

1 May 1744 James Mulcaster to Thomas Westgarth

[Note: The cover of the manuscript notebook from which these letters are taken shows a drawing of 'A Lady of Quality in her Indian silcks dress. Sold at the White Horse without Newgate'. The cover has been annotated 'No. 1 of Letters to several persons on several occasions'.

The London Lead Company leased the lead mines and mill at Wanlockhead in southern Scotland, and also of Acton Mill near Blanchland in Northumberland, where the Mulcaster family lived. It appears from these letters that 23 year old James Mulcaster was employed by the LLC at Wanlockhead in 1744. Fifty years later he gave the lecture to the Lit & Phil in Newcastle on ore hearth lead smelting in the North Pennines which is included elsewhere in 'Dukesfield Documents'.

Undated letter. Thomas Westgarth of the Riding, Allendale, a senior mining agent of the London lead Company died in July 1748 (B.P.Wilkinson, 'Leadmining families – the Westgarths and the Forsters', in B.Chambers (ed) *Out of the Pennines* (1997), p. 21. This letter might predate Mulcaster's time at Wanlockhead in June 1744 when perhaps only the eldest of his 3 brothers John (born abt 1722), Peter (abt 1727) and Robert (abt 1733), all later employed in the lead industry, was perhaps old enough to assist his father –and a date that spring is assumed here. However this is not at all clear, and a later request from Westgarth for him to visit Scotland is equally possible.]

To Mr Thomas Westgarth at the Riding in Alondale

Hond Master

According to Your Order, I have consulted with my Father about my going into Scotland, which he thinks will not do well, for he finds himself being but in an Indifferent State of Health, not able, with my Brother, to work about 2 tests (to wit, 6 or 7 Fothers) in the week - - - far Short of what you will have made here, wch in all likelihood, (as I suppose you don't intend the Lithurage Shall any more hinder the Ore-Smelting) will at least amount to 12, the Surplus of wch will Soon rise to a great Stock than I Suppose you will think fit to have unrefin'd here, and So you'll be under a necessity of having another Refiner – This consider'd, I must beg to be continu'd Here. – if You think otherwise, please let me know as Soon as you can, and you Shall not be more readily obey'd by any than by

Sir Your very humble Servant

Jas Mulcaster

28 Jun 1744 James Mulcaster to John Mulcaster

[Note: this is the first surviving page of the manuscript notebook into which all letters were copied, apparently by the writer James Mulcaster so at least one earlier page is

now missing. Given that later letters were addressed to brother John it is assumed that he was also the recipient of this letter.]

had him on Monday last at Carnwath Fair, but had not any Chapmon for him – I receiv'd also with your Letter by Jack Robson, Blackmore's Creation, for which, and your Lines of the French War, I give you many thanks, and desires you will continue the latter as largely as you can in your next, for as soon as I see what number of verses it contains, I shall collect it from your Letters, and write it in my Print Hand, it being very well worth my while – The Book I shall read, and let my Friend the School =Master read against Rob. Steele comes, and send it with him – If it should happen that you were well, and not very busy against ye time I think of coming of coming home, and were to come for me with your Horse it might save me the trouble of buying one (Horses being at present very dear here) and the Expence of keeping it in Winter --- what you think of this, you may let me know in your next – I'm very much Surpriz'd that I have not a line from Mr. Smith by J. Robson --- tell him if I don't hear from him Shortly, I shall both think and give it out here, that he is certainly Dead. Pray give my Respects to my Father, Mother, and Brother --- wch is all at Present from
Your affectionate Brother Ja: Mulcaster

Wanlockhead June 28th 1744

P.S. In a Scots Magazine for 1741 wch I have lately read, I met with ye following Article amongst the Deaths --- At Dublin, Thomas Morecroft, Esq; the younger Brother of a Baronet of yt. Name, and the person mentioned very often in the Spectator under ye Character of Will. Honeycomb.

