

Theme 1 - South Nottinghamshire Election

Subtheme1 - Election issues

Transcripts for other primary sources

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Ne C 4619 – Letter from G. Barron to Lord Lincoln; 18 Feb. 1846

My Lord

I have read your able address - and admire it much - but am sorry that, on principle, I cannot tender you my vote - however glad I should have been to give it you personally - I am old enough to remember the folly of the Duke of Wellington & Sir Robert Peel yielding to popular clamour about the Roman Catholics - I then predicted what has proved to be the result - constant agitation - never to cease - until they have attained their object - So it will be, if you yield to the League - they will never rest until they effect their purpose, and, by universal suffrage, bring this Country into a state of Democracy - "The pressure from without, in my opinion, unnecessarily alarms - it is commonly said "Right will eventually prevail against might" therefore the agriculturalist need not fear - has not only "Right" but "Might" in his favor - His numerical & physical power is the greatest - besides, many of the Commercial Community will also side with him - well knowing that the Farmer is the Manufacturers regular & best Customer - My chief objection to vote with your present party, is however relative to the Corn Laws - I maintain that if you admit foreign Corn, Duty-free, the price of wheat, after the present unusual demand & consumption, will become so low, that some occupiers will not be able (if still liable to the heavy charges on Land) to pay any Rent at all - I asked Mr Cobden by Letter some months [p.2] since (as he stated that cheap Bread would not tend to reduce wages) requesting him to tell me how I was to pay my Farm Labourers 12/- - 14/- per week when wheat could not be sold for 45/- per Quarter - or, how I could continue to pay the fixed heavy charges of Poor Rates &c when two Quarters of wheat are required to raise the same amount of money which one did formerly - Mr Cobden did not reply - therefore I conclude he could not - If your Lordship can do so satisfactorily at the Hustings on Saturday, it will gain you many friends - on the contrary, the majority at the Polling Booths will be great against you - at least I hope so, as a few such instances is the only chance we Protectionists have of convincing

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yourself and Sir Robt Peel of the necessity of retracing your Steps - if you do not, I dare pledge my existence that in 5 years, wheat will be under 40/- per Quarter - and that my opinion may be on record, I will ask the Editor of the Nottingham Journal to publish this in his Paper - it may be asked why I venture to give an opinion at all - I reply that every man ought to do his best (tho' poor that best may be) to stem the torrent of a polluted Stream, and surely as one of the Middle Class I am priviledged (sic) to publish my humble Sentiments as well as Mr Cobden, and, (be they right or wrong according to the estimate of different readers) I presume to think they are entitled to as much notice - because, at the works which are now carried on in this Parish by my Brother, as many operatives, or more, are employed here, as at Mr C's extensive Factories - and I am therefore feelingly inclined to advocate as much as he does that Bread should be cheap - but I deem Bread cheap enough when the best and finest flour can be brought by the Labourer under 2lb per Stone - there is however a wide difference in our feelings - He wishes to enrich himself at the expence of the Farmer - I wish to "Live and Let Live" - in short I consider the produce of the Land (if I may so express myself) as the staple commodity of England - and therefore entitled to the special Guardianship [p.3] of the Government - Manufacturers are only an offshoot - still they benefit each other - and I should wish to see both flourish - which I am sure they may do with reasonable protection against Foreigners - it is said that the sliding scale has failed - but I have yet to hear any solid arguments, Why - and likewise, why the restless dissatisfied members of the League are to be indulged - if their object is merely cheap Bread, let them go into those parts of the world where they can find it - we can get on very well without them in this Country.

In conclusion, I must admit that Your Lordships motives are apparently for the public good - and most disinterestedly so, as affecting yourself and family - and I trust your Lordships Sons will honour their Sire - at the same time, with all respectful deference, I may be permitted to hope they will honour their Grandsire also, by imbibing, at maturity, His Grace's sound sentiments regarding Church & State - He is one of the Bold Men who are determined to brave the Storm - surely there will be many ready to follow his noble example - altho' some, I regret to see, have strangely belied their professions.

