

Theme 1 - South Nottinghamshire Election

Subtheme2 - Electioneering

Transcripts for other primary sources

*Where the commentary refers to only sections of letters, these passages are shown in **red**.*

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Ne C 12157/5 – Letter from Earl of Lincoln to Sir Robert Peel; 12 Feb. 1846

My dear Sir Robert

I have little - & that little Not Very good - to Communicate today.

It is the Most uphill fight that ever was fought. Not only will No farmer Vote, but no [p 2] Person of influence will go round with my Agents to canvass the Voters. I have two or three Volunteers out of this Town, but otherwise the whole Work has to be done by paid Agents. I fear the expense will [p 3] be Very great but I have Made up my Mind not to think of that till it is over.

My Father is actually coercing his Tenants to Vote against Me, & has even Made his Agent in this Town where he [p 4] has not one County Voter Canvass actively against me. I have been told also that he has promised Hildyard £1000.

I am Not beaten Yet, & do Not despair.

I am
Yours Very Sincerely
Lincoln

Pw H 205 – Letter from Lord G. Bentinck to 4th Duke of Portland; 13 Feb. 1846

Harcourt House Feby 13. 1846
Lord George Bentinck

My dear Father

I am afraid Lord Lincoln has got a great start & the Whip hand too in the Election; - you will see by the inclosed letters from the Agent we sent down who is a consummate [p 2] Electioneering General that there is no Head & no Committee of Management to conduct Mr Hillyard's Election; - Can you do any thing to set this matter right? - Lord Lincoln it must be remembered is a first rate Tactician in Electioneering & whilst he carefully [p 3] kept his own Secret has no doubt long been preparing for this contest. -

I have no doubt the Central Committee here in London will meet in the course of the day and agree to send Croucher down the additional £1,000 he requires [p 4] carrying Nottinghamshire & turning out Lord Lincoln is of more importance than carrying any half dozen other Elections. -

I hear that in the City the feeling is beginning to change they fancy after all there is more talent & ability among the Protectionist Party [p 5] than was before imagined. -

Thus far our side has had much the best of the debate. -

Ever my dear Father
Most affly yours
G. Bentinck

Pw H 207 – Letter from Lord G. Bentinck to 4th Duke of Portland; 14 Feb. 1846

Harcourt House Feby 14.
1846.-

My dear Father

I have not said any thing to John I am quite sure he would not for a moment listen to any such proposition and the making it would quite hurt his feelings. -

Everything is very well as it is not a living creature wishes to see [p 2] any alteration, - & if Henry were elected Member for Nottinghamshire nobody would for an instant expect you to put yourself a single step out of the way. -

All these matters are very much changed of late years; - the increased labour of Members of Parliament & diminished privileges [p 3] have So altered the face of things that it is more a favour to the Constituencies than a favour to the Representative to represent a County. - Twenty years ago the Members always entertained their Constituents nowadays the Constituents on the contrary if a dinner is given give [p 4] the dinner to their Representative. -

In all the Counties where there have been vacancies in the course of the last few months the difficulty has invariably been to find a Candidate & the Constituents have had in almost every case to pay the expenses of their Representative

[p 5] I am quite Sure if Henry were elected it would never enter into anybody's head that your old habits of retirement at Welbeck were to be on that account intruded upon. -

Constituents in the present day expect their Members to do their Parliamentary business [p 6] but nothing more. -

Ever my dear Father
Most affly yours
G. Bentinck

Ne C 12111 – Letter from Earl of Lincoln to Sir Robert Peel; 10 Feb. 1846

Lord Lincoln
Election
Newark
10 Feb.y 1846

My dear Sir Robert

Mr. Norton has been withdrawn as unpopular, and Mr Hildyard (a young Squire of some property & a good family) started yesterday. A Most active canvass is carried [p 2] on for him - the Farmers Volunteer in all quarters, & all My oldest & staunchest friends amongst the Yeomanry are the most violent against me. -

Of course I can say nothing as to prospects yet. - The Election is fixed for Saturday [p 3] week and the polling Monday & Tuesday.

The D. of Rutland declines to support - (he has only reached the 9th time of reading -) L.d Brownlow also stands neuter - Lord Manvers the same. In all these cases the Tenants will go against me. [p 4] Lord Howe is the only Peer who gives Me a hearty support, & I fear his Tenants will noattend to his wishes. -

My present impression is that it will (in spite of the fearful odds against me) be a fine race. -

Ever
Yr.s most sincerely
Lincoln

Ne C 12112/1 – Letter from Earl of Lincoln to Sir Robert Peel; 11 Feb. 1846

11 Feby 46
Lord Lincon
Election prospects

Newark
11 Feb.y 1846.

