



Thomas Montgomery and family papers.

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Camp 67th Regt. U.S.C.S.

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Morganza La Oct. 15th 1864

My Dear Mother.

I received your kind letter of the 22nd ult. to day, and also one from Cousin Isabella Johnson in Canada. I was well pleased to get both of them, and it made me feel good all day.

I sit down this evening to answer yours, although it is pretty late. I am on duty as Officer of the Day, and was busy till dark; just then a donation of reading matter came from the Christian Commission, and I was busy reading that till after taps. I send home a sample of such as we get. We also get other larger papers. Well in the first place I am in good health thank God, and I am pleased to observe that your health is good also. Perhaps the best news to me in the last letter was that Vizzie had arrived safely with you. It is a great satisfaction to me for I felt uneasy, until I heard, it, lest something to prevent, it might happen. I heard through the Colonel from his Brother, that she had arrived with him at Mantorville, & that he paid her fare and saw her off en route to St. Peter. He said he gave her three dollars, more than I furnished her with. He was very kind to oblige me so much. She had a long trip and no doubt was very glad to see it ended. Truly I am glad she has got home safe, and I hope you will be satisfied with her, & find her willing to please.

She is and will be far better off, than she could possibly be here. I made no bargain as to her wages. The expense of sending her up was considerable, and would go a long ways in paying her wages but I don't calculate in that way. The intention is that she will remain with you, as one of the family, as long as you live, and both parties are satisfied. So I want her well taken care of, clothed, instructed &c.

I may perhaps send her things, in another box I may yet send up to you if spared. The valise I gave to her, but she can do as she pleases with it. I expect she is enjoying for me, some of the comforts of home. I seldom found in Morganzia, namely milk, butter, potatoes, vegetables &c. I would like to share the same, but still I am not discontented. I do pretty well. For a while not having money in the mep. we lived very cheap & poor, but I have plenty money now, to last a while longer. The Chaplain Resigned & is gone home. He went to New Orleans, got paid, returned & paid me \$16. he owed to me for Board &c. I also was paid another debt of \$6. Our Regt changed camp yesterday to about a mile north of our old camp & opposite Brigade Hd. Qrs. We are not fixing up however as the 62 is ordered to Brazos Santiago away on the coast of Texas, & we will move into their Camp when they leave. Then we will fix up comfortably for winter quarters. &c. Nights have been very cool for over a week, days beautiful. We have laid out a nice camp here, and could fix up very pleasantly.

The letter from Cousin Johnson was rather a surprise to me. It was written by Mary Jane, on rather poor paper and doubly worse charcoal ink. I would judge from the tone, that they have seen & do see hard times. They have however a large family. It seems they are being well educated, in the old Canadian style, 4 in the 4th Book. Studying Greek & Latin roots &c, they heard from you by letter. John & Mary Jane was going to write to the boys. They received the two pictures but did not know whose they were. They were busy clearing they had 17 acres for fall wheat. they had a good crop of hay. have 10 tons at \$16, per ton for sale next spring. The fire raged over the country. Causing much terror, & doing much damage, burning houses, barns, cattle &c, Stumps took fire in the field where the were making hay. She is very anxious and uneasy about her brothers James & Andrew. Supposes them dead. She wishes to know where her sister Catherine Jane is. I don't know. Sends love to all of you. I attended a prayer meeting last night held by darkies in a chapel of cane. Such a meeting I never before saw. The singing was the novelty. When they got fairly warmed up after repeating the chorus or chant a number of times it was ludicrous to see them. They would jump up & down dance with their feet, clap their hands on their knees, then together, then over their heads, then bow down. Slap each others shoulders, &c &c, & it all chimed in on the chorus harmoniously. Women were the same, then some brother or two would pray; next get up & some one strike up another tune, and in a few minutes the same scenes were repeated. This was among the La Darkies. The Mo. men are more moderate, but as earnest.

Oct 12

Fifteen teams went out this morning for lumber; only three returned in the afternoon, the others being taken by the Rebels. A Cavalry Squadron went in pursuit, & at night all returned, a few mules were taken off, but an equivalent was brought in. Some colored folks made their escape with horses, teams, &c. I receive all your letters quite regularly, also the postage stamps. I received a few lines from Miss Smith a week ago.

I bought some books from the Chaplain, "History of U.S.," "Power of Religion &c," I have Arithmetics, slate & plenty of writing to do & as much reading as it is possible for me to read. I have a volume of the "Student & Schoolmate," and get the reading of the Eastern Monthlies from the Doctor who is very obliging to me. Another Chaplain will soon be elected. Mann & Roberts are the Candidates. I think the former will be elected, but I prefer the latter. Our Lt. Col. has left the Regt. & Major Casey commands at present.

We have a first rate Bakery in the Regt. and get plenty of soft bread now to eat. The men's health is slightly improving during the cool weather, & by getting Sanitary Supplies. We are not yet paid off, but expect to be this month.

The weather is beautiful. I now occupy the left centre Company being the 8th Ranking Captain, the Captains of E. & H. don't like it well, but can't help themselves. The boys in Co. "B" send their respects to Sizzie; Andrew is still with the Regt. so is Mary. Spradley went up to St. Louis, with the Chaplain yesterday & took Ann with him.

I send my respects to Elizabeth also, & tell her to remember what I told her, and to take good care of herself and you. I miss her very much, but Hester does my washing & George still cooks for us. I will now bring my letter to a close. Hoping soon to hear from you again.

I am pleased at the manner you get along with your work. I hope you will take good care of the horses & not let the boys ride them too fast or much. Sizzie is a great hand to ride on horseback. Give my respects to all my Cleveland friends to John Jones, Mrs. Roberts &c. Captain Durkee tells me a story about Mrs. Roberts while in Hutchinson. He was in Co. C of the 1st Division. With best love to Father, Brother & yourself I close, remaining your ever loving son, Thomas Montgomery.