

Letter 1

NLS MS 19331 f1 [IMG_2613.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to James Watson, from Kiltarn, 4 June 1800

My Dear Sir

I was favoured with yours from Kirkwall last night, and I'm now happy to learn by your letter from Loth that you are safely landed on this side of the Formidable Firth. So far all is well and the anxiety of your friends is relieved about your safety.

Mr McGregor came here late last night. We have sent an express for Mr Young to Inverness, and he will probably be here in good time tomorrow to proceed to Tain along with Mr McGregor, where I think you'll best remain till they come up to you. Though we shall long for the pleasure of seeing you here, perhaps it will do best that you come to dinner on Friday and the ceremony can be performed that afternoon. You can easily come Thursday night to Invergordon. All here join in congratulating you on your near approach to us. As for one particular person she is in too great a flutter to write.

Believe me, Dear Sir

Yours most affectionately

Harry Robertson

IMG_2614.jpg

James Watson Esq^r

Of Crantit

Under cover

Letter 2

NLS MS 19331 f3r [IMG_2615.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to James Watson, from Kiltarn, 19 July 1800

My Dear Sir

I rejoice to have the accounts brought by Mr McGregor of your prosperous journey, and agreeable reception on your arrival at home confirmed by your own letter of the 9th curr. I can't easily describe to you the painful emotions we felt at parting with you and our dear Christy. I cannot deny but she was always a distinguished favourite with me. She seems to have bestowed her heart upon a man deserving of her affection and it is my earnest prayer and hope that you will live many years to render each other happy. But perfect and uninterrupted happiness neither of you must expect in this transitory state. Some disappointments and cross accidents must fall to your lot as has been the case of all married persons. At some time if you thoroughly study each others temper and carry accordingly, you have as fair a chance of passing through life comfortably as any married pair I know. You have a competency of the good things of this world and by a prudent attention to your affairs may in a few years attain a genteel independency. Though your situation is remote, you live among a society that

f3v [IMG_2616.jpg]

seem inclined to make every thing agreeable to you. Indeed I feel a powerful sense of my obligation to the most respectable family in Kirkwall who have shewn such marked attention to my dear girl. I hope some day to make my acknowledgement to them.

Mr McGregor left us only Tuesday last. I fancy you have received his letter from Kiltarn. I expect Mr Young here on Monday as that is Collector Tulloh's day of meeting at Novar Inn.

Our good friend Sir Hector Munro permits us to receive our letters under his cover. He regretted much he did not see you both at Novar house.

I had a letter of the 12th April from my son William who writes in great spirits. I daily expect one from Gilbert. With our joint love to you & yours.

Believe me ever My Dear Sir

Your very affectionate Father

Harry Robertson

IMG_2617.jpg

Address: James Watson Esqr

Crantit

Letter 3

NLS MS 19331 f5r [IMG_2618.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to James Watson, from Kiltarn, 21 Jan 1801

My Dear Sir

I longed for a little leisure to wish you & my dear Christy a good New Year which I fervently pray may prove auspicious to you both. Betsy joined us from Edn on the 23d Decr. We enjoyed the holidays very comfortably and on the 5th curt I set out from Aberdeen with a boisterous day. Hector Bethune rode up my horse & I rode home after remaining 2 nights at Inverness where you was not forgot. I got to Kiltarn Saturday the 10th.

On Saturday last who shd have called on me but Mr Findlater your friend from the south the Supervisor Gen^l. He desired his kind remembrance to be intimated to you. The same evening brought a letter from my son Gilbert dated the 14 Nov. Thank God he & all friends are well. I suppose we shall all hear from him by the Fleet. Poor Mr McCulloch minister of Loth died the same day wt Dr Blair. I am to visit that distress family next week. Indeed my good neighbours distress ? with

f5v [IMG_2619.jpg]

kind invitations. They will hardly suffer me to remain a moment at home but while I am in church. I called at Kinairdy last week & I dine there tomorrow. Poor Mrs Bethune Alness is very ailing confined chiefly to bed for 14 days past. I saw Cap^t Brown at Aberdeen who spoke very warmly of you & your ?

The state of this county as well as Aberdeenshire is very distressing owing to scarcity of grain. I approve highly of Lord Dundas's liberality to his poor islanders. The greatest number of the tenants have neither bread to eat, nor potatoes to plant. It is to be hoped our Gentlemen will make an exertion to save them from perishing by famine.

I thank you for your wishes to provide a plan for Kirkaldy. I hear he is now engaged by Lord Ankerville.

All our neighbours as if named remember you & yours wt regard. May the Almighty ever guard you & my dearest girl from every evil & prosper you together is the earnest prayer of My Dr Sir
Your truly effect. Father
Harry Robertson

IMG_2620.jpg

Address: James Watson Esqr
Crantit nr Kirkwall

Answered 2nd March 1801

Letter 4

NLS MS 19331 f7r [IMG_2621.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to James Watson, from Kiltarn, 18 Mar 1801

My Dear Sir

With much pleasure I received yours of the 2d curt. Mrs Robertson acquainted me of having received letters by Capt Richan which served in part to relieve any anxiety about you & my dearest Christy. I have the satisfaction fo receiving weekly journal from Aberdeen in Mrs Robertson's hand writing and the last of these on Sunday morning last. I presume that that several articles in my journal will be transmitted to Orkney from the same hand. Our friends at Demerara were well on the 10th December & we daily look for for letters from them.

I consider you a happy man in being Lord Dundas's almoner in this season of scarcity. The number you have to serve is immense. How different is the situation of some other factors, who must at the request of their constituents prosecute with all the rigour of the law a set of miserable tenants who have neither bread to eat nor seed to sow. Such things are and shock the feelings of humanity. The urgency of the case added to the fear of a legal assessments made the most of our heritors come forward with a small voluntary contribution but not without much trouble to the clergy which I have felt. However, my Heritors don't pretend to quarrel with me on the subject, tho' that would excuse of my being less zealous for the poor.

Last Saturday I married Miss Esther Munro to her cousin Alexr Sutherland master mason.

f7v [IMG_2622.jpg]

There were only 4 present viz Mr Barkly, Geo Robertson & Mr Brodie & his wife. The young wife says her first letter shall be to Mrs Watson. I hope this marriage will work out well, as the young man is introduced in Caithness where he is to get some good jobs.

Inverness has been the seat of some tragical events of late. Poor Provost Inglis in a fit of insanity threw himself in the river & perished, his body never found. On Thursday last betwixt 1 and 2 some barrels of gunpowder lodged above a candle shop of Mess M'Intosh, Inglis & Co took fire and blew up. It was in a lane near the Northern Rooms. Miss Willet Fraser Fanellan was killed on the spot & her elder sister Miss Mary miserably mangled and died next day besides a man, two women & 3 children. Many were wounded by the slates flying about. The damage done to the houses in general is great. Almost every window is driven in & the frames as well as the glass shattered to pieces. I saw Messrs Young & McGregor here within eight days. You are indeed in

disgrace with them, but quarrels of kindness are easily made up. I shall do what I can to negotiate a peace betwixt you & your friends.

