



Thomas Montgomery and family papers.

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Head Qrs. Provost Guard
Port Hudson La. May 19th 1864.

Dear Parents and Brothers,

Through the kindness and mercy of an All wise Providence, I am again permitted to write you a few lines, hoping they will find you all in the enjoyment of good health.

Many changes have transpired in the world since last I wrote, and not a few in Port Hudson. It more, who I informed you before was sick is now numbered with the silent dead. He died Monday the 16th inst at 12 O'clock noon, of typhoid fever, induced by the malarious influence of the climate. He was taken suddenly sick Apr²⁸th the day the Reg. moved, was taken to the Reg. Hosp. and removed from there to the Post Hospital on the 13th. I was to see him every day. It was evident - his end was approaching, although he refused to believe it himself. He grew weaker every day, but rested pretty easy. He was conscious to the last, a few days after he was in the Hosp. He talked on religious subjects. He sent for me several times, to talk with him. The Chaplain also visited him often. He truly repented of his past sins and resolved to be henceforward a Christian. It gave him great satisfaction to read & talk with him on religious subjects. The Captain & I went to see him on Sunday morning, and I signed the payroll at his request.

He was last heard from 12 miles out, and was treated well
having had a horse furnished them to ride. The Rebels
had one piece of artillery, then killed some contraband, broke
up the farm burnt down the saw mill, Dr. Roy's house &
other buildings. Our Cavalry pursued them killing some and
capturing two, who were turned over to me, after being examined
by the Genl. I had them clothed & examined & then took them
to the Guard House & put them in irons. The Genl. told them
if any of our men were injured he would hang them to the
highest tree in Port Hudson. They used to live close by.
Thus we lost 3 officers & several men in as many days.
I have been selected twice, for ~~to~~ on a special mission, by the
Genl. First on the 14th inst. he had me report to him with 50 men.
He then gave me instructions, and a written order, placing
me in command of the "Louisiana Belle". I took the boat, got
up steam and with 50 men took a sail down the River
about 8 or 10 miles to Prophet's Island, to arrest one Fullam, a Rebel.
I landed one half at the head of the Island, and marched them
down along the shore, sending the others on the boat, to come after
me. I posted myself from some colored folks, (the only reliable
authority for information) and hastened down in advance of the
boat & found my man, arrested him by surprise, and had all
my job finished, when the boat came. He then returned to
the port, coasting along the River, bought some vegetables &c. &c.
reported to the Genl. with my prisoner & took him to the Guard House.
To day I was called on for all my available force, and sent
down to the stockade, to arrest one man & confiscate his
property. I took 50 men with me, & executed my orders.

He was very restless, wanted me to come and see him again in the evening and write a letter to his wife. I returned in the evening, found him more restless, and ^{he} wanted to postpone writing till the next morning. He wanted to see the Chaplain & I sent him up ^{Monday} morning he sent for me at 10 o'clock and I went & found him dying. He could not speak, but I think he knew me. I remained with him till he died. He passed off very quietly, without a struggle or a groan. I had him laid out in full uniform. I took some men & dug his grave in a pretty spot, about 3 miles from here, one mile outside of the outer works.

He was buried Tuesday morning, with military honors. I had the post Band engaged for the occasion. The lost Capt Bailey Tuesday morning also, & he was buried Wednesday morning. He was only with the Regt. a few weeks. On last Sunday morning, our Regt. lost another officer also. Lt. Moulton Co. E. He was guarding a stockade 2 miles south of our Regt., near the Gov't farm, Saw mill &c, and had 20 men, when he was attacked by the Rebels, about from 150 to 300, early in the morning. They fought a few minutes, when he advised the men to look out for themselves, and they all left the stockade & made for our outer line of defense. Lt. Moulton had nearly reached there when the Rebels, who were all mounted intercepted him and took him prisoner, not however before he dropped three of them as they say. Three of our Regt. were killed and several wounded also some of the Rebs. were killed & wounded. They took the most of the guard prisoner, but all escaped except the Lieut.

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I was all over the ground of the fight on Sunday morning but was not afraid, although four Rebs. were there the day before & fired on several of our men. My wife was enraged at what I do. I found one loaded Colt's Revolver & a bag of powder under the bed clothes, also 3 guns and 30 or 40 pieces of clothing supposed to be stolen. also \$100 in Confederate money. My Captain is getting horrible & day sick leave and takes \$150 for me to Chicago & some other point where he will express it to your address in St Peter Co. B. is now on Provost Guard duty with Co. H, as the Prov. Marshal & Genl. would not consent to my returning to the Regiment. So I have now command of two companies & like my duties as well as ever. I enjoy myself very much and as far as I can live rich on fruit of all kinds, berries, vegetables &c. We only pay 75 cts per pound for butter & in proportion for all else. I understand that I have been recommended to Genl. Thomas for promotion to Capt. So note it be. I am in a hurry to send this with the Capt. who will mail it at Chicago. I hope this will find you all well. I had a letter from Cousin Isabelle. Morrow all are well in Ireland. More particularly next time. I wrote her. I also heard from H. E. R. Talbot who is well. The 7th Div. is in Paducah Ky. Weather is very fine pretty warm. I want my money used to the best advantage. Don't be afraid to give plenty to religious & charitable purposes as I often get some money above what pays my wages. Respects to all the friends. Write soon. Love to all, Yours in haste, Tho. Montgomery