

Dear Sir

Saturday, April 28th 1810.
Calcutta.

I wrote you a few lines with a pencil on board the Peller in the China river; I was unable then, & am unable now, to enter into a ~~thorough~~ thorough detail of my hopes & wishes. & of the accidents that determined me to come here. You must excuse my rambling — I was taking measures at Canton for proceeding immediately into the interior to Peking. I had a Chinese agent; I had prepared things — I had put money into his hands. I was to go up by boat as a merchant with about 500 £ worth of goods. My agent was at first sanguine but new difficulties arose every day — his manner & tone became disagreeable to me — I found that I should go up as it were a prisoner in a boat. A friend of his was to receive me 1st in his house at Canton but I found strange shuffling about that. I had never seen this friend. I suspected that he was playing the rogue or rather laying a plot for playing the rogue. I employed an honest simple Chinese servant to have an interview with this man. his account of the man's face & manner was enough to damp me. Then came on a new quarrel between the English factory & the Chinese, who made my friends strongly advise me not to risk being taken for a spy; for the Company could give me no protection if I came into trouble for I had only the tacit leave of the head to run a way if I liked — then again there was talk of sending a message to Peking; & if things had come to a greater rupture, this would perhaps have been done — in short for 10 thousand reasons I gave up my scheme & drew back my money (this whole business by the bye is a secret. I mean it must not be said that the select Committee had anything to do with it. In fact only two of them knew the exact plan — While wearing

from this place, I began to revolve on a passage thro Tibet
or other feasible point (for you must see that common
manliness (as you would not wish me deficient in that) prevents
me from giving up without a trial) & to this I added the
hopes of an Embassy from here. I was much encouraged
in these ideas by my friends at Canton. The Government
here has been written to concerning me in a most favo-
rable manner. I have also private letters to S^r Monto
& I am now here anxiously expecting his arrival.

He was to sail from Chadrass on the 27th, & is
expected here between the 3 & 6th of May. You
see that I am in a state of absolute suspense. I have a
sort of tetanus comes over my mind when I think of writing
to England, which absolutely shuts up my faculties. The note
I pencilled to you, & this letter, is all I have written
since my letter to Susan last winter! I cannot help it
my mind is in a ferment. All the letters I received by the
fleet last year lie crying for answers they are now in a
draw close at my elbow & I dare not look at them. There
lies a pair of Jane gloves on my table, & I dare not think
of where they came from Jerry! I shall Lloyd Lumb see
must all go unanswered till I have seen S^r Monto. but I
consider this letter as information to all my family & to
all in their reach. I am quite well - we had an
excellent passage, tho' being without Convoy, we were
desperately afraid of being taken in the bay of Bengal.
I meant to have lived retired here, for the month or
6 weeks that I am to stay, seeing only a few of the learned
but it would not do - I have been introduced to all the

