

## PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE

OF

## DAVID GARRICK.

LORD CAMDEN TO MR. GARRICK.

DEAR GARRICK,

Camden-place, Sept. 7th, 1774.

UNLESS you want or wish to have the gout, I hope the account in the papers is false. If it is true, I am yet at a loss whether to congratulate or condole with you. In this state of suspense between grieving or rejoicing, I desire very much to have the state of your health ascertained to me, and to be informed whether the fit be gentle or severe. It seems to me that the Bath water is absolutely necessary for your health; and that it behoves you, for certain reasons that I do not choose to mention, to repair to that city before the end of this present September.

My stomach remains still weak: in other respects I am perfectly well. We set out for Bath next Saturday se'nnight; but before that time I expect Mrs. Descombes in England, and probably at Camden-place. She comes to take under her care two young ladies, the daughters of Mr. Heron, who lately bought Sir Robert Colebrook's seat in East Kent. If that should be the case, you shall have notice in time, and if Mrs. Garrick should be disposed to see her, and will drag you with her to Camden-place, it will be a happy event for us, and make some atonement for the shortness of your last visit.

I have been employed since I saw you in reading Ben Jonson;\* for as I have waked generally at five o'clock in the morning, I have spent three hours every day in bed in reperusing my old favourite. I make no comparison, but I do assure you I am

\* It is with sincere pleasure that I find so good a *judge* as Lord Camden a hearty admirer of Ben Jonson. The volume put together and published by the bard himself in the year 1616, containing all that he was willing to consider his *works*, is a treasure of dramatic, idiomatic, and characteristic composition.—ED.

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beyond expression charmed with the dramatic powers of that author, and, in my opinion, the genius of the writer is equal to his art; nay, so far is he from being deficient in the first, that his own fund would have supplied him with every faculty of wit, humour, and nature, though he had been no scholar. His principal fault, in my judgment, arises from a pedantic imitation of the ancients. His prose dialogue is elegant; his verse hard and too much laboured, but by no means difficult or obscure. Read him again, as I have done, without prejudice, and forget Shakspeare while you are doing it, which is but just; for, to say the truth, he that reads an author with *proper attention*, has no *leisure*, while he is so employed, to think of any *other*.

As an orator, I should have bespoken your favour by a panegyric upon Shakspeare before I had presumed to introduce an inferior to your notice; but that subject has been so hackneyed by all mankind, that I can say nothing new upon it. My Lady, &c. join with me in compliments to Mrs. Garrick.

I am, dear Garrick, your sincere and affectionate friend and servant,

CAMDEN.

Is Lord Mansfield gone to Paris to deprecate peace? He is all-sufficient. Junius\* has taken the advantage of his absence to give him another stab in the "Morning Chronicle."

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SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS TO MR. GARRICK.

DEAR SIR,

Leicester-fields, Sept. 9th, 1774.

I CONFESS to you I could not conceive that you could possibly be engaged for two years to come, and thought I ought to understand it as a refusal; but I am now perfectly satisfied that I was mistaken. At any rate, to make use of the same expression, any appearance of solicitude from Mr. Garrick that there should be no misunderstanding, is very flattering to his sincere friend and admirer,

JOSHUA REYNOLDS.†

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MR. J. AICKIN TO MR. GARRICK.

SIR,

London, Sept. 9th, 1774.

THE moment I got to town I saw Mr. Vernon, and delivered your message to him as literally as I possibly could, and in the manner I think you would wish to have it conveyed. He seemed a good deal hurt, but determined upon having an addition to his salary of two pounds, and rank of benefit according. I urged to

\* This notice as to Junius is at variance with the received opinion, which closes the public communications of that writer a year earlier. But Camden, I should think, knew that "*Roman hand*" tolerably well. If he be right, it puts an end to the claim of Francis, who was then in India.—ED.

† See the close of the First Volume.—ED.

