

[Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers](#)

VMI Archives

Manuscript # 00103

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Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to daughter S. Wellford Corbin
1861 April 25

Richmond
25 Apl 1861

My dear Wellford,

You can best serve the cause by staying at home, planting corn & potatoes, than you can by coming here. There is a great press here. The people along the river are wanted at home to form police, guard, & c.

In great haste. yrs.

M.F. Maury

Don't come

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to wife, Ann Herndon Maury
1861 April 27

Richmond
27 Apl 1861

My dear wife-

Saw Lt. Carr this morning. He was Dave's Captain. Dave was a first rate soldier- enjoyed the trip, and got back all safe & sound.

I look for Dick from Washington this morning. He went for our things. He has an appoint of "1st Lt. of Volunteers for Services in Council Chamber." So you see how he is tied down in Richmond and can't go to the wars - now I do hope that will make you quiet and comfortable. Corbin is back too & Dave. Why my dear we are as happy as the day is long. Ain't we? Very busy today. Hope for a quiet time tomorrow.

Kiss my Lucy. What is that boy a'doing? Why didn't the girls write - are you going down with Nanny - Had you not better come up next Saturday for church - maybe I'll meet you.

Yr M

Tell Nannie I got all her letters and to thank Mason for all of them.

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1861 May 18

Richmond
18 May 1861

My dear Corbin,

Your letter of 15 came to hand last night. I shall go up to Fredericksburg this evening if nothing unforeseen occurs to prevent. I hope to find you there, but in case I should not go or going should not find you I write this in answer to your many questions now.

You did right to decline Col. [Ruggles] [] present offer, for he had no authority of law to make such an appointment.

If you raise a company you will be mustered into the service as volunteers, and will then be furnished with arms.

So far I have not succeeded in giving practical effect to my plan of organizing all the remaining white population in the border & tide water counties into a home guard to act in case of inroads & marauders as guerrillas. I did hope to bring into this organization all able bodied men & boys between 15 & 60. The law opposed difficulties in the way of this, and I did hear that Gen'l Lee who highly approved of the plan is going to carry it into effect by calling them out as militia. What the precise details of the militia organization are to be, I cannot say. But I suppose that as its objects are the same it does not in the main differ much from the guerilla plan. I think so highly of this plan that I have sought to have it turned over to us navy officers looking upon it as the most honorable & useful service that the times offer to us.

This too is I think the best service for you, and for reasons both public & private. It is highly important service and a double duty to the state--you fight for & help to raise bread for the people at the same time. Sallying forth with [sword] in hand today--tomorrow with the pruning hook or sickle. The private reasons are: your whole fortune is imperiled, and it will require all the personal attention and the best management of which you are capable to save you from ruin. I myself being a cripple have to conform myself to circumstances and to accept such occupation as those circumstances will allow. So it is with you- you by leaving home to serve the state now, would probably do it at the sacrifice of your entire fortune- and that you are not prepared to do. The true course and the brave course for you is cheerfully to adjust yourself to circumstances & then do the best you can.

Tom Maury has just called me out with a telegram that his child is dead. Yrs, M.F. Maury.

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law S. Wellford Corbin
1861 June 20

Richmond
20 June `61

Dear Corbin,

I got your note last night and went the first thing this morning to see the Governor. If he musters you into service, you will fall under the President who can send you where he pleases. Thus the Governor:

I heard a member of the convention from Tidewater complaining yesterday that two companies in one of the lower counties had been mustered into service with the express understanding that they were to remain in their own county and they had been ordered away. They were volunteers. So you will understand that no bargain can be made with you as volunteers, short of 1 year's service to go wherever the President chooses to order you.

As to guerrillas: the convention has that subject up now and he, the Governor can do nothing.

Thus you have a full account of the result of the interview. Thorburn has [gave] up the country- after referring your letter to the Gov. I thought it useless to mention the matter to him. If you conclude to go as volunteers how would Jack Maury do as your Capt.? He is at Gloucester Pt.

