

Addressed to: Mr Joshua Johnston, Notary Publick in Stromness, Orkney

From:

London Nov. 24th 1770

Dear Broy^r

The cause of my writing you at present is to enforce your punctuality & dilligence wrt referred to Mr Wm Halcro's letter of yesterday, and as I am privy to the whole of it and his letter of this date, both being concerted 'twixt us, you will adhere to the directions here given you as private to yourself. The request in the first is £400 to be taken up upon the security of his lands, i.e. not sell his lands for that sum, but a wadsett, for he will not sell it on any acc^t at this time and the reason for so doing is that he wants money to lay out for trade to India, and must have money for that purpose or otherwise it is needless for him to proceed on the voyage & in short he cannot go without, as the whole advantage that he has by the good birth gunnor (?) he is in, is the privalege of trade. Therefore as you regard his interest & that of your daughter, be sure that you loose not one moment of time, for his time is so short that none is to spare as And^w Cruckshanks has so long dallied which was just to xxx the advantage of him as appears by the result of his soundings, and by which it appears to me that by pretended xxxxxxx & friendship he wanted to trick him out of at least £200. Mr Halcro has had £140 or 150 of him at different times, his clear rental is £15 per year which at 30 years purchase, as we hear it gives & I think improveable land is certainly worth, is £450, besides there is shores that is valuable. For the whole of this And^w sends to ye amt of £109, £9 to him & the rest to his friend in Edinburgh who sends to Mr Halcro an Irredeemable Deposition to be signed in form & returned before that the money is remitted. Judge of this, & against yourself by obtaining the request of the letter of this date which is politically sent to you to shew to Andrew and obtain a reckoning before that he knows that his propossalls is not to be complyd with, otherwise he might extortion, so that you'l be expert in that point, when you have got the acco^t current you are not to send it as desired but keep it for the satisfaction of those with whom you agreed whether Mr Laing or any other you will first trale (?) with Mr Laing. I shall write him for this post that I recommended Mr Halcro to him & desire his diligence in determining for or against. I think he is y^c most likely to command an immediate sum in London which is my motive & that he will be as proper as any xxxxx and be sure to observe that money must be had, the more the better, £400 if possible but if so much is not attainable take £350, or rather than fail £300. This I write by Mr Halcro's desire who would that any person have it rather than he who has it. He shuffells about the Acc^t Current to put it off. Do not delay for that to settle wt any that will, for Mr Halcro asures me that the most he owes And^w is £150 so if possible conclude and remitt the remainder to London with all expedition with the proper writings to be signed & settle w^t And^w afterwards. I proposed Mr Halcro's applying to Mr Laing before but as he was connected wt And^w he aply'd to him & now has but just time to have an expeditious return to his present letters, but if he is disappointed either by delay or otherways it will be an irretreveable future loss to him as it will oblige to evacuate his

present berth in the India service not being able to do anything in it and go in the Navy which is insignificant.

I am with my love to you all, dear broyr

Your affectionate John Johnston

My broyr James sailed for the West Indies 29 Aug. and David w^t him. He proposes to settle in one of the islands. I have had no letter from Broyr this year but hope he will write me from y^e West Indies. George has gone to Barcelona Mate of the Brigg Diamond, Capt Linch. I expect him to London.

P.S. An impediment has just started in my mind which is that on wadset the present rental will not pay the interest of the £400 therefore to amend that the interest must be paid otherwise untill the time that it may be redeemed or sold & as Mr Halcro would rather give ten percent interest for the money than want it, you must agree to make good the Common Interest for the full sum advanced, which I am certain he will readily agree to.