I have the honour to be
My Lord
Your Lordships
most obedient and
faithful Servant
G Barron

Pw H 202 – Letter from Lord G. Bentinck to 4th Duke of Portland; 10 Feb. 1846

H. of Cs Feby 10. 1846.

Lord Geo. Bentinck

My dear Father

I did not hear it till too late for Post last night that Poor Gally Knight died yesterday morning; - this makes another vacancy. -

I fear there is little hope left now of defeating the [p 2] Repeal of the Corn Laws inasmuch as Lord John Russell's announcement of cordial cooperation with Sir Robert Peel will necessarily ensure him a large majority in the House of

Commons; - but I entirely agree with you in thinking that for the sake of Political Morals & the [p 3] characters of Publick [sic] Men that a salutary lesson should in all possible cases be taught to the delinquent Politicians. -

A new writ has been moved for the City of Westminster this evening Rous having been appointed [p 4] a Lord of the Admiralty in place of Captain Gordon who resigns. -

Ever My dear Father
Most affly yours
G. Bentinck

Pw H 203 – Letter from Lord G. Bentinck to 4th Duke of Portland; 10 Feb. 1846

Harcourt House Feby 11. –
1846.
Lord George Bentinck

My dear Father

The Secretary of the Protection Society at Newark having written to the Central Society in London for assistance by which we understand assistance in Agents accustomed [p 2] to Electioneering we have engaged & sent down Mr Croucher who is I believe considered to be one of the best as he is one of the most practised & experienced Electioneering Agents in England. - He will [p 3] be the more useful in Nottinghamshire from the circumstance that he was engaged for Mr Walter in his contest for Nottingham & consequently knows something about the County. -

It was not understood that any assistance in [p 4] money would be required & I suppose that is not the case else I have no doubt but that a great effort would be made to carry the South Nottinghamshire Election against Lord Lincoln, as there is no Election not excepting Yorkshire that would have a greater [p 5] effect than turning Lord Lincoln out of South Nottinghamshire. -

It is generally reported and believed that Sir Robert Peel himself wrote Lord Lincoln's Address. -

As a counter part to it I send you an extract I have copied from Lord [p 6] Lincoln's speech on the Hustings at Newark upon the occasion of his last Election. - I think it will amuse you. -

As yet the Protectionist Party in the House of Commons are considered to have had [p 7] very much the best of the debate Mr Stafford Obrien [sic] made a most effective speech which quite astonished even his warmest Admirers. -

In my life I never saw people look so down in the mouth & so ashamed [p 8] of themselves as those who sit on & behind the Treasury Bench. -

Ever my dear Father
Most affly yours
G. Bentinck

Pw H 204 – Extract from speech by Earl of Lincoln at Newark, Nottinghamshire; 6 Jul. 1841

Newark July 6th 1841.
Lord Lincoln. -

First let me congratulate you that the County has refused to be cajoled by the latest fabrication from the Workshop of Whig Trickery and delusion. - The cry of Cheap Bread is scouted from one end of England to the other. - Even the Town & Boroughs have scorned to be caught by this Party Claptrap, - this fugitive humbug of a dying political faction. - They see that the agriculturist is burthened with Taxes from which all other Classes are wholly or nearly exempt. -

Does he not chiefly bear the burthen of poor Rate, Church Rate, - Highway Rates, - and Tithes?

Pw H 208 – Extract from a letter from Lord G. Bentinck to 4th Duke of Portland; 18 Feb. 1846

... horses to ride round in their canvass it would be far more effectual & far less expensive than a canvass by hired Agents & in this way I should say North Notts might be canvassed in a week. -

I am astonished at Mr Owen's & Mr Brewster's reports; - Foljambe [p 2] gives a very different version of the state of Affairs, - he I understand refused to stand on the ground "that such was the excitement in favour of Protection in Nottinghamshire that he would not be able to obtain a single vote except [p 3] by compulsion". - I feel very sure he would not compel any Tenant of his to vote against Henry & if left to themselves I think there can be no doubt they would to a man enthusiastically join Henry both in his [p 4] Election & in his previous canvass. -

All accounts agree in the extraordinary activity & great personal popularity of Lord Lincoln but still there appears among the Middle Classes of the People Such a universal repugnance to [p 5] Traitors & Turncoats that they appear to meet with no favour anywhere. -

I do not know whether it has been published & placarded but if not the Extract I sent you of Lord Lincoln's speech at his last Election ought to [p 6] be placarded in every village where there is a voter if Ld Lincoln stands against Henry. -

