

A.A. John Keltbridge to hd. Southampton

38145-6

My Lord

Hill House, near Taunton  
Somerset. July 18<sup>th</sup> 1786.

I do not assume too much by calling myself an Independent Country Gentleman, for such I have always lived & such I hope to die. A proper Spirit & an easy Fortune cooperate to give me a Tittle to that Character, & I reside upon a Handsome Estate in the County of Somerset. My Breast hath ever glowed with a warm Attachment for my Sovereign, the Prince of Wales & the other Branches of his Royal Family, & stems also with a sincere Love & Regard for the Honor, Welfare & Good of my Country. Possessing such Sentiments, I am struck with the deepest concern on reading certain Paragraphs in the late <sup>print</sup> publick paper (whether they are founded in Truth or Error must be well known to your Lordships) setting forth that his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales hath formed the Resolution of disbanding his Household, & of abridging himself of those other Marks of Royalty & State, which surely are the Birthright of the Eldest Son of the King of Great Britain; & I can not reflect but with the severest mortification, as our National Honor, I think, must be greatly tarnished, that such Resolution should originate in the want of those

A.A. Job

Supplies which are so absolutely necessary to be granted, & without which it is impossible the Birth & High Rank of the Heir to the Crown of these Imperial Kingdoms can be maintained & supported with becoming Dignity & Splendor. I should not then in my opinion act consistently with the Principles of Loyalty I profess, nor the part of a good Subject, if I withheld my Purse or personal Exertions at this particular juncture, & therefore intreat through the Medium of your Lordships to make a humble Tender of my most Dutiful & Affectionate Respect & Regard for his Royal Highness's Person, & an Offer of some few Thousands for his present Use, Service & Accommodation. I am sensible it is not more than a Mite I can cast into his <sup>royal</sup> Treasury, but I hope the purity of the Intention will compensate in some Degree for the want of Ability. I do assure your Lordships I am not stimulated to this Act of Duty by an impertinent Vanity, or by views of Ambition & self Interest, nor is my Mind actuated by any other Impulse than a Regard for the person, Honor, & Dignity of the Kings immediate Successor & our national Character & Reputation, which, I fear, will suffer much on the present occasion.

Prompted by these motives & preferring Sincerity to empty Compliments, I shall rely upon your

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38146

Lordships goodness to excuse a formal Apology for  
troubling you with this Letter, & to make an allowance  
if I am deficient in those points of Ceremony & Etiquette  
of approaching you, which from a Stranger as I am  
you may justly expect. It is my wish also to vest  
a discretionary Power in your Lordship over this Letter,  
& if you should judge the Language & Contents improper  
for the Prince's Ear, you will be pleased to stop  
its further Progress by committing it to the Flames.

On the other Hand if you should not perceive any  
Impropriety in laying it at his Royal Feet, & his  
Highness should condescend to bestow any notice on  
the matter contained in it, your Lordship will  
have the goodness to signify what his Royal will  
& Pleasure may be & it shall be obeyed with the  
greatest cheerfulness, Punctuality & Dispatch.

I shall conclude with my most fervent wishes  
that his Royal Highness may in due course of Time  
equal if <sup>not</sup> surpass his Predecessors in goodness,  
greatness & glory, & with due Respect for your  
Lordships high & distinguished Character,  
I have the Honor to subscribe myself

My Lord

your Lordships

most obedient, most faithful  
& very humble servant

John Lethbridge

Mr. Leffingwell  
Luder to  
d. Southampton

July 10<sup>th</sup> 1786.