Mrs Bethune still lingers & there is only a ray of hope as to her recovery

f8r [IMG_2623.jpg]

Mrs McIntosh had a daughter on the 6th curt and is doing well. They're far behind that can't follow. God grant a favourable ? in due time from Crantit. I'm sorry to inform you that our poor friend Mr John Robertson of Grenada died of a bilious fever the 2 December. His mother & sister bear the affliction with due submission & desire to be remembered warmly to you both as also our friends at Tenafilag. Poor Flora there is dying & has been confined all winter. I am just setting out this day for Aberdeen via Fort George. Upon my arrival there I shall propose to Annie to take a sail to Crantit & I have only to say it will not be my fault if she don't go. When we can do it with propriety, more of us shall visit you. Our family don't leave Aberdeen till about the end of May. Let us know the progress of the volunteer business & by what new letter you are to be address, whether Major or Marshall. May God preserve you & my dear girl & grant us good accounts of you from time to time. My Dear Sir I remain
Yours with sincere affection & esteem
Harry Robertson

IMG_2624.jpg

Address: James Watson Esqr
Crantit by Kirkwall

Letter 5

NLS MS 19331 f9r [IMG_2625.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to James Watson, from Aberdeen, 11 May 1801

My Dear Sir

We are much gratified by receiving Annie's letter today by Capt Brown who sent ashore tho' he could not call himself. She seems at once so much captivated with the kindness of her friends, the society she met & the face of the country, in short so highly pleased with every thing that I suppose she will forget to return to Kiltearn. We had a letter from Gilbert of the 14th March saying he was perfectly well & desiring his love to you all. Inclosed you'll please receive a Bill drawn on Mr Parker by his own desire which will be duly honoured for £250 ster in part of Mrs Watson's legacy from her uncle. I regret that the whole could not be paid up at once but I shall not lose sight of your interest. It seems tho' his money is due in Demerara on the 1st June it is only payable in Britain on the 1st Octr & so on yearly till the legacies are all paid up. The Bill now as I saw sent will be duly honoured & you can get it discounted at Glasgow at any time as Mr Parker is known to be a sure man. I need not add the you must let the first of June

f9v [IMG_2626.jpg]

close before you send it south. I need not say that I am hurried, for you will easily discover that some friends who are to supper with us are just beginning to collect viz Mr Alcock, Professor Stuart etc & & We leave this about the last curt so that a letter will hardly reach us after you receive this.

We shall be longing to hear how my dear Christy holds out. With our joint love to you all I remain
my Dear Sir

Your very afft Father

Harry Robertson

IMG_2627.jpg

f10r

Copy of the inclosed bill . . .

IMG_2628.jpg

Address: James Watson Esqr

Crantit by Kirkwall

Answered 13 July 1801

Letter 6

NLS MS 19331 f11r [IMG_2629.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to James Watson, from Kiltarn, 22 July 1801

My Dear Sir

You may easily conceive with what sensation your letter of 13th curt was received by this family. We join in thanking God for the pleasing intelligence of our beloved Christy, her being the mother of so promising a boy and her having the comfort of the Father of the boy being recovered from a dangerous illness.

We were truly alarmed on your account and greatly relieved by having the confirmation of your convalescent under your own hand.

Your letter was forwarded to Mr McGregor yesterday. He only left us last Friday. Mr Young & the Collector slept at Kiltarn Monday night & would hardly have got to Dingwall when we received your letter. Mr Young is positive to visit you early in August. A propos, he has also got a young son within these few days, a long wished for & unexpected gift! We look for Mr & Mrs Parker in a few days. We also expect a friend from Jamaica who has hardly an acquaintance in this country but myself & depends a good deal on our society for enjoyment while here. These and many other circumstances unnecessary to detail will put it out of our power

f11v [IMG_2630.jpg]

to fortify ourselves by visiting Crantit this season, but as there is nothing we have more at heart we shall God willing accomplish it next season, for we long much not only to see you & our dear girl at your own house but for an opportunity to express our gratitude to your respectable neighbours who have shewn you both such uniform kind attention.

All our letters may come under Sir Hector's cover till we acquaint you that he is about leaving the country. You may believe we shall be anxious till we hear that all our invalid friends are perfectly well.

I should love your boy whatever his name was, and tho' I have so little to a preference, I feel the compliment you intend me & wish we may all have much comfort in young Harry & that he may be a better man than old Harry.

Grandmama, Aunt Betty & uncle Hugh unite with me in love to you & Christy. Believe me Dear Sir

Most affectionately yours

Harry Robertson

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Address: James Watson Esqr

Crantit

Letter 7

NLS MS 19331 f13 [IMG_2632.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to James Watson, from Kiltarn, 13 Aug 1801

My Dear Sir

I duly read yours concerning the bill on Mr Cameron wh he accepted this day, not being at home sooner & he assures me will be prepared to pay it. We rejoice to hear that you & my dear Christy are well & hearty again & that the young Heir promises to do well.

I have forwarded your letter to Edn conveys the Bill by this days post.

Being in haste I conclude with offer of our joint love to you all. My dr Sir

Affectionately yours

Harry Robertson

IMG_2633.jpg

Address:

Novar Thirteenth Aug 1800

To:

James Watson

Esqr Crantit

Kirkwall

?: Munro

Letter 8

NLS MS 19331 f15r [IMG_2634.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to James Watson, from Creech, 13 Oct 1801

Mr Dear Sir

It afforded much pleasure to us to hear such agreeable accounts of your family by Messrs Rainy & Parker who arrived here on Wednesday the 30th ult.

As Mrs Parker is in a very delicate state of health and can't bear the jolting of a carriage their wish is to return home by sea but as the ordinary travelling vessels have such wretched accommodation it would be a singular favour to get a cast of one of the Revenue Cutters.

If therefore any of them calls in your coast soon may I beg of you to prevail on the Captain to call at Cromarty for Mrs Parker and to acquaint me by express to Kiltarn when the vessel arrives. I wd in less that 48 hours see her on board.

In case no vessel casts up betwixt this & the middle of November, about which time Mrs Parker wishes to sail if the ? is ?

f15v [IMG_2635.jpg]

you need not take the trouble to write to Edn about a vessel, because we have already laid a train for that ? Please write on receipt both to me & to Mrs Parker at Creech by Dornoch on this subject & saying whether there is any prospect of a conveyance soon.

Mr Parker sets out Monday first for Glasgow alone in his own carriage, which shows that Mrs Parker could not safely travel in that way.