6 Sep 1744 James Mulcaster to John Mulcaster

To John Mulcaster Junior. At Acton in Derwent. To the Care of John Teasdale

Dear Brother

This comes, hoping to find you in good health, as, thanks to God, I arriv'd here on the 4th Instant – The Wether, I understand, has not been less turbulent here than wth us; Scarse any thing having been done in the Mine Since I came away, because of ye great Rains that have faln; so that for any thing that, as yet, I See, I Shall have done a good while sooner than I expected wn I left you – there has only been 24 Bars of Lead made Since left the Place, and there is but little Ore about the Mill, and less at ye Mine, nor is there any likelyhood of much being raid's this Season --- what Ore is about each Place, the Smelters will work up a very Short while, 20 Fothers of Lead being as much of (farthest) as can be made from it, after wch, they design to Set on a Slag hearth – So that Some time in November I'm likely to have done – If, as I expect it will, this finds you in Aldston Moor, I desire you will lead my Horse Home with you if he is able to

walk, and if he grows Sound would have you to dispose of him as Soon as possible; and if it is needful to put him to grass, to keep him in good Condition till you have an Opportunity of Selling him, I desire you would procure it for him, and whatever Expencc you are at I Shall reimburse at my Return – Let me have a Line from you as Soon as possible, that I may know how you all are, and if my Horse is recover'd, or like to recover - I would also have you to Set down in your Letters when you take off any Silver the weight the Cake, the day of the Month it was made, and the Quantity of Lead it was made from; or else keep it in a peice of Paper till I come home – I found, on my Return hither that the Smelters had begun to board themselves, and, for want of a better Way, I design to do So too – we are to pay 3s. a Week, and, at that Rate, will however live cheaper than we did the former part of Summer – I Shall Say nothing how I design to return at present, but Shall consider of Some way before the Time comes, and let you know – Pray give my Respects to my Parents, and Brothers, and to Mr. and Mrs Smith – wch is all at present (only I could wish you would continue your French War) from

Your affectionate Brother Jas. Mulcaster

Wanlockhead Septembr. 6th 1744

P.S. I design to give my Uncle a Guinea to pay Thos. Featherston for ye Loan of his Galloways, and Jo: Hetherington for my Horse's Grass – the Remainder thereof I Shall order him to give you, and would have you ask him for it, if he forgets, -- my Father wants 8 or 9s. of me, and may perhaps need it before I return – I'm not yet begun to work, but designs to put Fire to a Test this Evening --

14 Oct 1744 John Mulcaster to James Mulcaster

To James Mulcaster. At Wanlothead in North=Britain. By Way of Edinburgh and Lead=hills.

Dear Brother

Sunday October 14.

This comes, hoping to find you in Health, as thanks to Heaven, we are at present – Your's I receiv'd but just now. – I don't doubt but you have got mine of the 30th of Sept. So can only inform you in this; that I will meet you at Carlisle as you desire; So you may in Your next direct me when and where to meet you, and I desire that you would punctually observe the Day you fix on – We have not yet disposed of your Horse, but has put him to Grass to Abra. Teasdale, who, it's thought, will make a Sale Sometime shortly, if So, Seeing you can want your Money, he will give the best Price if we chop him off there: If not, we will either Sell, or exchange him for One that is Marketable at Hexham Fair – The only News that we have here is that Thos. Tweddle having made too free with the Black=Lead or Wad at Keswick has been oblig'd to take

shelter in the Isle of Man – Cornelius and Tom Gleeson came here on Fryday last – I can
Say no more (being 8 o'clock at Night) only that

I am Your Afft. Brother

J. Mulcaster.

24 Mar 1745 Daniel Watson to James Mulcaster

[Note: The two poems are given side by side in the original, 'Collin's Complaint' to the
left and 'The Imitation' to the right]

For Mr James Mulcaster at Acton –

Sir,

I take this Opportunity to Send you what I promised (viz) Collin's Complaint in
Burlesque. And am Sir Your's very Sincerely

D. Watson.

March 24 1745

Collin's Complaint

Desparing besides a clear Stream
A Shepherd forsaken was laid
And whilst a false Nymph was his Theme
A Willow Supported his Head.
The wind yt blew over the Plain
To his Sighs with a Sigh did reply
And the Brook in return to his Pain
Ran mournfully murmuring by.

