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The Works Of Horatio Walpole, Earl of Orford

In Five Volumes

Walpole, Horace

London, 1798

Letters to and from Ministers

Nutzungsbedingungen

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instance, the matter of the mint shall be given to somebody else to manage, I give in
 for my profit (I believe greater than mine) besides what I have at present; and
 in my place, I will give you eight places in mine and my brother's share
 not a farthing of money is thrown away, and when Mr. Chetwynd shall drop
 his place will be in your grace's disposal, and I shall be at liberty to wait for Mr. Chetwynd's
 place before me and Mr. Chetwynd, the whole profit of the custom-house
 place will be in your grace's disposal, and I shall be at liberty to wait for Mr. Chetwynd's
 reversion, or to the myself; and I shall be at liberty to wait for Mr. Chetwynd's
 to myself. In short, my lord, instead of paying me a large sum of money as
 was before proposed, I shall be at liberty to wait for Mr. Chetwynd's
 in content to my exchange of my place, that your grace may have the very
 this piece of acting at the same time for one or two years more.

LETTERS TO AND FROM MINISTERS.

LETTER I.

TO THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE.

SOME time ago Mr. West, by your grace's order, treated with me for the sale
 of my place in the custom-house, which bringing in to me at the lowest
 thirteen hundred per ann. with the contingence of 100 per ann. more on the
 death of Mrs. Leneve, besides other advantages which I shall mention pre-
 sently, was thought worth, by those who understand, and whom I consulted
 on, these sort of things, from fourteen to fifteen thousand pounds. The affair,
 as I understood, went off by my brother, who has the reversion after me, ex-
 pecting much more for his small share and great reversion, than was thought
 reasonable.

This being a brief state of the case, I have now thought of a plan, by which
 I believe I could accommodate your grace in a much easier manner, and which
 I shall here propose to be accepted or rejected as your grace shall think proper.

The post of master of the mint, held at present by Mr. Chetwynd, is, I
 think, reckoned at 1200 l. per ann. If it is less, even 1000 l. I will exchange
 mine for it on the following terms. If your grace will give me the reversion
 of the master of the mint after Mr. Chetwynd, for my life, I will immedi-
 ately on his death resign my share and profits of the place in the custom-
 house to whomever your grace pleases. That is, I will give up fourteen
 hundred a year, precarious, for 1200 or 1000 certain; on which your grace
 will please to make these observations: If my brother will not part with his
 contingency, whoever shall have my share will still be a great gainer. For

instance, the master of the mint must be given to somebody—if to me, I give in lieu my profits (I believe, greater than those), besides what I hinted at above; and in our place there are seven or eight places in mine and my brother's gift alternately, of which two at least are *very* good—I shall give up my nominations with my place. If Mr. Chetwynd outlives me, as my profits would go to another, not a farthing of money is thrown away, and when Mr. Chetwynd shall drop, his place will be in your grace's disposal, as it is at present. If my brother dies before me and Mr. Chetwynd, the whole profit of the custom-house place will be in your grace's disposal, and I shall be to wait for Mr. Chetwynd's reversion, or to die myself; neither of which will be of any consequence but to myself. In short, my lord, instead of paying me a large sum of money as was before proposed, your grace will only have the trouble of asking the king to consent to my exchange of my place, that your grace may have the very fair pretence of asking at the same time for one or two lives in the custom-house place, which on this agreement with me your grace would ensure to your family (and would be a great provision for a younger son of my lord Lincoln); and as I should be ready to resign mine (by much the largest share), I should suppose his majesty would not refuse your grace a suit so advantageous to you, and which then you would have so reasonable foundation for asking. And I own I have one pleasure in reflecting how, different from most reversions, this would be rather a service than anyways offensive to Mr. Chetwynd.

There is one thing more I ought to mention. I don't know the exact value of Mr. Chetwynd's place; it may be more than I have stated it, and I have no thoughts of making any clandestine advantage. If it should exceed 13 or 1400l. per ann. I by no means desire to be a gainer in income, and shall readily agree to pay to whomever your grace pleases as much as it shall exceed my present place; as on the other hand, if it falls short, I am content to be the sufferer.

