

TM/1/2/13

Canton - September 29th 1809.

My dear sister

It was my wish & intention to write to you long long ago. but I have had no opportunity since the fleet sailed in the spring, till now. for the usual conveyance by American ships has been cut off this year, owing to the Embers, & the illwill between them & us. Only one American ship has sailed from here this season, & her Captain refused to take English letters on board.

The Direct fleet arrived a few days ago; it brought me a letter from Fanny, dated 2^d April; for which I am indeed very much obliged to her; it was the only one ~~it~~ in the Fleet from ~~the~~ ^{her} family. No doubt, many are coming on in the Bombay & China fleet, wh^{ch} sailed from England a month sooner, & which generally, in time of war, arrives here before the Direct. So you see, if Fanny had not written, I should have been vexed & uneasy as before.

I last night received a packet containing a letter from Edward, dated so far back as Jan^y 1808!; It has been forwarded with great care! & sent on by easy stages, it seems. I suppose it has been lying 8 or 10 months in India! It was a very kind & affectionate letter, & gave me great pleasure. As it was, & makes me look back with compunction to my letter to him, by the last fleet; in which, I think, I reproach him for carelessness. Yet, after all, I must say the & all who write to such distant friends ought always to mention their former letters especially, & by their dates, until they are acknowledged; & not be so afraid of punctuality. I send so many letters to Dip, th^{at} as to render excusable a little want of exactness on my part; for among so many enough will always arrive to let you know how I am, & to explain

one another. — I had a letter early in the summer from my father dated
July, 1808; an unexpected treat. I received also about the same
time one from Fanny, of nearly the same date. They don't arrive
according to their dates, for 6 weeks afterwards I received one from
Mr Wilkins, dated April, 1808. So much for clearing up old
accounts. Now for myself — & truly here I am at a loss what
to say. This unfortunate altercation between the English factory
& the Chinese Government has broken up my schemes, & been of
great disservice to me. I don't like to have come so far, & at last not
enter the country! Yet a false shame shall not make me linger
here. — I thought to have been in Cochin China this year, but was
obliged to alter my plans; for the ship I was to have sailed in (& I had sent
my things on board) lingered & lingered, shut off her voyage so long,
that I thought she would go no good, nor I neither, & I was right, for
we now hear that she never reached her port, being too late for the
winds! (& besides, between ourselves, I did not much like her trim,
nor think her quite safe in these queer seas.) So I have remained
at Macao — & tho I have been uneasy in my mind at these delays in my
prospects, yet I have been consoled in part by the great progress I have made
in the Language — having had the regular attendance of a Chinese
scholar, ever since last February, who is still with me — I have
been working very hard, & am in a condition to make more of
4 months in the country now, than I should have been of a year
or even 2 years, when I first arrived. — I have entirely
given up the plan of finishing the work myself in propria
persona & men in England to look out for, & instruct some well-
disposed young gentleman, whom I will put in the way of
travelling in China, without any difficulty. — Why then don't
I do it myself, you may say? — So I could, but I don't
choose to sacrifice so much time. — I have made acquisitions
here (not in money) which fully compensate my labor. — Even the
discovery of the tones, which had baffled 'em all, is in my opinion a full

recompence for the journey the labor & expense. It is what ought & will hereafter justify me in the eyes of all — (except perhaps my partial friends, who would rather hear the tones of my voice, than read my account of other peoples). — But the philological remarks, that a knowledge of this strange language gives rise to, these are what I hold most dear. — all this you must take my word for at present. be assured that I have more in me than the people in England think for. —

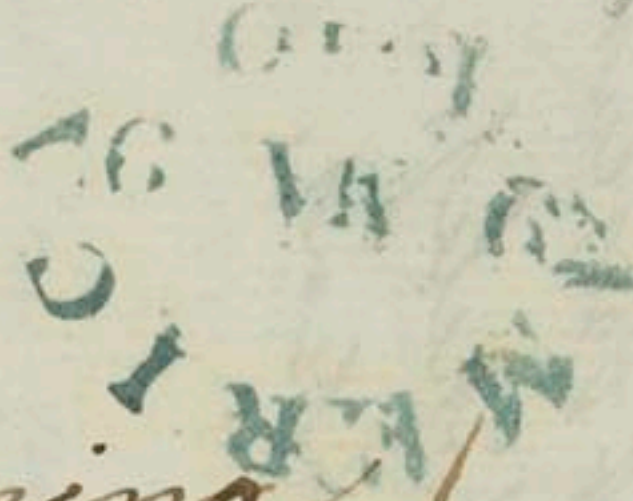
I have been up at Canton about a month — the ^{Supercargo} ~~factory~~ are still at Macao. I came to take a peep at the Spanish Ambassador, & to try if I can't creep into his train. He is just arrived in his junk from Siam, & I have entered into a negociation — to dine in his company — which I expect will take place in a few days. It would please me above all things to succeed in this business ^(not the dingy little trip to Peking) but this cursed quarrel between the English & Chinese makes it almost hopeless. When the fleet sails, I hope to be able to tell you my final plans. At present I drop

the subject; for the ~~for~~ more I think of it, the less I feel pleased. We expect the Bombay & China fleet soon. I hope to receive many letters by it from Norfolk, which, tho' of later date than the one I have just had from Geny, will be of greater interest to me than all the news in the world. For (except the sacred cause of the Spaniards, whom God preserve) there is nothing in the papers that interests me like letters from my friends. Apropos of the brave Spaniards; we had great rejoicings upon their account at Macao; fêtes as to the Spanish factory; &c. I composed several songs, some of which were sung at table, & prodigiously applauded. The subject did very much amuse & rouse me, & as far as a song can go, I do think, myself, what I wrote was not trash. I have no copies by me, but bye & bye perhaps I may send you one or two of the best. — very often yours
A. Smith
P.S. this comes via America



A new
writing
now done

29 Sept 1809



Miss Manning
Diss
Norfolk

England.

