

Transcription

"Anguish of mind about the ruin of our great Country"

Lynchburg, Jany 18th 1861.

My dear friend & Cousin

I suffer at times such anguish of mind about the ruin of our great Country, and the prospect of Civil war, that I feel impelled to write to you, just to pour out my heart—not that I think it can do any good, No, No one can help us now but God, all our hope and trust must be in Him.

Oh! for the faith that can look at the threatened ruin and see God in all, and believe He can and will, make "the wrath of man to praise Him." To feel with the Prophet, "That though the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines The labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls. Yet, I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

But such faith is hard to have for though I know His power, and believe and trust—still it seems that the working of His will inflicts a sorrow that I sink under. I know we deserve His chastisements, for we have been most ungrateful and committed great wrongs but it falls on me with a weight that I feel sometimes will sink me into my grave.

When my Lucy died, though, she was the charm of our life, I felt so sure she had gone into everlasting happiness that it was a sort of holy sorrow, it seemed to stimulate me to try to meet her. It deepens as I grow older and feel more and more how good a child I lost—but Oh how different from this—To see my sons arrayed against one part of their Country, and our own "Star spangled banner," and in such a cause, is a sorrow that makes me feel that the grave is the only place for me. You did not know my dear John the pains I took to train my five sons in sentiments of patriotism and other noble thoughts.

But the world is too much for me—My voice is drowned, And I have nothing left but to die.

In the war of 1812 I used to hear from my Father sentiments that sunk into my heart, when he little thought of the impression he was making—they were like those of the revolution, Oh, how unlike what are held now.



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But why talk any more of my own feelings, but bear with me, it is a relief. There are very few I can talk to. Pray don't shew my letter you know it is treason in the eyes of many, to hold these sentiments I do—And I do not want to injure my husband and children.

I suppose my Mary is with you now. I was glad to have her pay you a visit—How she used to enjoy her visits at your house, and what kind and judicious friends you were to her. May my Mary retain your friendship as She did to the last, and have your counsels, and Nannie as to her conduct—and as regards her immortal interests.

Give my best love to all of them, but perhaps it would be best not speak of getting this letter.

Your affectionate Cousin

M B. BLACKFORD

Citation: Mary Berkeley Minor Blackford to John Barbee Minor, January 18, 1861, Minor and Wilson Family Papers, Special Collections, University of Virginia