

The Bowne House Historical Society, Inc



INDEPENDENT MINDS: BOWNE & PARSONS WOMEN

By Ellen M. Spindler, Collection Volunteer, and Charlotte Jackson, Archivist

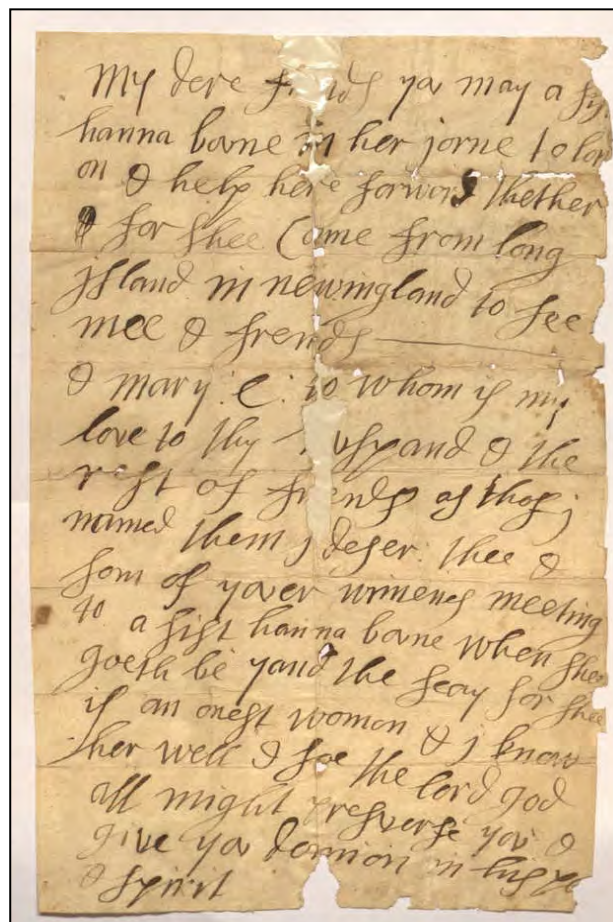
The history of Bowne House has often been dominated by John Bowne and his struggle for religious freedom. However, we are now showcasing the contributions and activism of the no-less remarkable women affiliated with the Bowne House. From John's resolute Quaker wife, Hannah Feake, in the 17th century, to the "Parsons Sisters" who preserved the Bowne House and its legacy in the 20th, these women preachers, world travelers, philanthropists, social reformers, and preservationists made a significant difference outside the spotlight reserved for men. Our research into these and other remarkable Bowne women is ongoing.

THREE GENERATIONS OF 17TH-CENTURY WOMEN

Hannah (Feake) Bowne
1637–1678

Hannah Bowne, the first wife of John Bowne, was one of the first female Quaker ministers in America and a missionary who preached in at least three Colonies, the British Isles, and Northern Europe. Hannah was raised in Greenwich, CT., then claimed by the Dutch; she was related to the powerful New England Winthrop family through her mother, Elizabeth. Hannah married John Bowne in 1656 and soon thereafter became a Quaker; family lore credits her with converting John to the faith, and together the couple hosted the Meetings that ultimately led to his arrest in 1662. When George Fox, the English founder of the Quaker religion, visited Bowne House on his 1672 tour of the Colonies, he evidently found Hannah impressive, for he later sent a personal letter of recommendation to Quaker leaders in London: "I desire thee and some of your Women's Meeting to assist Hanna Bowne when she goeth beyond the sea, for she is an honest woman and I know her well."

John Bowne's journal, his letters, and his eulogy at Hannah's memorial indicate that she visited both Rhode Island and Maryland, and took at least two solo religious trips abroad, the first in early 1675 and the second in 1676. Such was John's respect for his wife's vocation that he willingly consented to



George Fox letter for Hannah Bowne
(Bowne House Archives)

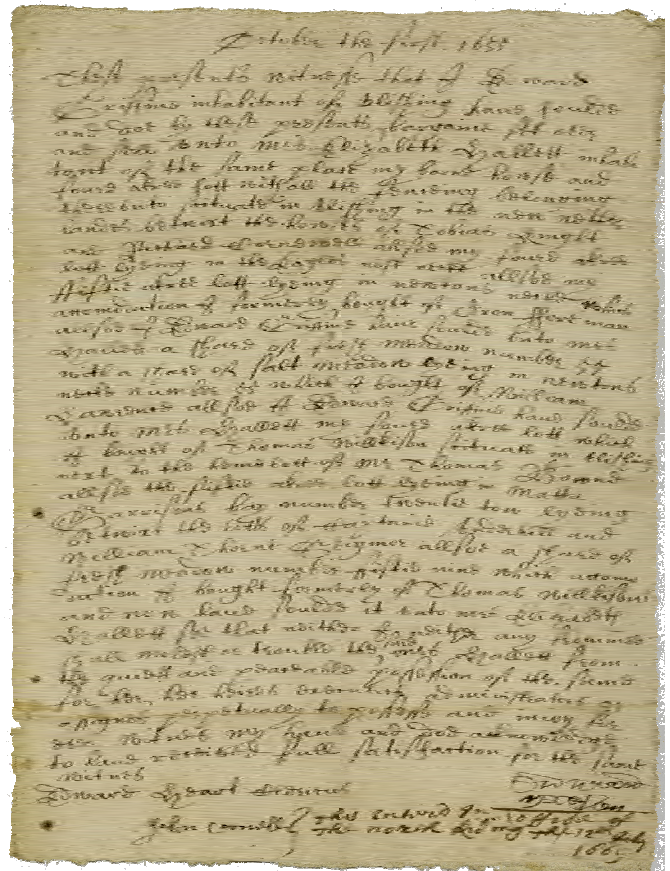
stay behind and care for their seven underage children during her extended absences. The record suggests that she travelled around England and Ireland doing mission work, possibly helping George Fox to establish Women’s Meetings, a controversial initiative he undertook as part of the formalization of the Quaker faith around that time. John joined Hannah midway through her second trip, which included Holland, Flanders, and Germany. He reported that she preached to the Dutch in their own tongue, and revived a lapsed Meeting in the town of Emden. Hannah fell ill and died at the home of John and Mary Elson in London in the winter of 1678 (according to the modern calendar) with John at her side, and is buried there in Bunhill Cemetery alongside George Fox and other early Quakers.

