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Letter from Harford Jones to Henry Dundas

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About this record

A copy of a letter from Harford Jones, Resident in Bagdad [Baghdad], to Henry Dundas, Secretary of State for War, sent from Bagdad and dated 31 October 1798. Subjects covered include:

- A dispute between the Pashaw [Büyük Sulaymān Pāshā, Governor of Baghdad] and Muscat
- Rumoured communication between Muscat and the French Government in Mauritius
- The arrest of the French Consul Jean-François Rousseau and the seizure of his papers, of which Jones forwards copies (IOR/L/PS/9/76/48, 57 and 58)
- Jones's attempts to obtain intelligence from French-occupied Egypt
- An arrangement with the Pashaw for communication with Constantinople [Istanbul], by which Jones will collect and forward intelligence from Europe
- Affairs in Persia [Iran] and the Pashaw's plans to send an embassy to Baba Khan [Fath-'Alī Shāh Qājār, Shāh of Persia].

The letter also forwards a copy of the Proclamation issued by General Napoleon Bonaparte on landing in Egypt (IOR/L/PS/9/76/42) and an intelligence report from Caboul [Kabul] (IOR/L/PS/9/76/41).

Another version of this letter is catalogued as IOR/L/PS/9/76/43.

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To
The Right Honorable
Henry Dundas
One of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State.
H. H. H.

Sir

Since I had the honor to address you on the 30. Instant I have had two very long Conferences, with the Pashaw, and his Minister, an account of which, I have transmitted in detail to the Honble the President in Council at Bombay, on the Subject of the Misunderstanding which existed betwixt the Pashaw and the Governor of Muscat. The Pashaw and his Minister at these Conferences, expressed a Wish for the Governor of Bombays Interference on the part of the Pashaw, with the Government of Muscat, and a desire of being assisted on the Expedition, undertaken by the Minister against Katus, with two of the Honble Companys Corsairs to join the Turkish Fleet at Bussora.

I have great pleasure in being able to add, that in the Course of a few days, after my Conference with the Pashaw Accounts were received here, of the Governor of Muscat, having permitted, two Vissels bound to Bussora, which he had for some time detained, to proceed on their

their Voyage, whereby we judge, that everything either is or will be, amicably arranged with the Muscat Government by the Governor of Bussora: and that I was fortunate enough without giving the Pashaw, the smallest disgust, to dissuade, him from persisting in Soli- citing the assistance of the two Cruizers, which I judge at this parti- cular Time might be a Request inconvenient to the Honble Com- pany to Comply with.

On Investigation I find the particular friendly Intercourse, said to exist between the Governor of Muscat, and the French Government at the Mauritius, has no other Grounds than Surmise.

On the 8: Instant the French Consul General, and his Household, excepting his Secretary who escaped, were Confined in the French Factory under a guard, in consequence of orders received here on that day from Constantinople - the Papers of the French Consul General, both public and private were seized and sealed up - I applied to the Pashaw for the Inspection of the former; and he readily granted my request. I have now the honor to enclose Copies of some of the most interesting and extracts from others. Amongst the former is the Prospectus of a French Commercial Company, which was in fact the foundation of the French Factory here, and a curious Letter from General Dubayet the late French Ambassador at Constantinople, to the late Consul General here - We may here remark, as one of the Blessings which French Republican Liberty sheds on an Individual, the Appointments of one of its publick Servants Stationers in the middle of Asia, attempted
to

to be paid by Mandats fabricated at Paris; and on a Representation, being ⁽²⁾ made, that such Notes are, not negotiable at Bagdad, and on a Bill being drawn for absolute Subsistence, as I am informed; the Drawer is imperiously told—"Vous sentez, que je n'ai point acquitté Notre traite elle invertit L'ordre de la Comptabilité du Ministère; elle est en outre contraire au respect que vous devez a L'Ambassadeur."

On the 13. Instant, I had an Audience of Ceremony of the Pashaw at which I delivered to him Publicly the Letter to his Address, with which I had the honor to be charged by you.

No recent Intelligence has been received here from Egypt. The Pashaw has long expected, without Success, one of his Messengers to arrive from Damascus, who I cherish strong hopes will return—with the pleasing Intelligence of the French having been driven out of Egypt. I have the honor to enclose, though probably this curious piece had reached you before this, a Copy of the Proclamation, published by General Buonaparte on his landing at Alexandria.

I have the honor also to enclose a Copy of a Paper of Intelligence from Caboul.

It is with great Satisfaction, I mention, that I have concluded, an arrangement with the Pashaw, that one of his Caravans shall always leave Constantinople for Bagdad, the day after the arrival there of the German Post—by this means I shall always have it in my Power, to keep the Government at Bombay, and the Resident at Bussora, early informed of European political Intelligence at a very trifling expence to the Honble Company.

The late French Consul General Monsieur Rousseau, Nephew
to the celebrated Author of that Name, will leave this place on the
2^d November, as a Prisoner for Constantinople under the Charge of
a Government Officer, Sent from that Capital to Conduct him
thither and accompanied by one of the Pashaws Tartars. Monsieur
Rousseau being an old and infirm Man, I have expressed my Wishes
to the Pashaw, to render his Journey as Commodious as may be - My
Interference on this occasion has proceeded only from Compassion
and Humanity, and therefore I feel Confident a British Adminis-
tration will not blame my Conduct.

The Pashaw proposes in the Course of a few days, to make an ex-
cursion to the Neighbourhood of Hillah attended by a very Considerable
force, and not to return to Bagdad, untill the Month of Ramazan.

Persia, seems to enjoy a temporary Tranquillity since the Recon-
ciliation, between Baba Khan, and his Brother Hossein Khan, took
place, and since the Surrender and execution of Mohammed Khan, the
Son of Lihay Khan Lunde. Baba Khan, partly on Business and
partly on Pleasure has left Iahiran for Astrabad, and whenever he
returns from thence the Pashaw, will send an Embassy to him

I have the Honor to be, with the greatest Respect

Sir

Your most obedient humble Servant
Harford Jones.

Bagdad

the 31 October 1798

True Copy

Harford Jones. L/PS/9/76/44