

LETTERS OF GOVERNOR JOHN PENN TO LADY
JULIANA PENN, 1774.

[Copied from the originals in "Penn Papers," Manuscript Department
of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.]

PHILADELPHIA, May 3^d 1774

DEAR MADAM

I have received yours of the 2^d of February & 2^d of March, the last gave me particular pleasure as it was a confirmation of your recovery from a dangerous illness & I escaped much uneasiness by not knowing you were ill, till I heard you were out of danger. I beg you will accept of my most sincere congratulations on your Recovery.

I am sorry to be accused of silence as I do not recollect to have omitted writing about any affair that has happened of any consequence except that of the Tea.

The ship that brought it staid but twenty-four hours in the River & the moment I heard of her arrival I was also told the Captain had agreed to return to England. The reason I did not write to Lord Dartmouth about it was that, It was believed the Ministry would not interfere in the matter indeed many letters came from England which said so & a Gentleman who came from thence last winter, said that he knew Lord Dartmouth had declared that it was entirely the affair of the East India Company & Government had nothing to do with it, & what made this more easily believed was that no Instructions were sent to the Governors by the Secretary of State nor to the Collectors of the Customs. No application was made to me by the Cap^t of the ship nor the Merchants to whom the Tea was consigned nor the Custom house nor indeed by anybody at all. I have wrote to Lord Dartmouth about it, with an

Excuse for not giving him notice of what happened upon this occasion. There was no riotous proceedings indeed the Cap^t saw it would be vain to insist upon landing the Tea therefore he wisely submitted to do what was required of him in a peaceable manner, had he refused, I imagine the people would have proceeded to violent measures. If it should be determined to enforce the Tea Act, I do not know what will be the consequence, be so good as to let Mr. Baker know I have received his kind letter and tell him I am obliged to him for it. I shall answer it by the next opportunity. I beg my compliments to him. I have hardly time to make up my letter before the post goes therefore conclude with assuring you that I am

Dr Madam

Your obliged & Affectionate

hble serv^t

John Penn.

I have received a duplicate
from my Uncle & a letter
from M^r Upsdell which

I will answer very soon. Mrs. Penn begs to be kindly remembered to you & all the family & desires you will accept her Congratulations upon your recovery.

PHILADELPHIA, MAY 31st 1774.

DEAR MADAM,

I have received your's of the 4th of April & am surprized you have not had any letter from me since Sep^t as I am almost sure I have wrote some that you must have got before the date of yours without they miscarried. Mine of the 3^d of this month will in a great measure be an answer to it. I am surprized that L^d Townsend should have said that the Assembly of this Province had returned thanks to the people of Boston for their spirited behaviour in defence of their rights, for if he had given himself the least trouble to enquire into the matter he would have found he had not the least foundation for saying it. the Assembly broke up

some time before the Tea arrived at Boston & have not sat since, so that it was impossible for them to have done it, indeed had they been sitting at the time I believe every man in the house would have voted against so wild a measure. A Tumultuous Committee of the people who assembled in the State house yard made a Resolve of this kind which I am told was not fairly carried neither ; many even of those who were most averse to the Tea thinking it very wrong. I have already wrote all that I know to have passed upon this disagreeable affair and given the reasons why I did not think it necessary before, the principal of which was, as I have before said, that I was well informed a Gentleman of Credit & Reputation had said that Lord Dartmouth had declared that the Ministry would take no part in it, indeed the matter was strongly represented in this light in many letters from England, I neither saw nor heard of any riotous proceedings & all I could have wrote upon the subject might have been contained in less than six lines. The clause you mention is in the Charter & was made use of by the ministry when the Stamp Act was passed. I am much concerned that any misrepresentations should be made of the conduct of this Province, especially such as tend to increase the prejudices already entertained against it. Every step will be taken that can to keep things in as moderate a state as possible, but at present a great number of people are very busy in all the Colonies in keeping up the flame & what will be the end of it, God knows. The People of Boston have made a proposal to this Town to concur with them to put a total stop to the importing or exporting any kind of Goods whatever until the Act for shutting up that port shall be repealed, in consequence of this a great number of merchants & others met at a Tavern & debated the matter for a considerable time & the only resolution I can learn they came into was to petition me to call the Assembly upon the occasion & I am told a Petition is now handing about Town to be signed & will be presented to me in a few days which I shall treat as it deserves. I have however

been informed that the movers of this extraordinary measure have no expectation of succeeding in it but that their real design is to gain time by it in order to see what part the other Colonies will take in so critical a Juncture. I have wrote to Lord Dartmouth by this Packet acquainting him with the above.

I will endeavor to get my Uncle a good pipe of Maderia which I believe will not be easy to be done as I am told there is none good in Town.

That this may find you all well is the sincere wish of

Your very affectionate

& obliged humble serv^t

John Penn.

