

John Bell's letter to James Law circa 1812-14

Reference and contact details:

GB 779 RCSEd GD/37

Location: RS O2

Title: John Bell's letter 1812/14

Dates of Creation: John Bell FRCSEd

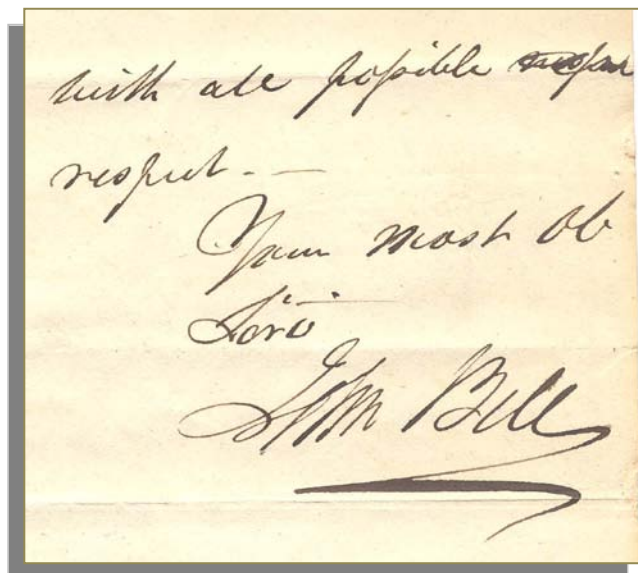
Held at: The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh

Name of Creator:

Language of Material: English.

Level of Description: item

Date(s) of Description: 2009



Transcription

Sir

I hope I know how to receive with becoming diffidence the very affecting compliment contained in your letter from the Colledge [sic] – I would say I was unworthy of so high a compliment but think I am conscious my motives were sincere and honest and that it would be but a poor return to doubt the judgement of my fellow members or to shrink from any degree of approbation they are pleased to bestow.

If I could have foreseen such a reward for my labours or have imagined that the Colledge as a body could think of honouring me with any public mark of approbation; I believe I should have felt in a more serious and [????] way for the dishonour done to our profession and for the insulted dignity of our Colledge. I should perhaps have been able to compose an answer more worthy of the approbation of my fellow Members and free from those blemishes which they have the goodness not to mention and which you have now only to regret.

You will pardon the length of this letter; it is not easy to express in a few words which an individual must feel on being honoured with the approbation of his companions and professional brethren and of that Colledge which is the head of his profession. The Royal Colledge of Surgeons has been pleased to adopt the sentiments of this reply, and must be the sole judge of what is written in defence of its privilidges [sic]. As an individual I can not but take a pride in having done a thing in any degree acceptable to the Colledge; But I hope that in the full exertion of its own constitutional powers The Royal Colledge of Surgeons will show itself the best guardian of its own rights – and that in its sober and dignified proceedings, the trivial and envious opposition of individuals will be forgotten.

With every sentiment of loyalty and attachment to the rights and privilidges [sic] of the Colledge in which you have the honour of Presiding I remain Sir

With all possible respect-

Your most ob se

John Bell

James Law Esq President of The Royal Colledge of Surgeons