Elizabeth (Fones-Winthrop-Feake) Hallett (1610–between 1657 & 1668)

Hannah undoubtedly inherited her strong will and independence from her mother, who was born Bess Fones and ended as Mrs. Elizabeth Hallett. Yet Hannah’s traditional marriage to John Bowne and her radical religious career both represented a departure from her mother’s free-spirited life, which would later be celebrated in Anya Seton’s historical novel *The Winthrop Woman* and Missy Wolfe’s biography *Insubordinate Spirit*.

Hannah was just ten when her father, Lieutenant Robert Feake, became mentally ill and departed for England. Alone with five children on their Greenwich estate in the contested borderlands of New Netherland, Elizabeth defied Puritan morality by openly cohabiting with Feake’s estate manager, a younger man named William Hallett. Accused of adultery despite having received an order of separation, she was threatened with confiscation of Feake’s estate, loss of custody, corporal punishment, and Hallett’s exile. Yet instead of separating, the blended family fled with the estate’s moveable goods and lived as virtual refugees for nearly two years, evading court orders in both New Netherland and Connecticut. Eventually Elizabeth took refuge with her kinsman John Winthrop, Jr., Governor of Connecticut, who may have formally married the Halletts and likely helped to negotiate the settlement with Director Stuyvesant that allowed them to return home in 1650. Stuyvesant later granted them land in Hallett’s Cove. Elizabeth’s bold gamble had prevailed; she survived to live and love on her own terms.

When the Hallett plantation burned down during the Peach Tree War of September 1655, she purchased 112 acres of land in Flushing as Mrs. Elizabeth Hallett. The deed dated October 1, 1655, describes a plot “next to the home lot of Thomas Bowne,” and another abutting land of Captain John Underhill. She may have chosen these locations for their matchmaking potential, for within a year Hannah Feake married John Bowne, while her other daughter, Elizabeth, later married Underhill. It was unusual for a married woman to buy property in her own name in the 17th century. However, Elizabeth had previously purchased “Elizabeth’s Neck” in Connecticut as



Deed, Edward Griffin to Elizabeth Hallett
(Bowne House Archives)

...Elizabeth (Fones-Winthrop-Feake) Hallett from Page 2

an inheritance for Johanna, her daughter by the deceased Henry Winthrop. The presence of the deed in the Bowne House Archives suggests that the Flushing purchases were an inheritance for her Feake children, and that they eventually were incorporated into the Bowne Estate.

For his part, John Bowne appears to have been a dutiful son-in-law; his journal records an expenditure for “stockings for my mother [in-law].” Hannah no doubt looked to her marriage and religion to offset the instability of her childhood. Yet the Bowne matriarch also followed her own mother’s precedent of female agency and independence.

Mary (Beckett) Bowne 1673–1707

Hannah’s daughter-in-law Mary Beckett was the first wife of John and Hannah Bowne’s son Samuel, who inherited the Bowne House. Like Hannah Bowne, the mother-in-law she never knew, Mary had a strong religious vocation that led her to a bold and unconventional choice. Mary grew up in Lancashire, England as the adopted daughter of two Quaker ministers, Elinor Lowe and Roger Haydock. Unlike some early Friends, Mary’s parents had land and a comfortable livelihood. However, at the age of 10, Mary decided to follow William Penn to the new Quaker colony of Pennsylvania, emigrating as an indentured servant with a family friend. Her father Roger Haydock wrote: “she comes of her own inclination to those parts, to which inclinations we have condescended...”

Mary later settled with foster parents Phineas and Phebe Pemberton, friends of the Bowne family with whom she corresponded after her marriage and move to Flushing in 1691. Their letters offer rare insights into household affairs and childrearing, topics lacking in the papers of Colonial men. She was evidently much esteemed among the Society of Friends. After Mary died at age 33, leaving eight children, the English preacher Samuel Bownas wrote to the grieving widower: “I hope that thou by this time hast learned how to take the Parting of so honorable a mate as thee had, which in my judgment has not left her fellow upon the continent of America.”

18TH- AND EARLY 19TH-CENTURY WOMEN

Dinah (Underhill) Bowne (1707–1770)

Dinah Underhill was the great-granddaughter of Captain John Underhill, the famous Indian fighter who in old age married Hannah Feake’s sister Elizabeth and converted to the Quaker faith. Dinah was raised near Matinnecock on Long Island. Before her marriage, she corresponded with a network of female Quaker preachers. One letter from Susannah Morris alludes to Dinah’s “gift” and urges her to undertake a missionary tour. In 1738 Dinah married John Bowne’s grandson, John Bowne III (1698-1757). Both she and John are described as Quaker ministers. They had four children, including one of the family’s most illustrious members: Robert Bowne (1744-1818), who established the Bowne and Co. Printers and was a founding member of the New York Manumission Society.

