

Negotiations for the marriage of John Sulyard to Philippa Sheldon

Thomas Cornwallis to the bridegroom's father Edward Sulyard; 15 Jan 1592/93,
Staffordshire RO D641/4/J/4/1/3(b)

Cousin Sulyard Although Mr Sheldon's and your self have referred to me to set down indifferently the considerations to be given on either side upon the marriage between your son and his daughter yet would I be very loath to take so weighty a cause upon me without the presence of you both. But seeing that there is no great hope of your meting shortly¹ and that I found so good liking in my cousin ye bearer of the gentlewoman which nevertheless is not otherwise settled than shalbe with your liking. Also I have thought good to deliver unto you my opinion presently lest my sloth and delay might be by some accident ye hindrance or overthrow of so good a purpose intended: I demanded of Mr Sheldon 2000 marks whereunto I perceived he would not willingly be drawn; and shewed reasonable cause why such a sum should not be demanded which I leave to the report of the bearer. On your behalf I offered £100 in hand for his daughter's jointure and £400 more to descend after your decease and [of] the lady your wife and then one other £100 for increase of his wife's jointure after the decease of the lady your wife; and £1000 pounds I think a convenient portion to be given by Mr Sheldon for such portion in possession and reversion as is offered to be assured by you and as much as any other will give except it be some lawyer or merchant to whom you should have no alliance for the strength of your house nor commonly any other friendship either. For the agreement of the £1000 pounds I will hasten Mr Sheldon although he especially required some favour in it considering his great charges lately in bestowing two other daughters.

I have now plainly uttered to you my [-----] whereunto I would advise you if you were my own son. Nevertheless if you shall mislike of my motion I will stay until I may speak with yourself for I will do nothing without your good liking. Only I will now put you in consideration what peril you leave him in if God should call you out of this world before his full age or marriage. Delays in such cases be dangerous as yourself can well consider.

And so with y very hearty commendations to yourself and to such others your fellow prisoners as I am acquainted with I end humbly beseeching Almighty God to send you health and liberty. At Hengrave the 15th of January 1592/93.

PS I pray you return me such answer by this bearer as you think mete I should signify to Mr Sheldon by my cousin your son at his going now to him.

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¹ Because Edward Sulyard was then imprisoned for his faith.