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Correspondence of Harford Jones with Jonathan Duncan and John Blankett

Holding Institution	British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers
Reference	IOR/L/PS/9/76/90
Date(s)	31 Jul 1799-26 Dec 1799 (CE, Gregorian)
Written in	English in Latin
Extent and Format	1 item (10 folios)
Copyright for document	Open Government Licence



About this record

This item contains four documents:

1. A copy of a letter from Harford Jones, Resident in Bagdad [Baghdad], to Jonathan Duncan, Governor of Bombay, sent from Bagdad and dated 12 December 1799. In response to Duncan's letter of 16 October (see IOR/L/PS/9/76/100), Jones discusses routes of communication between Bussora [Basra] and Constantinople [Istanbul], recommending the route via Bagdad. The letter includes tables displaying the estimated travel time from Bussora to Constantinople via Bagdad and the rulers of the territory on this route.

2. A list of presents sent by Tipoo Sultan [Tīpū Sulṭān of Mysore] to the Grand Signior [Selim III, Sultan of the Ottoman Empire] and the Grand Vizier [Yūsuf Z̤īa al-Dīn Pāshā] which arrived in Bagdad on 24 December 1799.

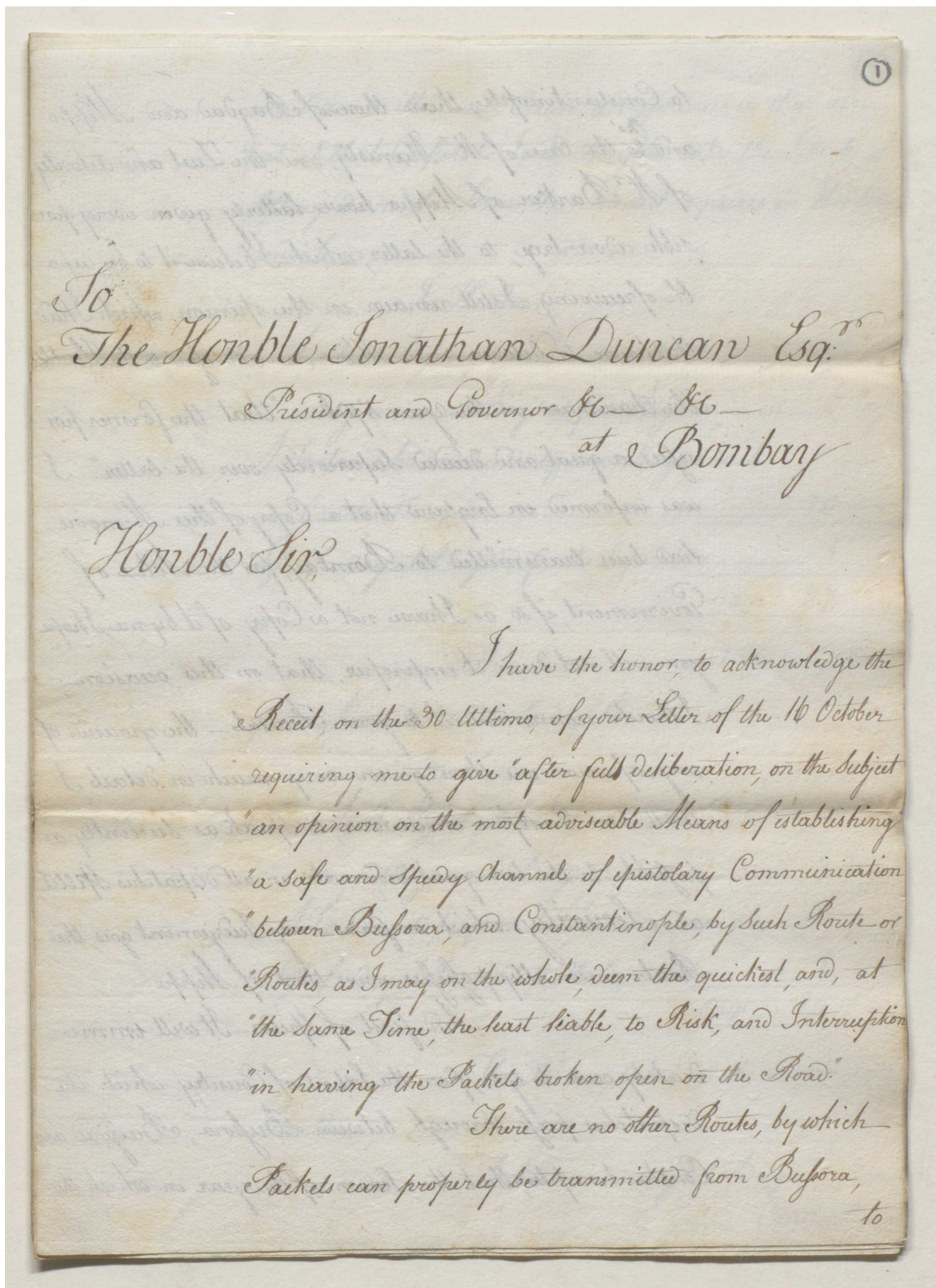
The list was compiled by Jones on 26 December 1799.

3. A copy of a letter from Harford Jones to Rear-Admiral John Blankett, Commander of the British naval squadron in the Red Sea, sent from Bagdad and dated 13 November 1799. The letter forwards dispatches and an intelligence report from Aleppo (not enclosed).

Another copy of the same letter is catalogued as IOR/L/PS/9/76/96.