I have treated this exchange as very advantageous to your grace, and it certainly would be exceedingly so; yet I do not mean either to be artful for my own profit, or to pretend to make any court by it. It would be below me not to deal frankly with your grace: I have neither ambition nor avarice to satisfy; I have as much from the government as I desire, or have any pretensions to; I want no more; but I do wish to be secure for my life, and to

keep nearly what I have. If I can keep it honourably, as I should, by this exchange, I should be glad: if I cannot, I shall be content with much less, for I would do nothing unworthy of me, to obtain any advantage. Your grace sent to me in a very handsome manner before; I hope my compliance then, and the much better proposal for your grace that I make now, mark my attention and desire of obliging your grace, in which, without any disguise, I mean, my lord, at once to pay a civility to you, and to secure myself in a way which leaves me nothing to be ashamed of, and gives your grace some reason to be satisfied with my plain dealing—in a word, a way as creditable to you as it will be little expensive.

I am, my lord,

Your grace's, &c.

HOR. WALPOLE.

Nov. 12, 1758.

LETTER II.

TO THE RT. HON. HENRY BILSON LEGGE.

SIR,

UPON hearing a motion yesterday in the house of commons for an account of the produce of the tax on places, I sent for my deputy and asked what I had paid. He told me that nothing had been demanded; that he had been ready to pay whatever should be required, as I had given him positive orders, and to answer to the extent of the value of my place whenever it should be enquired into. You will excuse my troubling you with this now, since on one hand I don't know on what method the treasury have fixed for taxing the places in the exchequer; and on the other, if I did, I would not send my assessment *just now*, lest it should look as if I had had any design of evading the tax, and only paid for fear of the enquiry. I must appeal to you, sir, how very groundless such a suspicion would be. I can scarce expect that any thing I say should make an impression on any body, and yet I believe you may recollect, that when such a tax was first talked of, I told you how far I was from wishing it should not be imposed; that I thought persons who had a good deal from the government ought to pay towards carrying it on, and that we in employments could afford it better than many on whom the weight

weight of taxes fell very heavily. I must bear my brother witness that he entirely agreed with me in these sentiments.

When this tax was to be voted, I again spoke to you upon it, sir, and said, Though I was very ready to pay myself, I hoped it would not be extended to little offices, where salaries were small, and the business great: and I mentioned to you a difficulty that might, by inadvertence, be laid upon me, if I was rated according to my bills, which, including all that I pay to the king's workmen and tradesmen, would, if valued in that manner, impose a greater duty upon me than my whole income would amount to. This you told me could never be the case; and I only mention it now, to show that I no more conceal what I said for myself, than I sought to avoid any incumbrance to which I ought to be subject. You concluded the conversation with saying, that no method of taxing places was yet settled, and that it would be a very difficult matter to adjust.

Do excuse my repeating all this detail, and be so good as to keep this letter, if it should be necessary for my justification. There is but one thing in the world that I have any pretence to be proud of, and that is, my disinterestedness. It would hurt me beyond measure to have it for one moment called in question. My carelessness about money had made me quite forget the tax since last year, or I should have again applied to you for directions—but I do protest I had rather give up the place than have one man in England think that I meant to avoid paying my share.

I am, sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Arlington-street,
Feb. 3, 1759.

LETTER III.

To Mr. WALPOLE,

MR. PITT presents his compliments to Mr. Walpole, and is extremely sorry to have been abroad when Mr. Walpole has twice done him the honour

to call. He is going out of town this morning, and will be very glad to receive any commands of Mr. Walpole next week, at the time he shall please to name.

St. James's Square,
Nov. 17, 1759.

LETTER IV.

TO THE RT. HON. WILLIAM PITT.

SIR,

ON my coming to town I did myself the honour of waiting on you and lady Hesther Pitt, and though I think myself extremely distinguished by your obliging note, I should be sorry for having given you the trouble of writing it, if it did not *lend* me a very pardonable opportunity of saying what I much wished to express, but thought myself too private a person, and of too little consequence to take the liberty to say. In short, sir, I was eager to congratulate you on the lustre you have thrown on this country; I wished to thank you for the security you have fixed to me of enjoying the happiness I do enjoy. You have placed England in a situation in which it never saw itself—a task the more difficult, as you had not to improve, but recover. In a trifling book written two or three years ago, I said (speaking of the name in the world the most venerable to me), “Sixteen unfortunate and inglorious years since his removal have already written his eulogium.” It is but justice to you, sir, to add, that that period ended when your administration began. Sir, don't take this for flattery; there is nothing in your power to give that I would accept—nay, there is nothing I could envy, but what I believe you would scarce offer me, your glory. This may sound very vain and insolent, but consider, sir, what a monarch is a man who wants nothing; consider how he looks down on one who is only the most illustrious man in Britain.—But, sir, freedoms apart, insignificant as I am, probably it must be some satisfaction to a great mind like yours, to receive incense when you are sure there is no flattery blended with it; and what must any Englishman be that could give you a minute's satisfaction, and would hesitate!

