

**1 Jan 1834    John Grey**

Wednesday 1st January 1834

This being the Quarter day, I inclosed cheques to the several Parties for their Pensions or Salaries. Received various Proposals for planting the ground in Dipton Wood. I think it better to let the making of the pits only, by the thousand, & to have the planting done by our own Woodmen under the immediate direction of Mr Parkin, both that it may be more carefully done, & that greater attention may be paid to the selection of the kinds of trees best suited to the variations of Soil and situation. The competition for work is such, that I fear some of the proposals are too low to afford the men adequate Wages. The small quarry at Whittle Mil, being found very inadequate to supply the large Stones which are wanted to place the rails upon along the Rail-way, & the parties being very urgent to be allowed to try for them elsewhere, having thought of Whittle Dean, as likely to answer their purpose, I went there again today, where Benson was engaged in measuring the new building, & explored all the Wood & Dean for the purpose. The Rock is abundant & from its situation can never be of use to that property. It would therefore be well to turn it to account for the Hospital, as well as to advance a public work, but being in the bottom of a deep glen, the expense & difficulty of getting the Stones conveyed away, will I fear be an insuperable objection, as I could only agree to it on condition of the road which was through the wood for carting out the timber, being first laid with stones, to prevent trespass. There is a piece of rock in the Glen close to the Bridge on the Newcastle turnpike, which I suggested to them to try. Should it be found to answer, the blocks might be raised by a Crane into the Turnpike & taken away without injury to any thing, but I have doubts of its quality. I have heard of a Stone in Newtonhall Estate very near the Newcastle Turnpike, which I intend to examine. If it will work of sufficient size, I have no doubt that they will pay a good consideration for it.

**2 Jan 1834    John Grey**

Thursday 2nd January

Received the Boards Minutes of the 21st December and made the communications required to Mr Wallis & Mr Grace. Was engaged all the forenoon in the Office with Benson, making up the building accounts, & Parkin arranging for the planting and making out the orders for the young trees wanted for the purpose, some kinds of which are to be had very good at Hexham & others better at Gateshead which I have ordered accordingly.

[Marginal note added here in pencil: 'What is become of the Hospitals Woods at Aldstone & Dilston which were to supply the young trees ready for planting?']

I then rode to Thornbro' Quarry Farm to see a piece of land adjoining the Kiln, which, though not very conveniently situated for tillage, is in such bad condition for pasture, that I advised the tenant upon a new lease to break it up, clean & give it a good liming, & then restore it to grass, which he has undertaken to do. I then went on to examine the state of the tillage & fences at the High Barns, fixing with the present tenant, the land for his away going Crop. Some hedges on this Farm, having according to the custom of these Estates where the present time was the only one cared for, been destroyed by mismanagement, & especially one boundary fence by the edge of the brook, which is quite useless, & cannot easily be renewed but by [underlined: 'a give and take'] to get fresh soil to plant the hedge upon. This Mr Bainbridge the opposite proprietor promised should be done, but as his tenant to whom I applied today, has not heard of it, I shall write to Bainbridge to meet on the subject.

I then proceeded to Newtonhall to examine some draining and the Quarry spoken of, which might have been got at without much damage to the farm, had the Stone been of such good quality as is required for the blocks of the Rail Way, but neither this nor the Stone at Whittle Bridge will answer the purpose. Robertson & Pattison have again applied to me for leave to work the rock in Whittle Dean, showing that by laying the road through the Plantation with Stones for 300 yards, they would get upon the turnpike. I have written them an agreement, binding them, not only to make the road, which they must do for their own sake, but to leave it, in good repair, to pay the value of every tree that may be damaged or cut down, to be answerable for every description of damage or trespass that may arise, to leave the ground in a state, disposing of the heaps of earth so that it may be planted over at the end & to pay one penny for each Stone sold to the Rail-way, which terms, if they subscribe, I have engaged to obtain them the Commissioners authority for the work. I have no doubt that I shall have their signatures in a day or two, & to save time, I shall be obliged by the Boards authority on the subject. There is a great body of stone there, which if the road were once made might be turned to advantage, & can never be required for the use of that small Estate.

**3 Jan 1834    John Grey**

Friday 3rd January

Engaged with settlement of Accounts in the office & with parties enquiring the particulars of farms. Afterwards went through the Dilston Estate to see the progress of the embankment & to try to teach some men cutting hedges, to adopt a better method than they are accustomed to. Mr Stokoe a Millwright who had formerly been employed by the Hospital, applied for payment of an account of £8.8.0 for valuing Threshing Machines, which he had presented to Mr Hooper, but who had declined paying it. I happened to be present at the time that Stokoe waited on Mr Hooper, the day before he

left the North, & considered that he was rather hardly dealt with. Mr Hooper was greatly, & I think justly dissatisfied with the arrangement by which the Hospital was made to incur the expense of purchasing & maintaining so many machines, but so far as I could see, Stokoe had only been accessory to it, by obeying instructions from the Receivers to put a value upon them. Mr Hooper doubted his authority for doing so, which he did not happen to have brought with him on that occasion; although the fact of the valuations having been paid, seemed to me, sufficient proof of his having been authorized to make them. Mr Hooper also entertained an opinion that Stokoe having done a great deal of work for the Hospital, ought to have done this for nothing. Now I cannot see why a man is not intitled to remuneration for his time, when employed in making a valuation, as well as in any other way. I have in former years paid a great deal of money to Millwrights, but I should not on that account consider myself at Liberty to call a Man from the superintendence of his workmen & employ him in calculations which he only was fitted for, by having spent time & money in learning his trade, without paying him for doing so. I shall not pay Stokoe without orders from the Board, but send herewith his charge, with Mr Hoopers remarks upon the back of it, and letters authorizing him to make the valuations.

**4 Jan 1834    John Grey**

Saturday 4th January

The morning being promising, to escape the interruptions of the Office, I set out in good time to make an excursion to the west, examining in my way the repair of the barn & building of some conveniences at Highside, now finished, the fences & draining at Woodhall, advising the tenants respecting some draining necessary at the Rattenraw Farms, inspecting the new buildings just now completed & measured off at Haydon Town Farm, which is substantially done.

Returning by Brokenheugh, to see the alteration of a most inconvenient piece of road & water course close to the farm Offices, which Mr Hunt had let to Workmen, then coming down by Allerwash & Fourstones, reached home after a pleasant ride of nine hours without rain, which is remarkable in this extraordinary season. When at Haydon Bridge, I examined the two fields containing 11 Acres, hitherto occupied Mr Coats, for which Hetherington, the landlord of the Inn, agrees to give £24 which I value them at, after May day next. That added to his present rent will make it £114 when he comes into possession of this land, it will be better that he should have an agreement of some sort, drawn up & executed. At present there is not a single line for the bargain made by Mr Hooper & him. I also waited upon Mr Coats Junr, & insisted upon a settlement being made with Peacock & Hetherington his successors in the farm of Esphill & those fields, respecting the proportions of manure which each is intitled to. As they allege, & I believe with reason, that he has used upon his own land, some which should have

been reserved for them. After some discussion & altercation, I got the parties to name two Arbitrators to settle the matter between them. I also examined 4 small fields hitherto occupied by Mr Reed, along with a timber yard and work shop at £22.0.0. These we shall use as a depot for the Hospital Wood, & saw yard for that part of the property. Two of the fields I offered again to Mr Reed at a rent of £14 which he agrees to give. The other two I intend, according to Mr Hoopers promise, to offer to old Mr Coats, in consequence of his being deprived of the land laid to the Inn, but shall defer doing so till I get all matters settled with his Son, who seems inclined to be a little too keen in his dealings. I have no doubt of getting as much for the fields as Mr Reed paid altogether, & having the wood yard & Cow House besides. As yet I have had no application for Mr Routledge's house, although I have had for the land appended to it.

**6 Jan 1834    John Grey**

Monday 6th January 1834

Had an early visit from Andrew Thorburn threatening the destruction of Gairshield by ploughing out as much Grassland as he is intitled to by his lease, well aware of the injury it would occasion to the letting of the place, and complaining of the restriction I had put upon him as to his Crop at Mirehouse. I told him that I had applied to the Board for instructions, as to whether he should be required to pay more rent for this year than his farms should be let for the next, according to Mr Hoopers recommendation, & that I wished to make him some consideration for not ploughing Gairshield, though it would not be a benefit to him to do so, equal to the injury it would do to the farm, & that in all respects I wished to deal by him fairly & to part on good terms, but that I had a watch upon his movements, & that his putting a Plough in Gairshield would be instantly followed by a seizure of all his effects. He professed great moderation & willingness to do what is right!!

Received from Mr Mitchell the balance of rent due at May day last for High Green Colliery, included in the purchase by the Duke. Had more parties enquiring about the farms that are advertised & especially one from Tweedside, wishing to know the particulars respecting the covenants intended for the management of Chesterhill & the division of a large Grass Field, a part of which, being interspersed with rock, cannot well be cultivated but the remainder of which, being in an unproductive state I propose to fence off and take into tillage. This arrangement Mr Smith much approved of, & said that he would add something to his offer in consequence. I should be much gratified to have Mr Smith for a tenant of so good a farm. I have known him long as one of the very best farmers in the north of England, who held the farm of Grindon for 21 years at a rent of £2200 which I thought it impossible for any man to do. The rent was reduced lately to £1500 but only from year to year. Determined not to hold it longer without a lease he offered 1300 which being refused, he would have nothing

more to do with it & it has been since let by public tender to a very inferior tenant at £1200!! This may seem to be matter irrelevant to my journal, but I mention it for the purpose of showing that the Hospital property does not decline in a greater proportion, or indeed so great a proportion as some others. This indeed is the greatest decline I have known on this side the Tweed, but it is peculiarly a Corn farm, unsound for Sheep & managed at great expense. Mr Smith thinks there is a want of Cottages for labourers at Chesterhill, which I have not heard complained of by any other, altho' Mr Thomson stated that all had not been built that were intended.

Mr Murray the Millwright whom I had desired to examine & report upon the state of Newlands Mill, which was easy to see was not working true, as the saying is, came to me today showing that in changing the power, the motions have not been correctly calculated & that in consequence several cog wheels were shorn away & the whole Machinery in great danger. To remedy & repair it will cost £23 which having arisen from the imperfect finishing of the Machinery & not from the regular wear, or the negligence of the tenant, I could not call upon him to replace. I have therefore thought it necessary to order it to be done forthwith to prevent greater damage - but an estimate of £25 for new blue Stones of the Wheat Mill I declined to undertake, conceiving that that may belong to the Miller to do. I paid Murray £75.5.- for the repair of Alston Mill. He states that he had put in larger Stones than he had reckoned upon, which cost £2 more than the estimated price, and that he was out of pocket. I however paid him by the estimate.

**7 Jan 1834    John Grey**

Tuesday 7th January

A number of Accounts, belonging to the last year still coming in, delays the making up of the Books. I heard to day from Mr Parker that he & Mr Crawhall had fixed the price of Lead for the bygone quarter at £14.16.0. I had two customers to day for the lot of Wood advertized at Capon's Cleugh, the one offered £320 & the other £222 a most extraordinary difference of opinion as to its value. It is an excellent Lot of Wood, though in a situation which makes it very expensive to get out. I hope to get £400 for it, at least I must try to do so, before coming much down. I rode to the Snokoe & Dipton Plantations to look at some which are in want of being thinned as well as those that have been gone through at the Park. Went to Snokoe quarry to see that the men employed to get Stones for walling in the new piece of the Gateshead Road, were working the Quarry properly & not leaving it in confusion as has been sometimes done, and stopped them from leading the Stones, until I should receive from the Surveyor a written undertaking respecting the repair of the road to the Quarry, concerning which I have had too much trouble already to allow a repetition of the same damage, without knowing to whom I am to look for redress.

I returned through the fields of Dilston Hall Farm to see if I could discover any arrangement to propose to Teasdale as to his crop by which the entry to the farm might be improved to the succeeding tenant; for all who have looked at it complain, as well they may, that grass seeds have not been sown & that every thing is out of course & order. In fact there is little to be seen upon it but couch & every thing indicative of poverty & slovenly management, nor can anything be expected of it till it has been gone through with a thorough fallowing & liming, which any tenant to do good in it, must set himself to in earnest without regard to the immediate outlay. But such proceeding is seldom, I fear, contemplated by the tenants in their quarter.

I then returned by the embankments in Widehaugh, which have sustained no injury, although the constant repetition of floods lately has broken a good deal in to the shores of the river by the Tyneside Plantation. The industry however is but trifling as the foundation which was laid at the waters edge in summer & the weirs made for its protection are safe; the damage being only in parts which were too steep to allow of sufficient slope, but which will now be more easily effected, since the river has removed a load of sand from the top of the Banks.

**8 Jan 1834    John Grey**

Wednesday 8th January

Teasdale came to me this morning as I had desired. I showed him the state of his farm, & among other things, that he had only 10 Acres sown with grass seeds last half year & 47 for fallow this, which should have been equal in quantity. He stated as his reason that the land was tired of growing grass in proof of which I must see how bad those 10 Acres were, & that there was no use in sowing any - and that all that 47 Acres were not for fallow, as he could not have his quantity of land allowed for away going Crop, without them or breaking up the whinny fields which would not pay. I was forced to admit that his lease allowed him a preposterous quantity of Corn for such a farm, but if the whinny fields which he had allowed to go to a wilderness would not pay for ploughing, neither, I was certain, would those upon which he had had Corn, as the Crop was hardly worth harvesting last season, & that to attempt it, which I would by no means allow, would be only doing a greater injury to the land without benefit to him. Like most men who are very stupid he is excessively obstinate & the only thing to be done now, is to prevent him by force, from doing any more injury to his successor than can be avoided. He gave me £20 & promised to bring me an undertaking from a person whose Sheep are eating his turnips & grass, to pay the money to me, that they might be allowed to remain unmolested. Having examined accounts & written letters in the Office, I set out westward, but had not proceeded farther than to the Men at the

Embankment, when the rain & badness of the day caused me to return. Mr Hunt is looking after some draining & other Works in the Langley district.

**9 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 9th January

A Wet day throughout. Had a meeting with Mr Walker, Agent for the Railway Company respecting its course through the Hospital estates to the west of Hexham, & requested him to fix particularly its position at Allerwash Mill, as the end of the Stable, which I examined there some days ago is in danger of falling, but if the rail-way should interfere with it, it would not be right to repair it at present. Received the Plans of the proposed House at Dilston from Mr Kay & wrote on the subject to Mr Jay. There is a Blacksmiths Shop at Haydon Bridge, for which a rent of £3 a year is received. It is not in good condition and the occupier states his willingness to pay £6 (or perhaps he might be inclined to give more) if the Board wo'd expend £40 in raising it, so as to give him a room above to live in, & grant him a lease. The cost of the building according to the calculation which I have got from Benson, will be about £45 besides leading the materials, which the Blacksmith will undertake. The question with the Board is whether they will lay out the £40 for the additional rent of £3 during a lease of 21 years, at the end of which they will be in possession of improved premises.

**10 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Friday 10 January

Another rainy day & little to be done, save to write the teller & attend to business in the Office. Benson is engaged with Green & Rewcastle in making up the accounts of the buildings which he has been measuring.

**11 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 11th January

Rode to Wooley to advise the Tenant as to the arrangement of the farm so as to get it into a course of rotation conformable to the covenants by which it is to be managed in future. Also to fix upon the mode of renewing some old fences. Returned by Dipton Wood to see the land to be planted where some people are employed in clearing away and burning the refuse branches etc from the late falls of wood, & others are making

pits for the planting of this season, which it is of great consequence to the success of the trees to have properly done.

**13 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Monday 13th January 1834

As soon as I could get away from the Office, rode to Throckley where I had appointed the Workmen to meet me, whose tenders had been accepted for making the Pits & fences for the plantations, that I might fix the dimensions & distances of the former, according to the situation & quality of the Soil. It will be necessary in some parts to carry a little good soil from the low ground to put into such pits, where there is only the refuse of the old Coal heaps, to make the trees strike root. I wished also, not only to set out the line of the fences, but to direct the manner of making them & planting the thorns, which is not generally judiciously done in this part. The young trees & thorns supplied to this place, by Falla of Gateshead, are remarkably healthy & good. I was gratified to see the improved manner in which Mr Stephenson has set about to cut & dress the hedges upon his farm, & to try to restore them to a close & healthy state, in consequence of a lecture I formerly gave him on the subject. In some points he is not quite right yet & I have promised to send down my Tweedside hedger for three days to show him a specimen of good cutting. It is pleasant to teach those who are willing to learn & though some of the old folks are obstinate as to their own method, which is probably the worst in the world, I hope ere long to effect a reform in this particular, which has led to a great & very unnecessary expenditure on the property. There is a Cottage & garden on this Estate for which no rent has hitherto been received & which Messrs Bones wished me to attach to their Colliery. It is worth about £5 a year, but I let it to day to a Labourer recommended by Mr Stephenson as a very steady & respectable man, for £3 on condition of his maintaining the plantation fences and preserving them from damage, as the house commands a view of most of them, which are far from any other Woodman & are not of consequence enough to keep any one to attend to them. I visited the Colliery, to know why the Lessees had not paid the rent at Christmas as promised. The reason assigned was that for the last three weeks they had not been able to leave home to collect money, owing to the quantity of water in the Pit, having drowned the working & kept them day and night at their horse Gin trying to subdue it. The Seam of Coal is so near the surface that the long continued rains have penetrated to it & produced this effect. A small Steam Engine would soon overcome it, but these people have no capital, & perhaps the sale of Coal in that place would not justify much outlay. I have great doubt of their doing any good either with Colliery or farm, the condition of the latter being by no means flourishing. Returned after dark, and as usual in heavy rain.



**14 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 14th January

Being Hexham Market day, had interviews with several of the Tenants on various matters & applications from others who are candidates for the farms now to let, anxious to know the result of their tenders. I was employed the greater part of the day on walking over the Farms on the Dilston Estate directing & instructing the Workmen as to the improvement of the Hedges, in which, I think I see a greater willingness in the tenants to cooperate, as I have constantly declared that I will promote no man's interest in obtaining a new Lease of his Farm, nor, as far as I am concerned, treat with anyone, who destroys the Hospital's property by the neglect or mismanagement of his fences, or depreciates it by the bad cultivation of his land. In treating with Tenants for new leases this year, I did not act with much vigour in this respect, because the vice originated as much from the system as the men - but hereafter, fair warning being given, it is a principle which I think should be acted upon honestly & consistently, as a means first of improving & then maintaining the condition of the Estates, free from that great outlay which now accompanies the commencement of every new Lease. But I would not stop even here - for if it is a legitimate exercise of influence, with every one who has the power of using it, to endeavour to improve & elevate the moral character of the people, it cannot, I conceive be less so, with a public Body, connected with the Government of the country. Degrading habits of drunkenness I regret to say, characterise the Town of Hexham, its Market & neighbourhood- and I should wish it to be understood, that to obtain any preference as a tenant of the Hospital a man should not only be exempt from the imputation of bad management as a farmer, but from every thing disorderly in conduct & disreputable in character. It rarely happens indeed, that good management & attention to business are found distinct from habits of sobriety & industry.

**15 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 15th January

Received the Tender for Farms from Greenwich - made a list of those for each farm, writing letters & instituting other means of inquiry into the Character & circumstances of those who stand foremost on the lists, with whom I am not acquainted, that I may as speedily as possible communicate my opinion to the Board. I went by appointment to meet Mr Grace, Mr Bainbridge's Agent, at Newton to fix upon the new line of boundary fence between his property & the Farm of Thornborough High Barns, which is at present quite useless and in a situation on the edge of a Brook where it is impossible that it should ever be made to stand. We agreed without difficulty upon the proper line, choosing firm & level Ground on one side, & then crossing over to obtain

the lime upon the other, leaving quantities of land to each, & access to the stream for all the fields. Mr Hunt met me on the spot as he returns from looking after some draining etc on Newtonhall, & received directions as to the manner of raising the fence & planting the hedge, that he may let it to Workmen. We then returned through the three farms of Thornbrough seeing each of the Tenants & looking into the state of their fences, tillage etc. Such visits even if there be no definite object in view, are useful in keeping tenants on the alert to have things in good order. On reaching Corbridge finding that we still had time before dark, I took Mr Hunt to some parts of the Dilston Farms to see the manner in which I had directed the hedges to be dressed & cut, that I might be certain of his understanding my Plans & orders respecting them. He is quite as sensible of the abominable treatment which the fences have received as myself, & will do his best to assist in promoting my Plans for their restoration.

**17 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 17th January

Received the Boards Minutes & wrote several letters to Parties referred to therein. Also to persons who are offerers for farms, with whom I wished to have explanations. Bargained with Mr Hedley for the Hartburngrange Lot of Wood at £80, which is exactly Mr Parkin's calculation, & I conceive it to be a correct one, as the purchaser showed me his which was £76. He is to pay £40 in a fortnight, & to give a Bill for the remaining £40 payable in March 1835, at which time the Wood is to be all cut and removed. I then accompanied Marshall, a builder for whom I had sent, that he might give me an idea for the cost of the House according to the Plan sent down by Mr Hay, along with Benson to see the Site of the House, situation of the Quarry & other Materials. They are of opinion that such a House would absorb all the allowance & leave nothing, or at least not an adequate Sum for erecting the appurtenances. I have in consequence set Benson to make a new Plan upon a reduced Scale, but which will embrace all the essential convenience and accommodation of the former. Of this Marshall will give me his calculation of the Cost, & if approved by the Board, it may be submitted to three or four builders to contract for. The elaborate Plans of Mr Hay could not have been used as working plans after all, for he has not made the walls substantial enough for our strong materials & rough climate, so that the dressed Stonework of the Doors & windows would be altered, & with strong walls, much less of bond timber or wall plates are wanted. I then went along to the Site of the Saw Mill, to see the proceedings of the party in making their cut for the water course & tail race. The wood to be cut down has been cut down and measured & valued by Parkin at £51:5:6 which price the Party engage to pay in November.

18 Jan 1834 John Grey

Friday 18th January

Had interviews with several of the successful and unsuccessful candidates for farms, which it is unnecessary here to detail. Rode up to Fourstones to look at the situation of a piece of rock for which application has been made for the purpose of quarrying into blocks for the rail way. It is very near the road & the working of it would be attended with little damage, should the Stone prove of a suitable quality of which I shall have to report hereafter. I then proceeded to Heslops Farm to look at the success of the drains I had marked out in the grass field which I wished him to improve & found them very well done - nearly completed & likely to do great good. I saw then too Thos Gray, who is a brother in law to the Heslops & first of the list of tenants for Bagraw. The Heslops are amongst our best farmers & I trust Gray will follow their example. They had been altogether at the valuation of Bagraw & highly approved of the course of management I had prescribed. I then went to Allerwash to see the tenant about the repair of some ruinous stone fences & to get him to lead Stones & lime to build an abutment to the end of the Stable & Cottages at the Mill to preserve them from falling. The premises will only come into his possession at May Day next, but in the meantime there is danger of their falling, & the present tenant will do nothing for them. I next went to West Allerwash to see the new pump, with which the old & respectable tenant Mr Watson is much pleased & examined with his Son some draining & attempts to restore old fences, some of which however I see must be renewed.

Reached home in the evening, drenched with rain, of which the most extraordinary quantity has lately fallen, ever remembered. I obtained a settlement this evening with Green & Rewcastle for the building at Whittle. I found some of their charges so much above the prices usual in the Country & also above those which Mr Howdon had most frankly agreed to accept for the Buildings at Haydon Town, Lipwell Wood, Deanraw etc which he had done during the last year & the previous one, though upon estimates calculate at higher prices, that I determined not to pay them, but to have it settled by reference - but they however held the order from the late Receivers to execute the work according to their estimates and Rewcastle seemed inclined to hold out obstinately I decided to allow the charge for the farmhouse to continue according to their estimate & account. But as I had thought it adviseable to alter the management at first fixed upon for the Offices, that I might obtain better Cattle Sheds, by which the original Plan & estimate had been departed from, I proposed to him to reduce the walling from 2/. to 1/6d & other things in like manner; in which case I should lay the account; but otherwise it should be left to reference. This he agreed to, & Benson has made out the account accordingly, which I have paid, trusting it may be the last in which the prices exacted from the Hospital are greater than those usual in the country. They have also presented an account of £19 for making surveys & estimates for buildings, part of which have not been executed. By the Acct herewith sent, it will

be seen that Mr Hooper required an order from the former Receivers to be produced before he would admit the claim. They have now obtained Messrs Wailes & Brandlings signature to it, & demand payment. Where they had the benefit of erecting buildings, as at Whittle they could not certainly look for being paid for the Estimate, but in other cases they may have a claim. I shall however await the Boards orders respecting it.

**19 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 19th January

Settled with Mr Storey his Salary & Gratuity as directed. Rode into Hexhamshire to look over the farms & obtain information respecting some Offers for those lately advertized. Directed the Woodman there to get some assistance in thinning the young Plantations, which are ruinously thick, and ought to be done before the Spring. Set out a new fence to divide a field in two, at Staples, for the purpose of getting the Land into a suitable course of tillage - the tenant undertaking to do it himself, on being allowed the young thorns. Some of his Outhouses have bad roofs of thatch which it was intended to cover with Slates - but as that would alter the pitch & require new wood, I got an estimate for laying on a new thatch at £13:10. I agreed to allow the tenant £12 for completing it, which he consented to do. Such a roof will last for a Lease without repair, if properly done. Blue Slate roofs will hardly do for that climate. The Wind blew so strong today I could sit on horseback at times with difficulty.

**20 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Monday 20th January 1834

Wrote to Mr Fenwick desiring him to make application to Mr Pringle of Borewell for payment of his rents, and in default to threaten him with distress of his goods, as he has failed to keep his engagements with me repeatedly & disregards his covenants in the management of his farm. Having heard nothing yet from Armstrong, the highest bidder for Whitley Mill, I inclosed another letter for him to Mr Fenwick, asking him to send it out by a messenger, that I might obtain a decisive answer.

I was occupied the whole day in writing letters & reports to Greenwich upon the tenders for the several farms, upon my communication with Mr Fenwick respecting an arrangement for conducting the law business of the northern Estates, and upon the allowances made to Johnson by Mr Hooper for buildings etc.

**21 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 21st January

Bell, whom I had informed, when he previously came to inquire, that his was the highest offer for Aydonshields & Mirehouse & would likely be accepted, came to the office to enquire into the account of Crop to be sown by the present tenant, the quantity of land for fallow etc. He complained with reason of the condition of Mirehouse & the small quantity of manure upon both places, & was very urgent that a part of the allowance for lime, should in this instance be commuted for bone manure to be applied to the growth of turnips, that the dung might be reserved for the wheat fallows. I admitted most readily the wisdom of such an arrangement, but it was question whether the tenant ought not to purchase that description of manure being intended for the production of an immediate crop, for himself, whereas the time allowed by the Hospital was more with a view to the future improvement & permanent amelioration of the Soil. At the same time, if such a commutation should be admitted by the Commissioners in any case the circumstances of the present one, would fully justify it, for one year at least, & I promised to submit it to their consideration. Received an application from Mr Taylor for £150.1.7 on account of Salary as mine Agent & Postage, which I accordingly remitted.

I then rode out to examine the state of a good many fences around the woodlands, which are not in good order, as this is the reason for cutting & dressing Hedges - also examined some pieces of waste land by the lane side towards Slaley, which have been left out at the time of enclosing the ground, & serve no purpose but to grow whins & rubbish & to harbour Gipsies & their Asses. To take out the old hedges & include those pieces of ground in the adjoining fields would cost a good deal, & might be complained of perhaps, but when we are planting in the Dipton Wood, near by, there would be little expense in putting in a few trees & running a railing of the small fir wood which we have going to waste, along the side of the road. The situation would grow wood, & would afford shelter. Having received no directions respecting a list of Arrears which I forwarded to the Board formerly, and which for the reasons annexed, are shown to be hopeless I beg to repeat the question, whether they had not better be removed from the books, as Mr Hooper also recommended.

**22 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 22nd January

Received from Greenwich the Agreement with the Duke of Northumberland for the sale of the manor of Wark & immediately examined all the Plans & documents I could find, to obtain information as to the situation of the allotments of Thorngrifton & the

manner in which they are now connected with the farms & occupied by the tenants of the Hospital. This is a subject which I have never before thought it necessary to investigate & in which I have felt no immediate interest, having been led to believe that the Duke was to take possession first in May last & then in November. Having found the situation of the said allotments & their connection with the Hospitals Farms in the West, it will be necessary to examine the Tenants themselves to ascertain how far their interests are likely to be affected by yielding the disputed clause in the Agreement.

Having had yesterday a very heavy flood in the Tyne I went round the banks today to see if any damage was sustained, & to know in case of the embankments standing good, as I doubt not they will in future, to what amount the tenants are likely to be injured by back water from the flood Gates, which are placed as outlets for small streams, which in time of high floods are of course stemmed back upon the land until the fall of the river admits of their escape. When the river subsides rapidly, little injury can ensue, and it rarely happens that the Tyne continues beyond its banks for more than 24 hours at a time. I then met Mr Hunt at Dilston for the purpose of examining, marking out & measuring the present road leading past the site of the present house, & the line of that which I propose to substitute, also the course by which it will be best joined to the piece of road which is now in progress by the Gateshead Trustees who are bound to the expense of extending the said road to their piece of turnpike. If they will go on with my views, it will be seen by the accompanying sketch [not included in surviving journal] that a straight line with a very easy & gradual ascent, will be substituted with a very crooked one, in which many parts are steep, the proposed line from A to B being shorter by 140 yards than the present one; consequently the Hospital would eventually gain by the alteration, the land contained in 140 yards in length by 10 in breadth, and the estate as well as the public, would have a shorter and easier road. The part which would have to be done by the Hospital from (B to C) would cost about £42 of which £12 would consist in leading materials, which might be obtained in part by the tenants, as making the road better & shorter would eventually save them statute labor. Were I the tenant of Dilston Hall Farm, having horses & Carts, I should not scruple to do the whole. I have written to the Surveyor of the Gateshead Turnpikes asking him to acquaint me previously to his coming that I may meet him for the purpose of arranging this matter. The Commissioners have already sanctioned the proposed change from B to C - but without informing me whether the expense was to be allowed as a general improvement, or was to form a part of the £2000..... allowed for the House & Appurtenances. If the latter then the Receiver will be paying at the exorbitant rate of £5 Per Cent interest, for an improvement which he will only enjoy in common with the public but by which the Hospital will in the long run be the principal gainers. But even this I should prefer to not having the Road altered, should the House ever be built there, & I happen to be its occupier.

**23 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 23rd January 1834

I prepared to set out at an early hour this morning, to inspect Thorngrifton Allotments & ascertain how far the interests of any of the Hospitals Tenants were involved in the working of the mines or Quarries below them, but after waiting for some hours, was obliged to abandon the intention, as riding to such a distance against a storm of wind and rain was not likely to secure the object. I received a letter from Mr Bigge, as Chairman of the Morpeth Dispensary, informing me that the Hospitals Subscription for five years, at three guineas a year, is unpaid. Finding no order for the discontinuance of the subscription, I suppose it might have fallen into arrear through neglect, but since a large portion of the only property which could alone be benefitted by that Dispensary, has been sold to Mr Cookson, I beg to submit to the Commissioners whether they might not with propriety reduce the amount of the Subscription, or withdraw it altogether. Mr Walton, Agent of Mr Beaumont, having examined the lot of Wood in Dipton Plantation, No 3 in the printed list, which is valued by Mr Parkin at £175 came today to treat for it, but I could not induce him to offer a farthing more than £140 for it the whole to be paid for in May next, alleging that he could get wood enough in the Country on quite as good terms. If he would have offered £150 I told him that I should have recommended the Commissioners to accept his offer, as he is a good customer, but he would not move further, & considering the quantity of wood in the market & coming forward on the Hospitals Estates, I fear it hopeless to stand out for such prices as Parkin has been accustomed to value at; but before submitting to much reduction from his valuation.

Mr Hunt has had a meeting today at Aydonshields between the present Tenant & Bell, whom I had informed of his offer being the highest & that I had no doubt of his being accepted, for the purpose of adjusting the amount of Crop etc from his report. I suspect that Bell is rather inclined to break off the engagement which however I must put to the Test as soon as I hear of his being accepted, for no time is to be lost should the farm to be advertized over again. I am told too that Robinson who offered highest for Dilston Hall Farm has been seized upon & is to be sold off!! My opinion of Todd's Petition which has been referred to me for the purpose, is, that it points out the most equitable mode of ascertaining the fair and just amount of reduction that his farm requires. The other farms upon which a similar reduction is expected to be made according to Mr Hoopers promise to the Tenants that it should have his recommendation are Vauce, Plankey Mill, Middle Deanraw, Lough, Harsondale, Gairshield, Bagraw, Mirehouse & Turfhouse (Spency Croft, Sproats Farm & Hartburngrainge South Farm have already received the Boards sanction to that effect). The difference it will make in the Rental will be ascertained after the Conditions of the new lettings are finally settled, by comparing the former with the present rents, & can be extracted either at Greenwich or here.

**24 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Friday 24th January 1834

I went with Benson to examine the Ground for the site of the intended house at Dilston, with a view to ascertain the expense of Garden Walls etc, but as it would be desirable, in case of the road being altered, to place the House a little farther to the South than was intended, until that is settled, the exact extent of such walls cannot be determined. It may not however be of great consequence to ascertain the cost of all such appurtenances, if it were even possible, at this time, for it appears certain from the calculations which I have obtained from a builder & Mr Benson that the Plan as now reduced, will be undertaken by a Contractor for something less than £1650 and as that Plan includes a Stable at the end of the kitchen wing, with Servants bedroom above, there can be no doubt of a sufficient surplus being left to complete any thing else that will be wanted. The Plan, as now altered, leaves out the Library which Mr Hay added & the bedroom above, & reduces the size of the lobby, but admits of a larger room for the Clerk's Office, that made by Mr Hay having been too little for the size of the Desks and Bookcases. This Plan I shall have Mr Green, an architect in Newcastle to revise & prepare, by Mr Hays specifications, for the guidance of Contractors, hoping soon to see the work in progress.

I then proceeded westward to investigate the subject of the Thorngrifton allotments, but had not gone more than four miles till I was quite wet through & having no Change of clothes nor chance of getting done so as to return at night, I thought it advisable to give it up, in hope of better weather and an early start tomorrow morning

**25 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 25th January 1834

Set out early & rode by Fourstones, Allerwash etc to Grindon Hill- looked through the repairs of the Buildings there- proceeded to Grindon & taking the Tenant along with me, rode over the whole of that farm & Beamwham, both in Mr Woodmans occupation. These are in a high situation & very properly almost entirely laid to grass. I was glad to see the excellent effect produced by the cheap mode of sod draining adopted here last summer, & well executed by a man from Dumfrieshire. The quantity of water carried off by means of those drains, is very great & the land which was previously a Bog, is even in this Season, comparatively firm & dry. The House at Grindon was rebuilt last Summer, & is now very comfortable, as well as the Offices, which have been repaired & improved. I looked at the situation proposed for the School House to be built there,



which is very much wanted in that remote district, to which the Board has signified their willingness to contribute the wood & £5 a year, but as yet inhabitants have not obtained an adequate Subscription. I also examined the Lime Kiln which is in a dilapidated state & was to have been repaired last year, but has not yet been set about. Rode over the Thorngrafton Allotments & obtained the Opinions of the Tenants respecting the conveyance of the Minerals etc to the Duke which they do not like, although they can hardly anticipate any annoyance from it during their Leases. I then from looking at Grindon Lake & some Roman antiquities in one of the stations connected with the Wall, close by, descended into the Vale of the Tyne by Thorngrafton, taking in my way Eastward, Whitechapel, the most westerly of the Hospitals property in that direction, where preparation must be made for building this summer, which was deferred the last & will be done now on lower terms. Lipwoodwell where I examined all building lately measured off & paid for, with which the old Tenant, Errington & his Wife too are well satisfied, agreeing that they could end their days happily there if the time would only allow them to pay their rents & live. The improvement of the house & Offices has certainly given great additional comfort both to themselves & their Cattle & the work by Mr Howden has been well done. I then proceeded through other farms on the property, by Haydonbridge, & reached home at 8 o'clock after a ride of 50 Miles, I imagine, rendered agreeable by the unusual occurrence of having little rain. In the evening reported to the Board on the subject of the Conveyance of certain manorial rights to the Duke of Northumberland.

**27 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Monday 27th January

Settled the Accounts for the repairs of the Mill & the Miller's house & Offices at Newlands & received a payment from Bones of Throckley, hearing from him a long list of grievances and difficulties respecting the quantity of Water which it has cost him so much to overcome in the Pit, & the impossibility of collecting money from the farmers, in both of which, I believe, there is much truth. Received & communicated to the Board Armstrong's reason for withdrawing his proposal for Whitley Mill. Had a long examination of the Railway Plans with Mr Walker, by which it seems likely that Allerwash Mill may be removed, so that it would be unwise to expend money on repairs at present, except of the most temporary kind. Mr Walker would be glad to take an Acre or two of Ground in the west part of the Dilston Park Farm, where there is a thick seam of Clay, to make Bricks & draining tiles. Being near the Turnpike Road, the damage by way leave would not be great, & it might be of advantage to the Estate & neighbourhood. I have promised to look at the situation, with reference to his plan, & to receive a proposal of terms from him, before undertaking to recommend it to the Commissioners. I then rode out to Dipton Fell where we began today to plant a new

ground from which the Wood has been cleared. In the parts of the Wood that have been replanted two or three years ago, I observed that few of the Larch or fir tribes succeed, which I account for by the Ground having produced a Crop of that kind of Wood already, whereas the deciduous kinds take readily, especially the Oak & Ash. This is worthy of observation & I have been pressing it upon the notice of the Woodmen, showing them the waste of planting a great many trees of a kind that will not grow. It is also quite analogous to other productions of the Soil, & hence the axiom in agriculture of observing a rotation by which the repetition of the same kind of Grain is kept as distant as possible; but the most striking instance of the kind is found in America where when a forest of Pine has been burnt down, in a few years the Ground is covered with all the deciduous trees that are common to the Country, but not one of such as formed the original forest.

**28 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 28th January

A dismal day of rain, everybody kept within doors. Engaged in writing letters, & Office business - conferred with Benson on the buildings at Whitechapel, Lees & other places, which must be undertaken this year, as to the most economical arrangement & mode of execution, as well as the probable cost that the Board may be informed upon it. At two, the Tyne having risen higher than I ever saw it before, I walked round the embankments to ascertain their condition & efficiency - the water in a high flood, affording the best test of the correctness of the levels. I found & marked just two places where water made its way through the Bank, by mole holes, which must be attended to. It was within two feet of the top in the part which has not yet been added to, which work has been of late suspended on account of the Season - had it risen higher, it must have done immense damage, but just then it was at its height. As soon as we get settled weather, that work must be proceeded with. In consequence of the repeated overflowing of this most turbulent river, it will be proper to defer filling up the plantations between the Shores & embankments, till as late a period in the season for planting as possible, & also, I think instead of putting in young nursery plants, which would be in danger of being destroyed by floods, to remove plants of some years growth out of other plantations where they are too thick, which I have no doubt will take readily enough, as the Soil is of fine quality & the situation a sheltered one.

I omitted to mention in my journal on Saturday night, that I had looked when at Grindon, at the Fir Plantation which had been partly destroyed by fire near a year ago by accidental communication from the burning Heather in the Allotment adjoining. The Woodman had told Mr Hooper that because the firs had made so little progress hitherto, it was not worth planting again, but I am not of that opinion - the fire has

destroyed all the rough Grass & heath which impeded the trees & left a covering of Ashes on the surface which being put into the Pits along with the Plants would greatly promote their growth. The expense of fencing off the Land has already been incurred & the remaining parts of the Plantation are there to afford shelter to the new. I would therefore recommend filling up the Ground with Oak & Birch, as the most likely to take, in such a situation, which is also Mr Parkins opinion. The Ground is not of great extent.

**29 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 29th January

Went to Thornbrough to see the extent of land that had been covered by the Tyne in yesterdays flood & consider of the practicability & cost of securing it, but as yet there was too much water standing in the low ground to ascertain it. Went forward to Shaw House & informed the tenant that unless he could take means to reduce the Arrear standing against him, I feared some other steps must be taken by the Hospital. He engages to bring me some money ere long, but complains like many others, that whereas in former years, being on the road to Newcastle, he made half his rent by the carriage of Lead from Langley Mills, since the Mills were let, he has had none of the employment. I then proceeded to Whittle Dean & examined with the Quarry-men the rock they mean to cut & the line of road they wish to use, making a farther stipulation with them, that in case of their being able to dispose of any of the refuse stone for building purposes, which would at any rate be better taken away, they should pay one tenth of the price as Quarry leave to the Hospital. They wish to make all into Rail way blocks, that they can, and as they are restricted to size by the Company & we are to be paid according to their account, any further stipulation on our part is unnecessary.

**30 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 30th January 1834

The flood having entirely subsided, I spent most of the day in examining along with Harle, who manages the embankments, the effects it had had upon them and the Shores. The former have sustained no damage, but what was occasioned by some runs through Mole holes, which having been marked at the time of the flood, a man today has remedied. In another respect the flood has done us a kindness, for by leaving its mark along the side of the embankment, it has shown the exact level which should be followed, & proves that at the first formation of the Banks, the levels had been erroneously taken by the Ground instead of being struck at intervals from the surface of the River, and without making allowance for the more rapid descent of the bed of

the river in some parts, than of the adjoining lands. It follows that although the top of the embankments preserves a gradual inclination, the water was at some parts three or four feet higher upon them than in others. This makes it unnecessary to make a uniform addition to the height of the banks throughout, and having marked the different places today, a considerable saving of expense will arise from the discovery. To the Shore to the West of the Confluence of the Devils Water, where the Wears were made to protect it, little injury is done, save the washing one or two spots of Sandy soil which had not acquired firmness enough, but on the East side, where no Wears are yet made, a great breach has been made & some trees washed down. The Soil is so fine and soft in quality, that when once broken into the Water makes a great impression upon it. I see now that it is absolutely necessary to defend it also, or the whole wood would be in danger & in time the interior embankments also. I much regret the necessity of such outlay but I see no alternative between that and losing the land, and certainly the Tyne here is the most mischievous & unmanageable river I ever engaged with. I observed Water standing in several fields adjoining the embankments, which by the ordinary course of making water furrows and cuts across hollow parts, when the fields were ploughed & down, might have escaped as soon as the flood subsided. On asking one of the Tenants why it had not been done and accusing him of slovenly management, he told me that such cuts had never been made in Dilston Haughs. I asked if he thought the Wheat would be the better for it, he admitted that it would likely perish some of it, but that they had never been used to cut out their land. The solution must be that they expect to get as many Pounds from the Hospital for the injury of their Corn, as they save Shillings to themselves by their blameable & disorderly practise.

**31 Jan 1834 John Grey**

Friday 31st January

Met Mr Pearson this morning, Surveyor of the Gateshead Roads, upon the Ground at Dilston Bank to point out to him what I considered the best arrangement for uniting the two branch roads upon that part of the property with the new part of turnpike, so as to be at once convenient for the occupiers of the farms & the public, and a saving of Land to the Hospital. He agreed that the Plan I proposed was the best & most complete if carried on by the Hospital, through a field in the Hall Farm, according to a Plan which I forwarded to the Board last week; & though it might cost rather more to the Trust than the one he had contemplated he would recommend its adoption at the next meeting of Trustees. Having examined all the points with him, as to the line of road, the kind of fences I should require & the Quarries he should use, I went to see how Harle was proceeding upon the directions I gave him yesterday to secure the Tyne Banks against the increased injury which another flood in their present state would occasion. Also to fix with Mr Parkin about the Planting, now ready to begin to at Throckley & the

quantity of trees that would be required for filling up the Plantation burnt down at Grindon.

**1 Feb 1834    John Grey**

Saturday 1st February 1834

Went to Newcastle to see to some matters there, & put into Mr Fenwick's hands a list of Fee Farm Rents due to the Hospital from parties residing in the Eastern parts of the County, who cannot be expected to come here to pay them, or even to come to Newcastle for the purpose, as the sums are small, were I to fix a day to meet them. I saw therefore no means of obtaining them, but to ask Mr Fenwick to apply for and receive them whenever the parties might call.

I met Mr Pringle from Scremerston who had promised me a payment, but from the state of the weather he has not been able to deliver a Cargo of Grain but engaged to come up in a few days. The Corn market was as bad as possible and the farmers in great depression of spirits.

**3 Feb 1834    John Grey**

Monday 3rd February 1834

Received the Boards Minutes of the 20th & 29th Ultima and made the several communications required by them, also informed the Parties whose tenders for farms had been accepted. I then passed some time among the Workmen, repairing the damage done by the late floods, to the Banks of the Tyne, contriving the best & cheapest mode of obtaining materials for securing them. Then went to examine the Ground where Walker & Bones propose to burn bricks, on the Park Farm, for which they gave me an offer this morning of ten Pounds a year, advancing gradually by one Pound each year to twenty, taking upon themselves all expense or erecting Sheds, compensating the tenant, making & Maintaining Roads etc. The situation is such as not to occasion much damage of land, but I must ascertain how much they would be likely to take, & try to get a better offer, before recommending it to the Board.

I then examined the House & Offices at Dilston Hall Farm, to see what accommodation might be obtained for Mr Hunt there, without inconvenience to the new Tenant. The House is small, consisting of one small parlour, two bed rooms, a Kitchen & Milk House, but he is satisfied with it, if it can be had at a fair rent, & if something be done to make it clean & comfortable. It will require some painting & repair, whoever may occupy it, as the windows sashes have gone without paint till they are so rotten that

they can hardly be made to hold the Glass. Yet for all that I can see, this is the only place where I shall be able to find Shelter while the new house is building.

**4 Feb 1834    John Grey**

Tuesday 4th February 1834

Had a meeting with some of the accepted Tenants for the Farms respecting their Covenants etc. Rode to Newtonhall Farm & then through Thornbrough to examine the success of some draining which I had marked out at the former, & at both places to look to the culling & dressing of some old Hedges under my directions, with the hope of restoring them. No particular occurrence today, requiring notice.

**5 Feb 1834    John Grey**

Wednesday 5th February

Was engaged in the Office making Estimates of the probable outlay for Building, hedging & draining for the present year, & the rental according to the reduction of those farms recently let, of which a statement was forwarded to the Board. Rode afterwards to inspect the work at the Embankments & the planting on Dipton Hill, on my return in the afternoon found Mr Pringle from Scremerston who paid me £300 of the Arrear due by him at May Day last, leaving still a balance of £94. He wishes the Commissioners to refer to letters from the Receivers & Mr Weatherly, which I herewith send, upon which he considers himself entitled to hold his Farm at the annual rent of £500 instead of £575, but prays to have a reduction of £100 a year from the original rent of £575 on account of the great fall in the price of farm produce. This is a petition to the same effect as that which was forwarded by him to the Board some weeks ago, except that the injury he sustained by the Rail way was the Ground upon which he then claimed a reduction. By the accompanying letters it appears that the late Receivers & Mr Weatherly sanctioned the understanding that the Abatement of Rent given at that time, was to be permanent, instead of being restricted as I understand it was, to three years. Mr Pringle also gave me Estimates for renewing a Platform around his Wind Mill of £9.15.0 and for putting in a new Pump in the place of a wooden one which is worn out of £7.18.- both of which I saw, when there, to be necessary, but refused to do on account of the Arrear of Rent. I shall sanction his doing the Work, and make the allowance conditional on his discharging his arrear.

Benson having been directed to inspect the farm house at Whitechapel very minutely, reports to me that it is the oldest existing on the Estate, except that at Lees, which is also ruinous. That by mending the roof, it might stand for a few years in its present

condition, though the walls are much shaken, but that nothing can with safety be done in the way of adding to or improving it. It is, as I know, small & incommodious & stands badly, just in front of & too close to the fold yards. To add to the Offices as intended & merely patch the Roof of the House, Benson estimates at £170. To remove & rebuild the House at £380 or thereabouts, of which I have desired him to prepare a Plan to be submitted for the decision of the Commissioners.

**6 Feb 1834    John Grey**

Thursday 6th February

After various interruptions & causes of detention in the Office, I set out for Haydon Bridge where I have appointed to be to receive Proposals for the planting at Grindon, which I let at the very low price of 5/. per thousand for making the Pits. The putting in of Trees I prefer to have done by our own Woodmen, hoping that they may be more attentive in selecting the different kinds of Trees for the varieties of Soil most suited to each & also in collecting into the Pits the Ashes left on the surface from the fire.

After looking into some arrangements for additional Stabling at the Inn, & directing the Conduit to be made for directing the water to it, I proceeded to Alston calling by the way at Mr Walton's House which is at a short distance from the road, Hoping to be able to get a few pounds more from him for the Lot of Wood at Dilston. He was not however at home. In the evening I had a long conversation with the Moor Master on various matters connected with the Alston District, arrears of Rent, Repairs & Mining. I regret to find that the celebrated Mine of Hudgill Burn is doing very little & has small prospect of improvement. The others are generally in a fair & hopeful way, & the great stores of Lead being now exhausted, there is a good prospect of a steady demand and improved prices. I had also a meeting with the newly elected Surveyor of the Alston Roads, who is to be introduced to his Office tomorrow & has been making an inspection of the various lines of turnpike, Bridges etc, and advised & consulted with him as to the most effective & economical mode of maintaining them, in my views of which he fully concurred.

**7 Feb 1834    John Grey**

Friday 7th February

Went out as soon as I could see & traversed Spency Croft Farm, which Mr Dickinson has held for 17 years at the rent of £100 and which is one of those included in the list to be reduced from May day last. Most of those in Alston which were entered to at the same period, have been reduced one third or more. As a mere Farm, I question that it

would now let for £70, the Poor's rate amounting to £22 a year upon it. But Mr Dickinson is willing to take it upon lease at £76 a year, owing to the accommodation it affords him as Moor Master for Horses keep etc. This is a mutual advantage, for the land is well managed & the rent always secure. I then went to examine the Watercourse through Burn's field which he had petitioned the Board to have covered in. The Water comes at times very foul from the Lead Mines & the course has been covered over through an adjoining field at the expense of the Hospital, for which reason he thinks his ought to be done too. I stepped the length of the Drain and estimated the cost at £6 of which I engaged that Mr Dickinson should pay him one half, upon his completing the Work, considering that as his field was more remote from the Mines than those already covered in, and as an end must be put to such claims, he ought to incur half the cost, & that beyond his, no other should be done. I think it doubtful whether he may do it on these terms or not. I next examined the Mill, the smooth working of which I found to be very different from the last time I was there. The Miller stated that he could now grind Six Bolls in the same time that was before taken to grind two, and with less water. The motions of the Machinery being accurately adjusted. I then spent some Hours at the Meeting of the Alston Road Trust, where the Books and Accounts of the Surveyor and Treasurer, being examined, were turned over to their successors in Office & some of the Plans for future management which I had discussed with Mr Rome on the previous evening considered & adopted. I also examined the young Trees in the Alston Nursery & directed Mr Dickinson respecting the small pieces of Plantation to be made & the kinds of Trees to be used in them, besides some of a more ornamental kind for the approach to the Inn, to which the door at the end is a great improvement. I regretted however to find the house in so damp a state, the paper both in the sitting and Bed rooms being much stained and spoiled. This arises partly from the decayed state of the Spouts, but more from that of the roof, which must be carefully examined and repaired so soon as the season will admit of it.

