LETTERS OF EDWARD BURD.

BY THOMAS LYNCH MONTGOMERY.

[The writer of the following letters, the son of Col. James and Sarah (Shippen) Burd, was Prothonotary of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania from 1778-1805. They do not appear in the Burd Papers, 1763-1828, edited by the late Lewis Burd Walker;—the originals are in the State Library at Harrisburg.]

Edward Burd to his father, James Burd.

February 2d 1765

Philadelphia —

Dear and honoured Sir

I am now confined to the House & have been so this Week with a Relapse of my former Disorder (the Sore Throat.) The Doctor says, I must not be a Drinker, or live an irregular Life—for this would renew it, by enflaming my Tonsals, which are very large.—

Uncle has already taught me something of Geometry and I have begun Trigonometry with him, which he can and will teach me thoroughly. I intended to copy a Receipt for Shining Blacball which will not rub off, & for liquid Blacking, but I will send them in my next if agreeable.

I shall soon be able to number 15—I am so great, that I am almost ashamed of my little Years.

Be pleased, Dear Sir, to excuse me, or desire Mama to excuse me to Mrs Atlee, who was so complaisant to desire me by her Brother to come & see her. It was not through Neglect, but Constraint, having been obliged to keep at Home on account of my Throat, part of the Time she remained here, I should have been very glad to have seen her—As also to Sister Sally, for
reading a Book yesterday, it so beguiled my Time, that there was none left wherewithal to write—But I promise I will immediately set down to write it for the first future Opportunity—I, remaining with great Love Duty and Tenderness to both our Families,

subscribe myself Dear Sir

Your most affectionate and dutiful Son
Edward Burd

Edward Burd to James Burd.

Philad* April 7th 1766.

Dear and honoured Sir

We have just received the agreeable News by Lre from Maryland "that the Repeal of the Stamp-Act had been resolved in Parliament by a Great Majority: The Bells toned in their most musical Changes per totum Diem. But Heaven drooped; the Air was unhealthy; a drizzly, soaking cold Rain damped my Pleasures on this joyful Day. For I am generally affected by the Weather. The moderate Influence of the Sun in Spring Season produces a contrary & superior Effect to culinary Heat. When we chance to have good Weather I feel lightened, renewed enlivened & can enjoy the Benefit of the Open Air with extreme Satisfaction; But when the contrary happens I had much rather confine myself to Home, Fire & Book.

Mr Allen, his two accomplished Daughters, his four Sons and Mr Stewart attend pretty constantly and fill their Pew. One day as I attempted to go into another Pew Mr Jn° Allen pulled me back & went out himself. Aunt Shippen was very kind & offered me a Seat in Church, I have accepted it 'till you could provide me with one in Meeting, (The Cost of which would be annually 10) as I was Sensible you would be unwilling Mr Allen’s Family should be incommode. If my Mem-
ory does not fail, I mentioned something of the Matter, when I had last the Happiness of seeing you, I am

Dear Sir
Your most affectionate
and dutiful Son
Edward Burd

Edward Burd to James Burd.

Philadelphia 3d February 1767.

Dear & honoured Sir—

I send enclosed a small Specimen of my Hand Writing in the Square Text, Set Secretary & round Hands; which I hope will be favoured with your Approbation.

This Part of my Education has been always so warmly recommended to me by all my dearest Relations, that I will endeavour my Improvem' in it at every leisure Time; in Consequence of which extraordinary Application, I hope, at some future Opportunity, to send up a Piece that may give greater Satisfaction—Grandpapa has been kindly pleased to approve a Copy of Mr Shelley's Copperplate 3d, which I wrote him according to his Desire.

I have been learning French with Mr Fooks, since 1st Dec' who has put me, with Billey Allen & two others, to begin Gil Blas after which Book, We must learn Telemachus, & therefore, if You have that Author without English, be pleased to let me have it. Be pleased also to give my Love & Duty to Mama, & my Love to my Sisters—I am, Dear Sir, with my fondest Wishes for the Continuance of your happily restored Health; your most affectionate & dutiful Son

Edward Burd

Edward Burd to James Burd.

Dear & honoured Sir

I have received your agreeable Favor in which you inform me of the Offer which Sister Molly has & de-
sire to know my Sentiments of the Gentleman I am an entire Stranger both to Mr. Grub and his Character but make not the least Doubt of his being a suitable Match for my Sister as I am very certain that he would not have received so much Countenance from those of her Relations whose Duty & Delight it is to take Care of her Interest & provide for her Welfare unless he was every way unexceptionable. As it is impossible for me to be at the Wedding I beg my best Compliments may be given to the Bridegroom with many Wishes of Happiness on the Change of his Condition—I hope to have the pleasure of being introduced to him before I am a great many Months older—

