

BOWNE HOUSE ARCHIVES



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BOWNE FAMILY PAPERS - TRANSCRIPTIONS

Document ID: #2018.1.3-02

Document Title: Letter from John Bowne in Amsterdam
to Hannah Bowne at Flushing

Date: 9th day of 4th month ("called June"), 1663, New Style
(May 31, 1663 - Old Style) / June 9, 1662 - New Style

Note on dates: Early Quakers used the numbers, not the names, of the months and days of the week. Prior to 1752, English people mostly used the Julian ("Old Style") calendar, which was 10 days behind the modern ("New Style") calendar and which began the New Year on March 25th.

This transcription retains the spelling and punctuation of the original document.

Transcribed by Charlotte Jackson; reviewed/edited by Kate Lynch

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Letter, John Bowne in Amsterdam to Hannah Bowne at Flushing

9th of June, 1663

BFP #2018.1.3-02

Most deare and tender wife

in the truth of our god doe I dearely salut thee: and unto thee doth my love and life flow forth exceedingly. and my earnest desier for thee is, that thou mayst bee presarved feaithfulle to the lord and may grow and prosper in his liveing truth soe my deare hart be bould for the lord and lett nothing discoridg thee, for hee is a sure reward to all them who freely and singly give up all for his truths sake, the which I do beleeve thou canst truly wnesse with mee. and this I can truly say in all my tryalls and exercyse¹ I find the lord to bee my suer helpe, my roke and my defense. And he hath taught mee to bee content with what hee is pleased to exercies {exercise} me in. Deare Hart I ritt a letter for thee when I arrived in Ierland and sent in the shipe to Hola[nd]² to be sent by the first,³ and when I goot into Darby Shire I rite agen and sent it to London by post, to be sent by the first, which was Will: Plumley and when I came [to] London there was a Boston ship to goe: in which I was loveingly profered a passage, where severaill friends⁴ was to passe and glad should I have been to have taken that oportunyty if I had had freedom for it, but it being otherways I sent a letter by elizab^{eth} hoooutton,⁵ and a box of bookes by y^e M^{tr} of the shipe (which if the[y] come to thy hands I think it may not be best to dispose of them till I come.⁶ I hope it will not be long) Soe it being upon mee to passe to Holand I hasted away and had a good passage for that day weeke I went from London I manifested my case to the West India Com-panie by sending in a writing, which the[y] read and accordingly aponyted Committies to sitt about it, but it being a feasting time, and the[y] that are great not mynding them that are littel wee could not gett a hearing of 14 days, but when wee (I and Will: Caton⁷ [*page torn*] and interpritter) was ca[lled be]fore them, they was very moderate and [semed] not to take any ofense at [...] or the like, nether [spake] one word against me in any particular nor one [wor]d tending to the liking of

¹ "Exercise" here means ordeal, suffering, or difficulty.

² Bowne disembarked in Ireland from the Dutch ship "Fox," which was heading onwards to the Netherlands

³ "the first": the first outbound ship to New Netherland

⁴ members of the Society of Friends, or Quakers

⁵ Elizabeth Hooten, one of the earliest female Quaker missionaries. The letter sent by her does not survive.

⁶ Probably refers to Quaker tracts; these were banned in New Netherland, and their distribution was a crime.

⁷ William Caton: a prominent member of the small English Quaker expatriate community in Amsterdam.

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anything that was don agenst mee, but freely and with a joynt cunsent promi^[sed] without any scrupel, that the next day at the tenth hour, my goods should be ~~restor~~ deliverd mee. and the next day when wee came, there order was given to the keeper of the [packhous] to that purpose, but he with others of the underling ofesers consulted together and asked mee if I had paid my passage and y^e anser being nay, the[y] would not deliver them Soe the marchant and sciper⁸ going earnest for passage mony, and the company (though ordered thereunto by the Governor)⁹ not willing to pay money upon such an account, and the bad thing taking place in them, the[y] doe not onely detaine my goods, but allso deny me a pasage home except upon grose and unresonable termes (which I could rather lay downe my life thin yeald unto) which may apeare by those writings which I thinke to send:¹⁰ which if I doe I would not have them publick till I come nether the papers nor any copys to pase from thy hand there abouts. I have sent thee a trunk (a small one) full of things: in the Crowne of the undermost hatt, thou maist find a paper wrapt about a litel bundel, wherein is information but whereas I ritt of 12 covenants¹¹ of [...] there ~~there~~ is at lest [19] there is many dierections upon papers which thou mast mynd its like theres many things in the trunke which I did not name: I have dyrected it to Corernelis Stinwick.¹² I have allso writ to him to pay the freight, ~~but~~ and from him its dy[r]ected to Richard Stockton soe If the ofisers will see what is in it, then send downe Richard with this key to receve it as his: and to see that nothing be ronged [within?] if it open[ed]: I thinke to write a few lines to Richard that if hee need to goe downe hee may carie with him If need bee to show them: I have allsoe sent thee a yong man (or youth) which is my

⁸ "marchant and sciper": merchant and skipper

⁹ New Netherland Director-General Peter Stuyvesant, sometimes called Governor

¹⁰ Possibly refers to the text of Bowne's final address to the Dutch West India Co. (BFP #2018.1.2-25), or to an unknown document that does not survive.