Mrs Robertson, Betsy & I arrived here on Thursday. We have some apples to amuse little Harry at Crantit, if we knew how to convey them. I wish you all joy of the Peace tho it has made some of our friends Dutch subjects. With ? love & compliments to you all I am My Dear Sir

Most affectionately yours

Harry Robertson

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Address:

James Watson Esq

Crantit

By Kirkwall

Letter 9

NLS MS 19331 f17r [IMG_2637.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to James Watson, from Kiltarn, 6 Apr 1802

Mr Dear Sir

Your letter of 2d March arrived at the same time with Ann's to her mother dated the 15th. I think it was someday last week we got them. At any rate they were welcome when they came as they gave us agreeable accounts of all our dear friends at Crantit. Mrs Robertson also received on Saturday last Mrs Watson's letter to her. Waving every other subject and referring you to the reasons already assigned which put it out of our power to see you at Crantit this season, I have to request that you will contrive matters so as to visit us at the time most convenient for yourself which I learn is in June & July. Young Harry must come to see Grandmama & we shall no interference as far as I can foresee during these months and no event can gratify us more than a visit from our dear friends from Ultima Thule. I hope you'll get a cutter to bring you to Cromarty, & safe back again. Don't scrimp yourself of time. Give us as much of you as you can with any propriety. Please settle with

f17v [IMG_2638.jpg]

Dr Grott for his attendance on Annie till we meet. Then we shall also talk over & endeavour to clear up other money accounts with Mr Parker.

I hear Wm McCulloch has returned very full of Crantit hospitality.

We heard last week from William my son from Demerara. All friends were well the end of January.

Betsy is well at Douglas Park & will be at Edin early in May to embrace the first favourable conveyance home. I wish she got the cast of a cutter to Cromarty. If you have any idea of one coming from the beginning to the 20th May, Betsy might be acquainted at Mr Parkers & she would order matters so as to come along with the cutter.

Mr Hector Bethune was licensed to preach last Wednesday. I shall be obliged to you to keep my friend Mr Cameron the preacher in view.

You'l send no more letters address to Sir Hector Munro till we acquaint you

f18r [IMG_2639.jpg]

that he is come home. We have had a long tract of bad weather and high winds. Hugh will be home this evening. I go to day to accompany Miss Bell McCulloch to the big ferry & return straight home.

With our love to all our friends under your roof I remain my Dear Sir

Vert affectionately yours

Harry Robertson

IMG_2639.jpg

Address:

James Watson Esq

Crantit

Kirkwall

Letter 10

NLS MS 19331 f19 [IMG_2641.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to James Watson, from Kiltarn, 16 Aug 1802

My dr Sir

We have been a dull family since you left us, particularly so for want of our darling boy. I take the earliest opportunity to acquaint you that the wheels of his carriage were restored to us this morning by some herd boys who found them near Sir Hector's deer park. I bring them tomorrow to Dornoch & shall see to forward by post or some other conveyance.

The heavy rain Saturday night & Sunday morning I fear would retard your travelling. Mr Young came here Saturday evening & remained till one o'clock Sunday P.M. then set out for Inverness.

I preached at Alness & Mrs Robertson & Annie met me at Novar to dinner.

With our joint affectionate remembrance of you all I remain

Mr dr Sir

Yours ever

Harry Robertson

IMG_2642.jpg

Address:

James Watson Esq

Crantit

By Kirkwall

Letter 11

NLS MS 19331 f21r [IMG_2643.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to James Watson, from Kiltarn, 2 Oct 1802

My dear Sir

As we parted with you all with such reluctance our anxiety was great till we heard of your safe arrival at Crantit. I assure you our dear little Harry has made a great blank to us. I thank God he has got so well over his indisposition. Probably you hear that Betsy was seized with a violent headache while bathing in the sea at Helensburgh near Dunbarton. It proved so obstinate & alarming that she had the first physician in Glasgows for 20 days ? of her. Thank God she has been for [10?] weeks past quite well & free of all pain. She walks abroad and is getting quite stout. Before she was taken ill, it seems matters were concluded between her and Mr Sandbach & her illness only prevented their union. He is now on a trip to Holland & returns the end of this month when it is proposed to compleat their intentions & if the weather is at all favourable, they will visit us for a few days. Col Ferguson's son is baptized Robert for his brother. Sir Hector declined taking the name. Mr Hector Bethune was ordained minister of Alness on Tuesday last by Mr Rose of Dingwall. The weather has been very dry & pleasant with us for fifteen days past. Today it rains gently.

f21v [IMG_2644.jpg]

I have got my hay sure of & my turnips promising. Also my wheat & barley cut down & hope most of my oats will be reaped after this day eight days. Sorry am I to hear such dismal accounts of your crops. You forgot to tell us the address of your correspondent in Leith which has prevented me forwarding commands. Please send it without delay. Anne is getting stouter & healthier every day. If Mr Spotiswood comes our way, you may believe shall meet with due attentions as your friend. I observe your ? as to a certain Northern Historian wh I shall make no bad use of. Mr William Munro is now solicitor to the Customs at Kingston, Jamaica. He is an attorney at law besides. I shall send this address to Loth because you desire it, but I own I have no fancy for the Grants and I hope Mrs Watson will not be rash in recommending any as it is a delicate point.

f22 [IMG_2645.jpg]

Mr Parker has got a severe cold for some days past. I wish he may soon get better. I heard that my son Gilbert had made a tour in the end of summer thro several islands, such as Grenada, Barbadoes to brace him up & that he returned in the beginning of August to Demerary quite well.

Messrs Young & Shaw were threatening a visit no doubt I fancy . . too late to think of it.

Hugh will set out for Aberdeen about 20 days hence.

With our joint love to self, Mrs Watson & Harry. Good wishes to Ba

I remain dr Sir

Most affectionately

Harry Robertson

IMG_2646.jpg

Address:

James Watson Esq

Crantit

Kirkwall

Letter 12

NLS MS 19331 f23r [IMG_2647.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to James Watson, from Kiltarn, 26 Feb 1802

My Dear Sir

Your agreeable letter of 12 ult and Mrs Watson's to her sister of an older date came to hand by the same post about 3 weeks after yours was wrote. We rejoice to hear that after all the hurricanes which have made such devastation at sea & even on land that our dear friends at Crantit are still safe and not only so but enjoying life with gaiety & innocence. It was no doubt very agreeable to us to see our young friends, now of Liverpool, who write us frequently that they are mutually pleased & happy. They have, to be sure, a larger proportion of this worlds goods than most of their connections & I wish them good of it; but let me assure you, very dear sir, that we don't proportion our affection to the fortunes of our friends. There are other circumstances which will ever operate more powerfully upon our hearts than all the riches of both Indies.

