

111 To THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, 5 August 1793

MS: Dr. Williams's Library, MS. 12.12, f. 224-225

PRINTED: Rutt, I, ii, pp. 205-206

ADDRESS: The Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr Lindsey at M<sup>rs</sup> Blackburne's Richmond Yorkshire

POSTMARK: Aug 05 1793

ENDORSEMENT: Aug 5: 1793

Clapton Aug. 5. 1793.

Dear friend

I hope that by this time you have received the letter I wrote to you from Gloucester,<sup>1</sup> tho you had not when you wrote yours. If you feel a void, I feel a greater. I have no satisfaction in going to town ~~now~~ now. It seems quite empty since you are not there, and it gives me some idea how I should feel in case of your death. The world itself would seem empty, and I should hardly have a wish to stay behind. Mr Belsham's<sup>2</sup> society is some relief to me, but he feels much as I do, and tomorrow he goes to Bradford. I am now, however, a good<sup>3</sup> deal occupied about the departure of my sons for America. Joseph,<sup>4</sup> and his wife and child, are with us, and she is much better than she has been. They go in about a fortnight, and are in pretty good spirits. Mr Cooper<sup>5</sup> goes with them and Mr Walker,<sup>6</sup> who has not yet left London, will follow. I cannot express how much I feel for him. If he should go to Manchester, he is threatened with being arrested, and sent literally in irons to Lancaster, with every insult. He has therefore, after signifying his intention to go thither, now sent word that he will appear at Lancaster, to answer any charges they can have against him. ~~There~~ There appears to be a determination to ruin him, and thereby break the spirit of the friends of reform at Manchester.

Mr Belsham has a letter from Mr Kenrick,<sup>7</sup> giving an account of the trial of Mr Winterboth[am]<sup>8</sup> for seditious expressions in two sermons. He was found guilty in both cases on the evidence of two very illiterate persons, against ~~the~~ the testimony of a great number of his respectable hearers, that he had not used any such language as was ascribed to him. This is indeed alarming, ~~and~~ and calls for the interference of the Dissenters as a body. Mr Cook of Cambridge<sup>9</sup> h[a]s also been convicted, on the evidence of the most infamous persons, of seditious words spoken three years ago. There was

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<sup>1</sup> See 24 Jul 1793.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Belsham (1750-1829), see 3 Apr 1789.

<sup>3</sup> Rutt: great [Rutt, I, ii, 205].

<sup>4</sup> Joseph Priestley jnr. (1768-1863), see 12 Oct 1789.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Cooper (1759-1839), see 12 Mar 1790.

<sup>6</sup> Thomas Walker (1749-1817), cotton merchant and political reformer [ODNB].

<sup>7</sup> Timothy Kenrick (1759-1804), see Aug (after 14) 1789.

<sup>8</sup> William Winterbotham (1763-1829), Baptist minister. Winterbotham was prosecuted for two sermons preached at How's Lane Baptist Church, Plymouth on 5 and 18 November 1792. On 27 November he was sentenced to two years' imprisonment and a fine of £100 for each sermon [Susan J. Mills, 'Winterbotham, William (1763-1829)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, online edn.]. See *The Trial of Wm. Winterbotham, Assistant Preacher at How's Lane Meeting, Plymouth; before the Hon. Baron Perryn, and a Special Jury, at Exeter; on the 25th. of July, 1793. For Seditious Words* (London, 1794).

<sup>9</sup> Who emigrated to America, where he obtained a doctor's degree, and when he visited England a few years since, he held an appointment of chaplain in the navy of the United States [Rutt, I, ii, 206].

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nothing worse than this in the reigns of the Stuarts – Mr Russell<sup>10</sup> is now here, and inclines to go to America, notwithstanding his present very agreeable situation at Gloucester. I think I shall be drawn ~~to~~ into the vortex, tho not immediately. My principal objection is leaving you behind. I do think I could do more good there than I can here. But I shall, at all events, wait the report of my sons – I began to print my Reply to Mr Evanson<sup>11</sup> last wednesday, and have already corrected five sheets; so that I hope to finish this work. We print something more than a sheet a day. It is enlarged about one fourth since you saw it, and I hope you will think it much improved. Mr Dodson<sup>12</sup> was here yesterday, and still wonderfully struck with Mr E's<sup>13</sup> work, tho I think Mr Belsham and I staggered him a little. I wish I could convey a Copy of my Reply before you return. With all our best respects,

yours & M<sup>rs</sup> Lindsey's most affectionately, J Priestley.

P.S. My respects to Mrs Blackburne,<sup>14</sup> and Frank,<sup>15</sup> and my friends in general, if you meet with any such.

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<sup>10</sup> William Russell (1740-1818), see 5 Jul 1786.

<sup>11</sup> Priestley, *Letters to a Young Man, Part II. Occasioned by Mr. Evanson's Treatise on the Dissonance of the Four Generally Received Evangelists* (London, 1793).

<sup>12</sup> Michael Dodson (1732-1799), see 27 Nov 1787.

<sup>13</sup> Edward Evanson (1732-1805), see 24 Jul 1793.

<sup>14</sup> Hannah Blackburne, [*née* Hotham] (1713-1799), see 24 Jul 1793.

<sup>15</sup> ? Francis Blackburne, vicar of Brignal, son of Francis Blackburne (1705-1787).