¹¹ Covenants: contracts or indentures

¹² Cornelius Steenwyck: a prosperous New Amsterdam merchant and later Mayor of New York City, who took an interest in Bowne's case.

Letter, John Bowne in Amsterdam to Hannah Bowne at Flushing

9th of June, 1663

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servant for six years as will appear by covenant,¹³ a copy of which I think to send thee Hee hath also the covenant. I would have you all bee loveing to him, but bee wise therein, and lett him not gett a head over any of you hee hath ben somthing hy mynded and litel used to labor, let him not bee too lavish in wearing of his things if hee should bee headie that thou bee burdend with him, then put him to brother farrington¹⁴ or Richard Stockton ^{till I come}. the trunk is marked **R.S.** upon a yellow cloth thats naled about it, I have also sent by James Clement my Chist and in it a sadel and a pilyon, a peare of bouts, a greene cloth to ware under my sadel and a bridle, a horse combe :4: sythes 2 stoklockes 6: bells 3 chisels, a goug and one oger one hamer one mortar and pesle 2000: clobord neales with some other neales, and some other things: which both he and them are in the custody of Danel Paterick¹⁵ till the[y] come home If thou have any thing to writ James can doe it well if thou thinke good thou may send Nathanel Silvester¹⁶ a copy of the papers fold[ed] up with my deare love to him and his deare wife, and tell him I was with his mother a litel before shee dyed.

[PAGE TWO]

Deare hart, I am like to passe shortly to rotterdam to take pasage for England where I hope to gett a pasage home shortly, for I left one Shipe there for Boston, which it's like is not yett gon, and John Scott tould me that hee and his cosen was buying a Shipe which should bee redie shortlie for [...] by his relation, and Nicholis Davies' vesel¹⁷ was expected to be

¹³ James Clement, who later became the Flushing town clerk. This indenture is in the Bowne House Archives (BFP #2018.1.2-16)

¹⁴ Brother Farrington: Bowne's brother-in-law Edward Farrington, a signer of the 1657 Flushing Remonstrance

¹⁵ Daniel Patrick, Jr.: son of militiaman Capt. Daniel Patrick and an acquaintance of Hannah Bowne's youth.

¹⁶ Nathaniel Sylvester: Quaker trader and plantation-owner of Shelter Island

¹⁷ Nicholas Davis/Davies: Quaker sea captain and merchant active in trans-Atlantic trade. His vessel is also mentioned in BFP #2018.1.3-01: *Letter from John Bowne in New Amsterdam to Hannah Bowne at Flushing.*

Letter, John Bowne in Amsterdam to Hannah Bowne at Flushing

9th of June, 1663

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at london shortlie after I came out, soe I hope I shall pas a passage
by one or other. [It's] like I shall not have time to write in particular
to any Friends (but my deare and tender love is to all) for I heare of
a sudden pasage from rotterdam, and not like to be anuther a great whil
and before this time I could not writ becace I knew not but I might
have a pasage from hence: therefore I would desier thee to remember
my dearest love to deare John Tilton and Marie with deare
Samuel Spysers and his mother.¹⁸ and tell them itt was my in-
tent to have writ pretie large to them if I had time, and remember
mee dearly to John and Peeter and deare Hester and the rest
of the familie and all friends at gravesend, and salute mee dearly to all dear [
Friends at] oyster bay, to [whom I should] gladly have
ritt in perticular, had I had time: also my deare saluta[t]ions to all
friends att Rustdorpe,¹⁹ Middelbrough,²⁰ and elsewhere. And now my
deare lambe, my tender greeting to my tender father with my
tender love to all my brothers and sisters and my littell Children
remember my true love to Jone Chattearton Edward [hart] Jn^o Noble
and Sarah Cornell and Charity Feald, with my love to all the rest
of our loveing neyhbers Soe my deare Lamb, I haveing ben up all~~
this night to write, and now not haveing more tyme, I must and doe~~
conclude in tender Love (to thee my deare Childeren and all deare Friends)
in which love the lord god of my life presarve and keipe you all.
Amen. Thy deare and loveing husband, John Bowne

Amsterdam this 9th: of the
4th: month called June 1663
New Style²¹

¹⁸ The Tiltons and Spicers were Quakers from Gravesend on Long Island; arrested at the same time as John Bowne and likewise sentenced to exile, they were released on their own recognizance and simply ignored their sentences.

¹⁹ Rustdorp: village later renamed Jamaica, Queens

²⁰ Middleburgh: village later known as Newtown, and now as Elmhurst, Queens

²¹ Bowne forgets that June is actually the sixth month in the New Style calendar, which England had not yet adopted.

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Deare George Fox²² Will: Dewsberie²³ Josiah Colles

Thomas Charston Peeter Parson Jone Broksop²⁴

and many more friends hath there deare lovese and
tender salutations remembered to all friends.

I have not time to give you a large declaration of that
love and tenderness that I have found here with my
deare friends will: Caton and annage his wife²⁵ and
many more whose love is deare to all friends who in
the Simplisity doe abyde.

²² George Fox (1624-1691): the chief founder and spiritual leader of the early Quakers

²³ William Dewsbury (1621-1688): influential Quaker preacher and writer from Yorkshire

²⁴ Joan Brocksopp (d.1681): early female Quaker missionary to New England; correspondent of the Bownes

²⁵ Annekin Derricks, a Dutch Quaker who married William Caton about 1662