By a letter from Mr Sandbach (who is a plain sensible unassuming young man!) I learn that he heard from Gilbert of date the 4 Decr and that he was fortunate enough to have shipped this year's crop before the colony was given up to the Dutch or rather the French.

What think you of Mr Parker who has gone forward to Demerary for his health instead of stopping at Madeira.

f23v [IMG_2648.jpg]

Mammon must have a sad hold of his heart and he was kind enough to "remember to forget" leaving orders to pay my annuity till he returns. This only betwixt ourselves but it was not very handsome.

The honour conferred on me by the University of Aberdeen sits the easier upon the ? instead of exciting the envy of my brethren at home, the motion originated with them & was readily complied with by the College, nor had I any intimation of it till the whole was settled.

I am sorry to say our great Laird Sir Hugh Munro is scourging his tenants. He has summoned out the whole & makes very unhandsome attempts even to break every lease on his estate. Some of them will dispute hard with him & carry too. I am happy to be independent of him but he was unhappy until I yielded my Highland farm to him. But now I suppose I must get the repairs of my offices carried on by a decision of the Court of Session. He is a perfect misanthrope. No man has broke his bread since he came home about 4 months ago. He keeps no horse, nor a man servant, but only a boy, tho he is worth in money

f24r [IMG_2649.jpg]

and land rent near £3000 yearly with out any debt or burden but his mother's jointure of £300. He shows no principle in his dealings. If he got it he would take £20 yearly for the meanest hut or for a single acre of land. But I don't wish you to publish any opinions of him. His character will soon be too well known.

I hope before summer passes, at least about the end of it, to visit you at Crantit when I promise myself much happiness from seeing & hearing by dear little prattler Harry. God bless the boy & spare him as a comfort to us all.

Our joint love we beg here to offer to you both & Harry.

Believe me ever Mr dear Sir

Yours with esteem & affection

Harry Robertson

N.B. Your last letter was charged double & Annie's overcharged too. I have transmitted 8 covers overcharged to the General Post Office Edn with a heavy complaint of your postman.

IMG_2650.jpg

Address:

James Watson Esq

Crantit

Kirkwall

Major Sutherland was here this week on his way to Edn & begged to be remembered to Mrs Watson.

Letter 13

NLS MS 19331 f25r [IMG_2651.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to James Watson, from Kiltarn, 24 May 1803

My Dear Sir

Your favour of the 17th curt I received yesterday. We rejoiced to think that you have escaped with a slight attack of the influenza.

Mrs Robertson & I had a serious attack from that enemy about 14 days ago which has confined us to our chambers hitherto & had old Dr Wishart several days attending us. I have not preached for two Sundays, my throat being much affected.

Thank God we are now in a fair way. Annie & Hugh have hitherto escaped the contagion, but few can say so much.

We are meditating a visit to you, barring accidents. Our plan is to leave Kiltarn the last week of July & remain a few days at Loth, then proceed by land to John O'Grotts. If we were to go by ship or in a post chaise we might have Miss Reed along with us; but our present plan renders that impossible especially as we mean to stop at several private families. It is very fair if we get our selves & our baggage conducted, as Mrs Robertson Annie & Hugh accompany me which will be full plenty for our gig & one saddle horse with which our

f25v [IMG_2652.jpg]

servant returns from the ferry & we must watch the possibility of a ship to return us home. You will readily see that it is impossible for us to increase our party without an increase of two horses & an additional servant which would make a great cavalcade. If you accept of our visit in this we shall make a grand effort to see you & hope in God all will be well with you before that time.

Mr Parker is truly a strange fish. He has never wrote here since returning from Demerary. I really don't envy him, poor man. However we shall make all our claims in due time, the parting with money is like losing his vital blood.

I suppose Mr & Mrs Sandbach are now returned from Holland, as hostilities have commenced. I am not able to hold the pen longer. Joint love to Mrs Watson Harry & self. My dr Sir

Very affectionately yours

Harry Robertson

IMG_2653.jpg

Address:

James Watson Esq

Crantit

Kirkwall

Letter 14

NLS MS 19331 f27r [IMG_2654.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to James Watson, from Kiltarn, 2 Oct 1803

My Dear Sir

Yours of the 12th ulto came duly to hand. You may believe me when I declare that our late visit to Orkney has (if possible) rendered you & family more dear to us than formally. Long may we continue to hear of you & often may we meet if circumstances permit. Last post brought accounts of Mrs Sandbach being safely delivered of a daughter on the 29 ulto, an event which we learn has been likewise announced to you. Our last letters from Gilbert are of the 21 June & there are letters from him ? Liverpool of the 23rd June. What think you of Paterson at Leith who omitted to send the Liverpool box to Kirkwall tho it lay with him some time.

? McDonald has shipped it on board the Eliza Capt Clerk for Cromarty & we expect it daily. Mr Mitchel was 3 days with us lately & begs his kind compliments. Hopes to hear from you. He sets out for Edn about the end of this month.

I am truly sorry for the process

NLS MS 19331 f27v [IMG_2655.jpg]

which Dr Groat is engaged. How happy would it make me to see him & our worthy friend Mr Yule on their return from Edn but I fear they'l return by water which no doubt is the easiest conveyance. We had Miss Miller, her sister Mrs Ross with Mr & Mrs Manson from Edn here for eight days. They left on Wednesday last. Sir Hector Munro sets out Thursday. His sister went to Inverness Saturday before last. Sir Hugh continues the old man as hospitable & generous as ever. The people say that water could not mollify his heart, but another element may. My harvest was all stacked on Tuesday the 27th ulto. Our joint love to Christy self & the dear boys. Believe me ever my dear Sir
Most affectionately yours

Harry Robertson

IMG_2656.jpg

Address:

James Watson Esq

Crantit

Kirkwall

Letter 15

NLS MS 19331 f29r [IMG_2657.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to James Watson, from Kiltarn, 31 Jan 1804

My Dear Sir

The agreeable frequent correspondence betwixt Christy & her mother hardly leaves us anything to say. I need not repeat the interest we feel in your dear family. I heard this week from Mr Sandbach from Glasgow, his letter is an excellent one. He is receiving several ships of the Company & others consigned to them. Tho they have had an uncommon series of good fortune, an incident has happened to check their ardour. I shall quote Sandbach's own words.

“We had yesterday the pleasing accounts of the arrival of the Elbe at the entrance of the Clyde but how different were those that followed in the evening respecting our finest ship the Demerary. We received accounts from Dublin that the Captain & crew had abandoned her in the channel, with six feet of water in her hold, having struck on the Wicklow Banks on the Coast of Ireland. This plainly shows that the battle is not always to the strong, nor the race to the swift, for this was without exception the best ship in the Fleet and is the only one that has been importunate. Although we had a considerable sum covered by insurance upon her, we regret the disappointment more than the loss. She had a most valuable cargo on board, partly our own, and all to our consignment, and a cargo outwards already prepared for her. The under writers suffer a loss of £40,000 by her, about one half done in Glasgow

f29v [IMG_2658.jpg]

and Greenock. These are rubs of life, which we are ever liable to as long as we continue in business. We must reconcile ourselves to them and endeavour to get the better of them by time & prudence. There is another vessel arrived that left Demerary on the 5 Decr (since the Fleet) there were letters from Gilbert of the 29th Novr He was well & far advanced in a pretty fruitful crop.”

