

Transcriptions of letters in 2664/3/1B/12

No 1

To Lady Elizabeth Talbot
Penrice Castle
Swansea
Glamorganshire

My sweet love,

Mr Braid has not written therefore I can give you no information about Codycote But as a soother for y^r other disappointments I have sent you a letter from Mrs Scott which came by this days post - I came very comfortably in the [Slass Bo...] from Barnes & went in a hackney Coach immediately to Sir W Farquhar who would not admit me to an audience as his Carriage was at the door but sayd he would call between 4 and 5 if he did not go out of town but if he did he could not come then he would tomorrow this he told me himself at the Coach door.---

I met Bouverie who has given me a most lamentable account of L^d Jancreds house from a friend of his who has inhabited it as says the furniture in it is not worth 30£ Poor Mrs Campbell wears herself to death she sat up with her Brother all last night who was very ill but better this morning – Mrs Obrien was here a moment ago and struggled hard to get at my morsel of lamb but I beat him bearing in mind y^r strict injunction on that head as well as the wrong I should subject myself to if he outlambd me. God Bless you Lily [kiss] little Henry for me & explain to him what a violence I have done my inclination in refusing y^r affectionate offer of staying with me & that I can practice self denial when two such objects require it

I am to see some fortune tomorrow & hope to be successfull tell Talbot

Adieu my love

Yrs ever affectionate

W Talbot

No 2

Brighton Wednesday Morn

The following Letter I have this moment rec'd. I am inclin'd to believe quelque prize - ... not likely to fall into it, therefore submit it to y^r instruction & request y^r advice how I may act least likely (if it should be true) to hurt L-s feelings & not exasperate Madame My mind has not

place for it to take up much of my thoughts, yet as he is my friend you may easily conceive I feel myself very awkwardly situated.

Hall place Dartford
May 9th 1795

When you pass'd me yesterday I thought I read in y^r countenance the strong features of contempt – is it possible that I should have insulted the feelings I so much revere or that in expressing sentiments I honestly felt I shou'd have forfeited y^r good opinion – yet I'm afraid it is but too true – I could not not mistake the expression of y^r countenance – Forgive me if I have unwillingly offended you- What I wrote came from my my heart and was instigated by the present motives of regard & respect for you – can you blame me for expressing sensation which you had given rise to? Can you hate me for loving you? Then you woud be the common enemy of womankind – For I believe to love you is a tribute which all must pay you who have either tack or penetration – To praise what we admire is but a natural impulse and you surely cannot despise me for giving way to it – If I have indeed forfeited yr good opinion by a few ill written verses I am wretched beyond measure and wish the idea had never enter'd my head – but upon reflection I think you will acquit me of the base charge of expressing sentiments I do not feel – you will generously confess you have wrong'd me by suspecting any integrity – Had I not avow'd any partiality towards you my action woud have soon discovered it – For to disguise is a species of worldly deception I have not yet acquir'd – I regret from my soul that I am not perfect enough to hope for a return of affection – and I curse the evil genius that made Lee y^r Freind for otherwise perhaps my constant zeal to mould myself to yr pleasure – and my unwearied attention to y^r happiness might deserve other sentiments than those of indifference [Indefleunce ? Insupportable word? Rather make me the laughing stock of every society rather join in abusing & execrating me – expose me to the world and enjoy the triumph of my downfall be my profess'd enemy – be any thing but a cold Preacher of doctrines at which our nature revolts – Do not tell me not to give way to my passions that make me miserable – Do not say that I have insulted you myself & my husband by the avowal of my sentiments and that I have infrin'g'd the Laws of decency and morality such common place maxims woud be ill applied to the object of y^r resentment – woud be ill applied to the object of y^r resentment – if I am loathsome to you be my open enemy – Do not Cloke under the appearance of civility disgust & contempt Do not preach maxims to me which reason as well as inclination teaches me to despise – If my presence is disagreeable to you I will know how to dispose of myself but you will one day or other regret having sacrificed Justice to policy – you will repent having bestow'd y^r affection on the most worthless part of the Creation who only admire y^r perfections as they are conducive to their vanity or interest – yet perhaps at this moment some contemptible rival is in y^r arms while I am the object of y^r derision – How debased I feel myself – but love forces us to the most degrading terms rather than relinquish our hopes – It covers the baseness of a deed under the specious garb of generous feeling – In any other case I would scorn to have gone half way – But in this I wou'd kiss the dust you tread on to obtain my wishes yet I woud not employ flattery to gain my point – you have too much understanding to be influenc'd by such unworthy means – I have too much honour to employ them – probably you thought the character I gave you of y^rself was too much heighten'd – but French verse ought not to be taken au pied de la lettre – when I said you had the figure of Apollo the most perfect thing in sculpture and the Wisdom of Cato which intimates the highest degree of intellectuall perfection – I only meant to infer that you had native beauty and heighten'd by a great share of mental endowments – For to say that you was as perfect as

