

[These letters are from a draft letter book identified as having belonged to [Benjamin Johnson](#), agent to Thos Wentworth Beaumont (TWB) from 1819. It was used in an essay by a Bretton College student, Michael Bell, in 1984, without giving any further details of the original volume other than a statement in the preface that it 'came from Viscount Allendale's estate in Northumberland'. However, unlike Johnson's later office copy letter book (NRO 672/E/1E/7), no trace of this 1820s volume can be found at the Northumberland Archives or elsewhere amongst the uncatalogued Allendale Estate papers. A more likely source, since Bell implies he did not visit Northumberland until a later stage of his research, is the Bretton Estate Archive of Allendale papers, now in the care of the West Yorkshire Archives Service, but the catalogue does not indicate its presence, and it is not said to remain at Bretton.

Consequently the transcripts are as Bell gave them, other than with a few minor corrections of known place or personal names. One or two of Bell's remarks suggest that the transcripts he provided are not the complete contents of the book, but 85 letters are still given, dated from between February 1821 and August 1828. The drafts often include phrases and sections later crossed out, and these are given *in situ* within the transcripts here and clearly indicated as such.

Bell's essay is to be found in Brotherton Library, University of Leeds Special Collections with the reference BHDVC/CD/78a M.Bell, 'Letters Book: 1821-1828', unpublished essay (1984). This new extract contains just the transcripts of Johnson's letters rather than any of the linking text, with the addition of Bell's copy of the extracted 1823 correspondence between TWB and Charles Earl Grey that was published in the *Newcastle Chronicle* in July 1826]

9 Feb 1821 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Feb 9th 1821

I beg leave to enclose a summons I have just recd for your attendance as Foreman of the Grand Jury at the Newcastle Assize ... In case a tenant should offer for the Abbey and grounds would you allow him to let the long room for a ball room and for other public occasions. The drainage by the Fenwick tenants and others is going on to a considerable extent and answers to my most sanguine expectations. I expect to remove to Bywell in a week or ten days. Some of the young Pointers at <Chesters> have been found worrying sheep. I have taken down the stalls in the stable at Bradley and found the wood so bad that it cannot be put up again. As much as may got out of it as will make the present cowhouse into two boxes but the stable will require new wood. The paint inside of the house is very dirty would you wish the worst parts to be painted. The outside has all been painted by Miss Simpson.

25 Feb 1821 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Feb 25th 1821.

I expect in a few days to let a part of the Abbey if not the whole of it and the grounds. I shall remove the best shrubs to Bywell for the present. ... you do not <...> where the Pinis [pineapples] in the Stove at Bywell is to be sent ... and I understand from the gardener they will not keep.

4 Mar 1821 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr Beaumont.

March 4th 1821

The Pinis with a couple of woodcocks sent in by Matthew Lee were sent off directed to you in Pall Mall on Tuesday last ... the two mills at Bywell .. for entire different purposes ... the High Mill being for the sole purpose of making flour and pearl barley and the low mill for making oatmeal. There is not any room in the high mill to place a pair of stones to ground oatmeal without building and the low mill is as I before stated now standing in consequence of the water wheel having nearly fallen to pieces and it would be in vain to attempt to repair it.

23 Mar 1821 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B.

March 23rd 1821

In case you should visit Northumberland soon I think it would be better to defer the alteration of the Bywell mill until you have seen it ... I have sent a brace of woodcocks sent in by the Bywell gamekeeper. He has applied to me for a gun, not having one of his own, you will have the goodness to say if he is to have one.

1 Apr 1821 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B.

Bywell April 1st 1821

I have removed my family to Bywell to enable me to attend [struck out: closely] to the enclosure now going on ... There is a <...> Engine and a great number of leather pipe for extinguishing fires which they value at £35 ... has suffered one of the young dogs to get away from him whilst hunting them and worry another sheep.

1 May 1821 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B May 1st 1821

To whom am I to remit the rents which I shall receive on the 16th inst also the sum agreed upon to be paid Mrs Beaumont out of the Bywell Estate ... five of the Pointers were sent off to Bretton Hall yesterday another would have been sent but was too heavy in pup to travel ... has applied to have part of the land now in open pasture enclosed ... he will pay 5s 6d additional rent on the sum expended in inclosure ... I shall send a Pini on Thursday the last which will be ripe until August. I gave directions to the gardener not to force any more to be ready before that time.

9 May 1821 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B May 9th 1821

I sent a Pini on the 1st the last which will be ripe until August. Would you wish any young rabbits or leveretts to be sent. I met Mr Thomas yesterday at Hexham where he informed me that Mrs Beaumont has given him directions to receive from me the sum agreed upon to be paid out of the Bywell rental. In the statement sent, the expense of repairing the mill is stated to be paid by Mrs Beaumont but Mr Thomas now seems doubtful of this and supposes Mrs B may not allow any expenses except the fence walls on Bromley Fell.

24 May 1821 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B May 24th 1821

There are two large coppers which were in the Brewhouse at Bywell taken down by Mrs Hudson ... they are not of a description which I think likely to suit in case you should at any time wish to brew your own ale.

18 Jun 1821 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B June 18th 1821

If the Pini house at Bywell is to new roofed, the glass being very much broken and the woodwork in a very bad state ... more Pointers worrying sheep ... The Bywell association for the prosecution of Felons solicit your becoming a member ... all the

proprietors of the adjoining estates are members ... The small mill at Bywell <...> is now standing for want of repair. On this subject I beg reference to my letters of Feb 25th & Mar 4th,

20 Jun 1821 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B June 20th 1821

You will observe £170 charged for fence walling this (I shall have to receive of) Mr Thomas will have to repay when he returns from London and we settle Mrs B's proceeds from the Bywell estate ... I fear the letting of the mill and fishery for 15s will require minute investigation and circumstances I expect will transpire in no way creditable to Mr Hudsons agents'

1 Aug 1821 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

[Note: Undated but in sequence between those dated 20th June and 3rd Nov 1821. The reference to grouse suggests a date nearing the start of the shooting season, and perhaps 1st August was sufficiently ahead of a 10th August meeting for it to be broadcast, and it is used here]

Mr B

A gent from Mr <...> is named as having your permission to shoot for 7 days. The 10th of August is fixed for a general meeting of all the copyholders who are wishful to infranchise their copyholds. I am sorry to say they do not seem to come forward with that spirit I could wish to see but I believe the Game at Bywell will be found scarce, hares and pheasants in particular. The present keeper looks well after the game in the daytime but I do not think him a sufficiently active and bold man for the night watching which is the principal point to be attended to. As you probably do not intend taking out a deportation for him a person at a less wage might answer as well. What quantity of Grouse would you wish Matthew Lee to kill for Bretton Hall? The rabbits have increased in March as to become a great nuisance and I should recommend a part of the young ones to be destroyed as they are doing a serious damage to your Tenants.

