Aug 4th / 1915

My dear mother,

I just received your letter and one from Guy, supposed he was at home by this time, so directed my last letter to him to home, was pleased to get yours anyway for had not received any letters for long time.

I am writing this in my little dug-out; it is only 4 ft. wide and about 5 ft. high, covered over with planks and sand bags, so when a shell will not burst we are quite well protected, this time we are in support a trench about 100 yards behind our lines, in case of an attack we are handy to go right up and help, we all thought there was trouble in the air last night an awful uproar of rifle fire on our left and the sky all lighted up with German rockets, we got all ready to rush up and help our boys in case of necessity but it died down in 15 minutes it seemed as though my heart was more than putting in the licks from the excitement but when it comes to a prickle and have to go up, next and do my bit I seem to forget everything and it is all over.
we on a fatigue party last night along carrying stakes and barked wire and took my turn as sentry 12 till 2 Am and today carried some more wire and helped make wire entanglements to put in front of trench so as to hinder those coming across when they do. took my turn as sentry today 2 Pm till 4 Pm cleaned my rifle and bayonet, oiled my shoes, got a jug of water and went over my shirt like hunting so you know what I have done today if not, they are firing at an aceplik out here. Just now that old stoker now too, a big German guns goes off about every five minutes shakes the whole ground, don't worry me any for it is not coming any way away off to the left the fellow that is in this dugout with me claims to be an American, but I think he is a German. he can talk German to bear the hard. I hope one of these English French German books I soft asked him a little he talked a lot and showed me a wrap he had drawn, don't know if it amounts to anything or not.
What shall I say now? can't think of anything only minor things that happen here, you might say I have been away from civilization almost seven months in strange lands, and all I knew is what is going on about us, my old temper is coming back on me again knocking about with roughs and every class of men for a year, you have to be ready to stand up for yourself at all times for if you back down the last bit the whole bunch will see you are a little afraid and nag the life out of you, and these are times when we all get sick and tired of each other company and the rest have owned up to it, and there is always one or two that get on your nerves the moment you first put your eyes on them, there are fine fellows gentlemen and all classes are represented in an army.

It has been noted since we got a couple of new drafts of men to take the place of ours killed and wounded I used to feel proud marching along every one in step with our successful the old fashion everybody knew each other.
and knew that everyone could be pretty well depended upon, but the most of them are gone. Oh yes, there has been a few cases of fever one fellow just came from the doctor and the trench his temp is away up, but I believe they take some kind of stuff so to get out of the trenches. Did well! not a thing to say and wrote a whole page, does that kind of stuff interest you. They are still after the airship, the big gun has stopped and one of those machine guns that shoots about 650 shots per minute has started. Sounds just like a big woodpecker would sound on a hollow tree. "Big woodpecker big tree." I mean that has stopped now, you ought to see our water closet only they are called latrines in the army, either in trenches you balance yourself on a pole, when cut they dig various holes in the ground at first I had an awful time I was either tipping forward or backward all the time couldn't seem to keep balance but
I am an expert as it now, we are expecting 400 men to make us strangers and perhaps will not have to come into the trenches anymore for I think it will need the three of us on cook kitchen. wouldn't that great. would not be in any danger at all worth speaking of. I did not building air castles. But I won't be disappointed. You cannot hear a sound you would never think a war was on. just now. If you got two parcels from Okinawa yesterday 2 lucifers, sharing lamps, 4 pipes, tobacco and a box of chocolates all laminated up they was good just the sauce. it was all gone before I got the cover fairly off. chocolates power one said and it made down the line like greased lightning. I told her to send thin stockings and she sent thick chocolates, probably coming later, but these should have few a letter with them anyway. Two or three weeks are going by high up, can hear them whistle don't know where they are front or going.
Another aeroplane overhead will take a pass and if you know if it is one of ours, one of the boys said same was the German was firing at for miles ago down the line. Three fellows are playing cards for cigarettes, another hole in the wall with a pair of shoes sticking out, and a fellow left me 3 figs while you were gone. I can hear cursing coming up the line, a little Welshman went about 3 miles and got a gallon jar of water, he stopped at the knot and they stole the water on him and put the empty jar he just shook my letter to see if it was free, he knew it should be empty. For he asked me for a drink before he went. A little rifle fire on both sides since spring up. I now guess I'm going to eat. I'm getting to picking like a fly. Why not move, a scutuline is singing in the next dugout. It is my chum. I am not going to be a fellow as ever breathed. Ever since we
left Montreal we have been in lovely
but, slept together much of the time, in
the same but on Salisbury Plain. Eng.
camp we planned to march side by
side and share the same dugout
but we got mixed this time done way
anything extra drive came to one first
and 2 to him, we lay side by side
for hours, not a word spoken, and we
are both satisfied, we understand
each other, we discuss the war once
in awhile, he keeps I feel like ought
whose mouth is going off the time
and saying nothing and he don't like
these letters. Our officer is left the town
is getting cold murder will
have to wait until tomorrow, if God
is willing you can see by what
I have and written the little things
that helped all the time from minute
to minute, when it is growing dark
and coming light in the morning it
the two things you have to defend
all attacks and charges are
made of these times, daylight
comes here about 2, 30 AM to 3 AM