**8 Feb 1834    John Grey**

Saturday 8th February

Returned from Alston, again calling upon Mr Walton without finding him. Stopped at Stublick Colliery to know how they were succeeding & was glad to find that notwithstanding the unusual quantity of Rain the excellent Engine not only sufficient to drain the Colliery but to diminish gradually the original stand of water, which in the absence of correct Plans of the former Workings, has always been a source of anxiety to me. I trust now that it may be overcome & removed without damage to the Mine. I took the Tyne banks in my way home to see what progress had been made in repairing the damage of the lane flood, which I found going on well. This is a subject of daily care and watchfulness with me.



**10 Feb 1834 John Grey**

Monday 10th February

Had an interview with Mr Bell late of Stublick and all differences having been arranged & disposed of, paid him his Gratuity, deducting the rent now due and taking his joint security with Mr Nicholson of Hexham for those to come. Mr Bell says that he expected to be included among those who by Mr Hoopers recommendation were to have the reduction for the present year, which I could not promise, as I had not understood it so before, but I engaged to mention it to the Board. Heard from Mr Walton that he would give no more than £140 for the Lot of Wood, No 3 as he considered it a full value. I wrote to him to conclude a bargain. Some other purchasers have looked at other Lots, but will not offer for them, on Account of Mr Parkin's valuation being so much too high, and I am convinced that it is so, as I hear from people conversant with such matters, that they could get foreign wood at a cheaper rate, considering the expense of cutting and removing it. Went to Dilston Hall to set out the line of Road as stated in the Plan sent up & agreed to by the Commissioners.

**11 Feb 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 11th February 1834

Saw Mr Walker & agreed with him on the terms for a Brick Work, of which I send his proposal, recommending it to the Board. The chief advantage to the Hospital being that if obtaining their own bricks, should the work succeed, at 25/- on the property instead of paying 33/- at several miles distance. Had it been begun a little sooner, there would have been a saving in building the new House. Made out & obtained signatures to some Agreements for the newly let Farms. Rode over the Estates of Dilston to examine the work at the Banks Plantations etc.

**12 Feb 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 12th February 1834

Went to examine the Farms at Hartburngrainge and found the small Stable which I had thought it necessary to make at the West Farm, completed at less expense than I had anticipated. The old Man White, who had hitherto been continued upon an allowance of 6/- Per Week with a House & small Garden for maintaining the fences of the Woodlands, died lately, & having looked upon that Allowance rather as a Pension to

an old Servant, than as a necessary expenditure, the Wood being fully grown & the fences not requiring much repair, I thought it unnecessary to make any other appointment, but prevailed upon the Tenant of the  $\diamond$  upon which the greatest part of the Plantation is, to undertake the care of the fences, by giving them the Woodmans Cottage to occupy along with his farm, by which £15.12 a year will be saved. I then proceeded Northward & passed

Tuesday 13th

At Millfield Hill with the part of my family which I had not seen for some months.

**14 Feb 1834 John Grey**

Friday 14th

Had appointed to meet Mr Borthwick and his father to arrange the particulars of his entry to Chesterhill Farm, finally to determine the Conditions of management, the diversion of certain fields which I have previously noticed & to obtain his signature to an Agreement, all of which was most pleasantly complied with. The Draining of the Bog Field at Outchester is nearly completed, & when finished will be examined again & measured by my Son who will transmit to me the Account.

**15 Feb 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 15th

Went over the Farms at Scremerston. Saw that Mr Pringle had already renewed the platform around the Tower of his Threshing Machine, which was indeed indispensable & that Mr Hogarth was proceeding with filling up & restoring to land, two Acres which had been rendered waste by old Quarry heaps, for doing which, he has obtained a proposal so low as £24, which I fear, even with the help of Barrow-way rails from the Colliery, will afford the men very small wages. The money however will be well spent, as the perpendicular sides of the Quarries endangered the lives of Cattle & being near the house & road were a great eye-sore. The cleaning out & repairing the roof of the old Water Level from the Colliery is an awkward undertaking, so foul & also dangerous, from the decayed state of the Wood & Props formerly used in it, that Men can hardly be prevailed upon to venture into it, a few of the worst parts, the Lessee has wisely secured by a rough Arching of Stone, which is let down by some old Pits by means of a Horse Gin. In a short time I hope a free passage will be secured for the water, and then the whole may be safely explored, but should much of it be found afterwards to be in a ruinous condition, it may be worthy of consideration whether it had not better be abandoned and the water drawn up by an Engine. It is evident that

the Steam Engines been in use when this Level was made, as they are now, such a mode would not have been resorted to. The Market for Corn at Berwick is remarkably low, & Mr Thomson & indeed all the Tenants there, say it will be impossible for them to make up their Rents.

**17 Feb 1834 John Grey**

Monday 17th

Returned to Newcastle & on tuesday morning to Corbridge, attended to letters and matters which had occurred in my absence. Directed Mr Parkin to commence planting at Grindon, and to reconsider his valuation of the Whittle lot of Wood, as it is most unlikely that I should be able to obtain the price he sets upon it. Went out to Dilston to see the progress that had been made with the new road preparatory to commencing to build, & learnt with much dissatisfaction that on examining the condition of Teasdale's House, Benson had found it so thoroughly infested with Bugs, that every floor must be taken up and means used to destroy them, before Mr Hunt or anyone can live in it. This is most provoking as I had looked to it as a place to take refuge in during the building of the House, Hunt in the meantime remaining in his lodgings at Corbridge. What to do next I cannot tell.

**19 Feb 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 19th February

Sold the Lot of Wood No 4 in Dipton Plantation to Joseph & George Dinning for £140, for which they are to give a joint pro: Note, payable in September & December next, by which time the Wood is to be all removed. This is £10 below Parkin's valuation, but I consider it a good price as wood is selling. Had also an Agent from the Lead Company's Mines to examine the Tyneside Lot, valued by Parkin at £220 last year, but not then sold. Since that time several Trees that stood in the way of the Embankment have been cut & sold or used upon the Estate. On this Account I offered him the lot at £200. He said he could not come to that sum by his valuation, but would consult Mr Stagg, Manager of the Mines, & give me the best offer he could, in the course of a week. Hearing that an additional number of men had been put to work in Throckley Quarry in consequence for the demand for Stones to the Railway, I wrote to the Lessee begging that he would henceforth make a monthly return of the number of blocking men employed that I might know what amount of rent he would be chargeable with, & wrote at the same time to Mr Stephenson, tenant of Throckley South Farm, where the Quarry is situated, requesting him to be so good as to keep a memorandum for me of the number of such men employed from week to week. Wrote by the Moor Master

who called on his way to Newcastle to the Assignees of the Arkindale Mining Company, referring them to him for an explanation of something they were dissatisfied with in the Award for damaged Ground, stating that the Hospital, as Lessors could not in my opinion be called upon to accept a dividend, they being bound to pay the whole amount to the owner of the land, & that I hoped they would see the propriety of paying it before making their final dividend. Wrote by him also to Mr Fenwick, Colliery Receiver, sending him Mr Thomson's Memorial & the accompanying correspondence respecting the price of Lime Coal at Scremerston, begging him to reconsider the matter & communicate with me at his earliest convenience. So much of the day having been occupied in the Office, I had merely time to ride to examine the work at the Tyne banks & to see the planting going on at Dipton hill & some waste spots by the Slaley Lane.

**20 Feb 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 20th February

I forwarded to the Board this morning, an answer to their enquiries respecting the Inspector of Woods - Mines etc also several Agreements for Leases, executed by the respective Tenants. Among them, it will be seen, that I have thought it best to hold Andw Thorburn as Tenant of Gairshield, at Will, so that his being allowed to continue or not, may be made to depend upon his own conduct. That the Term of Thornbrough Highbarns is to be 14 years, that it may determine at the same time with Thornbro' Town Farm, also held by Mr Scott, for if they should then go again into separate hands, a better line of boundary may be made than at present. In all the farms that have been let this season, I have been able to effect a transfer of the Threshing Machines from the Hospital to the entering tenants, except in that of Coastley, in which the Water Wheel & Axle are excepted. It is not likely that any expense will be incurred on account of that Wheel for a long time, as it is strong & new, but if that even should be the case, it is upon a Scale so far beyond what any tenant would have put up on his own Account & so very costly, that I fear the Hospital must continue to pay the penalty of maintaining it, for the indiscretion of having erected it. Threshing Machines are but a substitute for labor, which it is the Tenants business to supply, & I am glad that the principle has been established & will now be understood as one to be acted upon throughout the Hospitals Estates, that they are to belong to the Tenants. We shall hear no more of a half years rent being expended upon the mere Machine independent of building, & even more than that, for I see that the Machine at Dilston north Farm cost altogether £540.11.0 the rent of which is £750, & that too high. I rode today over the Farms at Fairle - High Field & Greymare Hill, to examine the condition of some Plantations in that part, & to attend to the setting out of some draining which is wanted. I am anxious to do this myself, as much as possible, as it is my great object to procure the greatest benefit at the least expense, & when left entirely to the Tenants, I find that they do not

always go the right way to work. Mr Hunt is engaged for 3 or 4 days at present in attending to the new fences etc, in Langley Barony.

**21 Feb 1834 John Grey**

Friday 21st Februry

Rode in the morning to Westwood to meet Benson & the Mason whose tender for building the two Cottages there had been accepted, that the Situation might be determined & the Work begun. The most convenient place for them is a piece of waste land at the junction of the Hexham & Chain Bridge roads, & as it is a public and conspicuous situation, some regard must be had to neatness in constructing and Keeping them. Proceeded then to look after some matters at Haydon Bridge & thence by appointment to meet the Lessee at Stublick Colliery. Having put myself into a Miners Dress I descended in a rope, let down by the Engine, 48 fathoms into the Earth, & then with a Candle stuck in a bit of Clay, made my way as best I could, sometimes on hands knees, through the various seams & to the different parts of the workings, being well satisfied, before I reached the Shaft again, that my size was not the most convenient for a Colliery Receiver. I have been in several Mines, but this is by far the most complicated & unintelligible of any I have ever seen, for besides the great Stublick Dike which runs through the Country 90 fathoms deep, & is known to all Miners, as cutting off the Coal seams in its course, the field of Coal here is intersected by innumerable small dikes, which throw the seams into such confusion, that in coming upon one the Miner does not know whether on the other side of it, he may find the seam he is working 20 fathoms above or 20 fathoms below his present Level. One of these Dikes I penetrated to today & found that on the other side they had discovered the Coal Pit 16 fathoms higher than on the side we had left.

My object in going through the Workings, was to endeavour to gain such a knowledge of them as to enable me to understand the Plans as laid down of their proceedings, & to ascertain if I could, whether they were working all the seams fairly away & not taking those which work easily & leaving those that are more difficult. In fact to decide upon the necessity of having the Colliery examined by a regular Receiver, from time to time. This would certainly be satisfactory, although the Seams are all carried fairly on at present, & ought to have taken place at the time of the transfer of the Colliery to the present Lessees. As for one thing it is evident that the Reducing Coal had been wrought farther than appears by the Plan delivered by Mr Bell. This Seam, the workings & sale of which are placed under such restrictions on account of its value in smelting, contains in itself its own protection. It is but a thin Seam, & what is grievous only the top part is of that peculiar quality, the under half being a small drossy Coal used only for the Blacksmiths fires, on Account of its thinness & the expense of separating the two kinds, it is worked at great expense than other seams & as the

Country people would not give more for it than for the others for domestic purposes, the Lessees would not be paid for working it were they so inclined. They have just now discovered Coal by boring, to the west of the present Pit, & very near to where it appears six different attempts have been made without success having always gone down upon Dykes or troubles. They are making a second boring in the supposed line of the Coal Seams, and should that prove successful they will, I hope, be able to make a winning at little expense, which will serve for some years without sinking a new Pit to the Eastward & incurring any risk from the body of Water there is there lodged upon the Colliery. Rode home in the evening 12 Miles in a Blast of Snow, tolerably wearied with the exercise. I ought here to mention what May lead to future unpleasant discussion if not attended to. It may perhaps be in the recollection of the Board that I had difficulty in ascertaining which part of the land now leased with the Colliery, Bell held as Agent, & which as tenant. It was at length decided that he was entitled to an away-going Crop upon a portion of it, & that Crop the present Lessees purchased from him for £27 odds, contending however & justly that as they pay rents each half year as they become due, without what is called the running half year, they ought to have the Crop the first year of the Term and none the last. The shortest way of putting them in this position, would likely be for the hospital to allow them the sum they paid to Bell, & then matters will be straight at the termination of the Lease. Otherwise they will be entitled to an equal portion of the Crop then, which might lead to disputes & perpetuate the confusion. If however the £27 should not be repaid a memorandum of the transaction ought to be attached to the Lease for the information of those into whose hands the settlement of the business at a future time may fall.

**22 Feb 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 22nd Feb 1834

I met Mr Leadbitter this morning at Dilston Hall Farm to make the arrangements respecting the occupation of it, reserving the House, small Field called Halls Nook, Garden Stable etc as specified in a written Agreement, for the Bailiff, he paying £22 and Mr Leadbitter £150 for the farm and remaining premises, with which he professed himself well satisfied. His Lease of the land should be made to determine along with that of his present farm & chargeable with the rent he will actually pay i.e. £150, leaving Mr Hunt as tenant at will for the remainder & entirely independent of Leadbitter. Mr Teasdale complained loudly of my injustice to him in preventing him sowing for his awaygoing Crop, land that grew a miserable Crop of Wheat last year, without which he could not obtain all that his Lease allowed, but by going into Moorish land. I told him that his Lease had allowed too much throughout, & he had taken more, injuring the farm by execrable management, & that any attempt on his part to repeat a Corn Crop upon the land that had grown Corn last year, would cause me to recommend to the Board to withhold the indulgence that had promised him respecting

his arrears. He still however complains of harsh treatment. I afterwards visited the farms of Westwood, Fourstones & Allerwash, chiefly for the purpose of inspecting some hedges and the manner of culling them. The Colliery at Fourstones has been overpowered with water of late & the men driven into an old working to get out some pieces of left Coal. I imagine little more need be expected from this Mine, without a new winning, & even that will be of doubtful success.

**24 Feb 1834 John Grey**

[Note: Date as written mistaken for 24th]

Monday 22nd February

Received the Boards Minutes of the 8th & 19th Instant & made the necessary communications to the several parties referred to. Was afterwards was occupied in inspecting the planting in Dipton Woods & examining the state of several plantations on the Property, some of which are now thinning & others that require to be thinned. Nothing occurred of importance to be noted.

**25 Feb 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 25th February

Went to inspect some matters respecting the roads at Dilston & also some bye ways into the fields which have been intersected by the Railway. Proceeded to Hexham & attended a meeting of the Alston Roads Trustees, saw Mr Walker respecting the making of Bricks at Dilston Park & his settlement of damages with the Tenant, also several of the Tenants on various matters, examined Robson's Nursery at Hexham, from which I wished to select strong & healthy thorn Quicks for the new fences. I was glad to effect a sale of a considerable quantity of small wood cut in the Plantations of Whittonstall, which it was necessary to remove for the benefit of the growing Wood, whether it could be sold or not. The produce will do somewhat more than pay for the cost of cutting.

**26 Feb 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 26th February

Having received three Summonses for Special Jury Trials had to go to NCastle to attend the Assizes, & owing to the late arrival of the Judges from Durham & the

quantity of business at Newcastle was not released from the Court till 6o'clock on Friday evening.

**1 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 1st March

Returned to Corbridge early in the morning , attended to letters & business in the Office. Directed Benson to make preparation for the Building at Whitechapel, as sanctioned by the Board, & to obtain estimates for it & the farmhouse at Lees. Received from Mr Hogarth at Scremerston the application to the Board, praying for a reduction of rent, which I herewith forward. It is hardly necessary for me to make any remarks on the subject of this Petition, in addition to those which I have been called upon to make from time to time, upon the ruinously low prices of Grain during the whole of the present season. The Berwick market has been throughout, the lowest in the Country, & Mr Hogarths statement is a confirmation of what I have often repeated to the Board, that a Farmer almost exclusively dependant upon the growth of Corn, is in a most hopeless predicament. But to relieve himself in this respect, why does not Mr Hogarth voluntarily adopt the rotation of alternate grass and corn which I have laid down in the recent Agreement for Chesterhill & Glorum, by which he would have a mixture of Sheep & Wool in his farm produce, & though the extent of his Corn Crop would be diminished, the land would be in better condition for growing it. It is true that such a change cannot be effected all at once, & if it could, that still it might not afford Mr Hogarth an adequate relief. Acting upon the principle hitherto adopted by the Board, I presume they will only offer to Mr Hogarth a reduction through the medium of a new valuation & letting.

After getting through the business of the Office, I rode over the farms on Thornbrough Estate to see the new line for a boundary fence between that property and Newton, as set out by Mr Hunt & the opposite party, & to consider by an inspection of the fields, an application from Mr Scott respecting their management in connexion with the farm he already holds. Mr Scott has signed an Agreement binding himself to manage his former farm as well as his new one, hereafter, in the five instead of the four course rotation.

**3 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Monday 3rd March

After dispatching a parcel to Alston, containing grants for trials of veins & Letters to Mr Dickinson & Mr Stephens, I took a long ride through the Farms in Hexhamshire



that I might inspect some new fences, reconcile some differences between the away going & entering Tenants, which they seem to make a point of never doing themselves without an Umpire, & examining a large extent of Woodlands, of which the younger plantations are so unreasonable thick that I had engaged five Labourers at 10/- a Week to go along with the Woodman of that district for a few weeks, to assist him in thinning them. The stuff which they cut out, consists chiefly of small Scotch fir, which is of little use but to give the tenants to rail & repair their fences with. But its removal gives room & air to the better kinds of wood, & though in some parts, rather too late in being done, will greatly promote their growth & value. A considerable quantity of Corf Rods has also been obtained in the Woods of that district, which will bring some money, & are cut at the expense of the purchaser.

**4 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 4th March

Mr Green the Architect, having come up with the Plans & Specifications of the House, I accompanied him & some Contractors to Dilston to fix upon the precise spot & see how the Plans as now arranged would fit the peculiar situation, as I was anxious to take every possible advantage of the picturesque character of the place, consistent with convenience & economy, & to save some Chestnut Trees, which after much contrivance, we were able to accomplish. I then left the Contractors to form their Estimates, that they may be submitted along with Mr Greens Plans to the Board, & went to examine into & give directions respecting some repairs at Teasdale's farm, which it is in vain to look to him for, in his impoverished condition. The Garden & Stack yard walls are all in ruins, & the road from the lane to the house almost impassable on foot, everything in fact both inside & outside the house, in the greatest state of disorder. These, must needs be put into some decent condition. I next went along the Tyne Banks to see the work of securing them, at which we have not done anything for some time, rather waiting to see the floods over before finishing it off. I think it may now be completed, as the weather is remarkably fine & I trust we shall not have any heavy falls of Snow on the mountains to cause inundations by their melting. They are going on with the change of road at Dilston which will be a great improvement both in appearance & reality.

**5 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 5th March

Rode to Throckley to see how the unsightly Pit heaps had been planted. I have hopes that the Trees will succeed, which will be a great improvement to the appearance of the

farm & neighbourhood & convert Ground which was before pernicious to the Wool, to a useful purpose. Mr Stephenson has kindly sent Carts to lead good soil to be put into the Pits along with the Trees, on such parts of the heaps as consisted only of Coal refuse. I found it necessary to order some more Trees for planting up parts of the Woodland here, in which those planted some years ago had entirely failed, in consequence I suspect, of their having been negligently done & allowed to be grown over & choked by rubbish. The other plantations are in a thriving condition. I sent the Hedger whom I lately engaged, to stay for a few days with Mr Stephenson & show a specimen on that part of the property, of the proper mode of cutting Hedges, so as to make them strong & efficient fences, instead of destroying them, according to the barbarous custom of this part. I was glad to find Mr Stephenson quite a convert to the Plan & imitating it very successfully, making very laudable exertions to improve & restore the condition of his fences. This is encouraging & if the example should be followed generally, I shall have cause to think the expense of having the Hedger well repaid. But I must admit, that few of our tenantry have the knowledge & liberality of Mr Stephenson. I found the Colliery in a better state than when I last visited it, the Water having been got under & the work proceeding. My attention was called by Bones, who occupies the Public House by the side of the Turnpike road to the state of the toofall at the back of it, and estimate for the repair of which, he says, was made out, & promised to be done by the late Receivers. The roof of this appendage to the House, which contains, the Beer Cellar, Kitchen, Milk House etc is of Pantiles which are very bad, & of too low a pitch for the kind of roof, even if they were good. The rain has continued coming through, till the Wood has been rotted & the place become neither safe nor habitable. I shall get Benson to examine it & give me an Estimate of the cost of repairing it. On asking Bones if he would give us any more rent if it were done, he answered, by showing me a good brew house which he had built solely at his own cost. I imagine the house ought to be put into repair, & then he should be bound to keep & leave it so.

**6 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 6th March

Went through the Estates of Newton & Whittle, examining at the latter place the working of the quarries lately opened for getting blocks for the railway & the trespass done by this & the roads. The latter is of little moment, being confined solely to the plantation & not touching upon the farm at all. I met today Mr Armstrong, who is Agent for the Estate of Threepwood. He applied to me for payment, to the Proprietor for two Stacks of Corn, said to have been grown upon that Property, but seized & sold by the Hospital, because they stood among others, in the Stack Yard at East Elrington when a seizure of the effects upon that farm was made, the tenant of which was also tenant of the other. He had applied to Mr Hooper, he said, who undertook that it

should be paid but referred the value to me. I told him that I was extremely glad that Mr Hooper had left the settlement of it to me as I was certain I should have no difficulty in convincing him, that he was not entitled to one farthing. The Corn in question stood up in the Hospital's farm, as part of the tenants stock - we had no reason to suppose that it did not grow there & no need to enquire. The whole of the effects that were sold fall considerably short of the Hospital's demands; & the Tenant continuing in the occupation of the other farm, though as he stated, in arrear of rents, formed a strong presumption that he had acted more favorably by his other Landlord than by the Hospital and that he had paid his rent to him in part from the produce of the Hospital's land. So that in fact, I had a better case, in making a demand of repayment from him than he had against me - but that we had better conclude the matter by agreeing to let it alone.

**7 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Friday 7th March 1834

I agreed this morning with Mr French on the part of the Governor & Co, for the Lot of Wood No 2, in the Hand Bill, at the price of £180 & £13 for some weedings in the Park Plantation. The money to be paid & the wood removed by December next. Some of this Wood standing by the Embankments, & some also so near the brink of the River to be in the way of sloping & securing the banks, has been cut down & sold since the Lot was valued. And as the whole is within Water Mark, and therefore attended by some risk in case of a flood coming when the Trees are cut & laying on the Ground, I thought it adviseable to close with Mr French, as his is considerably better than any other offer I have had for it. All the Lots of Wood proposed to be offered for Sale this Season are now disposed of, except those in Whittle Dean & Capons Cleugh. The former I should wish to sell, because the Wood will make no more improvement & because there is no local circumstance likely to increase its value. That at Capons Cleugh is likely to be more sought after, especially as it contains a quantity of excellent Oak, likely to be carried to the seaside, when the Railway is extended to the Wood in which it grows. I should therefore be inclined to defer the Sale of that lot for another year, rather than sell it at a low price. I have had other applications since that from Mr Wallis, for a Lease of the Allerwash Lime Stone, in anticipation of the Railway, but am of opinion that as Fourstones Colliery seems to be but little to depend upon for a continued supply, & the Lease of Brokenheugh Colliery which is almost as near to Allerwash as Fourstones, but in a different direction, will shortly have to be renewed, that it would be better not to let the Limestone till it & the Colliery could be united under the same party, which would make them independent of the Lessees of any other Colliery & probably secure to us more respectable Tenants. After being released from the Office, I went up the Tyne Banks to see the effect of a late flood & found all our works uninjured, though a part of it left in an unfinished condition. I then proceeded to

Dilston & spent the day among the Workmen making the road there & those engaged in planting, which I have made a point of examining frequently, & trust that the success of the Trees will prove that the work has been efficiently done. When in the Northern part of the County, I bought a quantity of perennial Ray Grass Seeds from the grower which I had long used & known to be of a kind much superior for pasture to any that I see in this district. I had it shipped found to Newcastle & Mr Hunt had undertaken to distribute it to such of the tenants as chuse to purchase it, at a charge to cover the original cost & carriage. My sole object is to introduce a more valuable description of Grass among the Tenants & my only reason for noticing the matter now, is that I may stand clear of any imputation of making gain by the transaction.

**8 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 8th March

Rode to Dilston to meet Mr Shipley respecting several claims, on Account of Fruit Trees & other things supplied by him when he made the Garden, for which he expects payment. His intention of selling manure from the Premises, I flatly resisted, especially as he had always sold the Hay made from his Land without permission & with impunity. But that he should not suffer any loss with respect to such Hay as he might have on hand, I engaged to purchase it by the valuation of an indifferent person. Neither could I admit his claim to have all the trees, gooseberry bushes etc valued according to their present condition, as he could not legally remove them, but only consented to pay him what might be the original cost. I offered him £3, which I considered a fair compensation for every claim he could justly make, & which I believe was his opinion too, & which he consented to take, after some repining over the things which he had taken such pains to nourish. To do him justice, I must say that kept his Garden & place altogether in very neat order. I should think it best that the Hospital should pay for these & any other trees that either the Receiver or Clerks Gardens may require, so that in case of change of Occupiers no dispute may arise upon such claims in future. I then Proceeded to the Park Farm to meet the Parties to fix upon the situation for making Bricks & to prevent future disputes, by settling the terms between the Contractor and Tenant - but the badness of the day prevented their appearing. I then went on to Highwood to examine the cutting & improving of some young hedges by the turnpike which have been ill planted & managed & will require some care to make them substantial fences. These & other young fences by the road sides, have been attended to by a variety of hands casually employed & upon no regular system - which formed one inducement for me engage a regular and experienced Hedger from the North, who is to have 12/- Per Week & an old cottage near Dilston. He will also be employed at the Woodland Hedges & will go occasionally to different parts of the Estate, to set an example of good cutting. I then proceeded by the new Cottages building at Westwood & to inspect some young hedges that are being made at

Allerwash. Then men who are planting them complain of the change of times as they are now doing for 1/6d Per rod, what they used to get 2/6 for. So much for subjecting the work to competition.

**10 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Monday 10th March 1834

Heard from the Tenant at Outchester that the Drains that I had marked out for improving a boggy field were finished & ready to be examined & measured, which I wrote desiring my Son to go over & do forthwith, that the ploughing of the field might be proceeded with. Directing him at the same time to apprise the Tenants in that quarter, that I should be at Belford to receive the Rents on the 8th April. Went to the Park Farm & met Mr Walker, the Lessee of the Brick Ground, to fix the site & line of road to communicate with the Turnpike. Also to instruct the Arbitrators between him & the tenant, upon the principle they should Assess the damage of ground etc. Went afterwards to the people employed in making & fencing the new road at Dilston Hall & to those making the plantations. Had some Ivy & ever-greens planted around the ruins of the old Castle & Chapel - the latter has a good leaden roof but I discovered in getting to the top of the roofing that the parapet Walls are decayed & in danger of falling, from the want of cement, in the joining of the Stones, & some other repairs. As I presume it is intended to preserve the Chapel as heretofore, I must take the opportunity of a good season for making the necessary Repairs.

**11 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 11th March 1834

This being the day appointed for payment of the Dividend of the Assignees of the Arkendale Mines Company, I attended at Hexham on the part of the Commissioners, having previously examined the accounts, & seen the Boards authority for concurring in the Agreement come to by the Creditors, to accept a Dividend of 12/- in the Pound. The Hospitals claim amounted to £2347.7.0 according to the accompanying statement - and the Dividend and Interest in the Bills to £1461.1.1. of which £704.4.1 was paid in Cash and the remainder in Bills at 12, 18 & 24 Months with Interest, for which, according to the Conditions of the Agreement, I had to sign a discharge and give an undertaking to deliver up the Bills of which I gave them a Copy, I believe the originals to be at Greenwich. I again spoke to Mr Hall on the Subject of the damage assessed by the Alston Jury, for land destroyed by the working of the Mine, belonging to Mr Dickinson of Lovelady Shield, which he undertook to settle. The Corn Market today was as low as ever, & I was assailed by many of the Tenants declaring that it was

impossible for them to make up their Rents, & that they must have an abatement or leave their Farms.

Newcastle

Mr Alfred Hall

To the Commissioners of Greenwich Hospital Dr

1831

Sep 28	To 1500 pieces of Refd lead wt 107. 4.2. 7 at £13.7.6	£1434. 0. 7
	To 300 ps Slag do wt 21.13.1.15 at 12.7.6	267.15. 1
Nov 25	To 600 ps Refd do wt 42.19.3.21 at 13.-.-	558. 6. 10
		£2260. 2. 6

1831

May 11	To wood sold and delivered	87. -. -
	Add noting to each of the above Bills at 1/6 each	4. 6
		£2347. 7. -

Cr

1834

Mar 11	By cash at 6% in the Pound	£704.4.1
	By bill at 12 Mos from 30 Mar 1833	
	For 2% in the pound interest	246.8.8
	By Do at 18 mo from Do with Do	252.5.8
	By Do at 24 mo from Do with Do	258.2.8
		£1461. 1. 1

## 12 Mar 1834 John Grey

Wednesday 12th March

Arranged with Benson the several Buildings at Whitechapel & Lees, for which parties are preparing Estimates. Directed him to examine the Offices at Coastley with a view to find a situation in which some Pig Houses may be built at small expense, which in arranging the Buildings, had strangely enough been forgotten. Afterwards accompanied him to examine Teasdales House & see in what way it might be made comfortable at the smallest expense as any thing that is to be done, must be decided upon and executed as quickly as possible, after his getting it. I then went with Mr Parkin to consult him about the Wood that is wanted for the Building upon the Estates, & spent most of the day among the Planters, who are now near a conclusion with their work. We have got a very nice piece of Plantation from the Waste Land by the side of the Slaley Lane, which has hitherto been worse than useless, being the constant resort of vagrant Tribes & their Asses. I have desired Benson to get some refuse wood worked up at a cheap rate into hurdles, or moveable rails, which may often I think, save the expense of permanent railing, in situations where it is only needful to save a

young hedge, or one that has been cut down during the short time that the adjoining field may be occupied by sheep; and for the want of such railing during that short period, the hedges often receive irreparable injury. We can have them made for 6d each, from weedings that cannot be sold.

**13 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 13th March

Rode through the Farms of Highside, Bagraw and Longhope & then to Woodhall to examine some new Fences just made there. Proceeded then to the Farm of Lees now let upon a fresh Lease, where we are making a boundary Wall at the extremity of the Hospitals Property in that direction. Having seen the Wall & another fence that is in progress & conferred with Mr Watson about some draining & the site of the new Farm house, I returned to Haydon Bridge to meet by appointment, the Moor Master & some Parties who, stimulated by the advance in the price of Lead, had made applications for the Trial of some Veins that are known to run through a part of Grindon Allotments in the Langley Barony. There being some doubt as to their priority of claim as well as to the particular veins to which their application referred, I thought it best to have a meeting of the whole, that after a full investigation we might come to a proper understanding & avoid future disputes. The result was, that leave was given to make three separate trials of Settling Stones Vein and branches, which exist on the Hill about three Miles to the North of Haydon Bridge & adjoining the Dukes Boundary This matter settled, I set out on foot to go through some Woodlands at Esphill, which though I had often seen, I had never traversed. The Wood is in a thriving condition & coming fast forward to be useful in the low part, but falls off very much as it approaches Langley Mills partly owing to the poorer quality of the Soil & partly to the injury it receives from the Smoke of the Mills, which is destructive of both animal & vegetable life. I returned across the farms of Langley Castle, Lightbirks & Land Ends, reaching the Anchor Inn after dark, which is a most comfortable place & getting into good repute. I found however that the Storms of the Winter had driven through the Western Wall & made the paper in the best Rooms very damp. I have since directed Benson to have it examined. The Walls being of dressed Free Stone, the application of Roman Cement to the joints may probably cure the evil. Mrs Routledge having declined to participate the field annexed to her house with any one, I agreed with a Surgeon in Haydon Bridge, called Barwick, for the part designed for her at 3 Guineas Per Acre, or £4.14.6 Per Annum. Having had no offer for Mrs Routledges house except one from a Saddler at £13.13 rather than allow the snug parlour to be converted into a Shop & pulled to pieces, I agreed to take her offer of £13, for the House & half the Garden. The Chimnies & Spouts of both houses, require repair. I have taken written acceptances of the Premises from the several parties making in all, Mr Hutchinson £21, Mrs Routledge £13, Mr Barwick £4.14.6 = £38.14.6. The present Rent being £35. I have

also Mr Reeds Acceptance of two of the fields now occupied by him at £15.0.0 and Mr Coats for the other two at £9.0.0 being £24 the same as now paid by Mr Reed for the Fields Wood yard & Work shop in Haydon Bridge, leaving us the latter for a depot of Wood & Slates - and as it will be necessary that some one should have the charge of it, I have directed that the end of the Work Shop be fitted up for a dwelling House for the Woodman of that district, which can be done at little Cost, & will save the rent of his Cottage.

**14 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Friday 14th March

I left Haydon Bridge early, intending to make a long excursion through the farms to the North of the Tyne. Proceeded by Rattenraw, Tofts & to Grindon, examined the planting of the Ground from which the Trees had been burnt last year. Much of it is done, but some parts are still too wet, in which I directed the Woodman to make open drains to carry off the surface Water. Traversed the wide Allotments of Grindon Common to see where the Trials for Ore are intended to be made and to examine some stone fences under repair. Came to Brokenheugh Colliery to ascertain the number of men employed and the state of the Workings. The Seam is growing thinner of good Coal & the refuse increases & from present appearances, will be exhausted by the end of the Term which is at May 1835. Came through the farms of Brokenheugh, Allerwash & Fourstones to the Colliery there, wishing to ascertain the state of their Workings, for having been driven from the whole Coal by press of Water to work in the broken Coal, or pillars left formerly for the support of the Roof, part of which I understand to be below the village & Farm Buildings, there seemed reason to apprehend that if they were removed & a 'Creep' to follow, the buildings might suffer injury. I found that my information was so far correct as to the working out some pillars, but Rewcastle assured me, that they were not in a situation to endanger the Houses. I warned him to be up in his guard, as if damage should ensue, it must be at the risk of the Lessees. I had some thoughts of going down the Pit, but finding that one of the Workmen had been killed only yesterday by the falling in of the roof, I considered it prudent to desist, especially as my exploring it could not have been attended with much good. Under the circumstances of both these Collieries, it will be proper to have the examination of a practical Viewer, to see that the Hospitals interests are not prejudiced. Proceeding by Westwood to see the new Cottages which are nearly built there, I reached Corbridge after a ride of nine Hours.



**15 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 15th March

Spent most of the day among the Workmen engaged in Planting, fencing etc upon the Dilston Estate, without any occurrence worthy of note, except an application from a Mr <Crile>, Lessee of a Colliery at Long Witton for leave to work in Coal in Hartburngrainge. Having no knowledge of the situation, the probable success or the damage that might ensue, I could not give him any encouragement, my impression being that unless connected with the Sale of Lime, it would hardly be an object worth pursuing. He stated that Limestone lay in the Same place & that that would also be his ultimate object. After obtaining all the information that I could, I gave him permission to put down a bore rod to ascertain the Seam, promising that if his success in that way should warrant the proceeding, I wd give him an early meeting on the spot to consider of the propriety of making further trials.

**17 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Monday 17th March 1834

Two men called David Gibson & John Nattrass applied to me some months ago, for leave to work blocking Stones for the Rail Way from a quarry at the village of Fourstones, offering 1d Per Block, which is the price they pay as Rent to Sir Edward Blackett & other proprietors on the line. Thinking that we ought to have a better price here, on account of the proximity to the Rail Way, & consequent saving in carriage, I declined giving them an answer until I had considered the matter & ascertained that more could be had from other Contractors, engaging however, that they should have the first offer. I therefore appointed a meeting with them this morning & stood out for 3d Per Block, & 1/5th of the value of any other Stone that they may be able to dispose of for Quay Walls, culverts or any other purpose, which they consented to. This is the highest price that has been paid on the Railway, but the Quarry is conveniently situated, & being near to the public road will occasion little trespass to the property & little expense to the Lessees for damage. And will pay a considerable rent when it comes into operation, which may not be for a year to come.

I went today over the farms in the Estate of Thornbro' to examine the new boundary fence that is just finished, the state of the Lime Kiln & other matters, & particularly to see Rowells of the Highbarns, who have done nothing as yet to reduce their Arrears. As the price of Corn had this season been ruinously low & they had Granary room, I did not press to sell, and purposely abstained from doing any thing till they sh'd have ploughed the Land & sown the Seed. That will now soon be completed, & my object today was to get them to try among their connections, to obtain security to

some extent to the Commissioners, otherwise I should be forced upon the alternative of attaching their effects, which I should be most reluctant to do, owing to their age & infirmity of the old people & the hardship of their case, having been literally robbed by an Agent of the Hospital. The young man promised to come to the Office in the morning & get an Account of Rent and Arrears against them, up to May Day next, that he might consult his parents as to their prospects & capability.

**18 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 18th March

After attending to business in the Office & settling with Mr Hunt, accounts for Work he had measured off in different parts of the Estate, for which he commonly makes his payments at Hexham on the Market day, I went out to Dilston to see the Work that is going on at the new road & laying out the Garden, which I have thought it best to put into a state of forwardness, although the House is not built, because it forms a place of deposit for any Soil that is to be removed, & may be made useful, even this year, in producing Potatoes & Vegetables.

Old Teasdale found it difficult to get a house for the following year, & being desirous of having one near his present farm that he might look after his Crop, pressed me to let him have that now occupied as a public house, of which the occupier had notice to quit, it being intended to remove or pull it down, after the alteration of the turnpike road, which will shortly be removed to a distance from it. Thinking it would be an accommodation to the poor man, and that if removed, it could not be rebuilt so as to be occupied this year, the present tenant having possession till May Day, I let it & the small Garden to him at £5 rent, subject to the approbation of the Board. This house stands in a part of the Ground hereafter to be occupied with the Receivers House and as that Ground will be cut up & diminished in value for some time, by the line of new road running through it, & in some degree permanently, by piece of plantation, which will much improve the Site of the Ruin, and look of the place generally, perhaps it may not be thought unreasonable that the rent of the old public house should go to the Receiver, as a compensation which another tenant would have required. I merely offer this however as a suggestion, but without making any claim for compensation.

The river being very low, I went round the embankments to examine their condition after the Winter floods. That round Widehaugh & the junction of the Devils Water is in excellent state, the work of heightening it whenever it was required, having been done in a substantial manner & at a cost, according to the account finally settled this morning of £106.9.10. The Estimate received by Mr Hooper was £130. The Embankments both to the West & east sides of Devils Water, are now I think perfectly secure, except perhaps one part on the east side, where Mason Work has been used

instead of an earthen mound, which was evidently the only part in danger, when I went round the whole at the time of the highest flood I have yet seen. The shores of the river must be objects of constant attention, as a single breach made in such sandy soil, if not attended to, may cause incalculable mischief. As they are now coming into a gradual slope with a firm foundation, I trust that by attending to the effect of each flood upon them, much less expense will be incurred in preserving them in future.

**19 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 19th March

Rode to Haydon Bridge and met Mr Hunt who had been looking after draining and fencing in several farms to the North of the Tyne, & then proceeded to examine the state of the buildings & fences on the farms of Deanraw, Vauce, Lough and Harsondale to decide upon what may be necessary to be done to put them in such condition at the commencement of the Leases, as to make it reasonable to require the tenants to maintain & leave them so at the end.

The buildings upon all of those farms are in good order, except the Lough, & here something must be done. A Cow House & Cattle Shed which though bad, I hoped might have stood for another season, have given way in the Storms of the Winter, the timber of the roof having broken under the load of old thatch, & their longer occupation become dangerous. The farm house, Barn and Stable require very little repairs. The fences too, in general require little, except at Harsondale, where there are a great many stone walls that have been built without Lime & much too high to stand in that stormy situation. These are in a state so ruinous, that the only thing that can be done with them, with some few exceptions, is to rebuild them in a better form & of less height. This is a farm which it always provokes me to visit. The land is poor, the situation & climate bad, yet a farm house & Offices have been made upon it, out of all proper to its value, and expensive fences erected, but in so insufficient a manner, as to require almost entire renewal. I found on examining them today a young thorn hedge, planted two years ago, but which had not made the least progress, & from the manner in which it had been set, could never possibly become a Hedge. I therefore sent for a man who is planting a Hedge in another farm, to direct him to take out the quicks and plant them over again, so as to give them a chance of succeeding, giving Mr Hunt charges that the person who could put such work off his Hand should never on any account be employed again. I then came to Stublick to enquire into a dispute between the Colliery Lessees and some party occupying a part of the Land now Leased to them. It turned out that some Workmen at Langley Mills having held land under Mr Mulcaster, were allowed by Mr Hoopers desire to hold it for another year, rather than be turned out so near to the May Day. This the Colliery Lessees agreed to, but in anticipation of leaving at May next, they set up a claim to away going Crop, & actually

borrowed Ploughs & broke up all the tillage land in spite of every remonstrance from the Lessees. If they had even had the right to a Crop, they could have none to it upon the land that should have been fallow, having grown Corn last year. I told them however that they should not sow a foot of it & directed the managing Partner at the Colliery in what way he ought to proceed to get it into a proper rotation. He will thus have the benefit of their ploughing day. Reached Corbridge late in the evening after a very long ride.

**20 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 20th March

Sent letters to the Tenants who are in Arrears regarding an early payment. Directed the Bankers to remit £2000 to the Credit of the Commissioners on the 29th Instant. Attended to Letters in the Office & went through the Workmen at Tyneside and Dilston.

**21 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Friday 21st March

Visited the Farms at Newlands where there is some draining going on, where some applications had been made for repairs & where I had applications to make for Arrears. Found that our old Tenant Soppit whose alacrity & wonderful possession of faculties at the age of 93 I had often admired, had died lately, and his wife nearly as old as himself, within ten days afterwards. They had just been 60 years married! Examined the Mill at Newlands which had lately been under repair & has been put by Murray into excellent order. The Machinery works well & smoothly, & he has managed cleverly to save the expense of a new upright Shaft by using the part which was of sufficient strength & making up the necessary length by fixing in a cast Iron Spindle at the top. From Newlands I rode across the country to Lambton to see Mr Morton, Lord Durhams head Agent, I consult him about the choice of a Colliery Viewer. Mr Fenwick is becoming old and slow and has besides too many large concerns to look after, to make ours an object of attention. I have written to him twice since sending him Mr Thomsons Memorial respecting the Lime Coal at Scremerston, as directed by the Board, & though I have ascertained that he is at home, having obtained no answer. I explained to Mr Morton that we did not want a high & expensive man as a Viewer, but one who would come as occasion required to inspect the Collieries, wch were in hand & but of small extent, charging moderately for his journies. He recommended a Mr Foster of Haswell as a very judicious & respectable man, one who is not in the

employment of any of the very large Collieries and would be likely to give due attention on moderate terms.

**22 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 22nd March

Rode from Lambton to Newcastle, expecting to find Mr Foster there & to have some conversation with him, but did not meet with him. I heard of another Viewer there, exceedingly likely for our purpose, but he is employed in a Colliery in which I suspect some connections of Major Johnson are concerned, & should that be the case, however respectable the person may be, as he will be expected to inspect the Workings at Scremerston, it is better to avoid the possibility of any bias from that quarter. At the Market today, the price of Corn & Coals is equally complained of. And among failures & dividends, the fact is talked of, of Lord Londonderry having made an Assignment of the Estates & Collieries in the County of Durham, to Trustees, with the intention of returning to his own Country. I enquired of Mr Fenwick if he knew anything of Alfred Hall's Bills, but he had never heard of them. I then informed Mr Batson, one of the assignees, that Mr Hooper had had them but that they had not yet been found, and that as they held my undertaking for their production when discovered, & my Signature to the Deed they would incur no risk, as they might be well aware that the Bills would not go into other hands. He expressed himself perfectly satisfied with my undertaking, though the Bills should never be produced. I apprehend that Mr Bicknell would get them at the time he issued the Extent. Leaving Newcastle I came to Throckley where the planting as well as fencing the Plantations is now finished. The Miller here complained, as all the Tenants do, of bad times & hard bargains, wanting relief. I compromised with him for the present, by engaging to make a piece of Hedge, which will include a small bit of waste land in his Garden, & substitute a new Hedge for a very bad one. The cost will not exceed two Pounds.

**24 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Monday 24th March

Had several matters to attend to, & letters to write. Engaged Mr Davison, whom I had formerly selected as Teacher of a School under my direction at Milfield, to come to that at Deanraw at May Day, by the desire of a Committee of the Inhabitants who have obtained a promise of £10 a year towards it, from the Trustees of the Haydon Bridge establishment. I trust the youth upon our Estates in the quarter will be benefited by the appointment. Heard from my Son reporting that he had measured the Drains at Outchester & seen to the cleaning and fencing some hedges on those Estates that are

under Seven Years & therefore in the charge of the Hospital. Had apprised the several tenants there and at Scremerston & the Innkeeper at Belford, that the rent day was fixed for the 8th April etc etc. Was waited upon by an Assistant Surveyor of the Gateshead Roads to inform me the Trustees at their meeting on Friday last considered & adopted the Plan I had recommended for the bye Road as connected with the alteration they are making near Dilston and wished me to direct the fences to be made according to my wish. This will complete the line for straightening & shortening the line which leads past the House & farm at Dilston Hall, as shown up in a Plan I lately sent to the Board, a part of which Road we are now proceeding with. As soon as I could leave the Office, I went to Dilston to see what progress had been made & to let the additional fences as authorised by the Road Trust.

**25 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 25th March 1834

This being a Cattle Fair at Hexham, I attended it to see how things were selling, taking the opportunity to see several of the Tenants on various matters and of delivering to them the Agreements for their farms as returned from Greenwich with the Commissioner's signatures. The Rowells of Thornbrough Highbarns, whose arrears accumulated there and at Newtonhall, together with the rents of the former up to May Day next, will amount to £985-.-. inform me that they have found friends who will join them in giving security to the Commissioners for £800, in case the Board will consent to strike off the remaining sum, & allow them to keep possession & dispose of the away going Crop. I have been to the farm to examine the Stock upon it & the Land sown & to be sown for the Crop, & under the most favourable circumstances. I can only value the whole of their available Property at £940 or 50£, but if brought prematurely to sale by a seizure, I am by no means certain that it wd realize more than the sum they offer, besides the unfavourable effect that such a proceeding would have upon the Credit & future endeavours of the poor people, whose case is a hard one. Under these circumstances the Board will perhaps authorise me to obtain the security for £800 & relinquish the remaining £185 especially as the farm has been recently let at a reduction of £65. The sale of Cattle today was tolerably good & several of the Tenants promised to be with me shortly to pay up their Arrears. After going through the Market praising those of the Tenants whose Cattle deserved it, & criticising those which were the reverse, I took my Horse & rode up to see the Cottages now building by the roadside at Westwood & afterwards proceeded through Fourstones and Allerwash. The Season is favourable & the Seed time prosperous.

**26 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 26th March

Mr Coulson the Tenant of Coastley came to the Office and paid £50, enquiring if the Board had not signified any intention of striking off some part of the Arrears which had been accumulated upon a farm so decidedly over rented. I told him that I had no orders on the subject, but hoped he would find means of reducing the amount before entering upon a new Lease. There is no doubt that he took the farm at a rent which it was not possible to make of it. He spoke of sending a Memorial on the subject to the Board. The Estimates for the House at Dilston upon a reduced Plan were received today & opened by me in the presence of Mr Green who had come up from Newcastle for the purpose. That of Ritson & Green amounting to £1733.16.3 being the lowest, I recommended to the Board, forwarding Mr Green Plan for their inspection and approbation. I accompanied Mr Green to the Site of the House, & had it staked out according to the proposed Plan, that no time might be in future lost, in case of its being adopted by the Board. I afterwards went over the farm of Dilston Hall to see what draining and repair of fences should be done for Mr Leadbitter, the entering Tenant, who is rather an exacting person and not easily satisfied. Old Hind the occupier of the public house which I had consented to allow to stand for another year for the accommodations of poor Teasdale, told me that he would not remove at May day because he entered in November & had held from year to year. He admits that Mr Hunt served him with Notice to quit previous to 11th November, but he cannot be required to obey it. I trust he may be induced to change his opinion & save me the trouble of forcing him out.

**27 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 27th March

Having had Notice from the Secretary of the Railway Company that they wished the line through Capons Cleugh to be set out & the Wood which might be in the way of it to be cut down, I sent Mr Parkin along with their Agent yesterday to ascertain what quantity of wood must be cleared for the purpose, & find from him today, that owing to the steepness of the Bank a great deal of ground must be taken up to obtain the necessary slope, and that besides the full grown timber, a good deal of young wood must be removed which is not of sufficient growth to sell it to advantage. I therefore wrote to the Secretary proposing that the Company should purchase the whole of the Wood which it might be necessary to remove, by the valuation of Persons mutually chosen, as I had no authority to cut down so much Wood without knowing where I should find a Market for it. I do not discover that any stipulation has been made with the Railway Company, respecting the value of the Wood, but think it only right that

they should pay the full value of it, sh'd any loss accrue. I accompanied Mr Parker to mark out for Sale, several Ash Trees of full growth upon the Bank near the ruin of Dilston, which will not improve by standing, & if judiciously removed will not injure the appearance of that romantic spot. Also went with Mr Hunt along the Tyne Banks to see what might yet be necessary for the future security of the Shores of the River. I deferred filling up the Plantation on the Tyne Banks this Season, for having sold a fall of Wood in the same Ground, the young trees would have been injured by removing it, & the whole will be cleared for planting together in the Spring of 1835.

