

22 Dec 1792 Anthony Watts to Mark Skelton

[Note: Recipient unclear but presumably, from context, Mark Skelton]

Dear Sir

Hatton Garden 22d. Decr. 1792

Beaumont agt. Bosville <Voy.>

I herewith send you the Bill herein together with the Ansr. of Dr. De Chair and <...> and also the Ansr. proposed for Mrs. Bosville's Signature but who thro her Sons interference in the Business seems the most litigious party, in short after I had Ingrossed her Ansr she objected to sign the same and then wished to do as Dr. De Chair and Wife had done and sign a similar Ansr. to theirs, I accordingly drew such an Answer and saw her previous to her leaving Town, but her Son not being in the way she refused Signing – I then left the Ansr. with her and also the Dr[af]ts of Ansr. of Dr. De Chair & <..> who had previously signed the same that they might be fully convinced it was a similar Ansr. and told her I would call again the next Day and after calling two or three times I now find the Son objects to one word which when altered he will send his Mother to sign, I therefore mean to see him on Monday when I hope to put the Buss. forward and will do my utmost to get her Ansr. in – I cannot get the Comm[issio]n till the 15th of Janry being the next Seal but I should apprehend there is no Occasion for Mrs. Walker to put in her Ansr. on Oath it not being required of the other parties, but if I hear nothing from you to the contrary will send the <Commn.> Directed as required

I remain Dst. Sir in haste

Your very Hble Servt.

Anth J Watts

P.S. pray take Care of Dr. De Chair & <..> Ansr. as you'll perceive it is signed by them

6 Jan 1793 E. Walker to Mark Skelton

Sir,

Inclosed are the two Papers which I return. Sir Thomas Blckett gave me both a Mortgage & a Bond for the security of my Money (£14,500.-) They are dated Nov: 7. 1781: And if you please to look into the Register Office at Wakefield, I believe you will find an account of the Premises.

Sir,

Your humble Servant

E. Walker

Kirk. Ello
Jan: 6. 1793

[on verso:]
Mr Skelton Attorney at Law/ Birthwait Hall/ Barnsley

25 Jan 1793 Anthony Watts to Mark Skelton

Dr. Sir/

Hatton Garden 25th Jany 1793

The Parcel containing the <Re.> to Mr. Lee was sent on the 21st Inst. from hence, which I hope you have Reced. If not, I trouble you herewith to inform you the same was sent as above directed to be left at Mrs. Ropers Barnsley as usually done, Mrs. Bosvill's Ansr. Is not yet come in but I hourly expect it, And will send the Interrogatories and Comm[issio]n as soon as possible.

I Remain Dr. Sir
Your very hble Servt.
Anth J Watts

[on verso:]
Mr Skelton, Attorney at Law, Birthwaite Hall, Near Wakefield, Yorkshire

21 Feb 1793 Diana Bosville

[Note: Undated, but appears to be the Answer referred to in a letter from Watts to Skelton dated 28th February 1793, so a date one week before is used here. Diana Bosville was the sister of the late Sir Thomas Blackett]

In Chancery

The Answer of Diana Bosville as one of the Defts to the Bill of Complaint of Thomas Richard Beaumont Esqr. and Diana his Wife Complainants

This Deft. saving and reserving to herself now and at all times hereafter all and all manner of benefit and advantages that may be had or taken by way of exception otherwise to the many Errors uncertainties and Imperfections in the said Complts said Bill contained for Answer thereunto or unto as much thereof as She is advised is materially necessary for her to make Answer unto Answereth and saith She admits it to be true that the sd. Sir Thos. Blackett's (formerly called Sir Thos. Wentworth) Bart in

the sd. Complts said Bill named was in his lifetime and at the time of his Decease seized and intitled of or to and possessed of the <Prem[is]es> in the said Complts Bill mentioned to be devised to the Complts And doth also admit that the sd. Sir Thos. Blackett being so seized intitled and poss[es]sed did about the time for that purpose in the sd. Bill ment[ione]d duly make and publish his last Will and Testament in writing in such words and Figures or to such purport and Effect as in and by the said Bill of complaint as set forth and that the sd. Testator was of sound mind memory and understanding at the time of his making & publishing the same and that the same was so executed and attested as is by Law required for the passing of Real Estates by devise And doth also admit that the sd. Testor departed this Life at or about the time in the said Bill in that behalf mentioned and that he died without revoking or altering his said Will leaving this Deft. and Elizh. Walker and Julia the Wife of John De Chair his coheirs at Law And this Deft. denies all and all manner of combination and confederacy whereunto She is charged without that that there is any other matter cause or thing in the Complts sd. Bill of Complt. contained material or Effectual in the Law for this Deft. to make Answer unto and not herein and hereby well and sufficiently Answered avoided traversed or <denied> is true to the knowledge and belief of this Deft. All which matters and things this Deft. is ready and willing to Aver maintain and prove as this Honble Court shall direct – and humbly prays to be hence dismissed with her reasonable <Costs> and Charges in the Law in this behalf most wrongfully sustained [signed] James Blackstone

