

[TO JOHN HANSON]

Southwell. April 19th. 1807

Sir,—My last was an Epistle "entre nous"[:] this is a *Letter of Business*, of course the formalities of *official communication*, must be attended to.—From lying under pecuniary difficulties, I shall draw for the Quarter due the 25th. June, in a short time, you will recollect I was to receive £100 for the expense of Furniture & ct. at Cambridge, I placed in your possession accounts to that amount, of these I have received £70, for which I believe, you have my Receipt, the extra £25, or £50, (though the Bills are long ago discharged from my own purse) I should not have troubled you for, had not my present Situation, rendered even that trifle, of some consequence; I have therefore to request, that my Draft for £150, instead of £125, the simple Quarter, may be honoured, but think it necessary to apprise you previous to its appearance, & indeed to request an *early* answer, as I had *one draft* returned by mistake from your *house*, some months past;—& have no inclination to be placed in a similar Dilemma.—I lent Mrs. B. £60 last year, of this I have never received a *Sou*, & in all probability never shall, I do not mention the circumstance as any Reproach, on that *worthy & lamblike Dame*, but merely to shew you how *affairs* stand, 'tis true myself & 2 Servants lodge in the house, but my Horses & ct. & [their expence, are defrayed by your hum[ble] Servant].—I quit Cambridge in [July] & shall have considerable payments to make at that period, for this purpose I must sell my *Steeds*,—I paid Jones in January £150, £38 to my Stable Keeper, £21 to my wine merchant, £20 to a *Lawyer* for the prosecution of a Scoundrel a late Servant,<sup>1</sup> in short I have done all I can, but am now completely *done* up, your answer will oblige

yours & ct.

BYRON

[TO EDWARD NOEL LONG]

April 19, 1807

E—— is a West Indian married to a *Creole*, C—— is Mrs. *Musters-Chaworth*, a former flame; Caroline is her mother in Law; Mary is a Mrs. *Cobourne* [Cockburn?], & *Cora*, a *Notts*. Girl, her real name is Julia Leacroft, there is a poem addressed to her, under the name of *Lesbia*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Oct. 20, 1806, to Thomas Jones, note 2.

<sup>2</sup> These identifications of the persons mentioned by initials and names in "To Edward Noel Long" (appended as a note to a copy of the poem sent to Long) are a

[TO JOHN M. B. PIGOT]

Tuesday night [April 21? 1807]

My dear Pigot,—I have been dining at Mr. Smiths & am just come home, I have only time to *congratulate you* on your passing this so much dreaded examination—

[April 1807]<sup>2</sup>

My dear Pigot,—Allow me to congratulate you on the Success of your first examination, "*courage mon ami*"! The Title of *Dr.* will do wonders with the *Damesels*.—I shall most probably be in Essex or London, when you arrive at this *darned place*,<sup>3</sup> where I am detained by the publication of my *Rhymes*. Adieu, believe me

yours very truly

BYRON

P.S.—Since we met, I have reduced myself by violent exercise, *much* physic, & *hot bathing*, from 14 Stone 6 LB. to 12 Stone 7 LB. in all I have lost 27 pounds. Bravo, what say you?—

[Four lines crossed out at bottom of cover]

[TO EDWARD NOEL LONG]

Southwell, May 1, 1807

... I am truly sorry the duties of your profession call you to combat, for what? Can you tell me? The ambition of Despotism or the caprice of men placed by chance in the Situation of Governors, & little puzzling. They do not exactly fit with the poems in his early volumes, and are perhaps not quite candid. The poem "To E——" in *Fugitive Pieces* was probably addressed to John Edleston, the Cambridge choirboy. See Marchand, *Byron: A Biography*. I, 109n. But in the poem "To Edward Noel Long" Byron says: "E—— is a wife", and he seems to be speaking of *girls* ("nymphs") throughout. In order to veil their identities, Byron changed some of the fictitious names in his poems several times. In none of the extant poems to Mary Chaworth (Musters) is she addressed as "C——". Several ecstatic love poems in the early volumes were addressed to "Caroline"; but it seems unlikely that she was Mary Chaworth's mother-in-law. Byron's distant cousin Mary Duff, his earliest childish love, married Robert Cockburn, a wine merchant in Edinburgh and London. News of their marriage sent Byron into convulsions. (See diary of November 26, 1818.) There is little indication, however, that the poems to "Mary" in the early volumes are addressed to her. The only one clearly referring to her is "When I Roved a Young Highlander". With the title "Song" it first appeared in *Poems Original and Translated* (1808). None of the published poems known to be addressed to Julia Leacroft used the name "Cora".

<sup>1</sup> Pigot had just passed his medical examinations at Edinburgh.

<sup>2</sup> "Lord Byron" and "April 1807" are written across the page in another hand.

