

Addressed to: James Johnston

From: Henry Johnston, St Kitts

St Kitts 24th March 1787

Dear Sir,

The receipt of your very friendly & polite letter by Mr Bannatyne 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 until the receipt of your letter, which afforded both M^{rs} Johnston & myself unspeakable pleasure. We sincerely congratulate you on your matrimonial connection, & your additional happiness in the birth of a son, with the pleasing prospect of an encrease of family. May that encrease daily bring you and your amiable partner an encrease of happiness, prosperity and every felicity this world affords.

Tho' 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 Eustatius, was a 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 Brittain, so that at the time of y^e capture I had sold of all my stock in trade & part of my property of houses, negroes, etc. and remitted something to England, but wth a view of making the most of my property. I sold upon time & those who purchased, being stripped of their all and ruined, from thence arose my losses, w^{ch} with a considerable value in the Dutch fleet that was captured (uninsured) deprived me of half of my all. Still I had wherewth all left on which I could have lived in a decent comfortable retreat in England, but the climate did not agree with M^{rs} 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, its pleasant and agreeable situation (more than the bargain) induced me to become 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 M^r Bannatyne having gone to reside at St Vincents, of course, I seldom know or hear of an opp^{ty} for your place. By accident a M^r Foulis who goes passenger in this vessel mentioned it me or I should not have known of this opp^{ty} which sails tomorrow.

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 passions which you will more easily conceive than I can express.

I thank you for your kind present of spruce. My family who consist of M^{rs} J, her father, a younger sister, myself and a nephew, all unite in every friendly sentiment & affectionate wish to you and yours, being verry sincerely

Dear Sir

Your affec^t friend & serv^t

Signed Henry Johnston