

Letters of Francis Makemie

[The following is an extract from the Preface regarding these letters.]

...In the United States we have been greatly indebted to George Moore, LL.D., Superintendent of the Lenox Library, for the use of the treasures of that richest library in America; as also for the use of two letters of Francis Makemie, never before published Appendix X., 3 and 4 and other material, in addition to his valued counsel. To D. McN. Stauffer, Esq., we are indebted for the privilege of consulting the most precious of all the letters of Francis Makemie, which is given in Appendix X. 5....

LETTERS OF FRANCIS MAKEMIE

There are six letters of Francis Makemie, which are known to us. The first of these was written from the Elizabeth River, Virginia, July 22, 1684, to Increase Mather. This is preserved in the Mather Papers, V.70, in Boston Public Library.

The second is also from the Elizabeth River, July 28, 1685, to Increase Mather. It is preserved in the Prince Collection, 1686-1790, p.57, in the Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. These are both given by Webster (in l. c., pp. 297-8, but so inaccurately that I have secured fresh copies.

The third is the long letter from the Barbadoes, [Barbados?] Dec. 28, 1696, printed at Edinburgh, under the title Truths in a True Light, etc. The only copy known is in the Library of Harvard College. The Librarian has kindly furnished us with a transcript, but it is too long for us to publish here.

The fourth letter is from Barbadoes, [Barbados?] Jan 17, 1697(8), and the fifth from the same place, Feb. 12, 1697(8), both to Increase Mather. These I have copied from transcripts in possession of Dr. George H Moore, Superintendent of the Lenox Library, N.Y. These are Vol. LVII., p6I, of the Massachusetts Archives.

The sixth letter, the most important of all, is from Philadelphia, March 28 1707, to Benjamin Colman. It was published by E.D. Neil, in his Terra Maria, pp. 195-6: then in the Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, V., p228. The precious original is in the possession of D. McN.Stauffer, of New York, Who, with kindness and courtesy, has granted me the privilege of copying the original.

ELIZABETH R. VIRINIA 22 JULY - 84

R. & d.B.

I wrote to you tho [though?] unacquaint, (sic) by Mr Lamb from North Carolina, of my designe [design?] for Ashly [R.?] So--- [South?] Carolina, which I was soe [so?] forward in accomplishing th-- [that?] [l?] en----- [engaged?] in a voyage, and went to sea in the moneth [month?] of May bu- [but?] [god?] in the providence saw it fitt [fit?] that I should nott [not?] see it, att [at?] this time; for wee [we?] were beate [beat?] upon the coast by contrary winds, and to the north as far as Delaware bay, [Bay?] for five weeks together, soe [so?] that falling short in our provisions were necessitated, after severall [several?] essayes to the South, to Virginia, and in the meane [mean] while, Collonell [Colonel?] Anthony Lawson, and the

other inhabitants of the Parish of Linhaven, in lower Norfolk County, who had a dissenting Minister formerly from Ireland until the Lord was pleased to remove him by death, in August last, among who I preached, before I went to the South, in coming from Maryland, against their earnest importunity coming soe [so?] pertinently to the place of our landing for water, renewing [renewing?] their suits, prevailed with me to stay this season, which the more easily overcame me, considering the season of the yeare, [year?] and the litle [little?] encouragement I found for Carolina from the sure information I have had. But for satisfaction of my friends in Ireland, whom I designe [design?] to be very nice in inviting to any place in America I have yet seen, I have sent one of our number to acquaint me further concerning the place. I am here assured of liberty, and other encouragements, resolving to submitt [submit?] to the soveraigne [sovereign?] providence of gd [God?] who has been pleased very unexpectedly to drive me back to this poor desolate people, among whom I desire to continue until god in his providence determine otherwise concerning me. I have presumed a second before I can heare [hear?] how acceptable my first has been. I hope this will prevent your writting [writing?] to Coll. [Colonel?] Anthony Lawson, att [at?] the Eastern branch of Elizabeth R. I expect if you have an oppurtunity [opportunity?] of writting [writing?] to Mr. John Hart, you will acquaint him concerning m-[me?]; which with your prayers, and advice will oblige him who is your deare [dear?], and affectionate brother in [the] gospell [gospel?] of our Lord Jesus.

The bearer Mr Wilson will be a safe bearer. To the reverend Mr Increase Mather Minister of the Gospell [Gospel?] att [at?] Bostone [Boston?] n. [New?] England, These

(2)

Eliza. R., 28 July, 1685.

Honoured Sir:-

Yours I received by Mr Hallet with three books, and am not a little concerned that those now sent to Ashley R were miscarried, for which, I hope it will no offence, to declare my willingness to satisfy; for there is no reason they should be lost to you, and far less that the gift should be reiterated for which I am oblidgeed [obliged?] to own your debtor. And assure yourself if you have any friends in Virginia, to find me ready to receive your commands. I have wrote to Mr. Wardrope, and beg you would be pleased to order the safe conveyance thereof unto his hands. I would have likewise wrote a line to one Mr. Thomas Barret, a minister who lived in S.(South?) Carolina, who, when he wrote to me from Ashley R., told me that next week was to take shipping for N.E., So that I conclude he is with you. But, if there be no such man in the country, let me [my?] letter be returned.

I am yours in the Lord Jesus,
ffrancis [Francis?] Makemie.

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BARB. [Barados Jan 17 1697/8
Reverend Sr [Senior?]

Yours, with your mentioned tokens, p. Capt. White I have received, for which I thanke [thank?] you, and shall not be unmindfull, [unmindful?] of a gratefull [grateful?] return, p. Capt. Green, your son in law.

