

unsurmountable, and too dangerous not to alarm even my zeal; since I must not ruin myself, and hurt those for whom I must feel too, only to restore a family that will end with myself, and to retrieve an estate, from which I am not likely ever to receive the least advantage.

If you will settle with the Churchills your journey to Chalfont,¹¹ and will let me know the day, I will endeavour to meet you there; I hope it will not be till next week. I am overwhelmed with business—but indeed I know not when I shall be otherwise! I wish you joy of this endless summer.

TO LADY AILESBUURY, Sunday 3 October 1773

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The date of the day and month is determined by HW's saying that he had been 'at church this morning' and by the collect he quotes, which is for the seventeenth Sunday after Trinity at the morning service, when the second lesson was Mark 4. In 1773 the seventeenth Sunday after Trinity fell on 3 October.

Strawberry Hill, 1773.

I'VE been at church this morning, Madam, which is not my custom so often as it ought to be,¹ but to show you how attentive I was, I have (as good boys do) brought away the text. After the prayer, 'Prevent us not, O Lord, etc., that in all our *work begun, continued and ended*, etc.,'² the preacher³ said,

failure to send him a letter authorizing his undertaking the management of her son's affairs; however, HW received 'a satisfactory, and even flattering, letter from Lady Orford' 9 Sept. (HW to Mann 9 Sept. 1773, MANN vii. 514).

11. The Churchills' house, Bucks.

1. John Pinkerton reports that HW, whose religious views were vaguely deistical, once told him: 'I go to church sometimes, in order to induce my servants to go to church. I am no hypocrite. I do not go in order to persuade them to believe what I do not believe myself. A good

moral sermon may instruct and benefit them. I only set them an example of listening, not of believing' (*Walpoliana*, 1799, i. 76).

2. 'Lord, we pray thee that thy grace may always prevent and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen' (Collect for the seventeenth Sunday after Trinity, *Book of Common Prayer*).

3. Probably George Costard (1710–82), M.A. (Oxford) 1733, vicar of Twickenham 1764–82 (DNB), though he was not a 'doctor' (see below); the curate was James