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him strongly the impropriety of insisting upon it now, as your engagements were all made and business quite settled, and that it certainly would wear the appearance of want of candour, breeding, and method: he said he could not think himself at all deficient in either; that he had mentioned it very seriously, and that it was no fault of his if it was not attended to. I do suppose you will hear from him. I made use of a number of arguments, (as from myself,) in the course of our conversation, but to little effect. I told him I thought it was but respectful to see you, but he did not seem very desirous of that. Upon the whole, I think a few arguments from yourself will make every thing easy, notwithstanding his seeming resolution.

I am, Sir, with all respect, your humble servant,

J. AICKIN.

I was quite ashamed, when I opened Mrs. Garrick's [note,] of the trouble I had put her to. We beg her acceptance of our sincere and grateful thanks.

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MR. VERNON TO MR. GARRICK.

DEAR SIR,

Sept. 10th, 1775.

I AM extremely sorry there should be the least misunderstanding between us at this time, but upon my word, I depended on your brother, to whom I spoke in March. The alteration I expect is two pounds a week addition to my salary, and my benefit in rank of salary: these I thought I told Mr. G. Garrick, but by your message by Mr. Aickin, I find I did not. I have ever testified the warmest regard and respect for Mr. Garrick, and would rather be with you at that salary than double any where else. I have some business to transact which takes up most of my time, or I would certainly have seen you at Hampton. Your answer to Mr. Becket immediately will much oblige,

Dear Sir, your humble servant,

J. VERNON.

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MR. GARRICK TO MR. VERNON.

SIR,

Hampton, Sunday, Sept. 11th, 1774.

I DID not expect to receive such a message and letter from Mr. Vernon, and a week only before the opening of the house. What would the world have said had we discharged Mr. Vernon at this time without any other notice than that which *you* have given *me*? Though I am well accustomed to strange things in a theatre, yet I must own that your behaviour in particular has surprised me; it is as ungenteeled as it is unjustifiable. I have been all the summer (three weeks excepted) between Hampton and London,—nay, I met you at Lord Stanley's in the month of May, and you never gave me the least hint of your intentions till yesterday. According to the rule and custom of the theatres, you should have given me notice at the end of the

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last season that you expected an increase of salary for the next, or by the same rule and custom I had a right to expect your attendance upon the same terms. Had you demanded double your salary at the proper time, I should have no complaint; I should only not have agreed to your proposal and we had parted; but to have no letter or message from you till *yesterday*, is very particular indeed. I have depended upon you for the next season; have planned my business accordingly; your salary shall not be diminished, and your benefit shall come in course and at a very good time.

I am, Sir, your most humble servant,

D. GARRICK.

Endorsed,

“ Answer to Vernon’s letter of the 10th of  
September 1774, answered the 11th.”

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LORD CAMDEN TO MR. GARRICK.

[When I read these letters upon dramatic subjects, written by a great lawyer to the greatest of actors, and dated from *Camden-place*, Chislehurst, a crowd of recollections press for communication to the general reader. Camden-place was the seat in former times of the learned antiquary of his country, the venerable author of the *BRITANNIA*; the biographer of the *GREAT QUEEN*; and the classical tutor at Westminster of *BEN JONSON*. To him that excellent comic writer dedicated his “*Every Man in his Humour*,” in the following manly language:—“ Now I pray you to accept this; such, wherein neither the confession of my *manners* shall make you blush; nor of my *studies* repent you to have been the instructor: and for the profession of my *thankfulness*, I am sure it will with good men find either praise or excuse.” Nor is this *ALL*; for at Chislehurst the Lord Keeper, father of the great *FRANCIS BACON*, Viscount Saint Alban’s, was born, and also that consummate statesman, Sir Francis Walsingham. It is the perfection of good taste to choose such a residence; and the highest happiness for the fortunate possessor of it, to feel from the *still voice* within, and the consenting *chorus* without, that he is worthy to reflect or repose among its sacred shades.—ED.]

