



Masonborough October 14, 1780

My dear Sir,

The death of your brother and my friend met me at Col^o [Sampson's] on my return from the Assembly. It was a shock which even in the best state of ^{health} would have called for all my firmness and philosophy to have supported it with the dignity of a man; but to add to the pungency of it I was then laboring under a severe bilious complaint which threatened very serious consequences. I imagined that the frequent deaths which had happened about me for some years past, and amongst others of some who had been bound to me by this of the most endearing kind had hardened me, & that my feelings having ^{been} long played upon had almost grown callous to the vicissitudes of human life; but I have been miserably deceived. Frequent distress has only made e the more susceptible of it. I cast up the account of the friends which are left behind & find them so few that I begin to fear I shall die without any.

You have lost a brother and I the most intimate friend, I may be considered as the greater loser, as he was seated in my neighbourhood and scarce a day passed that did not bring us together; whereas the distance at which you were placed from him prevented your being often with him. He was the only person in this part of the country (one or two relations excepted with whom I maintained a perfect and unreserved intimacy. My Wife ever considered him as one of the family & has, in a severe illness which I believe was solely occasioned by your brother's death expressed the sincerity of her regard for him. She says, she considers his removal as a member lopped from our household—an old friend—that we have not enough life left to think of beginning such another friendship. I have known Robert Hogg for 16 years, & have seen him at all hours—in all tempers

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 MMN # 102158
 Date: October 14, 1780
 Description: William Hooper on the death of a friend, North Carolina

Show the inmost recesses of the secret soul, and often very often has he told me "You know that I conceal nothing from you" and I declare in my conscience that I believe that he never said ~~anything~~ which he did not think, nor practiced what was not founded in the purest honour and the most rigid integrity, for he was scrupulously just. If he was not very popular, it was because he had a pride of character which could not condescend to pursue it. He was a living reproach to unworthy men & those who were conscious of their imperfections could not love him who despised them. Open & unreserved in his resentments his tongue & countenance spoke the feelings of his soul. To objects of real distress he was truly charitable and there are those who have often felt the effects of his bounty without knowing the source from whence it was derived. Secret & silent in his benevolence he sought no recompence but an approving god, the conscience satisfaction of having given happiness to woe. But I am trespassing upon you with what you know as well as I do—pardon the overflowing of a heart that beats with the warmest emotions of love and friendship—It is a picture drawn without flattery at least, for I can have no ambition to deceive myself, and you knew the original too well to distrust the fidelity of this copy. The testimony which the enclosed affords of his attachment to me and mine will ever be recorded in our hearts as a mark of endearing tenderness friendship & benevolence.

I am satisfied that during his illness everything possible was done to soften the bed of disease & lessen the pain of his expiring moments. Mr. Campbell—Mr. Gordon—Mr. [Gus] Hooper were with him as soon as his situation became dangerous & Dr. Cobham gave him an unremitting attention. but his disease alas too soon discovered that it baffled the power of medicine. Would to God I had been with him that I might have paid the last offices to the best of men and closed those eyes that I have so often looked up to with the highest satisfaction.

I have expected you down here for some time past—that with the confused state of my mind & a reluctance to draw together circumstances singly distressing enough, have prevented my writing you on the melancholy sub-

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just. As I fear that I shall be under a necessity to leave this on or before the 24th instant & before that possibly you may not be here, I think it proper to inform you what steps have been taken with your Brother's effects since his decease.

As you or the other had often told me that he had named me one of his Executors I made a point with me that I should undertake the trust, immediately upon my return home I thought it necessary to open the will lest he should have directed anything which required immediate execution. I then took possession of a portmanteau trunk enclosing two smaller trunks in one of which [was] contained the papers of Hogg & Campbell, in the other your Brother's private & separate papers. These your Brother had shewn me not long before his death & desired that in case of accident I would attend to them—(for he had a strange presentiment of the worst). I removed these & with them his will to my house at the vicarage where they now are.

