

APPENDIX 2

COLE'S Unsent Letter of Friday 29 January 1779

COLE'S copy, Add MS 5850, ff. 224v, 225.

See *ante* 4, 7 Feb. 1779.

Address: For the Honourable Horace Walpole in Arlington Street, Piccadilly, London.

Milton, Friday noon, Jan. 29, 1779.

Dear Sir,

GIVE me leave to recall my letter of Jan. 26 at night, which I wrote in an hurry immediately upon reading hastily the 'Life,'¹ in order to send it to the post time enough to certify you of my receipt of it, and that it was safe. I have since read it over, in my transcribing it, with attention, and, though it may offend, it must take its chance. I beg leave to have my former letter as unsaid and unwritten, and should be very glad to have that letter returned, for I hardly know what I was tempted to say in it, the chief part of the work pleasing me so much that I little attended to what was in other parts of it. In return, I will send you an original letter of Mr Baker to Mr Strype, the historian, and as staunch a Protestant and Whig as any could desire, in full proof of above half the arguments you are pleased to make use of in Mr Baker's favour: a letter that will amply make amends for my retractations, which, whatever be the consequence, I must repeat. The original I speak of may serve also to correct the account, p. 14, of his agreeing with, or approving, the notions of genealogic succession. There are many other specimens of the same cast which I could easily send, if you thought them worth having, for I have lately met with a large collection of his original letters, all written to the same person, and which fully confirm your character of his humanity and other virtues.

In a former letter you desired me severely to criticize the account you was about to oblige me with. It is a liberty I beg to be excused taking. What I have excepted to, I have already, in the course of my transcribing, remitted into the same book on the opposite page. However, I shall so far use your indulgence as to mention a few things which I conceive may be taken notice of with less offence, and may correct a mistake or two in the 'Life,' and this I shall do with the utmost reluctance, fearing it may occasion a debate, which, of all things, I abhor, and which, at my time of

1. HW's 'Life of Baker' (*Works* ii. 341-62).