14 Aug 1821 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

[Note: Undated but in sequence between those dated 20th June and 3rd Nov 1821. 14th August given here ie. shortly after the meeting of the 10th referred to.]

Mr B

I have had the honor to receive your letter from Paris ... About fifty of the Allendale copyholders attended on the 10th inst and have agreed to purchase their tithes and freeholds at the price asked and a meeting will take place ... The farmers are by no means improved in circumstances since you were in the North ... I called upon Geo Forster yesterday but he could only promise to pay up his last half years arrear with his half years rent at Martinmas. He expressed a wish to write you on the subject though ..?.. he send any letter to me I shall forward it ... If it meet your approbation I should prefer having an allowance in lieu of having a horse and milk found ... this I consider the actual expense incurred annually (£80) ... and permit me to rent the lawn and a small croft behind the house in grass it would be a great convenience to myself and family (as it is I am obliged to take the man who goes with the draught horses to attend to my horse night and morning.)

1 Sep 1821 Benjamin Johnson to Diana Beaumont

[Note: Undated but in sequence between those dated 20th June and 3rd Nov 1821, and which from the contents predates the end of September. 1st September is given here. This letter to Mrs Beaumont was clearly the subject of much agonised drafting, as indicated by the various phrases struck out along the way]

Mrs B

I have received a letter from the Park Keeper at Chillingham to inform me he has had directions from Lord Tankerville to send Mr B a Buck any time during the season which he says continues until near the end of September. I shall thank you to inform me if you would wish it to be sent to you at Scarbro' or to any of Mr B's friends, [struck out: 'when I have the honor next to see you in Northumberland I shall take the liberty of ... When Mr Thomas and myself settled the amount to be paid you out of the Bywell estate we considered that some allowance might be paid to me as the Agent. The sum then named was £50 per annum ... £50 per annum should be allowed ... paid to me as the agent of the estate ... having hitherto no opportunity of soliciting your consideration'] In settling with Mr Thomas the amount to be paid you out of the proceeds of the Bywell Estate we thought you probably might consider to [struck out: 'make me some'] allow [struck out: 'ance'] me [struck out: 'for the attendant trouble and expense regularly arising'] for the trouble and expense which I should incur in the care of it, [struck out: 'You will no doubt be aware that had the exchange of property which was first agreed upon taken place that my'] The sum Mr Thomas named was £50 per annum which he I believe would have expected had the property come under his management. [struck out: 'I must respectfully solicit your attention'] Should you kindly consider to make me this small allowance it will be most thankfully received.

12 Sep 1821 Benjamin Johnson to Diana Beaumont

[Note: Undated but in sequence between those dated 20th June and 3rd Nov 1821. The diary kept by Diana's daughter Diana shows that they went to Doncaster on Sept 16th, so his letter presumes can be dated to shortly before then, and the 12th is used here]

Mrs B

I have sent by this mornings coach two Pinis and have since received Mr Morrisons letter and shall take care that your commands in respect to the forwarding of Game are duly observed. I shall endeavour to send a brace or two of Black Game to be at Doncaster on the 17th along with more game.

3 Nov 1821 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mrs B 3 Nov 1821

I sent by the mail of yesterday two boxes of game containing 3 brace of grouse and a brace of black game. Matthew Lee has not been able to get any <...> Partridges owing to the continuous rain ... the Pinis are scarcely ripe but shall be sent as soon as they are fit to eat. The season for salmon fishing ceased in Sept until the 20th of December. I feel much obliged to you for your kind intention of sending the pheasants every care shall be taken of them.

10 Nov 1821 Benjamin Johnson to Diana Beaumont

Mrs B Nov 10th 1821

3½ brace of partridges and one brace of grouse sent on Tuesday last. By this days mail a couple of woodcock and a pini.

20 Jan 1822 Benjamin Johnson to Diana Beaumont

Madam! January 20th 1822

Mr Beaumont left directions for the first Salmon that was taken to be sent to Bretton Hall. The fisherman has brought in the first he has taken this afternoon which I have forwarded on the Mail of the day.

5 Feb 1822 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

[Note: Floods on Saturday 2nd Feb 1822 are well documented elsewhere. The day is not given here but mention of Sunday suggests it might date to a couple of days later, so Tuesday 5th is used here]

Mr B Feby 1822

We were in a great state of alarm on Saty night expecting to have the water in the house. The river began to rise early in the morning and continued to rise until five o'clock on Sunday. At this time it had advanced whom? in front of the house and was within a few inches of breaking over at the west end. I had removed all the furniture out of the low rooms and was about to begin throwing up a mound which might have held it back until it had advanced two feet more, when it fortunately subsided. I am persuaded much may be effected by a slight embankment on the west and south. This has not been so high in flood since the one in 1815 or 1816. The dam has been a little damaged but to no great extent ... The mill was 12 feet deep in water and the miller has had considerable loss in corn and flour. I have not yet heard what damage Mr Harbottle has sustained the whole of his low land must have been underwater ... I have sent Mr Fosters answer to my application to him to pay off a part of his arrears. I do not believe he will obtain any money from Mr Blckett and think he should give better security.

20 Feb 1822 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr Beaumont Feb 20th 1822

I sent by yesterdays mail 3 couple of woodcocks and four couple of rabbits. The Pini which was nearly ripe when you left Northumberland was sent to Mr Bacon as you then directed ... the gardener will be glad to have the melon seeds any time in the month of March.

16 Mar 1822 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

[Note: Undated but in sequence between those dated 20th Feb and 29th April 1821. Easter was 7th April, so mid-March is suggested here.]

Mr Beaumont

... I was not made acquainted with Roddams having dug out the fox until the following day in the morning ... I went down immediately and reprimanded him for so

doing and should have had him turned down but he was then so weak from being baited by a number of terriers that he was more dead than alive. Mr John Bacon of Styford I understand from Roddam had passed in the forenoon of that day and was asked if he thought the fox I lost be sent to the director of the Northumberland Hunt. He said they would not run a fox that had been bagged and Roddam might do what he pleased with him; but was not to turn him down as there were too many already in the woods at Styford. He was given to Mr Walker's son at Bearl and by him turned down before Mr Humble's hounds but was so weak that he never got out of the first field. I certainly never had allowed him to have gone to Mr Walker had I known he was to have been hunted (particularly by Mr Humble) ... I have not been able to get anything out of Mr Forster. I proposed to him some time ago to give a joint note with some responsible person ... I therefore much wish that you would honor us with your presence at Easter to see what has been done in the farm in particular and to ride through your Estate. Your tenants at Welton Fenwick and elsewhere who have hitherto made few complaints now say that they cannot go on with their improvements in drainage with the poor prospect of the value of produce and I should be sorry to see this most important improvement to your property relaxed ... It is an unpleasant task to have to make but consider it a duty I to yourself in so important a trust confided to me on your part as the care responsible must be of such extensive property and at the same time due to those who are labouring under such <....> depressed markets.