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...Dinah (Underbill) Bowne from Page 3

John III's will left Bowne House to Dinah and their teenage son, John IV, stipulating that when the latter came of age the House be divided, with Dinah taking the western end, now the Parlor, and John to occupy the eastern portion, or original 1661 house. In her widowhood Dinah must have presided over the necessary modifications, giving the main wing of Bowne House its central entrance and current floor plan. According to the 2007 Historic Structures Report by Walter R. Wheeler, 18th-century aesthetic changes date to the same period of renovation. These include the wood paneling and moldings still seen in the Parlor, and "modern" double-hung sash windows. Thus, Dinah may be largely responsible for the look of Bowne House today. She lived in the House until her death in 1770.

Eliza (Southgate) Bowne (1783–1809)



After a Portrait by Edward Malbone (Bowne House Archives)

Eliza Southgate Bowne married Walter Bowne (who later became Mayor of New York City) in 1803. Eliza was from Maine, was well educated, and met Walter at Saratoga Springs. Although she never lived in the house and passed away at an early age from consumption, she is notable for her letters, which were published in a volume entitled "Letters of Eliza Southgate Bowne, Mrs. Walter Bowne." These were reprinted as "A Girl's Life 80 Years Ago: Selections from the Letters of Eliza Bowne" in 1888. Written in a lively, accessible style, this book is still read today. Her portrait was painted in 1803 by Edward Greene Malbone, the most celebrated miniaturist of his generation. Decades after her death, her daughter-in-law Eliza Rapelye Bowne resided at the Bowne House for several years. A suite of the Mayor's furniture was subsequently donated by a descendant and is on display in the parlor.

19TH-CENTURY BOWNE AND PARSONS WOMEN

Mary (Bowne) Parsons
(1784–1839)



Bowne House Portrait Collection

The activist tradition established by John and Hannah Bowne continued among their 19th century Bowne and Parsons descendants. Mary Bowne, great-great-granddaughter of John Bowne, inherited the Bowne House along with her mother and three sisters following the death of her father John in 1804. In 1806, Mary married Samuel Parsons, a Quaker minister from a Manhattan merchant family, becoming the matriarch of the Bowne/Parsons family. Their children were James Bowne Parsons, Mary Bowne Parsons (Jr.), Samuel Bowne Parsons, Robert Bowne Parsons, William Bowne Parsons and Jane Parsons.

Mary and her husband were ardent abolitionists whose family friends included English social reformer Joseph John Gurney and American anti-slavery activist Lewis Tappan. Samuel Parsons safeguarded the funds for the Flushing Female Association, a philanthropic organization primarily benefitting African Americans that was founded in 1814 by a group including two of Mary's sisters. Mary focused her energies on the Quaker Meeting, where she served as Elder with a focus on religious education for youth. Mary passed her share of the Bowne House to her

husband upon her death from consumption; as her sisters never married, this ensured that the Parsons would eventually inherit the entire property.

Female Ownership and Occupancy of Bowne House, 1804–1886

From 1804 to 1830 the house was exclusively owned by the widow Anne (Field) Bowne and four daughters of John Bowne IV; until 1888, it remained majority female-owned and occupied. When the unmarried women died, beginning with Catharine Bowne in 1830, they passed their 1/5 shares in the property to their nieces and nephews. Following Mary Bowne Parsons' death in 1839, her husband Samuel Parsons inherited her share. Upon his death in 1842, it was distributed between their six children and their two daughters-in-law. The daughters-in-law received "dower shares," to be inherited in widowhood; however, these reverted to the Estate when the wives predeceased their husbands. Despite this gradual dilution of female ownership, the House continued to be set aside for widows, unmarried females, and their young adult relatives until 1886.

Ann Bowne (1785–1863)
Eliza Bowne (1787–1852)
Catharine Bowne (1789–1830)

The three sisters of Mary Bowne Parsons- Ann, Elizabeth (“Eliza”) and Catharine Bowne- remained unmarried and lived in Bowne House throughout their lives, first with their widowed mother, the former Anne Field, then with their young, unmarried nieces and nephews. As a child, Eliza Bowne attended the Nine Partners Boarding School, which operated from 1796 to 1863 in a settlement called Mechanic (now near Millbrook, NY) in central Dutchess County next to the “Old Brick” Meeting House, a center of Quaker activity. The school was the first co-educational boarding and day school in the State. It taught reading and math to both sexes and was designed to inculcate Quaker values. Lucretia Coffin Mott attended and graduated soon after Eliza Bowne. Many students such as Mott later embarked on lives as abolitionists and women’s suffrage campaigners. Nine Partners Meeting and School coordinated Underground Railroad activities throughout Dutchess County in the leadup to the Civil War. We know of Eliza’s attendance due to a sampler she made there in 1800 at the age of 12. The details of the other sisters’ education are not currently known.

In 1814 Ann and Catharine became founding members of the Flushing Female Association, which by its dissolution in 1967 was the oldest non-religious philanthropic organization in Queens. Though not a founder, Eliza later became involved. The Association held regular meetings at the Bowne House. Catharine died in 1830, but Ann and Eliza were living at Bowne House with their unmarried nephews Robert Bowne Parsons and William Bowne Parsons in 1850, when both men were involved in the Underground Railroad. While the sisters’ participation is not documented, it seems likely that their young relatives acted with their knowledge and consent, and possibly their active cooperation.

