



Thomas Montgomery and family papers.

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Camp 67<sup>th</sup> Reg. U.S. Colored Infantry.  
Morganza La. Dec: 17<sup>th</sup> 1864

My Dear Brother James Charles.

Yours of the 23<sup>d</sup> ult. did not arrive here till this morning, and the delay will excuse any apparent negligence on my part, in not replying earlier. In accordance with your wish I will endeavor to write regularly to you in the future. I hear with much pleasure of your continued good health, which I sincerely hope will continue, but it gives me much sorrow to hear of mother's illness. The purity of Minnesota air, and the healthy locality in which you are situated, being much in your favor, I trust will be conducive to the continued health of all the's. Though I am now far distant from you, yet I love you and think of you all none the less, in fact time as it wears away, binds my affections nearer to home. You may think it strange, yet I think I see you all as plainly as if I were looking in upon you. I can see you all just as you sit around the table or fireside. Tell me if I do not see you? There is mother, on the right of the table, with her knitting and a book open before her, and occasionally glances her eyes from the work or paper to that on the needle. Now counts the stitches, and then puts her eye on the book, and starts off again. Perhaps she may give a passing thought to days gone by, or to absent friends.

There is Vizzie looking wondrous wise and sewing  
with all her might, now and then stopping to ask  
a question about her lesson. She is on the left of the latter.  
Father is absent on business of a public character.  
Alexander in the background is now making some  
fancy sketches on his slate, and then again biting his  
lip or scratching his head, at the difficulties he meets  
with in Arithmetic. Yourself has just come in from  
town, and put up the mares, has seen that the cattle  
are all right, and have come in with the news and the  
mail. And now mother has stopped, and is absent  
and thoughtful, and my heart tells me she is thinking  
of her only absent child. Who can he be? Will you  
doubt any more that I have studied magic and  
can see with my back turned to you with many  
a river, hill and valley between us?

You have all been much kinder to me than I  
expected or than you promised. Your letters are very  
regular. It is only six days since I received the last.  
I spread open and read your letters, while both my  
heart and feet dance for joy, while my hands  
actually rub each other out of sympathy at hearing  
such continued good news. Thanks to you all for  
your letters and love, your good wishes and prayers.  
One corner of my eye is now moistened while I say, "Thank  
ye all, good folks!" Now a word about your letter. I cannot  
say much, for I have only read it twice. Those parts which  
relate to my own acts and doings greatly edify me,

Right glad was I that you appreciated the first box  
of goods I sent. And I trust you will the last.  
You long for something fancy and extra. but per-  
haps your opportunities for procuring such are as  
great there as mine here. I send <sup>some</sup> money  
which you know is the medium of exchange in all  
places, in this country. I am glad you got through  
with your threshing, so well, and at the fine result.  
I suppose the Rivers and Lakes are all frozen over  
and the skating and slipping good. I know many  
things are foolish, yet if Mother or Lizzie had skated  
or otherwise enjoyed themselves as many "womene"  
nights as I have they would sigh, not at the <sup>things</sup> ~~fact~~  
but at the fact, that skating days are over.  
Never will I find the same enjoyment, as I was wont  
to in my juvenile days, though often checked by little  
disappointments. I was going to write to you at  
length about the army, war &c. But when I think  
I will begin, pop! my thoughts are all at home!  
What a wonderful place home is! How attractive at a distance.  
Well, I am warm, well and comfortable; my duties are  
not severe, so I study a little, but it is hard to study in the <sup>evening</sup>  
we have no genius to help us. My Partner St Roberts is a  
fine old man, studious and sometimes very agreeable.  
He is now in bed, and fast-asleep, for it is nearly midnight.  
Your pictures are all here in the drawer of my desk.  
I never look at them, but what my memory recalls the past,  
and what I think you can imagine better than I can say.

I will now confine myself to other subjects. A number of appointments have recently arrived for officers of this Regiment which pleases the lucky parties. Major Loscy is now Lt. Col. Capt. Scholes (senior Capt.) Major Dr. M. Dickson. Captain, St. Sprockle is 1<sup>st</sup> Lieut. and Sergt. Maj. Kelly is 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut. My 1<sup>st</sup> Lieut. Krebs, will be Captain in my opinion, before three months. St. Roberts is very anxious for promotion, and I think will get it, in some way. It pleases me to see my friends advance, for I was once well pleased myself, and would be again to be promoted. But I speak the language of my heart when I say I am contented and well pleased to be Capt. commanding Co. K. When I feel qualified to go a step higher, I will surely make the attempt. I am now 1<sup>st</sup> Junior, or sixth ranking Captain in the Regt. and the result is already visible. To day for the first time I was on duty as Brigade Field Officer of the Day, a position only awarded to Senior Captains when field officers are few. My duty was to visit the different posts of the Grand Guard, twice during the day and once after midnight, which I will proceed to do, on finishing this letter. The line of our Brigade is over two miles long, guarded by over 100 men, and two Comd. Officers. Of course I have a horse for my use during the tour of duty. I like the duty very well, the Rebels are seldom seen, but Genl. Bollmann, will make them suffer when he does see them. He is determined not to play war, with traitors, as you will perceive by an enclosed letter in the New Orleans Era. On Wednesday last, I went three miles into the country, for timber to be used to finish my Company Quarters. Our roofing is made of boards split from the locust-tree. My Quarters are now finished and are very comfortable being second to none in the line. On my tour to day, I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with Lt. Slocum, who was in command of a portion of the grand guard, and who introduced himself to me as having often been on guard with me in the old 4<sup>th</sup> Minn. while I was Corp. He remarked the change which a few months brought around, then he was on guard under me, as a private now as a Lieut. which means B. T. O. of C. I could mention many other items of interest, but space will not permit. I need not urge you to write for I know you will. With love to you all, and much too, and I will soon write again. Present my respects to all my friends.  
Your Affectionate Brother, Thomas Montgomery