

HORACE WALPOLE'S CORRESPONDENCE

TO FREDERICK MONTAGU, Wednesday 28 October 1784

Oct. 28, 1784.

MR FREDERICK MONTAGU¹ will do what he pleases with these letters. As mine must be preserved, they may be kept together, as they may serve to explain passages in each other.

HOR. WALPOLE

TO MONTAGU, Sunday 2 May 1736

Not with Kimbolton MSS. First printed 1818, in *Letters from the Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu Esq.* (*Works* vi), p. 1. See Introduction. From the reference to the royal wedding it is clear that Montagu was in London.

Dear Sir,

King's College,¹ May 2, 1736.

UNLESS I were to be married myself, I should despair ever being able to describe a wedding so well as you have done: had I known your talent before, I would have desired an epithalamium. I believe the Princess² will have more beauties bestowed on her by the occasional poets,³ than even a painter would afford her. They will cook up a new Pandora, and in the bottom of the box enclose, Hope, that all they have said is true. A great many out of excess of good breeding, having heard it was rude to talk Latin before women, propose complimenting her in English;⁴ which she will be much the better for. I doubt most of them, instead of fearing their compositions should not be understood, should fear they should: they write they

1. Frederick Montagu (1733–1800), of Papplewick, Notts; politician (DNB). For his possession of this correspondence, see Introduction.

1. HW matriculated at King's 11 March 1735 as a gentleman commoner ('Short Notes').

2. Princess Augusta (1719–1772), youngest dau. of Frederick II, D. of Saxe-Gotha, m. (27 April 1736) Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales.

3. Doubtless a reference to the forthcoming *Gratulations* presented to the Prince and Princess of Wales by the Universities.

4. At Cambridge, 35 of the poems (including HW's and Gray's) were in Latin, 12 in English, 6 in Hebrew, 5 in Greek, and 1 each in Italian, French, and Hebrew with a Latin translation. At Oxford the tally was: Latin 59, English 16, Greek 5, and Hebrew, Welsh, and German, 1. See *Gratulatio Academiae Cantabrigiensis Frederici Walliæ Principis et Augustæ Principissæ Saxo-Gothæ nuptias celebrantis*, Cambridge, 1736; *Gratulatio Academiae Oxoniensis in nuptias . . . Frederici principis Walliæ et Augustæ principissæ de Saxo-Gotha*, Oxford, 1736.