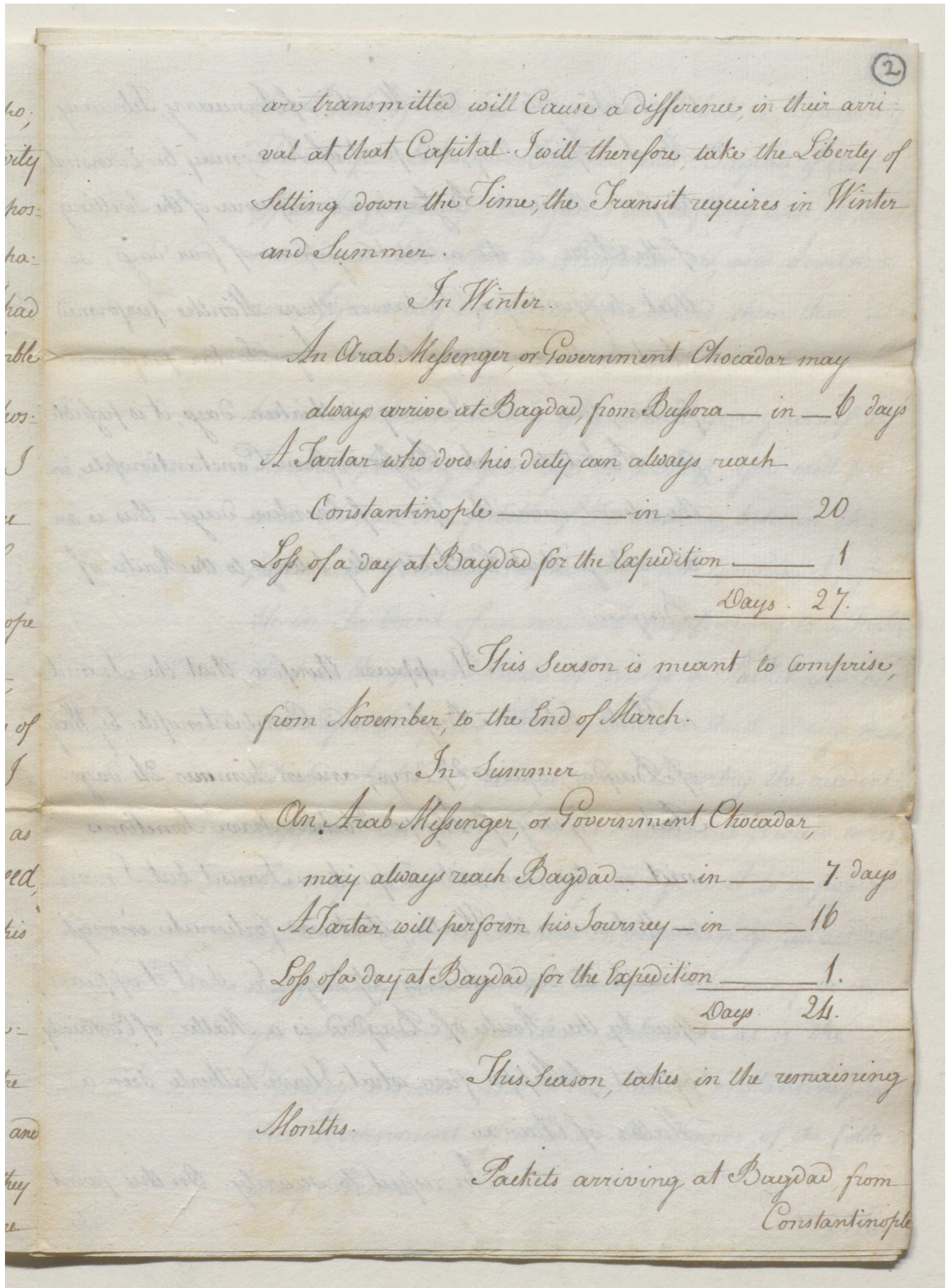
4. A copy of a letter from Rear-Admiral Blankett to Jones, sent from HMS *Leopard* at Mocca [Mocha] and dated 31 July 1799. It covers subjects including:

- The retreat of the French forces led by General Napoleon Bonaparte from Accre [Acre]
- Planned Turkish [Ottoman] and Mameluke attacks on the French occupation forces from Suez and Upper Egypt
- The French capture of Cossire [Al Qusayr]
- Relations and trade between the Government of Mecca and the French forces
- The supplies of the French forces in Cairo
- Reports from Maltese defectors that the French forces intend to offer peace terms
- The disruption of the coffee trade by Bedouin tribes
- The state of the British-occupied island of Perim.



to Constantinople, than those of Bagdad and Aleppo;
and ^{to} the care of M^r Maresty, and, the zeal and activity
of M^r Barker of Aleppo have latterly given every pos-
sible advantage, to the latter, which I believe it to be, capa-
ble of receiving, I still remain in the opinion, which I had
the honor, to deliver in a Memoire address'd to the Honble
the Chairman in the year 1796. — "that the former pos-
sesses a great and decided superiority over the latter". I
was inform'd in England that a Copy of this Memoire
had been transmitted to Bombay, for the Notice of
Government, if so, as I have not a Copy of it by me, I hope
you will not deem it improper, that on this occasion,
I should recommend it to your Perusal — the grounds of
my opinion are there given very much in detail I
shall here therefore endeavour, to speak as succinctly as
possible, to the two great desiderata, in all dispatches Speed,
and Security: which as far as my Judgment goes, this
Route eminently possesses over that of Aleppo.

And first of Speed: — It will imme-
diately occur to you, from the extent of Country which the
dispatches pass through, between Buxora, Bagdad and
Constantinople, that the Season of the year in which they
are



Constantinople in the Months of January, February,

 March, April, May, and part of June, may be transmit-

 ted from thence to Buxora, in consequence of the Swelling

 of the River, in the astonishing Space of four Days; so

 that supposing a Tartar in these Months performed

 what in the year 1794, Omar Aga Tartar performed

 for me, that is the Journey in thirteen Days, it is possible

 for a Packet, to reach Buxora from Constantinople, in

 the almost incredible Space of seventeen Days - this is an

 advantage, that Exclusively belongs to the Route of

 Bagdad.

