

LETTERS to LORD LONDONDERRY
– 10 Dec 1826 to 7Jan 1827
by John BUDDLE

Bud-61

[1]

Walls-end 10th. Dec. 1826

My Lord

In consequence of your Lordships' Letter of 8th. Ins^t. returning the Official, Letter in reply to Donkin's communication on G.D. Lambton's Affair. I have written Donkin, to say that I will wait upon him at Durham next Thursday morning on that affair.

The prospect of getting our Harbour reconciles me to a considerable degree to the idea of relinquishing the Surface of West Harrington, but without the Harbour goes on, by relinquishing this Land, we shall give Lambton the Whip-hand, completely in any future negotiation for Way-leaves either to the present Staiths, to Sund[itm]

I sincerely hope however that Robertson be acting on sure ground, if not, I shall feel deeply mortified and chassened. I have written an encouraging Letter to him, and to say that I fully expect the pleasure of meeting him at Wynyard on the 31st. Ins^t. all ready prepared. It will I presume

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be requisite to apprise the Trustees of this affair but it may be soon enough for this when we see our way clearly with Robertson

The Ship-owners of the Tyne, have come nearly about to a Stand Still, and are laying up their Ships unless they can get freights, or have freights upheld, so that the Coal-owners have become their own carriers, at a terrible Sacrifice. We have again been obliged to reduce Walls-end hire, to 26/ 3 on Board, but whether that will induce the Ship-owners to take them I don't Know. The Wear Meeting having declined to send a Deputation with the Tyne Ships & Coal-owners, has occasioned a considerable Sensation; and a [requ]isition was yesterday Signed by many Coal-owners of both Rivers, to deliberate on the present distressed State of the Trade. I declined to Sign the requisition rather wishing to look on, as to take any part in the business at present.

Mobray I understand has written to the Shields' Ship-owners stating that the Hetton Co. will not Stand in the way of a Regulation, or they are willing to leave the quantity which they should have on the bases of a Regulation, to the decision of disinterested Persons.

Loraine

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Sunderland, is selling Fancett's & Harraton, currently at 20/- & 21/- on Boo[k], being a reduction of 3/- to 4/- P. Ch. this must be a Serious draw-back on the fitting profits. In the end, if a regulation

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completely cripple us – indeed it w^d. be putting to much power into the hands of any Man. He therefore thinks a Tr[ust] of Coal coupled with a Life Insurance passable, altho' incurring a high

does not take place it will bring about a
further general reduction of Prices on the Wear
I expect the High-main, at Pitington
will be ready for my inspection next Wednesday
when I hope to be able to give your Lordship
a favourable report

I have the Honor to be
My Lord
with the greatest respect
Your Lordships
Most obedient
faithful Servant
Jn^o Buddle

P.S. I saw Donkin yesterday Chisholm, is still
pressing for Security for Banks, on looking over the
Df^t. of the Arang^t. With the [Tentus], Donkin can-

not find any object of Security, except the Colliery
Stock, or Coal. He has a great objection to
the former, as it w^d. be accomplished by a power to
Sell & in case of any disappointment, in the paym^t.
of the Instalments. Banks, or his Representatives the
being a bad Case, having had a Stroke of the Palsy /
might immediately proceed to Sale, which w^d.

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completely

Rate of Interest.

Before I See your Lordship I will term
this Subject further now in my mind.

This is written with Wedgeward's Pat^t.
"Manyfold Writer" which will take 4 or 5 Copies &
the original at the same time

The Marq^s. of Londonderry }
&c. &c. &c. }
Wynyard Park, }

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Walls-end 17th. Dec. 1826

My Lord

I regret to say that I have failed
in my object with Edw^d. Under the present aspect
of the times "Bankers" cannot think of lending their
Money, on dead Securities. Nothing therefore re-
mains for me but to try another Channel.