Thus far Mr Sandbach & very well.

When you see Mr William Watt of Skail, give him my best compliments & tell him I am sorry I gave him any trouble in making out estimates of his slates, for they will not sell in this country. I shall refer you for news to Mrs Robertson's next letter. I forgot to say that Mrs Watson's letter to her brother William shall be forwarded to him to London from whence he no doubt proposes to steer to the warmer weather. Our joint love to Christy, self & the dear boys. Believe me ever My dr Sir

With esteem & warm affection yours

Harry Robertson

[IMG_2659.jpg]

Address:

James Watson Esq

Crantit

Kirkwall

Letter 16

NLS MS 19331 f371r [IMG_2660.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to James Watson, from Kiltarn, 3 Dec 1804

My Dear Sir

Your favour to Betty came safely to hand. The dear children were perfectly content & happy in her absence but since she has persuaded you & Mrs Watson that her presence is necessary to their comfort, she is extremely welcome back again.

Harry is a sensible little fellow & began to enjoy manly sports & the company of little boys. I wish Betty by keeping him hanging on her apron strings will not bring him back to his former childishness.

Andrew is a most interesting little man quite fond of Grandpapa & no love lost betwixt us. Whenever he sees sugar or apples, he cries Amo so that you see he commences early a Latin scholar.

I observe your correspondence with Mr Parker who is surely a strange man. Before I received your commands he had sailed for Demerary several days. I thought it best to forward your letter to Glasgow in course, suppose that he has left directions with his partner James McInroy Esqr to make you a remittance. I feel myself incompetent to decide upon the state of accounts betwixt you, but I lean to Gilbert's state I fear nothing decisive can be done till Mr Parker returns which I suppose will be about May or early in June. What would you think of his

f37v [IMG_2661.jpg]

hinting to me his intention of going abroad, tho he wrote me on other subjects, but after he set out. Mrs Parker wrote me that he had made arrangements for my drawing a certain sum if necessary in his absence. Wonderful consideration! We must however carry fair with him on various accounts & particularly for fear he brings the legacy tax &c upon us. I don't even advise you to write Gilbert on the subject till Parker returns & then we shall have time to correct errors.

I think it is probable that I shall be in Edn early in May, having two law processes with the infamous swindler, Sir H M

I should be happy if our time of visiting Edn coincided. Why did you send the five pound I gave Betty, till we met & settled! You know I got £2 18 for Sir Hectors stocking Fir tree. I advanced £1 16 to Mr Chisholm Dingwall on Dr Trails account which he will settle with you. I have the ? discharged. We are at a loss how to forward Dr Trails big coat. Remember us to him most particularly. I wish he came to Kiltarn for his big coat himself. We rejoice at Mr Smellies preferment to the living of St Andrews. I shall long to hear how the plan for the Orkney Volunteers in settled.

f32r [IMG_2662.jpg]

Mr McKenzie senior of Scotsburn, a frail but avaricious man, finished himself last Thursday at his own house by cutting an artery in his arm. He has been in low spirits for 12 months past.

I am so much interrupted with idle people calling this being the day preceding our Goose Market, that I am afraid you can hardly read my scrawls.

Our joint love to you & Christy

I remain ever My Dear Sir

Yours with affection & sincere esteem

Harry Robertson

[IMG_2663.jpg]

Address:

James Watson Esq

Crantit

Kirkwall

Letter 17

NLS MS 19331 f33r [IMG_2664.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to James Watson, from Kiltarn, 14 Aug 1805

My Dear Sir,

Yours of the 31st ulto & Mrs Watson's of the 7th curt came to hand. We rejoice to hear you all bore the fatigues of the journey so well & felt no sea sickness. Much do we miss the sweet prattle of our dear boys. I don't wonder that all your friends are delighted with them. I think you were as well away when Lady Stafford visited your country. You would probably have the honour of good deal of trouble & little thanks. Your gig is now consecrated & no profane bottoms must attempt to sit in it. I hear t is very properly occupied in carrying Christy & the children to the Bath. The kind reception you met with from all your neighbours is peculiarly gratifying.

We feel much for good Mrs Baikie's continued frail state. Its astonishing how they receive so many company, perhaps I might add its wrong. But people will take their own own way & we must charitably conclude that Mrs Baikie only indulges an amiable disposition to an extreme.

f33v IMG_2665.jpg]

Our friend Sir Hector continues to droop. I see him frequently. He insists to have all our family to morrow.

We have barley in the glebe almost ready for cutting down. My carpenters are now busy finishing our low room & my stable & granary are almost completely filled up.

I don't know what to think of your beer & turkeys at Cromarty, which are still waiting a conveyance. Please tell your dairy maid her friends are well.

Very few salmon got since you left us. Uncle says his fair Andrew will soon be up with Harry as a scholar. Admiral Calders late victory hs occasioned great speculation. It seems we may soon expect a visit of the enemy. Are your volunteers prepared!

Our joint love to you all.

My Dr Sir

Yours most affectionately

Harry Robertson

IMG_2666.jpg

Address:

James Watson Esq

Crantit

Kirkwall

Letter 18

NLS MS 19331 f35r [IMG_2667.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to his daughter Christy (Mrs Watson), from Kiltarn 21 Sep 1807

My dear Christy

I must refer to Mr Barry for a full account of us. He will tell you how much we have been occupied for this & last week with our friends from the south. Mrs Douglas of Douglas Park, a most amiable lady, lodges here as does Mr Wm Munro who begs his best compliments & regrets he did not see you. Miss Jessie Douglas of Edn & Mr Gilbert Munro lodge at Inverness. They leave us Tuesday when I go with them to Inverness. Then I spent all last week waiting the arrival of my friends & Harry is quite well in applying to his book. I am glad your ? is well over & wish how soon you come here for fear of bad weather.

I am afraid no cargo of timber can be got here, except some trash that lies on this shore that was rejected by some buyers. I fear your waiting Lord Dundas's answer may keep you too long in Orkney. I wish

f35v [IMG_2668.jpg]

you to close up your matters as soon as possible. Your mother & all friends join in best regards to you. Remember us respectfully to Mr & Mrs Yule. Ever your affectionate father

Harry Robertson

IMG_2669.jpg

Address:

Mrs Watson Crantit

Orkney

By Mr Barry

Letter 19

NLS MS 19331 f37r [IMG_2670.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to James Watson, from Kiltarn, 14 Jan 1808

My dear Sir

Your agreeable & long looked for letter of the 1st Jany came only to hand yesterday owing I suppose to the stormy weather. Our patience was almost worn out, our only consolation was that by means of the new Comet we understood you were still on this earth.