28 Feb 1793 Anthony Watts to Mark Skelton

[Note: Recipient unclear but presumably, from context, Mark Skelton]

Dear Sir/

No. <82> Hatton Garden 28th Feby. 1793

In the <case> of Sr. Thos. Blacketts Will

I have been waiting with great uneasiness for the Moment which is now come, that is to inform you of Mrs. Bosvilles Answer being Signed and Returned to me, I make no doubt, the long Absence you have experienced will lead you to suspect, my proper attention to this Bus[ines]s but believe me I have used my utmost endeavours to push the Business on – The Young Bosvilles I am persuaded have been at a considerable expense in Searchg. for Recoveries &c suffered by Sir Thomas, previous to the Signature of Mrs B. but all avails nothing in the present instance no Argument could hinder the Proof of the Will, and the Answers being now put in We may proceed to Examine the Wit[nesse]s – I will therefore as soon as possible send down the Com[mission]n and Interrogatories that the Business may be soon concluded –
I am Dr. Sir

Your very hble Servt.
Anth J Watts

24 Jun 1793 Anthony Watts to Mark Skelton

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

Dear Sir/

No. <82> Hatton Garden 24th June 93

I this morning reced yours and will send the <De: Po[sition]:> by tomorrow's Post if possible – it being a Seal Day in the Court of Chancery but the notice is short –

You may have Mr. Milner examined in Town If you please but if he is so examined there must be another set of Interr[ogator]y's Ingrossed for the Country Witnesses, but which may be done or in fact the Wit[nesse]s may be examined in as many places as there is People if you choose to be at the Expence, I shall be obliged to you to inform me where Mr. Milner is to be examined here that I may attend him.

I am Dr. Sir

Your very hble Servt.
Anth J Watts

29 Jul 1793 Anthony Watts to Mark Skelton

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

Dear Sir

No. 82 Hatton Garden 29th. July 93

Beaumont Esq. v Bosville <...>

Herewith I send you the Interrogatories and also a Commission to Examine the Witnesses herein –

I should have sent them sooner but could not get the Commission Resealed until Saturday and which I this Day received from my Cl[er]k in Court – The Comm[issio]n issued some time back when you wrote for it but not <.....> it there, could not send it with[ou]t resealing – You'll be pleased to examine the Original Will with Interry's before the Examination-

Milner v Firth

The Ca: Sa: herein was sent immediately on Rect. of yours and which I hope previous to this you have Reced a <Warrd.> upon –

I am Dr. Sir

Your very Hble Servt.

Anth J Watts

9 Sep 1793 William Brooke to Mark Skelton

Sir,

I am favoured with your Letter, & will attend you at the Strafford Arms on Thursday next at the Hour you mention.

I am Sir Your Obedt. Servt.

Wm: Brooke

Wakefield

9th Sept. 1793

10 Sep 1793 John Carr to Mark Skelton

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

D/Sir

I shall be at home on Thursday next & will attend you when sent to by you or perhaps you will do me the favour of a call on your arrival, but at any rate I will be ready – do you think our joint names had not better be at the Navigation advertisement as John Waterhouse said in London –

Yours obediently

<Jno.> Carr

Wakefd. 10th Sepr 93

19 Sep 1793 Mark Skelton

[Note: Dates only to Sept 1793. Letters to Skelton from two of the commissioners, Brooke and Carr, must predate the hearings, and Brooke mentions 'Thursday next', which would have been 19th Sept in 1793, so that date is used here. Depositions are from Skelton and Hewitson. It is a heavily corrected draft with many crossings out and insertions which in places makes the text difficult to follow, and not entirely clear which sections survived to become the formal submissions]

Depositions of Witnesses produced sworn and examined the [left blank] day of Sept. in the 33rd Year of the Reign of his Majesty King Geoe. the third and in the Year of our Lord 1793 at the House of Cooke known by the Sign of the <Strafford> Arms in Wakefd. In the Co. of York by Virtue of a Commission issued out of his Majesties High Court in Chancery to Wm Brooke, John Lee, David Calvard and John Carr Gents. directed for the examination of Witnesses in a Cause there depending between Thos. Rd. Beaumont & Diana his Wife plts & Diana Bosville Elizabeth Walker & John De Chair & Julia his Wife Defts. on the part & behalf of the plt. We [inserted here: 'Wm Burke & John Carr'] the sd. Commrs. also the Clk. By us employed for taking & ingrossing the sd. Depositions havg. first taken the Oaths annexed to the sd. Comm[issi]on as thereby required.

