^o of People to Recruit for us immediately in this & other Provinces, but am much afraid we shall meet wth little Success especially as we are allowed so small a Sum from y^e Government for Raising our Men. The Price of Labour here is Extremely dear, besides the People of this Country are vastly averse to serve as Soldiers, especially under any other Officers than those of their own Country, all

²³ It would seem from this that Robert Ellison had spent some time at Eslington since his uncle Liddell's death.

these are difficultys I foresaw before we left England and Represented to Mr Pelham & Sir W^m Yonge but was always told they apprehended ye Men were raised at Louisburg: upon my Coming here & telling Coll^l Shirley y^e Sentiments of the Ministry, he was vastly Surprised, Not one Man being Raised in America at that Time for either his or Sr W^m Pepperell's Reg^t, & if it was not for Mr Shirley's great anxiousness to keep this new Conquest we shou'd be in danger of loseing it before the Reg^{ts} cou'd be raised for y^e Defence of it. The Men who took it only Listed for a few Months w^{ch} are long ago expired & were so uneasy at being kept there that Mr Shirley was obliged to go down to Louisburg last Autumn & wth great Difficulty passified them. Sr W^m Pepperell is now there & has been obliged to stay wth these People ever since the Place was taken. Mr Shirley is extremely liked here & indeed wth great Justice as I do not believe there is a better nor honest Man Living w^{ch} I do assure you gives me great Satisfaction & I believe if it is Possible to raise a Reg^t here wth y^e small allowance we have he will be able to do it sooner than any Man in the Country. As this is to be a Rendezvous for our Recruits raised on y^e Continent, Mr Shirley proposes I shou'd stay here some Time. We have heard nothing of our Convoy, nor y^e rest of the Fleet since we left them but hope soon to have a good acc^t of them, as likewise y^e two Reg^{ts} from Gibrálter from (*sic*) Louisburg as Admiral Warren will certainly let Mr Shirley know as soon as he hears any thing of them—I shall be very uneasy till I hear a good acc^t from England w^{ch} we may now Expect to hear very soon & I most heartily wish that y^e first acc^t we hear may be that of the Rebels'²⁴ Total overthrow. My best wishes attends your Self my Sister & y^e Rest of your Family and all friends.

[PS] I wrote to my Mother by a Vessel for Ireland w^{ch} sailed a few Days ago.

5th Febr^y Yesterday we had an Acc^t from New York that one of the Transports from Gibralter for Cape Breton was arrived there & that y^e rest were seen of[f] that Coast—And we have an Acc^t by way of St Christophers y^t part of the Rebels were taken w^{ch} I sincerely wish may be true.

The Vessell I came in from England is called y^e Diamond, is a very large Collier and belongs to one Webster of Whitby; she is a very stout Vessell w^{ch} was great Comfort to us.

9th Feb Yesterday came advice from St Kitts that y^e Woolwich, Man of Warr, has taken a very Rich Spanish Ship of 36 Guns s^d to be a Galleon & carryed her into that Island.

²⁴ i.e. The Jacobites.

Boston, March the 19th 1745/6.

