

2) PHILIP DODDRIDGE'S SHORTER DESCRIPTION OF JENNINGS'S ACADEMY

In 1725 Philip Doddridge wrote a detailed account of the education he had received at John Jennings's dissenting academy in the early 1720s. The recipient has been identified as Thomas Saunders (1694-1736), a dissenting minister in Kettering, Northamptonshire and a contemporary of Doddridge. His brother was later one of the first students Doddridge taught, and he features in Job Orton's biography of Doddridge as the person who transmitted Doddridge's thoughts about establishing a new academy to Isaac Watts. It is probably for these reasons that he was thought to be the recipient, but there is no certain evidence in the sources that this is the case. It seems likely from the tone and content of the letter than Doddridge was addressing an older man with whom he was not personally acquainted.

Doddridge's 'Shorter Description of Jennings's Academy' survives in three known versions. It is printed in volume 5 of Williams's and Parsons's edition of Doddridge's *Works* (1802), pp. 559-567, and in volume 2 of John Doddridge Humphreys's edition of Doddridge's *Correspondence* (1829), pp. 462-475. The manuscript copy in Dr Williams's Library transcribed here, is a copy of Doddridge's letter made in or after 1833 (the date of the watermark on the paper). It is not known whether this is a complete and accurate transcription of Doddridge's letter, but it is certainly more detailed than either of the printed versions of the letter. For example, the passage about drama at Jennings's academy is absent from both of the printed versions of the letter. In his *Calendar* of Doddridge's correspondence, Geoffrey Nuttall included the paragraph on drama omitted from both earlier printed editions (*Cal.* 190). A facsimile of part of the original copy of the letter in Doddridge's hand appears as the frontispiece to volume 5 of Williams's and Parsons's edition of Doddridge's *Works*, which confirms the accuracy of the date and opening paragraph of the manuscript copy. Doddridge's reference to his recent move from Burton Overy to Market Harborough, which we know took place on 30 September 1725, confirms the dating of the manuscript copy. It seems that John Doddridge Humphreys followed Williams's and Parsons's transcription, for there is nothing in his which is absent from theirs, and cuts and changes to the language are the same in both, for example replacing the word 'Lads' with 'Youth'. Humphreys makes additional cuts in order to justify the dating of the letter to 1728. Nuttall has noted that Humphreys removed the information that Doddridge had recently moved to Market Harborough, a change which amounts to falsification (*Cal.* 190). McLachlan reproduces extensive extracts from the letter, following John Doddridge Humphreys's date of 1728 (pp. 135-140).

Until the discovery of 'An Account of Mr Jennings's Method', Isaac Watts's reply to Doddridge's 'Account' was thought to be to the letter of 1725. It is now known that this is not so. Doddridge's 'Account of Mr Jennings's Method' is based on his 'Shorter Description of Jennings's Academy' but is more detailed, and follows a different structure. Because no information appears in the 1725 letter which is absent from 'An Account of Mr Jennings's Method' the biographical and bibliographical notes to the former are not replicated here. Readers are encouraged to read Doddridge's 'Shorter Description of Jennings's Academy' in conjunction with 'An Account of Mr Jennings's Method'. This online edition presents the first complete transcription of the only extant manuscript copy of the 1725 letter.