



Thomas Montgomery and family papers.

Copyright Notice:

This material may be protected by copyright law (U.S. Code, Title 17). Researchers are liable for any infringement. For more information, visit www.mnhs.org/copyright.

Camp 67th U.S. Colored Infantry.

Morganza La. January 1st 1865.

My Dear Mother:—

(86)

Your long letter of Decr. 6th came to hand on the 30th, and I assure you I was glad to receive it; not having received any for two weeks previously. It seems that you were in like manner disappointed in not hearing from me for three weeks but I cannot divine the cause, for I have written to you regularly all along. Lest you may fail in receiving some letters, I will recapitulate. I sent home Nov. 19th a box of army clothing, valued at \$50, which I hope you have received ere this. I also sent home from New Orleans Decr. 6th a check on New York for \$150. I would like to know as soon as possible whether the above was received, if not I have duplicates to send in their place. I am sorry to have you feel so uneasy concerning me. It will not do for you to give way to fears and distrust. Be assured I will try and take good care of myself soul and body, as long as God gives me breath, and when you hear that I have fallen it will be time enough to lament, or grieve.

Another new Year has opened, and I am still in
Father Abraham's employ, in the enjoyment of
excellent health, comfortably situated, and
contented. I have no reason whatever to complain.
A year ago to day, I was guarding Rebel prisoners
in the capacity of a Corporal, now I am an army
officer with the rank of Captain. What great change
a year will effect. What lies before me I know
not. I am willing to be guided by God's unerring
wisdom. He has been my friend in the past and
I trust will be to the end, O that I loved him more.
Here I to visit home now I would find many
changes in the neighborhood, so many away to the
army and a few gone to their long home. I was
sorry to hear of Mrs. Winter's death. Surely Cleveland
must appear deserted now. I don't think I could
be content to live there now, for a long time.

I used to like farming very well, but my mind
has another bent now. Much as I have been educated
I feel the lack of education very much, and I believe
if I returned safely from the army I would go to
a college, or high school, & store my mind with useful
knowledge.

When I look at the poor darkies, I think I know something
but when so much lies before me to be learned,
I confess I feel ignorant. I am reviewing Algebra,
Geometry, Geography, &c. The boys are having a rich
time during the holy days. They are enjoying them
after the fashion of olden times. It is amusing
to see the wild, heathenish dances they have; regular
hoe downs, including females, music &c.
As a general thing they are well behaved & orderly.
Since I last wrote the Reg. (was reviewed and inspected
by Col. Quincy ^{A.} Inspector Gen. of the Dept. He was very
strict, but we were well prepared for him in all things.
He complimented me by saying, "Your Company looks
well, and your Commands are very correct Sir".
We were also inspected and mustered for pay yesterday
by the Major Comdg. It gives me no trouble now
to do up the business of the Company, as I
understand it thoroughly. Being a fast writer
my papers are soon made out also. The weather
has been quite pleasant of late. The River is
rising rapidly. Twelve feet more and it will
overflow its banks, but I hope it won't rise any
more this time.

He have been living on chicken and mutton since
I last wrote, and to day we have a fresh mutton
one that I kept and killed yesterday. We live well
now and very cheap. I weigh 160 lbs. The men live
well also, and their health is pretty good.
We are constantly in receipt of glorious war news,
but as you hear sooner than I do, I will not enter
into details. Sherman has made his name illustrious.
Savannah has fallen. The end I trust will soon be.
I kept a complete diary for the past year and now
start another one. My receipts the past year have
amounted to \$871. besides all my pay, as Captain, ^{just due} and
my outlays including what I sent home amounts to
exactly \$1000. Debts due me aside from pay will balance
what I owe. The Government owes me \$750. pay now.
My pay is \$128.50 per month. 5 per cent. over \$50. is deducted
for tax. I have written during the year 80 letters and
have received 68, one half of each being to & from home.
Beside this I have received and written three times
as many official letters & communications.
I am pleased to hear that Elizabeth suits you so well.
I hope she will remain with you. She is ten times better
off than she could possibly be here. William her husband
is well and is always glad to hear of her welfare.
I hope Brothers Jas. Charles & Alexander will be good
boys and attend to your teachings and advice. I hope
they will shun every vice & sin, and be religious in their
early days. If I had no knowledge of God or Christ I
could never have withstood the temptations with which
I was constantly surrounded. I have seen a great part of the
world & human nature in many an aspect; but I find the
only genuine lasting happiness to have the heart all right
with love to Father. Brothers Lippin & friends I close
as ever your affectionate son Thos. Montgomery