As I am hedging along, not in the

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when I see that brilliant Star of our hopes,
Lord Seaham, put in the First Spade, for the
commencement of this great Work – My Lady
and your Lordship Standing by, to presume
"Good Speed the Work" in which I should
most piously join. I now look forward
for Robinson's further communications with
Anxiety.

best humers in the world in consequence of my want of success with the Quaker, I met the Pensher Post Boy, with the enclosed from Robertson, which cheered me exceedingly, and I forward it to your Lordship, that it may Speak for itself – it puts the matter beyond doubt I think. His recollection has failed him a little about the crossing of the Hetton Way as I Pointed out to him how I had always proposed to pass it by tunnelling. If we take the most Southern Line by Morsley Letch however we shall avoid this.

I shall only now add, that it will be one of the happiest days of my Life to
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Jn^o Buddle

The Marq^s. of Londonderry }
&c. &c. &c. }
Wynyard Park, }

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Walls-end 17th. Dec. 1826

My Lord

I have this morning rec^d. the enclosed from Donkin, – it seems the old Bogtrotter is not to be kept longer quiet without Security at least. I Explained to your Lordship in a frame Letter Donkins objections to giving the Security on the Colly. Stock.

We might I think give Security on Pensher and the Baronet's Coal, but being in Settlement it would have to be accompanied with a Life insurance I shall be glad to receive your Lordships Sentiments on this matter to enable me to talk with Donkin. If the old Fellow is not pacified, he may take it into his head to call in all his Money.

From Information received this morning I have reason to think, that the feeling for a Regulation of the Trade, is becoming very Sincere on this River & it is therefore probable that

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for some rime past. I was my intention when at Wyn^d. last Sa. To have asked your Lordship / but it escaped my recollection / if in case of an important meeting having to take place, your Lordship would attend; and probably Lord Ravensworth w^d. attend at the same time. I think it probable that much good might result from the presence of persons of such consequence

In your Lordship's Memoranda of Satdy. Ev^g. I observe your Lordship asks – has any thing been Settled with Davison & Smith^s. I have not heard anything since I communicated the contents of your Lordship's official Letter on the Subject – the offer was to pay £100 P. Mo.

I have not rec^d. any Communication from Gregson on the Moorsley Affair – indeed I have not had any communication with him for 6 Weeks at least. I hear that matters are not comfortable

the Meetings will shortly become of a more important Character, than they have exhibited for

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amongst the proprietary. On getting home Yesterday I found a Note from Col. Mills requesting me to go to Branspeth to see the Squire and Teringson, on an early day this Week. I have therefore decided to go tomorrow, but I don't

any thing of Gregson, & Suspect that all is not going on Smooth between him and his Partners.

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Jn^o Buddle

I have been very remiss, in not thanking your Lordship for some Game – 4 Hares & a Brace of Partridges sent to Pensher last Friday Week.

The Marq^s. of Londonderry }
&c. &c. &c. }
Wynyard Park, }

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Walls-end 24th. Dec. 1826

My Lord

I have this morning received your Lordships Letter of the 22^d. Inst., and with your Lordship feel very low on the State of our Vend

It however arises from uncontrollable circumstances – the Ship-owners cannot afford at this Season to carry the Coals for the price they fetch at Market and in consequence lay-up their Ships, unless they can get freighted by the Coal-owners at such a rate as will pay them, in which case, the Coal-owner loses God Knows how much. Rather than freight the Bewickes Walls-end People have reduced their Coals to 28/- And here we have reduced to 26/- on board, notwithstanding which we have not vended a Single Chaldron for nearly a fortnight & Bewickes' have only vended 2 Small Cargoes Since they reduced to 28/-

Indeed on this River the Trade is almost at a Stand in Spite of the necessities of the Coal-owners, and most of the Collieries are laid in 'till the New Year

commences.

