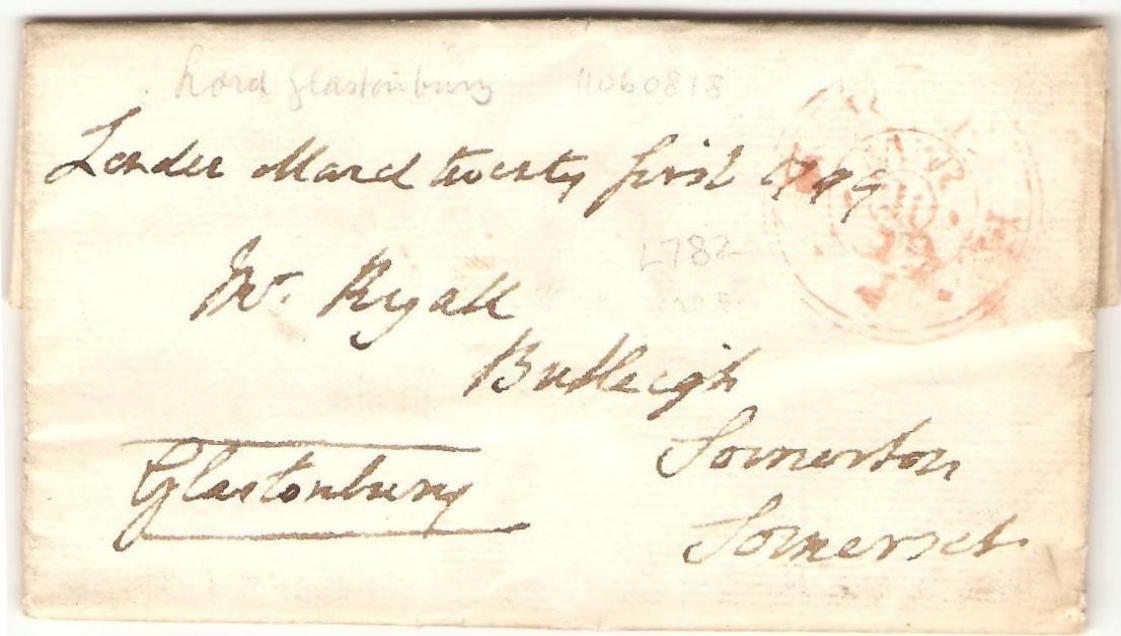


Three letters from Lord Glastonbury and one from General Grenville

My thanks to Rod Mattock, an ex-Butleigh resident whose father Tom was bailiff to Jack Whitehead, for allowing me to show the first two of these letters. The letters are known as 'Free Franks' because the squire James Grenville, Baron Glastonbury (1742-1825) was an MP and member of the House of Lords and as such allowed free postage. He was required to sign the letters and a postage mark was added.



Letter 1 - dated March 21st 1799

This letter is addressed to Mr. Ryall (William Ryall 1771 – 1849) who was the squire's bailiff and seems to read thus:

I received by yesterdays post your letter with the last fortnight's accounts which is, as usual, sufficiently accurate and satisfactory. I suppose that all the demand due on the account of carpenters are included in Periam's bill.

I am sorry to hear that no measures have hitherto been taken for repairing the Drove at the bottom of Claps corner: the stones (which) have been dug, as you observe, during the Winter, if [Stdman] will not undertake the management of it, it must be transferred to others, who will be less dilatory & more active. This puts me for delaying a beginning till the whole money intended to be subscribed, is paid, appears to the fruitless, & unreasonable. Mr. Gould acquaints me that this delay is occasioned by the unwillingness of some to subscribe, who are interested: I wish to know, who they are, as I am convinced they might easily be persuaded to contribute to a work, which will add so materially to their convenience. If any of Mr. Dickinsons tenants refuse I will acquaint him with it and I make no doubt of his being [sure?] and willing to overcome their reluctance.

You may tell the gamekeeper that I am much pleased with his detectin of Samuel Ford and as an encouragement to him to persevere in the same vigilance, you may give him the seven shillings which you have received from the offender and pay him three shillings & sixpence over & above on my account in order to make the sum of half a guinea. As you [seem] to recommend the [--lting] the remainder of the fine, I am willing to consent to it

Do you mean to bespeak or have you already bespoke any farther supply of flag tile from Bridgwater?

I am yours
Glastonbury

March 2nd 1799

Tell Mrs. Rawlins to send me a farther supply of rhubarb soap pills

Received by yesterday post your letter with the last
fortnight's account, which is, as usual, sufficiently accurate and
satisfactory. I suppose that all the demands due on the account of
Carleton are included in Penruddick's Bill.

You song to hear that no measures have hitherto been taken
for repairing the Iron at the bottom of Clap's Corner: the
Staves M^r. have been dug, as you observe, during the winter.
if that was with intent to frustrate the management of it, it may be
transferred to others, who will be less dilatory, & more active.
the portion in delaying beginning till the whole money is paid
to be debited, is paid, appears £ 1000 dollars, & a warrester.
Mr. Gould acquaints me, that this delay is occasioned by the
unwillingness of some to subscribe, who are interested. I wish to
know, who they are, as I am convinced they might be easily
persuaded to contribute to a work, that will add so much utility
to their convenience. if any of Mr. Dickenson's friends, whom I

will acquaint him with it, will make no scruple of his bidding him
and willing to overcome their reluctance.

