

THE LETTERS  
OF  
RICHARD HENRY LEE

VOLUME I

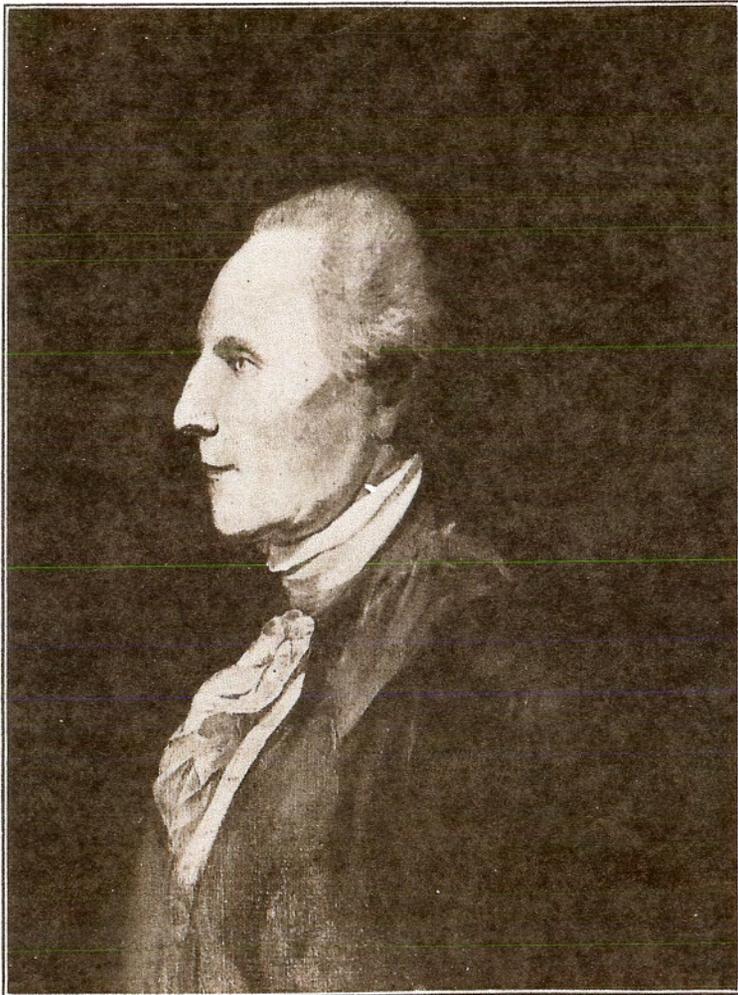
1762-1778



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RICHARD HENRY LEE

FROM A PORTRAIT BY GILBERT STUART, IN THE POSSESSION OF  
LAURENCE LEE, ESQUIRE

Obtained through the courtesy of Mrs. William Ruffin Cox,  
President of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America

THE LETTERS  
OF  
RICHARD HENRY LEE

COLLECTED AND EDITED BY  
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PUBLISHED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE NATIONAL  
SOCIETY OF COLONIAL DAMES OF AMERICA

VOLUME I

1762-1778

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To  
MY WIFE

WHOSE AID AND SYMPATHY HAVE LIGHTENED  
MY TASK  
AND MADE THIS WORK  
POSSIBLE

Ex. N. 1117, Rutland (Journalism)

## PREFACE

RICHARD HENRY LEE, sometime President of the Continental Congress and mover of the resolutions for a Declaration of Independence, Foreign Alliances, and a Plan of Confederation, exerted a profound influence upon political and constitutional movements in his State and in America from the beginning of the Stamp Act agitation to the close of his public career in 1792. His life was devoted to the service of the public and to preserving and developing political liberty as he and Patrick Henry and Samuel Adams understood it. His constant and arduous labor as an active patriot leader in his county of Westmoreland, as a Virginia Burgess and Assemblyman, and as a member of the Continental Congress and of the United States Senate throughout an entire generation of unselfish public service finally destroyed his health and led to the ultimate sacrifice of his life in 1794, at the comparatively early age of sixty-two years; a debt paid to his tireless loyalty to his country's good. Probably no member of Congress, unless it be John Adams, served in a more important capacity and on so many and such effective committees of Congress, and at the same time maintained such literary activity as is shown in his extensive correspondence. Despite these facts and his contemporary fame as an orator and statesman and the interest and value of the letters written by him during this critical period of American affairs, no attempt at anything like a comprehensive collection of these letters appears to have been hitherto made, and his services and name have been almost forgotten by the public.

