

LETTER

Robert Ram, Rector of Spalding (1626–1656) to the Town of Crowland

Spalding, Lincolnshire, 31 January 1642

As one that truly desires your peace and welfare, I adventure once more to write unto you. My business at this time is to entreat you to accept the advice of a friend who, though but a stander by, perhaps sees more than you that play the game.

I beseech you consider how dangerously you run the hazard both of your lives and fortunes in this course you take. Do you think to take up arms, to make bulwarks and fortifications without commission, to disobey all warrants and commands are not very high contempts? Can you imagine that the Parliament or the Committee at Lincoln can endure such affronts, or can you think to defend yourselves against such forces as may easily and speedily be raised against you? Surely your numbers and preparations are not so great but that a small force may prevail against you, neither is your town so inaccessible but that it may be approached many ways. A piece of ordinance will soon batter down your houses at two or three miles distance. Besides, it is possible in a very short time to famish your town by cutting of all supplies of corn and other provision.

Perhaps you expect some forces from other parts that will come to your aid. Perhaps they which have so promised you will not or cannot be so good as their words, or if they be, surely Crowland is not able to receive at least to maintain any considerable number of men.

Good neighbours, think seriously on these things, and do not desperately ruin yourselves and your posterity, but hearken timely to the counsels of peace. I know your plea is that you do but stand upon your own good in defence of yourselves and estates. So pleaded O.E., so pleaded C., and so pleaded all that stand out with the Parliament. But the Parliament allows of no such plea, neither will it endure to be so contemned, assure yourselves that if the forces of Lynn, Cambridge, Northampton, Nottingham, Lincoln, Boston, and Spalding be able to reduce you to the Parliament's obedience or justice, you will not long escape them.

My counsel, therefore, is that you would play the part of wise men. Lay down your arms and submit yourselves, listen not to them that advise you to stand out; they will be the first that will forsake you. Let those that were named in the last warrant present themselves to the Committee without delay; it will be the best day's work that ever you did, and if they will be pleased to make use of me, I will do therein the best service I can, not doubting but that I shall obtain there peace upon fair terms. Thus beseeching the God of peace to incline your hearts to these motions of peace, I rest.

Samuel Tymms, ed. *The East Anglian, or Notes and Queries on Subjects Connected with the Counties of Suffolk, Cambridge, Essex, and Norfolk* (Lowestoft: Samuel Tymms, 1869), III:223–224.