

Post Pk Co. Cal.  
February 20<sup>th</sup> 1865.

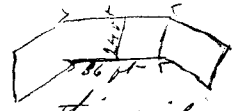
Dear Sister,

The day before yesterday I received your kind letter of Jan 31<sup>st</sup> admonishing me for not writing, as you have in several of your last letters and very severe in some of them but I deserved it. I ask your forgiveness. I will never be so unkind again. It was not because I did not have money, <sup>to send you</sup> that I did not write nor was it because I was sick, but

~~my health was neglected~~ ~~and~~ ~~therefore~~ ~~hereafter~~  
I will write often. I have not been sick. I never had better health in my life, nor looked better than I do now, although I can't say that I feel well. How can I, when them that were so dear to us have left us. Dear Father, Domic and Mary Jane I dreamed about Father last night and awoke crying as I have done a great many times since his death. I saw them for the last time when I left home. I hope I will return to see ~~them~~ dear ones that are there now. I will be home in May or June. I am at present in command here.

but it is temporary. The officer that com-  
mands here is Lt Col Wall of my Regt.  
He was ordered away a few day ago to  
be examined for promotion for a Colonel's  
position (A Lieut Col is next below a Colonel)  
and I being the senior Officer here, I had  
to take command during his absence. This  
Fort is a large brick work (a permanent  
fortification it is not an earthwork) moun-  
tains about 50 guns of very large calibre. The  
garrison consists of three full Companies  
of the 44<sup>th</sup> U.S. Colored Infantry which I now  
belong to. <sup>my Company is Co "B."</sup> I may have permanent command  
~~if Col Wall passes the examination.~~

~~As~~ consider ~~my~~ ~~competence~~ which no doubt  
you will wonder at to think that "Billy"  
should ever know enough for that. I went  
through an examination myself last July  
as to my being competent to hold a  
Captains Commission in the U.S. Army  
and no doubt the Colored troops will form  
a part of the Regular Army after the war  
is over. I dare say you <sup>and another</sup> have formed some  
curious ideas as to what kind of a place  
or Fort this is or what kind of quarters  
we have or how we live. I will give you  
an idea of the situation. On, or my  
quarters for instance. I imagine a brick house

of this shape  two stories high with a wide balcony on this side. nicely finished and furnished inside. There is six rooms in this building. It is built to conform to the shape of the Fort. When you see marked off is my room the pleasantest room in the building.

The floors are brick nevertheless they are dry and warm. They are heated by fireplaces.

We can go on the top of this building (which is called the citadel) and see for miles and miles around, can see steamers coming 15 miles away but when they pass the Fort the water is about a mile wide. We are surrounded by marsh land and water and as far as the eye can see there is not a hill ~~to be seen~~ although the mainland is about 2 miles from us across the water or stream at the Fort which is called the "Regoletts." The marsh-land here is greatly cut up with small ponds called Lagoons and small streams called Bayous. The Bayous are very deep but the Lagoons are very shallow but it is all mud! mud! mud! no such thing as a stone here. But on the shore of the Lake (Ponchartraine) is covered with shell small white shell. The shore of the Lake is about a mile from the Fort. There is a shell road from the Fort to the shore of the Lake down to where there used to be an old hospital. Our living here

is very good indeed it costs me \$28.00 a month  
but that is cheap down here. The Officers all  
mess together except the Col. his wife has been  
here all winter a very nice woman she is.  
The Surgeon has his wife here also a very nice  
woman, both young. Their presence has made it  
pleasant here this winter. Speaking of the Small-  
pox, it is very bad in New Orleans. There is  
a few cases here at the Fort. Lieut Morrison  
the Adjutant of the Post is sick with it  
(that is outside of the Fort) which makes  
more work for me in making out Returns  
Reports &c. I am going to write to James  
and ~~Thomas~~ and me your picture.

Tell me how Mother and all the children  
are and what they are doing.

Speaking of moving. I hardly know what  
to say. Even supposing Mother should sell  
the place and move you know yourself we  
have moved as much as most any family and  
how have we ever been benefitted by it. have  
we ever had anything until dear Father  
made up his mind that he would settle  
down and have you ever done any better than  
you are doing now. I address this to Mother  
as well as you. What is the result of Father's  
determination to settle down? It is that horses  
and lot and the money that Mother would

## INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE.

## Northern Division of Louisiana,

Baton Rouge, La., May 11<sup>th</sup> 1865

Dear Sister:

Your dear letter of the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> of March was in my Office when I returned from Morgonia, <sup>on the 4<sup>th</sup></sup> as I mentioned in my letter from that place. I was happy to receive it and hear that you were all well at home, and another thing it was so long and good. You will know before this reaches you that I am not at Fort Pike ~~now~~ <sup>at</sup> a short time after I sent you the flowers. I was detached from my Company by order of my Gen. Culbertson and ordered to report as you see by the Order enclosed. I have it and fold it as it was before I folded it to put in the letter. I would have answered your letter <sup>before</sup>, but I have been very busy making out my report. My duties here are extremely ~~so~~ <sup>as</sup> much as I have ever had to do any time since I came into the army. The Officer that I came here to assist went ~~about~~ <sup>about</sup> a day or two after I came here, and has left me to do it all. I am sole proprietor of the meaning of the heading -

on this paper. It is some that I got printed  
myself to use for my Official business.

I have, <sup>to inspect</sup> 8 Regiments of Infantry, 6 Batteries  
of Artillery a Battallion of Heavy Artillery  
(4 Companies) all the Fortifications, Staff  
Departments and other things too numerous to  
mention. I can't begin to tell you what I  
have to do. I have to inspect the arms and  
guns of every organization, take the number  
of men on different kinds of duty, the  
number sick, the number effective for the  
field &c, &c. I have to report upon the  
condition of each, whether efficient Officers  
or inefficient &c &c &c. I can't tell you any  
more. What makes it bad is the troops are  
scattered. One thing I will have a chance to  
see the country. Some of the troops left here  
the other day for a place called Clinton (D.C.)  
about 35 miles from here out in the country.  
I suppose I will have occasion to visit that  
place now. I have to make this inspection once  
a month and make out my report, which takes  
about five days although I have two good  
clerks and have to work hard at that night  
and day. I have just finished my report for  
April. I dare say I won't know some of  
the children when I get home. I won't