It appears therefore that the Transit

 in Winter between Buxora and Constantinople, by Way

 of Bagdad, requires 27 Days; and in Summer, 24 Days.

 Packets by way of Aleppo I believe have Sometimes

 met in Summer with as quick a Transit, but I never

 recollect one in the Winter, that was fortunate enough

 to reach its destination in 27 Days. In short it appears,

 Speed by the Route of Bagdad is a Matter of Certainty,

 by that of Aleppo, from what I have hitherto seen a

 Matter of Chance.

In respect to Security. On this point

 the

③

the Route of Bagdad, again exhibits a Superiority
The Risque, between Bessora, and Bagdad, if the
affair be properly managed is too trifling even, to be
mentioned. The Posts in Mesopotamia, and Anatolia
are Apparently infinitely better served, than those, in
Circassiana, and the Pashaw's own Posts extend from
hence, to Merden, which if you will give yourself the
Trouble of casting your eye on a Map, you will per-
ceive is near one fourth of the distance, between this
place, and Constantinople. I do not conceive it possi-
ble in the event of an accident happening to a Packet
that in the present state, of things a Packet can be
entirely lost by this Route, since we shall always know
between what Posts, and in whose Country the accident
happened, and by that Means be able to proceed to its
Recovery. But I have long imagined it to be possible
to prevent as far as human Means can go, an accident
happening even to the Tartars, who may be char-
ged with our dispatches. Extensive as is the
Country between this Place and Constantinople,
the Government, of it is in the hands, of the follo-
wing Persons.

The

The Pashaw of Bagdad,
The Pashaw of Mousul, for the district of Mousul.
The Pashaw of Dearbekir.
The Pashaw of Sewas.

and

Chapan Oglu.

I cannot think but it would be easy for me, to Commence, Such a Correspondence, with all these, as would give effectual Security, to our Packets, particularly if you or the Governor General, strongly urged the Pashaw, to assist me, in the Business. If I have any doubt it is in respect, to Chapan Oglu, but with him fortunately a method much more effectual may be adopted, namely the Exertion, of the Influence, of his Majesty's Minister at the Porte.

It will be seen from my accounts transmitted to the Presidency, that I have endeavoured, to arrange the Expence of a Packet, from ^{hence} here to Constantinople, if it arrive in 15 days, at the Sum of Piastres 1500: Such Packet therefore, may be reckoned, to cost from Baysora to Constantinople Piastres 1700, which I believe, is rather less than more, than it would cost by

by the Route of Aleppo. ④

I beg, to enclose, a Copy of a Letter from me, to the Honble the Chairman, under the 13. July besides which, it does not occur to me, that I can offer any thing worth your Notice on the Subject recommended, to my attention. The Information now transmitted, is founded on Experience, and such Observations, as I have had an opportunity of making, and on those Grounds, I do not hesitate, to declare, that to the best of my Judgement, the Route of Bagdad, is "the safest and speediest Channel, of epistolary Communication between Bussora, and Constantinople, and that the Packets by that Route, are "least liable, to Risk or Interruption, in being broken open on the Road "

