

"I WILL NEVER SEE

ENGLAND AGAIN"

SEPTEMBER 17, 1862

THE HAGERSTOWN PIKE

SHARPSBURG, MARYLAND

A New Song By Oli Claffey Company 'C', 10th Louisiana Infantry

It was the 17th of September, 1862.

Sometime after six in the morning, we crossed the Hagerstown Pike, just south of the cornfield. Starke's Louisiana Brigade was on the far left of the Confederate line. To our right came the 6th Wisconsin and the 2nd U.S. Sharpshooters. We wheeled to face them and in doing so, exposed our left flank, which was soon enfiladed by grape and canister from a Yankee battery. We were in a bad spot but put up a gallant fight with only a rail fence for cover.

Joseph Joyce, a sergeant with company 'D', 10th Louisiana, went down when a minie ball passed through his side. Joe was a good friend of mine. He was bron and raised in England, a shoemaker by trade. I had lived in England for seven years and when we met at Camp Moore, we found we had a lot in common. We spent many a night around the campfire, talking about the old days and singing many a song.

General Starke was killed, we were being shot to hell and the order went out to fall back to the cover of the West Woods. Everything happened so fast. I wanted to save Joe but in the smoke and slaughter and carnage that was Sharpsburg, it was impossible to take back any of our wounded.

As we regrouped, waiting in reserve, the battle raged on. I thought of my pard, Joseph Joyce, lying bleeding out there and there was I, powerless to help him.

Joe died at the rail fence. How long he suffered, I know not. I think of him often and what may have gone through his mind as he lay bleeding to death.

This song, "I Will Never See England Again", is dedicated to the memory of Sergeant Joseph Joyce, company 'D', 10th Louisiana, he who died on the Hagerstown Pike: born in England in 1829, died in America in 1862, he of 33 years. Joseph Joyce is one of twenty-four men from the 10th Louisiana who were killed at Sharpsburg. His place of burial is known but to God. Though he be dead, he shall live forever in my memory.. He shall live forever in my song. To you Sergeant Joyce, with deepest respect, I remain in your awe, a humble re-enactor

Sergeant Oliver Claffey, Company 'C', 10th Louisiana Infantry

Lee's Foreign Legion

I WILL NEVER SEE ENGLAND AGAIN

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As I lie on this grim field of suffering and pain
The fightings all over for the wounded and slain
A damned Yankee bullet went through me today
I watch as my lifeblood is oozing away

I will never see England again
I've fallen with thousands of gallant brave men
I feel myself fading, for death I am waiting
I will never see England again

As a boy I roamed through the meadows and hills,
When the hounds chased the hare, I remember the thrills,
We chased the Yankees, had them on the run,
But now I am dying, shot down by their guns

I will never see England again
I've fallen with thousands of gallant brave men,
Angels are calling me, the devil is hauling me
I will never see England again

God bless our colours, how glorious they flew
As we marched like lambs to the slaughter
I drank whiskey and coffee, tea and cold beer
Oh what I'd give for one last drop of water

I crossed the Atlantic, my dreams to fulfill
But that all was for nothing, for now I am killed
In a hundred years will they remember us all?
What will they think of this madness at all?

I will never see England again
I've fallen with thousands of gallant brave men,
A banshee is wailing, my eyesight is failing,
I will never see England again

I hear music playing, someone is saying
I'll never see England again
I will never see England again