

Dear Sir

Henry Ashurst

St Kitts 24<sup>th</sup> March 1781

The Receipt of your very  
friendly & Polite Letter by Mr Bannatyn  
was one of the most agreeable & Pleasing  
Circumstances I have experienced of a  
long time, - the more so, as I had heard  
by some means or other that you were  
Dead, - & really believed it untill the  
receipt of your letter, which afforded  
both Mr Johnston & myself unspeak-  
-able pleasure; We sincerely Congra-  
-tulate you on your Matrimonial  
Connection, & your additional happiness  
in the birth of a Son, with the  
pleasing prospect of an Increase of  
family - may that Increase daily  
bring you and your Amiable  
Partner an increase of Happiness,  
Prosperity and every felicity this  
world affords.

The I have never had the  
happiness of having Children,  
yet I cannot complain having  
enjoyed every degree of felicity and  
happiness in the Married State  
that I could wish for or desire, (that  
one Circumstance excepted,) to which,  
we both endeavour to reconcile  
ourselves and be contented.

The Dutch war, and  
Capture of St Eschatius was a  
terrible

terrible blow on me, — tho' fortunately  
I was much better off than my  
neighbours, for I had determined to  
Quit, & go & Reside in some part  
of Britain, so that at the time of y<sup>r</sup>  
capture I had sold of all my stock in  
trade & part of my property of Houses  
Negroes &c.<sup>a</sup> and had remitted  
something to England, but w<sup>th</sup> a view  
of making the most of my property  
I sold upon time, & those who pur-  
= chased, being stripped of their all  
and Ruined — from thence arose  
my losses, w<sup>ch</sup> with a considerable  
value in the Dutch fleet that  
was captured (uninsured,) Deprived  
me of half of my All; — Still I had  
wherever all left on which I could have  
lived in a Decent comfortable Retreat  
in England, but the Climate did not  
agree with Mrs Johnston, who scarce  
enjoyed a days health during two winters  
we were there, which determined me  
to return to the W. Indies; — & seeing  
no Encouragement to Enter again into  
Trade, — The Estate I at present Possess  
being offer'd me for sale, It's pleasant  
and agreeable situation, (more than  
the bargain) Induced me to become  
The

the purchaser, - where we have now  
resided three years, and enjoyed the  
greatest blessing in life - uninterrupted  
Health. - my Distance from town  
is seventeen Miles, where I go but  
seldom, except in the Court Months,  
and my friend Mr. Bannatyne having  
gone to reside at St. Vincent's - of course  
I seldom know or hear of an opportunity for  
your place, - by accident a Mr. Houlis  
who goes passenger in this vessel -  
mentioned it to me or I should not  
have known of this opportunity which  
sails to morrow.

My Brother William & myself  
went down to Orkney in 1782 -  
and paid our Mother a visit of  
near three months - and made her  
very happy, - you will suppose  
what a joyful meeting it was, after  
upwards of thirty years absence, -  
The good old woman's heart Exulted  
with various Papions - which you  
will more easily conceive than I can express.

I thank you for your kind presents  
of Spruce. - My family who consist of  
Mrs. J. her Father, a younger Sister,  
myself and a Nephew, all unite in  
every friendly sentiment & affectionate  
wish to you and Yours, being very  
sincerely Dear Sir - your affect. friends & friends  
Signed Henry Johnston