You may tell the Garrisoners that I am much pleased with the
detachment of Samuel Ford, and once encouraged to have a
person in the same vigilance, you may give him the same
instructions, that you have received from the Officer, & particular
than writing & instance over & over on my account, in order
to save the sum half a guinea. As you seem to measure
the remitting the remainder of the fine, I am willing to
consent to it.

Do you mean to bespeak, or have you already bespoken
the further supply of Rag. like fine Kidgummer?

Iza. Young
Glastonbury

March 2^d. 1825.

Tell Mr. Rawles to send me a further
supply of Akerford & Sons' felt.

Letter 2 – dated February 10th 1800



Also addressed to the bailiff Mr. Ryall

I wish to have the long backed horse sent up to this town under the care of the Taunton waggoner who passes thro' Kingweston, by the first opportunity, provided he is in a condition to bear a journey at that rate of travelling.

You must previously make a bargain with the waggoner for this charge of bringing him up - & the horse must be brt to my house in Conduit Street, or if I can learn the time of the waggoners arrival in London I will send for him at the time mentioned to the the White Horse cellar in Piccadilly where, I believe, the waggoner always stops.

Yours G.

Monday 10th Feb 1800

I do not wish that the horse I w^t be sent from Butleigh before the beginning of next week twenty as it is possible there is the [occasion] I may hear of another (turn over) horse, which I may chance to purchase, tho' know such may offend hitherto. I gave an guinea to the waggoner two years ago, who brought back my [ferral/femal?] horse to Butleigh. The General dissuades me from sending for my old horse, so do not send him, till you hear again from me, [let] let him be taked up, & be better fed that he may be in better condition to take this journey if sh^d wish to have him.

Note: The Taunton Waggoner presumably took produce, cider, cloth etc from Somerset to London - a journey of many days. Waggons were hauled by as many as 8 shire horses at an average speed of around 1.6 miles an hour. A stage coach by contrast might make the journey in 3 or 4 days with constant changing of horses – they could average up to 11 miles per hour.
To attach a horse to the convoy would be cheaper than sending a man with the horse, who would then need to return. The writing in these letters gives a glimpse into the life of the squire – but the writing is a little hard to decipher. Any suggestions to an alternative reading would be gladly considered, as would the sighting of any other such original material related to Butleigh.

10th Feb 1800
I wish to have the long backed horse sent up to this town under the care of the Taunton waggoner, who passes thro' Kingweston, by the first opportunity, provided he is in a condition to bear a journey at that rate of travelling. You must previously make a bargain with the waggoner for the charge of bringing him up - & the horse must be brt to my house in Conduit Street, or if I can learn the time of the waggoner arrival in London, I will send for him at the time mentioned to the the White Horse cellar in Piccadilly where, I believe, the waggoner always stops. Yours G.
Monday 10th Feb 1800
I do not wish that the horse be sent from Butleigh before the beginning of next week twenty as it is possible there is the [occasion] I may hear of another (turn over)

Home, that I may clean the juncure, tho' know such may offend hitherto. I gave an guinea to the waggoner two years ago, who brought back my horse to Butleigh - The General dissuades me from sending for my old horse, to do not send him, till you hear again from me, let him be taked up, & be better fed that he may be in better condition to take this journey if sh^d wish to have him.

The next letter, written a year later, was in anticipation of Lord Glastonbury's brother, General Grenville, returning to London and seems to be in the same hand (that of Lord Glastonbury).

Addressed to:

