

Who's Who in the letters of Diana Beaumont

Below is the first stage of an attempt to identify some of the people who appear in Diana Beaumont's correspondence with John Erasmus Blackett. It concentrates mainly, although not exclusively, on people connected with the Beaumont's Yorkshire concerns and as such complements the project's website page prepared by Ian Forbes on the business structure and postholders. It is hoped that this can be extended, and some of the many gaps filled, by others interested in DB's correspondence. A few of them have short biographies in the website – check the 'Biographies' page.

Mike Powell 23/04/14

Shute Barrington	1734-1826	Bishop of Durham 1791 – 1826. Engaged in long running dispute with the Beaumonts in the early 1800s over lott ore payments in respect of lead extracted from the mines of Weardale. The matter was eventually settled out of court in the Bishop's favour. Also notable for building schools throughout the diocese of Durham and (in 1812) for sending in troops to break up a miners' strike in collieries owned by the Dean & Chapter of Durham Cathedral in the Chester-le-Street area.
Colonel Beaumont	1758-1829	Thomas Richard Beaumont of Darton, Yorkshire. Husband of Diana. Inherited an estate of 450 acres in Darton from his father (Thomas) in 1783/5. Col.-in-Chief 21 st Light Dragoons until 1802. Served under Lord Cornwallis in Ireland (1800) but mostly not on active duties. MP for Northumberland 1795-1818.
John Erasmus Blackett	1729 - 1814	Blackett was a younger son of John Blackett (1683-1750) and Patience Wise, the daughter of Henry Wise, and was a grandson of Sir Edward Blackett, 2nd Bt. He was born in Newcastle on 1 January 1728/9 and was named after a close friend of his father, Erasmus Lewis, secretary to Lord Oxford. After serving an apprenticeship in Liverpool he became a partner in a Newcastle coal dealership and was for some years steward of the lead mines of his 2nd cousin Sir Walter Blackett. He was one of the original partners of the Newcastle upon Tyne Fire Office, now part of Aviva plc. He was prominent in Newcastle public life and became an Alderman and served as Mayor four times (in 1765, 1772, 1780 and 1790). In 1761 he had married Sarah Roddam and in 1791 their daughter Sarah married Cuthbert Collingwood, a Royal Navy officer who in 1805, as Vice Admiral Collingwood, was second-in-command to Lord Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar. John Erasmus Blackett died in Newcastle on 11 June 1814 and is buried in St. Nicholas's Church. More than ten years after his death Blackett Street, named after him, was constructed as part of the redevelopment of Grainger Town, in the centre of Newcastle. [Source: Wikipedia]
Mr William Bosville		William ('Billy') Bosville was Sir Thomas Blackett's nephew, son of his sister Diana, and crony (although 20 years Sir T's junior). Like Sir Thomas also a life-long bachelor. Trustee of Sir Thomas's first will. Inherited the estate of Gunnerton in Northumberland under the provisions of Sir Thomas's second will of 29 May 1792. This estate reverted to the Beaumont's upon his death as he had no male heirs. Diana appears to have

		kept an eye on his financial affairs during his lifetime.
Charles Bowns	Born c 1754	Took over as the Beaumont's Yorkshire Agent some time after the dismissal of Mark Skelton (qv). Professional land agent and lawyer. Worked for several large landowners in Yorkshire. Probably took a largely supervisory role with regard to the Beaumont's Yorkshire estates delegating day-to-day work to resident agents. Organised a systematic survey of the Beaumont's Yorkshire estates in 1805 -1810.
Mr Burdon		Partner in the Newcastle Bank of Surtees & Burdon which ceased honouring Bills draw upon it in 1803 after becoming severely extended as a consequence of failed speculations. This caused serious financial embarrassment to the Beaumonts who had significant sums of money invested in the Bank. Burdon was the object of Diana's especial wrath for much of 1803.
John Cockshutt		Ironmaster. A trustee of Sir Thomas Blackett's second will. Also connected with the Cottons (q.v.) & was a trustee of Mrs Cotton's marriage settlement. Became a trusted confidante and adviser to Col. Beaumont on business matters, especially with regard to the Beaumont's Yorkshire estates.
James Cockshutt		John Cockshutt's younger brother. Appears he replaced John as Col. Beaumont's business confidante after the former's death.
Mrs Collingwood		Sarah, daughter of John Erasmus Blackett. Married to Admiral Collingwood.
Mr & Mrs Cotton		Possibly the Cottons who went bankrupt and whose estates were purchased by the Beaumonts in 1794. See entry against Mark Skelton.
John Hall		Of Scoboro near Beverley in the E. Riding of Yorkshire. Engaged by Charles Bowns (qv) to value the Beaumont's Yorkshire estates in 1809.
John Hardy		Partner in the Low Moor Iron Company. Involved in complicated financial dealings with Sir Thomas Blackett over a lease of 1790 for iron working under some of Sir Thomas's estate lands. It is alleged that Sir T was swindled and after his death the matter ended up in a court case involving the Beaumonts. (Hardy v Beaumont before the Chancery Commisioners, Sheffield, July 1821)
Mrs William Lee		Diana's sister Sophia née Wentworth
Robert Marnock		Diana's head gardener at Bretton Hall. Seems to have been one of the few people to have had a good word to say about her. Later in his career created the Botanical Gardens in Sheffield and became Head Gardener at Kew.
Mark Skelton		Attorney at Law. Employed by Sir Thomas Blackett. Prepared Sir T's second will of 29 May 1792 and possibly drew up his first will also. Also involved in the financial dealings of the Beaumonts. Notably arranged the purchase of the Cotton estates in Haigh, Kexborough & Barugh on their behalf following a bankruptcy in 1794. Acted as the Beaumont's Yorkshire Agent. Skelton's employment by the Beaumonts was terminated by the Colonel in 1796.
Miss Louisa Wentworth		Diana's youngest sister
Sir Thomas Wentworth (later Sir Thomas Wentworth Blackett)	1726 - 1792	5 th Baronet. Diana Beaumont's father. Inherited the Blackett lead fortune from his cousin Sir Walter Calverly Blackett in 1777. Changed name to Blackett under the terms of Sir Wm. Blackett III's will. Never married but fathered numerous illegitimate children including Diana

		and her two sisters, Sophia & Louisa. Sir Thomas's mother (also Diana) was the sister of Sir William Blackett III.
David Wood		Resident agent at Bretton under Charles Bowns (qv) until 1812.