



Thomas Montgomery and family papers.

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Camp 65th U.S. Colored Infantry
Baton Rouge La. Dec. 30/61.

My Dear Father:

With pleasure I acknowledge the receipt of your kind favor of the 16th inst. just received. I was very glad to receive the papers I sent for, my discharge and other papers and may soon have occasion to use them.

I was very glad, as I always am, to hear that your health continues good, and hope it may long be so. I feel sorry that you are offended at me not writing more to you. Surely you must take a wrong view of the case. I have written you quite a number of letters the past year and have answered all I received from you.

I did not suppose that my hasty scribbles would interest you much or I could have written oftener. It was no want of respect; or indifference for you that made me write oftener to Mother & Brothers. It was the same thing I thought when you heard from me through ^{them} for I of course mean my letters to one to apply for all, except on private matters.

Many reasons might be assigned, why I should write more frequently to my mother or brothers but I do not entertain such ideas. Again I say no motives of disrespect ever prompted me to write less frequently to you. it was only thoughtlessness perhaps, or that you would be as well satisfied in hearing from me otherwise, I shall be only too glad to hear from you direct whenever you choose to write to me, and will promptly answer, and will let that govern me if you choose in the frequency of our Correspondence.

I am now very busily employed on my muster out rolls. The order for our muster out as an entire organization arrived last Wednesday.

We have to make out seven rolls, each one to contain everything of the military history of every man who ever belonged to the Company.

I have on my rolls 190 names, viz. 2, Com^d officers and 46 men now with the Co. 40 discharged men 80 dead men and 16 deserters, besides 5 Com^d officers who have ceased to belong to the Co. These immense rolls require great work and will occupy us before their completion a week yet. We have besides a number of other rolls returns reports &c &c to make before we can leave here.

I think we will leave here about the tenth
of next month for St Louis, where we go for discharge
and final payment. We turn over here all property
except our arms & colors. The prospect of going north
now is in noways encouraging. It will go hard
with us to leave this delightful climate, for a
country of ice and snow, I shudder at the thought,
but I suppose we will soon get used to it. What I
fear most is the danger of getting the chills
again. If I do I shall certainly return here.
I think now that before the 1st of Feb. we will be
citizens once more. It will seem odd for a while
I will write home when I leave here and again
when I reach St Louis if spared to reach there.
You need not write me any more from home
until I say so. The weather here has been very nice
until yesterday when it commenced raining and turning
cold, but this won't last long. I try to spend the time
pleasantly and agreeably, and have succeeded so far
very well. I had a pleasant visit north when I
went up with Sandy as you of course know all about.
I thank you for your kindly expressions, and hope
you may sometime have the pleasure of seeing
what you so ardently wish and pray for.

Dec 30
The Steamer Fashion was burned about three miles above here last Thursday night. About 300 passengers were aboard, of whom from 60 to 90 were lost, mostly ladies.

It was a sad affair. Two other steamboats were set on fire the same evening, the Magenta & R. C. Lee, it is thought because they were owned by northern men. I received a Londonderry Sentinel from Ireland today, also an English paper. I joined in the celebration of St John's day the 24th inst by the Masons & Odd Fellows. There was a large turnout, a good lecture & good dinner. We paraded the streets in regalia to music &c.

I suppose if all be well I will soon be back once more in Cleveland, at least sometime this winter. I will then be better qualified to tell all that I intend to do, and which I cannot do before. I am now the Senior Captain in this Regt, and would have been at least Bit Major if I had got what I was entitled to do. I may get it yet.

I hope this will find you all in good health and doing well. I have nothing more to say and may therefore quit by sending best love to all. Your Obedt. Servt
Thomas.