3d. Mark Skelton of Birthwaite Hall in the psh of Darton in the Co. of York Gent aged 42 – Years sworn & examined to the first Interrogatory [struck out: 'deposeth'] this Dept. saith that he knows the parties Complots & Defts and knew Sir Thos Blackett Bart. decd. sevl. Years before his decease and that he died at Bretton Hall in the psh of Silkston in the sd. Co. of York on or about the 10th day of July 1792

To the Second Interrogatory this Dept. says that the paper Writing produced & shewn to this Deponent at the Time of <exm> (marked with the Lre A) is the original last Will and Test of the sd. Sir Thos. Blackett decd. and that Words in the sd. Second Interrogatory contd. purporting to be a copy and true Copy of the sd. last Will & Test of the sd. Sr Thos Blackett and this Deponent saith that he was p[re]sent at the publishing of the sd. last Will and that the Name Thomas Blackett subscribed to the first & last sheets there is the proper Hand writing of the sd. Sir Thos. Blackett and the Name M. Skelton thereunto subscribed as a Witness is the proper Hand Writing of this Deponent And he is acquainted with Thos. Hewitson & John Milner the other Witnesses who subscribed their names to this will and they were likewise present at the publishing thereof and the names Tho Hewitson & John Milner are of the proper handwriting of the sd Tho Hewitson & John Milner respectively by them subscribing thereto in the presence of the sd. Sr. Thos Blackett & this dept

[added in left hand margin:] is the <letter> enabled so to Depose <...> that the sd Sr Thos Blackett in his life time directed this Deft to prepare his will & this deft did according to such directions preparethe <> original will & the body of the sd original will is all of the proper Hand writing of this deponent

And this dept saith that the same will was published & subscribed on the day of the date thereof and that the sd Sr Thos Blackett was of sound mind & <opinion> at the time <not so> Published his said will & capable of <... ...> same

Thomas Hewitson of Belle View in the psh of Sandal Magna in the Co. of York Esqr. aged [blank] years sworn & examined To the first Interrogatory the Dept. saith that he

knows the plts Thos R B & D <as> and the Defts. Diana Bosville & Eliz. Walker also that he knew Sir Thos. Blackett Bart decd. for several years before his <dece> and that the sd. Sr T B <died> in his own House at Bretton as the Dept. was informed & verily believes.

[The following paragraph is entirely struck through]

1st. that the paper Writing <so> produced and shewn to him at the time of his examination beginning This is the last Will & Test of me Sir Thos. Blackett formerly called Sir Thos. Wentworth of Bretton Hall in the psh of Silkston in the Co of York Bart. and ending In Wit[nes]s wher[o]f I the sd. Sir Thos Blackett formerly called Sir Thos. Wentworth have executed this my last Will & Test written upon & contd. in 22 Sheets of paper by signing my Name and putting my own <...> Seal to and upon the first & last Sheets th[ere]of this 29th Day in the Yr of our Lord 1792 (Thomas Blackett) The above written Will was signed sealed published & del[ivere]d by the sd. Sir Thos B. the Testor as and for his last Will & Test in the presence of us who in his presence & at his Req[ues]t and in the presence of each o[the]r hath hereunto subscribed our hands as Wit[nesse]s to the <Exon.> th[ere]of by him. Thos. Hewitson John Milner <M Skelton>

To the 3d. Interrog. this Dept. saith that the paper writing produced & shewn to him (marked A) is the same which was signed by the sd. Sr Thos Blackett & by him published as so for his last Will & Test in the presence of this Deponent & of John Milner & Mark Skelton all of whom this Dept. saith were subscribing Wit[nesse]s thereto & present together with the sd. Sr. TB at the publishing thereof And that the Name Thomas Blackett subscribed to the first & last Sheets of the sd. paper Writing is of the Proper Hand Writing of the sd. Sr. Thos. Blackett And that the Names Tho Hewetson John Milner & M Skelton so set & subscribed thereunto are of the proper Hand Writing of the sd. Thomas H, JM & MS respectively And this Dept. further saith that the sd. Sr TB was at the time of publishing Sir T <was> of sound mind memory & understanding & capable of making the same.

2d. John Milner

3d. Mr S

[on verso:] ' Sep 1793 <DrL> In the proof of the late Sr Thos Blackett's Will in Chancery – Witness Depons to Interry's -'