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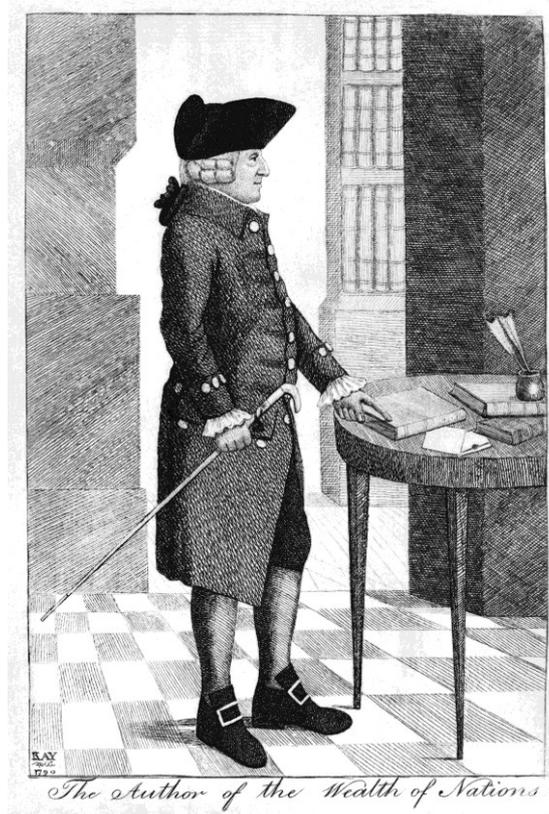
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ADAM SMITH'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE FIRST EARL OF SHELBURNE 1759-1760

THREE AUTOGRAPH LETTERS

“the secret of his genius is to be found in that part of his life before he became celebrated”



In 1751 Adam Smith was appointed Professor of Logic at Glasgow College (University of Glasgow) and in 1752 became Professor of Moral Philosophy. He was to remain there until he resigned in February 1764 to become tutor to the Duke of Buccleuch.

Although Glasgow College was relatively remote, it was becoming one of the great educational institutions in these islands. There were only 300 students in Adam Smith's day. The great majority of the students were apparently young men preparing for the Presbyterian ministry. Adam Smith's moral philosophy chair never had more than 90 students in the public or 20 in the private class.

At Glasgow he taught logic, jurisprudence and politics. He was a member of the Glasgow Literary Society. In 1755 he lectured to the Cochrane Club on economics. In 1758 he became Quaestor for the University Library and in 1760 was appointed Dean of Arts. In 1761 he became Vice-Rector. He published two articles in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1755, in 1759 his first book *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* and in 1761 *Considerations concerning the First Formation of Languages* in *The Philological Miscellany*.

Scott in *Adam Smith as Student and Professor* writes of this time *“the secret of his genius is to be found in that part of his life before he became celebrated”*.

Adam Smith lived rent free in a house in Professors' Court at the College, with his mother and his cousin, Janet Douglas.

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It was the custom for professors to take students into their houses. The names of the students who boarded with and were supervised by Adam Smith have been lost, other than Henry Herbert (later Lord Porchester) and Thomas Petty-Fitzmaurice.

In 1758 Gilbert Elliot, later Lord Minto, recommended Glasgow University rather than Oxford for the education of Thomas Petty-Fitzmaurice, younger son of the 1st Earl of Shelburne, 1706-1761, (the maternal grandson of the economist William Petty) and wrote to Adam Smith on November 14th 1758 that Lord Shelburne

“proposes that he should be in your house and entirely under your direction, and to give for his board and the inspection of his education a hundred pound a year, or more if it should be thought proper...you will have the total charge and direction without any control...I think myself that a young man of this rank coming to your University may be of advantage to it”.

For two years from 1759, Thomas Petty-Fitzmaurice lived with Adam Smith.

Adam Smith was the most conscientious of tutors and wrote on August 31st 1759 to the the Earl of Shelburne of his duties as tutor “*as the most agreeable and useful business in which I can be engaged*”.