Alas! Silly Swain that I was
(Thus Sadly complaining he cry'd)
When first I beheld that fair Face
'Twere better by far I had dy'd
She talk'd and I blest the dear tongue
When She Smiled twas a Pleasure too great
I listen'd and cry'd when She Sung
Was Nightingal ever So Sweet.

How foolish was I to believe
She could doat on So lowly a Clown

Or that her fond Heart wou'd not grieve
To forsake the folk of the Town
To think that a Beauty So gay
So kind and So constant would Prove
Or go clad like our Maidens in grey,
Or live in Cottage for Love.

What tho' I have Skill to complain
Tho' the Muses my Temples have crown'd
What tho' wn they hear my Soft Strain
The Virgins Sit weeping around!
Ah Colin! thy Hopes are in vain,
Thy Pipe & thy Laurel resign;
Thy false One inclines to a Swain
Whose Music is Sweeter yn thine

And you my Companions So dear
Who Sorrow to See me betray'd
Whatever I Suffer forbear
Forbear to accuse the false Maid
Tho' thro the wide world I should range
'Tis in vain from my Fortune to fly
Twas her's to be false & to change
'Tis mine to be constant and die.

If while my hard Fate I Sustain
In her Breast any Pity is found
Let her come wth the Nymphs of the Slain
And See me laid low in ye Ground
The last humble boon that I crave
Is to Shade me wth Cypress and Yew
And when She looks down in my Grave
Let her own that her Shepherd was true

Then to her new Love let her go
And deck her in golden Array
Be finest at ev'ry fine Show
And frolick it all the long Day
While Colin forgotten and gone
No more Shall be heard of or Seen
Unless wn beneath the pale Moon
His Ghost shall glide over ye Green.

The Imitation

By the Side of a glimmering fire.
Melinda Sat pensively down
Impatient of rural Esquire
And vex'd to be absent from Town
The Cricket from under the Grate
With a chirp to her Sighs did reply
And the Kitten as grave as a Cat
Sat mournfully purring hard by.

Alas! Silly Maid that I was
(Thus Sadly complaining She cry'd)
When first I forsook the dear Place
'Twere better by far I had dy'd
How gaily I pass'd the long Day
In a Round on continual Delights
Park, Visits, Assemblee's, and Play
And Quadrill t'enliven the Night

How foolish was I to believe
Delusive Poetical Dreams
The flattering Landskips they give
Of Groves, Meads, and murmuring Streams
Bleak Mountains & wild Staring Rocks
Are ye wretched result of my Pains
The Swains greater Brutes yn ye Flocks
And the Nymphs as polite as ye Swains

What tho' I have Skill to ensnare
Where Smarts in bright circles abound
What tho' at St. James's at Pray'r
Beaux ogle devoutly around.
Fond Virgin! thy Power is lost
On a Race of rude Hottentot Brutes
What Glory in being the Toast
Of noisy dull Spires in Boots?

And thou my Companions So dear
My all that is left of Relief
Whatever I Suffer forbear
Forbear to dissuade me from Grief

'Tis in vain then you'll Say to repine.
At Ills wch can't be redres'd
But in Sorrows as pungent as mine
To be patient, alas! is a Jest.

If further to Sooth my Distress
Thy tender compassion is led
Call Jenny to help to undress
And decently put me to Bed
The last humble Solace I wait
Would Heav'n indulge me ye Boon
Some Dream less unkind yn my Fate
In a Vision transport me to town

Clarissa mean while weds her Beau
Who decks her in golden Array
The finest at ev'ry fine Show
And flaunt it at Park & at Play
Whilst here we are left in ye Lurch
Forgot & Secluded from View
Unless when Some Bumpkin at Church
Stares wishfully over the Pew

5 Jul 1746 Daniel Watson to James Mulcaster

[Note: A Daniel Watson was curate at Ponteland in 1746 having been curate at Edmondbyers and Muggleswick in 1744 (not far from Acton): the online Clergy database

<http://db.theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/persons/CreatePersonFrames.jsp?PersonID=138259>]

To Mr James Mulcaster at Acton.