<sup>3</sup> Byron was still at Southwell, waiting to go to Cambridge.

probably inferior to yourself & many more . . . you know . . . I am no coward, nor would I shrink from Danger on<sup>1</sup> a proper occasion, indeed Life has too little valuable for me, to make Death horrible; I am not insensible to Glory, & even hope before I am at Rest, to see some service in a military Capacity, yet I cannot conquer my repugnance to a Life absolutely & exclusively devoted to Carnage, or bestow any appellation in my Idea applicable to a mercenary Soldier, but the *Slave of Blood*.—You will excuse the freedom of my Remarks, I smile again at Sentiments to which you are no Stranger, as you have heard me declare them before, to *very little* purpose; you have entered into a profession with all the ardour hope &c &c of 19 excusable enough at our age, I sincerely hope some one may hear your opinion on the Subject at 50.—<sup>2</sup> . . . When you return from the *Field* bring me the *Scalp* of Massena, or the chin of Bonaparte. . . .

[TO EDWARD NOEL LONG]

*Southwell May 14th. 1807*

My dear Long,—The Spirit of Prophecy certainly animated my pen, when I wrote the *præface* of Petty's Downfall, with his disgrace, at Cambridge, in my "*College Examinations*."<sup>1</sup>—I am sorry I cannot repay the Compliments of your *Sire*, by the requested Copy, all my private volumes are gone, however, my publication will be out in June, & if you are in England at that Time, I shall send a Copy for the purpose.—Not above a dozen of the pieces in my private Copies, will appear "*pro Bono publico*" though the volume will be considerably larger, most of the amatory poems, the Cornelian<sup>2</sup> (which *you* & all the Girls, I know not why think my best) will be omitted, I have lately been brushing up my *Intellects* by Translations from the Greek of Anacreon & Medea, of the former only 2 odes, & a Chorus from the latter, will make their appearance, I am putting the last touches to a Translation of the Episode of Nisus & Euryalus, (in my opinion the best in point of Versification I have ever written) & now bid an eternal Adieu to the Muse, in an Ode expressive of my Intention to relinquish *Poesy* forever, which will conclude my Volume.<sup>3</sup>—I am tired of versi-

<sup>1</sup> The facsimile begins with this word.

<sup>2</sup> The facsimile ends here.

<sup>3</sup> Lord Henry Petty, M.P. for the University of Cambridge, and Chancellor of the Exchequer, lost his seat in 1807. In 1809 he succeeded his brother as Marquis of Lansdowne. See "*Thoughts Suggested by a College Examination*."

<sup>2</sup> This was the poem to John Edleston, which appeared in the privately printed volumes.

<sup>3</sup> Byron's poem "*Farewell to the Muse*" was not finally put in the volume and appeared first posthumously in 1832.

fyng, & am irrevocably determined to *rhyme* no more, an employment I merely adopted "*pour passer le Temps*" when this work is accomplished, I shall have obtained all the *Eclat* I desire at present, when it shall be said that I published before I was 20; the merit of the contents is of little Consequence, provided they are not absolutely execrable, the novelty of the *Deed* (which though not *unprecedented*, is at least uncommon, particularly amongst *Patricians*) will secure some share of Credit.—All my Girls are *off*, as I told you in *Rhyme*,<sup>4</sup> consequently I am *dull*. I *swim* when the Weather permits, lately it has been unpropitious to that Amusement. I envy you so noble a *Bath*, as the *Medway*, a small River not above 8 feet in depth, constitutes my [*Lavarium*?]<sup>5</sup> here, I have now lost 2 Stone & a half & weigh 12 Stone at "*your Service*" I shall reduce myself to 11. & there stop; if the Skies & my Health permit, one Month will effect this, with the assistance of a great coat, 8 Waistcoats, flannel Bandages, daily Physic, no Ale, one meal a Day, & the Hot Bath, in truth, I believe you would not recognize "*George Gordon*,"<sup>6</sup> at least many of my acquaintance, who have seen me since our meeting, have hardly believed their optics, my visage is lengthened, I appear taller, & somewhat *slim*, & "*mirabile dictum!*" my Hair once black or rather very dark brown, is turned (I know not how but I presume by perpetual perspiration) to a *light Chesnut*, nearly approaching *yellow*, so that I am metamorphosed not a little. You must write previous to your Embarkation, & I hope you will return safe, from "*cutting foreign throats*" in company with the *Scum* of the *Earth*.—Is your Brother at Harrow? if he is I shall *tip* the youth,<sup>6</sup> on my visit to the *Blest Spot*, I see no account of their Speeches in the paper though the speechday is past some time, in our *day* it was different, there has been no mention of a single Speechday since our *departure*, last year or the present.—Wingfield<sup>7</sup> is gone to Marlow, Adieu yours ever

BYRON

[TO JOHN HANSON]

*Southwell. May 18th. 1807*

Sir,—I have this day drawn on you for the Sum of £50. 17s. 5d. the Balance due to me by your own acknowledgement in your last

<sup>4</sup> See "*To Edward Noel Long*."

<sup>5</sup> [*Lavarium*?]—cold bath.

<sup>6</sup> Byron several times tipped Long's younger brother Henry with five pound notes when he visited Harrow.

<sup>7</sup> See Nov. 4, 1806, to the Earl of Clare, note 3.