

25th November 1918.

Dearest Father:

I know its about ten days since I've written, but events are moving rapidly and supplies slowly so my hands have been more than full.

With the realization of our greatest hope has come, apparently, the downfall of all lesser ones. There will, probably be troops here as long as troops are anywhere in France, and in greatly increased numbers, but my hut has, I think, vanished into thin air, and I've given up expecting that helper promised me so long ago. There's too great need of her elsewhere. We're opening new Y's in all sorts of places and every able-bodied person will have to pretend she's twins - if not triplets. I don't mind so much though for I'm feeling very fit and seem to have got my second wind. And after all you can only do what you can do, so I suppose I ought not worry over the rest - only I do want to do so much more!

We're serving about thirty gallons of chocolate every night now, sometimes more; thats easy, what troubles me most is to provide eatables with it. The cases of sweet crackers and packages of cakes have given out completely, so whatever we serve has to be made. Every other day we get bread from the quartermaster and make jam sandwiches. That is, we get it when we do get it. There are so many troops to be fed now that some days they have to cut out the Y supplies. And its a problem how to make other things for we've little butter substitute, very little sugar and no eggs, and flour is hard to get. Several times we've made doughnuts - about 70 dozen last time - and once, in despair, I resorted to honeymoons, but after four hours work could turn out less than 100, and couldn't cook those because my oven wouldn't get hot. We carried them over to Headquarters kitchen and baked them there, but after all it was an economic waste because after all that work only 60 or 70 men got the pleasure (they were good!)

Last week the Y warehouse turned over to me several crates of sponge cake cookies that had crumbled and weren't salable. I went back to "Hand grenades" and they're tremendously popular, but they require more sugar than I can afford to use. I turned out about 350 yesterday after four hours work. That was better than the honeymoons, and if it weren't for the sugar question they would solve the problem for a while.

Tomorrow I'm going to try soda biscuits. Split, with a jam filling, they'd be fine. Its all a question of making the oven behave, but Donald has promised to try and if it can be done we'll do it. He knows more about draughts and properties of baking powder and mixing than anyone I've ever seen. Either soda biscuits or honeymoons would be practical if I could arrange in some way to turn out enough, for they require neither sugar nor eggs.

But-----
27th November. I didn't get the soda biscuits done after all because I spent nearly the whole day "rustling" football suits for our team. There was to be a big game on Thanksgiving and we were all pretty excited and now at the last moment the other team has given out! The men are awfully disappointed - so am I. It wont be a real Thanksgiving without either a football game or turkeys. I suppose I ought to have hunted up turkeys around the country side but to tell the truth I didn't think of it in time. I've got a little extra sugar and plenty of cocoa so I'm going to make real honest-to-goodness fudge, and we'll have that and chocolate and jam sandwiches thats the best I can do I'm afraid.

I'm quite excited over a rumor I've heard that perhaps I shall get my helper after all. Oh-if only she's any good- there's such a lot to be done! Here's a sample of a day-today-----I got up at about 8 o'clock and made a fire just as quickly as I could. This morning wasn't bad, but my word! how cold these stone houses get. I always carry home a little can of coffee from mess, evenings, and a couple of sandwiches, so while I dress I heat the coffee and make toast. It makes a pretty good breakfast, though not up to some I've had. This morning I got to work at once over the weekly summing up of accounts and worked all morning. The pesky thing wouldn't come straight. It never will, usually I call in Captain Grant and he fixes it up but I didn't want to today for I knew he was busy. Lunch time found me nearly 500 francs short and on the verge of givvering. Its funny how food helps; I tackled it again right afterwards and came straight inside of half an hour.