I have the honor, to be, with the
greatest Respect

Sir

Your very obedient humble Servant
Harford Jones

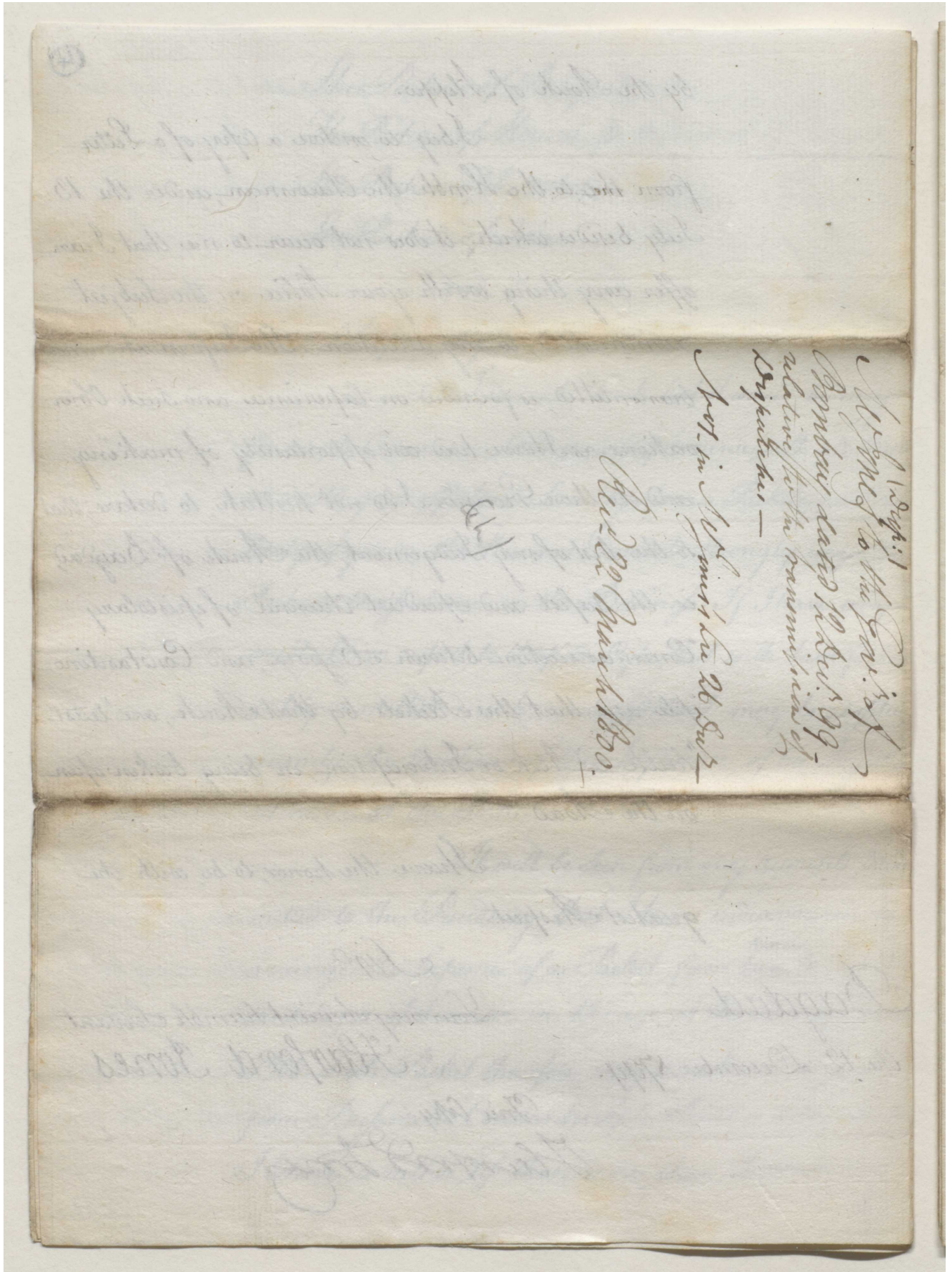
Bagdad

the 12. December 1799.

True Copy

Harford Jones

Correspondence of Harford Jones with Jonathan Duncan and John Blankett [4v]
(8/20)



(5)

List of Presents sent by the late Tippoo Sultan, to the
Grand Signior & Grand Vizier, and which arrived
at Bagdad on the 24th December 1799.

For the Grand Signior

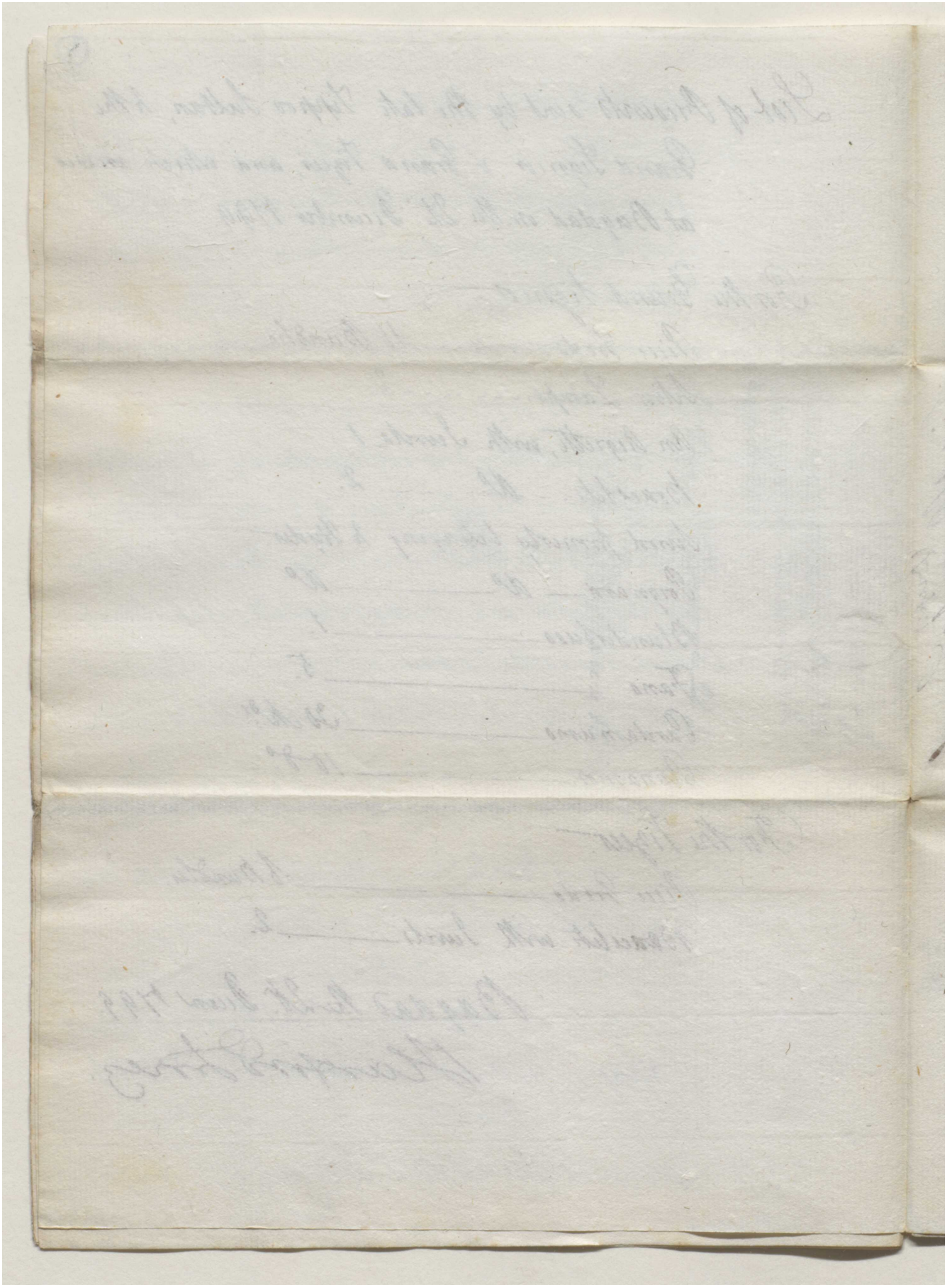
Rice Goods.....	11 Bundles.
Silver Lamps.....	2.
An Aigrette, with Jewels.	1.
Bracelets - - - - -	2.
Sword formerly belonging to Hyder.	
Poignard - - - - -	1.
Blunderbuss - - - - -	1.
Fans - - - - -	5.
Cardamums - - - - -	20 lb ^{rs}
Cinnamon - - - - -	10 lb ^{rs}