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It has been the editor's agreeable task to discover, during a search covering a period of several years, and bring together for preservation in these volumes reliable texts, in most cases taken from original manuscripts or transcripts, of as many letters of historical importance as possible that are of the indisputable authorship of Richard Henry Lee. Of about 500 letters here collected the majority have never been printed, and the larger portion of those that have previously appeared in print have for half a century been practically inaccessible to the public. The *Memoir of the Life of Richard Henry Lee, and his Correspondence* by his grandson, Richard H. Lee, in two volumes, published in 1825, contains only some 70 letters written by Richard Henry Lee mingled in chronological disorder with more than twice this number written to him, and was intended more as a biography than as an edition of his letters. A still smaller number of the letters now long out of print in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, *The Virginia Historical Register*, and half a dozen other publications, when compared with the original manuscripts, have been found to be so inaccurate in text, that, like many of those of the "*Memoir*," they are unsafe for the student to use. Printed letters with a trustworthy text are so few or so scattered amongst publications like W. W. Henry's *Patrick Henry*, *The [Charles] Lee Papers*, and *The Deane Papers* as to be practically useless. In these cases where the manuscript was discovered and permission to consult it was granted, the letter has been reprinted from the manuscript in order to preserve any variations that the text contains.

Though a small portion of what was apparently his letter book survives, Lee seems either not to have made or not to have kept together a very large collection of his papers. He unfortunately had neither Franklin's genius for hoarding, nor his brother Arthur's faculty for

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preserving, data of a personal character. Much that survives was kept by his correspondents and is widely scattered. However, two aggregations of miscellaneous Lee-family papers existed which contained a number of Richard Henry's letters. The first of these, made generally known by his grandson and biographer, was dispersed by him and deposited in the libraries of Harvard College, the American Philosophical Society, and the University of Virginia. Through the courtesy of the authorities of these institutions, in the order named, free access for purposes of transcription and comparison was readily granted to these "Lee Papers" and to other manuscript collections, such as those of Jared Sparks at Harvard and the Franklin Papers at the American Philosophical Society; and for personal attentions and aid the writer is particularly indebted to Professor Albert Bushnell Hart, and Mr. William Coolidge Lane, the Librarian, of Harvard University; Dr. I. Minis Hays, the Librarian of the American Philosophical Society; and Mr. Armistead C. Gordon, the Rector, Professors Richard Heath Dabney and Charles W. Kent, and Mr. John S. Patton, the Librarian, of the University of Virginia.

A second aggregation of "Lee Papers" of equal importance, including "Lee Transcripts," some of them of manuscripts lost in the fire at the University of Virginia that consumed its library building, was the gift of Mr. Cassius F. Lee of Alexandria to the Virginia Historical Society. These manuscripts were generously opened to my use by the Executive Committee of the Society, and it is a pleasure here to express my many obligations for kindnesses and valuable assistance rendered by the efficient Secretary, Mr. W. G. Stanard, and the Assistant Secretary, Mrs. Sally Nelson Robins, of that Society.

Professor William Shippen, Jr., M.D., of Philadelphia,

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preserved, as did Samuel Adams, much of his correspondence with Lee, and a large number of Lee's letters, illustrating the personal as well as the political side of his life, have been found among the valuable papers of the Shippen family inherited and owned by the great-great-grandson of Professor Shippen and his wife Alice, a sister of Richard Henry Lee, Dr. Lloyd Parker Shippen of the United States Navy, and in the possession of his mother, Mrs. Edward Shippen of Baltimore. By their kind liberality, and the active aid of Mrs. Shippen in the search through her collections, these letters were made available to the editor, who, together with Dr. and Mrs. Shippen, examined in their original folders more than one thousand manuscript letters of the Shippen and Lee families.

