

FULTON COUNTY, INDIANA

*HANDBOOK*

Service Men, World War II, Letters  
1940-1943

**SERVICE MEN, WORLD WAR II, LETTERS**

See: Service Men, World War II

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PAUL BOWEN WRITES OF LIFE IN NORTHWEST ARMY CAMP

Editor's Note: Paul Bowen, former Rochester boy, is in Camp at Seattle, Washington. His recent letter to Harold Remy is one of the most interesting we have seen. It is reprinted herewith.

Co. A. 69 QM Bn.

A.P.O. 3-P, c/o Postmaster

8-25-41

Seattle, Wash.

Hello Harold:

I received your card the other day. Sorry I failed to receive your last letters. I have moved around quite a lot. Left Ft. MacArthur last May 17th. Was up north to King City on maneuvers until July 5th. Had quite an experience living in pup tents and living in the woods. We ate out of our mess kits, did our own washings and usually shaved in cold water.

Got to climb a few of the mts. there. We climbed one which is about 1400 ft. Not nearly as high as some we've seen, but required a little time in which to gain the top.

While on maneuvers our work was to keep trucks serviced and repaired when necessary. There's nothing much I can tell you about the maneuver battles as we always worked in the rear. We did have to retreat a time or two and then come back to our original place later in the affair. I went swimming in several mt. rivers. I saw several deer, heard some coyotes and bob cats. We killed a few rattlesnakes, some tarantula spiders and scorpans. I've taken a number of pictures while in the woods. I'm filling an Army Photo Album so can show in part what I've seen while in the Army when I get home.

After leaving King City we went to Camp Callan at San Diego. By the way King City is a small town, about 1500 population and southeast of San Francisco. Upon arriving at Camp Callan we were much disappointed to find all barracks filled. We slept in pup tents again until we could get larger tents and still ate out of mess kits. Callan is just a new camp. The streets and roads are just now being built. They have an Army theater, postoffice and several post exchanges. We had several recreation halls in which civilians sponsored programs. They have built three new churches and are building more barracks and some maintenance shops.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

On Aug 7 we left Callan and headed north, by train to Washington. A few of the fellows left a week early and drove the trucks up. We were told we would be on maneuvers again but upon arriving found we were headed for Alaska. To some it was quite a surprise. Although we knew we were taking all our equipment, even the Day room chairs and pool table. We also knew they had sent other groups ahead.

We had a very nice trip north. I saw orange and lemon groves and a lot of truck farming in southern California besides the oil wells. We took the island route, so farther north we hit the desert. The air was hot and dry. Saw very little of anything except sage brush and the bare soil. Further north we came to the mts. again. There we saw Mt. Shasta, snow-covered. We saw shacks of copper miners. Saw old cables across a river which gold miners had used. We saw one of the large dams under construction and lots of very pretty scenery. The road was very winding and the train only made from 15 to 25 miles an hour, so we had plenty of time to see it all.

Some time on Friday night we hit Oregon. The air got rather chilly. In the morning we found we were in some of the great pine forests. It was a pretty sight to see such large and tall trees, canyons, mountains, rivers with logs being pulled to saw mills and many other things. In northern Oregon we saw farming ground. They raise mostly little grain, hay and cattle. Most the whole west is irrigated. Here in Washington I've saw farming ground, apple orchards and pine forests. Haven't saw any of the Redwoods as yet. Was in Olympia the capital of Washington. It's about twice the size of Rochester.

Here in Washington the people can't get through telling how much nicer their state is than the others. They do have some very pretty lakes and parks. Last year they said the grass was green the year round here, and only had a couple light snows. Mt. Rainier is just a little south and east of us.

Another fellow and I went to Tacoma Sunday. He knew some people there. They gave us a chicken dinner and then drove us around over the city and to the Defiance Park. They showed us many places of interest including part of the Puget Sound.

Our Company now is divided in three groups. The first group went to Sitka, an island off the coast of Canada, about 800 miles north. Clair Strong was on that boat. The next group goes Friday to Kodiak, an island just south of the mainland of Alaska. I think the group I'm in leaves about the 3rd of Sept. We go to Dutch Harbor, the farthest away, about 2,000 miles up in the Aleutians Islands, just below the Bering Sea, and not so far from Siberia, Russia and Japan.

The fellow at whose house we ate dinner Sunday, told me there was a funny thing about these islands. He says they're volcanic and some have just disappeared and others would rise. Sounds interesting, doesn't it? We are expecting a change in the weather anyway. We have been issued more clothing. They say it's rather stormy on these islands through winter months. I can tell you more about them in a week or two. I don't know how long we will be there. All I can hear is rumors. It seems as though all the fellows who have run around together have been broken up. The morale of the Army here is very poor. None of the fellows here have had furloughs, and now heading for Alaska with some extra months added to our year, makes it a little bitter to like. So far there has been three of our Company went over the hill, including one sergeant.

I guess the rainy season has started here as it's been raining all day and last night.

How's the store and everybody coming now? The stores here are more similar to those in the east than those in California. How was the trip east?

My address will still be the same while I'm in Alaska. Possibly I can tell you a little of interest later on so will stop for this time. Hoping to hear from you again. ---- Paul.

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, September 8, 1941]

LETTER FROM ROBERT F. OWENS

Veterans Home  
Yountsville, Calif.  
Feb. 10, 1942

Rochester News-Sentinel  
Rochester, Ind..

To my friends back home:

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I arrived in state, at Yuma, Ariz., and crossed the Imperial Valley through El Centro on to San Diego, which city is sure preparing for war. All you can see here is soldiers and sailors and they have a look in their eyes which tells you they have not forgotten Pearl Harbor. I talked to several of the boys and they are really anxious to go and woe be unto those slant-eyed hornets when our boys do get started. Everything is very secretive here as the whole west coast is now in the war zone.

I came on up the coast to Los Angeles and here one could see a more serious look in the peoples' eyes. They seemed to look upon each other with suspicion, instead of being a happy, care-free looking people I met here in 1938. They now have their eyes open to a grim realization of a war which will eventually leave its disastrous mark on the beautiful city of movie fame. Here the Japs and Italians are being watched very closely and are to be moved to concentration camps soon.

I left Los Angeles and went to San Bernardino, then on north over El Cajon pass into the Mojave desert, across this piece of waste land into Antelope Valley to a little city called Lancaster, which is a thriving city on the edge of the desert; hay and copper mining being their main industries here. The people do not seem to take the war quite as serious as they do along the coast. I left Lancaster and went to Gorman on Route 99, on over the pass into the beautiful San Joaquin valley which is filled up with Japanese vegetable farmers, and with all their cleverness they could not hide their hatred toward the Americans. I did not talk to any of them for I hate them too bad. I came on through Bakersfield which is a great oil producing center and the oil fields are sure well guarded now. I came on to Tulare, on to Fresno, and Fresno does not know a war is on as far as business is concerned. Just a big city in the center of the vineyard district of San Joaquin valley. I went into the McMahan Bros. Store but did not see any of the boys.

I left Fresno on Route 99, through Madera where Bud Ware lives. He is seven miles out and I did not get to see him. I went on to San Jose on the southern tip of San Francisco bay, a beautiful place but saddened by the war. From here I went through Livermore to Tracy where I met Joe King and his family who are well. Walter King operates a service station and Ralph King, his brother, helps him. I also met Ben Drake, who has retired from the railroad. Then I got a surprise. I went to see George Reams, Buck's boy. I had forgotten all about him, but he is here and married and has a big baby girl over a year old. He has worked for the California Power and Electric company for sixteen years and has a good position. He and I sat up until two a.m. talking about old times in Rochester; he says he is not homesick. I sure enjoyed my visit and he wanted me to stay in Tracy, but my destination is the Far East and then what? I will be there soon and I will try to get a letter through to you some way.

I left Tracy, came on into Oakland, which is really preparing for war. I was forbidden to disclose just what is being done, but you can take it from me nothing is being left undone. I went across the bridge to San Francisco, and here is where I met all nationalities and I wondered as I looked at them just what was in their minds about this war. There is one happy element here and that is the Chinese, they are confident now that the Japs will be defeated.

I came back across the bridge to Oakland, then up to Carquinez bridge. Here the soldier guard stopped me, but I showed him my papers and he sent me across in a station wagon to Vallejo. It is here the mighty Mare Island Navy Yard is located and what a busy place it is now. Every one working in the navy yard, and believe me here is where all strangers are watched, but I had a government badge so I was let alone. I am forbidden to do much talking about Vallejo, but I will say this, that is one busy place.

I left Vallejo and came on up Napa valley to this place for a few days' rest. It is just 50 miles due north of Oakland and is located in a beautiful green valley where enough prunes are raised annually to supply the world.

The next time you hear from me will be from the Far East and I will try and get a couple of Jap ears. Plan to send them to that war museum there in the courthouse. I will be here until march so any one wanting to order a few Jap ears may do so by writing me at the address below. Best regards to all from that old World War veteran.

Robert F. Owens

## SvcMen WW II Letters

California Veterans Home  
Yountsville, Calif.

P.S. - I saw Luther Keel, his wife and mother at Phoenix, Ariz. Also Kid Van Duyne and his sister. They were all well. It was beautiful climate at Phoenix.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, February 17, 1942]

### LETTER FROM WARREN C. BRAMAN

The following is a service letter received from Warren C. Braman by Mrs. Elsie Braman,  
Rural Route 5, Rochester:

Dear Folks:

Don't mind if this writing is "jiggly" since I'm writing on the train. I doubt if you can read it. Can hardly make it out myself.

We left Rantoul about 8:40 last night on a Pullman. Slept pretty well, but we had to double up in the beds, as it was pretty crowded. As a whole tho' it's been swell. We've passed through a corner of Kentucky and are in the lower part of Tennessee now. I woke up this morning just as we crossed the Ohio river into Kentucky and spent half an hour looking for Snuffy Smith before I remembered that he was in the army. In just a few minutes we'll be in Mississippi - or maybe we are by now. There's not a heck of a big difference in the country except that it's getting considerably warmer and hillier, and the soil around here is sort of a red clay. On strange thing I noticed was that there are more fir trees here than I ever saw up north. They're thinning out too, tho'. The countryside is a little wilder than Indiana. About all you can see is hills and trees. The woods are broken occasionally by fields of cotton or corn. Very picturesque country, even in the winter. It's pretty wet, too. There are large pools of water in most every field. The cotton and corn fields are becoming thicker by the minute. Sometimes we see a field with about a hundred foot border of corn around the edge and cotton in the middle. The two crops are planted very close together, but have a definite boundary between them and strangely enough, never seem to intermingle. The corn crops look very poor in this part of the country. It's smoothing out again, too. The hills aren't quite so sharp now, but a little more rolling.

Wee, we have to be ready to eat in 15 minutes, so I'll have to wait until later to finish this.

3:45 P.M.

We've crossed a corner of Mississippi and are almost to Birmingham, Alabama. The country is beautiful - no kidding. It's all great hills - almost mountains and practically all the trees are some kind of pine. For the past few miles we've been passing through a valley with a wall of trees rising on the right side and almost vertical drop to the valley floor on the left. The whole area is full of coal and iron mines. Sometimes we'd pass between two solid walls of rock and iron ore on either side, so close that one could reach out and touch them. Ever since we hit Kentucky, the homes and roads have been the poorest I've ever seen. The houses are all ramshackle and ready to fall apart, and the roads were just red clay. It's beginning to get hotter now, tho', with concrete or asphalt roads and occasionally a few fairly decent houses. I think we're pulling into Birmingham, so I'll wait a while, see what it's like and try to describe it to you.

My mistake! That was Pratt City. Most of it looked like something of that nature! There's a flock of iron or steel mills to our left. We've come into the outskirts of town already. Ah, Birmingham! It's spread out over the hills as far as the eye can reach. Pretty good sized jernt.

We finally came to the depot. Al we've passed through so far is filthy negro sections. By looking up long streets, tho', you can see that it gets better as it gets farther from the railword. We have a 15 minute lay-over here and most of the men got off. I didn't feel like it so I stayed in the car. We have a 2-hour lay-over at Jacksonville, Fla. at 6:00 a.m. tomorrow so I'll wait 'til then to stretch my legs. It's still fairly chilly even this far south.

Sat. 11:00 A.M.

Well, we're in Florida at last, just now the ocean is on our left and a jungle on our right. Very pretty. In Avondale, Ala., our train hit a car. Carried it about 5 feet down the track. An old woman was driving it, but she wasn't hurt a bit. A little earlier in the trip a man died on the train.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Then most of yestrday afternoon and part of last night we had a flock of females in the car. More fun!

5:25 P.M.

Morrison Field! At Last! We arrived about 2:00 o'clock this afternoon, and since have gotten our beds, bedding and a whole barracks to ourselves. The barracks are pretty good. A little larger than at Chanute, but about the same type. The officers are all pretty much of alright I hear, but I'm afraid we're in a pretty poor outfit. There are only about a thousand men here and the 313th has over 600 of them. Oh, lwell, I'll wait and see.

Golly, the weatherhereis swell = at least it is today. It's pretty hot in the daytime and gets cold at night. The field itself is beautiful. Palm trees all over it. So far everything's perfect. Let's hope it stays that way. I think I'd better sign off for this time and do a little cleaning up.

So long,

Love,

Warren.

P.S. - Please don't mind if this letter is dirty. Everything gets that wa on the train.

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, February 26, 1942]

### LETTER FROM ROLAND C. HIZER

Dear Folks:

This is really a healthy life if you can keep from catching cold and I don't have much trouble doing that. We are down here in the south but today was the first time we saw the sun.

This field is really quite an honor to be in although they only train machinists and I decided to take up machinist for more reasons than one. First, to get out of this weather; then, too, I could probably use it in the car business, and naturally I would be a little closer to home. I have passed the main tests (written is all there is) so it is almost certain I go to Rantoul Field, Ill., in three weeks.

Don't get the idea this is getting me down because I am proud to wear a U. S. uniform. The food is good, we get up at five, lights out (usually) at nine, and lots of exercise, so you see it should improve my physical condition 100%.

They say there are two ways to do something - the right way and the army way, but the tougher it is the better I like it. In fact, I had a tough blow the first night here. About 50 fellows got rolled of our flight. We were up quite late getting our cots, and train ride and it was drizzling rain - an ideal night to sleep. They even took it from under my pillow. But those things can be taken with a smile because there is great future in the army, saying nothing about patriotism. We only need money for cigarettes and I got P. K. checks (vouchers) for them. Anyway I wrote to Violet and had her cash in my stamps which should give me about \$8. It is certainly good not to have to go to restaurants and a hotel all the time. In fact it's all just as I hoped for. A chance to improve my health along with taking up some other trade. I know you are thinking that this is a short time since the 18th (by the way, that was Doris's birthday) but nevertheless I have great interests ahead.

I feel very sorry for the married men, however. They all seem to take the wrong idea of the whole thing. This field is very similar to any and all colleges, in fact, it is even better equipped, such as physicians, ministers, etc.

Well, before I bore you with my enthusiasm of the army I want to ask a few questions. First, how is Marie Ann? It seems as though I couldn't see enough of her. How is Florence? Is Florence getting any better? In fact, how is everybody? Did Geo. Ed. pass his physical exam Saturday? Write and let me know how everything is, Mom. Got long underwear on. Ha.

Love,

Pvt. Raymond C. Hizer,

Flight 161 - 414 S.S.,

Keesler Field, Miss.

P.S. - I'm a tent leader over six men which don't mean anything except if it isn't properly kept I and the guilty one have to clean the out houses.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, March 5, 1942]

### LETTER FROM ROBERT J. MINGLIN

Northern Ireland Forces  
Btry A, 151 F.A.  
A.P.A. 813 A.E.F.

Pvt. Robert J. Minglin informed Miss Willetta Van Lue on March 4th, by cablegram, that he has safely arrived in Ireland. He stated he is having fun, feeling fine and seeing lots of different country. Also wishes everyone at home his best regards.

Pvt. Minglin is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. R. Minglin and known throughout Rochester and Logansport. He entered services on June 30, 1941 and has been stationed at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, Camp Clairborne, La., and Fort Dix, New Jersey.

Thanking you kindly,  
Willetta Van Lue,  
R.R. No. 3  
Rochster, Ind.

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, March 7, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JAMES WILLIAMS

March 3, 1942

News-Sentinel  
(Best little paper in the world)  
Rochester, Indiana

Dear Friends at home:

Mother sends me your (or shouldn't I say our) paper every week. They are surely a great help to one in the service.

Often I read accounts of boys in different branches of the service and altho I have nothing really interesting to offer thought perhaps you would like to hear about my camp.

We arrived here Saturday night, the eighth day of February. We went into tents the first night and have been there ever since.

There were a hundred and sixty-two of us left Fort Harrison assigned to the Quartermaster Corps, attached to the Air Corps. Started our basic training the day after our arrival. That's the marching and drilling every man goes thru, regardless of his branch of service.

Our basic training consisted of three straight weeks, six hours every day. Altho that is a short day, it was mighty pleasant to flop in your bank at 9:00, and many evenings before that. Those who know me, can hardly visualize my going to bed at 9:00 and getting up at 6:00.

We ended our basic training today and started our schooling in Quartermaster training. That will be a four weeks' course of lectures. Doubt very much if we will remain here much longer because of the increasing number of recruits coming in. Will probably be sent to another Quartermaster school, which I hope is nearer Indiana.

Am fortunate in being in camp with another Fulton county boy. Arthur Wilson and I have been together since our examinations in Gary. In fact we sleep in the same tent. That helps a lot. I hope we aren't separated.

Tent City, that area in which we live, is about one mile from Savannah Air Base, about five miles from the city of Savannah and about fifteen miles from the coast.

We have been under medical quarantine for three weeks and recently a case of mumps broke out in camp which requires an additional two and a half weeks. So you can readily see I haven'y been around much since I've been here.

Am writing this letter by candle light. This is a newly made camp and lacks most of the conveniences I'm used to. But it is rapidly growing and is to become a recruit center.

Was really disillusioned with the "sunny south." The nights here are really cold and it doesn't warm up until about noon. We have a lot of rain and wind. Tonight is the worst night since we've been here.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

It rained all day and this afternoon it started blowing. We fall out sometime in the middle of the night when it rains to loosen the ropes on our tents. This is to prevent zipping.

This letter may seem awfully jumbled and uninteresting but I've written things as they come to me.

It is nearly bed time, so I will close this letter with the hope that everyone back home is well, and to keep chins up, because we, in the service, are well and healthy.

Would appreciate a card or letter from any of my friends,

Your friend,  
Pvt. James Williams  
Ree. Det. Co. F. A.A.C  
Savannah Air Base  
Savannah, Ga.

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, March 7, 1942]

### LETTER FROM ROBERT F. OWENS

Oakland, Calif.

Rchester News-Sentinel

Rochester, Ind.

Editor:

Well, here I am again back in an army uniform, doing guard duty on the longest bridge in the world connecting San Francisco and Oakland, the Bay Bridge, and what a wonderful work for human hands to construct, eight miles long across San Francisco bay.

I am in a company of soldiers made up of all World War veterans, the only company of its kind in the United States, and we have been honored by being given this Bay Bridge to guard against sabotage. Believe me, we old vets know just how to do that little job and it will be lights out for the little squint-eyed yellow rats if they are caught on this old causeway with their fingers uncrossed.

The people here are sure proud of this company of veterans and they make it known to us in many ways, and we are doing a real job of guarding this important structure, the link between Oakland and Frisco.

I had dinner in Oakland last Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Robert Fyvie. Mrs. Fyvie was Miss Irene Kilmer, daughter of the Kilmer of Rochester. They took me to see another ex-Rochester boy, Mervin True, Mel True's son, and did we all get together and go over old times "back home."

Mrs. Fyvie drives an ambulance for the Red Cross. They met the hospital transpots and hauled the wounded men when they arrived here from Pearl Harbor. A great patriotic work for Itene.

The people around here are really taking this war very seriously and well they may for this bay district will be the first to receive the attack and they sure will meet up with a big surprise when they attempt that attack.

I suppose the people back there were wondering where I went. Well, when I read about that dirty, sneaking attack on Pearl Harbor, and being a son of a Civil war soldier who taught me to drill with a stick, and being somewhat of a soldier myself, my trigger finger got to itching and I just had to get back into harness again. Besides, I am nearly to the end of my row and if I can finish the row and come to the end of it fighting for my country, I want it to end that way. While I was just a little urchin my younger days around Rochester, the people can never say that "Bobbie" Owens lagged back when his country needed him. The only thing I regret is that I can not do more.

I will write you later. There are lots of things I would like to tell you that I am forbidden.

Regards to all, I remain.

Robert F. Owens  
Co. "H", C.S.G  
Oakland, Calif.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, March 10, 1942]

### LETTER FROM RAYMOND F. GORDON

Mr. and Mrs. R. M. Gordon, 121 East Fourth Street, Rochester, received a letter from their grandson, Raymond F. Gordon, who is in the Air Corps, stationed at Darr Field, Arcadia, Fla. Ray writes that being flying cadet in the army is exciting, as they are flying all day now.

He says the food is good, but was very happy to get the box of candy and cookies his grandmother sent him last week, and longs for one her home cooked meals.

Ray is the son of Hayden N. and Grace Collins Gordon, and was born near Rochester, although he has lived in Farmsville, Va., several years. He is also a nephew of Charles O. and Jack Gordon of this city. He will be remembered by a number of friends he made while visiting Rochester in his own ship last summer.

(Signed) R. F. Gordon

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, March 13, 1942]

### LETTER FROM LEROY ESHELMAN

March 18, 1942

Wednesday Eve.

Dear Folks:

Everything is grand down south. It is really better than what we thought it would be. As yet, we don't know there is a war going on only just what we read in the papers. The atmosphere is rather foggy and damp but warm; I imagine from 75 to 80 degrees above zero.

The food is really delicious and a good variety. For instance for dinner today we had ham, mashed potatoes, head lettuce, peas, bread and butter, cocoa and ice cream and all cooked the very best.

I believe the nights and scenery are of the best, and the tourists do too, when they come to Biloxi for the winter. The only reason most of the boys don't think so is because they can't go home when they want to, in other words they have to stay here and that changes everything. The tan Spanish moss which grows on these oak trees is sure a beautiful sight. This kind of oak (I don't know the name of it) was used to build ships out of in earlier days.

Here in camp they use clam shells for roads and sidewalks, which is very conservative. They sure pack down very hard when broken but still can be graded with a regular road grader.

It certainly is good to receive the home town paper. I, as well as the rest of the Rochester boys, look forward to it every day.

Well, it is about time for lights out, so will sign off for this time.

Your son,

LEROY

Pvt. Albert L. Eshelman  
414 School Squadron  
Flight 161  
Keesler Field, Miss.

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, March 21, 1942]

### LETTER FROM BOB OWENS

Oakland, Calif.

March, 1942

To My Friends Back Home:

As I just came off duty and nothing to do for the next ten hours I will tell you what little news I can of this war-fear-stricken west coast.

Now when I say fear-stricken I mean just that; for these people here go to bed at night in greatest fear of a night air raid and which may come at any time. If it does come it will take a terrible toll because these cities are so thickly populated and buildings are so close together that a one thousand lb. bomb would wreck a city block. While this bay district is being patrolled every

## SvcMen WW II Letters

minute by air, land and water forces, there is always a chance for an enemy to slip through and do some mighty dirty damage. It will not come as a surprise to us soldiers because when we are on the alert we are always waiting with loaded guns for the worst to happen.

The one thing we have to guard against at all times is the Japs here in California. They know all our defenses out here and there is only one way to make this coast safe and that is to intern all of them in the middle west, or I have a better plan. I would get them altogether and start them wading westward into the Pacific Ocean toward the island of Japan and every time one of them let his yellow-slant-eyed face show out of the water, just give him a steel coated bullet and let the fish have a feast. That may sound cruel to some people but to me, who knows these little yellow devils too well, that would be too easy for them.

We are going to be moved from here soon but where to no one knows. We sleep with our boots on so we can move at a moment's notice. I hope the move will take us closer to MacArthur. All of us old Vets sure are anxious to give him a lift, altho some of the veterans still dislike MacArthur for his firing on the Bonus Marchers in Washington in 1932. I think they would all forget that mistake of his during this time of emergency and owing to the great resistance he has shown all of us are more than anxious to give him and his brave handful of men a helping hand.

Now to tell you a little about this Battalion of World War Vets we have here, they have all been in battle and know what it is all about, every man knows what to do and when to do it. They have been using us as a model for the young troops here and they try to pattern after us and believe me they are doing a good job and with a little actual experience they will make wonderful soldiers. So don't you people back there worry about this old soil of our's, it will be safe with a bunch of boys we are getting now.

I have seen and talked to many of the wounded from Pearl Harbor and in my next letter I will tell you some of the stories I have heard from the men who were there.

I wish some of my pals back there would drop me a line as I like to hear from home. It kind of takes some weary monotony out of a soldier's mind. Hoping everything is O.K. back there I will do my share at this end I remain your Old World War Vet.

Robert F. Owens  
Co. H, C.S.G. 9th Reg  
C.S.G. Armory  
Oakland, Calif.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, March 25, 1942]

### LETTER FROM RAYMOND GOSS

Dear Capt. Minter:

I finally got around to writing you, so don't be too surprised when you receive this letter.

Since the last time I wrote you, I've been at Albuquerque, San Francisco, 500 miles out to sea and back, March Field, Bakersfield, and now I'm at Spokane, Washington.

When I was at Bakersfield I went to gunnery school and qualified as aerial gunner. Now I'm putting in time to become an air engineer and coming along swell. An engineer handles the throttles, and lots of other important duties.

Also while at Bakersfield I passed my physical and mental exams for flying cadet. So I'm waiting to be called on that also. If a man takes advantage of his opportunities he can sure learn a lot.

I sure had a swell trip up here. We had our own trains with Pullmans and diner. Oregon and Washington are sure two pretty states.

Our squadron is sure well represented in the war today. Capt. Kelly was in our squadron when we parted at March Field and in March 16h, Life magazine, there is in "The Roll of Honor" a picture of Lt. Connally and his deeds. Another member of our squadron.

Since our buddies are over across the seas, but we can't be with them, we are doing our bit. The other day we took our squadron money used for recreation and bought a \$1,000 bond.

Well this is all I have to write about. Tell everyone hello.

Truly yours,

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Raymond Goss

My address is:

32nd Bomb Sqd.  
Geiger Field,  
Spokane, Washington

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, March 28, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JAMES E. SMITH

San Francisco, Calif.