I wrote to you some Time ago which I hope you Rec^d. I have taken every Opportunity of Writeing to one or other of my Relations that offer'd since I came to this Place but as the Passage from hence to England is very precarious to Merch^t Ships without Convoy, it cannot be expected that all Letters shou'd Come safe, so hope my Relations will not think me guilty of Neglect, if they do not hear from me so often as I cou'd wish. Since I wrote to you last we have heard from Louisbourg the Melancholy acct of the Loss of the Ship Rosby w^{ch} very probably you may have heard of before this Reaches you: we have by this Accident lost the Major, a Cap^t, the Surgeon & his Mate, all of our Regement, & the Principal Surgeon of the Hospital & I had a very narrow Escape my Self, having wth poor Maj^r Bradstreet agreed for my Passage in that Ship & intended going in her till within a few Days of our Sailing from England; but alter'd my Resolution upon the Master of the Vessell's telling me he cou'd not take in my Trunks wth my Cloaths & Linnen unless he put them in a Place where I thought they might get Damage: on my taking my Passage I was to have all my goods & Serv^{ts} carried in the Vessell & to pay 20 Guineas. And accordingly put most of my things on board, while the Ship lay in the River,²⁵ but on Comeing to Portsmouth I had my Trunks & some few things more to put on board & on the Master's refuseing to take them in & behaveing in a manner that I thought foretold our having a Disagreeable Passage wth him I Determined I wou'd not go in his Ship & therefore Accepted of an offer of a Passage wth a Friend of mine in General Phillips's Reg^t had made me to go in one of their Transports wth him. I cannot say but I was very unwilling to seperate from the Maj^r & the other Gentlemen wth whom I had laid in the Provisions for our Voyage. My leaving the Ship had very near been the Occasion of Saveing poor Maj^r Bradstreet likewise who wou'd have gone in the Ship with me if he cou'd have done it wth any tolerable Convenience to himself. I have by this Misfortune lost most of my little Stock of Furniture & Materials for Housekeeping at Louisbourg, but have great Reason to be thankfull for being safe my Self.—Most of our Officers that are here will I hope Sail for Cape Breton in a few Days and I shall follow them in less than a Month from this Time—Our Recruiting goes on but slowly & the Gov^t who is Coll^l²⁶ is willing to keep me here as long as he can to give me some Directions ab^t that Duty—The Transports wth the Two Reg^{ts} from Gibraltar are all arrived safe on the Continent—Our last Acc^{ts} from England were that the

²⁵ Thames.²⁶ Shirley.

Rebells had Retreated in great Confusion into Scotland & we are very anxious ab^t hearing that they are quite Subdued & that every thing is quiet again at home: pray let me hear from you as soon as you can directed to Louisburg, Cape Breton. My Service, etc.

[PS] We had an Acct the day before Yesterday from Antigua that the Kinsail, Man of War, w^{ch} was our Convoy from England had got into that Place, after having met wth so bad Weather on this Coast that she lost some Men & her Barge & was obliged to throw her uper Deck Guns over board: 2 of our Fleet are likewise arrived there.

Louisbourg, Oct^r ye 27th 1746.

This Comes by a small Vessell w^{ch} I am afraid Runs a great Risque of being taken but however wou'd not Omit any Opportunity as we have but very few of writeing to my Friends in England. I have had but one Letter from thence since my Arrival but as the Case is pretty near the same wth every body here we must wait wth Patience: we have waited wth y^e utmost Uneasiness for Ships from home & we begin now to Doubt if our great Folks have not intirely forgot us, but can hardly think after y^e Noise this Place has made at Home that that can be y^e Case & I rather imagine ye French Fleet w^{ch} has been in our Neighbourhood near three Months has picked up some Vessells bound to this Place: That Fleet arrived at a very Fine Harbour in Nova Scotia Called Chibuito in a very Distressed Condition after a remarkable long Passage & meeting wth Extrem hard Gale of Wind on this Coast: we have had Certain Intelligence that they had buryed in their Passage about 800 Men: They were seperated in y^e hard Gale, lost two Ships on ye Island of Sable & had no Doubt several Damaged w^{ch} together wth their Sickness prevented their attacking this Place w^{ch} I have no Doubt they were Destined to on their leaving France. We are now in a much better State of Defence than when they arrived in our Neighbourhood & are in no Pain about them as the Winter is now approaching, but are in great Pain for Anapolis Royall, as we heard from thence y^e other Day that a Body of 800 or 1000 Men from Canada who had been waiting all the Summer for y^e Arrival of the French Fleet had appeared near y^t Place & as we heard that some Men of Warr had Sailed from Chibuito to assist in the Demolishing of it, I cannot help fearing ye worst. We have a 50 Gun ship here ye Chester, Commanded by a very Gallant Man, one Spry, but am afraid that Ship alone will hardly be able to prevent them landing their Artillery w^{ch} if they do, I am apprehensive the Place must fall. Anapolis is a small Fort, secure enough against any attempt wth out

Artillery; but w^{ch} stands a poor Chance as ye Neutrall French as they were called to the Number of 6 or 7000 Men in Nova Scotia—on y^e French's attacking y^e Place wth a likelihood of Success will no doubt joyn their old Masters w^{ch} they have all allong shewed a great Inclination to Favour. . . .

