

BOWNE HOUSE ARCHIVES



Bowne House Historical Society, Inc.

37-01 Bowne Street

Flushing, NY 11354

<https://www.bownehouse.org/archives>

Ph: (718) 359-0528 Email: bownehousearchives@gmail.com

BOWNE FAMILY PAPERS OF FLUSHING, L.I.

Transcription of BFP #2018.1.01-16

Indenture: James Clement to John Bowne

Date: May 30, 1663 New Style

This transcription retains the spelling and punctuation of the original document.

Transcribed by Charlotte Jackson

Last revised: 7/2024

Transcription begins on next page

NOTES ON 17TH- AND 18TH-CENTURY DOCUMENTS

Dates:

1. Quaker dates: early Quakers used the numbers, not the names, of the months and the days of the week. (Note that the numbering of the months was different in the Old Style calendar-- i.e., their "seventh month" is September, not July.)
2. Old Style ("O.S.") vs. New Style (N.S.): Prior to 1752, English people mostly used "Old Style" dating, which followed the Julian calendar and began the New Year on March 25. However, the Dutch and many other European countries followed the "New Style" calendar in use today. By the 17th century, the Old Style calendar had fallen ten days behind the New Style.
3. Dual dating: because the New Style calendar began the year on January 1 and the Old Style began it on March 25, dates that fall in between are sometimes given in a format like 1663/4 or 1663-4.

Common abbreviations:

y ^e = the or thee	y ^m = them
y ^t = that	w th = with
y ⁿ = than or then	w ^{ch} = which

Note: words like "ye" are spelled with the Old English character thorn, which looks like the letter "y" but is pronounced "-th."

Money is denominated in pounds, shillings, and pence, in columns as follows: £ : s : d

Transcription Notations:

Text in ROUND PARENTHESES: () is in parentheses in the original document

Text in BRACKETS or SQUARE PARENTHESES: [] indicates missing or hard-to-read words supplied from context, or from an alternative source.

Text in BRACES or CURLY PARENTHESES: { } is an annotation inserted by the editor

[...] indicates missing text (page torn, ink faded, or letters blotted out)

[???] indicates hard-to-read words that we have yet to transcribe.

The forward slash: "/" represents the end of a line in the original document (where we have not been able to fit the text onto one line in the typed transcription).

Indenture of James Clement to John Bowne, May 30, 1663 (New Style)

BFP #2018.1.01-16

It is Contracted and Agreed betweene John Bowne, Inhabitant in Vlissinghe¹ in the province of New Netherlands in Amirica, on the one part and James Clement² of the Buthropp bridge³ of Durham in y^e Kingdom of England on y^e other part, that is to say that I the said James Clement doe hereby binde and oblidge myselfe, to be obedient, just, faithfull, and alwayes willing to the utmost of my powers truly & faithfully to serve the said John Bowne, his heires or assigns, the full spane of six yeares after my arrivall at y^e habbitat-
-ion of y^e sd. Jn^o Bowne, and to pay one halfe of my freight or passage from the place of Subscribtion to y^e place aforementioned in y^e New netherlands, In performance of y^e promise by the sd. James Clement, I the fores'd John Bowne doe hereby binde & oblidge my selfe, heires, & assigns to pay or cause to be p^d to y^e s^d James Clement the full quantity of Two hundred & forty pounds weight of marchantable blade tobacco,⁴ and sufficiently to cloth[e] him wth two suites of Apparrelle, one fitt to Labor in y^e other fitt to use upon other occasions,⁵ Amsterdam in Holland the 30th day of the 5th month cald May 1663 New Stile⁶

{continued}

¹ *Vlissinghe*: Vlissingen, the Dutch name for Flushing

² James Clement (c.1643–c.1724) remained in Flushing after serving his period of indenture and around 1669 became the Flushing Town Clerk, a role he held for decades. His son Samuel Clement became an accomplished Long Island furniture-maker whose work can be seen at the Bowne House and the Winterthur Museum.

³ Likely the area of the Burnhope Reservoir, where a 16th-century map of Durham shows a "Burdop Fluv."

⁴ "Merchantable" tobacco was the second highest of four standardized grades of New Netherland tobacco established in 1657: "Good," "Merchantable," "Poor," and "Zero" grade. The "blade" of a tobacco plant refers to its leaf, the usable part of the plant. The value of tobacco in New Netherland then ranged from four to six *stuivers* a pound depending upon quality. A Dutch *stuiver* in the 1600s has been estimated at about three dollars in today's money, although the currency usually was worth less in the colonies.

⁵ It was common for such indentures to specify a parting gift of clothing, tools, or money to help the newly free worker begin their independent life.

⁶ This indenture was drawn up in Amsterdam, so the "New Style" calendar adopted by the Dutch was used.

Indenture of James Clement to John Bowne, May 30, 1663 (New Style)

BFP #2018.1.01-16

John Lodge⁷ wittnesse
Francis Halford wittnesse

John Bowne
James Clement

⁷ John Lodge was a member of the small Quaker community in Holland and a correspondent of William Penn.