

Letter - to Elisha Camp

by Charles Finney

Charles Finney's letter to Elisha Camp addresses legal challenges faced by Camp and offers strategic advice for navigating the lawsuit.

Scripture: Psalm 37:5, Proverbs 21:15, Isaiah 1:17, Romans 12:19, 1 Peter 3:14

Topics: "Justice", "Preparation for Trials"

Description

In his letter to Elisha Camp, Charles Finney addresses legal challenges faced by Camp, providing insights into the court proceedings and the objections raised against him. Finney reassures Camp that he successfully quashed the suit based on jurisdictional issues, emphasizing the importance of being prepared to counter the claims made against him. The letter reflects Finney's legal acumen and his commitment to supporting Camp during a difficult time, while also hinting at the broader themes of justice and accountability. Finney's guidance encourages Camp to face his adversaries with confidence and wisdom.

Transcript

To Elisha Camp

22 January 1821

[MS in the Elisha Camp Papers, Cornell University, Department of Manuscripts and Archives (Accession Number, 696, Box 2)]

Elisha Camp (1786-1866) was a prominent citizen in Sackets Harbor, New York, and a land agent. He had settled in the village in 1804, where he had become supervisor of the township of Houndsfield in 1808. Subsequently he was postmaster, captain of an artillery company in the militia, deputy New York state attorney, and a politician. He was also a newspaper owner and editor, a banker, and a substantial landowner with interests in local mills, in Lake Ontario shipping, and in land and water transportation (see Elisha Camp Papers, Department of Manuscripts and Archives, Cornell University; and Franklin B. Hough, A History of Jefferson County in the State of New York [Albany: Joel Munsell, 1854], pp. 171, 174). For some years he had been a lawyer, and was at one time in partnership with someone by the name of Wright & endash; possibly Benjamin Wright (1784-1861), the lawyer in whose office Finney was employed. (See Hamilton Child, Geographical Gazetteer of Jefferson County, N.Y., 1684-1890 [Syracuse, N.Y.: 1890], p. 69)

According to Marianne Perciaccante who discovered this letter, "Camp was facing suit from numerous people for a variety of reasons. It is difficult to discern what this case involved."

Adams 22nd Jan. 1821

Dr. Sir,

It not being convenient for

Mr Wright to attend your cause at Rodman,
he handed me your letter, & desired me to attend
to it. The objection you mentioned is not tenable,
as there is a Subsequent Statute in effect repea
ling the clause which you referred to.

I succeeded however in quashing the suit,
on account of the summons' being made retur
nable "at my office at S. Harobr" it being
a public house. I took an exception to the
Jurisdiction of the court, (and whether the
objection was tenable or untenable is imma ial)

I prevailed as the court decided that he had
no Jurisdiction. I could not draw much
from the plaintiff in conversation. but
his counsel informed me that he was prepa
red to prove that you employed Miles.
they also expected Waldo from the Harbor as
a witness. you will probably be able to learn
from him what they can prove by him.

They have a letter which they probably think
to make use of on trial, (which by the by is
no evidence) purporting to be from the
Trustees of the corporation of your Village

which shows that they considered you responsible to Miles for his labor. What they can in reality prove I know not. but his counsel seemed

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to have much confidence in the action and that he had all the necessary proof.

The action will probably be commenced de novo. immediately. I give you this information that you may be prepared to meet them and give them "change in their own coin".

Yours Respectfully

C. G. Finney.

Elisha Camp Esq,

Nearly twenty years later Finney received a letter from Elisha Camp, dated Sackets Harbor, May 16, 1840, in which he expressed a desire to visit Oberlin and enquiring about the possibility of his second son being educated there.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/charles-finney/letter-to-elisha-camp/>

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