the Apollo of Belvedere and as wise and virtuous as Cato would be flattery too great for y^r belief – I thought you would allow for the nature of a French verse – or at least consider my opinion as a mark of my respect for you – I hope I have exculpated my conduct sufficiently to convince yr mind that I am not worthy of y^r contempt I beg you will write these few words “I abhor you” or these “I love you” – either will suffice for my intentions – but recollect that my fate is in y^r hands I am at present yours –

Large portion of the letter has been cut out

I know my mind has not room has not space to harbour a thought on this business – Its the expected letter from you my dearest Lily that engrosses every Idea which I trust tomorrow's post will not fail to bring – still that Letter can only contain Tuesdays thoughts & who can answer to me that whilst I read them they still exist O Abscence, O tourment, O bizarre et funeste etat, ou l'on ne peut jouir que du moment papè & ou le present n'est point encore - Conform I entreat you to the requests my last contain'd as on that must depend a continuation of our correspondence from this place & should y^r Father answer y^rs before I see you & you can convey a copy of it for Godsake delay not – The good effects of this place I may perhaps feel [*missing*]... I leave it – at present it does not agree with me – I ... worse than [*missing*] & if there was I should [*the rest is missing*]

No 3

To Lady Elizabeth Talbot
Laycock Abbey
Chipenham
Wilts

Portrea Monday

My Little Darling

I have been reading over again y^r D^r Letters & feel myself more in love with you than ever – but I dare say you are tired of this eternal theme which perhaps with you may deserve the epithet of Stale or I might Launch out with my accustomed feverishness in y^r praise. – By a letter from Taylor re'd yesterday I find you were well satisfied with the order you found the walks & gardens in I cant tell you how endearing y^r expression of partiality are to me in favour of y^r own Dear home. you have not been half explanatory enough about the old mansion what crop of Pears etc etc etc etc how you like the Cows cum multis aliis que [*renne fenescuibere longum*] est.-

Various reports are in circulation but hardly any to be depended on. – We understand there exists a great discontent in Lincolnshire & [Yorkbin] where General Mulgrave commands in the Flank Companies of the Militia embodied & detached from their own Regt like those at Weymouth that they have petitioned through General Mulgrave to return to their own Regts stating the inconvenience & unanimously in resigning if not attended to – that the Duke of York has ordered General Mulgrave to accept any resignation offer'd & determined not to give up the Point as an old officer of the Line I think the Duke right – I am not [*torn*] vers'd in Militia Etiquette – perhaps [*torn*] can inform us what L^d Radnor [*covered*] [*roud*] be on such a

can as I [understand] he Glorys even before the King of exhibiting the Militia privileges - he may give delightful Breakfasts but he is no officer mind that Poppet – Ld Radnor I understand has [petition] to relieve us at Portrea Barraks & its very well known that an official letter has been recd by Gen^l Murray for us to return to Winchester the end of this month – I intend putting a Blister on my knee to night the swelling decreases very slowly & at night it pains me violently – Charles Bouverie yesterday had a terrible fall from his horse but [his mad toterally] thick he is well of in feeling no inconsecences but stiffness

Y^r own [Cimons]

