

[This set of letters in a private collection appear to have kept by Sir James Graham, originally of Naworth Castle in Cumberland. In the early 1830s Graham was the First Lord of the Admiralty, and therefore responsible for the Greenwich Hospital. The first part of this set concern the appointment of John Grey of Milford, in the Berwick area, as the Receiver for the Hospital's northern estates. Later ones are from Grey to Graham concerning aspects of his new position, quite different to the journal entries now in the Greenwich Hospital archives and transcribed elsewhere in Dukesfield Documents.]

25 Nov 1832 James Graham to Henry Grey

[Note: Henry Grey, (1802-94), later the 3rd Earl Grey, was Viscount Howick during the period covered by this correspondence. Sir James Graham was also from the north, having been born at Naworth Castle. He wrote to Howick, the Under-Secretary of State for War in his father's cabinet, in his capacity as the First Lord of the Admiralty, which had responsibility for the Greenwich Hospital.]

Copy Private

Admiralty 25th Novr 1832

My Dear Lord

About twelve months ago, when Mr Wailes was not expected to live, Ld Grey and You expressed to me an anxious Wish, that Mr Grey of Millfield, in the event of a Vacancy, should be appointed one of the Receivers of the Greenwich Hospital Estates in Northumberland. I acquiesced and I believe some communication was made to Mr Grey at the Time, which may have led him to expect the offer of this appointment from me on the first occurrence of a Vacancy. Mr Wailes still lives, and no opening by Death or Resignation has taken place; but the Board of Admiralty, in compliance with the suggestions of the Commissioners of Greenwich Hospital, has resolved entirely to change the System of Management of the Northern Estates. The precise Nature and Extent of this Change are fully stated in the Confidential Letters addressed by the Commissioners to the Receivers on the 10th of this Month, a Copy of which letter I enclose.

It was thought fair to give to Mr Brandling the refusal of the situation of resident Agent on the new Conditions, which we have resolved to impose. By the enclosed Letter from Ld Auckland it is announced to me, that Mr Brandling declined the offer. I have therefore resolved to tender the appointment to Mr Grey on the exact Terms, which were offered to Mr Brandling; and these Conditions must be considered immutable. I should add that the appointment is during pleasure; and that no retiring allowance will henceforth be granted. If Mr Grey should accept the Situation it must be distinctly understood that he resides constantly at Hexham, and relinquishes every other occupation, business and employment. The new System will come into operation on the 1st of January; but the Accounts of the present Receivers must be wound up, and several arrangements made, which the Commissioners and the Board of Admiralty

are of opinion will be best executed by their confidential Secretary, whom they propose to send to Hexham for the discharge of these Special Duties, and he will remain there till the 31st of March. If Mr Grey accept the appointment, he will be nominated on the 1st April, and from that day his charge will commence, and the transfer of all the duties will be made to him. – In the mean time his own arrangements must be completed for his change of Residence, and for the surrender of all his existing Engagements. It will also be necessary, if he accept, to settle with the Commissioners the Amount of Security to be provided by him in consideration of receiving & remitting all the Rents.

It is advisable that Mr Grey, if he be willing to take the appointment, should notify to me his acceptance without loss of Time; and the transmission of this Letter with its Enclosures to him will be the clearest and readiest mode of conveying the Offer.

I must also add a request, that Mr Grey will for the present consider this Communication strictly confidential, and on no account disclose in Northumberland his acceptance of this appointment, if he should consent to take it, without my concurrence.

I am satisfied that in making this Offer to Mr Grey I am discharging my duty faithfully to a public Trust, and that if I am so fortunate as to secure his Services for the Hospital, I shall render an essential benefit to this great National Institution.

I am always with sincere regards etc

J R G Graham

The Viscount Howick.

3 Dec 1832 George Eden to James Graham

[Note: Eden was the 1st Earl of Auckland and was Commissioner of the Greenwich Hospital. He would succeed Graham as First Lord of the Admiralty in 1834. New Zealand's Auckland was later named after him.]

Private

B of T, [Board of Trade?] Decr 3 1832

Dear Sir James

I leave no time in giving you, as you desire, my opinion on Mr Grey's letter, in the first place premising that the candid & business-like manner in which he expresses himself does him much credit and fully justifies the offer which you have made to him – The points upon which he appears most to feel hesitation are, the pledge to have no avocation from the duties of the Receivership, the residence at Hexham, and the amount of salary proposed – Upon the first – I think that we are justified by experience in saying that the Receiver shall owe & give to us his whole time allowing no other pursuit or interest to interfere with our business, and though it would be difficult straits to define the cases to which this condition should or should not apply, I should

say generally that its application should be to the management not to property and that it would be absurd & unjust to say that a Receiver should hold no share in a coal mine and have no interest in freehold or leasehold property, though objections might arise in the demand for time & attention which such indirect interests might create and in the degree to which they might exist.