My brother has given me
a Release of his Claim;
we have not yet had a
meeting but I hope it will not be long for it. Messrs
Tilghman & Allen are not yet returned from Virginia where
they went to accommodate the dispute about Pittsburgh,
but Mr Tilghman writes me that Lord Dunmore will join in
an application for the settlement of the Boundaries & that
he told him he had already wrote to Lord Dartmouth upon
the subject. They are now endeavoring to fix a temporary
line to keep peace between the two Provinces.

PHILADA JUNE 24, 1774

DEAR MADAM

Mr Tilghman & Mr Allen are returned from Virginia
without doing anything toward settling the temporary
boundary with Lord Dunmore who would agree to nothing
without they gave up Fort Pitt to Virginia, this they would
not consent to do & so the matter is just where it was before,
except that he agrees to apply to the King to appoint Com-
missioners to settle the lines, but Virginia will not consent
to be at any part of the expence. The Minutes of their
negotiations will be sent home by a ship that sails very soon,
they are too large to be sent by the Packet. Lord Dunmore

is said to be deeply concerned in grants of Land near and I suppose at Fort Pitt. This may in some measure account for his extraordinary conduct, which is neither that of a man of Honor nor a Gentleman. He has thrown the back Country into a State of Confusion & I am satisfied by his impudence in raising the Militia & giving the command of it to one Connelly a very worthless fellow, we shall in all likelihood be involved in an Indian War. He has fortified Pittsburg & calls it Fort Dunmore, till the lines are settled by Authority, I fear the back Country will remain in a state of Confusion.

I have been obliged to call our Assembly, having received petitions from the back Inhabitants praying to be protected against the Indians, which I have it not in my power to do without the assistance of the Assembly as I cannot dispose of sixpence of the publick money. I had refused to call the Assembly upon an application from the Inhabitants in consequence of the Act of Parliament for shutting up the Port of Boston, but find upon this occasiou I cannot avoid it; indeed I could not answer it to my own conscience, if the Indians should fall upon the back settlers, as may probably be the case. If the assembly take notice of the Boston affair as most probably will be the case, they will be more moderate in their Resolves than the people in their Town Meetings, which it is impossible to prevent, I have wrote by this opportunity to Lord Dartmouth giving him an account of the temper of the people of this Province as well as of the other parts of America, which is very warm; they look upon it that the Chastisement of Boston is purposely vigorous & held up by way of intimidation to all America, & in short that Boston is suffering in a common cause. The Plan which seems to be adopted is the procuring a general Congress in order to state the rights & represent the Grievances of America to the Throne & to agree upon such measures as may be thought most likely to relieve Boston & restore harmony between England & America. I believe there will be a general association not to import any East

India goods, but it is impossible yet to speak with any certainty about the matter.

I have been trying to get a good Pipe of Maderia for my Uncle, but cannot find one worth sending. There is at present no good Wine in the Town but M^r Hockley intends to try if he cannot prevail upon a person who he thinks has some that is good, but not for sale, to let him have a pipe. If I cannot succeed here, I will send back to New York.

My Brother has sent me a Release of his Claim & I have sent him a message by Mr. Physick that I should be glad to see him at my house & that I would receive him in a very kind & friendly manner, but his pride (as I suppose) will not suffer him to visit me, or else I think he would readily embrace my Invitation, he says he is sure I do not wish to be reconciled because I have imposod terms upon him which he never can comply with though he should be reduced to beggary, he looks upon it that I only want to take advantage of his distresses (which he thinks I wish may happen) in order to humble him, he proposed meeting me anywhere but at my own house, but as I insisted upon seeing him only there for the first time, he is desirous of construing my objecting to his proposal into a refusal of being reconciled to him & I suppose is now labouring to make it appear so. However he cannot believe it if he will suffer himself to think, because I have sent him word in the most explicit manner that I was desirous of seeing him & that nobody stood in the way of our being upon good terms but himself & I declare I wish he would enter sincerely into a reconciliation, but I must also observe that as he was the first mover in this difference & has used me very ill by the grossest abuse in a very public manner, for his Indiscretion has been without parallel; he cannot justly lay anything further to my charge after I have put it into his power to finish this disagreeable affair in what I take to be a very easy way. I suppose he may think a visit to me would be an acknowledgment of his having been in fault, which he does by no means allow, but has always endeavored to make

himself & the world believe me the aggressor & that he had more reason to be angry with me than I had with him, but as I view the matter in a different light, I cannot think it unreasonable in me to desire seeing him first at my own house rather than anywhere else: I do not wish to distress him or give him pain nor to humble him any more as he affects to think. I shall wait patiently till he is in better temper, without returning evil for evil; this I have cautiously avoided ever since my arrival & if he had been moved by the same principles with me everything would have been settled amicably long ago, but I will not trouble you any further upon this subject, for I am really sick of it myself & heartily wish it was at an end.

I beg you will assure my Uncle of my Affectionate Regard for him & give my love to all my Cousins

I am very sincerely

D^r Madam

Your most obliged

Mrs. Penn begs her
best Compliments to
you and my Uncle,

& most affectionate

hble ser^t

JOHN PENN