March 24, 1942

Dear Mr. Minter:

I received your letter this evening and I appreciate your interest in me. It does me a lot of good to know that I have not been forgotten.

As to my shore duty, I may say I am very fortunate. There is a new Fleet Post Office starting here in San Francisco. It is the only one of its kind this side of Chicago. Now we are getting the building clean and ready to fix it for the post office. It will be for Navy personnel only. It will then be necessary for anyone entering to have a statement from their commanding officer. The mail coming in and going out will be under guard. We who handle and tie the mail will be the only ones to know the destination of the mail. Of course, it will be necessary for us to know where all the ships are off the west coast - where they go and when they return.

Today we started learning our duties, how to sort mail and various tasks. We will register mail and have all the departments of a regular U. S. post office. It will be about ten days or so before it will be underway. Thus far it has been very interesting, and I am sure that I will like it very much. We have already had many instructions that the things we do inside are supposed to be kept secret on the outside. That is, of course, in regard to the mail, the location of ships, etc.

It is pertinent duty and I imagine I'll be here for the duration of the war. We have to have a \$5,000 bond and it will cost us \$25 a year. We do not have to take that if we don't want to - but if we want to stay here.

Yes, the Y.M.C.A. is right on the bay. It is very close to the bay bridge. The piers are directly across the street, and of course, run a long way down Embarcadero.

Now, I have liberty every night after four o'clock. Consequently, I do have a lot of time to see the city. I have also been over to Oakland and Berkeley several times. The people here really treat us like "white people" which is a pleasant change from San Diego. So far, I like San Francisco very much. It is a very interesting town. I would appreciate it more though if we had less rain, and if the wind would cut down a little once in a while.

I guess that is about all I have to say. I hope that I have given you the information you want. There isn't much more I could say about the post office.

Thanks again for your interest in my welfare. Give my regards to my relatives and friends.

Sincerely

James E. Smith

Storekeeper, 3rd Class

U.S. Naval Reserve

Embarcadero, Army & Navy

Y.M.C.A.

San Francisco, Calif.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, March 31, 1942]

### LETTER FROM DICK MILLER

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Fort Amador  
Battery I, 4th CA.  
Panama Canal Zone  
April 8th, 1942

Dear Mother, Dad and Janice:

Last Sunday (Easter) we had church up here on our little rock. You see, we couldn't all go to church so they brought the church to us, and those who wish to attend could, and the turnout was so great they're going to have church here every Sunday. So, now there is no excuse for me missing a Sunday.

They turned down my transfer for the air corps so I shall apply again, but this time I shall do a better job. (I am going to find a general if there is one down here) to start it off and then, the 4th C.A. won't have anything to do with it. And if that doesn't work, I am going to put in for a flying cadet.

I am sorry I do not write as often as I would like to. Am am so tired when night comes I fall into bed, and the next thing I know it's time to got to work again.

With love,  
Dick

P.S.: Give my love to everyone.

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, April 16, 1942]

### LETTER FROM WILBUR E. BROWN

April 13, 1942

Dear Sir:

My name is Wilbur E. Brown. I am from Fulton county. My home is 2 1/2 miles east of Fulton. I am writing a few lines to let you know how I am getting along. I was drafted through the Fulton County draft board.

I am at Jefferson Barracks, Mo. I am in the air corps. We are only 12 miles from St. Louis on the banks of the Mississippi.

Sometimes I get pretty homesick, but I am proud to be serving so just a cause. Also to be serving such a fine community as Fulton county.

There is a fellow in my tent from Rochester also. His name is Max Good. A swell pal. Well, I must close.

Respectfully yours,  
Pvt. Wilbur E. Brown  
[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, April 16, 1942]

### LETTER FROM MAX GOOD

Jefferson Barracks, Mo.  
April 12, 1942

Dear Sir:

Just a line to let you know I am still thinking of Rochester and Fulton county. I am in the air corps and am stationed here in Missouri on the banks of the Mississippi. I have met a friend and pal from Fulton by the name of Wilbur E. Brown. We stick together pretty close and get by pretty good.

We are both glad to be serving our country in our power with the United States forces. Am saying hello to all my friends and folks and good luck. Your sincerely,

Pvt. Max Good  
564th Tech. Sch. Sq. S.P.  
Flight D,  
Jefferson Barracks, Mo.  
[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, April 16, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JAMES A. DEARDORFF

## SvcMen WW II Letters

April 15, 1942

Dear Folks:

Well, it was just a year ago today that I left home to serve a year in the armed forces. It sure looks like it will be slightly longer than a year before I get that very nice leather bound piece of paper entitled an honorable discharge.

We never think about getting out now like we did last year because we have a definite job to do.

The reason that we are here at Ft. Benning is because we are going to be demonstrational troops for the officers' candidate school.

I'm sending a folder to Doc that will give you a better idea of what it is all about. Our regiment was picked out of several divisions to be the best trained so we got this break and were sent here. We will be here until Aug. 1st and if we prove to be satisfactory we will stay longer. Of course everybody is working hard so we can stay.

We have all the latest weapons that have been developed and we don't go out and shoot blanks and play war any more.

Amos Foor is here too since he is in Company G of the 151st Infantry.

We are having plenty to eat and I'm taking on weight. The last time I got weighed I weighed 165 pounds with clothes on and when I was weighted in Doc King's office before I came into the army I weighed 132 1/2.

We enjoy a lot more freedom here. They don't have any M.P. gates like they did at Shelby and all we need is an O.K. from our company commander to get to town.

In fact I can see now why some men stay in the regular army all their life. It's just like any other job when you get enough privileges.

I talked to some of the soldiers from Camp Claiborne when we were on maneuvers and they are infantry troops just like us so I expect that Cecil Rhodes is getting the training I got a year ago.

Your loving son,  
Jim

P.S. - As far as I can find out now I'll either get a furlough the 1st or 12th of May. It has been hot here and I have my face and hands all tanned brown by the hot sun.

Pfc. James A. Deardorff  
Co. F, 151st Inf.,  
Ft. Benning, Ga.

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, April 20, 1942]

### LETTER CONCERNING ALBERT JENNENS

115 Howitt St.,  
Ballarat, Victoria, Australia  
March 12, 1942

Dear Mrs. Jennens  
Rochester, Ind.

No doubt you will be surprised to receive a letter from a complete stranger living at such a long distance away, but we have had your son, Albert, billeted with us for four days. The people of our town were asked by the authorities if we would billet American soldiers and airmen until they were sent to their bases. I am glad to say everyone gave them a wonderful welcome.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I do hope Albert enjoyed his short stay with us and we were very sorry to see him go this morning. He was so nice in the home, but I had better not sing his praises too loudly as he told me you would never believe he could be so good. We had another boy, too, but we didn't see very much of him as he was quite a different type from your boy. I suppose you are wondering just what we Australian people are like, but I think the great majority of the American boys will give us a good reputation when they return home. I hope I don't sound like an old grandmother as in fact my husband and I are in our twenties and will have been married two years on the 30th of this month. I thought you would like to know how your son is faring in a strange land, so I took the liberty of writing you. I have a brother in the navy and I know my parents worry about him. Anyhow, you can rest assured that when he left this morning he was fit and as happy as one could be under the circumstances. This cursed war brings lots of heartaches to millions of homes, doesn't it, and we can't do much about it, can we, but hope and pray it will soon end and that the boys return safely to their people. I remain,

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. A. J. McIver

P.S. - I forgot to mention that an advance party (including Albert and Bill) set out (censored) for their new headquarters, which are situated approximately (censored). The rest of the boys are (censored).

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, April 21, 1942]

### LETTER FROM EARL BAILEY

Air Corps Technical School

Keesler Field, Miss.

April 9, 1942

Mrs. Bert Myers,  
President, Mt. Zion Club.

Dear Mt. Zion Club:

I received the lovely box of cookies and want to thank the club very much for them. The boys, too, thought they were good. Said it reminded them of the good old-fashioned home made cookies. They soon disappeared as I am in the upper bay (upstairs) of this barracks and there are about 33 fellows and they came at a time when boxes were scarce, but since Easter it is quite different - so much candy and sweets, it's a wonder we all aren't sick. I am well and am enjoying this summer sunshine weather of the South, although I never expected to be so far south. This camp is near Biloxi and the Gulf of Mexico, and 75 miles south of Camp Shelby and 80 miles from New Orleans. This location is what they call a four season resort and the camp is very new, just started to build last June.

I am in the air force - used to be air corps but has been changed. This camp is especially to train airplane mechanics and other phases, too, and classes graduate every 10 days upon completion of their 110-day period. I am taking the A. M. course, too, and have about 25 days of it completed so far. It is very interesting but quite difficult, and so I am in the 13th class of the school. Hope it will be lucky for me, although I am not superstitious. We go to school at 2 o'clock in the afternoon till 6 o'clock, then chow, and back to school at 7 o'clock and are then dismissed from school at 10:15 p.m. so you see we get plenty of a day in that way.

It rained today - one of those typical southern rains and when it does it pours but we are equipped with rain caps and raincoats so we go right along as if the sun was shining. I have been in to Biloxi and have seen some of their beautiful flowers. I saw blooming in gardens marigold, snapdragons, sweet peas, pansies, and roses, lots of spirea bushes just bursting from buds and blossoms and evergreen trees, hedges and a few palm trees. It reminded me of mid-summer in Indiana, but folks' letters state you've been having wintry sort of weather, so hard to imagine for the South.

I must close for now, but certainly want to again express appreciation for the box of cookies from the club.

Sincerely,

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Private Earl J. Bailey,  
416 School Sqd., Flight C, Barrack 11,  
Keesler Field, Miss.

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, April 25, 1942]

### LETTER FROM REUBEN RYNEARSON

Supt. Rankin received the following letter from Reuben Rynearson who graduated from Rochester high school in 1937. He is stationed in the Panama Canal Zone.

Battery C, 1st C.A.  
Ft. Amador  
Panama Canal Zone  
April 17, 1942

Dear Mr. Rankin:

How is R. H. S. by now? Still as grand a school as it was when I attended last.

Talk about raining in Indiana; then you ought to see it raining now here in Panama. And it is also hot here all the time except for a cool night once in awhile.

There are several boys from Rochester here and we get to see one another quite often. Dick Miller and I are at the same place.

Mr. Rankin, could you give me a record of my credits in the R. H. S. and a letter of recommendation? If you could send them air-mail, I would appreciate it very much.

I will sign off for now but give my regards to the R. H. S.

Yours truly

Reuben Rynearson

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, April 29, 1942]

### LETTER FROM HARRY SAYGER

B. Btry. K. 34d C.A.  
Ft. MacArthur, Calif  
April 26, 1942

News-Sentinel  
Rochester, Indiana  
Dear Friends:

I have received the News-Sentinel dog-gone near ever since I have been in the Army and I'm telling you right now I sure as heck appreciate it very much. It is a very fine paper and it keeps me up on the home news, or should I say the draft because that is what every one is looking forward to.

It was fifteen months the 25th of April that 22 of us boys left Rochester and sent direct to Fort Benjamin Harrison. There were eight of the 22 sent from Fort Harrison out here to Fort MacArthur, and the others were sent to Texas. I was put into Battery F, a mortar battery and the other boys were put into the Quartermasters. Last May the Quartermasters moved out on maneuvers and never returned to this fort. Some of them were left at Ft. Lewis, Wash. and the rest sent on to Alaska. The last of May I was transferred to Battery K, a searchlight battery and I am with at the present time. I am the only one of the boys that left Rochester and sent here for basic training that is left here. The first four months was tough but it eased up after that up until December the 7th.

As I have mentioned before our battery is a searchlight battery and now that we are in the war we are kept plenty busy at night but we do have it rather easy during the day. We have out twenty searchlights now and covering a distance of about two hundred miles. We have a shack built at each light position large enough for ten men so we stay right at the position instead of staying at the fort as we did before the war.

It is difficult for us to get a pass as often as we would like to have them and it is impossible for us to get a furlough because of being located on the coast and at this particular spot. I would like to come home this summer but I am not counting on it so I won't be disappointed.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I am getting along very fine and I have never felt any better than I do now. I would like to come home but since that I can't I want to say hello to my folks and friends. In closing I want to wish every one the best of luck and hoping to see that good old town of Rochester as soon as we win this war and get released from the Army.

Your Friend,  
Corp. H. Sayger

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, May 1, 1942]

### LETTER FROM DON J. ROBERTSON

Av. Cadet Don J. Robertson  
A.C.R.P., Squadron "A"  
April 26, 1942

Hello Folks:

We have been nearly four weeks receiving our initial ground training. Next week we will be transferred to Kelly Field for further ground school.

Our class is the first under the new air crew qualifications and over half of our original number have been classified for bombardier or navigation training. I held my breath all the time they were reading that list of names; however, I was fortunate enough to receive pilot classification. Only two of us from the original gang of six Florida boys will receive flight training.

This barracks once housed Lindbergh when he was a cadet here at Brooke, or so they say. It's certainly old enough.

I've been doing a flourishing business this afternoon photographing other cadets in their full dress uniforms. We use a mesquite tree for a background. My gang's about to go swimming, guess I'll join them in a minute.

I received a card from Bill Ehart this morning. He's getting his wings soon at Foster Field, downstate from here. I hope to see him sometime soon.

Everyday brings a "sugar report" from "Pat," consequently my morale is "stratosphere high."

Tell all my Rochester friends, Hello.

Your son,  
Don

"Keep 'Em Flying."

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, May 4, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JIM WILLIAMS

Savannah Air Base  
Savannah, Georgia  
May 4, 1942

Dearest Mother and Dad:

Well it's still you who owes the letter, but while I have something interesting to write I figure it best to go ahead and write.

I'd like to start out by describing the most wonderful day since I've been in the army, from beginning to end.

Got up yesterday about 9:30 in the morning. Ed, Larry, Don and myself went to town to church. Ed, Don and I went to the Lutheran, and Larry to his own church, he being Catholic.

After church we met Larry in Walgreen's along with another fellow and his wife, she being from Indianapolis. We had a coke there and left the couple and went to Morrison's Cafeteria where we ate a very nice lunch.

We ate lunch and then went for a walk through one of the many parks in Savannah. We sat in the park and fed peanuts to the pigeons for over an hour. By that time it was nearing the hour we were supposed to be at the couple's house, where we were invited for dinner.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

We arrived there about 4:00 and I met the people for the first time; Don, Larry and Ed, being there once before. They are really lovely people. They are a rather young couple, and made us all feel like we were right at home.

After we had been there about a half hour, they suggested we go for a ride. They took us out along the Wilmington River, and to the million dollar James Oglehorpe Hotel. It is the most beautiful thing I've ever seen. The rates were once \$40.00 per day. Can you imagine a place that expensive. Boy I couldn't!

We came back to their house after I had sung two or three good Irish songs to them. Shortly after getting back, it was time for dinner. And what a dinner. You couldn't take more than one small spoonful of each thing or you wouldn't have had room for all of it. We had Southern Fried Chicken, Beef Roast, Potatoes, Macarone and Cheese, Potato Salad, Strawberry Short Cake. I didn't make a hog of myself, but when I was finished I was actually in misery.

After dinner we sat around and talked, and sang until 10:30. Some relatives arrived and we met them. They were also very nice people. You know the old saying about southern hospitality really applies down here.

They had a pet squirrel, that we all got a big kick out of. You know how tame they are at home. Well this one would crawl right into your pocket. We had a circus with it.

We figured we shouldn't stay any longer because we wanted to come back again, so we thanked them, excused ourselves, and left.

We took a chance on getting a ride, and walked all the way to the base, which was at least four miles. But, of course, we didn't mind that, the day had been too perfect to let a little thing like that bother us.

You'd like this town, mother. It's so historic. Monuments are all over the town, with epitaphs on them. The home that General Sherman used for his headquarters still stands in its same condition, and the same relatives live in it, descendants of the original families. The whole town is very interesting.

Well I have covered the day pretty well, so I will wait until I hear from you to write anymore. Write soon.

Your loving son,

Jim

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, May 8, 1942]

### LETTER FROM TOM HUNT

"In the Field,"

Feb. 12, 1942

Dear Ones At Home:

This letter may never be delivered. It will go to Corregidor and wait for transportation. Perhaps I'll be able to cable you before it arrives. Quien sabe!

About the war, I can say nothing. You back home know more about it than we do. All we see is our own little theatre of operations.

Also I am proud to be a part of the fight that is being made here and would not, even if it were possible, leave here until it is over, and we have won, as we inevitably will. By "we" I mean my country in general. Bataan may fall, but the outcome of the war is fore-ordained. I have seen some horrible things happen, and I have had my share of narrow escapes, but I have also seen some very wonderful acts of courage, self-sacrifice and loyalty.

At last I have found what I have searched for all my life - a cause and a job in which I can lose myself completely and to which I can give every ounce of my strength and my mind and I have mentally and spiritually conquered my fear of death. Pure animal emotion cannot be entirely subdued by the mentality, but it can be and has been controlled. My prayer each night is that God will send you, who are suffering so much more than I am, His strength and peace. During the first few days of the war, I also prayed for personal protection from physical harm but now, that I may be given strength to bear whatever I must bear - and do what I must do - so that those men under me will have every reasonable chance.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Life and my family have been very good to me and have given me everything I have ever really wanted and should anything happen to me now, it will not be like closing a book in the middle, as it would have been had I been killed in the first few days of the war. For in the last two months I have done a lifetime of living and have been a part of one of the most unselfish, cooperative efforts that has ever been made by a group of individuals.

Mistakes may have been made - but that has nothing to do with the manner in which my comrades on Bataan, both Filipinos and Americans, have reacted to their trial by fire. If the same unselfish spirit were devoted to world betterment in time of peace, what a good world we would have.

The purpose of this letter is to send to you my love and my thanks for just being my family. It is written with so-called premonition. Really, all in all my chances are pretty good. Much better than most of the live officers of my grade and age. For as I told you many times in my letters before the war, my particular job is about as safe as any soldier could have in war time.

“Keep ‘em flying” West.

Your loving son and brother,

Tom

P.S. - You were right - “A man can do what he must.”

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, May 9, 1942]

### TOM HUNT NOT AUTHOR OF INSPIRING LETTER

Mrs. Bertha Neighbor of this city, mother of Tom Hunt desires to clarify an erroneous impression which followed the publication of a letter received from her son, Tom Hunt, who is now a prisoner with Gen. Wainwright’s forces in the Philippines.

Mrs. Neighbor states her son was not the author of the inspiring message, but had sent it to her to show the high morale of the American soldier under most trying circumstances. Mr. Hunt’s mother states that Lieut. Henry Lee, of South Pasadena, Calif., was the author of the letter and at the time it was written he was serving under General Wainwright on the Bataan peninsula.

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, May 14, 1942]

### LETTER FROM BURK MILLER

An extract from a letter received recently from Burk B. Miller, an ensign stationed on the U.S.S. Platte now with the U.S. fleet in the Pacific, written to his parents, Judge and Mrs. Robert R. Miller, follows:

“Time has passed rather quickly the past few months. It is hard to realize that I have been away seven months and four days, if I figure correctly. Things certainly have changed here, too, probably more than has been realized. When I first came in the Navy it was largely pleasure and not too much work for anyone, now pleasure is rather a scarce article to find.

“It’s good to have you say that the civilian population is beginning to take hold and work. It is very necessary that they do that, for there are many things that we need out here. We certainly don’t want to get the reputation that England has had so far in the Pacific - “Too little, and too late.” Even on board here, we are handicapped by the lack of certain things. Intensified war production can win the war in the shortest time. Of course, each day that passes increases our possibility of winning, because of our rate of production which mounts each day. The war will be won by whoever can produce the most trained men, guns and potatoes.

“I fully believe that Fulton county will have as much to do in winning this war as any county producing armaments, and that any farmer is doing as much as the worker in the aircraft factories or the men in the army and navy out here, all provided, of course, that they do as much as they can for us. Food, I assure you, will count as much as planes. Tell that to the people of Fulton county. To them, no doubt, the war is an unreal thing, perhaps too far distant, but here in the Pacific it is the most realistic thing I have ever encountered. We are playing for keeps, not for fun.”

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, May 13, 1942]

## SvcMen WW II Letters

### LETTER FROM CHAS. COCHRAN

Canal Zone

May 4, 1942

Dear Capt. Minter:

I received your letter today and it certainly is very nice. I am glad you have written for every letter a soldier gets is really appreciated. I surely wish that I was back in Rochester to enjoy the spring weather and the beautiful green leafed trees and the flower gardens and eat fresh vegetables out of the garden.

Yes, this is rather a hot climate during the year around, and we usually have plenty of water from the sky. I am very glad that you think of the men in the service the way you take up for all of us and we appreciate the fact that you speak so well of us. We realize that we have to do things in the Army that perhaps we would not have to do at home, but whether we like it or not, we do it and we do not exchange words. I have several correspondents from Rochester and still could write to more and I will answer anybody's letter, anyone who will write to me for we have free mail if we want to send our mail that way, of course you understand that we haven't much to talk about. The women down here are rather sunburned and their language is not spoken in English when a few of them are talking together it sounds like a bunch of skeletons dancing on a tin roof. Capt. Minter, strange as it seems, I have never seen one Jap, but when I do he better take to the tall timbers fast and furious for if he don't he is a dead one. We hope this will not last long. My mother asked me to write and tell you about some sort of presents that most of the other boys got about Christmas time 1941. But I never received anything. Well, that don't matter for I had a few from my relatives and I was well pleased with my Christmas. So will forget what it might have been. Until I can hear from you again, I will sign off. Give my regards to all.

As ever,

Pvt. Charles Cochran

Battery "I", 83rd CA, (AA)

Fort Kobbe, Canal Zone

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, May 13, 1942]

### LETTER FROM ROBERT ROSE

Lt. R. L. Rose

ASN, 0-393202

1st Ferry Gp., 10th A.F.

APO 886, N.Y., N.Y.

May 10, 1942

Dear Folks:

I'm leaving in the morning. I'm flying it across. I have a co-pilot, celestial navigator, radio man, and a mechanic. In crossing, we fly just six hours a day and rest over night. It will take us at that rate over three weeks to complete the trip. Our longest flight isn't over 12 hours. Also I'm taking over \$200 worth of camera equipment. So I'll have plenty of pictures to show you when I get back.

My duty there will be evacuating refugees, and taking supplies to the combat crews, so I'll come back unless I slip on a banana peeling and crack my noggin. I sure would like to get into combat, but that's out. We will use Pan-American Airline airports and facilities, so it will be pretty tame. Due to the fact that we are connected with Pan-American Airlines, your letters will come much sooner, still it will take them ten days to get here. It costs 70c per one-half ounce to mail a letter by air mail, so I'll write regularly every two weeks and send you a telegram when I get across, and write once a week to Gladys, so she will send you information as to where I'm going, etc. If you send a letter by air mail it takes 10 days, by first class 3 to 4 months.

Gladys and her mother are leaving soon after I take off, for Texas to their home.

If you will get four copies of "Newsweek" magazine for the period of April 15th to May 15th inclusive, and read in the articles pertaining to the Chinese, you will see mentioned a supply line, well, that's me. So you can read all about my work and where I'm flying to and from.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

The baby is getting very fat. Gladys has some pictures and she will send you one or two. Well, that's all. I will write cards at all stops going over.

Love,  
Bob Rose

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, May 14, 1942]

### LETTER FROM MARVIN ROSE

May 12, 1942  
Monday Evening

Dear Folks

This is going to be a long letter so get set in an easy chair.

I was writing you yesterday morning but I went out to dinner at a Mrs. Walters, 11 Commercial Terrace, Swampscott, Mass. (You write her if you care to). I really had an enjoyable day. I got there at two in the afternoon. Mr. Walters and daughter, Marian (she's seventeen) took me for a ride while she prepared dinner. We ate around four o'clock. That's when all the people eat out here. After dinner Marian and I took the car and went for another drive. I drove because she doesn't know how. They have a 1941 eight cylinder, cream colored convertible coupe Packard. It drives like a dream. We sat around and talked about everything under the sun for the rest of the afternoon but in the meantime Mrs. Walters secured a room for me at her sister's home. It's only about 100 feet from the ocean. The home was built only last year and it's really swell. I will have to pay \$6.00 per week for it but I didn't mind that. She never rents rooms out but there are only she and her husband and also she has three brothers in the service. So she feels sort of obligated. This town is strictly an exclusive summer resort district and she could get \$25 per week but she doesn't care for roomers and also they are very wealthy. Also they happen to be Jewish people but they're certainly wonderful and very nice. About nine we drove to Mrs. Walters' mother's home but Mr. Walters and Marian and I went for another drive. They took me to where Nathaniel Hawthorne lived, "The House of Seven Gables," and also the house where they used to put the women that were supposed to be witches. It was all very interesting and educational. On the way home we stopped and had some fried chicken and French fried potatoes. They brought me home around 12 o'clock. And on top of that they introduced me to a very charming girl and also made a date for Wednesday evening. This girl, by the way, is a protestant. So I couldn't ask for anything more complete. In fact, I wish you would write and thank her because I'm not very good at that, although I did my very best. I'm moving in my new room sometime this week. I remember once that you told me that the people out here were very distant. I've found them just the opposite. It might be because I'm in the service.

Lieutenant Rich and I had a very wonderful trip out here. Especially after we got into the mountains. They are certainly beautiful. He took several pictures of some of the mountain scenes.

If it is at all possible I want you to come out some time late this summer and stay about a week. I will be able to pay most of your expenses. You'd enjoy it immensely.

The towns are all very quaint. Cobble stones for streets and no yards to speak of. The houses are right on the street. Concord and Lexington are very beautiful little towns. The countryside around them is full of stone fences about two or three feet high. It's really very interesting to drive through.

My work is very interesting but at the present it's rather difficult. It has been piling up since the first of the year, when this school began. There hasn't been a commanding officer and first sergeant up here officially until we arrived. So we have a large quantity of back work to catch up on. I have been working from eight until six every day except Sunday. After I get home at night I'm too tired to go anywhere except on week-ends. We have a very nice office and plenty of equipment to work with.

The General Electric is furnishing my noon meal and also my bus ticket. Incidentally, buses out here are very high. It would cost me forty cents a day for transportation otherwise.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

That's one of the reasons why I want to leave the place I'm staying at the present. She charges me \$54 a month for two meals and most of the time I never eat breakfast. Also I'm never home in time for dinner in the evening. And I think I can live a little cheaper somewhere else. Also I can eat where, when and what I choose. She also has a bar in the home and I'm strictly against that. It is also strictly against regulations to have liquor in the same building that soldiers are quartered in. But there's nothing much we can do at the present. Later on, however, we plan to make a few revisions.