29 Apr 1822 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr Beaumont

April 29th 1822

I find in minute enquiry that the flood of 1771 was ten feet above the level of the rock on the north side ... I have looked over the damage Mr Harbottle's farm has sustained from the flood ... the soil of the Island containing about 20 acres below the Tyne Mills is entirely washed away and a bed of sand deposited ... Mr Harbottle makes his statement upwards of £260 but I shall think £200 a sufficient allowance ... to be allowed at the Mayday rent day.

8 May 1822 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Sir! May 8th 1822

The Brown horse arrived safely and is now ready to turn out to grass ... I have sent by the days mail a pini and five cucumbers.

15 Mar 1823 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

[Note: Day not stated. 15th used here]

Mr Beaumont March 1823

I do not think any part of Broomley Fell can be planted this year to advantage as the snow is still upon it and the season is far advanced ... I am glad our markets are considerably better but unfortunately for most of the tenants they have marketed the greatest part of their corn of last years growth but it will nevertheless be the means of inducing them to continue their improvements in draining in expectation of the next being a better year.

1 Apr 1823 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

[Note: Day not given. 1st assumed here. Clark was the Revd Robert Clarke, one of the leading opponents of the plan to drive a road through the Seal park in Hexham in 1823. See G.Finch, 'Grand plans, popular protest and human frailty: the Hexham Sele road dispute of 1823', *Hexham Historian*, Vol 26, (2016)]

Mr Beaumont Apr 1823

The colliery at Kirkheaton was retained by Col Beaumont and is let to Mr Dixon ... I have reason to believe the present tenant is considerably in arrears. The colliery has been very much neglected and might in proper hands have worked twice the quantity of coals. Dixon spends the chief part of his time in the Ale house and I should suppose cannot long keep his head above water ... Excepting the breaking of the ice we have had no flood whatever this winter. The dam was then a little injured by it but to no great extent and may be soon repaired when the weather will allow the workmen to work in the water. The commissioners of the Hexham new branch of road have not yet settled the line of road through Hexham. Mr Clark opposes the line through the Seal and is determined to bring into a court of law if it pass that way. He has taken upon himself to <...> [possibly 'install', which the Revd Clark did indeed do that Spring] these new seats in the Seal for the accommodation of the public. Mr Bates the new surveyor of the road says you do not wish the road to pass over the Seal and that you gave your consent without due consideration his authority. Revd Charles Lee Mr Richardson who applied to you for a piece of land to build the new scotch chapel ... the vicar of Bywell has not received or heard any thing about books which were to be sent from the society for promoting Christian knowledge and which you said you be so kind as send someone to enquire after ... I shall take care to procure all the pheasant eggs I can meet with ... I am sorry to say our markets which had <...> have fallen back to the same low prices and are at present very dull. The next rent day will be about the

15th of next month and you will be so good as to inform me if you intend any return to be made to the tenants.

1 May 1823 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

[Note: The bridge was to be the present one over the Tyne at Bywell downstream from the Hall]

Mr Beaumont May 1st 1823

... enclosing an estimate and sketch of a stone bridge which you can compare with the one sent by Mr <...> I shall enclose with my accounts a letter I received from Mr Swinburne asking the loan of some <...> belonging to the Band of your Regiment. In my answer ... I said that you had declined a similar application last year as you wished the Band to meet and practice regularly.

15 May 1823 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

[Note: Undated but in sequence between those dated 1st and 29th May so mid-May is used here]

Mr Beaumont

... the total estimate of erecting such a bridge I estimate to be £4591. If it is made a Tole Bridge and you should consider to have it erected by shareholders I think there is little doubt but the money might be raised. Take 50 shares at £100 each as the number necessary to complete the Bridge and the approach to it and of these shares if you and Col Beaumont would each take five I do think the remainder might be made up.

29 May 1823 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr Beaumont May 29th 1823

I have the honor to receive your letter of the 16th inst and have to thank you on the part of the tenants for the return you have made to them ... I observe it states in the newspapers that Parliament is likely to be <prorogued?>. early this year if so I hope to have the honor to see you in Northumberland.

15 Jul 1823 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

[Note: The marriage was intended to be between TWB and Elizabeth Swinburne of Capheaton]

Mr Beaumont July 15th 1823

As the season for grouse shooting is so near I shall thank you to inform me if you wish the same Gamewatchers to be employed in Allendale as last year. If any poachers are taken do you wish their guns to be taken from them and their dogs destroyed. This had a very good effect last season. The young dogs which Simpson hunts in the spring will require running on the moors they are far from being ready ... I shall thank you to inform me when you would wish the house at Bradley to be got ready ... I enclose two bills sent in by Mr <Anglis> and Mr Todd they are no doubt overstretched but they nevertheless sustained great loss. It will rest with yourself what remuneration you may think proper to make them when you visit the North. I have seen in the Yorkshire Newspapers your intended marriage and it has also been communicated to me by Col Carr. It is on this account that I am most particularly anxious to know when I may expect to have the honor to see you in the North. There are many things in the house at Bradley that will be required to be done ... I was at the opening of the new Chapel in West Allen.

23 Jul 1823 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr Beaumont July 23rd 1823

Mr Kyle has been to look at the situation of the intended bridge but the river was too much swollen ... The gardener at Bradley has received a letter from one of your servants requesting a person may be got to assist Mary the Dairymaid to put the house in order and that you may be expected there in ten days or a fortnight. As I have received no intimation of your being so soon at Bradley I conceive there may be some mistake and shall wait your own instructions ... Simpson has not taken his dogs to the moors and <waiting> your directions.

29 Aug 1823 Thomas Wentworth Beaumont to Charles Grey

[Note: This extract is from a printed copy of the original letter, as also the others that follow in this entry, which found their way into the Newcastle Chronicle's hands and they were published by them on 20th July 1826, just after Beaumont had lost his seat in the highly charged election of 1826. The transcript was included alongside those of the letters in Johnson's letterbook in Bell's essay, and so is included here, together with

Bell's comment at the foot (thus). A fuller version of Grey's reply from Tunbridge Wells on 31st Aug is given elsewhere, as are two others from Grey on 19th January and 5th February 1824.]

