

Addressed to: M^{rs} Johnson, Stromness, North Britain

From: M^{rs} Ann Taylor, Plymouth, 13 Dec. Rec^d 28th Ins^t 1800

My dear Madam,

I have no doubt but you accuse me of neglect before this in not replying sooner to your obliging letter but I have been in expectation of seeing your brother home for some time past and thought he might wish to add a few lines to my letter himself. They have been cruising off the coast of Spain these last seventeen weeks. On the whole they have been tolerably successful but I assure you I have found the time extremely dull as Mr Taylor has never been absent more than eight weeks before since our marriage. I am in great hopes to see him in two or three weeks at farthest tho' even that is not certain. He is anxious to be home as I expect to be laid up in February and I shall feel less fortitude if he is away.

I inclosed your last to him and he desires his best love to you and your little family, also remembrance to M^r Johnson, begs you will write often. I do not think he has heard from his brother for some time, unless a letter has been forwarded to him since he has been out, which is not probable. For my own part I wish he had an eligible situation on shore, even if the profits were less. I should be much more content for it is a truly uncomfortable life that of a sailor, independent of the great risks they run, exposed to so precarious an element as the sea. And Lord St Vincent is so tyrannical in his orders that it is worse than ever it was. Every person complains. The ships are kept out continually and on their return to port they are allowed no more than six days to refit. Indeed I believe it is the general opinion that he will be the cause of laying up numbers of men this winter. The poor fellows living so long on salt provisions and having little time to refresh on their return even the captains have commands not to sleep one night out of their ships, tho' I fancy this command is not rigidly attended to. If I recollect right, you knew Mr Thompson, purser of the Marick. I am sorry to say by the loss of his ship he sustains great injury. He will not receive any profit from the ship for the last three years and half, which he tells me will amount to upward of six hundred pounds. He is a very worthy young man and I am much concerned. He has often asked after you and family. It would give me great pleasure were your residence near Plymouth. Taylor has often expressed xxxxx and said how happy he would be to think we were near, in his absence especially, it would be a great pleasure for me, tho' I fear I am selfish in the wish as no doubt you are much more comfortable among your friends in the north than you possibly could be in a strange country. I shall hope to hear from you soon. Let me beg my best wishes to M^r Johnson and the little ones. Believe me dear Madam,

Yours sincerely

Ann Taylor

Dec 13th 1800
No 66 Cumberland Street
Plymouth Dock, Devon