PS. The Duke D'Anville who Comanded ye French is Certainly Dead & it is said y^e Next in Command is wounded, supposed by himself, on ye Councill of Warr's refusing to give him the same Power y^e Duke was vested wth w^{ch} it is said was a very unlimited one.

Louisbourg, June ye 28th 1747.

I Rec^d your Favour of the 8th of April 1746 ab^t three Months ago w^{ch} is the only Letter I have yet Rec^d from You. I was very glad to hear by it that your Family were then all well & hope they Continue to be so. I have wrote many Letters to you & y^e rest of my Relations since I left England but do not doubt many of them, as well as those wrote by them to me, have miscarried. This Comes by an Express our Gov^r, M^r Knowles, is obliged to send home on Acct of a Mutiny that happen'd a few Days ago in this Garrison on his Issuing an Order to Stop^s 3^d p[er] Man p[er] Day towards paying for their Salt Provisions: before we left England there was an Intention of making y^e Stoppage w^{ch} we represented as impracticable & ab^t a Twelve Month ago an Agent for y^e Contractors came over, but M^r Knowles had no ord^s for making ye Stoppage till lately when he was found great fault wth for not hav^s ordered it, and threatned to be made to pay ye Additional Expen^{ce}, tho' he never heard of the Contract from any Publick Office. He upon receiving Directions lately Issued ye Order for the Stoppage upon w^{ch} ye severall Reg^{ts} carryed their Provisions to y^e Publick Store & declared they wou'd be paid like English Soldiers or cou'd no longer serve. M^r Knowles ordered them under Arms upon ye Parade where they represented to him the impossibility of their Subsisting in this Dear Place if 3^d p. Day shou'd be Stopped from them, w^{ch} is really true, for Shirts, Shoes & Stockings, Washing & in short every thing is double y^e Price at least that it is in England: in short he was obliged to Promise them to send an Express home directly & their full pay & Provisions, till he has answer to it, otherwise where their rage wou'd have ended no body can tell. The Gov^r & Field Officers of ye Garrison have sent a Remonstrance home in Favour of the Men w^{ch} I hope will prevent their attempting the Stoppage again for they may as well give up the Garrison as Attempt it, for added to the Impossibility of ye Men's living here

under such a Stoppage two of y^e Reg^{ts} now here did actually receive their Pay & Provisions in Gibraltar w^{ch} is a much Cheaper Place than this. We have not yet heard anything of the French except what M^r Shirley sent to M^r Knowles a few days ago, that he heard they had 3 Men of Warr at Bay Vert that were Landing Cannon, Mortars etc for ye attack of Anapolis Royall. It is true one Ramsay has been there some Time wth a Body of Canadians & it is said has erected a Battery of 9 Guns there, but as the Difficulty of getting heavy Artillery over ye Neck of Land to Anapolis River is so very great I rather think they are making a Settle^{mt} at Bay Vert, for while they keep that they can always preserve a Communication between their Friends in the Neighbourhood of Anapolis & Canada, not but I think they have an Eye on Anapolis & will if they are Strong enough attack it, for it will make them ample amends for y^e loss of this Place, as they will get in Exchange a Fine Fertile Country for a Barren one & will get a great Addition of Strength & be much nearer our Collonys to Distress them, & if something is not done very soon you may depend upon hearing Anapolis is gone. So much for this part of y^e World and I think nothing remains for me to say only that I heartily wish to see my Friends once more in old England.

Louisbourg, Nov^r ye 22nd 1747.

Tho' I have not had the Pleasure of hearing from you since April was Twelve month, I wou'd not Omit any favourable Opportunity of Enquiring after yours and your Family's Welfare & cou'd wish I had any thing worth Communicating to you from hence, we have been long looking out for a Vessell from England in answer to an Express sent from hence the latter end of June, but am afraid we have now scarce any Chance of hearing from thence Directly this Winter & indeed it seems as if we were almost quite forgot as we have heard but once for above a Twelvemonth Past directly from England & was it not that we have frequent Opportunitys of hearing from Boston from whence we now and then Pick up a little news this Place wou'd be quite Insupportable. By our last Vessells from thence we heard that they had a Report there that a Seige of Bergen op Zoom was raised & that the Duke²⁷ had beat the French near that Place w^{ch} we impatiently wait for a Confirmation of. I likewise saw in an English Paper of July that S^r Harry is made a Lord by the Title of Lord Ravensworth & I have since seen the Coll^l's Christian and Sirname among y^e List of Members of

