

My dear Papa-

[1918?]

while the trip to the
range was very strenuous & thoroughly
enjoyed it. a camp has been put
up right in the mountains. This camp
is arranged just like the camp here
with tents with floors, wooden mes-
sals, bath-houses etc. The range extends
across the mountains for about 5 miles
but people have moved out of their
homes for 15 miles, fearing danger, tho
the guns will not shoot but 4 miles.
Targets have been set up ranging
from 1800 to 5400 yds. The instruction
is carried out as follows. each morning
the 4 guns are taken up and placed in
position designated by the general.
The officers go up to the top of a mountain
where the targets are visible and
telephone lines are run from this point

down to the Battery. Colonel Cox
would then show each officer some
separate target to open fire at
and they take the problems in turn.
often the target would be 3
miles away - a tiny black spot
on the mountain-side, visible only
through field-glasses. Upon having
the target assigned to him, each
officer would then have to ^{on the guns}
compute the elevation and direction
necessary to bring the shells
upon the target. For instance
a target is assigned to me - I compute
the necessary data and when my
turn comes, this is telephoned to the
battery which sometimes is 1000
yds away. When the guns are fired
I observe the bursts of the shells
and send down the necessary charges

either to right or left or decrease or
 increase the range and continue
 this until the effect is seen on
 the target. The Colonel supervises
 my comments and after the problem
 is over calls all the officers
 together and reviews and criticizes the
 problem. The general stays around
 all the time and adds criticism
 or approval as the case may be.
 Personally I did not do any
 wonderful shooting but believe I
 did as well as the average. These
 3 inch guns shoot two kinds of
 projectiles - one is called shrapnel
 and is a case made of steel and
 containing 250 bullets. This shell
 is timed to explode at certain

distances after leaving the
gun and is used for effect
upon troops, the 250 bullets
scattering over a surface of
50 yds radius. The other kind
of shell is filled with more
powder of a higher explosive
power than Shrapnel and
explodes only when it has
struck something. There are no
bullets in this kind of a shell.
This shell is used to demolish guns
or fortifications.

I was very glad
to get a letter from Minton
yesterday. He appears to be
getting along pretty well and
seems to be satisfied.

I hope Brownie⁵ will be able
to get satisfactorily settled. He
has made a mistake but must
make the best of it and do the
best he can.

I am going to try to
get a pass home to see you all
the last of next week. Personally I
think this division will leave here
in 5 or 6 weeks. Of course I know
nothing about it and wouldn't
want to be quoted as having said
this.

I told you that I thought
I would be called to the range
again but all of our men and officers
have returned and I do not expect
now that any of the 11²th will
go back. The General has always

thought that our Regiment was
the poorest he has but the
records of both men and officers
at the range has caused him to
change his mind.

I had a letter a few
days ago from Mr. ^{Gettysburg} the
tax-collector stating that I owed
taxes. I understood from you
when I was at home in
December that you paid him.
Please have responded straight
this out with him.

I am very anxious
to get home to see you
very soon and will do so at
the earliest moment.

I do not know Masson's

last name, ¹ so I am enclosing
a check for 200 payable to
Mary Beverly. Please get
Mary to endorse it and turn
it over to Narcissus to buy
some herring with. She probably
will like to store a few away
and I suppose in a week or
so will find them selling at the
lowest price of the season.

I hope that you continue
to fare as well as usual. I think
about you very much and hope
the war will soon be over and
allow me to return home to you.
Do not worry about me. I have

taken good care of myself and believe I am in perfect health.

In writing you about the range I forgot to tell you about the part I took in firing the guns. There were only 4 guns at the range (one battery) and the 3 batteries there took it by turns to handle them, giving each battery 3 hours each day. I was in charge of our battery during the time they were using the guns each ^{day} and found it very exciting giving the commands as they came down over the wires and supervising the loading and firing. I am on guard to stop and inspect the posts. Love to you all
Affe Pickle