

Addressed to: Mr John Johnston, Merch^t in Stromness, Orknies, p^r packet via Halifax

From: John Purss Esq^r, Quebec 24th Dec^r 1800, rec^d 12th April 1801

Quebec 24th Decem^r 1800

M^f John Johnston

Dear Sir,

My last respects of 28th October p^r the Eweretta Patterson via London acquainted you of your Aunt & Cousin Nancy's having taken a passage in the ship Dundas for Port Glasgow in their way to Kilmarnock, & have now to add that we had the satisfaction on the 17th ins^t to learn that they had arrived safe at Greenock on the 27th Septem^r in good health.

I therein also advised you that a final judgement had issued & a dividend decreed of the wrick of your father in law's estate a copy of which judgement to save postage I transcribed. When I then wrote to you I thought I had discharged all the lawyer's bills, but M^f Panet & M^f Barthelot tell me they have demands on me for settling your dividend, but I have not yet got their bills, but got an order from M^f Lynd after a great deal of trouble for your proportion after promising Barthelot (who had made some objection to my receiving it) to pay him what fees might be due to him.

Agreeable to promise I now inclose you 1st of Mess^{rs} Mathew Macnider & C^o's bill of this date at 60^d/s on Mess^{rs} Ridsdale Hamilton & C^o, London, for thirty pounds sterling which is all I can possibly spare at present & beg your acceptance of. 2nd shall be sent p^r first occasion via New York or Halifax.

Your Cousin John & myself are thank God in good health & happy to advise you that we have escaped without loss (except a little breakage in moving our effects) from the ravages of a dreadfull conflagration which broke out in the little house we formerly lived in on the King's Wharf (now M^f Harris's as I informed you in my letter of 14th Aug^t last) about 2 o'clock in the morning of 13th Inst, which consumed it and the wooden store opposite to the ground. The door & five window shutters in the gable end of the stone store adjoining our now dwelling house are burnt to cinders & the roof was repeatedly in flames, but we have reason of thankfulness to an all merciful providence that about three o'clock the wind from a heavy gale from the north-east chopped about to the south west & blew with equal violence, which carried the flames in a direction from us & saved our buildings etc from other destruction. Happily no personal injury was suffered. M^{rs} Munn saved herself by escaping by the window of your old bedroom, with one of her children in her arms, in no other covering but her shift, having first dropped the other into the arms of a person below. Munn himself went home in Sept^r last in a new ship he built last winter. He has been rather unfortunate at setting out in his purchase of the lease. The

elements of water & fire seem to contend which shall do him most mischief. A hard gale of easterly wind on the 21st ult^o tore up and carried away a great deal of the front of his part of the wharf, & now this last & heaviest accident.

I am sorry to learn by a letter received 20th Ins^t from your brother Henry Taylor at Halifax of the death on the 2nd Septem^r of my worthy & much revered friend William Brymer of London.

Make offer of my best respects to M^{rs} Johnston, M^r Geddes & family with other friends in Stromness. Wishing you all the compliments of the approaching season & every manner of happiness, in which your cousin John unites.

Believe that I remain sincerely

Dear Sir

Your friend & hble serv^t

John Purss