Remember me to Bab & Mary Ann

No 4

Saturday night

Oh Lily Dearest Dearest Lily never to be forgotten Freind of an almost Broken heart how, by what name shall I address in what language shall I request you to write me something to allay to soother my agitated soul – Is it then true – Alas alas but too true or why else these strain'd eyes busting from their sockets these sobs vainly stifed sobs – Oh my Freind – how cheerless how joyless are now all my prospects – prospects which Kingdom cou'd not have purchased before last Wednesday – Oh Eliza I cannot cannot give you up but with my last sigh - let a [Tyranium] Father exert his unexampled cruelty – Yes Eliza Obey since yr duties are incompatible with yr love for the affection you promised me but let me, still let me retain a place in yr memory if only on account of scenes this; this; this; place has witnessed – I will cherish yr Idea in whatever climate, whatever county fate leads me to, & that with a fondness that shall preclude me from the remotest enjoyment of what this world affords – As I have loved you, doated on you in happier times,(when love was young & friends without a fault) so will I [] my present mercy draw even consolation from it, by dwelling on what I have lost – Oh Lily comfort yr friend [Cimons] & say not for [all] tell me it only a temporary probation & [also] for the present you have [jellord] to yr [.icomibable] duty. Give me hopes a time may come – my honour calls on me to leave this County – but if yr love for poor [Cimons] poor in every thing but his love for you you will allow him the privilege of hearing from you, & waiting to you whilst he remains in it – can you refuse me this last favour, when abroad how uncertain or if certain how uncertain If I am alive to read them you will not have the [.ack] long to oblige me (do not think it a task my Lily) for I soon shall leave it write me a comforting Letter – I want it – Yr friend has need of it to calm him, which you say I must endeavour to do or you will be wretched – If on my [comp...] depends y^r happiness, alas alas it is not in my power, put if the [asp....] of ~~the~~ never forgetting you of thinking of you with the same Fondness the same pure affection ~~he happy~~ can make you happy be be so for it out of my power to withdraw them notwithstanding y^r want of resolution. – Ask Mary in what manner I have [packled] yr conduct, Ask Talbot & then say Eliza if I have malice or rancour in my heart or if I have not done justice to yr dear opinion of me, for palliating this severe this cruelly severe stroke – Forgive me oh Forgive me for reproaching you consider my situation the height I fell from & still am falling for alas peace is flown from my Mind & all [comfort...] as my hopes are I see no refuge from them but in death, & in that last moment when calld to [] for my love you, will I still palliate yr conduct before him who will judge of yr [uni] by y^r future actions – Oh Lily shoud you be then [] me c[atichem omenpotene] for the [] of []

that have ever existed towards you – give my mind all the gruel it capable of knowing – tell me Oh tell me by that dear heart I have [seeth] heat if it has [] end from me if I still possess it if I still

No 5

To Lady Elizabeth Talbot

Melksham
Saturday 18th

Yr Frigid laconic Epistle by the Waggon counteracted the Extacy I experienced in a most Exquisite degree from the preceeding one writ the very same day – What an unfathomable woman is my Eliza? I have enquired about the Mad man you interest y^rself so much ~~about~~ for & have this moment finished sorting the plate destin'd for London which I shall take great care about never fear – I have been so occupy'd in Looking our leases making Bargains etc etc etc that I am really wore to Death & whats worse have the Blessed prospect of being detain'd longer in this sink of iniquity (for such Lacock most assuredly is) owing to a very necessary obliging hint from my Freinds that is it necessary to examine closely into the existing Leases & to oblige those who hold on doubtful [] to prove their right by all accounts I have been [conideratly] wrong'd not only in that instance but likewise in not [] [repain] to those who are bound by covenant –

Mr Honeys ser^t is returned NO letter – are you occupy'd pray in Letting a lease of y^r tenement? was you absent Eliza I wou'd not let a post go out without writing to you – I suppose I shall hear no more from you as by this days post you may imagine I am going to London – I was in hopes to have received Bircks & my sisters letter which [] this you must certainly have received – After reading this you may suppose I shall not be very anxious to delay a day in coming to [Meltacy] no not even for the Colonel – yet of you can again request it let me know – A letter from my Eliza soothes me & comforts me & annoy'd as I am here is my greatest place when the business of the day is ended – this night I will try to rest without it but you wou'd be more exact I hope if you really cou'd conceive I now much I look up to it – [torn]

Remember me to y^r Party

Adieu

No 6

Burlington Street
22nd 1800

I cannot even now think (however expeditious you have been) that you got to Cheltenham the first night I think I may truly guess you slept at North Leech on Tuesday at Chepstow & I think I may [..] to say notwithstanding all yr endeavours coud not get to [Kanin] the next day – Pray state to me in y^r next if I am right – this punctuate correspondence on my part puts me much in mind of former times when high in Beard & expectation hope invigorated me alas what have I now to look forward to but decrepitude & debility But I will not infect you with my [prescati..] enjoying now as you do the smiles of that sweet infant

No 7

Dorchester
Thursday [..]

