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From the Michigan Ninth Regiment

Correspondence of the Detroit Tribune
CAMP HAYCROFT,
Elizabethtown, Ky., January 21st, 1862

I have passed the day most agreeably in the camp of the Ninth (Col. Duffield). The Colonel is absent at Bardstown, having been appointed President of a Board of Examination for officers equal to and inferior to his own rank. No officer could be more popular with his regiment than Col. Duffield and his Lieutenant Colonel (Parkhurst), and Adjutant H.M. Duffield are enjoying the entire confidence and respect of the command. In the absence of Col. Duffield, Lieut. Col. Parkhurst has charge of the school for military instruction and if the officers of the Ninth are not thoroughly posted in "Hardee," it will be their own fault. The tone of morals among officers and men in this regiment is far above the ordinary standard: neither profanity, immoral conversation nor impertinent remarks are indulged in, and every man attends to his duty with alacrity.

This regiment from the date of its entrance on duty has suffered materially in health. Up to this date the loss by death has been thirty three, and there are now over two hundred on the sick list. Various causes have been assigned for this mortality and sickness. There is no lack of medical attention of the best description, and the officers earnestly seek to promote the health of the men. Unfortunately, their locations thus far have been malarial districts, and details are constantly employed guarding bridges pitching their tents on the lowest levels, and drinking freely of the water of swollen streams. The demand upon the men at West Point was very severe. No less than twenty thousand days' works were performed by this regiment on the entrenchments at that place. Their camp at that place was taken in the rain, and the men, drenched with water, threw themselves on the ground for rest.

These facts alone show sufficient cause for the bad sanitary condition of the camp. But suspended to these, is the *trash* offered by the Sutler to the soldier. The army rations are abundant, nutritious and healthy, and if to them are added tobacco (which the soldiers will have) and stationary, the Sutler might well be dispensed with. The officer, almost to a man, attribute a very large share of the sickness to this cause. Capt. Wilkinson specially noted the fact, and assured me that careful observation convinced him that the sick of the Regiment in most cases, were the patrons of the Sutler, consuming his trash at 100 percent profit, and then thrown into the hospital. Were the truth known, it would be found that not a few army officers are partners of the Suters, and he has his traps transported from point to point at the expense of the United States. But this is not all. The few soldiers who discard the Sutler, his sourcrot, pigs-feet, and bologna sausages, at pay day receive their full compensation, while many a worthy fellow, finding the Sutler's drafts on the paymaster absorbing his pay, is demoralized. In reply to my inquiries of a Sutler as to profits, he said, "I am allowed 25 per cent above

expenses, but I manage to make expenses count me 50 per cent more.” Said I, “What are daily sales.” “If I do not trade one hundred dollars per day,” he replied, “it is small business.” It is no uncommon thing at pay day for the Sutler to pocket \$6,000 of the soldiers earnings. If left to the vote of the Regiment, I believe the Sutler would but in a few instances be retained.

In the old village of Elizabethtown, one cannot fail to notice the absence of young men. With nothing to occupy them, they were early seduced into the Southern army, and over sixty from this village alone, are with Buckner, ready to burn and pillage the homes which have sheltered and nourished their childhood, while a large majority sympathize with, and extend aid and comfort to, secession. It is refreshing to meet those who have never swerved from their devotion to the Union. Among the most memorable of those is Thomas Haycroft, twice obliged to flee for his life, and from whom this camp received its name. He has placed at the disposal of the 9th, a large and commodious brick house for a hospital. Of this most worthy patriot and his wife, a woman of the old Kentucky school, every soldier speaks in enthusiastic terms. Half their time is spent in the hospital, ministering to the wants of the sick. On behalf of the Ladies Aid Society, I tendered them a warm welcome should they visit Detroit. But I think you will weary of my observations. I may drop you a line from St. Louis.