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Letters of John Innerarity and A. H. Gordon

John Innerarity

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LETTERS OF JOHN INNERARITY AND

A. H. GORDON ¹

(The Negro Fort ; and Captain Woodbine)

Pensa. 13 Augt. 1816.

[John Innerarity to James Innerarity]

My dear Brother,

Your letter of the 7th. inst. informing me of supposed attack on this place by the Insurgents ² came upon us like a thunderbolt, but Mr. Forbes will inform you of all the consternation and preparation to which it has given rise, while I reply to yours of the 6th. to me.

Now that the alarm has subsided I will write to [illegible] to know definitely what he will do towards satisfying or rather ultimately securing his debt to E.-Will report to you-Should any opportunity offer I will send you the 20 bags coffee you request. Inclosed you have 1481/2 Bank notes of different Banks which are all that we have got-say one hundred and forty-eight dollars & 50 cents. If the Planters Georgia Bank notes do not readily pass you at par send them back to me, as Capt. Bourke from where I got them has promised to give me silver for them. Owing to Doyle's absence at Appa. [Apalachicola] and several other circumstances I have not been able to send anything but I hope I will do soon, I hope to collect in about a month about \$500 more in notes.

¹ These letters are in continuation of the series of documents, survivals of the records of Panton, Leslie & Co., the publication of which has been continuous in the *Quarterly*. They are in the possession of Mrs. John W. Greenslade, who has transcribed them.

² See *Quarterly* XI, 140.

You will 'ere now have heard of the fatal issue of the expedition. They just arrived a day or two after the Gun Boats had blown up the Fort³ at P. Bluffs. Eight of our negroes are either at the Seminoles or Tampa Bay. Hambly has hopes of securing several of them. He has already Dolly's family in his possession and Doyle will soon return to Appa. to assist him. Six negroes who escaped unhurt in the Fort when it blew up have been brought here among the number Castalis whom I have sent to the Public Works with a chain about his leg in consequence of his having prevented several of our negroes from returning. About 40 negroes were blown up in the Fort besides about 20 that are left there wounded.- Such of the Choctaws as were not blown up were put to death by the Indians who are now Completely humbled and submissive.

Doyle speaks highly of the conduct of the officers of the Gun Boats. He did everything in his power to go to the Fort, but Dr. Benigno would not allow him, altho' the 2 Schooners were only 14 miles distant.

After being informed by the Officers of the Gun Vessels of the blowing up of the Fort, Dr. Benigno immediately ordered the 2 Schooners under his command to return here which they did in company with the Gun Boats.

Had they gone to the Fort they could have brought away the wounded, and Doyle would have been enabled to have collected several of our negroes who are scattered among the Seminoles.

He will draw up a complete report of everything he knows relative to the destruction of the Fort, the names of your negroes who have perished, of those who escaped, about what prospects there are of reestablishing the store at Pine Bluffs, with security. Hambly requests us to send a supply of

³ The so-called Negro Fort on the Apalachicola River built by Colonel Nichols, and attacked and blown up by Colonel Clinch.

Articles for the use of the American Fort at the Forks, from which I hope we will be able to derive considerable benefit.

So many things are pressing upon me at once that it is with difficulty that I have stolen a moment to write you these hurried lines.

Yours aff 'ly

JOHN INNERARITY.

* * *

[John Innerarity to James Innerarity]

Pens. [Pensacola] 21/8/1816

My Dear Brother-

Woodbine no longer riots in his guilt. Mr. Forbes' letters per Whitmore & its inclosures will I know give you the most heartfelt pleasure, to which I add Gordon's letter to me, which be pleased to return.

Mr. Forbes has rec'd per the Sophia a long letter from Mr. Craik, full of the same liberal sentiments which distinguished his letter to you, & in which he repeats the same paragraph expressing the unanimous consent of all our relations, "that a section of the lands should be appropriated to the Gentlemen who had with danger & difficulty realized them."

Independent of how nearly it concerns us, I cannot express to you the glow of pleasure I feel, on Mr. Forbes's account, in his triumph over the hell-bred villany of Woodbine. Tho' nothing could affect the placid calm & serenity of his mind, yet he has need of this consolation.

Yours Aff 'ly.

JOHN INNERARITY.

The Perdido will return to Orleans at a full load in about five days & will come back here.

James Innerarity, Esq. Mobile

Nassau 29 October, 1816

John Forbes Esquire
Canimar

My dear Sir,

Your regarded letter of the 8th inst reached me three days since pr Sloop Sisters. As relates to Woodbine you will probably have ascertained to be true, a circumstance of which I have the strongest suspicions namely that Woodbine neither has left nor has any intention of leaving Havana, but is using every artifice to make you believe that he has, that, taking you unprepared he may appear here triumphant next session to take his trial, he is no doubt at same time busy suborning witnesses to expose [?] against you. I have many strong reasons for believing this to be the case & I have no doubt on proper enquiry in Havana it will be found to be so.

I have seen Willm. Ken & communicated my ideas to him ; he shewed me documents proving that Woodbine had stole two Negroes & Six horses from young Arredondo at St. Augustine; as these proofs are fully documented in the Spanish form, I have no doubt they are quite sufficient for Woodbine's conviction, and under the hope that he may be apprehended & hanged for this theft in Havana (a consummation most devoutly to be wished) Mr. Ken has thought it right to forward these papers to old Arredondo. With him you can correspond & give him what advice or encouragement may be needful in the business.

As regards your own matters my opinion now most decidedly is that you should close this matter by coming here in January with a few select evidences, & Bennetts to give testimony of Woodbines in jury.

Since ever I had anything to do with money I have never been in more want than at present. We

have 5000Stg. locked up in Charleston in Hamnetts attachment, & a very large sum in N. Orleans which we find great difficulty in remitting. Meanwhile you will see by the enclosed card that we have two new Establishments just commenced & they are both most needy. I mention this as an apology for begging that if you can manage with out making use of the enclosed drafts it will be a convenience to us, altho it will give me pleasure to have sent them should you find them absolutely necessary. For then if made use of, you will have the goodness to forward to New Orleans, your own notes payable 31st Jany. and 28th Feby. for \$2000 each with 5p% discount, as we are obliged to give at least that P% Prem. in New Orleans to procure drafts on Havana, & will take the houses drafts at any time at that rate. If you can draw on Andrew Milne or any other house in N. Orleans so much the better as we could then make use of the Paper. We have very large sums of duties to pay about

Grant who expected to have been able to have left England in this month will not get away until next Spring so I am now very anxious to proceed to Orleans where I shall be wanted soon. I hope to leave this place early in November say from the 5th to the 10th & shall proceed direct unless you are very anxious to be dropped at Pensacola in which case I might be induced to call for you. I shall carry on your Private desk at any rate.

I am truly glad to hear of your favorable prospect in the Planting concern in which if the whole force is steadily devoted to your Sugar cultivation I have no doubt you will have great success. I have dunned all your debtors here, but presume nothing but coercion will extract payment from Forbes & Hart.

Dear Sir
Yours with great regard
A. H. GORDON

JOHN FORBES ESQUIRE
Canimar Plantation
Matanzas