²⁷ of Cumberland

Parliam^{t28} both which I sincerely Congratulate them upon, if true, & Earnestly desire to have soon a Confirmation of—We have been very quiet here all this Summer not having seen the least Appearance of an Enemy, but I believe we were obliged to the Fleet and y^e Admirals Anson & Warren as ye greatest part of the Men of Warr, taken by them, were bound to this Part of [y^e] World. The Frontiers, of the Provinces of the Massachusetts Bay & New York have been greatly harrassed this Summer by the French Indians particularly—the latter in that Neighbourhood which ye French have a large Body of Men & seem to threaten that Province this Winter & indeed I am afraid they have too good Reason to Expect Success as ye Duch Faction, who are the Most Wealthy People in that Province, oppose their Governor, M^r Clinton, in every thing he does, let it be never so much for the good of the Provyince, & tho' he has with great Pains and Expencc to ye Governm^t at home brought over to our Interest more Indians than we have ever had before, yet they have refused to send their Quota of Men who in Conjunction wth the Provinces & ye Indians were to have made an Attack upon ye French Settlements in ye Neighbourhood of Albany in ye New York Governmt & upon which Terms ye Indians Engaged with us & am afraid the Refusal of the People of New York to give their Assistance may be a means of our Loseing ye Indians, the Effect of which they in all Probability will be y^e first that will be Sensible of. In short they have got to such a height that I believe it will soon be found necessary to keep Troops among them to Support y^e Little Authority their Governours have now remaining.

Some Time ago I heard my Coll: M^r Shirley had a Schem of getting Gen^l Phillips Reg^t upon w^{ch} I wrote to him two Letters, y^e last of w^{ch} he after some Time answer'd & gave me to understand he had apply'd to the Duke of Newcastle and M^r Pelham (who are his Patrons & Friends) & that they had Promised Gen^l Phillips shou'd not have Leave to dispose of his Reg^t to any body but him & I dare say if M^r Phillips who is a very old Man should dye, he wou'd not only succeed him in his Reg^t, but the Governm^t of Nova Scotia also. M^r Shirley desired to know how much I wou'd be willing to give towards making a Sum for Gen^l Phillips to resign in his favour & I to succeed him.²⁹ I have answer'd his Letter & was in hopes of hearing from him again before this Vessell sails, but I doubt much as ye Winds have been for sev^{ll} Days Contrary that I shall not. I have wrote to y^e Coll on this head, but as M^r Shirley did not let me know Gen^l Phillips Terms cou'd not write

²⁸ Colonel Cuthbert Ellison was returned for Shaftesbury at the General Election in 1747. See my *North Country Life*, pp. 282-3.

²⁹ This affords interesting confirmation of the view that purchase of army commissions was intended to provide a pension on retirement.

to him upon any Certainty but was in hopes of hearing from Mr Shirley before ye Sailing of this Vessell & writeing to him another letter by her. As he may Possibly Communicate to you my Letter to him I desire you will not let any Body else know of the affair till I write wth more Certainty ab^t it.

I believe I wrote to you some Time ago that ye most frequent way of Corresponding wth me wou'd be by sending your Letters by ye way of Boston & I find there are sev^l Shipp^s every Year that Load Coals at Newcastle for Boston & Generally have short Passages by Comeing North ab^t.³⁰ You may easily hear, I imagine, from ye Custom House when there are any there & you must be Sensible how agreeable it is in our Situation to hear from our Friends in England.

Louisbourg, Nov^r ye 2nd 1748.