I understand that Sir Robert Heron who has promised his support to Lord Lincoln said the other day that if he had had any notion that Lord Lincoln had so insulted the Whigs at his last Election nothing [p 7] would have induced him to promise him his vote. -

Evelyn Denison said something of the same kind. -

Ever my dear Father
Most affly yours
G. Bentinck

The principal good of such a man as Croucher would be to organise the system of bringing [p 8] up the Voters to the Poll; - & also to organise the canvass. - He would act as Adjutant & Commissary General. -

G.B

Ne C 4609/1-2 – Letter from J.E. Denison to Lord Lincoln; 9 Feb. 1846

Ossington

Feb. 9. /46

My dear Ld Lincoln

On the receipt of your letter last night I at once decided to put off my journey to London.

If you had Come down, in your old office, for a re-election on the Question of the Corn Laws, I had made up my mind (tho' by no means entirely approving the measure) to have given you at once without reservation, and without [p 2] a word, the most entire support in my power, and I have communicated this intention to some of my friends, who desired to confer with me from the other side of the County. -

But the case is now somewhat altered. You come now seeking to be reelected in the new & most important office of Secy for Ireland.

You know my strong & decided opinions about [p 3] certain points of Irish Policy. It is not possible, but of late years these Questions must have been under your anxious consideration in the Cabinet. I do not ask for any promise, or any pledge, but as you ask me to assist in electing you as Secy for Ireland, I feel it necessary to ask, whether you enter upon that office, with your mind made up as to the necessity of maintaining the Protestant Church Establishment [p 4] on its present footing in that Country, or whether this Question, with others, would be open for consideration on a nearer & closer view of Irish Affairs.

If you allow me only this groundwork for Hope, you may command my best services towards promoting your re-election. if I shd find unfortunately that we still differ on such a capital point of Policy, I fear that it would be [p 5] impossible for me to offer, at all events, that active & cordial cooperation, wh, you justly believe, on the grounds of private friendship & regard it would be my especial desire to afford.

I do not know what your immediate movements may be. Possibly it might suit you to come here to dine & sleep tonight, in wh case name as late an hour as you please for dinner, [p 6] we should be most happy to see you. -

If this shd not suit you, I would drive over to Newark to meet you, either this evening, or early tomorrow morning.

If you could tell me how long the Debate is likely to last in the H. of C. it might be a guide to my movements. I shd be glad to devote as much time as I could to your business here.

Believe me
Yours very truly
J E Denison

Ne C 12157/9 – Letter from Earl of Lincoln to Sir Robert Peel; 25 Feb. 1846

25 Feb/46
Lord Lincoln.
Mr Denison.
Newark
25 Feby 1846

My dear Sir Robert

I do not think Mr Denison ought to have alluded to our conversation in the way he did, - and I am at a loss to know how he could consider my answer to his question "perfectly satisfactory".

He asked me, before he promised me his Support, what course I was prepared [p 2] to take in regard to the Irish Church and Irish Politics generally. - My answer was that I would give none but a general answer - that I thought the Government of Ireland ought to be at once firm & liberal - that I believed my views to be as liberal in regard to Irish affairs as those of any others of my Colleagues [p 3] in the Government - that I had opinions upon questions of Irish policy which if an independent Member I should have had no hesitation in explaining to any Constituent who might ask for information - but that having just entered upon the responsible duties of Irish Secretary I felt especially bound to give [p 4] no explicit expression of opinion (much less a pledge) upon any of them, either to him privately or publicly on the hustings, as I thought any such expression or pledge wd hamper my future usefulness.

Before going on the hustings he asked me whether he was not justified in saying I was in favor of a "firm, liberal, & conciliatory" policy. I replied that I had used the two former words but objected to the latter.

I am
Yrs very sincerely
Lincoln

Ne C 12157/7 – Letter from Earl of Lincoln to Sir Robert Peel; 24 Feb. 1846

Newark
24 Feb. 1846

My dear Sir Robert

I have nothing today to add to my Report of Saturday, except that if the Demon of Mischief had devised the best plan of destroying my prospects [p 2] he would have gazetted me "Visitor of Maynooth" on the precise day on which it has been done. - It is placarded all over the County - Any chance of explanation is out of the question [p 3] on account of the time and the damage it will do me is not to be told.

