

posed; the Duke and Duchess of Grafton, my brother, Lady Ailesbury etc. being expected at Ragley on the 19th by their Graces' appointment.

I wrote to you some days ago<sup>2</sup> to give you notice of it, and directed my letter to Wentworth Castle.

We have no stranger at present with us but Mr Varey.<sup>3</sup> The best wishes and compliments of this family always attend you and we hope to see you on the 19th.

Yours most truly and affectionately,

HERTFORD

### TO LADY AILESBUURY, Saturday 23 August 1760

Printed from the MS now wsl; first printed, with omissions, *Works* v. 549–50, and in full Toynbee iv. 417–19 and *Supp.* ii. 117. The MS was sold Sotheby's 5 Dec. 1921 (Waller Sale), lot 6, to Maggs; sold by Maggs, June 1932, to wsl.

Whichnovre,<sup>1</sup> Aug. 23d 1760.

**W**ELL, Madam, if I had known whither I was coming, I would not have come alone! Mr Conway and your Ladyship should have come too. Do you know, this is the individual Manor House, where married persons may have a flitch of bacon upon the easiest terms in the world?<sup>2</sup> I should have expected that the owners would be ruined in satisfying the conditions of the obligation, and that the Park would be stocked with hogs instead of deer—on the contrary, it is thirty years since the flitch was claimed,<sup>3</sup> and Mr Offley was never

2. *Ante* 10 Aug. 1760.

3. Possibly Rev. William Varey (ca 1712–94), son of James Varey, of St James's, Westminster; perhaps student at Eton 1725–8; matriculated at Christ Church, Oxford, 1729; vicar of Stillington, Yorks (Foster, *Alumni Oxon.*; R. A. Austen-Leigh, *Eton College Register 1698–1752*, Eton, 1927, p. 350; GM 1794, lxiv pt i. 386).

2. From the time of Edward III, at least, one of the terms on which the manor of Wichnor was held was that the lord of the manor should give a flitch of bacon to any man who would swear that for a year and a day he had never regretted marrying and that he would, if free, take the same spouse again; see the references cited *ibid.* i. 294, n. 6.

3. HW repeats this in *Country Seats* 27, but no record apparently survives of any successful claim (MONTAGU *loc. cit.*).

1. The name is correctly Wichnor (MONTAGU i. 294, n. 5).