



Thomas Montgomery and family papers.

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Camp 67th Regt. U.S. Colored Inftry.
Morganza La. Aug 31st 1864.

Dear Father and Mother:-

(68)

Your kind and welcome letter of August 5th came to hand yesterday, the first in three weeks. I was very glad to hear that your health continues so good and that your stock and crops look so finely. I was getting anxious to hear from home once more, but when I did hear I was pleased to hear such good news. Lizzie was pleased at the illusions made to her. She has just started to night on the Steamer "Edward Walsh" for St. Louis, in care of Lieut Edgerton, who will take her with him as far as he goes, and will forward her the rest of the way. I gave her my old valise and money enough to pay her way up respectably. I think she will go by St. Peter, if so I gave her a letter to Hon. A. Tibbet, U.S. Land Office, who will take care of her, and direct her home. I sincerely hope she may arrive safely, it will be for her and your good. I trust if she reaches you. Col. Barritt who commanded our Brigade went north on the same Boat. He is very sick. Our Colonel Edgerton commands the Brigade in his absence. Lizzie in her haste away to the levee forgot her hat, fan, &c. but perhaps I can forward them. She appeared rather reluctant to leave, this last time, being disappointed by so many Boats.

Although I have been unwell at times since coming here
(as who has not) yet my General Health continues to keep very
good. Last week I was on duty every day. This afternoon I
had command of 220 men, at work on the Fort. I go on this
duty every other day in the afternoon, acting Field Officer of French.
In the forenoon the Regt. was mustered for pay. We number
over 600 men, besides the officers, but I understand it is soon
to be recruited. The men continue to die off fast. I have
lost 18 men during the last two months. I now have 56,
nine of which are absent. We soon expect to be paid. I still
have money left, (which few can say just now) but I will
have to refund largely when paid, to the Co. Fund and others.
The boys will draw largely at next pay day. Their wages
from Jan'y 1st will be the same as white soldiers.

We are still in our old camp, and a good clean one it is.
The other Regts of the Brigade have moved inside the levee
leaving us in the front alone. I have been very busy for
a few days in making out my Muster Rolls, Monthly
Returns, Report &c. but this sort of business I like, and
what is best, I am able to do it all myself.

I like my new company very well. I intend to make it the best
in the Regt. and to be the best Captain myself. There may
be others equally as ambitious, but I mean to be best
nevertheless. This is the only principle on which to succeed.
Love to all Your affectionate Son, Thos. Montgomery

Best Love to all, Hope soon to hear from you Hope Lizzie is there from
tell her "Wells" is well.

Although I have been somewhat at times since coming here
(as who has not) yet my general health continues to keep very
good. Last week I was on duty every day. This afternoon I
had command of 220 men, at work on the fort. By on the
duty every other day in the afternoon, acting field Officer of the
In the forenoon the Regt. was mustered for pay, he number
over 600 men. Besides the officers, but I understand it is soon
to be recruited. The men continue to die off fast. I have
lost 18 men during the last two months. I now have 36.
None of which are about. We soon expect to be paid. I still
have money left (which few can say just now) but I will
have to spend largely when paid, to the Co. fund and other.
The boys will draw largely at next pay day. Their wages
from Jan'y 1st will be the same as white soldiers.

We are still in our old camp, and a good clean one it is.
The other Regt of the Brigade have moved inside the fence
leaving us in the front alone. I have been very busy for
a few days in making out my monthly roll. Monthly
Returns, Report &c. but this sort of business I like, and
what is best, I am able to do it all myself.

I like my own company very well. I intend to make it the best
in the Regt. and to be the best Captain myself. There may
be others equally as ambitious, but I mean to be best
nevertheless. This is the only principle on which I succeed,
Love to all your Affectionate Son, Chas. Montgomery

September 3rd 1864. My Dear Brothers J. B. & Alex.
I am often at the O. & A. day, but one man by death the "merry".