[note at top]

I dont [..] the Chevalier [Indied] I dont

Ma chere tendre et douce amie. Oh why cannot I find words to express my love & affection for you – I alas am no [a consnuir] in expression – every term of endearment which you alone could extract from apathy itself has been now passed my pen or lips – Let not my prodigality my dearest Lily prove my min – you have an honest & ingenuous heart to deal with whose fears proved from its own unworthiness in looking forward to possessing one of yr value

I am no flatterer my Lily – in former times you never could accuse me of it not even when first I try'd to gain yr affections – Je nictori mis au lit avant l'arrivee de votre letter esperant que mes [panpieses] se [serocint] firmes par la fatigue mais mon amour ne saçoit pas ceder a mes [] epuises, & for seven long tedious hours I was left a prey to the most cruel suspense I think I ever underwent – I understand the delay was occasiond by some part of the family having letters to send to the post. – When I received the two letters I really knew not which to open first – eager yet fearful to know the truth I knew not which to [..] to – But as I ever since I first knew you have look'd up to you as my providence and as the only person under its direction that could determine my fate – I open'd yrs first and [acthi] my forward heart had at times prompted me to suppose myself nearer felicity, yr affection & dear endeavours to calm had in part its denid effects – had I opend yr 2 in [pist] do not believe I should soon have been able to have open'd yrs – I see plainly he is angry with me for coming here & forestalling his indolence in [water], which all his friends acknowledge & which surely none has so great a right to accuse him of – He has not known what it is to sue for favour in a like circumstance conscious of acceptance negatives never stared him in the face – nor has his mind ever been honour'd with suspense – As a parent I forgive him But I can say no more – Blessings on thee my dearest love for meeting me Saturday I charge you to recollect every conversation you have had with yr father on this topic since you wrote last, that I may draw comfort if possible that he will let it all end yr own way if things cannot alter – he concludes his to me by saying “that he does not consider Mr Mrs Talbot kindness as any alteration therefore he could not withdraw his [disapestation] & that he must give you the advice he told me he should – that of [relinquestion] him it entirely & he earnestly hopes as its sincerely given with a view to yr happiness you will be induced to follow it” – after reading this I could not Breathe [perpitivity] for some time but yr dear Coute que Coute restor'd me.- Dont neglect to write to Scott my love – tell me where He is & I will carry the Letter to him if my Lily will permit – Bring it in yr pocket when I see you I know not where he is but Ill soon be there if it can advance it but a hairs breadth Let it be possible Lily – every nerve should now be exerted in the cause – you see my endeavours have been fruitless. For yr Father disallows the success of my application – It was for my Lily I made it or no power under heaven could have forc'd me to ask it 0 But I wil tell you more when I see you if the sight of you does not bury in oblivion all such transaction I shall go from here to Bridport to morrow where I shall remain till the wish'd for Saturday or Sunday comes & then shall go to Lyme & lodge as near the sea as I can. – Friday morning I have not slept much but I feel myself refreshed & take up the pen once more to thank you for attention – What little sleep I had was disturbed by the Image of the Chevalier – beware of him he was an insolent intruder in my dreams last night – near you will I hover my Lily nor no power on earth shall make me

leave this country till my fate is determin'd – may I not write to you every day - & shall I be thought too unseasonable if I hope to hear every two days

No 8

To Ly E Talbot

Mrs Campbell desires me to say
she is much surprised you don't write to her

Old Burlington S^t
Thursday

My Dear Little Girl

If you are anxious for me why should you [] that exclusive privilege may I not be allow'd to be equally if not more so for you – you say nothing of yrself or the Major I want to know how little Avril goes on ——— the variety of Calvages I have experienced since I came to Town I wont tire you with I have for these five nights had a constant and violent fever which leaves me weak low in the morning – the night before last it left me but last night it came worse that even with great pain all down my left side – I have even [Huatee] & am now taking Bark he seems to think it owing to taking the [.ovess] powders too long – The worst of it is with this fever I am [re...] stll more by pain in my Bowels How it will end god knows But am very anxious to move from this House for many reasons & yet i know not how to quit Town whilst I am in my present state write to me Mrs C- is very kind & I feel grateful what then shou'd I [fee] for Lilys

No 9

To Lady Elizabeth Talbot
33 Half Moon St
Picadilly

Uxbridge
10 oclock
Night

My D^r Eliza

By the Bearer you will receive sufficient [] of my [] to secure my non attendance this night I beg you will remember our Father in yr Disputation as you know he is an amateur – The middle [] fish are the best but I am anxious he shoud have the Large one & others keeping one or two for our selves as I shall certainly notwithstanding this [s] be with you according to promise by dinner time tomorrow – am I not more than good – in return I entreat you will look at Fish the moment you receive this & reflect that I was pleased when I caught them

Adieu then Dearest girl