

[John Macarthur letters concerning William Redfern.]

Bath 3rd May 1810.

My beloved Elizabeth,

I have not words to describe to you the happiness and gratification I felt at the receipt of your letters of the 13th of last October, brought on I understand to Rio in the *Mary Ann*, and forwarded from thence by the *Elizabeth*, Man-of-War. They found me here endeavouring to recruit my health and spirits, but though the former is pretty well restored, I found it altogether impracticable to shake off a gloom which had continued to increase upon me ever since the arrival of the letter you sent by way of India, wherein you expressed your apprehensions that our sweet girl would never recover the use of her limbs again. It shocked me more than any other tidings of the dear sufferer possibly could have done, for life under such deplorable circumstances could confer no pleasure, and must, in my opinion, be an unceasing burthen to the afflicted object. Judge then what must have been, and what are still, my feelings at reading the almost unhopd for news of the favourable change which has taken place in the health of my beloved girl.— The day after I received your letters, Mr. Redfern's nephew [Thomas Jnr.] came over from Trowbridge, kindly sent by his father [Thomas], with a letter from Mr. Redfern to me, in which your account of the dear girl's progressive recovery is most fully and pleasingly confirmed. I think I need not tell you, that if I had as much power as I have inclination, Mr. Redfern's reward for the service he has rendered Elizabeth should be as great as the skill he has manifested in discovering and applying an efficacious remedy to her extraordinary disease.—I hope he will be informed that no pains were spared on my part to ascertain how far it might be practicable to obtain a confirmation of his appointment, and I beg to assure him that whenever Mr. Bligh's affair is settled, whatever little interest I have shall he exerted in his favour.—

I sent a packet town by the coach this morning containing Protested bills. Letters etc. accompanied by a memorandum, which will, I hope, be sufficient to explain to you the mode I think most advisable to be pursued to collect together the large sums due upon them. Whether I shall be able to recover anything from Blaxland on the draft you enclosed a copy of in your last letter is very doubtful. I must, however, try what can done. I have received letters from Hannibal, dated 30th September from Canton. He had disposed of the *Elizabeth* and her Cargo, but at so low a rate as will leave him a vast sum short of our sanguine calculations. He does not say what is the cause of so extraordinary a depreciation in the price of sandal wood. I suppose it must be occasioned by the immense quantities of that commodity lately sent to that market.—In the packet I sent today is a copy of Hannibal's account for Mr. Blaxcell, with an estimate of the amount he will most probably remain debtor to me, even tho' I should safely receive remittances for the sandal-wood sent in the

*Wellesley* and by the *American* brig from Rio de Janerio. You will of course urge him to pay what he can in liquidation of the heavy balance against him, and, at all events, to give an obligation to pay interest for what he cannot pay, as it cannot be expected that I can afford to suffer for another person to carry on trade with my money, while I am deprived of all benefit from it myself.

I entreat you not to let these adverse circumstances prey upon your spirits, they cannot be helped, and repining may increase, but will not repair, the evil.

If you get my letters by the *Canada* you will learn that Edward sailed from Portsmouth in March to join his Regiment at Malta—he was in excellent spirits, and highly elated at the flattering reception he has met from many respectable characters,—There can be no fear of his doing well for a better disposed youth does not exist.

John affords a prospect of equal success in the line he has chosen—altho' he has been only three months at the University—he has obtained the Fourth Prize amongst 400 candidates for his Greek exercises—You will find a letter in the packet from a Mr. Young respecting him—He is a Greek professor and is said to be the ablest man at the University of Glasgow—I have heard that John has recommended himself very much to his favour since the letter was written.—I heard James and William were well on Easter Monday and spent two days in Castle Street with Miss Thompson—they are very diligent good boys, and great favourites with Dr. Lindsay—My worthy old friends Mr. and Mrs. Thompson are here with me, and desire their affectionate remembrances to you and Elizabeth; at whose recovery they rejoice as much as if she were their own daughter.—I have been induced to try the air of this City in hopes of shaking off a terrible nervous affection that has assailed me more or less since I got the better of the severe cold that confined me so long in the Winter—But I do not derive so much benefit from living here as I expected and therefore I shall remove in a day or two to Cheltenham to try the effects of the Mineral Waters, for which that place is celebrated.

... I am sorry Mr. Wentworth has omitted to send positive instructions for the disposal of his son.— Mr. Cookney is very anxious what he wishes to have done with him, and it is high time something should be determined upon—He is a very pleasing Lad.

I cannot give you the slightest information respecting our more important business—Government are perfectly silent upon the subject—and the colony and its affairs appear to be as little thought of as if it had no existence, I unceasingly pray for the arrival of Bligh, but I fear we shall not see him until the time of the return of the Regiment—Many people are of opinion he will never return—but that is absurd—for where can he hide himself—How thankful should I be if the business were settled; for to live in such a state of suspense is dreadful—Nothing can I arrange, nor form any fixed plan respecting my return to you my dearest Elizabeth, and my darling Girls. You will learn

from the Newspapers that the Publick Mind is very far from being tranquil in this country.—Many are of opinion that a Revolution is unavoidable, and cannot be long protracted.—In such a state of things it would be weak indeed to expect that the affairs of our insignificant Colony should create much interest. No man thinks of anothers safety when his own house is burning.—I left Johnston a month ago —he was then well; but I fear the losses at which you hint will affect him severely—He does bear misfortunes of this nature with much equanimity.—I ought to have had a letter from John to forward with this, but I fear it will be too late for the Ship.—Davidson is in Scotland with his Father.