Also the General Electric doesn't charge anything for the course these students are taking here, because they have so much equipment in the Air Corps that they want to train army personnel on the upkeep of it.

There are 80 men going to school and they are divided into two shifts of 40 each. One shift goes to school from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. and the second shift goes from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m.

No, I haven't gone to church yet. My blouse and a pair of my pants are back at Chanutte Field. They were supposed to get here last week but they didn't so I wrote a letter last Thursday afternoon. As soon as they arrive I will start going or as soon as we change into khaki uniforms.

There is a dim-out every night for three miles inland and it's very successful. This is about the only town that has one, though.

The people out here don't like the idea of gas rationing. Especially here in Swampscott. Most of the people that live here are wealthy. There are no factories, etc. I suppose you wonder where Swampscott is. It's on one side of Lynn, and West Lynn is on the other side. Also Salem, Marblehead and Beverly join Lynn.

Lieutenant Rich is a very nice fellow to work for. We get along just fine.

We stayed in the place where he used to live when he worked in Cleveland when we came through there a week ago Friday. The lady was very pleasant.

Yes, I would like to have to write Jenny and Blanche and tell them that I'm out here. Boston is only 12 miles from Lynn.

Did you receive my telegram Sunday?

I will send my car payment in a few days. If you care to you can send the coupon book out here and I can forward the payments from here. It would save a lot of time and trouble.

Also I had my watch fixed last week. It only cost 75 cents. It surprised me. Most everything is sky-high out here.

Write soon.

Love to all,  
Marvin

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, May 16, 1942]

### ANOTHER LETTER FROM JAMES E. SMITH

Mrs. Lenna Walters, 1429 Madison street, has received an interesting letter from James E. Smith, now in the navy on shore duty and which is published here.

640 Post Street  
San Francisco, Calif  
May 7, 1942 - 4:10 a.m.

Dear Aunt and All:

I am very sorry I have neglected writing for so long. Since we moved up to the apartment, cook, clean, wash dishes, etc., etc., time has been less plentiful.

I am now at the post office on guard duty with my .45 revolver on my side. I have to stay in the office at night so I can hear the phone. In the day time we guard the entrance to the building. My hours are from 3 to 7, both a.m. and p.m. That is for one week, then I won't have it again for about ten weeks. However, I've also been working the mail this week. Yesterday I worked six hours sorting the mail. The post office (Navy) went into commission last Thursday and we have been working half days, that is I mean 10 to 14 hours a day including Sunday. However, I do like it and it is interesting. Much better than laying around doing nothing all day. We have (blank) men here and we just sort the mail and sack it for the fleet and the marines. I

## SvcMen WW II Letters

have been sorting air mail most of the time. I know the cases pretty well now and like it. We ghet from (blank) to (blank) sacks of mail every day and they are usually seven of us to work that. Hours will probably be cut down a little, though, before long then we will probably get one day off every week, not likely Sunday.

I hear from Frank that he has taken an oath to be a railway postal clerk, starting as soon as school is out. I guess that just about takes care of the family as being "mail men" and whoever could have expected that. I hope Frank and I can do as well as Dad did by it. Well, so long, and write.

James E. Smith  
SK-3-c; U. S. Navy.

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, May 18, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JAY (IZZY) SMITH

Thursday, May 14, 1942  
Fort McClelland, Ala.

Dear Mom and All:

Received your letter. Was glad to hear from you. I'm just fine. Get a little tired now and then. I am getting a swell sun tan, almost black like a nigger. I am beginning to like this place better. I have been made acting sergeant. I get to help train the men. It is not so bad and the time goes faster. The new fellows are hard to understand anything but they treat me like a king. We get along swell together.

They have started taking down the tents and are building barracks. They will be better but will be awful hot in the summer. I'm going to write to Herschel as soon as I get this letter written. I have not heard from anybody up there that I wrote to yet. Hope they write soon. I didn't get my paper today. I sure missed it. It is awful hot down here. It sprinkled a little today, but did not cool off any.

I don't know if I told you about me pitching softball for the Co. team and I am playing first base for the baseball team. We played another team Sunday and won 18 to 1. I got two hits out of four times at bat. We go out on the rifle range Monday. I hope I can make expert, if I do I get a medal with expert on it. We were out and went through the gas chamber Tuesday. We had gas masks on. Then we took them off inside and tears came to my eyes. We all looked like we had been crying. I have gained 10 pounds already. I weigh 185 now.

Well, mother, this is about all the news down here so will ring off and write my other letter and hit the hay. It feels pretty good after walking all day. Write soon and tell everyone I said hello. Hope to see you soon.

Your loving son  
Jay

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, May 22, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JESSE THOMPSON

Fort Benning, Ga.  
May 19, 1942

Dear Captain Minter:

Well, I surely want to thank you a lot for the reply you made to a letter written by Miss Irene McCardle regarding me. She is now my wife.

I have been in the army now one year and 15 days and I'm not sorry one minute of the time. We have had hard times sure but after it was all over with you could look back and say that it was our duty to do things we had to do. We do find that there are some boys in the army who do not have a lot of manhood about them and go over the hill (desert). At a time like this a man should be proud that he is able to help his country to protect the ones he loves back home and be free to worship as we please. If we should lose this war I would rather be dead than to be under Hitler or Japan control and to see my people suffer like so many countries are doing today.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I have no use for any man who is not man enough to take it like a man should. If he don't he don't deserve to live with our kind of people. If every man in our armed forces feels like a very few feel there just would be no freedom for our people. We won the last war and we will do it again.

If you will write to me I will write you because I know now how much your army experience means to men like us and we men from home are proud to know you. My best wishes to all Rochester folks.

Yours truly,  
Pvt. Jesse H. Thompson,  
Co. G, 151st Infantry,  
Fort Benning, Ga.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, May 22, 1942]

### LETTER FROM CHARLES MOW

Pfc. Charles Mow 35163135  
Co. B 89th QM BN (IM)  
Army Post Office No. 886  
c/o Postmaster, port of embarkation  
New York City, N.Y.  
May 14, 1942

Dear Mom and All:

I should have written to you sooner, but I have been very busy. The last few days and the next few will be busy ones for us. As usual, I can't elaborate on our activities. As I have said before, I hope I can in the near future. I would like to write to everyone, but we are only allowed one letter per week. That always goes to you. Give my regards especially to Grandma Beehler and the rest of the "Beehler family."

Last Sunday I took several pictures. I am sending a few home to you. I would send more, but I am afraid they will get lost. Jess and I bought a small camera together. Our pictures are all censored. I think they are quite interesting. I hope you enjoy them.

I haven't received any more of your letters. I mentioned in my last letter about receiving the January mail. I hope I receive more in the near future. I did have a surprise last week. I received a box of cookies from Miss Klingaman (music teacher at Woodrow). They were intended for me at Christmas time at Tallahassee, Fla. They were somewhat late, weren't they? I also received a picture of the Woodrow teachers for '41. It was taken by Miss Klingaman about a year ago. If you happen to see her, tell her I finally received the cookies and picture after they had traveled halfway around the world.

I almost forgot to tell you that we hired bicycles last Sunday. We sure had a good time riding around over town and taking pictures. That is the first time I've ridden a bicycle in a long time.

I am well as usual. I trust that everyone at home is the same. Be sure and tell me how everyone is and how the draft is affecting the ones I asked about before.

It is getting too dark to write much more. My supply of news is exhausted, anyway.

Love to all,  
Charles

P.S. - I trust you had a happy Mother's Day. Plenty hot - 100-110 degrees. Save pictures. Write and tell if you received them.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, June 2, 1942]

### LETTER FROM LESTER J. BEEHLER

Camp Forrest, Tenn.

News-Sentinel:

I, Lester J. Beehler, wish that you would publish in your paper that I have been promoted from Private Beehler to Private First Class or Pfc. I have taken 9 months of training to become a

## SvcMen WW II Letters

first class gunner in the 105mm. artillery, 122nd Field Artillery Battalion, 33rd Div., Camp Forrest, Tenn.

The 33rd Division belongs to the Second U. S. Army under the command of Major General Ben Lear.

Thanking you for your courtesy and paper which I have been receiving.

Yours truly,  
Pfc. Lester J. Beehler  
Btry A, 122 F.A., 33d Div.,  
Camp Forrest, Tenn.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, June 3, 1942]

### LETTER FROM "BOB" JONES

Co. A, 15th BN, A.F.R.T.C.  
Fort Knox, Ky.

Dear Mother and Dad:

Just got out of bed and thought I would drop you a line or so. I haven't been feeling so good the last few days. We took a 12 mile hike over hill and dale to a machine gun range and that about fixed some of us up. I'm always glad when Sunday comes so I can get some rest. We have a guard mount coming up this afternoon which isn't so bad. I was out to see Ray Hamlet last night. He gets his furlough in a couple of days. I'm not so sure yet as to when I get mine.

Mary Ellen and Grace sent me a letter this week and I hope to get time enough to answer them soon.

You mentioned about the boys having poison ivy. The poor kids seem to have it about every year, don't they? I got a little touch of it on my hands, but it doesn't bother me much, anyway I hope it doesn't get any worse.

How is Peck getting along with the gas business? Pretty slow, I imagine.

I'll have to close now. Hope this finds you all well. Tell the rest of the Joneses I said hello.

With love,  
Robert R. Jones

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, June 5, 1942]

### LETTER FROM DON KUMLER

Dear Capt. Minter:

I have been trying for a week to get time to write you but they are sure keeping us on the jump. This is really quite a camp (about 23,000 men) and as you probably know is all comparatively new.

We arrived here on Monday morning, May 18th, and were sent temporarily to the 58th Battalion, then on the following Saturday I was transferred to the 62nd. This morning I talked with Joe Daulton and Louis Streich who are still in the 58th and Tommy Thomas who is now in the 53rd.

I will be here for about six more weeks, then transferred to some other battalion for six weeks schooling (don't know what for sure yet) and after that no one knows.

I am working hard but am thoroughly enjoying it. Last week took my qualifying rifle shots on the range (40 rounds at 200 yards.) This week we shoot for record, incidentally I have a nice sore arm.

One night this week we are due for an all night hike of 17 miles with full pack (about 65 lbs). It has been awfully warm here and a few of the boys have passed out with the heat. Of course the natives here say it is cool and just wait until it gets hot.

Went to Mineral Wells last night, it is a very pretty little town of about 7,000 population. On Saturday night it is about twice that size. It is only four miles from camp and there is a bus every 15 minutes.

Will be glad to hear from you, if you have time.

Yours,

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Pvt. Don F. Kumler  
Co. "D", 62nd Inf. Train. Bn.,  
4th Platoon  
Camp Wolters, Texas

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, June 5, 1942]

### LETTERS FROM DON HARTUNG

April 19, 1942

Dear Folks:

You haven't heard from me for quite some time now, and I hope you haven't been worrying yourself sick. I'm here in Australia now and am in the best of health, maybe I should say as good as I've ever been. I'm really enjoying myself which isn't hard to do here. The people sure are swell and seem to do everything in their power to make us welcome and happy.

I just got in from evening church. I didn't get to go to morning services because I was on duty. I enjoyed it very much and there was a very large crowd there.

The country, climate and people are very pleasing. I still have some trouble understanding some of them but am doing better. I sometimes wonder whether they can understand me when I start talking very fast, a good many times I know they don't but they just skip it like I do.

I've met scads of people here. I was invited to a Mrs. Kelley's home and spent an afternoon and evening with them. She said she was going to write you a letter and let you know I was safe and sound.

I have met an orchestra group since being here - but the latest music they have gotten is "Chattanooga Choo Choo." They haven't even heard "Elmer's Tune" and "I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire." Billa, if you can get hold of any of the new popular music of the last few months, will you send them to me?

I hope this finds every one fine. How's David coming? He will be a big boy by the time I see him again. I hope Bob and Grace are OK, or is he in the service now. Tell everyone I said "hello" and that I'll be seeing them soon, I hope.

Love,  
Bud

May 8, 1942

Dear Folks:

Just a few lines to let you know that I'm well and happy. It has been sometime since we landed and took our stations and we have had the best treatment that anyone could possibly get. The American soldier gets more invitations than he can possibly fill. We have what is known as the "American Center," that takes care of all the invitations and gets in touch with the boys. In a couple of weeks they will have their new place open and that will consist of an American canteen where you can get "banana splits" good coffee, doughnuts and other things we could get in a soda fountain or restaurant at home. They will also have American cigarettes for 7 1/2 D a pack (about 11c). American cigarettes are very expensive here and practically impossible to get. This center will have games, writing materials, showers, suit pressers and just scads of other things that will help make us feel more at home. I've been getting books to read from them now. I have a great deal of time to read while I'm on duty and a little when I'm off. I have been invited out several times to dinner, and play tennis and to lectures and just to spend an evening in a home.

People, most of them, share things with us. They have rationed most of their food and the army camps get the [sic] take us riding when the gas is rationed, about four gallons a month to most. You see quite a few charcoal burners on cars now. These burn charcoal and use the gas coming from it to run the motor.

Say, Mother, I would like to have a radio out here. One of those 3-way little portables like Billa's friend has. I think the Hot Point sells them. The smallest sets here sell for \$39. If you get what I mean, use my money in the bank for it.

I've had pictures taken and am sending them home. One is for Lucy. Maybe they will beat this letter there but I doubt it.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I hope this finds every one OK and I'll write to the rest of the bunch later one. Well, I'll close now so, Mother, don't worry. I'm perfectly safe where I'm at and it looks like I'll be here for some time to come. I couldn't be in a safer place that I know of and I'm well and happy and being treated swell.

Love,  
Bud

P.S.: When I moved into this squadron I lost my corporal rating so am just a private again. My new address is:

Pvt. Donald E. Hartung, 15084573  
31st Interceptor Squadron,  
35th Pursuit Squadron  
c/o Postmaster, San Francisco, Cal. APO 927.  
[The News-Sentinel, Monday, June 8, 1942]

### LETTER FROM FATHER EDDIE HOFFENBACHER

Dear Laura and Mother:

I am sending this to all of you for various reasons, so when you read it send it on. When I got back from leave I found all my stuff packed and sent to the boat and on the following ---- I did the same. We sailed on the ---- and had a very smooth and uneventful trip. It was very interesting aboard ship, but soon grew rather boresome. We landed here ---- day and were rather well settled by night. Some of the officers we knew were at the dock to see us when we arrived. We are not allowed to tell you where we are but I guess it is obvious to you, that is, our guess was as close as anything could be.

This is one of the most beautiful spots I have ever seen. The profusion of flowers is breathtaking to an enth degree. In all my experience the closest to it is Bellingrath Gardens in New Orleans.

We are quartered on a beautiful estate which promises to be a very interesting place. I did a little exploring this morning and enjoyed it very much. You can imagine how difficult an affair a letter is because you can't mention the country, the city, the people, the temperature, the food, your location and a whole list of other things, about the only thing you can say is that you are well and happy.

One thing I can tell you about are the services I had aboard ship. Each Sunday I had two services in the Lounge and they were filled to capacity. Had a fine choir led by one of our churchmen. It was quite a wonderful experience.

This might pass the censor. We are near a fair sized City so have an opportunity of seeing many of the sights we would miss if we were farther away.

We are all anxious to know how long it takes for a letter to reach home, so let me know when you receive this.

Remember me to all and write real often and soon.

All my love,  
Eddie

P.S.: Just found out that we could tell you that we are in Northern Ireland and have visited Belfast. It is some country, but cold most of the time. They tell us it never gets warmer than 65 degrees at any time. Belfast is very interesting in its antiquity. It fooled all of us with its many beautiful homes. We did a lot of window shopping and found things almost like the shops at home, not quite as stylish.

I can make change in English money now but when you get change you get so much copper it weights you down. The paper money is too large for our wallets and has to be folded.

I've seen lots of the country and met a great many of our church people. As you know they are very strong in this part of the world.

Tonight I am going out to dinner with Chaplain Martin of the English Army. The English are very correct and conventional so I am looking forward to it very much.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

One of the things hard to get used to over here is going to bed in daylight. It doesn't get dark here until very, very late. We darken our living quarters with black-out screens.

Here's something that amuses the men. When they have dances over here they start at 8 p.m. and end at 10 p.m. The boys are teaching the girls the jitter-bug. Doesn't take long for them to learn. On the whole people are very friendly and interesting. Contrary to our general opinion of this country they do have very strict liquor laws. They are all closed at 10 p.m. Most people drink stoh, Ale and Porter. It is all warm for they do not cool anything.

I will send this air-mail so tell me how long it takes to get to you.

Good night now,  
Eddie

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, June 18, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JAMES KINDIG Sunday Night

Dearest Moter:

Well, I suppose you are wondering what has happened that I haven't written for a week but I am very lucky that I am here to write now.

They woke me up Tuesday morning, June 9th, at 4:00 and told me to get ready to leave in one hour and wouldn't tell me where I was going, but it turned out to be Arizona and right out in the desert and was it ever hot down there.

There were seven of us drivers who went and we took a bunch of men out to a new camp that they are building. It is to be a Jap concentration camp, in fact they already have 10,000 of them out there.

It was about 700 miles down there and we had to go right through the heart of the desert. It is about 120 degrees in the shade and no shade and it never gets under 100 degrees and sand flowing all the time. It feels like it came off of a hot fire some place.

We left there Thursday afternoon and got here last night and was I ever glad to get cleaned up. There are only about half of the boys left here in our company. They left Friday afternoon and I was supposed to have been with them but as luck would have it I wasn't here and from what I hear they were sent across. Well, mother, it is dinner time, so I will close for this time, but will write again soon. Tell everybody I said hello.

Your loving son,  
Pfc. Jim Kindig,  
Hq. Co., 96th Sig. Bri.,  
Fort Ord, Calif.

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, June 19, 1942]

### LETTER FROM BURL E. EBER Sunday, June 14, 1942

Dear Mom, Dad and all:

How is everything back home? Here's hoping you're all going strong. Emil Knigge and I went into Houston Sunday and we had a grand time. We had his camera since mine had been left in camp and we took some swell pictures of some of the tall buildings. Took one across a pool of water and the reflection of the buildings showed up pretty in the picture.

We went down to the U.S.O. toward noon and played ping-pong. There were people coming in all the time inviting the soldiers and sailors out to dinner. The fellows really appreciate that, too, because it gives them a chance to get away and enjoy the comforts of home for a change. However, we went back up town and ate dinner and came back after it had quit raining. It rained off and on all forenoon and evening. There was an elderly couple came in about two o'clock and asked if there were three boys who would like to go for a ride with them and look the town over. Maybe it was charity but we, or a fellow from Wisconsin and I, really enjoyed it. Knigge had seen a good bit of it. They took us out through the richer residential district and showed us some really fine homes.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

They are all built typical southern style with the tall pillars in front and around the porch. Have a couple of pictures taken of the nicest ones and you will probably get them soon.

We then went out to the Rice Institute and that is a pretty place too. It is a very large school and the people of Houston are proud of it. Wanted to take some pictures out there but the people treated us so nice I didn't want to impose upon them too much. We rode around all afternoon and they showed us the Sam Houston monument and several other places of interest as well as a zoo. As luck happened we got out of there without getting penned up and went back to town.

Am sending a folder showing the pictures of the things we saw. Would like to get out to the San Jacinto monument yet and also want to go to Galveston. It isn't very far down to the coast and if things don't get too bad will go down there in a week or two.

We are still going good out here at the field. There is a free G.I. transportation from the post to a ten-cent bus line in Houston so we get cheap transportation to town.

It is after four o'clock and the sun is way up yet and still warm. Will quit for tonight. Hope you are all O.K.

Bye,  
Pvt. Burl E. Eber  
77th S.S. AAF,  
Ellington Field,  
Houston, Texas.

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, June 20, 1942]

### LETTER FROM ARTHUR MAGLECIC

Co. F, 37th A.R.  
Pine Camp, N.Y.

Dear Dad and Sisters:

I received your letter some time ago but couldn't get around to answering it until today. How is everything at home. O.K., I hope. I am O.K. yet, only my feet hurt. We've been out on a long road march. They are short on gas here so we walk now.

A am driving a tank. Work every day and some times at night to get ready for the next trip.

Tell everybody I said "hello" and thanks to Brubakers for the cigarettes they sent me. When I have a little more time I'll write to them. We don't even get Sunday off now. They always have something for us to do.

Weather here is rainy and warm.

I am sending some pictures and a book of the 17th A.R. will come as soon as they get it made. We go on a march again this week so answer as soon as you can, and I'll try to write sooner.

Tech. Sgt. Arthur Maglecic

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, June 24, 1942]

### LETTER FROM EMMETT MEEK

New River, N.C.

Hello Mom:

I will write just a few lines to let you know I am all right and that I miss you very much.

I sure am having a good time. I can't tell you where I am but send my mail to the same place.

Mother I have seen things that would make your eyes pop out. I have seen trees, snow, flowers, bridges and most of all people and cities that I thought I would never see. I have been in about 20 different states.

I will have to close, hoping to hear from you soon.

Please tell all hello and give them my love.

Your son  
Emmett Meek

I hope you can read this I can't.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Please don't worry about me I am all right.

Love

Note: Emmett joined the Marines the 10th of March. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Meek, 510 Clay Street, Rochester.

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, June 25, 1942]

### LETTER FROM ROLLAND NEWCOMER

June 21, 1942

Friend, Arlie Wynn:

How are you and the boys getting along up there? It sure is hot down here and the flies, snakes, mosquitoes are very bad. It has been so hot that some of the fellows are getting sick from the heat. I don't know what to say because we can't tell anything about the Army now. I hope the war is over soon because it is getting the best of some of us. I don't know if we are going to stay here or move out. They have told us that we would spend our Christmas in California this year.

I don't think we will move out of here because we have been going to school too much and we are teaching the new officers now.

I go out to the rifle range next Sunday with some new men.

I guess I get another furlough the last of August or September. I would like to get home while the lake is still open. Well, I will write more the next time.

Your friend,

Rolland Newcomer

Co. C, 151 Inf. R.

Fort Benning, Ga.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, June 26, 1942]

### LETTER FROM FRANK SWANSON

Camp Pickett, Va.

June 21, 1942

Dear Mom:

How is everyone at home? Well and having a good time, I hope. I arrived here last Wednesday, June 17. There is no one here from home that I know. Most of the boys are from the south and about half of them married.

We can't go out of camp for 14 days.

This is a new camp. Boys are coming every day so maybe some one will arrive that I know.

It is very hot and dusty here.

News is scarce so I will close. Tell my friends to write to me.

Your son,

Pvt. Frank Swanson

Co. "L" 313th Inf.

Camp Pickett, Va.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, July 1, 1942]

### LETTER FROM MARVEL E. WERNER

Btry. D, 430th Sep. Bn. C.A.A.A

Camp Davis, N.C.

Fort Fisher, N.C.

U. S. Army

Dear Mom:

Thanks for your nice letter. How is everybody at home? I am feeling fine. Gee whiz it's hot here. Mosquitoes galore. I just got off guard. Nine new soldiers came in last night. I am glad, as they will be of a great help to us. We have been kept on the go continuously. I have taken exams for auto mechanics. If I make it I will go to school for three months and when I get out

## SvcMen WW II Letters

they are supposed to give me a rating as a Sgt. You see the exams we have taken will tell who has the highest score and they are the one that will have to go. I like it right here with the rest of the fellows, send me the kodak and I will send you pictures of the boys. When we came back from our furlough we went to Wilmington. We did not know they had moved out to Fort Fisher until we saw one of the cooks. Probably will stay here a month or two. We live in tents out here. It's very sandy, we have a lovely beach called Carolina Beach. It is about five miles from here and there is where the Buddies and I go on week-ends and evenings. Hope we get paid next week as we are all broke since we all went on a furlough. Send me some cigarettes, Mom. Certainly nice here. We are close to the ocean. Will close for this time. I will take a shower and go to bed.

Oceans of love

Your son, Marvel

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, July 6, 1942]

### LETTER FROM HARRY W. DAWSON

Dear Folks:

I thought I would drop you all a line to let you know I'm O.K. The reason I didn't write sooner was because I was quarantined.

The Platoon was quarantined for spinal meningitis, one of the boys in our platoon went to sick bed in the morning and that night he died. We all had to take pills. The first day we took 18 pills. The next day we took 12 and the next day we took 9 and the last 6 pills it made a lot of the boys weak.

I don't know as yet when we go across, but have a very good idea the way they talk.

We shot for records on the .45 pistol and I got a medal that said "Marksman" on it. The rifle record day comes later and don't know yet as what I will get.

You can see off in the distance very beautiful mountains. It is too bad I couldn't have come back for my uncle's funeral. I would of liked to have been there.

There is planes all over out here. It would be suicide for a squadron of Jap planes to come here and try anything.

Will have to close love as ever

Private Harry W. Dawson

Plt. 421, R. D., M.C.B.

San Diego, California

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, July 8, 1942]

### LETTER FROM RUSSELL CAUFFMAN

July 4, 1942

Dear Sir:

I have been receiving The News-Sentinel ever since I was inducted into the army. I thought I'd write and tell you how much I appreciated you sending the paper to me. You can be sure there isn't much in that paper that isn't read by me.

I didn't live right in Rochester, but as my job was working for Armour & Co. I saw a lot of the place. I didn't know then how much it might mean to me, that is, if I ever left it. You can be sure I'd like to be there right now, especially since they have remodeled the "Char-Bell" (Times, now).

I'll have to write about what I do for recreation. Our organization has had a softball team. We won the league title, but in the playoffs we were beaten twice after we won the first game.

I also go to the show about three times a week. We are having some up-to-date pictures now. Of course, it isn't like going to a show in Rochester, but it helps to keep a fellow's mind off the war.

Here's a great big "thank you" for sending the paper to me.

Yours,

Russell Cauffman

Btry F, 1st C A A S M 35170609

## SvcMen WW II Letters

APO No. 836, c/o Postmaster,  
New Orleans, Louisiana.

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, July 9, 1942]

### LETTER FROM ALBERT SWANSON

Australia  
May 10, 1942

Dear Mother:

I received your letter today, the one you wrote March 17. I also got the other things you sent me some time ago.

I suppose you have nice weather back there. We are having winter but it doesn't get very cold.

How did Frank make out this time? Did he pass? Say, did you get the letter I sent you four or five weeks ago? You can tell the kids to write to me.

There isn't much I can write about here. Are the boys still working at the same place?

Well, this will be all for this time. Hope you will get it. Answer soon.

Your son,  
Pvt. Albert Swanson  
A.S.N. 35164088  
Bt "B" 94th C. A. A. A.  
APO 923, c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco, Calif.

