

**1 Jan 1784 Thomas Blackett to Mark Skelton**

[Note: Written and signed in a frail hand, but clearly that of Thomas Blackett based on other letters from his hand. Undated and little to date it between the time of his taking the name Blackett in 1777 and his death in July 1792. Kexborough was owned by Beaumont following the death of his father in 1783/5 and evidently considered for sale at some point prior to his marriage to Diana (1785). The rioting girls were perhaps Diana and her sisters in the early 1780s. 1 January 1784 arbitrarily used here.]

Mr. Skelton

I rec'd your Letter & will not think any more of the Kexbro' Farm, You may remember that I guessed very near the Price. I hope your pretty Girl will go home safe but I thought that she was come to stay & to learn to riot with the other Girls.

All well & Compts. to you.

Yours &c

T Blakett

**15 Mar 1786 John Erasmus Blackett to John Skelton**

[Note: Undated, but the mentions of Naples and Venice suggest this relates to 1786, when Beaumont stayed in both cities. 15 March used here.]

Bretton Tuesday Noon

Miss Wood presents her Compts to Mr Skelton, she yesterday recd a Letter from Mr Beaumont, Naples Dated Febry 28th & he did not mention anything of Mr Skeltons Letter therefore suppose he has not yet Recd it – he desires if I write directly I will direct to him chez Monsr Concorde Martens at Venice, but if I do not immediately I must direct to him chez Monsr Joseph Martens at Turin:

I am Sir Your most Obedt. Servt.

John E. Blackett

John Skelton Esqr /Birthwait/near Wakefield/ Yorkshire

**10 Jun 1786 Richard Beaumont to Mark Skelton**

Sir

I desired the favour of Mr <Beatson> to give you a small Parsell wch. I desire the favour of you to give to Mr Beaumont of Darton when he returns home and if you will direct the inclosed letter to him you will oblige Yr Obt. Hble Sv't

R:H: Beaumont

10. June 1786

[on verso:] Mr Skelton/ Birthwaite / near Barnsley

[a second undated note from same to same might relate to the same parcel]  
Mr Beaumont of Whitley presents his Comps. To Mr Skelton & desires the favour of Mr Skelton to deliver the inclosed parcel to Mr Beaumont of Darton when Mr Bt returns

**23 Jul 1792 John Erasmus Blackett to Mark Skelton**

[Note: This is the original letter that was also copied, accurately, into JEB's outgoing letter book (NRO 672/E/1E/5) and which can be found elsewhere in Dukesfield Documents. It is not transcribed again here]

**25 Jul 1792 Anthony Watts to Mark Skelton**

Quality Court 25th July 92

Dear Sir/

I hope before this you have received the Case which I sent you by Yesterdays Mail Coach, with Orders to deliver the same immediately, I this morning received your Lre and Communicated the contents thereof to Mr. Fearne whose Answer is as follows 'It must of course be proved in Common Form by the Ex[ecut]ors so far as respects any personal Estate, But that be no proof of it, as a Will of <Lands>, And if it is expected that the Heir will contest it, it will be on that Account, most advisable to prove it in Chancery against the Heir for perpetuating the Testimony of the Witnesses thereto, as is usual in such Cases'

Therefore if you are under the necessity of proving the same in Chancery you must file a Bill in the first instance and Issue a S[ub]p[oen]a against the Wits. and get in their Ansr. which will be to perpetuate their Testimony, or you may have a S p a before the filing the Bill, yet if you are to be concerned for the Wits. there is no need of a S p a at all, and when the Ansr. are come in, (that is) the Wits. have given their Testimony the same together with the Bill, and if atteds. to take the Answrs. etc must be exemplified on 20s. Stamps, which then is called the proving the Will in Chancery, I take it for granted from Mr. Fearne's Observations above the Exors may take Adm[inistrati]on in the first Instance \_

I am Dr. Sir

Your much Obliged And very hble. Servt.

