

Litchfield March 20<sup>th</sup> 1807

My very dear Maria

By this you will perceive that I am not unacquainted with events that have given you much uneasiness the occasion of my writing this is that I know ~~on such an occasion~~ in such cases the mind is returning to the event and inquiring whether it can be justified my dear child your conscience if rightly informed must acquit you ~~in~~ of any guilt in dismissing Mr Maxcy for I have no doubt that you struggled with your reluctant affections to make them yield. This you found impossible <sup>the</sup> consequence must have been if you had preserved <sup>d</sup> until you had given your hand you would have done it without giving your heart this would have <sup>been a</sup> step that could not <sup>have</sup> been retraced and most probably would have been a source of grief ~~not only~~ to you & would have been injustice to him you must with an aching heart <sup>have</sup> lived a life of deception and after all your attempts to conceal from him the real feelings of your heart would have been made in vain my dear Maria you could not have solemnized your engagement without wounded conscience for it would have been [a declaration?] that your affections were placed on him & no oath is more solemn than the marriage vow I have no doubt that your conscience does acquit you but probably the thought of what others may say gives you some uneasiness I hope it will not it is not of great importance what anybody says when our conscience does not condemn us

[p2]

and certainly it is of very little consequence if the [censure?] does not arise from those <sup>with</sup> whom we are acquainted & whom we love & esteem and ~~if~~ <sup>I</sup> am sure from what I have known of things of this nature and I have had some acquaintance with them that my dear child will not be less beloved than before by her acquaintances you may wish that you had never given any encouragement to Mr Maxcy's [passion?] in the first instance doubtless you do but it will be difficult for you to pass any severe censure upon yourself for this- your knowledge of his strong attachment to you and your tenderness ~~for him~~ of nature and wish to render him happy might lead you into an error but never stained you with any fault of heart no person living who is acquainted with you but what will attribute it to the same source that I have done that ~~if~~ <sup>this affair</sup> was continued so

long has the same origin I know my Maria you was  
trying to deceive yourself and at times even imagining  
that you had an attachment for him and all this  
was done out of tenderness show tenderness to Mr Maxcy  
[such a ? torn] tho it may occasion regret for the  
[mistake?] will not render you less lovely in the eyes  
of your friends if my opinion allows you any consolation  
do not suffer the consideration that I may be partial  
to you on account of my friendship for you to detract  
from it for this is an opinion that I have many years  
found in such a case trials my dear we must have  
whilst we are in this state of pilgrimage  
[p 3]

it is best that it should be so it is our interest & our duty  
to make a wise improvement of [them?] they should teach us the  
important lesson that there can be no reliance on any thing  
this side of the grave for permanent happiness they should  
lead us to put our hear in our Immanuel to be willing  
to surrender ourselves to our creation if it has this effect  
we shall have ~~all~~ <sup>infinitely more</sup> ~~the~~ happiness that <sup>n</sup> this world can afford us  
~~us afford~~. it will be the happiness of rejoicing let what  
will take place that the Lord God our [?]  
and we shall meet our pious friends in that world of ceaseless  
joy where there is neither sin or sorrow. Mrs Reeve sends  
to you her kindest affections please ~~at~~ to accept of mine also  
your affectionate friend

T Reeve

[Reverse]

Miss Maria Talma<sup>d</sup>ge  
New York

[Right margin in pencil]  
from my excellent  
friend Judge Reeve on  
an important occasion

Benjamin Tallmadge collection, 1933-19-0, Series 1: Correspondence, 1776-1856 Folder  
28: 1807

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