**28 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Good Friday

Filled up Cheques for the salaries & Pensions due on the 31st. wrote several Letters & made arrangements for my absence while on the Northern Estates, providing the Accounts & Stamps necessary for the Rent Day at Belford.

Mr Dickinson went yesterday to the Office at Hexham to get a Stock of Stamps for the approaching Rents, but could not yet obtain payment for the old Stamps that were called in, amounting to £13.5.3 which I hoped would have been allowed. Mr Todd of Rawgreen has applied to know if any answer has been returned from the Board to his Petition to have the rent of his farm reduced for this year to the sum it may let for the next. I have not received any.

**29 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 29th March

Went early to Hartburngrainge & found the boring for Coal which I had sanctioned, not so far advanced as I anticipated. The Metal which the Workmen had got into indicated the vicinity of Coal, but as yet they have not touched the Seam. I examined all the Woodland along the Northern boundary of the Estate which consists of a Bank, in many parts very steep, bounded by a Stream. Some parts of the Wood are thriving & good & much improved by having had the undergrowth cut out for Corf Rods. But in other parts, the trees have not got forward, either from the fences having been neglected or from their being choked at first by hazels & brushwood. As the Ground is partially wooded & is of no use for any other purpose, it will be adviseable to have it cleared of all the rubbish in the autumn & filled up with useful kinds of Trees at the same time that that part will have to be planted from which the Lot of Wood I lately sold will be removed. The Tenants here as elsewhere complain of the present prices of Grain being most incompatible with the present Rents.



**31 Mar 1834 John Grey**

Monday 31st

Heard from the Secretary of the Rail Way Co that they agreed to purchase the Wood in Capons Cleugh by valuation, which will be an accommodation to us & I hope no inconvenience to them, as they have occasion for much for their own use. I had occasion to go today to Alnwick to meet some parties respecting a trust affair which remained unsettled when I left the Country and rode up in the evening 25 Miles to Millfield Hill.

**1 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 1st April

Attended the exhibition of the Border agricultural Society at Kelso, of which I was one of the first promoters & most successful competitors; & where being no longer a Candidate for Premiums, I had been solicited to be a Judge for Awarding them. The exhibition of Stock, Seeds and implements, as well as the respectability and intelligence of Farmers on the Borders, form rather an unfavourable contrast with those on the Tyne. After the Show we dined a Party of 200, Lord John Scott taking the Chair as a substitute for the Marquis of Lothian.

**2 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 2nd

Passed the day at Milfield Hill, with my eldest Son & some of the younger children. Having a Son of Sir Jn Sinclair & some Agriculturalists from the north with us, examining his farming & Stock.

**3 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 3rd

Attended the Agricultural Show of Glendale Ward, at Wooler, where I had so often presided, & where I again found myself in the Chair, surrounded by a multitude of old friends. a great quantity of superior Stock was exhibited for Sweepstakes of all kinds &

for sale. The market for fat Cattle & Sheep, is rather on the decline. Heard today from Mr Fenwick of his intention of meeting the Scremerston Tenants at Belford on tuesday next respecting the answer to the claim for Tythe, & wishing to see their Leases or Agreements, I therefore gave notice to such as I met at Wooler, to bring them in their pockets as well as their money.

**4 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Friday 4th

Heard from Mr Johnson that he had appointed Mr Walton to value Capons Cleugh Wood on the part of the Rail way Co. I wrote to him to suggest that to prevent any delay which might arise from a difference of opinion between Mr Walton & Mr Parkin, they two had better take a third man with them at the first, as Umpire, provided the proceeding should obtain the sanction of the Board. Rode to Scremerston & looked over Mr Thomsons extensive farm. He complains of the great loss he must sustain by it this year, which is indeed unavoidable. And one cannot but regret that such should be the case, with a farm in such a creditable state of cultivation. I then proceeded to Mr Hogarths, & found that the man who had undertaken to fill up the large Quarry & restore the land in a Field near Mr Hogarths House, had discovered what I foresaw from the first that his Offer to do it for £25 was very inadequate, & that having received that amount by instalments from Mr Hogarth, & become liable for £5 more to his men, had determined to relinquish the job, unless he could be paid by days wages. I therefore agreed to remain all night that he might be sent for and meet me in the morning.

**5 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 5th April

At six o'clock went to the Quarry and met the undertaker whom I found to be an old acquaintance, that had once had been employed to do some work upon my property in that neighbourhood & of whom I entertain a bad opinion. His apology for having given in to Mr Hogarth so inadequate a tender, was, that he expected, as it was the Hospitals doing, the men would be allowed their weekly wages and it would not signify whether the Job could be completed for the sum or not. I told him that such was not my way of doing business, and though I regretted that the poor man whom he had employed, should lose £5 which he declared, and I believe truly, that he could not pay them, he sh'd not have another farthing. That I knew it was of no use attempting to force him to complete the Job, as he had not the means, but that if the man whom he had hired would send me by Mr Hogarth to Belford on Tuesday, a fair offer for

completing it, under Mr Hogarths inspection, I would let it to them, but that he should have nothing to do with it. I think it ought to be done now for £15.0.0. After looking at Mr Hogarths Farm, I passed on to Mr Pringles & found that he had gone on to some fishing which he has at Tynemouth, an occupation which he seems greatly to prefer to that of attending to his farm, if one may judge from its appearance. I passed along the line of Rail way from the Colliery to the Jetty at Spital, which is all in good order. Then crossed over to Berwick & found the market exceedingly lifeless. Afterwards proceeding up the south side of the Tweed & looked over my Estate of West Ord & reached the Milfield Hill at a late hour & after a long days riding.

**7 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Monday 7th April

Heard from Mr Parker that he & Mr Crawhall had fixed the price of Lead for the bygone quarter at £16.10.... I hoped from the late advances the average for the quarter would have been rather higher than that, as I know some parties who sell by the average of the whole year, I shall try to discover how our prices agree with theirs. Taking my Son with me, I rode across the Country to the Spindlestone Estates, examining the draining at Outchester now finished, which I had given him charge of, as well as some young hedges upon that farm, which having been planted within seven years, are under our care. These he has had scoured and dressed, with thorns set in front to protect them from Cattle, so that they will not require much more from the Hospital. The Cottages for Farm Servants at Glororum are old & in bad condition, especially that occupied by the bailiff, which is a part of the old Farm House & is barely habitable from shear decay. This I fear of necessity must be taken down and a comfortable Cottage for the Bailiff built in its stead. But before deciding upon what ought to be recommended respecting the half dozen others, I have directed my son to get them examined by a Mason & send me his report. If the Walls are found sufficient to stand for a Lease, it may be worthwhile to have the roofs, doors, windows etc renewed, but of this I am doubtful. The Lime Kiln at Spindlestone which is for the common benefit of the tenants, is sadly out of repair & hardly capable of being used. I am told that it gave way soon after being built by Bewcastle, & has always been propped & patched since. As it was full of burning Lime, I cld not see it's Condition, but the Tenants say it wants lining with Bricks throughout, & they would like it to be done early, especially Mr Borthwick, who intends going over Chesterhill with a strong Lining at the commencement of his Lease. Mr Nairn undertook as soon as it shd be empty to have it examined by a person engaged in Lime Works upon the Coast near Bambro' who is likely to advise as to what may be needful.

**8 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 8th April

Examined the new flooring, Spouts etc which had been done at Waren Mill, but as the Work is not finished, deferred making the allowance for it till the next rent day. Mr Nairn carries on a great business here with great spirit, & I trust with benefit to himself, as it certainly is to the neighbourhood. These Mills were formerly worked entirely by Water, but from the draining of the County generally & especially of two bogs to the west Three fourths of the work is now done by steam. Rode through Chesterhill Farm & thence to Belford where I met all the Tenants except Major Johnson who had written to say that he was in Newcastle & would wait upon me at Corbridge, & Mr Pringle, who never attends on such occasions. With this exception, I had a better receipt than I could have anticipated in such Markets. We had a very pleasant & respectable party at dinner, including my Son George, the Bank Agent & Mr Fenwick, who had come from Newcastle to meet the tenants upon the Claim for Scremerston Tithes, but the absence of Mr Pringle & the want of the proper Leases, as set forth in Mr Bicknells answer, but which cannot be found, rendered his going negatory. It seems that there has never been a Lease or Agreement for the Colliery Farms, but merely a letter from the Receivers. And for the others, accepted Proposals. In the evening rode up to Fowberry Tower to sleep, where being met by my Gig from Milfield Hill on

Wednesday 9th Drove to Corbridge 52 Miles

**10 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 10th

Was engaged with various Letters and accounts, which had accumulated in my absence. Walked out afterwards to see what had been done in cutting the foundations and drains for the new House, to examine the state of the Dam at Dilston Mill, & see the Road Surveyor respecting the Walls he is building along the sides of the new Road, the Coping of which I did not consider to be sufficient without being pointed with Lime, which he agreed to. Received from Messrs Murray an estimate of the repairs necessary at Woodhall & Plankey Mills. The Cylinder at Woodhall is absolutely & immediately necessary, & the Water & Pit Wheels at Plankey so rotten that they are in danger of going to pieces daily & perhaps damaging by their bad condition, other parts of the Machinery. An Oak had been cut down in the Wood long ago for the purpose of repairing this Wheel, but never yet applied. It would probably be well to do what is needful at the beginning of the new Leases, by which the Tenants must be bound to maintain the Machinery in good repair. I have not obtained any other Estimate, & therefore cannot say that a lower than Murrays might not be had, but he has done the

Work at Alston & Newlands Mills so well that I think it would not be wise to employ an inferior hand. The Estimates I shall send for the Boards inspection.

**11 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Friday 11th

Examined with Benson the Plan he has prepared of a small but compact farm house, & the Estimates received for building it, which will altogether Cost about £230. The old house is found to be so bad as to be incapable of repair. Rode through Highwood & Westwood Farms, & proceeded to Coastley for the purpose of fixing up on the cheapest & mode convenient situation for build a Turnip house & some Pig Styes. Also to look at & advise the Tenant as to the management of a steep Field which I have bound him to fallow & Lime in good style, for the purpose of laying it to permanent grass. I went out to the high Ground also, where draining is wanted, to see if the drains could not be laid in such direction, as to Empty themselves into a course which would bring the Water into the Reservoir for the Machine, which is so scantily supplied, which I found no difficulty in effecting.

**12 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 12th April 1834

Rode over the Farms in Hexhamshire to look into some draining & the dressing of some old & ruinous hedges, with the hope of restoring them to the condition of useful fences. And especially to examine the ruinous stone fences at Gairshield, for the purpose of deciding which of them it will be prudent to abandon & which it will be necessary to rebuild. The stormy winds of this season have rendered the farmhouse scarcely habitable, having shaken & opened the West Gable & roof, and driven some large stones from the tops of the Chimnies into their vents so as to fill them up. This house, though not old, is the worst Specimen of Mason work I ever met with - and is quite of a piece with the fences, which are chiefly of Stone. I took a long walk through the extensive Plantations at the extremity of this high laying property, which have been partially thinned this Season, but wants still a good deal more. Except that they have been much too thick, they are wonderfully thriving, & if young wood could be readily sold thereabouts, one would be inclined to plant more, the Land being of so little value otherwise. I was struck at enquiring at Rawgreen for the Tenant, Mr Todd, to be told by his daughter that he had been found dead in his bed that morning. He had been unwell for some time, but no apprehension had entertained of his death. He has left a family some of them grown up. I have also to report the death of old Mr Coats of Haydon Bridge, who was in receipt of a Pension of £20 from the Hospital.

**14 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Monday 14th April 1834

Heard from the Rail Way Co. that they had agreed to my Proposal that the Wood to be cut in Capons Cleugh should be valued jointly by Mr Walton on their part & Mr Parkin on ours, they two having the power to appoint an umpire if they think fit. I expect that the value of the wood will be £200 or upwards. Heard also from Mr Beaumonts Agent that he had paid to my Credit £94.7.11 for Andw Thorburn & £53.6.9 for Mark Maughan, on account of their carriage of Ore, for which I had obtained their orders. Maughan paid besides £65 of his Arrear last week, so that we shall get clear with him. He & his family are most industrious & desirous of doing well. Thorburn also paid £25, but he will have greater difficulty. However I must work it out as well as I can. I was detained at home most of the day by the arrival of Major Johnson, who entered into fruitless discussions upon the subject of his various claims real or supposed, as contained in a Letter which I herewith send. With no part of which I could have any thing to do, or pass any opinion upon, save the two last items, for money expended in repairing the old water Level, which I was aware would prove an expensive, as it was a dangerous & most disagreeable work, & one which it was difficult to get men to undertake. On this head I examined Johnsons under viewer, at Scremerston, who had himself explored the Level & made his way through the rubbish & fallen Arch, with great difficulty. Some of the charges in the Account delivered seemed to me to be high & I decided upon submitting them to Mr Fenwick's inspection, as he is acquainted with the kind of Work before allowing them. Our discussion terminated by his consenting to pay into the Banks to my Credit £437.10.0 as the half years rent due, for which I shall give them a receipt, when I find the payment has been made, leaving the Balance till he can have some communication with the Board on the subject of his claims. All Sea Sale Collieries are now subject to heavy Losses & labouring under great Depression, and I suspect it is found that in the present state of the Market, the coarse Coal of Scremerston is not a remunerating article.

**15 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 15th April

Settled with Mr Parkin the accounts for fitting and planting at Cowey Sike or Grindon Hill & for thinning the Plantations in Hexhamshire. Mr Green the Architect having come from Newcastle, we met the Contractors at Dilston & in compliance with their fancy, witnessed the depositing a newspaper & some insignificant Coins & laying the first Stone of the house by my boy Charles, which was concluded by three Cheers & my

ordering some Ale for the Workmen in the evening. Mr Green engaged to prepare another Plan to forward to Greenwich in a few days. I afterwards proceeded to see the progress of the building & water course for the new Saw Mill, & the road to it, which the Lessees propose to adopt. Then went to examine the repair of the boundary Fence on Dilston Hall Farm & other fences & draining upon that and New Town South Farm which are at present in hands.

**16 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 16th April

Received a Petition to the Commissioners for Reduction of Rent from Thomas Watson of Lees, & Mr Pickering of Woodhall Mill, which I herewith send. [accompanied in the margin by faint pencil annotations which appear to say 'Watson <former> rent £388 <.....> to 288 Pickering's former 277 <....> 190 Rejected'] Their farms have been let upon reduced terms from May Day next. Also an application from the tenants of Throckley, praying to be allowed the sum of £19.16.2 which is their share of a rate levied in the Parish of Newburn, for enlarging, repairing & painting the Church of Newburn, in addition to the payment of their annual Church rate, which I also refer to the Board. I was surprised to learn some days ago that Mr Hind who occupies the public house near Dilston, & who had regular notice to quit at May Day, refuses to go out, upon the ground that he is entitled to hold it till Martinmas. Having obtained what information I could respecting the terms of his occupancy, I stated a lease & requested Mr Fenwick to give me his opinion upon it, both of which I now lay before the Board & shall act by their directions. Old Teasdale reckons upon getting into Hinds House at May Day, & vacating that which is hereafter to be occupied by Mr Hunt, but which I shall have to take possession of for want of a better, while the new one is being built. Hinds obstinacy therefore may throw us all into confusion. Not having received the Board's direction in the case of Rowell of Highbarns, & the near approach of May Day rendering it necessary to fix & advertise the time for selling their Farm Stock, I sent Mr Hunt to them today, to decide upon a vacant day & send off an advertisement with the understanding that unless the Board should sanction some arrangement of their debt, to be previously entered into, the process of the Sale should be paid to me on Account of the Hospital.

**17 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 17th April 1834

Received another Petition to the Board signed by a number of Tenants, complaining of hard times & a reduction of Rent. Finding that a quantity of Bottles & Crucibles, with

some Spirits of Salts, Potass etc are occupying an apartment at Langley Mills which the Lessees wish to have possession of, I proposed to them to buy the whole But they only offered £5, which seems very little for the number of Articles, although the expense of packing & removing takes much from their value. I have asked the Auctioneer to examine them & advise me whether it is likely that we should be repaid for the trouble & cost of packing & conveyancing them to Hexham or Newcastle to sell in Lots by Auction, as few purchasers are likely to be found for the whole.

Went out to inspect the various Works going on at Dilston in building, road making etc for which this weather is remarkably favourable, though the farmers complain of its being too dry.

**18 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Friday 18th April 1834

Heard from Mr Stephens that he had completed the delivery of Duty Ore for the last Quarter, to Messrs Wilson & Co. The whole Quantity weighed have been 674 Bings, & the duty upon it 105 Bings and 1/2 a Cwt.

Had by appointment an interview with the Lessees of Stublick Colliery & a long discussion arising out of an application which had been made to them on the part of Mr Beaumont's Agent, to supply him with Coals for Smelting, in case of his renting the Low Mill at Langley from the present Lessees, at a lower rate than that which their Lease prescribes, at the fixed price at which the Hospitals Lessees at Langley Mills are to be supplied. Having had no intimation from the Lessees of Langley Mills of their wish or intention to sublet any part of them, the inference is that they consider themselves at liberty to do so without especial permission from the Board. And on examining the Dft Lease in the Office, I find no clause prohibiting it, but until I am apprised of their intentions, it would be premature of me to interfere in the matter. It is a fact I believe that the party now occupying Langley Mills are not very popular & are regarded as Monopolists in the Mining district, from which cause they have less employment in Smelting than anticipated. The Mills therefore not being fully employed, it would doubtless be an advantage to the district if some part of them was let to any one who would keep them at work, & in such case, there could be no objection, I imagine, to furnish such party with Coals at the prescribed prices, but not at lower, as it makes no difference whether the Ore Smelted passes under the name of one party or of another. The Lessees of Stublick Colliery are bound by their Lease to supply Mr Beaumont with 416 Fothers of Reducing Coal at 8s/- Per Fother and 2000 Fothers of Common Coal at 4s/- but this I believe was granted as a set off, for his giving up a Lease of Low Stublick, & could have nothing to do with such a transaction as is now contemplated. And should he become a tenant of any part of Langley Mills, I do



not think that the Colliery Lessees would be entitled to demand a higher price, or authorised in taking a lower one for Coals supplied to the Mills on his account, than that at which they are furnished to the present Lessees, whose representative he would in fact become. I declined giving any opinion on the subject to the Colliery Lessees until I should learn what arrangement about the Mills it was intended to make when I might probably think it necessary to ask Mr Fenwicks opinion, by whom the Leases were drawn, as to the right which the party had to sublet, & other matters connected with this subject, that I might be prepared to lay them before the Board.

**19 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 19th April 1834

Sent the Moor Masters Reports along with my Journal and other papers to the Board. The Tyne being remarkably low, I took the opportunity of examining to the foundation all the Wears & Works that have been made & found them quite safe, the only effect of the Winter floods having been to cut into the sandy Soil near the top of the Banks, where the slope was not sufficient & the surface very loose. I trust that this source of expense to the Hospital & anxiety to me, will hereafter be much abated, although it must always continue to be a cause of watchfulness & care. I afterwards inspected the Works going on at Dilston & then looked over the Farms of Thornbrough. In that occupied by Mr Scott, although he is one of our best tenants, I found a strong hedge so barbarously cut as almost to insure its destruction. I shall therefore direct Mr Hunt to send our Hedger to go over it again, & try if they cannot be induced by shame of their own work, to follow a better method.

**21 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Monday 21st

Having applied to Mr Wailes to know if he could give me any information as to the ground of Hind's refusal to quit the premises at Dilston & having heard from him that no agreement sanctioning his continuance till Martinmas was ever entered into, and that Mr Wailes never knew if such a deviation from the general practice of the Estates, I thought it proper to send Hind a notice in writing that his persisting in holding the premises after May Day would be followed by an action of ejectment. He is a man of remarkable obstinacy and although that would form no apology for my doing anything harsh or unfair, neither does it afford a reason for my submitting to be defied and bullied by a foolish, drunken old man. Went to see the works at Dilston & meeting a coach there, proceeded in the afternoon to Carlisle, where I had been solicited to act as a Judge in the distribution of Premiums, along with two other Gentlemen, from

Yorkshire & Dumfriesshire, at the first meeting of the East Cumberland agricultural Society.

**22 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 22nd

Was engaged till four oclock in examining the various kinds of Stock exhibited - in deciding upon their respective merits & making up the Award of Premiums, afterwards dined in a party of 150 & spent a pleasant evening making acquaintance with several Proprietors as well as farmers in the district.

**23 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 23rd

Rose at 5 and left to Carlisle, looking in my way home, at the commencement to build the farmhouse at Whitechapel. Mr Howden, the builder, had begun to work Stones from a piece of rock so near the turnpike as to occasion inconvenience & perhaps danger. His object was to get to the stones without breaking much ground & its a situation which would occasion little leading to the tenant. I warned him of the blame he might incur & that if any damage should arise, the Hospital could have nothing to do with it, he having taken it upon himself & without my permission to work stone there. He stated however that he had the consent of the Road Surveyor who was quite satisfied with the precaution he used, in closing up the place at night etc. I then proceeded to Haydon Bridge & informed Mr Richmond who has been elected Head Master of the Charity School there, on Mr Birkett having succeeded to the Living of Ovingham so long held by his father, that he might occupy the Grass Land as held hitherto by Mr. Birkett, at the rent which he had paid ie £10 a year, which is I think its value - returned to Corbridge & attended to business in the Office.

**24 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 24th

Went to Coupland Castle to attend the funeral of its owner which was rendered the more melancholy that that of his wife had only preceded his own by six days. He was cut off in the prime of life, at least in his 47th Year. We were of the same age & had been friends and neighbours from our youth, acting together in many public capacities. I could not therefore refuse to comply with his dying request, that I would

act as a Trustee & Guardian of his Children, giving my Colleagues however to understand that though I should be willing to advise as to the education of the poor Orphans & the management of the Estates, my personal attendance must not be generally expected.

**25 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Friday 25th

Passed the day at Milfield Hill. Having received the Boards Minutes of the 2nd Instant, wrote to inform Mr Thomson that they had given the fullest consideration to the case in dispute respecting the price of Coals delivered to him by the Lessees of Scremerston Colliery & could not interfere therein. And to Mr Hogarth, in answer to his petition for a reduction of Rent, that the only relief that can be granted him is, that the farm should be valued & relet. Saw the Mason who had accompanied my Son in an examination of the Cottages at Glorum. They state that three of them which are only one Storey high, may with little repair, be made to last for a Lease, but that five others, the walls of which had been originally built at a distant period of Stone & Clay, & upon which at a later time a building of additional height to obtain a Granary above, had most incautiously been erected, are in a condition dangerous to the occupiers as Mrs Thomson had represented. no use had been made of the Granary for a long time, the Walls having seperated [sic] from the Timber in many places. The Wood of the Roof they report to be foreign & in good state so as to admit of being used again & also a good many of the Pantiles. As there seems no alternative but to build new Cottages I would recommend that they should be placed in a more convenient situation at a little distance from the farm Offices & that they should be made only one Storey high, as there is a fair share of Granary over the Cattle Sheds, & it is neither safe nor desirable to keep Corn over Cottages. The old Materials will go far to build the new houses, but as the farm Servants cannot in the mean time be dispensed with, it will be necessary to build two Cottages first, & then by removing the occupiers, get the materials of the vacant houses to apply to the building of others, & so on progressively. The part of the old farm House too which has been left & is occupied as a back Kitchen & Dairy to the new one, is in a state of such rottenness & decay as to be dangerous, the Wood having broken in & being now standing upon props. To have given the necessary accommodation would have cost little, had it been done when the present house was built, which was only a few years ago but it is such a curious & inconvenient structure, consisting of two rooms on a floor, carried up in the shape of a square tower with windows on all sides, that it is not easy to add to it. I must take an early opportunity of examining these matters particularly upon the spot, which I could not do at present, not having made arrangement for a longer absence, & to try to fall up the cheapest & best plan of arranging these buildings & getting the Lime Kiln put into a condition to be useful to the tenants which is much complained of.

Saturday 26th April 1834  
Returned by Newcastle to Corbridge.

**28 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Monday 28th

A day of constant rain which will please the farmers & give me an opportunity of writing Letters & bringing up my work in doors. The Tenant of Allerwash Mill came to me by appointment as I wished to be assured if he could obtain any security to give me, for the payment of Arrears & rent due at May Day next, as if not, I must take means before allowing him to quit, to get as much as possible from his effects. He did not bring anyone along with him for that purpose, so I gave him till Friday morning next for him to do so, when if he should not succeed, I must be obliged to make a seizure. In the mean time, I shall send Mr Hunt to take an Inventory, to see that nothing is removed. Consulted Mr Parkin about weeding some plantations to get Larch railing and requested it to be peeled, which means it lasts so much longer, although the present price of that kind of bark, barely covers the expense of peeling. I can only be offered £2.15- per ton for it, to be delivered at Newcastle. Advised him as the time of payment that should be stipulated for, in valuing over Capons Cleugh Wood to the Rail way Company, and learnt from him, that all the Woodmen had agreed to the reduction of 3/- per Week from their Wages after 12th May next. Saw a Sketch made by Benson for the back building at the public house at Throckley which I directed him to proceed with. Being requested by the Boards minute of the 2nd April, received last week, to report upon the case of Coulson's Arrears, I am of opinion that considering the extraordinary rent which he engaged to pay & the great fall of prices, it would be by no means unreasonable, that upon his making good the remainder he should be allowed to pay for the last year & the present, at the same rate as he has engaged for hereafter - viz £550. I recommend this reduction the more readily, because he has done more for his farm than many tenants in more favorable [sic] circumstances.

**29 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 29th

Rowell of the High Barnes, came to the Office as I had requested with a relation who has a considerable [sic] Farm in the neighbourhood, to give their joint security for the payment of £800 to be accepted according to the Boards Minute, in full of Rent Arrears due by the Rowells. But as the sale of their Farm stock is to take place on the 7th May, I thought it better to take their engagement to pay over to me all Cash and Bills which

they may receive, & to give me their joint promissory Note, on the following day for the remainder, whatever it may be.

Wrote an advertizement to the Newcastle Papers, fixing the Rent Days to be at Shaw House on the 19th at Haydon Bridge on the 21st and 22nd and at Alston on the 30th May. As a general principle, I think it better that the rents should be collected within the half years, i.e. before May Day and Martinmas - but considering the difficulties which Farmers have now to contend with, I made the arrangement for this time, so as to give them the benefit of Stagshaw Fair on the 17th May & Alston Fair on the 29th & I trust it will have a good effect upon the receipts. I also advertized again the Lot of Wood in Whittle Dean, which is the only one now that that in Capons Cleugh is to be taken at a valuation by the railway Co, which has not been sold. Rode through the newly planted Grounds to see the Trees, which now begin to show signs of Life, of which the continued drought and frost since they were planted caused me to entertain some fears. The present rains will I hope save them. We are getting the fences repaired, where needful, to prevent them from trespass.

**30 Apr 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 30th April

Received the Boards Minutes & answered at length to Mr Jay the Queries respecting the appointment of Solicitors- the Memorial of the the Throckley Tenants regarding their Church loss etc. I have received a circular inviting the Proprietors in the Parish of Haltwhistle, to make good a sum expended by a Committee in building a Bridge there, which Circular I send herewith. The Hospital has little property in the Parish, & cannot fairly be expected to contribute much to such an object, especially as it remains to be proved whether or not the funds have been judiciously expended. Received a Notice from Robson, Tenant of the Nursery Ground at Alston, of his intention to quit it at Martinmas next, on account of which I conceive it must be advertized in due time & tenders taken in by the Commissioners.

Had an interview with the Lessees of Langley Mills, who report the condition of the Water Wheel & Case to be very bad & are desirous of having it renewed at present, when the Mills are off work. The necessity of this renewal was contemplated some years ago, & a part of the Materials provided at the time, which still remains in Burnetts Yard at Newcastle - & their Lease guarantees them in the amount of £150 towards the expense of the Work. I therefore agreed with the Lessees that the Work should be done under their direction, as they will have the surplus to pay, That they shall take the Materials formerly provided by the Hospital at the valuation of Millwrights mutually chosen. That an account of the total cost shall be exhibited, when the Work is finished, when it is to be examined by a person appointed by the

Hospital, to report upon its sufficiency and value. Mr Wilson again urged upon my consideration the advantage to the District & to the Estates of Newlands & Whittonstall where there is a great deal of Wood, of the projected Road up the Derwent, for which as yet an adequate subscription has not been obtained. I told him that I was fully aware of the facilities it would afford, having compared the new line with the old, but that my opinion on the subject was already before the Commissioners.

**1 May 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 1st May 1834

Heard from Mr Nairn that he had got the Limekiln at Spindleston examined by a Mason accustomed to Kilns, who reported it to be in want of lining throughout, and otherwise faulty in construction. His estimate for the necessary repair is £36.10.0. I wrote to Mr Nairn asking him to be good enough to obtain other Estimates for the work alone, as the Tenants who use the Kilns must lead the Materials. Rode to Bagraw to see the tenant who leaves at May day & had not come to settle his rent and Arrears. He promises to pay some Money next week & to bring me an order from Langley Mills for the amount due to him for Lead Carriage, after which, there is the growing Crop, as security for the remainder, which if unpaid at harvest, I may sell by auction. In this way I hope to get clear with him, without the exposure to him & unpleasantness to me of selling him off.

Proceeded to East Elrington to look at some repairs needful at the farm house, but to small extent, thence to Woodhall where Mr Hunt has commenced some draining which produces a great deal of Water & promises to be very effective. The present tenant entered to this farm last May & found the land and fences in miserable order. Some of the latter I found it necessary to renew, & caused Mr Hunt to pay particular attention to the planting & care of the young Thorns - yet on my journey there today, I had the provocation of seeing a thick old hedge cut or rather hacked down, in the barbarous mode of this country, & even worse than that, bad as it is, in spite of all the instruction they have had the example of good cutting, by an experienced Hedger. In consequence of which, I shall take care that no further expense shall be incurred in making new hedges for one who takes such effectual means of spoiling the old.

Examined Woodhall Mill, with a view to ascertain the necessity for all the items contained in Murray's Estimate, & found them to be very bad with the exception of two of inferior consequence, in which a reduction may be made. Proceeded homeward through the farms of Langholm & Coastley, inspecting at the latter, the working in fallow of a steep Field which it is proposed to lay off to permanent pasture, for which the Hospital is to pay for the Lime & Grass seeds; and the draining wch I had formerly marked out, with the double view of drying a tract of cold & wet land which the tenant

is bringing into cultivation by paring & burning, & at the same time adding to the supply of Water for Thrashing at a cheaper rate than carrying it by an aqueduct across the Bogle dean, as projected. The former I am sure will be effected, & the latter too in some measure though the quantity of water produced by draining is too small for such a purpose.

**2 May 1834 John Grey**

Friday 2nd May

The previous state of Fourstones Colliery & the near termination of the Lease of Brokenheugh, as well as the intricacy of Stublick under it peculiarly desirable that their condition should be viewed by a professional Man. Mr Fenwick the present Viewer, has I believe more to do than is consistent with his Age & the state of his health, and it can be no object with him to give his attendance to concerns apparently so trifling. My enquiries had been directed to discover some younger Viewer, of skill & experience, who would be willing to undertake the occasional examination of the Collieries at a moderate charge for his time and expenses. One who was recommended, I rather objected to, on account of his being employed in a concern which Major Johnson is a Partner. Another, Mr Forster, to whom no such objection exists, has been represented as a most suitable person, by Mr Morton of Lambton, & I wrote to him today desiring him to explain the matter to Mr Forster, & describe the concerns, & to desire him, should he be willing to undertake it, to inform me upon what terms he would do so.

Went out to see the progress of the Brick Yard & the quantity of Land occupied by it, for which the tenant must be compensated by the Lessee; as well as to urge him to get us an early supply of Bricks, which he promises in three weeks hence. Then went with Mr Parkin to arrange for the peeling of Bark & fix the price per ton that should be given for the work, & to examine the Woods on the Western boundary of the Dilston Estate, which have been gone through with thinning, & are in a much improved condition.

**3 May 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 3d

Took a long ride today through the Farms in Whittonstall, making arrangements with the Tenants for procuring the Lime to be allowed them by the Hospital, with a Check Book to show every Lead brought from the Kiln, which I or Mr Hunt at any time see and compare with the Lime laid in the fields in heaps of 3 Loads each. Also taking a survey of the farm buildings and of their management generally. And justice compels me to state that in spite of the disadvantages in point of climate & soil, which they have

to contend with, they are as a body the best farmers upon the property, whereas those occupying the good Lands of Dilston are the very worst. This may perhaps be accounted for by the experience of the former, teaching them that poor Soils, unless well cultivated, will yield them no produce, while the latter act upon the mistaken principle, that their good soils will produce tolerable crops, though neither well worked nor well cleaned, not considering how well they would be paid by the additional produce, for the application of more labor and the adoption of a better system.

**5 May 1834 John Grey**

Monday 5th May

The Tenant of Allerwash Mill having failed to produce any security, I sent Mr Hunt off early this morning with a warrant to distrain his goods & put them in the possession of some one, to prevent their being removed, until he shall produce the Money or the time comes for selling them. At six o'clock rode out to Thornbrough & examined the state of the fences upon the farm of Highbarns, which poor Rowell is using greater exertion to leave in repair than is the case with many who have more in their power. Returned to the Office & was engaged with Accts from Alston & with Murray the Millwright going over his Estimates for Woodhall Mill, in repairing which he is to try to make some reduction, I also engaged him to act on the part of the Hospital, in valuing the Materials for the Wheel at Langley Mills, that are to be taken by the Lessees. Past the remainder of the day among the Work people at Dilston. The weather is remarkably fine now & the appearance of the Country promising.

**6 May 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 6th May 1834

Attended a Sale of the effects of the late Sir Charles Loraine to make some purchases on my own account. When there I had a meeting with the Party who have been boring for Coal at Hartburngrange, which is near to Kirkharle, & found that they had gone through a seam of good Coal 20 inches thick, but that before making any report upon it to me, they were putting down the bore rods in another situation, which is equally convenient & attended with as little trespass as the other, & where they hoped to find a thicker Seam.



**7 May 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 7th May

Andrew Thorburn came early in the morning to give me information that a Person holding his Note for £100 had an execution out against him & was about to attack the Stock upon the premises. I forthwith executed an Order of Distress & sent it to the Woodman in Hexhamshire, Mr Hunt being at a distance in the Langley Barony, to put in force expecting to anticipate the proceedings of the other party, & secure our Rent & Arrears. Wrote to Major Johnson reminding him that he had not returned me the Account of money expended in repairing the Scremerston Water Level, which had been referred to Mr Fenwicks inspection, & that of course it could not be passed to his Credit. Went out to Thornbrough and saw the Sale by Auction of a part of the Rowell's Stock, which sold well being of a superior description to most in the neighbourhood, though on account of their declining circumstances, it has of late years been much reduced in quantity.

**8 May 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 8th May

Had another early visit from poor old Thorburn, informing me that in his absence yesterday, the Sheriffs Officer had attached his Goods & anticipated my warrant of Distress. Showing me an Inventory & valuation of the Stock, to prove that it was sufficient to defray his Debts & indemnify the Hospital, as well as to leave a surplus for him to continue the Farm of Gairshield with. I could not however act upon this representation so far as so allow of any part of the Stock being sold by the Creditor without first claiming the settlement of our Arrears & Rent up to last Martinmas, on account of which & the regular Notice of demand, were given to the Officer in possession of the Stock. As the Sale was under execution by the Sherriffs Warrant, may be made in three days after the seizure, & if not previously compromised will take place on Saturday, we cannot unfortunately include in our demand the rent for the present half year, which only becomes due on Monday next, & for which we may have no security save the ensuing Crops of Corn, should the Stock turn to bad account, as is likely on such short notice of Sale.

Mr Barwick, Surgeon in Haydon Bridge, who has succeeded Mr Hutchinson in the occupation of his house & part of Mrs Routledges Garden & Field, came to complain that the contumacious Lady will not allow him to put a Spade into the half of the Garden now attached to his house, but had removed some fruit trees out of it. And that she had disposed of the Hay grown upon the Hospitals Field to her brother, Mr Todd who is a Tenant of the Hospital at Tofts, without leaving him a particle of Manure instead. That on his remonstrating with Todd about removing the Hay

contrary to Mr Hunts promise to him unless an equivalent quantity of Manure should be restored, & on fastening the Gate against him, he took a Saw & cut it down in the middle. It is the Hospitals Gate of course.

I did not proceed to act upon this ex parté statement but promised to investigate the matter on the spot, on saturday first. Mrs Routledge has the character of being a quarrelsome & most unaccommodating person, whose removal would be blessing to the neighbours and her brother is somewhat of her disposition, accompanied by extreme greediness. I shall not soon forget the specious pretexts with which he attempted to induce me to grant him permission to plough an old Grass Field on his Farm, but which he gave up the moment I said that I should first examine it, well knowing that I shd at once see, as was the fact, that it would be a very great injury to the Farm, & could only be proposed with a view of obtaining an advantageous Crop or two, & then giving up the Lease. Rode out to see a boundary fence between the Dilston Estate & the Duke of Northumberland's to the West, which is in great need of repair, it is said to belong to the Hospital, as I think be some management or other nearly all the boundary fences & boundary roads do.

**9 May 1834 John Grey**

Friday 9th May

Rowells from High Barns came to the Office to pay the proceeds of their Sale, amounting in Cash & Bills at Six Months to £325 expecting to be able to give me some more on the rent day, at which time they will enter into security with their relation for the remainder. Mr Teasdale also brought me in like manner, Cash & Bills amounting to £102.3. After which the growing Crop will afford us ample security.

I went to Dilston with Benson to decide upon the repairs to be made in Teasdales house which must be set about immediately, as he leave it on Monday, & on the 1st June I must turn out here & go to it while the new one is building. Mr Hunt taking rooms in a neighbouring farm house during that time. On Monday too, Mr Dickinson must move into Shipleys house, which will have to serve him both for dwelling house & Office for a time, to the no small convenience of both parties. I trust however in the end, we shall all get comfortably settled. The Tenant of Allerwash Mill having found no means of discharging our claims, I was obliged to direct the Auctioneer to proceed tomorrow to sell his effects, in pursuance of a Notice given to the Excise & to the Public & fear from the small inventory that they will fall considerably short of the Hospitals demands.

**10 May 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 10th May 1834

Went to Haydon Bridge to attend a Meeting for letting the Tolls of the Suspension Bridge over the Tyne and other business. The Tolls of this Bridge have fallen off in consequence of the unproductive state of Fourstones Colliery. The Lessees of that Colliery & Lime Works having been accustomed to pay £120 a year of the £280 for which the Gate was met, but now offer only £60. It seems to me matter of regret that when so large a sum as £2500 was subscribed by the Hospital for the building of this Bridge, the whole cost of which was only £4000 it had not been suggested by the Receivers to claim an exemption for the carriage of Lime, as well as of other Manure, in the Act, which would have grown such an advantage to the Kilns at Fourstones as would have afforded good Interest to the Hospital for their advance, & which must have been at once conceded, as without that advance the Bridge could not have been erected.

Fourstones Lime Works are the only ones affected by this Toll, & are placed in a worse position than those approached by Hexham Bridge, in as much as other Tolls are only payable once a day, whereas this pontage is collected every time this Bridge is passed, so that if not altogether exempted, as I think Lime might have been it ought at least not to have been put upon a worse footing than at other Lime Works. Except in this instance however, the Bridge is unquestionably of immense benefit to all the Hospitals Property on that side of the Tyne. Our Tenant the Blacksmith at Westboat, near the end of the said Bridge, complained to me heavily of the sum he had to pay, in compounding for Horses coming to his Smithy; which I proved to the Trustees that they had exacted illegally ever since the Bridge was Built, their local Act containing no clause to supersede that in the General Act, which exempts from Toll all Horses etc going to or returning from being Shod, that have not traversed more than two Miles upon the turnpike. This they admitted, & the poor man will have redress for the future, though he will obtain no indemnity for the past. These Trustees & their Clerk at Hexham take things very easily.

I had Benson to meet at Haydon Bridge & decided with him, upon the easiest way of getting some more Stable room & a Shed for Gigs etc at the Anchor Inn. Examined the work which is nearly finished for bringing the Spring of Water from Esphill through the Alms Houses with a pipe for their use, to the Inn. This is a good thing, & Mr Hooper who suggested it, would have been gratified could he have seen it executed. I tried without much effect to reconcile the differences between Mrs Routledge & her neighbour, but for the destruction of the Gate & removal of the Hay, I must look to Mr Todd, her brother. Went with Benson to Lees to fix upon the situation of the Farm house which I thought it better to alter a little from that originally intended, but it is likely at some time, that a Water power, which can be easily commanded, may be substituted for a Horse one here & the House ought to be placed so as not to interfere with such an arrangement. I then crossed the Tyne & went to

Whitechapel the farthest point of the Property in that direction, where the new Farm House is in progress, of which Howden is making good Mason Work.

**12 May 1834 John Grey**

Monday 12th May 1834

Received from Mr Hunt the account & expenses of the Sale of the Millers goods at Allerwash, which left after paying for printed Notices & Auctioneers Charge £15.4.6 leaving a balance of £82.11.7 due to the Hospital at the present term, for which there is only a small patch of growing Corn of very little value. So much for converting an old Huntsman into a Miller. He has some claim, I think to be allowed the rental for two years of a Cottage amounting to five or six Pounds, which was to have been repaired, but has never been made habitable. But there is no likelihood of ever obtaining the residue from him. On this day we had the confusion of packing all our Books & Papers and removing the Office furniture to Dilston. Luckily the day was fine.

**13 May 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 13th

Had an unlooked for visit from Mr Thomson of Scremerston who paid up his balance of Rent, £150 & spoke in despair of the condition of Farmers & the hopelessness of redeeming the large Capital he had invested. He was anxious to know if no reduction of Rent could be made to him, but I hold out no prospect of an exception being made in his favor to all those who have already petitioned on the same ground - & only recommended that against next autumn, if his prospects should be in no way improved he might apply to be released from his engagement. Mr Thomson is not only the most extensive, but beyond all question the best farmer upon the Hospital's Property, & this case deserves consideration if any one does. Mr Howden also came bringing me a Memorial in writing which I herewith send, relating to a fact which I was before aware of, that his predecessor in the farm had obtained permission from Mr Hooper to sow 11 or 12 Acres for away going Crop, more than by his Lease, he was intitled to. I never could learn upon what ground Mr Hooper made this grant, & I think it possible, that at the time, he was so little of an agriculturalist as not to consider that what he bestowed upon the one, he took from the other. Because Mr Howden should have had those 12 Acres in Pasture during his first Summer & then have ploughed them out for his Crop in the ensuing Spring, whereas being in Corn the first year, & left for him to fallow the second, he gets no produce from them for more than two years. Mr Howden is unquestionably entitled to compensation, & it would, I think, be better to make it by pecuniary allowance at once, than to allow it to go on & be a constant plea for over

cropping & infringement of covenants. Sent the Cash in hand to the Bank Agent in Hexhamshire, by Mr Hunt, on his way westward, who is much engaged at present in measuring draining & other work, that allowances may be made at the rent day. Went out myself to see after the arrangement of the Office pro tempore, met Benson & went with him over all the works going on there.

**14 May 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 14th May 1834

William Hind paid his half years Rent but persisting in retaining the House, I wrote to Mr Fenwick, directing him to proceed by ejectment. Heard from Mr Hogarth of Scremerston, acknowledging my letter informing him that he could have no present abatement, but might surrender his Lease & try to agree for a new one. He proposed to come over and see me respecting it, but I wrote saying that no surrender could now be accepted before May 1835, & no valuation could be made till after the ensuing harvest. That I should attend to the matter, as soon after that as possible, if in the mean time he should write a Letter making a surrender of his present Lease. Rode through the Estates of Thornbrough, Newtonhall & Whittle. Seeing at the latter place that no unnecessary damage is done by working the Quarry for Railway blocks. The Tenant at Whittle has been unfortunate in losing some Cattle as well as a valuable Horse, by death, which he can ill afford, for though an industrious man, the appearance of the farm indicates a want of capital in its occupation.

**15 May 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 15th

Received from the Clerk of the Hexham Road Trustees £70, being the annual payment which they engaged to make to the Commissioners, due in the 13th instant. Having heard from Mr Morton that he had seen Mr Forster who had expressed his willingness to undertake the inspection of the Hospital Collieries I wrote to him describing the local situation & character of the various Collieries & asking him to inform me as to the terms upon which he would come to examine them. Went to do business at the Office at Dilston, preparing for the ensuing receipt of Rents, and afterwards to Hexham to get my Bank Book filled up etc. We have at length received an order from the Stamp Office, for an equivalent number of Stamps of the new impression to those we returned of the old.

**16 May 1834 John Grey**

Friday 16th

I enclosed to Mrs Grey of Whickham her half years payment of £25. Wrote to Mr Fenwick regarding the arrears due by Robinson of Needleshall which should be now paid. Settled several accounts with Mr Parkin & Mr Hunt respecting the Woodlands, & with references to allowances for repairs, draining etc to be repaid to the Tenants at the receipt of their rents. My present distance from the Office is an inconvenience & waste of time, affording proof of the advantage of the new arrangement, when the house & Office will be under the same roof. An establishment in Hexham with a House at the distance of a Mile or two, as Mr Hopper suggested, would have been a great interruption to business & a useless occupation of time.

**17 May 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 17th May 1834

This being the Great Fair of Stagshaw Bank about a mile from Corbridge, with reference to which I deferred the Rent days in this part till the following Week, a suspension is put to all other business than what takes place there, where all the County is assembled. Prices for Stock were rather upon the decline, yet a great many Sales were effected. I had conversations with several Tenants, respecting matters connected with their Farms and the payment of their Rents, also with the Railway Agent concerning the line through Fourstones, which I wish them to lay nearer the River, as not more injurious to them, & less so to the Hospitals Property, which he seemed individually willing to accede to & promised that the attention of the Committee should be drawn to my suggestions before fixing the line definitively. He also undertook to let me know in a fortnight how Allerwash Mill would be affected by it, as upon that must depend the propriety of repairing it in its present situation. A fine rain came on which will be favorable for the Country, though it rather interrupted the business of the Fair.

**19 May 1834 John Grey**

Monday 19th May

Went to Dilston in the morning to arrange some matters in the Office & look after the Work people, returned to Corbridge to breakfast & write Letters - afterwards went to Shaw House to receive the Rents for the Estates to the East of Corbridge. We had a good muster of Tenants & a receipt quite equal to my expectations, though of course

there are many deficiencies. Two of the Hartburn Tenants, Thos. Brewis & Wm Davison, gave in written resignations of their farms. Mr Boyd, one of the Partners in the NCastle Bank attended, to whom I paid & £2040.6.3. We dined 18 in number at 1/2 past three & parted at six, an early hour for such an occasion, but these times tend to sobriety of mind & habits.

**20 May 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 20th May

Went to the Office at Dilston & was engaged in various accounts respecting Rents, buildings etc and in looking to the repairs going on in Teasdales House, which is in a sad state of filth & disrepair & will hardly be made habitable by the time I shall require it. Returned by the Banks of the Tyne, where I am taking advantage of a great quantity of branches cut from the Lot of Wood that was sold there & with which I am filling up some holes in the plantation that have been made by floods, the surface of the Ground will be again restored.

Wednesday 21st

Drove in the morning to Haydon Bridge & was engaged all the day in receiving Rents & settling accounts with the Tenants.

**22 May 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 22nd

Began to business in the morning & did not get the Books closed till six in the evening, when I paid over to the Banker in attendance from Newcastle £8141.19.3. There are considerable arrears, as will be seen by the Rental Sheets, but not more than I anticipated. These times render it a distressing duty to have to exact rents. Those Tenants who do pay them, declaring that they do so from other sources than their farms. And those who have no other resource, not being able to pay them at all - a great number expressed their wish & the necessity they would be under to relinquish their Leases. This gives me the prospect of a laborious autumn, & what is of much more consequence, a great diminution of income to the Hospital. We had a large attendance on this day & a numerous company to dinner, which I left early, having been unwell & intending to set out at six in the morning. In this however I was disappointed for the close application & confinement of these rent days has brought the indisposition which I had hitherto striven against, to a crisis and after a night of deadly sickness, I was obliged to call in a Doctor. I was able to leave my Bed next afternoon & reached home in the evening.

Friday 23rd

Passed most of the day in bed, an occurrence which has not happened for years. In the evening, arranged my papers & answered the Letters that had come in my absence.

**24 May 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 24th

Finding myself considerably better, & being most anxious to give a meeting to my 60 Trustees under the Will of my late friend Mr Cully, respecting matters which threatened to involve us in a Suit in Chancery, I set out at five in the morning & proceeded to join their meeting at Whittingham. Afterwards proceeded to Milfield Hill & rested there till

Monday 26th

Having heard from the Spindleston Tenants that they were very desirous to have the use of the Lime Kiln as soon as possible, & Mr Nairn not having sent me the estimates for its repair, I wrote to him on the subject, desiring my Son to go & get it put forward immediately. Returned to Newcastle.

**27 May 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 27th

Reached Corbridge at nine. Went to the Office at Dilston to look over the accounts & numerous papers which Mr Dickinson is engaged with, from the late rent receipts, and to obtain such as are necessary for me to carry to Alston. Went through the different Works going on there & returned by the levelling in the Tyne side Woods, which is nearly completed. Received Messrs Parkin & Waltons valuation of Wood in Capons Cleugh, to be removed on account of the railway, amounting to £240 which considering the difficulty of its removal, & the Offers previously made for the Lot of which this is only a part, I think it a good price. I consequently wrote to the Agent of the Company informing him that they should be at liberty to cut & remove the Wood, upon their giving me an undertaking for the payment of the estimated amount. I have also a Letter from Mr Beaumonts Agent from which I extract the following passage.

‘I have been in treaty with the Lessees of Blagill Mill, to rent it of them for the remainder of their Lease. Would the Commissioners object to extend the Term to Mr Beaumont, or would they be disposed to sell the Blagill Mill? It is considered by the Lessees that the High Mill is capable of Smelting all the Ore that will be at any time



raised in Alstonmoor, that they may safely let the Low Mill for the Term of their Lease, which I think has 13 years unexpired.'