(Note - this letter had been opened by censor but nothing marked out. It was received July 8. First letter was written April 3 and Received May 8. Albert is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Gust Swanson of near Athens, and a brother of Pvt. Frank Swanson of Camp Pickett, Va.)

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, July 11, 1942]

### LETTER FROM LOUIS W. STRETCH

July 12, 1942

Dear Sirs:

Am writing to inform you of a change in address. I sure enjoy receiving the Sentinel every day, and by giving you my new address it will avoid delay and lots of work with the mail within the camp.

I have just completed my six weeks of basic training in the 58th training battalion, which is a specialist battalion. Yesterday afternoon I was moved to the 51st Battalion, Company "C," 1st Platoon. Starting tomorrow morning I will start on a seven weeks' course in clerk's school.

There are several Rochester boys here in this camp. Russel Parker Jr., and I are fortunate enough to be in the same barracks at the present time.

This is a very large camp, in fact, the largest of its kind in the United States.

I must close, asking and thanking you to change my address, I remain,

Sincerely,  
Louis W. Stretch

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, July 17, 1942]

### LETTER FROM DALE MILLISER

Sunday Eve.

Dear Mom:

Sorry that I haven't written sooner but have been transferred to North Island. This is an engineering school of the Marine Corps. I stay here a month until I am selected for a school. I

## SvcMen WW II Letters

was sre lucky to be transferred here. There were five hundred that took the examination and fifty passed it. I might be sent to a school in Chicago. If I am I can come home on week-ends.

The island I am on is about a mile off the coast from San Diego. It is sure beautiful here. Just like a college campus. Well I will write to you later.

Private Dale Milliser  
Aircraft Engine Sqyadron 23  
Naval Air Station  
Coronada, California

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, July 20, 1942]

### LETTER FROM WAYNE LEMLER

Dear Georgia Belle Berrier:

Shall try to drop a few lines, and let you know we are still among the living. After our departure from the states the next forty-one days were spent aboard boat. In this trip we traveled some 12,000 miles, finally getting to Australia on April 11. The voyage took us through all four seasons of the year, finding winter again here. The tropics were very hot, and many of us took sun baths laying on the docks. Most all are very tan now, and this climate is also very hot even if it is winter time.

Australia we find quite an interesting place. They have many wild animals and here near us are great numbers of horses, kangaroos, and in the bird lines is the parrot. The latter has proven quite a pest here, as they mock everything in hearing distance. Our nights are often broken by a prowling cow or horse, and in the early morning hours the parrots take up the chatter of the chickens from the near farm houses. The camp itself is located in a large pasture for the neighborhood cattle and horses.

The people here are quite friendly and ever willing to lend an ear to any American to find out how things are done in the states. Their ways of living is much the same as ours, but one finds their amusements much different. Their main sports are horse racing, dog racing and also the local rodeo. Cars are few, and so most travel is done by either bike or horseback. The shows are much behind ours and they also are not open on Sunday, or no public place for that matter. Sundays are either spent at the zoo or on the nearby beach, so you can see that this day is quite dull.

We were told of our first coming here that we had come in the dry season. After last week's experiences, we have changed our minds. Rain fell for several days and our pup tents did not prove very rain proof. Many a night the men woke up laying in water, and were forced to move to higher ground. These are some experiences but after gone through are quite a joke among the men.

Our first mail since leaving the states came Thursday, and you can well imagine what a happy day that was for the men. Any news that comes is more than welcome, so whenever you can find time drop a line. We still are arguing who won the state tourney, as the mail that came only stated the sectional winners.

I suppose your time is now growing short until you have finished nurses training. After this I imagine Uncle Sam may have some say in the future. There are several nurses who are here at this time, and more are arriving on each new coming convoy. This letter I am sending to Rochester, as you may have completed the training when it reaches the states.

Please note the change of A.P.O. to 22 on the return address. The rest of the address is the same, but for that one change.

This I guess completes my writing for this time, and so shall bring to a close. So shall say so long until next time, and please let me know of your work after graduation.

Love,  
Wayne Lemler  
Bourbon, Indiana

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, July 21, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JEAN JOHNSTON

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Pvt. Jean D. Johnston  
A. S. N. 15084450  
67 Qm. Squadron  
A. P. O. 502 c/o P.M.  
San Francisco, Calif  
July 6, 1942

Dear "Pop" Nightlinger:

Here is a little remembrance so you won't forget me. I should have written to you earlier but have been on the move quite a bit in the last few months. I have only received four letters since I left the States, and they were all old letters, written before I had left the States.

As I said I have really moved around I really ment it. When I left home I went to Fort Benjamin Harrison. Stayed there about a week, then went to Sheppard Field, Texas. I was only there about two weeks and went to California. There I got aboard a U. S. A. T. and we finally landed in Australia. Boy, it was really nice there. I would have liked to had you, Johnnie and I there for a while. We could have really had the fun. But I really had my share of it. It is about the next thing to the good old U. S. All the people were very kind to you and very glad to see us. But we all had to leave, so we came to this island we are on now. It is called New Caledonia.

This island is Free French and is a very beautiful place. It is made up of the French people and that it the tongue they speak. I am learning to speak some, but enough to get by a little.

Well, Pop, how is everybody these days? Tell everybody hello for me and take care of everything until we get back.

Do you hear from Johnny? I have only received one letter from him since I left home and he was heading for the East coast. I think he is in Ireland.

Have to go to work now so will close for today.

Your friend,  
Jean Johnston

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, July 23, 1942]

### LETTER FROM CHARLES M. MOW

Air Service Command  
Base Unit No. 2  
Army Post Office No. 886  
Postmaster, Port of Emb.  
New York City, New York  
July 30 [sic], 1942

Dear Mom & All:

I received two more letters from Bill, since writing you before. These were old letters dated March 23 and May 1, 1942. The news was quite the same as ones I have received of a later date. (May 14 & 23) Although the news was stale, I was very happy to receive them. I also received letters from the following people yesterday along with the ones I got from home: Richard Knarr, dtd Feb. 22, Frances Nellans dtd April 26, Clair's dtd April 27, W. E. McMurray dtd Mar 20, and one from Bill Biddinger dtd Mar 20. I was glad to hear from all of them.

Do you remember one year ago today? I never will forget that day. But since we are in this War, I am glad that I am in the service. Everyone of us must do our part for the good old U.S.A. Much has happened in that year. I have done much traveling. I have had much training. Many events have happened at home. It is all in the past. Let us look forward to the future. Surely brighter days will come.

Herschel, you and Paul go right ahead and use all of my personal possession that you can. They might as well be in use for someone. How did it feel to get in the old basketball equipment again Willie? I bet you burned that gym floor up at Culver. Did you make the grade? I hope you did. You should be a State policeman at the present.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I almost forgot to tell you that I received a box of candy from Paul Briney. It was very good. I let the Major that I am working for at the present taste the candy first. He said it was O.K. and stood the trip well, so I tackled the box of candy.

Today is pay day. A new pay bill went into effect the first of June. I will draw a little more this month. We get paid in Chinese money. One dollar in Chinese equals approximately five cents in American money. There is no place to spend what money you do have. I am going to deposit what I have in the Finance Office. After this month there will be no more specialists ratings. That means I will lose my specialists rating which give me \$20 extra on the month. We are supposed to be given a technician rating to assure us we will lose no money in pay. Since we are stuck up here in China I don't know whether or not the rating will come through. One doesn't get as good as service as you do in the States. I will still be able to maintain my allotment.

The last few days have been quite rainy. The monsoons have set in for a few months. The mud here is the stickiest and gumiest I have ever seen. I have my own private vehicle for transportation. You guessed it. A bicycle. It has been a long time since I have ridden a bicycle, but I manage very well.

I don't know how long I will work in my present position. At the present time I am working in a Major's office poking a typewriter. I am writing this letter during the noon hour.

I am in excellent health. My teeth are in good shape. I trust all at home are in good health. Give my regards to everyone.

Love to all,  
Charles

P.S. - Have you received the package with the gifts from my former station?  
[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, July 28, 1942]

### LETTER FROM TOM BALDWIN

July 25, 1942

Dear Mother:

Just a line to say I feel swell and I will talk to you tonight. I got here at 3 o'clock this morning and got up at 5:30. I had a swell trip and it is swell to be nearer home. I don't know for sure when I will get home, but I hope real soon. You can give everyone my address as I am going to start to school Monday morning and I won't get to write for a while. I took two tests this morning and I have to leave real soon for one more so I have to hurry. I am calling tonight so I will talk to you. I sent a telegram and hope you got it.

Write often and I will do the same. Send all my love to you till I get home and hope it will be real soon. Tell Marie and Mae hello for me. I received their cards also.

All my love to you,  
Tom Baldwin  
93rd S.S. (Sp.) Br. 826  
Scott Field, Ill.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, July 29, 1942]

### LETTER FROM GENE PONTIUS

Gene Pontius  
Seaman, 2nd Class, U. S. Navy  
Receiving Ship  
Key West, Florida

To Mrs. Frank Pontious  
Athens, Ind.  
Hello, Grandma:

Got your card and letter today and sure was glad to hear from you. It was very thoughtful of you to remember my birthday. Yes it would be nice if I was home, but then that would be hoping for too much. I am in the states though. Arrived here from Cuba Sunday which was my birthday. Had a lot of excitement on way here. I know now what it is for death and danger to be

## SvcMen WW II Letters

so near at hand. I wasn't the least bit afraid but excited about it all. Most of the fellows were laughing instead of worried. When we arrived we found out that our ship had been reported sunk and when we told them that ship we came in on they told us we were crazy and that the ship we claimed to have come in on was sunk yesterday. The main thing is I'm glad it was just a rumor. But it was funny. The only trouble we had was from 5:00 p.m. until 6:30 p.m. Saturday afternoon. But here I am safe and sound and that's all that matters. Don't have any idea how long I'll be here, but I hope it's for a long time as this Florida sunshine really agrees with me. Sorry to hear Frank hasn't been heard from. It looks pretty bad, doesn't it? Heard from Mother yesterday and Dordy today. He is sure a good kid, the best of the lot of us I guess. Sure hope the war doesn't last long enough to get him in it too. Yes, I would like to get letters from anyone, as letters is what us sailors live for. A guy will even miss going to eat once in a while, but the whole mob is on hand to get mail and the sorry looks on the boys who don't get any letters is pitiful. It really means a lot and I don't mean maybe. It is a very good idea to have clubs to write to fellows. Well must close and go to "chow."

Your loving grandson,

Gene

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, July 29, 1942]

### LETTER FROM EDDIE HOFFENBACHER

Somewhere in Ireland

Dear Laura:

Thought I would try out the new "V" mail. Tell me how soon it gets to you. Your letters have been coming through pretty good. On the 2nd I received the ones you wrote the 10th and 20th and on the 3rd the one you wrote on the 16th. Note the new address it will probably speed mail up a lot. Was very glad to know that everything was going alright at the lake, but you worry me about the shortage of help. I don't want you and your mother to overdo things for it isn't worth while. . . . I have been very, very busy but also very well and happy. So many interesting things happen that it keeps a person interested. . . . Sunday was Independence Sunday and they had a huge service in the Cathedral. I preached and evidently did a good job of it . . . . The Governor General sent word commending it . . . among those present . . . the Duke and Dutchess of Abercorn, the Prime Minister, the Admiral of the Fleet, the American Counsel, and lots of English and American officers . . . quite an interesting experience all the way around. The Cathedral was packed to the doors . . . In the evening I preached at a similar service in St. Stephens church to another large crowd. If I wanted to I could be persuading somewhere like that every Sunday, but it is too much so I only do it once in a while. People over here are very keen about America and ask more questions and will sit for hours listening to you tell about it. Frankly I believe that they think you are telling some whopping big fish stories. I can understand that for things are different over here than at home. One thing I will say for them that they do not hurry and rush around like we do and they get things done. How they do it I don't know. I still can't get use to going to bed in the daylight. They tell us that we had better enjoy it now for when Fall and Winter comes they will have just as much darkness as they have daylight now. Sent you some newspapers with the account of Sunday's festivities in. This is the only peculiar thing about this type of mail. You have to watch the page numbers or you will be reading the letter in reverse. It's a grand idea at that. I wish you could see the roses in this country. This is their season and they are the most wonderful flowers I have ever seen. The colors are gorgeous and they look as though they had been dipped in wax. Almost every house has roses blooming in front of the house. Their sweetpeas are about twice the size of ours at home and the pastel shades defy description. From all the news we get over here things must be popping at home. It certainly sounds good to us. How do you get along on the sugar and gasoline rationing. It must be tough on some men but it will do them good as it has me. I had a uniform made when I got over here and now I have to have it made smaller as I have lost about 14 pounds around the waist. Boy am I getting back my girlish figure and feel so much better for it. Well honey this is the end of the news for today. Remember me to all the friends and give my love to Edna and Bert and Aunt

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Amy. Send me Billy and Bernie's address so I can send them a card. Don't work too hard and take time off to play a little. I don't want to come home to a broken down family.

Lots of love to you,  
Eddie

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, August 1, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JAMES E. SWEET

Air Mail  
Fort Ord, Calif.  
July 29, 1942

Dear Capt. Minter:

I thought I would drop you a few lines to let you know that I arrived back in camp all right. We had trouble with our train engine and had to get another, but I arrived Saturday night at seven o'clock and did not have to go on duty until Monday. I had a nice time on the train on my way to camp from Indiana. I was very glad to get back to camp and to my duty in the Army. As you know, my mother died Wednesday but I could not come home, so I stayed here and made the best of it.

When I left home, the day before I left, the Ladies of the Spanish War Auxiliary in Rochester had a supper for us and they presented us with a large box of stuff to eat on the train and it did come in handy. We are all well here in this camp and all are getting along fine.

We got new rifles today and drilled with them and they are heavier than what we had, some of our men are yet learning the manual of arms and they will know that before long. I thought I would write you before we left here and then perhaps I would not get a chance for a while to write you. I will close for this time because I want to write some other letters home. We expect to leave here soon but we do not know where we will go. I am

Yours very truly,  
Pvt. James E. Sweet  
Unit 1962, Casual Section  
Fort Ord, Cal.

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, August 3, 1942]

### LETTER FROM FIRMER GLASSLEY

Dear Folks:

I'm in Louisiana now, and on my way to Hobe Sound, Florida, where I will go to a school for 13 weeks, and I'll be a staff sergeant who makes around \$100 a month. This school is a radio detector school. The radio detector is a big piece of equipment which can find a plane 500 miles away, by picking up the electric from the airplane motor. I sure get a break to get to go to this school, only 21 of us from the whole camp got to go. I didn't know I was going until 4 p.m. and we were supposed to leave the next morning. Will be about 1500 miles from you. The government doesn't pick you to go to school unless they think that you'll make good. The captain said that.

We sure have seen some lousy country, through Arizona, New Mexico, and most of Texas. We came through Phoenix, Tucson, Douglas, Arizona, El Paso, Del Rio, San Antonio, and now we are in Louisiana. We've been through Lafayette and coming near New Orleans. I skipped a lot of places because we were asleep. We are on a Pullman train and the car we got is the best one of the whole bunch. It has private compartments and 3 in a compartment and is air-conditioned. We sure are traveling first class, and it's really costing Uncle Sam. We are allowed \$1 per meal on the train and 75c off of it. We really get meals. We left Camp Callan Wednesday afternoon and got in Los Angeles at supper time and we ate at Fred Harvey's Cafe there. Left Los Angeles at 3:30 p.m. and we are supposed to get at Hobe Sound Sunday noon and we start to school Monday. We are going through swamps now and boy trees are about 1 foot apart. It's just like the books you read and pictures in the movies about Louisiana. Boy! I'm having an experience of my life.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

You can write to me at this address:

Pvt. Firmer Glassley  
Signal Corps Aricraft  
Warning School  
Camp Murphy  
Hobe Sound, Florida

That's just part of my address but I don't know the rest if it yet, but I will get letters at this address. Ask me questions and number them.

Well I don't know anything else now, but I'll write when I get in camp.

Your son,  
Firmer

### LETTER FROM BOB HARTMAN

Co. B, 53 Inf. Trg. Bn.  
Camp Wolters, Texas  
August 2, 1942

Dear Folks:

How are you, all fine I hope. I feel plenty good only this hot weather in Texas taking some weight off me. I weighed 145 when I left Goldie's house weigh last night weigh 129 lbs. Now Julia you know I would like your cookies know they would be good for I never had ate any of your cooking but what was good. When I come home on a furlough will come out and I want you have a nice potful of beans, biscuits or cornbread and plenty Jell-o. I won't be like Aunt Cora said don't serve beans for those what I want. How that tell you what I want that pretty good ain't it. Well I broke my glasses again that's twice in less than two weeks. So you see it takes a person's money, always something. How is Aunt Ida and Uncle Ren, swell I hope. Marie said that Aunt Ida hurt her back, hope it is O.K. by now. Oh, yes, how about having some pictures of you folks and send me some. I will send you all one of me, a good one, soon. I guess Dad has been feeling pretty good this summer. Aunt Ida got a birthday coming pretty close now. Does Dad come out very often. Julia when I bake pies I make fifty of them, that's quite a bunch of them, don't you think. Sure have been having good luck with pies and cakes both. Well I just don't seem to get my mind down on writing. That picture you said is true for when I don't receive no mail it puts you down in the dumps. So its up to you people to keep us soldiers up in good spirits so we can lick those dirty Japs and get this war over with. So here's hoping to hear from you again soon. I sent Aunt Faye a card but never heard from her. Don't know whether she received it or not.

From as ever,  
Bob Hartman

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, August 11, 1942]

### LETTER FROM ROBERT JONES

Dear Mother and Dad:

I'll drop you a line to let you know where I'm located. How are all of you anyway? I'm O.K. and still kicking around. Tell Red if he would like some little snake rattles to come on out here. Ha!

Have the Mikesells been down lately. I wrote a few lines to them and should write again so it won't take so long for the mail to catch up with me. I'll have to close now. I hope this finds you all well. Tell the boys hello for me.

Love,  
Sgt. Robert O. Jones  
H.G., 81st Armored Regt.,  
APO No. 255 c/o Postmaster,  
Los Angeles, Calif.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, August 12, 1942]

## SvcMen WW II Letters

### SECOND LETTER FROM FRANK SWANSON

August 13, 1942

Dear Mom:

I am taking it easy now laying in bed here in the hospital. Been here two days. Had a little fever and they sent me here. Am feeling pretty good now, but had four teeth pulled yesterday and five more to pull today. I don't know how soon I will get out but it is nice here.

We are starting to carry a full field pack weighing around 65 to 75 pounds. Later on will have to carry it about 30 miles.

Have been in the Army two months now and in another six weeks will have my base training in and then don't know where I will be sent.

Is anybody left at home now or are they all gone to the Army now?

Tell the kids hello for me.

Bye, bye,  
Pvt. Frank Swanson  
Camp Peckett  
Black Stone, Va.

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, August 17, 1942]

### LETTER FROM ROBERT GREER

Diesel Training School  
South Richmond, Va.

Dear Friend:

I sure have been slow about writing to you. I will tell you something about navy life. I wouldn't trade any fellow in Rochester, Ind., jobs. The navy is the finest place in the world for a fellow who wants an education and cannot go to college. I have learned more in this school in one week than I did in R. H. S. in a term, maybe it because I have to study whether I want to or not but I still learn. I am getting a little algebra, geometry and trigonometry all together, besides Diesel engineering. I never thought a motor could have so many parts until I looked at a Diesel engine.

I have traveled all of the eastern states and the Great Lakes region. We get good clothes, plenty of food, good beds to sleep in and good pay. You only get \$50 but that is plenty. I will get my first full pay Friday - \$50.00.

I am going to Richmond tomorrow night. The girls are beautiful here and very nice to sailors. The people invite us to parties and to their homes. So you can see why I wouldn't trade any fellow in Rochester places. I might have to go to sea in eight weeks but I am not afraid - it will be for God and my country if I never return. I know the Lord will guide me to safety. We go to church every Sunday. Thank you for everything you have done for me. Until you hear from me again, goodbye.

Your friend,  
Robert J. Greer

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, August 19, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JOE HORTON

Monday, Aug. 3, 1942

Dear Capt. Minter:

I am in Northern Ireland with a civilian detachment. It has been a very interesting experience so far.

Our sea voyage was uneventful. I really enjoyed it and did not get seasick.

The weather here is rather chilly. Have to use two blankets on my bed at night, and it rains almost every day. The foliage is very heavy here due to the amount of rain. There are some of the finest roses grown here that I have ever seen. Anyone can grow them in their yard. I think the weather is the most noticeable difference than anything.

Farms are very small with largest fields of about five acres. The fields are outlined with stone or hedge fences. One can see the fields and farm homes from one hilltop to the slope of the next. Farm buildings have stone walls around them in great many cases.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

There are many good horses, cows and sheep here. The buildings are built from brick and stone largely and in the country painted white. The hardware on the doors in many cases is bronze which is kept well polished.

The roads are rather narrow and nearly all main roads have bicycle paths parallel to them. The hedges that are along the roads are generally kept well trimmed. The houses are built out close to the roads. Many of the houses have thatched roofs.

The food here is quite different than that we have been used to but we are getting plenty of it. I miss Coca-Colas and ice cream as much as anything. Our living quarters are very good.

I have seen two persons so far that I had known before I came here. It is pretty hard being away from my family and friends but things could be a lot worse. I have been feeling fine.

I hope the war is over soon so things will be normal again.

Truly yours,

Joe Horton

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, August 20, 1942]

### THIRD LETTER FROM CHARLES MOW

Cpl. Charles M. Mow 35163135

Air Service Command

Base Unit No. 2

A.P.O. 879, c/o Postmaster,

New York City

July 18, 1942

Dear Grethel & Dean:

I haven't written to any of the Mow family since my departure from the States. I think of all often, but I have never found time to write. I have a few moments while on the job today, so there is no excuse.

Perhaps you have followed my travels around the globe with my mother, Janie or Herschel. I have certainly been around and have seen much. I can only tell you of my previous location in this letter because of censorship. I am now in China. Had you heard? You can learn of my other stops, if you already haven't, from Janie, Herschel or Mom.

The climate is quite comfortable here at the present. The rainy season will soon be here, as I am informed by those who have had experience in China. I am unable to tell you of my definite location in China. China is a large country and you will have to play a guessing game. Many things are seen growing in this immediate area. Corn, potatoes, beans, pumpkins, rice and most of the things that we raised at home. There is one thing that I haven't been able to find and I have spent considerable time looking for that one item. Yes, that's it, watermelons. The soil is not quite suitable, or the climate is somewhat too cool;. I haven't given up the case. I hope that my search will not prove fruitless.

I am doing clerical work at the present. Since my arrival in China, I have been made Corporal. There are many things that I would like to tell you, but as I have said before, censorship will not allow it. There is one thing that I can tell you. You can confirm it also. I am not too good on the typewriter. I make several mistakes but you will have to look over that point.

This part of China isn't much for entertainment. The nearest city is nothing to talk about in esteem. The stench is too much for me to stand. It does have one theater, but I have never visited it. We have two free movies per week. They are very old, but entertaining to us because there isn't anything else to do.

Living conditions are better than can be expected. We sleep in a building four men to a room. Food is good at times, but not always. That can be expected anyplace. Showers are available.

Give my regards to the rest of the Mow family. (Lee, Clyde, Clayton, Evelyn, Ed, etc.) I would like to write to all, but can't. There will be plenty to tell you when I get back.

Sincerely,

Charles Mow

## SvcMen WW II Letters

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, August 21, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JAMES NORRIS

August 17, 1942

Dear Folks:

Gee, I haven't written any letters at all this past week - seeing like we're terrible busy. I don't mind staying over now we've made up our minds to it. If we have good weather will be going South two weeks from the original time scheduled.

I passed my check in aerobatics today so now all I have left here is to polish up on what I've had and then formation flying. Finally I have my whites and are they nice!

I'll probably be home two weeks from the time I had originally planned so I'll be seeing you then.

I'm O.K. and feeling better than I've ever felt in my life and like this better than anything I've ever done. Write.

Love,  
Jim

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, August 21, 1942]

### LETTER FROM HOWARD SHIREMAN

London, England

9 August, 1942

Dearest Mother and Dad:

I know I have neglected you, but have not let three weeks go by without writing I know. The letters are also delayed or have been lost somewhere on the way. Will write you more often hereafter I promise.

I am again working today (Sunday), been transferred to another department and am hoping will get a sergeant rating out of it very soon. Like it better than where I previously was and the boys are a fine bunch to work with.

Yes Dad, I imagine a lot of the boys back home are wondering and worrying about when they will be called up. It seems like ages since I have been in, but as things are now I am glad it happened when it did. For an enlisted man am setting on top of the heap, whereas if was just coming in would not. If I had it to do over and knowing what I do know, I know I would do exactly as I did.

Have been getting apples and oranges with our meals, which to the English people is a grand luxury, but the other day we saw some peaches, and upon asking the price, thinking would buy a couple - they told us they were four shillings, six pence each approximately ninety cents in your money - not bad eh? Had a notion to tell them we didn't wish to buy the tree, just a peach.

Although we are many things, and do many things which are most interesting, it is impossible to tell you about them because of censorship, which really makes it hard to write a long letter to you back home. Think will get me a lot of picture post cards and use them, with an occasional letter, it would be much easier for me and then you would at least hear from me more often, and would ease your minds too, wouldn't it?

Had a letter from practically everyone last week, including Betty - Oh, yes, even had one from Marty. The second since I've been here. She was on her vacation, and said she might be down to see you some afternoon, did she show up, or was it some more of her talking?

How is Grandma Briney and all the others, tell them all hello for me and that I am expecting a letter from one of them these days.

Well, Mother and Dad Dear, not much else to say, besides have to get busy again so good-bye and all my love to you both. Write often.

Cheerio,

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Howard.

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, August 22, 1942]

### LETTER FROM HERBERT V. BECK

(son of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Beck)

Dear Mom:

Suppose you had begun to think I hadn't stopped when reaching Virginia. But believe me, when I say I haven't had time to write to anyone. We positively don't have any time we can call our own. We are not through until 9:00 at night and have until 10:30 when lights go out, to get ready for the next day. We can't even get out of the company area until Saturday after 4:00 till 10:30 Sunday night. Last week-end we worked right through.