A yet larger number of letters in the aggregate than those obtained from these three sources were, by a further personal search, found scattered through various manuscript collections in national and state archives, public and private libraries, state historical societies, and in individual ownership. For the courtesy and efficient help of their custodians and owners the editor owes a debt he can scarcely hope to pay by his grateful acknowledgments.

His greatest debt, however, is to Dr. J. Franklin Jameson, Director of the Department of Historical Research of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, without whose interest, encouragement, and valuable advice this collection would probably never have been completed or presented to the public. He not only supplied the funds from his Department for a search and collection of the letters found in Washington, but presented copies of important letters from time to time, called attention to the existence of others, and, through the kind offices of Mr. Waldo G. Leland, secured accurate copies of letters that the editor desired from the archives in Paris. At

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almost every stage of this work his kind and practical help has been of inestimable value.

Similarly Mr. Worthington C. Ford, while Chief of the Division of Manuscripts in the Library of Congress, and later as Editor of Publications of the Massachusetts Historical Society, has been unfailing in his kindnesses and aid by gifts of several transcripts of his own, by securing copies of other letters, and by suggesting possible and valuable sources of letters besides making available the manuscripts under his charge. From those in the Library of Congress, especially from the manuscript papers of Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe, and those of the Continental Congress, was obtained a large number of important texts.

A like search among the archives of the Department of State was most kindly permitted and facilitated in every way possible by Mr. William McNeir, and Mr. John A. Tonner of the Bureau of Rolls and Library. Though many letters were there found, signed by Lee's name, as well as by those of one or more other members of the Committee of Secret Correspondence or of the Committee of Foreign Affairs, they were either original clerical drafts or not in Lee's handwriting, and therefore could not be included among a collection of papers of his undoubted authorship. As most of them have been printed by Francis Wharton in his *Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution*, their omission here seems abundantly justified.

Dr. John S. Billings, Director of the "New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations," most courteously permitted the use of the rich and varied collections in his charge, and every facility for the prosecution of the work was rendered by Mr. Wilberforce Eames, Librarian of the Lenox branch, and his experienced assistants, Mr. Victor H. Paltsits, now

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State Historian, and Mr. Curtis. The Bancroft, Ford, Emmet, and Myers collections yielded a large number of valuable letters of Lee, none being more valuable than those among the "Samuel Adams Papers."

Another important source of Lee's letters was found in the Henry Laurens manuscript papers in the Long Island Historical Society, and these were kindly made available through the courtesy of Mr. Bryan H. Smith, Chairman of the Executive Committee, and Miss Emma Toedteberg, Librarian of the Society. By a like kindness of the authorities and the Librarian, Mr. Robert H. Kelby, of the New York Historical Society, a still further addition, greatly appreciated, was made to the collection.

Mr. Charles Francis Adams most generously had copies made of the letters of Lee found in the valuable papers of the Adams family, and presented them to the editor. Through the kindness of Dr. Samuel Abbott Green, permission was given to make copies of several letters found in the rare manuscript collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society under his charge. From the Mellen Chamberlain collection of manuscripts in the Boston Public Library the texts of several letters were obtained through the suggestions of Mr. Lindsay Swift and the kindness of the official custodians. Appreciative thanks are also due to the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for permission to search the Massachusetts Archives and to copy valuable letters found there. Mr. Albert C. Bates, Librarian of the Connecticut Historical Society, allowed a prolonged search through the numerous manuscripts in the Roger Wolcott, Oliver Wolcott, Jeremiah Wadsworth, Silas and Simeon Deane and other collections under his charge, and though the result was meager as to letters of Lee, the editor's appreciation of this personal courtesy is none the less great.