To this I have replied that I should communicate his application to the Commissioners & convey him their answer. To sell one Mill, where the two are so closely connected, is I imagine, out of the question, but to have let them to different parties originally, taking the necessary precaution to secure at all times, the Smelting of their own Ore, would probably have been a preferable arrangement, in as much as it would have produced a greater competition for the purchase of Ore in Alstonmoor, a large consumption of Coal & Lime from the Hospitals Works, would have given more employment in carrying, to the Hospitals tenants & would have occasioned the circulation of a larger Capital in the District. In present circumstances, it might be adviseable to throw no impediment in the way of an arrangement between the Lessees of the Mills & Mr Beaumont during the present Lease, but I cannot think that it would be adviseable to enter into any engagement beyond its termination, as at that time it will probably be found advantageous to divide the Smelting Hearths among different parties. At present a great quantity of Ore raised in the Hospitals Mines is carried into other Districts to be smelted, which could come more conveniently to Langley, by which means the Hospitals Tenants lose the benefit of carrying both the Ore & Lead.

**28 May 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 28th May 1834

When engaged in attending to Cash transactions and other matters in the Office at Dilston, was waited upon, not by the Miller of Dilston, who had not appeared at the Rent day, but by his Wife, manifesting great distress & saying that they had no money for me. That they had no trade & could make nothing by the Mill, and the price they had given for the growing Corn on coming to the place last spring was double of what it had produced. All this, I was obliged to confess was unfortunate, but then the Mill was good, & had been erected at great expense. The Corn grown in the neighbourhood was sold & the situation was good for business. How came it that they had no trade? The poor woman could only shed tears and regret that they could make nothing of it & must be quit. As to being quit, I told her they had lost the chance of that for the present, having allowed the May Day to pass, when all people had got themselves fixed in situations & there was little chance of finding a suitable tenant. That I pitied her, for whatever business was done, was of her doing, but that she could not be expected to manage such a concern to advantage. As for her husband he was good for little but drinking and smoking, & never should have engaged in such an undertaking. If they persist in refusing to pay rent, there is no alternative but to seize their property & then unless some friends should come forward to extricate them, it is

likely that loss may be incurred. Of all the Hospitals property, that of Corn Mills is the most unproductive & unsatisfactory.

Having arranged matters in the Office, I took the Coach, passing by to Alston. In the evening had a long interview with the Moor Master & Clerk of Deliveries, looking into the Mining produce etc. The Moormasters informed me that examining one of the Mines which had formerly been wrought to considerable extent, but has been lately very unproductive, he discovered that the party to save themselves the expense of drawing their refuse to bank, had stowed it away in an old drift, filling up the passage between one Shaft & another, and that on his insisting most properly upon its being opened out again they had abandoned the Mine. I have therefore desired Mr Bainbridge to write to the Parties, giving them notice of prosecution in case of their delaying to remove the obstruction, and have cautioned Mr Dickinson against ever again recommending any of them for trials under the Hospital, as to prosecuting them, I fear from all accounts they are not worth powder & Shot, being all poor Workmen, but such conduct must not be passed entirely over. I imagined from a Boards communication some time ago, that arrangements might ere now have been made with Mr Bainbridge, which would have allowed me to apply to him in such matters, without hesitation, but find that as yet he has had no communication on the subject of a Salary.

**29 May 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 29th

Viewing the Nursery Ground, The House & fences of which are in bad repair. It would have been an advantage in letting it to have annexed to it a Pasture field for keep of a Cow & Horse, but at present that cannot be had. I shall now advertize it, directing all Tenders to be sent to Greenwich by the 6th day of August. My attention was called to the state of Pound Fold at Alston, which it is the duty of the Hospital to maintain, & I found it necessary to give Mr Dickinson directions to get a new Door & have the Walls repaired. Also to have something done to the Wall dividing the Millers Meadow from the Ground on which the Fairs are held, as in its present condition, he sustains damage from the Stock brought to the Fairs. Four Pounds will, I think cover the cost of both.

Rode up Garrigill looking through the several small Farms there till I reached the most distant one of Tynehead, where the infant Stream may be stepped over. I had never before had an opportunity of visiting this remote place. There is not an Acre of tillage upon the Farm, Grass being its only produce. The Cow houses are excessively bad, but may with a trifling repair, stand out the Lease. The Stone fences are likewise in a sadly dilapidated condition & to rebuild them all would consume the rent of many years to run. At a new letting, here as elsewhere, it will be necessary previously to determine upon what fences it may be prudent to restore & what to abandon & then bind the tenant to maintain them. Many are the claims among the tenants for upstairs

& additional accommodation, all of which I put off for the present, mainly directing that the roofs be put into such condition as to preserve the Houses from greater decay. The buildings upon the small properties in this part purchased some years ago by the Hospital are universally bad. When last in this part, there was hardly a Gate to be seen, but I desired Mr Dickinson to get some made at a season when Joiners have little employment, which he did for 2/- each, of Wood grown on the spot, for which the Tenants express their thankfulness. I had a meeting with Mr Horne the new Surveyor of the Alston Roads, who is making great exertions to put the Roads into a substantial condition before the return of the Winter, but to do which in the most economical manner, he declared will consume the whole produce of the Tolls. The approach to the Inn at Lowbyer is greatly improved by the ragged bank along the roadside being sloped & planted & the new entrance to the low part of the House, adds much to the comfort & convenience of the House.

### **30 May 1834 John Grey**

Friday 30th May 1834

Went across the Tyne in the morning to examine the Buildings at Mark Close of which the Tenant complained & found them like too many others in bad condition. It will be necessary to put in a new Window or two, as the Wood is so thoroughly rotten, that it will not admit of the Glass being removed, which is nearly all gone. And to build a small toofall Shed, which will not cost much. Besides this other things are wanted, but they must remain until a new Lease is had. At nine o'clock the Tenants began to come, having been desired to do so early, & with the exception of two or three who depend upon selling Sheep in the Autumn & have been accustomed to pay a whole years Rent at Mart[inma]s, their payments were quite as good as usual. Having closed with them, I entered upon the examination of the Mining Accounts, comparing the Books of the respective companies with the Account of the Clerk of Deliveries, & found them in all instances to agree & to be kept in a clear & correct manner. This examination & comparison with the Deliveries of Duty Ore to the Receiving Houses & the aggregate delivery to the Smelting Mills, form as complete a system of checks as can be desired.

A little after four o'clock, we closed our labors & sat down to a substantial dinner with a party of 60 or more consisting of the partners or Agents of Companies who had come to exhibit their accounts, the venerable Mr Jackson, Vicar of Alston, Messrs Bainbridge & two or three more of the most respectable & old established inhabitants of the district, all of whom, whether actually engaged in Mining speculations or not are equally alive to their interests. They expressed general thankfulness for the reduction of the Duty Ore, & evinced the cheerfulness of people emerging from a state of adversity & depression to one of the brighter prospects & hapier days. Though having no liking for large Companies, & least of all for the responsibility of presiding over

them, I could not but feel much interested in the local information, habits & character elicited by this meeting, as well as a warm sympathy in their prospects & pursuits, & in the kind of filial regard with which they look to the protection & support of the Lords of the Manor. It has been suggested, I believe, that this Meeting might be dispensed with, but it would be a pity, I think, on account of the trifling expense of a Dinner, especially when as in this instance, the Rent day was combined with the other meeting, to break through the Hospitality of an old custom, which forms a rallying point for the speculators in the District, or to withdraw any of the kindness & encouragement which has been hitherto shown to those, by the Application of whose Capital & labor the Hospital is deriving a considerable revenue. I have before had occasion to mention with commendation the good moral conduct & superior intelligence of the lower orders in the Mining Districts & I am happy also to bear testimony to an equal extent in favor of their superiors, for after passing a pleasant & rational evening, the room was entirely vacated by nine o' clock.

**31 May 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 31st May

Made up my accounts and settled some matters, respecting repairs at the Inn & farm places with the Moor Master. Walked up the Nent to examine a Bridge which is without parapet Walls & in other respects in bad repair, as well as the Path along the River side at both ends of it. On which account it becomes dangerous, especially to the Miners who pass it generally in the dark. It is not exactly upon the Hospitals Property, though connected with it. The persons chiefly interested in its repair, conceive that if the Commissioners would contribute £5 on the part of the Hospital [marginal pencil note: 'we should give this £5'], they might obtain by subscription & contributions in labor, as much as would complete the work, in all, probably about £15 or £16 which I promised to recommend. I then returned by Coach to Dilston, & after depositing my papers etc in the Office & attending to other matters, proceeded to Corbridge at night.

I had sent Mr Hunt over to see the Agent of the Stanhope Railways Lime Works, whose Lime is much more convenient for Newlands & Whittonstall than any other, to try to bargain for the supply of the Tenants there at a reduced price, by engaging for a quantity & guaranteeing the payment, but as yet, their demand seems to be so great that they will not submit to any reduction of price.

**2 Jun 1834    John Grey**

Monday 2nd June 1834

A day of labor & confusion. Removed our furniture into out Houses at Dilston, dispersed the Children to Lodgings & took up my abode in the Cottage preparing for the Bailiffs amid Workmen, wet Paint & raw plaster. Yet it is refreshing to escape from the atmosphere of Corbridge & look out upon trees & green fields, and in a short time, I trust we shall be all very comfortable. Mr Stott, the late Tenant of Buteland, called upon me to say that Mr Spencer, the purchaser of that property, claimed the Threshing Machine, upon the Ground of its having been conveyed to him as well as the Mill. Both Mill & Machine were erected by Mr Stott, but the Mill having been advertized along with the Estate, Mr Hooper, as appears by his Journal, May 29th 1833, paid Mr Stott the value of it, that it might be transferred to Mr Spencer, but gave him at the same time a Letter which he showed me, stating that the Machine was his own, & that he might remove or dispose of it at pleasure. Stott is willing to sell the Machine to either party by valuation, but if he does not effect that, must remove it. Only before doing so, he thought it right to acquaint me lest it should involve the Hospital in a dispute with Mr Spencer who claims the Machine. As I know nothing of these transactions, it may be proper to apply to Mr Bicknell who I suppose made the conveyance, or go Mr Fenwick, who can see Mr Spencer or his Solicitor any day in Newcastle to ascertain the Grounds of his claim; and this should be done without delay. Stott also presented some accounts for work done at Buteland, which he said ought to have been allowed him, but I see from Mr Hoopers Journal that that he had presented them to him & had been refused payment. One however for work at a Pump done by a poor man who has not been paid and ordered by the Receivers, as he says, was not shown to Mr Hooper, and I told him that upon procuring an Order & proof of the work being sufficiently done, I thought it certain that the Board would allow it. The amount is under £3.

**3 Jun 1834    John Grey**

Tuesday 3rd June 1834

Had to settle several accounts with Mr Parkin for poor Bates due upon Woodlands. I am of opinion that the Hospital's Woodlands generally bear too high a proportion in the valuation for the Poores Rates, but as the other contributors, with few exceptions, are their own Tenants, it would do little good, & cause much discontent, to shift a part of the burden from the Hospital to them. Mr Storey of Wark sent me an account of £4 for work which I found it necessary to order to maintain the Pound fold there, the wall of which had been washed away by a Flood in the Tyne. I have had several applications for repairs from Tenants in that district, some of whom state that their windows cannot be mended with Glass on acct of the rottenness of the frames, but have not hitherto

attended to them, conceiving that the property would be transferred to the Duke. I shall be glad to have the Boards instructions on this head. I regret to say that a continued drought with frosty nights is affecting the appearance of Corn very much in this Country, much of the Soil being of a gravelly nature & being besides wore out with constant tillage, its moisture is quickly exhausted & the Corn grows sickly for want of nourishment.

**4 Jun 1834    John Grey**

Wednesday 4th June 1834

Rode through the Estates of Thornbrough & Newtonhall & thence to Whittle, my chief object in going there being to ascertain the success of an attempt to procure Water by boring in an old Grass Pasture the value of which has hitherto been much diminished by the want of it. It has been proposed to cut a road through the Wood to give the Cattle access to the stream in Whittle Dean, but this would have been expensive to make & steep & inconvenient to use. I therefore determined to try the experiment of boring, & having borrowed rods from a neighbouring Colliery set two men to work, & was glad to find today, that after cutting through five yards of Clay & five of rock, they found this morning their borehole full of Water within four feet of the Surface. This operation has cost 25/- I have shut the hole up for the present, to see how the water stands, & if it does not waste, a very little expense will convey it to its level on the hillside, there to terminate in a Watering Trough for the Cattle. I called on the Miller at Dilston in the morning without seeing him, & repeated my call on returning from Whittle, when as usual he was intoxicated. He told me he would pay me rent, but I might seize what he had & pay myself, for he would be quit. I told him he could not now be quit till May next, & that he must be made to pay his rents or go to Jail. He said I might do as I liked, he would be as well in Jail as here, but 'he would be quit.' This conduct leaves me no alternative but to seize immediately, as it is to be feared that they may convey away their Goods clandestinely.

**5 Jun 1834    John Grey**

Thursday 5th June

Sent Mr Hunt at five this morning with a warrant to seize the Stock upon the Mill & Grounds at Dilston, in occupation of Rochester of which he took an inventory, putting them in charge of our Hedger. He was just in time to detain the Horses & carts setting out with a loading g of flour. No attempt at compromise having been made by Rochester, a more detailed inventory was made in the evening by Mr Dickinson the Auctioneer and notice of Sale prepared. This Man entered to the Mill only in March

1833, & has not paid any rent whatever, I cannot believe that he has not the means of paying at least the Martinmas Rent at this time, or that this conduct is any thing but assumed to get quit in a base way, of a concern which he cannot manage. He is not therefore deserving of any lenity.

I rode in the course of the day over the farms of Wooley, Staples, Aydonshields & Salmon Field in Hexhamshire, to look after the repairs of Houses which I had directed. Heard from the Lessees of Langley Mills that they had taken an estimate for making the new Water Wheel there almost entirely of Metal instead of Wood, which besides its superior strength & durability, would afford greater power than would be given to a Wood Wheel without widening the Wheel case, which would be expensive. The Estimate for the Metal Wheel is £200. I wrote to Wilson saying that I should of course prefer a Metal Wheel if they chose to erect one, but that I could give them no reason to expect that the Board would contribute more towards it than the sum stipulated for by their Lease, i.e. £150.

**6 Jun 1834    John Grey**

Friday 6th June

Had interviews with Benson & Parkin respecting the several building & thinning of Woods etc, connected with their particular departments. Traversed the young Plantations to see that the fences are secure. This droughty season is very unfavourable for the striking of young Trees, yet I think they are coming sufficiently thick. We are now collecting the Bark into Barns, in convenient situations to sending to Newcastle. The building of the new House here goes on satisfactorily, for which the season is remarkably favourable. The work & situation are much admired.

**7 Jun 1834    John Grey**

Saturday 7th June

Left home at Six o' clock, & drove to Throckley, taking Benson with me to examine the state of the a public house there & the repairs that are needful. It is surprizing that the back Building should have stood till now, bearing the weight of a tiled roof, as the wall are filled with nothing but Clay. I then proceeded to Newcastle, got my account examined at the Bank and directed £5000 to be paid to the Bank of England on the 16th Instant, of which I have given Mr Paine notice. Saw Mr Forster, the Viewer, & engaged him to go through the Collieries, beginning at Throckley on Thursday next & then coming here that we may proceed to Fourstones etc. Gave Mr Fenwick as directed by Mr Lethbridge, Mr Claytons Correspondence upon the subject of Green & Rewcastle's

demands for buildings at Scremerston. He cannot however obtain any explanation from Major Johnson at present, as he is confined to bed by illness & unable to attend to my business. Mr Robinson of Needleshall having been able to offer no security nor fix any time for the payment of his debt to the Hospital, I was reluctantly compelled to direct Mr Fenwick to proceed for its recovery, lest Mr Clarkson should come in between us & sweep off all his property.

**9 Jun 1834    John Grey**

Monday 9th June

Mr Green the Architect from Newcastle came up to examine the Work of the new House which we went over together, & found it to be all very well executed. I was then engaged in Office business & looking after the various works going on upon this part of the Estate. The party building the Saw Mill waited upon me to inform me of their wish to rent a small piece of Ground cut off from Dilston North Farm in the shape of a triangle between the new Turnpike & the Railway, which though Inconvenient to cultivate is most convenient as to the site of a Depot for Wood & other commodities, going by the Railway, & also for a Public House instead of that now occupied by Hind, which the change of road will leave quite out of the way. Their proposal is to rent the Land from the Hospital & erect the Buildings at their own cost, except the home grown Wood which may be used, and at the end of 21 Years, to have the option of renewing the Lease, or to be paid a valuation for buildings, the Wood excepted. I desired Mr Dickinson to go with them & Measure the Ground, that they might give me a definitive proposal. As the suitability of the Ground for such a purpose, has often occurred to me before, & it could not possibly be in better hands than those who have the Saw Mill upon the Estate, as they are Men of Property & both occupances could be included in one Lease.

I have had today also, an enquiry respecting the Limestone at Allerwash, to which I replied that as the Lease of Brokenheugh Colliery was near an end, I was of opinion that both the Allerwash & Carrstones Limestone works should be let with it to one party, the Colliery being situated between the two. And that instead of reserving Lime & Coal for the private Working of the Tenants on the Hospitals Estates as at present, it would probably be better to let the whole, & bind the Lessees to supply the Tenants with Lime at a price to be fixed, at the cost price of burning. I have abstained hitherto from expressing a decided opinion upon this subject, wishing to have the viewers report of the state of the Colliery & supply of Coal that may be reckoned upon for the work. This I shall have shortly, when I shall communicate that & my own ideas respecting the letting to the Board.



**10 Jun 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 10th June

Received a Petition from the Tenants of Newlands & Whittonstall praying the Commissioners to encourage the proposed new road from thence to join the Newcastle road near Axwell Park, which Petition I herewith send. This is the road referred to in my Journal of the 23rd September last.

Mr Burnett called at the Office to receive payment for his portion of the Duty Ore arising from the Mines of the Hole Liberty which had been delivered at Langley Mills along with that of the Hospital. The amount after deducting 13/6 for Carriage came to £11.4.8. He proposes hereafter to have his portion set aside at the Mine, so that it will not pass through our accounts at all. Mr Burnett wishes to purchase from the Commissioners the Tithes of his Property at Tynehead, & offers to give Twenty years purchase upon the average Rent of the six years that it has been in his possession. That average as appears by the accompanying paper is £3.3.6 & the price he offers £63.10. It is a poor property in a high & unproductive county, & not capable of improvement. Mr Burnett will be glad to know whether the Commissioners are inclined to treat with him or not.

I rode over Dipton Fell to see the Ground which had been cleared of Wood & replanted last Season, I was glad to find that in spite of the drought, the young Trees are doing remarkably well. Returned by Snokoe Wood which we are now thinning & from which we are now leading the bark. The price of Larch bark is so low, that it will, I fear, barely defray the expense, but then the wood is more valuable when peeled than otherwise.

**11 Jun 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 11th June 1834

A Post Office having this week been established at Corbridge, I ordered a private Bag for the Office, and the Blacksmith at Dilston who has a young family not able for much work, engages to have it carried back and forward daily for any consideration that I may think right to give. This will cost perhaps 1s/3d Per week, but then we shall be saved the charge of 1d upon each Letter as hitherto paid to the Mail Guards. Was engaged for some time in the Office. Received a Proposal from a person named Wright for a building Lease of the same small pieces of Ground that have been detached by the Railway at Dilston which the Saw Mill Company offer for. He proposes to give only two Pounds rent during the Lease, but then does not claim any remuneration for the Buildings, which they do at its termination. So that if he were to lay out £250 as he says

he contemplates and give up the Buildings at the end, his rent would be greater than theirs. The Saw Mill party are however the best Tenants, as well as more likely than any others to turn the thing to good account, but I think they ought either to give up their claim to the value of the Buildings, the Hospital supplying the Wood, or to offer a higher ground rent, say £20 during the Lease, for though the Land is not worth more than £8.. to a farmer, it would let for more as it is situated. I rode over the farms of Coastley & Hackford, deciding the draining upon them, which is much wanted & certain to be very beneficial. Returned through the Wood in Coastley Dean & examined some damage which has been done & if not put a stop to, likely to go on increasing, by the course of the Brook at its junction with the Tyne. Came to Westboat, where the Blacksmith has completed his Building, upon which I told him to come and get the allowance of £5 promised him & sign an Agreement for 21years at £11 a year. He states that he has laid out £30 instead of £20 in rebuilding the House.

**12 Jun 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 12th June

Received the Boards Minutes of the 31st May & the Secretaries Letter of the 10th June, informing me of the Admiralties approval of the appointment of Mr Fenwick & Mr Bainbridges as Court Keeper & Solicitors for the Hospital in their respective districts, to whom I communicated the particulars regarding their respective appointments. I instructed Mr Fenwick at the same time, to enquire into the Grounds of Mr Spencer's claim to the Threshing Machine at Buteland, and sent him MSS Draft of the term of Lease, with the request that he would give it an attentive perusal & be prepared to discuss it with me at an early day. The Miller of Dilston having offered no terms of compromise, & manifested a most contumacious disposition refusing to make my payment, although he is said to have money by him, it became necessary today to proceed to a Sale of the effects, pursuant to Notice. After selling enough to satisfy the Hospitals claims up to Mayday last, he proposed to continue selling till every thing he had should be disposed of. I protested against such conduct, and refused to be accessory to it, by allowing the Auctioneer I had employed to proceed. He however found another and persisted. What he intends to do after disposing of all his furniture, I cannot devise. There is Corn as well as Hay growing on the Land, but they may be disposed of before we can claim another half years rent. On which case there will be nothing for it but to attack his person & he is understood to have some property. His conduct I think would induce suspicion that he labors under partial derangement. It is hardly likely that a Tenant could be found for the Mill at this Season, but if there could, he has not relinquished his agreement, but says he means to lock the Doors and leave it so.

**13 Jun 1834 John Grey**

Friday 13th June 1834

Having written Letters & attended to accounts in the Office I went over the different works going on here, examined the new Road through a part of Dilston Hall Farm, which being now finished, we this day opened to the Public, who take it most willingly being a much shorter line & less steep than the old one, & as regards the situation of the new House an immense improvement. I have not yet got the expense of attending it put into one sum yet, but hope to find that it has not exceeded that allowed for the purpose. I next went with the man who basically had charge of the work, over all the embankments, Wears securing of the shores of the Tyne, filling up holes which had been excavated by floods etc, all of which may now be pronounced to be in safe & good condition, & will I trust encounter any ordinary floods without damage, although they must be at all times a source of anxiety & watchfulness, especially as I hear, that owing to the injury sustained by Mr Beaumont's Tenants on the opposite side, from the additional height & strength of our embankment, he has been induced to undertake to make a similar one, which by contracting the water will throw an additional weight upon the embankments. Ours however will have the advantage of greater solidity than one newly made.

**14 Jun 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 14th

Having got the Cash accounts, including the numerous receipts & payments of all the Rents, brought up to this date and sent off to Greenwich, I rode to Thornbrough Quarry Farm to see if any remedy could be found for the Tenants complaint of a want of water near the House & Offices. It is certainly ill off in that respect during the summer, & a promise had been made him of sinking for water & fixing a Pump, but the place stands upon a thick bed of Limestone, to sink in which would be expensive & also of doubtful success. It may however be worthwhile to ascertain by boring first, whether there are any seams containing Water - proceeded to Newtonhall, the Tenant of which sent me an application some days ago, for an abatement of Rent or for leave to quit at May Day next. In this respect, he is far from being singular. He says that he is losing all his Capital & cannot longer continue to pay his way, but having laid out money in cleaning & improving the land, would be glad to treat upon [terms] conformable to the times. I told him that the Commissioners would likely accept his surrender of Lease & that he might probably be treated with by private bargain, if on examining the Farm after Harvest, I should find that he had done for it as much as he said. I believe it is true that he has considerably improved its condition. I then went as far as Whittle, to see whether the water got by boring there was likely to answer the

purpose, & on finding that it had not risen higher than at first, determined upon boring a little deeper before proceeding to incur any further expense. After returning in the evening Mr Robson of Allerwash came & gave me £100 his arrear of Rent.

**16 Jun 1834 John Grey**

Monday 16th June

Was occupied all the day with business in the Office, examining various accounts for work in different parts of the property & preparing agreements etc. By the Moor Masters returns, it appears that the whole quantity of Ore raised in the Manor of Alston between Michaelmas 1832 & 1833, is as follows. Bouse Ore 12702 Bings 4Cwts. Cutting Ore 679 Bings 6 Cwts the Duty on which is 2197 Bings 1 10/21 Cwts of Bouse and 119 Bings 1 13/14 Cwts of Cutting Ore.

**17 Jun 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 17th June

Went to Hexham - settled the Nursery mans Acct amounting to £57.8. for young Trees & Thorns used in planting during the last Season. Being Market day, saw several Tenants, who have generally some applications to make, but who are universally complaining of the Drought & bad prospect for a Crop, & stating the impossibility of holding their Farms at the present rents. I regret to learn that Mr Fenwick has found it necessary to resort to a sale of Robinsons Goods at Needleshall, to obtain his Debt due to the Hospital. Mrs Benson Tenant of Grindon Hill, who has Sons working upon the Farm, was one today among the applicants to have a reduction of Rent, or to be quit. I had expected it from her as the farm had been so hastily taken, & being a good deal in Grass & adapted to the keeping of Sheep, ought from the good price of Wool to pay better than the more Corn growing Lands. She admitted that they ought to cultivate no more Corn than would afford winter provision for their Cattle, but that her economy & the industry of her Sons would not at all do to enable them to pay their way.

**18 Jun 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 18th June

I rode to Haydon Bridge - saw the building of a Cow House and Coach House in the Inn Yard. Got agreements executed by the Rev George Richmond for the fields called Priests Pasture, & by J. Corbet, Blacksmith for the House & Shop he occupies.

Proceeded to the Works in Langley Barony & was caught in a heavy rain, my only regret about which was, that so little of it came Eastward to Dilston.

**19 Jun 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 19th June

Wrote to Mr Lethbridge, enclosing Letters from Messrs Fenwick & Bainbridge, accepting their appointments as Court Keepers & Solicitors in their respective districts. Also sending for the Commissioners' Signature, the Agreements for the Blacksmith's premises at West Boat & Haydon Bridge & Mr Richmonds, for Fields at the latter. No Lease or written Agreement of any kind was ever made, I believe for the Inn at Haydon Bridge, entered to in May 1833 by Matthew Hetherington. The Rent of the House & Fields originally attached to it, is £90 for three Years, to which is to be added £24.. the Rent of two Fields laid to it at May Day last formerly occupied by Mr Coals, since dead. At the expiring of three Years, one of which is already gone, Mr Hoopers proposal to Hetherington respecting it is founded upon such peculiar conditions, see his Journal 6th May 1833, as to render it impossible to extend the Agreement at present beyond the 12th May 1836. Until that period then, a mere written acceptance of the Terms by Hetherington will be sufficient security, as he and his family are steady & respectable people. After that, if he should continue in the situation a regular Lease may be executed upon new terms. Examined & settled up in full, balances due upon the Wears & Work at the Tyne, also for various other jobs done by Thomas Harle in draining & fences on different parts of the property. Looked over the young Fences & work going on in this neighbourhood.

**20 Jun 1834 John Grey**

Friday 20th June 1834

The subscription for building a School House & Dwelling House for the Teacher, in the Township of Lipwood, for which the Board granted a site & Wood for the Building, not having been found sufficient, application was made by a neighbouring Clergyman, to the national School society for aid. Their committee have subscribed £30 which will fully answer the purpose, but one of the conditions which must be completed with before the money can be had, is, that a conveyance of the site be obtained. I am therefore applied to, to know whether the Commissioners will grant such Conveyance to Trustees, that the Subscription may be had. Mr Fenwick would, I believe, draw the conveyance gratis. [Marginal pencil note: 'The Commissrs have no power to alienate without authority from the Admiralty']

Rode to Wooley, where the Tenant at the commencement of this new Lease, is putting up a Threshing Machine at his own cost & wishes to have the Barn put into suitable repair, which it is proper to do, as well as other Offices, as he will be required to maintain them hereafter. This I must have done. The Roofs of grey Slate, universal in that district, are expensive to keep, & always unsatisfactory. Rode on to Staples, to see the like repairs going on and Draining. Told Dodd that he must produce proof of Mr Hoopers having given him the promise to recommend a reduction of his rent last year, before the Board can sanction it. He said he would procure a Letter to that effect from Mr Sample, who was present. Went on to Whittle Mill which being also in the first year of a new Lease, is in want of some trifling repair of the Machinery, Roofs and Fences. Young Todd of Rawgreen in Hexhamshire, whose Father died lately came on behalf of his mother and family to know whether they would have an offer of the Farm again, & when I would go to put a value upon it. I told him I know of no reason why they should not have an opportunity of treating for their farm again, having paid their rents & managed it fairly, but that I could not set about valuing Land till after the Crop should be severed, probably in September or October. In the mean time, although the Board had sanctioned the abandonment of the present Lease by promising them to hold the Farm for this year at the rent it may be Let for the next, I thought it better to take from him a resignation of it in writing.

**21 Jun 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 21st June

Paid the second Instalment of £200 to the Contractors for the new House, due upon the joists of the second Story being laid. Wrote to the Agent of the Railway Company, requesting a settlement of the claims due to the Dilston Tenants & allowed to them on the last rent day. I find this Company very dilatory in their transactions & troublesome to deal with. Informed Mr Beaumont's Agent of the Boards decision respecting the letting of Blagill Mills. Rode to Whittle to see the effect of boring for Water, & found to my great disappointment, the quantity obtained is not sufficient to make it worthwhile to incur a greater expense in procuring it. A permanent supply would have been of great advantage, but this is not enough to reckon upon in drougthy seasons, & in wet ones, it is not wanted. The Miller of Dilston having disposed by Auction of all his Stock in Trade & furniture, on his own Account, after the Rent due to the Hospital up to May Day, had been satisfied, proceeded to advertize the Public Sale of his Meadow, this evening I sent to him to know what was his object in such strange proceeding. Advising that as he had become answerable for another years occupation, having held over the May Day, he had better try to find a sub tenant for the Mill till May day next, or authorise my doing so, leaving the Crop upon the Land to make up any deficiency

of Rent that might cause. That in either case I felt certain of obtaining the sanction of the Board. His answer to this is equally absurd as his other proceedings. He said he had lost money & would not give up the premises without compensation. That he would sell the growing produce of the Land, lock up the Doors & hold possession till he received it, & I might come by this years Rent as I could. I told him that to ask for compensation where he was injuring the property & contemplating a robbery of the Hospital, was the most extraordinary demand I had ever heard. I could however make no impression upon him. I sent Mr Hunt with a Notice in writing to the Auctioneer, that the Hay would not be allowed to be taken off the premises, with directions for him to make the announcement, if the Auctioneer declined doing so, which was the case. In consequence of this no one would purchase it, although Rochester gave them many assurances of indemnity. What he will next attempt, it is impossible to devise. And as his Rent is now paid up to May day last, if he will not come to terms & relinquish his Agreement, I fear no proceedings can be taken against him till another rent becomes due, & by that time he may have his Crop disposed of & nothing may be left to levy upon. It is generally said that he & his Wife have some property, & if so, he is certainly a fit subject to make an example of. By leaving the House & still holding possession, he will subject himself, according to the terms of his Agreement, to a penalty of £100 for non residence, which he is probably not taking into account. I shall however lay the Agreement & Case before Mr Fenwick in a day or two, & get his opinion to the best course to pursue. [Marginal pencil note: 'right']

**23 Jun 1834 John Grey**

Monday 23rd June

Having settled some matters in the Office & sent Mr Hunt to look after draining & the state of Tillage in the Coastley district, & having no particular engagement, I took an excursion through the Woods on Snokoe & Dipton Fells & those of Dilston Park, observing such as is sold & being cleared away, such as is in want of thinning, the state of the fences etc. There is always something to be looked after in this department, & commonly a good deal to remark upon & rectify, many parts of the Woods being difficult of access & only to be explored in dry weather. There is in Corbridge Church a toofall & small Gallery, containing two pews which belong exclusively to the Hospital & has always been kept in repair by it. The Pews have been occupied by the Tenants of Thornbrough Town & High Barns Farms. The Church Warden applied to me to have the Roof of the Toofall repaired as it admitted rain and caused dampness in that part of the Church. This it cost but two days works of a Slater to do, but on examination I found the Pews in bad condition, being old & the Wood much decayed. This I have had occasion in part to renew and as the two Farms of Thornbrough are now united, & either of the Pews sufficient by large to accommodate Mr Scott's family, I have thought it advisable to appropriate the other, that it may in future belong to the occupier of the

Receivers House, which could not otherwise be provided for, so conveniently or at so little expense.

**24 Jun 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 24th June 1834

Rode to Throckley, where I found for the first time the Lessee of the extensive Quarry there, to whom I had written without effect, demanding payment of the Rent, & also an account of the number of Blocking Men employed by him, that I might know whether or not it agreed with the account which Mr Stephenson, our tenant at Throckley, was so good as to keep for me. He owned that this year he had employed a greater number than formerly, but complained, that he had lost a great deal of money in working the Quarry, on account of a bad seam of Stone intervening, which he was obliged to remove, although he could not make use of it. There is some truth in this, as is apparent, but still, I told him he must fulfill his Agreement & that promptly, or I should take steps to stop his proceedings. Mr Stephenson of Throckley, one of our best Agriculturists & most respectable Tenants asked me to make the following proposition to the Commissioners. The Threshing Machine upon this Farm is of a weight & construction far beyond the ordinary Scale of Machines worked by Horses, added to which his Farm frequently produces heavy Crops of Wheat with very long Straw, a circumstance I regret to say, very unusual on the Hospitals Farms in this part of the County, which makes the Threshing a murderous job for the Horses. There is a Spring close by, affording sufficient Water for Steam Power, & Coals are only at a Miles distance. So situated, I had often expressed surprise that Steam had not been employed, & Mr Stephenson also said he would gladly adopt it, if the Hospital would be at the expense. This I entirely scouted, upon the Ground, that as soon as possible, the Hospital ought to get rid of the Machinery upon their Farms altogether. He is new however, so satisfied of the injury done to the Horses that he is willing to erect an Engine and appurtenances at his own cost, the Hospital building the Chimney & stand for the Boiler, to cost about £20, which would be repaid entirely, or in great part, by the Sale of the present Horse Wheel, which is strong & good; the Hospital undertaking to pay for such Engine by valuation, at the time of Mr Stephenson leaving his farm, all of which seems very reasonable. Or Mr Stephenson would allow eight Per Cent per Annum on the outlay, if the Commissioners would undertake to purchase the Boiler & Engine. Probably the best plan would be to allow Mr Stephenson a Sum say £20 to complete in a satisfactory manner all the necessary building & agree to take the steam Engine etc by valuation, when he quits the Farm. [marginal pencil note: 'I see no objection to this Plan.'] Or to give him the Horse Wheel, which in bargaining with his Millwright, he might perhaps be allowed £18 or £20 for, in consideration of his making the Chimney etc. a Stipulation ought also to be made, that he should insure the Premises against Fire, of which however in a Building rightly constructed, there is little



danger. Mr Stephenson is deserving of encouragement, & one of the few Tenants who manages his Farm as if he wished to hold it to the end of his Lease. There is a great want of two efficient flood Gates at the low end of this farm to prevent the backflow in times of Flood in the Tyne. The Duke has 15 Acres in the same Situation & dependent upon these Sluices for protection, while we have 50. And as His Grace's Agent is willing to allow the half, I could not refuse to undertake for the other. The whole should not cost more than £10. [marginal pencil note: 'This should be done.'] The young Trees on the old Pit heaps that were planted in the Spring, look shy on the tops & bare parts, while those around the base are thriving. I visited the repairs at the public House, saw the Miller about some repairs at his Dam, & proceeded in the evening to Newcastle.

**25 Jun 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 25th June

Went over the Draft Lease for Farms, as directed to be adopted, with Mr Fenwick, who has undertaken to have copies printed upon plain paper, attending to the prints himself, to see that sufficient blanks are left in the proper places. These Copies of each Lease will serve as records & for reference in the Office here, & generally will satisfy the Tenants, they holding them for the same purpose. While it will be necessary to have one Copy on Stamp duty executed to deposit at Greenwich. This Copy Mr Fenwick thinks it will be necessary for him to ingross, unless he can make an arrangement with the Stamp Office, to allow of its being Stamped, after being printed & filled up according to the amount of the rent included.

I consulted him likewise on the base of Rochester, the Dilston Miller, showing him his Agreement for a Lease. He is of opinion that no step can be now taken till another Rent becomes due, except to prepare & tender for his execution, a Lease, according to the Terms of his Agreement, & that on his refusing, as he likely would, to execute & pay for it, the bargain would become void & he might be forthwith ejected. I hesitate to adopt this proceeding, on account of the expense of the Stamp, which there was some doubt of being able to recover from Rochester. But should he be mad enough to pursue his present course, some such step will be necessary. [marginal pencil note: 'I think the Cost of this Stamp should be no impediment in getting rid of this man.']

As it appears that Wm Hind has not put in an answer to the ejectment served upon him, we can now turn him out by force. I therefore brought up a Warrant for that purpose this evening & on reaching home, sent my servant to Hexham to apprise the Sheriffs Officer to come down in the morning to put it in force. The stupid Man will now discover that the Hospital will not always to be imposed upon with impunity.

Mr Fenwick gave me his bill for Law Charges up to May Day last including his half years Salary as Court Keeper, which I herewith send for examination, before discharging it. We agreed that, although in future it will not be necessary for him to make out detailed accounts of Law Charges, he should procure a Book for the Hospitals business, in which to keep a Journal of his transactions, which it will be useful to have to refer to.

**26 Jun 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 26th June 1834

Had a meeting with one of the Rail way Agents respecting the claims of the Dilston Tenants, the amount of which is promised to be remitted in a few days. Went along the line towards Hexham to see the point at which they could be allowed to break into the bank for gravel, with the least injury. The Sheriffs Officer arrived & I sent some people with him to turn old Hind & his effects out of the House and let Teasdales family into it, who have lived since May day in a barn, on account of Hinds obstinacy. He admits now, that he had no just ground for remaining, but says he was persuaded that he could stop six weeks with impunity. The stupid man will have gained some information when he finds himself summoned to pay the Attorney's charge, besides the rent. In the Arrears which were formerly ord.d to be discharged by a Journal Entry, some items were included, the recovery of which seems hopeless. Mr Dickinson will inclose a list of them with a statement of the particular circumstances attending each.

**27 Jun 1834 John Grey**

Friday 27th

I rode as far as Wark for the first time, saw the work which had been done under Mr Storey's obliging direction, to secure the foundation of the Pound fold wall which had been undermined by the adjoining Brook, & the wall itself rebuilt. Called upon the Rev Mr Baggs to inquire into the nature of a complaint he had made to me by Letter respecting an encroachment he imagined had been made by persons using a part of the field.

**30 Jun 1834 John Grey**

Monday 30th June 1834

Being Quarter day, inclosed the several claimants Cheques for their Salaries & Pensions. A discovery was made some days ago that about 28 outside Deals which had been sawn from the Trees cut in Whittle Dean for flooring in the Public House at Throckley, had been stolen. There seemed some reason to suspect a Person call Bell at Ovington, & I even heard that they would be found in a certain out House belonging to him. I sent Mr Parkin early on Friday morning, who examined the out House in the Field, but they had been removed, if they were ever there, nor could he find any trace of them. In Woods so widely squandered many of them difficult to access, I fear we are liable to greater depredations in this way than I am not always informed of. And as it was certain in this case that the Articles have been taken away, I determined to take all the means in my power to discover & punish the Offenders. I therefore went to the place today, where however I could get no tangible proof, but proceeded to Throckley where the Workmen are employed who cut the Wood, & from whom the suspicion of Bell originated. I could only make out of one, that another person had accused Bell of having it, & from another, that it was said, he had had it in the out House & removed it on finding that it had been missed from the Wood. Hearing however that a person named Carr had been heard to say that he had seen some deals carried off, I rode around to find him, but did not succeed, as he was working at a distance, I shall however send Mr Hunt in search of him tomorrow, and finding him shall offer a reward of £10 for the discovery. The outside Slabs stolen, are of small value, but I understand that two Trees were carried off from that same Wood a year ago, & no inquiry made. And to pass such things over, is to encourage theft. Being at Throckley, I staid till evening, examining the state of the farms & plantations, while Mr Hunt took down the tillage. Visited the Colliery, where they are producing little Coal, but have got some Iron Stone of good quality, which will be purchased by the Iron Works Company at Lemington. When Mr Forster comes to view the Collieries he must fix the proportion of value which the Hospital should receive as rent upon this Stone. I examined the Mill Dam & proposed to allow £2.10.0 as being about half the expense of repairing and cleaning it out, if the Miller would do the rest. It is a poor Mill & does little business.

Received a Letter from Mr Sample, late Bailiff, which I forward in testimony of Mr Hoopers intention respecting the reduction of Dodds Rent, which I doubt not is quite correct.

Received also an offer from the Saw Mill Lessees of £10 a year for 61 Years, for the two Acres of Land by the Rail way, on a Building Lease. The Land is gravelly & not worth £5 a year to farm, but its value is enhanced by its situation. I consider the offer a fair one, as they leave all buildings at the end without compensation if accepted, there ought to be a Lease regularly drawn of which they should pay the Stamps, binding them to leave as well as maintain the fences, buildings etc in good order.

1 Jul 1834 John Grey

Tuesday 1st July

Received a Memorial from Westgarth Forster, Author of a Treatise on Mining which I have heard is a useful Work, but proved an unprofitable one to him. I was introduced to the author at Alston, whose appearance indicates poverty. I forward the Petition to the Board.

[marginal pencil note:] I think the Hosp.l subscribed for several copies, which were doubtless charged in the Receiver's account so can give no pension and I doubt whether we can give any subscriptions to his need. We certainly can not assist Mr, Forster. G. T.

All my attempts to bring the Miller of Dilston to a settlement on reasonable terms having failed, I sent Mr Hunt on Saturday evening to try if he could make anything of him, being very desirous to get such a compound of stupidity & knavery, off the Premises if possible. He first demanded £100 for what he calls compensation for his loss. That is, for having undertaken a concern to which he was quite inadequate. Considering the time he has held over May day & the disadvantage of letting the Mill now, he should have no consideration whatever for his growing Crop, but estimating it at about £70. I authorized Mr Hunt to offer him £40 in hand, if he would quit possession peaceably and at once. Even this would involve a sacrifice to the Hospital, but probably a less one that may in the end ensue from his continuance & this I took upon me to propose. To offer him more would be to bribe him to quit a concern which he should be thankful to be released from, & to give a premium for rascally conduct for which he deserves punishment. Rochester having declined my offer, I wrote to Mr Fenwick today requesting him to take such measures as he saw fit to bring the matter to issue, which may probably be effected by presenting him with a Lease to execute. I sent Mr Fenwick also a copy of an agreement for a Lease, to get printed, to be used on letting a Farm & before the Lease can be prepared, containing among other conditions one, that upon the party declining to execute & pay for a Lease, conformable to the terms of that Agreement, the Commissioners should be at liberty immediately to enter upon & take possession of the Premises. Had Rochesters agreement contained such a clause, there would have been no need for a legal process of ejection, upon his refusal to execute a Lease.

I then rode over the Hills to Stublick Colliery & Langley Mills, where I was glad to find that Mr Beaumont's Agent had concluded a bargain for the Low Mill during the term of the present Lease. This will bring some employment to the place, which is at present in a most stagnant state, & will also be a benefit to the Colliery, which in consequence of the falling off of the Smelting has only been worked three days in the

week for some time past. Called at Deanraw School to see if it had been put into decent & habitable Condition, for both dwelling & School House had been left by the old master in such a state of ruin that the new Teacher could hardly think of stopping in it. Everything that could be taken down was carried off, & even the Locks from the Doors, on pretence that he had placed them there, which was likely the case in such a long incumbency, but then it would be in lieu of others that had been worn out. I held back £3 from him, being the balance between his rent & the Subscription to the School, wch I shall retain in part of the Repairs. The School which has last year dwindled away to four children, consists now of nearly 50 & continues to increase. I then went to Harsondale, where I found it necessary to rebuild some of the most needful of the many ruinous Stone Walls by which the fields are divided. To do them all in one year, would strike deep into the rent. I must therefore proceed gradually, & have them made of less height & more substantially than before. I then made my way through the deep woods which clothe the precipitous banks of the Allen, to where it issues to the romantic spot on which stands Plankey Mill. The Millwrights were just finishing their job, having put in a new Axle to the Water Wheel & an inner or spur Wheel, entirely new, which as far as I can judge, looks to be well & firmly made. The parts of the old one that I saw are so entirely decayed that I wonder how they stood so long together. I then clambered up the banks on the top of which is the Vauce, to see the draining of a bog & decide upon some trifling repair of the buildings, before turning them over to the Tenant to maintain in future. Next descended to Lees where the main Farm House is ready for the Roof, & looks well, & proceeded eastward by the course of the Tyne, reached Haydon Bridge at 10 o'clock. Sent for the Woodman to the Inn, to make inquiry respecting the Plantations & the Wood cut for the several Buildings.

**2 Jul 1834    John Grey**

Wednesday 2nd July

Rode first to Whitechapel, three miles, Westward from Haydon Bridge, where the new farm House is roofed & will be soon fit to occupy. This is a substantial Job, of which all the work is well done, & does Howden credit. He is now going on with the Stables. Then to Lipwood & West Millhills, both occupied by good Tenants, & for this Country, well cultivated - but both, I regret to say, proposing to apply to be released, on account of the high Rents & low prices of Grain. Went to Haydon Town Farm, looked at draining & contrived how Water might be conveyed to the Farm buildings & some pasture Fields, which in this dry season are ill off for want of it. Examined also the Ground upon which by Mr Hoopers permission, the away going Tenant sowed last year 12 Acres of Corn to which he was not intitled. [marginal pencil annotation: 'I doubt Mr Hooper giving authority.'] The Land is bad, & after allowing for Seed & harvest labor, the Crop would probably not be worth more than £18. [marginal pencil annotation: 'Is there any notice of this in Mr Hoopers Journal?'] But when he ploughed

12 Acres, he left 6 of the worst of the Field in Grass, which could not be mown, the Grass being so bad, & which Mr Howden could not have the use of in pasture until after harvest, being intersected by the Corn. On this Account, I think he is entitled to £2 more making together £20 with which he will be fully satisfied.

Came to Westbrokenheugh, where I had altered the Roads leading to the Offices, substituting one for two, & thereby saving Land and turning two very small Fields in to one of convenient size, examined the new fences etc. Proceeded through the Farms of Allerwash, Fourstones and Westwood, looking into their condition & anything requiring attention, & reached home in the evening, pretty much done off by two days of constant riding in a burning sun. I am glad to find that the Railway Directors have adopted my suggestion & altered their line through Fourstones so that instead of cutting through some of our best Fields, it will run up the line of fence by the River, occupying Land of very little value, being chiefly River gravel, & will also form an embankment against floods. I remonstrated against their taking the other line, stating my opinion that this was quite practicable & would be little more expensive than the other, and urged upon them that the liberality of the Hospital in giving up the Land, gave them no right to occupy good Land if that of an inferior kind would serve their purpose. They have made a second Survey of it, & adopted my recommendation.

The Crops of Hay are generally rather light, but got in excellent condition & at little expense. And then of Corn, not promising to be very abundant, but they are better everywhere than at Dilston, where we have less rain & where the once productive Land is in a state of complete exhaustion & bad cultivation.

**3 Jul 1834    John Grey**

Thursday 3rd July 1834

Received from the Railway Co. £63.6.6 being the amount of compensation for damage done to the Lands in Dilston due abt Mart[inma]s last. Received also the Moormasters Accounts & a Statement from the Clerk of the Deliveries of the Ore weighed over in the Quarter ending on the 31st Ultimo amounting to 294 Bings & 2 Cwts. The Duty received being 473 Bings & 18 Cwts which I am glad to say exceeds the quantity received in the corresponding Quarter of last year.

The Tenant of Wark Manor Farm waited upon me with a valuation of the Lands in the Parish, liable to the making of certain Roads set forth in the Award of the Division of a Common a long time ago, but which have never been done till now, that to avoid an Indictment the Proprietors have consented to pay a rate for the purpose & a good part of the Road has been made. His Farm, rented at £60, is valued at £50 & the rate of 7/- comes to £17.10. I felt reluctant to pay this, but the rate & valuation having been agreed to by the majority of Proprietors & the money actually expended upon the Roads, I did not see that we could throw the payment of it upon the Duke who has not

yet taken possession of the Property & therefore settled it with Thomson who paid up his arrear of Rent.

I received from the Lessees of Langley Mills their Cheque for £2278.12.4 being the amount due for a Quarters Duty Ore, which I forwarded to the Bankers, desiring them to make a payment of £5000 to the Credit of the Commissioners on the 12th Instant.

**4 Jul 1834     John Grey**

Friday 4th July

I was called upon this morning by the Schoolmaster of Whittonstall for the half years subscription to the School there. The Subscription to this School by the Hospital is £15 a year, whereas to that of Deanraw & others it is £10. I am not acquainted with any particular claim which Whittonstall has to such preference, and having lately given a subscription of £35 to rebuild the School House, I shd think an annual subscription of £10 sufficient for a Teacher of such moderate qualifications as that at Whittonstall possesses. [marginal pencil annotation: '£10 enough, yes']

This being Stagshawbank Fair, I went there among all the rest of the County; had conferences with many tenants on matters connected with their Farms & received some arrears of Rent. Mr Scott of Thornbrough gave me an application to the Commissioners to be released from his Farm on which I shall hereafter report more particularly. The sale of Cattle was very dull, owing to the great falling off of pastures from the extreme drought. The only article of farm produce which sells at a good price is Wool, & that unluckily is one which the vicious system of continual Corn growing prevents the Hospitals tenants from raising.

