

Lord Berkeley to H.M.

50933-4

When I entered into the second Marriage, in my own mind there were a thousand chances against the solemnization of my first Marriage ever being proved. At the time of that Marriage and for some years after, it was absolutely necessary it should be concealed. In spite however of all precaution it was much talked of in Gloucestershire where the Marriage took place, which caused me to write to Mr. J. Cupman the Clergyman who married us, to say that if I heard of it again thro' his means from that moment I would forsake him. In consequence of that Letter he sometime after informed me that he had been forced to destroy the Register of the Marriage or it must have become more public; at the same time he added he had risked his life to serve me by committing a Felony. I shuddered at the act; but miserable as it made me, I could not in honor bring a Man to punishment

who thought he acted for my happiness (so he
falsely made me believe) I could not therefore
bring my Marriage forward in his lifetime; the
Person who acted as Clerk was not to be found;
Mr. Tudor was in a public Capacity exposed to
great risks; and myself at a time of life likely
to die before Mr. T. Cupman; Lady Berkeley in
danger of being left in the world without a
possibility of proving her Marriage; in this
perplexity a second Marriage was judged
expedient. So doubtful was I of my first
Marriage being proved without the Register,
that after the Death of Mr. T. Cupman I
desponded, till lamenting the sufferings of
Lady Berkeley to a Friend of mine, he differed
in opinion and desired leave to draw out the
Case for the Opinion of Counsel: The Opinion
of Counsel was found favorable — it opened
my eyes to the enquiry — it relieved my
mind of a load it had long laboured under —
I longed for an opportunity of doing justice
to Lady Berkeley's Character by making my

Lord Berkeley to H.M.

50934

First Marriage public. That I have now done; and I fear no dispute between my Children; my every wish is fulfilled - my eldest Son established beyond all doubt. These Facts I have stated, trusting your Majesty will see the little reason I had to think I could ever bring to proof my first Marriage when your Majesty condescended to enquire of me at Weymouth.

Now I became necessitated to keep my Marriage concealed, it would take up too much of your Majesty's time to state: but I trust your Majesty will believe it was owing to a train of unfortunate Circumstances brought upon us by the errors of other people. It pleased God that Lady Berkeley should have to bear in her early youth a load of Misery, under which she conducted herself so as to reflect honor on herself and all that belong to her.

This paper was delivered up
to James's April 25th 1800.
by Capt Berkeley