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Dr. John W. Jordan, Librarian of the Pennsylvania Historical Society, made available the rich collections under his charge, and the great obligations of the editor to him for access to the manuscripts in the Dreer, Sprague, Etting, Conarroe, McKean, and Society Collections are gladly acknowledged. From the transcripts of the Langdon Papers, also in that society, important letters were obtained. In the Ridgway Branch of the Library Company of Philadelphia through the good offices of Mr. Bunford Samuel, the Librarian, several interesting letters here included were found. Through the courtesy of Mr. J. G. Rosengarten and the kindness of the Librarian of the University of Pennsylvania, permission was given to search the Franklin manuscripts in that library, but no letter of Lee's certain authorship was found. Through the kind suggestion of Dr. Edmund C. Burnett, of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, some important letters were located in the valuable Charles Roberts Autograph collection of Haverford College, Pennsylvania, and accurate copies of these were furnished through the courteous Librarian of the College, Professor Allen C. Thomas.

To Mr. Richard H. Spencer, the Corresponding Secretary and Librarian, and to the other officers of the Maryland Historical Society, the editor is indebted for several letters from the Samuel Purviance Papers, and his especial thanks are also due to Dr. H. R. McIlwaine, Librarian, and Dr. H. J. Eckenrode, Archivist, of the Virginia State Library, for the willingness with which they made accessible the Executive Communications and other manuscripts under their care, and for the verification by Dr. Eckenrode of the text of several letters elsewhere that the editor could not personally compare. From the Henry Laurens collection in the South Carolina Historical Society was obtained a single letter to Laurens through the kindness of Miss Mabel

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L. Webber, the Secretary of the Society. Through the good offices of Mr. Nathan Goold, the Librarian of the Maine Historical Society, came several valuable letters contained in the Fogg collection. In the John Carter Brown Library the editor was kindly permitted by the Librarian, Mr. George Parker Winship, to transcribe several letters from Lee. Through the kindness of Professor Charles M. Andrews of the Johns Hopkins University, a valuable letter was obtained from the manuscripts of the Marquis of Lansdowne, and the editor is further indebted to him for his constant interest and fruitful suggestions at various stages of this work. The Proprietor of the "Sun Inn" of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, generously contributed a facsimile of an interesting letter written by Lee.

To Mrs. A. Morris Tyson and to her father, Mr. Joseph Packard of Baltimore, a great-great-grandson of Richard Henry Lee, the editor is under especial obligations for some rare and important Lee letters.

Grateful acknowledgment is also made to the Officials and Librarians of the following institutions where a fruitless personal search was allowed through valuable manuscript collections: the Library of the Boston Athenæum; of the Essex Institute at Salem, by the courtesy of the Secretary, Mr. George Francis Dow; of the American Antiquarian Society at Worcester, Massachusetts, through the kindness of Mr. Edmund M. Barton; of the Historical Society and of the State of Rhode Island, through the kindness of Mr. Clarence S. Brigham and of Mr. Herbert Brigham; and of the State of Connecticut. Mr. Victor H. Paltsits, State Historian of New York, besides his many helpful suggestions, kindly had a search made for possible Lee letters at Albany, and Dr. Reuben Gold Thwaites courteously rendered a similar service as to the collections at Madison, Wisconsin. Mr. William Nelson kindly furnished

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the editor information for the New Jersey Historical Society and Dr. Edmund C. Burnett generously gave him the benefit of his researches for the Carnegie Institution of Washington in North Carolina, South Carolina, and other places, and presented him with several letters of value. Mr. Clarence S. Brigham, besides his attentions at the Rhode Island Historical Society, kindly made inquiry into a valuable autograph collection existing in Providence. A personal examination was made without further result in several public and private libraries, such as those of Chicago and New York, and inquiry for possible letters in autograph collections in the hands of individuals. To many other persons who have taken valuable time to answer inquiries or letters, personal appreciation is gladly expressed.

Particularly is the editor indebted to Professor Charles M. Andrews, to Dr. J. Franklin Jameson, of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, and to Mrs. Albert Sioussat of Maryland, the Chairman, and the Publication Committee of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America for securing an agency for the publication of these letters, and to Mrs. William Ruffin Cox, President, and the other Officers and Members of that Society for the generous liberality by means of which these volumes are offered to the public.