Left Missouri Monday night and arrived here Wednesday morning. Came by Pullman as far as Washington, C.D. Had pretty fair trip all the way. Didn't get my barracks bags and your box for about a week after I had been here. I was the only one coming up here from Camp Crowder, but there were quite a number from Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri. They gave us a stack of manuals two feet high - and they're about one-fourth inch thick, so we have enough to read. We have both classes and practical work problems. As a matter of fact we had one Friday night - an assault boat crossing. Interesting, but work.

We had an air raid alarm a week ago at 12:00 at night. No lights of any sort - so just jumped out of bed, put on pants and shirt and raincoat (it was raining a flood) and house slippers. Dashed out across the drill field to the woods and lost a slipper in the middle of the field. Had a heck of a time finding it in the dark. One fellow just put his raincoat over his pajamas and went.

We had today off, so two other fellows and I went to Washington, D.C. Saw most of the government buildings except the Capitol building. We couldn't get very close to the White House, as they had it fenced off, and were doing construction work. Can't get up to it anyway unless on official business. Was up in the Washington monument. It's about 550 feet tall. Was also in Lincoln memorial, and saw the new Jefferson memorial! (It's not quite done yet), and a number of the others.

Will put my address at the bottom of the letter. Address all mail exactly as shown. Will have to drop a line or so to some of the rest. The time is getting short before lights go out.

So long,  
Candidate Herbert V. Beck  
Co. I, Eng. Sch. Rgt.,  
Fort Belvoir, Va.

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, August 22, 1942]

### LETTER FROM RAY McGRIFF

[son of Mr. and Mrs. Albert McGriff, Rochester R.R. 3]

Dear Mother:

Well how is every one back home by now. I am still at the same place and getting along fine. I have been getting all the letters you send me and am sure glad to get them, but would like to have more Rochester papers. I haven't had a chance to look up Dale Sensabaugh yet, but saw Tony Miller of Rochester, last Monday, was sure glad to see someone from home. I got a pass and went down to Honolulu last Saturday. It sure is a nice place. I am going to take some pictures this week. If they are good will send you some. You can do as you like with the rest of my money. Put it in a bank, buy a bond. I am going to send some more home as soon as I get to the postoffice. Well will close hoping to hear from you again soon,

Love,  
Ray

Address:

Pvt. Ray McGriff, 35258803  
399th Sig AVN, Box 1397  
APO, No. 958, c/o Postmaster

## SvcMen WW II Letters

San Francisco, Calif.  
The News-Sentinel, Monday, August 24, 1942]

### LETTER FROM CHESTER BLINN Sat., Aug. 15

Dear Captain Minter:

I arrived at Great Lakes Tuesday afternoon at 5:00. We went Wednesday and took our other examination at Great Lakes. And we got our uniforms. We had our first shots yesterday and my arm is really sore. We got three shots and we get three more shots next week. I have to spend 6 weeks at Great Lakes in a boat training and then we go to trade school or go straight to sea. I am going to go to trade school and be a aviation machinist. We have to sleep in hammocks and the first night half of us fell out. I have been on guard duty once it was 8 till 12 o'clock at night. We surely have fun everybody is your friend. Their are 120 men in our company. We got our first pay yesterday it was five dollars and I never spent it so fast in my life, four dollars went to buy a kit and our hair cut. Our hair cut is surely short. I almost all of hair off. Well good luck until later.

Chester Blinn A.S.U.S.M  
Company 719, Battalion 10,  
Great Lakes, Illinois

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, August 27, 1942]

### SECOND LETTER FROM JAMES E. SWEET

Dear Friend, Capt. Minter:

I just now got time to reply to your letter and I surely was glad to hear from you. I am sorry that I haven't been able to answer before but I was so busy that I didn't get time to answer yours. I showed some of the boys here in camp the pictures you sent me of the lake scenes and they said that it must be a nice place to live and I told them it sure is a swell place and a good place to live.

I am glad that you said I was a well dressed soldier when I was home on my furlough and I surely will do my best in this war, I will promise you that I want to go across but I don't know whether I will or not. But I hope so for that is what my mother would want me to do if she were living yet. Because we want to get this war over with so we can have peace again and I know that you will agree with me. I might never get home again but if necessary I will die for my country. A lot of our boys are in this war for peace and so am I. I am working very hard every day and so are all the rest of the boys in this camp.

How is the weather in Rochester? Fine, I hope. We are not having hard rains here as yet but it is just a drizzling rain in the mornings, just enough to give you a cold and I have a cold in my head, but that is much better. I have had a boil in my ear and have been going to the army doctor for treatments and that is getting better.

I have been receiving many letters about every day and I am saving all of them if that can be possible.

Well, here is hoping that you are in good health and hoping that the war will be over very soon. I would like to get me a few Japs myself and maybe I will get my chance yet. I hope so. I will close for now, hoping to hear from you very soon again.

Your very true friend,  
Pvt. James E. Sweet  
Casual Section, Unit 1962,  
Fort Ord, Calif.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, August 28, 1942]

### LETTER FROM KENNETH L. "TONY" MILLER

[Editor's Note: Mrs. Flo Miller, of this city is in receipt of one of the first V-mail letters to be received in this community. The letter is from her son Tony, who is stationed somewhere in the southwest Pacific.]

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Dear Mom:

Well, I finally made up my mind to write you a few lines. Sorry I haven't been keeping up on my writing, but you know how I hate to write and, Mom, there is no news or anything to tell - except that I'm O.K. and I hope you are the same. In your last letter you wanted to know if I received your pictures and the cookies. Yes, I received them and they were swell. The pictures made me homesick when I looked at them.

You know there are a lot of things I would like to tell you but can't. I sent you a four piece lunch cloth set for your birthday. It will probably be a week late, but it will show you that I'm thinking of you. Well, Mom, I made a \$25 allotment for you. It'll be pretty nice to know you'll have that coming in each month, won't it? Will try and send more when I can. It takes about two to three months for an allotment to get started. A lot of red tape, you know. You'll get it, I think, around the 7th of September, I hope. Well, I have to close now.

Your son,  
Kenneth L. Miller

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, August 29, 1942]

### LETTER FROM MICHAEL ZARTMAN

July 29, 1942  
Australia

Hiya, Mom and Dad:

Well, here I am again. Still all together and feeling fine. I have been receiving your letters regularly. Sure am tickled to get them. Glad to hear that you and Dad are both well, that the crops are doing fine. Dad must really be going into the hog business. Oh well, he has needed a hog house for a long time. But I thought he would take your nice chicken house over for his hogs. I bet you would have raised hell if he did. Ha, Ha.

I got a letter from Pete, and one from Sam Swope last night. I answered them both this morning. I had a little time left so am writing to you folks, too.

Ask Dad what color of a daughter-in-law he wants me to bring home. There are two kinds over here. The bush girls are black and dumb, and the others are white and educated, nicely built, too. Ha, Ha. Well, I guess I'll just bring a white one home. Ha, Ha. These girls ain't a damn bit bashful, either.

I sure would like to have a quart of good old American whiskey. This stuff they make over here is nothing but rotgut.

I am trying not to drink too much, but a man has to do something to keep his nerves quiet. How many Japs ears does Dad want me to send him? Oh well, I think I'll bury them, and tell you about it when I get home. Ha, Ha. I don't like the job of cutting the ears off of the damn yellow b - - - anyhow. They sure have been trying to raise hell with us lately. But so far, we are holding our own. They are just like a bunch of sneaking rats, trying to spread all over the world. But we will stop them - I hope. Ha. Ha.

I had a pretty good breakfast this morning - 4 fried eggs, bread, butter, coffee, about half a gallon of corn flakes, and fresh milk. Not bad, huh? Anyway, I feel better. Ha. Ha.

By this time next year, I expect to be eating breakfast with you and Pop. What do you think about it?

So long.

With love to you both,  
Mike Zartman

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, September 2, 1942]

### FOURTH LETTER FROM CHARLES MOW

Sunday, August 9, 1942

Dear Ruth, Elmer and family:

I just received your birthday greeting which was postmarked April 6. It was just a trifle late for May 1, wasn't it? I was very happy to receive the card just the same. I know the thought of

## SvcMen WW II Letters

greeting me on my birthday was just as good now as it was then. It makes no difference if the card and letters are a little late. I certainly enjoy getting them. It does me much good to know that different ones at home are thinking of you. Your greeting wasn't the only one that was late. I also received Jane's and Mom's the same time I got yours. My address has changed too many times for me to get prompt mail service although it is improving lately.

I presume you know that I am now in China. I certainly have been getting around. I have seen much and wish I could tell more than I do, but we are not permitted because of censorship. It makes it very hard for me to write home. It seems as though I tell the same thing over and over again.

I trust that all are well at your home. As for myself, they haven't been able to get me down. I am in fine shape and condition at the present. Gaining a little weight. If I keep on, I will have a larger paunch than what Grandpa Mow had.

Not much more to tell you. I am working as a clerk in an office. You are perfectly welcome to read any letters that I write home.

I wish to thank you again for the birthday card. Tell all hello. How's Clayton? I bet he's still kicking around.

Cpl. Charles M. Mow 35153135  
Air Service Command  
Base Unit No. 2  
APO 789, c/o Postmaster  
New York City, N.Y.

P.S. - I am taking a chance on your address. I hope that this letter reaches you.  
[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, September 2, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JAMES WHITE

Editor's Note: Mr. and Mrs. Ted White of Kewanna, received the following letter from their son, James. He is in the Army and stationed near Sitka, Alaska.

The Baranof Hotel  
Juneau, Alaska  
Aug. 22, 1942

Dear Folks:

Here is the low down, short, quick and to the point. Roy Pier, Peru, Ind., Mike Nolan, Chicago, and I were chosen on an All-Star baseball team to represent Sitka in a game with the Army outfit from here. We arrived yesterday noon and will play a double header tomorrow morning. Start back home (Sitka) Monday morning.

Quite a celebration on our first anniversary in Alaska. We are getting a taste of life in the big league. Practice a couple of hours each day, stay out until midnight, sleep until 10 o'clock in the morning, eat nothing but the best of steak and live in a hotel that is so grand it's beyond description. The American Women's Voluntary Service will sponsor a dance tonight in the Elk Ballroom, donated by the Elks lodge for the purpose. Girls will attend the dance with their sponsoring hostess and will leave with her. This trip is going to cost me a hundred dollar bond - but what's the dif - Will write when I get back to Sitka. Hoping all are well and with love and best wishes,

James.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, September 2, 1942]

### LETTER FROM GEORGE DAGUE

August 26, 1942

News-Sentinel  
Rochester, Indiana

Dear Folks:

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Mother has been sending me clippings from The News-Sentinel about the many boys from home who are in the service and now scattered all over the face of the globe. I have enjoyed them so very much and decided it was about time for me to drop you a friendly line.

Although I have been away from Rochester for the past eleven years, I often think about my old friends back home and when one is so far from home, they seem to remember pleasant memories much more vividly than before. I have many memories of Rochester that I carry with me always. It hardly seems fifteen years since I carried papers for George Ross, for it was through some of those first jobs of mine that I got to know so many of the home town people. Although I confess that I wouldn't be able to call all my old customers by name, I would recognize most of them on the streets and it has always been a pleasure to see and speak to them on those few short visits at home. But since I started to write a bit about myself, I mustn't allow myself to be carried away by fond memories of the past or I will completely overlook what I started out to do.

I was recalled into the service of the Army on Feb. 16th and reported to Fort Custer for duty. I was assigned to a unit then at Custer and before I realized it, had been shipped out the latter part of April for destinations unknown. We had a very good crossing of the big pond with fair weather, water not too rough, and what one might consider an enjoyable trip under the existing conditions. However, I hardly need to stress how happy we all were to get our feet on solid ground once more. It took me several days to get used to the ground standing still and that first night on shore, I was certain that my cot was rocking.

### Censorship Strict

Being under strict censorship we are not allowed to write very much about our actions or this country, even to identifying our location, so please do not think that I am being stingy with the news. It is just that I am going by the regulations. I will tell you what I can and hope that it might be of some interest to my old friends. Mother probably can tell you more, as I try to write her regularly concerning my activities.

The first days after we landed, we spent mostly in making huts like home. We live in the standard hut with the circular tops and after all the amateur carpenters got busy, we soon had ours very liveable. There are fourteen fellows in my hut, all very fine fellows too, which helps considerably to ward off the inevitable feeling of homesickness which we all feel sooner or later. With our living quarters settled with the presencer of pictures of our loved ones and our personal belongings adding that homey touch, we concentrated on our offices and outfitted them in fine shape, then settled down to work.

My work consists mostly of office procedure although of course, I have to be a good soldier just like all the troops for we have all had the same training in that one respect. I am in the Adjutant "General's department and enjoy my work very much. Our department in the service maintains all the records etc. of the troops and you can easily see what a big job that would be. It is a tremendous job and is just as important to an efficient Army as any other function.

Although at times we think that life is pretty rugged here we really have had it quite comfortable. The here will have to remain unnamed, ha. Our hut sets right on the bank of a nice stream so that we have plenty of water and are able to keep clean. We also have showers, which are of course a priceless luxury for Army troops anywhere and we do appreciate them.

We are located close enough to a town that we can hitch rides on Army vehicles and do a little sight-seeing and shopping on our time off duty. Of course that is one of the first things that any soldier thinks about when he hits a strange country or even a new place back in the States. I suppose it is because he misses his home town so very much and wants to compare the new place with it. The natives here were not overly friendly with us at first, however they are gradually warming up and I believe that in the four months that we have been here, that relations have improved greatly between the troops and the local people and will continue even more so as time passes.

### Three Essentials

As for activities in our spare time, letter writing takes up a great deal of our time for you have no idea of the important part that mail plays in the life of a soldier. The three great things to keep a soldier in good spirits are - mail, tobacco, and good food. Of course, each fellow would

## SvcMen WW II Letters

arrange them in his own personal order, but I feel sure that they would all include those three things as tops.

Our chow has been remarkably good during our stay here when you consider the distance that it must travel in the unprepared form of course, ha. Some times we have eaten even better than we did back home in garrison, but of course, we miss the plentiful supply of fruit and vegetables in the fresh form that we always had in the States. We do get plenty to eat and enough variety that one could not complain about the eats.

Cigarettes are very cheap for we buy them through our commissary and they only cost us about fifty cents a carton. Being a pipe smoker, I have found it more difficult to secure smoking tobacco but have had it sent from home and usually have a plentiful supply unless the mail get held up longer than usual.

On the third count, mail, I am sure that we have received our share. I correspond with about forty different people so do not have to mention very strongly that I am busy during my spare time. I enjoy writing letters and do not like to lose track of my friends even while I am so far from home.

### Enjoy Britishers

I have made friends with several British soldiers who are stationed nearby and enjoy exchanging our views about the war with them. They are as a whole a very cheerful group of individuals and we enjoy their company even though it took us awhile to get used to their accent and manner of speaking. They phrase their speech very much and when they ask a question of us, we almost always have to reconstruct it in our own minds before we can answer them. I had never been aware of such a difference before but guess that is only natural among Americans.

The average soldier spends much of his spare time reading. Some fellows who have never discovered the joy that reading can bring one - are discovering that because of being where they are now. We have sports activities available - and some of our time is spent engrossed in friendly competition of this sort. I hope that you will not gather from my remarks so far that our spare time makes up the majority of our activity. It is only that there is so little otherwise that I can write about.

There is little use in my filling up any space in any letter about how much we all miss our wives, our families and friends. It is very difficult to be separated from our loved ones under any circumstances, more so under the present ones. We hope that our letters home are cheerful and help those we have left behind, for that is part of our job. We like to receive cheerful ones from those at home too, but cheerful is misconstrued by so many. To us - it most certainly does not mean the great times folks are having in the States, the many places they go for entertainment, the big celebrations they are already having for heroes and that sort of thing. We haven't begun to fight this war, not on the scale that it must be fought if we are to win. We sometimes wonder if those at home realize the seriousness of these times - wonder if they realize the vastness and the type of war which must be waged to win by either side. This occasion calls for great sobriety on the part of everyone at home. It calls for individual thinking and planning so everyone's part about how the peace should be written when the battle for victory is achieved.

Please do not misunderstand me. We in the combat zones are glad that our production lines at home have made such great progress in the short time they have been given. There is still so much to be done - and so little time to do it. We have met many occasions the way we should, but there are so many fronts at home that we have not as yet shown indications of grasping clearly. This is no fun - where we are - and the job we are doing - or where our men or on many fronts and by our men - I mean not only Americans - but all those men who are fighting for the sort of freedom which we defend. When we are called upon to do our jobs, we will do them the best we know how and you can be sure all your sons will do the same. You are depending upon us on that score, and we in turn depend upon you back home not to let us down. We have only one thought foremost in our minds. That is to get this job done and return to our homes and loved ones. Your conduct at home during such critical times contribute as much as our efforts in the field.

I have been pleased to receive letters from Georg Ross, George Riddle, and Mrs. Alice Shipley from good old Rochester, and it would be a pleasant surprise to hear from others also.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

You can be sure that I will answer all who write. Please give my best wishes and regards to all my friends in Rochester.

Cordially yours,  
George Dague  
Tech 4 gr George W. Dague, 36121492  
Headquarters Co., 5th Inf. Division  
APO 5, c/o Postmaster  
New York, N.Y.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, September 4, 1942]

### LETTER FROM FRANK RAYMER

Frank Raymer, Prisoner of Japs, Sends Message

Mrs. Florence Raymer and Mrs. Howard Bunn, mother and sister, respectively, of Frank Ramer, who is held prisoner by the Japs in the Zentsuji Prison Camp, in Japan, today received their first personal letter from Frank.

The message was mailed from Tokyo on June 10th. Frank was taken prisoner during the fall of Guam Island last December and was removed to the Japanese prison camp during January. Approximately three months ago Frank was one of several U. S. service men held prisoner by the Japs who were permitted to broadcast brief messages over a Nipponese broadcasting station which had previously arranged a hook-up with the NBC of the United States.

Frank at one time was an employee of The News-Sentinel and later served as "advance man" with the Cole Bros. Circus.

The letter follows:

Jentsuji War Prison Camp, Japan

Mrs. Florence Ramer  
104 Bower Street,  
Knox, Indiana, U.S.A.

Dearest Mother, Dad and All:

We are given the chance to write a few lines. I was taken prisoner in December and brought to Japan in January. We are receiving very good treatment, but it is hard to become accustomed to the food which is mostly rice and wheat.

Working on Mountain

We work about six hours a day on a mountain, a short distance away. It is healthy work, with plenty of fresh air, and most of us enjoy it very much. We live in barracks and have fairly good bunks, so don't worry about my health, as I am O.K. Maybe you can get in touch with the Red Cross in Washington and find out if you can send me anything. If you can, I could use a pair of work shoes, size 8 1/2 D with hobnails, two pairs heavy socks, and a couple sweat shirts, also some work gloves and cigarette papers. If you'll get these for me, Dad, I'll sure appreciate it. Don't worry, Mother, and I'll be home one of these days. Your loving son.

Francis.

Francis Raymer, Cox, U. S. Navy.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, September 4, 1942]

### LETTER FROM FRANCIS BLACKETOR

Sept. 2, 1942

Hello Uncle and Aunt:

Well I finally got around to answering your letter. I had been waiting until we moved and found out what my address would be. We moved to a different part of camp last Friday and Monday our company was split up and put in with some engineer company. Harold Shields from Rochester is in the company I was put in. There are several boys from Indiana in the company. I think I will like it alright. It will be a lot different from what have been doing.

How are you folks feeling? I have been just fine. I received a letter from Earl Bailey the other day. He said he had been home over the week-end.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Well this is about all I can think of now.

Francis Blacketor

My address:

Pfc. Francis A. Blacketor 35110748

Co. A, 326 Airborne Eng. Bn

101 Airborne Division

Camp Claiborne, La.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, September 8, 1942]

### LETTER FROM GLEN DAULTON

Dear Mother:

Was glad to hear from you. I left New York, August 14. Have been in Charleston, S.C. for two weeks. We are leaving tomorrow. I don't know where I am going yet. I like it aboard ship. I am on a minesweeper, U.S.S. - YMS - 5. Address all my mail in care of New York Postmaster.

We eat good and the fresh salt air really gives you an appetite. We were out sweeping for mines Saturday and an airplane spotted a submarine about 200 yards from us. I was on watch in the crow's nest. That is a little platform on the mast. It is the highest place on the ship. You can see for miles. I have a pair of binoculars to see through. My first day aboard ship I really got sea sick. We hit a rough sea coming down to Charleston, S.C. That was the only time though.

When we have battle call, I am on a V-gun. I set it for what depth they want, take the safety off, load it, lock it, then they fire it from the bridge.

Mom, the Atlantic ocean is full of submarines. It is plenty tough at sea in war time. I sure like it. I wouldn't be surprised if I ended up on the Pacific coast later on.

Love,

Glen.

P.S. Tell the kids I said Hello.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, September 8, 1942]

### LETTER FROM ROBERT H. FRYE

Dear Bill and Edna:

Well, here I am at Great Lakes. It sure is a swell place. Navy life sure is grand. I wish every boy at my age could be in it. To show you what it is like I'll give you a day's routing. The bugle blows at 5:30, we climb out of our hammocks and wash, get dressed and lash our hammocks. Then we fall out in front of the barracks by 6:00. We then run around the block twice just for a pep up. And I do mean it peps you up. After the pep-up we go to chow which you would call breakfast. Then after chow we go back to the barracks to smoke, and only after chow are we allowed to smoke just for 15 minutes. After chow we divide into groups and clean up the barracks.

We usually are done cleaning up by 7:45. Then we again fall out in front of the barracks for our drilling period. We drill, march, and build ourselves up, for the Navy wants only the men who can take orders and fulfill them right. Our drilling time ends about 11:00. After marching back to the barracks, we then can do our talking and playing the radio until chow time. At the chow house we march through with our trays, and the men fill them as we pass. We sit at tables that are about a block long. I'll give you a hint what kind of chows we have. At noon meal today we had steak, mashed potatoes and gravy, string beans and for dessert we had rice pudding, cake and coffee. And after a day's marching we sure can pack in a meal like that.

After noon chow we again do our clean up detail. After the barracks are cleaned up they are then inspected. After inspection we fall out for drilling again. We drill from 1:00 to 4:00. After 4:30 we can do our washing and it is done by hand and a brush. After working in a laundry for two years I thought maybe I could get away from it for a while, so you see I am still at it. After washing we all take a shower. Now and then we put a gob under the shower, that is, for getting more than three letters a day. It is about 5:45 by now and it is chow time again and we all

## SvcMen WW II Letters

go but the guards, and they have eaten an early chow. After chow we go to a show or play pool at the ship's service. Or we all get together and sing navy songs.

There are about 125 men in our company. Most of them are from North Carolina, only two others besides me are from Indiana. And the three of us sure get into lots of arguments about our state. Well it's about time for taps and I'll have to be going. If you should see anyone who would like to write me, please give them my address. And tell the three kids to write me a card and you write me back.

Robert Harold Frye (AS)  
Co. 792, Batt. 9  
Great Lakes, Ill.

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, September 12, 1942]

### LETTER FROM ROBERT MILLER

8-24-42

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Spurlock:

Well here is this letter I promised to write. I should have wrote long time ago. Well how is everybody. Hope O.K. Well I am just fine getting along O.K. I am trying to make a cook and now I am going to cooking school. Just got five more weeks yet. Then I suppose I will go back to my outfit. It's been raining down here about every day. It's trying to rain now. This is a nice place I am in now but I don't like it here. I think there is about 120,000 men here if not more. Well I just don't think of much to write this time but maybe the next time I write I can tell you more.

Bob.

Address:

Pvt. Robert Miller  
B.O.C. School,  
Ft. Benning, Ga.

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, September 12, 1942]

## INTERESTING STORIES CONCERNING FULTON COUNTY MEN IN ACTION

### RALPH HUDKINS' EXPERIENCES

"There were three ear-splitting explosions and the three thousand men aboard knew the feel of a ship sinking under them. . . . When the order to abandon ship came, the deck plates were hot enough to fry eggs."

In large cryptic sentences like these, Petty Officer Ralph Hudkins, now spending his furlough with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Hudkins, of near Kewanna, painted a vivid word picture of the attack and sinking of the U. S. Carrier Lexington in the battle of the Coral Sea on the evening of May 8, 1942.

There was no hint of braggadocio, no touch of the melodramatic in Hudkins' manner. Rather, it was a calm, almost reticent recital of the wuthering fury of a Jap attack which lasted hardly more than fifteen minutes, but which scored fatal wounds to the big ship, including fire which raged below decks for nearly six hours.

#### Saw O'Hara in Action

Hudkins who had been aboard the Lexington in the battle of Bougainville in February when Lieut. O'Hara bagged six Japs out of eighteen which swooped down to attack, describes the Coral Sea engagement in this manner:

"We were steaming at about 2 knots. Reports had reached us that the Japs were approaching in force about sixty miles off our port side. Around eleven o'clock we heard the cry of our lookouts announcing enemy planes in force off the port bow. Immediately our anti-aircraft battery blasted. Puffs of white smoke hung close to the enemy formations which scattered quickly. The big ship quivered and shimmied as the firing gathered intensity. One burst broke

## SvcMen WW II Letters

squarely on a Jap plane which dropped like a dead duck into the sea. A moment later another "slant-eye" crashed head-on into the water.

"There must have been a hundred or more of them. They buzzed and droned like a swarm of angry bees but the wall of steel and explosives thrown up by our guns kept them off. A dive-bomber slipped through. The Lexington zig-zagged sharply. Two heavy bombs struck close. Huge geysers of water and spray drenched the ship. One of our boys got the bead. The Jap plummeted down to die for his Mikado. We watched him sink beneath the waves, and cheered.

### Caught by "Fish"

"Two aerial rorpedoes struck close aft and sank harmlessly. Another pair followed quickly. The ship's stern swung sharply to starboard, but the "fish" (torpedoes) caught her. The explosions all but buckled her and the men sprawled to the decks under the terrific impact. A diver hurtled down upon us, his throttles wide open. His bomb hit flush topside and exploded.

"Above the din of gunfire and the drone of the planes, we heard the sharp commands of our skipper, Capt. Sherman, ordering all hands to the fire controls. Smoke filtered through bulkheads and companionways. A report came through that our electrical pumps were out of commission; that fire was spreading toward the fuel tanks and magazines. We formed bucket lines, carrying non-explosive chemicals to the fuel tanks. Men with grime-baked faces worked frantically but in spite of all we could do, the fire gained headway.

### Abandon Ship

"When the order to abandon ship came - about 5 p.m. - the deck plates were hot enough to fry eggs. Men groped about, their hands seared, their faces streaked with perspiration. A destroyer came alongside and removed all but the fire fighters. Unable to get aboard, we jumped into the sea and swam for it. One by one the ship's whale-boats picked us up.

