

Timothy Pickering, Jr. to Timothy Pickering

Yorktown, Virginia, February 23, 1778.

Autograph letter signed, 2 pages.

York Town Feb.^y 23. 1778.

My Honoured Father,

With much grief I received the account of your indisposition; but at the same time was happy to find you rather growing better, & that there was a prospect of your recovery. Not that I deemed you anxious to live; I supposed the contrary: -- but whether to live or die, I know you are perfectly resigned to the will of Heaven.—But for the sake of your family & friends, I wished you to live yet many years: that I too might again see you, & manifest that filial duty which I feel, & would cheerfully pay, to your latest breath.

When I look back on past time, I regret our difference of sentiment in great as well as (sometimes) in little politics; as it was a deduction from the happiness otherwise to have been enjoyed. Yet you had always too much regard to freedom in thinking & the rights of conscience to lay upon me any injunctions which could interfere with my own opinion of what was *[inserted: my]* duty. In all things I have endeavoured to keep a good conscience, void of offence towards God and man. Often have I thanked my Maker for the greatest blessing of [2] my life—your example & instructions in all the duties I owe to God, and my neighbour. They have not been lost upon me; tho' I am aware that in many things I have offended, & come short of my duty. For these things I am grieved; but not as those who have no hope.

I am deeply indebted too for your care in my education; I only regret that I improved my time no better.

But altho' the line of action I have pursued has not always been such as you would have chosen; yet (but I boast not) in regard to religion and morality, I hope you have never repented that I was your son. By God's grace I will in my future life aim at higher attainments in those all-essential points; not only from a sense of duty to my Creator—from a regard to my own happiness here and beyond the grave—but that I may never wound the breast of a parent to whom I am under so many and so great obligations.

My love and duty to you and my mother,
conclude me your obedient son,

Tim. Pickering jun^r

To M.^r Tim.^o Pickering