

Wm Forbes Esq

John Scobie  
15<sup>th</sup> Sep. 1803

London 12<sup>th</sup> Septemr. 1803

in: 11<sup>th</sup> March 1804

Dear Sir

Melrose H. Crum

Sanacota is such an out of the way place that it is very seldom I can find the means of communicating with you, which is the reason that I have not sooner acknowledged yours of the 19 January, 28 March, of the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> of April, and of the 5<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> June from the Indian Country, very lately come to hand. At present however I do not mean to make a regular reply to them, as I do not know how or when this letter is to find you, which I mean to send to Liverpool, to wait for a chance of some conveyance from thence to N. Orleans, which I understand some times occurs.

My last to you was of the 2<sup>d</sup> April, via Rapsaw, and I have since, advised your Brother, as occasion served, of any thing material in our concerns here, which he would impart to you, as opportunities of consequence may have offered. — The strong probability of a renewal of the War, early in March last, and the actual process commencement of Hostility, not long after, together with the generally received opinion, which still remains to a certain degree, that Spain would or will be obliged to join with France therein, put a stop to my proceedings here, ere before now you would have received the goods you order for August. In addition to the war, the circumstance of British property being seized in most of the parts of Europe, where French influence or power prevailed, contributed to stagger me, as doubting whether the same might not extend to parts in America similarly circumstanced. Three Ships almost loaded for Cadiz lying in the River, in the same tier with the Sean, put their cargoes ashore again, & are still lying by their empty, as my man informed me. In the meantime we learn that Mr. Murray the American Minister here has concluded a Treaty with the French Government for the Cession of Louisiana to the United States, which Cession would include Mobile, & as far as the River Perdida, and but of this I could not obtain any certainty, I mean as to the limits; and about the same time I was credibly inform'd, the American Minister at Madrid, was negotiating with that Court for the Cession of the Two Floridas

1<sup>st</sup> August 1791

Floridas, including Pensacola & ~~Mobile~~, in Addition to Louisiana; but this it seems has not yet been Accomplish'd. About the same time I learn'd that Mr. Munro was shortly expected here from France, in the Capacity of American Ambassador to this Court, which induc'd me to suspend operations till his Arrival, hoping through him to be enabled to see my way more clearly than I then could. Accordingly about the Middle of last month, two or three weeks after his Arrival in London, I waited on him, and inform'd him of my Connections & Concerns in your Country, and learn'd from him that Mobile did fall within the American Government, which he thought would be establish'd there, at N. Orleans, in about six Weeks from that date; And that such of the Inhabitants, and Settlers there as chose it, might be immediately admitted as Citizens, on taking the Oath of Allegiance to the U. States, and that at any rate, private Property of all Descriptions would be inviolate. I told him that I thought of sending out a Ship, with an Assortment of Goods, chiefly for the Indian Trade, to Mobile; and ask'd him if I should be safe in doing so, to which he answer'd in the affirmative; I ask'd him if he would furnish such Ship with his Passport, to which he reply'd that was a question he was not then prepared to answer on the sudden; [he had not then had his Audience, or deliver'd his Credentials to the King, to which perhaps he allud'd in that reply] but he said generally, that he would do any thing in his power, or that he could do with propriety, to promote our Interest and facilitate our Trade in that Country. He ask'd if the Ship I meant to send was an American or British Ship; when I told him, the Ship I had in the River was British, but of that made much difference, I could probably dispose of her, & charter an American, which he seem'd to think was the more eligible Mode. Upon the whole, the Conversation I had with him was so far satisfactory, that next day I began to warehouse your Goods, and set about making extracts of a kind of compound from both of them, to give out to the Traders, especially to such of them as would require some time for Manufacturing & preparing the Goods, & getting them to the Place in the Country; I had the Seal Advertis'd for Sale, & a Broom stuck up at her Mast head, and directed the Broker to look out for a suitable American Ship to charter for Mobile, thinking there at least,