In all cases where the original manuscripts or faithful transcripts exist, and access to them was granted, the texts of the letters have been carefully collated with the originals by the editor. Though these originals were often found in a damaged condition or in the form of much-corrected drafts, it has been possible to preserve not only most of the original text but even the scarcely legible erasures. It has seemed well, however, to preserve here, in appended printed notes, only those erasures of some possible significance, omitting all mere variations of phrase or words which the author him-

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self had discarded and which did not modify his thought. The texts are thus given *verbatim et literatim*, and not only is the author's spelling and capitalization, but also his punctuation and paragraphing, preserved. His division into paragraphs was infrequent and original, though his spelling is fairly good for his time. The salutation is given in the place and form in which it appeared in the manuscript, and it has seemed well to preserve also the formal ending, as it is varied and often characteristic; but the signature, which was usually the author's full name, is omitted. The postscripts were usually signed R. H. Lee, or R. H. L.

Though it can scarcely be hoped that all the letters of Lee have been found, it has been necessary to omit wholly or in part comparatively few of those that have been found, and any omitted passages are indicated by dots or by a note. Lee was a singularly chaste and careful writer and most of his letters have historical value, and with the exceptions specifically noted their texts are printed in full. A few relatively unimportant letters, particularly of his earlier years, are included, because of their personal bearing and the fact that we have no other view of the man at that time. Letters signed by Lee with other members of committees have been excluded when not in his handwriting or otherwise clearly of his authorship.

More than 250 letters of Lee are printed in the present volume, and the character of each manuscript — whether an autograph letter signed (A. L. S.), autograph letter (A. L.), autograph draft of a letter signed (A. dr. L. S.), autograph draft of a letter (A. dr. L.), autograph copy of a letter signed (A. copy L. S.), autograph copy of a letter (A. copy L.), letter signed (L. S.), transcript, or other copy — and the place where it was consulted and may be found are stated at the bottom of the page, in the first note to the heading of

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the letter. In case the text is derived from a printed source, that fact with the source is specifically stated in the first note. For the purpose of clarifying the text little annotation has been needed, and it has been thought well to err on the side of too little comment rather than of too much, as space has thus been saved for letters that otherwise might necessarily have been omitted.

The limitations of space as well as of title have also made it necessary to exclude speeches, memorials, petitions, addresses, motions, and resolutions, etc., of Lee's authorship, though a collection of such interesting documents has been made which may subsequently be published.

The printed headings of the letters preserve the personal form of the address given in the originals or in reliable transcripts. Square brackets indicate the portions supplied from safe endorsements or other certain means of information.

As Lee generally wrote the salutation on the same line as the place and date in his manuscript this form has been followed in texts taken from printed letters where a different and varying style had apparently been adopted solely for editorial reasons.

JAMES CURTIS BALLAGH.

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY,  
BALTIMORE, December 12, 1909.

## THE LETTERS OF RICHARD HENRY LEE

"It is proposed, that another Congress be held on the tenth of May next, at this place, but in the mean time, we beg the favour of you, Gentlemen, to transmit to the Speakers of the several Assemblies, the earliest information of the most authentic accounts you can collect, of all such conduct & designs of ministry, or parliament, as it may concern America to know.

"We are, with unfeigned esteem and regard, Gentlemen, &c.

"By order and in behalf of the Congress,  
"HENRY MIDDLETON, *President.*"

TO PAUL WENTWORTH, DOCT<sup>R</sup> FRANKLIN, W<sup>M</sup> BOLLAN, ARTHUR LEE, THO<sup>S</sup> LIFE, EDM<sup>D</sup> BURKE, CHARLES GARTH.

TO LANDON CARTER<sup>1</sup>

DEAR SIR,

CHANTILLY december 20<sup>th</sup> 1774

I wish with all my heart you had found the Harlem oil as effecacious as M<sup>r</sup>: Allen supposed, but when I heard the old Gentlemen recommending it in such strong terms, it occurred to me, that like other Carminatives it was palliative only, and that the cause must be removed by other medicines. I do not remember any further direction for its use than the number of drops for a dose, and a general reference to the paper of directions. You reason very well on the distemper, and I make no doubt but that a proper attention to food, keeping the body from costiveness, whilst a proper tone is restored to the Intestines, will at length produce a radical cure. In sudden fits of severe pain, the Oil may perhaps, like other Carminatives procure ease, but I am convinced

<sup>1</sup> A. L. S. Virginia Historical Society, Lee Papers, IV. 165. In answer to a letter of Carter's, of November 29, 1774, Lee had sent him, for flatulent colic, the only bottle of Harlem oil that he had brought from Philadelphia.

