

hears so little of the matter. What my insipid Lord H . . . on⁷ could poke out of his memory against him, I don't conceive. Would to God anything I could do might make all the world think of him as I do. But the way you propose would signify very little. Adieu, Sir, I am

Yours ever,

T. G.

From GRAY, Tuesday 31 December 1751

Printed from MS in Waller Collection.

The date of the year is determined by the allusion to the Nicoll affair.

[Cambridge,] Dec. 31 [1751].

YOU have probably before now met with the paper¹ I enclose, itself, though when you wrote last, you had only heard of it from others. It must not be known on any account that it came from me, for by that means it might be easily discovered whom I had it from, which might be the ruin of a gentleman.² I do not see any one end it can answer but that of putting Mr C[hute] in a silly light to such as do not know him. The exactness of dates, hours, and minutes with the observation of his different tones of voice, betray it to be the work of a listener, placed on purpose.³ I am told that old H[orace] does not deny his design of getting her⁴ for D[ick] W[alpole],⁵ after my Lord O[rford] had refused her. He insists he was not once at C[appe]r's⁶ chambers while she was in his hands, and that the story of the £10,000⁷ is a manifest lie. He affects to treat it as a fact asserted by Mr C[hute],

7. This name is partly deleted in the MS. Not identified.

1. An account of the interview of 21 June 1751 between Miss Nicoll and Chute, evidently based on Miss Nicoll's own account. For this account, and an explanation of the other allusions in this letter, see Appendix 1.

2. Not identified.

3. See Appendix 1 for HW's accusation of espionage. Gray evidently did not know of the existence of Miss Nicoll's account,

from which the details he mentions could have been learned.

4. I.e., Miss Nicoll.

5. 'Old' Horace's third son: the Hon. Richard Walpole (1728–98), M.P. for Great Yarmouth 1768–84; m. (1758) Margaret Vanneck (d. 1818) (Burke, *Peerage*, 1928, pp. 1265, 1785; *Members of Parliament*, 1878, ii. 141, 153, 179; CM 1758, xxviii. 556).

6. Francis Capper. See Appendix 1, n. 18.

7. See *post* ii. 217.