

My harp and my drawing have ceased to please; I could (previously) practice for hours. Lieutenant Stevenson of the Rangers, to whom I complained jestingly, said he could think of nothing so likely as love at my age, and that if Capt. Stobo were not so much my senior in years, he would swear the captain was for much in the case. Stevenson is not a bad fellow by-the-by, only I wish he would not be incessantly joking at my expense. My pious mother says that there is only one fault to be found with Stevenson: *he is a heretic*. She seems determined to bring him over to the true faith.

[ANOTHER LETTER.]

ROBERT STOBO* TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

*From my French Prison, Quebec,
Christmas Day, 1755.*

DEAR GEORGE,—Is not mine a glorious *final*—for me, your trusty and well beloved *campanion d'armes*: don't be surprised at my getting to learn French. I am now *prisonnier de guerre*. Here is your dashing leader of a Virginia company, condemned to a *regime* of bread and water, instead of Madeira punch, prairie chickens and quail as of yore. My luxurious campaigning seems now like the dreamy shadow of pleasures past, though not forgotten. In this lonesome French dungeon shall a descendant of Montrose give away to despair? Never, never! Ah! sweet hours of my childhood, ye are indeed far away. Dear old Glasgow, the Elysium of my youth, dare I recall thy cherished memories? On the eve of closing my career, I can well retrace how it began. When a roving school boy, I was playing the soldier, mustering and drilling my noisy squad of schoolmates, little did I then dream what life's realities had in store for me. And you, my dear old relative, who taught me so early to live and dislike a man, let me waft you my blessing across the broad Atlantic. John Mitchell, my sire, my early friend, I shall not die unworthy of you. I thank you for having nerved my arm and inspired my young heart with your thrilling stories of Bruce and Wallace, always closing your gentle advice with a request that I should remember that I was a descendant of James Graham, the great Earl of Montrose.

Yes, George, I shall never forget my grandfather's parting words, when I left Scotland for my adoptive country, for

America. "Hob," said he, "my boy, watch the grand, the stern features in that picture on the wall; see the eye following you. Do you know what that great man lived for? He lived for his country; he left an undying fame as a soldier. Be worthy of him! His name was Montrose; some of his blood courses in your veins." I have no hesitation, my dear George, in this solemn moment to recall to you these family memories—to you, whose life has ever been inspired by similar sentiments. This is Christmas day, George. Twenty-one such days have revolved for you—twenty-eight for me. We have both seen death on the battle-field, and Indian warfare has more than once added to it additional horrors, but neither you nor I ever shrank from it, at the call of duty. You were the wise leader, the dutiful son, the truthful man, and I the rash cavalier, maddened with success, intoxicated by the praise of my fellow-men, bestowed more on my good looks, good dinners, than on my virtues. I am, however, prepared to seal my opinions with my blood, if the enemies of my country wish it,—but enough of this croaking.

If this should be my last letter, let it contain for my friends a record of what has occurred to me since that unlucky stroke of fate which has landed me where I am. Let me hope this letter will involve me in less trouble than my epistle of July 28th last, in which I enclosed the plan of Fort Duquesne. Poor Braddock! that fatal day, which brought him defeat and death, will also, seemingly, bring me to the block. Doubtless he thought my letter and plan safe in his custody, but the savages plucked the damning record from amongst his baggage. Therefore, I am, I am told to grace a gibbet on the highest pinnacle of Cape Diamond. My French jailers load me with every opprobrious epithet. I have ceased in their eyes to be a hostage—as such inviolate in person by the law of nations; and if England has really disavowed the terms of the capitulation of the Fort, was I still to consider myself a hostage for the due execution of these terms,—was I not then an ordinary prisoner of war, as such not precluded from aiding my country by communicating information about the enemy—even should I forfeit my life by so doing? But enough on this point—if ever we should meet on this side of Styx, of which, I confess, the chances seem faint at present, we will discuss this knotty point of the usages of war and the duties of a *paroled prisoner*. There are some incidents personal to myself at the taking of the fort, which I

did not impart to you. For surrendering we had excellent reasons. Those *nine hours* we stood exposed to the galling fire of the French and their murderous allies, the Indians, will never be forgotten by any of those who survived. We could not hold out any longer; what would have availed us firing at foes carefully entrenched behind trees? No relief at hand, our palisades crumbling and defective, it would have been an act of inhumanity to sacrifice the lives of any more of our devoted Virginians. That merry fellow Munro, my ensign, I shall never forget his rueful countenance when I conveyed to him your order to hoist the white flag. "What, Captain!" said he, "are we then reduced to this—you and I, who so lately organised this pleasure party to thrash the French? Why, our good cheer was the envy of all—our venison, quail and comfits, with a full team behind to draw the King's ammunition, viz. a butt of Madeira, and crowds of camp followers. Captain, captain, I shall never survive it!" But he did survive it. He was luckier than my poor lieutenant, to whom, on becoming a hostage, I surrendered my then useless sword. My dear George, did you not know my buoyant, mercurial nature, you would wonder how I could find space to record all these trifles, with death staring me in the face; but death has stared me in the face before this, and I generally succeed in staring the unwelcome monster out of countenance. You, no doubt, will be surprised to hear that the athletic French officer, Pean's friend, whom I purchased for forty pistoles from the Mohawks, just as they were preparing to scalp him, has turned up in Quebec. Whilst I was here on *parole*, I used to meet him in the best salons, at Vaudreuil's, and at the *petits-soupers* of that charming little rascal, Bigot. His name is Duchesnay: he is Laird of a *Seigneurie* facing Quebec. His manor, at Beauport, is within three miles of the city. It contains two budding beauties of uncommon promise. Gratitude made him extend to me in my wretchedness a helping hand; his doors were ever open to me. I sometimes wish I had never crossed the threshold.

Everyone remarks the fine typographical appearance of CANADA. The credit of this is due to our printers, the Nova Scotia Printing Co., who have taken a deep interest in the magazine, and have succeeded in making it conspicuous among Canadian publications for the attractiveness of its make-up.

*Robert Stobo, a hostage sent from Fort Duquesne to Quebec, where he was a stated prisoner for four years, escaped in 1759, and found Wolfe's army at Quebec.