To Lord Grey

Aug 29th 1823

..Almost immediately after her daughter's acceptance of my proposal, in which she and Sir John seemed cordially to concur, I was struck by the Unkindness of Lady Swinbourne to me, and the Continual Endeavours she was making to hinder Elizabeth from giving her Affections to me ... this alarmed me considerably, ... for, besides the usual Respect of well-disposed Children to their parents, I observed a Confidence little short of idolatrous in Elizabeth towards Lady Swinbourne - the peculiarity of some of their Habits and Education had construed this. I resolved immediately to give up other Considerations, and to use all the Advantage which my Familiarity with the Family and approaching Marriage afforded me, for investigating to the Bottom, the cause of this unnatural Behaviour.

Circumstances soon occurred to shew me, that Lady Swinbourne had not much Regard for her Husband, for whom, however, she constantly expressed the strongest Attachment. I may now pass over a variety of Things which brought me to suppose that she had entertained, if she had not still, a Passion for yourself, which had at some time or other, probably many Years ago, been gratified. Having this idea, I went on to examine its truth by repeated Conversations, which fully confirmed it.

..I had the opportunity of seeing General Grey with her and was brought to a similar Suspicion regarding him. Nor did it entirely stop here, so unbridled and unprincipled her Conduct appeared to me. The first Step I took (this was in London) was to expostulate with Lady Swinbourne upon her behaviour to me..

On Sunday the 10th, after some prayers had been read at home (it was a wet Morning) .. I declared to Edward Swinbourne my Opinion respecting his Mother, and named yourself, General Grey, and her own Butler.

I think it is also my Duty to mention that I felt myself urged to the Course I took, by Circumstances of a extraordinary Character, which, after a most calm and dispassionate Examination, I believe to be out of the actual Cause of Events. ...It has not been the least in my thoughts to screen myself from a Duel by this letter ... to confound their most unworthy, and abandoned Mother ...

TW Beaumont.

Tunbridge Wells.

Sir, I have this moment received your most extraordinary Letter, which has excited not only my Surprise but my Indignation ... the infamous Allegation you have made against Lady Swinburn's character is totally false and unfounded.

GREY.

My Lord; Being convinced, upon calm Reflection, that my Conduct towards your Lordship has been unjustifiable, I do not hesitate to offer your Lordship an Apology for it.

TW Beaumont.

[This last letter was apparently delivered by hand by TW's brother. Upon reading it, Grey said he presumed TW had been suffering from a temporary mental derangement, and was glad he was cured. On hearing this, TW threatened Grey with action for defamation; a plan which was soon dropped.]

16 Sep 1823 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr Beaumont Sept 16th 1823

James Briggs has requested me to ask you to allow his wife who is at present lodging at Crawcrook to occupy the room over the stables at Bradley which Earnshaw had when his wife was there. I have been indirectly asked if you intended giving up Bradley but of course I could only say that I had received no instructions from you to that effect. Mr Clavering of Riddlehamhope is the gent who caused the enquiry and is in want of such a situation. He has Greencroft only for one year.

20 Sep 1823 Benjamin Johnson to Dawkin

[Note: see notes to the letter from William Lee to Lord Fitzwilliam of 8th September 1823, given elsewhere in Dukesfield Documents, for the context to this letter]

Mr Dawkin Sept 20th 1823

The common report of the day at Hexham is that Sir J. Swinbourn has explained to you the cause of his quarrel with Mr Beaumont and that he does not wish it to be kept secret. You must naturally suppose I feel very anxious to know the real cause that could break off the match so suddenly and I will state what common report says upon it. Sir J Swinbourne is said to have communicated to you that Mr Beaumont <...> said he and his sons to be rascals and Lady Swinburn no better than a W---e. Upon which Sir J S thought it <necessary> to turn him out of the house. If you have been made acquainted with the cause of the disagreement and are perfectly at liberty to make it known I shall feel particularly obliged to you to state it to me. It is from no idle curiosity that any thing authentic would be satisfactory to me feeling as I must do a

strong interest in every thing that relates to Mr Beaumont and particularly when his conduct and character is brought into question.

17 Dec 1823 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr Beaumont Dec 17th 1823

I have been prevented writing sooner supposing that you would visit Naples first and then proceed to Rome ... I have given James Briggs directions to take your horses up and get them in condition to go to London about the 20th of January ... There is little passing in the county that is necessary for me to communicate. Hostility against yourself I hope is gradually subsiding and I trust before long something may occur to draw off their attention from that point. ... Your brothers have not returned here to shoot an I suppose the season is now too far advanced to expect them.

20 Dec 1823 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

[Note: No date given but it appears in sequence between 17th Dec 1823 and 7th Feb 1824. 20th Dec is used here. The Pitt Club had been established in 1814 by the anti-Catholic Tory Charles Brandling – and fellow MP for Northumberland alongside TWB. Beaumont's evident decision to leave might therefore have been political rather than personal.]

To the Secretary of the Pitt Club, Newcastle

I am directed by Thos Wentworth Beaumont to request you to take off his name from the

24 Jan 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

[Note: No date given but it appears in sequence between 17th Dec 1823 and 7th Feb 1824. Since the advertisement referred to by Johnson appeared on the 31st it was presumably the edition of the 24th which it was too late for. This letter is therefore assumed to date from around the 24th]

I rode to Newcastle on Wednesday ... I found your letter had arrived this morning. The Newcastle Papers are all printed on the Thursday ... I could not therefore get the advertisement inserted ... I am convinced every advantage will be taken of it to your prejudice in this county. Your letter to Mr Brandling has been made generally known by Mr Brandling and those hostile to your interests who have spared no pains when

any disadvantage to your interests in this question could arise from its promulgation ... I beg to apologise for offering my opinion in this matter but I cannot remain silent when I conceive my sentiments can in the least <...> to your advantage in what I think no one has a more lively or <...> feeling.

7 Feb 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Sir! Feb 7th 1824

The advertisement appeared ... on Saturday 31st ... I have no doubt Sir J Swinburne feels himself in an unpleasant predicament from which he cannot withdraw with credit to himself.

Newcastle Chronicle 24th Jan 1824.

To the Gentlemen, Clergy and Freeholders of the County of Northumberland

GENTLEMEN,

I Have returned to England in Order to discharge my Duties to Parliament, but have found that Reports concerning me have gained Credit which render me un-fit for acting as your Representative.

I must, therefore, decline any further Attendance in the House of Commons, until I am able to repel the infamous Allegations, which have been urged against me.

I have the Honour to remain, GENTLEMEN,

Your obedient humble Servant,

T.W. BEAUMONT

Warren's Hotel, Jan 19, 1824.