DEAR GARRICK,

Camden-place, Sept. 17th, 1773.

Mrs. Descombes came here last night, and is obliged to go to London to-morrow, where she will have the pleasure of seeing you and Mrs. Garrick either Thursday or Friday. Thus you see the plan I had laid for tempting you once more to Camden-place is overthrown, and I shall go to Bath without that satisfaction. You will be pleased, however, to be informed that I am stronger and better every day, and believe, if I durst run the hazard, I could get well here; but in this, like a true stoic, I compel inclination to submit to prudence, though I suspect that fear rather than virtue is the real motive to my wisdom. I agree with you in a great measure, though not altogether, in your judgment upon Jonson. He thought admirably, but was no master of expression when he attempted a higher diction than mere prose, for *that* is good; whereas his verse is not so obscure as it is laboured, and he is hardly ever happy in his words and sentences, though sometimes strong. Therefore he is verbose and coarse; always attempting to imitate Juvenal without success; for though he had language enough, he did not know how to choose it. Ben was a great dramatic

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genius, but no poet. Shakspeare was divine in both, though, in my opinion, his poetic faculties, as I have more than once ventured to assert to you, are the most astonishing. But what am I about? Venting my own idle criticism to the greatest judge as well as actor of these compositions! A common lawyer at my years to be dabbling in plays and poetry! Burn my letter,\* and conclude it to be the delirium of the jaundice. Adieu till we meet between the two houses; present our best respects to Mrs. Garrick, and believe me,

Yours most sincerely and affectionately,

CAMDEN.

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MR. S. FOOTE TO MR. GARRICK.

MY DEAR SIR,

Sept. 15th, 1774.

I AM sorry I could not see you before my quitting this country, and am more concerned at the cause; but as I find your gouty fit was in form, I flatter myself there will be a long parenthesis betwixt this and the next: consider—

“ You have no leisure to be sick  
In such a justling time.”

Your opponents are numerous, and Solomon says, in “ a multitude of counsellors there is safety;” but I should suppose his counsellors are of a different stamp from the congregation at Covent-Garden.

There is more of prudence than pleasure in my trip to the Continent: to tell you the truth I am tired with racking my brain, toiling like a horse, and crossing seas and mountains in the most dreary seasons, merely to pay servants’ wages and tradesmen’s bills. I have therefore directed my friend Jewel to discharge the lazy vermin of my Hall, and let my Hall too, if he can meet with a proper tenant:† help me to one if you can.

\* Happily Mr. Garrick knew when to disobey an *injunction*, and thus has preserved some true critical feeling from oblivion; not “ the repeated air ” of common-place judgment, often nothing more than ambitious sentences, which show the vanity of the writer, rather than his knowledge of the subject; such characters as have been sometimes given in *verse*, by modern poets, of their ancient predecessors, of whose works they subsequently acknowledged themselves to have been completely ignorant.—ED.

† This happy determination of Foote to let his theatre in the Haymarket, produced an event which every lover of the stage must be happy to commemorate—I mean the accession of Mr. Colman to a situation for which he was exactly calculated. The *divisum imperium* of Covent-Garden was not at all to his taste; but in the Haymarket he luxuriated; and produced a series of pieces, that must live while we deserve to be entertained, and a succession of performers distinguished for genius and devoted to their accomplished leader. His son succeeded, with a different, and I think a more powerful genius, and the theatre flourished in spite of the ruinous avarice of the winter patentees. But the plan of the theatre had been well conceived; and when the present spirited proprietor Mr. Morris, his brother-in-law, rebuilt the house, he did not very much enlarge its bounds, though he increased its comforts, and allowed some latitude to the skill of the architect.—ED.



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You need not doubt but I shall be happy to hear from you: my epistolary debts it will be always in my power to pay; the others I pay when I can: is it in man to do more? With any thing that France produces I shall be proud to supply you. Your commands will reach me by being directed to Panchaud.