From the condition of residence at Hexham and its immediate neighbourhood, which implies the living on the estates and amongst the tenantry and the Receivers seeing with his own eyes, and from the propose amount of salary I am of the opinion that there can be no retreat, certainly none, in fairness without again submitting the Receivership to the election of Mr Brandling – Mr Grey seems not to be aware that we have sold the Keswick Estates and that the only properties more, I believe, than twenty miles from Hexham in the possession of the Hospital are those at Spindleston and Scremerston for which we shall allow a bailiff and which of all our estates require the least frequent inspection – For one, I should be extremely inconsistent if I did not press the residence in the immediate vicinity of the bulk of the property – I did so in 1820 when Mr Brandling was first appointed, and again when I became Commissioner in 1829 – and next to the expense of the establishment at Newcastle I hold the great vice of the present system to be its distance from the estates – I am aware that the office proposed will be irksome & laborious & not overpaid & upon a different footing in responsibility from what it has hitherto been but it is due to the public and to the interests of the Hospital that it should be so and whilst I lament the expense of retiring allowances to which we shall be subject, I hold it rather to be a reproach to the old than an objection to the new system – Upon the question of Salary you will remember that in a discussion on the subject at the Admiralty, a doubt arose whether the amount should be 7 or £800 and the larger sum was only admitted upon the exclusion of all superannuation allowances – I trust that in the next three months our mining affairs will be so simplified that all mineralogical knowledge would be absolutely superfluous, but at all events I hold activity and earnestness and ability in business to be of far more importance than any such requirements – I have written to you in great Haste but without critically measuring my expressions you will be able to collect my opinion from this letter – I enclose a draft of instructions which have been prepared for the consideration of the board & which will probably be adopted in substance though perhaps not to the letter.

Very faithfully etc

Auckland

[annotated on reverse:]

Lord Auckland / 3rd Decr 1832 / Mr Grey's Appt

4 Dec 1832 James Graham to Henry Grey

[on outer leaf:] Sir James Graham to Viscount Howick 4 Decr 1832 / Mr Grey

Copy

Admiralty 4th Decr 1832

My dear Lord

To enable Mr Grey to come to a final decision, I forward to You the answer of Ld Auckland to the Letter, which you sent to me yesterday. He has enclosed a Draft of the New Instructions to the Receiver; and you may transmit both this Document, which will in substance be adopted by the Board, and Ld Auckland's Letter to Mr Grey. After he has considered them, I will trouble you to return them to me.

The Salary cannot be increased beyond the Sum offered in my former Letter.

The Residence must be fixed at Hexham or at Haydon Bridge.

No other occupation or business can be allowed, which is inconsistent with the constant Residence and close attention to the business of the Estate, prescribed in the Admiralty Instructions.

The cases put by Mr Grey, and the arrangements which he would seem to contemplate, do not fall within the proscribed line of 'other professions, pursuit, or business.'

I shall be anxious to know Mr Grey's final decision.

Very truly yrs

(signed) JRG Graham

The Viscount Howick

6 Dec 1832 George Eden to James Graham

[on outer leaf:] Lord Auckland to Sir James Graham 6th Decr 1832 Mr Grey's Appt

Private

B. of T. Novr 6 1832

Dear Graham

I have had a long interview with Mr Grey who has come up to Town in search of you – He is very anxious to see you and wishes me to ask you whether he could find you in Carlisle or Netherby on his return & when – he wishes to leave London about Tuesday next. I told him that he had better make up his mind decidedly, before he took such a journey, as to whether it was worth his while to live at Hexham for £800 a year, for I was quite certain that he could make no impression on you in these points – He said that he would consider between this day & Tuesday when he will call for the chance of an answer from you.

His objections upon other points are of much less importance – He was afraid that no tolerable residence could be found in Hexham and thought that the Commissioners should build a small house for the Receiver. I told him that we may wait for Hooper's report after he had visited Hexham but that probably a small place might be hired – He wished for some security that he should not be turned out on a change of government – which is not likely, but the security is impossible – and he objected to some of the expressions in the instructions as imposing upon the Receiver too minute an accountability & particularly to the requisition for a daily report of the employment of his time when a more general though regular report of all necessary information would be quite as useful in effect and be less intense & carry with it less the appearance of suspicion & mistrust – In this I am not indisposed to agree with him provided care is taken that the information is fully & substantially given, and in a manner to satisfy the Commissioners that there is no remissness and no tendency to revert to the old system and we may consider whether or not the expressions of the instructions are too stringent.

I must say that on the whole I was very much pleased with Mr Grey's manner & appearance & intelligence – Let me know whether he can catch you anywhere in the North – I know of no news which you will not already have heard - Hyde Villiers' death is very shocking – I have from George today a letter from Paris giving a prosperous account of his commission, Bills for the export of raw Silk & admission of cotton twist are already in the Chambers & the announcement given that the Ministry wish to institute duties for prohibition

Ever etc

Auckland

8 Dec 1832 James Graham to George Eden

Sir James Graham to Lord Auckland 8 Decr 1832 Mr Grey
Copy / Private

Knowsley 8 Decr 1832

My dear Lord

I am very sorry that Mr Grey should have taken the trouble of coming to London for the purpose of having an interview with me. I had endeavoured to make the original offer to him in very explicit terms; and they did not admit of variation, since Mr Brandling is treated unjustly, if Mr Grey be favored by the conditions of his appointment differing materially from those, which Mr Brandling had rejected. I gave an explanation in consequence of some enquiries made by Mr Grey thro' Lord Howick; and I must now repeat that residence either at Hexham or at Haydon Bridge is indispensable and that £1000 a year, to cover House Rent, is the Maximum of Salary, to which I can consent. The Receiver must of course hold his place during pleasure and any assurances to the contrary would be wrong in principle and perfectly nugatory but if Mr Grey do the duty well, he need not fear the chance of removal, against which

public opinion will be his best security; as to minor details concerning the form of the Monthly report and matters of this description no difficulty will arise provided Mr Grey be prepared to devote his whole time to the management of the Hospital Estates, and to reside in the centre of them, not quitting them without leave of absence and not considering himself at liberty to undertake other business. If he accept the salary and agree to these main conditions, we shall not differ about the rest; if he hesitate with respect to these he cannot have the appt.