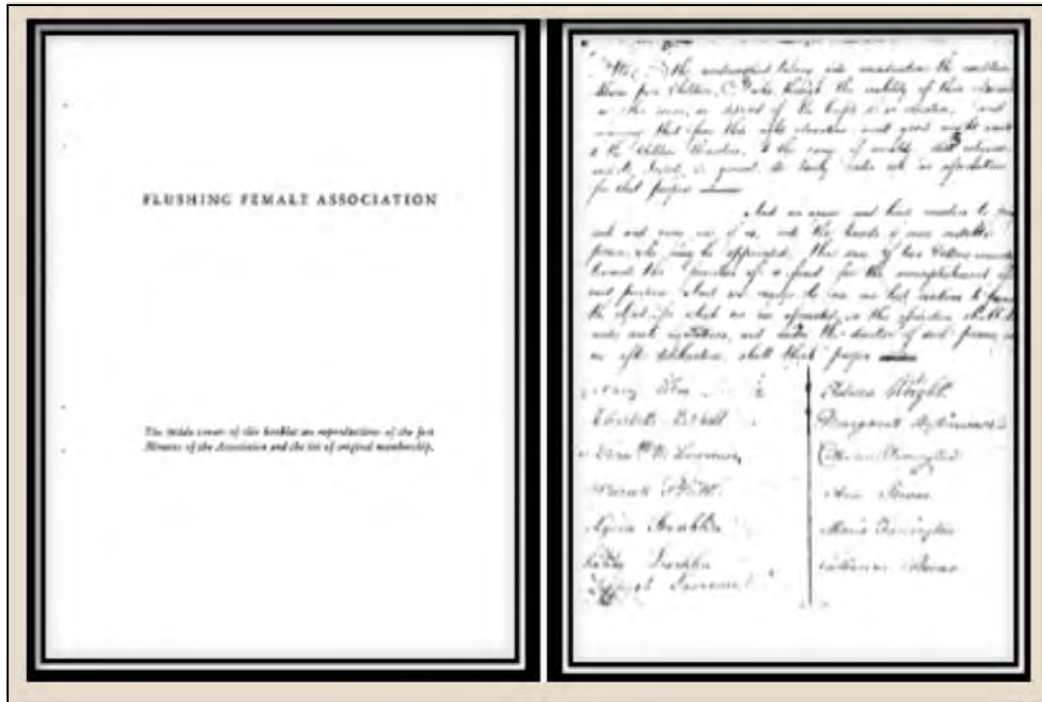
Bowne/Parsons Women’s Participation in the Flushing Female Association, Founded 1814

Three generations of Bowne/Parsons women were involved in the Flushing Female Association, which operated from 1814 to 1967. Catharine and Ann Bowne were among the eighteen founding members of the Association, whose mission was to provide education to the poor (primarily children in the African-American community), since Flushing had no public schools at the time. Twelve of the founding members took turns teaching until a teacher was hired and they all paid \$2.00 a year to fund the school.

Initially, the school was racially integrated and open to all who had insufficient means for a private education. It operated in rented premises until 1821, when a one-story wooden schoolhouse was built on lots purchased on Lincoln Street between Main and Union Streets in Flushing. Circa 1838, the Association received two of its largest gifts, including one fund established by a Quaker donor for the schooling of poor African-American children whose parents had been held in slavery by Quakers. After about 1847, around which time Flushing commenced segregated public primary schools, the Association served solely African-American students, with public funds contributed after 1866. The school was temporarily closed after the draft riots in 1863, but a new brick school was built and opened that same year near the old one. After the Board of Education took over the school in 1862, the Association offered extracurricular activities for the students; established the Flushing Colored Mission Sunday School, which ran from at least 1866 to 1910; and provided financial scholarships for African-American students.

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In addition to Ann, Eliza and Catharine Bowne, their niece Miss Mary B. Parsons (daughter of the elder Mary Bowne Parsons) served as Treasurer of the Association for forty years until her death in 1878. Her own niece, Anna H. Parsons, was also an officer of the Association in 1914. While the work of the Manumission Society and the African Free School—established exclusively by men, including Robert Bowne—remains better known, the Flushing Female Association founded by Robert's nieces and other Quaker women furthered a similar mission and survived over a century longer.

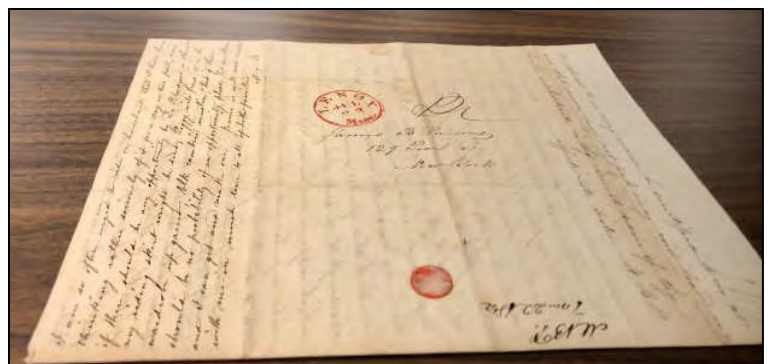


Flushing Female Association booklet with list of original members

Mary B. Parsons (1813–1878) & Jane Parsons (1826–1862)

The 1850 census describes Mary B. Parsons and her sister Jane as living in the House with their two maiden aunts, Eliza and Ann Bowne, and their brothers William B. and Robert B. Parsons. However, they did not lead a cloistered life. Letters show that both Mary and Jane Parsons used the Bowne House as a home base for travel to the Berkshires, England and other places, and corresponded with family and friends during their travels. The family was cultured and befriended notables including judges, attorneys and clergy. In one letter, Jane Parsons proposes hiring the notable portraitist Henry Inman to paint Mary, as he had painted their parents.