I kiss Mrs. Garrick's hands,

And am, most truly and sincerely yours,

SAMUEL FOOTE.

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REV. W. HAWKINS TO MR. GARRICK.

SIR,

Whitchurch, near Bridport, Dorset, Sept. 14, 1774.

I CANNOT help considering your very laconic note as, in effect, a rejection of "Alfred." However, as matters are brought to this crisis, I think myself bound in delicacy to tender the performance once more to your acceptance; and before you decline this final tender could wish you, for your own sake, to consider, whether you have not at different times furnished me with circumstances, which, if fairly laid before the public, would do little credit either to your candour or your judgment. I think I can put your refusal of more pieces of mine than one to the account of a principle which you would willingly disavow. At first sight, probably, you will treat this insinuation with contempt; but be pleased to hear what I have to support it with. Remember, I formerly gave you offence in the business of "Henry and Rosamond;" and of all animals, I believe, a manager is allowed to be the *sorest*. Some years after that affair, you rejected my "Siege of Aleppo," because it was "wrong in the first concoction," as you said, or on some such general consideration. Now, Sir, this performance was honoured with the *intire* approbation of the following personages, confessedly eminent in the republic of polite literature—the present Judge Blackstone, Mr. Smart of Cambridge, Mr. Samuel Johnson, and to name no others, our common friend Mr. T. Warton, who "without flattery" (those were his words) "pronounced the performance admirable," &c.; and was so far from conceiving that it would be ultimately rejected that he desired to write the prologue. I must add too that Mr. Quin expressed much satisfaction at the reading of this play, and declared to my late Right Honourable friend Sir T. Philipps, that, had he not quitted the stage, it would have been a pleasure to him to have performed the part of Theodore. On the strength of these facts, let me ask you, Sir, whether in common justice I *might* not call upon you to bring this tragedy upon the stage even *now*? Some few years after this you declined accepting the play of "Troilus and Cressida" from the hands of my just mentioned friend, although in terms that did honour to it at the same time; his report to me being that you had not performers enough to do justice to so many capital parts, but that the play itself was highly approved, &c. or to that effect. You may recollect, Sir, I reminded you of all this in my letter some time since from Wells. This indeed was rather a genteel evasion than a refusal; but

how will you reconcile it with your late criticism on the performance, in the only letter I ever received from you on that subject? The merit of that criticism, considered apart, I have not room to examine here; but will be bold to say, and would undertake to prove, that the best play that could be written would never maintain its ground against such objections. And now, Sir, for the tragedy of “Alfred;” which, I frankly confess, I put into your hands with a design to sound your present disposition towards me. The original plan of this piece I acknowledge to have been in many respects improperly digested; and accordingly I readily admitted the justness of your first exceptions. But, Sir, can you lay your hand upon your heart and say, that your late *cavalier* note is a satisfactory answer to my last letter to you on this subject? In one of your former letters to me you say, “it is very improbable, and consequently unnatural, that Alfred and his friend should go to tell fortunes in the Danish camp, when they must know that many there, and particularly Hubba, to whom they first address themselves, knew them.” Are appearances in disguise, then, things so new upon the stage? But even allowing this objection to have SOME weight; let us hear what you have to say in a subsequent letter. Your language here is, that “it was not any part of the performance in particular that you objected to, but to the very foundation of the fable in all its branches.” Now, Sir, Alfred’s going into the Danish camp in the character not of a fortune-teller, but harper or minstrel, is, as you well know, the foundation of the fable in its present state; and it will be very hard, methinks, if that should not be a proper foundation of a fable, which happens to be *matter of fact*. You tell me farther, in another part of this letter, that “you very much doubt whether any of the proposed changes will make ‘Alfred’ fit for the stage;” and in another you “wish me to advise with my friends of knowledge in these matters,” &c. You find I have so done, Sir, and yet you seem to be as much disposed to differ from them as with me. The words of your note are, that you “are very sorry to differ in opinion with such great men” as I had mentioned to you; but that I must forgive you if you speak your mind, and freely, upon every thing that concerns you and your theatre. But pray, Sir, is not this referring, tacitly at least, to a third judgment, and yet rejecting it? Is it not to say, in effect, that, as a manager, you will not submit your judgment to that of the wisest mortal upon earth? Let me now again intreat you seriously to consider whether I have not very good grounds, from the whole course of your proceeding, for the afore-mentioned insinuation. It will be impossible for you to elude the substance of what I have been alleging so much to your disadvantage. You say, I must forgive you if you speak freely upon every thing which concerns you and your theatre; and, Sir, you must forgive me if I speak as freely upon every thing which concerns me and my reputation as an author. You cannot wonder if the public character I once had the honour of sustaining (and I hope with some credit too) renders me somewhat jealous in this respect; especially as under that character dramatic poetry was the subject of my lectures.\* In short, Sir, the world will be a proper judge whether, on the whole, I have been

