



May 28, 1670 LETTER

EXCERPTS: "Family Histories and Genealogies"

AUTHOR: Edward Elbridge Salisbury, 1892

Pages 540-41:

"October 12, 1669, he was granted 1000 acres 'in any place that may not prejudice a plantation,' for his public service, as well at home as in England."

"Another * significant memorial " of the Deputy-Governor, to use Hutchinson's expression, is a letter dated May 28, 1670, when he was confined to his bed by sickness, addressed to his associates in the Government, exhorting them to "the demonstration of oneness and affection." We give the whole letter, as follows :

" Gentlemen

" The all wise God seeing fit to lay me under Such a dispensation as by which I am rendered incapable of attending upon you and upon the work that I have been called to, being Confined to my habitation.

"Having varietie of visiters Sometimes, and meeting with reports, (how true I know not) that you were making it your work to be Solicitous to know the Cause of Gods displeasure and frown upon us manifested in those Severall wayes which are obvious to any intelligent spirit ; It being hinted to me that the way that's taken does not seeme to produce any good Issue ; but rather to beget animosities and distances of spirit one part of the Court against the other, and one person against another ; which if true, is possibly occasioned by the misrepresentation of Cases, possibly by prejudices taken up in one anothers spirits, without enquiring into the truth and reallity of things, possibly by some occasion given in some particular cases (we all, being but men, and capable of acting but as men, and so Subject to faile and miscarry in every thing we doe) I take the boldnes to hint the Same and to lay my feares before you that (if things be amongst you as they are rendered, that there should be such distances in your transactions) it may tend to the provoking of God to a further degree of displeasure, and may lay us open to greater Inconvenience both at home and abroad, when it shalbe rumour'd that you shalbe at such a distance one from another ; especially if you should rise and break up Court in such a frame.

"As I beg your excuse wherein I may be defective in anything I say, so I would humbly entreat you would look upon your selves not only as men, but men eminently professing the name of God: Consider that the eyes of the world are in a great measure upon us, so that if we doe anything that may prove Inconvenient to our Selves, the name of God will not only suffer exceedingly, but we shalbe as persons without pittty, by how much we if by our pretended enquiry into the Cause of Gods

anger, shall divide and break to peeces and bring sufferings upon our Selves, when
 the Lord by his providence hath prevented its coming by other hands. That there
 may be differences of apprehension is nothing but whats Common. But our direction
 in the word of God is that all things should be done in Love ; and if we would
 doe any singular thing, as we are singular in our profession, Let's manifest it in
 our endeavouring to Subdue our Spirits, and to carry things an end with that affection
 and tendernes to the name of God, and one another, that it may appear the
 spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ is breathing in us. I perswade my selfe your scope
 and aime is right, and for God: But the way and manner to bring about your aimes
 may possibly be sometimes irregular ; Let's mind the manner as well as the matter
 :

Let the name of God be most dear and precious to us, above our private animosities
 and prejudices : Let not Jealouzy possess our spirits without sufficient ground and
 demonstration, and let the demonstration appear to be a Contrivance in way of
 designe, before we set our selves in full opposition : For it may be upon enquiry, it
 may either arise from weakness or Infirmitie, or from that Latitude which we would
 give to others or gladly take our selves. I earnestly beg what I say may not be misconstrued
 ; you know my plainness, if I err in anything Charge it to the account of
 my love, and great desire the name of God may not be a sufferer by our means : And
 I doe earnestly beseech you that you study and contrive some way before you break
 up the Court, to adorne with the demonstration of oneness and affection, that it may
 appear you all scope at the good of the poor Country : And that you will endeavour
 to have as good thoughts one of another as possibly you can, retaining the Interest
 of the name of God among us ; Let it not be published to the world that the Government
 of New England is broken, and that your animosities are such that tis Impossible for you to agree in
 anything that may tend to the Saving the whole. Desiring
 a good Construction may be put upon my broken lines ; and that you will beleieve
 that my scope is publike Interest ; Praying and beseeching the Lord to be with you
 in your Counsells and determinations, that his name may be gloryfied in all your
 transactions, with my service hearty tendered to you I rest
 *yours affectionately desiring the Interest of the name of God may not
 be buried, but thrive in this poor wilderness under your hands
 ffr Willoughby "

" Charlestowne 28th. 3d. 70

"Hon. Hamilton A. Hill, author of the " History of the Old South

Church in Boston," refers to this letter in the following words :

" While this controversy between the two branches of the General Court was in
 progress, the deputy governor, Francis Willoughby, detained at his home in Charlestown
 by illness, was following it with the deepest interest. Unable to participate in
 the discussions in person, he wrote a letter to the magistrates, which was pervaded
 by a beautiful spirit of charity and conciliation. This letter probably made very
 little impression upon the opposition party at the time, but it reveals to us the
 amiable, candid, and devout qualities of the writer's mind and heart. After reading
 it we can easily believe, as Backus tells us, that he was 'a great opposer of the persecutions
 against the Baptists.' The members of the Old South certainly can never

forget that in the days of its trial this excellent man opened his hospitable doors to receive the council which met for its recognition, and which extended to it the right hand of church fellowship." No wonder that the Deputy-Governor, being such a bold opposer of wrong, and yet so peace-loving a man, " is mentioned," as Hutchinson says, "in warm terms of affection by his contemporaries."

Additional information about this story

Description

Date

Location

Attached to Francis Willoughby (1613 - 1671)

The content of this page should adhere to our community guidelines.

Visit Other Generations Network sites

Ancestry.com

[Corporate Info](#) [Affiliate Program](#) [Advertising](#) [Ancestry Blog](#) [Contact Us](#)

© 2009, The Generations Network, Inc. - [PRIVACY STATEMENT](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#)