Good night

2 X 10 AM Aug 5

Everything passed off quiet last no firing
- Speak of three fellows had a quarrel
about stealing each others ration of bread
last evening this morning so far hard done
so sentry duty of two hours, had breakfast
and cleaned the dug out up for the doctor
comes around and inspect them. If to
dirty you get cleaned, do many extra
quickly or extra work, there is a party
blind us digging a trench or something
but the Indians heard like firing shells
at them all the morning, they are going
over our heads but I duck everything
just the same, always try and be on the
safe side, they sometime go off before they
should, then you would catch it. I think
we are going out tonight if so will mail
this tomorrow the 8th you will get it the
19th if I am not mistaken.
Feel kind of dozy this morning, kind of nappy and sleeping with all your clothes on and shoes on for 8 or 10 days you don't get much rest, there has been times when we did not have anything off at all for two and three weeks, walking in mud and filthy water. You can imagine what it smells like when they all take their shoes off, especially my own. I would like to have one of the chickens you tell about in a pot frying where I could get just a whiff of it just in a while. If I ever get out of this thing will stop along some for couple of weeks after. Guy said in his other letter that Harry had gone to Calif. and said the same thing in his last letter wanted me to be sure and know if I guessed dear old bird I like to see him writing in ink in the moment I see it. I can see him. They are still wheeling behind me. Don't work yourself to death on the chickens and other animals. It is now 11:30 am will tell you what happened rest of day in the morning and send this along. I'll follow it up day after day so you will know just
At we all are doing, and how modern warfare is carried on. I suppose you notice I put in Of God is willing, it does not pay to plan ahead for a single second on this job. It only takes a fraction of a second to reach you and yourself. It has started to shower a little. Have started a letter to Classic. I cannot think of anything to say at all. Only stuff that I know will make his temper fly. I told her for one thing you said the kids were looking fine.

It has stopped raining, did I say the Germans are only about 220 or 240 yards away. Lots of places their trench is much nearer and sometimes farther away, sometimes as close as 50, 75, 100, 150 yards and all distances, I can hit an army full's eye at 170 yds 4 out of 6 times and they can shoot better than that. It is careful business even at 250 yds for they have guns with a telescope attachment.

6:30 AM getting packed up to move out. Heavy bombardment on our left think there is a fight on.
Aug 6th 7:50 AM

