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21st Jan 1985

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Dear Mr Williamson,

Thank you very much for your letter. I am staying next Saturday night with my niece at Higham, near Rochester, so it will be quite convenient to come on Sunday morning to your house at 12 noon. My niece will be with me, so I hope I may bring her in while we talk.

While you were at La Brède you may perhaps have met Monsieur Delc, who is the president of the Académie Montaignienne. He is my correspondent, & sent me on a letter from Madame Philippe de Montaigne. He refers to her as la baronne, so I expect she is the wife of your contact. She did mention

that you had given her information, but gave no details, so I was not aware of how much was already known.

They are now going to send me a photograph of the inscription, but I should still like to have a look at. The point that particularly interests Madame de Montesquieu is whether the harem who was Montesquieu's prisoner remained a Catholic. A certain amount of delving in reference books has shown me that a Catholic gentleman in those days was likely to be buried in the parish church, so no conclusions can be drawn from the fact that the harem was buried in St Peter's at Bridge. I was however very interested to hear that the plaque has a cross on it, because it is said in Sources for Roman Catholic & Jewish History, (1974, vol 3 of the National Index

of Parish Registers) that "it is safe to assume that tombstones prior to 1830 marked with a cross or the monogram IHS are those of Roman Catholics." So I shall probably be able to assure Madame de Rantecquien that the Baron did not ~~not~~ change his faith.

As you are "unofficial" historian of Bridge, I may be able to repay your kindness by letting you have a copy of the Baron's will drawn up in 1822, if you have not already got this.

There are naturally a lot of local references. Perhaps you could identify the house where the Baron lived? He refers to it as my "dwelling house at Bridge Hill", and it had about 22 acres of land.

I am looking forward to meeting you.

yours sincerely,

IUT Cox