Your Excellencies,

Punishment and Bounty has so very essentially contributed to the growth and reduction of our public debt, that it would be highly blamable and unbecoming in me, who am supposed by it, to think of undertaking any thing which might have the smallest probability of injuring it, without taking the liberty of consulting you. Especially as your approbation or disapprobation of the measure would render it injurious or the contrary. And upon this principle shall either put my design in execution or not, as your Excellency shall think proper to advise.

From several letters which I have lately had from your father it appears to be highly necessary both to my interest and happiness that I should visit some Native country in the course of the ensuing year. The nature of my present employment however is such that I...
Would greatly have thought it practicable had I not received a letter a few weeks ago from a young gentleman who informs me that he will be in this city next Spring. He is a young man of liberal education and unexceptionable. Most Charles and would no doubt satisfy you to the satisfaction that I can persuade him to undertake my plan for a few months. I should not propose being absent more than six, at most, eight months during which time I design to visit some of the principal towns both in Ireland and Scotland and should make it my business to inquire particularly after a good Maltese mastic, a person much wanted in our ships. Starch is also much wanted. I should also establish a connection by which I could have a constant supply of such books as we want which at present cannot be got in St. John, Baltimore, or Philadelphia. The people here have constantly upon their tables weekly newspapers to my going. If I can persuade them to come back, this I am fully determined to do. So if I can only meet with your Excellencies approval, shall up with a cheerful heart looking upon any interest as mine.

Please be pardon the liberty I take in coming to you with my private affairs and believe me to be

Your Excellence
Most obedient
W. M. Whist

Alexandria Dec. 24th 1791

W. M. Whist