**5 Jul 1834     John Grey**

Saturday 5th July

Received some payments for Wood & settled accounts with Mr Parkin. Having made no discovery regarding the Deals stolen from Whittle Dean, I issued hand Bills offering a reward of £10 to any one giving such information as to lead to the conviction of the offenders. Was engaged with Mr Green the Architect who came to examine the progress of the House, which will soon be ready for the Roof. At noon Rochester's wife came to tell me that he was more inclined to come to terms, but thought I should give him a larger sum than I had offered. I was of a different opinion & stated that by this time, it was likely Mr Fenwick had prepared a Lease, by which some expense would have been incurred to which Rochester was liable. He would not come to me to make any terms himself, she said that she would bring the Keys if we could agree upon the Terms. I of course informed her that I must have a relinquishment of his Agreement

signed by himself before a Witness, specifying the Conditions, & that Mr Dickinson should wait upon him with it, which he accordingly did, no one being more anxious than myself to get rid of a worthless & useless mortal, whose conduct has been to me a source of so much vexation. He signed the paper taken by Mr Dickinson, giving up the Agreement for a Lease engaging to quit the Premises immediately & to leave all Corn, Hay & produce growing & being upon them for the consideration of £40 to be paid to him tuesday next; at the same time giving Mr Dickinson possession of the Keys of the Houses & Mills. It is a relief to be done with him, & the next thing is to get a better Tenant. Another so bad it is hardly possible to get. I wrote to Mr Fenwick to stop proceedings. Drew up an advertizement & sent my Servant off to get it printed by hand Bill for circulation in the District, it being too late for Newspapers of this week. As it is of consequence not to lose time & allow the custom & Trade to get into other channels, I have required that intending offerers should come to the Office to learn the particulars of letting, & that I may have an opportunity of enquiring into their character & circumstances. And stated that Proposals would be received by me till Tuesday the 15th Instant. This is a deviation from the usual course, wch however, I trust the Commissioners will deem me justified, in making by the peculiar & pressing circumstances of the case. I must beg their direction previous to the 15th how I am then to proceed. Whether to send the Proposals to Greenwich or to conclude the most advantageous bargain I can with the most respectable Tenant, & to allow him to commence operations at once. [marginal pencil annotation: 'The proposals should be sent to us in the established rule certainly. G.T.'] I propose that the new Tenant should purchase the Corn by valuation in harvest & reap it himself, but if he does not choose that, that I should sell it to the best advantage. And that he shall enter now, as he is intitled to do, to the Hay & fallow lands, paying the expense of making the Hay & sowing the Turnips, which I have given Mr Hunt directions to commence with on Monday & to get it done as speedily as possible.

**7 Jul 1834    John Grey**

Monday 7th July 1834

Mr Lee of West Land Ends came to complain of the extreme dearness of his Farm & offer a resignation of the Lease. I shall report upon the several applications of this kind, after having got a good many together, which will save the Board the trouble of attending to & replying to each separately. Wrote to Mr Forster urging him to give his earliest attention to the view of the Hospital's Collieries.

Rode to Whittonstall & examined the Farms there & at Newlands, & got the Woodman of the District to accompany me through a great deal of Woodland there, in which, though a good deal has lately been cut, there remains much fit for cutting. The Tenants on these Estates are using the privilege granted them of getting Lime, with great



alacrity, & are working their Fallows in good style. And the Lime they procure from the Stanhope Company is of excellent quality. I expected that Newlands Mill was to have required nothing more in the way of Repairs for a long time to come, but on going there today, found that the roof of the Water Wheel case had given way, from the decay of the Timber under the heavy & porous Gray Slates & that in tumbling down, they endangered the Wheel when in motion, which is a very good one. I therefore decided that they should be completely taken off, that the Wood might be replaced & the Slates replaced.

**8 Jul 1834     John Grey**

Tuesday 8th July 1834

Received from Major Johnson the detailed account which I had desired him to send me, of the expense he had invested in cleaning out and making parts of the old Scremerston Water Level. It is an expensive concern, but I believe had become very necessary, and having been recommended by Mr Fenwick & directed to be done by Mr Hooper I presume Mr Johnson must have credit for the amount of the charges for above ground work are reasonable. I cannot well judge of that below, but know that it is a shocking place to work in & that few men could be persuaded to undertake it.

Heard from my Son that he had been over the Spindleston Estate & had the Lime Kiln renewed, for which the Tenants had become impatient. This I shall examine & pay for when I next go there. Wrote to Mr Fenwick on the subject of Mr Burnetts offer for the Tithes, & received from him the printed copies on plain paper of the new form of Lease. I shall now proceed to fill up for those of the farms which were let last year & give them to the parties to inspect, before filling them up on Stamps. My valuation of Lees Farm was £288. I had some difficulty in making a bargain with Mr Watson, who begged hard to have the odd £8 struck off on account of his former Losses & the expense of leading to the new Building, which I promised to recommend & which was afterwards consented to by the Boards Minute of 28th December last. His signed Agreement however stands at the original sum, I therefore think it necessary to explain the discrepancy that will appear between the Articles of Agreement and subsequent Lease. Sent Advertizements of Dilston Mill to the Newcastle Papers, & Mr Hunt dispersed Hand Bills from Hexham market to all the neighbouring Towns & Villages having them listed up at the Toll Gates etc, so that it will be extensively known. He has got the Hay on the Mill Ground safely into Stack & the Turnips sown.

**9 Jul 1834    John Grey**

Wednesday 9th July

Received £60 in payment for Bark from Dilston from Mr Ridley of Hexham. Prepared the Copies of some Leases by the Agreements formerly signed, that they might be submitted to the Parties, previous to being put upon Stamps, & examined with Mr Hunt the Plans of some Farms of which the measurement of the Fields cannot now be made out, owing to their having been intersected by new Turnpikes & Railways. Among them are the Farms of Dilston, Coastley, Woodhall & Esphill, and probably there may be others in which the like confusion has arisen by recent changes. It would be convenient to have this rectified & having the Plans already, a Surveyor would easily lay down the new Fields. Went afterwards through among the Woodmen thinning Plantations & railing up the fences.

**10 Jul 1834    John Grey**

Thursday 10th July

Received Mr Fenwick's Letter respecting Mr Burnett's offer for Tithes, which is herewith sent \* [pencil annotation in margin: 'letter not sent. JAL'] also one from Mr Charlton of Hesleyside, asking permission to obtain Stones for building the intended Bridge at Bellingham, from Hareshaw Common, to which I replied that as the Manor might probably be transferred to the Duke of Northumberland in a short time, a Grant of that kind could not be made with propriety unless by the joint consent of the Duke in case of the purchase being completed. Having gone through some of the Estates to the Eastward and being near to Mr Burnetts residence, I took the opportunity of seeing him, thinking it might save time and future trouble to ascertain the utmost price that he would give for the Tithes in question, which as Mr Fenwick observes, is but a trifling property to have the trouble of valuing & bargaining for every year. I told him that the present price of Wool enhanced the value of the Property & would increase the average annual Rental, & that if he were inclined to amend his offer I should communicate it to the Board. This he did not seem much inclined to, but on my saying that if he would make an offer of £70 I thought he might have a chance of its being accepted, he consented to give that sum to defray the cost of the Conveyance, as a matter of course. The Commissioners therefore will be pleased to signify their determination respecting it.

We have had some showers of late, which have revived the appearance of the County a little, but Hay is every where very deficient in quantity.

**11 Jul 1834 John Grey**

Friday 11th July

Received Messrs Parker & Crawhall's Award of the price of Lead for the last Quarter, which they have fixed at £17.10 and wrote to the former acknowledging his Letter as well as my obligation for his attention to that matter & his services for the past twelve months, & begging that he would be so good as let me know what remuneration I should make him in return. Received Bensons report of certain Farm Buildings in Hexhamshire, where repair is wanted, which I had sent him to examine. Rode to Wooley, looked over the Farm & Farm Buildings now under repair. Some of the Buildings in that District exceed for badness anything I ever knew. In breaking out a Doorway in a Barn there, to place the Door in a more convenient situation, the Wall came tumbling down for double the space that was wanted, being made of mere Stones loosely thrown together & plastered with lime outside. Andrew Thorburn's was a faithful description when he told me they were only like dry stone Dikes, letting the rain in & the smoke out in all directions. Returned by the Woods Farm of Dilston Park, & prepared the accompanying reports \* as required by Mr Lethbridge for the Board.

[pencil annotation in margin: '\* on Mulcaster's memorial, and on Benson's and Leadbetter's applications for reduction of rent']

**12 Jul 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 12th July

Settled the Accounts for peeling Bark on the different Estates with Mr Parkin. The people employed complain that the price paid per Ton, is below what they can make Wages of, but I can afford them no more, as the price of Bark is also so low, that it leaves little after paying the expenses. Communicated with the Lessees of Langley Mills the Quarters Account for Ore, according to Messers Parker & Crawhalls Award of the price, & transacted other Office business, but have no particular occurrence to record.

'John Benson's Letter applying for reduction of Rent'

I presume that Mr Benson's statement is correct as to the length of time that he has farmed the Hospitals land, & know it to be so, and to the high rent he continues to pay.

His father & afterwards himself, farmed Coastley in the times when farm produce sold at the highest prices, and made a good deal of money, he afterwards took Dilston Haugh & pasture farms finding them, I am told, in good condition. He had continued to pay his rents regularly up to that time, & I am quite certain would have done so latterly, to a considerable extent out of his capital, because although the rent is too high for the present times, under any circumstances it is rendered doubly so by the exhausted state to which he has reduced his land, by a severe course of cropping, in some cases in direct violation of his covenants, as well as of all the rules of good husbandry. I had requested Mr Hunt a few days ago to make out, as far as he could do so, a list of the cases in which he had broken through the covenants of his lease, to the palpable injury of his farms, thinking it my duty to submit his conduct to the consideration of the Board. One glaring instance against which I remonstrated with him without effect, occurred last autumn in his persisting to sow a field, poor, foul and most unfit with Wheat, after having grown already two white crops, whereas two even ought not to have been grown in succession. He meets my remonstrances by the argument that such things were not heretofore found fault with, & that it is justifiable in a tenant in the present times to use every means of making his rents. Solely intent upon getting over his work in the cheapest & most expeditious manner it is often done very improperly & inefficiently. And as to his fences he is totally regardless of them & they have suffered sadly from mismanagement. Having paid high rents punctually gives him some claim to consideration, but certainly he is not the tenant to whom I would give a preference; as the occupier [sic] of land entitled to the best cultivation, whereas it receives the worst.

*'John Leadbitter's letter'*

Leadbitter is the Son in law of John Benson & unfortunately too much resembles him in the management of his farm. It is decidedly very high rented, but then more might be made of it than he makes by better cultivation.

It is true too, that he must have incurred considerable expense in leading materials for building a Barn &c, though not to the amount stated by him. And of the threshing machine he derived little benefit from the want of water, till seeing the loss & inconvenience attending it, I applied myself last Autumn to remedy the deficiency & at a cost of 10£ obtained a supply which has not failed once in the present drought. When Leadbitter was allowed to become the tenant of the small adjoining farm of Dilston Hall last May he engaged to manage it according to a different course, but he is taking no pains to clear his fallows, which are miserably foul, he has sown the land to grass that I can see, & when he comes to sow his next years crop I foresee that he can only get it by sowing over again land already so worn out as not to pay the expense of cultivation upon which he & I shall be likely to quarrel. So pertinacious are they in growing corn, & so ignorant of any improved mode of cultivation. Anticipating the relinquishment of Dilston south farm, which is also ill managed, besides the tenant

being in arrear of rent, I should be inclined to submit to the Board what I consider a much better & more convenient arrangement of that at Leadbitters farm, than the present, giving a part of the Hall farm to each of the other & also laying some fields of the South to the North farm.

This could only be done in case of all three being at liberty at the same time, & is the change which Leadbitter alludes to. Should an opportunity offer of accomplishing it, I shall point it out upon the plan & explain my reasons for recommending it. With respect to Benson & Leadbitter, I must ask how desirable it would be to have tenants in such farms who would set a better example & do the land more justice. Were they the property of an individual, I would even advise a sacrifice to be made to obtain such. Their present condition being daily under my eye, is a source of daily vexation to me. Whether better managers could be found in this neighbourhood, or whether they might be induced to come from any other, I cannot pretend to say but certainly there is nothing about those in question to induce the Board to break through the rule they have adopted of requiring a relinquishment of the present Leases, before entering upon new agreements.

John Grey

[annotation below in pencil:] In both these Cases - we should allow them to resign their Leases paying up their rent - and then encourage good tenants to take them at a fair rent, able & willing to do justice to the Land.

<B H/A> L

**14 Jul 1834 John Grey**

Monday 14th July 1834

Attended to & answered several Letters. Inspected the condition of the Dilston Farms, their Fences & management. Afterwards went over with Mr Hunt the Leases of the Farms entered to at May last, before delivering them to the parties & filling up the Counterparts on Stamp, comparing them with the Agreements originally signed by the Lessees. Received from Mr Fenwick the new form of Agreement & Conditions for letting Farms, which had been printed under his inspection.

**15 Jul 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 15th July

Attended a Meeting of the Alston Road Trustees at Hexham, called chiefly for the purpose of coming to an Agreement respecting the branch road to Bellingham & the

Bridge proposed to be created over the Tyne there. The completion of this Line of Road formerly abandoned for want of Funds, although included in the Alston Turnpike Act, & now that the proprietors in this District have agreed to build the Bridge by Subscription the only thing which I thought it necessary to do in the matter, was to see that the entries in the Minute Book of the Trustees, should be made so as to guard the general funds of the Trust against the liability to any deficiency that might arise upon that particular branch. As the Subscription is considered to be adequate to the undertaking, I trust it may be completed and afterwards adopted by the Trust, as I think it would be likely to in case the Toll at the Chain Bridge, & to benefit the Sale of Coal and Lime at Fourstones. I took occasion to urge upon the Trustees the necessity of providing for the stipulated repayment to the Hospital, the promised instalments of which had been so long suspended. Upon an examination of their Funds & expenditure, they agreed that in six weeks hence, they would discharge the Interest, & divide the residue of the sum into such portions as to enable them to liquidate the Debt within the given period. I had conferences with several of the Tenants at Hexham on different matters connected with their farms, & received from Mr Errington an application to be released from his at Lipwood at May Day next. [marginal annotation in pencil: 'Mr Gray will be attentive to this, and pin them to their Engagements which have too often been broken']

**16 Jul 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 16th July

Had a handsome Letter from Mr Parker expressing his willingness to meet Mr Crawhall as hitherto, to fix the price of Lead on the Hospitals Account, but declining to receive any remuneration for doing so. I conceived in making the proposal, that this would likely be the case, but thought that I should hardly be justified in occasioning an individual so much trouble without at least putting some compensation in his power. As it is, I must take some opportunity, when I get House room, to invite him to take some days Shooting at Dilston in return for his civility. The Tenants have no Shooters more than myself and it is good partridge ground.

Forwarded to Mr Lethbridge the Offers received for Dilston Mill & Ground, with a report of the Parties & their circumstances, so far as I am acquainted with them. Went over with Benson his report of the condition of the Wood Work in several Farm buildings which I had directed him to examine, especially such as are of recent erection, but where the painting has either been neglected altogether, or been done so slightly as to have disappeared in a few years. I very much grudge the expense of doing over again work which ought to have been done & was probably paid for a few years ago, but it is more economical in the end to preserve outside Woodwork, such as Granary Lattices, Doors Windows etc by painting, than to allow them to go to decay &

to require them to be made new. I paid today to the builders of the new House according to Contract the Third Instalment of £150, the main part of the House being ready for the Roof.

**17 Jul 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 17th July

After attending to matters in the Office, I rode through the Farms of Highwood & Westwood to Coastley where I am trying to improve some boggy Ground by draining & to better some Land on a Hill side which is much too steep to be properly cultivated, put through a good following, for the purpose of being laid down to permanent Grass. I shall regret if poor Coulson cannot get on now with his Farm. He takes more pains & has better ideas of cultivation, than most of our Tenants. I have had occasion to remark upon the short supply of Water that has been provided for an expensive Machine erected upon this Farm, and the consequent Loss & inconvenience sustained by the Tenant, who cannot Thresh but at particular Seasons. [Marginal annotation in pencil: 'Would it be worth while even now to remove the machine to the more appropriate site, the tenant bearing a reasonable portion of the Charge. Ask this.'] There is a constant and abundant supply of water in Coastley Burn, which might have been used at pleasure, had the Machine barn been placed in a lower situation, as it is, this supply could only be had by diverting the stream from its course at nearly a Miles distance, & then it must be carried across the ravine of the boggle Wood, at an expense which coming upon the former expenditure, I should not be justified in recommending. I have never been at the place without considering this subject, & endeavouring to devise a remedy. And on examining it particularly today, & observing the Waste Water from the present Reservoir which is at too great a distance from the Barn, as well as that from some Drains & Springs which might be had a lower Level, I think the least expensive improvement that can be made, is to construct another reservoir of small size, which can be done probably, including the sluice, for £20 near to the Barn to catch all the Water that rises below the level of the other, as well as to retain a larger supply on hand at all times, as a provision against a dry season. From Coastley I went to Highside & Bagraw, to see into what state of repair the Premises had been put for the new Tenant, who seems to be an industrious, steady man & inclined to manage that poor Farm in a judicious way, by using it more in Pasture & less in Corn than hitherto.

**18 Jul 1834 John Grey**

Friday 18th July 1834

Being kept indoors by a rainy morning which is most acceptable to the Country, I take the opportunity of forwarding to the Board the resignation of Leases, or as they should more properly be, permissions for leave to relinquish Farms, at May day next from the following Parties.

Thomas & William Brewis of Hartburngrainge West Farm. These are respectable Tenants & little fault is to be found with their management, but the Land is generally cold & poor in quality, leaving little return for cultivation, at the present prices of Grain, while it is unfortunately not very safe for Sheep Pasture, being subject to rot in moist seasons. The Farm is too high rented.

Thomas & Wm Davison of Hartburngrainge South Farm. The description given of the West Farm & its Tenants, above, will apply also to this. There is Land of rather better quality in this Farm than in the other, but I believe it is equally high rented. Davison is virtually released from his Agreement already, having the Board's promise to be allowed to pay for this year, according to the letting of the next.

Messrs Pratt- Newtonhall. This is an industrious Man & I have rather a good opinion of the Farm, which is well situated, but he complains that he has lost so much by farming it at the present rent, that he cannot continue it any longer without the total sacrifice of his capital.

Messrs Todd of Rawgreen. The Tenant of this Farm died some months ago leaving several Sons, who are desirous to continue in the Farm, if they can have it at such a rent as it will afford. It is a poor place in Hexhamshire adjoining Turfhouse which was let at a considerable reduction last year.

Mr Scott of Thornbrough Town Farm. I have felt disappointment at this application from Mr Scott because I entertain a good opinion of both his Farm & management, & although the prices of Grain for the last two years have been very discouraging, yet he is not so entirely dependant upon Grain as those who keep no Sheep. He was accepted as the Tenant of the adjoining Farm of Highbarns too last year, by my recommendation at a lower rent than was offered for it, partly with a view to relieve him in this, both in respect of Rent & the advantage & economy of working the two together, the one consisting chiefly of Wheat and the other of Turnip Soil, which we do not require to be cultivated at the same season. I had also another object in laying them together, which was to save the expense of a new boundary fence between them, which besides being useless, is in a wrong situation &c & should include some Land now belonging to the Town Farm in that of Highbarns, in case of their being again let separately. To accept Mr Scotts resignation of the one Farm without the other, would defeat this object, & I should recommend to the Board, to require Mr Scott either to hold both, or to resign both, as they may see proper.



Mr Lee of Land Ends. Mr Lee is one of the fortunate men who had a share in the Hudgill Burn Mine, in its golden days, and is still of the party. He was induced I believe to take this Farm, by the good & pleasantly situated House & its convenient distance from the School at Haydon Bridge. On these accounts it is likely to command a high rent at any time, and the acceptance of Mr Lees resignation will be seen to be more of an act of justice than necessity.

Mr Errington - Lipwood. Errington is an old Man, possessed of a small Estate, which he says, he must lose if he continues his Farm at the present Rent, but having Sons to manage it, would like to take it again on reduced terms. It is a nice little Farm adjoining the Tyne above Haydon Bridge with a considerable Allotment of Common, at rather an inconvenient distance, & will command offers enough on good terms.

These are all I have yet received, & from what I hear, there is no reason to apprehend want of employment in viewing & valuing Farms, during the Autumn Months.

Saturday 19th July

A day of incessant rain, of which the Farmers will now be complaining that they have too much, the Crops however in this neighbourhood are not so heavy as to be lodged by it.

Nothing to be done today, but to write Letters & work up Office Work.

**21 Jul 1834 John Grey**

Monday 21st July 1834

Received the Boards Minutes of 20th July & attended to all the matters contained in them making the necessary communications to the Parties referred to. Received also Mr Snowball's Letter to the Board applying to be released from the present Agreement for the farm of Fourstones & to be allowed to treat for the same by valuation. Mr Snowball is a Man of Property, but by no means a superior farmer, his Son who occupied Fourstones Farm died, & his Widow continues to live in the House while the old man manages the Farm. He can have no particular claim for a reduction upon this years rent, more than other Tenants. One of the Railway Agents called upon me in answer to repeated applications I had made to them respecting the interference of the Railway with the Buildings at Allerwash Mill, as in the meantime I am quite at an uncertainty what to do about repairing them. He stated to me the wish of the Company to know what value would be put upon the Buildings in case of their being taken down, as the best Line would be over their present Site, but might be deviated from, if they found it too expensive to follow it. I shall have an estimate of the Buildings made to submit to

the Board, that besides that, they must satisfy the Tenant of the Farm & Mill, during his current Lease. Mr Pearson, the Surveyor of the Gateshead Road also waited upon me, in consequence of my having reminded him that having got the public road made, he seemed in no haste to finish the branch road for our accommodation. He promises to get on with it forthwith. In the afternoon, rode to Hartburngrainge where I had heard from one of the Tenants of the failure of a Pump which was very essential to the Farm Offices, being the only Water within a considerable distance. This I directed to have taken out by a person experienced in such matters, & repaired if found capable of it, but if not, that it should be reported of to me. Then I proceeded to Rothbury to sleep, being 30 miles on the way to Milfield Hill.

**22 Jul 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 22nd July

Rose early & rode to Milfield Hill 26 miles. The dear child whose illness caused my Journey, whom I had not seen since she was the picture of animation, health & loveliness, expired on her Mothers knee, three hours [underlined] before I arrived!!! My occupation during the remainder of the week was not of a description to find a place in this Journal, nor had it any connection with the business of the Hospital farther than the receiving from & transmitting some Letters to the Office at Dilston upon needful transactions.

**28 Jul 1834 John Grey**

Monday 28th July

Rode to Scremerston & looked over the Farms. Mr Hogarth had got the Quarry rubbish removed & the banks sloped in, so as to restore the Land to the Field in a condition to be cultivated, but as he was away from home, I have not an opportunity of ascertaining the cost, or of knowing some other matters which I wished to learn from him. I waited upon Mr Pringle, & expressed surprize & dissatisfaction that he should not have attended the Meeting appointed for receiving the Rents in April at Belford, nor have paid any money or even acknowledged his delinquency ever since - telling him that I could not allow the Hospitals interests to be so trifled with, or myself as their Agent to be treated with such contempt. He treated my remonstrance with the greatest indifference making such ridiculous excuses as that at one time there was no Wind to Thresh with, his being a Wind Machine, at another time he was engaged in Working his fallows etc, that he was about to sell Wheat & would pay his rent - demanding also certain allowances for repairing his Wind Mill Tower etc. I pressed him to fix a day for making the payment, otherwise I must resort to means at all times unpleasant to secure

it, for that I had no idea of allowing him to carry on a wild Speculation of Salmon Fishing among the Rocks at Tynemouth, 60 miles distant, to the neglect of his Farm & the risk of the Hospital. I could not drive him to fix a day, but warned him that it must not be a distant one, or he must take the consequences. The evening setting in wet, rode to Berwick to sleep.

**29 Jul 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 29th

Examined into matters at Scremerston Colliery where I regret to find very little demand for Coals. The several Land sale Collieries in the neighbourhood having reduced their price very low, & being generally more favourably situated than this for Carting Coals to the North & West, & the attempt to make Scremerston almost exclusively a Sea Sale Colliery having in the present depressed state of the Trade & abundant supply, proved unsuccessful. I have great fears that the laying of that expensive rail way, unless the vend of Coal should be increased to such a degree as I see no reason to anticipate will turn out to be a dead weight upon the Colliery. The crops in the neighbourhood, & especially Mr Thomsons are very good, & the Wheats, unlike those we have at Dilston, so heavy as to be laid flat by the late rains, so much so, that unless Sunshine & dry weather should now succeed, there is a danger of the Grain being injured. I returned that night to my family at Milfield Hill.

**30 Jul 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 30th July

Proceeded to Newcastle bringing Mrs Grey with me, from the scene of her late affliction. Saw Mr Fenwick in the evening to enquire, in consequence of a Letter I found from Mr Stott, what arrangement had been come to about the Machine claimed by the purchaser of Buteland, but which is evidently Mr Stotts Property. Mr Fenwick is of opinion that the Machine not having been advertized with the Estate as the Mill was, is removable Stock & thinks Mr Spencer was of the same opinion, till he got hold of a former Lease, wherein the Machine was demised to the Hospital. Since that time, Mr Stott redeemed the Machine by making good his rents, & is unquestionably entitled to the value of it, whether paid by the Hospital or Mr Spencer. By what means or for what purpose the said Lease was put into Mr Spencers hands, I have yet to learn.

**31 Jul 1834 John Grey**

Friday [sic] 31st July

This being the first day for the Assizes for the County, I was desired to remain in Town, by the Solicitor for Mr Thomson of Scremerston, whose trial with the Lessees of the Colliery respecting the charges for the small Coal for burning Lime, was expected to come on, on which it was thought my evidence might be useful in proving what passed at Berwick between Mr Hooper & the parties in the subject. The Trial however had not come on at four o'clock, & as I had not been served with a Subpoena & had nothing to do in Newcastle, & expected that many matters might be waiting my return to Dilston, I came home in the evening. I learnt today from Mr Fenwick that the transfer of the Property & Manor of Wark is now likely to be made shortly to the Duke of Northumberland which will regulate my proceedings in regard to the management of the Property.

**1 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Friday 1st August

Attended to Accounts, answered Letters, settled with the Bailiff of the Regality of Hexham the various Fee Farm Rents due from the Hospitals Estates in the District and received numerous applications to be released from their engagements from Tenants in various parts, which I shall report upon particularly after another week, when I imagine I shall have received a good many more.

I send herewith the Agreement for Dilston Mill, as executed in three parts by Ridley Hall, who has now entered into the occupation of the Mill & Ground, as no time was to be lost. Two of the Copies, I shall hope to have returned, when I shall apply to Mr Fenwick to have a proper & binding Lease made and executed. I had filled up forms of Leases for those Farms which were let last year and entered to at May Day last, and issued them to the respective Tenants for their inspection, previous to having them put upon Stamp. Several of them have been returned & no objection made, but Mr Hunt tells me that Bell, the Tenant of Aydonshields, & Harrison the Tenant of one of the Whittonstall Farms object that the allowance of Lime is not inserted. However it was never intended by the Board, & certainly not understood or expected by me, that that allowance should continue through the Lease, or that the Hospital should be bound to continue it any longer than circumstances might warrant, or the management of the individuals be considered deserving. In the Agreements which those Tenants executed, no mention whatever was made of an allowance of Lime. They could therefore unquestionably be made to execute the leases in conformity with these Agreements and I think the Board should either insist upon their doing so, or in case of

their being set at liberty, make it known that they should not be treated with again upon any terms.

**2 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 2nd August 1834

I heard from the Clerk of the Deliveries that he had finished the Delivery of Duty Ore to Messrs Wilson for the last Quarter amounting to 473 Bings 3 11/14 Cwts including 2 3/4 Cwts of Mr Burnetts Ore. Mr Burnett & I have agreed that in future his Duty Ore is not to be included in our accts, so that we shall have no more mistakes arising from that cause. I was engaged in examining & arranging the leases returned from the Tenants to whose inspection they had been submitted & forwarded those to which no objections had been made to Mr Fenwick, with instructions to extend a Copy of each upon proper Stamp, for execution. Rode over the high part of the Dilston Estates & Woodlands and thence to Wooley to see whether the repairs of the Barn & other Offices which I had directed, had been proceeded with, & found that like other patching Affairs, it turns out that more is wanted than was anticipated. The Harvest is beginning partially, in the District, & the Crop cuts up light.

**4 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Monday 4th August

I had frequently applied to the Railway Agents to have their determination respecting the Line at Allerwash Mill as I have hitherto abstained from making any repairs which are wanted, lest they should eventually be taken down, and as they requested to know what might be the value of the Buildings, before they could decide, I sent Mr Benson to examine & measure them, being rather desirous that if they would give a fair value for Housing & Machinery & compensate the present Tenant, they should take possession of them & run the Railway over the site, for besides the cost of keeping up old Houses, the Hospital has more Mills than afford them Interest for the outlay they require. Bensons valuation of the Buildings is £180.8. which I communicated to the Agent of the Railway, at the same time stating that if they determined upon taking them, the proper way of ascertaining the value of both Housing & Machinery would be by valuation of persons mutually chosen. Having dispatched my Letters & Office business, I rode into Hexhamshire, examining the Farms of Staples, Rawgreen, Turfhouse, Salmonfield & Rowleyhead, Aydonshields & Gairshield, as to the state of their fallows & the application of the Lime allowed by the Hospital, having stipulated, as a condition of that allowance, that their Land should be well worked, & prepared for the reception of the Lime in a satisfactory manner. On two of the Farms I had some

draining to inspect, also went through some of the Woodlands with the Woodman & saw the Bark that had been collected in that part, amounting probably to 12 Tons. In a general way their fallows are in a creditable condition, but I was surprized in these times of Roads & Wheels, to find upwards of 20 Ponies still employed in carrying Lime upon their backs, to this high district from a Kiln about 8 miles distant, a proof of the expense which attends its conveyance. I wished to have seen old Thorburn to know if he was prepared to pay any part of his Arrears, as if otherwise, I should think it necessary to take possession of the Corn growing upon Mirehouse, as his Away going Crop & sell it by Auction. He was not at home, but his daughter undertook that he should meet me at Hexham Fair on Wednesday next. The Crops in that cold district, not having been affected by the Drought, are better than usual.

**5 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 5th August

I had the Corn left growing by Rochester on Dilston Mill Ground, valued by Mr Hunt, on the part of the Hospital & and another person on behalf of the new Tenant, for which they decide that he is to pay £52.10.0 according to the reputed measurement of the Land, but to be increased or diminished in due proportion should it be found on measuring it afterwards to be more or less than is expected. Received also from Ridley Hall the new Tenant £15 as agreed upon for making the Hay & doing their work upon the Land, & for the Clover seed sown by Rochester. The outlay for the work is £6.15 leaving a balance of £8.5 in our favor, which together with £52.10 for the Corn makes £60.15.0 so that after paying Rochester £40 for quitting the Premises we are still £20.5 into pocket.

I went today through the Woods of Snokoe, which the Woodmen are employed in thinning, & the extensive plantation of Dipton where the ground replanted last winter is now looking very promising, almost every plant having made a fresh shoot since the last rains. Returned through the Woods of Dilston Park, & found Mr Green the Architect here examining the progress of the House. They are about erecting the Spouts & proceeding with the Slating.

**6 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 6th August

Some of the Whittonstall Tenants called in the morning on their way to Hexham fair, & I afterwards saw others there from different parts of the Estates, most of them, I regret to say being of one mind as to the necessity of giving up their Farms. The Crops in this

district are generally rather below an average, while the prices have rather a tendency to decline rather than to advance. It is no wonder then, that farmers almost wholly dependent upon Corn, should take alarm at the responsibility they are under. The principal article of Sale at this days Fair, is Lambs, which are brought in great numbers from the pastoral districts in the South of Scotland, & were sold at high prices. But as a County Fair is a place of general resort for business transactions of all kinds, it affords an opportunity of meeting many people that one wishes to see, & sometimes of making Sales of Wood & collecting payments for it. Wrote to Mr Forster expressing surprize that he should not have come to examine the Hospitals Collieries, as I had expected for some weeks past.

**7 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 7th August

Had accounts to settle in the Office with Parkin & Benson, in their respective departments, and held a long conference with old Thorburn, whose stupidity about his account, & unwillingness or incapacity to understand the Amount of Arrear upon his several Farms is excessively troublesome. Our interview concluded by my telling him that unless he should bring some one to give security for the rent due for Bagraw in the course of this week, I should seize & sell the Crop by Auction in a few days. As for that at Mirehouse which I examined a few days ago, it is so bad that I think it doubtful whether purchasers would come forward to take it, & therefore agreed to his having it cut, which will put that part of the expense of it upon him, in the first place, & then I should determine what to do with it. I then rode to Highwood to see the Tenant respecting his Arrear, which is large in comparison with his Rent. He is one of the Applicants to be released, his Crop is poor & altogether, I fear he is not in a good way, though he is a sober & industrious man. He promised to bring me some money within ten days. I then went forward to Allerwash Mill, where I had sent a Milwright with directions to make only such repairs as was absolutely necessary to keep the Mill at Work, until it should be determined whether it is to stand or be taken down by the Railway. The Water wheel which is of small size, will hardly hang together for another year, & will have to be made new, should the Mill be kept up. I then rode to the top of Fourstones hill, to examine the state of Prudham Quarry & enquire into the number of men employed in it, but found that hitherto the Lessee has made very little use of it, his object in taking it having been to sell Stones to the Rail Way, which is not yet doing any thing in that quarter. I then rode over the Farms in the Estate of Fourstones, & found the two occupied by the Heslops, bearing good Crops & in very creditable condition. The small Farm attached to the Colliery is likewise in good condition but I cannot say so much for Mr Snowball's management, although he is a man of Property. The Farm however, is as well managed as his own Estate, where things are done very roughly. The Railway is to be run along the low end of this farm, & will soon be

commenced with. During Snowballs occupation of it, he will I imagine, be compensated by the Company for the damage sustained, but in case of the a farm being taken off his hands & relet, they expect that they will be allowed to take the Land without payment, the Farm being Let with that understanding. Having never seen any Agreement between the Commissioners & Railway Company, I am at a loss to know how those matters should be regulated & shall be obliged by being furnished with information respecting it. [Marginal pencil annotation: 'If there was any such agreement it probably was prepared by Fenwick or his predecessor, it must be found & referred to'] I returned through the Farm of Westwood & reached home at nine o'clock.

**8 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Friday 8th August

Sent Mr Hunt to value the Corn Tithes belonging to the Hospital, directing him as to the prices at which the different kinds of Grain should be calculated. Wrote to Mr Hogarth of Scremerston reminding him of his promise to discharge his Arrear of Rent in the beginning of the present Month & to other Tenants on the same subject. Received the Boards Minutes & the offers for Lowbyer Nursery. Inclosed to Mr Fenwick a cheque in payment of this Account as returned to me, after being taxed, & wrote to the Moor Master for particular information respecting the party giving the highest offer for the Nursery, as I am not acquainted with his character & circumstances. I now forward to the Board applications to be released from their Farms from the following Parties.

Shield of Rowleyhead. The Tenants are three Brothers holding a farm in a high & exposed situation in Hexhamshire, consisting of poor Land, too high rented & too small to give them sufficient occupation, a new set of Offices had been begun to build, but left off, after making a Barn, Granary & Hovels, leaving out the housing for Horses & Cows, which must of necessity be added, as the old Stable & Cow houses are ruinous & in danger of falling. I regret that the Farm, if it is to be given up, had not been relinquished last year & let together with Gairshield. This admits of tillage, whereas there ought to be none, or next to none, at Gairshield. They form a square laying Farm together & would command a more respectable Tenant, if united, than either will do separately; and the farmhouse at Gairshield is so badly constructed, that though not old it will hardly be possible to preserve it in habitable condition, but the materials would complete the necessary Building at Rowleyhead, at little expense if it could be dispensed with by laying the Farms together. Gairshield was only let from year to year, & though even in that case a Tenant should not be displaced, if he acts satisfactorily it is by no means unlikely that Thorburn may have to quit it at May Day. In which case it will be well, to keep this object in view, before letting Rowleyhead.



Anthony Taylor - Fairl Farm. This is a respectable Tenant occupying a Farm consisting chiefly of poor Land in Whittonstall.

John Harle - West Millhills. Is an active man & rather a superior manager, his land, excepting an allotment on the Common at a distance, is of good quality, but too circumscribed to be occupied to advantage. He has held it for several years at a very high rent and must be a loser by it.

John Temperley – Highwood, is the Tenant mentioned in my Journal of yesterday, as having poor Crops & falling back with his Rent. This is a very small Farm consisting chiefly of rather inferior soil, & might have been annexed to the adjoining Farm of Westwood as formerly with advantage.

Joseph Maughan- East Land Ends, occupies a compact little Farm close by Haydon Bridge & manages it very well. It is a place sure to let at a high Rent at all times, from its situation & quality.

Ralph Milburn - Longhope, has some Property & pays his Rent, but Longhope is a miserable place, on the top of a cold hill, the soil is so poor & wet that in many years it does not ripen Corn, & to make matters worse is apt to rot Sheep. It holds also the small Farm of Highside, about a mile off, but of dryer quality.

Henry Peacock of Esphill & Lightbirks, & Jno Hutchinson of Woodhall. I place these two together because they have only held their Farms since May 1833, and I venture to suggest to the Board whether it would not be advisable to refuse their application, on the ground that there is no such great difference in times, since their taking, as to warrant their abandoning their Farms without longer trial, & because if such a practice were allowed, it would mitigate against all attempts at improvement, as well as lead to a reckless course of bidding for Farms, merely as a temporary accommodation.

Thomas Dickinson - Tedcastle, holds a very small Farm at the extreme Western point of the Property, on the Banks of the Tyne, which is unquestionably very high rented. He is a very industrious man.

William Langhorn - East Millhills, occupies a good Farm on the North Banks of the Tyne, near Haydon Bridge, and is one of our best Farmers.

William Hunter - Whittonstall High Field & Edward Hunter of Whittonstall Hall Farm. These are the Sons of Old Hunter of Morrow Field, who has been long a Tenant of the Hospital. They are a respectable & industrious family & inclined to do justice to poor Land, in an unfavorable district.

John Woodman - Beamwham lives at Grindon where his house has lately been enlarged, & occupies the adjoining Farm of Beamwham, upon which there is no tolerable House, were it not for the difference of the name & that they are under separate Leases, they would be better to be dealt with as one Farm. Beamwham is intirely mountain Pasture & very good of its kind, but Woodman says that he loses money by it every year.

John Leadbitter of Dilston North Farm, whose application was before the Board lately. In his resignation is included also the Hall Farm which he entered to last year, & which of course he could not hold without the other.

Thomas Benson - Dilston South Farm. This Tenant is in some Arrear of Rent & is not a capital manager. The Land is generally much inferior to the rest of the Dilston Lands, more resembling the Hall than the Haugh Farms, & part of it being on very high Ground near Dipton Wood. As these three Farms are now at liberty at once, supposing the resignations to be all accepted, I would suggest a better arrangement of the Boundaries than the present, should the Board approve of it, by which the lands of each, would be laid more contiguous to the Farm buildings, and altogether more suitably for their occupation. The low part of the North Farm has been so much intersected by Roads & Railways since the Plans were made, & the Fields so much altered, that their Contents & even their names are not known. It would be well before letting or even advertizing the Farm, to have that part of it gone over by a Surveyor & laid down in its present condition. [Marginal pencil note: 'we cannot do better than adopt our Receiver's suggestion']

John Benson - Dilston Haugh Farm. Mr Benson's application was before the Board some Weeks ago & I need not revert to it now, farther than to observe that Mr Benson occupies the Park Farm also, which he does apply to be released from, this year, although he would most likely do so the next. The two Farms work most conveniently together & there is a Machine driven by Water upon one & not upon the other. If they should come to the Public, the two together might attract a Tenant of superior Capital, the opportunity for which would be lost by Mr Benson holding the Park Farm for one year longer than the other. At the same time it is right to observe that there is no chance of obtaining such a rent for it as Mr Benson pays. It is for the Board to decide whether they will release him from the one without the other, & whether in case of their doing so, they will not intimate to him their intention to hold him to the Park Farm if not given up now, to the end of the Lease. [Marginal pencil note: 'the opportunity should not be lost.']

Joseph Robinson - Greymare Hill. He has done a good deal for the Farm during the five years he has occupied it, and with a considerable sacrifice to himself, but much as its condition is improved, he declares that he cannot make the Rent.

**9 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 9th August 1834

Set out early to visit the several Farms in the district of Newlands & Whittonstall, most of which will be to value & Let this Season, on which account, I wish to look over them while the Crop is on the Ground, as well as afterwards. I told Harrison, who objected to execute his Lease on Account of the Grant of Lime not being included, that he must make up his mind to do so at once, or relinquish his present Agreement. He is to let me know in a few days. I particularly examined the buildings at Newlands Haugh Farm, which are in a ruinous condition, to decide upon what might be absolutely necessary, & to get Benson to make an estimate of it, to enable me to decide upon the comparative advantages of letting it together with, or distinct from the adjoining Farm. To unite them would undoubtedly save a great deal of building, as the Farm House, barn & some hovels at the Town Farm are sufficient & the only thing against it, is the want of Capital in the Tenants. I shall advert to this hereafter. I went to the Mill, where a part of the Roof has been taken off, & was under repair, the Wood so rotten that the Men could not upon it to take down the Slates, but by placing a Scaffold. On my return in the evening I found Mr Foster, who had examined Throckley Colliery in his way here, of the condition & prospects of which, under its present management, he thinks unfavourably, but of which he will report at length hereafter. I advised him with the Conditions & terms of the other Collieries to the West which he is now visiting.

**11 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Monday 11th August 1834

Had a Meeting with Thorburn, who brought a relation who holds a Farm in the neighbourhood, to join him in a Promissory Note for £80 on condition of his being allowed to reap the Corn at Bagraw. From the Estimate I made of it, that is as much as it was likely to sell for by Auction, besides taking the risk of bad debts. I rode to Woodhall Mill, where the Tenant hesitates to execute the Lease, according to his Proposal. He had no good reason to give for it, but that he wished to give a farther trial of it before binding himself for a Term of years. I told him that could not be allowed, & he could make up his mind to execute his Lease or resign the Agreement, & give me his decision in a fortnight. Proceeded to Haydon Bridge where a Cow House & Shed for Carriages are making in the Inn Yard. Went forward to Lees where the new Farm House is covered in & will soon be ready for occupying. Gave directions respecting the repair of Buildings at the Lough Farm, & took a Survey of the Farms south of the Tyne in that District, several of which are among those that are relinquished. Returned to

Haydon Bridge, but finding that Mr Foster, whom I expected to meet there to stay all night, had returned from Stublick & left it before my arrival, I rode down to Dilston late in the evening, thinking to find him here, or that he would call in the morning.

**12 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 12th August

I informed old Teasdale, that the Commissioners having consented to remit a part of his Arrears for Dilston Hall Farm on condition of his paying up the remainder, he must give me satisfactory security for doing so, that he might be allowed to reap & dispose of the away going Crop at his pleasure. This he has done. I obtained & examined Mr Hunt's valuation of Lipwood Corn Tithes, at which rate he has let them to the occupiers, of which I send a Copy. Gave directions to Benson at Newlands Haugh Farm & give me comparative Estimates for doing what would be necessary for occupying the Farms separately as at present, & if they were thrown together. Was engaged with Mr Green who came from Newcastle to see the progress of the House. The Saw Mill has been set to work, & one of its first operations was to cut the hand of old Mr Green, one of the Lessees, almost in two, he having used it incautiously in the way of the Saw. It is a painful accident, & May produce bad effects from the effusion of blood & laceration of nerves. Was engaged in the afternoon with Mr Parkin going through some of the Plantations to examine their condition & decide upon their management. We shall have a good quantity of Wood to cut next Season, & I hope from the progress of the Rail way & improvement in Mining concerns that we may have a good demand for it.

**13 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 13th August 1834

Having written a few days ago to Coulson, the Tenant of Coastley to say that unless he could discharge his Arrears, I would not have the Lease prepared upon the new Agreement, & he would not be allowed to continue his Farm, he came to me this morning to investigate the state of his Account, left a little money & promised to raise the remainder or give me security for its payment upon the next rent day, repeating the old complaint, which is unluckily too well founded of the inconvenience he sustains from the want of Water to work his Machine. I promised to try to remedy that at least as far as £20 would go, by making another reservoir, and immediately wrote to Murray to ask what would be the cost of such a sluice as would answer the purpose. After settling some matters with Mr Hunt who was going for some days into the Langley District I rode to Thornbrough & looked over the Farms there, examining some

boundary Hedges that were planted last Spring under my direction, & which are very thriving. Thence to Newtonhall which is also given up, where I found the Crops very good & the state of the Fallows very creditable. I returned by Shaw House, & attacked the old Tenant on the state of his Arrears, but got nothing beyond the kind of promises which I can obtain at all times, of payment some time soon, I must however bring him to something more decided, but will let him get his Crop in first. I fear he will be hardly be able to get on, & yet I am unwilling to stop him if it can be avoided, for I see that his Son who now takes the chief management of the Land, is using considerable efforts to improve its condition, & has done so to a certain extent. As for the Public House, I apprehend it is a bad concern & must become entirely useless, so soon as the Lead Carriage is taken off the Road by the opening of the Railway .

Valuation of Lipwood and Whinnitley Corn Tythes 1834

Thos Coats (Lipwood)	Wheat	11 1/4 acres	
	Barley	2 do	
	Oats	2 1/2 do	£8
Jno Bell(Whinnetley)	Wheat	12 acres	
	Barley	5 do	
	Oats	8 do	£11
M. N. Parker (Hill House)	Wheat	2 acres	
	Maslin	3 do	
	Barley	3 do	
	Oats	4 do	£6 5
Geo Bell Cruel Syke)	Wheat	2 acres	
	Barley	2 1/4 do	
	Oats	5 1/2 do	£2 7
			£27 12

Dilston 10th Aug 1834

**14 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 14th August

When at Newlands lately I found a part of the Building done by Rewcastle two years ago, has not yet been finished. The Slated Roof of the very expensive house inclosing the Horse Wheel of the Threshing Machine, has not been pointed, though the Tenant had the Lime as he showed me for the purpose, but which is long ago become useless;

& now some of the Slates are beginning to blow off. I wrote to Rewcastle today, calling his attention to that & to some other things at Newlands West Farm left in a very discreditable condition by him, expressing surprize that having received the payment, he should not have completed the Work, & begging that he would not give me occasion again to revert to the subject which I now do for the second time. Wrote also to Stokoe the Millwright to know why £8 demanded of me in payment for a pair of Millstones annexed to the Machine at Coastley had not been included in his Estimate, & asking him to produce a Copy of it, as there is not one to be found in the Office. In consequence of a complaint made by Mr Beaumont's Tenant, I went to look at a Water course which the Hospital has made by permission through his Field that they might get quit of a Stream of Water, by turning it into the Tyne, which formerly ran through Widehaugh & would have been troublesome e & expensive to get through the embankment. The cut being deep, the banks slide in, which occasions an obstruction to the Water and a waste of arable Land. The most effectual care would be to make a covered Drain of it, & as it is not long, the expense would not be much, except for leading the Stones, which I proposed to him to do, for his own benefit. This I think he will do, after Harvest, & I must be at the expense of making the Culvert. I rode forward to a Mill belonging to the Duke of Northumberland to see the kind of sluices used in the Reservoir, for it seems to me that those employed in the Hospitals Machines of late years are unnecessarily expensive.

**15 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Friday 15th August

Harrison the Tenant of Sproats Farm came to the Office this morning, paid up his Arrear & told me that he declined holding the Farm, as taken last year unless the grant of Lime were guaranteed throughout the Lease. This I told him was never contemplated & would not be complied with, & that if such was his determination he must return to me the Agreement signed by the Comm.rs., with a writing from him, signifying his resignation of it, which he promised to do. I wrote to a great number of Tenants requiring an early settlement of their Arrears.

I saw Stokoe the Millwright, who informs me that the Millstones, put into the Machine at Coastley, were ordered by the Tenant on his own Account, & were not included in his Estimate at all. So that the presentation of the account to me turns out to have been a mere attempt to get me to pass it without enquiry. I went with Mr Parkin through the Birchside Wood & others up the Devils Water to decide upon the Plots which it would be right to recommend to the Board to have set out for Sale in the Autumn, and in the meantime to cut down, in parts that are too thick 2000 feet of Fir for the immediate use of the owners of the Saw Mill, which being new at work, will I hope, help us to a considerable consumption of Wood.

**16 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 16th August 1834

Having written some time ago to the Party to whom I had given permission to bore for Coal at Hartburngrainge, requiring that they should acquaint me with the result of their experiment, & whether they intended to conclude it by making an offer for working the Coal, or to relinquish it, & leave me at liberty to treat with another party, two of them came over today. They have found Coal on the East side of the Estate which might be worked, but the Sale, they say could be very limited, as they themselves are Lessees of Coal in the Wallington Property to the West. They have found Coal also near the Western boundary, where it would be more expensive to sink, but which in a few years could be wrought and cleared of Water, by the establishment they have at present in Sir John Trevelyans side of the boundary, who would give them permission of outstroke as it is called, by paying him a certain Rent. They reckon upon having Coal to serve for seven years in the Wallington side, which they must Work out before beginning to the Hospitals Coal. I asked them if they expected that the Hospital should grant them a Lease of this Coal to receive no rent for seven years to come, & be debarred from treating with any party for Coal in another part of the Estate. They said they could not afford any Rent till they began to work the Coal. But I observed, if it would not pay them to give something for keeping another out, I could let the Coal to another Party with whose competition they would have to contend. In fact I had been offered £25 years another person for leave to work Coal on the East side of the Estate, but told him that so trifling a Sum I would not recommend the Board to allow of the Land being broken into. The party today left me with the undertaking that they should make one offer of paying dead rent as it is called, while the Coal remained unwrought, & a certain rent for each hewing man, in case of their commencing the working. I shall be able to judge by their offer, whether it shall be worthwhile to send Mr Forster to examine the seam or not. From the thinness of the Seam & the scanty population thereabouts, I apprehend there is not much to be expected from it.

I rode to Wooley, where the repairs of buildings are finished. To Staples & Rawgreen where they are nearly so. Through the Farms of Turfhouse, Aydonshields & others in that quarter, returning by Whitley Mill, where the Mill Wrights are at present employed in putting the Machinery in to proper order for the new Tenant. It will not cost much. Some of the Wheels wanted new Cogs, and the Kiln a drying Plate. Reached home at nine o'clock.

