

Accession number: 1992-24/39d/d

Description: Large sheet of paper, written on both sides, folded as a letter, with seal. Addressed to Revd. Thomas Rackett from G. F. Beltz College of Arms, dated 1 January 1823. Postmark and seal.

Transcript:

Address: The Revd Thomas Rackett
Spettisbury
Blandford

Post mark A J A 1 1823.
Black sealing wax

Letter:

College of Arms
Jan. 1 1823

My Dear Sir,

I rejoice to learn by the favour of your letter that you arrived safely, tho' with such fearful rapidity, at your own fireside, where I most sincerely hope you will not long suffer that interruption to your comfort which is occasioned by M^{rs} Rackett's indisposition. A little *otium* [rest] will be quite refreshing in contrast with the '*obsoleti sordibus tecti*' [squalid ruins/remains?] which have for some weeks occupied our joint attention – for my part, I can assure you that I feel a solace in trying my hand again at some of the tough genealogical knots which I had left untied at the commencement of our anxious functions.

With respect to the elbow chairs & their supposed secret repositories, I am of opinion that it will be most prudent to say nothing concerning them until I can go to Hampton which I propose to do shortly for the purpose of paying the taxes & adjusting the other claims upon us there. I have not yet received Wipen's bill from M^r Carr; but will apply to M^r Dean on the subject; and then appoint an early day for my expedition.

The collection of the articles of plate which are wanting to complete M^r Garrick's portion, as well as Miss Rackett's, must of course stand over until you return to Town when I hope we shall be enabled to gather the *disjecta membra* [dispersed pieces] of both the sets. I will speak to M^r Dean about the tea chest which I think must have remained at Hampton. Was it not of black shagreen? The spoons were taken out & brought away with the other articles of plate. I had no idea of the value of the Pewter Service.

You will see by the annexed that we have little hope of the snuff boxes: I have said nothing on the subject to the legatees; wishing to have some conversation with M^r Hine (whom I have not

seen since he sent me the opinion) on the propriety of embodying, sometime hence, all the doubtful points in a Petition to the Chancellor for his judgement thereon, without which I fear we shall not fully satisfy the several claimants. As to "China Ware" I feel no doubt, notwithstanding Johnson's definition, that a Worcester porcelaine would pass by that description: and I do not see how Delft could be excluded.

I have paid poor M^{rs} Gerlach's Legacy; & believe that it proved a most seasonable relief to her at this time. Since her husband's death she has been, as she informed me, endeavouring to improve her very confined income by letting furnished lodgings in a very pretty little house, in which I found her, on Ratcliffe Terrace Gorwell [Goswell?] Street Wad[?]; but she seems not to have succeeded, and is now obliged to dispose of the principal part of her effects & go into lodgings. She said that she considered this legacy as an immediate boon from Heaven to extricate her from her difficulties, & had not the least expectation that M^{rs} Garrick would have so kindly remembered her. I have also paid poor M^{rs} Reynolds, a very decent woman, who is at present supported by her son who prints the playbills for the Theatre. M^{rs} G. had been in the habit of giving her £2 at Xmas, which no doubt this legacy was by her providently meant to continue. I have been enquiring respecting M^{rs} Messenger, with whom I think you will approve that I should also settle at an early opportunity.

I had yesterday another letter from Mad[a]me deSaar dated 11th ult.

[Written sideways on the other fold of paper]

ult & in answer to mine of the 22^d transmitting the Copy of our memoir. Relative to the latter she thus expresses herself "I am quite & my family quite at a loss how to express our thanks on the delicate and very puper [proper?] management of the new article (or biography) inserted in the papers concerning my dear aunt & do not doubt it will be sufficient to refute all those absurd & partly malignant tales running about & with which we had been amazed all this time." Mad[a]me says it is very surprising that her Aunt could be made responsible for so many effects as by M^r Garrick's Will he left her all the furniture plate linen & excepting his library & some valuable pictures; and that she was only "enjoined to the careful tenure of both houses". She talks, as usual, of the disgrace which her Aunt has put upon her by her Will. She says that prudence obliges her to contradict the desire mentioned in her former letter respecting the Jewels as she is doubtful whether so much as £100 will fall to her share; and in a PS she says "If M^{rs} Swadling¹ (I can never hold this name) if she would part with a pair of gloves or some such thing my dear aunt had worn, I will be very much obliged to her." – These speculations seem to require at present no answer from us. The Compliments of the season are again sent to yourself & family.

¹ In Mrs Garrick's will (1992-24/39d/f) there is a legacy of £1000 to Mrs Twalling her 'old and faithful servant at Hampton'

I was concerned to hear the other day from M^r Charles Hoare that his brother sir Richard had been obliged to leave Stourhead suddenly & go to Weymouth in consequence of a violent fever which had broken out in his house & carried off his valuable assistant the Rev[eren]d M^r Offer, whom I also much lament & more particularly as I received great civilities from him during my late visit in Wilts[hire].

The Plats are I understand tolerably well. When I see them I shall not fail to remember you & M^{rs} R[ackett] to this afflicted family. I hope you have favourable accounts from Lincolnshire; and I shall now conclude this "lengthy" epistle by offering the best wishes of myself & family that you and M^{rs} Rackett may have many returns of this day & in the enjoyment of every blessing.

Believe me, my dear Sir,
Yours most faithfully
G. F. Beltz

On reverse

Mr Hart's Opinion

"Altho' there seems to be very great probability that the Snuff boxes became the property of M^{rs} Garrick by purchase of them, from her husband's executors yet unless there be some evidence on the subject I cannot advise her Ex[ecut]ors to dispose of them according to the directions of her Will without the consent of the other residuary Legatees of M^r Garrick – I think that slight evidence on the subject would be sufficient but I do not conceive that the mere fact of possession of a chattel of this peculiar nature would be sufficient evidence of title to secure the Ex[ecut]ors from future demands

I think that the Orange Trees & Green house Plants must be taken as belonging to the house unless there be some evidence that they were purchased by M^{rs} Garrick.

Ant[hony] Hart
Linc[oln's] inn
24 Dec[ember] 1822

If my recollection is accurate the accounts of M^r Garrick's estate were pass[e]d under a decree of the courts of Chancery – If so – it is probable that the papers in the Cause may give some light on the subject.

A.H."

Extract from the Will of Peter Garrick Esq[ui]re dated 23 Feb[ruary] 1791 proved 20 May 1796

"I give as well a certain legacy of £3000 by the Will of my late brother David Garrick Esq[ui]re & interest thereon & my share & claim in the residue of the estates monies & effects of my said late brother & by his will bequeathed to his next of kin unto & amongst my said sister Merrial Docksey, my nephew David Garrick Esq[ui]re, & my Nieces Arabella Wife of [blank] Schaw Esq[ui]re, Catherine Wife of John Payne Esq[ui]re & said Merrial the wife of James Susanna Patton equally & their Ex[ecut]ors Adm[inistrat]ors & Assigns as Tenants in Common"

The Persons entitled to the residue of M^r Garrick's property appear to be-

1/3 to Mrs Patton, as representing her Mother M^{rs} Docksey – presuming that she is the universal legatee under any Will she may have made or her Administratrix

1/3 to the representatives of the Legatee of Mr Geo[rge] Garrick

2/5 of remaining 1/3 to Mrs Patton in her own right & as representing her late Mother

1/5 of remaining 1/3 to the representatives of David Garrick junior

1/5 of remaining 1/3 to the representatives of Mrs Schaw

1/5 of remaining 1/3 to Mrs Payne