

**Addressed to:** Capt<sup>n</sup> W.D. (*W.Dickie ?*)

**From:** John Purss (?)

Quebec 28<sup>th</sup> August 1786

Capt<sup>n</sup> W.D.

Dear Sir,

However improperly the odious term of old batchelor may have come from me, I shall be glad to learn you have expunged your name out of our list & entered yourself into the fraternity of your wise brother & my partner and that you have before now legally got under the lie of the amiable Amy Dow's petticoat. If you have, I am convinced from M<sup>rs</sup> Johnston's high opinion of that lovely girl & your own more than lukewarm epithet, you will be infinitely more happy than in the tasteless insipid state of celibacy can possibly afford you. However far my inclination might have led me, or that the connection might have been agreeable to either of the lovely objects you allude to, I have the mortification to inform you that a wise and all directing providence has seen fit to deprive me & the world of their endearing persons being both cut off in the bloom of life by a scarlet fever & gangrenous sore throat, Miss Hetty on the 3<sup>rd</sup> & Miss Nancy on the 4<sup>th</sup> March last, after an illness of a very few days, both laying corpses in the house at the same day - a melancholy instance of the futillity of all sublunary things. This disorder was very prevalent & mortal in town this spring especially among young people of a plethoric habit & that manly promising boy Billy Macknider also fell a victim to its rage.

Mrs Johnston was attacked by it at same time with the Miss Taylors & was some time before she recovered her health, but I have the pleasure to acquaint you that the sprightly healthfull air of Lilac Hill (where she, Mr Johnston & their boy, a most lovely promising child, have spent the summer) has contributed to her perfect recovery.

That you may long live with health to enjoy it is the sincere wish of, D<sup>r</sup> Sir

Yours etc.