11 Feb 1824 Benjamin Johnson

[Note: Recipient unknown but apparently in relation to a vacancy for an agent for Lord Tankerville – of Chillingham Castle, Northumberland. It is, of course, a draft which might never have been sent as a letter]

Feb 11th 1824

[struck out: 'Your sister has this morning acquainted me that Lord Tankervilles Agent is leaving his situation'] I am much obliged to you for your early and kind communication relating to Lord Tankervilles Agency. It is a situation I should be glad to <...> and in a part of the country I should like to reside in, but before I can take any steps in the affair, it will be necessary for me to obtain, if it can be got at, what the situation is likely to be worth and this must be done if possible without it being

generally known that I am an applicant for it. I will state to you what advantages my present situation and you probably through Mr Alder can compare it with the situation at Chillingham. My present salary is £300 per annum a house and coals found and £20 for all riding expenses upon the business of the estate when I am not detained from house all night in which case I extra expense incurred. To this you may add Mr B's promise that he will advance the salary when he is in <...> of the property he will come to at the death of Col & Mrs Beaumont. On this little value can be placed as Mrs B enjoys good health and the benefit to me is in all probability at a great distance. The very unpleasant unsettled way in which Mr B and his mother live makes a change desirable to me but against this I must be <...> that I can obtain an equally or more lucrative situation it would be bad policy to move and secondly I consider myself bound until <...> it was materially to the advantage of myself and family to stand by Mr B until existing circumstances and not desert him now that the storm lours around him, I feel sincerely and hold the obligation you have placed me under by your kind communication and if you think you can obtain any information as to the value of the situation I shall be obliged to you to communicate it. I am happy to inform you that your father is much better and has obtained his old look. I have a message for you from your sister but fearing I might make any mistake I have sent my letter than she may insert it herself.

17 Feb 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr Beaumont

Feb 17th 1824

I have used every endeavour to obtain a copy of Lord Greys letter to Sir J S but I find that now impossible and the current report is that you are taking steps to <proceed?> against Lord Grey for defamation and this makes every one very cautious in saying any thing upon the subject. Mrs Beaumont told me she had procured a copy of Lord Greys letter to Sir J Swinburn when she was at Capheaton and he made the same statement at Newcastle but I cannot learn that it was shown by Mrs B to any one ... Mr Dawkin is not in possession of the contents of Lord Greys letter at least he does not admit that he is, but I shall most likely meet him at a party on Thursday evening and will again sound him upon it.

12 Mar 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

March 12th 1824

I do not think it would be possible to fit up as many rooms at Bywell at a trifling expense as you would require for your whole establishment but I could with care by opening out a few windows get as many ready as you would need for yourself and two

22 Apr 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr Beaumont at Pall Mall

April 22nd 1824

I am sorry to have to communicate to you the destruction of the farm building at Acomb yesterday by fire. By great exertion we saved the dwelling house and a cottage but the barn stables sheds and cowhouses were all destroyed. The fire originated from a spark of fire in removing some hot embers out of an oven falling in some dry straw which this communicated with the straw in the fold yard and instantly the whole in a blaze the wind blowing hard and no person except the women being at that time in the premises it gained such strong hold that there was no time to save two calves that were in one of the sheds. The tenant ... has lost the greatest part of his implements of husbandry ... the small engine we had at Bywell was of infinite use indeed without it the dwelling house and cottage could not have been saved. This farmstead stands on the left as you rise the hill from Bywell on the road to Newcastle by way of Bearl.

2 May 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr Beaumont

May 2nd 1824

I cannot learn that Sir J Swinburn or any of his friends have come forward in any shape to answer your speech and the received opinion is that it is unanswerable ... Sir J S has lost much of his popularity before and seems now to have sunk so far in the estimation of every one (save those bound to him from self interest) that any thing he may attempt to thwart your virtue at a future election can only cause disappointment to himself and show him the estimation the public hold him in .. I have not in any <...> heard your speech mentioned but with great approbation being <...> for in just vindication of yourself against an infamous libel which everyone is now convinced had not the shadow of foundation. It is always spoken of as explaining all that was necessary for the public to be acquainted with and conveyed in the most gentlemanly and delicate manner possible ... The proposition to remove the dam has been made to the parties interested .. I have not begun to take down the Cupola.

4 May 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Cook

Mr Cook May 4th 1824

The gent who has had care of my childrens education left last week and I am extremely anxious that they should be as short a time as possible without a tutor as I am

convinced they will soon lose the little they have learnt. Mr Beaumont the gent to whom I am land agent has considered to occupy the house I now reside in himself and I am consequently obliged to remove to a distance of four miles.

13 May 1824 Unknown to Benjamin Johnson

[Note: This appears to be a letter sent on behalf of the Northern Receivers of the Greenwich Hospital estate to Johnson]

Haydon Bridge 13 May 1824

..with respect to your inquiry concerning the Dam at Bywell the Commissioners and governors of Greenwich Hospital ... will be much guided ... by what the Duke of Northumberland and the other great proprietors of lands and fisheries upon the River Tyne may think proper to do upon the occasion.

15 May 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

[Note: Chapman was William Chapman, engineer and promoter of the Newcastle and Carlisle Railway, which in 1824 favoured a route to the north of the Tyne rather than the southerly route eventually built. The Railway needed TWB's support to run across his land past Bearl and Peepy]

Mr Beaumont May 15th 1824

I have sent by this days coach a box containing plans and prospectus sent to me by Mr Chapman ... The alteration at the Hall is proceeding with all possible despatch ... it appears the railway if carried into execution would take the same line as the intended canal was to have passed and you will observe that it would pass through the centre of the Bearl and Short Wood and proceed past Peepy intersecting the whole of your estate in the north side of the River. It is unnecessary for me to make any comment upon it as I am convinced you will instantly see the great nuisance that would arise from it. By the same parcel you will receive a Pini.

31 May 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr Beaumont May 31st 1824

..I understand Mr E Swinburne has called upon several gentlemen in the neighbourhood to contradict the substance of your speech at Hexham. Col Carr told me ten days ago he had received a letter from Sir J Swinburn the contents of which he

would communicate to you and Mr E.S. was to meet Col Coulson by appointment at Col Carr last Tuesday to contradict your statement. I shall see the Col tomorrow and in case he has not made you acquainted with the particulars of this extraordinary appointment I will inform you of it. ... intend to begin to take down the Copula next week and expect to have it roofed in and in a state of forwarding when you return in July. I have paid Mr <...> £2300 a deposit on the purchase of the Bearl estate this week with other payments will prevent me remitting any money. ... The Duke of Northumberland has signified his consent ... to come forward in equal proportion to his interests in the Salmon fishery in the Tyne ... the rent of the fishery and mill is at present £240 per annum. ... I should think the parties ought to give about £4000 in consideration of the money being applied to build a free bridge.

2 Jul 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

[Note: No date given but it appears in sequence between 31st May and 9th July 1824, and perhaps shortly before the latter date given the mention of the cupola in both so 2nd July is used here]

Mr Beaumont

..Every person who has been made acquainted with the correspondence is fully convinced that Sir J Swinburn has been guilty of a gross mistatement and are at a loss to know how he means next to proceed. Every step he has taken from first to last has tended to defeat his own object and his friends now admit that he has mislead them and are all <...> to see how he will set about to extricate himself. Mr Bird seems not to wish the correspondence to gain great publicity (at least so his letter to Col Carr implies) but in my own opinion it ought to be made known to all who are in possession of Sir J.S. statements. We have taken down the cupola.

