

Letter from Nicholas Matthew Smyth to William Browne, his half brother. The George mentioned was another.

My Dear William,

It was my intention to have wrote you a long letter – but have just heard from George that you intend coming again overland to this country; I conclude that you will have left Europe before this arrives. In my last I informed you nothing could equal the success that attends our arms – the Enemy appear to panic struck at the sight of Europeans – the mahrattas have lately gained a compleat victory over a very large detachment commanded by Tippoo's eldest son and the Nizam's People still remain staunch friends – the army are now within three Days march of Seringapatam and only await the arrival of a detachment which will leave this Place tomorrow – I have been oblig'd to stay here some time past thro' indisposition but proceed tomorrow with the Europeans.

I am my Dearest William
affectionately yours
N M Smyth

Bangalore
25th January 1792

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Letter to
Miss R. Browne
St Catherines
Leixlip

Tullamore
24th Sept 1815

My Dear Madam

I should have written to you long before this in answer to yours by Corpl Caity but waited until I would send you the lines on Col Smyth which you seemed so anxious to get. I wrote for them on coming here but my father not being at home to send them sooner I did not get them until yesterday. Believe me I feel great pleasure at haveing it in my power to oblige you and your sister to whom I am so much indebted for your goodness towards me in every respect. Be assured it was not want of gratitude or friendship that prevented me from calling before I left Lucan but being ordered to march with the first Division I really could not get a moment to spare. I should be very ungrateful indeed if I had time and did not call but hope you *will* take the will for the deed. I find there is something like a little rebellion in the *Co F Tippy* I hope it will not extend to other countys. I wrote to my brother (the clergyman) to call to see you as I knew he would be going to your part of the world. I did not hear from him since. I hope Mrs Smyth and Wm is well. I wish the poor lad was well provided for. I know it wd be a great ease to your mind. My father in his letter desires to be remembered to you all. No letter from India since I saw you. Remember me most kindly to your sister & Believe to be yours ***** ever grateful and affectionate

J R Ardagh

Co F Tippy probably County of Tipperary, the next door county to Offaly which is where Tullamore lies

***** Not decoded yet!
Miss R. Browne was NM Smyth's half sister

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Will of NM Smyth
Trichinopoly 26th June 1800

In the event of my Decease, I will and bequeath, to my wife Stuart Smyth my whole Property & Effects, or in the event of her death, the whole to devolve to my son William Robinson Smyth. & I request my Friends Mr Owen Capt Joyes or either of them, will have the goodness to administer to my Estate and carry this my last will into full Effect

N M Smyth Captain 1st Battn. 14th Regt, N I

Witness
Thos. Owen
***** (not decoded yet!)

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List of children

William Robinson Smyth born at Madras on the 2nd June 1799
Sarah George Ann Smyth born at Seringapatam on 23rd May 1806
Frances Jane Robinson Smyth born at Bangalore on 25th December 1810
Copied out of my dear Mother's prayer book
14th January 1824

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Letter to Rachel (Browne?) from NM Smyth in 1791 Rachel was his half sister

My Dear Rachel,

Hearing a ship is to sail in a few Days I have taken up the pen tho' I have nothing particular to say except that I am well and in every respect a happy as I could wish. I informed you in my last by the Swallow Packet that I had the good luck to be made an Ensign immediately I arrived & appointed to a Corps commanded by a particular Friend of the Major's and in consequence have experienced every possible attention.

The fatigue at first of marching in the sun made me very ill and obliged me to move into this place for quarters - but am now thank God nearly recovered. I intend joining the army again in a day or two.

I write this in Bangalore Palace which was taken from Tippoo last March - it is by much the grandest I ever saw - built in the form of a square with four *fronts* almost entirely supported by pillars painted and gilt in the most beautiful manner. I had an opportunity the other Day of seeing it to the greatest advantage - The Nizam's son was encamped near the fort and honoured the commanding officer with a visit. The palace was elegantly prepared for his reception by order of Lord Cornwallis who wished to pay him every attention. He came in great state, attended by all his chiefs, most of whom were mounted on Elephants. I had not till then any idea of Indian grandeur. The Respect and Deference paid to him by his own people exceeds anything you can possibly conceive. We were obliged to pull off our shoes when we made our salaam and the guns fired four salutes while he remained in the garrison. So much for the Nizamites.

I yesterday wrote and sealed a letter to Aunt Kitty. I recollected I did not know her name however. I have enclosed it to Betsy so 'twill make no Difference.

