

**Addressed to:** Mrs Johnston at Stromness, Orkney

**From:** Mr Joseph Isbister, London 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1758

Dear Aunt,

I receiv'd your letter of y<sup>e</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> April 1758 & observe the contents, am glad to hear that you & your family are all well. I thank God my family enjoy a tolerable good state of health at present & hope these will find you & yours enjoying a plenty of y<sup>e</sup> same.

I am very well satisfied that you have convinced my sister in law that she has no right to any part of ye kail ground for in my opinion she enjoys more by the death of my brother than she ought by law and if I had time & opportunity I would soon let her know so too, seeing he left a brother & sister behind him, for she can by law demand no more than her thirds by reason he left no children, & I am obliged to your son for inspecting into her papers, which will give us more light into y<sup>e</sup> affair. As to my houses at the shore, I hope you will take care to keep them tenantable, & the houses in Harray on as good a footing as possible & get in y<sup>e</sup> rent as well as you can, but I would not have you let y<sup>e</sup> tenants get too much in debt but make them pay when the rent comes due. For as I am not on y<sup>e</sup> spot they will put you off with trifling excuses which has been too much y<sup>e</sup> case ever since my father's death. I shall be as glad to settle all acco<sup>ts</sup> as you can be, therefore I desire you will please to send me your account y<sup>e</sup> first opportunity, stated in y<sup>e</sup> most ample manner, & you shall mind for this will be very agreeable to me, for what end can it answer my having possessions in Orkney & not know the produce & as times is very hard I am like to want something from it to support a bad trade by which I have lost greatly & if your son Joshwa would remit to me part or all y<sup>e</sup> money I lent him it would be of great service at present for he must consider I am not in the Hudsons Bay service now & cannot dispence so well without it now as I could then. He has had it without interest many years but shall be glad of y<sup>e</sup> principle which in these times is no small favour for I myself cannot borrow such a sum without giving five p<sup>r</sup> cent.

My compliments to him & family. I conclude with good wishes for your health & all your family

I remain your affectionate nephew

Joseph Isbister

At the Star Brewhouse  
in St Georges Fields  
Southwark  
May y<sup>e</sup> 22<sup>nd</sup> 1758

Betty is with me & is well, gives her duty to you and your family. She was with your daughter, Ann, about six months but is not much improved in y<sup>e</sup> methods of London as yet