Yesterday my patience was again awarded by receiving your kind letters of Aug. 12th 1864. Indeed I was very glad to get them, to find that you were all well and doing so well. You are surely doing nobly in doing all the harvest-work yourselves. It must be hard work for you, but it is paying to have such heavy crops. You will surely make a fortune. You make more money than I do at \$4. per day. Well, some must fight, while others work at home and pray for those who are absent. I have been quite busy lately. Yesterday forenoon the Regt. was inspected by the Division Inspector. Leo "K." was behind no other company in looks. In the afternoon I had the Regt. out at work on the fort. The weather is pretty warm. Had some heavy rain storms. I am pleased that you have such pleasant times.

I would judge you are good singers now. Well I am losing in stead of gaining. I sometimes read (History, Tactics, Regulations, Bible, papers &c, but I am greatly occupied with writing, drilling, &c, I am in a position now that requires my assiduous attention, for if I act boyish or am careless, I might as well leave. Being Capt. I am compelled to enforce authority and strict obedience in all things, as well among the Officers as the men. I purpose to do my duty faithfully, attend to my own business, obey my superiors, &c; and do not fear the results.

September 3rd 1864. My Dear Brother, Feb. 6. 1864.
I am officer of the Co. to day. Lost one man by death this morning.

Yesterday, my patience was again awarded by becoming your benefactor of Aug. 12th 1864. Indeed I was very glad to get them. I find that you were all well and doing so well. You are surely doing pretty well in doing all the hardest work yourselves. It must be hard work for you, but it is paying to have such heavy crops. You will surely make a fortune. You make more money than I do at 8 1/2 per day. Well, some must fight, while others work as I have said. I have been quite busy and busy for those who are absent. I have been quite busy lately. Yesterday forenoon the Regt. was inspected by the Division Inspector. See it was behind the other companies in the forenoon. I had the Regt. out at work in the forenoon. The weather is pretty warm. Had some heavy rain. I am pleased that you have such pleasant times. I would judge you are good singers now. Well I am looking in head of gaining. I sometimes hear History facts, Regulations, Bible, Paper &c, but I am greatly occupied with writing, drilling, &c. I am in a position now that requires my constant attention for I get boys or am called on. I might as well leave. Being Captain I am compelled to enforce authority and strict obedience in all things. As well among the Officers as the men. I purpose to do my duty faithfully, attend to my own business, and my subordinates, &c. I can do not fear the results.

Aug 31

I firmly believe that some enviously watch me, and would like to pick flaws in my character, &c. but by the grace of God I will be more than conqueror. Most of the Officers are my friends, at least appear so to be, but I would not trust one of them scarcely, especially those who are my inferiors in rank. Some would do any thing almost for promotion. The Col. has authority however to recommend none but his best and most efficient officers. This he has done so far at least so he says, and he also says that the best Captain will get the two rows of buttons. I have no ambition for that at present, but still mean to do my duty well. There are Captains, who richly deserve and no doubt will get promotion, as soon as the Lt-Col. leaves. (You have asked, Are you in for three years longer? I am! from July 6th 1864, date of my muster, this is always the case, but an officer can always find some excuse to resign, before three years if he chooses. I am glad you have not broken any fingers of the cradle. The grain must be straight. I have not received Miss Keittley's letter yet. Was sorry to hear of Mrs Coolidge's death, but she is best off. I am glad the stock prosper so well, the names suit me very well. I want one called Lizzie. I hope you have recd the box of clothes, I had no pants to send, they are always worn out. You think I feast on fruit &c. this is not so. But we live pretty well. It cost us less than \$10. last month for food. potatoes & onions are 12¹/₂ cts pr lb. We have plenty soft Bread, dried apples, tea, coffee, meat Beans, hominy & sometime oysters or canned fruit. When we can get ice cream, Lemonade Soda water &c to buy at the different Butler stands. There is considerable motion among the white troops for a week past, they are moving away in great numbers. I must now come to a close. Give my respects to J. Jones & family & other folks. Flowers &c. I am glad so many are going to enlist. Men are wanted in thousands to put an end to this rebellion and they must be had. We must overwhelm the South with soldiers, we must burn and destroy their property and kill the Rebs. themselves before we can conquer. May God give success to our arms & accept my kindest love to father mother and friends. Write often. Your affectionate Brother J. Montgomery