

mondely⁴ are both returned or upon the point of returning after their several elopements, and their good men stand with open arms to receive them.

My resolution of going to the masquerade⁵ incog. which was but in embryo last time I saw you⁶ is now come to perfection, and in pursuance to it I have borrowed a sachée,⁷ and I will take care not to want anything that will help to disguise and adorn me, and now, my dear Horry, this is one of the many times in which I find myself in want of your good company, that you might employ to my improvement and instruction those female airs and coquetries which you have so often practised for my diversion. I have squandered away since this design was formed a considerable sum of money in going in quest of the Duchess of Manchester,⁸ no public place has been unfrequented by me; but in vain; I have not yet seen her, and am now no less at a loss to know how to act my part, than I was at first to procure a dress. I am resolved, if there is a good comedy acted tomorrow night to lay out t'other crown, and since I cannot find the substance will imitate the shadow of a fine lady. Since I saw you I have met with the most terrible accident that could possibly befall me, with respect to a fruitless passion which I have some time nourished unknown both to the object, and the rest of my ac-

4. Lady Penelope Barry (ca 1707–86), m. Hon. James Cholmondeley (1708–75) (MANN i. 152, n. 38; Collins, *Peerage*, 1812, iv. 32–4); her husband's brother had married HW's elder sister, Mary. She eloped in 1731 and was living in Paris without her husband in 1741 (Hist. MSS Comm., *Hastings MSS*, ed. Bickley, 1928–47, iii. 7; MANN i. 139, 152). On 29 Jan. 1737 OS Lady Lucy Wentworth wrote to her father: 'Lady Pen Cholmondly is come to town but where she is I can't tell' (*Wentworth Papers*, ed. J. J. Cartwright, 1883, p. 531).

5. 'Great preparations are making at the Theatre in the Haymarket for a masquerade for next week' (*Daily Adv.* 19 Jan.). It took place on the 27th (ibid. 27 Jan.).

6. HW had been in London from late October 1736 until at least 16 Jan. 1737 OS when Gray wrote to him there from Cambridge (GRAY i. 115, 125–6). In 1736

he had been at Cambridge in early January, but had left for London before the 29th, while in 1738 and 1739 he was not at Cambridge at all (ibid. i. 8, 145–61; *Correspondence of Gray, Walpole, West and Ashton*, ed. Toynbee, Oxford, 1915, i. 62).

7. A sack, a type of woman's dress (OED *sub* 'sack' *sb* 4; *post* 1 Feb. 1737; MANN i. 170, n. 3). The Countess of Hertford wrote to the Countess of Pomfret 3 June 1741 OS, 'Few unmarried women appear abroad in robes, or sacques; and as few married ones would be thought genteel in anything else' (Frances, Countess of Hertford and Henrietta Louisa, Countess of Pomfret, *Correspondence*, 1805, iii. 203).

8. Lady Isabella Montagu (d. 1786), m. 1 (1723) William Montagu, 2d D. of Manchester; m. 2 (1743) Edward Hussey (after 1749, Hussey Montagu), cr. (1762) Bn and (1784) E. of Beaulieu.