Remainder of letter not in evidence.

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Letter from NM Smyth to his son William Robinson Smyth

Madras 5th May 1810

My dearest William,

Your Mamma, Sally and myself arrived here from Trichinopoly about a month ago, where we left the Battalion and all your good friends in perfect health after having marched with them from Goa to which place we are now about to return; in consequence of my having been appointed Barrack Master at that station. The distance from Goa to Trichinopoly is upwards of seven hundred miles, from thence to Madras about two hundred, and from hence to Goa must be at least six hundred more and which, as the season is far advanced, we must travel by land. It would be dangerous for ships now to venture upon the coast of Malabar.

Your Mother and Sally my dearest William have been great Travellers lately. Do you recollect our march from Seringapatam to Cannanore with your Mother, your Aunt Kate, Ward and myself? and do you recollect our visit to Coory Rajah, his sending us five large elephants with howdahs to escort us through his country upon which we rode three marches, the handsome little sword bell and cap that he gave you in return for the beautiful bay Poney you gave to the Rajah's youngest son. Do you also recollect the immense large Royal Tiger the Rajah had brought out to show you - you will be concerned to hear that the old Rajah is dead and has been succeeded by his Son, who is I hear equally liberal and attentive to European travellers.

We came to Madras Chiefly to visit your Uncle and Aunt General & Mrs Gowdie, the general being as I told you before Commander in Chief of the Madras Army. He appointed me His Military Secretary - but which, not being so good a situation as Barrack Master, I have accepted the latter in preference, and hope I shall not be disappointed in my Expectations. Your good Aunt Rachel gives us the most favourable accounts of your conduct in every respect and of the very rapid progress you are making under the worthy Mr Molden to whom I beg my dear William you will offer

my respects and best thanks as likewise to Mrs Molden for their truly kind care and attention, which ensured to you every possible advantage and has afforded us the utmost happiness and satisfaction.

Your sister is growing a fine little girl, she wishes very much to see you and will be delighted to receive a letter from you. She is just beginning to learn to read and I shall commence teaching her to write when we reach Goa. Your uncle and aunt Owen and children are still at *Ganjam all wills*.

Mrs Andrew and Kate will be with us at Goa as he is to be appointed Garrison Surgeon which will make our situation much more agreeable – I shall write you from thence. I fear I shall be obliged to leave your Mother & Sister at Bangalore for a few months as it will be almost impossible for them to accompany me until after the approaching Rains. They both join me in most kind and affectionate love to you and in prayers for your Health & Happiness and I am my ever dearest William your fond Father NM Smyth

Mama was Stuart was originally Stuart Gowdie, the general's daughter. Her first marriage was to a Lieutenant Peter Wright but she was already a widow at 17 when she married Nicholas Matthew.

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NM Smyth details his travels:

Estimated distance travelled by me with my family since I have been married

| | |
|--|-------|
| | Miles |
| In 1797 From Madura to Madras) <i>Manilla</i> | 600 |
| Madras to Madura) Expedition | |

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1799 From Madura to Trichinopoly) William born and christened | 200 |
| Trichinopoly to Madura) Owen married | |

(Owen was possibly NMS's brother-in-law)

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|---|-----|
| 1800 Twice from Madura to Trichinopoly) Stuart's illness | 300 |
| Once Trichinopoly to Madura) | |
| Twice from Trichinopoly to Madras | 400 |
| Once from Madras to Trichinopoly | 200 |

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| 1801 From Madras to Trichinopoly | 200 |
| From Trichinopoly to Coimbatore | 100 |

Coimbatore to Panjalancourchy
 Panjalancourchy to Madura
 Ramnad Callocoil Shevangunga
 Nattam Madura Anneyoor
 Dindigul Anneyoor Madura
 **** Trichinopoly ** looks like Tooramcoinchy
 **** Pallamcottah

Stuart & William from Coimbatore
 to Trichinopoly
 Do Do from Trichinopoly to
 Dindigul

| | |
|---|--|
| 1802 From Trichinopoly to Rajah*** (could be Rajajinagar now) | |
| From Rajah**** to Trichinopoly | |
| From Trichinopoly to Seringapattam | |
| From Seringapattam to Way***** (looks like Wyanaard) | |
| From Wyanaard to Seringapattam | |
| From Seringapattam to Madras | |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1803 From Seringapattam to Madras | |
| From Madras to Seringapattam | |