Anth J Watts

26 Jul 1792 Anthony Watts to Mark Skelton

Quality Court 26th July 1792

Dear Sir

In the matter of A's Will

Since writing mine of Yesterday I have considered this Business as to the proving the Will in Chancery and as it is in all probability possible you may be concerned in the whole of this Business, that is, in <.....ing> in the Ansrs. etc for the Witnesses as well as filing the Bill, (the whole expence being to be paid by the person applying to prove the same) I think you had better send the full Instructions in the first Instance and then the Bill and Ansrs. may be drawn at the same time, in which case there being no Occasion for S p as to Answer, the Bill may then be filed and a Commission <Issued> to take the Ansrs. Immediately and the Business proceeded on as fast as Possible.

I Remain Dr. Sir Your much Obliged & very humble Servt.

Anth J Watts

PS. I hope you reced the Case safe

28 Jul 1792 John Lawson to John Erasmus Blackett

[Note: Noted as a copy, and evidently the letter referred to in JEB's letter to Skelton of 30th July. The handwriting appears to be that of JEB's clerk Joshua Straker]

July 28. 1792

John E. Blackett Esqr.  
Newcastle

Sir

I have recd. a letter from Mr. Nichos. Wescomb of Longford Grove near Maldon, Essex, in which he requests that I do wait on you with his Compts. and inform you, That in right of his Wife Lucy, the Grand Daughter & Heir of Eliz: Marshall (The second Sister of Sir Willm. Blackett, & one of the Coheirs of the said Sir Willm. Blackett, He claims one undivided Third Part of the Estate, of which under his Will, Sir Walter & the late Sir Thos. Blackett took Estates for Life. \_ That you will see Mrs. Wescomb's Claim acknowledged in the Act of Parliament of 1774 for settling the Claims of the Respective Lords of the Manors of Hexham & Blanchland. \_ Mr. Wescomb also desires you will send him a particular <Accot.> or Rental of the Estates, and thinks that it will be necessary to take Attornment of the Tenants (at least the Principal ones) for one undivided Third Part, which he desires me to do, & that I may lose no time in transacting this business. I therefore take the liberty of requesting that you will let me

know when it will be convenient for you, & I shall wait on you at Newcastle on this business.

I am Sir Your most Obedt. Servt.  
John Lawson

Longhirst July 28th 1792  
(Copy)

**30 Jul 1792 John Erasmus Blackett to Mark Skelton**

[Note: Recipient not stated, but content infers it was addressed to Skelton. It was not copied into JEB's outgoing letter book]

Newcastle 30th July 1792

Sir

I this day received your letter of the 27th inst. with a Copy of the late Sir Thomas Blacketts Will; I observe the opinion of Mr. Frearnes on the Divisees & Limitations of the Real Estates & I congratulate you on the same, as it certainly must Relieve you from Great Anxiety. Inclosed you have a Copy of a letter that I received this morning from Mr. Lawson a Person of Character & pretty good Fortune who I believe is employed by Mr. Westcomb in the receipt of some Tithes in this Country. I shall acquaint Mr. Lawson that the late Sir Thomas Blackett having Passed a Fine & suffered a Recovery in a regular manner was entitled to dispose of the several Estates of the late Sir William Blackett on which amount any further Information from one respecting them would be quite unnecessary;

This Business I am informed was done and I have no doubt in a very regular manner by the advice and I have no doubt in a very regular manner of Mr. Jon. West, the writings must be either at Bretton, or in the possession of Mr. West, & I submit it to you whether it will not be necessary that they should be looked into.

I thought it necessary to send Mr. J. Bell of Hexham a Copy of Mr. Lawsons letter, with directions to apply to the several Tenants to prevent their Attornment to Mr. Westcomb &c in case of any application being made to them for that purpose.

The several Game Keepers Deputations shall be sent by the Diligence directed to Mr. Beaumont at the Straffords Arms Wakefield & to be forwarded from thence to Bretton, & if you think it necessary they may be forwarded from thence to Mr. Beaumont.

I am Sir Your Most Obedt. Servt.  
John E. Blackett

I omitted mentioning two Gentlemen to whom I think Mourning Rings should be sent, they are both Relat[i]ons of the Family & acquaintances of the late Sir Thomas Blackett

Sir Henry Mainwaring Bart. of near Northwich Cheshire  
Stephen Watson Esqr. of North Seton, Northumbd.