**18 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Monday 18th August

A rainy day throughout & unfavourable for the Harvest, most of the Corn is still in the Fields hereabouts. Went over the Plans of several of the Farms with Mr Hunt which have been intersected by Roads & Railways to try to make out the measurements of the Fields as they are now left, & arrange the course of rotation to be prescribed in a new letting, also marking out new pieces of Land which might be planted without lessening the value of the Farms in which they are situated. Examined all the Hospitals transactions with the Railway, & the Boards Minutes which refer to it, that I could find, but discovered nothing to lead me to the conclusion which I understand the Directors expect to act upon, Viz. that after the determination of the existing Leases of Farms through which the Way is laid, they shall not be required to pay any further compensation, but occupy the Land free of charge, until the company shall be in a state to pay a certain per centage upon their Capital. It is a common practise, where such Work is undertaken, to pay the occupying Tenant double the rent of the Land taken from him, on account of the loss & inconvenience he sustains. But when a Farm comes to be let after the Work is completed & the Fields have been arranged & other matters accommodated to it, the Tenant takes it as it is, & can have no claim for compensation. Still the owner of the Soil, has a right to the value of the Land, either at once, if sold, or by annual Rents according to its value, unless some Agreement has been made to the contrary. Land is frequently given up to public Works, on account of the benefit they otherwise confer upon the Property, but in this case, I find no Agreement between the Board & the Railway Co or any document to guide me respecting it. I therefore with a view of bringing the matter to a settlement, wrote today to the Directors, informing them that several of the Hospitals Farms through which the Way passed, would be relet in the ensuing Autumn, and asking them whether, as their present mode of settling the compensation with the Tenants occasions great trouble & dissatisfaction, they would be inclined to adopt a different one, by which they should settle all demands with the Hospital at once, & leave them to let the Farms in which the Land occupied, or to be occupied by the Railway is ascertained, to their Tenants, with the understanding that they will have no claims for compensation from the Company.

**19 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 19th

Having occasion to go to Newcastle I took the opportunity of giving Mr Fenwick instructions respecting the preparation of certain Farm Leases, & also put into his hands the Agreement executed by the Commissioners for a Lease of Dilston Mill, to Mr



Ridley Hall, for 15 Years from May last, guarding him as to maintain clauses for the maintaining of Machinery, Water courses etc. Having found a Memorandum in the Office of certain articles of Machinery belonging to the Hospital, which were left in the Yard of Mr Burnett in Newcastle, I went to the place to examine them, taking with me a list of particulars. Those I saw safe & under cover, but as Mr Burnett was not at home, I could not learn whether he had the means of applying them to any purpose, which would induce him to give me a fair value for them, or whether I should endeavour to find some other channel for disposing of them. His Foreman, however undertook that he should write to me on the subject. There is besides this, some Machinery & Materials for a large Wheel on Alston moor, that were formerly intended to draw the Water from a Copper Mine, but which was abandoned & became unnecessary. Every thing of this kind which is now not wanted by the Hospital, had better, I imagine, be disposed of as soon as possible. [Marginal annotation: 'yes']

**20 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 20th August

I received today applications from two of the most extensive occupiers of the Hospitals Lands, to be released from their engagements - Messrs Thomson & Hogarth of Scremerston. They are undoubtedly both too high rented in present times, and Mr Thomson especially, whose Farm is in a high state of cultivation, have expended upon it a large amount of unredeemed capital. If these Farms are to be valued and relet this season, I should be glad to be informed in good time, that I might take a favorable opportunity of examining them carefully. They are important concerns, both as regards their rent and management. I forward their applications, as well as one from Edward Soppit of Newlands West Farm to the Board. Finding that the applications from the tenants of Lightbirks & Woodhall to be released, they having been only in possession of their Farms since May Day 1833 having been refused, I presume that I may give the like reply to any applications from other parties similarly circumstanced. I received today also Mr Forsters report of the several Collieries of Throckley, Stublick, Brokenheugh & Fourstones which I herewith forward for the inspection of the Comm.rs hoping that it may be returned ere long with their directions respecting its contents. I regret that Mr Forsters View has been from various causes so long delayed. It is no doubt to be regretted that the Lessees have been allowed to go on without keeping & producing regular Plans of their Workings & proves the necessity there was for putting them under a different superintendence, I should think it advisable that plans should be made as Mr Forster suggests in his Letter of Stublick & Fourstones, and that he should visit & examine the Collieries once in three months, for a time at least, until they are found to be in such a state as to render less frequent inspection sufficient.

With regards to Brokenheugh, it is now so far exhausted in its present Winning and so near the end of the Lease, & at Throckley so little has been done in the new Pit or Splint Coal as Mr Forster calls it, and it is so unlikely I fear, that the present Lessees will be able to continue in either their Farm or Colliery, that the making of Plans of them, might as well be dispensed with, until something can be decided, as to the future letting & working of the Mines. On this head I shall think it to consult Mr Forster. There is a memorandum of Agreement for Throckley Colliery, which Mr Forster either has not had, or has overlooked, but which he shall have a Copy of. Since the present Lessees entered to it, they have lost so much time as well as money in making trials, for a length of time without success, that there is no chance of their Certain quantity being wrought up. As to Brokenheugh, Mr Forster expresses the same opinion which I have always done to the Board, that hereafter it should be let solely for the burning of the Hospitals Lime in that quarter. I settled the accounts today for the repairing, or almost rebuilding the Public House at Throckley & other matters of correspondence & Accounts.

**21 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 21st August

Wrote to Mr Forster sending him a Copy of Mr Fenwick's report of Throckley Colliery & recommendation of the Terms on which it should be let, which were acted upon although no Lease appears to have been made hitherto. Also a Copy of Messers Bones' application for leave to work the Splint Coal upon the Fell, & to be allowed three years to make up their short Workings, which proves that they are in Arrear, & not in advance, with their quantity.

Drove to Haydon Bridge to inspect some Buildings in that part. Gave directions for the disposal of some old Lead Pipes that have been taken up in the Inn Yard & are now unnecessary since the house & brewing place have been supplied from a spring by bringing it through the Alms Houses. The Cistern & force Pump, which from something faulty in its construction could never be used, I must try to sell to the Plumber who does the work at the new House at Dilston. And the building of hewn Stone which contained them has come to good use, as it saved quarrying & dressing Stones for the window & Door frames in the new Farm House at Lees. I informed the Tenants of Esphill, Woodhall & Lipwood that the Commissioners decline accepting the resignation of their Leases, as they had held their Farms for only one year previous to the current year. Went by Lipwood to Whitechapel, passing through several of the Hospitals Farms in the North of the Tyne and proceeded forward 13 Miles to Gilsland, where some of my family had gone previously.

**27 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 27th August

Having remained since Thursday night at Gilsland, receiving all necessary communications & answering Letters daily, the Carlisle & Newcastle Mails passing by Dilston & near to Gilsland, I set out on Wednesday morning, entered upon the Hospitals Property at Whitechapel, passed through several of the Farms on the North Tyne. Stopped at Haydon Bridge to see the Building in the Yard, went to Woodhall Mill, which is now undergoing repair & nearly completed. The Tenant who had hesitated to enter into a Lease, thinking he had taken a dear concern agreed to do so forthwith, on finding that I was resolved that he should not be allowed to play fast or loose as he thought fit. The Mill will now be in good order, and the Land, it is only fit to acknowledge, is in good condition and when the Railway shall reach Haydon Bridge, it is reasonable to suppose that the situation of this Mill for Trade will be improved, as that place must then become a considerable depot for Lead and many other kinds of Goods, going to & coming from the Sea ports to the district of country on both sides of it. Reached Dilston in the evening.

**28 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 28th

Little had occurred in my absence the farmers being much engaged with Harvest & the Sportsmen on the Moors. The last week has been very rainy & most unfavorable for the Grain, most of which is yet abroad in the Fields to the Westward of this place. I am glad to have received £300 from Pringle of Scremerston, which just came in time to prevent my sending an order of Seizure upon his effects. He is still upward of £90 in Arrear of the Rent payable last Spring, & I have given him Notice that I shall insist upon its being made up at the next Rent day. I hear too that Mr Hogarth of Scremerston has paid £200 to my Son, who will place it to my credit at the Bank. Temperley of Highwood has likewise paid £70 of his Arrear. Except on these my late circulars has not produced an effect. I examined Bensons plan & calculations on Newlands Town & Haugh Farms, respecting which I had given him directions, and the result we come to is, that to make the Offices at the Town Farm sufficient for the occupation of both it & the Haugh Farm united, would cost about £200 whereas to make those of the Haugh Farm sufficient for its own occupation merely, would cost at least three times that sum, the Farm House, Barn & almost every thing else, being quite past repairing. There is in the Office an Estimate of Green & Newcastle, for building at the Haugh Farm, amounting to £1283.13.2 and a Boards Order in 1832 £714.4.8 which unfortunately was not proceeded with, and there is no doubt that the two Farms as they are situated, are worth more together than separate. Under these circumstances, I

conclude that the Board will adhere to their intention of laying them together, with the exception of a few Acres contiguous to the Mill Farm, which ought to go with it. Wrote to Mr Storey late Bailiff of Wark, in answer to his application, requesting him to have the goodness to attend to the proclamation, or Riding as it is called, of Bellingham Fair, & to some matters concerning the Courts in that district, as usual & that his expenses should be allowed. As the transfer of the Manor is to take place in November, thus it will be the last time it will have to be done by the Hospital, & I thought it better to employ Mr Storey, whom I have found in many instances extremely useful & obliging, & who is on the spot to sending over Mr Hunt who is entirely a Stranger, to so inconvenient a distance. Wrote to Mr Fenwick about fixing the Courts at Haydon Bridge & respecting some Leases. To Mr Burnett informing him of the consent of the Admiralty to his purchase of the Tithes upon his Property in Alstonmoor, & various other Letters etc.

**29 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Friday 29th August

I received today a Proposal for working the Coal at Hartburngrainge from the party by whom the Boring was lately made. They offer a Rent of £20 Per Man for each Hower employed. The Rent to commence when the Colliery comes into regular working. The Wood used in the sinking, which would be little, & some Cottages to be supplied by the Lessors. They give no idea of how many Men's work they would be likely to sell, but I imagine that the demand might not exceed the produce of two, in which case, the rent would only be £40, a sum hardly sufficient to authorise the damage of Ground however poor in quality. The Tenant of the Farm would be compensated for present damage by the Colliery Lessee, & the hire of two Cottages would cost £5 a year which would be better than to build new ones, till it was seen whether the Colliery was likely to be permanent or not. Having had an application from another person I have written to invite him to give me an offer also, which if he should do, I shall have the honor to send both together to the Board, that they may decide whether they would accept either offer or not. I had today an interview with Mr Johnson, Agent of the Railway Company, who agreed to the settlement of certain matters in dispute between the Company & the Hospitals Tenants of Dilston Nursery Ground and the North Farm, which Mr Hooper expected that he had left in a train of satisfactory settlement, but which have lain over till now. I pressed him by Letter previously, to come to some arrangement for those Farms through which the Way passes, & which are now to be let, without the intervention of the Tenant at all, which is attended with continual squabbling. But he told me today that, the Company understood that they had Mr Hoopers promises that upon the expiring of the current Leases, they should not be charged with the rent of Land occupied by the Way. I told him that no document had come into my Hand to lead me to such a conclusion & that I apprehended some

mistake, as I had received no directions from the Board respecting it. That my idea was, that as the Farms fell out of Lease, they should be let exclusive of Land occupied by the Way, & that the Company should pay the Rent of such Land directly to the Hospital, but that if they had anything to show to the contrary, they had better communicate it to the Board that a proper understanding might be come to, and a Plan of the easy and regular settlement decided upon. I went over all the Embankments, Wears etc in the Dilston Grounds, & found with great satisfaction that the late Flood had not made the slightest impression upon the newly made Slopes by the river side, but that they are getting a strong cover of Grass & small, Willows which I had planted for their protection. There is therefore good reason to hope that we shall not have much expense or trouble with them in future.

**30 Aug 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 30th August

Directed the Bankers to remit £2000 to the Cof the Commissioners with the Bank of England on the 10th of next Month, & informed Mr Paine of my having done so. Wrote to Matthew Bell Esq. M P informing him that as the transfer of the Manor of Wark to the Duke, would not take place until the 22nd November ensuing, the Rent for the Right of Shooting on Hareshaw Common would be due to the Hospital up to that period. The Rent for last Season is still unpaid. I took occasion today to go over the whole of the Dilston Farms, particularly with a view to their present condition and the best arrangement of their Boundaries. The Corn being now all cut, the exact state of the Land is apparent, & I must say that anything so foul and discreditable, upon Land of good quality, I never before witnessed. I find Mr Benson though desirous of quitting the Haugh Farm is anxious to retain the Park Farm, & I am of opinion that it may be advisable to allow him to do so, for the following reasons Viz, that the condition of the Haugh Farm is very bad, & more likely to grow worse than better, if he should be compelled to keep it against his will. That the Park Farm consists of 300 Acres, a size sufficient for the Capital of the generality of Tenants in this part of the Country, that its form is square & cannot be improved by any change of boundary, & that though, when in the same occupation as the Haugh Farm, the Tenant has had the advantage of Threshing a large portion of the Corn by his Water Machine yet the Horse Machine is a good one, whereas that at the new Town South Farm is a bad one, & might be laid aside by the following arrangement of the Farms, The Park farm of 300 Acres to remain in the occupation of Mr Benson, the Commissioners having the option of releasing him at a future time or not as they may see fit, I would then lay about 100 Acres of the North Farm to the Haugh, which would make a beautiful laying farm, bounded by the West & North by the Tyne, & on the South of the Turnpike Road from Hexham to Corbridge, giving easy access to all the Fields, with a good set of offices centrally situated, and an abundant supply of Water for Thrashing. This would make the Haugh

Farm about 390 Acres. I would then lay the remainder of the North Farm & the South Farm together, the supply of Water and the excellent new Machine at the North Farm being fully adequate to both & the situation central, except that I think it likely that a high rent might be obtained for one Field or perhaps two, belonging to the North Farm, but at a distance from the homestead & most suitable in point of Soil, & convenient as to situation for Garden Ground, much resembling the Land near Biggleswade & part of the Vale of Evesham. There is already a good deal of Garden Ground near Corbridge, the produce of which is sent to Newcastle, but this would have the advantage of being close by the Rail Way, both for obtaining Manure & sending off the Produce, whereas the others are on the opposite side of the River. And if it could be let to persons living in Corbridge, without the expense of erecting houses it would be an advantage. It would be advisable to ascertain what could be had for those Fields for this purpose, before deciding upon the propriety of severing them from the Farm. In this way the South Farm & the part that would be left if the North Farm, would consist of something more than 400 Acres - a part of it very good land & a part on Snokoe Hill very poor, which would go better together than separate. There are some spots consisting of old Quarries & broken ground which are of no use to the Farm, though included in the measurement of 6 or 7 Acres, which ought to be reserved & planted. There would be then left 140 to 150 Acres of poor land, much of it in Heath & stunted Wood, which formed the extreme part of the Hall Farm before it was let into the same Hands as the Hall Farm. They would be occupied with equal convenience by any one of the Dilston Tenants, & I should recommend that offers should be taken for it separately, as might suit the Capital and inclination of the parties without prescribing what particular Farm it should be connected with. It ought to be used as a rough Pasture for young stock with but little Tillage, which could be easily managed by any Tenant occupying one of the neighbouring tillage Farms. After much consideration I consider this the best arrangement for the Dilston Lands, & preferable even to that which I formerly thought of, by keeping the Park & Haugh Farms united, especially as it continues the Park Farm at a higher rent than I could anticipate for it in future. The other Farms would have abundant Water for Threshing, dispensing with the old Horse Machine at the South Farm & they would be of sufficient size & quality to deserve the attention of Tenants of skill & capital. The only thing in the way of building which would be wanted, would be a Cottage or two at the Haugh Farm which could be had at very little expense by fitting up the old Public House & Stable for the purpose. [Marginal pencil annotation: 'In all the foregoing remarks the Commissioners must be guided by the Receiver, who does not seem as yet to have made up his mind as to the whole of the arrangement of these farms. <BHL>']

**1 Sep 1834 John Grey**

Monday 1st September 1834

Heard from Mr Burnett that he would instruct Mr Bainbridge, Solicitor at Alston, to prepare the Conveyance of the Tithes of his Property in Alstonmoor. Rode to Fourstones where I inquired into the state of the Colliery & Lime Works with respect to their short Workings. They have still a good deal to make up for, though not so much under the head of Lime, as appears by their accounts, because they are in the habit of giving larger measure to the County Carts than that by which the quantity is regulated. The difference however is easily calculated. The Doors, Granary Windows & all the outside Woodwork of the Farm Buildings here were in so bad a state, never having been painted, that I found it necessary to have them repaired where needful & all painted over. I then went over the Farm of Allerwash, where the Turnip Crop is excellent & that of Corn better than usual. The Buildings here too are undergoing some repairs, as the Tenant is entering upon a Lease by which he is bound to keep & leave them so. The weather having become favorable again all Hands are occupied in the Harvest, so that Draining & all kinds of work are suspended, & we have less to look after than usual. Returned by Coastley & Westwood Farms.

**2 Sep 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 2nd

Seeing a Meeting of the Gateshead Road Trustees advertised, I wrote to the Clerk reminding him to get an order for the payment of £15, stipulated for, in giving up the old Public House, & also the sum awarded as compensation for damage done to the Tenants of the Haugh & North Farms, calling his attention too to the making a piece of branch Road which they engaged for, as at present & during the Summer, my small piece of Grassland has been laid open to trespass of all kinds. Drove to Whittle, the Tenant of which Farm is falling back in his Rent so as to cause me some apprehensions of Loss. I talked gravely of the consequences if he did not make it up, & he undertook to wait upon me at an early day. Proceeded to Throckley to see the Messrs Bones for the same reason, but they were not at home. Went over Mr Stephenson's Farm & the young Plantations to see that the Hedges had been cleaned & properly taken care of. Then to the Quarry, where I found the Work going on to a considerable extent for the supply of the Rail Way, although I had not received the Rent, as promised, in consequence of which, I gave Mr Fenwick directions, when I reached Newcastle, to demand payment forthwith, or threaten immediate prosecution in default of it. Transacted business with the Bank & instructed Mr Fenwick as to some particulars to be observed in drawing out Leases for the Saw Mill & Grounds in Dilston, upon a building Term. The Duke's Solicitor having been very particular in applying for a List

of Fee Farm Rents in the Manor of Wark, with the dates of their last payment, to see that they had not been forfeited through neglect, & finding that some of those which had been for several Years in Arrear, which I had put into Mr Fenwick's hands last winter to try to recover, had not been paid, I desired him to give notice to the parties that if not paid up this Autumn Legal proceedings must be taken against them, for besides the propriety of obtaining what is the Hospitals due, before the transferring the Property, it will I imagine, be incumbent upon it to maintain the Rental upon which the Sale was founded. This I find it difficult to do, with respect to the Farms, as all Farmers are now clamorous for abatement of Rents. I must however work it out of them as quietly as possible till we get quit of the Property, as to the Fee Farm Rents, to be collected in such small sums from persons in distant parts of the Country, it is always obtained with difficulty much in Arrear.

Wednesday 3rd September

Was engaged today to go as far as Alnwick to attend the funeral of a relation.

Thursday 4th September

Rode to Howick to Breakfast, returned to Alnwick & came back to Newcastle by Coach in the evening.

**5 Sep 1834 John Grey**

Friday 5th September

Reached Dilston by Mail at nine, found various Letters & matters to attend to in the Office. Received reports of their proceedings from Benson & Parkin, the latter had sold another Lot of Wood to the Lessees of the Saw Mill, which, now that it is fairly established, will I trust, realise the expectation I formed of it, in giving us a pretty regular market for our Fir Wood in its neighbourhood. Received an application from Major Johnson, to be allowed a certain portion of the Money paid by him to Mr Pringle on account of trespass by the Railway from Scremerston Colliery, which he conceived ought to be borne by the Lessors, according to the custom in such cases, & in accordance with Mr Hoopers promise, & not by him as Lessee. Wrote to ask him to state the particular of his claim, that I might lay them before the Board, as I was desirous of obtaining a settlement of his Arrear. His suit against Mr Thomson for price & amount of Kiln Coal, was divided in his favour at the Assizes, & he is to receive payment in full of his demand.

I forwarded to Alston Grants for Trials of certain Veins, & instructions to Mr Bainbridge to prepare draft Leases of Spencer Croft & Lowbyer Nursery, for my



inspection when I should next go there. I have received the following notices of Leases from which Tenants wish to be released.

Samuel Lewis of Hartburngrainge North Farm. Makepeace Lee of Newlands Mill & Ground. Thomas Wilkinson of Whittonstall.

Cuthbert Harrison of d[itt]o., who refuses to take a Lease upon his Agreement of last year, on the ground that the allowance for Lime is not guaranteed throughout the term, but really, because he thinks he gave too high a rent for it. It is one of those which was let by private Contract.

George Stokoe who holds a Public House together with a Blacksmiths Shop and some Land in Whittonstall. The Public House & Land ought to be let together, & the Shop along with the adjoining Farm, that the Tenant might have the power of removing an improper Blacksmith.

Some of the Whittonstall Tenants go to one three Miles off rather than employ the said George Stokoe.

Williams Lambert of Rattenraw East Farm. These people are generally industrious & respectable Tenants, but the present showery weather which retards the housing of the Crop & threatens its safety, together with the continual decline of prices, is enough to fill all farmers with alarm. Good Wheat sold in Newcastle Market on Tuesday at 4s/6d Per Bushel, which is One Shilling Per Stone.

**6 Sep 1834    John Grey**

Saturday 6th September 1834

Intended going through the Farms in Hexhamshire today but the incessant rain prevented me, as all work out of doors must be suspended, & the Men occupied in repairing the Buildings driven home. Attended to various matters in the Office, & among other Letters, wrote to Mr Ord of Whitfield, who is likely to be Chairman at the ensuing meeting of the Turnpike Road Trustees at Alston, requesting his attention to their undertaking to renew the instalments payable to the Hospital.

8 Sep 1834 John Grey

Monday 8th September

Another day of heavy & incessant rain, putting a stop to outdoor employments, protracting the Housing of the Corn, which now must sustain great injury & preventing my going over the Farms which are to be let this autumn to arrange their course of management. Every thing this year has a tendency to depress the Rents of Corn Lands very much & unluckily a great deal of the Hospitals property will in all probability have to be relet. The choice however is between reducing Rents so as to meet the change of times and allowing Arrears to accumulate, to the discouragement of the Tenants & depreciation of the Land. Had the Farms been generally in a good state of cultivation, it might have been advisable to let upon short terms, to secure the advantage of any rise of prices; but where the reverse is decidedly the case, a short Lease affords a Tenant no encouragement to apply his capital to the improvement of the Soil. Nor is there anything in the present aspect of Affairs to lead me to anticipate a permanently high price of agricultural produce. We may have seasons of occasional advance, arising from late Harvests & deficient Crops here or on the Continent, but I see no ground to reckon upon a higher Average than that of the last three years, & should a change be made in the Corn Laws, the probable effect would be to bring for a time at least, much lower Corn than at present.

I make these remarks, less with an intention of offering my own opinion, than to draw the attention of the Commissioners to the subject, that they may decide upon the length of Leases which in the new Lettings it may be best to grant. During the advancing times, the most spirited improvements took place upon Lands which were let upon Leases of 21 Years, but in present circumstances & looking to the condition of much of the Hospitals Property, I should say that 15 Years would be the most suitable term for the generality of the Farms. [Marginal pencil note: 'Terms regulated by circumstance & the Board will leave it to Mr. Grey to define the terms upon all lettings. He will recommend to the Board the terms which should be agreed upon.']

I wrote today to Mr Foster, informing him of the Boards approval of his visiting the Collieries quarterly, & making surveys & Plans of Stublick & Fourstones, sending him also two Offers for working the Coal in Hartburngrainge that I might obtain his opinion to forward it along with the Offers to the Board. Received a communication from the Lessees of Stublick Colliery containing the following information.

'After a long trial we have tapped the Water, & it is running off at a rate that keeps the Engine going 21 hours out of 24. We are most thankful that the thing has been effected without accident. The inaccuracy of Bells Plans is awful.'

There was great risk of much mischief being done to the Colliery from the load of Water that lay upon one quarter of the Works, the exact situation of which was not known, & from coming into it incautiously, or through a metal which would not resist the pressure. This is a strong instance of the necessity of having a Viewer to insist upon Plans being made, & look into their accuracy.

Not having found Mr Bones, the Tenant at Throckley when I went there lately, I desired that he would wait upon me, which he did today. He pleads hard to be allowed till Christmas to get in his Coal accounts, stating the heavy expense that has been incurred; and promises to come down with the Rent of the Farm at the Rent Day. He purchased Robsons Lease of the Farm for £515... and entered at May 1828, which sum the Hospital received in liquidation of Robsons Arrears. There is no doubt that the Farm is too dear independent of the bonus given for the Lease, besides which, the farm contains a great many old Coal Pit Heaps & waggon ways, which are of no use, & which are included in the measurement, but which he says, he expected were not at the time of making his offer. I told him that I must lay the state of his Arrear before the Board, and would accompany it with any explanation he might choose to send. The Rent of the Farm is £485... and at the last Rent Day he stood £167..7..10 in Arrears. Another half Years Rent is now due.

**9 Sep 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 9th September 1834

I heard today from Mr Johnson that the Directors of the Rail Way were desirous to adopt the line at Allerwash which would interfere with the Mill, and desiring first to know when compensation would be required for the old Buildings, by the Hospital. I Inclosed him a Copy of mine of the 4th of August, addressed to Mr Walker, another Agent, but which seems never to have been laid before the Directors, containing a Copy of Mr Bensons Valuation of those buildings, amounting to £180. Informing Mr Johnson at the same time that the Mill is under Lease to the Tenant of the Farm, who would require compensation during his Time, & that I should be ready to forward for the Boards consideration any mode which the Directors might propose, for settling present & future compensation. The Rain having ceased at 11o'clock, I set out for Hexhamshire, the Rivers in a flood, the Corn Fields in that district, cut & uncut, looking dismal enough, passed through the Farms of Wooley, Staples & Mirehouse. Went to the Woodkeeper & directed him to take off a great number of Gates leading into the Woodlands, which are of no manner of use, & supply the Tenants with them. Many of these Gates have never had occasion to be opened since they were made, & it is so much cheaper to take down a Gap in the Stone Fences or to rail up a Gateway that is only wanted once in 8 or 10 years, than to maintain Gates, that I cannot conceive why they were made at all, unless to give a job to some favoured workman. I then walked

over every Field in the Farm of Rawgreen, putting a value upon them as I went, & afterwards arranging the course of management & making such remarks as will be necessary to direct the letting of the Farm. Before i had finished this, the rain came in so heavily that I was compelled to return without proceeding to do the like at Rowleyhead as I intended.

**10 Sep 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 10th September

Received from Mr Fenwick the Draft Leases for the Saw Mill & Plots of Ground for Wood Yard & Public House, to be granted to the same party. Supplied some deficiencies & gave him the account due by Stephenson for Throckley Quarry, which he had promised, after being threatened, to pay to him. Gave permission to Mr Ritson, Mason to get Stones in Coastley Dean, for building a Wall for the Railway, he paying 1 1/2d Per Yard of Wall, for Quarry leave, & being bound to leave the Quarry and road in good order. Went to Newcastle in the evening. Conferred with Mr Fenwick respecting the above named Leases & fixed the Courts of Haydon Bridge & Wark to be held on the 15th & 17th days of October, for which the regular notices have been issued. Found Mr Burnett the Millwright & asked him if he had any objection to take the Materials laying in his yard, which belong to the Hospital, by valuation, which he declined doing upon the ground that the dimensions of those prepared for the Wheel at Langley are larger than he is likely to have a demand for, & that Water Wheels of that size are now so generally made of Iron, that he might never have an order for one of Wood, but promised to let me know, if he should meet with any occasion on which it could be disposed of. I then wrote to Murray, who is now employed in repairing some of the Hospitals Mills, desiring him to inspect the Materials, & if possible to put me upon some Plan of disposing of them with the least possible Loss.

**10 Sep 1834 John Bones to John Grey**

[Note: See Grey's journal entry of 24 Sept 1834]

To the Right Honorable and Honorable the Com. of Greenwich Hospital

The humble Petition of John Bones of Throckley North Farm Sheweth

That the Father of your Petitioner in November 1827 Purchased from your late Receivers the Lease of Matthew Robson the late Tenant of this Farm for the sum of Five Hundred and Fifteen pounds to enter upon the 12th May 1828 - the said Matthew Robson having failed upon the Farm, and the £515 was paid to the Receivers

That the Farm was advertized to contain 306 acres which it was expected was exclusive of Old Pit Heaps and Waggon ways, which was the case at the South Farm, and it is now found that the whole are included which is to a considerable number of acres and are of no use whatever to the Farm, but on the contrary a nuisance.

That from the time of the Purchase of the Lease, the price of Grain has continued to fall untill it is now so low, as from 3s/6d to 5s/ Per Bushel which circumstance and the Farm falling short of the number of Acres expected together with being at a considerable expence for Carriage of Materials for new Buildings (the Old ones having gone intirely to decay) has caused your Petitioner to fall into Arrears.

Your Petitioner therefore humbly hopes that your Honors will take his case into your serious consideration and grant him such relief in the premises as they shall deem mete and your Petitioner as in duty will ever pray.

John Bones

Throckley 10 September 1834

**11 Sep 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 11th

The protracted state of the Harvest & suspension of other occupation upon the Estates, gave me the opportunity of accepting an invitation from Lord Althorp to spend a farming day or two at his place in Notts, although I declined the former part of it which was to attend his Agricultural meeting near Northampton on account of the distance. I took the Sale of the celebrated Stock at Studley in my way, where I met many breeders and Agriculturalists, English, Irish & American, & where Cows were sold as high as 70 Guineas a head. When shall we see such Stock on the Hospitals Estates? Proceeded to Wiseton, where I received Letters under cover to his Lordship on [Saturday 13th. ie. next entry]

**13 Sep 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 13th

That from Mr Forster on the subject of the Hartburn Coal, I have the Honor to forward to the Board , along with the two proposals for working it, to which his Letter refers. I agree with him in thinking that Crile would be the best Tenant, but am of opinion that if he would give £50 certain Rent, for the work of three Men, finding his own Houses, and at the rate of £20 a Man for each above that number, the Board would do well to let him make trial of the Coal, as the Land is not valuable, in which it is situated. It will be

seen by Mr Forsters Letter, that he thinks it advisable to have Plans of Brokenheugh & Throckley Collieries, as well as of Stublick & Fourstones.

I had an application from the Agent who manages Mr Beaumonts Smelting to know if he could have a House in the neighbourhood of Langley Mills, where as sub Lessees they are now preparing to begin their operations. I informed him in reply, that we had no House in Haydon Bridge which could be at liberty till May day next, & feared that even then, we had not one sufficiently commodious. There is a good Farm House pleasantly situated at Esphill, but the Land of that Farm lays very awkwardly & inconveniently. I have sometimes thought that if the Land could be appended to the adjoining Farms, the House & a few Fields around it would be likely to let well, from its nearness to Haydon Bridge, which will increase in importance & population in consequence of the Rail way, but such an arrangement is not likely to be accomplished at present.

**15 Sep 1834 John Grey**

Monday 15th September

Left Wiseton & passing through Doncaster, full of agitation at the commencing Races, proceeded to Leeds to inform myself of the state & prospects of the Woolen Manufactures, which are closely connected with some important departments of Agriculture, & was glad to find them very good indeed. Little progress has been made in the Harvest, the last fortnight & even in Yorkshire a good deal of Barley & Beans still out in very bad condition, of those kinds of Grain, as well as Oats, the Crop throughout the Kingdom is certainly deficient. Wheat is a full average, though in many parts the quality is far from fine.

Tuesday 16th September

Travelled from Leeds to Newcastle & reached Dilston by a morning Coach on [Weds 17th. ie. next entry]

**17 Sep 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 17th

Was engaged all the day in attending to business in the Office, transactions with Mr Hunt & Mr Benson, writing Letters etc. Finding that the Cylinder in Dilston Mill which was known to be bad, but which it was determined it would work as long as it would, had entirely failed, I found it necessary to write to inform Murray of it, who had taken the dimensions that he might be prepared for such an event, & to direct him to proceed

in making a new one. Having received the Boards directions respecting the Terms on which the Hospitals Land is to be transferred for the use of the Railway, I wrote to the Secretary on the subject requesting to be informed how the Directors intended the Land which will be out of Lease at May Day, to be estimated, being willing to avoid making any propositions from myself respecting it, as the expression used in the Boards Minute, January 29th 1831, that the Trustees are to have the required Land on moderate terms leaves the matter very indefinite, & does not determine whether they are actually to purchase it, or to hold it at a moderate annual Rent.

**18 Sep 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 18th

Mr Murray luckily came here this morning & I got him to examine the state of Dilston Mill, which I expected had been very good, as it had undergone a repair not long ago. He found the frame of the Cylinder good but the Wire Sheets entirely worn out. This I expected, but to my surprize, he showed me the wooden Cogs of a large Wheel which must have been made of unseasoned Wood, as they are quite loose & working out of Gears all round, endangering the safety of the other works. That Wheel will require 90 new Cogs. The upper Stone of the Grey Mill is worn much too thin to do its Work properly, but may be useful as an under Stone at some future time, for which purpose it shall be reserved, but a new top Stone is quite necessary. I went with Murray to examine the Sluice at the North Farm, which is of the kind that has been used in the Reservoirs lately made by the Hospital, but in my opinion most cumbrous & absurdly expensive. I described the kind of Cast Iron valve which I wished to substitute as being simple & cheap, & he has engaged to send me one for the new Dam at Coastley, which will cost frame & all two Guineas, whereas these cost twenty. I examined & settled his Accounts for Work done at Woodhall, Whitley, Plankey & Allerwash Mills - and engaged him to examine the Materials in Burnett's Yard & if possible to find us a customer for them. The Wheel is above the size of any which he has orders for or he would look at them at once. The day being fine, I set out for Hexhamshire, & rode through the extensive Plantations of Gairshield & Rowleyhead, which we have been thinning of late, & the Weedings from which have been sold to Mr Beaumonts Mines. They are much the better for it, but can spare a good deal more. I took in my course the several Farm Offices that are being repaired & then walked over every Field in Rowleyhead Farm, making a valuation & arranging the Covenants for a new Lease. Reached home at nine o'clock, & made up my calculations.

**19 Sep 1834 John Grey**

Friday 19th September

Set out in the morning to have a long day among the Farms to the West of Haydon Bridge, but being met by a rain which soon wet me through & the appearance being bad, returned. The Weather cleared at noon, and being anxious to get on with an examination of the Farms that are given up, I rode to that of Newtonhall which is only five miles off, & walked over every Field with the Plan in my hand, writing down my valuation & remarks as I went & making up my calculation & notes for a new Letting, in the evening. Received from the Railway Directors a Plan of the Way from Hexham to Haydon Bridge showing its course through the Hospitals' Farms, which I desired that I might be furnished with before they began to cut the Ground, that I might have an opportunity of tracing it through the Fields & discovering whether any particular objections existed to my part of it, which might perhaps be obviated. I fancy those Gentlemen think me rather troublesome, but they cut so largely into the Hospitals Property, that I am naturally anxious to prevent any damage that can possibly be avoided.

**20 Sep 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 20th September

Set out for the Western Estates. Went through the Farms of Esphill, Langley Castle & the Deanraws to Lough Green, where the old Stables & part of the Barn having fallen through Age & decay, we are rebuilding them, & adding a small Hovel, which was much wanted. Returned to traverse the Farms of West & East Land Ends, met Mr Hunt afterwards at Haydon Bridge with the Plans of the Railway from thence to Westwood near Hexham & disposing of our Horses, followed the course intended for it, for six Miles, through Fields & Woods, noting some deviations which if practicable, it would be less injurious to the Hospitals' property to make, & marking such hedges as must be removed. & situations where others must be made, to put the Fields to be intersected, into convenient Farms. On this subject I must have a conference with the Directors, or their Agents. Returned home to make up my calculations of the Land Ends Farms, pretty well done up, after twelve hours of constant riding & walking.

I received today a Letter which I herewith transmit to the Board from Peacock, Errington & Hutchinson, whose resignation of their Leases has been refused on account of their having held them only from May 1833. They state in that Letter what they have severally stated to myself, that Mr Hooper said they should not be bound to hold their Farms, if they found them too dear. I have no evidence that Mr Hooper did make them such a promise, but readily believe it, as Mr Hunt readily heard him use the like



expressions, telling the Tenants that the Commissioners would never confine anyone who wished to quit his Farm. I feel confident that Mr Hooper would be actuated in the use of such Language by a spirit of justice & of kindness. But unfortunately, in total ignorance of the consequences that would inevitably result from such a practice. It is difficult enough under the pressure of the times to keep some Tenants from taking undue advantage of their Land, under any circumstances, but if allowed to entertain the Idea that they were at all times at liberty to quit, everything would be sacrificed to present benefit, & nothing done with a view to the future. Every adventurer might take a Farm for a year or two by way of experiment or for a temporary residence for his family & turn about, as soon as he had plundered it of anything good, or fancied that something better was within his reach. I certainly would never consent to undertake the management of a Property upon such terms, & with such a fugitive & changing tenantry as would then be produced. The three Petitioners in the present instance are respectable Men, & if they were induced to sign their Agreements by such a promise, which however made it of very little consequence whether they signed Agreements at all. It is for the Commissioners to decide whether they will be bound by it or not. If released I doubt not that several others will make the like claim, & having so many Farms to let this year, perhaps I may be allowed to suggest the reasonableness of their continuing at least to see what another year will produce, with an understanding that then, if times do not improve, their case will be considered, and in the interval, I must look sharply to their management. Received an application from the Tenant of Whittle to be released from his Farm which I herewith send.

[marginal pencil note regarding Grey's suggestion of holding them to their leases for at least another year: 'The Board having in other instances refused to accept the resignation of leases granted in 1833 cannot accede to their request and will not <..... to fix a period when it may be <..... to inter....> any future applications of the parties']

**22 Sep 1834 John Grey**

Monday 22nd September 1834

Rode to Whittonstall and proceeded to examine & value the Farms of Greymare Hill, High Field & Newlands West Farm, which I just accomplished before dark. Slept in that neighbourhood & on

Tuesday 23rd

Sending my horse forward, began at seven o' clock, and going through each Field, examined the Mill Farm, Newlands Haugh & Town Farms. Whittonstall Hall Farm & a part of Lawsons Farm, when the evening coming on, so that I could not see to finish that Farm, & being tolerably weary with eleven hours of constant walking, I returned

home at eight o' clock. That is a most unsatisfactory Estate, extending over a large surface of little value, the expense of cultivation swallowing up the produce & leaving little for Rent. Found matter from Alston & several Letters to answer in the evening.

**24 Sep 1834 John Grey**

[Note: see also Bones' petition of 10 Sep 1834]

Wednesday 24th

Occupied in making up the calculations of the last two days valuations. Gave instructions to Mr Weatherly, the late Bailiff on the northern Estates, but now established as a Surveyor at Hexham, to go over the Fields in Dilston Haugh that have been intersected & altered by the Railway & Turnpike, to Survey & lay them down upon the Plan, according to their present contents. It is inconvenient not to know the quantities, in keeping the Tillage Book, but a wrought statement in letting suitable Land like that, might lead to future disagreement and contention, I think it better therefore, to have it ascertained before any mistakes are made. Directed Mr Hunt to put up a few written Notices, in Corbridge, that any person wishing to occupy some Acres of Land near to the Bridge, as Garden Ground might apply to him for information respecting it, thinking that we should be such means be able to know whether it would be worthwhile, or not, to sever such Land from the Farm. Examined Mr Bones' Petition herewith returned, I think his case deserving of relief. He unfortunately gave a bonus for the Lease of a Farm which has proved too dear; which was in fact giving away part of his Capital for the privilege of wasting the remainder. As he expected that the Farm contained 306 Acres, exclusive of Pit heaps, of which I should think there are upwards of 20 Acres, it would seem not unreasonable that he should be allowed for them at the average rate per acre over the Farm for the past, & that they be deducted from it in future. And should those Pit heaps which have been planted on the adjoining Farm, be found to succeed in producing Trees, it would be applying these to the best purpose to plant them too, of this the next winter will give proof. Directed Mr Hunt on various subjects, & make the necessary arrangements for my absence in the North. Received £48.9.3 Interest from the Alston Road Trust, & paid £230 as an instalment for the new House.

[rent calculation entered opposite in pencil:]

Rent £485 taken May 1828

306 If 306 acres gives	£485	what will 286 acres give
286	£453 6 7 1/4	
	31 13 4 3/4	
6 yrs to May 1834	190 0 4 1/2	

Arrears        £167 10 last rent day  
                  242 10 another half year due

**25 Sep 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 25th September 1834

Left Dilston at 4 in the morning - drove to Newcastle in time to set out by a morning Coach which took me to Milfield Hill.

Friday 26th

Passed the day with the part of my family resident at Milfield Hill. Was waited upon by Mr Davison, the Tenant of Outchester, with an application to the Commiss.rs to be released from his engagement, for though anxious to have struggled on to the end of his Term, he found it impossible to do so, at the present price of Corn. I told him that the Board had come to the resolution not to receive any more such applications after the 20th Instant which was now past. He assured me that his mind had been made up long before, on the subject, & that he, not knowing of such a regulation, had only delayed sending his application in hopes of seeing me in this part of the Country. I therefore took his Letter & forwarded it to Mr Lethbridge.

**27 Sep 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 27th

Attended the great Sheep Fair of St Ninians, where there was a large show of Stock, which though the sale was not brisk, was mostly disposed of to Dealers from Yorkshire, at fair prices. Mr Thomson the late Tenant of Chesterhill, gave me an order upon Mr Nairn for £100, the balance unpaid, of this last half years Rent, and promised to meet me at Belford on Tuesday the 21st October, on which day, I have fixed to receive the Rents of the Northern Estates, being a few days after the Fair at Wooler, where several of the Tenants may have Stock to sell. At that time, I hope to have a final settlement with him, & previously to which, I shall be glad to have the Boards directions as to the allowance which he petitioned for, of £35 & odds, which he had expended in new Plates & work for the Boiler of his Steam Machine shortly before quitting the Farm. I examined the Boiler when at Chesterhill & saw that it was newly & substantially repaired. And as it is now to be purchased at a valuation by the new Tenant, it does seem reasonable that some allowance should be made to Mr Thomson, for the new work, of which by quitting the Farm, he has derived little benefit, especially as he held the Farm at a high rent. Probably it might be a fair thing to allow him £25 leaving him to pay the remainder in return for the wear & tear he has had of

the Boiler. I appointed to examine Mr Thomsons Farm at Scremerston on Monday & Mr Hogarths on tuesday next, having met those Gentlemen, & indeed all the Northern Tenants, save Pringle, at the Fair. Mr Nairn asked permission to burn about 100 Loads of Lime on his own account at the Spindleston Kiln. I told him that as the Kiln was reserved for the use of the Estates & not for public Sale, I could only comply with his request as a matter of favor to him, as a Tenant and on condition of his paying a rental of 6d Per Load for the Stone & using the Kiln at a time when it should not be wanted by any Tenant for the use of his Farm. To this he consented as it would save him going to a greater distance for it. In the evening I prepared a list of Fields in the Scremerston Farms with their contents to be ready for an early start on monday.

**29 Sep 1834 John Grey**

Monday 29th September

Breakfasted at 6 o'clock and rode 15 miles to Scremerston, taking my son with me, to inspect the Farms & fill up the Tillage Book for that Estate. Was engaged till 5 in the evening in examining & valuing the very extensive Farm occupied by Mr Thomson, in which I found a greater quantity of inferior Land, than I had anticipated.

Tuesday 30th

Set out again at 6 o'clock & went over Mr Hogarths Farm, looked at the only Quarry from which it seems a Stone can be found sufficiently durable for the use of the Colliery, in which a good deal of Arching is wanted underground for the Coal drift, but to continue to work this Quarry, it will be necessary to alter a part of the Lane leading along the edge of it to the Turnpike Road, & to lay the Road on the other side, a sketch of which, with an estimate of the cost, I have desired Major Johnson's Clerk to make and forward to me. It will be obtained without any loss to the Tenant, as he will get more land included in his Field from the broken ground on the other side, than will be taken off. Rode to Berwick & took an evening Coach to Edinburgh.

**1 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 1st October 1834

Set out for Aberdeen by Mail & arrived on Thursday morning. Attended a numerous Meeting of the Directors & Committee of the Highland Society, the Duke of Buccleugh in the Chair, where many arrangements were entered into & much discussion took place, on subjects connected with the objects of that important Society, which has been

so useful, in introducing improvements in the breeds of Stock, Agricultural implements & various kinds of produce, throughout Scotland.

**3 Oct 1834    John Grey**

Thursday [sic] 3rd October

Was engaged most of the day in examining the Stock exhibited for premiums, which though not generally of first rate quality, was so numerous as to make the Duty of the Judges anything but a sinecure. The interest excited by this Meeting is extraordinary. It was attended by all the Nobility of that and the neighbouring Counties, and the Town exhibited a gathering of many thousands of various descriptions of people from lowland Strath and Highland glen. A company of 900 dined in the County Hall, but the effect was injured by their being divided into three Parties, presided over by the Dukes of Gordon & Buccleugh and the Marquis of Tweeddale.

**4 Oct 1834    John Grey**

Saturday 4th October 1834

After giving my opinion to the Directors upon certain matters subjected to our consideration for the future regulation of the Society, I set out on my return to Edinburgh, wishing to embrace the opportunity of visiting my family connections & Friends there whom I had not seen for the last two years.

**8 Oct 1834    John Grey**

Wednesday 8th October

Left Edinburgh early in the morning by a Coach which runs by way of Melrose & Jedburgh, & brought me in the evening to Cambo, where I slept, which is within a short distance of Hartburngrainge where I had appointed in the following day to examine the three Farms there which are given up, & also to meet Crele about his proposal for the Colliery, having my Gig sent over to meet me with the Plans of the Farms etc.

**9 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 9th

Set out early to Hartburngrainge, & was employed in walking over & valuing the Farms from 7 in the morning till 4 in the afternoon. After which, I drove to Dilston, 20 miles. This is an unsatisfactory Property & will not easily find good Tenants in these times, on which account it would be advisable to treat with the present ones, should they be inclined to do so on fair terms. I met Crile at Hartburn by appointment and found him only inclined to give £40 a year certain rent for the Colliery, but on telling him that the Commissioners had fixed on £60 & that I have other applicants, he consented to give that, provided that he could have the use of some Cottages, & a little refuse Wood to aid in sinking the Shaft. Upon examination I think we could spare him the old Woodkeepers house without encroaching upon the Farmers, or building new ones,, which would hold two families. I referred Crile to Mr Foster, for fixing the Terms of an Agreement, subject to the approbation of the Board, as he is more conversant with such matters than myself. And I shall instruct Mr Foster on all the points I think needful for guarding the Hospitals interests, before Crile waits upon him.

**10 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Friday 10th October

After attending to various transactions in the Office, & writing several Letters, I rode to Whittle & made a valuation of the Farm. There are upon this farm a few Acres, perhaps 5 or 6 in all, of Land which is scarcely of any value to the occupier, having been the workings of Quarries in former times, or banks too steep & stoney to be cultivated. In Hartburngrainge there is still more of no use at all, which were the Estates mine, I would plant at once, especially where it can be done at little cost for fences. Should the Board be inclined to plant such parcels of waste Land, I should be glad to have their authority for reserving the right of appropriating them at any time during the Leases, without any demand being made for them by the Tenants.

I have received Messrs Parker & Crawhalls award of the average price of Lead for the bygone quarter, ending the 30th Ultimo, which £17.12.6 & am informed by the Clerk of Deliveries that he has weighed over 3740 Bings & 6 Cwts of Ore, from which he has received in Duty for the Hospital 597 Bings 6 13/42 Cwts.

I received today from Major Johnson a Sketch & estimate for the alteration of the Road by the side of the Quarry, which I requested his Clerk to make for me. I see no other way than this of obtaining the Stone that is wanted, except by leaving the present road & breaking up a Quarry in the field to the South of it, which would incur a greater expense, by the waste of land; but it may perhaps be got done for less than £33, as

estimated. He has sent me likewise as I desired a statement of what he considers his claims against the Hospital for certain sums awarded to Pringle, which he has paid, that I might obtain the Boards direction respecting them. The Hospital having always taken upon itself the expense of the old Water Level, it seems right that they should also pay the damage done in repairing it, which amounts in this instance to £15.6.6 and an annual payment of 6s/6d. The sum of £123.12.0 for severance of Fields & inconvenience sustained in consequence, with an annual payment of £21.5.0. I understand him to claim on the ground that by the custom in Colliery districts. Such damage is borne by the Lessors & that on entering into a Bond for a settlement for all matters in dispute, he had Mr Hoopers promise that he should not be called upon to pay a Shilling more than the custom of the Tyne & the Wear would require him to pay. This sentiment, I certainly heard Mr Hooper repeat, when Johnson objected to execute the Bond, in the manner it was prepared, at Berwick, but whether the custom which prevails in the Coal country would exempt him from such payment, or not, I am not able to say. I should be glad however that the matter were settled & set at rest, that our account with Johnson might be closed.

**11 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 11th October 1834

Wrote to Mr Forster respecting the Agreement with Crile for the Hartburngrainge Coal & informed the Bankers of the Rent day at Belford. Finding that there is a considerable demand for fir Wood at present for the Rail way, I have set Mr Parkin to mark off and value two Lots in Dipton Plantation, which being at the full growth, ought now to be cut down in regular sections, and followed up with replanting, that which was done so last year having succeeded admirably. Rode to Whittonstall , & was engaged till evening in valuing the Farms which had been left undone the last time I was there. Received the Boards Minutes of the 25th September, & in answer to the question whether I consider it necessary to incur the expense of making Plans of Brokenheugh & Throckley Collieries, as recommended by Mr Forster, I confess it did appear to me in the present state of the Workings, to be hardly necessary. But Mr Forster's opinion on such a subject is much more to be depended on than mine, & that is that the inconvenience & danger of being without any accurate information as to the position of a Colliery & the state of the Workings & Water drifts, in case of their being ever reverted to at a future time are much greater than to counterbalance the trifling expense of measuring & laying down a Plan of the last Workings.

**13 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Monday 13th October 1834

Having examined my Cash Account & sundry papers to be forwarded to the Board, I rode to Hexham to pay my balance in hand to the Bank Agent, & thence to Highwood to examine & value that Farm. Having finished it & the day being fine, I hastened forward to Fourstones, and got over it also, just as night came on, reaching home at 8 o'clock, to make up my calculations. Fourstones East Farm consists of very good Land, & is favorably situated for Roads & Lime, but though in the occupation of a man of Property, I cannot report very favorably of its cultivation.

