


3-9-1863

## Letter from Thomas S. Armstrong to Editor

Thomas S. Armstrong

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Letter from the 78th Regiment.

Meridian, Miss. Feb 15th, 1863

EDITOR COCKER:

Our Division (Logan's) will start down the Mississippi, for the vicinity of Vicksburg, to-morrow or next day. Last night, we received orders to be in readiness, (with three days, cooked rations, in haversacks,) to move at a moment's warning to-day. But the transportation arrangements could not be completed, in time to get aboard the boats, before night. So we are here, (1 1/2 miles from the city,) waiting for further orders. A large number of transports are at the Landing to-day, being loaded with soldiers, and army supplies. "Things are working" down the river. Regiment after Regiment, and Brigade after Brigade, are moving down to strengthen the Union army, now in front of the rebel "Gibraltar," and unless I am very much mistaken in the signs of the times, you will ere long hear glorious news from General Grant's army. Although the undertaking may cost thousands of precious lives, and make many to see sad and desolate, Vicksburg, the stronghold of rebellion, must, and will be taken. The raising of the blockade by the Ram "Queen of the West," and the later daring exploit of the U. States gunboat, "Tadpole," in passing all of their batteries without having received a single shot, is having a good effect upon all of our soldiers, and a depressing effect upon the rebel sympathizers in this vicinity.

In behalf of the regiment, allow me to say to friends at home, that we are going where duty calls us. Some of us may fall by the way, far from the scenes of our youth, and the friends that we love. But if we do, let me give the assurance that the consciousness of having added our name toward the crushing of this accursed rebellion, and the restoration of our once glorious (but now distracted) nation, will, in the hour of death, have a charm, which no traitor's heart can ever feel.

To those at home, who are craving for peace on any terms, (and whose sympathies are with those in armed rebellion against the best government the sun ever shone upon, or the world ever saw,) let me say a few words. You have done all that you could, to discourage enlistments. You have denounced the President of the United States, and his entire Cabinet, as Abolitionists, wishing for the overthrow of slavery alone, caring but little for the true interests of their country. You have time and again written treasonable and discouraging letters to soldiers in the field, and in some instances, have been the direct cause of desertions from our army.

You have been deluding yourselves with the very foolish idea that peace could be had by simply asking for it. You have said that the Government could never be restored to its former tranquility and prosperity, and by uttering such sentiments as the above, you have said indirectly to our noble army of patriots and heroes "Lay down your arms and come home." Shame on such men. The fields of Donelson, Shiloh and Corinth, will cry out from their graves, and appeal to you to look at the homes made desolate, the wives made widows, the children made orphans by the fiend succession, and the question is asked, how can you play a traitor's part with all these things staring you in the face? The dead not only cry out against you but the masses of the soldiery say there is an account to settle when they get home. They say that they volunteered to fight traitors, and that they intend to do it, wherever such are found. If you would not invite bloodshed in your midst, I implore you, as a friend of justice and right, to stop before you farther go. Let your sympathies be with the Union soldier in the field. Show by your actions and words at home that love of country and hatred of rebellion has taken deep root in your hearts, and that those who are enduring hardships and suffering privations, (that you may enjoy peace and happiness in the future) may have at least your good wishes. To the true and loyal hearts of the North, I would say in of good cheer. "The darkest hour is just before day," and though the present seems dark and gloomy, daylight will soon begin to dawn. The glad news of "victories won," will soon swell the heart of every true American with pride and cause the nation to rejoice over the success of her arms. We are generally pretty well.

Colonel Leggett has not yet received permission to "shoulder stars," but I hope that he will soon, as he is in every respect a true soldier and fine officer. He is well. Lieut. Colonel Z. M. Cassidier commands the regiment, and is at present enjoying pretty good health.

I have just learned that we have to strike tents in the morning at 7 o'clock. The Pay Master is to be here early in the morning to pay us for September and October. We are all ready to receive the Greenbacks.

JOHN W. A. GILLESPIE.

The starting of the Masters.

The Richmond Wide clones over the destiny.

February 28, 1863

Letter from the 78<sup>th</sup> Regiment<sup>1</sup>

Memphis, Tenn. Feb. 19<sup>th</sup>, 1863

Editor Courier:

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<sup>1</sup> Zanesville Daily Courier, February 28, 1863, P. 2

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