

U.S. Hospital Chestnut Hill
Philadelphia June 28/63

Dear Anna:

When I wrote you from here before there was some talk of send the sick and wounded to their own states but I do not hear any thing of it of late so I conclude it is not to be done. The hospitals in Washington were cleared out in preparation for the battles expected to take place soon. I am getting rather tired of hospital life but if I must remain in one I am contented to remain here. This is a beautiful place, 9 miles from the Quaker city but they keep the patients very much confined - They are not permitted to go outside of the buildings. The hospital is built in a circle or a kind of a square with the corners rounded off and covers several acres of ground. The inside of the circle is a corridor or walk 12 or 14 feet wide and is a half mile or more around - I have never been

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MMN #42243

Date: June 28, 1863
Description: Sgt. Horace White from Philadelphia hospital

around it yet. This forms the hub and the
wards, 60 or 70 in all, 125 feet long and 18
wide are the spokes — the rim is a picket
fence 9 or 10 feet high. There is a rail-road
around the corridor over which the vituals
are transported from the kitchen on hand
cars and which is used for various other
purposes. There is also a gas and water pipes
and connected with the waterpipes are
hose which can be made to bear on any
part of the building in case of fire. There
are benches all around the corridor where the
men go to smoke or sit by the open windows
and look out. In the inner end of each
ward is a room 14 feet long and the width of
of the ward for a dining room, opening out
of this in a little wing is a kind of pantry
sink room &c where the dishes are washed and
kept. In the other end is the ward Master's
room, the bath wash room and bath room &c
in another wing supplied with hot and
cold water. In the center of the circle is
the Dispensary — an apothecary shop on a

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large scale, Kitchen, laundry, chapel and several other buildings, I don't know what they are used for. The cooking and washing are done by steam. The buildings are all temporary — mortar outside and sealed inside the roofs are covered with sheathing-paper and tarred — all are thoroughly lighted and ventilated and whitewashed throughout and kept perfectly neat and clean. Altogether it is a well contrived and well managed hospital. There is a room where all the baggage is kept each knapsack having a card on it with the owners name number of ward and bed on it each ward being kept separate.

The beds — there are 60 in each ward — are ranged on each side of the ward the heads to the wall iron bedsteads, a straw bed, hair or Excelsior pillow, sheets, double blanket (white) and a figured cotton spread. There is a small table and chair to two beds. Such is a partial description of this hospital; it would well repay one the trouble of a visit — provided they did not have to go too far. Visitors are ad-

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mitted Mondays Wednesday and Fridays.

We are allowed 6 passes to each ward from 7 AM. till 5 PM. and can take the train which leaves here at 7 and spend the day in the city and return by the 5 o'clock train. I have not been out yet but think I will go this week. — Our regiment has had another severe engagement — last Sunday but I suppose you have seen an account of it in some of the papers. I sent one to The Cary which gave some account of it — don't know whether he will print it. Lieut. Neville was reported killed. Lieut. Kimball did not belong to Co. E. as reported — belonged to Co. C. I have heard nothing farther of the loss in our company but fear it is heavy. I don't know where the regiment is now, in fact I guess it is a mystery to most folks where the main body of both armies are; the papers give but vague and conflicting accounts of Lee's whereabouts and keep almost entirely mute about Hooker. The papers last night said that Banks

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had been defeated at Port Hudson. Grant continues to work his way into the "affections" of the rebs at Vicksburg. I hope he may be successful. Banks will have to do something soon or give up for the time of a large part of his troops must be out now. Do you know anything of the Houlton company in the 22?

Monday morning: The papers this morning give accounts of some skirmishing about Harrisburg and anticipate an attack upon that city soon — also that Lee is across the Potomac with his whole army. There is another change of commanders in the army of the Potomac — Hooker has been removed at his own request the paper states and Maj. Gen. Mead has been appointed to the command. I never had so much confidence in "Fighting Joe," as many — I did not like his braggadocio style and censure of McClellan's peninsular Campaign also of Burnside but I think it is a bad time just now to make any such change in commanders as each new commander wants to

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inroads upon the property of the Penn^sylvanians
destroying bridges and other public property —
If this war is to last till all our Maj. Gens.
take their turn in commanding the Army
of the Potomac when will it end?

I have had no letter since I left Aquia
don't expect ever to hear any thing from
letters directed there. I don't know but
the rebs will drive us from here yet — it
would not be more strange than many of
their movements and you may not be sur-
prised to hear from me at N.Y. or some place
farther north the next time.

Yours

Horace

P.S. Director U.S. Hospital ^{ward 36} Chestnut Hill
Philadelphia Penn.

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