I am very sorry to see our guerilla scheme fail, but the connotation is we have both done our best and all that can be done.

Love to Nannie
yrs M.F. Maury

The Council was abolished yesterday and I am relieved of duties.

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to wife, Ann Herndon Maury
1861 July 18

Richmond
18 July 1861

My dear wife,

I have just learned from the Sec. War that the boys at the university are not to be taken into service. They remain undisturbed. I shall so write Dave this day.

I shall go down to the central cars today at 2 1/2 hoping to meet Dab. He can have his folks at the junction. Come here spend 2 or 3 hours & join them in the 5 p.m. train for Fredericksburg.

Hollins has charge of the Naval defenses of James River- and will be cavorting about I suppose, & Dick with him. This will be more agreeable than a stay at one place.

There are many flying rumors about the street this morning such as the landing of 30,000 troops at Norfolk, 20,000 at Aquia Creek & c- and that they are moving upon Richmond. It is now 12.20 and no official dispatch has been received, so there is nothing in it. But I wish you all would fancy to make a visit to Albemarle until the denouement takes place. I suppose the enemy will run upon us somewhere soon and the sooner the better for us in my poor judgment.

Now you know I don't want to give alarm and I know no more about the enemy's plan than the newspapers tell us. Still our armies cannot remain much longer as they are and I had rather see my people a little further off. God bless you

M.F.M.

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to daughter Diana Maury Corbin
1861 September 18

Charlottesville, Va: Ridgway
18 Sept 1861

My dear Nannie,

Your two letters came yesterday. The great drawback to what you call "a celebrity" is this being called on by friends for 'influence' and help, where you are powerless. [?Kennedy's] inquiry I imagine had no such bearing as you seem disposed to give it. I know Mr. Corbin is missed all the time, and you may know that I am not going to permit any opportunity of having him to pass unheeded by. I understand that he did not want a commission at first when he was trying to raise that company - and now I suppose it difficult except in the Confederate Service and there I am powerless. Bless your heart for offering us your house. I have not been able to find - yet - suitable accommodations in Charlottesville. Moreover I am distressed by what they tell me of typhoid fever there - and moreover Fredericksburg is "powerful sweet". I am waiting for the word from Richmond to go ahead with the submarines. There is no chance for a Ltcy. in the Navy for Mr. Corbin. I think a good of his affairs. The give us solicitude. Dave and C. Minor went off a'recruiting yesterday. I think you had better come to us. We will take care of you for a year and that will help Mr. C. along with his interest.

Yr. Dad.

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to his wife, Ann Herndon Maury
1861 November 20

Richmond
20 Nov 1861

My dear wife

I do not go to the Miss. just yet if at all. The committee has the matter of steam launches up. I shall wait here for the result of their deliberations. I cannot speak positively about you and home Saturday.

Tom left for Manassas Wednesday morning. He took the turkey and all.

Nan and Lewis and the general were here. Now returns to Bowling Green this morning. Lewis went this morning to Norfolk. Jack came up from York River yesterday. He returns tomorrow.

The hoop skirts cost \$6.00 -[Bill] waits further orders before giving \$12.00 for the two.

Miss Fanny Perkins left the day I arrived. She went down to Norfolk Wednesday morning with the General's check in her corset and the other "preciouses" behind the photographs in her album.

How are my sick? All still mending I hope. Kisses to everyone.

Yr. affectionate, M.F. Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1861 December 9

Richmond
9 Dec `61

Dear Corbin,

Your leave is extended to the 1st Jan. unless Kennedy should sooner require your services. The leave with his letter to you go up to him this evening. Buchanan grants you the leave. I have seen it. So there is no mistake. K. no doubt will send it you.

Dave is off in the morning.

Love to Nannie,
Yrs. in haste
M.F. Maury

{in pencil} Send it to C.

