

TO GRAY, July 1755

Missing. Mentioned *post* 22 July 1755.

FROM GRAY, Tuesday 22 July 1755

Printed from MS in Waller Collection.

The date of the year is supplied by Gray's pocket-diary for 1755 (see n. 1 below).

Address: To the Honourable Horace Walpole Esq. in Arlington Street, London.

Postmark: BASINGSTOKE 23 IY.

Dear Sir,

The Vine, Tuesday, July 22 [1755].

I SHALL be very sorry if I have been the occasion of interrupting any party or design of yours. When Mr C[hute] thought to carry me to the Vine, I was hardly recovered from a fit of the gout,¹ and was obliged to delay my journey thither till the week afterwards;² and the uncertainty of my own motions has made me defer answering your message without reflecting that it might be troublesome to you. My intention is to wait upon you tomorrow sennight at Strawberry;³ if you go to Colonel Conway's,⁴ or have any other design that makes mine inconvenient to you at present, be so good to let me know at this place, where I shall stay till the end of this week.⁵ We returned yesterday night from Portsmouth,⁶ Southampton, and Winchester. I leave to Mr Ch[ute] (who will write next post)⁷ to display to you all the beauties of Netley Abbey.⁸ The two views of this house⁹ go on apace, and grow every day under our eyes. Adieu, I am ever

Yours,

T. G.

1. Gray had been in poor health all the year, and particularly since his arrival at Stoke on 7 June, as is shown by his pocket-diary for 1755 (now at Pembroke College, Cambridge), extracts from which were published by Mitford (GM 1845, n.s. xxiv. 229-33). On 26 June he speaks for the first time of the gout: 'Noctes inquietæ et quasi febriculosæ, quas nunc primum excepit podagra sub articulo pollicis dextri pedis.' He was confined to the house until 13 July (GM 1845, n.s. xxiv. 232).

2. 'July 15. Went into Hampshire to the Vine' (ibid.).

3. See *post* 8 Aug. 1755.

4. At Park Place, Berks. Conway had returned from Ireland shortly before this time (HW to Bentley 17 July 1755).

5. 'Thursday [31 July]. Returned to Stoke' (GM 1845, n.s. xxiv. 232).

6. 'Saturday [19 July] go to Portsmouth' (ibid.).

7. Missing.

8. 6 miles SE of Southampton. The ruins of this Cistercian abbey, founded 1239 by Henry III, were in particular favour with eighteenth-century romantics. See *Gray's Corr.* ii. 843; see also i. 428.

9. By Johann Heinrich Müntz (1727-98), a Swiss painter in HW's employ (MONTAGU