



Thomas Montgomery and family papers.

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Headquarters Co. I. 65<sup>th</sup> U.S. Col. Inf.  
Baton Rouge, La. November 28<sup>th</sup> 1866.

(152)

My Dear Mother:—

What I have long been waiting for, has come at last that is, letters from home. I have just received three letters, two being from home, one from you and Bro J. B. and one from Mrs. Sandy. I was glad to know that Brother had arrived home in safety having journeyed so many thousands of miles through this vast continent. Truly God has been very good to him and me, infinitely better than we deserved.

I feel since my own safe return, under renewed obligations to serve and praise him. Although I had never lost my faith and confidence in the care exercised over me by my maker. I fear that I often disregarded his commands, and served him at too great a distance. In the Army, at best, what is there to induce a life of holiness? Nothing whatever. Everything points in the opposite direction, but of course it is all our own fault, if we give way to sin and temptation.

Since I went north, I feel like placing more dependence on the good Lord, who has always stood our friend.

I should have more, far more faith in Him, who has preserved my unworthy life, and favored me with so many unmistakable marks of his favor, and care.

I have in these respects been favored above many, and I firmly believe that as in the past, God will direct my whole future life, to my own and others good and to his own honor and glory.

You alluded to my visit to Cambridge and seemed considerably exercised that I should return unmarried. Now I trust I know as much about that matter as any other person, and I am convinced that my course has been wise; at least I believe the future will fully demonstrate that what we mutually determined on will be for the best. From what you know of this, I think you have come to erroneous conclusions.

You form your judgment from inferences, which are not founded in facts. The suppositions and fears you speak of are entirely without foundations.

I may not in a letter be as able to satisfy you of the wisdom of our course, but I am sure I could if I could verbally express myself. I only went there on a visit, & with no settled intention of getting married yet, not being engaged. Of course I knew I would be welcome. I spoke nothing whatever of my affairs, that is, as to what I was worth either in property or money. I don't believe that gave anyone a serious thought. Now I could have married if I had so chosen. No objections ~~were~~ raised, only this. I am in a very unsettled condition. I cannot with certainty tell whether I can get out of the army before next spring. I am liable to be ordered anywhere, (in fact I was ordered to Bayou Sara last week, with my company, but got out of it, & St. Merriam went with C. D.) if I got out now, I could not tell what I had best do for a living. Of course I talked this matter over, not with the young lady's parents, but with herself, and much as she



would have been delighted to accompany me back  
as my wife, we came to the judicious decision to  
be in no hurry. When I get out of the army, and am  
spared to go north, I will want to be free to look  
around and see what I had better do. You have  
yourself most seriously condemned the practice  
of marrying before a home has been provided.  
As I have no settled home, I think I would have  
been very foolish to have married now, although  
if I had, I might have got along very well.  
As it is, I am better satisfied, and am in no  
hurry for many months to come.

In the meantime I enjoy the happiness of correspond-  
ing with her who is my dearest treasure, a lady  
in every sense of the word, endow'd with noble and  
endearing qualities, and who has pledged herself to  
be mine, whenever in my judgment is best.

Oh no! I indulge in no regrets for having visited  
her, for I could never enjoy myself better. I am now  
only too anxious to see the time roll speedily round  
that will take me out of the army, & settle me in  
some profession or business, where I can establish  
a permanent home. For over four years my home has  
been in the army, camped out in tents, and a poor house  
it is. For "what is home with none to meet? none to welcome  
none to greet us? Home is sweet and only sweet, when  
there's one we love to meet us. "Home's not merely four square  
walls &c. Home is where there's one to love, Home is where there's  
one to love us."

Nov 28/66

Having written you at such length, about my own affairs I will now change the subject, for I have already in this and in former letters said far too much about my doings. But it is to my mother I am addressing myself, & mothers you know are always deeply interested in the welfare of their offspring, sons as well as daughters. There is no reason however that any other person, should be acquainted with affairs, outside of the family.

You wrote about stopping in Chicago, and paying to Poe & Hitchcock \$10. for you and \$10. for Mrs. Roberts. There is no prospect of me being there before next Spring. If it is not too late, I will be only too happy to carry out your wishes & perhaps do something myself. Our services will be retained here until the last moment. We will muster our men out when their time expires. I will have 20 left, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of Feb'y, and 5 on March 1<sup>st</sup>. The Regt, now numbers 500 enlisted men, and 35 Officers. I have been enjoying excellent health lately. The weather has been delightful. It is raining today. The health of the Regt is very good. Our Major Francis Moore, has accepted a 2<sup>d</sup> Lieutenantcy in the Regular Army. Capt. Ward who formerly commanded this Comp'y, is now a Capt. in the 39<sup>th</sup> Inf U.S.A. Maj. Moore was better qualified for a Colonel than Ward was for 2<sup>d</sup> Lt, but such is luck. Influential friends often give an ordinary man a great start. Merit is often lost sight of entirely. I sincerely hope this will find you in good health, as well as Pa. Brothers & Lizzie. I wrote last week to Aunt & Cousin Morrow Ireland. Miss Purnell desires me to send her love to you and all, and by doing the same myself. I close for the present of remaining as ever Your Affectionate Son. Wm. Montgomery