

Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections

<http://archives.dickinson.edu/>

Documents Online

Title: Letter from Samuel Barlow to George Curtis

Date: October 17, 1881

Location: I-Original-1881-1

Contact:

Archives & Special Collections
Waidner-Spahr Library
Dickinson College
P.O. Box 1773
Carlisle, PA 17013

717-245-1399

archives@dickinson.edu

No 35 William St
New York Oct 17. 1881

My Dear Mr Curtis:

I have read the Buchanan
MS with much care & I am clearly of opinion
that you should not print any considerable
portion of what you have written on the subject
of his engagement to Miss Coleman.

Mr Buchanan's actions with reference to the
bulk of the Coleman papers, show conclusively
how he desired the subject to be treated.

He never spoke of this matter, in so far as
I have heard, except in the most vague way,
& then he never gave Miss Coleman's name.
In a long confidential talk in London, he
said to me "I never intended to engage in
politics, but meant to follow my profession
strictly. But my prospects & plans were all
changed by a most sad event, which
happened at Lancaster when I was a young
man. I found the most wealthy & influential
family in that part of the State, hostile &
desirous of breaking me down. There was no
cause for this, but I saw I must leave my
home, or fight my way. As a distraction
from my great grief & because I saw that
through a political following I could secure
the funds I there needed, I accepted a

Ornamentation."

I would mention the fact of this attachment: that it was finally broken by the death of the lady: that to this great grief is to be attributed his change of plans, & his political career: that he was true to this, his first & only love, during life: that he carefully treasured & guarded the correspondence with this lady, while he lived, & in dying ordered the package to be buried, unopened: & thus end, as you have already done, that his grief ended with the grave, & with the just & fitting tribute to Miss Lane, that was, which you have written.

And this is all. In this view Mrs Barlow agrees fully. Such a statement would be creditable to Mr Buchanan: it would learn ^{no one} ~~any~~: it would clear the lovers' quarrel & the Father's injustice unnoticed, & it would prove that the President was, after all human & filled with sentiment & heart, of which in public, he exhibited more too much, for his own reputation. How well I remember Miss Lane in London! - A noble gentlewoman, the peer in grace, beauty & manner of any Lady in England, & afterwards in the White House, truly, the first Lady in the land.

In truly
Yours
Geo. Ticknor Curtis Esq
Nannah L. M. Barlow

No 35 William st

New York Oct 17, 1881

My Dear Mr Curtis:

I have read the Buchanan Mss with much care & I am clearly of opinion that you should not print any considerable portion of what you have written, on the subject of his engagement to Miss Coleman.

Mr Buchanan's action with reference to the bulk of the Coleman papers, show conclusively how he desired the subject to be treated. He never spoke of this matter, in so far as I have heard, except in the most vague way & then he never gave Miss Coleman's name. In a long confidential talk in London, he said to me "I never intended to engage in politics, but meant to follow my profession strictly. But my prospects & plans were all changed by a most sad event, which happened at Lancaster when I was a young man. I found the most wealthy & influential family in that part of the State, hostile & desirous of breaking me down. There was no cause for this, but I saw I must leave my home, or fight my way - As a distraction from my great grief & because I saw that through a political following I could secure the friends I there needed, I accepted a nomination."

I would mention the fact of this attachment: that it was finally broken by the death of the lady: that to this great grief is to be attributed his change of plans, & his political career: that he was true to this, his first & only love, during life: that he carefully treasured & guarded the correspondence with this lady, while he lived, & in dying ordered the package to be burned, unopened: & then end, as you have already done, that his grief ended with the grave, & with the just & fitting tribute to Miss Lane, that was, which you have written.

And this is all. In this view Mrs Barlow agrees fully - Such a statement

would be creditable to Mr Buchanan: it would harm no one: it would leave the lovers' quarrel & the Father's injustice unnoticed, & it would prove that the President was, after all human & filled with sentiment & heart, of which in public, he exhibited none too much, for his own reputation. How well I remember Miss Lane in London! - A model gentlewoman, the peer in grace, beauty & manner of any Lady in England, & afterwards in the White House, truly, the first Lady in the land.

Yrs truly

Geo: Ticknor Curtis Esq.

Samuel L. M. Barlow