As to our own particular case we can only depend upon the Shipping force of our own Fitters for carrying off Coals, as no ~~Coal~~ Ship-owners will take them at the

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and will not peck at any property, that is not actually yielding a present rental or income

I am not entirely without hopes of Success, but yet I sincerely dare venture to hope; and I am sorry to say that I cannot conceal from

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present price, and freighting would be ruinous. We must either therefore erase by general consent to force Coals into the Market, until it is [elrased] a little, or regulate. If neither of these Plans can be adopted a further great reduction of Price in my opinion is inevitable – a reduction to such an extent as will speedily bring a great many Coal-owners to Stand. And then after all we must come to Regulatⁿ.

The State of the Trade is really desperate beyond any thing I ever remember, and the question now to be decided is regulation, or ruin.

I wish to God I could see my way to relief thro' the Channel to which I looked but People who have Money, are getting the longer the more festidious about Securities
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your Lordship that the sort of hue & cry which is universal against our credit, [operates] Strongly against the accomplishment of any object of this sort

I will assist in getting the Way-leave Acco^t. settled with Lambton's people, but Croudace has been very ill, and I don't Know whether he is yet will enough to do business I shall however See this on Tuesday.

Tuesday's Meeting will I think be important, as it will most likely decide the question of Regulation, or no Regulation – of Peace, or War, as I am satisfied that the Trade cannot go on longer in its present State. The Ship-owners cannot longer carry the Coals – the Coal-owners must therefore become their own Carriers, which will Speedily ruin them. The instant I hear

from Robertson I will send a Messenger to your Lordship. I hope tomorrow will bring me his Dispatches

As stated in my Letter from [Newcastle] yesterday I have made my arrangements for being at Wynyard on the 31st. this day Week – I shall Start early from Pensher & will be at Wyn^d. To Breakfast.

I calculate on finding Robertson there

I am My Lord

with the greatest respect

Your Lordship's

Most obedient

Faithful Servant

Jn^o Buddle

The Marq^s. of Londonderry

[14]

My Lord

I last Night ruined your Lordships Packet, covering your Letters of Official & Private on the Subject of the Coal-trade Meeting – Regulation &c.

I am really sorry to find that I have committed an indiscretion, in Stating at the Newcastle Meeting that your Lordship was favourable to Regulation, on the principle of an arbitration of Claims for quantity on the Basis, between the Committee & individuals. In doing this I assure your Lordship, that I acted under the entire [connition] that I was representing your Lordships wishes and Sentiments on the Subject. I trust your Lordship will not consider me guilty of blabbing table talk, after Dinner, in this instance when I call to your Lordships

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Walls-end 25th. Dec. 1826

Wyny^d.

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recollection, that you have in all our late Conversations on the general State of the Coal-trade, expressed your Sentiments uniformly, to the above effect.

The extent to which I committed myself at the Newcastle Meeting, was that your Lordship was favourable to Regulation founded on the principle of a reference, in case of a difference of opinion as to the Claims for quantity between Individuals and

the Committee. This is the extent to which I am committed, and your Lordship will please to consider, that the Copy of the Regulations which I sent, on the resolutions of the Tyne – the Wear being no further committed by them than as to the proportion of the $\frac{3}{5}$ ^{ths}. & $\frac{2}{5}$ ^{ths}. and this is for the reconsideration of the Wear Meeting tomorrow

The Newcastle Meeting, was in fact nothing more than the preparatory Meeting to ascertain whether the Trade of both Rivers was disposed to regulate, or not. But all the details of the rules &c. of the Regulation for each River, have to be gone into at the private Meetings of the Committees of each River. The only thing that the general Meetg. could do was to fix the proportion between the Rivers, but this has nothing to do with the distribution of the Basis on each River. – this distribution will be the business of the respective Committees. And it by no means follows that any one is to stand on the same Basis as in 1825. This could not be the case, on either River – particularly on the Wear, whose new Colls. are coming in & old ones going out. Lambton's Fatfield 24,000Ch. on the Basis has gone out in consequence of Lambs' failure & his Leafield / J. Humble / 12,000 on

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will gain on the Wear, this year. From the Co. House Acco^t. it is said the Tyne Vend this year will be 800,000 Ch. which will require the Wear to be 533,332 to be up to its' proportion of $\frac{2}{5}$ ^{ths}. which in my opinion it will be. I therefore anticipate, that a comparison of the quantities vended by each River, will be against the claim of the Wear for its' $\frac{2}{5}$ ^{ths}. – this part will however be ascertained at the Commission at Sund^d. on the 20th Jany

I shall now advest to some remarks in your Lordships private Letter.