The time draws near when I must launch into the World & provide for myself—I imagine It will be difficult for me to maintain myself at first but I must exercise Frugality & put my Shoulder to the Wheel—Grandpapa, I believe, will lend me some Assistance at my Setting out & I must be very industrious & saving to get a little Money to purchase Books with, which is an Article which I can do Nothing without Uncle was mentioning your House in Northampton as what would help me a good deal—It is dead to you, but would be of great Service to me—Your Family is so expensive that I can’t expect much to be spared by you at my setting out—I should be hard punished I fear if Grandpapa did not give me an assisting Hand—I have some Reasons to believe he will make me a present of a few Books & provide me with some Necessaries; & when once I earn Money enough to purchase a Library I shall reckon Myself a happy Fellow—I expect I shall go to Northampton about the Middle of next Month & perhaps may get admitted at the Court where I may have an Opportunity of seeing the principal People at the County & make Acquaintances—I am already acquainted with Mr. Gordon, Dr Leadlie, & the Sheriff—& Lewis Weiss has promised me a
strong Letter of Recommendation to the Heads of the moravian Society who altho they have not much Law Business to do yet may be of Service by their Influence in the Country

You never acknowledged the Receipt of some Wine Glasses China Cups & Saucers & Fishing Tackle which I sent you—If they have not come to hand I will make Inquiry about the Waggoner who lives near Carlisle —Please to give my Love to Sister Molly & tell her of the warm Wishes of a fond & affectionate Brother for her Happiness any addition of Pleasure to her in the happiness of her Nuptials She may make herself my Debtor for them I am with My Duty to Mama & Love to my Brothers & Sisters

Dear Sir

Your affectionate & dutiful Son

Edward Burd

P.S. I was aboard a Dutch Vessel to day but it was so rainy I had not an Opportunity of seeing y° People—I will try to make a Bargain tomorrow.

EB.

Edward Burd to William Dewer.

Philadelphia 5th Janry, 1771

Sir

Col: James Burd, the Son of Mr Edward Burd late of Ormiston, is my father, and as I know him to be extremely anxious to learn the present State of my Grandfather’s Affairs, & it is impossible to advise him in time of the present Opportunity, I take the Liberty of writing on the Subject to You, as the legal Trustee of the Estate, and a Gentleman in whom my Father has reposed great Confidence.

As it is a long time since my Father has transmitted You his power of Attorney, & he has not since that
time received any Advices from you, he is both sur-
prized, and uneasy—I therefore request, in his Name, 
that you would please to favor either him, or me, with 
an Account of what has been done in pursuance of 
those Powers; and you will greatly oblige,

Sir,

Yours obed' hble Servant,
Edward Burd.

P.S. Mr Sproat makes but a 
short Stay in Edinburgh, & 
will be a good Opportunity 
to write an Answer by.
To Mr William Dewer, 
Edinburgh

Edward Burd to his Grandmother Burd.

Honoured Madam

The Receipt of a Letter from an unknown Grandson 
will perhaps be some Surprize to you—I am the eldest 
Son of Col: James Burd, & as such beg Leave to pay 
you my dutiful Respects—It would be more agreeable 
to my Inclinations to do it in Person, but I fear I never 
shall enjoy that Happiness I am now about 20 years 
of Age, and am studying Law under my Uncle Mr. 
Edward Shippen junr of this City—If ever I should 
have it in my Power to travel, I think Edinburgh 
should be the first place I would visit, as I feel in my-
self a Strong Desire of seeing my Father’s Friends 
in that part of the World—Notwithstanding all the 
Avenues to such an agreeable prospect are closed 
against me, yet I hope I may reasonably expect a Sub-
stitute for it—that my hon’d Grandmother or Aunts 
will not deny me the pleasure of writing to me

Mr Sproat, the Gentleman who carries this Letter, 
sets off so suddenly, that I have not time to acquaint 
my Father, who lives 3 days Journey in the Country,
of the Opportunity—This has obliged me to write myself to Mr. Dewer, & let him know, that my Father was extremely uneasy at being kept so long in Ignorance of his Affairs in Scotland, as he has received no Advices from that Gentleman since the Power of Attorney was transmitted to him—My father has nothing but a Farm to depend upon for the Support of a numerous Family, the produce of which is barely Sufficient for the purpose; A Remittance therefore of his Share of my Grandfather’s Estate would be of the greatest Service to him—Mr. Sproat will make but a short Stay in Edinburgh; he will be a very good Opportunity to write by to my Father, & if my hon'd Grandmother or either of my Aunts will favor me with a Line, it will be gratefully acknowledged by,

hon'd Madam,

Your dutiful Grandson,
Edward Burd

P.S. I forgot to mention that my Father and his Family are well & wo'd doubtless join me in my hearty Wishes for yours and my Aunts Welfare—

Mem'o given to Mr. Sproat.

If Mr. Sproat will take Care to deliver M'n Burd’s & Mr. Dewers Letter, & let them know when he returns to Pennsylvania in order to bring Answers, & would also make some Inquiry what Col: James Burd is to expect from his Father’s Estate, he would confer a great Obligation on his,

Very humble Serv't,
Edward Burd.

(To be continued.)