



Thomas Montgomery and family papers.

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Camp 67th U.S. C. I.
Morganza La. Dec. 10th 1864.

My Dear Mother:

Since I last wrote to you from this place, I had a very pleasant visit to the great city of New Orleans La. from which place I safely returned last night about 12 o'clock. I remained in the city from Monday morning till Thursday evening; four days, during which time I enjoyed myself very much. I travelled nearly all over the city, on foot, and by means of the street cars, which run in different directions. I also paid a visit to Lake Ponchartrain; five miles east of the city. I went thither on the steam cars, passing through a very swampy region, which forms the back ground to the city. Canals connect this extensive lake with the River, and thus New Orleans has readier communication with the ocean, than by the mouth of the river. I saw on the lake vessels in full sail. Also steam vessels, and on my way, orchards of orange trees heavily laden, also vegetables growing in great plenty.

While in New Orleans the weather was beautiful.
The Sun shone very strong and warm. I could in
truth say "December as pleasant as May."
Of course I visited all the places of note, at least
a great many. At night I visited with my friend
Gorden the several places of amusement, and saw
performed successively the Plays of Romeo & Juliet
Richard III. and Brutus or the fall of Tarquin.
They were conducted and performed on a grandness
sublime and unapproachable. The Paternal affection
mingled with the stern sense of justice to Rome, as
exhibited by Brutus to his son Titus, brought tears
to many an eye. I was in luck in seeing such plays,
and an impress of the original acts and times, as
shown in history, was made on my mind never
to be effaced. I have heard much said against the
stage, as might also be said against the press or
pulpit when improperly conducted, but I saw nothing
exhibited on the stage in New Orleans, but what might
be witnessed by the most modest of the gentler sex.
Of course they are not thus conducted everywhere
but when properly conducted I consider the stage
as a powerful means of moulding the future of a nation.

I hope you will not be offended at me, for dwelling so long on a subject which perhaps you do not relish. I might tell you a thousand other little incidents of interest, were I at home to tell them orally.

I wrote home from New Orleans, last Tuesday, sending you a check, or draft on New York, for \$150. I made several purchases after. I had a dozen Photographs taken, and bought an Album for to hold those of my friends. I bought a pair of calf boots \$12, cap \$5. Several books, for study, and various other trifles. My trip cost me \$57, but I was richly repaid. I saw what was once the Rebel Ram Fennessee; and other double-turreted gun-boats & some with single turrets. I settled my board bill with my hostess, a very fine lady, and left the city Thursday evening on the Olive Branch.

The Kear officers were as gentlemanly a set of men as I ever yet met with, and treated me as an intimate friend. I stated that I was not paid as I expected, whereupon they brought me up free, including board & bed room, and would not accept one dollar. I can never forget their generosity - as also of the officers of the Grey-Eagle, on which I went down. The fare each way being \$5.90.

Dec 10

The monument of Henry Clay on Canal Street is fine
On the Pedestal ^{Mayor Hoyt of San Francisco} ~~Butler~~ caused to be inscribed a
quotation from one of his speeches, which reads in this wise
"If I could be instrumental in removing this foulest stain
Slavery, from the escutcheon of the nation, I would not exchange
the proud satisfaction of having so done, for the greatest honors
awarded to the most successful conqueror," or something ^{similar}.
Jackson's monument on Jackson Square is another inimitable
work of art. He is represented on his war charger, who is reined
upon his hind feet, horse and rider being equipped for the
war. Butler had inscribed on the pedestal of this statue
the words "The Union must and shall be preserved."
The square is very tastefully laid out, the walks are paved
with the smallest specimens of sea shell, the shrubbery is
ornamented, being trained in all shapes. Orange
trees are still laden with fruit, flowers are numerous
and every thing presents a lively appearance.
The markets are very extensive, all sorts of eatables may be
purchased. You can also get warm coffee at 5 cts, and in addition
increase your meal to \$1. if you choose. Oranges were cheaper
than apples, only a dime for three. I ate many a one of them.
I wish you could share with me in these things, and I wish
again I could share with you in other things. In my absence
the house ~~work~~ did not proceed, but I will soon complete it
and then the men will be more comfortable. The Rebels
came up to our pickets, while I was in the city and shot one
cavalry man. Our boys chased them away wounding some.
Before St. Warden & I parted. He received a letter from St. Fallow, who
was well. I met many other friends in New Orleans, whom I did
not expect to see. For the information of Bro. Sandy, I will
state that I am 5 ft. 7 inches high and weigh 160 lbs.
I purchased several books to study. I am learning a little French & German.
You may perhaps think that all these things would
have a tendency to lead me astray, and perhaps they do
but I strive against any such allurements from the path
of right and duty to myself my God and my country, and
I pray for God's supporting grace to uphold me whenever tempted
or tried, and with every temptation offer a means of escape
I see a great deal of the world, public & private. And learn from
it a great many things, that I was before ignorant of.