Pont-Eland July 5 1746

Sir

I beg you wou'd be So good as Send me a Copy of my Lord Wharton's Burlesque of Chevy Chase – You may enclose it in a Cover directed to the Care of the Revd Mr Alderson of All-Saints Newcastle – And you'll oblige

Your very humble Servt

D. Watson

20 Jul 1746 James Mulcaster to John Westgarth

To Mr John Westgarth at Unthank in Weardale

Sir

Having lately seen in my Friend Job Ward's Hand a Vol. of Don Quixote wch I understand is Your's, my great Inclination for Reading, and Your late Favour in lending me Several Vols of Shakespear gives me the Presumption to beg a Loan of this also, and the other Vols of it. – Tho' in this I'm conscious that I too much resemble other Sturdy Beggars, to whom if you give an Alms once, you run ye Hazard of being perpetually pester'd wth their Importunities. – Only I can promise to differ from them in this, to wit, not to make any bad Use of your Charity, but Shall be very careful of what you shall please to trust with me, and return your Books as Soon as possible, having Some Short Intermittions in my Bus'ness wch gives me an Opportunity of using them. – If you add the above Favour to your former, You will lay under a further (and very great) Obligation a Poor fellow, not capable of making any Return other than remaining

Sir, With the utmost Sincerity Your very much obliged Humble Servant
Jas Mulcaster

Acton 20th July 1746

3 Aug 1746 James Mulcaster to Daniel Watson

[Note: Dated as 3rd April but in reply to letter of 4th July, so assumed to be a mistranscription from the original into the MS notebook]

To the Revd. Dan. Watson at Pont=Eland. To the Care of the Revd Mr. Alderson of All=Saints, Newcastle.

Revd. Sir

According to your Request, and in Requital for the Imitation of Collin's Complaint, wch I've receiv'd from you, I send you this of Chevy=Chace – And am

Acton) 1746
Apr. 3d)

Sir
Your's in Sincerity
Jas Mulcaster

The Drinking=Match

God prosper long our noble King
And likewise Eden=Hall;

A dolefull Drinking=Bout I sing
There lately did befall.
To chace the Spleen with Cup & Can
Duke Philip took his Way;
Babes yet unborn shall never See
Such drinking as that Day.
The Stout and ever thirsty Duke
A Vow to G-d did make
His Pleasure within Cumberland
three live=long Nights to take.
Sir Musgrave too of Martindale
A true and worthy Knight
Eftsoons with him a Bargain made
In Drinking to delight.
The Bumpers swiftly past about,
Six in a Hand went round,
And with their calling for more Wine
They made the Hall rebound.
Now when these merry tydings reach'd
The Earl of Harold's Ears,
Am I, quoth he, with a great Oath
So Slighted by my Peers?
Saddle my Horse, bring me by Boots,
I'll with them be right quick;
And, Master Sheriff, come you too,
We'll fit them for this Trick.
Lo! yonder doth Earl Harold come
Did one at table say;
'Tis well, reply'd the mettled Duke,
How will he get away?
When thus the Earl began, great Duke
I'll know how this did chance,
Without inviting me, Sure this
You did not learn in France.
One of us two under the Board
For this Affront shall lie;
I know thee well, A duke thou art
So some years hence may I.
And trust me, Wharton, pity it were
So much good Wine to Spill,
As these Companions all may drink
Ere they have had their fill.
Let thou and I in Bumpers full

