

Accession number: 1992-24/39e/x

Description: Large sheet of paper, watermarked 'RUSSELL & TURNERS 1817'. Originally folded in half to form four pages and stitched to form a notebook. (See also 1992-24/39e/y,z,aa which all have the same form). Written on both sides. Copy letter to General Wallis requesting the portraits of M^r and M^{rs} Garrick &c. N.d.[post 1822]

Transcript:

Sir,

As I have not the honor of being personally known to you I lately requested Capt[ai]n Harris to do me the favour of introducing me to you, but finding on calling at your House that you had left London & that your return was uncertain I am under the necessity of taking this method of laying before you some circumstances which although partially known to various persons some can perhaps be accurately stated & proved only by myself.

I am one of the Trustees under the will of the late David Garrick & also one of the Executors of M^{rs} Garrick. I was appointed by the Court of Chancery as the former, after the death of the late Albany Wallis Esq[ui]re and I think it proper in order to stand clear of any imputation of prejudice, to [swear?] that although the proceedings in the case between the Garrick family & that Gentleman were carried on with a degree of hostility I was never any party to, or concerned in them. On the contrary whenever M^r Wallis & myself met we were on the most friendly terms to the latest period of his life.

On the death of M^r Garrick M^{rs} Garrick retired with my Mother (her intimate friend) to my Father's house till after the funeral at the time of which being then about the age of 21 I have a perfect recollection that two portraits of M^r & M^{rs} Garrick, the former by Gainsborough & the latter I believe by Hone, were hanging in the drawing room Before M^{rs} Garrick who was much distressed returned to her house it was suggested by her friends & agreed upon by herself the M^r Wallis the executor who had access to her at my father's house every day should remove those pictures (that of her husband having been lately painted) lest the sight of them in the room she constantly inhabited should awake too lively & painful emotions. These Pictures ever remained in M^r Wallis's house where I frequently saw them and no claim upon them could be made by the family during M^r Wallis's life. At his death, although new Trustees were appointed Yet since that time their duties have been so few, I never had any communication with or even had ever seen M^r Dowdeswell the other & only surviving Trustee. But however extraordinary it may appear we are now after a lapse of more than 40 years taking cognizance of M^r Garrick's estate effects & I am engaged in separating the property of M^r & M^{rs} Garrick as if the former had died last week. you have probably anticipated what is about to follow. The pictures above alluded to are presumed to be in your possession. But here, Sir, I must pause, so much of the above Statement rests on my own assertion, & your reply may so greatly depend on the opinion you may entertain of my veracity that I can hardly venture to ask for it! Should you however be induced to believe what is here advanced, upon receiving any other

explanations you may require, & which may be in my power to give, I trust I may confidently appeal to your candour liberality and justice for the restoration of the Pictures to be disposed of for the benefit of the Garrick family.

Believe what is here advanced upon receiving any other

M^r Garrick by his will directs all his property to be sold after his death & the produce to be divided among his next of kin.