



Thomas Montgomery and family papers.

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Head Quarters C. K. 67th Regt. I. I.
Morgantown La. March 22nd 1865. (95)

My Dear Father,

Your last letter dated Feby 25th was received in due time and I hasten to reply. I mentioned the fact of receiving it in a letter to Bro. Alex. a few days since.

Being favored myself with excellent health I am glad to hear that my friends are enjoying the same blessing. Go God be all the praise.

I am glad to learn that you have heard something definite, from your property in Durham. It appears from your statements that it is not a source of much income to you, in fact it never will be, as long as you are so far distant from it. You ask my opinion as to selling it. I would do it by all means. I can see no reasonable inducement to hold it on hand.

The money you receive for it little though it be, would bring you more by investing it in Govt 7/30 bonds. At present it causes much care and anxiety, and would necessarily in the future, that of the past we all know.

It is my opinion, that even at present if you get any thing for it without going after it. You will do well and may be thankful.

As the expenditures almost balance the amount received for rent, I can see no reason in holding it.

Mother says she would like to live there some day,
but I can see no inducement to go there.

The house is likely in a dilapidated condition
and a cheap plain new one could be built with
the money and be just as serviceable.

However if you think it would pay to keep it, I
would do so. I am sure I would never live there.

As to the other subject spoken of by Mr Sibbels, that
of forming a settlement of Colored families in the
St. Peter Land District, I am anxious to obtain further
information. I spoke to the men about it, and they
seemed to be gratified that any person had taken
such an interest in their future welfare.

I have no doubt but I could form a good Colony
but the men as well as myself want to know
on what conditions we are to base our action.
Will you please collect the required information
and send it to me as speedily as possible.

Mr Sibbels, from his position is better qualified
to give such information and might make a
written statement of the conditions &c.

I want to be able to answer the following
questions viz: Will the land be timber or prairie?
high and rolling or wet and marshy. good soil
or sandy & poor soil? Will it be convenient to market
or to the Minnesota River, to timber if prairie. And can
wood & ^{good} water be found easily? About how far and
in what direction from St. Peter.

For what purpose is the \$18.00 required? Is it simply
to pay the land office fees at present, or is it all
that will ever be required? Will a receipt be
furnished, or other papers sent, showing what was
done with the money? so as to make myself safe, &
give the men something to show that they have a
claim on the land: Will the land be safely held
for the men till after the war, free from taxes
and for their heirs, in case they should die or be
killed in the U.S. service. The object in asking
these questions, is to make my own action secure
and furnish the men a guarantee, that there is
no deception. Of course they enquire about the
climate &c. I am anxious to do all I can for them
but I will not involve myself in any trouble.
All my men are without homes, and are desirous
of procuring them, and they could each bring their
friends along. Some are tradesmen. All of them
I have no doubt would make good industrious
citizens. I don't want to have them misled or disappointed.
If your answer will be satisfactory, and you will
guarantee a good selection, as I have no doubt you will,
I will hasten to send you the names and money.
I think they will be quite willing to go to Minnesota.
One of them said, "We will go anywhere to get away
from these heathens." The plan is a good one, and I
like it well, and it will induce them no doubt
to be saving of their money.

March 22/65

Yesterday we received another lot of recruits.

I received nine. They were from Wisconsin. One of them is a brother to Supt Dodge of my Co. one of them is perfectly white, and one of them can read and write well. ^{He is proper & in good manner} Most of them can read.

I have now an aggregate of 71, but 8 are absent without leave. The river is still rising slowly. The weather is fine. The 61st U.S.C., which was stationed here for a month past, left this morning the water driving them out of their camp.

I wish they would order us away, one of these days.

Quite a serious affair came before me this morning. About a month ago, one of my new recruits lost \$3.50, stolen out of a private pocket. The thief was not discovered till last night, and proved to be his own bedfellow. Of course I had him arrested, and preferred charges against him. He first denied but finally acknowledged his guilt. All the money was recovered but \$1.80.

Some of these men found their friends among the new recruits - which came yesterday. William Estell came to me last night, and desired me to tell Lizzie that her two children are well, and well taken care of and at the same place, as where she left them. He is well and sends his love to Lizzie.

I am kept pretty busy these times. When not otherwise engaged I spend the time in reading. I have plenty of reading matter of the best kind.

I will now close, hoping soon to hear from you. With best love to Mother & Brothers.
I close remaining your affectionate son
Best respects to friends
Thos. Montgomery