"From the destroyer, at almost two hundred yards, we watched the Lex. There were tears in nearly every eye as we realized that the big ship's life could be measured in minutes. A man walked briskly from the bridge and across the flight deck. There were no other signs of life aboard the carrier. Throwing a rope over the side, he slid down. Twenty-five feet above the water he was thrown - by the force of a deafening explosion - into the sea. A whale-boat picked him up. The man was Captain Sherman.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, September 15, 1942]

## SECOND LETTER FROM HOWARD SHIREMAN

London, England

Monday, Sept. 7, 1942

Dearest Mother and Dad:

Will take a few minutes from my work to get a short letter off to you. Was busy over the week-end else would have wrote then, but something doing each minute. Went to a show Saturday night, stopped in and got a bite to eat afterwards. Slept most of Sunday morning, then in the afternoon, played baseball exhibition game in the northern part of London, played an English team, beating them 21 to 2 and in the evening had date.

Last Wednesday was in the first American Parade held in London since the "Yanks" came over here. Although only about 300 boys were in it, t'was very nice and afterwards had luncheon with the Lord Mayor of London and his "Corporation" in the Guilhal, which is the "City Hall." An enormous building, built long before America was discovered, about 1270 if I remember correctly. It was bombed during the "blitz," but has been rebuilt and this was the first time I had been used since. Considering everything, the luncheon was very good, and to us boys the Lord Mayor and his "Corporation" in their long gowns, wigs, ketc., was something to wonder about. Have read about it and saw pictures of it, but never thought I would see it in reality. Have sent clippings and pictures of the parade home to Sis telling her to forward them on to you, so probably you should be receiving them soon. Put them away for me as I wish to add them to my album when I come home. Not much more news, just about the same old routing every day. Bye now and write soon. Oh, hes! have now received both the packages, and thanks so much, right now

## SvcMen WW II Letters

am chewing away at one of the sticks of gum you sent and it is good, but the English still make fun of us for chewing it. Oh, well, such is life I guess.

Lots of love, always,  
Howard

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, September 17, 1942]

### LETTER FROM MELVIN SWEANY

September 11, 1942

Dear Mom and All:

Have you guys broke your arms or you forgot I'm in the army? I got your package but no mail. The only letter I got in the last 2 weeks is from Thompson. So how about writing me some letters.

Don't send me a harp, I've got one. I gave \$1.50 for it. Boy, they sure hold uou up for things down here. I bought me a wristwatch too. In fact, I bought several things.

I just got off the range. I made marksman. And the army sure agrees with me. If you pay attention and do what you're told you get along OK.

It's getting pretty late so I will go to bed. It is now nine minutes after eleven. I know because I looked at my watch. Ha, Ha.

I sure have a lot of fun. There is always something to laugh about. Well, I will close,  
Melvin

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, September 17, 1942]

### LETTER FROM DOUGLAS M. SWEANY

September 7, 1942

Dear Mom and Dad:

I finally got around to writing again. I'm feeling fine and hope every one around is the same. I got a letter from Ruth the other day and believe it or not, she isn't married.

How does Melvin like the army by now? Fine, I hope. You know Marie has written to me about six or seven times and I haven't written to her once. When I come home I'm going to let her kick me. But I'm beginning to feel the back of my neck so I'm writing her now. I was going to write to Melvin but I forgot to bring his address so will write tomorrow night.

You were telling me Earl and Wayne went up this month for examination so if they make it write and let me know and also get their address so I can write them.

There is another thing I would like you to do and that is tell Ruth's mother and ask her when Ruth's birthday is. In her letter the other day she said she sent me a birthday present although I never received it, just like I never received the one Marie and all of you sent.

Well, I finally got a rating. I'm no longer a private, Mother dear. I'm a corporal technician. I have got to write to Earl as soon as I have time but I don't feel in the writing mood tonight.

Is Dad still working for Klein's? Boy, I would have liked to have been home when the garden came off and got some of those good old corn and beans. Speaking of eats, they really feed good here and I'm sure not losing any weight.

Well, I can't think of any more to say, only I saw a good movie. The name of it was "Unholy Partners," with Edward G. Robinson and Edward Arnold. I guess I'll have to close for now so write soon.

With lots of love,  
Doug

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, September 17, 1942]

### LETTER FROM DEAN H. SEVERNS

Sept. 12, 1942

7:30 Sat. Eve.

Dear Mrs.Becker:

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I received your birthday card and dollar. I surely appreciate it an awffly lot to think that the Green Oak Community Club thinks enough of my folks and their boys to do that for me. That dollar will surely come in handy because the married man or (boy which ever I am) in the army doesn't have anymore than they had on \$21 a month. Just ask my Mother about that and I believe she may be able to tell you about it.

Well I just don't know what to say, but I expect you wonder just what I am doing with my time and the government's money, in the Army Air Corps, which is a separate branch of the U. S. defense that is also a young division and fast ranking.

To start with we get up at 4 o'clock in the morning, make beds and clean up for daily inspection, breakfast at 4:45, school 6 o'clock, back to barracks at 2:30, calisthenics from 2:30 till 3:30, mail call at 4:00 to 4:15, supper at 4:45 and back to barracks 5:30 to 5:45. We only have about three-quarters of a mile to the mess hall. From 6 to 8 is study period and after that the time is our own. Which doesn't leave much time for what we would like to do and get enough sleep by four o'clock in the morning.

Right now we finished our fourth phase out of eleven, which was propellers. Now in the fifth phase. We study instruments of the airplane, which there are only 105 of them. Do you think we can learn them all in ten days, I don't.

When we graduate from here, we go to a factory for six weeks' training and then we are crew chiefs or bosses over the maintenance and repair of bombers or pursuit jobs. Mighty fine if you can make it. Several have washed out already. Some 50 or 60.

Still hot down here, we go to bed at night sweating and wake up in the morning with wet sheets.

That is about all I can tell about. Be home in about 4 or 5 months I hope and thanks again to the club for the birthday card and money.

Sincerely yours,  
Pvt. Dean H. Severns  
Squad 302, Flight "B"  
Bldg. 7, Blk. 22  
Keesler Field, Miss.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, September 23, 1942]

[NOTE: P. H. Severns is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Deloise Severns, of near Rochester]

### LETTER FROM JOHN MUTCHLER

Sept. 12, 1942

Dear Mom,

Well, I am still out here at North Island Naval Base in San Diego harbor. The weather is really swell out here, it is a lot better than on the mainland. It does not get so cold at night. We have been swimming about all afternoon. The water was a little cold, but it was sure swell.

Well, I am still hoping to get sent back to Chicago. At least I am in the air corps anyway. When I finish school, I will be what they call an "aviation machinist's mate." I think I will like it O.K.

They have shows every night. They sure are good.

Today we got off at ten o'clock and don't have to muster again until 7:00 Monday morning. We have shore liberty but we can get anything we need here at the ship's service, so I don't think Gabby and I will go ashore this week-end.

Has Buzz joined the marines yet? If so, when does he leave? I hope he gets here before I leave so I can see him.

How do the kids like school by now?

Did Dad win anything at the Akron Fair this year?

Well, this is about all the time I have, so goodbye.

With love,  
John

P.S. - Please write. I haven't gotten a letter since last Monday.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Pvt. John Mutchler  
A.S.G. - 2 - A.E.S - 23  
U. S. Naval Air Station,  
San Diego, Calif.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, September 23, 1942]

### SECOND LETTER FROM RAY McGRIFF

In Hawaii  
Sept. 2, 1942

Dear Mother:

Just a few lines to let you know I am O.K. I am sending you some pictures. Hope you like them. Will send some more when I get them finished. I got the cablegram you sent today, also the pictures Florence sent. Sure was glad to get them.

This is sure a nice place here. I think when I get out of the army I will come back over here. Sure takes a lot of money to live here, though. Everything is so high. We haven't had any spuds for over six weeks. Rice takes the place of them.

I haven't found Dale yet. Don't believe he is over here any more. Send all of the Rochester papers you can. I sure like to get them. Tell Florence I got her cake but it wasn't any good. Takes too long to get here. Well, will close for this time.

Love,  
Ray

Pvc. Ray McGriff 35258803  
399th Sig. AVN, Box 1397  
APO 958, c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco, Calif.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, September 23, 1942]

### LETTER FROM BOB BIGLER

Lemoore Army Flying School  
Army Air Base  
Lemoore, California

Dear Mr. Purdue:

My arrival at Sant Ana, April 21, 1942, was the beginning of experiences I shall never forget. After spending 11 weeks there, my Squadron left for Rankin Field at Tulare, California. There was the beginning of my flight training. Knowing that only a few of you have been to California, I might say that it is a state comparable to a beautiful girl. It's beautiful, changeable, and at times agreeable; while still again it is something you would be glad never to have had anything to do with.

July 13th was the "day," the day every cadet remembers, his first "solo." After that I was considered one of the group. I didn't have to wear my goggles around my neck or much of any other of the "Do do" customs.

Primary is rough. You see some of the finest friends you have pass by the wayside. That is all very disheartening and makes a fella lose a bit of confidence. One of the finest feelings anyone can have is to be an upper classman. That means you're nearly a sure bet to get through the course and then you feel proud of your conquest of being a "do do." Completing all my ground school and checks in Primary successfully, I was one of the eligible 110 of 250 that started at Rankin.

We were transferred to Lemoore, California, where we again assumed the name "Do do's." And I mean "doublewhacks," too. Rankin was rough but this is rugged. Up at 4:40 to bed at 9:30-10:00. One thing about this army is that they always have something for us to do. If not we go out and drill.

During our first week here at "Basic" we drilled every day and listened to lectures of all kinds at night. Really tiresome!

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Then on September 3 we began flying. Just to give you an idea, here are some points you must check in each ship before taking off:

P.T.:

1 - Oil pressure

2 - Gas

3 - Mags.

In the B.T.:

1 - Prop pitch

2 - Mixture Control

3 - Radio and headset

4 - Primer

5 - Tobs

6 - Stabilizer

7 - Flaps

8 - All the different temperatures and pressures.

When the instructor said: "Start the ship," my mouth drew open and I said "Huh!" I was so awed by all the instruments that all I could do was open my mouth and sit there with a silly grin on my face. Oh! Well! A fella has to learn, so I just began looking around. Finally and really I don't know how I got it started. My first flight was very interesting. This BT is a ship to respect and "we" Cadets put that as our first of all check points.

I finally soloed this ship after 4 1/2 hours flying time. Already eight of my class from Rankin have "washed out." This flying really breaks a fella's heart especially when a cadet washes out. Nevertheless, those who wash out are not washed out because they couldn't learn. Please believe me, when I say that too many people think if their boy or boy friend washes out he's no good, but the chances are he's a much better pilot and would make a better officer than some of those who get through. One bad turn, one bad day, or one little slip up and you're out.

It would really be a blow to me if I washed out and I know the rest of the fellas feel the same. Of the five boys under my instruction at Primary 3 have already "washed." That really makes a fella feel as if there's nothing left to go on for. Anyway the fella in front of you and those on both sides of you will never be with you when you leave this place. Only about one will go to the same place as you do. You make a friend in a few short weeks, one you will never forget as long as you live.

I have met three former Rochester residents while I've been in the army, Ed Ley, George Jenkins, and Leo Zimmerman. I see Leo every day as he is stationed here.

In closing this short memo I'd like to extend best wishes to "Old R.H.S." and to the faculty. I hope to be home for New Year's at least. It's nearly time for taps and this is an opportune time for closing.

Sincerely,

Bob Bigler

P.S. - All anyone can ask is that we do our best and that's just what all Cadets do.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, September 23, 1942]

### SECOND LETTER FROM DON F. KUMLER

Somewhere in Louisiana

Thurs. Eve., Sept 17, 1942

Capt. Otis I. Minter

City Hall

Rochester, Ind.

Dear Sir:

I feel rather ashamed of myself for not having answered your letter sooner but with your years of soldiering behind you, you no doubt realize that a soldier has a lot more to do than write letters.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

As you may know I left Camp Wolters on the fourteenth of last month, and have since been stationed at Camp Shelby, Miss. Wolters was much more modern, but on the whole I think I like Shelby much better.

The thing that surprises me most in the Army life is that everyone seems to be congenial and friendly. I have yet to meet the Officer or enlisted man that I couldn't get along with. Everyone has a certain one thing to look forward to and that is the end of this mess and the time when we can live like the best people in the world should live.

I am planning to come home right after maneuvers to see how the best town in the world is getting along.

I am now working as assistant to the intelligence officer and I really like my work fine. My superior is Capt. Wilson and a finer man never existed. He is willing to give me all the help I need although he is always busy himself.

Our maneuvers will last about eight weeks. We are now about twelve miles from Mansfield, La., and will probably move South from here.

It's a great life, full of mosquitoes, chiggers, wood ticks and a lot of fun thrown in. Yesterday I rode twelve miles to get a bath. You know I must have been pretty dirty to go that far just to dunk myself in a little water. However, I felt like I was half-way human afterwards.

Well my light is getting kind of droopy and so am I so will wind up for this time. Answer and I will endeavor to be more prompt in the future.

Yours,

Pvt. Don F. Kumler  
Hq. Co. 152nd Inf. 38th Div.,  
APO 38 c/o Postmaster  
Leesville, La.

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, September 24, 1942]

## LETTER FROM DEVERL BECKER

Mon., Sept. 21

Dear Mom:

Well, here I am again. I just got off work for the day and boy, am I tired! Oh, I didn't work too hard, but the days are so long and it gets pretty tiresome before the day is through. I'll be glad when we really get to working hard.

Well, Mom, tonight I'm going to try to tell you a little something about this place. It probably won't make much sense, but bear with me and we might manage to get by.

You wanted to know how big a camp this is. Well, when it's full, there's around 30,000 men here. At the present there isn't quite that many, but they keep coming in every day and I imagine there are around 20,000 men here now. Our company has a capacity of 686 men, but we aren't full just now - only 500. I'm the clerk of the whole company, so you can imagine just how busy I will be when things get going. Before long they will be bringing in complete units at once. About 1,000 men equipped with trucks, guns, ammunition and anything else that makes a unit complete. Then we will be responsible for all of that stuff until they move out.

Practically every man who comes here is eventually bound to end up in Alaska (with the exception of our shipment, of course). Almost every day, a fleet of trucks pulls out of here loaded down with men and baggage, bound for the north. It is a thrilling and somewhat sorrowful sight to see all of those healthy, big men leaving the U. S., maybe to never return again. Oh, I tell you, war is a terrible thing. You can't possibly realize, there in the middle west, just how big a thing this is. You have to see men leaving the country, sky patrols and air-raid precautions before you can actually feel that we are fighting for our lives. You should be out here with all the balloon barrages and P38 interceptors flying back and forth on the look-out for enemy planes and

## SvcMen WW II Letters

destroyers in the bay, refueling for another trip along the coast and air-raid warnings. Oh, if it were only possible for some of the skeptics in the middle west to see some of these things, I'm sure they would have a different opinion of it. This is war, a fight to the finish. I am awfully glad that I have my chance to be in it. I can't fight but I sure can work hard and help keep things moving forward so that it will be possible for our boys to finish off those Japs in quick order.

That's enough lecture for one night, so back to Ft. Lawson and its surroundings.

Mercedes asked in her letter if we could have cameras out here. Well, we can take pictures of individuals, but are strictly forbidden to take pictures of any of the installations on the fort. You can see the reason for that. There is nothing outstanding about the place, however. The barracks are built row upon row with a nice yard around each building. There are lots of big fir trees throughout the fort. We have two chapels, several mess halls, theaters and recreation centers. It's really a city without the business district.

Each barracks holds 80 men. Every morning we get up at 5:45, dress, wash, make our beds and then start scrubbing the whole building. (I don't have to do all of that, now that I have a room of my own. I'm responsible for my quarters. That's all) Everything must be spic and span for morning inspection. About 7:30 an officer comes around and looks over the whole building and woe be unto the men, if he finds any dirt. So far, we have kept our barracks spotless and have received praise from several officers. I hope we keep up the good work.

Well, I washed again last night and this time I really got my clothes clean. I used lots of soap and hot water and scrubbed (with a brush) all the dirt out. It took me over an hour to do it, but it sure was worth it. It ain't got "tattle-tale gray." Ha!

Oh, yes, I saluted a general today. This high-ranking official was visiting the fort and wouldn't it be my luck to run into him? I was almost too scared to lift my arm but he didn't say anything, so I must have done O.K.

I received a letter from Mercedes today and certainly enjoyed it. Funny, though that it took so long in getting here - one week exactly. She asked about the weather out here. Oh, it's fine. I like it a lot. The air is much clearer and gives a person a good appetite. The fog is the only bad part. Almost every morning the wet stuff rolls in from the Pacific surrounding our camp, but it lifts around 9 a.m. so it isn't too bad. I imagine I will miss the Indiana winter this year. It snows about once a year out here and all the rest of the time it rains. They say it rains day in and day out for weeks at a time. Don't be surprised if I have webbed feet when I come home. Ha!

The food out here is certainly good. They have spaghetti out here about three times a week, so you know I'm satisfied. As for quantity, there is a big sign in the mess hall which says, "Take what you can eat and eat what you take." It means just that, too! If I wanted six eggs for breakfast, I could have them. You may need some heavier scales when I come home. In fact, I have gained nine pounds.

S'funny, I haven't received any newspapers yet. But the service is terrible here so I suppose I'll be getting five or six of them at one time and will have to take an evening off to read all of them.

Be good now and don't worry about me. I'm feeling fine and everything is O.K. Write to me soon and tell me all about yourself. Bye now.

Loads of love

DeVerl

Pvt. D. E. Becker 35363952

Company "C"

Casual Section, Staging Area,

Fore Lewis, Wash.

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, September 28, 1942]

LETTER FROM ESTEL ROWLES

Sept. 23, 1942

Dear Sister, Mother and All:

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Well, I finally got moved and I think a pretty good move, too. I don't know yet just what I will do but it's post office work of some kind. Ten of us came from Alabama. Three of us boys that chummed around together down there have a room together. We are in a big hotel less than a block off Fifth avenue and only about four blocks from Madison Square Garden. It's almost too good to be true. Of course we have no assignment yet and could be changed somewhere but now it looks as if we would be located here for a while at least. Probably have some training in the kind of work we do. Well, it's getting pretty late and we are all tired after the long trip so must be getting to bed. We came through Atlanta, Ga., North Carolina through Virginia to Washington, D.C., changed trains there and were there about 30 minutes; went through Baltimore, Md., Philadelphia, Pa, Newark, N.J., into New York City.

Well, will tell you more when we get more settled. So good night.

Love to all,  
Pvt. Estel C. Rowles  
Postal Bn., N.Y.P.E.  
Hotel Breslin, 29th & Broadway  
New York City, N.Y.

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, September 28, 1942]

## LETTER FROM JAY CARR

Sept. 8, 1942  
A.P.O. No. 27

Dear Captain:

Sorry I haven't dropped you a line sooner, but we haven't been settled down for some time. Everything is going along pretty good at the present, of course, anything could happen.

So far I've only received two letters from home since I've been here. We left the states July 21st. We have no way of getting any up-to-date news. It's all from three to four days old and about twice as big before it gets to us.

We can't tell you where we are although we did cross the equator and the natives are friendly. They speak pretty well. I'm trying to pick up a few of their words.

I've been a telephone operator on the guns since I've been here. Every time we change places we do something new.

I haven't been out on a pass for quite some time now. If we could get a pass there is no place to go. I've seen two movies. They are about five years old. The time goes pretty fast here so going out is just a waste of time. There are very few white people here. What few there are, aren't so friendly toward a soldier.

How is everything going around home? I suppose the rest of the fellows are in the service by now. I met two fellows from Indiana that are in a different outfit. I happen to know some people from their home town. We shot the bull for awhile.

Today is pay day - the first full one we've had since May 31st. I'm going to try and send some money home.

Well, Captain, I want to thank you again for the help and advice you helped me out with. In case you see the folks tell them I dropped you a line. It's hard to tell when you receive this. Write when you can.

Sincerely,  
Jay

Jay Carr 35172389  
B atty "A" 268th CA. HD.  
APO 913, San Francisco, Cal.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, September 30, 1942]

## SvcMen WW II Letters

### LETTER FROM ARTHUR WOOLINGTON

[This letter was received by Mr. and Mrs. Max Anderson from their nephew, Arthur (Buster) Woolington of Fort Bragg.]

Sept. 20, 1942

Dear Uncle Max and family:

Just a few lines to let you know that I'm still alive. It sure is hot down here now. Last night was the first time I could go out and I met Bert Cramer's brother down here and both of us went to Fayetteville yesterday afternoon and had a swell time together. You should see the card we are going to send Hitler and we are sending it to Berlin. We don't know if it will get there, but we may get heck for it but we don't care as we are all into it.

I wrote to Don and haven't heard from him yet. There is nothing but sand and pine trees, and the sand down here is like rock salt.

I am getting so that I can do the manual of arms and a little drilling but you should have seen me at first. I was very awkward.

I guess they are going to put me in as a cook and I would rather do something besides cooking. I went swimming down here last Tuesday and the water was very brown.

Your nephew,

Buster

My address is:

Pvt. Arthur Woolington

A-11-4, F.A.E.C.

Fort Bragg, N.C.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, September 30, 1942]

### LETTER FROM TRENSON KLINE

U. S. Army Air Corps

MacDill Field, Fla.

Tuesday, Sept. 29

Dear Roy:

As you know I've been going to O.T.V. School to become a propellor specialist. Today I had a new experience. My instructor had me teach a ground maintenance group that came in for their lecture on Curtiss props. He told me to tell them everything, how it operates, the inspections of the governor, relays and dynamotor, and all the clearance. I talked for better than a half hour. Now I understand why all instructors didn't like their jobs and to think I just about vounteered for it at Keesler. I guess I'll finish school this week and go back "on the line." I hope I get back on the night shift 'cause I can get more experience because of not so much flying and more work being done.

Yesterday a bunch of fellows came from the B-26 factory at Baltimore. I asked one if any were being sent to Baer Field at Fort Wayne. They send these direct to Fort Wayne so I guess the rumor about us going there isn't the real McCoy. Well, anyway, it sounded good while it lasted.

I expect to be on the next cadory to be formed in two weeks. If I'm on it I'll be transferred to a new squadron here for five weeks, then go to Lakeland for five more before going to an embarkation point. I'm trying for a furlough, but if it don't come through before I leave Lakeland I'll see you all after the war. I've heard a few mechanics are getting them at Lakeland so my hopes are a little higher now.

One day last week Tampa had some assistance from Veronica Lake in selling war bonds. She was quite a success. My! what a beautiful blonde can do!

Sunday Tampa had their first taste of enemy bombings but the catch was that they used 2 pound bags of flour. It caused quite a mess 'cause it rained some after the raid.

I guess we have quite a difference in weather. You're freezing to death in Indiana and I'm melting away in Florida. It's even warmer here than it was at Keesler Field or Baltimore. I guess we will wear our summer uniforms until December.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I'm sending a few pictures so if I do get a furlough you can recognize me when I open the door.

Well, it's getting time for lights out so I better stop and try for some shut-eye.

Your brother,  
Trenson

P.S. - Tell Hank he better get on the Cardinal wagon and root for them in the series. Please send some clippings 'cause I haven't had the news for some time.

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, October 3, 1942]

### SECOND LETTER FROM ALBERT L. SWANSON

Pvt. A. L. Swanson  
Btry B 94th C.A.  
A.P.O. 22 c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco, Calif.

To Mrs. Belle Swanson, Akron, Ind.

Dear Mom:

I got two letters from you on Aug. 25 and was sure glad to hear from you all, and to find that you are all well. I am feeling fine and having a good time. I got a letter from Frank the other day that I got ours. I only got eight letters that day. I guess that was good. One of the letters was from Blondie Swihart. Was I surprised to get one from her!

You asked how long it took for your letter to get here. The letter I got from you last was sent July 15. You asked if it will do any good to send cigarettes and stuff. Yes, I will get them in time. I got about everything else you sent. Well I guess I will close now for this about all the room I got left. So I hope this will find you all well.

Your Son  
Albert

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, October 5, 1942]

### THIRD LETTER FROM JAMES E. SWEET

Dear Friend Capt. Minter:

Just now have time to reply to your letter you wrote me a few weeks ago. But I now have time to answer. I have been on duty every day and am still on duty and I am doing fine. I hope you are all right these days. I broke a finger on my right hand and hurt my left arm last week, but I have only missed 1 1/2 days on account of it.

I didn't know such things could be so painful to have a bone set but I had to take it. I feel that if other men can take it I can take it too. So I'll keep on trying to do my duty the best I can and when I get time I will try to get caught up with my writing and more especially to my folks, and to my girl friend in Rochester. And to you because I have known you a long time and I consider you my best friend.

You said that I was a clean looking soldier when I was at home. I try to be a good soldier and I am glad that you liked the way I was dressed, but that is the way we American soldiers dress, the very best.

Well, it don't look as if I will get to go across yet, but I would like to go and hope that I get my wish soon and get over the pond and down a few Japs. Then the people at home will know I am doing my duty. I feel that I could kill quite a number of Japs in a day and that would help all of us to get home sooner.

How is the weather at home? I suppose it is getting cooler there now. It is really dry here and it just don't seem to rain; We need rain very bad. It gets warm here in the day time and cool at night but it is just about right for us men to sleep well at night and that is what we want and need. I have gained weight since I have been in the Service and now weigh about 185 and that

## SvcMen WW II Letters

proves that we are getting lots of good things and beneficial food to eat. We do eat well. I will say so long for this time, and will be so glad to hear from you again when you find time.

Your friend  
Pvt. Jameds Edward Sweet  
Casual Section, Unit 1962  
Fort Ord, California

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, October 5, 1942]

### LETTER FROM LEO D. ZIMMERMAN

[One wonderful letter which the receiver wishes to share with all the readers of The News-Sentinel]

September 30, 1942

Dear Friend:

It was indeed a surprise and pleasure to receive our most welcome letter, and you can be sure it brought back many pleasant memories.

It did my heart good to know that you have placed a star in your service flag for me. It will be an added inspiration to this soldier, along with many others for which it represents.

Though we are busy from morning to night, there is always some time during the day that our thoughts wander back home and it makes us realize it is all worth while. I feel that I have been very fortunate to have lived among such a fine group of all American people and each night I thank God for having had that privilege.

