

The sky is of a deeper blue, and the sun beats straight and fiercely down over the hill and dale, and on the miles and miles of mud flats, seared and cracked by the intense heat. The light in the Northern sky, which at home is but a faint pale light, is here a great display of trembling vivid colour.

Then the great phenomena of the tide, of which I wrote you in my last letter. 'Tis ever new and strange. And I tire not of watching it surge and roar over the flats, and beat with angry violence against the cliffs.

PISQUID, July, 1746.

I am tarrying here until my father's return from Annapolis, whither he hath been summoned by his friend the Chevalier de Ramesay, who is before the fort with his men, but has no cannon to invest it in a regular siege.

The Acadians, and French, are anxiously awaiting the arrival of the Duc D'Anville's fleet. He has with him a great army who will first capture and garrison Annapolis, then proceed south, ravage the Atlantic coast, burn the town of Boston and capture the British possessions in the West Indies.

And I do sit meekly with my knitting, and hear my father, La Loutre and his friends discuss these things.

SEPTEMBER 1st, 1746.

Much anxiety is felt concerning the non-arrival of the French fleet. It hath been a time of great tempests.

PISQUID, Sept. 9th, 1746.

A messenger hath lately arrived from Chebucto with a dire tale.

A remnant of the great fleet that left France with such high hopes has arrived there. Many of the ships were lost in terrible storms. Twelve hundred men died on the passage of a frightful plague; and since coming to anchor eleven hundred more have been buried.

'Tis also said that the Duc D'Anville has died of grief and Admiral D'Estourville in despair has fallen upon his sword; and that the Marquise de la Jonquiere, after a vain attempt to reach Annapolis, has returned to France.

'Tis a distressful tale, and hath made me very sad, even in spite of the wonderful deliverance of our friends. 'Tis even as we read:

"They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.

"The river of Kishon swept them away, that ancient river, the river of Kishon. O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength."

PISQUID, October, 1746.

My father hath been but little in Pisiquid since June. He went with de Ramesay to St. John and returned to Annapolis to await La Jonquiere.

Disheartened by repeated misfortune de Ramesay has retired with his detachment to Beaubasin. My father purposeth remaining at Minas, or Grand Pre, and hath sent for me to join him there.

MINAS, October, 1746.

'Tis rumoured that a strong force from New England is to be quartered here to awe the Acadians, and that an attack is to be made on the French at Beaubasin.

Glad, indeed, am I, that my father is minded to stay here. It will be a pleasure to meet again some of my own religion and language.

MINAS, November, 1746.

The first detachment of English soldiers reached here yesterday, after a toilsome march from Annapolis through partly frozen swamps and over a rough road.

Colonel Noble and some four hundred soldiers, with the cannon and munitions of war follow in ships.

The bay and basin are full of floating ice which is carried first one way and then the other with fearful velocity by the tide. Much anxiety is felt concerning the safe arrival of the ships.

MINAS, November, 1746.

Colonel Noble and the remainder of the New England soldiers have arrived in safety. The greater part were landed on the shore near the North Mountain and have marched through the woods to Minas.

The ships arrived after many perils from ice and tide, and are frozen in at Gaspereau. The weather has been unusually severe.

Colonel Noble has decided that it is too late in the season to erect the block house, the frame of which, with the

munitions of war, he has left on board the ships. He has selected twenty-four houses for his men, beginning at the centre of the village and extending well nigh a mile and a half. He hath his guard in a stone house quite near to us.

The Acadians have provided provisions and have shown no hostility as yet. There was indeed some slight ill will manifested at the hoisting of the British flag upon the church steeple.

I was somewhat surprised that my father made no unpleasantness at having an officer and two soldiers quartered upon his household. Our house is small but comfortably furnished, and luxurious in comparison with many of our neighbours.

Our officer is Lieutenant Robert Hale, from New Hampshire. He is a young man of comely presence, and an agreeable straight-forward manner, which is very pleasing to me after the intrigue and treachery with which I have been surrounded this year. We have many mutual likings. He hath been carefully educated and hath offered to assist me with my studies. It hath been a deep concern to me that I have forgotten so much that I learned with my teachers. Mayhap I shall appear very ignorant.

MINAS, December, 1746.

Lately the weather hath been quite mild. This afternoon I went with Robert Hale for a long walk. We climbed the hill and wandered through the fields into the maple wood. The crisp air made our faces tingle as we walked swiftly along the frozen road. In the shadow and silence of the wood the air was warmer. Here and there a beech tree clothed in faded leaves, rustled softly, and the light snow was crossed and recrossed in dainty patterns, by the tiny tracks of squirrels and other small animals of the wood. Flocks of snow birds fluttered amongst the leafless trees, and from the dim recesses of the forest came the shrill screams of the jays.

The steel blue water of Minas Basin was full of great ice cakes, moving slowly back and forth with the tide. At low water they are piled along shore in gigantic masses, streaked and smeared with the soft red mud of the flats. Oft I lie awake listening to the roaring and grinding of tide and ice. Methinks, in the winter season this bay is nature's battle ground.

The sun was setting as we retraced our steps, all the sky was dappled o'er with rosy cloudlets, and in the east were faint pale tints of yellow and green. Through the unshuttered cottage windows came glimpses of happy home interiors.

'Twas, indeed, a delightful afternoon, and one long to be remembered.

MINAS, December 27th, 1746.

Outside the days are gloomy and chill. But inside there is no lack of warmth and pleasant converse, that doeth much to keep out the chill of the tempest. We sit in a circle, round the great fire of maple logs, which lends light and cheer to our small room. My father sits in a great chair at one end, apparently taking little interest in the merry chatter.

The good Jean and Francoise are always of the party, and occasionally Hopkins and Libby, the two soldiers, grave men of staid demeanour, who were somewhat concerned as to the fitness and piety of reading from one William Shakespeare.

'Tis but the remnant of a book, containing the two plays, "King Richard III." and "Macbeth," and a small portion of an interesting tale called, "Romeo and Juliet," which I would give much to be able to finish.

MINAS, January 31st, 1747.

It is a time of great storm and tempest. A fierce northeast wind rattles and howls against the casement. The snow is piled deep over roads and fences, and is blown and whirled by the gale, until the air is but a blinding mist of snow, which seems to touch the very sky.

My father hath been absent four days at Pisiquid, on business.

A soldier hath just come for Robert Hale, to sit to night with his friend, a young lieutenant, a nephew of Lord Lechmere, who is ill with fever.

We had been sitting by the fire holding sweet converse together. I have heard much of his home life, family, and friends. 'Tis, indeed, sweet, to feel that there are those to