I shall be very much occupied next week in visiting different parts of Cumberland previously to my Election: but Mr Grey will find me at Carlisle on Saturday next the 15th & I should be happy to converse with him there, but I cannot alter or depart from the fixed conditions now so fully stated.

In haste My dear Lord
Very truly Yrs
JRG Graham

Lord Auckland

11 Dec 1832 John Grey to Sir James Graham

London Dec 11 1832

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you, that I have today, had an interview with Lord Auckland, and have finally agreed to accept the Receivership of the Greenwich Hospital estates, upon the terms on which you were pleased to offer it to me, Subject to such alterations as to <minor> arrangements, as the report of Mr Hooper, after a residence on the spot, may decide the Commissioners to adopt. In the meantime, I shall strictly attend to your injunctions of secrecy, respecting the appointment.

I should have been glad to have had the honor of a conversation with you on the subject – but as you are now occupied with your election & I should be glad to be at Alnwick with Lord Howick on Saturday, & must be in the way to vote for Ord & Beaumont and Lambton & Williamson, in the following week, must decline the proposal conveyed in your letter to Lord Auckland, of an interview at Carlisle on Saturday.

I have the honor to be
Sir with great regard Your obedient servant
John Grey

I return Lord Auckland's letter.
The other <la....>, his Lordship retained

The Right Hon Sir J. Graham &c

12 Jan 1833 John Grey to James Graham

John Grey Esqr 12th Jany 1833 Promulgation of His intended appt

[printed newspaper notice affixed to cover sheet:]

The change in the management of the Greenwich Hospital estates, in this country, we believe is now arranged, and will be carried into effect in April. Instead of two Receivers, three clerks and six bailiffs, as at present, we understand it is intended only to have one of each, and the business will be transacted at Hexham instead of this town. It is currently reported that Mr Grey, of Millfield, is to be the new Receiver, an appointment which, we are sure, will give very general satisfaction, for we are confident that a gentleman better qualified for the situation could not possibly have been selected.

Milfield Hill, nr Wooler Jany – 12 – 1833

Sir,

In the first communication that I had the honor to receive from you on the subject of the receivership of the Greenwich Hospital, you requested particularly that my appointment, should it take place, might not be mentioned by me until I should have your permission to do so. I was anxious, as well on that account as on my own, that it should have remained secret – but was surprised to hear about ten days ago, that Mr Fenwick, who is I believe Colliery Viewer for the Hospital, has named it to an acquaintance of mine near Newcastle, who mentioned it to me, saying that he presumed it must be correct, as Mr Fenwick had just come from London, & had heard it from someone connected with the establishment – Since that time the report seems to have spread, though not having been in that neighbourhood, I was not aware of it – for on my return yesterday from Scotland, I found two letters from persons applying for employment as Bailiff, besides the notice which I enclose, from the Newcastle Chronicle of this date.

I hope that this premature announcement, may not now cause you any inconvenience, & my only reason for troubling you on the subject is to preserve myself from the suspicion of bad faith respecting it.

I have the honor to be Sir

Your most obedient Servant

John Grey

14 Jan 1833 James Graham to John Grey

Sir James Graham to John Grey Esqr 14th Jany 1833 Promulgation of his intended Appt

Copy Private

Admiralty 14th January 1833

Dear Sir

I am sorry that by any indiscretion your appointment has transpired prematurely, but I entirely acquit You of that indiscretion, and hope that you will suffer neither inconvenience nor annoyance from the disclosure.

The course to be adopted by you is not to deny or to confirm the statement, but remain perfectly quiet, while the Transfer is in progress under the care of Mr Hooper and subject to his responsibility; and you had better answer the application made to you for appointments by referring the applicants to the Trustees of Greenwich Hospital for their answer.

Allow me to take this opportunity of expressing my entire satisfaction at your acceptance of the Office of Receiver, and the pleasure which I feel, in having placed in this important Station a Gentleman of your attainments and high character.

I have the honor to be, etc

/signed/ JRG Graham

John Grey Esqr

28 Jan 1833 James Graham to Charles Grey

Sir James Graham To Earl Grey 28th January 1833

Augmentation of Salary to Mr Grey as Receiver of the Greenwich Estates

Copy Private

Admiralty 28th January 1833

My dear Ld Grey

I return Mr Gray's Letter: what he asks might not have been unreasonable, if before his acceptance of the Appointment he had not raised these very questions, and if he had not taken it only six weeks ago, on the express and declared assurances, that any augmentation of Salary beyond £800 a year, with £200 for House Rent, 'was quite inadmissible.' I am sorry he has troubled you on the subject; for thro' Ld Auckland I had a full communication with him; and I send the whole correspondence for your perusal. If you will refer to my Letter of the 8th of December and to Mr Grey's of the 11th, I am convinced you will be satisfied, that he is wrong in this early endeavouring to alter the Terms, with which he was lately content.