Lord Shelburne, replying to a letter from Adam Smith of 4th April 1759, wrote on the plans for his son’s education

“...the account you give me of my Son...convince me of your power of looking into him, so does the Scheme you chalk out for the prosecution of his studies, convince me of your judgement...I can point out nothing, I can only approve of what you mean to do...Oeconomy seems...to have a just place in your attention; No fortune is able to do without it, nor can any man be Charitable, Generous or Just who neglects it, it will make a man happy under Slender Circumstances, and make him Shine if his Income be Affluent...Your Pupil comes into the World a sort of an Adventurer, intil’d to nothing...I wish him train’d to Need little, not for the purpose of Accumulating, but in order to enable him to Give more...I wish him therefore to be convinc’d, that it is His Happiness and not my own, that I have in view. I wish him to become an honest and Benevolent man; I wish him Punctual and Sober; a lover of Method, and so skill’d in Figures and the businesses of Life, as by Assisting me in my latter days, he make me rejoice at my Labours in his early ones...” 26th April 1759

Thomas Petty-Fitzmaurice (1742-1793) had earlier been educated at Eton. After Glasgow he went to St Mary’s Hall, Oxford in 1761, was called to the English Bar in 1768 and became a Member of Parliament in 1762. In 1779 he set up as a linen merchant and established a bleaching factory at Llewenny in Wales, as his Irish estates were unproductive. He was reported to have lived on “*the most intimate terms with Johnson, Hawkesworth and Garrick*”.

Between March 1759 and November 1760 Adam Smith wrote 13 letters to Thomas’s father, the Earl of Shelburne. **3 of these letters of 14 pages are present in this Collection. They are in fine condition, written in black ink, entirely in the autograph hand of Adam Smith, signed and dated, all endorsed by the Earl of Shelburne on the back. Each letter is preserved in a green cloth, morocco backed box, lettered in gilt.**

The letters provide an important source for any study of Adam Smith’s life at this time.

We see Adam Smith as a tutor his sense of duty towards his pupil, his “*Plan I would propose for his education*”, his strictness in keeping his pupil “*under my own eye*” and “*I chuse rather to oppress him with business*” which “*leaves no time for Idleness*” April 4th 1759

Adam Smith explains the practice of professors taking pupils as boarders at Glasgow and the cost “*being ten pounds per quarter for each person*”, fees for masters, and other expenses including

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“two suits of Cloaths, a suit for mourning and a summer suit of fustian, Books and some other necessaries” and *“allowance for Pocket”*. August 31st 1759

Smith’s curriculum includes the study of civil law, feudal law, French, Greek, Latin, mathematics including Euclid, moral philosophy, logic with fencing and dancing available in spare time. There is Adam Smith’s recommended reading for his pupil to include *“the best greek latin and french Authors on Moral philosophy”*, and the *“best English Authors”*. In these letters he mentions his own first book *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (as well as Montesquieu’s *L’Esprit des Loix*).

We see Adam Smith as carefully accounting and keeping receipts for money, transmitting accounts of expenditure to Lord Shelburne and overseeing his pupil’s accounts and ensuring he *“he pays all his own accounts after he has summed and examin’d them along with me”* April 4th 1759

In spite of Adam Smith’s pressure of work at College he mentions visits to Edinburgh where he caught a cold sleeping *“in a damp bed”*, and his need to go to York and the West of England July 15th 1760

Of his contemporaries at Glasgow, in these letters he refers to Hercules Lindesay Professor of Civil Law, James Clow Professor of Logic, Robert Simson Professor of Mathematics, James Moor Professor of Greek, and George Muirhead Professor of Latin). Others mentioned include the great political economist Sir William Petty, Lady Shelburne, Lord Fitzmaurice (later 2nd Earl of Shelburne and Prime Minister) the sons of Sir John Colthurst who may be sent to Glasgow College, Dr William Cullen physician and Professor of Chemistry at Edinburgh, whose most famous patient was David Hume; and Adam Smith’s mother *“who is my heir”*.

Adam Smith shows his ability to assess character - *“the real bottom of his character”*. We also see Adam Smith as a good companion- the *“amusement and Dissipation enough during ten days he staid with me in Edinburgh”* on *“the jaunt to Edinburgh”*, and his hospitality *“your Lordships friends will look upon my house as their home”*.