Mr. Westcomb is a distant relation but Mr. Beaumont will judge of the Propriety of sending him a Ring.

**1 Aug 1792 Mark Skelton to Miss Bedford**

[Note: This document appears to be an account of services rendered. It is possible that a sheet has been detached to the right as the first letter of an indistinguishable word is just visible at the RH edge, exactly opposite a bracket encompassing the first clause to its right. A separate bracket encompasses the second clause. The identification of Mr S is a mystery, unless it was Mark Skelton senior writing elliptically to his son's house at Birthwaite. It is undated but in seeking terms to work for the Beaumonts it was presumably submitted soon after Sir Thos Blackett's death. 1st August is used here.]

1792

For many consultations during the Months of Feby. March April May & June with Sir Thos. Blackett at Bretton & at Mr. Skeltons concern[in]g the Altering of his Will & taking Instructions in Writing for that purpose & draw[in]g heads th[ere]of & attend[in]g at Bretton many Times reading them to him & mak[in]g Alterations accord[in]g to his directions & afterwards preparing the Will & duplications (as Sir Thos. required the strictest Secrecy) Mr. S writing the whole himself on 40 Sheets of Paper and the like of three former Wills for w[hi]ch Mr. S was only paid as for <Com.n> Business

& Mr. Skelton also submits to Mr & Mrs Beaum[on]t the Consideration what his Annl. Salary is to be for Actg. as their principal Agent & Auditor of all their Accts. & in the managemen[t] of their Ests. & concerns as well as the Ests. of Mr. B at Darton & Kexbro & that <purchased> of Mr. Cotton

[on verso:] Miss Bedford/ Mr Skelton/ Birthwait Hall/ near Barnsley

**5 Nov 1792 Gray & Thorpe to Mark Skelton**

York 5th Nov. 1792

Sir

We have been for some Years in receipt if the rents of Mr Marsh's estate at Barugh, but he never intimated to us any intention to dispose of it, which we think he would have done (rather than to any other person) had he been inclined to sell.

We are, Sir Your very hble Servts.

Gray & Thorpe

**17 Jan 1793 Benjamin Gott to John Skelton**

[Note: signatory unclear, possibly 'B Gott'. Benjamin Gott of Leeds (1762-1840) was the son of a civil engineer and county surveyor and is possibly the correspondent here.]

Mr Skelton

Leeds Jany 17. 93

Sir,

I am engaged to pay for an estate 2000£ in Cash & 4000£ in Bill at sight or a Bank Note to which I must beg the favour of you to conform – the other 4000£ in any way most agreeable to you.

With respect to the Pews in Thornhill Church I was informed they did not belong to the Estate in Flockton that Thornhill Church had been <new pav'd> <Mr. R> was at the <.....> of these which induced me to dispose of them \_\_ The Accommodation to all the Tenants of Flockton in that Chapel <lead> me to conclude <.....> in Thornhill Ch. <wd.> be of no consequence to Mr. Beaumont. or I shd. have applied to you on the Subject who remain

Yours Very respectfully  
<B: Gott>

[on verso:] J Skelton Esq/ Birthwaite Hall/ near Wakefield

**7 Mar 1793 James Milner to Mark Skelton**

[Note: addressed only to Mr Skelton, so unclear whether Mark or John, but Milner's name was mentioned in a letter to Mark Skelton later that year]

Dr Sir/

As it may be some time before you and Mr. Beaumont return from Town, Hope you will determine and inform me before you set off to allow me some Timber along with the 100£ for the intended improvements. at the Manor House, as its now time to prepare the materials. Also inform me when I may look over the Falls of Wood \_\_

I am Dr Sir Most sincerely Yours  
Jams. Milner

Flockton 7th Mar. 1793

**4 Sep 1793 Isaac & John Wilkinson to John Erasmus Blackett**

[Note: Recipient not stated but given the existence of other correspondence at around this time between JEB and the Wilkinsons on the state of the lead trade it is probably that it was addressed to him]

Chesterfield 4th Sepr. 1793

Sir

We took the liberty to write to you about six weeks ago, to request the State of the Lead Market at Newcastle, but presume you was at that Time from Home, as we have not been favoured with an Answer.

