

Note: This letter was written by William Francis Tiemann to Colonel Edward Leslie Molineux after the Battle of Irish Bend. It was enclosed with a letter of May 20, 1863 to Tiemann's father and was found among Tiemann's Civil War letters. It is likely that Molineux never saw it.

Molineux, who was wounded April 14 at Irish Bend, was taken to New Orleans for medical treatment and, sometime after May 8, evacuated home to Brooklyn. He returned to the New York 159th on July 15 and wrote home that day that "the boys seemed glad to see me."

Note: After the Battle of Irish Bend, Chas. A. Burt was promoted to lieutenant colonel and assumed command of the regiment. Edward L. Gaul was promoted to major.

Note: Captain Hatry was dishonorably dismissed by a general courts martial in November.

Simmesport, La., May 19, 1863

Dear Edward,

I have undertaken to write to you about a dozen times, but could not get through any letter, having been interrupted by different causes. Since leaving you we have been on the march almost constantly and with but few rests.

We left Barre's Landing on the afternoon of the 4th & marched 13 miles before halting. Next day nearly double the distance. It was the same on the 6th and the men staggered along tired & worn, feet all blistered so they could hardly stand, but they marched to within 12 miles of Alexandria and then encamped again. Nothing of interest occurred while laying here. On the morning of the 14th we started off again and on Sunday morning had arrived in this place on the other side of the [Atchafalaya] river (the name extends to both sides of the river), but next afternoon we were brought to the east bank. The town is situated at the junction of the Actafalaya [Atchafalaya] & Bayou Le Grange & consists of 3 houses & 1 tavern.

The regiment goes on in the same way. There is still the same jealous feeling existing among the officers & they do not hesitate to show it. There is one good thing has happened. [Augustus J.] Dayton is out of the service. His "dismissal" date from March 16th. [The official date was Feb. 28, 1863.] I do not think there is an officer on the Brooklyn part of the regt. sorry to get rid of him. I know I am glad of it.

There is a good deal of talk about the position of Major. Guesses as to who will get it etc. [First Lieutenant Alfred H.] Bruce is actg. Adj. of the regt. This appears to be satisfactory to all. Capt. [Wells O.] Pettit is carrying on his game as well as the rest. He told the Major "that he had been informed by Capt. [Joe B.] Ramsden that Lieut. Tiemann (meaning me) was on the left of the line during the late engagement." Capt. Ramsden was sent for and denied having said such a thing. Capt. Pettit then went to Bruce & asked him. Bruce said the same as Ramsden, "that he had not said any such thing." Then [Second Lieutenant Alfred H.] Howard was asked and he said, "that he had said, that he saw Lieut. Tiemann cross from the right of the line, at the time of the falling back of the regt. & came to your side & take your sword from Lieut. [George W.] Hussey." I was informed of this circumstance by one of the parties questioned. I deemed it best to write you a full account and let you know, so as to advise me what to do for Pettit has reported the same thing to others in the regt. I have not said a word about this except to [Major Robert McD.] Hart and [First Lieutenant Charles C.] Baker, & they both advised me to say nothing 'till I hear from you, so I have not said a word to any body.

The Major as a general thing is not much liked by the officers & one & all unite in wishing you safe back again to take command.

Gen'l [Guvier] Grover has been superceded by [Major Robert C.] Anthony [2nd Rhode Island Cavalry who commanded troops in Brashear City] or it is so reported. I cannot give any reason for the change unless it was the fight at Irish Bend, which every body seems to think was a needless murder of our troops. I heard that [General Nathaniel P.] Banks had given him a blowing up for the manner in which he conducted the battle, but that is only rumor.

Lieut. [Wesley] Bradley [of Company E] is dead [of illness]. He died on the 10th, I think it was.

Capt. [Joseph A.] Hatry's resignation has been returned to him disapproved by Gen'l Grover. He appears to be perfectly satisfied with it. He desires me to say that he had not had an answer in regard to the Negro regiment.

I wish if you could you would see about getting my commission from Albany. I should like very much to have it. If you get it you can leave it with Pa as I do not want it down here.

Please tell Mr. [Lyman] Burnham [an attorney and Molineux's brother-in-law] his kind letter is received and I thank him for the kind expressions contained therein.

We have rec'd orders to prepare for a 15 day march. It was reported we are going to Vicksburg or Grand Gulf.

I have nothing more to write at present. Will you please present my regards to your wife, Mother & sisters.

I remain as ever your friend,
W. Frank Tiemann

Baker & Hart desire to be remembered. All unite in wishing you a speedy return to the regiment.

Note: Edward Leslie Molineux married Harriet "Hattie" Davis Clark on July 18, 1861. His mother, a widow, was Maria (Leslie) Molineux. His sisters at home were Maria and Anna. Another sister, Emma (Molineux) Burnham, lived nearby the Molineux residence in Brooklyn.