I hope Colonel Macquarie's arrival will have produced some beneficial changes in the Colony—What his instructions were are kept a profound secret—It is however understood here, that they were not at all favourable to any one concerned in Mr. Bligh's arrest.—The *precedent* is not liked, for men in power prefer *unlimited* authority over those they govern.—We may think ourselves fortunate Mr. Cook is out of office, for, had he remained in authority his arbitrary principles would have made him extremely active in support of Bligh—Sir Joseph Banks still continues to advocate his friends cause, and speaks of him as a much injured meritorious character—fortunately no one believes him.—We shall be looking out about the beginning of July for the 102nd, what a bustle their removal must have created. It is a happy event for the Colony for a more improper set of men could not be collected together than they have lately become.

Let not my dear Mary imagine I have forgotten her, because I have omitted her name until now—she and all of you are continually in my thoughts, and my prayers are almost unceasingly addressed to Almighty God for your health and happiness—Kiss my sweet cherub Emmeline and teach her to love me. God Almighty Bless

You my beloved Wife.—

JOHN MCARTHUR.

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London 20th July 1810.

My Beloved Wife,

I am sure it will give you great pleasure to hear that Hannibal has arrived safely in this country. He landed at Liverpool the latter end of last month, and proceeded immediately to join me here. My former letters will have prepared your mind to bear the disappointment of our expectations of advantage from that adventure. After settling his accounts with me he left London to visit his father at Plymouth, and he still remains there. It is my intention to hurry him back to you

immediately after the arrival of the next ships from Port Jackson, and I hope I shall receive some letters from you by them, with such information as will enable me to form some determinate plan.

I enclose you herewith a bundle of accounts for Mr. Blaxcell, which will give him every necessary information of the results of our unfortunate speculations in sandal-wood.—I have not yet got the *Dart's* accounts settled, but there will be a considerable loss on his adventure.

Tell Mr. Blaxcell I am much chagrined and disappointed that he does not write to me, as I fully expected he would have been mindful of his promise to do so. I hope he has sold out my share in the *Favourite*, as I instructed him before I sailed, and accounted with you for it.

Mr. John Blaxland has positively refused to pay me £630 without I produce the original draft, and I find I cannot compel him while that draft is in existence. I have, however, caused him to be arrested, and he has been obliged to give bail. When the time of trial comes on, I must present an affidavit to the Court stating every particular of the transaction between us, and praying time to be allowed to produce the original bill. My Attorney assures me that will certainly be granted, and that by adopting this plan I shall have two good bondsmen to look to for my money, if he should be incapable of paying, or should the original bill be lost in coming home, attested copies will then be considered good evidence.—I have, therefore, written a letter to you expressly on this subject, and I have sent you a copy of his letter to my attorney, that you may show the friends of Messrs. Blaxlands how much their testimony is worth in a Court of Justice. You will recollect Gregory swore that his brother told him he had paid the draft, and in the letter to my attorney John says he thinks it probable his brother has made some arrangement to pay it, as he had written to him on the subject.— When you send the attested copies of the draft and protest, send with them a copy of the letter you write with the originals, for should the originals be lost, it will be necessary to prove by what ship they were sent, at what time, and every other particular.

I hope you have received the protested bills I sent you by the *Canada* etc. etc. safe—Sloans for £150 endorsed by Lord, Kables for £100—, Kables for £672— of which £340—8—3 had been paid, leaving a balance of £331—11—9 with interest and expenses to be received. I now send you the second of Kables £1665—6—0 endorsed by Lord, which there is no chance of getting paid in this country, for they are all over head and ears in debt. The accompanying copies of Letter of advice from Lord to Messrs. Plummer & Co., and of their letter to me, will prove that the draft has been kept back at the request of Lord, by which means, if you have not already, on the receipt of the first bill by the *Frederick*, taken steps, you will be enabled to prosecute either the Drawer or the Endorser, as may appear to you most prudent. I am sensible, my dearest Elizabeth, how hard a task necessity obliges me to impose upon you, and believe me however painful it may be to you I bear my full share of the evil when I reflect, as indeed I am constantly doing, upon your situation. I do not doubt

but Mr. Best will lessen your difficulties all in his power, and whatever may be the result, I shall be satisfied you have acted for the best.—But do not compromise with the unprincipled knaves, for depend upon it their circumstances will become more desperate every day.—

Remember me very kindly to Mr. Wentworth, and tell him that I have urged everything I could think of as likely to induce Lord Fitzwilliam to get an appointment for his son in the Company's service or into the Academy at Woolwich. His Lordship really has no interest with the present men, or I am sure he would exert it. I have therefore agreed with Mr. Cookney that there is nothing else to be done but to send him out by the first good opportunity. Most probably he will come with Hannibal.

Inform Mr. Redfern that nothing can be done in his business here, but everything must depend on the report of Colonel Macquarie. Let him know I saw his brother [Thomas] and nephew [Thomas Jnr.] at Trowbridge, and that I shall feel the greatest pleasure if it should be in my power to aid their exertions to serve him.

For the present, my dearest, best beloved Elizabeth adieu.

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