I Rec^d your Favours of the 29th of Febr^y & 22nd of March last, for both of which am much obliged to you & was Extremely glad to hear your Family were well: poor Harry's accident was a most Shocking one but he has been very lucky in getting so well over it.³¹

We have been for these three or four Months in Constant Expectation of having orders from England for giving up this Place to the French this year³² and in Consequence of w^{ch} of having soon afterwards ye Pleasure of seeing our Friends in England w^{ch} has indeed been ye Reason of my not Answering yours sooner; but as ye Season of ye Year is so farr advanced I think it next to impossible for us to remove this Winter & indeed not very likely that we shall hear from England before next Spring which you will easily imagine we do impatiently wait for. When I tell you ye Gov^r has not rec^d one Publick Letter wth any Directions, or even a hint to him what is to become of his Garrison tho' we hear from all hands by Private Letters that the Place is to be given up. Admiral Watson who had a fleet here sailed from hence 16 Days ago. I wrote to Lord Ravensworth and y^e Colonel & hope they are very near England by this Time as we have had fair winds & moderate weather since they sailed. The Admiral left the Comet Bomb behind (by whom I send this) to carry home some Dispatches for ye Gov^r w^{ch} I think it highly necessary ye Ministry shou'd be acquainted wth. About two Months ago, y^e Gov^r of Quebeck sent some English Prisoners here in a French Man of Warr of 24 Guns & wrote Colonel

³⁰ i.e. by the north of Scotland.

³¹ Henry Ellison's elder son was then at Eton. The nature of the accident is not known.

³² By the terms of the treaty of 1748 Louisbourg was surrendered to the French in return for Madras.

Hopson word of ye Cessation of Arms & told him he intended to send a small Party of French wth some Inhabitants upon y^e Island to cut wood this Winter, but neither asked his leave to do it nor acquainted him that the Court of France had leave from our Court for it (w^{ch} I daresay they have not): the Party however are upon the Island and ye Gov^r has sent a Letter to y^e Commanding Officer to know what brings him here & by whose authority he came upon ye Island. The Bomb waits only for an Answer from ye French Officer. There is also another Party of French at the Island of S^t Johns w^{ch} belongs to this Governm^t who were sent there since y^e Cessation of Arms. It is Certainly a great Piece of Insolence in y^e French Gov^r of Quebeck to send these two Detachm^{ts} meerly on a Cessation of Arms & on a Supposition that this Place was to be given up to them. I imagine you have heard ye French sent a Detachmt of French & Indians early last Spring to attack a small Detachm^t we had Protecting our Colliery w^{ch} they were also to have destroy'd, but they miscarried in their attempt & only took two small Vessells that were in a Harbour hard by.

If you can find an Opportunity of sending me a Letter from Newcastle by ye way of Boston this Winter shou'd be much oblig'd to you: it will probably reach me before we hear directly from home & will be Very Acceptable. . . .

P.S. Since I wrote y^e above, we have had an Acct from Boston that Admiral Knowles has had an Engagem^t near y^e Havanna wth Seven Spanish Men of Warr that were fitted out there to attack him: he had y^e Same Number of Ships & y^e acct says that M^r Knowles has taken a 74 Gun Ship & Dismasted ye Spanish Admiral who was Towed off[f]. This you will take Notice is only Ship news but as y^e Master of the Vessell is so particular as to say he was on board Admiral Knowles after y^e Engagem^t I hope it is true. The Boston news Paper is not very clear when it happened but it must be either ye first of Sep^r or October.

This is the last of the letters in the present series. Colonel Cuthbert Ellison, M.P., writing from London on 1st August, 1749, stated: "Last week I received a Letter from Bob dated at Louisbourg the 31st of May, at which time neither the French Troops who are to take possession of that place nor our Transports that are to carry the British Garrison from thence to Annapolis in Nova Scotia were arrived, so that we cannot expect the Colonel in England till about Michaelmas."

He returned to this country in 1749, but was again drafted

to America and died at Albany in 1755. The circumstances are not yet known. On 14th February, 1756, the elder brother wrote:

I transmit you with this a Copy of Cap^t Kinnier's Letter & Acct I received three days ago from him, left at Lord Ravensworth's by a Cap^t in Shirley's Regem^t. I was unluckily from home when he called & have not seen him, nor been able to learn where he lodges or frequents. As no mention is made in M^r Kinnier's Letter of a Will being found among the Colonel's papers at Albany, I imagine 'twas left with his diary & Baggage at Boston & will be brought over by his Serv^t when he arrives here. I shall consult with some New England Agent how I may best have the Ballance due to my Bro^r's Heirs returned to them. . . .