**14 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 14th October

Had a visit of Mr Johnson, an Agent of the Railway Co. & went over with him the Plans of the way through the Hospitals Property from Hexham to Haydon Bridge, pointing out certain alterations which it would be a saving of the Hospitals Lands & for the convenience of the Farms, if they could adopt, also stipulating for the removal of certain Fences & roads, the present lines of which would be rendered inconvenient, by the intervention of the Railway. To the latter he readily agreed, & undertook also, that the former suggestions should be brought under the consideration of the Directors, who had every wish to meet my views, & who would give me an opportunity of attending their general Meeting to explain & enforce them. I then went to the Low Grounds of Dilston, where Mr Weatherly is engaged in surveying the Fields that have been intersected by the new Road, to give him instructions - examined our banks & wears which I had not seen since a heavy Flood that took place in my absence & which I found all safe. Returned to meet Mr Fenwick from Newcastle, whom I had engaged to come here on his way to hold the Courts at Haydon Bridge & Wark, that the Tenants might meet him to sign the Leases which they entered to at May day last. The stamped copies he will transmit to the Hospital. While I retain one in the office here on plain paper, & give another to each Tenant for his guidance. Although the Tenants are much satisfied at getting so cheaply off for their Leases, some of them hesitated to sign them, owing to the Great Depression of markets.



**15 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 15th October

Rode to Haydon. Ridge to breakfast & set out immediately to value the Farms of East & West Millhills, leaving Mr Dickinson to collect the small Fee Farm Rents, which it always troublesome to get in, from the insignificance of each payment. Returned to get some Leases executed by Tenants in that neighbourhood, all of which were done except that for East Elrington by Mr Lambert, who has taken fright at the state of Markets & fears the Farm cannot maintain the Rent. I told him it would be at the option of the Commissioners to oblige him to execute it or to take the Farm off his hands. At all events he must pay for the Stamp made use of. This he agreed to, & we settled it that the Board must decide whether he is to be bound to his bargain, or they will release him & advertize the Farm [marginal pencil note: 'agreed to']. There is one reason why he may be considered entitled to lenity in this case, which is, that he took the Farm, not on his own account, but for a brother who occupied it & had been both indiscreet & unfortunate so that he incurs the double risk of falling Markets & a brothers misconduct. The various Trials & presentments at the Court having been disposed of by 4o' clock, I dined with Mr Fenwick & the Jury, & returned to Dilston at night, leaving Mr Dickinson to accompany him to Wark, & to do his best to obtain the arrears of Fee Farm Rents there, & clear off scores in that quarter, as this will likely be the last Court to be held there by the Commissioners of Greenwich Hospital. I received on my return an application from Mr Pattinson, formerly Assay Master for the Hospital, for a payment of two Guineas, of which his accompanying Letter will afford the explanation which I thought it necessary to have in writing.

**16 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 16th October

Instructed Mr Hunt to examine some fences & bye roads upon the Hospitals Farms, which will be interfered with by the Rail-way, & to investigate other matters, that I might be prepared for a Meeting of the Directors. Directed the workmen as to some fences & roads in the Dilston Estate, & prepared all things that would be required for the rent day at Belford & my visit to the Estates in that quarter. In the afternoon drove 40 miles northward.

**17 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Friday 17th October

Left Whittingham at 6o'clock & reached Wooler before the conclusion of the Fair, at which all the Sheep were cleared off early at good prices. Had a conference with Mr Borthwick, the new Tenant of Chesterhill, upon the division of an open grass field, a part of which is rocky & steep, but the lower part of which I advised should be fenced off & taken into tillage. While he admits the propriety of the management, he scruples to engage in any avoidable outlay, these times are so discouraging to every thing connected with the growing of Corn. The matter was deferred till we should meet at the spot on Wednesday morning.

An Agent from Scremerston Colliery came to inform me of the inconvenience they were put to for want of Stones for their underground arching, & wishing to know if the Quarry was to be wrought & the road changed in the way we had planned. I had as yet no answer, but told him that I might have one from the Board on the subject, to communicate to him on the ensuing Rent day. Proceeded to Millfield Hill in the evening.

**18 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 18th

Was occupied most of the day at Coupland Castle, in arranging with my Co Trustees, matters relating to the property of the late Mr Cully. Received a communication from Greenwich & wrote to inform Mr Scott that his resignation of Thornbrough Town Farm would not be accepted unaccompanied by that of Highbarns also, for the reasons stated by the Board.

**20 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Monday 20th October

Spent the day at Millfield Hill with the members of my family there. Heard from Mr Forster informing me that he had appointed a meeting with Crile & Partners to propose to them the terms for letting the Coal at Hartburngrainge, a copy of which he Inclosed for my inspection, which I returned with remarks & recommendations on certain points. Wrote to Mr Lethbridge recommending that the necessary steps for letting the farms be taken with as little delay as possible, as all farmers who are in want of situations, are getting themselves suited, and the landlords who have farms to let are

selecting tenants rather with a view to their respectability than to their offering the highest rents.

**21 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 21st

Left Millfield Hill in the morning, accompanied by my eldest Son, to assist me in receiving the Rents at Belford & in the valuation of Outchester on the following day, as well as to fill up the Tillage Book of the Northern Estates, which he takes charge of that I might convey it to Mr Hunt to transcribe into the general Tillage account in the Office. All the Farm Tenants came forward & made quite as good payments as I could look for. I got all matters settled with Mr Thomson, late Tenant of Chesterhill, & an agreement made between him & Mr Borthwick, the successor in the Farm, for the payment of the Grass seeds sown last year, from one to the other, without my intervention. Mr Fenwick having as I desired sent the new Leases of Chesterhill & Glororum to meet me at Belford, I got them executed, receiving payment for the Stamps & Stationry. Both parties were rather reluctant to execute them, fearing that they would not be able to hold their Farms at the Rents. Major Johnson did not make his appearance, but wrote to say that he would wait upon me to settle our account, in the course of a week or two, when he hoped I should have the Boards instructions as to the allowance he considered himself entitled to, upon the Award of Jobson, Scott & Lowry. I wrote to him in reply, informing him that I should be in Newcastle on my way home & begging him to give me a meeting there on Saturday morning as I would not allow his Rent & Arrears to lay over.

**22 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 22nd

Rode first to Glororum, to examine the Ground & decide upon the necessity of making two new hedges, for the purpose of laying the Land more equally & more conveniently, for being managed in the five course rotation instead of the four, which has been too long pursued. Having fixed this part and directed my Son to send some workmen to examine the Ground & give him in estimates of the Work, to be transmitted to me, which he has also undertaken to do respecting the piece of new road at the Scremerston Quarry, according to the directions I gave him, I proceeded through Spindleston, looking over that Farm & examining the Lime Kiln which has been lately repaired & new lined with Brick, at the expense of £18.17.6 & of which I heard that it did not work well. I cannot however think that the fault can be in the improvement but rather in the original construction, & also in the peculiar situation which is ill chosen,

being immediately under a high rock, which obstructs the Draft of the Kiln, when the wind blows over it. When the wind is from the West or South, it does very well.

Mrs Thomson has expended nine pds in the repair & lining a Kiln upon Glororum, for the use of the Farm, which she begged to have allowed, upon condition of her maintaining it during her future occupation of the Farm. I told her that I had no authority to do so, but would refer it to the Board, thinking it likely that they might do so, upon her giving an undertaking to keep & deliver up the Kiln in good order. [marginal pencil note: 'agreed'] Went then to Spindleston and Waren Mills, to examine their condition & the manner in which the Work was executed, for which the large alteration had been made on the previous day. These are the only concerns of the kind on the Hospitals Estates, which can be said to be managed in a full satisfactory manner. But as the old Tenant of Spindleston Farm is nearly worn out, I should much recommend at a new letting to Tenants of such Capital & activity as the Nairns, to take the Farm of Spindleston along with the Mills. It is not too large, is close by, & would be convenient in many respects, especially for the keep of Horses. I then went to Chesterhill to assist Mr Borthwick in contriving the best manner of laying out his future rotation of management, so as to leave a portion of the Turnip land in each years Fallow quarter, & to get the Farm altered from the four to the five course husbandry. This farm, as well as Outchester, sustains great damage by being carted over in wet weather, & would be much the better of some short branches of road being made through the Fields nearest to the Offices, which communicate with those beyond them. At Outchester this cannot be done, till a new letting takes place, but at Chesterhill, seeing the necessity of it, & considering the Farm high rented, I took upon me to undertake to do the most necessary part immediately, as the Season is dry, Mr Borthwick doing all the leading at his own cost. I pointed out the mode of doing it, & my Son, as well as Mr Borthwick is to inspect the work. I occupied the remainder of the day in going over Outchester.

**23 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 23d

Finished the valuation of Outchester. Gave my Son particular directions as to Fences, draining & roads which he is to look after, on these Estates & at Scremerston. We then parted, he to return to Milfield Hill & I drove to Howick, in time to have two or three hours farming with Lord Grey before dinner.

Friday 24th October 1834

Proceeded to Newcastle, 40 miles. Delivered the Leases I had got executed to Mr Fenwick and conferred on other matters.

**25 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 25th October

Found that Major Johnson had been called to Scremerston the day before, & could not meet me till the middle of the following week. Saw Mr Forster on the subject of letting Hartburngrainge Coal & the plans of the other Collieries, which he thinks ought to be made up to the present time. He expected to have a meeting with Crile the result of which he would immediately communicate to me. Returned to Dilston & examined all matters that had occurred in my absence. I received the Boards Minutes of the 16th October & the Secretary's Letter of the 23d accompanied by a list of the Farms from which the Tenants beg to be released requiring me to report which I would recommend to be let by public Tender & which by private bargain, & of the latter, to say whether the parties will accept new Leases upon the Terms & at the Rent fixed upon by me. To the latter question I can as yet give no answer, never having considered myself authorized by the Board to communicate my valuation to the Tenants, or to come to any terms with them respecting new Leases. But as the Season is passing away & it becomes desirable on every account to expedite the lettings as much as possible, I shall use my best endeavours to obtain interviews with the respective Tenants to whom I think offers of their Farms should be made, that I may compare their proposals with my valuation & communicate both to the Board that no time may be lost in deciding whether they should be accepted, or the Farms submitted to public competition.

With this view, I have written this evening to the Tenants of Scremerston, Outchester, Hartburngrainge, Newtonhall & Whittle, saying that to suit their convenience, I would meet them at Newcastle on Wednesday, where there is a Fair which several of them may have to attend. The others I shall also see as early as possible. And of those Farms which must of necessity go to the public, the Board will perhaps think it advisable that they should be advertized at once, adding to the advertizement afterwards, such as may not be taken by the present occupiers. The Tenant of Aydonshields has refused to execute a Lease & has relinquished his Agreement. Fewsters Farm of Newlands Haugh is not included in the List, because he has not sent in a resignation this year, considering that the Board had virtually released him by confirming Mr Hoopers promise, that he should pay for this year, the rent agreed for in the next, I shall however require him to send in a written resignation. It will be remembered that this Farm is directed by the Board to be united to Newlands Town Farm, except a small part that is to be laid to the Mill. Fewster is the only one of the present Tenants, that is at all likely to occupy it, & even he may be deficient in Capital, but should it be found that he cannot eventually carry it on still the object will have been attained of uniting the Farms and saving the Buildings.

**27 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Monday 27th October 1834

Being anxious to expedite the letting of the Farms as much as possible, I dispatched my servant this morning on Horseback to give notice to the Tenants in Newlands & other parts, that I should be at Hexham tomorrow, at the Turks Head in Newcastle on Wednesday & at the office on Thursday to receive their Offers to be transmitted to the Board, & explain to them the covenants & management which I had to propose. I then set out & the day being fine, got over the farms of Longhope, Peelwell & Tedcastle, which I had been prevented from valuing on a former occasion by rain. Reached home at nine at night having ridden upwards of 30 miles, & walked six hours.

**28 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 28th

Mr Scott came into the Office & gave in a resignation of both Thornborough Town Farm & Highbarns Farm, upon which I requested him, if he wished to continue to occupy them to give me an offer for the Town Farm in the course of this week, that it might be transmitted with the others to the Board. He is a man of good capital, & upon the whole a good farmer, tho' I have been dissatisfied with the management of his fences, which I have not failed to point out to him. An [sic] if he offers a fair Rent, I do not know that we are likely to get a better Tenant. After confirming with Parkin & Benson upon matters in their respective departments, I rode to Hexham, took a room in the Inn where several of the Tenants met me, as appointed, to talk over the Covenants & future management of their Farms, & gave me offers for new Leases, which will be severally reported upon. Went in the evening by Coach to Newcastle.

**29 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 29th October

Rode to the Hill to see the great collection of Cattle at the Fair for which the demand was less & the sales slower than hitherto during the season. Transacted business at the Bank. Received £200 from Major Johnson who seems confident that the Board must in justice bear the Lessors share of the Sum awarded to Pringle, in the matter of the Sea Drift etc, as stated in his application, upon the decision of which, he will settle the demand against him. Received also £51.11.3 from the County Treasurer, for Wood used at Haydon Bridge. I was glad to find at Newcastle that there is a good demand for Lead at £18 Per Fodr., I had then interviews with several of the Tenants in

succession from Scremerston, Outchester, Hartburngrainge etc & which lasted till a late hour.

**30 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 30th October

Rose at six & came to Dilston by Mail. Having attended to Letters & Office business, I set out to make a valuation of Thornbrough Town Farm & High Barns now relinquished by Mr Scott. In the evening had interviews with several tenants from Newlands & Whittonstall etc. I required Fewster to give me a written resignation of the Lease of the Haugh Farm, which was virtually relinquished by him & accepted by the Commissioners last year, and desired him to make an offer for that Farm together with the Town Farm, which is to be united to it with the exception of 14 Acres to be laid to the Mill, & 26 to Whittonstall Hall Farm, by way of obtaining a better boundary between them.

**31 Oct 1834 John Grey**

Friday 31st October

Robert Hunter, Tenant of Newlands Town Farm which is hereafter to be annexed to the Haugh Farm, came to state that he had lost much of his capital in occupying that Farm, & incurred considerable expense (between £60 & 70£, in leading to buildings which he is now to leave, & wishing for some compensation. I could of course promise none, but knowing his statement to be true, said I would forward any application he might address to the Board, on the subject. Had interviews with the Tenants of Whittle & Fourstones respecting their Farms. Rode through the Woods on Dipton Fell to see the Lots Mr Parkin had been setting out for sale. He is engaged in marking & measuring others in the Whittonstall Plantations. I think too that we ought to set out a Lot in the Banks of the Allen at Harsondale, which is well situated for the Mining district, as the stimulus produced by the advance in Lead, is likely to create a corresponding demand for Wood. We ought to try to sell another Lot this year at Hartburngrainge where there is a great deal of old Beech & Wood of little value, but can never make any improvement. It is possible that [closing section of journal entry and any entry made for Sat 1st Nov not found in the manuscript]

**31 Oct 1834 Robert Hunter to John Grey**

[Note: no date, but here assigned the date of the corresponding entry in journal]

The Memorial of Robert Hunter of Newlands Town Farm Humbly shows

That your Memorialist entered to this Farm at May 1830 at the Rent of £180 per Annum, and several of the Buildings being in very bad condition, he was under the necessity of being at the expense of carriage of Materials for Building a Barn, Stable Fold Walls etc which together with the Tolls on Slates and <Roads from> Newcastle came to near Seventy Pounds.

That the continual depression in the price of Grain made it impossible for your memorialist to continue to pay the Rent originally taken at and the Rent as was last year reduced to £136 but it was only taken for one year it being in the contemplation of your Receiver Mr Grey to lay this Farm to that of Newlands Haugh to save expense of Buildings at that Farm, which will render it out of your Memorialists purse to occupy both, having lost a considerable Sum on his present Farm.

That under the present circumstances, if your Memorialist is obliged to quit the Farm at May next he humbly hopes your honorable Board will take his case into your most serious consideration and grant him such relief for past losses and Expense of carriage of Materials as your Honors shall deem Meet and your Memorialist as in duty bound will ever pray etc.

Robert Hunter

[annotated in pencil opposite:]

It appears to the Board that the reduction of the Rent from £180 to £136 was granting a relief to Hunter but if Mr Grey is aware of any circumstances in this case which he thinks may be entitled to further consideration the Board will be glad to be made acquainted with them

**1 Nov 1834 John Grey**

[Note: Filed in the office copy volume after the journal entry for 15 November]

Proposed arrangements of the Dilston Farms - to accompany a place for the consideration of the Commissioners.

Haugh Farm - Pink - containing 336 acres

This would make an excellent, compact & most desirable farm, with a powerful threshing machine driven by water, & a turnpike road running along the side from one extremity to the other, passing by the offices in the centre of the farm.



Newtown Farm - Blue - containing 391 acres

The high part of this farm is necessarily broken into by the Snokoe Woods, but the offices in this arrangement are more central than at present. The whole would have the benefit of a threshing machine by water, whereas at present there is a horse power at the south farm, the good land in the low part at the south farm is most conveniently intersected by public roads for conveying the produce & manure to & from the offices, & the high lands, which is of an inferior description, is of more value, connected with the good land below, than if occupied above.

The Park Farm - Nursery & Mill Lands, now under Lease, are left uncolored.

The field called Cow <South> would have been a desirable appendage to the Receivers House, to have kept it in grass, being flush under the windows, instead of being in tillage, & the Miller might have been equally well accommodated by going into the Letchside close <Back> as the Haugh Farm was not at liberty when the Mill was last let, & there seemed to be an objection to accommodate the Receiver's residence by any addition of land, I did not propose it.

The Receiver's Ground - viz - Hall Banks, Dilston Green & <Hog...> Close, all also left uncolored.

The piece of new road, which, I obtained the Boards permission to make, being much shorter & more level than the old, is painted green, & the old roads to be taken up, are scored across with pink. This ground is all in grass, a part of it is very steep on the banks of the river, & much shaded by old ash & chestnut trees, which add much to the beauty of the place, but are very injurious to it as pasture ground. To this I should like to add the four fields, left also uncolored until it shall be decided how they are to be occupied viz <Round> Heads which is meadow & should not be ploughed. Between Towns & East & West Bulls Closes, which are now in tillage & in wretched order, leaving <preu...> a part of old Teasdale's farm. Those I should propose to keep in a course of tillage to obtain turnips & litter for my cows & horses in winter or if thought too much, a part of East Bulls close might be annexed to the adjoining farm Head, dotted with pencil. The northern boundary of the field called Dilston Green is a ragged wall that had been built without lime, & standing along the ridge of the hill, obstructs the view into the vale, besides being a bad place & an ugly object. I should therefore propose to be allowed to remove it a short way down the hill, to the situation where the field line is now drawn, which would much improve the appearance of the place by keeping the fence out of sight & laying open the country below. This would take an acre or perhaps a fraction more, from the Haugh farm & lay it to my grass land, which of course I should willingly pay the rent of. Leaving it to the Board to fix the rent that I ought to pay for that & the other fields, should I be allowed to occupy those, by valuation of neutral persons, the average of the Newtown farm, to which it joins, or in any way they may think proper.

Hall's Nook - Orange - is let to Mr Birch along with the <houses> I now occupy.

Hall farm - Yellow - containing 146 acres.

This is generally very poor land, especially the three fields called the Fell closes and allotment, which are covered with heath & grass of base quality & are not worth cultivating. This land with a barn, fold yard & as at the Hall farm, might be occupied with equal advantage, as an off farm, for young stock, by the tenant of any of the adjoining farms, who might have capital & inclination to take it. I should therefore advise that it be advertised separately & left open to all.

Bridge Haugh & Beds Flat - Lilac - containing <28 or 25>.3.26

I have before stated my objection that from the quality of the soil, & their contiguity to Corbridge Railway, these fields would bring a greater rent, to be occupied as garden ground than as attached to a farm, which objection is confirmed by the offer of Thos. Harle, a substantial Man, who wants no outlay in building, & whose offer would have been still higher if I would have undertaken to indemnify him against loss by floods, but which I consider it much better to avoid.

Long Dales & Doepath - Green containing 30.3.30

This land I consider to be of greater value, as appended to the small farm of Corbridge at the other end of the Bridge, than to any of the Dilston farms. a part of that farm having been sold off to Sir <B> Blakett, left the remainder too small to give occupation to the horses which it is notwithstanding necessary to keep. The Barn - machine & offices are all calculated for more land than belongs to it, or each than it would have after the addition of these two fields, although to add more at present might exceed the capability of the present tenant, who is however, a good manager. Should this arrangement not be approved of there will be no difficulty in <letting> them to the New Town farm.

Plots let on building Lease - Dark yellow - containing 2.0.4

Railway - yellow. New turnpike from Dilston Bridge to Corbridge.

To accompany the list of farms now to let

Newlands Haugh farm, as now arranged

Valued at £255 a year. Fewster offers £247. This is not an unfair offer, considering that will have to lead to some new Buildings. But would likely give £250 or 255 by treaty .

Dilston Farms - no offers.

Thornbrough Town Farm. Valued at 781. High Barns rent 275 = £1056. Scott consents to give £1060 which I consider a full rent, this a good farm, but burthened with every kind of Tythe & heavily rated to the Poor.

Newton Hall - The Tenant offers only £230 which is much too low.

Whittle - valued at £290. Deduct Tythes 33£ <... to p... £2> leaves 255 which Spraggon consents to give.

Newlands Mill & Farm. Makepeace Lee offers £128. The Receivers valuation was £130 which he thinks would be a high rent, but he would likely give it.

West Farm - valued at £212. <Soplich> offers 200£ probably give 210 or 212 by treaty.

Lawsons Farm - Valued at £177.18.0. Wilkinson's offer 160£ but now consents to give £180, the Smith's shop & cottage being included.

Whittonstall Hill farm - valued at £232. Hunter offered £220 but returned two days after & offered £230. He will no doubt give my valuations £232.

Sproats farm - Harrison took it last year, but refused to sign a Lease finding that he had taken it too high.

High Field - valued at £274. Hunter offered £260. But sent today to let me know that he would give £270 rather than be put out. He will give £270.

Fairle Farm - valued at 248.18.8. Taylor offers £240. But will likely give £250 if treated with.

Gray Mare Hill - valued at £123. Robinson offers £120 and to continue to pay £20 for working the poor seam of coal to supply the <Ba....t>. He has done so much to improve the farm must have lost so much by it, that I think he should have it at his offer.

Public House & Blacksmiths Shop The latter is included in Lawsons Farm. The Public House & <Inn> had better be advertised. He offers £32.10.

Rawgreen - <Todds> offer £100 which comes very near to a valuation It is a poor place & will suffer like others in that quarter by losing the carriage of Mr Beaumonts Ore. He having laid in the Smelting Mill at Dukesfield.

Rowley Head - valued at £121.9.6. Shield offers £110. I should wish to defer the letting of this poor farm till after the rent day, which may decide whether Thorburn can continue to occupy Gairshield. Or, to let it for one year as an opportunity may occur of laying them together, or of attaching a part to Rowley Head & a part to Rawgreen & Turf House as the Tenants may offer.

Langhope - valued at £100. Milburne offers £90. He has a small property in the neighbourhood, which enables him to pay the rent. It is so poor a place & so unlikely to command a good tenant, that it may be advisable, probably, to make the most of him. He may advance a little against his present bode.

Highwood. - valued at £203. Temperley offers £160 - which is too low to be accepted without further trial. I fear his capital is much exhausted.

Tedcastle - valued at £75-11-0. Dickinson offers £74 which I think ought to be accepted. He has done much for this small farm, which is very inconveniently situated for roads.

West Land Ends. - valued at £227. Mr Lee offers £220. This farm is rather heavily taxed for roads on which account a reduction of a few pounds sh'd be made. Mr Lee has continued paying a very high rent, which other farms taken at the same time have been given up & reduced.

East Land Ends Valued at £215. Maughan offers £196. There would be an advantage in working this & the West Land Ends together. And if not let to Maughan I believe Mr Lee would give £220 for it, or perhaps £450 for the two.

Rattenraw - valued at £236.12. Lambert offers £247.0.0. He is a man of substance & a good tenant, but have some fear that he may draw back, as I am told he added to his intended offer, at the instigation of his wife & daughter, who are attached to the house.

Beamwham - valued at +£225. Woodman offers £210. He is a respectable tenant, living upon the adjoining farm of Grindon. And though the farm may perhaps pay this year, he has always been a loser by it hitherto.

West Mill Hill's - valued at £258. Harle offers £240. He is a good tenant & has held this farm long at a high rent. A machine, unfortunately much too expensive for the size of his farm, has been erected upon it, & the covenant for him to purchase it, is an objection, or rather causes a reduction of rent, equivalent to the interest of the purchase. The Rail way will occupy four Acres of this farm. Probably he might be induced to give 250£ or 245 exclusive of the land so occupied.

East Mill Hills. - valued at £344. Longhorn offers £320. The Rail way will occupy 5 Acres of the best land, & there are some acres of water gravel by the Tyne included in the agreement. He reckons upon compensation for the land, hitherto by the railway, but would probably give the rent offered, exclusive of this, which I think would be a fair rent.

Hartburngrainge- South Farm valued at 213£ Davison offers £160. Bad as the estate of Hartburngrainge is, I would not recommend to the Commissioners to accept of this offer without further trial.

Do West Farm Valued at £166. Brewis offers £130. This is very low offer, but it is difficult to say what is best to be done with so poor & unproductive a place. If advertized, I fear it will find few competitors. If Brewis would advance £10 or 15 upon his offer, it might be well to let him have it. If not, probably it may be more satisfactory to try the Publick.

Do. North Farm - valued at £255.10. Brewis offers £230. This farm is in creditable condition , & is better than the others, though it contains much bad land. If the tenant would give £250 I would not advise to change him.

Fourstones. - valuation, exclusive of land to be occupied by the Rail way & some small Tythes, £520. Snowball offers, exclusive of Rail way, 510 & would likely give £520. He is a man of property, likely to pay his rents, though not a very neat farmer. He complains, probably not without reason, of damage sustained by cows in the land by the Blacksmiths & the keeper of the Public House, & therefore wishes to pay the rent for these tenements that they may be under control. This arrangement might be adopted or if let to them separately they should be bound not to keep cows & poultry to the annoyance of the tenants.

Outchester - valued at 773£. Davison offers £760. This farm has had a succession of tenants in a few years & it is not in good condition, though it has improved under the present occupier. I consider £760 a fair rent, in its present state.

Scremerston Town Farm - valued at 1341£. Thomson offers £13\*\* [last 2 digits obscured in fold]. Mr Thomson's offer was £1260 but I prevailed upon him to amend it, certain that we should not get a better tenant, nor perhaps so high a value as he can afford. In so large a farm, containing a great deal of poor land, although I took all pains in valuing it to the best of my judgement , yet I am not prepared to say that I can judge of its value so well as the person who occupied it so long. It is fine that Mr Thomson might advance £20 still rather than remove his family from a place they have so long resided in, but I certainly would not recommend to differ with so good a tenant for so small a sum.

Inland Pasture Farm - valued at 870£. Hogarth offers 850. I would not prevail upon Mr Hogarth to come up to my valuation. He conceives that £800 is as much as the farm would now let for. Several farms in that part having been lately let at a great reduction. I think however that he ought to give £860.

John Grey

Dilston Nov 1st 1834

**3 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Monday 3rd November 1834

Received the Boards Minutes. Informed Mr Lambert that the Farm of East Elrington would be taken off his hand upon his paying for the Stamp used in the Lease, and giving in a written resignation. Had various matters to attend to & Letters to write, was engaged most of the day with the arrangement of the Dilston Farms, of which I forward a report with a colored Plan showing the Railway & new Roads that have been made, & the alterations that I have proposed for the Boards consideration.

**4 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 4th November

Rode to Hexham, being Market day & had conferences with several Tenants on matters regarding the management of their respective Farms, condition of their buildings etc. Proceeded some miles westward to see the course of the Railway, which they are now laying out through several of the Hospitals Farms, to watch against unnecessary encroachments & damage. Also to examine the Condition of some Buildings at Fourstones which are not good, to be prepared to meet the proposition of any one treating for the Farm. The Farm house is a poor one, but if let to the present Tenant it will likely be thought sufficient with a little repair. Several applications have been made for a Lease of the Allerwash Lime, at different times, and as the Building is now making progress in that quarter & the Lease of Brokenheugh Coal is drawing to a close. I appreciate it might be well to advertize it for letting by public tender, that the party taking it might have time to build Limekilns & make the necessary preparation.

With a view to this object, I shall take an opportunity of obtaining a meeting with Mr Forster in Newcastle, to learn his opinion as to the terms of Letting & the restrictions necessary to be imposed.

**5 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 5th November

Having heard that the Tenant of Eadsbush had been unfortunate in having money in the hands of a person who had absconded, & that he was likely to get into some difficulty, & perhaps to be seized upon, I gave Mr Hunt a Warrant of Distraint sending

him to the place to ascertain the circumstances, with the option to put it in force or not, as he found it necessary. After settling Cash accounts in the Office, & others for Wood & sundry expenses in the Woodlands with Mr Parkin, the heavy rain which had produced a flood in the River having ceased, I set out to Haydon Bridge to look after some matters in that neighbourhood but only reached the Inn as it became dark.

**6 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 6th November

After looking to some repairs, the Wood depot at Haydon Bridge, the new Woodmans house which has been got off one end of the Shed in the Wood Yard, & some damage done to the haugh at Lipwood by the late flood breaking in behind a Wear [sic] by the side of the Tyne, I proceeded to Langley Mills, where I wished to make some enquiry into the practicability and probable cost of making a long horizontal Chimney to convey the Smoke, so injurious to the Cattle in the neighbourhood, towards the top of a barren hill where it could do so little damage. I am convinced that it is practicable & that the deposit of Lead found in the Chimney, would go far, in a few years to defray the expense of erecting it. Looked at the house which ought to be occupied by old Mulcaster, but is now deserted, he being still in Jail, & his Wife gone elsewhere. It was promised that he should hold it & some ground for £10 a year for life. When he may return to it I cannot tell, but it is in such bad condition, that I shall deem it necessary to have the roof repaired, to prevent its becoming uninhabitable. Went on to Alston, & had daylight to walk up the Nent & examine the repair of the Bridge & road to which the Board subscribed £5. It has been well done & is a great improvement upon the old dangerous path. Passed the evening in conference with the Moor Master & Clerk of Deliveries.

I regret that I am not able to report any improvement in the productiveness of the Mines in the Hospitals Manors but a good specimen of Ore had that morning been cut in Nent Force Level which the Miners consider a favorable indication.

**7 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Friday 7th November

This was the day I had appointed for receiving the Rents in this district & for settling various matters of business. Was prevented by the most intense rain from riding to Gallygill in the morning, to examine some Houses, belonging to Mrs Couper, which have been rent and rendered dangerous by the improper working of a thin seam of Coal, called Crow Coal, which has been let for a Pepper Corn, to the Overseer of the

Poor in Alston, for the supply of the Poor. I sent for the Overseer & some Members of the Select Vestry, & though I found that no conditions had been imposed in the permission to them to work this poor Coal, I insisted that it must be considered that they must avoid doing damage, or bringing the Lords of the Manor into trouble & expense. They engaged to hold a Meeting to try to satisfy the Owner on the present occasion, of which they would send me a report. If the right to work that Coal is to remain under the present arrangement, it would be proper, I think, that an Agreement should be entered into with conditions to protect the Hospital against damage.

Had a very long interview with Mr Bainbridge who gave me the draft of a Lease of the Nursery Ground which he had prepared, & which I perused, remarked upon & returned to him, on leaving Alston. Mr Burnett having purchased his small Tithes at Tynehead, Mr Bainbridge proposes on the part of the Lead Company to give £10 for the purchase of those of Eshgill Estate, amounting to 5s/. or 6s/. a year, as will be seen by the accompanying statement, by which, we would be rid of that trifling & troublesome property altogether.

We went over also the matter of the disputed piece of Ground on the top of a Mountain, called Scraith head, a Plan of which Mr Bainbridge had, & which the Duke of Cleveland, being so confident that it belonged to him, had included in a Lease to the Lead Company. Boundaries marked by certain water runs, become very undefined on the tops of Mountains, where the Water is too small in quantity to make for itself a distinct Channel. It was proposed I believe, & consented to, that rather than go to Law for the purpose of deciding this doubtful point of right, the Ground in dispute should be divided & a large Ditch made through it, to mark the Division. Fortunately for the Hospital, this arrangement was not carried into effect, for the only thing that renders it of any value, is the prospect of a Vein of Ore pointing that way, which if it exists at all, is on the side which would have fallen to the Duke of Cleveland, whereas the surface of the whole, is not worth a Shilling a year. Mr Bainbridge has made a proposal, a Copy of which I herewith forward, which will give each party claiming the Royalty a share in the proceeds, should Ore be found in the Premises. The Duke & Mr Burnett having signified their consent, it remains for the Commissioners to decide whether the Plan should be adopted or not.

When paying his Rent the Tenant of Alston Mill complained of the Public encroaching upon a Field of his, at the times of holding the Alston Fairs, which hitherto had not been given to them for that purpose. I find on enquiring into the matter that in Awarding that Ground to the Hospital it is a condition that it is to be used for holding two Fairs, in May and November. It is divided into two Fields, the lower Field having in former times been sufficient for the accommodation of the Cattle, the higher one was used as a Meadow by the Tenants of the Mill, who have always occupied them under the Hospital. The Fairs having increased in extent, the lower Field is no longer adequate to the accommodation of the public, & knowing their right to the whole, they



have taken also the high Field, rendering it unfit for growing Hay, one of the Fairs being held in the month of May, for the loss of which the Miller asks a compensation of £6.0.0. Besides the two old accustomed Fairs, held in May & November, as specified in the Award, another was instituted about 20 years ago, which takes place in the month of September & is held only by sufferance. Had the matter been considered at the time this last mentioned Fair was established, a Toll should have been collected, to indemnify the Tenant for the Trespass, but I fear it might be difficult to enforce the payment of such a Toll now. Should the Board think it proper to make the attempt, it would be right to advertize it before hand in the District, & place Constables at the outlets of the Fair, to collect the Toll fixed upon.

I had many complaints from the Tenants of the District, of the bad condition of their Houses and Stone Fences on the Mountains. Many of both I know to be very bad. And unhappily many lines of Fence are so extensive compared with the small value of the Land, that it becomes a hopeless matter to think of rebuilding them. The Houses must be preserved in a habitable condition. But as the whole district will be out of Lease in May 1836 I generally got them passed by for the present, with a promise, & in the hope, that I should find leisure in the ensuing Spring to spend more time among them, so as to make an accurate examination of the whole & decide upon what is absolutely necessary & what may be dispensed with. At this season it is hardly possible to see through all those small Farms. The weather is so boisterous.

[separate sheet bound in overleaf:]

As to the disputed ground at Scraith Head

Proposed, That the Duke of Cleveland, Commrs of Greenwich Hospital and James Burnett Esq. convey disputed ground by ffeofment to a Trustee, To uses, one half to Duke of Cleveland, one fourth to Commrs of Greenwich Hospital and one fourth to James Burnett Esq.

That the said three portions then lease the minerals within & under the same to the Govr & co at 1/5 th duty, one half to Duke of Cleveland, one fourth to Commrs of Greenwich Hospital and one fourth to James Burnett Esq. with liberty for the Govr & Co to try the same from the Eshgill head workings and bring out ore on that side – rendering the duty ore abovementioned and to employ not fewer than 4 workmen.

NB The Duke & Mr Burnett agree to this proposal <J.G.>

[another separate sheet bound in overleaf:]

Tithes paid for Eshgill Estate belonging to the Govr & Company

	S d
1830 Thomas Currah	3 5
Mary Currah	- 4

Joseph Elliot	- 4
Isaac Armstrong	- 4
Anthony Siddle	- 4
	4 9
1831 Thomas Currah	3 5
2 1/2 fleeces of wool 3/1	
2 cows 4d viz 2d each for milk of each cow	
Mary Hetherington 2 cows	- 4
Mary Currah	- 4
Joseph Elliot	- 4
Isaac Armstrong	- 4
Anthony Siddle	- 6
	5 3
1832 Thomas Currah	3 5
Mary Hetherington 2 cows	- 4
Mary Currah do	- 4
Joseph Elliot 3 cows	- 6
Isaac Armstrong 2 do	- 4
Anthony Siddle 3 do	- 6
	5 5

Memo: The Governor & Co offer Ten pounds for the purchase of the said Tythes. J.G

**8 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 8th November

Made up my Accounts. Had a conversation with the new Surveyor of the Alston Roads & advised him as to his proceedings. He goes on most satisfactorily & is making great improvements in the condition of the Roads, though from the quantity of Metal necessary he cannot much diminish the expense as yet. Accompanied him to look at some part of the Roads, & to get him to work away a ledge of Limestone to improve the approach to the Inn at Lowbyers. This house was going fast to decay. When I had the fruit trees taken from the front of it in the summer, the Walls were found to be so open that a Stick might be passed half way through them in many places. The rain came down the inside & spoilt Paint, Paper & Wood. I had the Walls filled & pointed - it is now dry - the roof also has been repaired, but the timber is bad.

Had some of the Hudgill Barn Compy respecting some fancied encroachments upon their Ground, which proved to be groundless.

Returned to Haydon Bridge & thence to Dilston. At Haydon Bridge Mr Lambert met me to say that he and his brother had decided upon executing the Lease as prepared for the Farm of East Elrington, which they would try to hold at the rent agreed upon. If any thing could be done to lessen the injury from the Smoke of Langley Mills, as I propose, it would be, he said an inducement for them to continue.

**10 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Monday 10th Nov

After arranging the Accounts of the Alston Rents & attending to various matters in the Office, I rode from one end to the other of our Embankments on the Tyne, to see the effects of the late heavy Flood, & found that the last done Slopes near the influx of Devils Water, had been slightly broken, where the surface had not yet become sufficiently solid but to no great extent. The repair will be of trifling cost, but must be done immediately to prevent further encroachments in this season of rain. The parts which were done early enough to get a good cover of Grass, are quite safe. Proceeded through the Park Farm & Woods, to the Saw Mill, to see the effect the newly made Dam had had in throwing the Water in the time of Floods, over the opposite Grounds, in anticipation of which the Lessees are bound to embank against it, if found necessary. As yet, it has produced no injurious effect. Received today Mr Forsters Letter & Agreement with Crile & for the Coal at Hartburngrainge; & forwarded them to the Secretary for the Boards consideration. In acknowledging the receipt of them to Mr Forster, I asked him to consider of the Terms & Covenants proper for letting a Lease of the Allerwash Lime & Brokenheugh Coal. I proposed to meet him in Newcastle to discuss the subject.

**11 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 11th November

I attended today a meeting at Hexham, of the Alston Road Trustees, when much discussion took place in conference with the new Surveyor, upon the management of the roads and economising the Funds. The bridge now in progress over the Tyne at Bellingham, has sustained no material injury from the late floods - but as the Trustees of the Roads declare against incurring any risk or loss by the erection, the Subscribers have prudently held the Undertaker responsible, under sureties for its maintenance for seven years. I found several of the Tenants at Market today, anxious to know the determination of the Board respecting their Farms, which they hoped I might have been able now to communicate to them. It has been a desideratum with me for some time, to have a Document, in form of a Lease or Agreement for a Lease, at once, so

cheap as not to be rejected by the Miners, & so comprehensive & intelligible as fully & plainly to define the rights of the Lessors & the Covenants which the Lessees are expected & bound to fulfil in the Mining Grants in Alstonmoor. I need not remind the Commissioners of the difficulty that attended the obtaining the payment for Mining Leases, some time ago, & the many which after repeated ineffectual attempts to procure them by Mr Hooper, we're eventually abandoned or compromised. And it must be equally unnecessary to remark, that to require Leases to be entered into before trials have been made and proved successful, would be effectually to suppress the spirit of speculation, which is the 'primum mobile' of all Mining operations. In nine cases out of ten, the trials of Veins are applied for and made by parties who have little beyond their hands & picks, to call their own; and a great majority of those trials prove abortive.

To require anything like a Lease on Stamp, in this case, is out of the question, & it is only when a trial turns out favorably, & attracts partners with Capital to join the original undertakers and embark their money in the concern, that a more formal & valid document can be requisite. I have brought this subject at different times under the consideration of the Solicitor & Moor Master at Alston, who are both fully conversant with the Customs of the District & the interests of the Parties. And having decided upon the principle & general Heads of such Agreement, Mr Bainbridge has been kind enough to extend them in a form, which we conceive might be printed with blanks to be filled up according to circumstances, leaving it open to the Commissioners or the Lessees to have such Agreement extended upon Stamp when demanded. Such a plan, would, I trust, prove equally secure for the Commissioners as satisfactory to the Miners. At all events, it must be much more so, than the present system, where no document exists, but the simple form of a grant for Trial. I have now the honor to transmit for the consideration of the Board, the form of Agreement drawn up by Bainbridge. Should it be approved of, & ordered to be adopted, the Board will probably direct that it be returned & printed under Mr Bainbridge's inspection.

**12 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 12th November

Was occupied all the morning in examining & settling with Benson sundry Masons & Carpenters Accounts for the new Buildings at Leas, repairs at the different Farm Offices in Hexhamshire & other places. Received the Boards Minutes respecting the letting of Farms, & in consequence, wrote to thirty of the Tenants, informing some that their Proposal had been accepted, subject to conditions to be agreed upon, others, that theirs had been rejected. And proposing to treat with others which had been left undecided. Rode over the high part of the Dilston Farms, to see what part of them, the Tenants should have for Corn & what should be left for fallow, having sent Mr Hunt to

measure the old Pit Heaps on Bones Farm at Throckley & some draining in Mr Stephenson's Farm at Throckley.

**13 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 13th November

Mr Ridley Hall, the Tenant of Dilston Mill & <Murray> the Millwrights came to urge the necessity of having a new Wheat Cylinder put up in the Mill, as that which is now there, though it does very well for coarse Flour, is not calculated for fine work. I told him that so much money had been already expended upon that Mill, besides that I had undertaken to put in a new Stone lately, that I could not think of applying to the Board for any additional outlay, but that if he would incur the expense of a new Cylinder & working wheels I would engage that he should be paid for it on valuation on leaving the Mill. This he agreed to do, unless the Comm.rs would consent to lay out the money at present, for which he is willing to allow interest, during his Term. The cost will be something above £20. I shall therefore be obliged by being informed which mode the Board prefers.

Having sent Mr Hunt into the Whittonstall district to examine the accounts of Lime obtained by the Tenants, and compare them with those from the Lime Kilns, that I may be prepared to make the allowance at the Rent Receipt, I went into Hexhamshire & rode over the several Farms there, examining the state of the buildings which had undergone repair during the Summer, of those which have been newly let, & the charge of which is in future to come upon the Tenants. At Rawgreen I marked out some Draining & the line of a new Fence which is intended to divide a piece of land, which will be useful in tillage from another plot which is not worth cultivating, & will in this way, be joined to a boggy Pasture. Proceeded to Gairshield where I found strong ice & showers of Snow, but did not meet with Thorburn as I wished. I left a message expressing disappointment that he has not reduced his Arrears as he promised, and that much would depend on his payment at the ensuing Rent, whether he should be allowed to remain there or not. Reached home in the evening & received a Letter from the Moor Master, which I have much pleasure in forwarding to the Board, as it holds out an encouraging prospect of driving at length, some decided benefit from the expensive Work of Nent Force Level & at the same time explains the reason of the cost per Fathom, for drifting it, having been lately increased, which explanation I had requested him to give. I have the honor also to forward to the Board a Letter from Mr Bainbridge, respecting a matter which came under discussion when I was at Alston, but which, for the sake of accuracy, I requested Mr Bainbridge to have the goodness to give me an account of in writing. With his Letter, I also send the Case & Opinion which he favoured me with. Having carried the Question to the Quarter Sessions & had a decision against them, the Governor & Co. conceive that they have done all that they may be expected to do in vindication of the Hospitals right, & now leave it in the

Hands of the Commissioners. Were I to venture an opinion on the subject, it would be, that the Magistrates having decided against it, the chance would still be worse before a Jury, & that the object is not worth bestowing much expense upon. In case the preservation of Gilderdale being abandoned by the Com.rs the small Common of Whitlaw will then be severed from the rest of the Hospitals Manor, & it will become difficult & almost impossible to preserve it alone. It contains very little black Game Ground, & is not much worth preserving. The only Heather being at the extremity adjoining that of Lord Wallace's Ground, who might perhaps undertake to preserve it in Self defence, but I hardly think anyone else would.

**14 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Friday 14th November

Received a Letter from Mr Bell formerly Bailiff of Meldon & Hartburn District, respecting his Pension, the payment of which was I understand, suspended on account of some loss having occurred to the Hospital by his allowing an away going Tenant to infringe his Covenants. This matter was under Mr Hoopers direction, & will be found adverted to in his Journal. Bell is a very old Man.

[marginal pencil annotation: 'Lost to Hospital £45. £40 will have been paid off on 3rd Jan 1835. Excuse the £5 after 3rd Jan']

I have been applied to by the Agent of the Duke of Northd to put the Buildings at High Green Colliery into Repair & in reply informed him that although a Tenant becoming bound to maintain the repair of buildings through a Lease, is intitled to have them put into repair at the beginning, I conceived that as Purchaser was understood to take & enter upon them 'in statue quo' unless the Agreement of Sale contained a Condition to the contrary. I referred him to Mr Fenwick.

Received also a Letter which I forward to the Board from Messers Nairn of Waren, applying for a renewal of their Lease of the Mills. I suggested some alterations. Having a large Capital embarked in the Concern, it is quite natural that they should wish to know before the term comes to a close, how they are to dispose of it, & if any advantage is to arise from the new arrangements which they propose the sooner the advantage can be obtained the better for all parties. Messrs Nairn are most respectable Tradesmen with abundant Capital, & have formed a good business connexion. Having obtained some Property near the Shipping place, they could undoubtedly erect Steam Machinery there to carry on their business but they would of course greatly prefer to give a good Rent for their present Mills, than incur the competition of them in the neighbourhood. It might be satisfactory to the Board, to receive from Messrs Nairn a Plan & Estimate of the additions proposed to be made to the Mill, with a Proposal as to the rate of Interest they would give upon the outlay, or the portion of expense they

would engage to bear. The safest principle, if they could be induced to agree to it, would be for them to purchase all the present Machinery and erect any new that they may require, with a Covenant to be repaid by valuation whenever they quit the Premises. Was engaged the whole day in negotiations with various Tenants for new Leases, & arranging the Covenants etc of Farms, which will be reported of hereafter.

**15 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 15th November

Received from Mr Bicknell the Conveyance to Mr Burnett, of the Tynehead Estate, with instructions to deliver it to Mr Bainbridge, on receiving £70, the Purchase Money which I communicated to Mr Bainbridge. Arranged with Mr Hunt the contents & boundaries of the Dilston Farms, as now altered, that he might prepare lists of the Fields, & give information to persons wishing to examine them. I then accompanied him to Dilston South Farm to fix upon a Barn which in the new arrangement, the Tenant may dispense with & which it will be very convenient to have reserved for a place of depot for Gates, bark, or Wood of any kind for the use of the Estate, being by the road from Dilston and Snokoe Plantations. Went afterwards to the Tyne Banks where we are repairing some trifling injury done by the late Floods. Had again interviews with some of the Tenants respecting their Farms.

**17 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Monday 17th November 1834

Informed Messrs Crile & Co that their offer for the Hartburngrainge Coal had been accepted by the Commissioners, a copy of which I forwarded to them, authorizing them to commence operations. Mr Harle the Tenant of West Millhills, who had declined the offer of his Farm at £250.-.- came again today, & we eventually agreed, after much discussion, at £246. It would have been a pity to lose so good a Tenant. The tenants of Hartburngrainge neither having come nor replied to my Letters, I thought it best to dispatch Mr Hunt to see them, that if they declined taking their Farms upon the terms offered, I might add them to the Advertizement I was preparing for the others.

I regret to learn that Mr Brown, who succeeded to the share of Scremerston Colliery, formerly held by Mr Sibbit, & who, having been involved with parties who have lately failed in Newcastle & others on the Coal Exchange in London, & has himself become Bankrupt in consequence, has been unwarrantably drawing upon the Owners of the Colliery, involved the real Lessee Major Johnson, in considerable loss and

difficulty. The history of the transaction I believe to be this - Sibbit failed to make good his share of the advances for winning & establishing the present Colliery, which was carried forward by Johnson till his claim against Sibbit, came to a large amount. Sibbit's interest in the concern was eventually transferred to Johnson by arrangement, after having been placed in Chancery. Johnson again transferred it to Brown, for a certain consideration, who at that time was thought to be an eligible Partner, but instead of paying Johnson in Cash he induced him to take a share of several Ships, which they were to employ in carrying their Coals to Market. This was an improvident bargain, as Shipping property has been over since the decline, & freights have been very low, & now that he would wish to realise money upon the Ships he cannot, because Brown's Creditors have an interest in them. I am told both by Johnson & a relation of his, whose information I thought I could depend upon, & therefore applied for, that he expects soon to surmount the difficulty.

There is little doubt that the Stock on the Colliery & farms, though he should have no other resource, is enough to indemnify the Hospital, but I think it right to put the Board in possession of the information I have on the Subject, in case they should think it necessary to have an account & value of the Stock taken, or to require security for the Rents due - at present it would not be advisable to do anything that would expose the situation of the Lessee and destroy his Credit, except upon a conviction of the absolute necessity of using such means for the security of the Hospital.

**18 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 18th November 1834

Had an interview with the Tenant of Longhope at an early hour, & at length brought him up to my valuation, which was £10 above his offer. As the same person holds a small farm near to Longhope, called Highside of which Lease there are 16 years to run, I think it right to grant him a Lease of Longhope for the same period. Davison of Hartburngrainage came to know if he could not still be allowed to treat for his Farm, & seemed disappointed when I informed him, that his offer being so very low, the Board had directed it to be advertized. Mr Hunt returned from Hartburngrainage, having with some difficulty persuaded Thomas & Samuel Brewis, to advance upon their former biddings, so as to meet the view of the Commissioners. Having now come to Terms with the present Tenants, for all the Farms, except such as it had been ordered to let by public tender, I filled up the advertizement, and dispatched it to the Newspapers in Newcastle, Berwick and Kelso - the latter are in circulation in the Borders where the best farming prevails, having fixed on Monday 29th December, as the day by which the Offers are to be at Greenwich. This done I set to work to prepare the Covenants for filling up the several Agreements for the Farms that have been let. I compared with Mr



Hunt the offers he had received for clearing from Whins, and pitting two Parcels of Waste Land on Dilston New Town Farm, for planting.