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that a recurrence to other remedies is necessary to remove the cause. I have not any calcined Magnesia, but surely any common crucible would effect this purpose.

My family are a little indisposed at present, but next week I did propose to visit Richmond, and whilst there, I will endeavor to persuade M<sup>r</sup>: Parker to join me in paying respects to Sabine Hall which always gives pleasure to your affectionate friend.

P.S. Nat brings you a small but well written Pamphlet on the American dispute. A native of Pennsylvania is the Author — But I fancy, by the arrival of 5 Ships of the Line at Boston with fresh Troops, the Ministry propose to try if we can fight as well as write.

TO SAMUEL ADAMS<sup>1</sup>

SIR,

VIRGINIA 4<sup>th</sup> February 1775

I fear the friends of liberty and virtue may wonder at the few efforts that have been made by this Colony since the dissolution of the late patriotic Congress. But tho we have not yet had an opportunity of publickly expressing our sentiments, I think the general private conduct has not been exceptionable. Among all ranks and Classes of people (a very few interested foreign Traders excepted) there appears great unanimity, and firmness of zeal in support of the American cause.

A ship from London, owned by a much favored Merchant here, has been forced to return without being suffered to take a single hogshead of Tobacco, because she had brought a few chests of tea; and every measure is taking to enforce the Continental association. Hitherto we have had no Colony Congress, because our Assembly was to have met early in November, but Lord Dunmores excursions on our frontiers occasioned a prorogation

<sup>1</sup> A. L. S. in initials. Lenox Library, Samuel Adams Papers.

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until the 2<sup>d</sup> instant, at which time many reasons concurred to induce a firm belief that a meeting would then take place. However a few days past, we have been surprised with a further prorogation to the first thursday in May next. This has been followed by a call from our late worthy President, M<sup>r</sup> Randolph, upon the several Counties to choose Deputies to a Colony Convention on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March. A compliance with this<sup>1</sup> now occupies our attention, and will certainly be unanimously obeyed. It seems that this latter prorogation is in consequence of a letter from L<sup>d</sup> Dartmouth forbidding the calling of any more Assemblies, unless the exigencies of an Indian war should render it necessary. How perfectly coincident is this, with the conduct of the Tyrant Stewart race, whose wicked and ruinous policy made them fear to meet their people, and rendered it necessary to deprive the community of the aid resulting from wise and collected councils. The event of their despotism is well known. — May we not hope that the same causes will produce similar effects and that ruin may recoil on the heads of the detestable contrivers of the present unjust and destructive system of Colony Administration? The cause of Liberty must be under the protection of Heaven, because the Creator surely wills the happiness of his Creatures; & having joined the faculty of reasoning with our natures, he has made us capable of discerning that the true dignity and happiness of human nature are only to be found in a state of freedom. You have no doubt seen the speech to Parliament, and from thence may judge what our Ministerial enemies propose for us.

A letter from London 6<sup>th</sup> of december says “the present intention of the Ministry is to declare all meetings and associations in America illegal and treasonable — To guard the Coast against all Traffic and Communication with Holland, France, and Spain. To corrupt

<sup>1</sup> The two words preceding are inserted above the line.

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N. York, and to employ a military force, chiefly from Canada if necessary. Having their designs before you, your attention will be bent to defeat them with all earnestness which the greatest question in the world demands”

Added to this, I understand they propose to forfeit and confiscate all the estates of all those who meet, associate, or combine against the Commerce of G<sup>t</sup> Britain! Should such Acts pass, will it not be proper for all America to declare them essentially vile and void, and that whoever takes or claims any Estate so said to be forfeited, shall be deemed a public Enemy and that it shall be meretorious in any person to put such Claimant to death? This would probably deter, and defeat the wicked design. I find the Ministerial Manoeuver of dissolving the Parliament, has, notwithstanding the timely warning of Junius, answered their purpose so far as to rest the matter now on the firmness of our own virtue, or on the general exertion of the people of England. Tho’ the latter should fail us, I hope the former will be immovable.