And in 1759 we read Adam Smith writing as an economist over 25 years before the publication of *The Wealth of Nations* on landed *“improvers”* in Scotland and Ireland and *“the noble & important duty of attempting to introduce arts, industry and independency into a miserable country”* August 31st 1759

Provenance: Bowood Library, home of the Marquess of Lansdowne, Earl of Shelburne.

Paper & Watermarks: In addition to Adam Smith being a *“beau”* in his books, he was a positive dandy in his choice of writing paper. When he could get it, he always used the best thick handmade Dutch paper. The leaf edges of the paper are gilt.

Adam Smith’s Letters: the total number of recorded letters written by Adam Smith is surprisingly small – about 200; of which at least 24 are only known from published sources, which leaves about 176 letters surviving – virtually all in public collections. There are only 11 surviving letters of Adam Smith’s predating his correspondence with Lord Shelburne.

References: Mossner & Ross, *The Correspondence of Adam Smith* 1987. Murray, *Memories of the Old College of Glasgow* 1927. Rae, *Life of Adam Smith* 1895. Scott, *Adam Smith as Student and Professor* 1937

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1. **ADAM SMITH** autograph letter to the 1st Earl of Shelburne. *Glasgow College 4th April 1759*

Quarto, 2 leaves, 5 pages, 123 lines, endorsed in ink by Lord Shelburne
£40,000

Adam Smith in this fine and important five page letter provides Lord Shelburne with a detailed plan for his pupil's education including philosophy, languages, law and history, especially Civil Law, feudal law attendance in his moral philosophy class, as well as mathematics, greek, latin, dancing and fencing. His pupil Thomas will read with him Greek, French, and Latin authors on moral philosophy every day. Euclid will be taught by the Professor of Mathematics Robert Simson.

Adam Smith discusses his pupil's accounts and expenses and hopes to see Shelburne in Scotland. Finally, in paying tribute to Shelburne's stewardship as a reforming landlord in Ireland, refers to the measures needed to improve the economy of Scotland and refers to William Petty.

Provenance: Bowood, home of the Earls of Shelburne. **References:** Mossner, Correspondence of Adam Smith, no.30. **Paper watermark:** coronet above a shield with capitals LVG below.

April 4. 1759

Mr Smith

concerning the Scheme he proposes for my son Thomas's Studies¹

[page 1]

My Lord

I did myselfe the honour to write to your Lordship some time ago² & promised to write more distinctly by next post. It was not in my Power to keep my word. A slight indisposition which has hung about me ever since, joined to a multiplicity of business which several accidents have conspired to bring upon me, have kept me either so exhausted or so hurried that till this moment I have not had one hour in which I had both leisure & spirits to sit down to write to your Lordship.

I have nothing to add to what I said to your Lordship in my last letter concerning Mr Fitzmaurice's behaviour here. It has hitherto been altogether unexceptionable.

With Regard ~~which~~ to the Plan which I would propose for his education while he continues here; he will finish his Philosophical studies next winter; & as My Lord Fitzmaurice seemed to propose that he should stay here another year after that, I wd propose that is should be employed in perfecting himselfe in Philosophy & the Languages, but chiefly & principally in the study of Law & history. In that year I would advise him to attend the Lectures of the Proffessor of civil law³: for tho' the civil law has no authority in the English courts,

¹ Endorsement on blank verso in hand of 1st Earl of Shelburne

² Adam Smith's letter to the Earl of Shelburne of March 10th 1759

³ Hercules Lindesay, Professor of Civil Law

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the study of it is an admirable preparation for the study of ye English Law. The civil law is digested into a more regular system than the English Law has yet been, & tho' the Principles of the former are in many respects different from those of the latter, yet there are many principles common to both,
and

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And one who has studied the civil law at least knows what a System of law is, what parts it consists of, & how these ought to be arranged: so that when he afterwards comes to study the law of any other country which is not so well digested, he carries at least the idea of a System in his head & knows to what part of it he ought to refer every thing that he reads. While he attends the lectures of the Proffessor of Civil Law, I shall read with him myself an insti=
tute of the feudal law⁴, which is the foundation of the pre=
sent laws & Government of all European Nations.

