



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.

Camp Beaver Sept 1st 1863

My Dear Mother-

As I promised, to take advantage of every opportunity of writing, I again embrace this one, to let you know that up to the present thank God, my health is excellent, and I greatly anticipate the pleasure of soon getting down to see you all once more.

We are now on our way down as fast as we can go. Since we left the Fort a week ago to day, we have marched over 100 miles, and at this ratio, if all be well, will reach Fort Snelling in 3 weeks. This Camp (named after the lamented Lieut. Beaver of Genl. Sibley's Staff, killed by savages on the Missouri River bottom) is only 12 miles from Lake Centro which we will reach tomorrow. From there to St. Cloud on the Mississippi is 60 miles, and it is called 80 miles from St. Cloud to St. Paul.

We have marched thus far on an old road, thus avoiding the settlements that are on the regular stage road. The first sign of a settlement, except those close to the fort, we saw this evening, where an old Shanty was built, and where some breaking was done, as a nucleus for some future town. The Country travelled over the past week, is the richest, & most beautiful of any I have yet seen in Minnesota, and its beauty increases daily. The prairie soil is rich and is well watered by pretty lakes, and well timbered by beautiful groves which surround them, and to day, in addition to the above we crossed many a meadow of excellent grass. It is also a good place for game. We killed 4 deer one evening not long since. We also have abundance of plums, cranberries &c, which are quite a relief from the dull, barren & desolate region of Dakota.

The Brigade is all in good spirits in the prospect of soon getting a furlough to visit their friends. Co. D. of our regt. had no furlough since they enlisted, being sent to Fort Abercrombie Co. A. being raised between here & St. Cloud have the privilege of a furlough immediately. To morrow we expect to see Senator Ramsey who is on his way up among these frontier stations on business. Some say to treat with some Sioux Chiefs who we hear are desirous of peace. It is rumored that Standing Buffalo and 5 other Chiefs came to Fort Abercrombie from Pembina to treat. He reports a desperate conflict between a party of returning Miners & Indians. The whites were all killed numbering 24 & I heard 30 Indians were killed. A great many rumors are afloat in Camp every day but cannot be all credited. We are all cheered at the glorious news from the South. I trust they will go from conquering to conquest till all are subdued. Probably we may share in the final results ourselves if we may judge from present prospects.

I think it very probable we will go South to Dixie this fall. This pleases us all very well, being so long viewing the works of nature, we now desire also to view the works of art. But a far deeper motive prompts us who are truly patriotic, namely a desire to assist in our Country's salvation and push on the cause of freedom throughout all the land unto its every creature. May God hasten & finally bring about this grand result, is the prayer of every loyal heart. But alas how many Copperheads are in the country, many are in this Brigade, & even in our Regt. I am pleased to hear of Colonel Miblers nomination for our next Governor and am confident of his election, but we are loth to give him up. We missed him very much in this campaign. The only field Officer now with us is Major Bradley. If we go South a great many talk of re-enlisting in the Veteran Volunteers. The weather at present is delightful for marching in. The nights are cool, but we lie warm in our tents. We have abundance of good water now, and the animals have plenty of grass, and travel right along. Quite a number of persons have left & went on ahead. Our Chaplain left also. The 10th Regt. I hear will leave tomorrow at Hank Centre & strike off for Fort Ridgely. The Regt. is in very good health, only one of our Co. confined to the Hospital, Mr. Hobson. The rest are all very well. My tent mates are all well, & of us, Mr. Little still continues his evening devotions of reading a chapter singing and prayer which has a salutary effect on us all. There is now no dearth in reading or news matter. We have St. Paul papers of the 29th. I must now draw to a closer. I think you need not write any more after the receipt of this. Thanking you for your last letter and for its valuable advice, & hoping this will find you in good health, I remain your faithful & affectionate son
J. Montgomery

In my tent, all around busy writing, (23)
Sept. 1st 1863, } 10. Feb.

Diary Extracts.

August 25th Struck tents and bid
farewell to Fort Abercrombie &
Sakotah crossed the Red River
into Minnesota & marched S.E. 12
miles to Camp Phelps on the
Otter Tail Branch of Red River
26th Marched S.E. 18 miles to Camp
White on the east bank of the Otter
Tail, a clear broad stream. Saw
Breckinridge which we left to our right
27th Marched S of E 15 miles to Camp
Sullivan in a group of nice lakes
the country rich & slightly rolling
I went on guard. Had a fine mess of fish
28th On Guard. Marched 15 miles S.E.
to Camp Heath over rich rolling lands
& past beautifully wooded lakes
Crossed the Pommie de Terre and
Camped on east side. Found plenty
of plums &c. very cold day

29th Marched 16.13 miles to Camp C, Lower
The country as yesterday but more rolling
crossed Chippewas Creek
Camped near lakes. Found plenty fruit
& Deer killed. 30th Sabbath. Staid in
Camp. Despatches came to Gen Sibley
31st Marched 17 miles So E. to Camp Jones
over fine country well timbered and
watered. Mustered for 2 months pay by
Major Bradley. Sep. 1st Fine day
Marched 6.7 miles to Camp Beecher
on a prettyly timbered Lake. Fine Country
Had Dress Parade. } We have an Odometer
along or Machine constructed in Co. C.
for measuring distance, which is handy
March for the settlements to morrow
We have seen no crops grow this season
Give My love to Father & Brothers and
Compliments to the neighbors generally
Adieu for the present and accept my
love from your ever loving Son
Thomas
P.S.
L. Davis is well, but - is getting to be a very hard boy.