

I have never ^{heard} from Milton or much about him Is he in Norfolk?

Sunday.

[1918]

My dear Papa-

7/17/18

Your letter of the 5th came Friday and I appreciate your writing to me as I realize that is require some effort for you to write. I have been getting on all right so far with the new Battery. This Battery is from Lenoir and of course is made up mostly of boys in that immediate vicinity. I find that they are not of good stock as the New Bern boys but they make better soldiers as they are obedient and interested in their work. They have been well-trained, too. But most of my time during the past two weeks has been taken up on the "Smoke-bomb" range. This range was constructed to give the officers practice in observing where their shots from their Batteries burst.

The range is about 800 yds long
connected by telephone. The officers
are at one end and the targets
at the other. The officers take it
by turns to practice. He gives the
firing data just as if he was giving
commands to an actual battery of
4 guns. Then this data is telephoned
to me at the Range and I have my
men to set off 4 smoke balls
to represent where the 4 shells
had burst. The officer observes
these bursts thru his glasses
and telephones to me the
changes that would be necessary
to bring the bursts on the targets.
Then I have the men send up the smoke
balls as per the changes. It sometimes
takes 10 or 12 changes to bring the

Bursts on the target. Then some
other officer tries his hand. I
had the range brief and have
been staying down at the targets but
next week I hope to be able to
send some other officer down there
and try my hand at giving the
data and observing the shells burst
from the observation-station. The
Smoke-balls are set off at the targets
by an apparatus consisting of a long
pole with a metal cup connected at
the top of the pole. The cup is partly filled
with powder and is set off by the men
pulling the string that explodes the cap on
the cup. However, I have nothing to
do with firing these things. I merely
designate where the 4 men stand

To fire them each time.

I think Brownie feels
better satisfied now. I saw him
last night and he appeared in very
good spirits. We are really having
Spring-like weather and it looks
good to see the sun shining again.
We need no fires now and we
drive without overcoats.

I have heard nothing
from my new Commission, and it
might be several weeks yet before I
actually get it.

I hope this excellent
weather is extending to Edenton and will
make you feel better. My subscription to
the Edenton paper has apparently run
out. Won't you have them send it for 3
more months? With love to you all,
Richard