My life here has been much finer than I expected. I have yet to meet a fellow soldier or officer whom I dislike. All selfishness is cast aside and we are all united towards victory. It is almost unbelievable, that so many men from all walks of life could be cast together like this overnight and become as one.

Robert (Bob) Bigler, formerly of Rochester, is an Aviation Cadet here and it is with great pride that I point him out to my fellow soldiers, for he is a mighty fine soldier and a pilot. As a Dispatcher of Planes, I get to see him fly quite often and of course have watched closely his progress. Today, I noticed he has been chosen to march his class of Cadets to and from the field, so his work on the ground has been recognized on the ground as well as in the air. Also today he asked me if I would go up with him some time, and of course, I will do so at my earliest convenience. I only wish that we could head the nose east and land at Rochester for a while, however, I am afraid the gas wouldn't hold out.

It is almost time for lights out, so I must close.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness in writing.

May God bless all of you with all that is good.

Your friend,  
Leo D. Zimmerman

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, October 5, 1942]

### LETTER FROM CONDE HOLLOWAY

Pfc. C. D. Holloway  
E.S.C. - 26, Building 381  
F.A.S. Det. (White)  
Fort Sill, Okla.

Dear Mom and Dad:

Well, here I am again and well and happy. Boy, it's swell down here. It doesn't seem like the army but more like a college. The camp is beautiful and the buildings are very pretty. The buildings are all white stone with a red tile roof. I'll send some pictures of them later.

We got here last night at 8:00 and were on the train for about 52 hours. The trip was swell and I sure saw lots of country and sights. Came through South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Missouri and Oklahoma. I am only 30 miles from the Texas border. I guess I'll become a cowboy or an oil king.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

For dinner today we had chicken, mashed potatoes, green beans, peas, chicken gravy, sliced tongue, head lettuce and salad dressing, milk, coffee, hot rolls and butter. For dessert we had cake, fruit salad, and ice cream. Boy, was that a meal. If they keep that up I'm going to become pretty fat. The climate is real cool and sure makes you feel good. I about froze last night and am now wearing my winter underwear. They sure feel good, too.

I am in the radio specialists school and will be here for about two or three months. It's going to be lots of studying and I am really going to work. I know I can make good if I work and that's what I aim to do.

The country is very flat and you can see for miles. It's pretty, too, and looks like Indiana. We saw miles and miles of oil fields. I didn't know there were so many oil wells. Saw lots of Indians, too. In fact, that's about all we saw from Oklahoma City to Fort Sill. You can get a map and find out where I am at. The closest town is Lawton, only four miles from camp. I don't think I'll go in there very much because I am going to study in all my spare moments.

Give everybody my address and have everybody to write right away. When I get mail it helps a lot. I don't think I'll get home sick, though, because I'll be too busy.

Don't worry about me, Mom and Dad. I am on my way to something better now and I'll make good.

Take real good care of yourselves and I'll be seeing you before long.

I'll write real often and let you in on all the news and what I'm doing.

Lotta love.

Your wandering son,  
"The Oklahoma Kid,"

Conde.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, October 7, 1942]

### LETTER FROM FREDERICK R. GREER

Sept. 27, 1942

Camp Pickett, Va.

Dear Mother:

Received your letter was glad to hear from you. Got to see Robert before he left Richmond. He sure is a big boy. We had our picture taken together. As soon as they send them to me from the photo shop I'll send you one. I saw the proof of them it sure looked good. Robert was glad to see me. He was across the street when I hollered at him he knew who it was. The first thing he said was Fred. We had a good time. He had to go back out to the school at 12 o'clock. I got a room in the Hotel Richmond and what a room I got for \$.75. It had everything in it - two tables, a shower, washing sink so I could clean myself up before I went down town. Hope Georgia gets better than she is. Tell her that I said Hello. Hope she gets well again. Tell her that I'm sending you a picture of both of us boys in our uniforms, it will bring back sweet days when we were with you. Hope to get a furlough soon, then I will be able to see you again and all the rest of the folks. Sure hope it comes through soon. It has been raining the last two days and it is muddy here, hard to keep things dean. Well I will have to close for this time. Will send you Robert's and my picture as soon as I get them. So bye and answer soon.

Your son,

Frederick R. Greer

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, October 7, 1942]

### LETTER FROM CLEM E. BOWEN, JR.

Pvt. Clem E. Bowen, Jr.

561st T.S.S., Bks. 283,

Scott Field, Illinois.

October 1, 1942

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

## SvcMen WW II Letters

During my recent illness, which confined me to the hospital for 12 days, I received many, many cards and letters. Also some very pretty flowers. Since it is almost impossible to answer each and every one of them with a separate letter, I am writing this to express my appreciation for the thoughtfulness of everyone. It sure brightened every day to receive so many nice cards and letters.

I was released from the hospital on Monday, September 28th. I really wouldn't have been in that long, but the day I went in, one fellow broke out with the measles, so the whole ward was quarantined for 12 days. There were 22 of us in there.

I'm feeling fine now and am back on the regular schedule again. I had to drop back two classes in school in order to pick up what I missed, but that isn't bad at all.

Again may I say, thanks a million.

Pvt. Clem E. Bowen, Jr.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, October 7, 1942]

### SECOND LETTER FROM ROBERT GREER

Amphibous Training Group

N.O.B. Norfolk, Va.

Sept. 28, 1942

Dear Mom:

You are probably wondering what is wrong I haven't written. Well I have been transferred to the Naval operating base at Norfolk, Va. This is one place I don't like. I spent my last night in Richmond with Fred. We sure had a good time. He is in the army amphibous force. We have to haul them around in our invasion barges. I still like the Navy. I spend all of my spare time down at the pier watching the ships come in. I saw the Battleship Indiana this morning. Fred had some pictures taken of us together. He will send you some. We got beat out of our leave so I probably won't get home until the war is over. I don't want you to worry about me because I will be all right. I think invasion barges are the best part of the service. Tell Georgia and the kids I said hello and Bing too. Well I guess that is all until the next time.

Your son

Robert

Answer soon

Robert Greer

Amphibous Training Group

A-16 Drill Hall, N.O.B.

Norfolk, Va.

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, October 8, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JACOB A. MILLER, JR.

Oct. 4, 1942

St. Petersburg, Fla.

Dear Mother:

Say have I ever hit it lucky? We are stationed in the finest hotel in St. Petersburg. It is called the Vinay Park Hotel. Some name isn't it?

We left Ft. Benjamin at five o'clock Friday afternoon and arrived at St. Petersburg Sunday morning at ten-thirty. Was I ever surprised when I found out we were going to stay at a hotel!

We left Indiana and headed southward, went to Cincinnati. We knew then we were going southeast but not just where.

I saw some of the most beautiful scenery on the way down. We were in Chattanooga, Tenn. at seven Saturday morning and from there went to Atlanta, Ga. That's where I mailed your card, did you get it. All day Saturday, Saturday night and a short while Sunday a.m. we were traveling in Georgia, that's a lot larger state than I thought it was.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

The hotel in which we are staying overlooks the Gulf of Mexico. The palm trees are swaying in the breeze and the birds are singing. Boy! This is so swell I have to keep pinching myself to make me believe it is all true.

There are eight of us in each room. Separate beds. By the way I have a three-quarter bed and the rest are just regular army cots.

For dinner we had turkey, dressing, peas, mashed potatoes, gravy, rolls, bread, butter, coffee and lemonade. They really feed you in this man's army.

Did you receive the card I wrote you in Indianapolis? Oh, say I think I forgot to tell you I was in the Air Corps. Am I ever tickled pink? I wanted in this branch of the Service.

Say Mother will you send me the Sentinel? I'd like to see where some of the rest of the fellows went. I'm the only one down here from the gang that left the 29th. Eugene Koch is here, but I don't know where, he's in a different flight. If it comes out in the paper where the other fellows went and their addresses, send it to me.

Well can't think of much more at the present.

Love,

Jake

Pvt. Jacob A. Miller, Jr.  
386th S.S. A.A.F.R.T.C.  
St Petersburg, Florida

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, October 9, 1942]

### THIRD LETTER FROM ROBERT GREER

Bar. 19

U. S. Navy Amphibous Sch.

Solomons, Maryland

Oct. 2, 1942

Dear Dad:

I have just finished my first Atlantic cruise, and never got seasick. We have been transferred here at the Solomon Islands just off the tip of Maryland. I am in the Amphibous force or commandos. Some people call it the suicide squad but it isn't. All I have to do is to drive invasion barges. It is the best and safest outfit in the Navy. Ask Fred, he is in the same thing only he is with the Army.

I guess the government has forgotten about my leave but if they need me real bad I don't want to leave. I joined the Navy to see the world and get action and I sure am getting it. I still won't trade places with anyone in Rochester if they put me out in the Atlantic with a canoe and a popcorn machine. I got a fireman's second class rating when I finished school.

I was stationed at Norfolk, Va., for a while. I don't ever want to have anything to do with that town again. They don't like sailors in that place. They are teaching us signaling here, semaphor and blinker. Semaphor is with flags and blinker is with lights. I have seen the battleship Indiana and have been aboard the aircraft carrier Ranger. She sure is a big ship. I haven't had to do any manual labor since I have been in the navy. This is my third school and I have to go to another. I should know something about the Navy when I finish, huh?

Did Fred send you a picture of him and me? Well, I guess that's all for now. Write soon.

Your son,

Bob

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, October 9, 1942]

### LETTER FROM CMDR. HOWARD F. STONER

[Editor's Note: The following letter was received by Lisle Kriegbaum who several weeks ago sent Mr. Stoner a list of names and addresses of boys in service on sea and in foreign lands, and it is to this list that the following letter implies. Lt. Commander Howard F. Stoner is the son of Norman Stoner of this city. At present he is on the U.S.S. Gato, a submarine operating in the

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Pacific. His address is Lt. Comdr H. F. Stoner, U.S.N. U.S.S Gato, Fleet Post Office, San Francisco, Calif.]

U.S.S. Gato  
Sept. 15, 1942

Dear Lisle:

Thank you very much for your kindness as I do appreciate it all. We are seldom in, so hence my tardiness in replying. Since last December I have been seeing a bit of the world, all of which couldn't be traded to me for a small bit of Indiana right now or any other time. However, it has nearly all been through a periscope so maybe it isn't a very fair conclusion.

The clipping contains names and addresses which I should have had earlier as I would have enjoyed seeing at least a few people from around home and especially George Haimbaugh. It might be a good idea if such a list could be compiled periodically and sent out to each of us. What do you think? I know that I would like to have it.

My best wishes to everyone and many thanks to you.

Very sincerely,  
Howard F. Stoner

P.S. How are the basketball prospects? H.F.S.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, October 9, 1942]

### LETTER FROM ALBERT LEROY ESHELMAN

October 5, 1942  
Sebring, Fla.

Dear Folks:

All is well and I hope this line finds you all the same. As yet I haven't received the box but I imagine it is herein the field but haven't gotten around to it yet. Those pictures, that is, of home, sure were good and plain. Always glad to see a few pictures. Ed Vawter sent me a few post cards today of Rochester and the lake, so I pasted them to my "foot locker" lid with other pictures. I will soon have that space full. I have to quit for a while to attend a short meeting. Be back later.

Well, here I am again. It was nothing but a false alarm.

It sure is hot here right now. The mosquitoes are pretty bad of a night, but they don't worry me much. I imagine I will keep a couple of those pictures to help out on my foot locker lid. Some day I'll send the whole locker home. That is a long time off though, I suppose.

Poor Hitler - I feel so "sorry" for him. To think he can't have his own way. It's entirely too bad, isn't it? Uncle Sam is going to start a clock consisting of bombers and it is supposed to continue running until Germany gives up and once Germany surrenders so will Japan - I hope. Well, I haven't much to say so I guess I will write Frances a short letter.

So long,  
Leroy

Pfc. Albert Leroy Eshelman  
1039 Guard Squadron  
Hendricks Field

Sebring, Fla.

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, October 10, 1942]

### LETTER FROM ARCHIE B. CHANCE

(Better Known as Dale Vanata)

Somewhere in England  
September 13, 1942

Mr. L. V. Vanata  
Rochester, Ind.

Dear Folks:

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Arrived safely some time ago. Am well and happy. Have received three letters so far, two from hyou and one from Bill's. My A.P.O. has been changed and is now 875. I've been living in a tent ever since I got here.

Have a three day pass coming up in a few days and intend to see London, Shakespeare's home, and the Sherwood forest I read about when I was a kid. Expect to have a good time. Wouldn't you like to join me - or would you? The people here talk so funny and so darn fast you can hardly understand them. The girls here are very nice, however.

Received a letter today that was mailed August 1st. Have camera so will send some pictures later. Have only one roll of film (127-V film size). Please phone Stoner's that you've heard from me. Write.

Love,  
A. B. Chance.

Pfc. Archie B. Chance  
301st Bomb Group AAF  
419th Bombing Squadron (H) AAF  
A.P.O. 875  
c/o Postmaster, New York City.

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, October 10, 1942]

### SECOND LETTER FROM HARRY W. DAWSON

1 A-6 Camp Elliott  
U. S. Marines  
San Diego, California

Dearest Mom:

I thought I would drop everybody a line and let them know I am O.K. I was sorry to hear Uncle Bill died. I was sorry I couldn't get that leave. You can guess why. I guess it wouldn't be any different.

Harry Hogue will probably read this and I'm saying hello to him and family and all the rest of my friends. Well you sweat bad out here in daytime and at night if your out you freeze.

Don't worry about a Marine, because they care of themselves pretty good.

If you ever get a chance to see the picture "Iceland," well, that's our outfit, the 6th Marines. The ones who have the Thorshear around arm. Well haven't much to write we're still here, but just for a short time. Got the birthday cakes. One from Pat, and one from you. Thanks.

Love,  
Harry

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, October 10, 1942]

### LETTER FROM "BILL" SKIDMORE

Corp. W. T. Skidmore  
725th Ord. Co. AVN (AB)  
A.P.O. 922  
c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco, Calif.  
September 12, Australia

Dear Folks:

Well, here I am again. I am still Okay. No, my knee hasn't bothered me any more. How is everything at home? I have been working hard the last couple of weeks, but I don't think that will hurt me any. It is just like threshing or sweet corn jerking especially if Rube gets in a hurry for the corn. We have to work on Sunday mornings. We have some very hot volley ball games every afternoon. We have a couple of hours to eat and play in after we get off work. The days are getting longer down in this half of the world, you know.

I got a letter from Doctor King one day saying he was sending me a pipe and I got the pipe the next day. The pipe made me think of Mabel Greer's uncle. The one that runs around with the

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Kitchey's lid over his pipe. This one's got a lid on it. He said you come up and get your black medicine every so often, Dad. He said the Cubs were still burying old worn out players. I got a letter from Sis and Max but I haven't got the pipe yet. [?] I am looking for it every day. I also got a letter from Hank and Ruthie and Tommie's picture with his typical expression. He must be a fat little rascal. Lyle wrote me a letter. He said he believed he had worked out a way to keep people from seeing his cards, but he would have to wait and try it on me before he would be convinced it was perfect. Mom, I am sending a few pictures. They are not so hot, because we didn't know how far away to stand to take them. I will send more later, maybe they will be better.

Well, I will quit for this time. So long.

Love,  
Bill

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, October 12, 1942]

### LETTER FROM NORVAL BALL

Pvt. Norval Ball  
321st Bomb Sqd., A.P.O. 959  
c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco, Calif.

Dear Mother and Willodean:

I hope you are all well. We had a nice trip over here. We had picture shows and boxing matches on the boat. We also had a post exchange where we could buy whatever we wanted.

I am someplace in the Hawaiian Islands. We live in five-room cottages with nine to a cottage. We have all kinds of tropical trees and flowers including banana and avacado trees.

Some of the boys got real sick coming over. I didn't get so sick but it felt like I was drunk. I felt dizzy and light-headed.

You let Jim show this letter to Ross. Tell Jim and Bob to write. All my letters will sound the same but you write often and tell me all the news back home.

I went to the exchange to get a beer and while I was there I recognized a voice so after looking around I saw Bill Rouch. He was about as glad to see me as I was him. We sat there and talked about old times, then the next day he brought Crill over there and the three of us sure had a nice time them.

He took some pictures of us so if I can will send some home. They are the first boys I have run into since I've been in the army.

Too bad about Roy. How did he break his leg? I run into a boy from Indianapolis who knows Pop Martin.

I asked my boy friend if we could use some good home made candy and cookies and he said we could so you fix us up. Will wite later.

Norval.

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, October 12, 1942]

### LETTER FROM TOM WRIGHT

Pvt. Tom Wright, U.S. Army  
27th Troop Carrier Squadron,  
10th Troop Carrier Gr.,  
Pope Field  
Ft. Bragg, N.C.

Hello, Mom:

Well, Mom, we have been doing a lot of changing around here, but are finally lined up with our permanent company. After a lot of fooling around and sorting us over I came to the north side of the airfield with the 27th Squadron, and there are around 200 of us. Really I never expected to see such a fine bunch of officers and men as there is in this gang. Just like one large family. There are only two of us radio men, several engine mechanics, body men, and about 5 officers and 20 men, who just keep the camp clean. Our camp is in a small grove of nice large shade trees, and

## SvcMen WW II Letters

the ground is as clean as a pin. It's like being on a camping trip. We have only a few planes in yet, so we take it easy most of the time.

The bunch in Washington say now we will be moved again in three or four weeks to Texas for the winter, and boy, it sure costs them plenty to move these big outfits all the time. But I should worry, I am getting a big kick out of it all. May be I'll get to see the entire U.S.A. before it's over.

I'll get the letters you have written O.K. but they will be a day or two late, I suppose. But send them according to this address and I'll get them here allright. We have two mail deliveries daily and we will get better service from now on. We have swell beds, eats and get all our laundry hauled to town and done up nice for \$2.00 a month. I sent two summer suits, trousers and shirts, two suits of coveralls, socks and underwear this week. Had some wash, didn't I?

I have been hauling an officer all around over the camp in my spare time in a jeep, and boy it's fun driving one of them. He buys the cigars and we have a great time until we stop, and I have to wait. Then I hunt a shade tree, for these jeeps haven't any top, and this sun is sure hot.

The only thing we lack is newspapers. The papers around here are more like hand bills. We have two doctors, two dentists and a dandy little church, with the finest minister that preaches all Bible. That's one thing about the army, if they have only 20 men in a group they have a minister.

Now Mom, don't worry and be a good soldier, so I can be more proud of you than ever, if that could possibly be. And keep 'er in the middle of the road, for everything's bound to be O.K. for our good old U.S.A. And write often.

Your Son,  
Tom

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, October 14, 1942]

### LETTER FROM CHARLES MOW

I have been requested to write a letter for my friends in Rochester and vicinity. This, I will try to do with the best of my ability and with the information at hand. If I were permitted to narrate on my travels and experiences, there would be many interesting items to tell you. As it is, Uncle Sam believes that certain things should be censored for reasons quite obvious to all. Therefore, if the scissors have been applied, you will know I have elaborated on the information too greatly.

One thing I am allowed to tell is that I am in China. Definite location would be censored. The climate in this particular part of China is very agreeable. The past few days have been sunshiny, reminding of late Summer or early Fall in good ol' Rochester, Indiana.

Entertainment is scarce. I've been to the nearest city (name of which I can't disclose) very few times. Only one theater is in bounds for American personnel. The movies are quite old, (i.e. "Dodge City" just finished playing) but enjoyable when no others are available.

The Chinese people have been very friendly towards the American soldier. They seem to do everything possible for our benefit.

As you probably know, China is only the latter of the countties I have visited. In regards to the former ones, I am not able to reveal, because of reasons mentioned before. My mother will be happy to answer all of your questions, if she has received the knowledge previously.

I have received many letters and greetings from different friends in the vicinity of Rochester. My intentions are to write each and everyone a personal letter of gratitude. If I have overlooked any, please excuse me. To compensate for my errors, I wish to take this opportunity to thank all.

In reference to my present duties, I can say that I am doing office work. I am clerk for the MAN who appears on the left side of a page in August 10 Life Magazine. He was born in Carolina. I could not desire a more respectable, pleasant superior to perform my duties under than him. Can you guess this riddle?

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I am in excellent health. I trust that all who read this one line are the same.

I wish to extend my heartiest greetings. Trusting we will meet again in the near future and that we will not be bothered by war clouds hanging overhead to disturb our peace and happiness.

Sincerely,  
Charles Mow

Sgt. Charles Mow 351631 35  
11th Bombardment Squadron  
A.P.O. 627. c/o Postmaster  
New York City.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, October 14, 1942]

### LETTER FROM EVERETT R. BASS

U.S.S. Colorado  
Box 33

Dear Sir:

Just received your letter about an hour ago, and found time to write. That was really a grand letter you wrote. I surely appreciated it, and that was a good idea to send the newspaper clippings. Please continue to send them.

That was quite a letter Charlie Mow wrote home. I can understand it easily. He spoke of censorship. His letter compared to ours wasn't censored at all. You know it is vitally important that we conceal all the information about our ship and our daily actions, as it could mean the destruction of our entire ship and crew. So I'm sorry, but I can't even tell you at what time of day we eat. It wouldn't be so good to be disturbed at lunch some day.

Things are going fine with me, and I surely hope the same goes for you. I guess Bill is working in South Bend. I hope he is contented.

Bob Reed is really doing a fine job. The last I heard from him (3 months ago) he was still in training for Aviation Radioman. But I'm now certain when he gets in active duty, he will be a machine gunner, as well. I'm sure he was aware of this fact all along, but didn't care about mentioning it for his mother's sake. He is a brave fellow, and I surely hope he has the best of luck, when he comes to our front, and I do think he will probably come out here, as most of them do.

Give Lucille and Dennis my best regards when you write to them.

I guess I'll close now, and hope to hear from you real soon, although it took 34 days for your last letter to reach me. Give the Keplers my best regards and tell Wanet to drop me a line if she has time.

How about some more news?"

Love,  
Cap.

Everett R. Bass, Seaman 1/C, U.S.N.,  
U.S.S. Colorado, Box 33  
San Francisco, California  
c/o Fleet Postmaster

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, October 15, 1942]

### LETTER FROM HAROLD L. MILLER

October 14, 1942

Dearest Folks:

I received your card today and sure was glad you arrived home allright. I did the same as I told you in my letter of yesterday.

We didn't do much today but I am tired anyway. The first thing this morning we stood reveille and then ate chow. After we were through we made up our bunks and cleaned the barracks which takes about half an hour. We then fell out for police call. In other words we police the grounds and pick up all paper, matches, etc. It is then about 7:30 so we immediately go

## SvcMen WW II Letters

out for calisthenics. All we did in them this morning was practice calling starting positions such as from the position of attention, hands on hips, hands on shoulders, etc. We finished this at 8 o'clock and then drilled for an hour on right and left turns. We are to have a retreat parade this coming Thursday so we had to practice a little and don't think we didn't need it, too. We were rotten at it for the first three or four times but then we improved somewhat.

We then went to classes for the rest of the forenoon. One was a test on organization and function of the army. The other on bandages and dressings. They weren't so tough anyone should have made a good score on them.

The first thing in the afternoon we had a class on disposal of waste materiel on the field which is very important. More diseases and deaths are caused on the field from waste material than by bullets. It was proven so in the World War so we are trying to prevent that and it is up to the medical corps to do it.

The rest of the afternoon was spent out in the woods practicing as though we were on the field and had some wounded soldiers to bring back to the aid stations. I happened to be one of the patients and rode on a litter or stretcher as we knew them at home.

After we were through with this we came back to the company area and stood retreat. We were then through for the day. There you have again the daily happenings of a medical soldier in camp.

It sure did seem good to get home and I am going to come home every chance I get but I'm not coming the same route as I did last Saturday. It takes too long that way.

Well, I must close for now as it is almost time for lights out. Thanks again for the fine week-end and I hope to see you and hear from you soon.

Your loving son,  
Harold

Address Pvt. Harold L. Miller  
Co. No. 1, 6th Div. Tng. Reg.  
Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo.  
U.S.A.  
[The News-Sentinel, Friday, October 16, 1942]

LETTER FROM DAVID A. WILSON  
Glendale, Calif.  
Oct. 7, 1942

Dear Mother:

I received your letter this evening and was very glad to hear from you again. I am feeling fine now. I hope this finds you the same.

We are having very good weather out here, there hasn't been any rain here since I arrived at this school and I have been here 9 weeks this coming Monday. We only have rain here from Jan. to March, so I don't suppose I will see any rain while I am here as my school is ended by the 17th of Dec. Then we go to an airplane factory where we get from 4 to 6 weeks more schooling. Then we are supposed to be able to inspect and maintain these airplanes where our permanent base is at.

We we have 11 phases of 10 days each and I am just finishing up my 5th phase and will start on the 6th phase Friday afternoon. The phase I am now in is instruments. We have to learn all the principal parts, hook-ups, inspection of each one of which there are from 12 to 20 different inspections of each one of the 31 instruments. We are expected to learn all of this in 10 days or 30 hours. I have given you just a slight hint on what we are supposed to learn in this place.

Well I am doing pretty good. I am one of the average, and that is a grade of 88.

We alternate in our phases. One phase we take in the morning class and the next the afternoon class and so on. In the morning we get up at 4 o'clock, have breakfast at 4:30, then come back to our barracks and sweep and mop the floors, make up our bunks, of which are almost all innerspring mattresses. At 5:30 we fall out for formation and roll call and then march to school which is over a mile from our barracks. At 10 o'clock we come back here for lunch and back to school at 11 o'clock and off at 3 o'clock. From 3:15 to 4 is calisthenics, 4:00 to 4:30 is supper.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Then a shower and clean-up the barracks and after that is study period unless we want to go to town which we are permitted to do only on Wed. night when we have a boxing match and every soldier must attend.

The morning classes get off school at 3:45 Saturday afternoon and the rest of the week including Sunday until Sunday evening at 9:30 bed check. Most of the boys go in to Hollywood or Los Angeles, Calif. to the shows and other places and there are a lot of interesting places out here to see. I go to shows and U.S.O. clubs mostly. The U.S.O. clubs are heaven for the average soldier out here. The people are real nice. Everything is free. There is one especially to go to almost every Sunday evening and it is on Riverside Drive. They serve supper every Sunday evening to around 40 soldiers. We have sandwiches, coffee, salads, all the cake we want, pie. Then they have some sports, dancing, music and cigarettes and candy. Well so much for that.

There are very few boys out here that are from Indiana. My buddie is from Ohio. We run around quite a lot together. We were to Long Beach last Sunday. Boy that sure is a swell place. We left here Saturday afternoon and stayed at one of the largest hotels in Los Angeles Saturday night so we could get an early start for Long Beach Sunday morn.