My dear Sir Robert

Today was Market-day here. I went into the Corn-Market & made them a speech - rather as a preliminary to the Nomination than as any attempt to explain the Measure which time & the business of the [p 2] Market rendered undesirable.

I courted questions however & found one Catechizer.

What I said was well received by many - & kindly & civilly by all, - & I have since been told that - (contrary to House. of Com.s practice) my speech gained me several votes. -

I find My exertions [p 3] gradually telling, - & my long popularity is to some extent returning & shaking the determination of those who had resolved to oppose me. I send you a copy of a letter which will exemplify this. Mr. G. Parr is a most influential Yeoman in the Vale of Belvoir & commands More [p 4] respect & influence than most of the Gentry. His Conversion is caused by a visit & a long & earnest conversation I had with him on Monday on the Govt. Measures.

Nothing can be said at present - but I think my prospects improve.

I am

Yours ever sincerely

Lincoln

I go into the hornets nest tomorrow.

Ne C 12114/1 – Extract of a letter from Earl of Lincoln to Sir Robert Peel; 14 Feb. 1846

Feb 14/46

Lord Lincoln

His prospects in Notts

-Windsor Railway

Nottingham

14 Feb.y 1846.

My dear Sir Robert

I cannot speak with any approach to certainty of the issue of this Contest.

Great changes both ways are taking place daily - those against me arising chiefly from the influence of such Landlords as Lord [p 2] Chesterfield - those for me from my interviews with the Parties and the points which I have been able to put before them in Public.

To my shame be it said I interrupted the business of the Market in this Town by speaking for an hour & 20 minutes. today. I was most [p 3] kindly received by all Parties and they tell me my speech gave satisfaction - the proof will be, if it has gained votes.

The Writ for North Notts. arrived today. I presume by the indecently early issue some gain is expected by the Protectionists. Nobody knows here who their Candidate [p 4] is, but Ld. H. Bentinck is talked of. I fully expect Foljambe to come out, - but if not I have put in train a requisition to Gladstone. I cannot tell yet whether his name will take.

I return the Prince's letter. Mr. Saunders has written to me to say he was to see you & therefore

Ne C 12115 – Letter from Earl of Lincoln to Sir Robert Peel; 15 Feb. 1846

Stoke Hall

15 Feb. 1846.

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Transcripts are provided by Dr Richard Gaunt and edited for the purposes of this project by Lynda Carter.

My dear Sir Robert

I fear I cannot yet boast of more than 1000 promises. So many however are shaken in their opposition to me that I think 1400 [p 2] will win. - Whether I can screw the Constituency up to that pitch of friendship is, I confess, very doubtful indeed.

The whole County was canvassed and pledged against me a fortnight before I started, & many [p 3] of the Squires (who now regret it) were committed for "any Protection Candidate".

I am confident that any other Man coming forward at this moment on my principles would not get 100 votes.

The enclosed will [p 4] shew [sic] that I am undergoing a process of preparation for the attacks of the Press in Ireland.

I am
Yours very sincerely
Lincoln

Ne C 12116 – Letter from Earl of Lincoln to Sir Robert Peel; 18 Feb. 1846

Newark
18 Feb. 1846.

My dear Sir Robert

My prospects mend day by day. At the same time it is only fair to say the chances are against me. My personal exertions have done more than I could have ventured to [p 2] hope, but time is wanting and it has been the most desperate & up-hill contest that you can conceive.

Do you think the D. of Wellington would mind writing to Sir Arthur Clifton for me. He is a General in the Army and I am told a [p 3] line from the Duke wd. secure me his ten votes.

Even one vote may be of consequence, for the indisposition to vote against me increases daily. -

I spoke again in the Market-place here today. My Opponent [p 4] has shewn [sic] himself nowhere in public. -

In greatest haste
Yrs very sincerely
Lincoln

Ne C 12117/1-2 – Letter from J. Thompson to Sir Robert Peel; 19 Feb. 1846

South Notts Election
Nottingham
Thursday Feby 19
1846.-

Sir

Lord Lincoln being much engaged this Evg I have been requested by his Lordship to report progress. Though I am unable to announce any very extensive Conversions I cannot but feel that we are daily improving [p 2] our position, and I think we have reached that point which renders it impossible for either party to speak confidently of victory. The influence of another week's appeal to the feelings of the Electors would I am confident place Lord Lincoln very far at the Head of the Poll.

[p 3] We have just come in from an inroad upon the Enemy's Country, Lord Chesterfield's Town of Bingham. Lord Lincoln addressed the people in the Market Place at some length, and one of his principal and most active opponents had the indiscretion to reply. Lord Lincolns refutation was complete and was received with [p 4] loud cheers from at least three fourths of the people assembled. - His Speech yesterday at Newark to about 4000 people was not less successful. I enclose herewith with deep regret for the mental aberration of the Writer, but with no apprehension of its ill effect upon Lord Lincoln's position, an address which has been circulated this morning.