We beg leave to transmit you the Resolutions pass'd at our half yearly Meeting at Matlock the 2d Instant & which shews there is no selling with us at present, it would give us pleasure to hear from you & remain respectfully

Sir Yr. most obdt. Servts

Isaac & Jno. Wilkinson

[on verso:]

Matlock Bath 2 Sepr. 1793

At a Meeting held here this Day of the Miners, Smelters, & Lead Holders of the County of Derby, the following Resolutions were agreed upon. \_\_

First, In Consequence of the Stagnation of Trade occasioned by the Disturbances on the Continent, it was unanimously agreed, to avoid as much as possible the working of the Lead Mines for the present.

Second, There being no demand for Lead we find it impossible to fix a price; but as working the Lead Mines of this Country, for several Years past, hath been in general attended with Loss; each Member of this Society agrees to use his Endeavour to avoid as much as may be lowering the price. \_\_

Third, That it is the duty of the Miners & Smelters of Lead Ore in England & Wales, to make Inquiry as to what Lead may be yearly exported from Scotland, from such Mines as Ship their Lead Duty free. \_\_

John Barker Esqr.

In the Chair

4 Nov 1793 Richard Clark to Mark Skelton

Sir/

I have made a Valuation of Mr Beaumonts Estate at Wibsey & have Calculated the Buildings as you'll see by the Acct. at 20 Years purchased & the Land from 20 to 33 Years purchase, but on Acct. of the Coal being Sold off it will very much Injure the Estate in selling as its an Object to no person but the Lords of the Manor & that they will be well aware of otherwise its a very great [word obscured] to them but I cannot see a Chance of any purchase likely to [word obscured] with them, if you was to offer one lot only on the South Side beginning with Jolly Hall & continue on that side down to the Bottom of Thos. Holdsworths farm this would be a Considerable Lot & is almost all bad Land but lays Compact to theirs & brings them up to the Common. I begun the Book there & it goes regularly on the Side to Holdsworths leaving out no Inclosures but 3 of Jno. Tordoffs was this part sold off the Remainder would take a Market much better either in Lots or any way you think proper; if the Parcels about the Town shd. be Sold in small Lots they will sell for much more than I have Valued them at, but I think nothing ought to be sold off until the South side is disposed of as that is the Outcast there are many Buildings upon it & in bad Repair & the Farms small & the Tenants poor & the Land bad & in general ill managed so that there is nothing to tempt a purchase but the Contiguity to the Lords Estate, the Fields tho' small are an object for Inclosing & would improve very much & I see no difficulty in getting it forward if it was properly promoted. I made no Report or Remarks in the Book on a supposition that you might have proposed to show it to some intending purchaser – when you have perused it if any further Remarks or information is Wanted I will Readily send all the assistance in my Power & when any other business offers shall always be happy to serve you & am Sir your most Obedt.

Hble Servt

Richd. Clark

Rothwell Haigh 4th Novr. 1793

[on verso:] Mark Skelton Esqr

### 10 Nov 1793 John Hardy to Mark Skelton

[Note: Recipient not stated but context of this and other letters strongly suggest Skelton]

Bradford Nov 10 1793

Dear Sir

On behalf of my partners & myself I thank you for the Offer of treating with us for the Sale of Mr. Beaumont's Estate at Wibsey. Upon this Business we shall be very happy to meet you any day & at such place as you shall appoint, only we must entreat you to favour me with the Contracts of each Tenants farm, which will be immediately looked over so as to meet you at the time appointed. Perhaps asking you to allow us



until Monday the 18th Inst will not be inconvenient to you; if it should we will endeavour to be prepared against a more early time.