We came out last night by quite late, pitch dark, arrived here around midnight, had tea waiting for us, just woke up five minutes ago, and had breakfast, shared and had got dressed for inspection by some big bug. He will probably say: Well done, you are looking fine, and pass along and that will end the performance, one shell burst just before we came out and some of the pieces fell in the trench near some huts but not near me, the only one we had trenches for for the day, quite a few bullets went by us on the way out but not near enough to amount to much, will start today cutting wood, bacon, etc., and making tea for the boys. It is official now, that the new lines have been taken, that will probably the real first so much longer, heard arumored this morning that the 1st Division is going away back for a long rest and the 2nd Division is to take this place, they haven't been here at all, and we need the rest sure enough. Only hope this is true.
This is to happen this month, but you cannot believe a word they tell you, they are always telling me good news like that to brighten us up and make us more contented. We have been fooled too many times to believe all we hear. Also we all expect to get a 7 day pass to England for vacation, few at a time. I don't expect to get mine until next year sometime, we'll take it when it comes. Anyway although it is not known a soul in England, it will be a little rest and change, you only have 4 days and there it takes the rest to go and come, you can see Eug from France in some places, it is so very far across the channel. And I ever tell you about the trip from Eug to France when we come over. I cannot conceive it just as it was so how I feel we'll the received orders on satisfactory plans one night to pack and get ready for we was leaving Eug, such repriers and noise by the trip they are repying so much now.
Our feet were issued to us day or two before and such feet, hurt just feet in
every place just like iron. Well, they
loaded everything conceivable on us so
our pack must have weighed very near
800 or 900 lbs. Besides other things that we
had we felt stood us in the dark about
two hours with this pack on, and when they
thought we were about ready to faint and
started for the station and about it 20
miles, we got there after and like and got
aboard the trains, old trains and old engines
but they got the wind, we were packed like
sand bags, took my clothes to tuck my face
and about yards of cloth we had to wrap
around our legs, few clothes to keep it in,
past part of our shoes, went to sleep until we got
there about daylight next morning and
not find this cloth and had look they butt
was that sleepy and that did not come much
but I look and had sleeping things in my bag down from top of packing life
and the same laying along we said a
nice large ship thought it was for us.
It wasn't until we were put aboard a large
steamboat, that we saw our first few days,
not allowed to leave the ship, and
wished to be on a rough sea and
see some of the mountains high above.
Sure enough, we went about it soon in
the bay of Biscay, was not easy.
Next, we were six days going the way
west, the course was changed to find
the German subs and we only, this time,
could have crossed in a row. It
was rough, the whole time. I held my
breath more than half the time, crossing
first the stern would be away down and the
water pour in over the top of the stern would
come and the bow would go away down
almost under the water, every time I
expected to see her deep right in going
downhead first and along with that
she was rolling from side to side. I
think the ship was going to capsize
drowning until she went over to, along
with all this first you were a great
hole. had to look up to see the tops
next moment you was away up at the
looking down into the hole. they told
us but it was very bad at that time
of year, I kept my eye on a life belt until
you could almost see where it was now
by my watching it a close, the officials
gave the ship's gun a shot and sent a lot
of torpedoes boats and cruisers out hunting
for us. we pulled into harbor and got
tied up to some kind of a wharf then
was crowds of French people young and
old to welcome us. then we went and
every thing good to eat at war. but we were
not delayed off the boat when we did
land and went into the cars 40 and 4 times in
each car, rode 6 days and nights with
only four stops. if about 10 miles an hour,
going a good clip all the time. when we
got off the train tired cut put on our
packs and marched 25 miles mostly
in the rain, some sneezing, you
could hear me above the others.
And the rest is history, since then we have been in Belgium then France then Belgium then France again but not yet in Germany. I said something about an inspection today I had to go it was by our General Alderson, General Sam Hughes, Minister of Militia of Canada. I can't remember what he said only that he was proud of us as fighting men and in Val Cartier. I'm sure he thought we were handsome and that we were just as handsome now (Some Bull) also that a lot of us had fallen and that there would be more of us fall. He appealed to be looking at me when he said that and it didn't phase me much and that he wanted to tell the married men that their wives and children would be more cared for if they fell in battle as he had passed a law or something giving very liberal pensions (very cheap, I don't think) and that the single men with only sweethearts that some others fell and would take care of them until he returned and I wanted to tell him.
A - lot of the married one too.
the old man once back and I thought
he was going to cry, he turned away and
that ended it. A prince of some Indian
troops was there. Will tell you about
the trip across the Atlantic next time.
 You can by chris's house there for a
sudden thing and hardly anything to
write until I copied this off and I
would be dumbfounded about the rest
of it and it is in my Bible. It is now
3:30 R.M. and has again tomorrow will
close with love of love.

O. Miller

P.S. When I get this started I will take
a long stretch it is so long.
you might send a little note back
This rifle I had ready carry about in
my pockets and write.

Ober