In 1870, Mary B. Parsons is described as a “Lady” living in the Bowne House alone with her maid. By the time of her death in 1878, the estate appears to have been in financial jeopardy. For several years thereafter, it was occupied by Eliza Rapelye Bowne, the widowed daughter-in-law of Mayor Walter Bowne, until her death in 1885.



*Mary B. Parsons letter from Lenox, Massachusetts
(Image courtesy of Queens Library Central Archives)*

LATE 19th- AND EARLY 20th-CENTURY WOMEN

Mary Elizabeth (Mitchell) Parsons (1829–1915)

In 1886, the now-untenanted Bowne House was subject to a tax auction, but ultimately stayed in the family through the intervention of Mrs. Robert B. Parsons, neé Mary E. Mitchell. Mary was the daughter of Judge John Mitchell and Caroline Green, who moved to New York in 1835 from Charleston, South Carolina, when Mary was still a young child. She married Robert Bowne Parsons, one of Flushing's prominent nurserymen, on August 18, 1857 at Grace Church in Manhattan. Although her husband was the proprietor of the Kissena Nursery business, Mary purchased the house at the auction with her own funds. The Bowne House Archives contains letters from far-flung Bowne descendants praising her for "saving" the House.

The 1900 Federal Census shows Mary Mitchell Parsons as a widow living on Broadway in Queens with her five children and three female Irish servants, Robert having died in 1898. Bowne House was occupied by caretakers until her death in 1915. During this period Mary and her children began treating the House as a Museum and offering public tours. Mary's 1915 will requested that the House not be sold. Her children then lived there until their age and infirmity necessitated its dedication as a Museum. This history, especially Mrs. Parsons' purchase of the House with her own funds, presents unusual examples of female property ownership during those times, and women's leadership in saving the Bowne House for posterity.

Anna H. Parsons (1859–1948) & Bertha R. Parsons (1869–1946)

The final two residents of Bowne House were Bertha R. and Anna Hinckley Parsons, two unmarried daughters of Robert Bowne Parsons and his wife Mary (Mitchell) Parsons. Anna was the eldest of this ninth generation descended from John Bowne. The sisters spent their early adulthood on an extended world tour, traveling extensively in Europe but venturing as far afield as Egypt, Japan, and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), among other exotic ports of call. At one point, Anna remained in Europe for three years. However,

following their mother's death in 1914, they settled in the Bowne House for good, although they continued to occasionally travel. Their brother Edward lived with them until his death in 1935.



Anna and Bertha continued occasional public tours of the House, zealously preserving the material and spiritual legacy of John Bowne and other early ancestors. In 1908, they said: "It contains the same old furniture, china and papers; nothing has been changed that we could prevent."

Photograph taken in Bowne House; date unknown. Dress on the right is in textile collection.

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The sisters also devoted their time to civic and philanthropic work. Anna served as an officer of the Flushing Female Association and was involved with the Good Citizenship League and McCall mission. Bertha served as President of the Flushing Workers Association, an organization providing daycare and other aid to children of working women.

Postcard of Good Citizenship League building in Flushing in 1907

By E. C. Nichols



They appear to have been pillars of the local community; Mayor Fiorello La Guardia himself gave a radio address from the Bowne House. Due to their advanced age, they and their brother William ultimately arranged to sell the Bowne House and its contents to the newly formed Bowne House Historical Society in 1947. Bertha's obituary the year before mentioned that the Bowne House was believed to be the oldest home in America used by the same family continuously. Ultimately, the Parsons sisters may be remembered most for their final contribution in preserving the history of this historic landmark. Fittingly, Bowne House began its new life as a museum the same way it began its former life as a family home: with strong, visionary female leadership.



Bertha and Anna Parsons, circa 1940s (Bowne House Archives)

Further Reading

- Bowne, Eliza Southgate; *A Girl's Life 80 Years Ago: selections from the letters of Eliza Southgate Bowne with an introduction by Clarence Cook* (Charles Scribner's sons, 1887)
- Seton, Anya; *The Winthrop Woman* (Hodder & Straughton, 1958)
- Wolfe, Missy; *Insubordinate Spirit: A True Story of Life and Loss in Earliest America, 1610-1665* (Globe Pequot, 2012.)

FROM THE ARCHIVES: A JAILHOUSE LETTER FROM JOHN BOWNE TO HIS WIFE HANNAH

By Charlotte Jackson, Archival Consultant to the Bowne House

Like libraries and archives around the world, the Bowne House Archives has been closed to researchers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The silver lining has been the chance for us to spend time more deeply reading and researching the historic documents in our collections- in some cases for the first time. Our activities included the transcription of some of our earliest Colonial manuscripts, including early Flushing land deeds and the correspondence of John Bowne. A few of these items I've never seen in print, nor referenced in histories or genealogies of the Bowne family.