\* Hawkins had the honour of succeeding Lowth in the Poetry Professor’s chair.—ED.

candidly treated by you ; whether (to repeat some of my own late words) you have not *thrown cold water most profusely upon me* and my performance ; and whether, under a few plausible expressions and affected declarations of regard, &c. at the close of a letter, &c. it has not been your artful aim to give me many sensible mortifications. After all, Sir, I do not desire to come to an open rupture with you. I wish not to exasperate, but to convince ; and I tender you once more my friendship and my play. I have, however, too much knowledge of human nature in general, and of the particular pride almost peculiar to your situation, to look for any good effect from this amicable overture, and have only to add that your answer, or indeed your silence, will determine the future measures of, Sir,

Your much dissatisfied humble servant,

W. HAWKINS.

P. S. You would have heard from me before, had I been at home when the packet arrived. Excuse haste, &c.

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MR. GARRICK TO THE REV. MR. HAWKINS.

SIR,

Sept. 20, 1774.

THOUGH your threatening letter found me in a fit of the gout, which is a very peevish disorder, yet I assure you it added nothing to my ill-humour, nay I could have laughed, though in pain, had not the more humane sensation of pity prevented it.

Notwithstanding your former flattering letters to me, which I have luckily preserved, you now accuse me of pride, rancour, evil designs, and the Lord knows what, because I have refused your plays, which I most sincerely think unfit for representation, and which (some of them, if not all) have had the same fortune with other managers. You are pleased to say that “of all animals a manager is the sorest.” Pray, Mr. Hawkins, had you no feelings at the time you wrote this which contradicted the assertion? Can you really believe that this unprovoked, intemperate behaviour can make me submit to your inquisitorial menaces? “Perform my plays or I’ll appeal to the public!” If you will publish your plays with your appeal, I will forgive you the rest.

Your insinuation that I formerly mortified you because you “once offended me in the business of ‘Henry and Rosamond,’” is unworthy of an answer. It is very well known that I bear no malice ; and the offence which *you* so well remember is as much forgotten by me as “Henry and Rosamond,” the cause of it.

You value yourself much upon “laying a design to sound me,” that is, to catch me tripping in order to expose me : a very liberal design truly for a scholar and a divine, and I wish you joy of your success ; but to convince you, if possible, how much your intemperate zeal contradicts itself, you confess that “Alfred,” your tragedy-trap, was not well prepared ; that the play was (as you are pleased to express it) “improperly digested, and you readily admit the justness of my exceptions :” nay



you go farther and say “you give up ‘Alfred,’ and acquiesce in my judgment.” Can any thing I write vindicate my conduct more than your own words? Have I seen “Alfred” *since* your above confession; have I *refused* to see it? I know my duty too well—I am obliged by my situation to read all you are pleased to send me; but I have the same right to reject a play, which I think a bad one, as you have to compose it.

