Dec. 25. 1799

Mayor Burr Sonville
Mecklenburg
Dinwiddie County
Virginia

Dear Burr. Phila. Dec. 25th 1799.

I think this must be the fourth letter which I have written to you & in one of them enclose one to your Mother and as yet have not recd. one in return. I recd one yesterday from Betsy which is the first time that I heard from home with certainty since I left it.

I have just sent over to the Printing Office for yesterdays paper which I meant to enclose to you but none could be had. It contained the steps taken by Congress on the loss of the great & the good Genl. Washington. I expect you will find them republished in the Alexandria paper. Tomorrow is the day that an Oration is to be delivered in honor of his Memory & Genl. Lee is appointed to deliver it. There were some publications also which went to shew that wheat & flour are not so plenty in England as we had understood it was, from which I conclude there is no danger of a good price for the present Crop, flour has sold here as high as $11½ it fell again to 9. & I do not know that it is higher at this time, but it will probably be up again. I have drawn my Opinion more from Publications than from information from Merchants, for my Attention is so taken up with Public business & with the different Members of Congress that I have made no acquaintance among the Merchants.

The Melancholy event which has taken place, put a stop to business, so that nothing of consequence has yet come on, nor do I expect that we shall fairly begin untill the holydays are over. It is a melancholy consideration that Virginia should pursue with such fury her present Policy, the decided Majority of federal characters in the Senate of this state will prevent her Co-operation and I think it very probable that the Election for Electors here will be by districts or that no law will pass on the subject in which case there will be none in the state, We are told the Senate is determined on this Point, the other house however where they have a Majority of two it is said is equally determined on the Other Point. The people are Meeting and preparing Petitions on both sides

McKeans administration is disgusting to the federalists and equally so to the moderate thinking on the other side. His first act after the appointment of Dallas as his Secretary was to remove from office every man dependant on him in the State who voted against him or was not active in his interest. His appointment too of the Pittsburg Brackenridge as one of the Judges of the Supreme Court has displeased many & among them several of his friends who thought themselves as well entitled to the appointment. These disorganisers have hitherto hung wonderfully together, but in this State there are strong hopes that they may split. It is said McKean cannot find places for all to whom he had made promises & there are wranglers. Whether the man of the people as he is called when he arrives here may not find means to reconcile these differences I cannot tell, but he that as it may I am persuaded that Congress will steadily go on with such measures as may be supposed the best calculated to promote the interest & secure the rights of the people regardless of any bugbears which may be set up by way of fright. One serious danger however arises from these circumstances. The French we do believe that they have a fixed and decided strong party in this Country & however they may be mistaken as to the reality of this they will take their measures against us consistant with this opinion & altho' I trust they will in the end find themselves mistaken yet great distresses may be brought on our Country in consequence of it. and if their successes should continue in Europe they may succeed in bringing this Country into their power, for there is one truth of which I cannot doubt, that we have people in our Country who rather than not rule at all would willingly do it with their aide if it was even attended with the surrender of our independance. At the same time I do not believe there are many of these, but they take their measures with such art that great numbers are deceived.

I am anxious to hear whether Mr. Marshall brought any money from Col. Bullitt & how that matter stands, also how futures crop of Corn turn'd out as well as his Pork — I have got a speech of to day which I send. Sara with my affections to all

Yrs

Levin Powell

Phila Decr 25th 1799.

Dear Burr.

I think this must be the fourth letter which I have written to you & in one of them enclose one to your Mother and as yet I have not recd one in return. I recd one yesterday from Billy which is the first time that I have heard from home with certainty since I left it.

I have just sent over to the printing office for yesterdays paper which I meant to enclose to you but none could be had. It contained the steps taken by Congress on the loss of the great & the good Genl Washington. I expect you will find them republished in the Alexandria paper. Tomorrow is the day that an Oration is to be delivered in honor of his memory & Genl Lee is appointed to deliver it. There were some

publications also which went to show that wheat & flour are not so plenty in England as we had understood it was, from which I concluded there is no danger of a good price for the crop. Flour has sold here as high as $11 p bbl & fell again to 9. & I do not know that it is higher at this time, but it will probably be up again. I have drawn my opinions more from publications than from information from Merchants, for my attention is so taken up with public business & with the different Members of Congress that I have made no acquaintance among the Merchants.

The melancholy event which has taken place, put a stop to business, so that nothing of consequence has yet come on, nor do I expect that we shall fairly begin

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Congress will steadily go on with such Measures as may be supposed the best Calculated to promote the interest & secure the rights of the people regardless of any bugbears which may be set up by way of fright. Our Prime danger however arises from that Circumstances, the French will believe that they have a fixed and decided strong party in this Country tho however they may be mistaken as to the reality of this they will take their Measures against us consistant with this Opinion & altho' I trust they will in the end find themselves Mistaken yet great distresses may be brought on our Country in consequence of it and if their Successes should continue in Europe they may succeed in bringing this Country into their power, for there is one truth of which I cannot doubt, that we have

people in our Country who rather than not fight at all would willingly do it with their aid if it was even attended with the surrender of our independance at the same time I do not believe there are many of them, but they take their Pleasures with such Art that great numbers are deceived.
I am anxious to hear whether Mr. Marshall brought any Money from Col.n Bullitt they say that malitt stands, also how fortunate crop of Corn turn'd out as well as his pork – I have got a paper of 1st day which I send.
I am with my Affections to all
Yrs
Levin Powell.

Dec. 25. 1799

Major Burr Powell
Middleburg
Loudoun County
Virginia