

13 - 28
1015
+ 20

May 11, 1942

Dear Lieutenant:

You are about to enter into the service and will probably soon be serving with troops. I congratulate you. Service as an officer gives a man great opportunities and is a challenge to all his abilities. We old boys who can no longer wear the uniform like to feel, for all that, that we are of some use in the war: This must be my excuse for offering you advice which I hope may help you.

Of course, the first duty of a Field Artillery officer is to know how to fire. And I have no doubt you have been and will be well instructed in this so that you can first see what is happening when you fire and second know what to do under the circumstances.

The second responsibility of an officer is to maintain proper guard. There is no disgrace in being licked in battle when a man has done his best, but the officer who fails to guard and protect the property and men in his charge is simply not on the job. That was the failure of Pearl Harbor. But these matters you fully understand already.

One of your disappointments at first may be that there is so much housekeeping in the army. Ninety per cent of your work will consist of looking after the men in your charge—putting them to bed, getting them up, clothing them properly, seeing that they are well fed, keeping them cheerful. Unless you keep your wits about you, you will find yourself like the old lady who lived in the shoe, and had so many children she didn't know what to do.

In a Regular Army outfit in times of peace, the life of the line officer may be very pleasant and easy because the noncommissioned officers in Regular outfits are seasoned soldiers and know their business and can