The Emoluments are surely ample with reference to the Extent of the Property now diminished by large Sales: and any alteration of the Terms offered to Mr

Brandling, and rejected by him, would expose us to bitter reproaches, and would place Mr Grey himself in an invidious situation. I am sorry He has thought fit to urge this question of House and Salary again; more particularly that you should have the annoyance of being dragged into the discussion, when in point of fact the question has been full discussed, considered, and settled.

Have the kindness to return the enclosed Copies of Letters, and believe me always.

Very faithfully Yrs

/signed/ JRG Graham

10 Oct 1833 James Graham to John Grey

Private

Cowes 10th October 1833

Dear Sir,

I am informed that the agreement with Mr McAdam as Surveyor of the Turnpike Roads under the Alston Trust expired in November. I have always been led to believe that the bargain made with him was improvident, that his Services been of a doubtful Character and that the allowances to him and to his Assistants have been continued on an extravagant Scale. If the bargain be open in November, the Time has arrived, where it would be expedient carefully to revise the whole arrangement and to consider whether this important Trust may not be placed in safer hands and under more economical management. The subject will have not escaped your attention but you will excuse me for thus reminding you more especially of it, because in the County which I represent, the whole transaction of the original appointment of Mr McAdam was viewed with jealousy as a flagrant job; and since the influence of the Hospital thus contributed largely to its perpetration. I am anxious that it should now be used effectually to the correction of the past error. A man of the name of Christopher Hodgson, who had been extensively employed on the Turnpike Trusts round Carlisle, informed me that he is an applicant for the situation of Surveyor on the Alston Trust, he has been long known to me as a Road Maker and Surveyor. I think him intelligent and trust worthy and quite competent to the adequate discharge of the duties: but I suspect he looks to a Salary like that enjoyed by Mr McAdam; when as I hope a large reduction will be effected; and the appointment should be only during pleasure; a Surveyor for a Term of Years is a strange Anomaly.

I hear with great pleasure how satisfied your whole Conduct is to the Trustees of the Hospital: and I was therefore gratified in consenting to an arrangement for building you a House, which I know was an object desired by you.

I have the honor etc

JRGG

Coll Grey

18 Oct 1833 James Graham to John Grey

To John Grey Esq Alston Trust Octr 18th 1833
[in a different hand] <Qu..> 22nd Octr

(Copy)

Private

Cowes 18th October 1833

Dear Sir,

I have derived the greatest satisfaction from the perusal of your letter. The Principle which you announce as regulating your conduct in the very important and responsible situation which you fill, and the objects, which you have in view, are precisely such as I anticipated from your high Character, and such as I should have desired to inculcate.

With respect to the Alston Trust, I am glad that you are duly impressed with the importance of this concern as bearing on the Interests of the Hospital; and nothing can be more judicious than the conduct which you have adopted. Representing the Hospital you are fairly entitled to exercise a dominant influence, which I am sure will be directed to the extinction of all the Jobbing, which has hitherto been at the root of the management of this devolved Trust at the same time I am equally sure that you will court the cooperation of the resident Gentry; and Mr Ord is a Gentleman of such Character & Merit that it is of importance you should carry him along with you in your principal reforms.

I by no means with my accommodation of Mr Hodgson in the least to sway your judgment: on the contrary I think your plan of advertising for a Surveyor quite correct; and the proposed Salary appears to me ample and the Condition of Residence indispensable. The Election will of course depend entirely on the comparative merits of the Candidates

I hope your new Residence will be comfortable and that you may long inhabit it, so as to restore the welfare and prosperity of the fair Estate, which is confided to your care. I am aware of the difficulties, with which you have to contend, but they will only enhance the merit of your success, and I am persuaded you will realise all the hopes which led me to appoint you.

I am Dear Sir Yours very faithfully

JRGG

18 Oct 1833 John Grey to James Graham

[Note: The 'scientific surveyor' disparaged by Grey was John McConnell, a nephew rather than grandson of McAdam. Like McAdam he was also involved in many other Turnpike trusts at the same time.]

Corbridge Oct 18th 1833

Sir

I have the honor of your letter on the subject of the Alston road trust, & am much gratified to think that all which I have done in respect of it, is in strict accordance with the views & suggestions it contained.

I discovered, soon after entering upon my present office, how deeply the Hospital was interested in that concern, & how enormously the debt upon it had accumulated, which led me to investigate the whole of the transactions of the trust from its commencement, & the result has convinced me of the truth of your supposition, that it had been founded on a system of jobbing throughout. McAdam got into it at first, by stating, upon the face of his estimates, that £26,000 would do, what 60,000 had not been sufficient to complete this proving <.....> extremely incompetent or something much worse. The early correspondence & meetings on the subject, are very curious. McAdam holds Lord Lowther up to the admiration & gratitude of the country for his enlarged & patriotic views of improvements. His Lordship in return magnifies McAdam's unequalled skill & knowledge in. this important branch of internal communication, & proposes that after his immediate inspection & personal services may be dispensed with, for the purpose of securing a skilful & scientific surveyor, the appointment of such person should be left solely to the said Mr McAdam. He as was natural, appointed a youth, his grandson, called McConnell, with a salary of £500, with the power of keepings assistant &c and with a provision that he could only be removed by a notice of six months, agreed to by a majority of a general meeting to be called for the purpose three months previously making in all nine months. The great interest which the Hospital possessed & the kind of <dictation> that it practised, indeed may <eutte...> in the country to decline taking any active hand in the business, & it has been <induced> by Mr McConnell much according to his own policy ever since. I found that he knew hardly any thing of the concerns except by the report of his deputy to whom he paid a salary of £160, he himself living in other parts of the kingdom & coming here to make an annual statement & receive his salary. This deputy too, was left to act in the most uncontrolled <manner> possible. He collected the rents, ordered the work, let it, paid for it, took receipts, often from illiterate people who could not sign their own names & transferred these to a nominal Treasurer, without any check upon his proceedings. None of the ordinary work, such as breaking stones or quarrying them, was subject to competition, but let by this man privately, thus opening a door to all kind of jobbing, if he were so inclined.

