

From GRAY, Monday 15 December 1746

Reprinted from *Works* v. 389–90. Dated by the reference to the impeachment of Lord Lovat, the proceedings in which began 11 Dec. The news of the impeachment, on Wednesday 17 Dec., would certainly have reached Cambridge by Monday the 22nd, and since Gray appears to have been ignorant of it, the letter is assumed to have been written the previous week.

Cambridge, Dec. [15, 1746], Monday.

THIS comes *du fond de ma cellule* to salute Mr H. W., not so much him that visits and votes,¹ and goes to White's² and to Court,³ as the H. W. in his rural capacity, snug in his tub on Windsor Hill,⁴ and brooding over folios of his own creation; him that can slip away, like a pregnant beauty (but a little oftener), into the country, be brought to bed perhaps of twins, and whisk to town again the week after with a face as if nothing had happened. Among all the little folks, my godsons and daughters, I cannot choose but inquire more particularly after the health of one; I mean (without a figure) the *Mémoires*.⁵ Do they grow? Do they unite, and hold up their heads, and dress themselves? Do they begin to think of making their appearance in the world, that is to say, fifty years hence, to make posterity stare, and all good people cross themselves? Has Ashton (who will be then Lord Bishop of Killaloe,⁶

1. HW returned to Arlington Street from Windsor for the opening of the sixth session of Parliament 18 Nov. (see HW to Mann 21 Aug. 1746, O.S.). The debate on the Army appropriations was begun in the Commons on 5 Dec. See Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xiii. 1424, 1433.

2. White's Club in St James's Street. HW was elected a member in 1744 (W. B. Boulton, *History of White's*, 1892, ii pt ii. 89).

3. HW went to the Birthday ball at St James's Palace 13 Nov., at which 'the quality made a most splendid appearance' (*Daily Adv.* 15 Nov. 1746; and see HW to Conway 24 Oct. 1746).

4. HW rented a house at Windsor early in August (MONTAGU i. 40, 44) and lived there until about the middle of November. In HW to Conway 3 Oct. 1746 he refers to it as his 'little tub of forty pounds a year.' Gray saw HW, while he was at Windsor,

'usually once a week' (Gray to Wharton 11 Sept. 1746, *Gray's Corr.* i. 239).

5. 'Memoirs from the Declaration of the War with Spain' (now wsl), some twenty closely written folio pages, presumably HW's earliest attempt at a history of his own times. In HW, Waldegrave MSS 2.248 a fuller title is given: 'Some Memoirs of Public Affairs from the Declaration of the War with Spain to the Conclusion of the General Peace at Aix-la-Chapelle. With a cursory Introduction to connect them with Preceding Times. The Whole intended to illustrate the Characters of the Actors, rather than to particularize the Events.' The memoirs are unpublished, and are not to be confused with *Memoirs of the Reign of King George the Second*, which HW did not begin to write until 1751. See Ketton-Cremer, *Walpole* 128–9.

6. In County Clare, Ireland. A promotion took place this year when Nicholas