Messrs Collingwood, Coach Makers,
Liquor Ponds House, London

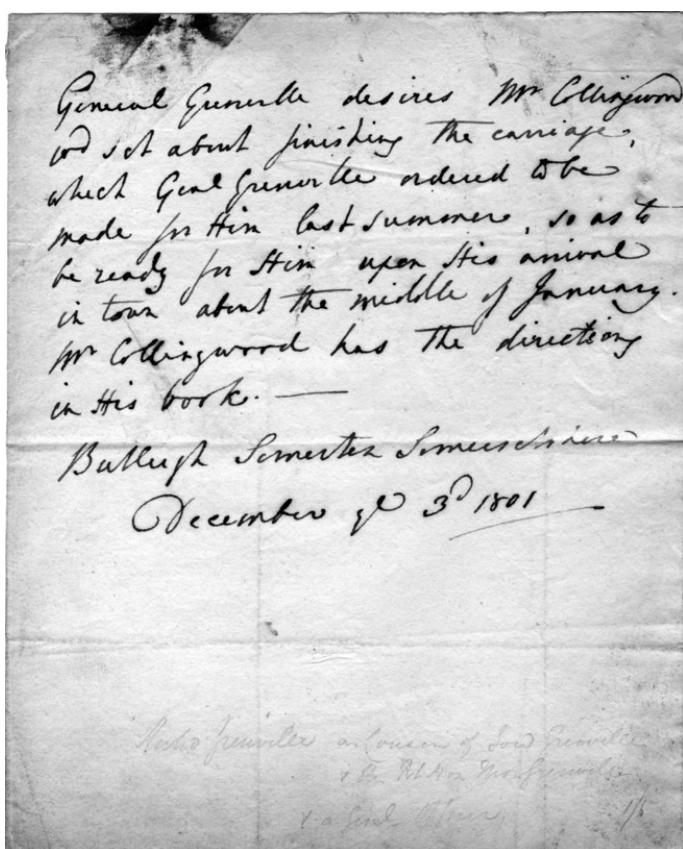
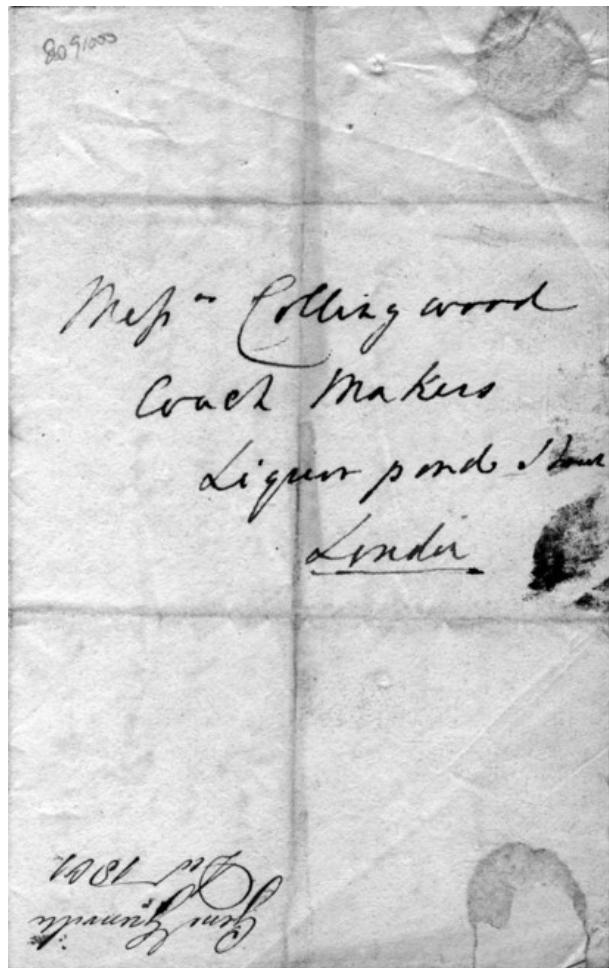
below:

Genl Grenville, Decr 1801

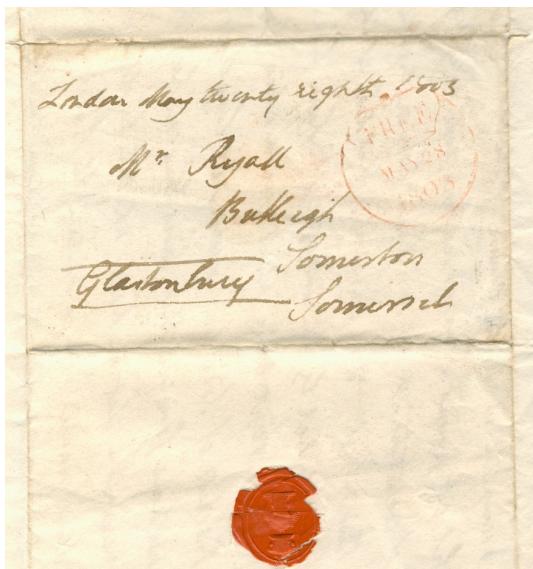
General Grenville desires Mr. Collingwood would set about finishing the carriage which Genl Grenville ordered to be made for him last summer, so as to be ready for him upon his arrival in town about the middle of January. Mr. Collingwood has the directions in his book.

Butleigh, Somerton, Somersetshire

December ye 3d 1801



Lord Glastonbury Letter 3 – dated May 28th 1803 London



The letter is addressed to his bailiff Mr. Ryall and sealed with his wheatsheaf and coronet seal – an image that appears on one of his properties in Butleigh.

It reads:

As I am now recovering from my illness I think that I shall have to return to Butleigh at no very distant period, & hope that to accomplish it in the course of the week after next, but at present I can fix no time with any sign (?) of certainty: and you will hear from me again on this subject. I am surprised that none of the parcels sent by the waggon 1st have been received, except those which you mention. Two baskets of [sode] watercress sent long ago.

I do not have from you that more than one has been received – let me know whether the other has since reached you, and whether the bedding etc. has been brought. I shall send on Monday a large box containing books & the paper &c for covering the bed chamber & dressing room: the walls I suppose will have to see fitt to receive it.

Saturday 28th May

Yours, G