Having qualified as a Trustee, & being appointed one of a committee to enquire into the management of the roads, the finances of the trust &, I immediately moved some resolutions to the effect that McConell's services were not essential & much over paid – that they should be dispensed with at the earliest period that the stipulation in his appointment admitted of – that a resident surveyor be elected with a salary of £150 – that one clerk with a salary of £50 be substituted for two at £40 each. That certain workmen be employed giving to each a section of the road, to look after the surface, conduits, watercourses etc – but that all work which admitted of being let by the piece, should be submitted & let by public tender – a saving would thus be effected of £300 a year in salaries, & I should anticipate a considerable one also in the expenditure for labor, only that I fear the state of the roads, will for two or three years, require the application of an additional quantity of materials. These resolutions were adopted – notice has been given to Mr McConell that his engagement will terminate in February, not in November as you suppose, and a general meeting is to be held in Alston in November, to adopt the best means of carrying the other measures into effect.

I hear that our hasty reforms have produced some effusions of dissatisfaction from the Westmoreland end of the road – but having been in constant communication with Mr Ord, who fully coincides with my opinions, & effecting to meet Mr Scott, & others of the Trustees at Whitfield on the day before the Alston meeting, there is no doubt that we shall carry our field.

I need hardly assure you, that the importance of the roads in question, to this district, & the interest of the Hospital involved in them, are too great ever to allow of my omitting any opportunity of contributing to their improvement, or the economy with which it may be effected. I have not heard of Mr Hodgson as a candidate for the office of Surveyor, but should recommend that the selection be first advertised, & testimonials & qualifications etc produced, before an election be proceeded to.

Allow me to express the valification that I feel in hearing that my services so far, have proved satisfactory to you & to the Commissioners of the Hospital. I assure you there is <.....> room for energy & exertion in effecting the redress of abuses & in contending with the <...teracy> of prejudice & habit. The system of plunder, arising chiefly from the monopoly in the building department, that had been enjoyed by one set of people, is already broken down, but to restore land from a state of extreme exhaustion, from a long & uninterrupted course of severe cropping, in which every advantage been taken of it, & to raise tenants without capital, to a state of respectability, must be a work of time as well as of an entire chapter of encouragement.

Allow me also to express my acknowledgements for your kind compliance with the proposed plan of building a house. Seeing no prospect of any thing being obtained, at once convenient in situation & comfortable as a residence, there seemed no alternative between building, & my relinquishing the situation. I shall shrink from no amount of exertion or fatigue, but when added to a life of labor, was the privation (& that to a person of strictly domestic habits & enjoyment) of living as a lonely bachelor <....>, leaving my wife & children, of whom there are five, at the other end of the county, I did feel it to be a sacrifice which I could not continue, & which I was not

called upon to make. I trust however that in the end, the plan of building a residence for the Receiver, will give to the arrangement a respectability, independence & <pe...aletice> which could not have been secured by any other.

Allow me to apologise for the length of this letter, & to assure you of the consideration with which I have the honor to subscribe myself

Sir Your most obedient & obliged servant

John Grey

5 Dec 1833 James Graham to John Grey

Copy Private

Admiralty 5 Decr 1833

Dear Sir

I have received the enclosed letter from Mr R Hodgson of Alston, and I send you a copy of my answer. It is true that I have had no opportunity recently of making the conduct of Christopher Hodgson; and it is possible he may have fallen into dissolute habits; but the County of Cumberland is so divided by Party Feeling, and Mr R Hodgson is so much attached to Lord Lonsdale's Interest, that a Representation of his on this subject connected with Patronage is to be received with caution. I will thank you therefore to satisfy yourself by careful inquiry of the real merits of C Hodgson, before you support his appointment, at all events a Trust of this importance will require his fixed Residence at Alston and his exclusive time & attention. Mr Johnson of Walton and Mr Ramshay of Brampton would give you information with respect to C Hodgson, on which you might rely.

Have the goodness to return Mr R Hodgson's letter. I go to Netherby next week and shall remain there till the 1st week in January, if you wish to communicate with me.

Yours very faithfully

JRG Graham

J Grey Esq

10 Dec 1833 John Grey to James Graham

Private

Corbridge Dec 10th 1833

Sir

I feel myself very much obliged by your kind information & advice reflecting the election of a Surveyor for the Alston Turnpike in a proper choice of whom, the interest of the trust & the accommodation of the public are so deeply connected.

