

Assist. Adj't Gen'l's Office
1st Brig. 1st Div., 19th A. C.
Franklin La February 10 1864

My dear Sir

Your pleasant sociable letter of the 24th Ultimo has just been rec'd and in "Camp life" nothing is so thoroughly appreciated as a letter of the kind.

I am greatly pleased to think that all are beginning to see that the end is approaching. The South are now fighting against hope and the Leaders are driven to desperation. In our Dept we are among them, and they cannot deceive us by "[] orders."

New York has truly redeemed herself in the raising of the two colored Regts, may she keep on in the good work.

I must confess that I was considerably surprised about the feeling in regard to the Irish. I think that it is time that we throw off the yoke of the "Pahdees" and that we governed ourselves.

What a "jolly time" the boys must have, and what a time you probably have mending skates and sleds and carrying out the thousand and one suggestions that are advanced etc etc. I sympathize with you and hope that you may recover in time for the summer campaign, which will probably bring innumerable poles and lines that require mending etc.

Think of it, I am in the "Free State of Louisiana." I say this for I am positive that Hon Michael Hahn will be elected Governor of the state on Washington's Birthday. This will be a fitting time for the state to redeem her lost character and she will do it. Slavery in La is an institution of the past never to be restored. It will be the proudest thing I can say, that I have cast my [] of labor toward the accomplishment of this great event. We are to have a glorious truce on Washington's Birthday, or rather they are in New Orleans. All the bands in the Dept. are going to march there and play the National Airs. Guns are to fire by electricity instead of beating the bass drums, so that you can []. It may seem trivial, all the parties etc that [] by Genl Banks, but they do a great deal of good, dispelling the hatred some of the inhabitants have evinced toward us. New Orleans has improved wonderfully, the people are beginning to wake up and see the errors of their ways.

We expect a general reorganization of the army in this Dept. I hardly know where or in what Div I will be ordered to, but I am waiting patiently, then Col Cave and this Brigade will resume the command of this Regt.

I have been sick a few days but I considered I was entitled to that privilege as I have performed double duty for nearly two weeks. The continued exposure brought on malarial fever accompanied by chills and fevers, but I am able now to do duty, though I dispose of immense quantities of quinine, red grapes, etc.

I suppose the ladies are working continually [] are never at rest [] at the good work. Please remember me to all of your family, not forgetting the boys and believe me as ever

Very sincerely
Yours

Oliver Matthews

P.S. I will write as soon as anything transpires that I know would interest you or Mrs Roosevelt.