

## 1812 Note to Miss N. from William Lincolne

Miss N. was really naughty to abscond this morning, but with my usual sanguine temper am willing to put the very best construction upon it (*torn paper here*) probably to try my philosophy (*illegible*) therefore on the issue of experimental philosophy we drop the subject – only stating, by way of self defence, that I was sadly disappointed of an early Stage. I leave this fact with your *candour(?)*.

You did not surely misunderstand a rejoinder I made to a playful remark of yours under the head extravagance; I meant of course that the one was as improbable as the other – as my dear – if we meet clasped in each other's affection I shall not find you extravagant you will not discover me to be parsimonious. Accept practical piety with my kindest love, as I know you may anticipate a high treat in its perusal.

Miss Joscelyn desires to be particularly remembered to you. Perhaps you will be sceptical enough to doubt that ye flurry I put myself in from haste to reach ye Wharf is the reason of my writing such a gentlemen's scrawl.

Favoured,

William

You will not mistake my signature for that of Mr Napier's royal correspondence (*written on margin*)

*This note is undated but was probably written at the end of October 1812, after William Lincolne had first approached Mary Napier about marriage, but before he went to meet her father, William Napier, at his house on Grand Junction Wharf on the Thames. The note was clearly delivered by hand, so Mary was probably still staying with her sister Sarah Reeve in Braintree, where the two had first met. It seems rather disjointed in expression and the handwriting is noticeably scrawled, unlike the well-formed hand of his next letter to her.*

*William appears to have given Mary a copy of "Practical Piety" by Hannah More, published in 1811. Hannah More was a favourite author of both William and Mary.*

*Miss Joscelyn was a second cousin of William's who lived in Braintree.*

*Transcribed from original letter by Helen Wolvey, 3 x great granddaughter of William and Mary, in 2018.*