

Box 1
Folder 14

Dear Sir/

(11)

London. March 18. 1754.

You will before this have rec^d. a Letter from me & another from your Son, desiring your assistance in procuring an appointment to the Stewardship of Brafferton in Yorkshire (now vacant by my Father's Resignation) for my Brother in Law Mr Edward Thompson of Helmsley in the same County. I did not then, for want of time & proper information, explain to you the particular reasons of this request, & the perplexity which has been thrown upon the Affair by indiscretion on the one hand & injustice on the other. But being now at London, where I have endeavour'd by the opportunity of light afforded me to make myself perfect master of the Subject, I shall lay before you what I have been able to learn in relation to it, & desiring myself entirely of all partiality & private attachments, give you what I really think to be the true and real State of the Case.

The Estate at Brafferton in Yorkshire belongs as you know to the College in Virginia. My Father had the care of it for many years. A Trust, which he had executed with so much care & Honour, that the College gave him the Honour of appointing his Successor after his Death or resignation. This was found out by one Hind an Attorney at Ripon in Yorkshire, whom my Father unluckily employ'd in Law Affairs, & lately too as Steward of the Manor Courts which are held at Brafferton. This man, as I said, having found out that my Father

Had the power of naming his Successor, & observing
that Age & Infirmary now grew upon him so fast
that he must quickly be incapable of going thro
the Trouble of the Stewardship; found means to
draw from my Father a recommendation of ~~him~~
to Mr Hanbury who is Agent for the Colley, as
a proper person to be the Steward of Traffeton
The word Steward is an ambiguous Term, &
my Father says he only meant to recommend
him as Steward of the Courts, & not of the White
that is to have him continued Steward of
the Courts, even after my Father had resigned
the Stewardship of the White to another. However
that may be, the words will fairly bear an
interpretation favourable to Mr Hind's pretensions
& therefore I lay no stress on this plea. I am rather
apt to think that my Father either ~~did~~ does not
remember what he wrote or what he intended
or that he did not at the time consider what he
was doing. And I am the more inclin'd to this
Opinion, because the Letter recommending him
(The original of which is in Mr Hanbury's possession
which I have seen) is wrote by Mr Hind's own
hand, & only sign'd by my Father, whose faculties
are now so much impaired by aged infirmity, that
I am not much surpris'd at his being prevail'd
on by a plausible designing Man to set his name
without much deliberation to that paper. A Copy
of this Letter Mr Hanbury has transmitted to the
College, & you will there see that my Father
mentions Hind (or rather Hind mentions himself)
as a person of Integrity & proper for the Stewardship
I do believe that Hind had by little Services & great

Unacquainted imitated himself into my Father's
good graces. But whatever his Opinion might then
be, whether well or ill-grounded, he has since
had the utmost reason to alter it. Mr Hind upon
this recommendation procured from Mr Hanbury an
appointment to the Stewardship, & prevailed upon
Mr May Father to resign the Stewardship, reserving
to him the Salary for Life, which he foresaw must
be a very short time. No sooner were the Papers
delivered up to him, than he began to act in
the most arbitrary & tyrannical manner, gave
notice to some of the best Tenants to leave their
Farms, appointed the next Day a month sooner
than it was to be, & insulted Mr Thompson
my Brother in Law whose House is contiguous to
Brafton, in so outrageous a manner that if his
Injuries are continued, Mr Thompson will be
obliged to quit the place. My Father upon this
wrote to Mr Hanbury, who desired him to resume the
Stewardship till an appointment came from
the College, but Hind refused to give up the
Papers, & continues to act as Steward. It is therefore
now my Father's most earnest request, that the
College will displace Mr Hind, & appoint
Mr Edward Thompson of Helperby in the
County of York, Gentleman, to be Steward of
the aforesaid manor of Brafton. To which
request he is not induced by an view of interest (for
Hind had reserved to him the Salary for Life) but
because he is now convinced (what way soever
beside himself was convinced of being wrong) that Mr
Hind is a most improper Man to have the
management of the Estate, & that Mr Thompson

a very way perfectly qualified for that Trust. To say
since you of this I will only give you a short sketch
of the Characters of these two Gentlemen, & leave
you to draw the Inference. - Were I to repeat to you
every thing that I have heard in regard to ~~him~~,
you would not hesitate a moment in your opinion
but as I would always wish to be of the charitable
side, even when it makes against myself, I will
only observe to you, that in general it seems very
imprudent to commit the care of Estates, whose Owners
are at a Distance, to Attorneys, especially to an
unskillful, self-interested, & vicious Attorney, which
I do assure you is frequently the case in the
Terms. Mr. Sol. King seems to be the managing of money
which has involved them in continual Law suits,
that have not added any reputation to his
Character. - Mr. Thompson is a gentleman of
3 or 400 £ a year, who has no profession or private
end to serve, lives contiguous to Brafferton, is remarkable
for the strictest Integrity & Honour & does not desire
the Stewardship for the profit of it, which are very
inconsiderable, but merely to preserve himself from
the Faults of so injurious a Neighbor as ~~him~~, or
of any other Person, who may endeavour to disturb
him in his retirement.