Adieu, sir—I am unambitious, I am disinterested—but I am vain. You have

² Royal and Noble Authors, account of sir Robert Walpole.

by

by your notice, uncanvassed, unexpected, and at the period when you certainly could have the least temptation to stoop down to me, flattered me in the most agreeable manner. If there could arrive the moment, when you could be nobody and I anybody, you cannot imagine how grateful I would be. In the mean time permit me to be, as I have been ever since I had the honour of knowing you,

SIR,

Your most obedient humble servant,

Nov. 19, 1759.

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER V.

To THE EARL OF BUTE.

MY LORD,

HAVING heard that his majesty was curious about his pictures, I recollected some catalogues of the royal collections which I had a little share in publishing a few years ago. I dare not presume to offer them to his majesty myself; but I take the liberty of sending them to your lordship, that, if you should think they may contribute to his majesty's information or amusement, they may come to his hand more properly from your lordship than they could do from me. I have added some notes that illustrate a few particulars.

Having dabbled a good deal in this kind of things, if there is any point in which I could be of use to your lordship for his majesty's satisfaction, I should be very ready and happy to employ my little knowledge or pains. And permit me to say, my lord, your lordship cannot command any body who will execute your orders more cheerfully or more disinterestedly, or that will trouble you less with any solicitations: an explanation which even esteem and sincerity are forced to make to one in your lordship's situation. The mere love of the arts, and the joy of seeing on the throne a prince of taste, are my only inducements for offering my slender services. I know myself too well to think I can ever be of any use but as a virtuoso and antiquarian; a character I should formerly have called very insignificant; though now my pride, since his majesty vouch-

safes

favours to patronize the arts, and your lordship has the honour to countenance genius, a rank of which at most I can be but an admirer.

I have the honour to be, &c.

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VI.

TO MR. WALPOLE.

SIR,

I HAVE presented the book sent me to his majesty, and mentioned the very polite and respectful manner you expressed yourself in with regard to him. The catalogue came very opportunely, for the king had just given orders to the duke of Devonshire to make out exact lists of all the pictures in the royal palaces. His majesty's great fondness for the arts will, I hope, soon have a striking effect in this country. I with gratitude acknowledge the assistance they have been of to me during many years of absolute solitude: other matters much less agreeable now demand my whole attention; depend upon it, therefore, I shall presume on your generosity, and use the freedom you give me, without remorse or hesitation; fully satisfied, that whatever you shall please to undertake, will be executed in a much superior manner to any attempts of mine, even in the days of liberty and quiet. I am sorry before I finish this scrawl to be forced to enter my protest against an expression in yours. Men of your character and ability are by no means confined to any one study: quick parts and superior talents become useful in every occupation they are applied to; with these, according to marshal Saxe, little things amaze, and great ones do not surprize.

I am, sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

BUTE.

Dec. 17, 1760.

LETTER VII.

TO MR. WALPOLE.

LORD BUTE presents his compliments to Mr. Walpole, and returns him a thousand thanks for the very agreeable present he has made him. In looking over it, lord Bute observes Mr. Walpole has mixed several curious remarks on the customs, &c. of the times he treats of; a thing much wanted, and that has never yet been executed, except in parts by Peck, &c. Such a general work would be not only very agreeable, but instructive:—the French have attempted it; the Russians are about it; and lord Bute has been informed, Mr. Walpole is well furnished with materials for such a noble work.

Saturday.

LETTER VIII.

TO THE EARL OF BUTE.

MY LORD,

I AM sensible how little time your lordship can have to throw away on reading idle letters or letters of compliment; yet as it would be too great want of respect to your lordship not to make some sort of reply to the note you have done me the honour to send me, I thought I could couch what I have to say in fewer words by writing, than in troubling you with a visit, which might come unseasonably, and a letter you may read at any moment when you are most idle. I have already, my lord, detained you too long by sending you a book, which I could not flatter myself you would turn over in such a season of business: by the manner in which you have considered it, you have shown me that your very minutes of amusement you try to turn to the advantage of your country. It was this pleasing prospect of patronage to the arts that tempted me to offer you my pebble towards the new structure. I am flattered that you have taken notice of the only ambition I have: I should be more flattered if I could contribute to the smallest of your lordship's designs for illustrating Britain.

The hint your lordship is so good as to give me for a work like Montfaucon's

con's Monuments de la Monarchie Françoise, has long been a subject that I have wished to see executed, nor in point of materials do I think it would be a very difficult one. The chief impediment was the expence, too great for a private fortune. The extravagant prices extorted by English artists is a discouragement to all public undertakings. Drawings from paintings, tombs, &c. would be very dear. To have them engraved as they ought to be, would exceed the compass of a much ampler income than mine, which, though equal to my largest wish, cannot measure itself with the rapacity of our performers.