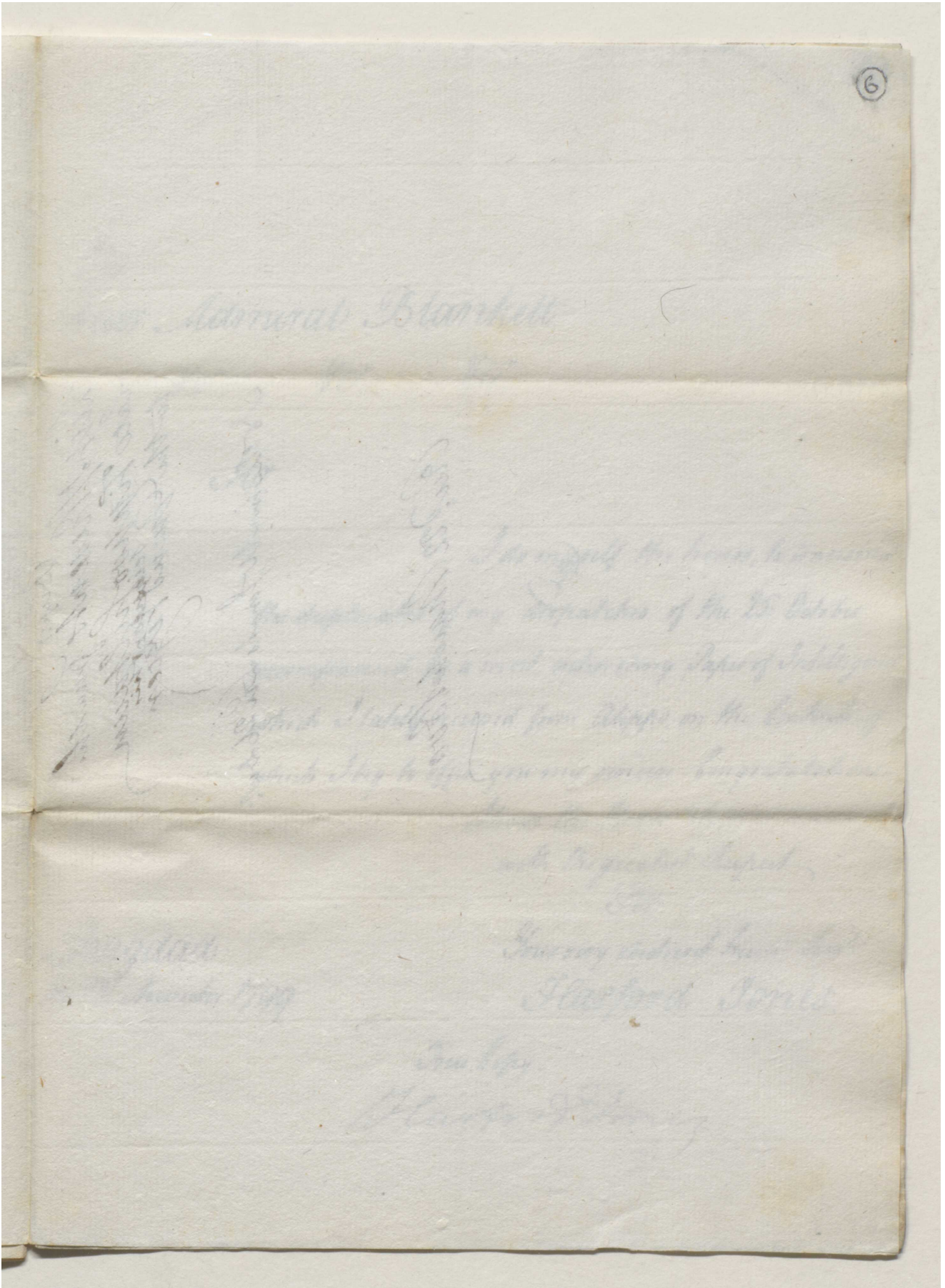
For the Vizier.

Rice Goods - - - - -	8 Bundles.
Bracelets with Jewels - - - - -	2.