One discovery that I am particularly eager to share with our members is the following letter, written by John Bowne while imprisoned in New Amsterdam, where he had been languishing in the Stadthaus for two months at the pleasure of Director Peter Stuyvesant after refusing to renounce his Quaker faith. The recipient was his wife, Hannah Feake Bowne, at home in Flushing. The letter is dated Quaker-style: the 5th day of the 9th month, 1662 Old Style. (This corresponds to November 15 in the modern calendar; John had been arrested on September 11, New Style.)ⁱ To my astonishment, I found no reference in the historical or genealogical literature to this jailhouse letter from the period of Bowne's trial and imprisonment. By contrast, the letter he sent Hannah from exile in Amsterdam, with its commentary on his appeal to the Dutch West India Company, has been excerpted several timesⁱⁱ.

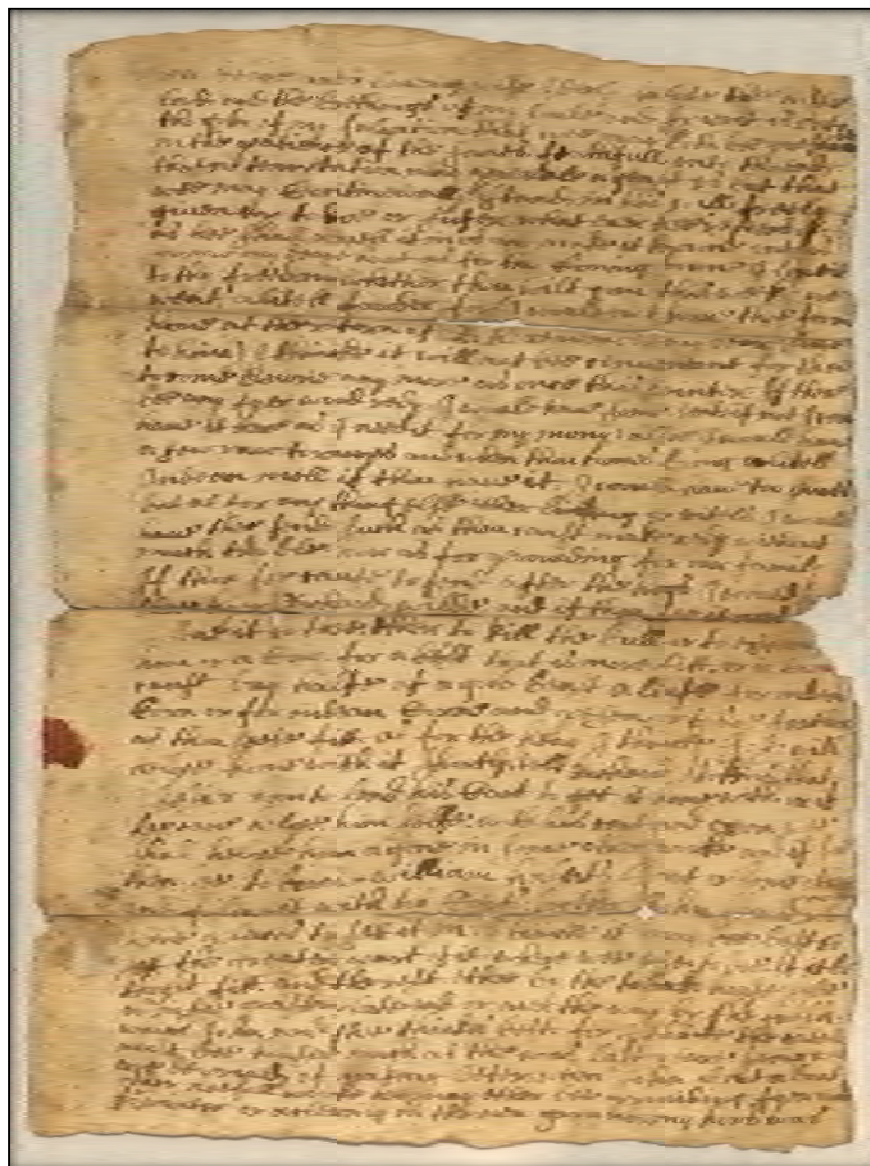
Possibly the scholars of yesteryear found this letter uninteresting for the very reasons that I find it interesting: its wealth of mundane detail and its focus on subsistence agriculture and other practical matters. Bowne could be eloquent when speaking in public, as in his address to the Dutch West India Company or his testimony at Hannah's memorial service. In these pages, Bowne engages in no speechifying about liberty of conscience and relates no stories about his ordeal within the New Netherland legal system. Nor does he waste space on flowery professions of love. After opening with some formulaic though doubtless deeply felt religious sentiments, he requests a list of items from home, before pivoting to the true subject of the letter: "...providing for our family." With winter looming on the Long Island frontier, this was a matter of survival. Bowne instructs Hannah on the management of the farm in his absence: which animals to slaughter and what type of pulses to trade for, where to dry the hay and who might loan their ox carts. Such mundane details are likely irrelevant to historians of religion or bards of civic virtue. Yet they offer the modern, urbanized reader a window onto life in agrarian Colonial society, as it was lived even by its heroes and martyrs.

