

Addressed to: Mr Joshua Johnston, Writer, in Stromness

From:

Tain Dec^r 25th 1780

Sir,

I received your favour a few days ago and note the contents, in which I am glad to know that you are all well and likewise that you have heard from Mr John, tho not mentioning what time he means to sett off for Quebeck. I would have answered your letter before now only something unexpected that has come my way that prevented. I had occasion to have dealings with a litigious fellow, a merch^t in Glasgow, which a few months back oblidge me to give him a draught of that infernal scoundral Gallie (?) which draught the said merch^t accepted as good to such time as he had occasion to draw for his money. And then unluckily the draught would not be accepted as any value, the drawer Gallie (?) being indebted very much to the Reg^t (?). Therefore the draught being returned upon me with expeditious diligence to be executed again (?) I was obliged to yield and be incarcerated here. You no doubt could prevent my so being only being advised by my friends in Town to take this method which I expect will prove to my future advantage. & this famous Gallie (?) has made his elopment and cannot be pursued. I have wrote my wife yet nothing with regard to the above. I beg that you'll keep the same as a secret from her in case of her being uneasy, and from all to such time as you hear my next. You made mention if James stands upon the same mind, which he still does, as he himself communicated his mind to you that unless he would get a free passage he could not as yet think upon such. I mean to write Mr John this day but nothing touching my situation. It is true this affair will oblidge me to begin the World a second time, and in expectation of the best, I remain, with my love to Mrs Johnston and family

Yours while

John Urq^t