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MC200: Folder 1: Mother [Francis Carr Fowler], April 30, 1898

*This transcription from the original letter contains language contemporaneous of the time and is being presented as part of a historical record.*

Springfield 4/30/98

Dear Ma,

I suppose that you received my postal card O.K.

There are about eight thousand of the boys down here and as we are all in the Fairgrounds it makes quite a crowd.

The first received a great send off all along the line when they came down here. At every town along the line the people turned out and cheered the trains as they passed through.

We are sleeping under a roof but it is not closed in. We have lots of straw and with the blankets we are comfortable. We get all we want to eat. Plain food and coffee without milk or sugar but it tastes fine after drilling out in the open air for three or four hours and the amount our company gets away with in a day is enough to feed a family like ours for a year. The hundred man eat 50 loaves of bread each meal.

We are beginning to take long marches across the country and the boys are getting as hard as iron from the drill, plain food and regular hours.

No one is allowed outside the camp and the boys that thought they were going out on a picnic, soon found out their mistake.

No one knows when we are going south or whether we are going at all or not but those that pass the regular army examination will probably get their equipment next week.

Joe Rockwell and I sleep together. We are both corporals, I was appointed as soon as we arrived here and we get the best there is of what ever is going.

I am all swelled up over my new job as their [sic] were fifty men that were in the company along time before the trouble with Spain came up, and as I was new in the company I did not expect to get it. I get out of all the dirty work and get a couple of dollars a month more pay.

Yours Herb

P.S. When you write address,

H.G. Fowler

Camp Tanner

Springfield

Ill

Co. L

1<sup>st</sup> Infantry I.N.G.