In order to have him immediately under my own eye I have hurried him a little in his Philosophical studies. I have made him pass the logic class, which might regu=
larly have been his first study, & brought him at once into my own, the moral Philosophy. He attends however the lectures of the Proffessor of Logic⁵ one hour a day. This, with two hours that he attends upon my lectures, with one hour which he gives to the Proffessor of Mathematics⁶, one hour to the Proffessor of Greek⁷, & another to that of Latin⁸, makes his hours which he attends every day ~~exp~~ except Saturday & Sunday to be six in all. He has never yet missed a Single hour, & in the evening & mor=
ning goes over very regularly with me the business of these different classes. I chuse rather to oppress him with business for this first winter: it keeps him constantly employed & leaves no time for idleness. The oppression too is not so great as it may seem. The Study of Greek & latin is not at all new to him: Logic requires little attention

so

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so that moral philosophy & mathematics are the only studies which take up much of his time. The great vigour both of mind & body ~~not~~ which he seems to be peculi=
arly blessed makes every thing easy to him. We have one ho=
liday in the month which he has ~~th~~ hitherto constantly

⁴ possibly Craig's *Jus Feudale* of which Smith owned James Baillie's 1732 edition.

⁵ James Clow, Professor of Logic

⁶ Robert Simson, Professor of Mathematics

⁷ James Moor, Professor of Greek

⁸ George Muirhead, Professor of Humanity

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chosen of his own accord to employ rather in learning something which he had missed by being late in coming to the College, than in diversion.

The College breaks up in the beginning of June & does not sit down again till the beginning of October. During this interval I propose that he should learn french⁹ & Dancing & fencing¹⁰ & that besides he should read with me the best Greek, Latin & french Authors on Moral Philosophy for two or three hours every morning, so that he will not be idle in the vacation. The Professor of Mathematics too proposes to teach him Euclid at that time as he was too late to learn it in the Class. That Gentleman, who is now turned seventy but preserves all the gaiety & vigour of youth, takes more pains upon Mr Fitzmaurice than I ever knew him do upon any Person, & generally gives him a private lecture twice or thrice a week. This is purely the effect of personal liking, for no other consideration is capable of making Mr Simson¹¹ give up his ease.

I make Mr Fitzmaurice pay all his own accounts after he has summed & examined them along with me. He gives me a receipt for what ever money he receives: in the receipt he marks the purpose for which it is to be

applied

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applied, & preserves the account as his voucher, marking upon the back of it the day when it was payed. These shall all be transmitted to your Lordship when there is occasion: But as my Lord Fitzmaurice¹² left fifty Pounds here I shall have no occasion to make any demand for some time.

Your Lordship may depend upon the most religious compliance with whatever commands you shall please to lay upon me with regard to the conduct or Education of Mr Fitzmaurice.

I have been lately made to flatter myselfe with

⁹ Gilbert Elliot had written to Adam Smith in November 1758 that French was not taught at Eton but that it was customary for the children of his friends to be taught to speak and read French. From 1730 the University made a small grant to a competent Frenchman to teach French. By the 1740's the Professor of Oriental Languages, Professor Cumin was voluntarily holding classes in French.

¹⁰ In 1761 Adam Smith was involved in a scheme for an Academy of dancing, fencing and riding to be established under the direction of the University.

¹¹ Robert Simson (1687-1768) Professor of Mathematics at Glasgow (1711-61), the celebrated 'restorer of ancient geometry' of whom Adam Smith described on the 6th edition of the Theory of Moral Sentiments (1790) as one of 'the two greatest mathematicians that I have ever had the honour to be known to...Dr Robert Simson of Glasgow and Dr Matthew Stewart of Edinburgh...'