The conferences after Dinner, are disposed of already in a former part of this Letter.

As to the additional profit this year of £7000 to £8,000 – merely a cash Bal^{ce}. The real increase, or decrease in profit can only be Known, by a Balan^{ce}. of the Books – shewing whether we have increases, or decreased our Stock in Trade & Book-Debts. I however hope that the bona fides Profit is more than last year, but I attribute it entirely to the working of Pensher Colliery, which has both increased the quantity and risk [charges] there Rainton. I am Sure that no increase of vend which we have obtained from Rainton in consequence of the Regulation having been taken up, has at all compensated us

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the Basis, will also be out before April, so that 3,600 will be to add to others.

Now as to the propositions between the two Rivers I am of opinion that the Tyne will

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for the reduction of 4/- on W.end and 1/- on Eden the reduction of the 4/- alone, will next year amo^t. to £7000, or £8000. That is for the same Expence or working out profit will be less by that Sum than it w^d. be if the Coals were Sold at their

former

former price. And the 1/- on Eden-main in the same Way, will amo^t. to £6000. So that if under Regulation we could obtain inly the same Vend we shall get this year, our Expenses w^d. if anything be diminished, while our Receipts w^d. be increased £13000, to £14,000. <distress>

Your Lordship Says it is evidently the interest[^] of the Trade on the Tyne to ~~Regulate~~ that forces Regulation. I really do not Know that the present attempt to effect or Regulatⁿ. has originate with the Tyne. I think it has originate with Mowbray, who has for long been using all his endeavours to bring it about. He has written a Series of Papers on the Subject & sent Copies to both Ship & Coal-owners. Your Lordship saw his First essay on the Subject written on the 23^d. May last & you approved generally of it. The idea that the Hetton Co. w^d. negate at all, has had great influence in bringing the Tyne into the Measures & your Lordships' communication to M^r. W. Brandling on the same Subject, has also had its effect.

My own opinion is that Regulation is equally necessary to the Wear, as the Tyne, as I feel confident, that with Bewickes Walls-end Free on B^d. at 18/- & Russells at 26/- that the Walls-end on the Wear cannot fetch 34/-, And that with Northumberland, Killingworth &c. at 24/- or 22/- that Eden Main, P[rimore] & Lyons, can obtain 28/ 6

If things continue in this State on the Tyne
[Bud-61] Prices

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2)

Prices will enevitably be pulled down on the Wear
On this point we ought not to deceive ourselves, in the contemplation of such an event, every one ought to consider his own position. In our own, it is evident that a general resolution – I mean a further reduction of about 3/ 6 P. Ch. would entirely deprive us of Profit, lest the extent of Vend be what it ought

A Further reduction would [raise] a Loss. – there the more Vend, the greater the Loss. This is my serious and unbiased opinion.

I shall now remark on my own feelings about the trade, in which your Lordship thinks I have difficult Cards to Play. I can with truth assure your Lordship, that the greatest anxiety which I feel is in the earnest wish to play your Lordships' Cards well. Our Stake is so poor that I consider it almost, a Sort of Life & Death affair. For if once such an enormous Establishment, take a retrograde Movement, or even halts. We need not ask, "what will be the consequence? Could we act independently of the Trade, and Sell our Coals at a Sup[reme]price & in large quantities than others, it w^d. be ridiculous to think of regulation & I should never think of addressing your Lordship to enter into anything of the Kind, if you could make more Money by Keeping out of it. But I am at this moment of a contrary opinion, as I do not think, with or without Fitters that we could

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sell our Coals at a Penny a Chald. more price than either Hetton, or Lambton – that is Coals of like quality. As it is plain that our Coals have no preference in London We could therefore only force a large Vend by underselling them, and can we afford to do so

We must recollect that we are now Saddled with 1/- P. Ch. Dean & Chapter's Rent on the Rainton Coals.

