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MC200: Folder 11: Mother [Francis Carr Fowler], July 15, 1898

This transcription from the original letter contains language contemporaneous of the time and is being presented as part of a historical record. Please note that this transcription has not been reviewed for final editing. Please contact us with any questions.

Trenches about 3 miles from Santiago
Sebony [Sibony] “ 8 “ “ “

July 15 /98

By way of Sebony [Sibony] Cuba
Dear Mother

We are in the trenches just outside of Santiago and within 500 yds of the Spanish Army. They have had a flag of truce up for the last few days and there has been no firing to speak of, a little at night is all.

We were told last night that they have made up their minds to surrender. [illegible] expect to get the [illegible] ammunition to

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just back of the town. We have about 2500 and if they don't surrender today we are in a position to wipe them off the face of the earth. We have them surrounded and have enough artillery here to tear Santiago to pieces in a few hours. Tuesday afternoon the Spaniards put up a flag of truce under the pretext of wanting time to bury their dead but instead of doing that put up a battery of 6x8 in. guns and without any notice they pulled down the truce and started to blaze away but as they are poor shots with big guns they did no damage to speak of. After they had shelled our troops for 20 minutes we got a danymite [dynamite] field gun in position and fired just three packages of danymite [dynamite] at them and it was wonderful the amount of damage the three shots done. The battery was completely destroyed and they have not had nerve to stave anything since.

The Spaniards seem to be brave enough but do not know how to fight. They expected to have our soldiers fight like the Cubans but have learned a good many things in the past two months.

Every body here thinks that the Spaniards have had enough and all think that the war is about over.

It rains here all the time pretty near but we are used to rain now and...

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...don't mind it. The island is very fertile and I think there is a great chance for Americans to make money here after the war. We were [out] of rations for a few days after we landed here the reason being that we marched inland fifteen miles to get [illegible] the firing line in front [illegible] the Spanish rifle pits and as the roads were the worst that ever happened they could not get our pack train through the result was that we were out of rations for a couple of days and had to live on fruit which is very plentiful here. I think a person could make money by shipping fruit to New York it grows

[illegible]

[illegible] scenery is grand we are in the mountains and if we manage to keep away the fever we will be O.K. So far we have had no serious sickness in the 1st. Santiago however is full of small pox and yellow jack and I do not think we will go [illegible] town after the surrender.

Hoping this will find all well at home.

I am,

Your loving son,

Herb

Address 1st III Vol.

in the field