



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.

On board Steamer "Julia",
Baton Rouge La, Jan'y 9th 1867

My Dear Parents and Brothers,

Another epoch in my life has been reached, and I am now about to bid farewell to the South, the theatre of most of my military life, and start finally perhaps for the cold, frozen North. But although the weather of your latitude may give me a chilly reception, I shall hope to have a warm and hearty reception from those I love.

After two weeks of preparation, we were mustered out of the Service of the U.S. as a Regt. Last Sabbath evening we had our last Dress Parade. This morning the Camp we have been occupying for fourteen months, was demolished and before noon not a vestige remained of the old Camp ground. Lumber, brick, and everything else was carried away by the citizens. The Steamer Julia arrived about 1 P.M. the Regt. formed for the last time on our old parade ground and passing through the principal streets of the city we embarked for St Louis. Hundreds of the Soldiers friends thronged the levee and remained until we left at 2 P.M. The Colors at the Arsenal were run up and down, waving us a salute as we left.

The rest of my letter will be in the form of a diary giving an account of each day's journey in brief. We left Baton Rouge at 2 P.M. on the 9th inst, and I am sure I was not sorry to depart. The only friends I could count on (outside of Masons) were the Hendrick family, and them we took along with us. We pay their fare to Memphis, where they have friends living. It was wholly unexpected to them, but the Officers thought too much of them to leave them to the tender mercies of the Rebels in Baton Rouge. Their Company will make the trip very pleasant, and cheerful. Shortly after leaving I had trouble with my 1st Serg^t and a Corp^t who had been indulging too freely. I was compelled to place them both under arrest, under guard, and intend to keep them so for awhile. Beside the afore mentioned ladies there is Mrs Kelley & Palmer, both Minn^{ts}, and one lady passenger besides. Our Cligue as we call it, have therefore their own way on this trip, much to the chagrin of our drinking friends. Received a letter from Sam^l the day before I left, dated before Christmas, 10th I come off duty this morning, and won't come on again for a week. We passed Port Hudson last night about dark and reached Natchez about 11 a.m. The weather is moderate, and we are enjoying ourselves. Passedicksburg at 2 a.m., and Milliken's Bend about daylight. Quite warm, making fair time, fare and accommodations good. Miss Fannie treats us to the choicest music, playing to night for my especial benefit.

12th Passed Napoleon at daylight, busy writing all forenoon completing my Co. papers up to date. Spent most of the day and evening in the ladies Cabin among the ladies and enjoyed myself. We have been sailing through ice, floating down from above. 13th A mild beautiful day. Arrived at Memphis at 1 P.M., where we left Mrs. H. and family with their friends. Took on 200 bales of Cotton. 14th Chilly morning. Met the Steamer Mississippi and occupied most of the day lighting her and helping her over the bar.

15th Sailed through heavy ice, arriving at Cairo about 2 P.M. disembarked. Weather quite cold. A testimonial of thanks signed by every officer was given the officers of the Ste. Julia for kindness and good treatment of us.

130 miles
Left at 8 P.M. on the Ill. Cent R.R. for Hannibal where we arrived on the 16th at 9 a.m. where we again changed to the cars of the Ohio & Miss. R.R. for St. Louis 60 miles arriving there after dark. We travelled slowly and the being in box cars suffered much with cold. Having crossed to St. Louis we marched once more through its streets to martial music in the clear cold night to the Station of the Iron Mt. R.R. and in a short time were at Jefferson Barracks ten miles below St. Louis. As we were not expected no preparation was made.

for our reception and we suffered in the cold
for an hour or more. 17th Today has been
extremely cold. We managed last night
to bundle in together and do the same to
night. I went up to St Louis today, with
several of the Officers. I was on duty as
Officer of the day, my last tour as such.
I am busy to night fixing to turn over my
ordnance & complete my pay Rolls &c.
We will be ready in a day or two and will
probably leave here on the 22nd inst.

I purpose going home by Chicago. I may
stop a short time at Cambria Wis.
I almost dread to travel farther north in
this cold weather, but I will try and
bave for it. I must now close this as I
want to take it with me to St Louis
tomorrow to mail. About 8 or 10 officers
are in my room spread out on the floor
asleep as I finish. We are all longing to go
home. The weather now is bitter cold, but
no snow is on the ground. The river is
nearly closed at this point.

I will try and write again perhaps from
Cambria. I think of going by rail to Faribault
thence by stage. I hope the weather will
moderate some and give us all a chance
to get to our homes without freezing to death.
Farewell for the present. I hope I may
soon have the pleasure of seeing you.
Affectionately Yours, Thomas