This comes to inform you of our great and unexpected disappointment, by our son, Mr Samuel, his not coming to Barbados, after so full purposes and frequent resolutions and wonder at your people who return from this Jsland [Island?] with magnified [magnified?] news, of our sicknesse, [sickness?] and

that of purpose, to discourage any ministers coming hither from N: E: [New?] [England?] which I am constrained to impute to nothing else but their willingness that any of you should come hither to behold, and remark, the lives, carriage, and conversation of some new England men, in Barbados, which I am informed, are vastly different, from what they appear [appear?] in N. England: And whatever discouraging reports has been or shall be carried to you, upon this account, I confidently confirm, that Barbados does now, and has for severall [several?] moneths [months] past enjoyed, more peace, plenty, and health, then [than?] it enjoyed since our late Revolution, and I am willing to beleeve [believe?] that as our visitation by sicknesse [sickness?] came in by war, so God will remove it by peace, for tho [though?] we have of late had, and have as great, if not greater concourse of strangers, and sailors on this island, then [than?] has been formely observed, and yet very healthly, and no greater mortality, then in other healthy places of the world, many instances might be given to obviate what you have heard, of not one in three, escaping in life, even from many N.E: [New England?] ships, particularly Capt. ffoster [Foster?] lately sailed for London, who had been here, for many months, had considerable number in hands, in a large ship, and assured me, he had lost not one man by sicknesse [sickness?] tho [though?] many of them pressed aboard men of war, which has been the continued grave for sailers [sailors?], who have fallen most by sicknesse [sickness?] of this place. If this reach your hands, to undeceive and other friends, who have dissuaded [dissuaded?] your son from Barbados before he sail for London, I shall be necessitated to leave this people, and many strangers, who resort to this Island desolate, being purely confined these two yeares [years?] from going off for my health, for want of supply; and as to particular visitations by mortality N. [New?] England, London, and all other places, as lyable as Barbados.

Ld. [Lord?] Bellamont your Governour, [Governor?] beat of the coast of N. Yorke [New York?], and arrived at Barbados, and being from Ireland and having knowledge of some of his relations, and since I was capable of knowing anything, heard an honourable character of his father Sr Ch. Coot, a zealous Paliamentarian, and terror to the Irish, I presumed to pay my respects to him and admitted to familiar conversation; our President Bond, lover and admirer of N. England [New England?], blesses God on your behalf, that he put it into the heart of our king to pitch upon such a man, for N: E [New England?] and I am really persuaded, he is a loyall [loyal?] subject, a true protestant, and a moderate man; and this juncture, a fitter man, of his quality, scarce [scarce?] could be had in England for that post, excepting the infirmity of his body, by the Gout.

I took the freedome, [freedom?] when alone to assure his Lship [Lordship?] if he would protect and countenance N. E. [New England?] in their Religion and Liberty, he would be happy in that Government, and he assured me of all moderation on that account. I expect fresh opportunities of further access to his ldship, [leadership?] which I shall endeavor to improve in favour of N. E: and communicate what occurs to you, and present subscribe yourself.

Your assured friend, humble servant,
tho [though] worthy

Brother
ffrancis [Francis?] Ma [Makemie?]

I was long since convinced the Carlysle Dove was a cunningly contrived cheate [cheat?]

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Barbados ffeb. 12 1697/8

Reverend Sr [Sir?]

This comes by Capt Green, to informe [inform?] you I wrote at large, by way of Saltetudos, concerning our disappointment in our expectation of your son Mr Samuel, since which time severall [several?] families of my hearers are resolving off for Europe Sr accept a small token of the product of our island, from

Your humble servant

and unworthy B/

1.M A small barrell [barrel?]

mixed preserves./..

[Superscribed]. To the Reverend

Mr Increase Mather at

Boston These

p Capt Green

Q:D:G:

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PHILADELPHIA, March 28, 1707.

Mr. Benjamin Colman.

Rd Brother. Since our imprisonment we have commenced a correspondence with our Rd [Reverend?] Brethren of the Ministry at Boston, which we hope, according to our intention, has been communicated to you all, whose Sympathising concurrence, I cannot doubt of, in our expensive Struggle, for asserting our liberty, against the powerful invasion of Ld Cornbury, which is not yet over.

I need not tell you, of a pickd [picked?] Jury, and the penall [penal?] laws are invading our American Sanctuary, without the least regard to the Toleration, which should justly alarm us all. I hope Mr Campbell, to whom I direct this for the more safe Conveyance, has shown or informed you, what I wrote last. We are so far, upon our return home; tho' [though?] I must return for a finall [final?] Tryall [trial?] which will be very troublesome and expensive. And we only had liberty, to attend a Meeting of Ministers we had formely appointed here; and were only seven in number, at first, but expect a growing number: Our design is to meet yearly, and oftener, if necessary, to consult the most proper measures, for advancing religion, propagating Christianity, in our Various Stations, and to mentain [maintain?] Such a Correspondence as may conduce to the improvement of our Ministeriall [Ministerial?] ability by prescribing Texts [texts] to be preached on by two of our number at every meeting, which performance is Subjected to the censure of our Brethren; our subject is Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, I and another began and performed our parts on vs. 1,2, and the 3 is presribed to Mr Andrews and another. If any friends write, direct to Mr. Jn [Junior] Bud at Philadelphia, to be directed to me in Virginia. Pardon Sr [Sir?] this diversion from

Your humble Servant, and Brother

in the worke [work?] of the

ffrancis [Francis] Makemie.

(Transcribed by Maxine Green) (Source - Irish Emigration Database,
<http://ied.dippam.ac.uk/records/43124.transcript>)