Mr Tweddle at the last Rent day at Wibsey mentioned to us an Engine which Mr Beaumont was intending to erect; if you have not engaged it we shall be very happy to serve Mr Beaumont assuring you that no person shall do it better or upon lower terms. When we meet I hope to be able to say something to your satisfaction upon the subject of your former Letter I am

Dr Sir Your very obt. hble Servt  
Jno. Hardy

**9 Dec 1793 John Hardy to Mark Skelton**

[Note: Recipient not stated but context of this and other letters strongly suggest Skelton]

Bradford Dec 9 1793

Dr. Sir/

I have just now seen Mr. Sharp and he has promised me to go upon the Valuation of Wibsey as soon as he can but his present Engagements will take him a fortnight, in the mean time as he understands his Value is to be compared with Mr Clark's he wishes he may be favoured with a field Book otherwise he must be obliged to make a kind of <...ing> Notice which will not do to compare with Mr Clarks; if you will favour me with the Book I will take care to convey it to Mr. Sharp. I am

Sir Your very obt. hble Servt.  
Jno. Hardy

**1 Jan 1794 Anthony Watts to Mark Skelton**

[Note: Recipient not stated but from context probably Mark Skelton]

Hatton Garden 1st. January 1794

Dear Sir/

Beaumont vs. Bosville

I am sorry that I could not Answer yours sooner but the delay has been occasioned by the holidays and Mr. Barkers non attendance during them. I have now this day procured his Sentiments hereon and find the Exemplification must be sent back and Resealed and have the great Seal put to it de novo.

The mistake of the <Test> is certainly a great one and Mr. Barker takes shame to himself that it was returned out of his hands by going to be sealed in <blank>; the only apology he has to make is that he was afraid of opening it lest he could not get it again

into the Patent Box, but that he considers as no apology it was his Duty to have examined it before it went to the Seal.

The charge for drawing the Exemplification is the usual Charge and is Divided amongst a number of Officers

The Solicitors fee herein is 5 G[ui]n[e]as

I am Dear Sir Your very hble Servt.

Anth J Watts

**18 Jan 1796 John Taylor to Mark Skelton**

Gomersall Jany 18th 1796

Sir/

In reply to the Letter with which you favd. Me; I should be far from wishing to induce Col. Beaumont to sell his Heaton Estate by fixing some Very high Price: And indeed I think it quite out of Character for me to fix any price at all.

If it is his intention to sell it and you are impowerd to treat and will fix a price of Course I shall be willing to give the real Intrinsic Value taking all the Circumstances together, and this is all you can wish: And Probably may be more than you will get by selling in small Lots besides avoiding an Immense deal of trouble, perhaps You will think of getting it Valued but I desire it may not be known in this Neighbourhood that anything of this kind hath passed between us. By which you will Oblige.

Sir. Yr most hble Servt.

John Taylor

**27 Jan 1796 John Taylor to Mark Skelton**

Gomersall 27th Jany 1796

Sir/

I am now favourd with yours 26th and beg to inform you that comparing what I have heard of the Heaton Estate with the price you fixed I am induced to give up all thoughts of it, should you sell in Lots I may purchase one or two if there appears a probability of their paying a fair Interest, anytime when you or Mr F: comes over your giving a Call will Oblige.

Sir. your most hble Servt.

John Taylor

I thank you for not naming me to <S:W:> He formd the Idea of my purchasing the whole out of his own head

[on verso:] M Skelton Esq at Breton

2 Feb 1796 John Taylor to Mr Skelton

Gomersall 2d. Feby 1796

Sir,

In reply to the Letter you Favour me with I have no difficulty in describing to you my Ideas & chain of reasoning of the Value of Col: Beaumonts Heaton Estate: if it can be of the Least use to you, tho I must conclude you know much better than me. \_

From every thing I can Learn the Land is run out, the Buildings ruinous, and the Tenants poor; now whoever hath this Estate their Business is to remedy all there. The way I presume to do this is to change most of the old Tennants, Lay out some money in the Buildings, and bind the whole of the Tennants to keep the buildings in good repair, and to put the Land in good condition, and to see they do this, but this cannot be done consistent with taking up the rents to the most any kind of poor tenants will offer, Men of any property equal to the Task will not take it so And the poor people who will take it at any price will probably never intend to pay all the rent or to remit it worse than it is, just for a present shift.

I understand there is abt 5 or 6 people in Heaton that wish to become new Tennants not many of them in good circumstances that 6 to 8 acres of Land each would be as much as they could do any thing with, for if they had a great deal it would infallibly break them. They will want the Grass Land. The Bulk of the Land being Ploughing It ought to be let to substantial people and they will not take it but at a rent they can afford to pay in a Farming way.