May I, without offence, differ in opinion with a gentleman who once was a credit to the Professorship of Poetry in Oxford? “It will be very hard, methinks, (these are your own words) “if that should not be a proper foundation of a fable which happens to be matter of fact:” indeed, Sir, the best dramatic critics I have read tell me that matters of fact are *not* always proper foundations for dramatic fables.

You say I wrote a cavalier note: if it were so, your very cavalier letter produced it—I never begin first. Your last letter begot this, but I hope it is very unlike its father.

You conclude with saying “you do not desire to come to an open rupture with me, and that you wish not to exasperate, but to convince; and you again tender me your friendship and your play.” So far you seem to be returning to temper and reason;—but how was I deceived!—for in order to promote the good work and bring about a reconciliation, you add, that “you have too much knowledge of human nature in general, and the particular pride of my situation, to look for any good from this amicable overture.” Ought you not as a gentleman and a clergyman, and in justice, reason, and good manners, to have waited for my answer, before you had been guilty of such outrageous behaviour?—or is it the Rev. Mr. Hawkins’s method of *convincing* and not *exasperating*, to call names, while he is making a tender of his friendship?

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

D. GARRICK.

Give me leave to make another observation upon your peculiar behaviour to me and to your friends. Though you seem to think me inexcusable for daring to differ with them, yet when they do not agree with you it is to stand for nothing. For example—Mr. Warton tells you that your present “Alfred” “is deficient in point of bustle according to the turn and taste of the times;” and you tell me “so far as the objection goes,” Mr. W—— “seems to think the success of representation may be affected—but this opinion (supposing it to have ground) cannot, you presume, affect a right of representation.” Indeed!—I do not know which most to admire, your logic, or politeness to your friend.\*

\* This is one of Garrick’s neatest replies. Hawkins’s rejoinder does not turn a single *point* in it.—ED.

## FROM LIEUTENANT-GENERAL BURGOYNE TO MR. GARRICK.

[With the “Maid of the Oaks ; or, a Fête Champêtre.”]

October 3rd, 1774.

THE author of the little piece sent with this letter begs Mr. Garrick would take the trouble of looking over it, and if he finds it worth representing, makes no doubt he will give it the first vacant opportunity this season to the public. He will see that it is taken in some degree from the French. Mr. Garrick's determination will be sent for to his house the latter end of the week.

## IRISH SONG FOR MOODY.

Ye brave jolly blades of the brush, line, and rule,  
Who owe all to *ganus*, and nothing to school,  
Come, join in full chorus, rejoice and be glad,  
For while you are merry, you'll never be sad.

Then away to Shampater, Shampater, away!  
To work at Shampater is nothing but play;  
As I know nothing of it, no more will I say,  
But Shampater for ever, for ever and aye!

You may guess what a sight, for it ne'er was yet seen;  
Heaven bless her sweet face, 'tis a sight for a queen,  
For lords, and for earls, and for gentlefolks too,  
All the busy beau-monde who have nothing to do.

Then away to Shampater, &c.

While light you'll see nothing, but when dark you shall see  
That the darker it is the more light there will be;  
The moon and the stars they may all go to bed—  
We can make better sunshine than ever they made.

Then away to Shampater, &c.

Such crowds and confusion, such uproar, delight,  
With lamps hung by thousands to make day of night:  
There'll be Russians, Turks, Prussians, and Dutchmen so gay,  
And they'll all be so fine, they'll have nothing to say.

Then away to Shampater, &c.

Then let's take a drink to the Squire of the Oaks:  
May no crabbed critics come here with their jokes;  
If they did, I could make the dear souls change their notes,  
Might but Paddy's best brush sweep clean their foul throats.

Then away to Shampater, my boys, come away,  
To work at Shampater is better than play;  
As I know nothing of it, no more will I say,  
But away to Shampater, my boys, come away!