9 Jul 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr Beaumont July 9th 1824

Mr Edward Swinburn has been very unwell for some weeks but he has now got out again. I believe he has had a slight fever from taking cold but the wits call it the Summer fever ... I have got the cupola down and partly covered in ... I shall next get on with the inside work of the new kitchen and lower the present stacks of chimneys.

21 Jul 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr Beaumont July 21st 1824

I was not able to state in my last letter the day on which the judge will enter Newcastle. I rode over there yesterday and learnt that it will be on Thursday the 19th of August. I hope nothing will prevent you being in Northumberland at that time as considerable disappointment has been felt by your friends that you were not at the Races.

24 Jul 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

[Note: The jubilee referred to was a moratorium on all game shooting for the 1824 season, advertised on August 14th in the Newcastle Courant with warnings against illegal shooting and poaching]

Mr Beaumont July 24th 1824

..you are determined at any rate to take the dam down. (As to the absolute necessity of this; I am aware your opinion is at variance with my own as I have every reason to believe should a bridge be erected and the stone taken from the south side of the fish lock to build it with it would give the River so much more scope that no flood <...> be apprehended and would save greatest and <... ornament> to the place. Thos Strutt says there are a few grouse upon Bromley Fell but I fear some will have but very indifferent sport there as they will immediately fly into Mr <Ormsstones> property. There will no doubt be plenty on your farm at Westburnhope ... Mr Morrison has had a letter from Mrs B last week to say it is her intention to be here in September and that a general jubilee is to be given to the moors. Mr Morrison has deferred allowing any public advertisement to appear to that effect until he knew your pleasure upon it.

26 Jul 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr Beaumont July 26th 1824

..You do not state in your letter what you wish to be done as advertisement appearing in the Newcastle papers to announce a general Jubilee on the Allendale Moor.

19 Oct 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr Beaumont Oct 19th 1824

The wine may be <...> immediately if you think proper but I think it would be better to delay it until Spring as I shall be obliged to leave the house this winter to enable the workmen to get on with the alterations inside. There is at present a house at Corbridge

to let and I shall thank you to inform me ... if you would wish me to engage it and remove my family from Newbiggin to it as the seaside is dreadfully cold at this season.

2 Nov 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B. Nov 2 1824

In answer to your letter ... there is not any cottage on the south side of the river in which the gamekeeper you purpose sending could be placed ... If Thos Strutt was to remove back to Broomley two rooms may be found in the village until a house is built. Is it your intention to let Thos Strutt continue to take charge of the dogs and retain the deputation or to place them under the care of the new gamekeeper. I fear Thos Strutt's disposition will often cause dissention between them and I shall feel obliged to you to state the nature of the situation the Suffolk man is to hold that I may be able to settle any dispute that may arise between them. You do not make any remark on my enquiries respecting the letting of the Bearl farm and it should be determined upon without <...> of time. As your return to Northumberland seems so uncertain I must beg of you to refer to my last letter respecting the letting of the farm. Is it your intention to continue to occupy all the land now in hand at Bywell? Where do you intend the cows to stand when they are removed to Bywell. I should think the present stables too near the house to put them in any part of them and yet they should not be at any great distance? At present I think there are more cows than are necessary and some might be disposed of. Must I proceed to <fill> up the present stables or let them remain until Spring. I think as little as possible should be done to them as I am convinced you will wish to have them at a greater distance from the house. In case you should be at Bretton soon I wish to meet you then as the finishing of the inside of the house and many other matters should be determined upon which could be much better settled in a personal interview than by letter.

17 Nov 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr Beaumont Nov 17th 1824

I am sorry I am not likely to see you here before next Easter as it appears (if current reports are to be believed) that there is a strong party forming to oppose you at the next election but I cannot find that any individual has positively come forward to offer himself. I think it necessary to make one observation, that in several instances lately I have heard it stated by some who I am convinced are your friends that they think you must be indifferent about it or you would have passed more time in the county. Those who wish to breed mischief say you treat your constituents with too much indifference. I have given Strutt very strict orders about the preservation of the game on the south

side indeed I have of late been obliged to be rather severe upon him and have told him that I shall report any neglect of duty on his part or any attempt at insubordination immediately to you.

1 Dec 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Diana Beaumont

[Note: Day not given; 1st used here]

Mrs B. Dec 1824

I have to thank you for your very polite attention and handsome present of the P. Forte at Hexham Abbey. I did myself the honor to call upon you last week but you were from home; otherwise I should have had the opportunity of more particularly impressing the obligation you placed me under.

15 Dec 1824 Benjamin Johnson to unknown

[Note: No date given but it appears in sequence between December dates. Mid-December assumed here]

I did not receive your note until today at home consequently some time after I had sent the cart to bring away the Piano Forte. I feel sorry I was not sooner made acquainted that the instrument was in use as I should have had great pleasure in accommodating Mrs <...> with the loan of it or indeed any friend of Mr Lees for a short period. The instrument was Mrs Beaumonts but a short time ago I applied to purchase it when she very politely made me a present of it. Had Mrs <...> when I first sent for it stated the matter as it really stood without prevarication all this would have been avoided for I was a total stranger to yourself and Mrs <...>

28 Dec 1824 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B. Dec 28th 1824

We had a tremendous flood here on Christmas day which has done much damage to the lands bordering the river. Mr Harbottle on his farm has suffered to a considerable extent. The water still covers a considerable part of the flat land below the house ... The water was upon the lawn here but I prevented it getting to the house by making a small embankment to the west.

26 Feb 1825 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B. Feb 26th 1825

Everything seems to have died away in the shape of any strong opposition at the ensuing election but it will nevertheless be necessary to be prepared against any <....> your adversaries may adopt.

30 Mar 1825 Benjamin Johnson to Christopher Bird

Mr Bird March 30th 1825

I should have been most happy to have seen you and Mr Wm Beaumont to have taken up your quarters with me but at present we are all in confusion from workmen in the house. The female servants however are all at Bradley and the house then in order to receive Mr G B and his bride. I fear Mr Wm will find fishing a cold amusement and the woodcock I should suppose are all gone.

2 May 1825 Benjamin Johnson to Christopher Bird

Mr Bird May 2nd 1825

Thomas Strutt has requested me to write to you to say he will be glad to accept your offer to go to Gummerston and take charge of the wood fences and game but should you since have altered your determination as to the appointment ... he will feel much obliged to you to take a house for him in the neighbourhood of <Hoyland>. Mr Beaumont has not taken any further notice as to his leaving, nor has any new gamekeeper arrived. I have received a letter from Mr B indeed he seems to have given up writing altogether and I am at a loss to account for his silence.

