Duke of Northumberland to Col. McMahon

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Alnwick Castle 14th Feb.y 1804.

My Dear Col:

It is impossible for me to express the Pleasure which your Letter of the 11th afforded me, by the account it gave me of Reestablishment of the Prince's Health. I trust however H: R: H: will not allow the Subject to be mentioned to prey upon his mind. He stands clear in the eyes of all the Country from any want of Zeal or Spirit upon this occasion. He has done every thing in His Power; & if He should not be employed, in case of Invasion, in such a Manner as His Birth & High Situation in the Country entitle him to expect, the blame will not lay upon Him. But I cannot bring myself to believe that seriously any thing else can be intended. The answer I must proceed from the hasty Anger of a Moment, which upon cool Reflection must have passed off, & although Persons in very high Situations are unwilling to retract, yet I hope that after the Fine cases H: R: H: will have such a Command as his Rank & Abilities deserve.

What you mention of another Person corresponds much with what I have heard. I think the Willies have acted perfectly

rights for their own honour & for the good of the Country.
These are not times to trifle upon such serious subjects.
In such a Crisis as this, the Kingdom at large have a right
to know whether they are governed by a King, or his Ministers.
as the information I get from you on this subject is I know authentic
& therefore to be depended upon, let me beg you if you hear anything
particular to let me know it. I shall leave this place on the
22d. or 23d.; if therefore you write any day before Sunday, be kind
enough to direct it to me here; after that day, till Sunday following
I must desire you to direct to me at the Post Office Newcastle
upon Tyne, & there to be in hand by the 2d. or 3d. of March.
a letter I had from London mentions the K: being bilious. We know
what that means. I hope in God he will get well, for there are
not times for any Person to wish to occupy the uncertain &
constrained situation of a temporary Regent, & I trust that
if the necessity of appointing a Regent should occur that the P.
will insist upon proper & full Powers, without which nothing
can be done for the Service of the Country. Pray have you ever
heard that the K: has made no Will as yet? I always understood
that Lord Thurlow had made his Will for him some years ago. I am

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now told. He has positively not made any. This is a Letter of the utmost Consequence for the Prince to know, & I should think, considering his Intimacy with Lord Glenlow, H: R: H: might easily have it from his Lordship. If we will is as yet undecided, it may be a Letter of Doubt, too far, in his present State of Mind, a Will made now may ~~[illegible]~~ not come to be disputed hereafter. This of course is for the Prince's own Eye only. I am hardly yet quite legible, but I know you you will excuse the trouble you will have in deciphering it.

You will be kind enough to assure the Prince that I feel as I ought to do those flattering Expressions in which his hope to me has been conveyed, & that I trust my Conduct will prove that I am not wholly unworthy of them. No Person I will venture to say can suspect me in attachment to his Person, Zeal for his Services or Anxiety for his Honour, Dignity, & Welfare.

Adieu my Dear Colonel — The Duchess joins with me in the Offer of our Compliments to yourself & Mrs Grace Meter & believe me

Ever most sincerely Your's

Northumberland.

Duke of Northumberland
14. Feb 1804