I have the honor to be
Sir
Your most obedient Servant
J Thompson

Right Honble
Sir Robt. Peel Bart.

[p 5] P.S. Nearly all that can be done on the Canvass, has been completed. - Our main reliance now is upon the Division in the House of Commons. If the result of that place the question beyond the reach of ultimate failure, some influential landlords will withdraw their pledges to the Protectionists, and give Lord Lincoln entire support.

Ne C 12118 – Letter from Earl of Lincoln to Sir Robert Peel; 24 Feb. 1846

Newark
24 Feb. 1846.

My dear Sir Robert

The numbers are not made up, tho' they will be at Nottingham in time for the Newspapers, - but I am sorry to say there is no doubt [p 2] I am beaten. - I hope however the majority will be a good deal reduced tomorrow. - I shall keep the Poll open till the last. -

In greatest haste
Yrs most truly
Lincoln

[p 3] 24 Feby 46
Lord Lincoln
Election

Ne C 12157/8 – Letter from Earl of Lincoln to Sir Robert Peel; 25 Feb. 1846

25 Feby 1846

Lord Lincoln
Mr Denison Termination of
contest

Newark
25 Feb. 1846.

My dear Sir Robert

The enclosed is a plain statement of what passed in private between Mr. Denison & myself. You may possibly like to shew [sic] it to anybody who has asked questions on the subject.

I am beaten in this Contest by a far greater majority than I ever contemplated as possible.

[p 2] I have polled 250 fewer votes than my canvass books led me to hope, & Hildyard has undoubtedly polled many more than he expected. I do not yet know the cause.

I shall attend the Declaration on Friday & go up to Town by that Nights mail. -

I am
Yrs very sincerely
Lincoln

Ne C 4631/1-2 – Letter from Geo. Rawson to Lord Lincoln; 25 Feb. 1846

Nottingham
25th Feb. 1846.

My Lord

There seems to be a general wish & almost expectation amongst the Free trade party here that Your Lordship should be put in nomination for the North Division – Mr. Chas. Paget the late High Sheriff has been conversing with me on the subject & he seems to be of opinion that your Lordship would certainly be returned if you came forward upon a requisition from the Conservative Party - suggesting that there [p 2] Should be an announcement on the part of the Landowners to allay the alarm of the Farmers - stating their conviction that the proposed measure will not be injurious to them - & their own willingness to lower their rents if necessary - Mr Paget mentioned the names of a number of gentlemen willing to enter into such a pledge & also hinted at a subscription to which he would contribute £100 -

I find on analyzing the poll that 79 out of the 129 resident Nottingham voters polling at East Leake Lowdham & Bingham have voted for [p 3] your Lordship - only 15 against - the rest being sick dead or neutral from various causes - I am told that the result of the partial canvass in this neighbourhood shows an overwhelming majority against Lord H. Bentinck with a Conservative Free Trader & greater still for your Lordship but of the north part of the County I can gain no intelligence further than that Mr. Foljambe is reported to have said that he could not rely upon his own Tenants voting even for himself -

At present the spirit which appears to animate the farmers [p 4] exceeds all anticipation & it has been useless to attempt to counteract the influence they have brought to bear upon the small freeholders & poorer voters in the villages - Lord Middleton's tenants have all gone against us – Mr. Musters' almost to a man

- Earl Howes have been neutral at most in voting but most active in other ways - Indeed Lord Rancliffes are the only tenantry that have bodily come to the poll & they not without an exception or two.

I have been much disappointed at the result of the East Leake polling but on investigation I cannot make out how it would have been possible to [p 5] get over those who had promised against or even to retain those who had faithfully promised for - Infact the spirit had become so enthusiastic as to leave us no chance.

In the Lowdham District we realised our Canvass & polled just 3 more than our return - In Bingham we were worse off than we expected by 20 or 30 votes but there we never anticipated increasing our score -

I am bound to tell your Lordship that with the exception of Mr Stannary who has been indefatigable Dr. Williams who has done [p 6] as much as his professional duties will allow & a member of Mr Hadden's family we have received little or no countenance or support from extraneous services - and that of your Lordships' Agents (retained) we have been deprived of the assistance of several from Railway & other engagements - Mr Coverham has been unremitting in his attendance as have also Mr Patchitt & Mr. Lees -

Mr. Campbell we have seen little or nothing of & Mr. Coope has been in London for some time - We cannot however complain that we have lost any point for want of numerical [p 7] assistance - but we have been wofully [sic] deficient in that of another quality -

I trust your Lordship will pardon this long explanatory letter - and also that deeply deploring as we do the result of this contest your Lordship will give us some assurance that you think we have done our best -