But, my lord, if his majesty was pleased to command such a work, on so laudable an idea as your lordship's, nobody would be more ready than myself to give his assistance. I own, I think I could be of use in it, in collecting or pointing out materials, and I would readily take any trouble in aiding, supervising, or directing such a plan. Pardon me, my lord, if I offer no more; I mean, that I do not undertake the part of composition. I have already trespassed too much upon the indulgence of the public; I wish not to disgust them with hearing of me, and reading me. It is time for me to have done; and when I shall have completed, as I almost have, the history of the Arts on which I am now engaged, I did not purpose to tempt again the patience of mankind. But the case is very different with regard to my trouble. My whole fortune is from the bounty of the crown, and from the public; it would ill become me to spare any pains for the king's glory, or for the honour and satisfaction of my country; and give me leave to add, my lord, it would be an ungrateful return for the distinction with which your lordship has condescended to honour me, if I withheld such trifling aid as mine, when it might in the least tend to adorn your lordship's administration. From me, my lord, permit me to say, these are not words of course, or of compliment, this is not the language of flattery; your lordship knows I have no views, perhaps knows that, insignificant as it is, my praise is never detached from my esteem: and when you have raised, as I trust you will, real monuments of glory, the most contemptible characters in the inscription dedicated by your country, may not be the testimony of,

My lord,

Your lordship's most obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Feb. 15, 1762.

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LETTER IX.

TO THE EARL OF BUTE.

MY LORD,

AS it is now near five months since your lordship signed my orders, I should be glad if your lordship would please to direct the payment of the money.

I am, my lord,

Your lordship's obedient humble servant,

Arlington-street,
March 14, 1763.

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER X.

TO THE EARL OF BUTE.

MY LORD,

I AM very sensible of your lordship's obliging civility in immediately ordering my money on my application. It was by no means from want of respect to your lordship that that application was not made sooner; but for above twenty years that I have held the office, it has been the constant practice to write to the first secretary to desire his letter, when the lords have signed the orders; and the payment has seldom been delayed above a fortnight after.

If your lordship should approve of it, should much rather, as my bills become due, apply to your lordship, than to any body else, unless your lordship please to give any other directions.

I am, my lord,

Your lordship's most obedient humble servant,

March 16, 1763.

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XI.

TO MR. BEDFORD.

DEAR SIR,

INQUIRING of your son to-day why my new clerk was not more instructed, he said, there were circumstances which some persons of the treasury would

would not like to have communicated; which much surpris'd me, your son said Mr. Rowe had had some cloth, which he chose to have entered as some other article. This notice did and could not but greatly astonish me, who have always told you in the most positive manner that I never would connive at the smallest collusion, nor upon any account receive the least profit that was not strictly and justly my due. You know I have repeatedly declared to you that I would not suffer the benefits of my office to be rais'd by any indirect practices on my part; and you must remember how strongly I rejected old Palmer's pretensions, and was firm that I would lose the perquisites due on what he was entitl'd to take at the office, rather than enter into any bargain with him.

When I talk'd to you last at Brixton-caufeway, you desired me not to let any body into the secrets of my office. I replied with dissatisfaction that *I would have no secrets in my office*, nor would receive a shilling from it that I was not willing all the world should know—and I appeal to yourself if this has not been my constant rule.

I am sensible that you have done nothing but from zeal for me and regard to my interest—but my honour is infinitely more dear to me, and I most peremptorily charge you not to give into the least collusion with any body of the treasury, in order either to serve me by increasing my profits, or by gaining them to my interest. I will go shares with no man living in any dirt. I am aware that this may make those people my enemies, and may turn them to prejudice me by postponing my accounts, by delaying my payments, or, as your son said, by preventing their taking many articles from the office on which I should have a just profit. But I scorn such traffic, and had rather lose the office itself, than blush to hold it by such means. In short, I prefer being wrong'd to doing wrong.

In the present case, Mr. Rowe is welcome to the cloth; but then I will pay for it myself, and do absolutely forbid you to charge it in any shape to the government. Should he ever make such another application to you, or should any other person, you must say that you dare not yield to it, and that I have positively forbidden it.