- 1804 From Seringapattam to Mangalore
From Mangalore to Seringapattam
- 1805 From Seringapattam to Nulliall
From Nulliall to Goa
From Goa to Cannanore (by sea)
From Cannanore to Seringapattam
- 1806 From Seringapattam to Nulliall
From Nulliall to Seringapattam
From Seringapattam to Madras
From Madras to Seringapattam
- 1806 From Seringapattam to Cannanore
From Cannanore to *Seduisly Ghum* by sea
From *Seduisly Ghum* to Goa by sea
From Goa to Bombay by sea
From Bombay to *Seduisly Ghum* by sea
From *Seduisly Ghum* to Goa by sea
- 1807 Goa to *Seduisly Ghum* by sea
- 1808 From *Seduisly Ghum* to Cannanore by sea
From Cannanore to Mangalore
From Mangalore to *Seduisly Ghum*
From *Seduisly Ghum* to Mangalore) Stuart's
From Mangalore to *Seduisly Ghum*) illness
From *Seduisly Ghum* to Goa
From Goa to Mangalore
From Mangalore to Goa
- 1809 From Goa to Bombaylllk
From Bombay to Goa
From Goa to Onore with Stuart
From Onore to Goa
From Goa to Onore sick certificate
From Onore to Goa
- 1810 From Goa to Trichinopoly
From Trichinopoly to Madras
From Madras to Bangalore
do Bangalore to Goa by land
From Goa to Cannanore by sea
Cannanore to Bangalore
Bangalore to Cannanore
Cannanore to Mangalore by sea
Mangalore to Goa by land
- 1811 Goa to Cannanore by sea
Cannanore to Bangalore
Bangalore to
- Here the itinerary ends

Onore is now called Honavar
Seringapatam is now called Sriringapatna
Seduisly Ghum still needs decoding

Marmagao near Goa 19th April 1809

My ever dearest Sisters

The Captain of a Portuguese vessel which is bound to the Brazils has very kindly Offered to take charge of this letter. and has promised me to forward it from hence by the first Opportunity to England. . as usual I have been very remiss but cannot reconcile it to my conscience upon this occasion to let my indolence get the better of my good intentions although I must acknowledge it is but too often the case, therefore, without further preamble, Stuart, Sally and myself are still in the land of the living. My letter however my dear Sisters must be concise and I must defer giving you any further particulars - ***** that no very material alteration has taken place since I last wrote you in our situations. I have (*next page*) I have been under the necessity of taking on short trips to Bombay on rather an unpleasant business which however I am happy to say has terminated in every respect most favourably. Briefly then my dearest sisters at the time I last wrote you I was in arrest on account of an unfortunate difference in opinion with an officer, my superior in rank upon a point of Duty. The result was necessarily an appeal to the decision of a General Court Martial, by whose sentence I am happy to inform you I was fully and honourably acquitted of all and each of the charges preferred against me the particulars of which you shall be acquainted with in my next. I will not say more upon the subject at present. Your most kind and affectionate letters, my ever dearest Rachel dated 25th June, 20th July and 20th August we had the happiness of receiving soon after my return from Bombay. The very favourable and most pleasing accounts you give us of our dearest William's health and future prospects could not fail to increase our happiness and our unfeigned gratitude to you both for your unbounded kindness and affectionate care and attention you so invariably evince for the Boy's comfort and improvement and for the Parental Interest you so fondly express for his welfare and future success and for which we can only offer our thanks and fervent prayers that he may live to repay you in some respects by his future conduct what can never be sufficiently or so justly appreciated by us and that you may live to witness and experience the satisfaction & happiness of meeting a suitable return which can only be realized by himself.

Here the letter ends unfinished. Why? Was his language, on reflection, too flowery even for him?

At Madura the 10th February 1797

Publicly and Lawfully Married

Nicholas Matthew Smyth Lieutenant in the 1st Battalion of the 3rd Regiment of Native Infantry of the Hon ble Companies Service to Mrs Stuart Peter Wright widow of the late Lieutenant Peter Wright of the Hon ble Companies service. Daughter of the late Dr Walter Gowdie and niece to Colonel Francis Gowdie both of the Hon ble Companies Service by me with the consent of Lord Hobart Governor

(Signed) Robt. Hughes Justice of the Peace

For Madrasapatam and its dependencies

Witnesses

(Signed) Francis Gowdie

(Signed) P. Joyes Lt 1st Bn 9th Regt NI

a True Copy

(Signed) J A Andrews Surgeon

A true copy of an attested copy ** Rob sn Smyth (*first part of the signature not yet deciphered*)