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to daughter Diana Maury Corbin
1861 December 9

For Nannie
Private & Confidential
Dec. 9.1861

My dear child,

Milly's death is a sad blow. You will feel it as such and miss her mightily. A law has passed authorizing the appointment of 50 Navy Lts. to serve during the war. I do not know what rules is to be adopted with regard to appointments; but it has occurred to me that Mr. C. might stand a chance if he would like the place. If so, let him file his application with Mr. Mallory and interest his member of Congress on his behalf. If I know that you and he desire the place, that is enough. I'll help it and if I can.

Say to Blackford that the only understanding between us was that I was to stay there until I could find a place to suit us both and that he would live with us - one offsetting the other. That he had better get some of our mutual friends to fix the visit. It had better be by the month, for he may want to sell and I man find a more suitable house. We lack another room or two sadly - We'll will attend to the execution of any papers that are required in the processes. God bless you my daughter

M.

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to his wife, Anne Herndon Maury
1862 January 30

Richmond
30 Jan.

My dear wife,

Will came yesterday and told me that you were poorly and also of the great thinning out. You must feel very quiet if not lonesome. I don't get much from Will about the school. Of course they are done with Mr. J.

I'll leave it entirely to you as to whether one or both shall come home. They should come soon and we should know the day so that Dave may be at the cars. Dave is a precious fellow. He has been a great comfort to me, but he and I do not think that this clerking of his is exactly the thing for him. I think I shall give the place to Bob who returned last night.

I have written to Lynch asking him to take Dave with him for a little while. We are waiting to hear from him. The answer is daily expected for I wrote about 10 days ago. L's answer will determine the Lad's course, whether it will be back to you, or down to the south - or rather the Sounds of N.C. Tell Nannie I have exhausted myself upon Corbin both with Buchanan and the Inc. What I said seemed to go in one ear and come out of the other - S.C. must muster up his political influences and push them. 25 or 30 of the 50 Lts. that are to be made will come from the "Old Navy" including cases like Smith's and from the Masters and Mid of C.N. The rest are I believe to be made out of the resv. C. will come in with them if at all I suppose.

The "Doc" got off this morning, much to my relief.

I have got a pair of shoes at last which I can wear when the foot is only 1/2 swollen. I have them on this morning for the first time. I have ordered another and a larger pair, so I have them of three sizes.

I know my brood is doing fine in Latin. How is Lucy and the Musik Glum and the philosophy Totts and the writing. A Kiss to everyone I am dying to see you all but can't tell about coming.

Yr Aft M

Did Jno get the money Dave collected for him?

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1862 May 1

Richmond
1 May 1862

Dear Corbin:

I have this morning yr's of 29th. Wrote you yesterday - nothing from Fredericksburg since Dave went up there this morning hoping to take a peep of an hour or so upon the blessed group. I shall expect him back to-morrow. His appointment will probably be made out by that time. When he will put out west of course he will bring letter which I shall hasten down to you.

In haste
Yrs MFM

The examination as I understand it relates only to midshipmen.

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1862 May 4

Richmond
4 May `62

Jas. M. Johnson [Hd.] carpenter of Rootes party left sick at Custis' Quarters reports himself for Norfolk today - without money. I lend him \$3. which he promises to return to you 1st pay day. Please get it. Dave I expect will be off in the morning.

It is the case of yr[house on fire at night]. Your duties for the moment are and ought to be the all absorbing subjects with you. Not only yr prosperity, but your life and liberty are at stake. And you will be lucky and ought to be happy to escape with the last two.

A letter from Dick - all well.

Yrs.
M.F.M.

- That's right. Keep your mind occupied. Don't despond or despair. The enemy has the power to possess himself of Richmond - of the Miss River and of all the Tidewater country. Look upon that as more than likely.

To Lt. Corbin

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1862 May 5

Richmond Virginia
5 May

Dear Corbin:

I have just time to say this is [the] 3rd or 4th. Have yr's of 2nd. The army came over into Fredericksburg yesterday. Nothing since direct from our folk since Dave was there. He will perhaps go off in the morning.