¹² Sir William Petty, Viscount Fitzmaurice (1737-1805) later 2nd Earl of Shelburne from 1761 and 1st Marquess of Lansdowne from 1784, elder brother of Thomas Fitzmaurice, soldier & statesman, 1763 1st Lord of Trade, 1766-82 Secretary of State, 1782-83 1st Lord of Treasury

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the Pleasure & honour of seeing your Lordship in Scotland this summer. It would give the greatest satisfaction both to Mr Fitzmaurice & me. Your Lordship would then see with your own eyes in what manner he was employed & could judge better how far it was necessary either to increase or diminish the quantity of work which is now imposed upon him. We are no Strangers in this country to the very noble & generous work which your Lordship has been employed in in Ireland. We have in Scotland some noblemen whose estates extend from the east to the west sea, who call themselves improvers, ~~who~~ & are called so by their countrymen when they cultivate two or three hundred acres round their own family seat, while they allow all the rest of their country to lie waste,
almost

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almost uninhabited & entirely unimproved, not worth a shilling the hundred acres, without thinking themselves answerable to God, their country & their Posterity for so shameful as well as so foolish a neglect. Your Lordship, I hear, is not of that opinion, & tho' you are not negligent either of the elegance or magnificence of your country Villa's, ~~do~~ you do not think that any attention of that kind dispenses with the more noble & important duty of ~~and~~ attempting to introduce arts, industry & independency into a miserable country, which has hither to been a stranger to them all. Nothing, I have often imagined, would give more pleasure to Sir William Petty¹³, your Lordships ever honoured ancestor, than to see his representative pursuing a Plan so suitable to his own Ideas which are generally equally wise & public spirited. Believe me to be with the greatest respect

My Lord
your Lordships most
Obliged & most obedient
Humble Servant
Adam Smith

Glasgow College
4. April. 1759

¹³ Sir William Petty (1623-87), political economist and father of 'political arithmetic' or statistics, friend of Hobbes, maternal grand-father of Lord Shelburne.

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2. **ADAM SMITH** autograph letter to the 1st Earl of Shelburne. *Glasgow College 31st August 1759*

Quarto, 3 pages, 58 lines, endorsed in ink by Lord Shelburne
£38,000

Adam Smith describes the alternatives at Glasgow College for the education of the sons of Sir John Colthurst; either to come with a tutor, or a tutor is appointed at Glasgow or to board with a Professor. **Adam Smith refers to his recently published book *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* which he had sent to Lord Shelburne**, his duty of service to his pupil's and ends by requesting a remittance of money to cover his pupil's costs for tuition, clothes, books and other necessities.

Provenance: Bowood, home of the Earls of Shelburne. **References:** Mossner, Correspondence of Adam Smith, no.37. **Paper watermark:** coronet above a shield with capitals LVGERREVINK below with a bell suspended below.

Augst. 31. 1759

Mr. Smith

*with advice concerning the manner
of Settling Students at Glasgow¹⁴*

[page1]

I wrote to your Lordship about a month ago & directed my letter¹⁵ to Hanover Square that my Lady Shelburne might see it as it Passed to Ireland. In that letter I gave your Lordship a full detail of the different Articles of expense incurred at Glasgow. I shall not at present repeat them; as your Lordship must adoubtedly by this time have received it. What your Lordship seems chiefly anxious about, the care that is to be taken of the Morals of the two young people¹⁶ you are so good as to recommend to our care, is undoubtedly of far the greatest importance. What I would advise for this purpose is either first, that the Tutor, of whom your Lordship gives so advantageous a character, should, if at all convenient, come along with them: Or, secondly, that a Tutor should be appointed there them: Or, last of all, that they should be boarded in some of the Proffessors houses who are in the Practise of taking Boarders¹⁷. The first expedient I look upon as incomparably the Best, nothing being equal to established Authority for the government of young people. The objection against the second, is not only the expence that would attend it which would be considerable

(as

¹⁴ Endorsement on blank verso by Lord Shelburne

¹⁵ July 23rd 1759

¹⁶ John Colthurst & Nicholas Colthurst, sons of Sir John Conway Colthurst (d.1775), Irish M.P. and married to Lady Charlotte Fitzmaurice a cousin of the 1st Earl of Shelburne.

¹⁷ It was the custom for Professors to take students into their houses or, as appears in at least one case, when a Professor had no more room, he put some of those he was to board into College rooms and they came to his house for meals and possibly extra tuition.