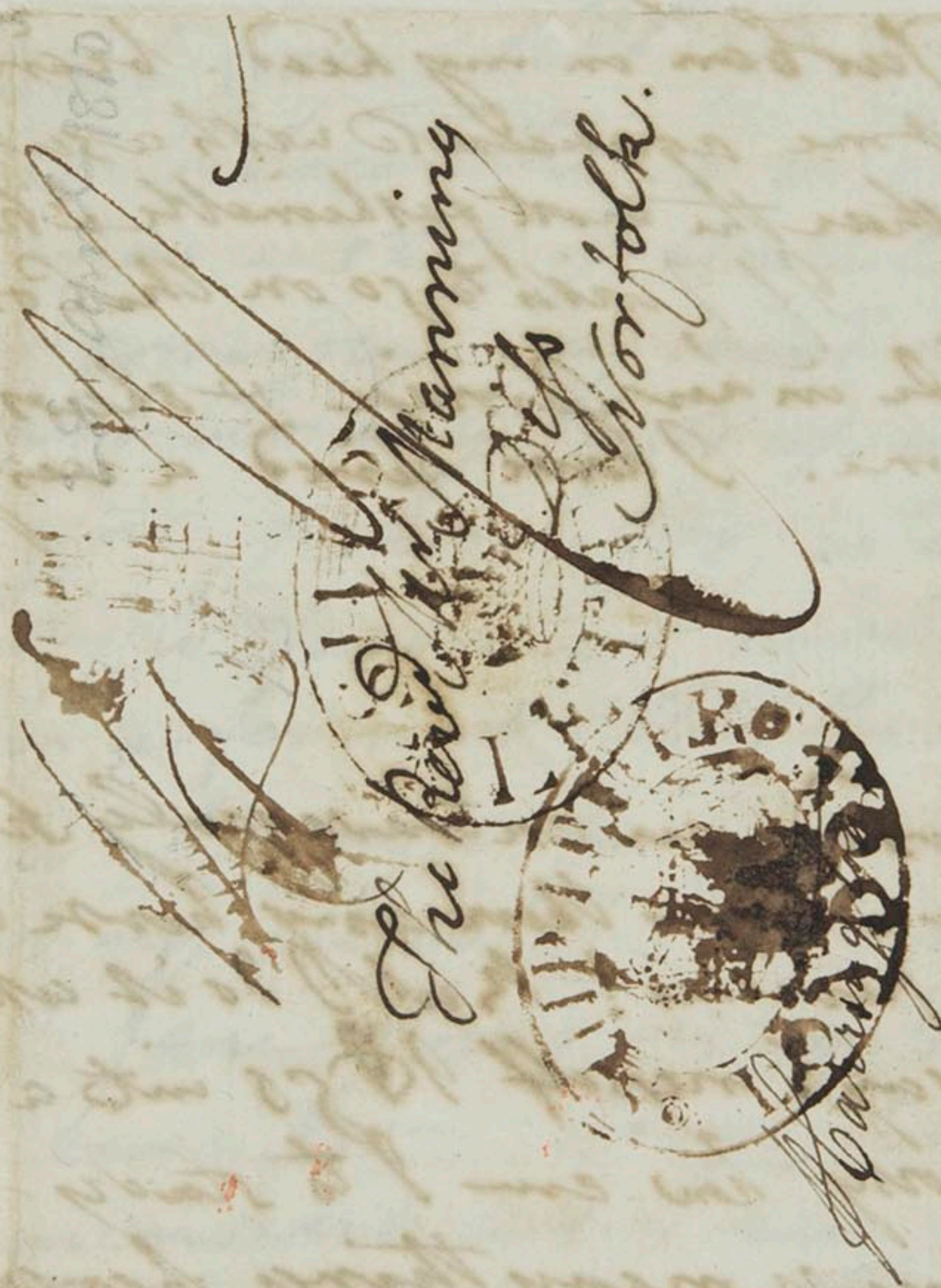
world & have dinner engagements till the 7th of May! ~~my~~ but the last now on my books is to St Wm Purroughs.

I yesterday dined with Mr Palmer the Member, who promised to procure this letter every early passage via Madras. but I must send it him ~~to day~~ before 5 o'clock. I thought my dress would have rendered my presence here in the fashionable world, incommodious - but quite the contrary! I'm sorry it for. & made to hand out the lady of the house to the dinner room. I have lost all my masculine honours. I was at a ball the other night given by Commodore Hays, dressed in ^{beautiful} blue gauzy flowered silk ~~robe~~ ^{having a beautiful grape cloth vest under it fine as} open before, & subnected with a black silk girdle subnected by a precious stone called ^{as} ~~you~~ black satin boots. Turban on my head. beard about a foot long. all eyes staring at me acquainted with a sufficient number of people in the room (other than the most fashionable & handsome &c) to be one of the company. If I wish to go on the Corso, some lady takes me by her side in her carriage & shows me to all the world & all the world to me. I have hired a very pleasant

house on the circular road. an extravagantly handsome house for me. handsomer & larger than any house in the parish of D. or the adjoining parishes! But I do it upon an economical plan; & thus. I say to myself I go into a miserable dirty lodging hot & noisy how can I to study - how am I to be cheerful, having so many things hanging on my mind - now my house, being spacious & airy with a fine veranda & a large ground, serves me instead of horses, & carriages & permits me to live in other respects simply. if to save 30 £, I made myself ill, where would be the sense of it? After all I could not save 10 £ perhaps.

I have not yet seen Mr Smith the Advocate General, Derry's intimate friend. I dine with him on the 3rd of May. There are

missionaries here who fancy they know something of the Chinese
language & have written most consummate nonsense about it.
This is a little trouble to me. for I am appealed to & what can I say.
these missionaries are good sort of folks, only a little weak in the
upper story, & no linguists - they are eager to see & talk with me.
I explain to them as gently as I can that they are perfectly
ignorant of the written Chinese language & that their translation of
Confucius is a mass of mistakes from beginning to end. but they
are too ignorant to comprehend that own ignorance, & I suppose in
the end I shall be obliged to translate two or three pages of the
book they have been mangling in order to justify myself from the
suspicion of unfairness.



I was present at the feast festival where a live man
swings round like a joint of meat suspended by hooks thro his
flesh! & other rare spectacles thro their tongues & a horrid sight
& I am invited to see a widow buried alive! The superstitions
of this country are dreadful. there are many besides these combining
blood, victims, charnel house scenes & ceremonies that may not be
named!! Depend upon it I'll write to you very soon again yours