

1757

Sir

That I may show myself sensible of your
Favours, and not commit the same fault a second time
I make haste to answer the letter which I recei-
ved this morning. The truth is, the other likewise
was received, and I made an answer, but being
desirous to transmit you some proposals and re-
ceipts, I waited till I could find a convenient
conveyance, and day was past after day, till
other things drove it from my thoughts, yet
not so, but that I remember with great plea-
sure your commendation of my dictionary. Your
praise was welcome not only because I believe
it was sincere, but because praise has been very
scarce. A man of your candour will be surpris-
ed when I tell you that among all my acquaint-

have there were only two who upon the publica-
tion of my book did not endeavor to depress me
with threats of exposure, from the public, or with
objections learned from those who had warned
them from my own profane. Yours is the only
letter of ^{good} goodwill that I have yet received, though
indeed I am promised something of that sort from
Sweden.

Now my new Edition will be received &
knew not, the subscription has not been very suc-
cessful. I shall publish about March.

If you can direct me how to find proposals
& send ^{with} that they were in such hands.

I remember, Sir, in some of the first letters
with which you favored me, you mentioned your
sister. May I inquire after her? In return for the
papers which you have sent me, it is not much

to tell you that I wish you and her all
that can conduce to your happiness.

I am

Sir

Your most obliged

and

most humble servant

Sam: Johnson

Grave Square

Dec. 24. 1751

From D. Johnson
Dec. 24th 1757.

No. 2.

