

A Suitor Commended

y^e 23^d 3^{mo} 1734.

Cousin Birkbeck

Respected Kinsman

We p̄sume that A Few Lines from us in Relation to the Character of our Esteemed friend Josiah Forster will be acceptable, inasmuch as we understand, he makes suit to Cou^s Jane. He is aman of Great parts and Abilities, both natural and acquired, endued wth a good undstanding, quick in his Disposition, ready in Comprehension and w^t is the best Qualification seasoned wth A Good Degree of Truth, so that the more we grow acquainted wth him, the more we value him ; and believss that he's a growing man in Religion, he is well accounted of amongst Friends being of a sober Life and Conversation, Chast and reserved, he's a Serviceable Man in the Church, being sound in Judgment and Zealous for the Good Cause.

As to his School its in a flourishing Condition w^{ch} may be likely still to Encrease if he Succeed in the Affair. We speak encourageingly believing Cou^s Temper agreeable to his Disposition and hopes it may tend to their Mutual Good both here and hereafter.

So concludes wth Dear Love to you all (that is both the Families) your Loving and Affectionate Kinsmen & Kinswoman

HENRY BRADFORD
& JOHN BRADFORD
ELIZABETH BRADFORD

Endorsed: "To William Birkbeck in Settle in the County of York. By Bradforth Bagg. This."

Josiah Forster (c. 1693-1763), probably the first of the name Josiah, left his northern home at Chester-le-Street, Co. Durham, in 1710 for London, where he was occupied as a teacher in the Friends' School and Workhouse in Clerkenwell, and became a member of Bull and Mouth Monthly Meeting. In 1723, he married Hannah Hands, of Birmingham, and opened a school at Coventry. Their son, Josiah II, was born therein

1726. Hannah Forster died in 1733, aged 34, and was buried at Warwick. In 1734, Josiah I married Jane Birkbeck (1709-1797), daughter of William Birkbeck, of Settle, Co. York. In 1741, the family moved to Bury St. Edmunds, Co. Suffolk, and they appear to have lived at Settle and also two years in Birmingham before establishing themselves at Tottenham, near London, in 1752, where a Friends' school was established.

Among the children of Josiah and Jane Forster were Sarah (1735-1826); Mary (1739-1827), married William Fairbank, of Sheffield; Ann (1742-1797); Deborah (1743-1834); Elizabeth (1745-1841); William (1747-1824), the Tottenham schoolmaster, some of whose letters have been printed in *The Journal*.

The above letter was probably written from Coventry. Henry Bradford (1698-1771) married Elizabeth Fisher, of Kendal, in 1724.

The original letter, in a tender condition, is in **D**.

A Militia-Substitutes Club

C. Brightwen Rowntree, of Saffron Walden, sends us the following extracts from the minutes of Felsted M.M. in Co. of Essex. Were such Clubs in existence in other parts of the country?

FELSTED MONTHLY MEETING

4 v. 1762

Minute 11. "Report being made to this Meeting that John Wallis, Junr., of Felsted, has entered into a Club to hire substitutes for such members of the club as should happen to be drawn to serve in the Militia, which thing came to the knowledge of friends by it's happening to be his lot to be drawn: This Meeting appoints Jos. Smith, Junr., Jos. Thresher and R. C. Sims to visit the said John Wallis on the account and make report to next Meeting."

12. "In order to prevent the like in others, the same friends are desired to take an opportunity as soon as possible of advising and cautioning every particular member of our Meeting liable to be drawn for a Militia man, from having the least hand in any practice so very opposite to our Christian Testimony."

FELSTED MONTHLY MEETING

3 vi. 1762

Minute 7. "The Friends appointed visited John Wallis, Junr., on account of his having entered into a Club by whom a man was hired in his stead, as it happened to be his lot to be drawn for a Militia; and the s^d John Wallis, being present, says he did it ignorantly, not knowing it was contrary to our principles. If he had, should not have done it."