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1856, January 24 - James King

James King

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King, James. (1856). 1856, January 24 - James King - Cleveland County Historical Collection.
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Liverpool 24th January 1836

My dear Mrs. Martin,

As it is now some time

since any communication has taken place between us, & tho' if I don't mistake you are in my debt as a correspondent, I shall not stand upon etiquette, (and as your being a lady prevents my finding fault with non answering my last) but proceed to ask you how you have been for this long time, & to inform you what I have been about since my visit to you. My health after leaving Kilquarity began rather to decline, & tho' I established in this place that same year in business, was so delicate that during a journey I was under the necessity of making to the north connected with my commercial pursuits here, I took so ill that I had to lay up at my cousin William Hamiltons, where I spent the winter, as he & his wife would not suffer me to stir, till I was capable of travelling without risk of a relapse. In Novr. 1834 I went to Portugal, partly for my health, & in part with an eye to business. I remained in Lisbon till the beginning of August, when I returned to this

Country much improved by my residence in the Peninsula, and am now fairly fixed here for the future, - at least I hope so. As far as this Season has gone, I have not felt the rigor of the climate nearly so much as I used to do, & expect to be able to stand it out if the weather becomes no severer than it has been.

I was in Glasgow about a month ago, & found all our friends there as usual - my uncle David had been complaining a good deal, but was better. - Both my father & he are very deaf - he so much so that the only way of communicating to him is by writing, or the fingers - my mother & the rest of the family were pretty well; - William was to sail for Demerara on the 20th to practice his calling as an engineer, in conjunction with Gavin, who was to have got married last month, to an English lady, who had gone out to the colony with some of her friends; - Johnny is doing very well there, & now manages one of the Company's estates to their entire satisfaction; - West India matters have been looking up for some time - Sugars having advanced considerably in price, and the compensation money for the negroes being due next month on most of the claims, have

raised the spirits of proprietors somewhat - they had
much need of it, as their interest was bad enough
for a long time - my uncle was very near
retiring from the concern last year, but my father
persuaded ^{against it} him, & it will be a good many thousands
in his pocket -

Aunt Nelly last time I saw her, was as well as
usual & living very quietly - she showed me a
Dumfriesshire newspaper, in which was an account of
a grand meeting of archers in your grounds, and
a dance I think afterwards in the house, by which
I supposed you were in good health & spirits.

How is my old friend Duncan? - I understand from
a cousin of his here, that he & his lady have been
increasing the population of your parish - please
remember me to him, as also to Mr & Mrs Lawrence
Mrs & Mrs Skiving & all our mutual friends in
your delightful district.

Hoping I shall have the pleasure of hearing
from at your convenience, & tendering my
services to you in this place I remain

Yours very sincerely

My address for letters

James F. King Esq.

Dumfries

For parcels

No 9 Goree.

W. F. King.

PAID AT
LIVERPOOL

Mr. Martin
of Plymouth
By Castle Douglas
A. B.

Mr James King
24th Jan 1836