I have made the best arrangements in my power for a grand push tomorrow [p 4] & I will send you the result of the first days poll. -

I am
Yours most sincerely
Lincoln

Pw H 206/2-3 – Extract of a letter from Lord G. Bentinck to 4th Duke of Portland; 14 Feb. 1846

... means to stand for the Northern division. - I hear he even proposed to set up his friend Mr Gladstone & imagined that he could bring him in for North Nottinghamshire. -

The Duke of Richmond is out of Town, - I believe the present plan is to move as an amendment an Address to the Crown praying Her Majesty [p 2] to appeal from Parliament to the sense of her People. -

I believe that with the exception of a few spots were [sic] the Potato disease has been very bad there never was such a Lie as that of an impending famine in Ireland; - even in Galway one of the worst [p 3] Counties I see Potatoes are only 4d 1/2 per stone equivalent to 1s 10d per bushel; - in the last real famine they were 10.d - per stone i.e. 4s.2d. - per bushel; - In England & Scotland in the worst Counties potatoes are nowhere higher in price than they were in 1839. - [p 4] Oats have fallen 3s. a Quarter within the last month in Ireland & Lord Cloncurry has declared that though two million Quarters of Oats have been exported to England this last year there remain Oats enough in Ireland to feed the entire population. -

The fact is the entire reputation of Sir Robert Peel & his Government depends upon his being able to [p 5] persuade Parliament & the Country that there is or has been a fearful danger of a real famine in Ireland. - Up to this moment certainly the people never were so well off. -

Ever my dear Father
Most affly yours
G. Bentinck

P.S.

Since writing the above I have seen Maidstone; - he is quite ready [p 6] if wanted to canvass & contest North Nottinghamshire but has no money as I said above - His Father has property in Newark but Newark is in the other division. -
G.B.

Pw H 210 – Letter from Lord G. Bentinck to 4th Duke of Portland; 21 Feb. 1846

Harcourt House Feby 26th 1846.
Ld G. Bentinck

My dear Father

So much reliance has been laid by Sir Robert Peel & Sir James Graham on the circumstance that the prices of Corn have nothing to do [p 2] with the rate of wages that I can not help writing to ask you whether the fact is not that your labourers during the war & war prices received 15s. aweek & that after [p 3] the war or rather after the change of prices your wages & the wages generally of agricultural labourers in Nottinghamshire did not fall to 12s. -

My impression is that at one time you had [p 4] two distinct rates of wages viz; - the old labourers at 15s. - & the new labourers at 12s. - Is this not so? -

I am terribly afraid unless Lord Lincoln stands equally committed that by the promise of refreshments made in the inclosed Circular [p 5] Mr Hilyard will bring himself under the treating Act & vitiate his Election; - I have written a letter on the subject which I have desired may be laid before Mr Hildyard & his Committee.
-

It is arranged that the Debate in the House of [p 6] Commons is to be carried on till Friday next. -

Ever my dear Father
Most affly yours
G. Bentinck

Ne C 11929 – Letter from Sidney Herbert to Earl of Lincoln; 11 Feb. 1846

Private
War Office. Feby 11. 1846

My dear Lincoln,

Things look very bad here. nothing could be more hostile than the House last night. they almost mobbed Graham. - It is clear to me that the breach between us & our friends is irreconcilable. They evidently put the worst construction [p 2] on our motives as well as our policy, & our position under such circumstances cannot in my opinion be held with advantage to the Country. The moment we have passed this measure our power of usefulness & our task will be at an end & the sooner the whole thing is broken up the better. -

I met Fontblanque in Chesterfield St and talked with him on your address. [p 3] of wh I gave him a copy & wh he intends to notice favorably. -

Your friends of the Times have opened upon me (with Dizzy's pen I suspect). If you were here I shd ask you to see if you could not stop this for everything adds to our difficulties at this moment. -

Stafford O'Brien spoke very well last night. [p 4] Our majority is estimated at 80 & by some as high as 120.- Young takes the lower number & the Protectionists the higher as they are anxious to induce people to stay away who wd support the Govt if hard pressed.

Yrs faintfully
Sidney Herbert