Beyond Penn's Treaty

Letter

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AUTHOR: Henry Simmons (b. 1768)
SUMMARY: Letter from Henry Simmons to Israel Chapin, written while living at Cornplanter’s Village.

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Respected Friend, Pocantico 3d. No. 25th. 1799.

I have made it my business during this Winter, at Crotonplanters Village, about 8 miles from my ten Companions, in the Exercise of Education the Indian Children, not only in Literal knowledge, but, also in other useful arts. It being the most Eligible place for the Purposes, which I hope to improve as rapidly as can be expected, though at times (as I so often) my Occupations is very trying and Exercising, even to my very Sells. Get by the help of GOD! Do I hope to remain this year on the Truth, and the实惠 of my Public Business, where I am called, not doubting the Lord's Presence over me, in the discharge of my Duty to Him, among the Nations of the Mountainous Country, for benefit from my near Dear Relations, and former Friends.

Be pleased to favour me with a Line or two, respecting Oneida, whether their Mills is completed, and how many of our Indians, at the present, are at Onondaga, and whether Shangano, and Antone & Christian (the Principal Chiefs) are yet Living, and whether they canst procure any Declaration among them, for the better, to whether their Approaching on about all Vanc, which we have bestowed amongst them. I can truly say my mind is often Waisted over the Mountains, to Oneida, in an Eye of Compassion towards the Nations there, with desires for their lasting Welfare.

I am in Heart, my Affectionate Friend.

Henry Simmons Jun.

Israel Chapin.

Mr. Crotonplanters informed me yesterday, they had lately received an Express, that their Money had arrived at Canandaigua, and requested me to write to thee, on his behalf, in the following Words, to know the reasons of his not attending Better himself, (i.e.) He is not sure the Money is yet come, and he has understood that the Buffalo Indians are Anxious of holding the Council at their Village, which if it is, he knows there will be much Disorder among them, as it has hitherto been the Case, which he does not want to see. And rather Preserves thee on that Account, for not using thy Power, especially at such times, to Suppose that Earl Habit among them. It knows that if the Council held there the Chiefs will hardly Sign them; and if they do not, he is Certain they will be incapable of making a just division of the Money, which he thinks is his right, since he has heretofore been called to all the Business on Business of Importance, and the Minutes past thereof have fallen on his Shoulders. He wishes thee to know the number of People who are under the care, which is 8 Old Souls, Eight of whom he has want for the Money, and two others to Carry their Provisions, his own Son, & Rings. He wants thee to know the Sum of Money, in each man's Pack, that none may get lost, and desire thee to impart them so soon as practicable, and to have the oversight them, whilst there, that they may not get Drunk. He also desires to send Word by Letter of the suffers of the People, to the President, to impart some small matters concerneth them. His little goods with the Pocantico people.
Coniscotagoytyf 3rd. Mo. 25th.ytf 1799.Respected Friend, ytf I have made free to write a few Lines, and inform thee, I have been stationed during this Winter, at Cornplanters Village, about 9 miles from my two companions, in the Exercise of Educating the Indian Children, not only in Literate knowledge, but, also, in other useful arts, it being the most Eligible place for the purpose, who improves as rapid as can be expected. Although at times (I doyf confess) my Occupation is very trying, and Exercising, even to my very Soul; Yet by the help of God: Do I hope to remain steadfast in the Faith and in the dive of my Duty Business, wherewith I am called; not doubting the Lord's Providence over me, in the discharge of any Duty to Him, among the natives of this Mountainous Country; far distant from my near & Dear Relations and former Friends - Be pleased to favour me with a few Lines, by the Bearer, of information respecting Oneida, whether their Mill is compleated, and how many of our Society, at the present, are stationed there, and whether Skendo, & Antony & Christian (the Principal Chiefs) are yet Living; whether thou canst perceive any alteration among them, for better or for worse; Or whether thou apprehends our Labour all Vain, which we have bestowed amongst them. I can truly say my mind is often wafted over mountains, to Oneida, with an Eye of Compassion towards the natives there, with desires for their lasting Welfare.


P.S. Cornplanter, informed me yesterday, they had lately received an Express, that their money had arrived at Canandarqua, and requested one to write to thee, on his behalf, in the following Words, to shew the reasons of his not attending thither himself, (i.e.) He is not shure the Money is yet come, and he has understood, that the Buffalo Indians are desireous of holding Council at their Village, which if it is, he knows there will be much Drunkenness among them, as it has hitherto been the case, which he does not want to see. And rather Sensures thee on that account, for not using thy Power, especially at such times, to suppress that Evil habit among them - he knows that if the Council is held there the Chiefs will hardly keep sober, and if they do not, he is certain they will be incapable of making a just division of the Money, which he thinks is his right, for as he has heretofore been called to all the Treaties on Business of Importance, and the Arduous party thereof have fell on his shoulders &c. He wishes thee to know the number of People who are under his care, which is 362 Souls, Eight of whom he has sent for the Money, and two others to carry their provisions, his own Son, & Strong, he wants them to know the Sum of Money, in each man's Pack, that none may get lost, and desires thee to dispatch them as soon as practicable, and to have the oversight of them, whilst there, that they may not get Drunk. He also desires thee to send him Word by Letter, at the return of his people, how matters are circumstanced between him and Robert Morris, who says respecting some small matters betwixt them - H.S.