



Thomas Montgomery and family papers.

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Head Quarters Co. F. 65th U.S. C. Inf.
Fort. Williams, Baton Rouge La. Oct. 7th 1865.
Brother James Charles.

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It is now about a month since I
left home and yet no letter or news. I am beginning to
feel anxious to hear from you once more by letter.
I have in my mind's eye your situation, and can almost
see you all, as I left you, although one was absent. You knew
not where I was, yet I hope you have heard from him ere this.
I have not, I am sorry to say, been able to trace him out
although I tried as hard as my health would allow.
It would give me great joy to hear that he was doing
well. I hope it is so. Although the distance of 2000 miles, which
I travelled in coming hither, seems great, yet the time is so
short since I was personally among you, that I still think
at times I am at home. Especially so at night. One night
I was in a fright caused by nightmare, and looked
out the window & roof, instead of which I saw the
capacious lights of my room & was for a time bewildered.
In a humble, there is no place like home especially
in this case. When a person finds himself a stranger in a
strange land, without money & without friends,
I am sorry that I did not enjoy myself better, when at
home. Could a person do so, who was continually sick.

I can easily look back and see that my continued sickness made me fretful, disobliging, and discontented, but I have every reason to be thankful that it was no worse with me. I think now it might have been fatal for me had I remained South. My condition at present is all that I can desire. My health is very good, it has been constantly improving for a week past. We fare well, and I am increasing in flesh, and my bowels are regular. My duties give me sufficient exercise, and still I have all the time I want to read, write and study.

We have a fine library of large volumes, donated by the Christian Commission. The Paymaster is here and will pay the men in a few days. I don't think I will get any pay this time, or until my case is heard from. The military court sat on my case of being absent this week, and have forwarded their proceedings to Washington for approval.

I will hear from it in a few weeks & I think favorably. Many of the Officers are quite sick, & the number for duty is very few. I am thankful to God that I am fit for duty. I am better satisfied with my new Lieutenant and company than I was at first led to believe. Lieut Violet is a good officer, strict and attentive. Between us I think we can attend to the company. He had his wife down here all last winter. She went home last July. He is my age,

I said I did not enjoy myself on my visit as I expected
sickness of course was my only reason. I am thankful
for the care and attention taken of me by you all, but would
have enjoyed myself infinitely better, had I been well
and strong. Although sick, I enjoyed my return trip very
much. I had either a chill or fever nearly every day until
I got down here. I took no medicine until nearly here
when I met with a doctor on the boat who prescribed for
me. I took Quinine in small doses hourly for two days
& applied Cayenne pepper to the soles of my feet for a
few days, which broke up the fever and ague & I have
not had it since. I passed through on my way down a
lovely country, the nicest I think was between Faribault &
Redwing. It was indeed lovely. Reaching Prairie Du Chien
on the Boat War Eagle. I went thence to St Louis on the
bars, passing through Madison. Milwaukee. Racine.
Waukegan. Kenosha, Chicago. Springfield &c.
These towns are all large & prospering. but none are
so solid or imposing as St Louis. Thence down the mighty
Mississippi. I passed Cairo. Memphis. Vicksburg. Natchez, reaching
Baton Rouge my destination in 14 days. I could have come
faster, had I been right well, & had no delays to make.
As it was I took it leisurely & enjoyed myself the
more, as I took pains to visit through all the towns
on the way.

Oct 7/65

The Miss. is a great river. 3100 miles long & with the Missouri 4500. with an average depth of 50 feet and a width of 1/2 a mile. whose floods are a month in passing from its source to its mouth, which drains an area of 1,200,000. Square miles & washes the shores of 12 powerful states. was discovered by Desoto who was buried in its bed. Lake Pepin 2500 mile from the sea can float all the navies of the world safely at anchor.

The value of Steamers afloat on her is \$60,000,000. Number of Boats 1600. Jeff. Davis tried to stop these boats. from their course but Uncle Sam said "by the Eternal God I will go to New Orleans" and he did in 1862. St. Louis the largest city on the River excepting perhaps New Orleans has a population of about 200,000. has 25 News papers. 81 Churches. 30. Public Schools. 13 Benevolent Associations 6 Hospitals. 17 Asylums. 17 Express. Transportation & Telegraph Offices. & 7 Packet lines. 12 Banks. 13. Savings Institutions. 35 Insurance Co's. & 22 Incorporate Co's. She has a Police force of 5 Commissioners. 1 clerk. 4 Capt. 3 Lieut. 12 Sergts. 4 Turnkeys & 160 Privates.

The weather for the past few days has been delightful. I hope it will keep so all winter. I am endeavoring to be contented. but find it hard work sometimes. I have every thing I might say that I can wish for but still I am about tired of Soldiering knowing that the war is over & there is nothing to do. I am in hopes of being mustered out by Spring. Many think the Regt will too.

The 118 Ills. stationed here with us were mustered out last week & are now on their way home. I do not get my paper regularly. Will you please tell Tom Perry, the first time you are in St. Peter to address his paper to me here. I hope you enjoyed your Soldier reception festival. I am sorry I was not there. I was actually sick with a fever that afternoon. I have mailed home a "Soldiers Memorial" or Illustrated Roll of my present Co. which I want you to keep safe & clean until I am spared to return. I also have a group of 27 Officers of the old 67th I guess I will keep it for the present. I think of going to Fort Hudson soon.

Please present my respects to all the wellwishers & friends. I have not seen Mr. Estile since I last wrote. I hope Lizzie is well & has received the money Mr. sent her. Give my love to Father & Mother & accept the same yourself. From your Affectionate though Absent Brother Thomas. Montgomery.
Mr. Jas. C. Montgomery.
Cleveland & Queer Co. Miss. { Co. 118th Ills. U.S. C. I.
Baton Rouge. La.