Mr. Harris must be instructed thoroughly in all the duties of his place, but

I do not desire he should know this transaction, for fear he should ever be tempted to imitate it. I am fully persuaded of your good intentions to me in it, and that your prudence and fear of making me an enemy induced you to comply. But I entreat you to remember, that as I have no worldly wisdom myself, I cannot let any man living use any for me contrary to right, justice, and the duty I owe to the public as a servant of the government. I have held the place now above thirty years through many storms, and sometimes under much oppression, but my conduct in it has been untainted; and as I have disdained to secure it by voting with ministers against my conscience, you may depend upon it, I will not traffic for the favour of clerks by winking at their corruption.

I am, dear sir,

Yours most sincerely,

Arlington-street,
Feb. 27, 1771.

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XII.

TO MR. WALPOLE.

SIR,

YOU may be assured of my perfect obedience to the commands I received yesterday.

I am happy that you think I have served you with zeal—gratitude required and obliged me to it—affection is too familiar a word from me; and I do most solemnly assure you that my poor unfortunate son has not been less zealous, for he never thought your accounts high enough; and yet you may be quite easy and satisfied that nothing has been done that could bring the least reflection upon your honour. Our desires have been to oblige every body, and we have done it honestly; and if I knowing a gentleman to have an allowed right to a particular perquisite of office, which he did not always want in that shape, have gratified him with another thing in lieu of it *of equal value*, I did not perceive the injury to government, or think you would have any objection to it: but if you will not suffer such indulgence to be continued, and will be pleased to inform me so by my son, I will show the strictest regard to your commands.

There

There has never been any thing charged in your accounts without a voucher of its delivery, which would always justify you; and the person who ordered it was to justify himself if called upon.

I am, fir,

Your most obliged and obedient humble servant,

Brixton-caufeway,
March 1, 1771.

GROSVENOR BEDFORD.

LETTER XIII.

To MR. WALPOLE.

SIR,

I AM directed by lord North to send you a copy of the representation which the commissioners of the customs have made to the board of treasury relative to the difficulty which hath arose in the management of the office, in which you are so much interested, by the death of Mr. Mann. His lordship orders me to say that he is desirous of arranging this business in any way that is practicable and most agreeable to you, and to appoint (if it can be) Mr. Suckling, or who you choose, as temporary collector.

I shall be at my house at Sion-hill tomorrow morning, and shall be glad to receive your answer to that place; or, if it is agreeable to you, I will wait on you at Strawberry-hill to receive your commands. I have the honour to be with great respect,

SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

Treasury-chambers,
December 23, 1775.

JOHN ROBINSON.

To the Right Hon. the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury.

Custom-house, London, December 22, 1775.

Memorial of the commissioners for managing and causing to be levied and collected his majesty's customs, &c.

SHEWETH,

THAT his late majesty king George I. by his letters patent bearing date the 28th of June 1716, did grant unto Robert Hare, esq. and Robert Mann, gentleman,

gentleman, the office of collector inwards of the customs in the port of London, and the members and creeks thereof, for and during the natural lives of Robert Walpole, jun. esq. and Edward Walpole, esq. sons of the right honourable Robert Walpole, esq. and during the life of the longest liver of them, with full powers to execute the said office by themselves, or their sufficient deputy or deputies.

That Mr. Suckling, the present deputy to the collector inwards, acquainted us, that Edward Louisa Mann, esq. the last person admitted to that office, is now dead, and that the same devolves to sir Horace Mann, bart. his majesty's minister at Florence, who not being in England cannot immediately attend to take the oath of office.

We beg leave to represent the same to your lordships; and as the case is unprecedented, we are at a loss to know how and by whom the collection is to be carried on during this interval, and in what manner and in whose name the money so collected is to be paid into the hands of the receiver general, in order to its being paid into the exchequer.

This being a matter of very great importance, as well as peculiar nicety and difficulty in point of law and prudence, we think it necessary to give your lordships this early intimation of it, and pray to receive your lordships' directions herein.

H. BANKES.
W. MUSGRAVE.
C^N. MORRIS.
J^S. JEFFERYS.

L E T T E R X I V .

To JOHN ROBINSON, Esq.

S I R,

I HAVE but this minute received the honour of your most obliging letter, and do not lose a minute in answering it.

It is impossible to be more sensible than I am of lord North's goodness, and I must beg you, sir, to express my gratitude to his lordship, as I shall have
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the honour of doing in person. His lordship's condescension to me is as flattering as unmerited; and the only way I can at all pretend to deserve it is by doing what I ought; that is, as far as the case regards myself, prefer the public service to myself, and submit myself in the care of that interest to his lordship's wisdom: at the same time having so just a sense of the duty of gratitude, that I think myself equally obliged by a kind offer, whether accepted or declined.