I must however state that Mr R Hodgson's information is incorrect as to my having expressed any intentions to advance the election of Mr C Hodgson upon your recommendation of him, however agreeable it would of course be to me to be able to accede to your wishes on the subject, which I well know, could only be expressed in so far as the character & qualifications of the party might be found to authorise the appointment – and I am sure that he is equally at fault respecting Mr Ord's intentions, as he / Mr Ord, very lately applied to me on the subject, & said that he would live to Mr C Hodgson the same kind of answer that I had done, which was, that however glad I should be to attend to your recommendation, the interests of the trust must be with me, as I was confident they were with yourself, the paramount consideration, & that I should not make up my mind until all the candidates were in the field, and I had availed myself of every means of obtaining information respecting them. Of Mr R Hodgson, I am compelled to remark, that in spite of his profession of disinterestedness, I have seldom met with a more apparent attempt at jobbing, than he made on a late occasion, or been brought to act in concert with any one whose motives & manoeuvres I should think it more necessary to keep a vigilant eye upon, than his own.

I have the honor to be Sir
Your very obedient servant
John Grey

15 Dec 1833 John Grey to James Graham

Corbridge Dec 12th 1833

Sir

I am sorry to say that the accounts I hear of Mr C. Hodgson are by no means favorable to his appointment by the Alston Trustees. Mr <Maunslay> informed me that he has been dismissed, or the determination of it, has resigned the Surveyorship of the road from Carlisle to Hesket, as also that from Carlisle on the Newcastle line, and is likely now to be dismissed from his situation of Bridge Surveyor from incompetency. You may perhaps have heard that a bridge at Alston fell lately, soon after the arch had been cast.

Mr <Gale> has been good enough to write to me respecting a Mr Wood who seems to possess most respectable testimonials. After seeing who the candidates are, we must endeavour to exercise due discretion in our choice.

I am glad to be able to report considerable improvements in the price of Lead. Beaumonts affected have sold a large quantity at £15 per ton. Last year at this time the price was only £13.

I am much occupied at present in valuing & reletting a number of farms that are out of lease or the leases of which have been relinquished upon the change of system newly adopted, from public tender to private negotiation with such tenants as are deserving.

I anticipate from this change great improvements in the condition of the property. Formerly every tenant took advantage of the land toward each end of his lease in every possible way, knowing that two pounds more offered by another, would displace him. And so it was that at every letting the tenants shifted about like men on a draft board leaving every thing in the greatest disorder & entailing a great deficit for repairs to the Hospital. Now a tenant will have the inducement to manage well to the end, knowing that in that case, he will have a renewal of his lease on fair terms, but if otherwise, that he will not be treated with at all.

I have the honor to be your faithful & obedient servant
John Grey

18 Dec 1833 James Graham to John Grey

Wetherby 18 Decr 1833

Dear Sir

I fear from your account that the objections to the appointment of C. Hodgson are unimpeachable & I am the last person who would wish to advocate his claims when his want of merit is established.

I gladly gave my consent to the new mode of letting the Hospital Farms: all the reasoning against the former practise is unanswerable & my confidence in you justifies the adoption of private Bargain in the place of Public Tenders. That confidence I am satisfied is not misplaced - & I remain

JBGraham

J. Grey Esq.

21 Jan 1834 James Graham to John Grey

Copy

Admiralty 21 January 1834

Dear Sir

I have received a Letter from Mr Hodgson of which I enclose you a Copy, together with the Copy of my answer. I am sorry that any serious misunderstanding should have arisen between you in consequence of my sending to You his first Letter, which perhaps I did hastily, but certainly with no intention of making mischief. I should be very glad to hear that the difference was amicably arranged, and eventually forgotten.

I am (Signed) JRG Graham

John Grey Esq.

23 Jan 1834 John Grey to James Graham

Corbridge, nr Newcastle. Jan 23rd 1834

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st Instant, together with copies of one addressed by Mr Hodgson to you & your reply to it.

I cannot but express regret & surprise that Mr Hodgson should have again made my conduct subject of remark to you, or should have thought it necessary to obtrude upon your attention a matter which was strictly personal between us. And I regret it the more that it obliges me to encroach still further upon your time by an explanation of the affair.

Previous to joining the meeting at Hexham for the purpose of electing the Surveyor & other officers for the Alston roads, I informed Mr. Ord that Mr Hodgson had stated to you that he & I were likely to give our support upon your recommendation, to a person most unfit for the situation. Mr Ord naturally felt indignant at such an imputation, & said that notice must be taken of it, making at the same time some remarks upon Mr Hodgson's general conduct, which however, were strictly private. He urged me to allow him to call me to the Chair and leave him at liberty, which however in the presence of so many, my <seniors>, I declined. Mr Ord, being placed in the Chair, could not take the matter up, but urged the propriety of my doing so, and accordingly, when he as Chairman reminded the meeting that they were assembled to make elections very important to the trust, & doubted not that every Gentleman would be activated in the vote he should give, by a sole regard to its interest, apart from any other notice. I stated that I fully concurred with him in that opinion, but that I knew with regret, that other motives had been imputed to my conduct in reference to this subject, & that being comparatively a stranger to the meeting & the representative of a most important interest, as connected with the trust & neighbourhoods, my anxiety to stand well with the Gentlemen with whom I was called to act, & with whom it was my wish on all occasions to act cordially & openly, induced me to take the liberty in their presence to vindicate my conduct & to ask Mr Hodgson on which authority he had informed Sir J Graham that I intended to support the election of a person whom he represented as very ill qualified for the situation, & the worse qualified the more improper must my conduct be in supporting him. That the course which would have suggested itself to my mind in such circumstances, would have been first, to ascertain the truth of the allegation which had been made to him, before communicating it to the person towards whom the greatest delicacy respecting any imputation against me should have been observed; for it could not be unknown to Mr Hodgson that not only the Receiver but the Commissioners themselves were accountable to the First Lord of the Admiralty for their conduct. That while I should be found at all times most ready, frankly & freely to obtain any notices & account for my actions, I should never submit to any thing like private misrepresentation with impunity.