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(as not only a fee of at least twenty or thirty Pounds a year must probably be paid to those such a tutor, but to have the proper use of him, he must be boarded along with them) but like-wise the extreme difficulty of finding a good one: I think, however, this might be taken care of. The objection against the third expedient is likewise its expensiveness, the board taken by the Professors being ten pounds per quarter for each Person¹⁸. Your Lordship will judge which of these is the most proper expedient.

Your Lordship, makes me very vain when you mention the satisfaction you have had in reading the book I lately published¹⁹, & the engagements you think I have come under to the Public. I can, however, assure your Lordship that I have come under no engagements which I look upon as so sacred as those by which I am bound as a member of this University to do every in my Power to serve the young people who are sent here to study, such especially as are particularly so recommended to my care. I shall expect, whenever they are settled, that your Lordships friends will look upon my house as their home, & that they will have recourse to me in every Difficulty that they meet with in the Prosecution of their studies, & that I shall never regard any application of this kind as an interruption of business, but as the most

agreeable

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agreeable & useful business in which I can be engaged.

I shall soon have occasion for a remittance from your Lordship. The fifty Pounds left here by Lord Fitzmaurice are now spent & I am now about thirty pounds in advance. I shall send your Lordship upon the sitting-down of the College a full account of every article of the former years expence. The chief articles have been fees to different Masters, two sails of Cloaths, a suit of mourning & a summer suit of fustian, Books & some other necessaries. His allowance for Pocket is a guinea per month. I am with the greatest respect

My Lord

Glasgow College
31. August. 1759

Your Lordships most
Obliged most Obedient &
most humble servt.
Adam Smith

¹⁸ It is known that Adam Smith received £100 a year during each of the two years that Thomas Fitzmaurice lived under his care. The names of others who boarded with him are unknown, except for Henry Herbert, later Lord Porchester.

¹⁹ *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, presentation copy of first edition sent by Adam Smith's publisher Andrew Millar in April 1759.

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3. ADAM SMITH. Autograph letter to the 1st Earl of Shelburne. *Glasgow 15th July 1760*
Quarto, 2 leaves, 6 pages, 129 lines, endorsed in ink by Lord Shelburne, preserved in a cloth box.
£35,000

Adam Smith writes in this long six page letter of his own illness since March and its recurrence from sleeping in a damp bed. Dr Cullen had advised him to ride five hundred miles before September as a means of recovery. He also encloses receipts for expenditure and asks Lord Shelburne for payment of the money he is owed for books and clothes for his pupil Thomas.

Adam Smith describes Thomas's academic progress and character. His pupil reads the best English authors, **as well as Montesquieu's *Esprit de Loix***. In the evening he goes dancing and soldier's exercises. His pupil's inclination is towards mathematical and mechanical learning, and that he has less time for polite literature. Thomas has a certain hardness of character, that from Eton he learned a sort of flippant smartness which has now left him entirely and that his character is very grave and serious.

Provenance. Bowood, home of the Earls of Shelburne. **Reference.** Mossner, Correspondence of Adam Smith, no.51. **Paper watermark,** coronet above a shield with capitals LVGERREVINK below with bell suspended below.

July 15. 1760.

Mr Smith of Glasgow

*giving acct. of his ill state of
health & desiring a remittance
of Money on acct. of my Son
Thomas.*

*I have accordingly remitted
to him two Drafts on Gosling
& Co. for 100£ each this 23 July 1760.²⁰*

[page 1]

Glasgow 15:July:1760:

My Lord

I send your Lordship enclosed in the same packet with this letter Mr Fitzmaurices receipts for the money he has got from me since the beginning of November last. The sum, you will see, is upwards of ninety Pounds. I did not propose to trouble your Lordship upon this subject till November next. But I happened unluckily to catch cold in March last & I suffered this illness, thro' carelessness, to hang about me till within these three weeks. I then thought I had got entirely the better of it. But upon going into Edinburgh about ten days ago, having been lain in a damp bed in a house in that neighbourhood, it returned upon me with so much violence that two days ago, my friend Dr Cullen²¹ took me aside on the street

²⁰ Endorsement on blank verso by Lord Shelburne. One draft for £100 represented the fee to Adam Smith for board, teaching & general supervision; the other draft of £100 was to meet the advances Adam Smith had made to his pupil for the payment of University fees and tradesmen's accounts.

