

tell you that I am not, though I have been long thinking of it and still intend it, though not exactly yet. My silence I must lay upon this uncertainty, and from having been much out of order above a month with a very bad cold and cough, for which I am come hither to try change of air. Your brother Apthorpe, who was so good as to call on me about a fortnight ago in town, found me too hoarse almost to speak to him. We both asked one another the same question, news of you? You have I hope got rid of all trouble from your impertinent neighbour, and reverted to the tranquillity you love.

I have for some time had the pictures from Dr Cock, and shall have the one engraved that I conclude your ancestor, though there seem to be no very accurate marks to specify it.

I have lately had an accession to my territory here, by the death of good old Frankland¹ to whom I had given for his life the lease of the cottage and garden 'cross the road. Besides a little pleasure in planting and in crowding it with flowers, I intend to make what I am sure you are antiquarian enough to approve, a bower,² though your friends the abbots did not indulge in such retreats, at least not under that appellation; but though we love the same ages, you must excuse worldly me for preferring the romantic scenes of antiquity. If you will tell me how to send it, and are partial enough to me to read a profane work in the style of former centuries, I shall convey to you a little story-book, which I published some time ago, though not boldly with my own name; but it has succeeded so well, that I do not any longer entirely keep the secret: does the title, *The Castle of Otranto*,³ tempt you?

I shall be glad to hear you are well and happy, and am

Ever yours,

H. WALPOLE

Pray direct your answer to Arlington Street.

1. Richard Francklin, printer of *The Craftsman*, the opposition paper to Sir Robert Walpole. He became HW's tenant about 1753 (see HW to Mann 27 April 1753). He died 1 Feb. 1765 (Musgrave, *Obituary*).

2. The 'Bower' was a two-room brick cottage which was erected on the site of the old one, formerly occupied by Francklin. It was not entirely completed until

1776 (*SH Accounts* 11, 130-1; 'Genesis of SH' 87-8).

3. The first and second editions (500 copies each) were published 24 Dec. 1764 and 11 April 1765 ('Short Notes'). Cole's copy of the first edition (the one mentioned here) is now wsl. Cole transcribed upon the flyleaves this part of HW's letter and that part of the succeeding one, 9 March 1765, which relates to the story.