This premised I consider the advance the estate will bear so as to answer the above ends Mr Savills agent hath just relet his estate at Hunsworth adjoining yours at abt an advance say from <12> or 14s per acre to 15s or 17s But I will suppose yours can be advanced one third say to 22£ or 30£ a year and I think this is full as much as it will bear consistent with Letting to good substantial Tennants and having it brought into some kind of condition, and without this the owner may as well sit still.

Now I think a purchaser should as money Lets at present make 3 1/2 to 4 per Cent of his Money what the expense of the act & Inclosure may be I cannot tell or the Value of the Coals this you must know better than me.

By this statement you may judge of my sentiments of the intrinsic Value of the Estate But from the price you fixed I have given up all thoughts of being a purchaser for the whole.

Notwithstanding I remain

On all Accounts Sir Your most hble Servt.

John Taylor

23 Feb 1796 Richard Wilson to Mark Skelton

My Dear Sir

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I will with pleasure dine with you on Saturday the 12th of March

I have great satisfaction in telling you that the Cause of Lancaster & Beaumont came on this Morning before the Chancellor who has ordered us to proceed in our Action at Law agt. Lancaster & Co. & they are to be examined as Witnesses on the Trial. I would almost venture to insure you a Verdict for the demand[?ant]

I am Dr. Sir very truly yours

Richd. Wilson

<Bartlett B....>

Feby 23rd 1796

**29 Feb 1796 Mr Child to Mark Skelton**

Roberttown 29th Feby. 1796

Mr Skelton,

Your esteemed fav[ou]r of the 27th Inst. came duly to hand. I do assure you that I should not have made application for the Cleckheaton Colliery had I not be informed that it was to be disposed of, as I should be ashamed of myself in being an Instrument of takeing any thing out of the Hands of another person in an unfair Way, I am glad that you have considered to take a further Trial of the present Tenants and I wish it may Ansr. both your and their End, if you ever should have the Cleckheaton, or any other Colliery, to dispose of I shall esteem it as a favour conferred on me to have an Offer of it, I remain

Sir Your obt. Humle Servt

<Wm> Child

**26 Mar 1796 Joshua Straker to Mark Skelton**

Newcastle 26th March 1796

Sir

By Mr. Heron's desire I send you the Report, and Calculation of the probable Revenue of the intended Canal, between this place and Maryport. The Subscriptions at Newcastle, Hexham & Carlisle Amount at present to upwards of £108000

I am Sir Your most Obedt. Hble Servt.

Josah: Straker

M. Skelton Esqr.

**12 Apr 1796 Francis Edmonds to Mark Skelton**

Sir,

Since my arrival in Town I have seen General Prescott, who is within a few days of his departure for his appointment as Governor of Quebec, & as I understood from my Clerk who just before I left Yorkshire for the South, waited upon you upon another Matter of Business, that you had something to say or do, respecting the General's affair between him & Mr. Beaumont, but that then you had not time for it. If therefore there is anything <essential> to his Int[eres]t that you think might be right to communicate to him or me before the General leaves this Country; you will have the Goodness to do so as soon as you are <prepared> for it.

I am Sir Your most Hble. St.

Frs: Edmunds

London 12th: April 1796

45 Devonsh. <St>: Portland Place

**30 Apr 1796 John Waterhouse to Mark Skelton**

[Note: Waterhouse was a Halifax merchant]

Halifax 30th April 1796

Sir,

There seems a probability that if the Haigh Bridge and Horbury Pasture Canal was now brought forwards it would meet with the support of the Merchts at Manchester, Rochdale and this place. This you'll observe is given as My own Opinion – I have mentioned it to Mr Walker Certainly nothing can be done without Mr Beaumont being first Waited upon and consulted about it. I trouble you therefore with this to ask when He is expected at Britain and should be glad at the same time to know (if you are acquainted with His Sentiments) Whether he is still desirous of promoting the Undertaking. I shall thank you not to mention this Application and Requesting the honour of your Answer soon as Convenient.

I am always with much esteem

Sir Yr Very Hble Servt

Jno Waterhouse

Mr. Skelton Esqre