

John Johnston

My Dear Nephew

London Sep. 15. 1772

A15/3/1

With great pleasure I received your letter by M^r Pops about a month ago, and hope that you have by your diligent Attention made great Improvements since it was wrote I shall be glade to have another from you on Receipt of this, acquainting me what you have learned, & what you are learning & what you propose to learn, For know this that a man without Education will cutt but a poor Figure in the World, therefore Youth being the time for Education, in order to do Justice to yourself you ought to apply diligently to what you are about, & learn as much usefull Literature as possible you can before that time which you must begin to reply to some kind of Employment to enable you to get a living in the World, And this Opens a large field for your Consideration, You are your Fathers Only Son but he has no Estate to leave you, & if he had you ought to sett out in Order to Obtain what you can by your Own honest Industry, Beg of God to advise you & direct your mind to Incline to that which is best, & that you may not Incline to, nor set out about any thing but what the Almighty will approve of, And when you are going to set about any thing let this be your Golden Rule (e) say earnestly in your Own mind, if it is right grant that I may pursue & do it, but if it is wrong the Lord forbid me from it, And the Almighty will actually do so, for he will approve of your Conduct, that you rely on him to bless your best endeavours, his restraining Grace is the best protection of Mankind, & in the course of your life if please God you are spared to see the Man on this Earth you will prove what I here Assert to be true, & that you will be keep'd from doing things that you wished to do, And by your Asking as above you being restrain'd from it & not doing it was the best

best for your Good. & then you will naturally thank God that
you did not do it. Think well of what I here advise & ad^{ly} according
& further you will consider that you are the Only Brother
of several Sisters. A man should have that Nobleness of sentiment
that he would rather wish to help than be helped & to obtain
that power he must beg of God to advise him to pursue such
means as may enable him & must be industrious, diligent
& carefull, And let this be the Motive of your Actions (ie Honesty
is the best policy, and this be your Rule, To do to others as you would
that others should do by you, - A Fricking person may obtain
Wealth & Emolument ~~in a short time~~ but God who loves the right
and hates the wrong cannot approve of his Ways, tho he may
be content at first, till we often see the Wretch pulled down
and year in his own Collours, while the Honest man enjoy
a constant satisfaction in his own Actions tho not succeeding
so well as the others. - I would have you think & bend your
mind to some business where by you may have a Chance to
employ yourself. To prepare yourself for which, Endeavour
to spell well, to Read distinctly, to Write a good hand, & to ditto
You will you must furnish your mind with Knowledge
which is Obtained by reading good instructive books, then Good
writing with good Style will like a Spring Urise in the
ground & flow out to your own satisfaction & your pen will
convey the like to those you correspond with who will esteem
you for it as one Capable. And you must learn to Understand
Arithmetick well, & likewise Book-keeping all which is
Requisite in a Common Sphere of Life, the more Compleat
you are in this the fitter either for a Mechanical Trade or
a Merchants Clerk. To learn such like Trading Businesses, &
if you have a mind to go to Sea, learn Navigation also, together

with what I have already mentioned. The whole being requisite
in that way. & if you incline to be a Doctor or a Lawyer you
must also learn Latin. Thus Whatever business you incline to
Qualify yourself for, & this conclude that you must apply to
Some Business Or Other, I would have your sentiments to be
such that you will aspire to Obtain a living for yourself & to
be able to help your sisters. Your Father if he can spare a little
to Qualify you as above & help in Obtaining a way to get a living
is all that he can do. & for you to think of more will be mean
in you which dependence you will Repent as long as you live

Therefore be diligent
on business to learn
you must not think of
the blessing of God, & the sentiments herebefore
Your Fortune abroad Consult your own Inclination
acquaint your Father & friends, and that God
Protect you is the sincere wish of
Remember my love to your
Father & Mother Grandmother
All your Aunts & Sisters. All
here are well

write for posts as soon as you receive this

Dear
Your affectionate
J. W. Johnson

[Faint, mostly illegible handwriting on the top section of the document, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side.]

[Faint handwriting]
 Mr. John Wilson
 at Mr. James Robertson's
 in Memphis
 R. 15. 8m
[Circular stamp]
 Arkney

[Faint handwriting on the right section of the document, mostly illegible.]