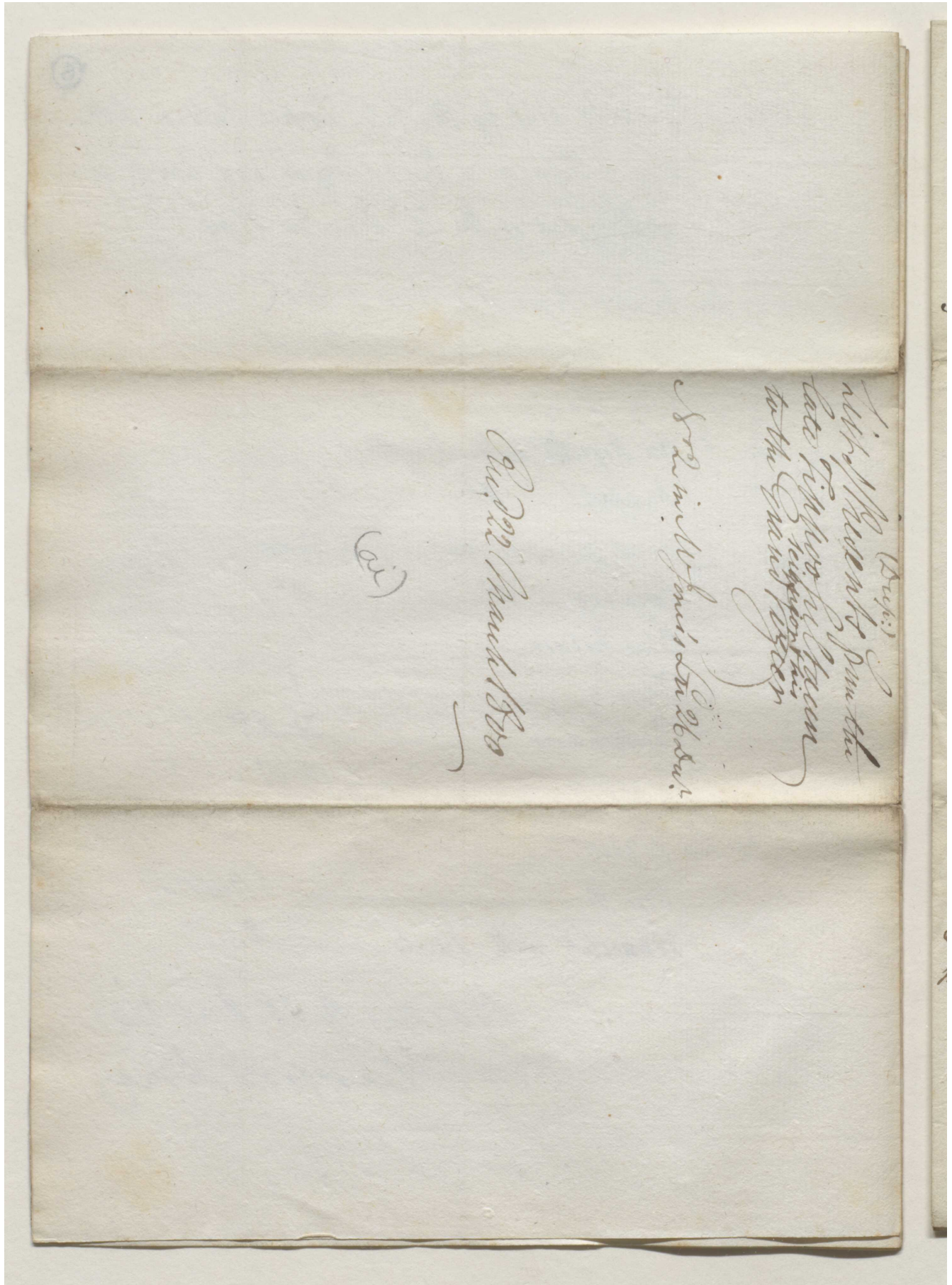
Bagdad the 24th Decr 1799.

Harford Jones.





Correspondence of Harford Jones with Jonathan Duncan and John Blankett [6v]
(12/20)



(Dunc.)
I wish Mr. Blankett's opinion the
late Mr. Jones's will becom
to the same paper

I send in Mr. Jones's will to be done

On 20th March 1820

(or)

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To
Rear Admiral Blankett.

Sc: Sc: Sc:

Sir

I do myself the honor, to transmit
the duplicates of my dispatches of the 25: October
accompanied by a most interesting Paper of Intelligence
which I lately received from Aleppo. on the contents of
which I beg to offer you my sincere Congratulations.

I have the Honor to be,

with the greatest Respect
Sir

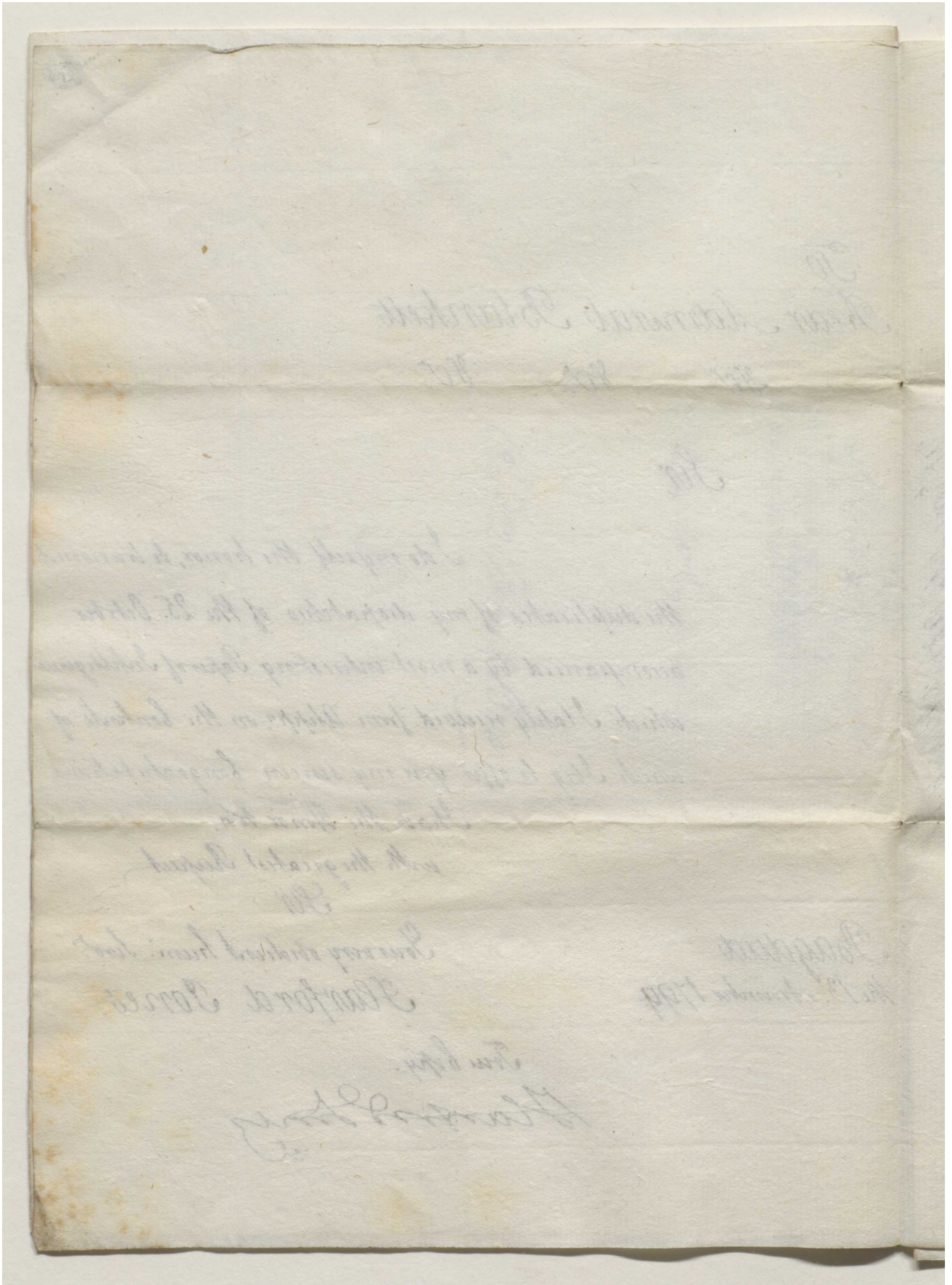
Your very obedient hum: serv:

