

TO THE FREEHOLDERS OF THE  
COUNTY OF PICTOU.

GENTLEMEN—

The very flattering support which you have extended towards me, as a Candidate for your suffrages, at the late Election, demands my warmest acknowledgements for the confidence and honour with which you were disposed to invest me;—and I take this early and public opportunity, of conveying to you, the high sense I entertain of such an exhibition of public approbation. To such as were not present, however, it is due that I should explain the reasons that induced me to withdraw from the Hustings, at a time when I had every rational prospect of success.

My card, as will appear by its face, was not published until Thursday 10th inst., and the Poll was advertised to be opened, as you are aware, on Monday the 14th inst. This delay arose from the following circumstances, viz:—on Tuesday last I was waited upon by a number of Freeholders in Town, belonging to the Kirk, who solicited me to come forward as a Candidate in the event that Mr. Harts. would not tender his services; to which I replied, that if such was the wish of a respectable number, and expressed by a requisition to that effect, I would certainly comply, altho' I had many personal objections to the honour intended. Under this promise I left Pictou, expecting to return on Thursday following and wait the result of Mr. Harts. answer, which was expected by that day's mail. On the arrival of the coach at Truro however, I was led to believe that Mr. Harts. would not appear, and circumstances then existed which required my immediate attendance in Halifax; I had not a moment to hesitate as to the course to be adopted, for the coach had not arrived there till 3 o'clock on Thursday morning. The following letter was then written hurriedly, and the Card which appeared, enclosed:

Truro, 4 o'clock, Thursday Morning.

My Dear Sir,

Treeman, my Coachman on the Halifax end, is laid up—in consequence of which I am obliged to go to Halifax, instead of returning to Pictou, as I intended; this, however, is of no consequence, as I do not expect that any movement has been made in the matter of which we were talking on Tuesday evening. The Halifax Coach has just arrived, and my brother Joseph tells me that Mr. Tremam, one of the passengers, told him that Mr. Harts. is not to come, and that Mr. Wallace is his informant. Therefore a contest will follow, and as a good many, I believe, would rather trust their suffrages to my charge than to those who have offered, together, with the very disinterested offer made by Mr. Crerar, I think I ought not to shrink from the duties that are required, (and I know them to be very important); nor will I, if the necessary steps are taken by such as want me to offer, and the first and most essential, is a Requisition.

When the mail arrives the fact will be ascertained, and I doubt not the most prudent course will be adopted to secure the return of one Member for the County, to whom the Highlanders can, with confidence, apply, and receive attention, to make their political wants known, in hopes of redress.

Altho' I say it myself, I can get now as favourable a hearing at *Head-quarters* as many who have been longer known as public characters.

I have only time to say, that if you publish the enclosed Card, have it circulated, and I shall be in Pictou on Saturday.

Shew this to Crerar and Ferguson, and be guided by their suggestions, and that of all my friends.

Yours, in haste,  
JOHN ROSS.

Mr. WILLIAM GORDON.

Thus matters stood, until Friday night, having arrived at Truro from Halifax at a late hour; I found my Card published and circulated, and letters from my friends in Pictou, stating that Mr. Harts. letter was so ambiguous, as to lead the "Kirk Council" to determine that Mr. Blackadar was to be shouldered by Mr. Holmes, and carried triumphantly over the County; therefore they published my Cards without the Requisition. On Saturday evening, I returned to Pictou, and expressed some displeasure at having my Cards published without the Requisition. I found, however, that exertions were made and flattering prospects presented, which soon allayed my fears that the steps taken were premature. Mr. Crerar had resolved to resign in my favour, propose me at the Hustings, (which he afterwards did) and use his influence and interest to secure my Election.

On Monday (the morning of the Election) Mr. Crerar and myself having ascertained that a letter had been received from a friend in Halifax, stating that Mr. Harts. was willing to be nominated, and would accept the honour, and attend to the duties required.—We immediately repaired to where the Heads of the Kirk party were assembled—David Crichton, Esquire, president, and put the question, whether they would nominate *one*, or try to put in two?

In rising to answer the question, I said, *one*, and that *one* should be Harts. I endeavored to show at the same time, the folly, the injustice, and the evil consequences that were sure to follow the attempt to put in two, if persisted in. But my speechifying was cut short, by the Chairman, stating that they wanted none—that I might pursue my own course—so would they pursue theirs.