Finding the negroes idle about the streets of Wilmington I ordered them here that they might have less temptation to mischief & that if they should fall sick they might be properly attended to, here they still are, except a boy who walked of a few days ago to Eagle's where he has some relations. Tom & Sabina have the charge of the house in which your Brother died. All the moveable articles therein I have collected into one room under a lock & key, except some furniture of mine law books etc. which are detached from the rest & lodged up Garret. I propose if I can muster resolution on Monday to go to town & take an inventory of everything there, which I will leave for you or forward with this if no opportunity offers sooner your way. The papers of Hogg & Campbell rightfully fall into the hands of Campbell as surviving partner, but as I was told by my brother [Ges.] that he absolutely declined taking possession of them on your brother's death—I think it right for reasons I will mention to you when I see you that they should

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remain where they are, for a time at least.

You will find the few negroes which are here in want of winter clothes, the necessities of some of them press so importunately that unless you arrive soon I shall be induced to give them a temporary supply of Oznaburg of which there is a bolt amongst your brother's effects.

There is a family of negroes at [Cross] Greek Carolina Alexander London & Philadelphia - the eldest amie is here which with the house in town & diverse other artifacts were bought by your Bro. & myself in partnership with our joint stock of profits of the East Ind. Company - If you and M. Burgess think proper to order the negroes down before the cold weather we would cast about to get cloathing for them here, as they suffered last year (as I am told) exceedingly from the want of it before your brother bo't them.

Should this reach you before you get to Wilmington I hope that you will manage matters to be here in the end of November & beginning of December when I shall again be at home. Whenever you arrive your stay must be of some continuance, of hope - I trust. Mr. Hooper, myself will be displeas'd unless you make our house your home literally & truly so - Your horses shall be taken the best care of in our power; by the way - Your brother's two horses are here in a fresh field & gathering flesh - but I fear that one of them has a defect in his eyes which will end in a total privation of sight.

Will not the encampment of the army make it necessary that you should change your residence. If so & M^{rs} Hogg could sustain the fatigue of removal; Wilmington I think should be your Object. There will be the burden of your business; & in the neighborhood of it a large portion of your interest; and a change of air & access to the salts might possibly contribute to the relief of my worthy friend M^{rs} Hogg. I mean this as Temporary, for your [attachments] to the back country are at present too strong to urge a total removal from it. Any thing that I or any of mine can do to make your stay amongst us agreeable you can command & I believe I could secure a house that would answer your present occasions. Should you be here in my absence, my M^{rs} Hooper will deliver you the several keys trunks etc. which you may have occasion for. The original will is with the codicil inclosed in the smallest trunk within the large portmanteau trunk.

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I cannot close my letter without hinting what you already anticipate that the Codicil was intended to prevent the operation of the confiscation law on Yr brother's bequests & to carry those to your Sister in Europe the more effectually into Execution. It evinces that your Brother possessed the strongest powers of reason & Judgment even in his latter moments, when he could suggest so ingenious & sure an expedient to accomplish his benevolent purpose in spite of a knavish publick.

You will think probably that I ought to have proved the will at our County Court. I had reasons against making it publick before I saw you; my delicacy revolted too against the measure before you were privy to the contents of it. No material inconvenience can arise from the Delaying it until judges of the superiour court come here which will be early in December. and as there is nothing which can ever be the subject of contest you can act on anything which requires immediate dispatch as if probate had taken place.

I beg you to mention me with the truest esteem & wishes for her perfect welfare to Mrs. Hogg. I beg my kind Comps. to Miss. Betsy—Niley—& Gavin. Should Majors Deam & Davidson be in your reach make my respects to them & believe me

My dear Sir
Your friend & Obedient Serv.
Will Hooper

My Mr. Hooper resents that I have not united with mine her respects to Mrs. Hogg, yourself, the ladies & Gavin

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