

Memphis July 16th 1864

Rowan Bridges Esq

Sir

From all the information I can procure - about 80 of the bales of cotton were had at Tamey's before selling to Field & Perkins were stolen - principally by Thieving bands of Soldiers, hauled to the river at various places & sold to different boats. The Honeycutt got it is said 21 bales. Now these boats are all responsible to us for every bale stolen & brought by them.

But before we can hold the boats responsible we shall be compelled to show 1st that our cotton was taken off - by whom - & to what boats sold fixing the time place circumstances and every thing - so as to lead to the conviction of the boats. Now it seems to me there is but one way to accomplish my object, viz. to have some one down there specially appointed whose duty it shall be to trace out the different lots of cotton by whom taken, by whom hauled off - where to & to what boats sold.

I shall look to you to attend to this.

I wrote to You about my taxes. I wish You would see Dick Bell get a Memorandum made out of mine and Edwards taxes. Remember I have for the last two Years only had in Bolivia about 50 negroes mostly old women & children & of but little value. For these Years I have made but little & that was consumed by Confederate Soldiers. I want an allowance for my keys - Col Field wrote me that several neighbors informed him that the keys taken off would weigh at least 15000 lbs.

Montgomery & other bands used up money they should give receipts such as will pay taxes.

I hear the author of Journey out to Perkins & Field was burned - I also hear that some scandalous circulated a story that I had been seen at Green Mills, had employed Fort Cooks troops to go & get it & that they made a raid on it there, burnt ~~it~~ a boat & that I as the alleged owner - never was or more infernal lies invented.

Whilst upon the subject of lies - I wish to allude to another.

I understand that Capt Montgomery believing that I influenced the burning

of his success. I have no reason to think
much of Capt Montgomery, for two years
past he had put himself forward as
an accuser of mine, in one shape
or another. He has greatly trespassed
on me without provocation.
I am still unwilling that he or any one
else should believe a position like.

The facts are these. The ~~Admiral~~ Collyer
was burned about 7th or 8th of Novbr last,
on the 5th of Novbr - I left on the Halfont. Stopped
at night 25 miles below Memphis.
Where I got to Helena next day, there was
a rumor that some boat had been burned
below there, but name not known or
facts. On that night we stopped
about 25 miles above Mouth of White
River, on the Morning of the next
day. We boarded the Gen boat East
port, and from the officers of that boat
learned all the facts of the destruction
of the Collyer.

That night we reached Mouth of
White River. As soon as we landed,
we learned from the Gen Boat officers
I think Capt Brown was one of them

That the Marine Fleet under command of
Genl Conry - had come up from below
gone out into the country & burnt out
Montgomery.

Among these facts which I can establish
by all the men on the Redout - You will
perceive - that on the very day on which
we recd the news of the destruction of
the battery - we learned of the burning
out of Montgomery. that we were dis-
cussing the river - the party that burnt
him out came up. That he was burnt
out before I heard of either the loss of
the boat or Montgomery's loss.

I never saw Genl Conry, never spoke to
him or any officer of his command
I never spoke to any officer about
it until at White river when I heard
of Montgomery's loss. If Capt Montgomery
willed to drop a note to Genl Conry - I am
sure he will inform him that he does
not know me never saw me, that
so far from being any thing to do
with his matters - his loss occurred before
it was possible for me to know it
Yours
R. J.