A number of persons from various parts of the country were present, who asserted that it would be vain to try Mr. Blackadar, as he was very unpopular in the country. Mr. Blackadar agreed to resign in favor of Mr. Harts. and requested that *no* alone (Mr. Harts.) should be nominated—expressing his willingness at the same time to agree to whatever might be agreed upon by the Meeting. Mr. Holmes would not resign in favor of Mr. H.—alleging that he could not transfer the trust reposed in him by the people. The majority then agreed to couple Mr. Harts. to Mr. Holmes's interest, and lead him the whole rounds of this county in a contested Election, where a defeat was evident to every reflecting mind—and which if successful (which was morally impossible) could only be effected by throwing out Mr. Smith, and thereby disfranchising a very numerous, and most respectable number of the Freeholders of this County, who brought forward Mr. Smith as their Candidate, and I believe under promises from *our* side, that he would not be opposed.

I left the Room, protesting against such a course, and declaring that although I would use every means in my power to prevent a contest; still, if a contest must ensue, I would see the last man polled before I left the Hustings. The ludicrous scene which followed on the hustings, by Mr. Blackadar resigning one minute and mounting the hustings another, was seen by many of you, and the disclosure made by Mr. Fraser, I leave Mr. Holmes to explain to the satisfaction of his friends, but Mr. Harts. in particular. When no other alternative was left me, I took the only one of which I could avail myself, by calling on Mr. Crichton to take the oath of qualification, he being then nominated to stand for Mr. H. That step had the desired effect of procuring a peaceable & quiet Election; having retired myself, although I had every reasonable prospect of success—if I could reconcile myself to the idea of effecting it at the expense of the public peace, and the fearful consequences that were sure to follow such an event, I may be asked the question why I dread-

ed, or why I should suspect, any unpleasant and unchristian consequences, my answer can easily be discovered in the following Card:

"My Countrymen and Friends,

"You are now called upon to select certain individuals as members of the High Council of the County from that circumstance, prove as yet what you do, that the *Gael* will not forsake his friends, or affront his country. Your enemies are ingenious and crafty, they will try and deceive you with flattery, artful insinuations, lies, and smooth talk, but my friends, it was never known that the sheep ever derived any benefit from the wolf's friendship. With much exertion we have acquired the privilege that our voice may be heard among the mighty of the land. We are all *Gael* and it is a Gaelic soldier that the King has appointed over us. If we do not as the sons of the mountains were wont to do, we lose the esteem and respect due us as the descendants of heroes. Choose those that have a fellow feeling with your state and circumstances, both in temporal and spiritual affairs; they are those that will stand by you in the day of trial, as well as in the time of quietness. Your forefathers have stood many a battle for their King, Country, and Religion, and if at this time, you give to the enemies of your profession an opportunity or room to overcome you, it is evident that water is mixed with the blood that strengthened the heroes who fought the fortunate battle of Bannockburn.

A TRUE HIGHLANDER."

"Pictou, Nov. 7, 1836."

Being originally written in Gaelic, and printed on the same sheet with Mr. Blackadar's Card to the Freeholders—such a document coming from such a quarter, showed the fearful length to which a few individuals were prepared to go, in order to carry their *own* ends; and at any price—I throw myself in the gap, and am happy of the result. Such a document requires no comment, it carries in its face, the most daring and insulting attempt to mislead the Highlanders, that could be dictated by a reckless and unchristian feeling; while at the same time it was so insidious as to lay hold of the noblest feelings of our nature, (and which *you* my Countrymen possess in no ordinary degree;) and thus make *you* subservient to the vilest of purposes—turning the most valuable and dearest political right you possess, as freemen & British subjects, to the inglorious and shameful end of arming one party against another, with the most heartless suspicions that malevolence could conjecture.

Gentlemen, you cannot be surprised to learn, that individuals who could act such a part as that which I have described, (and I challenge *one* and *all* of them to contradict successfully, *one* particular of what I have stated), that they are equally assiduous to get rid of the infamy which such proceedings entail, and that they are not scrupulous what means they use—and that I am the object of their displeasure, is what you could expect. That they are gulled, and that severely, I admit; and if they had taken their defeat with any degree of moderation, I should hesitate thus to expose them. But their own conduct this morning, by endeavouring to enflame *you* against me, left me no other alternative.

In conclusion, Gentlemen, and in accordance with the promise which I made, while addressing you from the Hustings yesterday, the next opportunity that may offer of tendering you my services, I will probably appear, if for no other reason, than to test your approval or otherwise of the course I have thus adopted.

I have the honor to be,

Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

JOHN ROSS.

Pictou, 15th Nov. 1836.