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Maryland Voices of the Civil War – Excerpts from A. B. Davis Papers

Source: Allen Bowie Davis Letters, 1855-1904, MS 1511, MDHS

In 1861, Rebecca Davis, daughter of Allan Bowie and Hester Ann Davis, discovered that her parents and brother all had different views on the crisis in Maryland. Allen B. Davis was a prominent planter in Montgomery County, Maryland.

From her father:

“I am glad that Maryland is still in the Union – it would be utter ruin and devastation for her to attempt to secede [sic]. The South could not protect her and she would be prey to the northern hordes.”

Source: A letter from Allan Bowie Davis to Rebecca [Davis], May 14, 1861, A.B. Davis Papers

From her brother, William Wilkins Davis:

“. . . I hereby announce myself . . . a straight out “Southern Rights’ man . . . I remained by the Union as long as I could, but when I saw it was the intention of Lincoln & his crew, to convert into a despotism [tyranny], the fairest, & best government ever instituted by mortal man I can no longer support a man whose avowed intention is to subjugate [defeat] the South.”

Source: A letter from W. W[ilkins] Davis to [Rebecca D. Davis], May 22, 1861, A.B. Davis Papers

From her mother:

“. . . you and perhaps I will witness most extraordinary and unlooked for changes in the aspect of things . . . and yet many in our state helpless, unarmed, and entirely surrounded by the U States troops at the risk of having Baltimore sacked and burned (which I think she narrowly escaped) the whole country devastated, even the wealthy utterly impoverished, the poor made poorer, thousands abused and massacred in cold blood . . . we may not like the present [Lincoln] administration, nor endorse its acts, but we had better bear the ills we have than fly to others that we know not of. Let Maryland remain neutral and she may ride out safely this awful storm.”

Source: A letter from Hester Ann (Wilkins) Davis to Rebecca Davis, May 24, 1861, A.B. Davis Papers