

Many handsome things would have been done by the troops had they been permitted to act; as it is, Captain Howe carried off all the honour of this enterprize.

The disaster in North America,\* unless the French have driven from their anchors in the harbour of Louisbourg, is of the most fatal kind; whatever diminishes our naval force tends to our ruin and destruction. God forbid that any accident should befall our fleet in the bay!

The King has given me the rank of colonel.

J. W.

Black Heath, 5th Nov., 1757.

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#### LETTER TENTH.

Dear Rickson,—Calcraft told me he had prepared a memorial for you, and was to give it in to Sir John Ligonier. My services in this matter, and my credit with the reigning powers, are not worth your acceptance; but such as they allow it to be, you are as welcome to as any living man. I can assure you that Davy [Colonel David Watson] is double, and would shove you aside to make way for a tenth cousin; it becomes my Lord G. Beauclerk [then Commander-in-Chief in Scotland] to confirm you in your office, by asking and procuring a commission. If he is satisfied with your management, it is his duty to do it; these mealy chiefs give up their just rights, and with them their necessary authority. The Commander in Scotland is the fittest person to recommend, and the best judge of the merits of those that serve under him. Though to all appearance I am in the very centre of business, yet nobody (from the indolent inattention of my temper) knows less of what is going on where I myself am not concerned \* \* \*. Being of the profession of arms, I would seek all occasions to serve; and, therefore, have thrown myself in the way of the American war, though I know that the very passage threatens my life [alluding to his indifferent health], and that my constitution must be utterly ruined and undone; and this from no motive either of avarice or ambition. I expect to embark in about a fortnight.

Black Heath, 12th January, 1757.

[There were "Dowbs" in those days then, as well as Lord Panmure's?—B.]

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\* This relates to the capture, by the French, of Fort-William Henry, on the south side of Lake George, with all the artillery, vessels, and boats, on 9th August, 1757, about three months prior to Wolfe's letter. The governor, Monro, had a garrison of 3000 men, and there was a covering army of 4000 besides, under General Webb; but the latter, by the most unpardonable neglect and obstinacy, would not advance to Monro's assistance, who had accordingly to capitulate. Well might Wolfe speak of it as a great "disaster."