

## **Rev. John Wiswall. Journal and Correspondence, 1636-1812, predominant 1770-1792**

### **Listing of documents, with abstracts:**

#### **Section 1.1 Falmouth (1770-74)**

- 4 Nov 1771, to Henry Bellew (Exeter, England)
    - State of his church and parish: general state of finances; progress building church, requests assistance with; includes petition from Wiswall and wardens of St. Paul's Church, and includes background pertaining to hardships
  - \*7 Aug 1775, (Boston), to Henry Bellew
    - Gives account of the May 9<sup>th</sup> incident in which he was imprisoned, includes mention of his family; his situation now as chaplain to 2 regiments- 63<sup>rd</sup> and 44<sup>th</sup>, and his intentions, hopes to go to England, mentions his sons.
  - 19 June 1770, (Falmouth), Massachusetts, to Rev. Daniel Burton
    - Governor Shirley's new law as it relates to church and taxes; death of Judge of Probate, Waldo and its effect on the church.
  - 6 Jan 1771, (Falmouth), to Rev. Daniel Burton
    - State of his congregation – baptisms, marriages, buried; enduring effects of the late unhappy disturbances.
  - 1 Nov 1771 to Rev. Burton, Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
    - Progress in building church; obstacles; support of strangers in port; state of his congregation – baptisms, buried, marriages, communicants, proprietors, parishioners, males and families; mentions dissenters and relationship with.
  - 25 Nov 1772, to Burton, Secretary of the Society
    - His financial situation; flock increasing; teaches for extra money; donation from Francis Waldo; state of his congregation, as above; requests books for his parishioners.
  - 27 Mar 1773, from Rev. Hind, new Secretary (Westminster)
    - Books will be sent
  - 19 Nov 1773, (Falmouth), to Hind
    - Books received, more donations from Waldo, including land for burying ground; health-infection spread throughout community, measles, fever, dysentery; went to Rhode Island with wife for her health, reflection on his mission as comparison to; great progress, expands on; church progress due to industry of warden Simmons; Mr. Gardener's request for mission at Gardeners-Town, eastern frontier, speaks on behalf of.
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**Note:** \*16 Sept 1774, (Falmouth), to Hind, see Boston section; and brief summary of Falmouth church history, see the end of the London section.

#### **Section 1.2 Boston (1775)**

- 30 May 1775, (Boston), to Hind, Secretary at Westminster
  - Recounts in detail his experience surrounding May 9, 1775, wherein he was taken prisoner by Col. Thompson, while with Mr. Mowat, Commander of one of his Majesty's ships; mentions effects on family and parishioners.
- 15 Apr 1775, (Boston), note from E. Oxnard to Wiswall on ship *Canceaux*
  - Sorry he must leave, also note from Wiswall in Boston, May 31 to the Wardens/Vestry/Parishioners of St. Pauls Church indicating same.
- 11 Aug 1775, (Boston), to Hind
  - Refers to the situation in Falmouth and how it's not possible for minister to reside at; his and family's situation; request to go to England with explanation.
- 29 Nov 1775, (Boston), to Hind
  - Left for England, mentions seeing Falmouth and church within burning; mentions he included notitia parochialis for Falmouth for 1766-1775.
- \*16 Sept 1774, (Falmouth), to Hind
  - Relating to the *increasing public distractions*, determined to espouse either side, explains reasons for not agreeing to contribute to the relief of sufferers in Boston – to encourage Boston to oppose Act of Parliament; dissenting ministers encourage the people; some flock has left due to; great distance from brethren for advisement; state of congregation: baptisms, marriages, burials.

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**Note:** See Falmouth section for 7 Aug 1775 letter from Boston.

### **Section 1.3 London & Oxford (1780-82)**

- 9 Feb 1781, (London), to Mrs. Thomas Brown in Halifax, Nova Scotia
  - Briefly describes his last three years, mentions his boys and friend; recollections on his past visit to Halifax.
- 20 Dec 1780, to Jeremiah Dummer Rogers at Halifax
  - Financial matters
- 30 May 1781, to H. Willard, Westminster
  - Describes Oxford and his situation therein.
- 5 Dec 1780, to Treasury
  - Petition for relief, mentions health reasons for not being able to act as naval chaplain any further, last ship on board was Rainbow, and present salary.
- 6 Apr 1782, to Lord Marquis of Rockingham
  - Request for assistance, refers to letter above, and that he's served in the Navy under Admirals Howe, Barrington, Byron, Palmer and Rodney.
- 8 Apr 1782, to Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
  - Requests mission at Albany or Stratford, and reasons.