Upon the whole, I see ~~nothing~~ Some
infirmity & inclination on the side of my Father, but
much art & cunning on the side of Mr. King; ~~but~~
and you will, I dare say, agree to me in thinking
that a Fault in the Head, especially in an aged
Head, is much more pardonable than a fault
in the Heart. But supposing that nothing of this
had happened, & that King was now actually
Steward of the Estate, I should out of regard to
the College (supposing the Curons indifferent to me)
desire to have the Estate entrusted in other hands

I would not ~~not~~ for the sake of the nearest relation I have in the World, either do myself or advise you to do a wrong or ungenerous thing; but abstracting from all private Attachments & Family Considerations, I do protest to you upon the word of a Gentleman & a Clergyman, that in recommending Mr Thompson & excluding Mr Hind you will do the ~~best~~ best piece of Service that can be done to the College. The Value of the thing is trifling, not above 20£ a year, but what makes me so earnest in it is that Mr Hind ~~has~~ ~~is~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~power~~ by being Steward of the Estate & Manor of Brufferton has it in his Power (if he never wags the inclination) to plague & disturb Mr Thompson in a thousand instances & as this has happen'd by the inadvertence of my Father it may possibly create some uneasiness in the Family, we would give me the utmost concern. - The College may perhaps think that Mr Thompson when he has got the Stewardship into his hands may out of Obedience to Mr Hind as Hind has done him. But that cannot be the case, because Mr Hind lives at a Distance, 40 or 9 miles, from Brufferton, so that the Stewardship of that Estate, let it be in whose Hands it will, can never affect him. Whereas Mr Thompson is upon the Spot, & exposed to innumerable inconveniences from any Steward of Brufferton that chews to be troublesome.

Honour as the removal of Hind is the most
essential Point both in regard to the Quiet
of Mr Thompson, & the interest of the College.
If the College think proper to appoint in his
Room any other Person rather than Mr
Thompson (though I declare solemnly I
know none more proper) I would beg leave
to commend to them My Brother Mr
Edward Patens of York, ~~_____~~ who
is desirous of it in case Mr Thompson should
resign a die; or for the reason above suggested
be thought improper by the College. You
mention this to you in private, & you
need not take any notice of, unless that
Opinion is Mr Thompson (which as I
have shewn is really none at all) should
be started by the College. I must desire
that if Mr Thompson be appointed or
whoever is appointed in the room of Hind
it may be done in the most cautious
& proper manner; In if Hind can possibly
find out any Flaw in the Appointment
by all Tricks & wiles of the Law he will do it.
I suppose they know the Form of appointing
a Steward or receiver of the State; it must be
I apprehend conceived in some such words as
They do constitute & appoint Edward
Thompson of Helperby in the County of York

gentle man, Steward, Receiver of the Bank,
& chief manager of the State at Buffalon
in the said County, at the same time wholly
excluding ~~the said~~ William Hind a Hokey
at Law of Ripon in the County of York
from any share in the management of it
or receiving the Bank thereof.

As I look upon you to be our
principal friend in managing this
Affair, I have chose to explain the whole case
to you at large, in order to give you a thorough
knowledge of the Subject. You will not
however communicate to others any more
of the contents of this Letter than is absolutely
necessary to secure the success of our negoti-
ation. Particularly what I have said in regard
to Hind's Character (though I am usually
persuaded of the truth of that & much more)
yet I should be unwilling to prejudice him
in the opinion of others, as my design is not
to do harm to him, but to prevent him from
doing harm to others. Add to this, that as
he is the most litigious Man upon earth, if
he could prove that I had said any thing
derogatory to his reputation (However true
it may be, or however fully I could prove it)
yet he might have it in his Power to give
me a good deal of trouble & bring me into disrepute
which I should be very loath to do.

I must desire therefore that He or His Friends
(If he was any in the Province) may never have
an opportunity of getting this Letter or a Copy
of it into their possession, or of taking any
advantage from it against me.

You will excuse me for being thus
positive in regard to your Affairs, which I sincerely
I have much at heart, & which I most earnestly
desire you to promote with all your credit
& Authority. — I have just room to add a
word or two in relation to your Son — I
have acquainted your Son wth your desire that
he should spend another year in College, in
which he very readily acquiesced, & will I dare say
stay in it wth more pleasure, than many leave it.
If he had happened to come at this time, I
could have taken him as my own pupil,
the engagements, which prevented me at first
being now at an End, & all my old Pupils
on the Part of going, after staying wth me
three years. I am therefore now at Liberty to take
any of your particular Friends that you would
wish to have under the care of an acquaintance
Mr Nelson's Son will shortly come to our College
under my care. You will not however have the
best reason to lament that your Son was admit-
ted under Mr Barker, who, I must say, has enjoy-
ed wth the utmost integrity & Honour. — This
Mr Smith to the utmost integrity & Honour. — This
will come to you by Mr Imbler, to whom I refer you
for further particulars. He knows Mr Thompson & the whole
State of the case I will conform to you very obligingly
I am Dear Sir, most sincerely & affectionately
Yours