²¹ Dr William Cullen (1710-90), medical scientist & teacher, played important part in establishing medical schools at Glasgow & Edinburgh, Professor of Medicine, Glasgow 1751, Professor of Chemistry, Edinburgh 1756 & Practice of

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of Edinburgh, & told me that he thought it his duty to inform me plainly that if I had any hope of surviving next winter I must ride at least five hundred miles before the beginning of September²². I came home yesterday to settle my affairs which, so well as I can judge, will take me up near a fortnight. If I was in health, it would not take up two days, but at present I can give so little continued application that I have already been obliged to interrupt this letter twice in order to let the profuse sweat, which the labour of writing three lines had thrown me into, go off. I am besides obliged to employ a great deal of time in Riding. I propose going the length of York &

returning

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returning by the West of England as soon as my affairs will allow me. If, indeed, I run down as fast for these ten days to come as I have done for these ten days past, I shall soon think I shall save myself the trouble & My Mother²³, who is my heir, the expence of following my friends prescription.

As the expence of this proposed journey comes upon me a little unexpectedly I find myself obliged to begg that your Lordship would order payment immediately of the money I have advanced. Besides the money contained in the enclosed account Mr Fitzmaurice owes three different accounts, two to different Booksellers & one to a Clothier. It will be three or four days before I can get in these Different accounts. By what he tells me they will amount to between thirty & fourty Pounds ster. I fancy nearer the latter sum than the former. I must likewise beg of your Lordship to remit the last of these sums upon trust & I shall immediately take care that the Accounts themselves be remitted transmitted to you. I would chuse to leave him behind me free in the world & as my intended journey will ran away with all my ready cash I cannot do it otherwise.

It would be throwing away Mr Fitzmaurices time to make him accompany me on this expedition. He has had amusement & Dissipation enough during the

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ten days he stayed with me in Edinburgh²⁴. A longer relaxa=

Physic, Edinburgh 1773, Adam Smith's physician, David Hume was his patient, pupils included William Hunter and Joseph Black

²² Strange advice but in line with contemporary ideas about treating the lifelong hypochondriasis that afflicted Adam Smith.

²³ Margaret Smith, (1694-1784), daughter of Robert Douglas, M.P., married Adam Smith, W.S. in 1720, widowed in January 1723, deeply religious, lived with Adam Smith in College at Glasgow and later in 1778 shared his home in Edinburgh, Adam Smith described her as *the object of his affection for more than 60 years*.

HAMISH RILEY-SMITH

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tion is altogether unnecessary to one of his hardy & strong constitution. He is at present & has been ever since the rising of the College extremely well employed. He stays at home all the forenoon which time he employs in reading the best English Authors. Immediately after dinner he read with me L'Esprit des Loix²⁵ for an hour or more till I caught my last cold. That lecture is now, indeed, probably at an end for this Summer. The Evening he spends in exercises, in Dancing & in learning the exercise of an Officer & a Soldier. He learns them with no other view than to form his body, for I do not discover in him the least inclination towards the army. He has less disposition towards those parts of science which are in some respects the objects of taste; that, & his than towards the mathematical & mechanical learning. In these he makes extraordinary progress; but seems to have less turn for what is called polite Literature & his mind is in some respects like his body, rather strong & firm & masculine than very graceful or very elegant. No man can have a stronger or a more steady resolution to act what, he thinks, the right part, & if you can once satisfy him that anything is fit to be done you may perfectly depend upon his doing it. To this excellent disposition he joins a certain hardness of character

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character, if I may call it so, which hinders him from suiting himself, so readily, as is agreeable, to the different situations & occasions & companies in which he has occasion to act. The great outlines of essential duty which are always the same, you may depend upon his never transgressing, but those little proprieties which are continually varying & for which no certain rule can be given he often mistakes. He has upon this account little address & cannot easily adjust himself to the different characters of those whom he desires to gain. He had learned at Eton a sort of flippant smartness which, not having been natural to him at first, has now left him almost entirely. In a few months more it will probably fall off altogether. The real bottom of his character is very grave & very serious, & by the time he is five & twenty, whatever faults he has will be the faults of the grave & serious character, with all its faults the best of Characters. I heard sometime in April last

²⁴ Adam Smith regarded Edinburgh as a *very dissolute town*.