I am My Lord
Very Faithfully Yours
Geo Rawson

Ne C 4645 – Letter from 1st Earl Brownlow to Lord Lincoln; 8 Feb. 1846

Belton House
8.th Feb. 1846

My dear Lord

I regret much that I cannot go so far as to extend any actual support to your canvas [sic] for South Notts, but on the other hand, I am not inclined to exert any [p 2] influence in opposition to you, so that I shall leave my Tenants to use their Votes, as may be most agreeable [sic] to themselves on this occasion! -

I am truly much dissatisfied with the present measures of [p 3] Government, the nature of which are indeed so "comprehensive", that it seems to me, to become a matter of little or no importance, whether Sir Rt. Peel or Ld. John Russell shall guide the helm of the State!

Believe me, My dear Lord
Yours faithfully
Brownlow

Ne C 4593 – Letter from G.E.H. Vernon to Lord Lincoln; 12 Feb. 1846

Feby. 12./46.

My dear Lord

I write a line to say that I am delighted to see by a letter which Mr Philipps received today from Mr Thompson that your cause seems to prosper - he praises much your speech which appears to have been well listened to, & to have told - and he uses the expression that tho opposed by two Dukes & a Lord you have [p 2] the body of the gentry with you - I trust that this is really true - and am already in high spirits - I shall be with you on Tuesday night - and will canvass, where I can be of use, to any amount -

Yrs truly
GEH Vernon.

Ne C 4620 – Letter from J.T. Becher to Lord Lincoln; 18 Feb. 1846

Private.
Southwell
18.th February 1846

My Lord

Without delay I sent a communication to the Tenantry of Sir Richard Sutton at Hoveringham, Halloughton, and Bleasby; and I feel gratified in being enabled to assure you that, I believe, you will them all disposed to vote for you, with the exception of one or two who had previously promised their Votes to Mr Hildyard: and one or two who had so committed themselves as Members of the Agricultural Protection Society, that they cannot vote for you; but will not vote against you. -

I beg leave to suggest for the consideration [p 2] consideration, [sic] whether it might not be advisable for one of your Agents to visit these Parishes. -

As I did not think myself authorized to influence the Tenantry of Sir Richard Sutton beyond sending his Agent to make known to them that the might vote according to their Judgment.

Under this impression, my Lord, I have headed this Letter "Private", Since Misrepresentation appears to be the Order of the Day; and, now that your are acquaint[ted] with the circumstances the mention of my Name is not required to promote the [p 3] Accomplishment of your Object.

Reiterating my wishes for your success
I remain
My Lord
Very faithfully yours
J.T. Becher

Ne C 4622 – Copy of letter from Mr Tomlinson to Mrs Sherbrooke; 19 Feb. 1846

Copy
Annesley Park 19 Febry

My dear Mrs. Sherbrooke

I reached Notts only last week being ignorant of the contention that troubled the district. I called upon Col. Coape this morning but found that he was at Oxtun. It had been my intention to have called upon Mrs. Sherbrooke also – but the Hounds led me back almost to Annesley.

I remember when, years ago, Lord Lincoln had well conceived a recollection of Mr. Sherbrookes' sentiments wherein his Lordships' interest was clearly shown to be a secondary consideration to a delicacy for Mrs. Sherbrookes' feelings.

[p 2] I allude to a canvass of the farmers at Oxtun.

I beg to be excused for intruding a wish upon Lord Lincoln's success in the coming election, but I do it under the conviction of what would have been Mr. Sherbrooke's feeling as between Lord Lincoln & Mr. Hildyard.

Under the conviction upon the unquestionable merit between the two Tories and under the further conviction that YOU would neither take a part against Lord Lincoln nor interfere in politics

I feel most anxious to know whether you would object to the Tenants being canvassed for Lord Lincolns interest either by his Lordship or by myself on his Lordships' behalf

[p 3] Lord Lincoln is placed in an unnatural position but I hope his ability & his honesty may prove more than equal to all the tricks & disadvantages with which he has to struggle believe me my dear Mrs. Sherbrooke

your faithful humble Servant
W. Tomlinson

Ne C 4630 – Letter from Lord Lincoln to G. Rawson; 23 Feb. 1846

Copy
Private
Kelham. Sunday Evg. 23 Feby
1846

My dear Sir,

I have been over to Annesley this Afternoon. Mr Musters still feels himself committed by some engagement with the Protection Society.

He is however going away from home, and will not vote. He told me that his Tenants were quite at liberty to vote [p 2] for me if they liked, and said that he believed one (I think his name is Fothergill of Colwick) intended to do so.

He said that he did not like "to give me leave" to canvass them, but unquestionably they are at liberty to support me without giving offence to their Landlord. I am

[p 3] Yours very truly
Lincoln

G. Rawson Esq.-