We sincerely rejoice with you, our dear Mrs Watson & the boys on the commencement of a new year which we hope & pray will be a prosperous one to you all.

So our dear boy Harry is to become a student at Inverness! I have read a great deal which you know has been wrote pro & con upon the subject of a public & a private education. I really flatter myself that under the eye of Mr & Mrs Young Harry will enjoy all the advantages of both with as few disadvantages as he could meet anywhere. The prospect of seeing him here occasionally you may believe is no small gratification to Grandmama & all of us. I hope you'll bring at some time with Harry another pet for Grand.

The affair of Major Stewart gave us no small uneasiness. He must be a hot-headed blustering madman & I think should be brought to his senses. I am happy

f37v [IMG_2671.jpg]

you have the opinion of so able a counsellor as Mr Matthew Ross decidedly in your favour. You'll require to look sharp when the Act & Commission comes down to take a proof & have your witnesses kept out of the way of corrupt influence.

I am glad the small articles sent by way of Leith came at last to hand & that the young folk were pleased with the playthings. The complaint of scarcity I am sorry to say is not confined to your quarter. The late harvest & total failure of the potatoe crops is likely to be severely felt in this country, especially by the poor. Oat meal sells at 32s & barley at 35s & both very scarce.

I am glad the painter succeeded so well in taking both your likenesses. There certainly is a degree of pleasure in having the image of the one we love before our eyes. We had a good many friends with us during the harvest and beginning of winter, but have passed out Christmas Holidays very quietly.

I learn you look for a visit of Capt & Mrs Balfour. We beg our best wishes to the amiable Lady whom

f38r [IMG_2672.jpg]

we always remember with esteem as well as her good father & mother. We beg to be remembered kindly to Mr & Mrs Yule & to any of our acquaintances who shall enquire for us. We hear from William frequently tho' he is a good deal been [fired?] about his Tobago connexions. We daily expect to hear of Hugh & Gilbert by next Fleet.

Ann Sandbach is really a delightful little girl. I only dread she will soon be recalled from us. Grandmama & Aunt join in cordial remembrance

My dear Sir

Your affectionate & faithful

Harry Robertson

IMG_2673.jpg

Address:

James Watson Esq

Crantit

Kirkwall

Orkney

Letter 20

NLS MS 19331 f39r [IMG_2674.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to his daughter Christy (Mrs Watson), from Kiltarn, 17 Jan 1809

My dearest child

My heart is too full of grief to be able to say much to you. Was I to give vent to it, I would hurt your feeling & my own. Your mother & I partake in your present sufferings. May you look up to God for comfort. His paths are on the deep waters, be it we shall one day be convinced of the equity & fitness of his dispensations. You know that we are not able to visit you but our heart is with you.

Thanks to God who has raised up such friends as Mr & Mrs Yule, whose soothing attentions to you we shall never forget.

Instead of ?ing on your loss, I beg you to remember you have a part to get in life & beg of God for strength to carry you this way duly as well as to support you under your trials.

f39v [IMG_2675].jpg

You need the advice of friends. I know Mr Yule & a few more whom he may recommend will be ready to give you counsel. Whenever the season & other circumstances will admit of it we insist that you & your dear boys may come & reside at Kiltarn which I think providence has paved the way for by . . . while our family are few in number, believe it my dearest daughter it is my first wish to make you comfortable.

Dear Willm is a pleasant & charming child & we hear of Harry every week. I wrote Mr Young & several other friends this day. Whenever you are able write us fully. Disclose all you thoughts & wishes to me. You are sure you are in safe hands.

Your mother will write you in a few days. She joins n love & tender sympathy. Your most affectionate father
Harry Robertson

N.B. Yesterday brought an affectionate letter from Hugh of 23rd Octr. Gilbert proposes to be here next summer.

IMG_2676.jpg

Address:

Mrs Watson

Crantit

Letter 21

NLS MS 19331 f41r [IMG_2677.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to his daughter Christy (Mrs Watson), from Kiltarn, 31 Jan 1809

Mr dear child

Your welcome & much longed for letter of the 19th curt came to hand this instant. The mournful detail it gives of a subject most interesting & afflicting to us all, was read by your mother & myself with the most tender emotions.

Eternal thanks to the God of comfort & consolation for his aids administered to you on the most trying occasion. I trust this is an earnest of more mercy that is in store for you & your dear children. Situated as we are & unable to be near you to sooth your mournful spirit, what gratitude do we feel to that worthy pair Mr & Mrs Yule who have acted this parental part to you. Let me sure you that I hardly ever recollect a case in which friends & neighbours have condoled more sincerely with the afflicted. I had not strength of mind to preach til last Sunday, when I took for my text these words of our Lord Luke

Father if thou wilt let this cup pass, nevertheless not as I will but as thou wilt & it was very remarkable that in any ordinary course I lectured upon the last verses of John 16 In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace. Be of good chear &c

The crowd of all ranks who attended church was immense, not only of out own parish but Alnes & Dingwall, all serving to partake of our griefs with the warmest of feelings. Our amiable young

friend Miss Betsy Reid spent a week with us & left us only yesterday. How anxious was she to hear of you. We had three expresses daily at the post office. I hope ere now that any letter to you under Mr Yule's cover & your mothers wrote last week have come to hand.

f41v [IMG_2678.jpg]

Our kind friend Mr Young behaves on this occasion as usual. I had two letters form him. In the first he proposed to visit upon Saturday the 21st but afterwards he wrote that he thought it more expedient that he should join his family & appear in mourning at their own church. Dear Harry is well. After the first shock he attended his classes as usual. I consider it as small blessing that those innocents are not fully sensible of their loss. It might hurt them essentially as they have not strength of mind to reason upon the subjects that cause their grief. O that we might all learn to trust more in the wisdom & faithfulness of our God who has promised one day to satisfy us fully of the justice & goodness of his dispensations. Your case I own is trying my dearest Christy but look around you & you'll see many worse. Blessed be God you have still relations surviving who are able & willing to give you & your young ones every comfort, but that only God has thought fit to deprive you of . . . I again repeat the your mother & I will be counting over the days till we have the happiness to receive you into our arms. Till that period arrives, ? strength of God to fit you for your arduous ? & communicate freely with us upon every subject that interests you. Pray have you wrote to Mr Peter Miller the Watson's great friend or did Mr Yule write him?