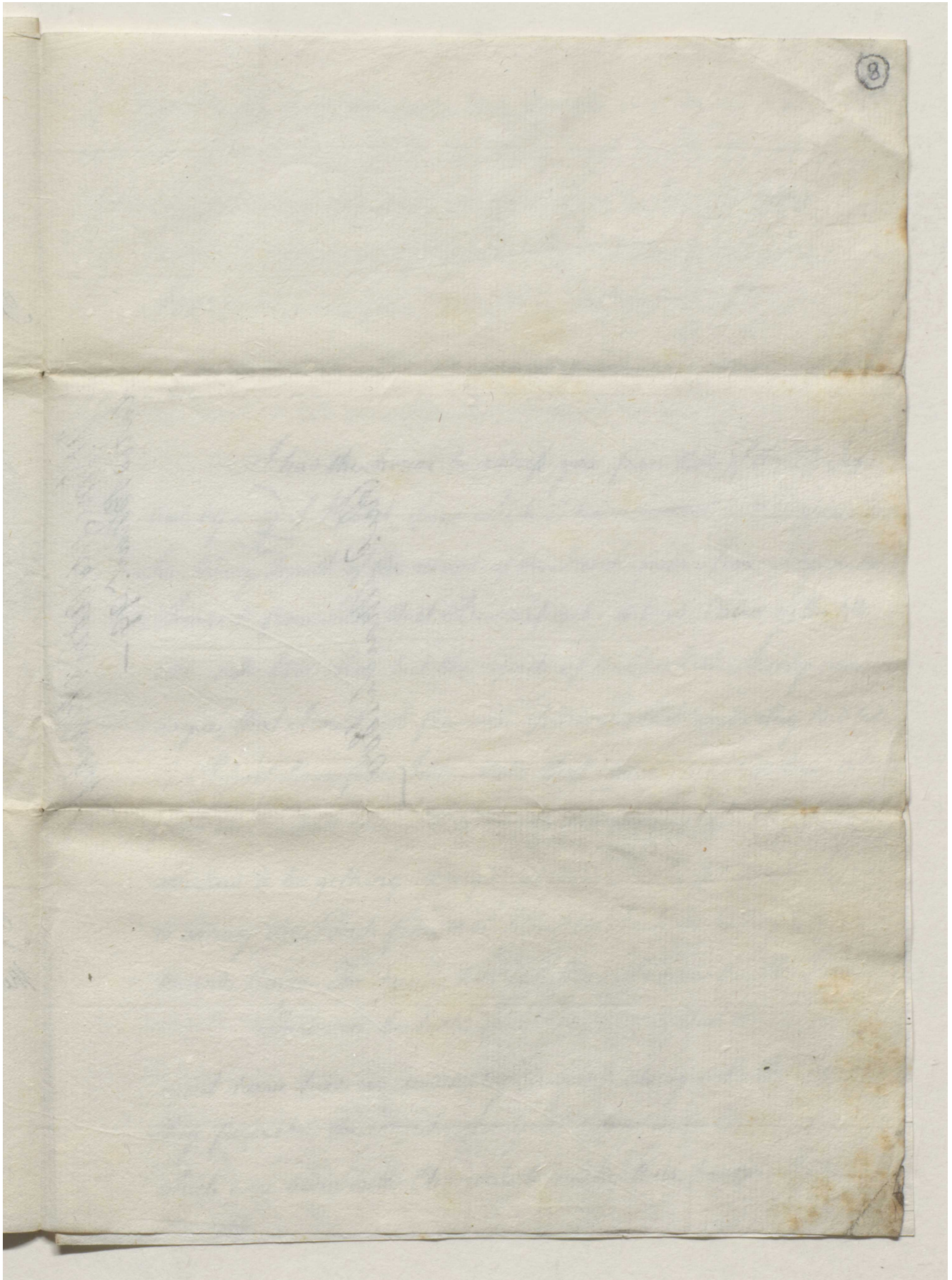
Harford Jones.