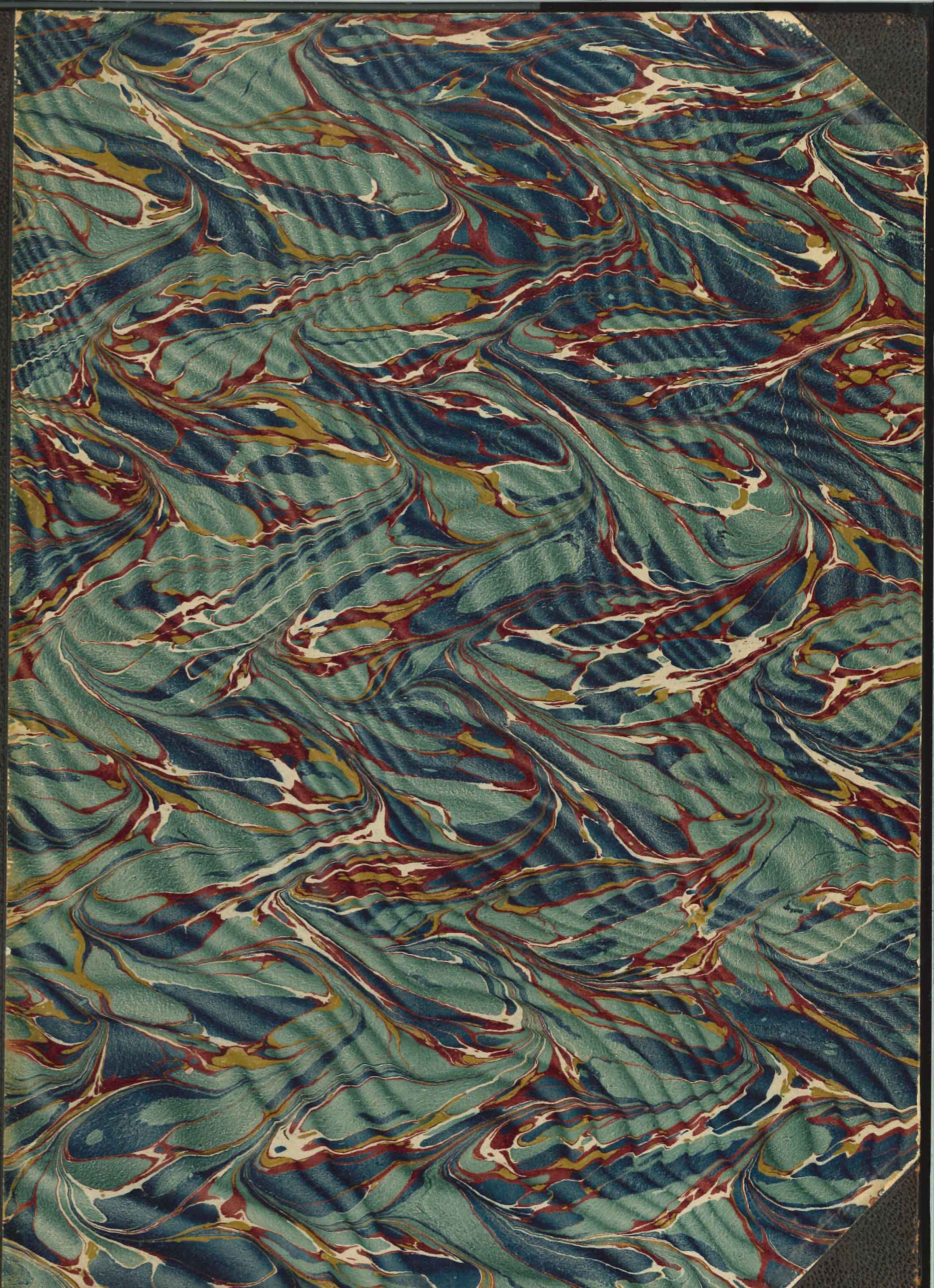
To Mr Burney
at Lynn Norfolk

From
Johnson
Dec. 24
1757
No. 2.



2

DR. JOHNSON ON HIS DICTIONARY



SAMUEL JOHNSON, A. L. S., 24 December 1757, to
Dr. Charles Burney.

Sir

That I may shew myself sensible of your favours, and not commit the same fault a second time I make haste to answer the letter which I received this morning. The truth is, the other likewise was received, and I wrote an answer, but being desirous to transmit you some proposals and receipts, I waited till I could find a convenient conveyance, and day was passed after day, till other things drove it from my thoughts, yet not so, but that I remember with great pleasure your commendation of my dictionary. Your praise was welcome not only because I believe it was sincere, but because praise has been very scarce. A man of your candour will be surprised when I tell you that among all my acquaint- [p. 2] tance there were only two who upon the publication of my book did not endeavour to depress me with threats of censure from the publick, or with objections learned from those who had learned them from my own preface. Yours is the only letter of good will that I have yet received, though indeed I am promised something of the sort from Sweden.

How my new Edition will be received I know not, the subscription has not been very successful. I shall publish about March.

If you can direct me how to send proposals I should wish that they were in such hands.

I remember, Sir, in some of the first letters with which you fav-

oured me, you mentioned your Lady. May I enquire after her? In return for the favours which you have shewn me, it is not much [p. 3] to tell you that I wish you and her all that can conduce to your happiness.

I am
Sir
Your most obliged
And
most humble servant
Sam: Johnson
Gough Square
Dec. 24, 1757

ALS, 3 pages. Double sheet, 20 x 15.8 cm.

Laid paper. Watermark: large coat of arms.

Seal removed.

Postmarks: Three, all quite faint.

Address: To Mr Burney | at Lynn | Norfolk.

Docket: (top of p. 1) Dec^r. | 1757; (p. 4) From | Johnson |
Dec^r. 24 | 1757 | N^o. 2.

Provenance: James F. Drake, Inc., Sep 1926; Newton sale, 15
May 1941 (no. 378).

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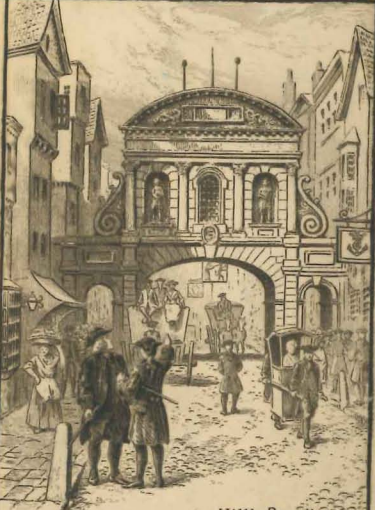
Notes: 1. The hiatus in Johnson's correspondence with Burney went back to the latter's letter of 28 March (*Memoirs*, 1832, I, 124), which brought Johnson six subscriptions to *Shakespeare* (including Burney's).

2. The "only two" were Thomas Birch, Secretary of the Royal Society, and (probably) Bennet Langton, an original member of The Club.

3. *Shakespeare*, "my new Edition," was delayed until October 1765.

4. Here published by permission of The Clarendon Press, Oxford.

686

| | | |
|-----------|---|-----------|
| I | A. EDWARD NEWTON | 9 |
| EX LIBRIS |  <p>Hill's Boswell II 238</p> | OAK KNOLL |
| O | "Sir, the biographical part of literature is what I love most." | 9 |

C. G. O. 207

J. E. E. C.

This is one of the
priest Johnson letters
I have ever seen (except
in the collection of my
dear friend R. B. Adams)
I bought it from Drake
in September 1926.

A. Woodbury.

L9a9dxx

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