I received

f42r IMG_2679.jpg]

two letters from our worthy friend Mrs Coll Sutherland since your distress. She & her daughter Mrs Coll Mckenzie enter tenderly into our feelings. I need not say that we shall long to hear what answer & what directions Lord Dundas may send. Mrs Parker has wrote me a most feeling letter so has Annie McCulloch. I am looking for letters daily from London & Liverpool. None can feel more acutely on this occasion than poor Anne. Your letter for her attachment to our dear departed friend was of the warmest kind.

Your dear child William continues thriving & promising as you could wish. Now that you have broke the . . . us as often as you can & let us know whatever concerns you for none can be so interested. I observe with approbation the paragraph in your mother's letter adress to Mr Stuart & that is enough now. Remember us kindly to all your friends as if named. Accept of our love & believe that you are ever present . . .

My dr Christy

Your most affectionate father

Harry Robertson

IMG_2680.jpg]

Address:

Mrs Watson

Crantit

Orkney

Letter 22

NLS MS 19331 f43r [IMG_2681.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to Dr Traill, from Kiltarn, 15 May 1811

My Dear Sir

Your favour of the 10th curt I received yesterday. The disinterested attachment you have shown for our dear Christy could not fail to make a favourable impression upon Mrs Robertson and myself who had always a strong partiality for you since we first knew you.

I flatter myself that your union with my daughter will contribute to your mutual happiness, as it is not the result of a slight acquaintance, but of a long & intimate knowledge of each others dispositions, in circumstances where no disguise was practised on either side.

You judge well in supposing that the want of our dear Christy's society will be a great blank to us, but that gratification we are willing to deny to ourselves on account of the agreeable prospects which we trust await her in the society of the man she loves, and who is so well qualified to make a woman of sense happy.

We must insist to be left in possession of her dear boys, whose society will add much to our enjoyment & make up in part for their mother's absence. Every attention in our power will be shown to them, and you know they

f43v IMG_2682.jpg]

cannot breath a purer air than at Kiltarn.

I little thought when we parted that our next interview would be so interesting to both parties. I have only to add that the sooner we meet it will be the more agreeable to me, so that you have only to settle that matter with your fellow traveller. Mrs Robertson, I thank God, has made a surprizing recovery from her painful illness and I hope you will be sensible of her amendment when you see her.

She and Annie (for nobody else thinks of you) join me in offering our warmest regards. Believe me with much esteem

My Dear Sir

Yours faithfully

Harry Robertson

IMG_2683.jpg

Address:

Thomas Stewart Traill

M. D. Islington

Liverpool

Letter 23

NLS MS 19331 f45r [IMG_2684.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to Dr Traill, Liverpool, from Kiltarn, 3 Mar 1812

My Dear Sir

I was much gratified with your affectionate letter of the 23rd Decr. Though I am not anxious for living many years in the world further than I can be of some service in it I feel obliged to you for auguring so favourably to a man past 63 upon the high authority of Hippocrates.

Permit me to say with out flattery, that it is no small addition to my enjoyment of life that such of my family as are settled in the world have formed connections so agreeable in every respect. And it is and shall be my earnest prayer that all the best blessings of heaven may descend upon my dear children.

The boys here are fine promising young creatures and closely attended to by their aunt, who, with all her tenderness is looked up to with reverence. As an instance, I had occasion some days ago to walk towards the barn. Overheard Andrew call, Peter! Aunt is angry! Peter stood stilled upon my enquiring the cause of anger, Andrew replied, Aunt has forbid any of us to walk the length of the house by with out her orders. Peter instantly returned home.

The schoolmaster comes down every second night and spends two hours with Andrew who now seems to understand some of Mairs Introduction, a very important step as you know being a Latin scholar.

f45v [IMG_2685.jpg]

It is a pleasure to us to hear their prattle & I hope their mother will consider that the children are in the situation that is most suitable to them for years to come, and in point of health, you know they cannot breath a purer air. Tho that is a vain wish I should rejoice to have dear James with the rest.

I feel much for the friends of Capt Peter Ross. I knew him well and a worthy soldierly man he was. He died like a hero as he lived.

I return your thanks for giving such clear and distinct views of American politics, and I am satisfied your views of the part that people are acting are exceedingly just. They are afraid of casting out either with France or us. God grant some plan may be adopted that will raise the price of the W India produce for we cannot be indifferent the distresses of our friends at the present juncture. As my friend Cadbol will not grudge to frank my letter I send it to London, a very circuitous course, but you will receive ti in a few days. Dear Grandmama is greatly better & with our joint love remain

My Dear Sir your very affectionate Father

Harry Robertson

[IMG_2686.jpg]

Address:

Tunbridge Wells, tenth March, 1812

Dr Traill

St Ann's Street

Liverpool

?B. Aeneas Macleod

Letter 24

NLS MS 19331 f47r [IMG_2687.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to Dr Traill, from Kiltarn, 6 Sep 1812

My Dear Sir,

Last post brought us your very acceptable letter imitating our dear Mrs Traill's safe delivery of a daughter. May God spare mother & daughter for your comfort. The boys are quite delighted at the thoughts of having a sister who is ? to them as a beautiful & accomplished young Lady; in the same [drawer?] as they believe Ladies to be, a fair scholar & acting the young doctor.

We have cause of thankfulness for Mrs Robertson's having recovered such a degree of health as herself her friends hardly looked for, except some feebleness in her left hand. Little remains of her former imbecility. She derives great benefit from the ? ball & and following out the course of medicine prescribed for her which she does most punctually observe.

Miss Eliza Robertson has favoured us with a visit & is a very agreeable young lady. She came here yesterday along with her cousin Miss Lexie McKenzie of Dingwall. Annie went for them in our gig. Mr Bethune of Alness had [a] son, born on Friday last, a suitable match for your daughter.

We are full of gratitude for Wellington's glorious victory. I returned feeble thanks for it before the general order was issued. I received a letter from my sister Mrs Rainy yesterday mentioning the breach in poor Mr Tenents family.

f47v [IMG_2688.jpg]

by the death of his oldest daughter. They all seem much cast down on the melancholy occasion.

I hope our friend Mr Sandbach will have a prosperous journey to London & find his dear family are ? as he left them. It must be a great comfort to the two sisters be so near, especially in this season when Mrs Traill is laid aside.

Our harvest will be very late tho the crop looks well. There will hardly be hay cut down before the middle of September. I have had a very rich crop of hay on my glebe consisting of fine [beres?]. It is computed to be little if any short of 2000 stone hay & the foggage excellent.

They are now busy making the new road from Dingwall by the shore. It turns up below the garden of Drum??? We got an agreeable intelligent neighbour to Drummond, a Mr Sim, who is now modelling every thing there & seems to go on with judgement. Having Sundays duty to perform I must conclude with our warmest congratulations on the happy event in your family, hoping to hear of Mrs Traill's compleat recovery I remain my dr Sir with esteem & affection yours

Harry Robertson

[IMG_2689.jpg]

Address:

Thomas S Traill Esq

M.D.