With respect to the utility of Fitters, with, or without Regulation, I don't see that I can add any thing, to what I have said, on this Subject on former occasions. It has already been proved that they cannot vend the Coals when undersold by others. Neither could we do so, under similar circumstances. I shall only in[trude] of your Lordship, to understand most distinctly, that although I do feel it to be my duty, to State my opinion freely, and without reserve on all points which I consider to be of great importance to your Lordships' intrust, and although those opinions may occasionally not accord with Your Lordships Sentiments. Yet I do also feel it to be my duty, not to Support my own opinions [festinaunslly] but to obey your decisions. And to carry your Lordship's wishes and orders into effect, to the best of my ability.

As regards the business of the meetg tomorrow, I feel that I Stand committed on the point of reference, on which it seems I have
misunderstood

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misunderstood your Lordship: but at the same time if better cannot be done, however uncomfortable the circumstance I must State it to the meeting – lay your Lordships official Letter before the meeting, and State that I have no discretionary power.

In the first place however I will push Billy. Home upon the extent of his powers; and if they do not go to the full recognition of the of the plan of Reference, I shall at once be relieved from my difficulties, and then we shall all be fairly at Sea again. For the sake of my own feelings this is the result which I most ardently wish for. And let matters turn as they may, I shall take good care not to risk the placing myself in such a position again.

I think your Lordship has omitted to send a Sheet of your private Letter, as it ends at the end of the 4th Page, with this words – If I was.

Then follows a note at the bottom of the Page to say that S^{ir} H. Browne has just returned

The only [Oil] of comfort which I feel this good Christmas day in the Morng. is that he has Succeeded in his object, which will I trust be the means of placing your Lordship in a Situation to meet all pressing Engagements: for it is but to clear that the Colliers will not be able for some months to do more than maintain themselves, and

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it is even questionable whether for Jany. & Feb. they may be able to do that.

I will see Donkin in the Morning on my way to Sunderland, on Banke's affair – I do not like the tenor of Chisholm's Letter at all.

No Letter from Robertson this Morng. but

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Walls-end 25th. Dec. 1826

My Lord

I received your Letter of the 8th. Ins^t. in course, and was much gratified by the intelligence which it conveyed of your improved prospects, as to the completion of your great un-

as we have two deliveries of Letters a day, it is possible I may receive one in the Evg in which case I will send to Wyn^d. a Messenger from Sunderland, after the Meeting. I then go to Pensher where I have asked Stobart to a Bed to be ready for our Ride to Sherburn next Morning

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The Marq^s. of Londonderry }
&c. &c. &c. }
Wynyard Park, }

[Bud-61]

dertaking at Swanwick &c. after struggling hard through the Billows of financial difficulties to gain the wished for haven, there is nothing so gratifying as to be brought to safe Moorings in Smooth Water, and it makes our very cautious about venturing to Sea again.

I now enclose you our last Monthly return, which I have delayed sending for some days, in the vain hope that I might be able to give you a more favourable Acco^t. of our December Vend. This however I am not able to do, as it is going on languidly and I question if we shall get 400 Ch. for the whole Month – it entirely depends upon the “Goods Traders” taking the Coals for Ballast, as the must of the regular Colliers are laid up. The price of the Coals being so low in London that they cannot afford to carry them. Indeed the Ship-owners have had so bad a years’ work of it, that they are resolved not

not

not to run their Vessels during dead of Winter unless they can obtain adequate freights from the Coal-owners: but as this is a risk which few Coal-owners are willing to run, the trade is almost at a Stand for the present.