The collectorship of the customs is an office of such importance, that my family or I, who have received such favours from the government, ought to be the first to take care that the public suffers no detriment in an office in which we are concerned. I, it is true, have a great, though a temporary, interest in that office, but it is my brother, sir Edward, in whom it is vested for his life; and therefore I flatter myself that both lord North and you, sir, will consider my answer as only regarding myself; for though I am persuaded that my brother has the public service full as much at heart as I have, I must not take upon me to answer for him about an office that virtually and ultimately rests in him. For myself, I am persuaded that I cannot serve the public more essentially than by waving my own interest entirely, and referring the whole disposition of the present difficulty to lord North's discretion, and submitting myself entirely to what he shall direct. The situation of the office by the absence of sir Horace Mann is certainly extremely momentous, and ought not to remain precarious; therefore, I beg very respectfully and gratefully too, that I may not be considered for an instant, but that his lordship will give orders for the security of the office in whatever manner he thinks fit, till sir Horace can come over and accept it; and whatever his lordship shall determine will be cheerfully acquiesced in by,

SIR,

His lordship's and your most grateful

And most obedient humble servant,

HORACE WALPOLE

Arlington-street,
December 25, 1775.

POSTSCRIPT.

SIR,

I was so convinced that my brother sir Edward prefers the service of the public to his own interest, at least as much as I do, that I deferred sending

VOL. II.

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my immediate answer till I had communicated it to my brother; and he authorizes me to say that he submits himself entirely to lord North's arbitration for the safety of the office till sir Horace Mann can be admitted to it according to the intention of the patent.

LETTER XV.

To JOHN ROBINSON, Esq.

SIR,

MY deputy, Mr. Bedford, has acquainted me that you are desirous of knowing the prices I pay for the several articles with which, as usher of the exchequer, I supply the treasury; and he told me that you added, that lord North has a mind to make new regulations that may be œconomic for the public. I have accordingly, sir, ordered Mr. Bedford to give you the most exact information on every particular. He told me too that lord North would be so just as, I do not doubt, to make compensations to any body that should suffer by such alterations. Give me leave, sir, to say that it is not on that ground that I now trouble you. On the contrary, it is to beg you will be so good as to acquaint lord North, that he may not only command any information from me on that subject, as far as I myself am concerned, and which it is my duty to give, but that I shall cheerfully acquiesce in whatever new regulations he shall be pleased to make for the benefit of the public. No rights or interest of mine shall stand in the way of so good a purpose; and when I use the word *rights*, it is not to support, but to waive them for any national benefit. I have received too great benefits and too long from the crown and the public, not to owe any facility in my power, as far as so inconsiderable a person can do it, to ease the burthens of both, and I shall with great willingness accept whatever shall be thought proper for me on any new plan of public œconomy. I should think myself of too little consequence to say this, were it not that the example of the most private man may be of use on such an occasion. I am, sir, with great regard,

Your obedient humble servant,

HORACE WALPOLE.

Arlington-street,
June 9, 1777.

LETTER XVI.

To the Hon. HORACE WALPOLE, Usher of the Receipt of the Exchequer.

SIR,

I AM commanded by the lords commissioners of his majesty's treasury to desire you will forthwith cause to be made out and transmitted to me, for their lordships' information, an account of the ordinary allowance of stationary delivered into this office in the year 1780; together with the prices of each article, and the amount of the whole; an account of the extraordinary allowance of stationary, and all other necessaries whatsoever, delivered to the lords, secretaries, clerks, or any other person in this office, within the same time; together with the prices of each article, and the amount of the whole.

I am, sir,

Your most humble servant,

GEORGE ROSE.

Treasury-chambers,
August 10, 1782.

LETTER XVII.

To MR. WALPOLE.

SIR,

I WAS very much concerned to understand yesterday, from Mr. Bedford, that you had considered my letter to him as leading towards an enquiry into the conduct of your office; it was merely to know what the consumption of stationary at the treasury has been, which I could not learn with correctness there. This I begged Mr. Bedford would assure you of in the strongest terms, to prevent a possibility of your continuing under a mistake with respect to my intention in writing to him; and when I mentioned the misapprehension to lord Shelburne, he expressed the utmost anxiety to have it set right, and desired I would write to you myself for that purpose, with assurances that it would give him very great pain to have occasioned the smallest uneasiness to you, which I hope you will admit as an apology for my having given you this trouble. I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

GEORGE ROSE.

Duke-street, Westminster,
August 16, 1782.

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LETTER XVIII.

TO GEORGE ROSE, Esq.