St Anns Street

Liverpool

Letter 25

NLS MS 19331 f49r [IMG_2690.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to Dr Traill, from Kiltarn, 14 Aug 1813

My Dear Sir

I am favoured with yours in the box by the Inverness coach which with all its contents came safe to hand. It would certainly afford us much pleasure to have seen you here when you was so far on your way as Edn but the sacrifice would be too great on your circumstances for the act of friendly attention. I got a hint of the business which brought you to Edn. I sincerely wish you may get it settled without much prejudice to your interest. I perceive the difficulty arises from the feu duties being involved with the tiends. I know it is usual in the sale of lands to deduce a fifth part for tiends from the rent of which an estate is valued. I know likewise that patrons of churches, if titulars of the tiends claim a right to exempt the lands in their own possession from paying any stipend till all the tiends in the hands of the other heritors in parishes are exhausted. In short you have nothing for it, but to make as frugal a bargain as you can, but it is fortunate that you can have the advice of many gentlemen skilled in the law who's interests are at stake as well as yours, being heritors in Orkney, particularly Mr Malcom Lacing who no doubt has searched the matter to the bottom.

f49v [IMG_2691.jpg]

Anne received Mrs Trails welcome letter by post two days ago. All the letters sent in the box were read with much interest. The boys are pleasant and promising. Aunt is unwearied in her attentions to them & no doubt reports their progress from time to time. Harry is a sensible boy of excellent disposition & I flatter myself he will be no loser, but a considerable gainer, by changing his situation. It is a fortunate circumstance that he appears sensible of his own deficiency and ambitious to improve. Mr Ross is an excellent classical scholar and attends regularly from 6 to 9 at night & prescribes tasks to be prepared ? the day. In short betwixt the attentions of Aunt & Mr Ross I think the boys will make such progress as could be wished & when the attention paid to their health & morals is added I suppose they are in every respect as well appointed as at any public seminary of learning.

Mrs Robertson has made a progress in recovery & a better beyond what we had any reason to look for but she still feels a remainder of fever occasionally with great heat which however by

f50r [IMG_2692.jpg]

perseverance in the regimen prescribed to which she strictly adhere, will I trust prevent her trouble from returning with ?.

I am bathing every day almost & find much benefit by strengthening my limbs. I still have occasional spasms of asthma.

If William is arrived at Liverpool please tell him the we at last received the cash concerning which we corresponded lately.

We join in offer of our love to all under your roof & Mr Sandbach's & remain

My dear Sir

Yours very affectionately

Harry Robertson

N.B. Our hay is stacked a fortnight ago and in ten days our wheat harvest commences. All the stops look well but meal & victual still at very high prices.

[IMG_2693.jpg]

Address:

Thomas S Traill Esq
M.D. St Anns Street
Liverpool

Letter 26

NLS MS 19331 f51r [IMG_2694.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to Mrs Traill (Christy Robertson), from Kiltarn, 29 March & 22 April 1814

My dear Christy

Your letter to your mother afforded us all much satisfaction. What cause of thankfulness to God that you have made so good a recovery & and that your infant is promising. Dear Father! We lament the severe strokes he has got, but its lucky his spirits are good & I hope in time he may recover his former good looks. You may believe that we often think of your situation & are disposed to do everything to make your mind easy. You have need to summon up all your fortitude to bear the temporary separation from so kind & worthy a husband. God send good accounts of him & return him in safety to his family. How happy are you in being under the eye of so good a friend as Mr Sandbach. As for your dear sister I shall say nothing of her. Natural affection & her own warm heart will lead her to do everything that is kind. With respect to your fine boys with us I have nothing to add to what I said in my last letter to Dr Traill. It will be a pleasure to prepare them for entering into the world in due time & I assure you betwixt Aunt & the school? their time is not mispent & they are out of the way of those temptations that are to be met with in great towns & public seminaries. I am sorry to say the Inverness Academy is quite fallen off & the new Academy in Tain seems to outshine it.

f51v [IMG_2695.jpg]

Your mother had lately a severe cold of which she is recovered. She will write you when able to handle her pen which has been difficult for her for years past but she has recovered beyond what her friends expected at our period. I am now performing my public duty as usual after a long confinement to the house. Indeed I find I need care & good nursing & by these means perhaps my life may be prolonged for a few years. If not I am resigned to the will of Heaven. Our neighbours are well. Mountgerald has now with him Mr Simon Fraser & Lady. Simon called here Saturday & was Sunday in church. The ladies staid at home because they have no carriage but they propose some day soon to walk to Kiltarn & remain a day & night with us. Our lads are very intimate with them.

We long much to hear of Hugh's return to Demerara after his excursion among the islands.

Excuse the shortness of my letter as I am now less inclined that ever to write.

Our joint love to you & our other friends.

I remain My Dear Christy

Your very affectionate Father

Harry Robertson

[IMG_2696.jpg]

Address:

Mrs Traill

St Ann's Street

Liverpool

Letter 27

NLS MS 19331 f53r [IMG_2697.jpg]

Rev Harry Robertson to Dr Traill, from Kiltarn, 25 Nov 1814

My Dear Sir

Your letter from Paris of the 12th Ultmo gave us all much pleasure for we could not help indulging many an anxious thought about you while on your travels. The short journal contained in your letter to me is very pleasing. The great variety of persons & places you have seen during your late tour, must furnish matter for agreeable recollections during life to a person less observant than you. We thank God that you are now returned in safety to the bosom of yr family.

You may perhaps wonder that I have not acknowledged your letter sooner but my apology is too good. I was not able so much as to read your letter for a fortnight after it came to hand being confined nearly a month with a bilious fever which deprived me of my health & appetite and brought on a kind of stupor which only gradually left me. All the time felt no pain. Dr Wishart first attended me but he was soon called to a distance so far as Sky to attend an old gentleman Mr McDonald of Scalpa & he has not yet returned.

I was fortunate however in getting a Dr Fairbairn, a very regularly ? young man

f53v [IMG_2698.jpg]

He was three years clerk to the Edn Infirmary & is considered very skilful. I took many a nauseous draught without hesitation of his prescription which proved salutary. I have now in a great degree recovered my strength & appetite but I still need all my strength. The asthma does not trouble me unless I move quickly up stairs which you may believe makes me to gang warily.

Our dear boy Hugh arrived here at five o'clock last evening in company of Mr Wm McBean who brought him in his own gig from Inverness. Mr McBean was obliged to return home today. Being not very able to write as you will see I must conclude with all love to Mrs Traill & Mr Sandbach & family. Hugh will write in a day or two.

Believe me ever My Dr Sir

Most affectionately yours

Harry Robertson

[IMG_2699.jpg]

Address:

Thomas S Traill Esq

M.D.

St Annes Street

Liverpool