1918-06-17, Wesley to Family

Wesley F. Diedrich

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Dear Folks,

Just a few lines to let you know that I am well & a little nearer the line than ever.

We moved forward several days ago & are now pretty close to the front. We are living in dugouts for protection from shrapnel & we have them fixed up quite comfortable, not quite as good as 108 M.E. but good enough under the present circumstances. The hills are shelling a town about a half way from us, the shells shrieking over us now and again during the entire day & night. Last night they dropped a few just outside of our camp but did no harm. From a small hill near our camp we can see the battle front & at night it has any firework display I have ever seen, feet & miles.

Another thing we have to furnish us with amusement & excitement are the aerial duels that take place in the clouds above us. Just before dark last night a German plane came over the line & downed
one of our observation balloons, but it had
scarcely finished its task, when it
was hit by shrapnel from an antiaircraft
gun. Nearly every day several german
planes are brought down within sight
of us.

Have not heard from you for several
weeks, the last letter being addressed to
Camp Merritt. Have not heard from Ralph
since I have been over here. Neither I inquired
about the location of the regiment, but
it must be on a different sector of the
front, as I have found no one who
knows anything about it.

No further news I will close
with love.

"Yrs.,"

Please excuse pencil & writing, but am writing on the stock of my rifle it
will have to do.

Campbell
Wesley Diedrich
Engrs. U.S.A.

Mrs. N. Diedrich
108 Glenwood Av.
Joliet, Ill.
U.S.A.

Answered 7-7-18
Dear Folks:

Just a few lines to let you know that I am well & a little nearer the line than ever.

We moved forward several days ago & are now pretty close to the front. We are living in dugouts for protection from shrapnel & we have them fixed up quite comfortable, not quite as good as 108 Glenwood but good enough under the present circumstances. The huns are shelling a town a short way from us, the shells shrieking over us now and again during the entire day & night. Last night they dropped a few just outside of our camp but did no harm. From a small hill near our camp we can see the battle front & at night it has any fireworks display I have ever seen, beat a mile.

Another thing we have to furnish us with amusement & excitement are the aerial duels that take place in the clouds above us. Just before dark last night a german plane came over the lines & downed
one of our observation ballons, but it had scarcely finished its task, when it was hit by shrapnel from an anti-aircraft gun & fell. Nearly every day several german planes are brought down within sight of us.

Have not heard from you for several weeks, the last letter being addressed to Camp Merritt. Have not heard from Ralph since I have been over here either. I inquired about the location of his regiment, but it must be ion a different sector of the front, as I have found no one who knows anything about it.

No further news. I will close with love.

“Wes.”

Please excuse pencil & writing, but as I am writing on the stock of my rifle it will have to do.

[[Illegible signature of commanding officer]]