

**Letter from Edward Winslow to a friend, December 11, 1621** (abridged)

Loving, and old friend;

[W]e have built seven dwelling houses . . . and have made preparation for divers others. We set the last spring some twenty acres of Indian corn, and sowed some six acres of barley and peas, and according to the manner of Indians, we manured our ground with herrings . . . which we have in great abundance . . . Our corn did prove well, and God be praised, we had a good increase of Indian corn . . . our harvest being gotten in, our governor sent four men on fowling, that so we might after a more special manner rejoice together, after we had gathered the fruit of our labors . . . at which time amongst other recreations, we exercised our arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and amongst the rest their greatest king Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five deer, which they brought to the plantation and bestowed on our governor, and upon the captain and others. And although it be not always so plentiful, as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God, we are so far from want, that we often wish you partakers of our plenty. We have found the Indians very faithful in their covenant of peace with us . . . it hath pleased God so to possess the Indians with a fear of us, and love unto us, that not only the greatest king amongst them called Massasoit, but also all the princes and peoples round about us, have either made suit unto us, or been glad of any occasion to make peace with us . . . so that there is now great peace amongst the Indians themselves, which was not formerly neither would have been but for us; and we for our parts walk as peaceably and safely in the wood, as in the highways in England, we entertain them familiarly in our houses, and they as friendly bestowing their venison on us. They are a people without any religion, or knowledge of any God, yet very trusty, quick of apprehension, ripe-witted . . .

I never in my life remember a more seasonable year, than we have here enjoyed . . . For fish and fowl, we have a great abundance, fresh cod in the summer is but coarse meat with us, our bay is full of lobsters all the summer, and affordeth variety of other fish . . . all the spring time the earth sendeth forth naturally very good salad herbs: here are grapes, white and red, and very sweet and strong also . . . the country wanteth only industrious men to employ, for it would grieve your hearts (if as I) you had seen so many miles together by goodly rivers uninhabited, and withal to consider those parts of the world wherein you live, to be even greatly burdened with abundance of people . . . I forbear further to write for the present, hoping to see you by the next return, so I take my leave, commending you to the Lord for a safe conduct unto us, Resting in him

Your loving friend

E. W.

Plymouth in New England this 11th of December, 1621.