

**Addressed to:** J & P

**From:** David Geddes, Stromness

Stromness, 12 April 1788

Dear friends,

*(early text of letter not recorded in letter book)*

I have very little material to say further than that we are all well in this remote poor happy country, neither Govr, Judge, Lawyer or any rank above a poor minister to disturb us, not so much as a Justice of Peace nearer than 12 miles. Indeed the Customhouse folks sometimes take our good drinks; but yet we are resolved never to pay any duties, let the acts of Parliament be what they will. To give you an idea of the flourishing state of our great town, 40 years ago 150 feet of ground on the shore below the street was bought for £10 & now I pay £60 for 70 feet of the same ground, all the spare pieces of ground on the shore bear the like value. My grandfather had foreseen this & had pick'd up I suppose about one third of the most valuable spots. The ground above the shore that has not free access to the sea is not near so valuable not being so convenient for business tho much easier to build on.

In a very few days I hope Mrs ----- will give me either a son or a daughter, if the former; out of regard & esteem I owe you both jointly, I mean to call him James John, if this should have the good effect to unite in him both your good principals he will be a lucky fellow. If you are thrown out of your chance for this time by a female you must give me credit till next bout, & for your encouragem<sup>t</sup> we shall not be idle.

Signed D.Geddes