Cf. Horace Walpole's Letters H.P. Vol. III p. 136 (Toynbee Ed.)

[Mar. 23 1752]

Sir,

I think myself obliged to acquaint you, that the last Conversation you honoured me with has thrown me into the greatest Perplexity of Mind I ever felt. It has laid me under the painful Alternative, either to be unfaithful to the Lord Bishop of Norwich, whom I have many Reasons to honour and esteem, or to communicate to his Lordship your Sentiments of him, in the midst of all my Ambition to enjoy your Protection and Favor. I have proposed it as a Case of Conscience to some judicious Friends, who all agreed, that, as his Lordship laboured under difficulties without knowing from whence they arose, and particularly had a great Confidence in your Friendship from some strong Expressions of it in a Letter of yours to him, I was obliged in honor and Conscience to undeceive him, that without this there is no Security in friendship, and that if I have a regard to my duty, I am bound to disregard every Consequence that may follow from the Observation of it. In order, however, to avoid doing you Injustice, by confounding and misrepresenting things out of their Connection, I have delivered in to his Lordship a written Paper containing the Substance of what I could clearly and

distinctly remember, and attest upon Oath. It is a heavy Trial, Sir, to forfeit all Pretensions to your friendship, by acting with the Uprightness, which Conscience obliges me to, and my Patron and Friend has a right to expect from me. But unpleasant as it is, I have after too long deliberation chosen to act this Part. I cannot apologize for it to you, unless you will accept the Simplicity with which I assure you, that if any one had given me the same Symptoms of Enmity against you, I should think it my duty to acquaint you with them. Had Interest been my Rule of Action, it might have been more prudent to depend upon your Friendship and Power, at the Expence of his Lordship's Character; for by speaking so freely of him, you have laid me under the Necessity of adhering to Him, or to You. The Censure I shall incur from those who are partial, or misinformed of the Circumstances of the Case, will become indifferent to a Mind full of the Sense of having done right, of having done what I should have been an unhappy Man in leaving undone; and the same Sincerity, which prompted me to point out to his Lordship where the Prejudices against him lay, hath induced me thus openly to inform you of it. I am &c.

West Mar. 23. 1752.

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