Richard Bull to Thomas Pennant

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To:	Thomas Pennant
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Dear Sir

Stratton Street June 8. 1797
nine o'clock, morning. -

An hour hence, I shall be in my carriage, bound to the hitherto quiet Isle of Wight, but how long to continue so, who can guess? I cannot however leave London, without thanking you sincerely, tho' shortly, for having me so much in remembrance, and for paying M^{r} Ingleby for the few drawings he sent me –. I have paid the said debt of £4. 4. 0 to your worthy Son, and I rejoic'd to see him look so well and happy; health I am possess'd of, but happiness cannot be mine, so long as my daughter continues ill, – in mind, and body.

Ingleby is next to Moses Gryfith, longo sed proximus intervallo.[1] I wish to know of him some time or other, why he has return'd me a few pages only of the letter press, whereas he has, I imagine, receiv'd *the whole book*, which I took the liberty to send to you complete, the beginning of last June, and I wish you would have the goodness to direct him to send the remainder of the letter press to Stratton Street, by the same conveyance, any time before the middle of Junely, when I shall return to town, for a few days. I would not have any more illuminations to that book, but there are other drawings for the *journey to London*, which I shall wish for. Time will not allow me now to enter into the large and comfortless field of Politic's. every day, and almost every hour brings forth a thousand lies, and as many miserable truths. When I went to bed last night, it was believ'd the Rebel fleet had sail'd towards the coast of france,[2] but this morning that improbable story gains no credit, on the contrary it is reported, that in every ship there are so many sailors, and marines, detain'd against their inclinations, that the mutineers must submit without terms, as soon as the force preparing to attack them appears in the river. in the mean time dismay is in every countenance one meets, tho in my opinion, this is the time for exertion, and not despondence – there are discontented Crews in every Ship in every part of the world – the dutch sailors in general, are for a recall of the Statholder,[3] and the new republic in Holland [4] dares not send her fleet out, at such a risk – mutiny and Sickness, and cowardice reign in the Spanish fleet, and the french dare not come out, as long as Lord Bridport can keep his station,[5] and it is said France, now, is seriously inclin'd to Peace even with England, and perhaps before the summer is out matters will cease to be so alarming, as they certainly are at this moment.

Your son says you are not in perfect health, and that your legs begin to swell, a circumstance that shows your blood does not circulate so forcibly as formerly. my legs are almost as big as my thigh every night, at least were so the beginning of the winter, but D^{r} Turton did not apprehend any bad symptoms would be the consequence – all you, and I have to hope for, is to live without pain, and die without fear

My daughter joins her best and kind[illegible]est good wishes to you and M^{rs} Pennant,

and am Dear Sir, with one foot in the Stirrup – , sincerely
and truly yours

R. B. -

Stamp: (postmark) [illegible] JU 8 97

Thomas Pennant Esq[re]. | Downing, Flintshire| North-Wales.

Editorial Notes

[1] 'next but by a long distance'.

[2] Bull refers to the mutiny among naval personnel at the Nore, off Sheerness in Kent, between 12 May and 15 June 1797. C. Gill, *The Naval Mutinies of 1797* (Manchester, 1913), p. 129.

[3] William (Willem) V, Prince of Orange, the last Stadtholder of the Dutch Republic, went into exile in Britain in 1795.

[4] The Batavian Republic, created by the Treaty of the Hague on 16 May 1795. The Dutch army and navy fought alongside the French from 1795 onwards. Jones, *Longman Companion to the French Revolution*, p. 140.

[5] Bridport, although nominally under the land command of Howe, was involved in ensuring a blockade of the Breton port of Brest, but in May 1797 claimed that this was becoming an increasingly difficult task. *ODNB* s.n. Alexander Hood, Viscount Bridport (1726–1814).