Mr Hodgson reply was, as he seems to admit, an unhappy one. He stated that his anxiety to save time, induced him to apply to you at once. That he had been told by a person at Alston that he had heard me say that C Hodgson had applied to me for my interest, & that he had also applied to Sir Jas Graham. That C Hodgson had himself stated that he hoped by this means to obtain the Hospital's interest; and that he thinking that C Hodgson might have been politically useful to Sir J Graham & that he might be inclined to further his views in respect of the Surveyorship had written to warn Sir James of Hodgson's <unfitness>.

To this I replied that the explanation, as I thought, made the case worse & not better. That Mr Hodgson had founded his representation to Sir J Graham upon the most suspicious of all authority, the hope expressed by C Hodgson that he should obtain the Hospital's interest. That his mode of saving time was rather a novel one, which was to write to Sir J Graham at the farther end of the island, when a line to me, a few miles down the Tyne, would have allayed his fears & satisfied him that I had come under no engagement to support C Hodgson or any one else, having determined to give no promise, nor to make up my mind as to whom I should support until I should see every candidate & have an opportunity of judging of their several qualifications & testimonials. And lastly, that the inference, which no one would admit, that Sir J Graham was capable of promoting any man from merely political connexion, & ever admitting that to be possible, that I should implicitly follow his '<interest>' regardless of my own character & my duty to the trust, were imputations which I must be understood most indignantly to reject.

I then apologised to the meeting for the intrusion & begged of every Gentleman present to ask himself the question whether in this instance, Mr Hodgson's conduct had been characterised by that liberality & consideration which acting in a public capacity, any Gentleman had a right to expect from another, stating that with their verdict I should be fully satisfied. Mr Ord also expressed in his quiet manner, 'his astonishment, to say the least of it', that his name should have been mentioned as a supporter of C Hodgson, with whom he had never had any kind of communication whatsoever on the subject.

From that time I have neither seen nor heard of Mr Hodgson, nor have I the slightest wish or intention to refer again to the subject, but I certainly never paid him the compliment of thinking that his representations would in any degree have the effect of lowering me in your estimation, or in that of any man of sense & discernment.

Begging to apologise for giving you the trouble of so long a letter on so uninteresting & frivolous a subject & at the same time to offer my best thanks for your attention & kindness with respect to the promotion of Mr <Biddick>

I have the honor to remain Sir Your obliged & most faithful servant

John Grey

28 Jan 1834 John Grey to James Graham

[Note: William Hutt, (1801-82) was elected as a Liberal MP for Hull in December 1832, and then for Gateshead for 30 years from 1841. He was knighted in 1865.]

Private.

Corbridge Jan 28th 1834

Sir

I have received from an acquaintance at Hull a newspaper which I take the liberty to send to you, that you may be aware of the vulgar attack that Mr Hutt has made upon the management of the Hospitals property, & of that which he threatens to make upon yourself in particular on the subject of the Merchant Seamen's sixpences. Among other mistatements or falsehoods contained in his speech, he comments upon my appointment & salary, which according to his assertion, is 1200£ a year - whereas he might have known, & ought to have done so before stating it as a fact, by reference to the printed release to Mr Currie's enquiry, dated the 8th May 1833, that the salary of the new Receiver is £800, with an allowance of £200 more for travelling charges etc. I don't know whether that 200£ a year was calculated to cover house rent & horses' keep, which are currently allowed to agents upon large estates, but if it was, then a wrong division has been made & the salary should have been stated at £700 & the other allowances at 300 - for unfortunately for me, no residency can be found, & if the projected house should be built, the percentage upon the outlay of £2000 will cause me to pay £100 for house rent alone. And looking at the extent & various kinds of property, farms, mills, collieries & lead mines spread over a district from the mouth of the Tweed to the source of the Tyne on the borders of Westmorland beyond Alston, nearly 120 miles apart, subject continually to my personal inspection, I find it impossible to keep such horses as are necessary, besides coach travelling & living from home, under £200 more. The amount of personal labor as well as travelling expenses is immensely increased beyond what was usual or even contemplated by either party on my assuming the office, in consequence of adopting a mode of private letting by valuation instead of that by tender in many cases. In the latter the Receiver had only to send an advertisement to the newspaper & the tender went to the Board. In the former he must visit every farm & every field in each to calculate its value & fix the most suitable covenants spending much time at a distance from home. This of course I most readily undertook because I believe & hope that if judiciously & consistently acted upon, it will tend greatly to improve the condition of the property as well as the character of the tenantry. It is true that the Commissioners proposed as kindly as delicately, that I should employ a Surveyor to value for me in case of my not wishing to undertake it myself. But I must have spent my time & opportunities to little purpose did I not know the value of land, in this county at least, as well as any man whom I could have engaged at a charge of three guineas a day & eventually a bill of some hundred pounds in going over all the estates, which must come to be let in a year or two. I was most happy to save such an outlay to the Hospital, if the Commissioners

could confide in my judgement, & would have incurred any addition of labor & expenses rather than have seemed to take a subordinate part & forfeit the character for knowledge in such matters, for which I think the tenants are inclined to give me credit. At the same time, I must confess, that if I could have anticipated the great labor & anxiety arising from the management of such extended & complicated concerns, the difficulty of obtaining a house & the absence of all comfort in that which I now occupy, the separation for so long a time from my family, together with the vile attacks of lying Tory journals from which one might believe that I have nothing to do but sit and [underlined: 'receive'] the rents as if they dropped softly down from the clouds, whereas I am often at work sixteen hours out of the four & twenty, I should never have undertaken the task. As it is, I feel a deep interest & responsibility in the success of the new system of management & shall spare no effort that I am capable of to make it productive of benefit to the institution.