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### **Section 1.4 Correspondence with Rev. Morice, Secretary to the Society (SPG): Cornwallis (1783-89)**

- 12 Dec 1783, (Cornwallis), Nova Scotia, to Rev. Morice (England)
  - Generally describes and explains his parish and his optimism, in relation to, for example, churches, meeting houses, teachers, inhabitants' religious inclinations; mentions arrival of loyalists.
- 24 Aug 1784, (Cornwallis), to Rev. Morice
  - Brief summary of the last year's doings for Cornwallis, Horton and Digby; mentions difficulties in Cornwallis, Anabaptists in Horton, and increase in refugees in Digby; state of Digby: baptised 7 infants and 3 adult negroes, and nos. for his own mission; requests library.
- 25 Feb & 15 June 1784, from Rev. Morice, Halton Garden
  - Esteem towards Col. Burbidge; directions to contact Mr. Palmer of Boston for a library.
- 38 Dec 1784, (Cornwallis), to Rev. Morice
  - Member nos., no money from parishioners, building of a parish house – burden mostly falls on Col. Burbidge and Mr. Belcher.
- 16 May 1785, (Cornwallis), to Rev. Morice
  - Difficulties: severe winter, uncomfortable church as not finished inside; religious education of children: catechism and catechist Mr. Fox and his impressions; his impressions on dissenters.
- 22 Nov 1785, (Cornwallis), to Rev. Morice
  - Nos. catechisms; glebes at Cornwallis and Horton – values thereof; Horton refugees leave, service no longer required; Wilmot – expectations for bright future there; Cornwallis – discouragement explained; salary; state of congregation at his mission & at Wilmot and Digby (includes Horton), blacks included separated; laws concerning marriage and the opportunity for more income; request for tracts re. drunkenness, profanity, extravagances, idleness, vices which reign in Horton and Cornwallis.
- 19 June 1786, to Rev. Morice
  - Wilmot – general summary of parishioners, request for catechist; Horton glebe, finances; congregation state of: baptisms-Cornwallis 6 infants, 1 adult, Wilmot-5 infants, married at Cornwallis 1 couple.
- 7 Oct 1785 from Rev. Morice
  - Information pertaining to Cornwallis and Horton glebe allotments.
- 4 Apr 1786 from Rev. Morice
  - Concerned about Horton, which Wiswall has dismissed from his charge; glad to hear about the possibilities at Wilmot, especially re. land; sent books and tracts.
- 30 July 1786, (Cornwallis) to Rev. Morice
  - Explains discouragement at Cornwallis and Horton; difficulties with parishioners at Cornwallis – regarding Wiswall's sharing with them a communique from Morice concerning the parish's backwardness in not fulfilling their responsibilities to Wiswall for a salary, (Mr. Burbidge to further explain).
- Certification to Commissioners of American Claims from Herbert Sawyer
  - Wiswall was a Chaplain of ship *Boyne* under his command in consequence of loyalty.
- 30 July 1786, (Cornwallis), to Rev. Morice

- Horton glebes-issue surrounding misappropriation of for benefit of Presbyterian minister, improvements and general value; Cornwallis glebe – description and rents, value.
- Power of attorney to William Read of Horton
  - Re. Horton glebe lands issue; glebes described.
- 7 Aug 1786, (Cornwallis) to Rev. Morice
  - Horton-explains reasons for dismissal from his charge and how he will secure the glebes, Anabaptist shoemaker preaches there; Wilmot – content to preach where he's wanted half his time and describes situation and parishioners there, gives nos. baptised, glebe lands and role of B. Ruggles and Maj. Barkley?; books received and distributed; tracts concerning vices distributed everywhere as *they greatly prevail among old inhabitants*.
- 30 Sept 1786, to Rev. Morice
  - Horton glebes – valuation of undertaken and detailed therein, tenant lease, profit expectations; Cornwallis glebe – explains how more attention was needed, his efforts to make them profitable.
- 24 May 1787, to Rev. Peters
  - Difficulty between he and parishioners at Cornwallis, particularly Mr. Belcher - explains Peters was misled as he *never had the least altercation, excepting Mr. Belcher who would carry his resentment so far as to injure my interest and the interest of the church*, indicates dispute resolved; believes church will not flourish here at Cornwallis; heard they are now quarrelling with Rev. Graham, Church of Scotland at same place because he *won't be governed by them and is a zealous loyalist*.
- 29 May 1787, (Cornwallis), to Rev. Morice
  - Difficulties travelling in winter – didn't go to Wilmot until March and then baptised 8 children, travels much distance to preach; Cornwallis church location – problems for parishioners in distance; summarises his travels in summer with his expenses not covered – Wilmot has no money, Cornwallis refuses; Notitia since April 1786: baptisms at Cornwallis, Wilmot, Horton; marriages at Cornwallis; 5 communicants.
- 27 March 1787, (Cornwallis), to Rev. Morice
  - Cornwallis Township church land – to be surveyed for free, briefly described; includes survey return describing lots, 7 July 1787
- 11 Dec 1787, (Cornwallis), to Rev. Morice
  - Demonstration of gratitude for new catechist: flock bought land, built log house for school for teacher Mr. William Cropley, a suffering loyalist; briefly compares settlement at Wilmot to Cornwallis; believes even with some government funding, parishioners at Cornwallis will not contribute to finish church, hard on his health; compensation for losses received and building a house at Wilmot; journeyed over 700 miles last summer and not compensated; state of congregation – baptisms, etc.
- 17 June 1788, (Cornwallis), to Rev. Morice
  - Cornwallis – partial salary received from for the first time ever, salary never been sufficient to support family; state of congregation: nos. married; baptised at Cornwallis, includes blacks, and at Wilmot.