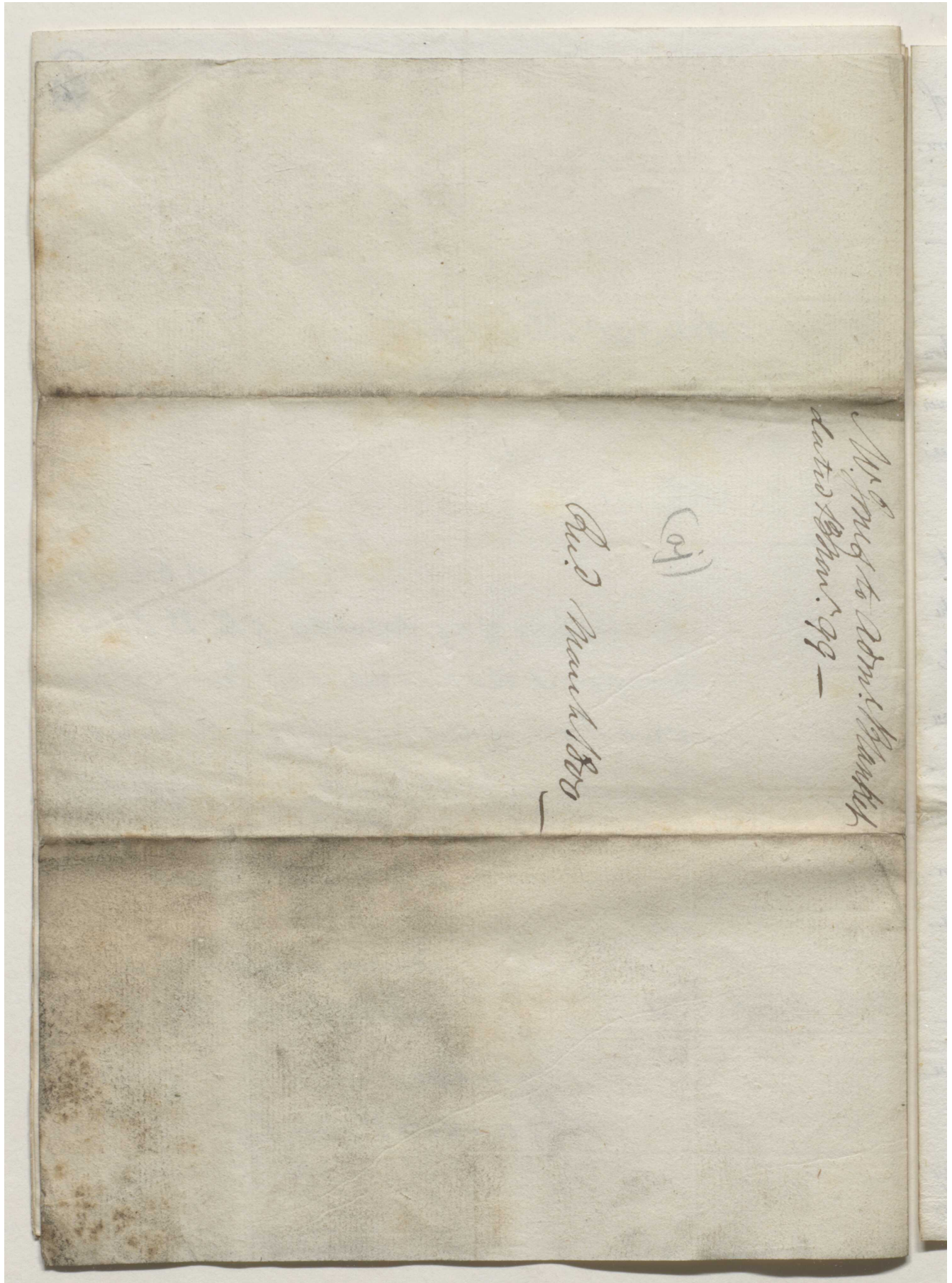
Bagdad
the 13: November 1799

True copy.

Harford Jones







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Sir,

I had the honor to address you from this of the 25. June last by way of Muscat, since which I have received intelligence from Sir Sidney Smith of the retreat of the French from Accra. I have an Account from Suez, that Buonaparte entered Cairo on the 19. ult. with 6000 Men but the reports of the Turkish Army were so vague, that I could not form an opinion, what route they had taken. A Report since from Jidda states that 9000 men had been detached from the Turkish Army to take possession of Suez. The Mamelukes are said to be getting strength in the upon Egypt I will be ready to annoy the French from that Side if the Turkish Army advance towards Cairo. The French took possession of Cosra the 11. June.

There can be little doubt at present that the Mecca Govern- ment have had an understanding all along with the Enemy. They furnished the French Army at Cairo, with Camels, from for which were laden with Charcoal to make their powder, the people from

from Zambo were trading with them thro' Coive for Wheat & those of
Iddra, to Suez & Cairo, with Coffe & other Merchandise. This was done
while the Sheriff was writing to Captn Wilson, pretitious accounts
of Success against the French, pretended to be received from his own
Speake as Eye witnesses of the facts.

This Intelligence has arrived too late to me, to stop it, as there
is no getting up the Gulf after May, nor before March next, however
in the mean time the Season of the year will stop the Continuance
of this trade.

The French have large Magazines of Wheat & Rice at
Cairo, & a quantity of Biscuits they make their own Powder in the
Citadel & have no want but of wine. They found some considerable
treasure in the Citadel of Cairo in Ingols which they have lately ac-
quired & they do not at present want money.

It does not appear that they have as yet collected any num-
ber of Vessels, they have built one brigantine at Suez out of the tim-
ber of two Dows & have three Guns board. There was no Dow at Coive
when the Centurion left it on the 24. May.

Some Maltese desertors from Suez brought Down in the
Albatross give me this Intelligence, the only opportunity I have
had to be informed of the Enemy since I have been in these Seas
they say it was the Common report in the french Army, that they
would

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(19/20)

would offer terms to the English.

The Bidouins who the last year surrounded Sana, the Capital of this Country & where the Imaum resides, & forced a Contribution of 60,000 Dollars, have now laid themselves so, as to intercept the Coffee coming from Birs el Fakik, & will probably enforce another payment before they quit this part of the Country. The Government here is too public to resist.

Our Island of Perim give on very badly for the reasons I have before written to give which are obstacles not easy to remove.

If you think proper you will communicate any part of this Letter Home.

I have the honor to be

Sir

His Majesty's Ship Leopard

Your most obedient Servant

J. Blankett

Mocca 31. July 1799.

True Copy
Harford Jones

