

The Landholder to William Williams, *American Mercury*, 10 March 1788

THE LANDHOLDER presents his most respectful compliments to the Honorable W. WILLIAMS and begs leave to remind him that many dispensations in this world, which have the appearance of judgment, are designed in goodness. Such was the short address to you, and though at first it might excite an exquisite sensibility of injury, will in its consequences prove to your advantage by giving you an honorable opportunity to come out and declare your sentiments to the people. It had been represented in several parts of the state, to the great surprise of your friends, that you wished some religious test as an introduction to office, but as you have explained the matter, it is only a religious preamble which you wish. Against preambles, we have no animosity. Every man hath a sovereign right to use words in his own sense, and, when he hath explained himself, it ought to be believed that he uses them conscientiously. The Landholder, for the sake of his honorable friend, regrets that he denies his having used his [Williams'] name publicly as a writer; for, though the honorable gentleman doubtless asserts the truth, there are a great number of those odd people who really think they were present on that occasion, and have such a strong habit of believing their senses, that they will not be convinced even by evidence which is superior to all sense. But it must be so in this imperfect world.

P.S. The Landholder begs his honorable friend not to be surprised at his former address, as he can assure him most seriously that he does not even conjecture by whom it was written.

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