This little-known document also sheds light on at least two of the enduring mysteries of the Bownes' ordeal. How did John Bowne survive for months on a bread and water diet without starving or suffering severe malnutrition? It turns out that Bowne was permitted to "order in." His rather basic requests to Hannah include turnips, Indian corn, and firewood to cook with. (A page of accounts in the back of his diary suggests that he also had a relationship with a tavern near the jail that was owned by an English couple, and that he may have bribed his guards with liquor.) Another question frequently asked by visitors and researchers: however did Hannah manage, all alone on the farm with the children during John's exile? The answer is that she *wasn't* alone- she had the proverbial village to help her. Hannah's step-father, her brother, and two friends or neighbors are to be enlisted for the haying; another neighbor is to round

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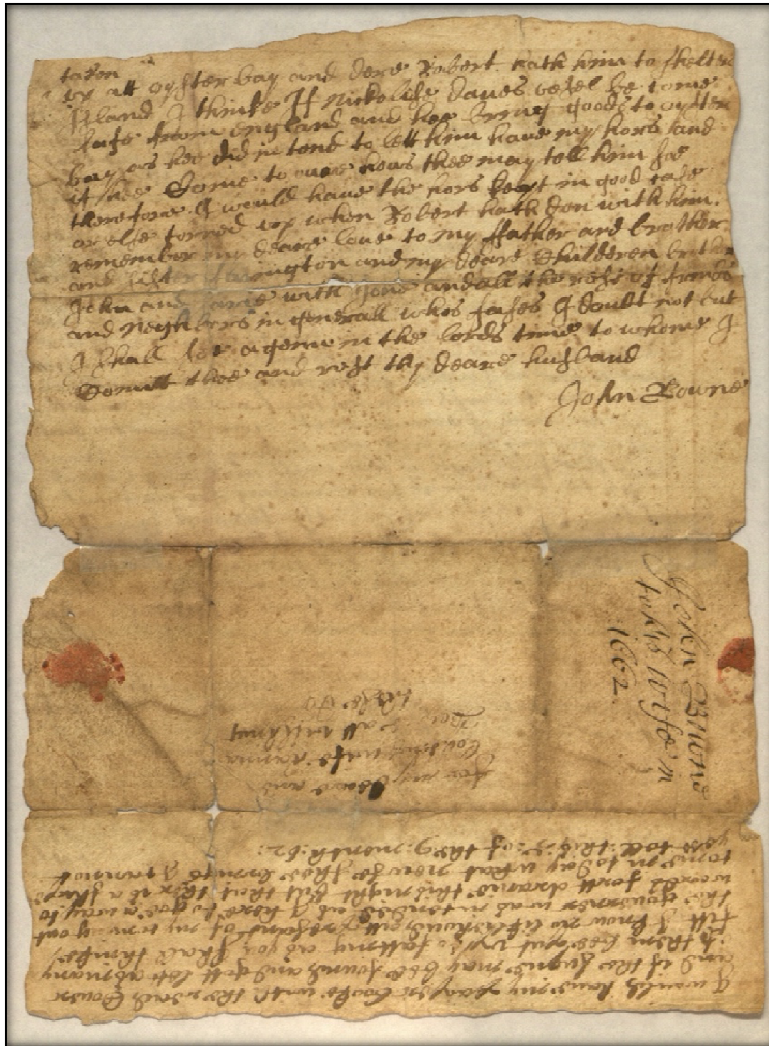
up the free-range hogs for the winter; her brother is to lay in firewood and clear new ground for next year's planting. Bowne's laundry list of chores makes concrete the weight of responsibility that now lay on Hannah's shoulders, in addition to her own household labors. Yet it also illustrates the strength of the community that she could turn to for support.

Finally, in a hastily scrawled postscript, John requests "my paper book with the red cover." This must be the famous Journal in which Bowne memorialized the 18-month saga of his arrest, trial, imprisonment, exile, appeal before the Dutch West India Company, and his eventual, Odyssean return as a free man. Notably, the first passage in Bowne's journal to use the present tense is: "The 6th day of the 8th month...I was brought to the State House and there put in the prison room, *where I have remained 'til this 19th of the 9th month, being the 4th day of the week, and yet remain here.*" Given this date (November 19 Old Style/29 New Style) we can infer that Hannah arrived with the notebook within two weeks of Bowne writing, on what seems to have been an extended conjugal visit. Indeed, twelve days later the Journal records her departure with the same stoic brevity as the letter: "my wife...went away the next 2nd day^m morning, on the 1st day of the 10th month Old Style."



John Bowne to Hannah Bowne, 5th day 9th mo. 1662 - Page One

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John Bowne to Hannah Bowne, 5th day 9th mo. 1662 - Page Two

Transcription by Kate Lynch; rev. Charlotte Jackson - Spelling and punctuation modernized

“My dear and loving wife, I dearly salute thee in the Lord, and the breathing of my soul and spirit is unto the God of my salvation that we may both be preserved in the patience of the saints, faithful unto the only: that no temptation may prevail against us, but that we may continually stand in His will, freely given up to do or suffer whatever he requires of us as he shall reveal it in us and make it known unto us.

And now my dear heart, as for thy coming down I leave it to thy freedom whether thou wilt come this week or wait a little, for I would not have thee from home at the return of R.H.^{iv} (remember my dear love to him). I think it will not be convenient for thee to come down any more as once this winter: if there be any of your wood ready I would have some sent; if not I can have it here as I need it. For my money also I would have a few raw turnips, and when thou comes bring a little Indian meal if thou have it: I would have two shirts, but as for anything else, other linens or vittles, I would have thee send such as thou canst make ready without much trouble.