Under the American Government, there would be little vigour of the Frater-  
-nal hug. Commercial business here, has for Months past, been extream-  
-ly slack, a great many ships for sale but no buyers, inasmuch that  
we have never had an offer for the Tean, tho she has been in the Market  
for Weeks past; I had her Advertised also for Charter, but no Notice was  
taken of it: On the other hand several American ships were offered for  
Charter, but on such terms that I did not think it right to agree to;  
Such as £2500 - to £2700 for the Voyage, 5  $\frac{1}{2}$   $\frac{1}{2}$  Pinnage,  $\frac{2}{3}$  Pilotage and  
Port Charges, 60 running days allowed on the whole here & with you, and  
After them from 10 to 12 Guineas of day for demunage, £500 to be paid  
in Advance, the remainder on the Ships return & discharge of her Cargo,  
&c. Rather than conform to these hard terms, & having little or no pros-  
-pect of doing any thing w<sup>th</sup> the Tean, I have lately determin'd on ma-  
-king her of her, & have told Hyndman to get her ready for sea, which  
he is now about. The Goods I expect will be all ready, a full Appoin<sup>t</sup>  
in about three weeks, and they talk of a Convoy for Jamaica, about the  
Latter end of October, which I propose Hyndman to join, if he should even  
wait a fortnight or so at Portsmouth or Plymouth for that purpose;  
so that upon the whole I think you may be looking for him about  
Christmas, barring Accidents. It is my intention to clear her out for Mo-  
-bille, an American port, but Hyndman in running down the back of  
-Roe Island, will hoist an English Ensign at his Main top Gallant Mast  
-Head, and lie to about three hours of the bar of Penracola, when if you want  
him in there, & think it safe, you can send out a boat to him for that  
purpose; or previously concert with the officer of the Guard at the Bar-  
-rancar to send off such boat, which he can do more readily than from the  
-Dun, and deliver Hyndman a Letter of instructions from you, which you  
can have lying with the Officer, ready so to send off - but if Hyndman  
-sees no sign of any Boat coming off to him, after lying to about three hours,  
he will conclude you do not wish him to come in at Penracola, & will pro-  
-ceed to Mobile. - It appears to me, that it will be convenient that you,  
or M. Simpson, or James Amerandy, or all of you, should get Naturaliz'd

as Citizens of the U. States, by which means the homeward Cargo may be rec-  
-koned, and will in fact become Neutral property, being shipped in the Name  
of such Naturalized Americans: Some such Measure as this will probably  
have suggested itself to you, as soon as you learn the Change of Government  
about to take place.

It grieves me to have to advise you, that Henry who had in his hands  
the proceeds of the Revolution's Cargo, stop'd payment before he could be  
made to refund any part of it; but still I do not give it up for lost, as  
he will, it is said, be able to pay all his debts in 3 or 4 Years, and have a  
considerable Surplus. Meantime a Power of Attorney from Penman & Co.  
has been sent to Kingston Jamaica, to try what can be done with his  
partner & connections there, to whose credit he had placed about half of  
the said proceeds. — I do not think of sending you any other Ship than  
the *Tean*, this Season; because I think you will have no difficulty, in getting,  
either by purchase or Charter, some suitable American Vessel when wanted,  
in the New American ports of N. Orleans & Mobile, on better terms than here,  
and I presume there will be no more difficulty in your shipping Cotton or  
Any thing else, from an American port. Cotton is very low here at present,  
but I do not know the exact price, indeed I believe it is in no demand, and  
any that has been sold lately is I think about 15. to 18.

Your Deer skins of <i>Tean</i> rec'd from the Broker's Sale	£22676. 15. 7
Those from E. Florida - 30 Hds - rec'd from d <sup>o</sup>	3027. 10. 6
The Deer skins of <i>Supply</i> d <sup>o</sup> d <sup>o</sup>	1024. 13. 6
The Cow Hides d <sup>o</sup> d <sup>o</sup>	268. 4. 4
	£27897. 3. 11

I have not yet got the Sales of the *Fur*, nor of the *Cedar*: the  
former went off at much the same prices as last year, the latter not so well,  
and will not average 3/4 of foot, on the *Gross* Sales.

There is hardly any thing talk'd or thought of in this Country but the In-  
-vasion from France & Holland; the whole Kingdom is under Arms, & learning  
military discipline &c. And tho' no one I believe has any doubt but an In-  
-sion will be attempted, yet no one seems to have any Apprehensions from  
the result, and I for one think Bonaparte cannot succeed in it. This Country  
is so powerfull both by Sea & Land, that I have no fear for its safety.

In the Meantime I remain — Dear Sir — ever yours — Wm. Leslie