In haste yrs
M.F. Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1862 May 24

Richmond
24 May

Dear Corbin:

Nothing from Fredericksburg since Brodie's letter of 13th. I have an idea that the place is evacuated. I tried yesterday and the day before to get Totts back with the aim of sending her there- Mr. White wrote to say the Alsop's went last Wednesday and he thought there would be no difficulty about Totts. I am afraid now to bring her down. I may be down to the Bluff tomorrow. Gave Lt Davidson of the [] a letter from you yesterday. Jack has gone down to take command of the battery below you.

Yrs. in haste

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1862 June 1

1 June '62

Dear Corbin,

Dick was hit yesterday in the right arm, breaking one of the bones, His wound is very much such as one as Dabney's only not so bad. I went out and brought him in. He was wounded early in the fight, but not until he had resisted the charge and driven back two Yankee regiments. Dick is a gallant fellow and has won the name "immortal" for his regiment - so says the Yankee General Hancock. His horse was killed under him and he was struck 4 times. He will be well in about 6 weeks. He is in my room laughing and talking as I write.

My admirable Pettigrew was killed. I write in haste. Send word to Jack about Dick. Nothing from home.

Yrs.
M.F.M.

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1862 June 5

Richmond
5th June 1862

Dear Corbin,

This morning brings in yrs of 3rd. Dick is walking about the streets and is doing well. No chance to Fredericksburg and nothing from them. I hope to get off to Albemarle with Dick next week. Jackson gives us a bright spot. In all the directions around the horizon the clouds lower upon us.

Yrs. M.

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1862 June 19

19th June

Dear Corbin:

This will not come to hand in time for you this morning.

Dick and I hope to get off for Ridgeway Saturday. I tried today an order for 3 Irish servants to be sent from New York. Dabney is acting Major General. Price and his staff are loud in his praise of Dab and Cave.

I [?] Nannie's letter for time was short.

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1862 July 14

July 14 (1862)

Dear Corbin:

Looked for you yesterday, but your two letters came this morning. George has arrived at Ridgway from Fredericksburg. Dick has sent him back to get his marriage license. Nothing from Nannie or Betty. Yankee pickets are about Bowling Green. Will is home in status quo. Gen Minor has letters from Fredericksburg of 11. [Nannie] [Gardner] was very ill with typhoid fever. Harry Hasbrouck is our prisoner. I have his photograph picked up on the battlefield. I only know the mail does not go to Fredericksburg. I hope to get off this week. A letter from Dave of 3 Oct. Doing well.

Thanks for Nannie's letter. Betty had a letter from Nannie after her arrival in Fbg. I suppose Dick will be married as soon as he gets his license.

Yrs. truly
M.F.M.

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1862 July 19

Richmond
19 July

Dear Corbin:

I am sorry I did not see [you] again. I am off to Ridgway in the morning. Letter from my wife of 16 - Dick's license had not arrived. It was due that day. Betty is still in Carolina. Don't know when she goes back. My wife will return next week, say the last, I reckon.

I write in haste. Read last night - letters from Dave and Dab of y. Still there, well and rejoicing over Richmond. Let us hear from you at Ridgway. My [] for news from home will be mainly thru you and Will.

Yrs.
M.F.M.

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1862 July 29

Richmond
Exchange Hotel
Room No 12
29 July (1862)

Dear Corbin:

Pope's order No 11 - brought me and my wife down to-day. Our people will have to come out of Fredericksburg now. They can't stand that. I want to get authority to-morrow to send up there. So come up to town as soon as you can after the receipt of this & we will lay our plans. Give my compliments to Lee and say you coming will be a personal favor –

Yrs in haste

M.F. Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1862 July 30

Exchange Hotel - No 12
30 July

Dear Corbin:

Pope's order to arrest everybody in Fredericksburg that will not swear allegiance makes it necessary to get our people out. I am here for that. Come up to day. I want your help. Get his permission to ask for a leave of 10 days, if you find it necessary, at any rate come up to day.

Yrs.

M.F. Maury