

Duke of Northumberland

19. Jan 1812.

Confidential

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Albion Castle 19. Jan^{ry} 1812.

I cannot delay one moment, by Dear Colonel,
congratulating you on your Election, & expressing for that
I feel the greatest possible gratification, in being able
to contribute to the success of your Wishes. To be any way
instrumental towards the accomplishment of what I know to be
the Wish of His Royal Highness, as it is my Duty, so will it ever
be my most ardent Desire, & any success with which my Endeavours
may be crowned on such occasions will constantly afford me the
highest, & most unfeigned, Satisfaction.

A singular Circumstance came to my know ledge yesterday
which I think it right to mention to propose you for what is
coming. A Person came to me, & brought with him a large sheet
of Parchment on which nothing was written, prepared for the
Signature of Names. To the top of this Parchment was affixed by a
single Pin a small pointed piece of paper, in two parts. The one
to the Lords Spiritual, & Temporal - & the other, addressed to the Commons
with being petitions for the repeal of all the Restrictions against Catholics
& claiming the Right of enjoying all the Advantages of Englishmen
with perfect Freedom of Conscience. This Paper, so printed, I was then
informed was sent down by a noble Lord to a friend, who desired it might
be left with some proper Place, & as many Signatures of names as
possibly, & that the friends to Catholic Emancipation, having found that
Colonel Macdonald

There would not be time for copying the different Shiers of Petitions
with the Petitions, as they wished to bring on the Question as soon
as possible, had directed their being printed off, & forwarded in that
manner, by which means they had been able to transmit them
to every Member soon thro' out of: Bonhain, & the Words of the
Petitions might afterwards be written on the Petition, when the
Shiers were returned. The one I saw was yesterday left at a
Stationer's, being heretofore. This is quite a new, & most
dangerous, mode of procuring signatures for a Petition to Parliament.
The printed paper, passed on, may be used to suit the Opinions
of different Persons, & indeed People under the Idea of signing
a respectfull Petition, may unfortunately, when the Petition
is written, & presented, find their Names annexed to Treason, or
Rebellious Streets. This Proceeding does not quite accord with
with the Intentions of laying by until the expiration of the
restrictions. At all events I thought it proper to communicate
this Circumstance to you. Adieu my Dear Colonel - Say every
thing proper for me to H: R: H: & accept yourself of the Compliments
& best wishes of myself & Family, & present the same for us to H:
Dear Madam
Dear most faithfully your's
Northumberland.