- 2 Jan 1789, (Cornwallis), to Rev. Morice
  - Church doings this past summer; notitia: baptisms, burials, marriages, communicants (Cornwallis and Wilmot include blacks); Cornwallis congregation increasing, explains why backward in subscriptions; requests mission at Wilmot if division occurs and the reason for; discusses catechist, Mr. Cropley, and attendance by dissenters; church to be built; administered Lords Supper for 1<sup>st</sup> time at Wilmot Mountain, optimistic for its future; Cornwallis church still unfinished.
- 27 March 1789, (Cornwallis), to Rev. Morice
  - Drawn on Treasury for half year's salary; roads impassable, couldn't travel to Wilmot.
- 6 Mar 1789, from Rev. Morice
  - Change in mission, if he chooses to remove to Wilmot, Twyning will take over Cornwallis; compensation for what he's laid out on glebes will be considered in the future.
- 30 May 1789, (Cornwallis), to Rev. Morice
  - Property-overview of, including value, income from and improvements; list of profits from Cornwallis, including parsonage house and glebe, land and lease, dyke Horton, pasture, salary paid by subscription; list of profits at Wilmot, including salary and 1000 acre glebe; mentions his investment in Cornwallis glebe.
- Falmouth Church Records
  - Very brief note on beginnings, Wiswall's evacuation, its burning and the years' opened-10 years, 5 months.
- 3 July 1789, (Cornwallis), to Rev. Morice
  - Resignation from Cornwallis, removing family in spring to Wilmot; salary unknown.

### **Section 2.1 Letters and petitions from Boston & London**

- 7 Aug 1775, (Boston), to Mrs. Hannah Minnott at Brunswick
  - Personal letter to family re. wife/daughter deaths of, etc.
- 22 May 1775, (Boston), to Thomas Graves
  - Account of circumstances surrounding his imprisonment at Falmouth May 9<sup>th</sup>.
- April 1775, Petition to Thomas Gage, Commander-in-Chief
  - Details his distressed situation; requests assistance.
- 5 Jan 1776, (Boston), to Henry Bellew, Commander of his Majesty's Ship, *Liverpool*
  - Even though appointed chaplain of *Liverpool*, explains why his situation requires him to go to England.
- 29 March 1776, (London), Petition to Lord Sandwich
  - Description of his situation, requests assistance and to be appointed to guard ship in lieu of *Liverpool*, with his son along as schoolmaster; includes "Extracts of Mr. Pitt's Speech in the House of Commons," concerning America.

### **Section 2.2 Family Anecdotes & Journal**

- Family history starting in 1636, includes details of his immediate family, particularly his description and sentiments about his wife; journal contains, for example: description of Kinsail Ireland and its people, 1777; naval movements and intelligence during his time as naval chaplain on the *Boyne*, in the West Indies, such as: list of killed and wounded, ammo expended, and the line of battle in action at Granada, and St. Lucia, 1779 (p 208-210); line of battle at Gros Islet/Port Royal, 1780 (p.219); Observations of St. Lucia, July 1780 – geography and batteries; and general remarks re. men on ship – spread of infection and resultant deaths, and their overall conditions, July-Aug 1780 (p221-2, 5-6); arrives in London Dec 1780. (pp 176-230)

### **Section 2.3 Accounts**

- Financial accounts with: Peleg Wiswall, 1780-85; John Wiswall, 1782-86; Thomas Brown, Halifax, 1783; Samuel Rogers, merchant in London, 1783-92 (pp 231-245).
- Chronological accounts –journal-like entries relating to important dates concerning his immediate family and himself, as well as, political happenings, starting with his birthdate and place; also includes at the end, dates and places where he preached, 24 Aug 1783-Jan 1787 (pp 247-271).