

Duke of Richmond to Rev. Isaac Ashe

Enclosure.

18499-500

Transcripts of Letters addressed by his Grace the Duke of Richmond Lord Lieutenant &c &c to Isaac Ashe Clerk Rector of Tamworth.

Stanhurst Park. Sept 5th 1808

Sir I am aware of the claims which you allude to in your Letter of the 17th Ult. & which had been mentioned to me by Sir Arthur Wellesley. I shall be very happy if an opportunity does occur of fulfilling them, & will keep your Letter as a Memento - in rem according to your desire. I am at Richmond to

I must here freely acknowledge, that notwithstanding all the disappointments which I have experienced, I concluded, & I should even suppose the conclusion was to the honor of his Grace, that these Expressions were seriously intended, & that either some Provision would be made for me in the Church, or, in failure of that, a Pension of one hundred a year would be settled on Mr Ashe in trust for my little family, for it was to that circumstance related - but alas it seems I am more decidedly myself since his Grace of Richmond, & every Gentleman must be supposed to be the best Guardian of his own Honor, & the most accurate Interpreter of his own Expressions, declares that it was not his Intention to intimate any promise in that Letter

Sir In answer to your Letter of the 10th & 18th - His Grace the Lord Lieutenant directs me to assure you that he has no prejudice against you whatever, & that he has at all times been ready to admit that you have been useful to former Administrations, but his Grace cannot consider himself bound to fulfill the promises which they may have held forth with regard to a Pension to Mr Ashe, the overburdened State of the funds is such that his Grace very much regrets that it is not in his power to hold out any hopes of being able to comply with your wishes. I have been very ready with humble submission to his Grace of Richmond I find myself compelled to consider this Letter, which his Grace appears not perhaps the most desire to sign, in some degree contradictory to the

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"to the former. In the Letter to which his Grace is an Answer, I have entered more fully into the particulars of the cruel Treatment which I had experienced from former Government, & it is to this his Grace alludes when he is pleased to say, that he does not entertain any prejudice against me; & if his Grace were really solicitous that my Complaints should proceed no further, he would be graciously to continue the same expressions which he has condescended to employ in the first Letter, but on the contrary, all Expectations of such sort are at once cut off, without a shadow of reason being assigned.

How far a Chief Government is bound by the promises of his Predecessors, it surely is not my Province to decide, but, under the peculiar circumstances of my case, I am inclined to think, without being swayed by partiality, that his Grace was bound to perform those promises, because they were made for public Services, & that by Government, to which his Grace was always politically attached - & was supposed that no Promises have taken place, I would have fondly imagined that when his Grace freely acknowledged the Services his own high feelings of Duty, Justice & Loyalty would have been sufficient guarantees that they should be remembered.

Westle March 3^d 1809

I am directed by the Duke of Richmond to acknowledge the receipt of your two Letters dated the 28th Ult. & in reply to inform you that his Grace can have no objection to your publishing any correspondence with him; but he is perfectly ignorant of the subject of your correspondence with former Administrations, & therefore cannot judge of the propriety of your publishing any part of it, nor does his Grace know to what you allude when you say -

"You cannot but be of opinion that as it would be much more desirable & advantageous to me, so it would ultimately have proved more honourable to the Ministry in England, from some of whom those Promises were received, had a small Provision been made for Mr. Ash's trust for two children, & a fund that had been put to a business which cannot fail of being attended with the most

unpleasant consequences." With respect to former Promises, the Duke of Richmond does not feel himself bound to comply with those made by his Predecessors, & he is aware that he never made any Promises himself - & I am again directed to repeat, that in consequence of your former Services his Grace will be glad when an opportunity offers, consistent with what he deems necessary Arrangements, to assist you in the Church, but he cannot specify any particular terms, & with regards to a Pension to Mr. Ash & your two children, the smallness of the funds renders it impossible for the Duke of Richmond to give you any hopes. I am further directed to say that his Grace is not aware of any Prejudice against you in the mind of any Person.

I have &c. I remain

I must beg leave to observe that, though at the time of writing this Letter it must have escaped his Grace's recollection, not only my claims, but the nature of my complaints, had been laid before Government. Indeed they were in a manner visible - & it is apparent, from the Parenthesis marked with brackets, & taken out of my Letter, that it was at that time in the power of his Grace to have regulated my mode of proceeding in this ungracious business - & that cannot be a stronger Proof than that I suppose exhibits, of my extreme unwillingness & heart-felt repugnance, that so glaring a violation of every thing which has hitherto been deemed at least sacred between Man & Man, should at such an awful crisis come before the Tribunal of the Public - Surely his Grace had at that time received the two Letters addressed to me by Lord Camden, & the Letter from the Marquis Cornwallis - but Lord Camden & Lord Castlereagh, Chief Secretary under the Marquis Cornwallis were then in the Ministry - so that I cannot conceive any difficulty in understanding the meaning of that passage in my Letter - Confidence, I confess, was much lessened by the second Letter which I had the honor of receiving from his Grace - I forwarded to

Petition to Mr. Perceval, in the hopes that Gentlemen would
within present it to Parliament, or take such steps as might
have rendered the measure unnecessary - He condescended
to inform me that it was out of his power to comply with
my request. I enclosed another to be presented to our
gracious Sovereign - To this there was not any answer.

I forwarded a Petition to the Irish Government,
addressed to Sir Francis Burdett, before the unhappy
dispute which afterwards took place between the
Parliament & that Gentleman. This Paper was sealed
& I did not mention the subject of this from the
Apprehensions of giving offence but I knew that they
would readily conjecture the nature of this -
They were returned with the enclosed Letter -

I waited a long time in the hopes that such a Step
might not be necessary - It was in vain - I at
length enclosed this - It appears as if my political
Principles were not conjunct with that Gentleman -
After an Interval of more than an year, & repeatedly
writing to him on the subject - he was at length
pleas'd to honor me with a Letter, informing me
that my Papers were mislaid -

In a word, Sir, I did not pursue a single step in this
ungracious, & to me extremely unpleasant business, without
previously communicating with, & in a manner consulting
the Government in Ireland; & I must once more presume
to advance that the private Honor of his Grace the
Duke of Richmond, the conjunct Honor of the
Ministry in England, the sacred Dignity of Majesty itself;
for the Promises were received from the Representatives
of Majesty, & the characteristic public Faith of the
English Nation, are all deeply engaged to render
to me all the Justice, which is now in their power,
before I pass that Bound from which no
Innocent returns -