THOUGH I am very sorry, sir, that you have had so much trouble on my account, I cannot entirely lament it, both as it has procured me a most obliging letter from you, and as it gives me an opportunity of explaining my expressions by Mr. Bedford, which, if I had had the pleasure of being better known to you, would not have surpris'd you.

As a very subordinate officer of the exchequer, I have always known it was my duty to receive the commands of my superiors, the lords of the treasury, with respect and obedience, and to give them any information that they please to demand of me. I owe every thing I have to the crown and the public, and certainly by no merit of my own; the servants of the crown and the public are entitled to any lights that can fall to my province to furnish; and so far from having any secrets in my office, I would not keep it an hour, by any mystery, subterfuge, or disguise. I once received an enquiry from Mr. Robinfon something parallel, sir, to yours, and, as Mr. Bedford can tell you, immediately complied with his request.

When the commissioners of accounts sent for Mr. Bedford, I gave him the most positive orders to lay before them the most minute details of my office, and answer their every question circumstantially.

Forgive my troubling you, sir, with these particulars about myself: they are only meant to shew you that so far from entertaining any jealousy about my office, I think myself accountable for every part of it, and should blush if I were not ready and willing to give it: perhaps that delicacy made me express myself a little more eagerly than the case deserved.

With regard to lord Shelburne's or your own desire of information, I beg both will command me or Mr. Bedford on any occasion without ceremony. I feel extremely obliged to you, sir, for your readiness in explaining your orders; and I must entreat you to present my most respectful thanks to lord Shelburne for his lordship's condescension and attention, to which my insignificance had no pretensions, but which must increase my gratitude. I would
take

take the liberty of thanking his lordship myself, but he cannot have time to read complimentary letters. I fear, sir, I have taken up but too much of yours, for which I beg your pardon, and have the honour to be with great regard,

S I R,

Your most obedient and most obliged humble servant,

Strawberry-hill,
August 18, 1782.

HORACE WALPOLE.

LETTER XIX.

To WILLIAM SUCKLING, Esq.

DEAR SIR,

THE more I reflect on what you said to me yesterday, the stronger is my opinion that the most faithful and exact account should be given of all the fees and profits belonging to the office. There can be no right to any thing that it is necessary to conceal from those who have authority to ask an account: and as this is my opinion, I must beg you will observe it as far as I have any title to interfere, and to keep it as a record of my sentiments, if they do not prevail in other offices. I do not pretend to judge for others, but I am very solicitous to preserve my own conduct uniform with what it has always been. I have no notion of holding a public office and not being ready to give an account of it at a minute's warning.

I am, dear sir,

Yours most sincerely,

Berkeley-square,
January 31, 1783.

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XX.

To MR. WALPOLE.

DEAR SIR,

BE pleased to accept my most humble thanks for your speedy compliance with my request in applying to the commander in chief for purchasing a commission; the young man I wish to introduce into the service is my son, aged twenty, about five feet ten inches high.

Since I had the honour of waiting upon you, have received a letter from
Mr.

Mr. Adair's office of a cornetcy to be fold in lord Southampton's regiment of dragoons, which I am in treaty for. If any difficulty should arise in the business, your very kind offer of speaking again to the commander in chief shall be embraced by me.

It gives me the fullest satisfaction to find you more and more strengthened in your opinion as to the propriety of rendering the accounts called for. Sir Edward entirely agreed therein, as he also did in the new arrangement of the warehouse officers. I have the honour to inform you that the duke of Manchester sees the necessity of a compliance, and has ordered his deputies to make suitable returns to the accounts called for.

I am with great respect, dear sir,

Your most obliged and humble servant,

WILLIAM SUCKLING.

February 1, 1783.

LETTER XXI.

TO THE EARL OF SHELBURNE.

MY LORD,

NOTHING but the dread of ostentation would have prevented me long ago from taking the step I am now going to take, and which obliges me to give your lordship this trouble, which I flatter myself you will excuse in pity to the feelings of a man who has long suffered in silence under the painful sensation of being reckoned in any manner a burthen to the public.

From the moment that the necessities of this country made reformation of expence called for, I not only approved of such a design, but was most ready to be an object of it. So far from any wish of being exempted, I did every thing that became me as a benefited servant of the public to lay open my situation to those delegated to enquire into the state of offices. I ordered my deputy to give the most minute account of my advantages, and to offer to the commissioners every light that it was possible for me to give about my own office. I can boldly say, that every board of treasury that has been employed since reformation was started, must bear me witness that publicly or privately

they never heard my name to any application for favour or mitigation of my lot. I could go farther, if the repugnance I have to saying any thing of myself did not enjoin me silence, as it has during a long period of very irksome reflections on my standing in the light of one chargeable to the public, without any merit on my part.

