

[Copy of a letter from Mrs. Selwyn* to Mrs. Lowther*
(Information from Sitwell Papers per F. Bamford)]

[On death of Queen Caroline Nov. 29. 1737]

52824

I will not make any apology Dear Mad. Townshend
having wrote sooner & I do assure you this is y^e first time
I have taken a Pen in hand since y^e Queens illness which lasted
12 days nine are now past since we lost y^e best Queen friend and
mistress that ever scr.^{vs} had yet still all my faculties seem benummed
as if seiz'd wth a palsy you that know what it is to feel can best
judge what one suffers with a broken heart & a distracted
head and how little one is capable of uttering even there
sorrow. from y^e seizure I foresaw our loss & hardly ever
felt one gleam of hope & yet when y^e stroke came it found
me unprepared but not her that underwent it, she
never from her first illness had any hopes of a recovery
nor show'd y^e least fear of y^e pain she endur'd or of
y^e last closing scene her only concern was for the King
affliction which is certainly as severe & in intensity
as ever human nature sustain'd. y^e Arch Bishop who
constantly attended her told me he never saw a behaviour
equally glorious & Christian to hers & that all she had
deserv'd to be printed y^e first time when he went he
express'd his sorrow to see her so ill & her pains so
great but she told him tho her body suffer'd she
had a good conscience which spokt inexpressible
comfort to her & supported her in y^e midst of all her
torments about 2 hours before she died she call'd for y^e
Duke who was in y^e room wth y^e King & y^e Princes who he
had at y^e time a severe fever contracted by sitting up
several nights together when he came to her bed side
she told him she had call'd him to give him her
blessing & upon that to charge him to be always dutifull
to his father & never to listen to any one who might
be wicked enough to insinuate to him y^t they could
have separate interrestes for even if y^t were possible
he would find more comfort in y^e reflection of having
obeyed to his duty then in y^e possession of all y^e empires
in y^e world & added that whether he liv'd long or not
he would find no thought worth his care on a dying
bed but how he had liv'd if he could then feel that he

[had acted]

[* Mrs. Mary Selwyn, wife of Col. John Selwyn, & mother of George
Augustus Selwyn (1719-91) Honou^r of the Bed chamber to Q. Caroline]

[* Mrs. Hannah Lowther, Maid of Honour to Q. Mary &
Queen Anne. Died Jan. 18 1757, aet. 103]

part of a man of honour justice & of a christian.
It would give him joy that she could feel but not describe
she then order'd him to go to bed which he submitted to
wth great reluctance after she had been quiet some
time they ask'd her to take some viperbroth but she
desir'd to have something to give her a little spirits
they brough her some palsy drops in madera wine
the swallowing of which put her into a fit of coughing &
difficulty of drawing breath for some time. she then
took leave of y^r Princesses one by one & gave some particular
directions to each of them last of all she took leave
of y^r King & thank'd him for all his goodness to her in
y^e most moving terms imaginable & among other things
said my poor serv^{ts} are under excessive affliction give
me leave sir to re comend them to y^r protection when she
had done speaking she bid one of her bed chamber
women take away y^e candels which stood by y^e bed
y^r King ask'd her if they hurt her eyes she said no
sir but I would speere you y^e affliction of seeing
y^e King then lay down & was not long
at y^e end of which she call'd to those in y^e room
(for y^e Arch bishop was gone to read y^e recomendatory
Prayer) & desir'd them to pray for her & read aloud y^e she
might hear them before twas finish'd she expir'd y^e
y^r King staid in y^e room about $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour after & I
believe has not known a though since but what
tended in y^e strongest terms imaginable to show his
tenderness in regard to her memory his first was to
continue to all her serv^{ts} from y^e highest to y^e lowest there
respective salaries for their lives y^e next was to look
into all her acct^s of her charitable p^{er}sons which
amounted 13000 l^l Ann^u which he like wise continu'd
& no satisfi'd wth he has order'd y^e we should all let him know
y^e names of those who receiv'd casual reliefe thro our hands y^e we
may from time to time assist them y^e y^e Beh: of y^e man who has been
call'd false to her fickle in his friendship & avaritious he has order'd
her body to be embalm'd as near as they can get fight in y^e manner of
y^e egyptians at y^e expence of betw^{en} 5 or 600 l^l her funeral is to be
in y^e mann: of Q: M: & her whole family attend there att: her as if she was alive
y^e y^e y^e y^e Chamberlaine: M: of y^e horse by day 2 m^o of 2 bed:
in an aduerry every night