



Thomas Montgomery and family papers.

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Head Qrs. Co. "B," 67<sup>th</sup> U.S. Inf. (colored).

Port Hudson La. May 27<sup>th</sup> 1864.

My Dear Mother.

I sat myself once more to write you a few lines hoping they will find you in the enjoyment of good health. Your letter of the 6<sup>th</sup> inst. I received on the 22<sup>d</sup> just as Cap<sup>t</sup> Whitford was starting for home. I was very well pleased to hear from home so speedily and that your health was not worse, and sincerely hope it may long continue very good. I trust I may be spared <sup>and then</sup> the pleasure "When this cruel war is over" to return home, to find you in as good health as when I left for the war.

I was glad to hear that you were all getting along so finely with your spring work, and that the crops were looking so fine. What do you think of new potatoes, beans, peas, greens, cabbage, blackberries, lettuce, onions, radish &c, &c, which we of the Provost Guard, have been feasting on for nearly a month.

Being on Provost Guard duty, we had an abundant chance to procure such eatables, and very often had distinguished guests at our humble board, to partake of our vegetables, eggs, fish &c, which they could not get at home. Such were the Provost Marshal, our Col. 4<sup>th</sup> Co. & Major, & other officers. Butter at 75 cts a lb. & eggs at 60 cts per doz, &c costs something, but, we are bound to live,

But Provost Guard duty with me has ceased for the present, as my command of Cos 'B' and 'H,' have returned to the Reg. by order from Post Hd. Qrs. The Provost Marshal was loth to let us go, but the reason was a lack of officers and men in our Brigade, as all detailed from our Brigade were relieved also, and our places taken by white recruits. When you consider that an order exists, preventing detailed men to be absent from their Regts, more than 3 weeks at a time, & that we were absent two months, you may guess we won the esteem of the Provost Marshal & the Genl. and we did for we saw the third P.M. and the Second Genl. in Command before we were relieved. One thing I am happy to say, we done our duty well, and had the approbation of the Genl. Comd. who complimented me several times. I am glad however in many respects to return, & take my place in the regiment. I had the name of arresting & confining more prisoners, than all else combined, I confined in all about 400; preferred charges against two, & made written statements against six. But now that is ended & I am peacefully reinstated in the Capt. ad place, only I have my tent looking better; having a good board floor, bunk with good mattress, & mosquito bar hung around, an arm chair, 4 camp stools, a fine desk to hold Comp books, papers &c, which cost \$12, and in my cook tent a mess kitchen which cost us \$28 in St. Louis, all very handy, Then I have a good cook, laundress, & washwoman, all together in the person of the wife of one of my Corp's, a fine yellow gal, very kind and good to me, and also very quiet & industrious, her name is Elizabeth Estell, almost white, & well formed, makes splendid pies, biscuits, dumplings and any thing else we want.



The weather is very warm now in midday, but the nights mornings and evenings are luxurious. We have been sprinkling the streets to allay the dust, which is very plenty.

Our Reg. was reviewed and inspected this week by Col. Barrett of the 1<sup>st</sup> Mo. Comdg our Brigade, and Co. "B." as usual bore of the palm. Co. "B." is very small now. I only reported 20 private this morning for duty. I have in all only 75 men, and 28 are absent sick in St. Louis & New Orleans, and 15 present sick. I have lost by death 32 men & one 2<sup>d</sup> Lt. My Co. is about an average. I reduced my Orderly Sergt. to the ranks this morning, for misconduct. He was until lately a good Sergt. & had the name among the officers, of being the best in the Reg. but lately I did not like his actions, and he was reported to me by several for the pernicious habit of stealing, but last night I caught him. He entered my cook tent and filled his haversack nearly full of flour which I had just purchased, & took it to his tent. In the morning Lizzy told me some one had been in there last night & stole flour, & suspects him. She accused him of it, & he denied. She watched & saw him take the flour under his arm & hide it in a hollow, where it was found & brought to me. He denied it, though seen doing it, but I reduced him. I had lost confidence in him so had the Capt. and all the boys. He has now found his level, as will every one who acts so. Lizzy I can trust. If my men were disposed to steal, they might rob me of everything, as it is very often open to them but I must say, they are very honest, and trustworthy. My Cook is honest & saving. I have saved during May, in Comps. rations \$208.64, for my whole detachment, most of which goes to Co. "H."

May 27  
I received a letter lately from Lt. Falbot of the 18<sup>th</sup>. He had been sick but was then recovering. I received his photograph. I was amused to hear him ~~tell~~ about Oate Carter, Capt Carter's brother. I will give his word "As I was parading down Fourth Street last week, putting on a huge amount of style, about the first object that greeted my eye, was the figure of our Nate, with his knapsack strapped on his back, bound for Dixie to join the Regt.; he was just returning from recruiting in him. It would have done you good to see him stare. He said it seemed that I had been getting up in the world lately, I remarked very complacently, that every one would find their level sometime. The last glimpse I caught of him, he was scratching his head and looking very dubious. I think that level question troubled him; I think it may trouble others in Co. K. also. Yesterday I was relieved as officer of the day, being summoned to appear before a Military Commission, to give evidence in the case of W. B. Haught, whom I arrested near the stockade, when they appear before their superiors. The commission consisted of 8 Colonels & some officers of lower rank & I was sworn and gave my evidence. The court also had my written statement. The Red River expedition is returning & to day the Cavalry passed down, opposite here, the infantry comes down on boats, the expedition was not as successful as was hoped it would be. Very little of interest is transpiring here, except the hurry to complete all the works grubbing stumps &c. We occasionally hear an 8 or 10 inch Columbiad fired off at some heedless boat that won't mind the 12 pound howitzers. I have just received some Western papers much to my satisfaction. St Paul press, Milwaukee Sentinel &c. I was pleased and very much interested to witness & hear negro religious exercises last night. After an eloquent sermon, they had such a prayer meeting as Cleveland might not have been ashamed of in her palmy days. They sang favorite hymns in a full feeling strain. This being my second chance to hear religious exercises since I left St Louis, I remained till it was over and my mind wandered back to the time when such meetings were common. But these meetings in the still moonlight on the open strand of our camp are as affecting almost as any I ever attended. There are many devoted earnest Christians among the ranks of our Regt. and many able preachers. Your letters are gladly received and read by me and I try to live up to their valuable precepts. I hope you will continue to write as you have done, & pray as you still do, that your absent son may not err from the path of honor and right. I sent home \$250, by Capt Whitford which I hope you have received ere this reaches you. He was to press it to St. Peter for me, use it largely for charitable & religious purposes, at least one tenth. Remember me to all my friends, would like to hear of their welfare. Give my compliments to Lt. Manning & tell him I am doing well, & may soon have another bar on my straps. Please write of less & direct as before. M. C. B. 67<sup>th</sup> U. S. I. (C). Port Hudson La. Hoping this will find your health improving, wife close by, remaining your affectionate son. Love to all  
Thos. Montgomery, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Co. B. 67<sup>th</sup> U. S. I.