



Thomas Montgomery and family papers.

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Letter No. 8. Minnie's letter to  
 South Bend April 20<sup>th</sup> 1863  
 to Dear Father  
 Jack & Charlie & Sandy.

I write you once more  
 a few lines from my old room here  
 in South Bend. My arrival here  
 to day was so unexpected, as was  
 our departure last Friday, but  
 change is seldom one's companion  
 will often occur in a persons  
 lifetime, and especially in a  
 Soldier's life. This is only a  
 foretaste of what awaits us in  
 the coming summer and during  
 the remainder of our term of serv-  
 ice in the 1<sup>st</sup> Utter. State. I was  
 in Middlebury my Company is  
 that "Bully Company" which  
 here that night. and pitched  
 their tents in front of the barracks.

Next morning, Lieut. Col. Marshall  
with a company of Cavalry started  
in pursuit of the Indians.

About noon, 2 other companies of  
Cavalry arrived, and immediately set  
out to join Col. Marshall. The last  
we heard from them, he was leading  
them on after the Indians.

The Indians on Thursday morning broke  
into a dwelling house, where two  
of Co. C. Boys were staying for the night  
and shot one while asleep both with  
ball and arrows. The other on hearing  
the noise jumped up and had a  
scuffle with the 2 Indians. Knocked  
one down and drove them away  
taking with him as he fled the woman  
of the house who was also wounded  
and whom he carried on his back.  
This second soldier was also wounded  
severely. He and the woman were  
barely rescued by their comrades, as the  
Indians followed them.

About 20 of Co. C, who were stationed  
 near there in a stockade, on hearing  
 the noise in the morning, started out  
 in pursuit, and were deployed as  
 skirmishers and firing on the 3 or 4 in  
 sight when one who ventured ahead  
 of the others was shot in the arm.  
 The wounds were brought to the fort  
 yesterday & will be brought to Mankato.  
 Another person was attacked while fishing  
 and his throat cut and his scalp also  
 another woman and boy were tomahawked  
 but will recover. The doctor yesterday took  
 the point of an arrow out of one of the  
 boys, but could not get out the ball  
 at present. Friday night after we had  
 some supper, 6 of our boys with their rifles  
 had to go on guard that night. Col. Lamm  
 & I were on last night and were ordered  
 this morning by having to march.  
 The Col sent up a dispatch yesterday to the  
 Major who is in command, for our Co. to return  
 to day to South Bend, which we did starting at  
 7 o'clock.

12  
We reached the halfway house at 11 A.M.  
and rested some time and had dinner  
and reached here at 5 P.M. Our march  
to day although as long and harder for us  
carried our knapsacks most of the way, was  
much more pleasant and not so tiresome as  
the march up. The boys were in good spirits  
to get back from tents into our comfortable  
quarters, and gave 3 hearty cheers as we broke  
camps. Company C. occupied our quarters in  
our absence. But left for their former quarters  
on our return. On the whole the march was  
beneficial to us, for it broke us in, as it were,  
and made us estimate what we ought and  
what we ought not to take along.

This morning as our rations run scarce, we  
breakfasted on potatoes & coffee, and at dinner  
on mince cracker & pork so we could not express  
our gratitude to seat ourselves for supper,  
around our old tables, where Tom Hanyan  
gives us what he calls "the dead loads" a new  
thing. We had 3 eggs a piece with butter, &  
fresh bread, meat, coffee &c for supper which  
was quite a contrast with us in camp.  
We are going with our plate or shingle for what we  
were to get. Tom is an excellent cook. He says  
he wants to put "hair on our breasts." We have  
bacon, beans, beef, puddings, &c regular.

How long we will stay here I cannot say. It may  
be for some time, unless something unusual occurs.  
C. & S. was went up with us, feel bad, about staying  
up there alone. Their Capt. tried to get back to Indian  
& let us stay, but the Col. would not grant this request.  
The Col. means to punish them for their bad conduct,  
and they know it too. Perhaps we may have to assist  
in punishing the Indians, west. It is a terrible case.  
I unpacked my box, and with me very things again. I want  
to see some of you up, but don't put yourselves about for  
I can pack my things up when I please and send them down, if  
I do not go down myself. I receive the paper with I hope you are  
doing well with the old man, and his wife, and their children, for farmers & the

I feel frustrated after the trip and  
hope to enjoy myself here a short-  
time once more. I hurt my feet a  
little going up because I wore my  
boots, but - this morning I borrowed  
a pair of shoes, and walked much  
easier. in fact do not now feel as  
stiff or sore, as when I left this morning.  
I hope this will find you all well  
also. Mr. Hobson's & Peters wives are  
up here now, also Mr. Kitchley is here.  
The Country west of this is beautiful  
one extended prairie as far as the eye  
can see with here and there an oak  
grove or beautiful lake to beautify  
the scenery, or relieve the monotony  
of continuous prairie. but the houses  
are few and far between sometimes they  
are several miles apart. Madelia so  
called consists of a half doz houses  
within sight of the fort over a quarter  
of a mile apart. and on the Watonwan  
River. The fort, Cathe, Fort Cox, is very well

6

situated for Indians. It is of an octagonal form with a long log house joining one side, and 2 or 3 other little houses all surrounded by a breastwork of logs and prairie soils. Last night some of the refugees that were in Mankato ~~wintered~~ <sup>wintered</sup> the fort all winter and with whom I was acquainted showed me the facts from the fort where the Indians pursue them and where some of their neighbors were killed. As there was a light rain all day we feel damp and our guns are quite rusty so we will have quite a job to morrow cleaning up generally. It is now nearly 11 O'clock time as I slept little last night. Being on guard I guess I will go to bed.

I want each of you to write to me again. I was glad to receive the last letter. Tell me how you are getting along with the spring work, and how the stock is increasing. Give my compliments to the neighbors. Count, to John Jones &c. I will now come to a close for the present and with love to all bid you good bye.

From your absent brother, one of the brave soldiers of the Watonwan

J. Montgomery

L. B. & Sandy }  
Montgomery }  
Chester & Minn }