But, my lord, when I read in the papers on coming to town to-day that my office of usher of the exchequer has not only been alleged in the house of commons as an expensive one, but as a bar to the correction of great waste, I can no longer be silent. I must sacrifice my aversion for parade to my duty; and must beg leave to say to your lordship, that I entreat that my patent may be no obstacle to any necessary reformation. I am ready to consent to any thing that parliament shall think proper to do. The legislature without my consent may do what it pleases, but it will have my perfect and cheerful acquiescence in whatever it shall please to ordain about me and my office. I am ready to surrender my patent, and shall be content with whatever shall be thought enough for me by a new regulation. I wish my age of sixty-six and my infirmities did not reduce this tender to a very immeritorious one, for to give up what I have very little time to enjoy is no very heroic effort.

But though I am little solicitous about myself, I do feel for my deputy and clerk, who have long faithfully executed all the trouble of my office, and have wives and families unprovided for, but during my life. I should hope to have them considered; and though I have no merit to plead myself, I flatter myself that this testimonial to their integrity will have a little weight.

The great confidence I have in your lordship's goodness and honour makes me take the liberty of addressing this letter to you, for two reasons; one to authorize your lordship to take what step you please with regard to my office, and the other, that you would not produce this letter unless necessary to my vindication. I had still rather bear the vexation of what has been said on my place in public, than seem to affect any vainglorious self-denial. It shall suffice me to have deposited my justification in so honourable a bosom as your lordship's, unless I should be called on to clear myself more publicly.

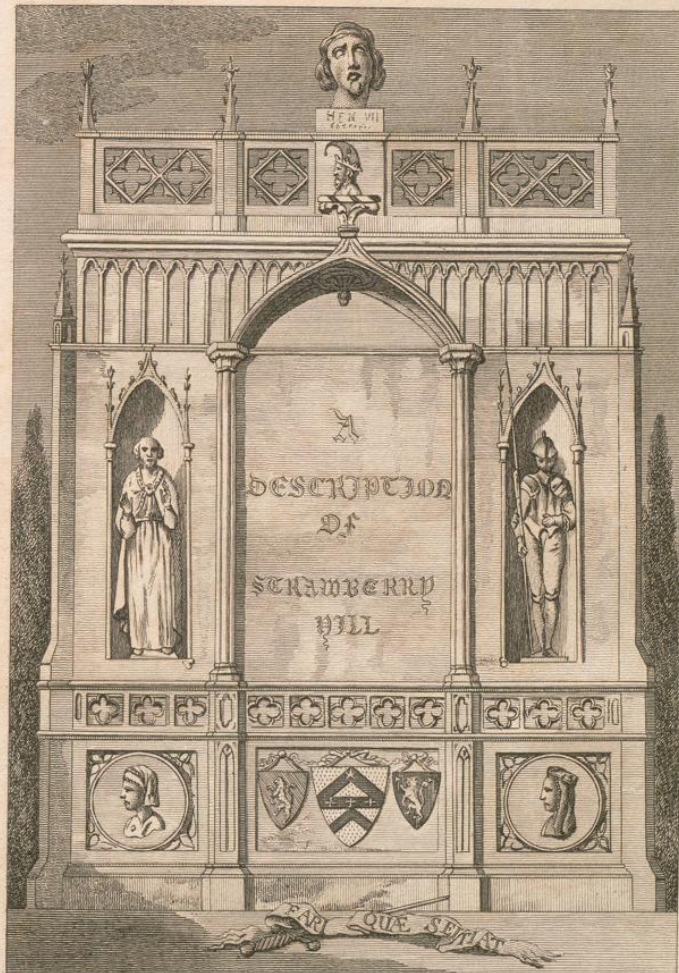
I have the honour to be with the greatest respect, my lord,

Your lordship's most obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

June 19, 1783.

LORD JOHN CAVENDISH called on me on 22d; said, if I resigned, my place must go to Martin. He said he should, when he had time, bring in a bill for taking away exchequer places, but should give possessors the same salaries as stated by the commissioners of accounts. I said I could not take mine at that rate; they had stated mine at 4100l. a year; which I thought hard: they had taken a very high year when I had received more than a yearly payment (indeed three quarters); that I had not complained, because I would not seem to lower my place; yet, as I had thought myself ill-treated by its being overcharged, I could not in conscience not tell him the truth; and that so far from desiring 4000l. a year, I should be content with half: that I had much rather have a provision made for my deputy and clerk for their lives.



C. Edwards sculp.

Harris fecit.

FRONTISPIECE.

