Hospital of 12th Corps
near Gettysburgh July 17th 1863.

Dear Father

My last was written from this place on or about the 4th but at present my health & appetite is verry good. For 5 or 6 days after my being wounded it was verry difficult & sometimes impossible for me to rise from the ground without help & I lay without any blanket but the nights were mild & I did not suffer from this last deprivation; now I have a blanket left by one of the patients & as we have had a few cold nights I have found it verry acceptable & it also gives me a chance to take off my clothes, which I always do at night if circumstances allow.

Now by taking a little pains I can I can rise to my feet without much

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difficulty, the wound is nearly filled up & I am but slightly troubled by irritation upon the outside of the wound; in a few weeks I suppose I will be considered fit to join the regt. Co. G, I suppose was about 35 strong on going into battle, 2 men were killed & 3 wounded (including myself) on the 2d & 3d & since, I suppose but little fighting has been done –

This Hospital is but a temporary affair; as fast as patients become able to move & arrangements can be made to transport & recover them elsewhere they are taken to general Hospitals at Baltimore, Philadelphia, or some other City: Possibly I might have gone off yesterday as before if I had stirred sufficiently in the matter but to day the Hospital Steward said that those who had

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previously gone off had gone to Baltimore & the rest of us would go to Harrisburgh so on some account I have perhaps gained by staying here & in a few days I will be able to travel with comparative comfort; If I can manage it I will try to leave on monday if not before & when I arrive at Gen. General Hospital will write again, & hope to have the pleasure of again receiving letters & papers from you—

Yesterday I read the "Philadelphia Inquirer" "of the 14" & was grieved to learn that Gen. Lee had succeeded in recrossing the Potomac with the loss of only one brigade, for from the rumors of last week I was led to believe that we had beaten him badly & that but few of his army would succeed in getting back into Virginia. I have said little or

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nothing about the two battles in which I have been engaged & one reason for it is that ~~I should~~ ~~go on very different~~ I differ very much from other soldiers in my opinion of them -

It occurred to me yesterday that I have but seldom made any reply to different remarks in your letters, this has arisen not from design but from hurry or some other cause - In your last you speak of a Serg't by name Smith, I cannot say I know the man but I saw a tall corporal of that name before the battle of Chancellorsville & he may be a Serg't by this time I imagine most of his time has been spent in the Hospital, I have no doubt he would go there again or get a Discharge if possible - we have too many such men in the army, men, able bodied enough, some of them for any thing but deficient in heart or soul -

I also read in the paper about the riots & hope the police & military will punish those engaged in it severely; probably most of them are persons of bad principles & cowardly enough certain they are on the strongest side: I hope yourself & friends have suffered no inconvenience - I propose writing to Edmond & others when I get to Harrisburg

Your affectionate Son
Jas. Miles. Smith

R33

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