Under all these circumstances, I think Mr Hutt's assertion might be met by another, that instead of £1200 my salary, after deducting the allowances of house etc, common to agents, does not exceed £700 and that whereas in the old system there were seven bailiffs at salaries from £110 to £50 each, I am only allowed one, at a salary of £150 and 50 more for travelling charges & horse keep, (which by the way, considering the kind of horse he must keep, & the quantity of riding he has, is 50 too little.) Then as to the former Receivers, one was actually superannuated by age & infirmity, & the other declined the situation with a reduced salary & increased labor. And as to their retired allowances which he inveighs against, that certainly was not the work of the present ministry.

I find that Mr Ord is in town. Should you meet him, he will be able to inform you, whether the remarks I made, at the meeting at Hexham were so improper as Mr Hodgson seems to think, & whether they deserve to be styled 'an attack upon him' or a necessary vindication of my own character, to the bench from Alston where he aspires to lead, & who formed their objection of my conduct from his representations.

Begging to apologise for troubling you with so long a letter, I have the honor to be, with the greatest regard,

Sir Your most faithful & obedient Servant
John Grey

30 Jan 1834 James Graham to John Grey

Copy / Private.

Admiralty
30th January 1834

Sir,

I am obliged to you for calling my attention to the Speech of Mr Hutt at Hull: It abounds in exaggeration and mistatements which will shrink into their proper proportions when we come to the promised discussion in the House of Commons. I am

satisfied you will do your Duty, regardless if all malevolent attacks, to which your Conduct in your Office is the best reply; and doing your Duty you are not overpaid.

With regard to Mr Hodgson, the Affair is not worthy of a thought: and what he says or does would not disturb me for one moment.

Let me only beg you steadily to persevere: and the improved condition of the Hospital Estate will soon speak for itself and vindicate both you and me.

Very faithfully yrs

(Signed) JRG Graham.

John Grey Esq.

[annotated on verso:] Sir James Graham to John Grey Esq. 30th January 1834/ Mr Hutt's speech/ Mr Hodgson's conduct

22 Mar 1834 Thomas Dickinson to John Grey

Spency Croft. Alston
22nd March 1834

John Grey Esq

Sir

In reply to your enquiry for a Gamekeeper, I take the liberty to name George Wallace as a proper person, he is a single Man, 29 Years of Age, near 6 feet high, of sober, industrious habits, and of good character - from the enquiries I have made I understand he is a pretty good Shot, is capable of training Dogs & destroying Vermin. At present he is employed by the London Lead Company as under keeper at 15/- a week wages, and he says he has no objections to accept the Situation if he can better himself by doing so, and if it was thought proper he would call upon the Gentleman previous to being engaged.

G Wallace has a taste for Musick, he is one of the Alston Band, can play on various instruments, and at present is engaged teaching Singing in Garrigill Church.

I am Sir Your Obt. Hble Servt

Thos Dickinson

[on verso:] 6d / John Grey Esq / Greenwich Hospital Office / Corbridge

10 Apr 1834 John Grey to James Graham

Private.

Corbridge April 10th 1834

Sir

On the receipt of Major Graham's note, desiring me to make enquiry respecting a suitable person for a Head Gamekeeper, I applied to Mr Dickinson, our Moor Master at Alston, knowing that part of the country to be a nursery for Poachers & Keepers. By the letter which I have the honor to enclose from him, you will see the account he gives of a person whose qualifications he enumerates.

I should have made more particular enquiry respecting this person, had I not recollected having heard that George Moffat, a son of the old Keeper at Howick, had left the situation of Keeper at Eslington, which he has held under Mr Liddell for <nine> years and was at present living with his father at Howick. As I was to go over to the northern estates & to pass near Eslington, I took that opportunity of asking more particularly the cause of his leaving that Situation, which I found, both from his own account & that of others, arose from his refusal to marry a servant of Mr Liddle, to whom he had paid his addresses. I then wrote asking him to meet me at Belford, where I held a rent day on Tuesday & am now able to report that he is at liberty and very willing to go to Wetherby, should the terms be such as he likes. He is now single, but is going to be married which will prevent him remaining in his father's house. He refers you to Mr Liddle or any of Lord Grey's family, for a knowledge of his character, qualifications etc, all of which I believe will be found very satisfactory. He has one brother, Gamekeeper with Lord Mulgrave, & another with Mr Bowes at Gibside. The latter wishes to leave the situation, having been twice shot by the unruly Colliers, & would probably take yours, should the elder one decline it. Besides this, I have heard others recommended by Mr Silvertop & Gentlemen living among the moors but none whose experience could be relied upon.

It will give me pleasure to render you any further assistance in the matter.

I have the honor to be Sir

Your most obedient Servant

John Grey