The opportunity that conveys this, brings a small testimony of our esteem, in this County, for the patriotic virtues of Boston, and we shall be glad to hear by return of this Vessel that the contribution has been duly received. If any late intelligence from G. B. has reached you, be so kind as favor me with it by Capt. Layton who returns immediately here. Is the fortification on the Neck compleated, how many Ships & of what size in your Harbor, and how many Soldiers in Town? Are your people in good Spirits, and does the business of discipline go on well? I think a certain M<sup>r</sup> Ruggles with you, whose Body itches so much for the stroke of Knighthood, should be first stricken with rods, and then find his fate on that Tree where Traitors to their Country should all hang.

## THE LETTERS OF RICHARD HENRY LEE

I am with very singular esteem Sir Your most affectionate friend and Countryman.

TO ARTHUR LEE<sup>1</sup>

D.B.<sup>2</sup>

[Feb. 24, 1775].

All America has received with astonishment and concern the Speech to Parliament. The wicked violence of Ministry is so clearly expressed, as to leave no doubt of their fatal determination to ruin both Countries, unless a powerful and timely check is interposed by the Body of the people. A very small corrupted Junto in New York excepted, all N. America is now most firmly united and as firmly resolved to defend their liberties ad infinitum against every power on Earth that may attempt to take them away. The most effectual measures are everywhere taking to secure a sacred observance of the Association — Manufactures go rapidly on, and the means of repelling force by force are universally adopting. The inclosed Address to the Virginia Delegates published a few days since in the Gazette will shew you the spirit of the Frontier Men — This one County of Fincastle can furnish 1000 Rifle Men that for their number make most formidable light Infantry in the World. The six frontier Counties can produce 6000 of these Men who from their amazing hardihood, their method of living so long in the woods without carrying provisions with them, the exceeding quickness with which they can march to distant parts, and above all, the dexterity to which they have arrived in the use

<sup>1</sup> A. L. S. University of Virginia, Lee Papers, No. 16. Addressed to Lee at The Temple, London. On the back of the letter under the address is the following autograph note by William Lee signed with his initials: "I will meet you at 7 o'clock tomor/row even<sup>g</sup> at the George & Vulture/in Cornhill."

<sup>2</sup> Dear Brother.

W. L. Sunday./

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of the Rifle Gun. Their is not one of these Men who wish a distance less than 200 yards or a larger object than an Orange — Every shot is fatal. The Virginia Colony Congress meets the 20<sup>th</sup> of next month for the appointment of Delegates to the Continental Congress in May next, and for other purposes of public security. The Ministry who are both foolish and wicked, think by depriving us of Assemblies, to take away the advantage that results from united and collected counsels. But they are grievously mistaken. In despite of all their machinations, public Councils will be held and public measures adopted for general security. Still we hope that the proceedings of the last Continental Congress when communicated to the people of England will rouse a spirit that proving fatal to an abandoned Ministry may save the whole Empire from impending destruction. The honorable Col<sup>o</sup> Lee of Stratford was buried this day, he died the 21<sup>st</sup> ultimo after a months painful illness. He is a public loss, and if the Ministry go on filling up these vacancies in the Council with raw boys and hotheaded senseless people, that affairs of Virginia must be in perpetual confusion, altho the present dispute should be accommodated. It is absolutely necessary that some grave sensible Men should now be placed there in order to temper the present body.

The pamphlet entitled an Appeal &c<sup>o</sup> is, I think, the best I have read on the subject amidst such a variety of finely reasoned ones.

Farewell. —

P.S. By authentic accounts just come to hand, all the Ministerial efforts with New York and the Jersey Governments have failed, both Assemblies have highly approved the proceedings of the Continental Congress, thank their Delegates — and appointed them to represent their respective Colonies in the next May Congress.