

This is such a sketch as I can give you at present of the state of things. Lord H[artington] continues to hold one steady and uniform language of a single and settled view to do the King's business and the nation's by plain and direct ways, and by an equal and impartial government, favouring no party nor faction, nor setting up none.¹¹ And though he may meet with rubs in this road from the ambition of some and the warmth or weakness of others, I am persuaded such a behaviour and such intentions, well supported, will carry him through.

We have had no mail since our arrival, so begin to grow impatient for news; I desire you'll tell me a great deal and soon, for we don't intend to stay very long.¹² We have heard nothing of the French¹³ nor seen nothing of them yet; so are a little inquisitive to know what's become of them.¹⁴ Our military preparations go on; but we begin, I think, to believe we shan't have much occasion for 'em, after seeing the French fleet distinctly at almost every port for this fortnight.¹⁵

We have been hitherto in a course of great, troublesome dinners,¹⁶

was over, the opposition began to create difficulties over the appointment of lords justices; see *post* 18 June 1755.

11. Hartington told Boyle in their interview 'that neither he nor any man in Ireland should prescribe to me what I was to do or who I was to show favour to. That I had no view but to support the honour of the King's government and the interest of the country and that if he and his friends would concur with me in carrying on the King's affairs and endeavour to allay the heats and animosities that still subsist among them, that upon those conditions I would offer him my friendship and assure him that he and his friends should have that share of power and influence that was due to them, that I had, nor would have no attachments in public life to any of them, but would show favour and friendship impartially to them all as they deserved' (BM Add. MSS 32854, ff. 423-4). See also *Letters to Henry Fox*, loc. cit.).

12. Hartington had originally planned to leave 'in four or five weeks,' but the impossibility of appointing acceptable lords justices kept him in Ireland; Conway, however, left for England 9 July and was back in London by 14 July (Con-

way to Hartington 15 July 1755, Chatsworth MSS, 416/0; *Leinster Corr.* i. 19; HW to Bentley 17 July 1755, CHUTE 235; *post* 18 June 1755, n. 11).

13. A French descent on Ireland had been expected since mid-April (HW to Bentley 13 April 1755, CHUTE 218-19; MANN iv. 474; Thomas Adderley to Lord Charlemont 22 April 1755, Hist. MSS Comm., *Charlemont MSS*, 1891-4, i. 216-17).

14. The French fleet, which in fact did not sail until 3 May instead of in March or April as believed at that time, went to America, not to Ireland (Georges Lacour-Gayet, *La Marine militaire de la France sous le règne de Louis XV*, 1902, p. 238; MANN iv. 474, nn. 1, 5).

15. A typical example was the report current in Dublin 29 April that 'five sail of men-of-war, supposed to be French' had been seen off Dungarvan 21 April; this 'fleet' turned out to be a collection of fishing boats and two East-Indiamen (*Daily Adv.* 6, 10 May). Other reports circulating in Dublin at the same time were all contradicted on 2 May (*London Evening Post* 8-10 May, *sub* Dublin 3 May).

16. 'Tuesday last [6 May] his Excellency our Lord Lieutenant dined with his Grace