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## INTERESTING LETTER FROM JOSEPH A. SARGENT.

Camp George G. Meade, near Middletown, Pa., Sept. 7, 1898. Co. H, Second Regiment, U. S. Volunteer Engineers.

My Dear Swain: Since I wrote to you last, we have moved camp again and are now nearer corps quarters. A green four-leaved clover on an orange field constitutes the colors of the Second Army Corps, General Graham commanding.

Lieutenant Colonel Edgar S. Dudley, formerly commandant of Cadets at our university, is judge advocate general of the Second Army Corps. He was largely instrumental in our getting the Grant Memorial hall. Wherever you find him, you will find a kindly gentleman at all times interested in University of Nebraska men. I have very much enjoyed two calls that I made on him and we Nebraska university boys are going to call on him in a body some Sunday afternoon.

Did I tell you of the trip I had made to Harrisburg? The mammoth steel mills between here and the city are roaring everlastingly. Day and night they emit oceans of smoke and one could spend a week very profitably in viewing the different converting processes and the forging and rolling of the tons upon tons of "shapes". But to go on to Harrisburg. The old town has the conventional Pennsylvania German air of supreme self-satisfaction. The average descendant of the early German settler has his elegant barn, his modest house, his wife, children and his barnyard stock. He sits on the front porch after work and smokes, and to use the words of an Irish fruit peddler, "Wot more do yez want?"

I wish you could see that famous painting, "High Tide at Gettysburg," now at the temporary state capital. The artist has thrown the spirit of the death struggle into every face. The perspective is, perhaps, a trifle to clear and sharply drawn to suit an impressionist, but the story is told with a terrible ardor. In front of the great picture, under the eyes of the struggling and bleeding men, are Pennsylvania's old battle flags, some two hundred odd, ranged in eloquent array by your side as you stand facing the crucial moment of Pickett's matchless charge. Some of these flags were carried on a score of bloody fields; some of them are only little greasy ribbons clinging to splintered flagstaves. While I was looking at one more than pitiful remnant, an old G. A. R. man came up and said: "Well, sergeant, will the young soldier shake hands with the old one?"

He pointed out various places of interest in the pictures. Some old land marks, the old hotel and the old stone wall, are still standing on the field as they are represented in the picture.

Returning to the flag before which I was standing the old man said: "The last man killed under that flag was a first lieutenant. He had no more business with it than you would have, but he picked it up when the color-sergeant fell. Ten minutes later, a minnie ball glanced on the flagstaff—there's the mark where it hit—and then went through his throat.

Swain, when you leave that room—the pictures and the flags—you forget to put on your hat as you pass out the door.

I won't attempt to describe camp Meade. It would do you good to cross the Susquehanna river and climb one of the blue hills that hug the shore, just to get a full view of our "White City." We have a well-

nigh perfect location and there would be no complaint if we were only fed with common sense. During this beastly hot season we are stuffed with heavy, greasy food—enough to buy light cereals and vegetables for us all. This kind of fare would go all right in Labrador; but when you sit under a molten sky and try to say you like it, your stomach groans.

Our field hospitals, too, are nothing for America to be proud of. Some of the men nurses nearly kill themselves by overwork, but in the volunteer service, most of the nurses are not very well fitted for their positions. Many of them wouldn't be tolerated in the ranks as ordinary infantry privates. The hospital department lacks the "esprit de corps" of the larger bodies of men.

So much contact with sickness and suffering seems to harden ignorant men. Many of the men nurses take no more interest in the cases than they would in greasing wagon axles.

Up in the hospital of the Red Cross society, you see patient women with tired faces bending over cots, giving the bitter medicines with all the gentleness of perfect mothers. The worst cases—those which seem too tough for the division hospital to treat—are turned over for these Red Cross women, and the women never murmur. They are all pluck. The cots are so low that the constant back-bending tires the nurses out fearfully. For two weeks, these Red Cross nurses were obliged through their own generosity, to turn over their own wash-basins in order to get enough for the sick boys. And all this within a few hour's ride of our largest American cities.

A couple of days ago, a particular impressive male nurse that I saw at the division hospital, made me feel that I would most cheerfully join the firing squad of an executionary party, assembled to do justice to such as he for the "good of the service."

I couldn't shoot him, but he gave me such a bad taste in my mouth that I couldn't resist dedicating a few lines to any one who may care to read them:

### DOG DAYS IN A DIVISION HOSPITAL WARD.

With feeble hands too weak to lift the net  
That bears the winged advance of buzzing hordes,  
The hot, sick soldier rolls a listless eye  
And lost in fever fancy hears him come,  
The blatant one with greasy face and shirt:  
Along the floor of vibrant pine he treads;  
He clatters with hard heels that beat tattoo,  
And lifts his voice of brass and hoarsely brays  
The whole ward length to some brown donkey friend  
Who tongues reply in twanging nasal tones.  
Far down the ward from the white field of cots  
A gasp is heard, a throttle croy of "nurse!"  
The blatant one with greasy face and shirt  
Lifts up his hoofs and gallops down the floor.

Today I have seen Sergeant of the Guard and this is the result of the spare moments when I was working on my guard book or going the rounds.

The sun is now hanging, a huge red disk, with its lower edge cutting the trees of the western horizon behind the smoke of Harrisburg. Battalion after battalion of billowy clouds are racing across the