6 May 1825 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B. May 6th 1825

... The arrears in the payments to Mrs Beaumont out of the Bywell Estate have arisen partly from the payment of the deposit on the purchase of the Bearl estate ... but to give you the clearest idea of the matter I shall forward to you as soon as I have <acct of> the rents now due which will be in the course of the week after next ... to the period by which you will see that no money has <....> time been resting <in> my hands <....> I will forward the whole account from my commencing your agency up to this period and I

shall feel most particular obliged to you to let someone examine them as it is highly necessary that they should be looked over and passed. I am aware that Mrs Beaumont will catch at any thing that may tell to my disadvantage and I shall therefore

8 May 1825 Benjamin Johnson to Christopher Bird

Mr Bird May 8th 1825

... offer you my most sincere thanks for your very friendly information respecting the payment in arrears to Mrs Beaumont out of the Bywell Estate. ... the deposit pd, was £2300 which it would have been impossible for me to have met had I paid Mrs Beaumont the £1500 paid half-yearly to her out of this Estate. I am now determined to have my accounts <...> from first to last which I have often urged Mr Beaumont to do ... I am now convinced that Mr Beaumont has never examined my accounts I have been regularly sent to him or he would have been able to have explained the matter at once to Mrs Beaumont and that in giving orders for the building upon the estate and payments to his servants etc he has never taken into calculation what funds I had to meet the demand. ... I can assure you I feel very much hurt to be for a moment subject to Mrs Beaumonts unwarranted accusations and had it occurred after the approaching Election I should have instantly resigned my situation but until that is passed I will endeavour to meet it with that indifference it deserves conscious of my own integrity. I am really at a loss what to say respecting Thos Strutt as I am in no way acquainted with his attributes.

20 Jun 1825 Benjamin Johnson to Arthur Trevelyan

[Note: This is the only letter in the book which positively identifies the author as Johnson]

To: A Trevalyn Esq, Nether Witten. June 20th 1825

Richard Simpson was not quite a year in Mr Beaumonts service but during the time he held the situation he was sober, civil and attentive. He is a good shot and took considerable pains in destroying vermin. [struck out: 'I believe Mr Beaumont got a little out of humour with the behaviour of his dogs'] Mr B did not assign any reason to me for dismissing him and directed me to give him a good character.

Benj Johnson

1 Aug 1825 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

[Note: Day not given. 1st assumed here]

Mr B. Aug 1825

..I sent a quantity of the best fruit ripe to the dinner of the Horticultural society. The grapes were particularly fine and by far the best in the room. I also sent a basket to the mayor. I shall send fruit and vegetables to Mrs Beaumont tomorrow and observe your instructions as to the remainder as it ripens ... I shall take every care in my power to preserve the game at Bywell and prevent every one from shooting which I can assure you has never been the case but I cannot be answerable for the quantity you may find when you next come down until you give me authority to dismiss Thos Strutt in case he is not attentive and somewhat more subordinate than he has hither-to been ... Lord Howick was on the grand jury and it is generally thought he is endeavouring to bring himself into notice but I think he is too insignificant to become formidable.

20 Aug 1825 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B. Aug 20th 1825

... say if I may direct the dog which came from Bretton to be destroyed as Strutt says he is good for nothing and besides eaten up with the mange ... Will you allow T Strutt anything towards removing his family back to Yorkshire? He had ten pounds allowed him when they came into Northumberland.

1 Nov 1825 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B. Nov 1st 1825

... I have not heard of any public dinner at Newcastle of the friends of civil and religious liberty but I will ride over to inquire and inform you immediately.

30 Nov 1825 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B. Nov 30th 1825

Mrs <...> is arrived at Bradley and has applied to me for some grouse to shoot. I have written to Mattw Lee to <...> what he can before the season closes but the moors are now covered with a thick snow and I fear he will not be able to get many. She also wants some pheasants and Partridges but as there is no gamekeeper here and having

your .positive instructions that no person is to shoot at Bywell I have declined sending any until I receive your instructions upon it.

1 Dec 1825 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

[Note: No date given but it appears in sequence between Nov 30th and Dec 20th 1825. 1st Dec used here]

Mr B.

I have seen the plan of the intended railroad in the south side of the river the original line on the north side being entirely abandoned. They wish to pass through the Stockfd Hall farm and come along the bank in front of the hall on the opposite side of the river. If this is permitted they would cut down nearly the whole of the wood in front and lay open <...> above the turnpike road but their rail road also. As they by a little extra cutting keep on the south side of the turnpike road I hope you will not allow them to destroy the appearance of the Place in taking the line they propose.

20 Dec 1825 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B. Dec 20th 1825

Owing to the unsettled state of the banks and the runs caused thereby upon them ... I thought it best to defer drawing out the money I had been paid into the Bank ... until the thing had somewhat subsided.

29 Dec 1825 Benjamin Johnson to Edward Dodds

Ed Dodds. Dec 29th 1825

We have part of the Oak Bark ready to deliver and I shall thank you to inform me if you will take it at the same price as the last viz £10 per ton and a small quantity of Larch at £6 to be paid for Midsummer 1826.

11 Jan 1826 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B. Jan 11th 1826

Lord Ravensworth has not yet let Bradley and I fear it will rest in your hands another year. In this case your Brother possibly might prefer going there at Mayday and superintending the painting and papering of Bywell himself.

17 Jan 1826 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B. Jan 17th 1826

.. Mrs Johnson has been confined to her room for the last ten weeks but is at present considerably better and I hope will be able to come down stairs this week.

19 Jan 1826 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

[Note: In this election year another letter said to be from Johnson to TWB's solicitor, but not transcribed in full, is described as a long list of bills, from which the transcriber gave the following: 'I went to Hexham yesterday and engaged with Mrs Charltons Coach of Grey Bull Inn for her two gigs and 14 horses, Mrs Thomson of the Black Bull Inn two chaises,']

Mr B. Jan 19th 1826

As the Election must take place in a very short time, and you will have to furnish the house at Bywell I should recommend you to defer the building of a house for me for the present. If you would allow me to remove my family at Mayday to near to a town where I could get my children to a good day school it would be a great advantage to them as well as myself, as educating such a number at a boarding school with me is out of the question ... the school at Hexham has been closed ... at Alnwick there is an excellent moderate one and if you will allow me to place my family there for the present (until a house is built, at your convenience, for me at Bywell) the distance at first might seem great, but the difference between Alnwick and Newcastle is but a few hours ride.