This great Affair decide,
Accurst be he, Duke Wharton said
By whom it is deny'd.
To Andrew's and to Hotham Fair
Many a Pint went round:
And many a gallant Gentleman
Lay Spuing on the Ground.
When at the last the Duke espied
He had the Earl secure,
And ply'd him with a full pint=Glass
Which laid him on the Floor.
Who never Spoke more Words than these
After he downwards Sunk;
My worthy Friends, revenge my Fall
Duke Wharton sees me drunk.
Then with a groan Duke Philip held
The Sick Man by the Joint,
And Said, Earl Harold 'Steed of thee
Would I had drank that Pint.
O Christ! my very Heart does bleed,
And does within me Sink,
For Surely a more Sober Earl
Did never Swallow Drink.
With that the Sheriff, in a Rage
To see the Earl So Smit,
Vow'd to revenge the dead drunk Peer
Upon renown'd Sir Kit.
Then Stept a gallant 'Squire forth
Of Visage thin and pale,
Lloyd was his Name, and of Gang=hall
Fast by the River Swale.
Who said he would not have it told
Where Eden River ran
That unconcern'd he should sit by,
So Sheriff I'm your Man.
Full lustily and long they Swill'd
Many a tedious Hour;
Till like a Vessel over=fill'd
It run upon the Floor.
Then News was brought into the Room
Where the Duke lay in Bed,
How that his 'Squire Suddenly
Upon the Ground was laid.

Ah! heavy News, Duke Philip Said,
Cumberland Witness be;
I have not any Toper more
Of such Account as He.
Like Tydings to Earl Harold came
Within as Short a Space,
How that his doughty Sheriff too
Was tumbled from his place.
Now god be with him, Said ye Earl,
Since 'twill no better be,
I trust I have within my Town
As drunken Knights as He.
Of all the Number that there
Sir Baynes he Scorn'd to yield;
But with a Bumper in his Hand
He stagger'd o'er the Field.
Thus did the dire Engagement end,
And each Man of the Slain,
Was quickly carry'd off to Bed
His Senses to regain.
God Save the King the Church & State
And bless the Land with Peace;
And grant henceforth that Drunkenness
'twixt Noblemen may cease.
And also bless our royal Prince
The Kingdom's other Hope,
And grant us Grace for to defy
The Devil and the Pope.

16 Dec 1746 James Mulcaster to Thomas Brown

To Mr Thomas Brown at Nent=Head.

Dear Sir

I acknowledge the Receipt of Your's of the 12th, together wth the two Books, and Should, according to Your Request, have Sent you Some more of mine, but not knowing how this may come to hand, much less Books, I defer Sending any 'till after ye Holidiaies, when People are coming to Work. – I take very kindly your Interposition with your Cousin in my favour, and am not a little rejoic'd to find She does not take my late Want of Circumspection in her Company amiss. – As to her Objection, that I'm going to marry, I can assure you there is nothing of it. – So She needs give no Credit to a Report whose cheif foundation was laid by the Hopes of the Girls Parents and the

Fears of mine; of the Truth of wch I shall endeavour to convince her, by erelong paying her another Visit, which, She may be Sure, I would neither give her nor myself the Trouble of, was I engag'd elsewhere. – But as the Weather is So extremely wet, and, as I believe we shall make very few Holydaies (our Bus'ness being pretty urgent) I think I shall not get in to Aldstonmore till the Days are a little longer, when it may be hop'd the Weather will be better --- So I have nothing more to add But that

I am Dear Sir Your's in Sincerity
Jas Mulcaster

Acton 16th Decembr 1746

3 Jun 1747 James Mulcaster to William Atkinson

To Mr William Atkinson, Wig=Maker at Alondale=Town

Mr Atkinson

Whether it is that you think me below keeping your word with, or that you don't regard your most Solemn Promises to any, I pretend not to determine - - - But from your late very uncandid Dealing with me, tho' in a very Triffling affair, I cannot help Suspecting either the one or the other – However once more, I disire to hear from you, which I make no doubt I Shall, Seeing you have always been liberal enough that Way – But as I begin to be asham'd of giving myself and other People any further Trouble about a thing of So little Importance, I must disire you to be ingenuous with me at last, and either let me have my Wig, or tell me plainly that you don't intend me it. the latter you have given me Reason to Suspect – By doing the former you will prevent having fixt upon you the very ill Opinion of

Your Friend
Jas Mulcaster

Acton 3d June 1747