



MSS295 Thomas M. Reynolds letters to Louisa J. Seward, American Civil War Digital Collections: Letters, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.

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Transcriptions by Center for Digital Collections staff.

Thoughts upon a visit to "Camp Fisker"

Leaving Dover at an early hour this morning, I rode to Camp with a friend. The morning was beautiful in the extreme, and as we rode leisurely along admiring the beautiful attire, in which nature has clothed hilltop and vale, we almost lost sight of the fact that we were paying the last visit to the 3rd Delaware "boys"

But as we drew near we were suddenly aroused from our reverie by the distant strains of that beautiful tune "The girl I left behind me," and casting my eye in the direction of the camp, I witnessed one of the most solemn, yet grandest spectacles, that ever met the eye in that locality. Through the front avenue leading to the "depot" led by "glorious strains" filed the "noble sons" of Delaware, on either side stood the bereaved ones of earth, gazing intently at the "files" as they passed on, perhaps to look for the last time upon that noble son, who, fired with the patriotism of a Cincinnatus had left perchance his plough, and rushed forth to defend his Country's flag.

Thus meditating upon the ~~scenes~~ different emotions exhibited around me, I stood motionless, and, not until the last file had marched beyond me did I move slowly forward. By this time I had become deeply interested in the scenes, transpiring around me, and looking into a carriage by the wayside, I beheld, seated alone, a beautiful young lady, gazing vacantly in the direction whither the 3rd had gone. I did not speak to her, her grief was too deep, it was holy! But as I passed on, it pained me to think of the "fortunes of war" to which he (her lover) was exposed, and that perchance the hopes she so fondly cherished, were doomed to be crushed to earth, that the eye that so oft had smiled might grow dim in death, the form she so fondly cherished become a victim of "Battles gory tide," I dwelt no longer upon this sad picture, but passing on I was soon amid the more stirring scenes of Embarcation where the

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Officers stern commands of "March in" were heard along the whole line, the soul stirring word Good Bye was being uttered amid the sobs and tears of hundreds.

Here and there might be seen the fond mother with her youngest-born, pushing through the dense crowd, perhaps to present for the last time her darling babe to its dear Father, and he snatching a fervent-kiss and again pressing him fondly to his manly bosom, is soon lost-amid the crowd in the cars. She to return to a fatherless home and prayerfully await his return. Oh what a theme for the reflective mind, what days of watching and toil awaits that-fond mother; while he is battling nobly for his Country. what-eye can witness such scenes and not be moistened with the tear of pity, or be kindled with indignation at the infernal propagators of this wicked rebellion. Other scenes might be enumerated equally touching, but I will not attempt to portray them.

I might speak of those "fair ones" left-behind whose only ties were those of friendship, and whose relations that were severed were not of consanguinity, yet their tears were sacred, I did not blame them, theirs is the province to weep and pray, ours to strike, yes "till the last-armed foe expires," And we must-remember too that-though many who left were strangers to us yet far away perhaps dear ones were weeping nightly for them. And that-youth who stole quietly to a seat in the car, unnoticed and perhaps without an encouraging smile from all that-large, assembly, was his mothers darling boy, who only a few days ago doubtless she had bade go forth to battle for his country and his God! Did she not weep? yes bitter tears were mingled with those admonitions which only a mother can give, and which will follow him amid the excitement of the march, the monotony of Camp life, yea; even amid the din of battle will they be present-with him. But-I will not write longer,

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They have gone, and ere they again return, their ears will have been greeted by the angry roar of an enemy's gun,

Oh may the God of Battles defend them, may they fulfil nobly their ~~return~~ righteous call, and be permitted to again return and gladden the hearts of those for whom they have dared thus nobly to go forth,

T. M. Reynolds

NB. I might remark that ere "another moon shall wax and wane," I too shall have gone to share with them the "fortunes of war"; and if I fall a victim upon the altar of my country I hope with my expiring breath to be able to exclaim in the language of Virgil, "Dulce est propatria mori," (It is sweet to die for ones native land)

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T.M. Reynolds

Louisa J. Seward

[Faint, mostly illegible handwritten text on lined paper, likely bleed-through from the reverse side. The text appears to be a letter or a journal entry.]