

not desir to persuade you to sell the appor-
tion of your friends for the difference between
this sum, & that which your necessities actually
require. but the mention of your friends
has suggested a plan to my mind which perhaps
you may be able to execute. You have
undoubtedly some well wishers who altho they
would refuse to give you so large a sum as
£1200 would not refuse to lend it you
on security which they might consider
reasonable. I think you could lay before
any rich friend such a statement of your case
as, that if he could refuse to lend 1200
on my security his desire of benefiting you
must be exceedingly slight. There is every
probability in favour of the arrangement with
my father being completed within the year. I can
give evidence of the existence of the negotiation
between us. If this prospect should fail, I
still remain heir to property of 6. or 7000 a
year. Why not ask Gautton or Mackintosh
or Lord Holland, whom I have heard named as your

Shelley

Bishopgate Jan 7. 1815.

Sir

I will endeavour to give you as clear as
possible an history of the proceedings between
myself & my father.

A small portion of the estates to which I am
entitled in reversion, were comprehended in the
will of Mr. John Shelley my great uncle, & devised
to the same uses as the larger portion which
was settled on my fathers marriage jointly
by my grandfather & father. This portion
was valued at £18000, which my father
purchased of me with an equivalent of
£11000. I signed on this occasion two deeds
the one was to empower my attorney to suffer
what is called a recovery, the other a counter-
part of the deed of conveyance.

Before these transactions however, & at the very commencement of our negotiations, I signed a deed which was the preliminary & the basis of the whole business. - My grandfather had left me the option of receiving a life estate in some very large sum (I think \$150,000) on condition that I would forego the interest so as to keep only a life estate in my original patrimony. These conditions I never intended to accept although Longwell considered them very favorable to me & urged me by all means to grasp at the offer. It was to my father's interest & wish that I should refuse the conditions, because my younger brother, ~~was~~ ^{was} inherit in default of my compliance with them, this life estate. Longwell & Whittom therefore, made an agreement that I should resign my rights to this property, & that my father in exchange for the conveyance should give me the full price for my reversion. In compliance with the terms of this agreement I signed a deed imposing that I disclaimed my grandfather's property

My father did not sign his part of the agreement because he could not do so without perpetrating the new entail, which says, that whoever in whatever manner shall endeavor to break the intentions of the testator shall not enjoy the fortune: but - Mr. Whittom engaged tacitly to Longwell that my father would buy the reversion on the terms already settled.

Now, Whittom proposes my father willing only to proceed, but urges every consideration calculated to delay the progress of the affair. Longwell told me that he saw Whittom wished to procure as much delay as possible, but that he still thought it was his intention not entirely to give up the negotiation. Whether both Whittom & Longwell are not quietly making this advantage of my inexperience & credulity of myself & my father is a doubt that has crossed my mind.

You say that you will receive no more than \$250 for the ~~deed~~ payment of them in currency. I think you think I may be considered as especially bound to relieve you: I would

10,578

SHELLEY, PERCY BYSSHE (1792-1822).

Poet. Bishopsgate.

A.L.S. to William Godwin. 7 Jan. 1815[i.e.1816]
4p. (double sheet, quarto). Incomplete.

He writes out an account of his affairs, including details of his grandfather's will and his relations with his own father, Sir Timothy Shelley.

Printed in Ingpen's edition of Shelley's letters as No. 213 (I, 448ff.) The balance of the letter has not been recovered, nor did Ingpen know its location. Shelley and Mary Godwin had eloped in August, 1814, and were finally married in December, 1816. This is one of a long series of letters to Godwin, who was philosopher enough to accept loans (as they were called) from the man who was living with his daughter.

Bishopsgate Jan 7.1815.

Sir

I will endeavour to give you as clear as possible ["an" cancelled] a history of the proceedings between myself & my father.

A small portion of the estates to which I am entitled in reversion, were comprehended in the will of Mr. John Shelley my great uncle, & devised to the same uses as the larger portion which was settled on my fathers marriage jointly by my grandfather & father. This portion was valued at £18000, which my father purchased of me with an equivalent of £11000. I signed on this occasion two deeds, the one was to empower my attorney to suffer what's called a recovery, the other a counterpart of the deed of conveyance.

Before these transactions however, & at the very commencement of our negotiations, I signed a deed which was the preliminary & the basis of the whole business. My grandfather had left me the option of receiving a life estate in some very large sum (I think £140,000) on condition that I would prolong the entail so as to possess only a life estate in my original patrimony. These conditions I never intended to accept, although Longhill considered them very favourable to me & urged me by all means to grasp at the offer. It was ["to" cancelled] my father's interest & wish that I should refuse the conditions, because my younger brother, ["would" cancelled] inherit [instead of "inherits"], in default of my compliance with them, the life estate. Longdill & Whitton thereupon, made an agreement that I should

Sir

resign my rights to this property, & that my father in exchange for this concession should give me the full price for any reversion. In compliance with the terms of this agreement I signed a deed in parting (?) that I disclaimed my grandfathers property. My father did not sign his part of the agreement because he could not do so without forfeiting the new entail, which says, that whoever in whatsoever manner endeavours to break thro the intentions of the testator shall not enjoy the fortune: but Mr. Whitton engaged tacitly to Longhill that my father would buy the reversion on the terms already settled.

Now, Whitton professes my fathers willingness to proceed, but urges every consideration calculated to delay the progress of the affair Longdill told me that he saw Whitton wished to procure as much delay as possible, but that he still thought it was their intention not entirely to give up the negotiation. Whether both Whitton & Longdill are not quietly making their advantage ["from" cancelled] out of the inexperience & credulity of myself & my father is a doubt that has crossed my mind.

You say that you will receive no more than £1250 for the [one word cancelled] payment of those incumbrances which you think I may be considered as specially bound to relieve you. I would not desire to persuade you to sell the approbation of your friends for the difference between this sum, & that which your necessities actually require. but the mention of your friends has suggested a plan to my mind which possibly you may be able to execute. You have undoubtedly some well wishers who altho they would refuse to give you so large a sum as £1200 ["would" cancelled] might not refuse to lend it you on security which they might consider unexceptionable. I think you could lay before any rich friend such a statement of your case, as, that if he could refuse to leand 1200 on my security

Sir

his desire of benefiting you must be exceedingly slight. There is every probability in favour of the arrangement with my father being completed within the year. I can give evidence of the existence of the negotiation between us. If this prospect should fail, I still remain heir to property of 6. or 7000 a year. Why not ask Graltan or Mackintosh or Lord Holland, whom I have heard named as your

[the rest of this letter is wanting]