

therefore am obliged to desire you would make Dodsley print it immediately (which may be done in less than a week's time)<sup>4</sup> from your copy,<sup>5</sup> but without my name, in what form is most convenient for him, but in his best paper and character. He must correct the press himself, and print it without any interval between the stanzas,<sup>5a</sup> because the sense is in some places continued beyond them; and the title must be *Elegy wrote in a Country Churchyard*.<sup>6</sup> If he would add a line or two to say it came into his hands by accident,<sup>7</sup> I should like it better. If you think fit, the 102d<sup>8</sup> line may be read:

Awake, and faithful to her wonted fires.<sup>9</sup>

But if this be worse than before, it must go as it was.<sup>10</sup> In the 126th<sup>11</sup> for *ancient* thorn, read *aged*.

If you behold the *Mag. of Mags* in the light that I do, you will not refuse to give yourself this trouble on my account, which you have taken of your own accord before now. Adieu, Sir, I am

Yours ever,

T. G.

If Dodsley don't do this immediately, he may as well let it alone.

4. The *General Advertiser* of 15 Feb. 1751 and the *Daily Advertiser* of 16 Feb. 1751 carried the same advertisement: 'This day is published (price 6d.) An Elegy wrote in a Country Churchyard. Printed for R. Dodsley in Pall Mall, and sold by M. Cooper in Paternoster Row' (see Stokes, op. cit. 18, and Hazen, *Bibliography of Walpole* 110-3). This was the first quarto edition.

5. Missing (*ante* 12 June 1750).

5a. This was not done.

6. In an early draft (the Eton MS, for which see Stokes, op. cit. 23-4), described by Mason as 'the first manuscript copy,' the *Elegy* is entitled 'Stanzas wrote in a Country Churchyard.' Mason adds: 'I persuaded him first to call it an elegy, because the subject authorized him so to do, and the alternate measure in which it was written seemed peculiarly fit for that species of composition' ('Poems' in Mason, *Mem. Gray* 106).

7. In HW's 'Advertisement' prefixed to the first quarto, he says: 'The following poem came into my hands by accident, if the general approbation with which this little piece has been spread, may be called

by so slight a term as accident. It is this approbation which makes it unnecessary for me to make any apology but to the author: As he cannot but feel some satisfaction in having pleased so many readers already, I flatter myself he will forgive my communicating that pleasure to many more.'

8. Actually the 92d. In the Pembroke MS, which Gray evidently had before him when writing this letter, he has himself numbered every tenth line, and in so doing inadvertently skipped from '80' to '100.'

9. So in the first quarto edition.

10. In the Wharton MS: 'And in our ashes glow their wonted fires.' This was probably the reading of HW's MS. In the Pembroke MS (which remained in Gray's possession throughout his life) there are two marginal corrections of this line: 'Ev'n' for 'And,' and 'live' for 'glow.' The new reading, 'Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires,' was introduced into the eighth quarto edition, 1753, and was retained in all subsequent editions.

11. I.e., the 116th. In the Eton MS, 'ancient'; in the Pembroke MS 'ancient' is crossed out, and 'aged' interlined.