Now as for providing for our family, if thou so canst to send after the hogs I would have thee hire Richard Wilde^v and if thou see it needful I leave it to thee: either to kill the bull or to exchange him or a cow for a beast that is more fit. Or if thou canst buy half of a good beast [...] for Indian corn, or for Indian corn and

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peasen^{vi}: or to do farther as thou sees fit: as for the hay, I think S.S.^{vii} will help home with it shortly. Tell Richard [Stokins]^{viii} that I desire him to lend his cart to get it home with, or if he can help himself with his cart and oxen, we shall help him again in some other work, and if so then so to borrow William Hallett's^{ix} cart, or some other, and follow it with two carts: brother John^x should make ready some places to set it on: I think it may be best to set the greater part of it where we used to do, if it be thought fit; and the rest either by the tobacco house side, or in the grassy [place's end?], or over the way by the [fresh]^{xi}: which[ever] John and thee thinks best: for I think the cattle must be housed much as they was last year. Seeing we are desirous of making better: when John is not about other needful work, he may be either providing firewood for winter or a-clearing in the new ground.

My horse was taken by at Oyster Bay and dear Robert^{xii} hath him to Shelter Island, I think. If Nicholas Davies' vessel be come safe from England and he bring goods to Oyster Bay, as he did intend to, let him have my horse, and if he come to our house thee may tell him so; therefore I would have the horse kept in good case, or else turned up when Robert hath done with him. Remember my dear love to my father and brother and sister Farrington^{xiii} and my dear children, brother John and [Sarie], with [Joan]^{xiv} and all the rest of friends and neighbors, whose faces I doubt not but I shall see again in the Lord's time, to whom I commit thee, and rest thy dear husband,

John Bowne

*For my dear and loving wife Hanna Bowne
at Vlissing, these [go]*

[Postscript]

I would have my paper book with the red cover,^{xv} and if the swine may be found and got, let as many of them be put up to fattening as you shall think fit. I know no likelihood at present of my coming out, the Governor^{xvi} was intended as I heard to go away to[wards?] Fort Orange this night, but that there is a ship come in today; what news she bring I cannot [yet] tell."

this 5th: of the 9: month :62:

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- i. The Julian calendar used by English subjects until 1752 had fallen 10 days behind the modern calendar by the 17th century.
 - ii. See for instance Charles Yarnell's article *John Bowne of Flushing, 1627-1695* and Herbert Ricard's *Journal of John Bowne, 1650-1694*.
 - iii. *2nd day*: Monday. Quakers do not name the days of the week or the months of the year due to their pagan origins.
 - iv. "RH": Likely Robert Hodgson (1621-1696). Among the first Quakers to visit New Amsterdam in 1657, he may have converted Hannah.
 - v. *Richard Wilde*, sometimes spelled "Wilday," a neighbor of the Bownes.
 - vi. *peasen*: Peas (used for "pease porridge")
 - vii. "S.S.": probably Samuel Spicer (1640-1699), Quaker of Gravesend, Brooklyn; arrested around the same time as Bowne.
 - viii. *Richard Stockins*: Probably Richard Stockton, a signer of the 1657 Flushing Remonstrance.
 - ix. *William Hallett*: Hannah Bowne's step-father (third husband of her mother, Elizabeth Fones-Winthrop-Feake-Hallett)
 - x. *brother John*: John Feake, Hannah Bowne's brother
 - xi. *the fresh*: possible shorthand for "fresh meadow," as contrasted with "salt meadow"
 - xii. *Robert*: either Robert Hodgson again, or Hannah's brother Robert Feake
 - xiii. *brother and sister Farrington*: John Bowne's sister Dorothy and her husband Edward Farrington, a signer of the Flushing Remonstrance.
 - xiv. identity of these people not currently known
 - xv. *my paper book*: John Bowne's *Journal* (1650-1694)
 - xvi. *the Governor*: Director-General Peter Stuyvesant, sometimes called "Governor"



**Bowne House
2021 Events
WINTER**



SPRING



SUMMER



FALL/WINTER



(some may be virtual)
see the events page
on our website
www.bownehouse.org
for detailed information on
time and dates

February- Black History month



February 12- Lunar New Year



March-Women's History month



June- Path through History



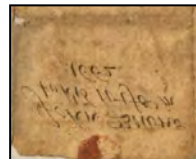
June 19- Juneteenth



Sacred Sites Weekend



Archives Exhibit



Open House New York



Path Through History



Halloween



Queens Holiday House Tour



ERRATA

This PDF is an amended version of the original printed newsletter made on March 30, 2021. It includes the following changes:

Independent Minds: Bowne & Parsons Women

- ❖ On page 4, Eliza Southgate Bowne's birth year was changed to reflect the correct date of 1783.
- ❖ On page 4, the photograph of Eliza Southgate Bowne's portrait was replaced by a copy from the Bowne House Archives.
- ❖ On page 9, a missing reference was restored to the "Further Reading" Section.

From the Archives: A Jailhouse Letter from John Bowne to his wife Hannah

- ❖ In endnote (i): the date that Britain switched from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar in 1752, not 1751 as previously printed. (The relevant Act of Parliament was passed in 1751, but the actual change did not occur until the following January 1.)
- ❖ Author made minor changes to the wording of the article, and reformatted the end notes.

MEMBERSHIP:

Bowne House welcomes new and returning members. To learn more or to renew, please visit our membership page: <https://www.bownehouse.org/membership>



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