As soon after the end of the Month as I am able, I will send you a Sketch of the State of our affair; but I don't flatter myself with the hope of a very brilliant year's work, as our Vend is going to be considerably short of last years, and the high-price of Corn has considerably increased the cost of leading the Coals. I believe however according to the extent of our Vend that we shall make more profit than any Colliery, almost on the River.

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Walls-end 7th. Jany. 1827

My Lord

I have this morning received your Lordships' Letter of yesterday, and perfectly agree with your Lordship, that Robertson, must be Mad, or worse than Mad if after all he has now written, her should not already see his way. I expect to hear from him definitively as to the time he will be down, in a day or two, and Know of nothing to prevent my meeting him at Wynyard, whenever he may appoint, unless I should happen to be at Brancepeth at the time and this could only delay me a Single day

I wrote the Squire on the 30th. Dec. begging

The Coal-owners both on Wear & Tyne Seem to be inclined to go seriously to work to in-
deavours to better the State of the Trade – it Stands much in need of it & I think it probable that something may be done in the cause of next Month. Wishing all the good family at Kingston the Complements of the Season I remain

Dear Sir
with great respect
most Sincerely yours'
Jn^o Buddle

W. M Pitt Esq^r.
Kingston Dorset) this is written Wedgard's Mani –
Folds Writer, which writes 2 or 3 Copies/if necessary/and the original at the Same time.
[Bud-61]

of him to name the time when he would wish me to be at Brancepeth, as the press of business at this Season rendered a few day's notice necessary. – I have not yet had any reply, altho' I have thrice written him since on other matters!!!

I shall be at Pensher tomorrow, and shall hope to find the River open again, and

in case I have any Letter from Robertson, or Backhouse I will send them by a Messenger to your Lordship.

The post has not bro^t. me any Letter from Edw^d. this Morn^g. it is therefore possible he may have remitted the £1000, but I dare not be confident, as I may receive a Letter from him, by the second delivery in the Ev^g.

The most important points in your Lordships' Letter, are 1st. as to the Regulation, and 2^{dly}. as to obtaining the direct Bills at 2 Mo. from the Fitters.

With respect to the 1st. Altho' I feel the greatest confidence in the superior State of our mining Concerns, yet there is no certainty that the Referees will give us 150,000, and if we enter into proposed plan of reference we shall be bound to Submit to their decision. If therefore your Lordship is of opinion that any quantity which the Referees may award, will not be so Satisfactory as what

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to your interest to enter into a Regulation than to Keep out of it. I should not on any account advise your Lordship to enter into it. And above all I cannot possibly take upon myself the responsibility of advising your Lordship, against the conviction of your own judgement. The decision of this great question, I mean Regulation, will most likely have to be finally settled at Chester next Tuesdy.

I shall therefore feel obliged by your Lordship favouring me with the result of your deliberate judgement, on this very important point, as

I am sure your Lordship, will feel, that it is by far of too great importance for an Agent to decide upon, when his principal is on the Spot. Your Lordship will receive a Letter from me in the Morn^g., and also one ~~from~~ for Hawkes, written from Newcastle yesterday, in the latter of which are some explanations, which may in some degree govern your Lordships' judgement, on this great affair

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we may obtain under a Free trade. It will be best to Keep out of it, as unless your Lordship is perfectly Satisfied that it is more
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Your Lordship had therefore better detain the Messenger until you receive those Letters.
As to

writing the Fitters a Circular, in the event of a regulation, to the purport your Lordship suggests. It would in my opinion be a breach of Faith, as no such idea was intimated to them when their agreement for the year was entered into in November. In case of the Regulation being entered into, however, it is probable that some of the more Stable of them, may as Cropton, and H[o]rn & Scott. If they really are able to do it, their interest will lead them to it, as they save the Discount, by it.

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The Marq^s. of Londonderry }
&c. &c. &c. }
Wynyard Park, }

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