

3rd July 1810

To Mrs Van Crombrugge, Grammont

My very dear Mother

Our journey was very pleasant but on our return yesterday we looked a little like the pilgrims at Mecca: we often turned our eyes towards the city that we had just left. However we arrived safely in Gent, where my first care was to put the final touch to the matter of my Uncle the Regent. It is now for you to act; here is what you should do as soon as possible:

1. There must be a family council of five made up of the closest people to discuss the writ of interdiction and the place of confinement.
2. We will establish the reasons for his arraignment before the magistrate and will proceed to the supervision of the person and possessions.¹

This is in substance what Mr Haek told me, with the exception of certain expressions beyond my competence. You must judge for yourself and if there are any problems you should tell me immediately. For the rest my Uncle is happy at his new home and saw with joy from the packet that he was sent that we thought about him and that we only wanted the best for him. I can tell you nothing more about the arrangements except to tell you that Mr. Haek's integrity must leave you in the greatest tranquillity in this matter.

I have the honour, my dear Mother, to tell you and to repeat with renewed pleasure that I am sincerely

Your very devoted and very submissive son

Gent 3 July 1810

C Van Crombrugge

PS: Please present my respects to my dear Father, my Aunt De Bakker, my cousin Vandenhende, etc. Before sending my letter, Jean and I went to seek fuller instructions; here they are. The family council must take place to discuss the writ of interdiction; you should send us some exact and most striking details of what our Uncle did in his illness; you should add any local testimony. We will arrange the business here in such a way that there will be nearly nothing left to do in Audenarde, Jean will take charge of serving the interdiction because the one who serves it doesn't have a deliberative voice in the family council and this could be awkward. Note also that you should choose, by preference, as the testimonies that I asked for above, actions which would seem to stem from our Uncle's weakness, such as those actions where he wished to seem rich, generous, etc. This is to facilitate the whole matter and the cross-examination that he will probably undergo. I leave it to your judgement to correct and to rectify anything that is useless or deficient.



¹ This is an educated guess as the original French terms are outmoded.