**19 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 19th

Received a long letter from Mr Wilson who still contends that the Hudgill Burn Co have a right to a certain extent of Mineral grant, although it appeared to me when I met him and the Moor Master together that he was wrong in conceiving that encroachments were made on their premises. This is a matter which I must be at pains to investigate as there is every reason to depend upon the Moor Masters accuracy. Mr Wilson also requests to be allowed to burn Lime at the Langley Kilns, as being nearer & of better quality than that of Lough Green - to which application, I have replied that I cannot, without orders, grant the permission, the Lime in question having been reserved for the use of the Tenants in that district, & the Lough Green Lime, let to the present Lessee, with that understanding; conceiving too, that if it had been intended to grant such liberty to the Lessees of the Mills it would have been contracted for, by their Agreement. Mr Wilson makes another request which is to be allowed to give their personal security to the Board, against damage by Fire, instead of being obliged to comply with a clause in their Lease, requiring them to insure the Premises in one of the public Offices. To this I should think there can be little objection, as the party is wealthy.

Received £70, in payment of Tythes purchased by Mr Burnett, and communicated to Mr Bainbridge the Boards directions respecting the steps to be taken to protect the Hospital against damage by working the Crow Coal. Upon the arrangement as to the disputed Ground at Scraith Head, & the collection of Tolls at Alston September Fair. Rode to Whittle & then to Throckley, and looked over parcels of Ground, old Pit Heaps & other waste, to decide which it might be worth while to inclose and plant.

**20 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 20th November

I had occasion to meet my Co trustees in the affairs of the late Mr Cully, together with the Solicitor, this morning in Newcastle. I had written to ask Mr Forster to meet me there if convenient, to give me his opinion upon the terms of letting Allerwash Lime etc, but he was not able to attend.

Waited upon Mr Fenwick to examine some Draft Leases and obtain a statement of monies received by him on account of the Hospital, for the settlement of this account at the close of the half year. Received from the Railway Directors a notice of their intention to apply to Parliament to be allowed to use Locomotive Engines in the way, with a request that I would forward it to the Board. A strong objection was formerly made by resident proprietors to the use of Steam Engines on the Railway, to which however, most are now reconciled. Without that privilege indeed, the operations of the Way would be very deficient. The Directors would be glad to be informed whether they are likely to meet with any opposition to their application from the Commissioners. [marginal pencil note: 'Mr. Grey should obtain decisive information and thereupon give his own opinion thereon']

I met Mr Thomson of Scremerston at Newcastle, who wished to stipulate for some new fences being made & others removed from he considers inconvenient & improper situations, but as I was not so fully convinced of the advantage of the changes as himself, & could not obtain any advance of Rent beyond his first offer, which he still contends is too high, I concluded an agreement with him, leaving him to make the Fences at his own cost, or not, as he thinks proper. He had another demand too for new Pumps & the expense of bringing Water to some Fold yards, of this I must judge on the spot hereafter, & probably the most economical mode of dealing with him in the matter will be, to leave him to do it in the most reasonable way he can, & to guarantee him in the payment, by valuation, for any Pumps etc that he may provide, at the conclusion of his term. Returned to Dilston in the evening.

## **21 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Friday 21st. November

The unfortunate Tenant of Eads Bush who has been crewelly defrauded, & obliged to make an Assignment, waited upon me this morning, to gave me an undertaking from the Assignees for the rent due & to say, that he hoped in the settlement of his affairs, to be able to carry on the small Farm. I told him that I felt convinced the Commissioners would wish to regard his unfortunate circumstances with due consideration, but that they must at the same time keep an eye to the interest of the Hospital, & that I could not, in such a case recommend his being allowed the Farm without giving security beyond his own, for the payment of the rents, which I advised him to endeavour to provide.

I am obliged to report that Mr Fenwick could only realize £20 from the effects of Common & Atkinson, late Tenants of a Public House & Ground at Meldon, in payment of an Arrear of £52.3.11 1/2. The balance must therefore I conceive be discharged by

Journal entry, if approved & ordered by the Board. [marginal pencil note: 'I do not like this summary abandonment of our Claims lest it become too easy a practice of']

Was much occupied in examining Mr Parkin's valuation of the Lots of Wood in Newlands & other places, in correspondence & office business. But rode at noon to see the repair done Tyne banks & to direct the cutting & improving some old Woodland hedges on the Dilston Estate, that have been spoilt by mismanagement. In letting the Dilston Estate I propose that the Hospital should not as heretofore be bound to make compensation for damage by Floods, but that it should take upon itself the Expence of maintaining the embankments in a full & complete state of repair, & also the charge of the young Hedges upon the Embankment, & by the sides of the Turnpike Roads, as it is in vain to expect the Tenants to bestow any particular pains upon them.

I received today Mr Le Geyts remarks upon my Cash account and in explanation state, that I did not send a receipt on Stamp for my own & Mr Dickinson's Salary, from the conviction that it would not afford any additional security to the Hospital, & therefore appeared to be unnecessary. The items, forming a part of an account written out by Mr Dickinson & signed by myself, & for which I am in every way responsible & which is sent to be retained by the Board. [The first of several marginal pencil notes occurs here, signed PCL, ie Philip Carteret Le Geyt 'Clerk of the Cheque' for the Hospital, ie an auditor, renowned for being meticulous. This first marginal note is truncated into the fold and therefore not possible to transcribe and make sense of.]

In the same way it seemed to me an unnecessary expense to the Hospital that the Moor Master should send back a receipt on Stamp for Cash advanced to him as Imprest, at the same time that the account for which he is responsible, arrived, giving Credit for the amount, & signed with his name. I therefore told him that I conceived an acknowledgment by Letter of the money which would appear in his Account, might suffice. If I am wrong & if this trifling economy can possibly lead to inconvenience or insecurity, it may be easily rectified. [marginal pencil note by PCL: 'This is the first time it has occurred. The moor Master had always given stamped receipt for the money advanced to him on Imprest hitherto' But possibly the Commissioners might be inclined to view the advances made to him in the same light as those made by them to the Cashier here, for which the Audit Board do not require a Stamped receipt']

Then as to Stamps, when a number are got at once, for the rent days etc, a voucher & bill of Particulars can & ought to be given, but when, as often happens a payment is offered at a Market or fair, which of course one is not inclined to lose sight of, it becomes necessary to buy a Stamp at the moment. In such cases to produce vouchers is impossible, & it as frequently happens that it is forgotten to be charged at all, as otherwise a Box is kept in the Office, into which all money received for Stamps from persons coming to obtain payments, is put. When more Stamps are wanted, this money goes in payment of them as far as it will, & the remainder only is charged to the

Hospital. If all the business were done in one Office or House, a more regular account of Stamps might be kept, & vouchers rendered for the purchase of them, but when it is extended over a wide district of country I despair of being able to render a very detailed account of receipts & disbursements. [marginal pencil note by PCL: 'I see no reason why a Bill of Parcels would not be made out for any large number of Stamps purchased and the Vendors receipt be attached to it. And it would <...> better perhaps to <.. imitate> the Usage in this Case to what observed by the Cashiers <...> which is every month <he> debit himself with <the> amount of money received from Tradesmen & others for Stamps. However it may become necessary to buy a single stamp or a few for incidental purposes as stated <...> outlay would be the proper subject to introduce to the Contingent Account']

Then as to Postage, since an Office has been established at Corbridge, an account is kept by Mr Blandford, the Postmaster & paid every quarter, the Letters being forwarded to Dilston Toll in a Bag, for which we have not an opportunity of making the daily payments. Mr Blandfords account & receipt, then will be a voucher so far, but we have almost daily communications besides those by Post. The interchange of Papers - Draft Leases etc with the Solicitors - All the applications for Mineral Trials from Alston & corresponding Grants & all other communications with the Moor Master, are necessarily made by Coach Parcels, there being no Post that way. Such parcels are left at Dilston Toll & paid for by the Gatekeeper, who receives it again on delivery. One thing I know, that many such parcels delivered to myself when passing the Toll Bar, or on meeting the Coaches by the way & many gifts to the Tollman & other messengers for bringing Letters & Parcels are paid out of my own pocket, & never charged to the Hospital at all. But on this head I shall do my best to give Mr Le Geyt satisfaction. [marginal pencil note by PCL: 'Mr Dickinson would of course keep an account of all such payments <...> of others made <out> of Office last <...> the same service <...> and any similar casual disbursements of Mr Greys would be equally made from that source. At the end of a quarter (or monthly as considered best) the payments would be converted into the form of the Voucher which I sent - and which is the same exactly as required by the Audit Board for similar disbursements in each Department here.']

Upon the head of Checks - I shall request the bankers to mark those paid in by the Receiver, in lieu of Cash payments which he has made, which I take to be Mr Le Geys meaning contained in his request on that head. With regard to the Cheque for £191.10 complained of as causing so much trouble, & comprizing eleven different items, it consisted of all the allowances made to Tenants at the Belford Rent receipt & the corresponding sum would appear in the column of allowances in that Rental Sheet. I have on former occasions included all such allowances in one Check, instead of incurring the fruitless labor, to myself & the Bankers, of drawing (it might be 50 Checks at the Haydon Bridge receipt) for small sums which appear separately & collectively in the Rental Sheet. Mr Dickinson shall be desired in future to arrange the items in the

Cash Account, so as to make it appear which & how many are included in one Check, without trouble to anyone inspecting it. [marginal pencil note by PCL: 'This arrangement will obviate the difficulty complained of, and save a vast deal of time in the comparison of the Receiver's with the Banker's account and is what I should have proposed had I been sure the disagreement arose from the cause stated.']

[Further marginal pencil note by EHL: 'I approve all Mr Le Geyts very proper remarks, which Mr Grey must adopt as necessary']

**22 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 22nd November 1834

Rode to Thornborough to examine along with the Tenant the piece of Land subject to be overflowed by the Tyne & where he requested, in taking a new Lease, to have a short embankment made. As he is willing to supply all the Carts wanted in forming the embankment, I am of opinion that ten Pounds would do the rest. If it should cost more, I would bind him to pay the surplus. Examined there also some young hedges, intending to put them into proper order & the. Transfer them to the Tenants keeping. Rode over the Quarry & Highbarns Farms, examining the Buildings, & on my way home over the low grounds of Dilston, comparing its state of cultivation with the Covenants of the Leases, from which I anticipate some difficulty in settling matters between the present & the succeeding Tenants, should the Farms change hands. With reference to Robert Hunters Petition, adverted to in the Boards Minute of the 8th Instant, it may be remarked, that he has no actual claim for any compensation, for leading Materials for Building. He only did what he contracted for, but not able to retain his Farm, he has not derived the benefit. The reduction of Rent for one year from £150 to £136 was not made with a view to make him any recompense for leading to Buildings, but instead the latter sum is a full rent for the Farm. The poor man must have lost much of his small capital, by holding the Farm at so high a rent, & having lead to Buildings to the extent of £60, besides has increased his Loss, while the Farm is made the better for another occupier. This is the state of the case, & if the Commissioners should find themselves at liberty to allow him £20 or £30 from the last payment of his rent, it would be an act of kindness, to an unfortunate old Man. [marginal pencil note '£25']

**24 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Monday 24th Nov

Held a rent day at Shaw House. Had a full attendance of Tenants, & a better reception than I anticipated owing partly to my having deferred it till after all the autumn Fairs were over, & partly from the anxiety of the Tenants to stand well with the Commissioners. Davison of Hartburngrainge, whose Farm is advertized to let by tender and Bones of Throckley Colliery being the greatest defaulters. The latter promises to pay in a very short time.

**25 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 25th

Received the Solicitors answer to my enquiry respecting the Covenant in the Lease of Langley Mills, requiring the Lessees to insure the premises against Fire. He states that the Lessees covenant to insure three fourths of the value of the Buildings & Machinery, & to expend the Money to be received from the Insurance Office in case of Fire, towards reinstating the damaged Property. In event therefore of the Lessees not being called on for a literal fulfilment of the Covenant, I should not think that any Bond, unless they can produce some other Persons to join them as surety will at all strengthen the security that the Hospital already possesses.

Having communicated to Mr Fenwick the Secretary's Letter, informing me of the Boards directions to have the Counterpart of the Leases also on Stamps, he states he is setting to work forthwith, to have other Copies engrossed for the purpose.

Went over the transactions of yesterday's receipt & settled some accounts for repairs with Benson in the Office. Rode to Hexham Market & met several Tenants. The Lessee of Lough Lime Kilns, tells me that he cannot consent to the Lessees of Langley Mills burning their own Lime, unless they give him compensation. This is as I anticipated. In the evening prepared an Advertizement for letting Brokenheugh Colliery & the Limestone there & at Allerwash, fixing the last day of January for the Proposals to arrive at Greenwich which will appear in the Newcastle Courant & Chronicle of this week, along with the Lots of Wood set out in Newlands & Dipton Plantations. Mr Parker has not yet completed the measurement & valuation of the Lots on the Banks of the Allen at Hartburngrainge, but as they are of a different description of Wood & in different parts of the Country, I think it better to offer these in the market at once, as they consist chiefly of Larch & Scots Fir, which is in pretty good demand.

**26 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 26th November

Sent Mr Hunt into the Langley district to measure & examine some Draining which was not completed when he was last there, that the payments may come into acct tomorrow. Was engaged with Tenants coming to the Office with Accounts to be allowed from their Rents, which it is wished previously to examine. Went in the afternoon to look over the Ground which is being cleared of Whins, previous to planting on the high part of Dilston New Town Farm.

**27 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 27th

In the morning drove to Haydon Bridge, carrying all the necessary accompaniments of a Rent day, Stamps, Accounts, Valuations, Tenants Ledgers etc along with me and was engaged there the whole of the day and

Friday the 29th

till near six in the evening, when I got the Cash made up & transferred to the charge of the Banker in attendance. The payments as will appear in the Rental Sheets, were generally good, though many stated & I fear with truth, that they were not all made from the Farms.

The Tenants of Newlands & Whittonstall who formed a part of the first days company, will be all found to have left an arrear of Rent, arising from what I conceive to be an erroneous impression on their minds, that the reduction which was granted to them was to include the bygone year, the present rent being that due on the 12th of May 1834, whereas my understanding of the matter is, that the Commissrs only intended them to have the reduction for one year previous to their entering upon new Agreements. [marginal note: 'The Receiver is right – and the rent must be claimed'] Those new agreements commence at May day 1835, & the reduced Rent, I conclude, will take place from May day 1834 to that period, & not from May day 1833. The ground that they go upon is, that is their Petition, they prayed for reduction to commence the next rent day, but then the rents are not paid till half a year after they become due, and though the Board complied with the Petition, or rather with Mr Hoopers promise previously given, to recommend it to the Board, they did not, I imagine contemplate that the reduction should revert to rents in Arrear, but to those arising from & after the May day previous to the next letting. I have looked over the Boards Minutes since my return, & find that those of the 13th January 1834, I am

instructed to inform those tenants 'that they will be allowed to hold their Farms for the present year at the Rents they may be let for the next year, provided they give early notice of their wish to surrender their Leases at May 1835.' Now though this Minute bears date the 13th January & mentions the present year, everyone knows that the Farmer's year begins & ends at May day, & I think it could not be intended to include any time previous to May Day in 1834 in the reduction. Those tenants complained that they would have great difficulty in making up their Arrears, if the reduction should not include the former year, & begged me to refer the matter to the Board, as I now do, but with every regard to their unfavourable situation, I confess, having the promise of reduction, for one year & an allowance of Lime besides, I think to give them more, would be to act very unfairly by other tenants who petitioned for a reduction for one year previous to the new letting I have been refused. It will [be?] seen that I made the allowance for Lime to those parties, because they are upon at this Season to pay for such as they have got through the summer. Mr Hunt & myself had frequently examined the Lime as led to their Farms, we also had their Accounts from the Lime Kilns to compare with theirs. Several had not exceeded the quantity to be allowed, but some had, in which case they were left to pay the surplus themselves. I wish they had been all in that list. There will be no reduction on that head next rent day.

Coulson of Coastley has managed to make up his Arrears, & has thus intitled himself to have a Lease on the terms of his new agreement. He is a man who endeavours to do well, & I hope he may now succeed in getting through his term with some comfort.

**29 Nov 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 29th November

Had interviews with several Tenants in the morning, respecting repairs wanted at their Farm Buildings and drainage done to their ground by the late Flood etc, some of which Mr Hunt had gone Westward to examine. Mr Peacock of Esphill waited upon me, & expressed great mortification at being confined to continue that Farm so much against his inclination & contrary to the promise by which alone, he says, he was induced to sign an Agreement. Besides the Farm being too high rented it is out of the neighbourhood which he has been accustomed to & in which his family is settled. He lost his Wife since coming there & seemed very unhappy. I find that he would like much to take Newtonhall Farm which is 14 Miles eastward from his present residence & very near to a Farm occupied by his Son. He is a man of Substance and would be a good Tenant for Newtonhall. Knowing that Mr Lee of Land Ends wishes to have a Farm near himself for his Son, it occurred to me, that if the good House at Esphill would induce him to give a good rent for it, the Commissrs might be inclined to set Mr Patrick at liberty for Newtonhall & thus both would be accommodated. I wrote to Mr Lee before leaving Haydon Bridge to suggest the arrangement & asking him to let me



know if he should be inclined to set upon it. There is no chance of Esphill being held through the Lease at the present Rent & we could not have a better Tenant than Mr Lee.

I returned home by Woodhall Mill & Highwood having something at each place to attend to.

**1 Dec 1834 John Grey**

Monday 1st December 1834

Received the Boards Minutes - communicated with Messrs Bainbridge- Nairn, Ridley Hall etc on the various matters on which I received instructions. Directed the Bankers to pay £5000 to the Credit of the Commissioners on the 10th Instant, & shall order a further payment by the end of the Month. Gave Benson directions respecting the repair of some Roofs, for want of which the Buildings are sustaining injury. Rode to Wooley, the tenant of which had not appeared at the Rent receipt, but did not find him at home - afterwards drew up Minutes of the conditions for a Lease of the Coal & Lime at Brokenheugh & Allerwash, to submit to Mr Forster the Colliery Receiver for his observation & correction.

**2 Dec 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 2nd

The Lessee of Throckley Colliery instead of coming today to pay his rent, sent a Letter begging to be allowed till January next, to collect his Bills. This request has so often repeated & his engagements so often broken that I wrote to say, if he did not make a settlement by the end of the year, I should be under the necessity of having recourse to some unpleasant proceeding. As there will be a good deal of planting this season, in the waste pieces of Land at Whittle, Hartburngrainge & the high part of Dilston New Town farm, besides replanting the ground cleared last year in the Dipton & Tyne Banks Plantations, I think it will be advisable to defer planting the old Pit Heaps on Burns' Farm at Throckley, especially as another summer will give better proof of the success of those planted last winter on Mr Stephenson's Farm, & show what kind of Trees take best in such situations. Heard from my Son, with Proposals he had received for making the new Fences at Glororum & roads at Chesterhill. Directed him to proceed in getting the Hedges planted, but to leave the other matters till a fortnight hence, when I shall probably be there myself to fill up agreements according to the rotations which I shall have to fix, for the new Leases, with the Tenants, & when I shall take a few days to decide upon everything to be arranged on the Northern Estates. Having been much engaged in writing & Office Business, I had only time to take a round through the

embankments to see whether any more damage had been done by a Flood the other day. Some parts of the Shores, where the surface is yet tender, are apt to break a little, which requires constant attention, but a few days works will repair all the injury which is trifling.

**3 Dec 1834 John Grey**

The unfortunate Tenant of Eadsbush, having been obliged to make an Assignment, on account of his late Lessees, I have applied to his Assignee and obtained payment of the rent due at May Day & an undertaking for the payment of that due in November. His effects having been advertized for Sale this day, I sent Mr Hunt over, to ascertain whether the Farm is to be given up, or whether Curry has found friends to enable him to carry it on. As he is a man much respected & pitied, I hope he may be supported.

I had requested to see the Surveyor of the Gateshead Roads at Dilston to show him that he had not fulfilled the Agreement made with me when the alteration of the Turnpike past Dilston New Town was consented to, in taking up the old road, removing the Fences & restoring the Land to my satisfaction. He came this morning, when we went over the ground together, & he undertook to have all matters done according to my wish. I then set out for Whittonstall, to examine some Land at Lawsons Farm, which the Tenant by his old Lease, was bound not to plough, but which having become much incumbered with Furze he applied for leave to plough out in line of some other Land, which I readily granted, considering it an advantage to the Farm. Thence to the Farms of Fairle & Greymare Hill, to look into the propriety of allowing some draining and fencing to be done, which the Tenants applied for at the rent day. Having got the prices of Nursery goods from different Parties, I wrote this evening to Falla of Gateshead, whose trees are always good, to send up the quantities of the various kinds wanted to plant the Ground now preparing at Whittle, & the Thorns for the necessary Hedges.

**4 Dec 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 4th December

Having now got all of the Workmen out of the new House, except the Plasterers, with Fires lighted in some of the Apartments to accelerate the drying of the Walls, I was occupied most of the day in planning, levelling & laying out the Garden & Shrubbery, with the drive from the old road to the front, where the inequality of the Ground gives abundant room for disposing of all the rubbish that has been left from the building. The approach & Ground will be very neat, after having some Trees & Shrubbery in suitable situations. Received the Moor Masters Account & Vouchers, & a

letter from Mr Bainbridge which I forwarded to the Secretary for the consideration of the Commissioners respecting the matters to which it refers, & also the Leases & Counterparts of Spency Croft & Nursery Ground & a Draft Lease of a Mining Grant to the Governor & Co. as settled upon, as I understand by Mr Taylor & Mr Hooper about two years ago, & which the Company have now called for. Mr Bainbridge does not say whether he has submitted this Draft to the inspection of the Moor Master or not. But as his plans of the Manor show the different Mining Grants it would be proper that he should have the opportunity of examining & comparing the boundaries described & set forth in each Lease with the plans to prove their correctness.

**5 Dec 1834    John Grey**

Friday December 5th

Went over the ground of Woodhall & Elrington accompanied by Mr Hunt, to decide upon the propriety of Drains & new Fences at at both, & the most suitable construction of the latter; which having fixed, directed him to put up Notices of them at Haydon Bridge, that he might receive Proposals from Workmen. He then proceeded to measure off some draining at Elrington Hall & to examine & value the Farm of Esphill & Lightbirks, commencing at the extreme point of the black hill near Stublick & ending the other extremity at Haydon Bridge, with a view to try if any desirable arrangement could be come to, by which it might be let to Mr Lee, who should like to occupy it, & by which Peacock might be released from it, & become a candidate for Newtonhall. This is the most awkwardly arranged Farm I ever knew, a reference to the Plan will show its extraordinary shape, the Offices at Esphill being near to Haydon Bridge, & the Land extending to nearly two miles Southward, & so narrow that the access is only by passing through the whole line of Fields, & many of them extremely steep & inaccessible. I had often wished that an opportunity could have been found to lay the high part of this Farm, from the head of Boggle hole Wood upwards, to Langley Castle Farm; & the low part to East Land Ends, which would have made a compact & square Farm, the water machine at Esphill, superseding the Horse one at East Land Ends, & in a central situation. But the difficulties are not easily surmounted, of having Buildings, Roads & Fences arranged to suit the present divisions, & especially of the Farms not coming to be let at the same time - this occupied me till dark.

**6 Dec 1834    John Grey**

Saturday 6th December

Saw Mr Lee at Land Ends. Examined the state of the House there, which is suffering for want of paint on the Windows & doors, & rough cast on the Walls which has fallen

off in many places, leaving the Walls which are not good, pervious to the rain. This must now be deferred till Spring. He wishes also to have a new Stable built & the present one converted into a Shed adjoining the Fold Yard, for Cattle - which had been formerly decided upon, but suspended. He is certainly in want of more accommodation for Cattle, but I think a Shed may be contrived at a much cheaper rate than by dismantling the Stable, & building another, which I shall look to again before another Winter brings him to feel the want of it. I talked to Mr Lee about the Esphill. He said he would like it as a residence for his Son, who is about to be married, but would not give more than £250 which he considered a high rent for a farm so extensive to work from its awkward situation, containing so large a portion of very poor hill Land, & that Land only fit for pasture, so much exposed to have the Stock fed upon it, injured & at times destroyed by the Smoke from Langley Mills. It must be admitted that the Farm has all those disadvantages, & I think Peacock has done wrong in converting a part of the high Land into Tillage, the reason he gave for which is, that being a stranger, he was not aware of the mischief done by the Mill Smoke till he experienced it in his Stock, & then he determined to try for Corn. I showed Mr Lee my valuation of £278. From this 8 or £10 should be allowed for the Tithe of Turnip etc and said if he would offer £270 for a Lease, hard & fast, without abatement or hope of going up, & if Peacock would make up the difference between that & his present rent of £355 for this year, perhaps the Board might be inclined to consider the offer. He would not however advance at all. If he could have undertaken that a Chimney would be made to convey the Smoke out of the way, which I have some hopes of getting the Lessees of the Mills to engage for, I think he might have come up. It is quite clear to me that the farm is exceedingly over rented at present. I rode westward to Lees looked through the new House which the Tenant has got into. It is comfortable & substantial. Went over the Farm & examined the Fences etc.

Crossed the Tyne at Lipwood examined the repairs making at the river side, where some breaches had been made by the late Floods. Came Eastward to Millhills where the same operation is going on & nearly finished. Neither of these will cost much - four Men for a week, with help of the tenants Carts have done the latter. Went out to Allerwash Allotments to see the manner in which some Stone Fences had been rebuilt, the original of which had entirely fallen down, they look like standing now, being made lower than before, & the Cope laid on with lime. Returned by Foustones & Westwood, through which Farms the Rail road is now in progress. On reaching Dilston, found a person from the North of the County waiting for me, who had looked over the Dilston Farms. He liked the Land & locality, but I fear will not give an offer, he is so disgusted with its condition, never having seen anything so bad before.

Found a Letter which I forward from some of the principal inhabitants of Alston respecting the Crow Coal, declining to occupy it, or to pay for damage. It seems very doubtful in this instance, whether the injury done to the House, was occasioned by the working of the coal or not, but it is clear that the Hospital must not give the Coal, bad as it is, for nothing, & be exposed to pay for damage done by working it too. Closed this Journal & my Weeks work at 1/2 past 12 at night.

**8 Dec 1834 John Grey**

Monday 8th December 1834

Received the Secretary's communication respecting the Arbitration & Award in the matter between Johnson and Pringle of Scremerston, & Inclosed the documents to Mr Forster, informing him by Letter of the points he was required to state his opinion upon - desiring his attention is at the same time, to the conditions of Letting the Coal & Lime at Brokenheugh & Allerwash of which I had sent him a Copy, for his correction & remarks. Met some of the Rail-way Managers at Riding Mill, to fix some matters respecting the fences to be made, & an encroachment I apprehended they were making & had remonstrated against, in the Millers Land at Dilston, by setting the hedge further back than the original mark. They assert however that they have gone no further than was intended & have taken no more Land than is included in their Survey. Proceeded to Minsteracres.

**9 Dec 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 9th December

Proceeded to go through those Farms in Newlands which I could not visit when in that district last week, informing the Tenants of the Boards decision respecting the reduction of Rent granted them from May day last, and inspecting their different grounds of claim for draining & new fences at the beginning of a fresh term. Such applications require to be entertained with due caution, as it does not always follow, that a thing desired by the tenant, and that may be a convenience to him, is also a matter of permanent improvement to the property. The Tenants however, in that district are respectable people, and not inclined to encroach or take advantage. Returned home in the evening. Heard from my Son who had been to Chester hill to examine & measure the Drains I had set out when last there, & conveying applications from some of the tenants on that Estate, which I have desired him to postpone till I see them.

Heard also from Mr Nairn saying that in case of their taking a new Lease of their Mills they intended to erect one for bruising Bones for Manure, & think they could employ the Materials for a Water Wheel which we have on hand at Newcastle, if the Board would allow it. Informed Mr Nairn, that if he should give an offer for a new Lease of his premises, on terms such as the Board should approve, including the use of those Materials, the Wheel so constructed, would not of course be included in that part of the Machinery for which he would expect to receive payment in leaving the Premises. I should be glad of an opportunity of applying those Materials to any useful

purpose, as they are dead Stock on hand and are not very disposable. And though I should have been glad to press the purchase of them upon Mr Nairn, I feared to do so lest he should say, that if he were to pay for the Wheel, he would prefer buying a metal one, on one of different dimensions, & so deprive us of the chance of using them & all of Waren.

**10 Dec 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 10th December

A succession of People enquiring particulars concerning the farms to be let, for the settlement of accounts & the planting in Dipton Wood, detained me most of the day. I had a long conference with Mr Green, the Architect, who examined the execution of the different kinds of Work at the House, the laying out of the Grounds etc. Communicated to Mr Johnson, on the part of the Railway Directors, the terms of letting the Allerwash Lime, which they seem to offer for, and prepared Agreements for the Scremerston & Outchester Farms, to takeover with me for signature.

**11 Dec 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 11th

So soon as I could get released from attending to various persons calling at the Office on different matters of business, I set out to join Mr Hunt in Hexhamshire to look into some arrangements respecting the Farms there & especially to direct the mode of planting some young hedges where the old ones have entirely failed, & which I intend to have done upon a better plan than heretofore. Finding that Andrew Thorburn, late Tenant of Mirehouse, had made it public that he intended to sell a Threshing Machine, which he has there, on Saturday, I sent Mr Hunt to inform him, that if he sold it, it must be on condition that the money should be paid in part of his arrear of Rent, otherwise it should not be allowed to be removed. It is not (unluckily) of much value. Besides the Machine he also claims some fixtures connected with it, which I suspect would be put up by the Hospital, as in other cases, & which I shall try to ascertain from the Millwrights or Bailiff employed at the time.

**12 Dec 1834 John Grey**

Friday 12th December

In my way to Newtonhall today, I rode to Stokoe the Millwrights & found him, not only that the fixtures & cross beams of the Threshing Machine at Mirehouse belong to the Hospital, but that he was paid by the Hospital for putting the Machine in repair, the original of which belonged to Thorburn, he imagines, was not worth more than £10. It seems singular that such should be the case, & Thorburn be still allowed to claim the Machine all along as his property. The fair thing seems to be, that the Hospital should take the Machine & allow him £10, or whatever sum, upon enquiry, the original works were worth.

Proceeded to Newtonhall to see how the tenant is going on, who is likely to quit at May day. No-one has as yet looked at the Farm, but Mr Peacock. Mr Jobling the adjoining Proprietor there wishes to effect an exchange of a field of the Hospital which he asked me to look at & to report to the Commissioners. By a reference to the plan of Newtonhall Farm, it will be seen that Mr Jobling has 15 Acres of Land surrounded by that of the Hospital & close to their Farm Offices. In lieu of this Mr Jobling would take a field, No. 32 in our Plan, of the same size, or nearly, by which he would have all the Land to the East of the road which is the drive to his House & so keep the hedges & Gates according to his mind. In my opinion, the exchange would be a greater advantage to the Hospital than to him, except for the accommodation mentioned, cause the land got from him is of excellent quality and close at hand, whereas the other, though good land too, is at a distance. Should the Commissioners be willing to entertain his application Mr Jobling proposes that the respective fields should be valued by neutral Persons & the difference adjusted by cutting off a small piece on either side of the boundary Fence in some convenient part of the land, which the fence being in many parts very crooked, might be done with advantage - or if the Land that Mr Jobling wants, should be too much, he would not object to pay the difference in money. I apprehend the difference would be very little. The exchange would be an advantage to the occupier of the Hospitals Farm, which is also the opinion of the Tenant.

Went from there to Whittle to look over that Farm & see the filling of the plantation to be made & the young trees that have been sent from the Nursery. I found that in measuring the Land for planting Mr Parkin had mistaken my directions, having taken in merely the Ground broken by old Quarries, whereas to save a good deal of fencing & make the Plantation into a good farm, he should have included two or three Acres more. This led me to, a dilemma with the Tenant, as I had in letting the Farm, only stipulated for a smaller quantity, on pointing it out to him today, he readily admitted the propriety & saving on hedges, of planting the whole, & as it had originated in Mr Parkin's mistake of my directions, he readily agreed to give up the extra Land without compensation.

**13 Dec 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 13th December

Informed the Lessees of Langley Mills, according to the Board's Minute, that they could not be allowed to burn Lime at the Kiln reserved for the Tenants there, nor to dispense with the covenant in their Lease, binding them to insure the Premises against Fire. Wrote to the Secretary of the Railway Company, informing him that the Board would offer no opposition to their application to Parliament to be allowed to use locomotive Steam Engines. Wrote to the Bankers requesting them to pay £5000 to the credit of the Commissioners on the 29th Instant.

Rode through the Estates of Westwood, Fourstones & Allerwash. At Highwood & Westwood the Hedges by the sides of the new Turnpikes have been in many places so improperly planted, having no soil to grow upon, that after the expense of railing & cleaning them for several years they are no farther forward, nor ever will be good for anything. As they are now in our charge, rather than incur the annual expense of keeping up the railing, while the hedge makes no progress, I have directed Workmen how to proceed in taking out the bad parts, & planting them over again with a bed of good Soil from the accumulated scraping of the Roads, laid under their roots. At Allerwash a new Smithy must be made, the old one being in both a most inconvenient situation, & dangerous condition. I examined again today the Buildings & situation of the Mill there, with reference to the Railway. The best line & that which will do the least injury to the Hospitals Land is directly over the site of the Mill. The Building is bad but the dwelling House is better. The Railway Company offer £400 for them exclusive of Machinery, and I dare say that would fully cover the cost of moving the Buildings back out of their way & also give us new for old Houses, but in case of a new Mill, some part only of the present Machinery would go in again. The expense of new Machinery could not however be fairly laid upon the Company, & an allowance must be made to the Tenant for the time the Mill would be off Work. All things considered it will probably be the best plan to require the Company to build accommodation equivalent to the present, off the line of the Railway, to compensate the Tenant for the loss of time, & as we should have a new building which ought to be done under the inspection of our Surveyor, instead of a bad one which would not stand long, it might be fair & reasonable, to allow them the timber for roofing out of the Hospitals Woods.

**15 Dec 1834 John Grey**

Monday 15th December

Communicated my ideas respecting Allerwash Mill to Mr Johnson, Agent to the Rail way asking him to make a distinct proposition on the subject, which I might lay



before the Commissioners, enquiring also, their intention as to laying off a road from Hexham to the West Boat, which might at some future time under the Hospital Tenants liable to the payment of a second Toll on the road to Hexham, in which case I should think it necessary to oppose it. Received the Leases of Spency Croft & Nursery Farms, together with the Boards Minutes & Secretary's Letter, and made the necessary communications to Mr Bainbridge & the Moor Master. Received from Mr Fenwick a Letter which I herewith enclose in answer to my request that he would furnish me with an explanation of the circumstances under which he accepted £20 in payment of the debt due to the Hospital by Common & Atkinson.

Received also from Mr Forster the documents relative to the Arbitration between Pringle & Johnson, with his Letter on the subject of Johnsons claims to relief from a certain portion of that award, all of which are herewith forwarded. Mr Forster returned at the same time the conditions for letting Allerwash Lime & Brokenheugh Coal, which I had submitted to him, with some additions of his own, which I think very judicious, a Copy of which I send for the Boards approbation. Arranged some matters respecting the sales of Wood with Mr Parkin, & engaged him to meet me at Hartburngrange on Wednesday morning, to fix what Wood should sold & what part of the Dean replanted, & afterwards went through the Woods here where the Men are engaged in thinning & dressing them.

**16 Dec 1834 John Grey**

Tuesday 16th December

Received from Mr Johnson the Lease & Counterpart of Coastley for execution of the Tenant. Also a Letter from Mr Nairn explaining his views as to the projected addition & outlay at Waren Mills, but making no offer of an advance of Rent, as I suggested. I shall be there in the course of the following Week to examine the Land etc and talk the matter over with him. I forward his Letter herewith. I had a meeting as I requested with Mr Lee upon the subject of EsPhill Farm. I showed him my valuation of £268. He was most unwilling to advance upon his offer of £250, but after going away from the house he consented to give £260, which I agreed to recommend to the Board to accept of with the understanding that the Lease is to stand good to the end and no allowance for damage by smoke from the Mill or any thing else, to be required. This is of course dependent upon an agreement to be made with the present Tenant as to the terms upon which he will surrender the Lease. He & Mr Lee ought to make up the next years rent between them, according to Mr Peacocks rental, or it would be giving Mr Peacock an undue preference over the other Tenants who applied to be quit under similar circumstances & were refused.

**17 Dec 1834 John Grey**

Wednesday 17th December 1834

Arrived at Hartburngrainge at 9 oclock at which time I had appointed the Tenants Thomas & Samuel Brewis to be at home. I went to their respective houses & having discussed with them the Covenants I had fixed upon for their ensuing Leases & brought them to consent to my terms, I filled up agreements for Leases accordingly & obtained their Signatures. I then met Crile, as I had fixed, to see as to the Houses which could be attached to the Colliery. Besides the old Woodkeepers House, I could only find an old Cow House in a field on the North Farm which the Tenant can spare. This we examined, & rather than incurring the cost of making it fit for a Cottage by building a Chimney & other things that are necessary at such a distance with no one to look after it, I engaged to allow Crile £5 for doing it, he being bound to have it & all other erections in good repair. I then went into the Woods where I had engaged Mr Parkin to meet me. He is engaged in marking off a great deal of inferior Wood with a view to sell it. In thinning those Woods formerly they have unluckily taken out most of the Larch which would now have been valuable & left a great quantity of Beech which is unsaleable. As it will not improve in size or value now, I think it best to clear the Woods as much as possible of all the unprofitable stuff, & replace it with Trees of a better kind. The replanting of this cannot take place for another year, but there are pieces of ground on the top & slopes of the glen which have been fenced off for planting, but never planted, & other pieces which in letting the farms I have reserved for planting, in some parts, because they are of little value & in others because they save a good deal in the length of the Hedge to be made, which will be planted this season. Having desired Mr Brewis to get some experienced Workmen to meet me on the ground I went over it with them & Mr Parkin & having set out the lines of fence, concluded by bargaining with them for making the pits for planting by the thousand & the hedges by the roof. Mr Brewis engaged to look at their Work daily & to supply them with money as occasion requires. In the evening rode a few Miles Northward.

**18 Dec 1834 John Grey**

Thursday 18th

Proceeded to Wooler - saw a Nurseryman who used to supply me with excellent goods. His stock at present is very good & told him if he would deliver them at such a distance as Hartburngrainge, without charge, I would probably give him an order. This he is to consider of. Reached Milfield Hill late in the evening.

Friday 19th

Went to Outchester, the tenant not being at home proceeded through the Farms of Spindleston & Glororum, at the latter place some new fences are in progress, & Mrs Thomson & her family are making considerable efforts to improve the condition of the Farm. In the evening went to a friends house near Bamburgh to sleep.

**20 Dec 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 20th

Called on Mr Nairn before breakfast & examined his premises, having a description of the additions to the Mill & Machinery which he proposes in case of coming to an Agreement for a new term. He has promised to supply me in a few days, with an estimate of the probably outlay to which those additions would subject him upon receiving which, I shall be better able to found a report to the Board. An order had been made, Mr Nairn says, about two years ago for a grant of upwards of £200 for the purpose of adding a story to the Granaries which has never been acted upon, because it was considered by himself & Mr Hooper, that it would only in part remedy the deficiency of the Mill for want of room, & that it wd be better by an additional expenditure, to make the improvement more complete. These Mills were formerly pretty well supplied with Water, but that is now much altered by the draining of some extensive Mosses in adjoining Properties to the West, by which, instead of the Water passing off gradually, it is, after falls of rain discharged so rapidly, that for a day or two, there is much more than can be used, & then hardly any for a long time to come, to remedy this want of Water, Mr Nairn applied a Steam power in aid of the Water Wheel, but this works so inconveniently and is attended with such loss of time in changing from one to the other, that he would more adapt the present Mill entirely to the Steam power, & by an additional Building at the North end of the Mill in which he could place Machinery & a Water Wheel of considerable power, the present one being worn out, he would use the Water when it was to be had without interfering with the other Mill, & also gain the Granary now wanted, by floors above the new Building without unroofing & raising the present one. This seems to be a very good plan for enlarging the premises & fitting them for doing a great deal of business. It remains to be seen what the termes may be upon which Mr Nairn will undertake it. Went through the Farm of Chesterhill & examined all the draining which had been done under my Sons inspection Nothing has been done towards making the roads through the fields, except working stones in a Quarry, as the tenant wishes to take the advantage of Frost, should we have any, to save plunging the fields in leading them.

Went to Outchester having left a message for the tenant to be in the way. Discussed with him & filled up the Covenants in the Agreement for a Lease, which he executed. Examined the Cottages which are damp, uncomfortable & out of repair from the superficial manner in which they had been finished.

Went over his fields to see some draining he had begun and advise as to some in other parts that are wanted. Having got a reduction of Rent, with a prospect of being able to pay it, the Tenant is exerting himself to improve the condition of the Farm. Returned to Milfield Hill in the evening, after a long day of riding and Walking.

**22 Dec 1834 John Grey**

Monday 22nd December 1834

Heard from Mr Beaumont's Agent agreeing to pay me from £60 to £70 on account of Andrew Thorburn for Rent, being money due to him for carriage of Ore, also making enquiry on account of the Railway Company, respecting the Conditions of letting Allenerwash Lime, & appointing an examination of Allerwash Mill with a view to propose some Plan of compensation. Wrote to Mr Hunt instructing him respecting that and other matters. Was engaged nearly all day at Coupland Castle in the trust of its late owner.

Tuesday, Wednesday & Christmas Day

Passed in seeing my old friends & with my family now all collected at their former home.

**26 Dec 1834 John Grey**

Friday 26th December 1834

Set out in the morning to Scremerston. As those Farms contain land of very different quality, it was necessary to divide that which was calculated for turnip husbandry from such as will be better occupied in a rotation including Beans & Wheat. I accordingly went over to Mr Hogarths farm with the Plan and having ascertained the quantities of each kind, filled up an Agreement with the suitable covenants and obtained his signature. I then proceeded through Mr Thomsons farm for the same purpose, which together with the calculations of quantities & the discussion generally attending such an arrangement occupied me to a late hour. Mr Thomson proposed the alteration of a line of hedge through his Farm, for the purpose of dividing the Clay from the Turnip Land - a part of both kinds of Soil being at present included in the same Fields, which would be better otherwise. But I told him that, as that had not been attended to in planting the Hedges, & the Coms had let him the Farm somewhat below my valuation, he must take all such expenses upon himself, which he agreed to. He is quite tired of the Wind Machine, & I don't wonder; it's operations are so uncertain, & the loss of time in collecting people to work at it, & then if the Wind fails, turning them

to other employments, so great. He wished me to consent to build him an Engine House and what accommodation would be needful for a Steam power, which he would erect on his own account. I would not undertake to recommend this to the Board, because they would have the external Machinery thrown on their hands, the internal part only being applicable to Steam.

On calculating the value of the Sails & upright Shaft of the Tower, I find it would do little if any thing more build what is wanted & make the Reservoir for collecting & cooling the Water, which too will be a more permanent property than the Sails & Wood. I therefore proposed to Mr Thomson, that if he will build & make what is necessary in the one case, taking the internal Machinery by valuation, I should take upon me to advise the Board to place the other at his disposal in return for his outlay. This he consented to, and if authorised will immediately undertake. With Coal on the Premises it is certainly much better to have a power that is always at command and that can be regulated with ease, than one which is always uncertain & often disappointing, and as to risk of Fire, Mr Thomson tells me that he has always insured the Wind Machine there higher than the Steam one at another Farm considering it in greater danger from the velocity at which it is liable to be driven.

**27 Dec 1834 John Grey**

Saturday 27th December

Examined the piece of Road which was made by direction of the Board, to admit of the future working of the Quarry, without breaking into a field. It is not quite finished but is a good job, my Son having let it to a man who has been much employed on the lines of turnpike in that part, who was well known to me. His estimate was the lowest, but he complains that it will not pay him, the old road was so bad to take up. Went with Mr Hogarth to see a Wall of considerable length which divided the tillage fields from the Sea Links where Sheep are pastured at some seasons & where fences indispensable. This is a grievous concern. It had been built at considerable expense, but with such a perishable Stone, got from the top of the Limestone Rock, that there is not a heard of it standing, nor scarcely a Stone in it, that can be used again. Mr Hogarth found it in that state on entering the Farm expected to have it rebuilt, according to a promise made to him, which has not been done, & in the meantime has been obliged to patch it up with Thorns & Rails, & frequently to keep a person watching his Sheep on the Links to prevent them trespassing among the Corn. There seems no alternatives but to make a new Fence at the beginning of a new Lease, by which the Tenant is bound to maintain the fence in repair, and even then it will fall heavily upon him, as all the stones must be led from the high part of the Farm where the new road is now being made, by himself. A Hedge would not grow in that situation, both from the standings of the Soil & the exposure to the East Winds from the Sea. It will be necessary I imagine to take in Estimates for Quarrying & building it

according to dimensions which I left with Hogarth, & to do so much in a season as he can conveniently lead the Horses for. Some of the Cottages occupied by the Labourers upon that Farm are very damp & uncomfortable, the floors never having been regularly flagged, but laid with course flat Stones, & the roofs are not waterproof, though Hogarth laid £10 in the Autumn for the repair of the tiling upon his Farm. Better floors can be made by a composition of Lime & Ashes from the Colliery Engine, than by those bad flags, & at much less expense, & I shall send a Man against Spring to do them, who laid floors for me 30 years ago in that way, that are as good as ever now & remarkably dry. There are two very old Cottages which it is scarcely safe to inhabit, & which yet cannot be dispensed with any degree of convenience, which I think it will be necessary to rebuild in the Spring.

I then went to Pringle, who was most outrageous at not having been placed, as he said, on the same footing with his neighbours, by having his Rent reduced. I told him that when he applied for an abatement of Rent, he had been informed like others that it would not be granted, but he might by giving timely notice, get quit of his farm, that as he had not done so, he must abide by it for the present. He said that if he continued he would be ruined, and if he quitted it he would be ruined, that it was my business to have let him know that the other farms were to be offered to the tenants privately, & to advise him to follow the same course. I told him that I did not understand that it formed a part of my duty to inform the Tenantry of the Hospital of any negotiation that might be going on with other individual, but that he had had an equal chance with them to get quit of his Farm had he chosen. But said he, how did I know that I would have an offer of it again? I told him that the Conditions on which old Tenants were to be treated with, were there former adherence to their covenants & having managed their Farms creditably. This seemed to touch him on a sore point, & he became more furious, insisting that he should at once be put upon the same terms as the others. I told him it was not for me to do so but he might make any application to the Commissioners that he choose, tho' I believed that he would only receive the same answer that he had previously done. No, he would apply to no Commissrs any more. He was determined to go to the Duke of Wellington at once, & he would see him righted for he was a friend of the Duke & had correspondence with him. I assured him that I could offer no objection to his making such an application to his Grace, if he thought proper, & made my retreat from the Storm, without having heard a word of some matters which he wished to speak about, but which after a few days cooling, he may have recollected.

I then went to the Colliery Office. Johnson is not there, but the Clerks showed me the Books. I much fear that the expensive Rail way has been an ill advised measure. It is evidently of no use to the Landsale & I see that there is not a Port to which the Coal is Shipped that affords them a remunerating price. It looks well & is of large size which is a desideratum, but it is too coarse in quality to compete with the Coal from the Tyne or Wear, and from what I saw of their payments & receipts, I should fear that it has been a very bad concern. Having heard that the Bank at Berwick has obtained some sort of Security over the Colliery to cover Johnsons Account, I went there and had an

interview with two of the Patrons to ascertain the fact, as well as to inform them of the claims of the Hospital which could not be invalidated by any security given to them. This they were aware of, & promised that no hostile proceedings should be taken, until I should be acquainted with it & satisfied. They said moreover, that if Johnson could get rid of the fraudulent paper put in circulation by his Partner Brown he might get through, but otherwise, he had not the slightest chance. However necessary it is to secure the rights of the Hospital, it would be more impolitic to make a seizure at present, which if. It relieved, must in a few days proceed to Sale. By this means the Works would be laid off, & the Engines etc sold for almost nothing, whereas were I to decide into whose hands the Colliery must fall, the full value of them would be got by valuation. At Berwick I reced from Mr Thompson £350 & from Mr Hogarth £100 which they had left unpaid at the Rent day, & transmitted it to the Bank.

In the evening, had an interview with Nairn according to appointment & got from him the following Statement:

Rent of Waren & Spindleston Mill	£396
Machinery in Spindleston Mill (All Mr Nairns) value £1000 at 8 Per cent.	80
Do. Proposed to be erected at Waren by Mr Nairn estimated at £1100 at 8 percent.	88
Supposed outlay for the building for Machinery and Granaries at Waren £1060 and at 6 Per Cent	60
	£624 0 0

Besides this outlay, Nairn proposes to erect a Bone Mill. I would not however advise the Board to engage to repay that, at the end of the Lease, because the supply of Bones may fail, or the use of them for Manure be less in repute, than at present, & it might become dead stock on their hands. Nairn therefore understands that he must do that solely on his own footing, only he requests that he may have the Materials for a Water Wheel that belong to the Hospital and are not likely to be sold at Newcastle, which he would take round & put up at his own expense, leaving the Wheel in repair, as the property of the Hospital. Perhaps he might be induced to give a moderate price for those Materials too, & then it would be entirely his own. By this Statement Nairn would be saddled with a Rent of £624, & says that he cannot give more. Of this I cannot form an opinion, but think he might be asked to advance £30 or £40 a year in the first place, although I think it would be impolitic to lose so good a tenant. Those Mills are well situated for trade, and having obtained a Lease from Lord Grey of the small Harbour and buildings adjoining Nairn has the full command of it & could make it very inconvenient for any other occupier of the Mills. Situation however will not do all, a Man must have capital, connexion & capacity for business to make it a good one & though Nairn has all those requisites & has done well in it, it was quite otherwise with his predecessors. It is certain too that contemplating such an addition to the Mills he would wish to take the earliest advantage of it by commencing his operations

immediately. I shall therefore hope to be favored with the instructions of the Board on the subject. Returned to Milfield Hill at Midnight.

**29 Dec 1834 John Grey**

Monday 29th December

Passed the day there and at Coupland Castle, having several Farms on that Estate to let.

Tuesday 30th December

Rode 44 Miles towards Dilston taking Hartburngrainge in my way, to see how the Work I had set out was going on & ascertain what quantity of thorn Quicks would be required for the new fences.

Wednesday 31st

Proceeded to Dilston - received reports of all transactions during my absence - examined Cash Accounts - answered Letters etc.