1 May 1826 Benjamin Johnson to Diana Beaumont

[Note: Diana's intervention in the election campaign, the 'powerful support' encouraged here by Johnson, seemed to backfire. A contemporary chronicler noted that TWB 'hoped they would not put too harsh a construction on the conduct of a lady and a mother who, in her anxiety to secure her son's election, had not taken the most judicious means of doing so'.]

Mrs B. May 1st 1826

Mr Beaumont left Newcastle on Saturday last for London after completing the most successful canvass ever accomplished in this or any other county. His opponents

generally but more particularly the inconsistent Whigs are completely defeated and can never rally now. Throughout Mr B's canvass he has met with the most flattering reception and his exertions have been beyond what I believe any other gentleman could properly have given thought. The result however has amply repaid him and his very enemies now consider his election sure. Indeed nothing is now wanting but your powerful support to make the White Flag ride triumphant at the next election and thereby establish your power and influence in Northumberland never again to be disputed. Upwards of two hundred and twenty of his friends met at the Queens Head on Friday to give him a dinner ... a more glorious and deserved triumph was never achieved by man. Mr B as well he might, was in excellent spirits, and (gave them a speech which will be recollected by all present to the last moment of their, lives as displaying the soundest and most enlightened principles) was received with thunders of applause.

2 May 1826 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B. May 2nd 1826

I understand Captain Jobling of Newton Hall has taken offence that you did not call upon him and says he should certainly have attended the dinner had you called upon him ... Michael Dodds Esq residing at Cornhills Nr Kirkwhelpington was from home when you passed and I believe you omitted to call at his house to leave your card. A letter I have no doubt will win him over and I shall request your Brother, as soon as he returns from his canvass at Carlisle to call upon him.

10 May 1826 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B. May 10th 1826

Mr Ed Beaumont will have made you acquainted with an unpleasant circumstance which your servant Mason says have occurred at Bradley. As soon as I heard of it I went down to enquire into the affair and I must confess myself that after a long and close investigation I have considerable doubt of the veracity of his statement. The matter is of so improper a nature in any family that the parties accused cannot remain as fellow servants with the accuser and they have both given notice to leave their places particularly as he says he was induced to watch them on account of a quarrel he had had with Joseph.

16 Dec 1826 Benjamin Johnson to unknown

Dec 16th 1826

You would be surprised to hear that Mr Beaumont was contesting Stafford and I am sure you will be glad to hear that he had succeeded ... the bells there today I understand gave him many a merry peal and from the anxiety every person shewed for his success when I was there on Wednesday I am sure there will be many a merry feast. He did not make anyone in this quarter acquainted with his intention until last Wednesday ... Stafford is I believe one of the most venal boroughs in the kingdom and I hope he will have been careful to steer clear of bribery.

16 Feb 1827 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Feb 16th

Mr <Naters> has been to Bradley and got all the Apple Grafts he wants. I shall have the valuation of the farms you purpose selling ready in a few days ... If Mrs Beaumont should wish to purchase them would you object treating with her. The accounts at Alnwick for Beds still remain unpaid and <...> W Bell settled his the partners have been very clamorous. Mr Horsington offered Mr Canon for those he engaged about 2/6 a night but the other candidates have paid 5/- and 7/6 for the best. It is true that too many beds were engaged but I do not see how the partners can be expected to take 2/6 ... The new staircase is in a state of forwardness and I hope when finished will have a good appearance.

1 Jul 1827 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

[Note: Date not given but is in sequence between 16th Feb and 13th July 1827. Reference to TWB coming south might suggest it dates from not long before the July letter in which those plans are clearer. 1st July used here]

Sir!

The new staircase is put up and now only wants the bannister and handrail. The old staircase is taken down and the Balcony in a state of forwardness. I should be glad if you could come down to the north before you go abroad to see what has been done and gain your directions to proceed upon.

13 Jul 1827 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B. July 13th 1827

I shall take care to provide six beds at Allendale town for yourself and friends in the 12th August which is on a Sunday. I am extremely glad you are coming to the moors as I understand <Mr> Ruddock intends shooting without leave (he says at the seven springs) on the 12th. He grounds his right to shoot from the <allotment>. he has upon the Common and says he is determined to try his right and would not accept leave if offered to him ... The tradespeople who want accts of Mr Ge Bt are getting very troublesome. It will require £1,000 to carry me on until Xmas. Mr Lee sent me a bill for £100 to pay for the blood mares in Yorkshire which I have settled for and I expect they will be sent to York and sold. There still remains accts to the amount of £500 and upwards to settle.

3 Mar 1828 Benjamin Johnson to William Harbottle

Mr Harbottle March 3rd 1828

I had the misfortune to lose one of my youngest boys yesterday - you must therefore excuse me meeting you this morning. I have looked at the two trees claimed by Mr Bacon and I think there cannot exist a doubt of the southernmost one belonging to Mr Beaumont.

18 Jul 1828 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B. July 18th 1828

I am happy to know that you are arrived in London ... the China and Glass will be packed tomorrow and sent by the steam Packet which leaves NCastle on Tuesday next, and will arrive at Blackwell on Thursday. I enclose you Mr Harbottles letter in answer to my application to him to reduce his arrears. I must confess I was never more astonished at any production. He has had £150 allowed on .account of damage ... with this I also send you one or two more names who are deeply in arrears and by the favour to know, if, I am to give them notice to quit next Monday ... not having heard from you since I wrote in April last I am at a loss how to proceed with the house and outbuildings at Bywell, and all at present is at a stand.

Anick Grange

14th July 1828

The damage I sustained by the floods upon my Crop, entirely puts it out of my power to reduce the arrears I now stand under to Mr Beaumont, it is not to the crops alone the damage is done but to the farm also, which has obliged me in the last six years to expand upwards of Five Hundred Pounds in purchasing manure which but for the reduction in the quantity of Straw and the consequent reduction in Corn I ought to have produced upon the farm. It is some consolation that the arrears have not arisen either from neglect nor mismanagement, but from the effects of an Element over which I have no control and which will eventually render the farm of little value unless prevented by an Embankment.

27 Aug 1828 Benjamin Johnson to Thomas Wentworth Beaumont

Mr B. Aug 27th 1828

I waited upon Mrs Beaumont yesterday at Allenheads and was sorry to learn you are unwilling that I should hold any agency along with yours. When I appoint to it I had no wish to extend it, but since that time my family has increased beyond my expectation, beyond anything that might offer in your own family, my second son will leave school in six months when I purpose taking him into the office to assist me. Sir E Blacketts agence at Matfen is now vacant for which I wish to become a candidate. The property is so immediately adjoins and intermined with yours that no situation could offer which I could hold with so much felicity and I do trust that you will, with your usual kind consideration towards the wants and necessities of others, allow me to hold if the situation, should I be so fortunate as to have an offer of the appointment.