²⁵ Baron de Montesquieu, *De l'Esprit des Loix*. Adam Smith's Library had a copy of *Oeuvres de Montesquieu*. Amsterdam 1758.

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that his companions accused him of narrowness. I told him of it immediately, & he soon explained to me what had given occasion to the accusation. I have ever since been more liberal to him & soon after gave him first six & then four Pounds to spend during the time of the Assizes. This has raised a good deal the articles for pocket. As I am thoroughly convinced that there
is

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is now no chance of his ever being a spendthrift, I do not think that it could have any good affect to pinch him at present & it might have a very bad one. Take him altogether he is one of the best young men I have known, & in since he came here has done more good than I ever knew anybody do in the same time. I have not the least fear that anything will go wrong in my absence. I do not propose being away above a month. He will be in my house & have the occasion conversation & assistance of several of my colleagues whenever he pleases to call for it. Independent of this my confidence in his own steadyness is now perfect & entire, & my illness will only be the loss of a lecture to him. Remember me in the most respectful manner to Lady Shelburne. I began this letter at in the forenoon, I finish it at eight at night. It has been the labour of almost a day; you may judge how often I have obliged to interrupt it. I am with the greatest respect

Your Lordships
Most Obliged & obedient
Servant

Adam Smith

Mr Fitzmaurice has gone out & has forgot to leave the Accounts which the vouchers of his receipts. Your Lordship will receive them in another packet by Next post. His receipts come by this post in a pac=
ket

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ket by themselves. Your Lordship will observe that the date of his receipt for the jaunt to Edinburgh is yesterday, the day we came home & settled accts. He had received the money so he had occasion for it & kept the acct of it. The same was the case of several of his other receipt: their dates are often posterior for the real time in which the money was received

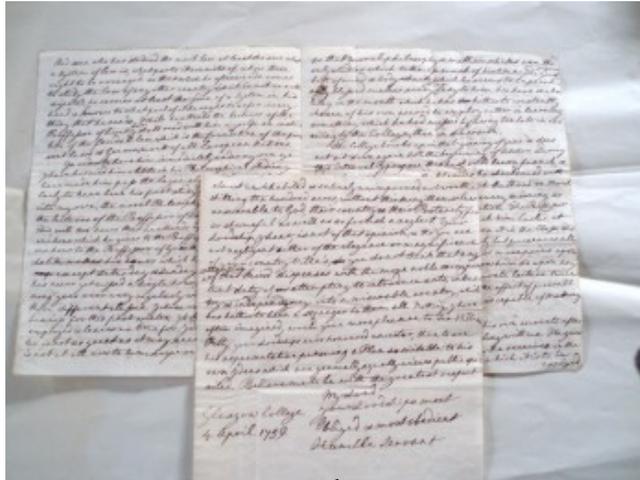
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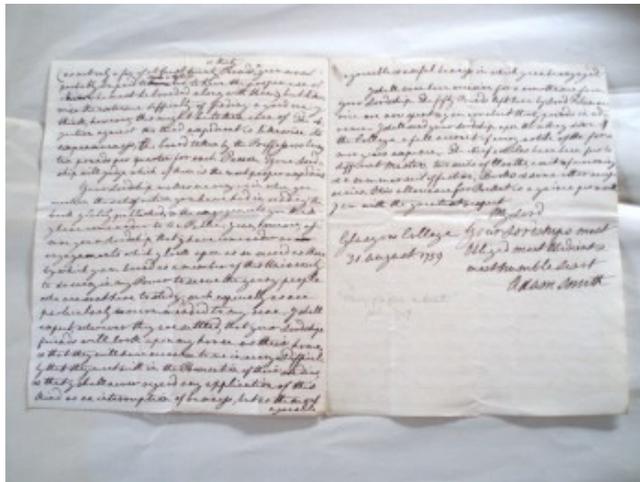
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April 4th 1759



August 31st 1759



July 15th 1760