

BOWNE HOUSE ARCHIVES



Bowne House Historical Society, Inc.

37-01 Bowne Street

Flushing, NY 11354

<https://www.bownehouse.org/archives>

Ph: (718) 359-0528 Email: bownehousearchives@gmail.com

BOWNE FAMILY PAPERS - TRANSCRIPTIONS

Document ID: #2018.1.3-04

Document Title: Letter from John Bowne in Oyster Bay to
Hannah Bowne in London

Date: 18th day of 3rd month, 1675.

(May 18, 1675 - Old Style) / May 28, 1675 - 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 began the New Year on March 25th.

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

Transcribed by Kate Lynch; reviewed by Charlotte Jackson

Last revised: 3/2024

Letter, John Bowne in Oyster Bay to Hannah Bowne abroad
18th of 3st mo. 1675
BFP #2018.1.3-04

Oyster bay the :18th of y^e: 3^{mo}: 1675

Deare wife

In that unfained love that in good truth
Lives in my hart doe I dearly salut thee
Thou Inoscent lamb wherein I have full
Satisfaction that wee have a sencable feeling
Of each others faithfulness to god and rezinding-
nes¹ in to his will: for which I desier for ever
to blesse the lord, and am ever made to prese {*praise*}
his name in the assembles of his sants {*saints*} ~~~~
by this my deare thou may understand that I am
[eve]rie way well blessed [by] the lord; my father
and Childeren are all pritie well and
familie in pretie good order² the last thing
before coming to this meeting was the funerall
of my brother Farington³ with gladnesse for his
relese and oure satisfaction: deare hart to perticuler[arize]
all that desiers to bee remember {*sic*} to thee would be
exceeding large but this I may say for all friends
in generall relations neghbors and people the
like largness of love for one perticuler person
I have seldom found amongst them as is for thee
To give thee a full account of oure [__ercys] concerning
that sad accident in Marieland⁴ would bee too long

¹ Resignedness or resignation

² "familie in pretie good order": see George Fox's tract "Gospel Family Order," circa 1672, concerning the proper running of a devout Quaker household according to Biblical precepts.

³ "My brother Farington": Edward Farrington, John Bowne's brother-in-law, died in 1675.

⁴ "that sad accident in Maryland": the drowning of Hannah Wright of Oyster Bay, a charismatic young Quaker missionary, in a shipwreck off the coast of Maryland the previous March.

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18th of 3rd mo. 1675

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besids the great lose wee have had much to doe
with the government a bout Hanah's estate all
which Gideon⁵ hase gotten in to posecion if
deare John lost any monie [there] lett him send
a [demand] Matheu Pryor⁶ came home just
to this meeting with tydings of thy beeing gon⁷
for which the lord had fitted mee as thou hast
knowne in like cases formarly blessed be his name
thy letters are not yet come to me but I hope will
shortlie by deare John or Danell: my letters to
thee I understand fell short, wherefor the Copie
of one I her inclose: deare Henrey Correr⁸ is here
who never say {sic} the like in his life as yester day by
Case⁹ and his Roufe rotted Crew whose uncomely
and unmanly actions did much discover them to the
people as thou hast largely seene before and art able
to give account to friends Robert Storie¹⁰ and his wife
whose love is to thee are here with many more friends
who arrived ten days since for whome I am pritie
much concerned in what sarvis I can I recev'd a let_{er}
from deare John Burnyate¹¹ to whom I hope to writ shæ

⁵ Gideon Wright, Quaker of Oyster Bay, brother of the deceased

⁶ Matthew Prior, Quaker of Oyster Bay.

⁷ Prior had just returned from the colony of Maryland, where Hannah Bowne had also been traveling prior to her departure for England.

⁸ Probably Henry Corryer, for whom the Flushing Quarterly Meeting issued a certificate of good character in 1679 before his religious journey to England.

⁹ Thomas Case of Newtown, Queens Co., belonged to a rival sect called the Ranters, who would disrupt Quaker worship services. In October 1675 Case was fined for preaching and creating a disturbance in front of John Bowne's door.

¹⁰ Robert Story (1617–1683) and his wife Patience Wilson, Quakers who emigrated to New York from London in the 1670s

¹¹ John Burnyeat (1631-1690): an Irish Quaker preacher and pamphleteer. On a previous visit to America he engaged in public disputation with Roger Williams of Rhode Island.

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shortlie but this is [in] great hast in hopes to reach a
shipe at Southould bound for London

[Written sideways in left-hand margin]

Soe deare hart salut me dearly to deare :G:F¹² J:B:¹³ Jone Brocksopp¹⁴ and all good
Friends that knowse mee as if named soe in that which is bhond words my deare lamb
I bid thee farewell. Thy deare husband in truth John Bowne~

[Note: Jacob Titus Bowne's 19th-century notes on this letter record a cover sheet bearing the following inscription]:

To be left with John Elson at the Sign of the Peele, St. John St.,
For my deare wife Hannah Bowne,
London, Old England – These.¹⁵

¹² Probably George Fox (1624-1691), considered the founder and leader of the Quaker faith

¹³ Possibly John Burnyeat, above

¹⁴ Joan Brocksopp (d.1681) of Little Normanton in Derbyshire, an early female Quaker missionary who traveled to New England in 1661 in the company of Elizabeth Hooten.

¹⁵ This cover sheet or address label has since been lost or separated from the letter.