

Baltimore 22nd Novemb 1816

My dear mother I have much, very much to tell you, but you must pardon me if you ^{see} only your son in the language — the Biographer of Byron must not be seen always — John Pierpont Esqr was a lawyer in Newbury Port — we have testimonials of his integrity — morality — independence & talent, that few men in the united states could get — Judge

Stor^e y(?) — & twenty other Lawyers — the Presidents of the Principal colleges are unanimous in their declaration that he is an extraordinary man — he has written a Poem — it will be delivered next week for his family support — he will then deliver a Course of Lectures on Theology — (divinity) — I have reviewed the Poem in the Philadelphia Portfolio & the editor who does not know me has had sufficient confidence in me to publish the review before he has seen the Poem himself — a great compliment from such a man my mother — to assume such a responsibility for ~~one~~ ~~whom~~ ~~man~~ whose very name he is ignorant. of — he expects to be attacked by other Reviewers & I must defend him — my Review of Byron has attracted great notice — a well as the Poetry I have written — “a great man at Washington” declared to Doctor Walking the Editor of the Portico that since Collins ode to the Passing, he had seen nothing equal to my “Lyre of the Winds” — now Collins ode is the very best in our Language — The circumstance of Pierponts going into the ministry here — my having obtained so much notice lately & the ur

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(Coll. 2125, Ser. 1, Box 1/4)
Date: Nov. 22, 1816
Description: John Neal letter about writing career

any of my friends, & him in particular, for he has proved himself my friend. have determined me to study Law — I know all my difficulties — two years hard study — night & day — my poverty — my ignorance of Latin — tho' now thank Heaven! my French will be of more use to me — I am now a good French scholar) — all have been thought of & dwelt upon — I can support myself the mean time by my pen — one Gentleman offers me board for his heat — another his books — & another his advice — but I cannot be so dependant — my own labour shall support me or I will perish — I am writing a novel which I think great, to discourage duelling — do not mention it — it will come out in the winter when I shall send you one or two

do not believe my mother that I have embarked in this new undertaking with precipitancy — I have lain awake night after night for two months, — but blessed be our God — I am now firm — I will study Law — & if he Grants me an opportunity, I yet will make a figure in the world — I am flattered my mother & I do not deny it — I am vain, very vain — but is it not something uncommon for a fellow educated like me to make such a noise — to write both in prose & verse in the very greatest of all our literary papers, on the most difficult of all subjects, so as to gain the applause of our greatest men —

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— The wonder seems to be, that I should not understand Latin
— that I who thus write should not have been liberally edu-
cated — I only laugh — as if a man need to understand
Latin to feel — to talk English, or write it — as if my
knowledge of men and manners has not already
qualified me far better for any profession, than
the dull plodding of booby learners ~~and~~ ^{our} the musty
Books — under starchd up — & really ignorant
professors — that is, entirely ignorant of most that
a ~~man~~ ^{man} should know — the world — having
th ~~reek~~ ^{reek} & Latin — I wish I knew it. then I
would not have wasted the most precious moments
of my life in scribbling over these lumbering
pages, while we have our very essence transfusd
into our English works — where pray is the necessity
of recurring to first editions, when we can peruse the
latest? — you were right my dear mother about
the 100\$. I had never credited it to you — it is now
too late to secure you, but my heart & head are
pledged — whenever I am master of another 100
pounds it shall be appropriated to the right owner
— at present I am destitute — but not de-
pressed — prouder than ever — but not ostentatious
shape — Good Bye — John

Do write me dear mother. —

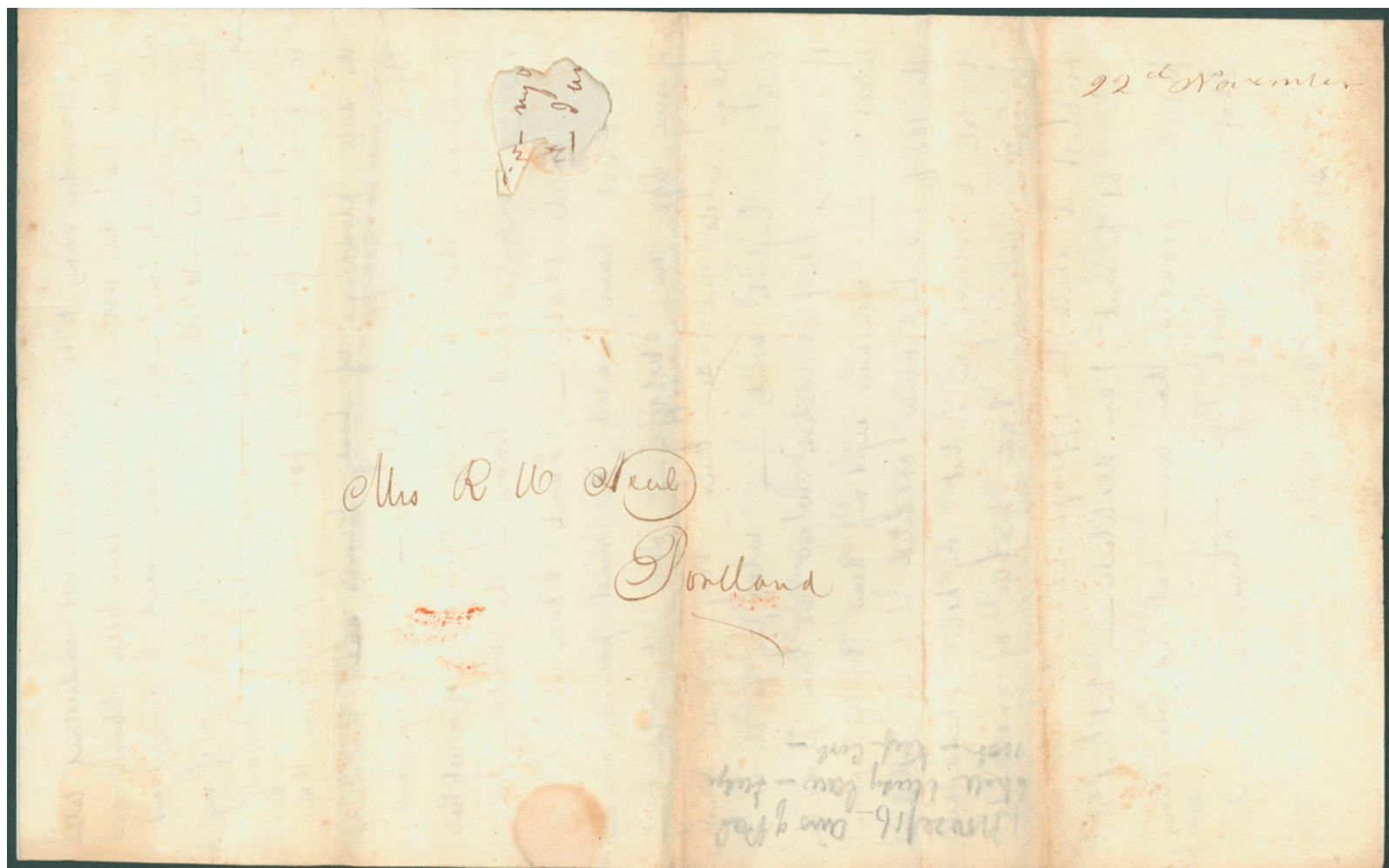
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Mrs R W Neal
Portland

22^d November

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