

Lucy Clarke to her son Washington [in Virginia T. J. Campbell's handwriting]

Montcalm, April 11, 1843

My dear son,

You must forgive me for not writing to you for so long and leaving unanswered two letters which I prized so highly. I have not been well for sometime & night before last about two o'clock you had a little brother to come into the world. He is a fine little fellow & I have named him John Campbell. He is the first little boy born on the hill that has lived since the birth of James and you may be sure they all make a great deal of him. Mary and Lizzy are perfectly delighted & want to be always looking at him. He is so little yet that I scarcely know who he will favor. Miss V. says she thinks he looks a little like you. Your stepfather John has not been well for sometime. He has a decayed tooth & his face is swelled up as if it would [*beal?*]. He was here last night & had it poulticed [*sic*] with tar & ashcake. Your grandma Lethe has been sick all this winter and is worn away almost to a skeleton. She has not suffered much pain but complained constantly of weakness & sometimes can hardly walk about in the kitchen. She talks a great deal about dying & always seems entirely resigned to the will of her Lord & master. Since the weather has become so fine she walks out every day & seems anxious to be well enough to go into the garden & to attend to her chickens, ducks & turkeys [*sic*]
—we do hope the change in weather will be of benefit to her & restore her yet—but she is now very frail. Your aunt Hannah has been much afflicted with rheumatism and scarcely ever able to go about two weeks at a time without a spell of sickness. The swelling in her shoulder has gone down but her arm is still almost useless. When she is able she is generally moving about doing something. They both talk often of you and are glad, as well as all the rest of us, that you continue to be a good boy and try to do your duty in every thing as you should. I hope my dear son that you will always try to do what is right. [pg 2]

You would be pleased if you could just take a peep & see how busy every person is on the hill this morning. Master has gone down to Hunter's hill to see about the farm there, which he is going to have worked himself this year—He will have the principal part of it sown in grass & clover. Mistress is superintending the workers here; first she is in the east porch directing Richard about spading the garden & William, Jack & James about wheeling in manure, then she is at the front door making Margaret & Frances carry away the leaves & trash in baskets & showing David how to trim up the trees & bushes & saw off the low pine limbs--& now she is at the west window looking at Michael harrowing with the grey horses in the west field which is very much enlarged [*sic*] by the addition of Mr. Fairman Preston's meadow which makes the field go beyond the house where Col. Railey used to live—Mr. Watson lives there now. Page is ploughing [*sic*] in the same field which is to be planted partly in oats and in corn. The wheat is in the field back of the well. Jefferson is working in the yard with David. Eliza & Mary have washing to do today & aunt Hannah assisting them. Eliza is just beginning to get dinner now. Mary & Lizzy are running about on the green grass as happy as larks. The children talk a great deal about you & one evening last week Aunt Patience's little son came [*home? here?*] & as soon as Lizzy saw him she ran up to him & said it was her brother Wash and then ran into the middle room that her brother Wash had come. I wish you could hear Mary & Lizzy saying their poetry. Francis leans anything by heart very easily & she always teaches the little ones what Miss V. teaches her. She says "The little busy bee" very [*politely?*]. Margaret knows three pieces of poetry very well which she has learn while she was putting Miss V.'s room to rights in the morning. This is a good plan & keeps away evil thoughts & keeps ones mind rightly engaged while their hands are employed & I hope my dear Washington does the same way and that while he is employed in the field or at any other work that he is thinking of what he has learned about God & about his duty to his fellow beings & to his own soul. I hope, my dear son, that you will never steal or tell a lie, nor be indecent in your conduct. Try to govern your disposition so that you may not be ill-natured or quarrelsome with any person. & always be kind and obedient to those who have the rule over you & then you will get along so much better. I hope you will try to keep the Sabbath day holy for I believe that if a person spends that day right, that is serving God with an undivided heart, the whole week will pass off in the happiest manner. My dear son you cannot do all these things unless you are assisted from on high & that you may be assisted you must daily pray to your heavenly Father to give you a heart that is inclined to do what is right and never forget when you pray to ask God to forgive your sins for Christ's sake. It is a most excellent plan for every person when they go to offer up their prayers to God [*each?*] evening, to think over their actions thro the day & if they have done wrong to any person, if they have been angry and said anything to offend or to hurt their feelings, to go & ask them

also to forgive. This will humble a person so much that they will not be apt to do the same thing soon again. I hope you will think of these things often, Washington.

You have not told me anything about little Lucy—I hope she is a fine girl & would like to see her much. Why do you not tell us something about all the servants. I feel much obliged to Madaline for her kindness to you & I hope you will try to return her kindness by always being kind & obedient to her & trying to do what will add to her happiness & comfort. I am very sorry to hear of dear little Alfred's sickness & still hope it make be the Lord's will for him to recover. [pg 3]

Tell Top & Henry I often think of them & hope they will be good boys. Remember me also to Uncle Lewis & to Bob-- & also to the servants at Mr. Kelly's and to Mas' Wm's other servants. Give my love also to all the white people. Your grandma Lethe always wishes to be remembered to them all. She and everyone of the servants here send their love to you. You can't imagine how glad we were that Jerry came be so as to bring us letters & tell all about you. Edwin is still working at the blacksmith's trade & is hired to Mr. Fulcher. Your uncle Richard, awife [*sic*] Sarah was here Sunday. She is a very clever woman.

[*sideways*]Give my particular love to Vesta. I often think of her—[*illegible*] joined the church a few weeks ago & seems to be in deep earnest seeking the Lord. He had joined the [*illegible*] society just before Page has also joined the [*illegible*] society.

Now be a good boy my dear Washington. I am more anxious about this than anything else. Your little sisters, brothers, & Lizzy's love to you. & accept the sincere love of your affectionate mother,
Lucy Clarke