



Thomas Montgomery and family papers.

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Colt. J. Montgomery (Via Cairo)
Co. 1st Regt. U.S. & July 21st
Morgauzia La

(27)

Port Hudson La July 21st 1864
Guest in a Steam Boat

Dear Bro James Charles.

I have the pleasure of writing to you once more from Port Hudson, and I hope this will reach you speedily and find you well. The reason for me being here is this. Our Regiment had amassed a company fund of nearly \$1000, when we were ordered to leave here. The papers were all made out in the proper manner, examined approved &c. so when the time arrived for the payment, a petition was got up to the Regt. and a leave of absence of five days was procured for me, without my knowledge and handed to me by the Adjutant. Accordingly I prepared to visit this place, and had a great number of errands to attend to. I have to bring up to Morgauzia, several boxes of clothing &c. Chests &c. On the evening of Tuesday I got aboard the splendid and magnificent floating palace the Leviathan and had a luxurious sail down the River to Port Hudson. How delightful it is to get on one of these fine boats and enjoy the cool breeze of the River in these hot days. Soon supper time came round, and what a supper we had in contrast to our camp meals,

The Leviathan brought down late St Louis Papers
and also our Colonel. A. J. Edgerton, who landed
as I got aboard. She also has aboard some Regiments
of reenlisted Veterans, on their way back to New Orleans.
The boom of the gun at this point, announced that
we were approaching Port Hudson, and about 8 P.M.
we landed, & I went my way without delay to
the Provost Marshal's office, and found it in
the hands of Capt. Bailey my old friend, who
of course furnished me with a night's lodging
& for whom I had a late paper, containing the
Rebel raid on Washington, the capture of the
Electric Spark, Gen. Franklin & other news.
Yesterday after breakfast I set out on my business
and worked hard all day, almost finishing.
Last night I found our old Hosp. Steward who
is staying in the Office of the Medical Director
and I stayed with him last night, as he was
alone, the Surgeon being in New Orleans.

I had indeed a fine soft bed to sleep on last night
in a nice bed room, seen, and had a fine
breakfast this morning. I now write this
letter in his office, because I intend to go back
to Morganza to day on the first Gov't Boat
if possible & by mailing my letter here to get
it as much sooner. I got all my business attended
to but getting the C. Savings, the Com. of Subsistence
having no funds in his possession.

This place is now in command of Genl. McNeil.
and looks very fine. The fortifications &c. are
about completed & it can stand a long siege.
The River is now very low, but still the gun-
boats patrol the River anchoring in the middle
of the stream before such places as Morganzie
Bayou Sara, &c. The consolidation of the La.
Regts. is causing quite a stir in this department.
The different Regts are moving about. & it is rumored
that we will come back here, but I doubt it.
I would like to go to New Orleans, but my pass
only says Port Hudson. The officers of these
La. Regts. who only have their appointments from
Gen. Banks, are not pleased. Many a one wishes
now he belonged to our Mo. Regts. They cannot
take our appointments from us, or muster us
out, without express orders from the President.
I am thankful that my lot has been cast under
such favorable circumstances. I am thankful
also to Almighty God that my health is so good,
and I trust as long as I am in the South, that
it may be spared. Some of the Officers of our Brigade
have gone up North on a sick leave. I trust never
to be forced to do so. Yesterday I had the pleasure
of eating some fresh peaches, which grew opposite
here, they were delicious. Canned fruit is very high here.
Canned peaches, berries, or chicken, mutton, or any kind is no
less than one dollar a can, so for all kinds of canned
meats.

Other things costs in like proportion, 8. per bbl. for fresh
potatoes, 10 cts a lb for onions, 50 cts for cheese, 65 for butter
25 for crackers, 20 cts for a lemon, 10 cts for a glass of lemonade
or soda water, then those who drink have to pay for it, from
25 cts to 50 cts a drink. Yesterday I bought a pair of shoes
(gaiters) and paid \$8.50, a hat some time ago \$2. which would
only cost in the north 75 cts or a dollar, ^{thus} a hat costs 10.
Coat \$45, pants 15, boots \$10 to 15, shirts \$5, vests 5-10
So you see soldiering costs something here especially to officers
But some day, \$130. per month, can stand all that & more
to. So it can, but less money can be made to send home
If all be well I think I will send a box of clothing
home the first chance, some surplus clothes I have,
I now have spun my letter out pretty long and not
exact sense but I am bound to fill the sheet.
I suppose when you receive this, you will be busily
engaged with harvesting, I hope you will have
good crops, and have success in getting it harvested.
Day before yesterday I crossed the river from Morgantown
100 men went over to cut poles for a commissary shed and
after they loaded them on the boat, they fell in line
& got aboard & it was as long as to see what plunder
they had with them, sacks full of green corn, of
melons, & nearly every man has one or more
chickens. This is the way to soldier in an enemy's country.
Remember me to all my Clements & other friends
in the neighborhood, I would like to hear from
John Jones, I must now close. Please write to me
often, write any thing but write, I will never object
to receive a letter from you should it be daily.
I send my love & best wishes to Pa, Ma, Bro Sandy
& yourself, Excuse my scribbling. Sweet as
before, I mailed you a letter here yesterday.
Write soon and believe me your affectionate
Bro, Thomas Montgomery.