

Letter from the Revd. Philip Doddridge. D.D.

Copied from original letter.

Northampton,

July 4th 1749.

To Mr Lincoln(e)
in Norwich.

Dear Sir,

I never parted with your good son before with so much sorrow and yet so much joy. Much does it grieve me to think how probable it is I may see him no more as a member of my family; much does it rejoice me to see how well he has improved his time, how abundantly God hath prospered his studies, and how apparently prayer hath been heard for him. Never did any student under my care behave in a more blameless manner, and although I have bred up many excellent youths few have been equally exemplary. I will not say much of his preaching lest I injure him by raising too high an expectation; but I bless God for what I heard from him on Lord's day morning, and my people were exceedingly pleased with it. I shall be extremely glad to receive him again, and I am well assured he will be very useful among us, both in the Congregation and the Academy if God lend him to us for another year. But we have no right to controvert this with the great Lord of all, from whom those Gifts and Graces for which he is distinguished from so many others are derived. It is so very late that I can only present you and your good lady and family with our congratulations, our thanks for the many indeed unequalled instances of your generosity and friendship which we have received, assuring you that he has

fixed himself for ever in our esteem and love, and that I shall always acknowledge it as a singular favour in Providence that such a person has been committed to my care, and that he is now brought out into the Ministry mine eyes seeing it and mine ears hearing it. We join our most cordial salutations to yourself and good Mrs Lincoln(e), the other dear Children of the family and my other kind friends at Norwich, especially Mr. Wood and Mr. Joyce, May Balderson and his Brother, Mr ^{Hensman} Hensneen and Mr. Dawson, with the dear remains of Mr Scott's family. I dare not talk of what is projected for next year with any confidence but if God spare my life and prosper my schemes you may then depend on seeing

Dear Sir,

Your ever affectionate friend,
and obliged humble servant

P. DODDRIDGE.

(Rev. Philip Doddridge)

The following is the Obituary Notice of the young student above referred to - copied from the Bury (St. Edmunds) Post 1792.

April 22nd " On Sunday evening last, died suddenly in his chair, after a short confinement from an attack of the gout in his stomach, at his House in this Town, in the 64th year of his age, the Revd. William Lincolne, Pastor of the Presbyterian congregation at this place near 35 years. His polite manners accompanied with an extensive knowledge of Human Nature, rendered him an agreeable acquaintance and able adviser. Liberally educated, and possessing considerable ingenuity as a composer, his

evangelical sentiments, free from illiberality, but productive of rational and fervent devotion, rendered his services truly valuable. His humane heart ever sympathised with distress and his charitableness befriended the poor. Of a truly pacific disposition, he was greatly averse to animosities of all kinds; and ever ready to insinuate such considerations as tend to calm the mind and banish resentment - these properties during life, procured him the esteem of all his acquaintance who now with his afflicted relations, unanimously lament his death."

My great-grandfather's first ministry was at Beccles from 1749 to 1758 when he went to Bury St. Edmunds. At Beccles he became engaged to Miss Rebecca Plaisted, who was afterwards his wife. M.H.Sutton.

The same is also referred to in Crabb Robinson's Diary Vol. 1 pages 7 and 14.

1781. " The name of the Minister whose religious services my father and mother attended was Lincolne. He was a gentlemanly person and inspired respect especially by a very large white wig. He was often at our house, and his two daughters were my mother's very great friends. When he came I used to be kept at a distance, for I was always running about, and he was afraid for his gouty toes Mr Lincolne was a gentleman and a scholar.

At Bury St. Edmunds
Suffolk.

These letters were transcribed from the originals by Marianne Harriet Sutton, née Lincolne, the great grand-daughter of Revd. William Lincolne, in Norwich in about 1890.
H.W. 2015