This coming Sunday my buddie and I are going to Hollywood and take in some of the scenery and maybe meet some movie stars. I have met two since I have been here.

Well I guess I had better close for this time and get ready for the boxing match. We have to wear our O.D. suits or winter clothes although it is too hot here for them. We would like to go in our BVD's if they would let us but the Army order is O.D. after Oct. 1, so I guess we will wear them and smother.

Answer soon as I enjoy hearing from you. We soldiers look forward to getting letters from friends and folks back home.

With love, your son,  
David

My address:

Pvt. David A. Wilson  
Class I.M. T-43  
HDQTS Training DTCH  
Army Hdqts Tech Training Com  
Curtiss-Wright Tech Institute  
400 N. Paula Street  
Glendale, Calif.  
[The News-Sentinel, Friday, October 16, 1942]

### LETTER FROM HOWARD SHERBONDY

Sept. 29, 1942

Ed Vawter  
Rochester, Indiana  
Dear Ed:

I want you to know how much I appreciate your kind letter of Sept. 1st. It surely is nice of you fellows in the Rochester lodge to write to us boys in the service.

You were right when you said that we always welcome a letter from home. It helps break the monotony of our duties and lets us know that we are being thought of back home. All this helps us to go at our chores more vigorously after getting a letter from home.

My Mother writes to me almost twice a week and I get The News-Sentinel too. So I am pretty well posted on things back home. It seems to me that no matter how much I hear I always have room for more and the more letters I get the better.

Military censorship handicaps writing a letter from a theatre of operations, therefore I can't say much now but will have a lot to tell about after the war.

I am a truck driver in this anti-tank Co. An anti-tank Co. is a mechanized unit and has quite a number of trucks. I drive the maintenance truck, hauling the mechanics and their tools and equipment.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

The people on this island are, by a big majority Japs. They are quite friendly and treat us well. They set up several U.S.O. Clubs around here. Each one is centrally located to accommodate all the soldiers who are scattered here and there. They have dances and programs for us and altogether we think they treat us pretty swell.

That big 39 lb. watermelon you talked about made my mouth water because I know how extra good those Indiana watermelons are.

We have good eats and plenty of them. I know a lot of fellows who can't stand pineapple juice anymore, and I'm one of them. We've had so much of it.

I guess I'll have to close this time I can't think of anything else to say.

I'm enclosing a couple snapshots taken of me, one is in work clothes and the other is my sun-tan uniform.

Thank you very much for your letter, Ed, and don't forget I sure like to hear from home town folks.

Your friend,

Howard Sherbondy

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, October 16, 1942]

### LETTER FROM EDWARD WIDEMAN

Camp Claiborne, La.

Oct. 10, 1942

Dear Marjorie:

I have had so many letters to answer since I have moved that I have just about forgot you.

I didn't have anything to do this afternoon so I thought I had better drop you a few lines to let you know I was O.K., hoping you are the same.

I am in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, now one of the largest camps in the United States. Here are the names of two of our officers: Major Jack and Captain Klimp. Everybody goes by their last name. I don't know their first name.

I like my new home just fine. It is not as hot and damp here as it was down in Louisiana. We had a long train ride coming up here and saw lots of negroes picking cotton on the trip. We re going out on the range Monday to see how good we can shoot our rifle. We was on a parade this forenoon. Some big shot was down here so we had to put on a parade. This is all I can think of now so I guess I will sign off until the next time.

Your Uncle,

Sgt. Edward Wideman

Battery B, 80th A.B.A.A. Bn.,

82nd A.B. Div.

Fort Bragg, North Carolina

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, October 16, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JEAN WALBURN

U. S. Army Air Corps

Columbia, S.C.

Oct. 11, 1942

Dear Dad and Mom:

Please excuse my not writing yesterday, but my schedule was full from 6 in the morning until 2 this afternoon. This is one busy place. Instructors get one day off every 12 days, and student gunners get no days off.

The only way I knew it was Sunday is that we had chicken for dinner. I got gyped on the chicken though - had a drumstick, thigh, wing, and a breast. By the way, Mom, did you slip down here and fry that chicken? It tasted very similar to your cooking. In other words it was delicious. Of course, we had other things, too.

It's 5 o'clock and we have been kept busy since 6 o'clock this morning. Now I have a few hours to clean up, eat, and relax, then at 10 this evening have to go back to work for 2 hours. I'll

## SvcMen WW II Letters

get to bed about 1 in the morning and at 6, away we go again. So far, it's been that way every day. Last night I took a little hop in one of our bombers. We went to Savannah, Ga. and back. We got a little off the course and it took us 4 hours.

We have medium bombers here. Next to the B-17, I'd rather fly in them. There are other reasons why I'd rather be in one of our ships, but you know the old rule about military secrecy.

Next week some of us will go to the firing ranges and practice on the ships. I'm looking forward to that as it will be as near to combat flying as we can get in this country.

### Bond Money Doing Good

Anyone who thinks that their bond money is being wasted should be able to visit here and see just how we operate. Instruction is going on 24 hours a day, and 7 days a week. Of course, there are some critics who would like to squeeze in another day in the week so we would have to work more, but anyone with the least bit of tolerance could see that the sacrifices that they have to make are being used at the best advantage.

I went into town one night, but don't see now, if I'll ever be able to go again. All spare time is taken up by sleep, or one just can't stand up under the strain.

Don't think we're being driven like slaves, 'cause we're not. In fact if you asked the boys how they like it, the most of them would say that it's swell, or if they were nearer home they wouldn't trade their job for any other. I think the reason for that is that most of us are doing the jobs that we chose. The Army seldom puts a man at a job he doesn't like.

### Warns Against Rumors

By the way, be awful careful about rumors. There are more wild tales going around than one can remember, but just remember, only one thing - most of them are false or have been told in the wrong attitude. There are ships that crack up here in this country. Some have here at this field, but you will have to remember that there are several thousand men here, and probably, according to percentage, more of the men would have been killed in civilian life than here. Our officers always watch out for unsafe practices and when such practices are found they are eliminated or rectified. The Army is very severe on anyone who violates rules of safety. Anyone who abides by the safety precautions, I believe, is in less danger than if he were in civilian life. For instance, there is as much traffic on these post roads as there is in many towns, and I have yet to see or hear of an accident. These men are trained and whatever job they have they are trained to the best knowledge that science knows today.

Oh, I almost forgot the Remington Firearms Company put on a free exhibition for us gunners today. They demonstrated rifles, shotguns, and pistols. It was very interesting. They threw up oranges, potatoes, and cabbage to show how different shells affected the target. Some of the smaller arms put only a hole through the targets, while the larger guns just shredded the cabbage into fine bits - like cole slaw. We also learned a few pointers that will help us soon. But we don't talk much about those things, except in classes.

If you see a soldier on the street please don't snub him - treat him as if he were one of my friends. After all he is one of my buddies. We have had quite a good showing, recently, in the differences that the attitude of the civilians have. In moving from one town to another, we could see a marked difference in the morale of the soldiers, just because the civilians treated us well in one place and in the other place we weren't accepted. Augusta, Ga., is the nicest place I've ever been to. The people there asked us in their homes for parties, etc. Don't think we soldiers won't remember that. And when we come back we will want to help them as much as we can.

Another thing too. Why is it that only the bad tales spread? I know that there are some of us that do things that we shouldn't, but just remember that those men, if they were at their own homes, would probably be doing the same things. Possibly you have heard that the soldiers drink entirely too much. Maybe, but you still have to prove to me that there is more drunkenness in Army life. While I was at Augusta I didn't see one soldier who couldn't walk under his own power, or even one who acted intoxicated. Oh, we all aren't angels, but neither have we gone to the dogs just because we are now wearing the Army uniforms.

It's later than I thought. Will have to close and go to chow. No one skips a meal here - food is too good.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Your son,  
Sgt. Jean Walburn  
309th Bomb Group  
377th Bomb Sq.  
Columbia, S.C.

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, October 17, 1942]

### LETTER FROM KENNETH BRUBAKER

Island of Tulagi  
Solomon Islands  
August 25, 1942

Dear Mom, Dad and All:

Hi, there, well here it is more than two months since I have written. I suppose you wonder what has happened to me. I have been pretty busy since the last of June. We have been in (censored) since we left the good old U.S.A., but if you have read the papers and listened to the radio you probably remember the island of Tulagi in the Solomon Islands. Our outfit was (censored) now based here. I haven't received a letter since about the 20th of June. No one in this outfit has, so I am not the only one who is kicking. We have seen battle though, so we are now veterans.

Has Devern left the states yet? I sure hope not, although I don't believe he will see any action if he does. From what I have seen so far the Marines take islands and then the Army moves in to defend them. I sure miss everyone. I suppose you have practically finished the fall harvest? Roy, I sure wish I had been home to help do it. It will soon be time for school to start and winter will soon be starting. Well I don't know who is crazy but it is now spring here and it will soon be summer time here. As hot as it is now and has been all winter, I sure hate to see summer come.

There is nothing more that I can say, only I am happy to be alive and really think that God had his arm around us all through this. So take care of yourselves and I still think I will be home before long. So keep your chin up and I will try to do the same and hope to see you all real soon. With love to all.

Kenny

P.S. - Give Marge and Don the dope and tell them that due to the situation I haven't time to write everyone. Also write Devern and tell him I am safe and well if he hits the Solomon Islands to look me up. Tell them I will write as soon as possible. I almost forgot to tell you the Marine Corps gave me a birthday present. On the first of July I got my first warrant which gave me the first step up the long ladder. I was made a PFC. (Private First Class).

Say, has Jean received her money yet. I sure hope so. Tell her to be good and I'll be home soon.

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, October 19, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JAMES LOWMAN

United States Army Air Force  
Grand Hotel Barracks  
Santa Monica, California

Dear Folks:

I have really been assigned to a squadron and I may have a permanent address for a while.

My new address is Box A, Oakland Municipal Airport, Oakland, California.

I am trying to get a furlough but I don't know what kind of luck I will have.

How is evryone back home? I am feeling fine and working hard every day. I am working in engineering and I like it very much. I have a swell boss and we get along fine.

Well I will close now and get some sleep, kbecause I have to work nights this week.

James Lowman

[James is the grandson of Mrs. Grant Lowman.]

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, October 20, 1942]

## SvcMen WW II Letters

### LETTER FROM VICTOR HOOVER

Oct. 13, 1942

Dear Mom:

I suppose you have been looking for a letter from me every day. Boy! Have the last five days been something. I've been through everything unpleasant I can imagine.

We got to this Hole last Friday at 2 in the morning after being on the train all day. It is so dark and so enormous that we couldn't find where we were to go and no one who could tell us. We finally landed in an area where we convinced the Charge of Quarters to put us up for the night. He put us in all the empty beds he could find including his which I slept in. The next morning they moved us to an outfit they call a Casual Detachment. That was the worst - we hadn't been there half an hour till the whole bunch were on K.P. The place was almost like Camp Grant - that is they held us there till we were interviewed and a place found for us. They bring fellows - privates just in the army to top sergeants - and kick them around from one department of the army to another with no regard to their training, if they don't kick about it. This is a new outfit - I'm in the 3rd Division - two have been trained - and it is a tough outfit - we are in the same class as the famous Commandos you hear so much about. I don't like it in the least and am going to try to get out of it and back to Aviation Ordinance. I don't know whether I can do it or not but I'm sure going to try.

This place has about 85,000 men in it and more coming in all the time. There are barracks as far as I can see in any direction. We have a parade ground 1 mile square and there are barracks 4 deep all the way around and they are only about 50 feet apart. Only about half of them seem to be filled but they have thousands of men living in tents and on islands along the Cape - incidentally the camp is on Cape Cod in Massachusetts about 60 miles from Providence, R.I. and 70 miles from Boston, Mass.

The whole outfit is supposed to move to Florida and Georgia for the winter because they can't do much training up here with everything frozen, and I guess it really freezes here, too.

This outfit is made up of the actual Commandos and all the men who service them - guns, tanks, trucks and the thousand and one other things it takes. Everyone has to learn to swim so you can see about what it will be.

Frances is still in Aberdeen and when I called her Saturday evening I was going to have her go home but we finally got moved to an outfit where I can get a pass even though nothing but a week-end pass is any good because it is 3 miles from here to the gate and an evening pass would give me just enough time to get out and back again.

I asked her if she wanted to come up here and of course she will. It won't be for long though. I may get to some place that will be worse later on and not be able to see her at all.

Well it is almost time to turn out the lights so I'd better quit.

You can write to me -

Pvt. Victor Hoover  
163rd Engineers Amphibian Brigade  
Camp Edwards, Massachusetts

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, October 20, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JAMES NIXON

Oct. 12, 1942

Dear Mom:

Taking a little time off to let you know everything is going along O.K. It is drizzling rain outside now and has been all day long and it looks like it was going to keep it up all day tomorrow. I hope it does because we can get a little rest as we can use it. Have been working day and night getting everything straightened up. Worked every night last week 'til 10 or 11 o'clock and it was rather tough getting up at 5:30 in the morning; I didn't do anything yesterday but sleep. We had a division parade and review Saturday a.m. and then got off at noon. I don't think there were 20 fellows in the company who left the place. We spent Saturday afternoon cleaning up our

## SvcMen WW II Letters

own equipment and straightening up our foot-lockers. I carry a Tompson sub-machine gun all the time now and they are quite a job to clean. I had never had mine apart in the 4 weeks I have had it so it took me about all afternoon to clean it and get it back together right. We are going on the range in a week or so but I don't know whether I'll shoot it or one of the new carbines that the rest of the men carry. They are awfully small and light but they claim they are the most deadly weapon that has been invented for soldiers yet. I went to bed Saturday night at 8:00 and didn't get up 'til 11:00 o'clock Sunday morning. And believe it or not, I slept very nearly all the time, in fact, only woke up once and that was about 5:30 in the morning. I and three other squad leaders have a room to ourselves so it makes it a lot nicer than we have ever had it before.

Things have changed quite a bit since we arrived here. We have really begun to soldier here and there is not much fooling around. The men have all become more serious and they are all trying to learn as much as they can about self-protection. We have begun to act like a well trained bunch who have suddenly realized this is a pretty serious business we are in. Our training has become tougher and we are now taking the same conditioning that they give the parachute troops at Fort Benning, Ga. We went out the other day and hiked 8 miles in 1 hour and 45 minutes. And that is really traveling, especially with a 64 pound pack and a gun that weighs 14 pounds. Last Thursday we went out and started double timing (running at a dog trot or a little faster) as soon as we were out of the company area. They let us go 'til we got ready to stop or had to and no one stopped for 2 1/2 miles. I and 6 other fellows ran the full trip which was 4 3/4 miles and only 1 officer out of 10 finished with us. It took us exactly 47 1/2 to make the 4 3/4 miles, so you can see we kept moving. Everyone has to be able to make 2 miles in 2 hours with a full pack by this coming Thursday.

We got 70 new recruits a week ago yesterday and they were all from New York City or Brooklyn. They had just been inducted on Wednesday before so you can imagine what they were like. We started training them, 3 other fellows and myself, and they are about to drive me nuts. I thought I was dumb when I came in but these guys beat anything that ever came out of the mid-west. I have to almost learn to speak Dago and Yiddish to be able to talk to them. We have about 12 men in the bunch that can't read English at all. They talk their native lingo when they are at ease out on the drill field and I can't tell whether they are talking about me or not so I just get tough and raise hell with them to be sure I am at least getting half way even. At the end of the first day's drill we marched them from the field to the barracks and I stopped them in front of their barracks. We had been pretty tough (talking) with them that day and I asked them if they thought they could remember me and fall out when they heard me yelling for them the next day. One fellow piped up in a very tired and mournful voice and said, "How can I ever forget you?" I don't think anyone could have kept a straight face if they had wanted to - the company commander couldn't keep from laughing. Everyone heard about it - that is the older men - and they have been ribbing me plenty ever since, but I'm getting along with the new ones O.K. now so I guess they don't let me worry them too much.

Well, I guess that is about all for this time. I am sending a clipping out of the Charlotte, N.C. paper. I am also sending one of the insignia that we wear on the left sleeve of all of our uniforms. This is the division insignia of the 82nd division. Billy will probably think it is pretty as it is red so if he want to, why let him wear it as I have 3 or 4 extra ones and I think I can get some more if you want one of them. Well, so long and will write again the end of the week when I hope to have a little time to spare.

Jim

Corp. James Nixon, 35116734  
Co. A 307 Airborne Engineers Bn.  
82nd Airborne Division,  
Fort Bragg, N.C.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, October 20, 1942]

SECOND LETTER FROM EMMETT MEEK  
PRIVATE EMMETT MEEK SEES PLENTY OF ACTION

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Private Emmett Meek, 24, son of Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Meek, 510 Clay street, has seen plenty of action during the last 30 days, according to a recent letter received by his parents.

Private Meek has just returned from Guadalcanal where he was stationed for 30 days with the Marines, and is now in the U. S. Naval Hospital at San Diego, with an eye disease known as choroiditis.

Mr. Meek attended high school in New Castle and moved to Rochester with his parents after his graduation. He was employed here by the Metal Products Company until February 10, 1942, when he enlisted in the Marines at Indianapolis.

From Indianapolis he was first sent to Paris Island Camp, in South Carolina. After he had completed his training there he was sent on maneuvers to New York. From New York he went south again to New River Camp in North Carolina. After spending a short time in North Carolina, Meek was sent to San Francisco, and was shipped from there to the Solomon Islands and remained there from May, until October.

The following letter was written to his parents from the hospital in San Diego:

“Dear Mother:

“How are you? Fine I hope.

“I was at Guadalcanal for 30 days, one of the marines who took the island from the Japs. It wasn't fun when we first landed but we had fun after that. We found out that they were yellow in more ways than one.

“One time we lost 38 men and the enemy lost 1,200. That was a bloody day. That fight lasted 12 hours.

“I'm well except for my left eye. I have choroiditis. I can see a little out of it and it doesn't hurt. I think I can come home for 30 days.

“Please send my mail to:

“Private Emmett Meek

“U. S. Naval Hospital, Ward E-1

“San Diego, Calif.

“Give my love to all,

“Your son,

“Emmett”

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, October 22, 1942]

### LETTER FROM HUGH D. WILSON

Bertha Wilson has just received the following letter from her brother who is stationed at Camp Atterbury, Indiana:

Sunday, October 18, 1942

Dear Sis:

Here it is Sunday again and not much of anything around to make it seem like Sunday except for no work, a few visitors and soldiers going to church. Seems funny not to eat a big Sunday dinner then go to see Lollie for the afternoon. We haven't been doing very strenuous work this past week. We saw a lot of picture films on Army training pertaining to our branch of the service. We also took a five mile hike last Friday. To tell the truth about it, I really enjoyed it. I had heard so much about hikes being hard on a soldier before I came into the Army, but the officers in charge make sure our feet are in good shape before we go on a hike. Everyone that went with us came through in fine shape. Hugh Umbagh, Kenneth Nelson and Herbert Ballenger, all from Rochester, were in on the hike too. Umbaugh, Nelson and I being in the same company, helps to keep us from getting homesick. We have a lot of fun here. We get up at 6:00 o'clock every morning except Sunday. We fall out (Army term for assemble) for reveille at 6:05. We breakfast at 6:30 and at 7:00 our day starts off with the morning exercises topped off with the obstacle course. About 8:00 o'clock we have drill, and so on through the day with various things until 5:00 o'clock p.m. when we stand retreat and another day is finished. The best part of the day is mail call at 12:00 noon and 6:00 at night. We are quarantined to the company area for the first two weeks. That's done just in case some contagious disease would break out. It will be lifted

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Tuesday. We are allowed to go to shows now as our regiment has its own theatre and post exchange where we can buy toilet articles, pop, candy, magazines and other gifts if we want them. Beer is sold there too, but that doesn't bother me as I don't indulge. The theatre here puts on good shows and they are pretty well attended. The food we get here is good considering that this is a new camp and things aren't fully organized yet. It gets better all the time.

Our basic training starts tomorrow and lasts for 18 weeks. I am hoping to get home a few times while I'm here as we will probably be shipped out to some other part of the country as soon as our basic training is finished. Must close now as I have more writing to do, and this is my day to get caught up.

Love,  
Brother

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, October 22, 1942]

### THIRD LETTER FROM ALBERT SWANSON

September 17, 1942

Australia

Dear Mom and All:

I received your two letters written on July 30 and August 4. I was very glad to hear from you. I also got one from Ruby and from Mrs. Hudgin of Virginia. She said it was very hot there. It sure is hot here. Don't know what it will be like this summer.

I haven't got the box yet that you sent me for my birthday. But I hope I will get it before long.

You ask if I've seen Elmer Walker. Yes, I've just been talking to him. He said he has been writing to his folks.

We get \$10 more for being overseas, so that makes me \$80 a month. You said that Pop has been over in Australia. That is the first time I knew that.

Well, I will close as I have no more space to write on.

Love,  
Your son,  
Pvt. Albert Swanson  
A.S.N. 35164088  
Bt. B, 94th C.A.A.A.,  
A.P.O. 922, c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco, Calif.

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, October 22, 1942]

### LETTER FROM H. H. BASS

September 16, 1942

Dear Jessie:

I just received that letter of yours that you wrote to me July 30th. The mail is very slow over here it seems to get tied up some places for quite awhile. I don't know much to write except that I got here the 10th of last month. We get paid here the 1st and 15th of each month. There isn't anything to spend it for except rations. We're allowed 7 packs of cigarettes a week, 3 bars of candy, 1 pack of gum and we used to get fruit juices, but they cut that out now. We get good food here, but they have plenty of work for us so we need it. I'm most generally so tired at night that I don't feel much like writing letters. It rains here lots and I've got to be careful of that rheumatism. It hasn't bothered me yet and I hope that it doesn't. You can tell Gram Gleason that I am over in her country. Ask her if she knows anyone in Belfast. If she does, send me their address and maybe I can look them up. I guess they took Johnny in the Army, didn't they? I don't imagine that he minded it though, did he? How is Roy? Did he go to the Army? Tell Helen and him "Hello." Say you see about our trailer for us will you. Mary says that she hasn't received any money from it yet. Find out how long they've lived in there and ask Bill if he got the rent. If they don't pay it, you have it moved to Grandad Reed's. Tell Big Bob "Hello" will you?

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I haven't ever heard from Cap yet. I guess he is still O.K. though. I wish I could hear from all of you more. I really appreciate those letters. It is sure lonesome here.

If I stay here for another 6 months I will write you out a check and I want you to buy Mary a fur Chubby for Christmas and send it to her. I can't get her anything nice over here. You'll have to excuse this writing but I have to write on my knee. There is 21 of us in one hut here. We have swell beds but they're plenty close together. I'm glad you like your job. You might as well get in one of those defense jobs though if they pay more. Now is the time to make the money if we can. You take care of that trailer will you and see how much it will cost me for a Chubby for Mary and something nice for Shorty. Eileen will expect something. I don't know what she expects. Write soon. Tell Bill "Hello." Tell Grandad that things are quiet here. Tell Brick to be careful.

As Ever,  
Doc

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, October 23, 1942]

### LETTER FROM HAROLD NIGHTLINGER

Saturday Evening

Dear Parents:

You may now address me as an "old salt." I have just completed three days of sea. Guess where we went. Key West. We anchored just off the keys, stayed there a couple of hours and started back. The keys are sure pretty. White beaches, deep green trees, blue sky, and a light bluish green sea. It's really pretty. We didn't land, though. Was just up on deck to see how we're coming along. We're just turning into St. Pete. There's a big school of porpoises playing around the bow of the ship. They look like a shark but they're the shark's worst enemy. They can't stay under so very long. They breathe air - not water. They're also man's best fish friend. They've been known to push shipwrecked men ashore. They come up (sometimes just half out of the water, and sometimes they jump clear out) and go down, come up and go down. It's fun to watch them.

You know what I'm looking forward to now? Mail call! If your box isn't here I'm going to reorganize the whole postal system.

We saw a convoy down there too. Five ships and a couple of corvettes for escorts. We had a couple of C.G. small patrol boats as our escort. They're fast and carry depth charges.

Well, time to dress for liberty. So long.

Your son,

Harold Jan Nightlinger

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, October 23, 1942]

### LETTER FROM LEMUEL H. FLYNN

Fort McClellan, Ala.

October 22, 1942

Dear Mother and Son:

I'll drop you a few lines to let you know that I am still among the living and feeling fine. Inclosed you'll find a money order for \$10.00 for your own use. Willis said he was going to send me some things. If he is not up by the time you get this letter send me my arch supports and a soldier's sewing kit with the regular buttons in it. The rest is yours. You will get some more money from the government between the 1st and 5th of November, that is for your allotment. Willie said he would have written long ago. He only received one of my cards. That must have been the one I wrote when I was down at Fort Benj. He said he would send me some cigarettes and writing paper. Dewayne said he would get me a pen and pencil set. I got a letter from Willie

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Wednesday that he, Mary, and Dewayne wrote. Don't you let any of my steel traps go. I hear you have another restaurant down below. I got a letter from Glen Squires today. I got a letter from Bee White Sunday. It keeps me busy writing but I don't mind it. I have written four letters this week so far.

I got a letter from Betty Sutton, Mom, she said she saw you and John every day. She is working at Topps Garment factory. I got the sunglasses and the other things Tuesday. The rubber don't fit the pen - too big. Don't send me any more rubbers for my pen as Dewayne said he would send me a pen and pencil set. Have the Sentinel sent to me for six weeks. Have it sent to my address down here. When I leave here I will drop you a line and let you know where to send it to. I hope they send me to a camp in Indiana so I can come home on the week-ends. If they don't I'll try to get to come home at Christmas or New Year's. When you eat that chicken let Bruno sit in my chair and eat a piece for me. Has John been called up yet for the draft? Let me know. Tell him if he has to go to do as they tell him to do and he will get along alright. I hope he don't have to go. It looks like they ought to let one of us stay at home to look after you.

Well, news is getting scarce so will ring off. From your loving son and brother,

Lemuel H. Flynn

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, October 27, 1942]

### LETTER FROM GERALD W. REESE

October 23, 1942

Dear Mother

You ask me to write something for the paper, so here goes:

I'm writing you this short letter,

And your word is true,

Don't look away, Draft Dodgers,

For it is addressed to you.

You feel at ease and in no danger,

Back in the old home town,

You cooked up some pitiful story,

So that the Draft Board turned you down.

You never think of real men,

Who leave there day by day,

You just think of their girl friend

Who you'll get while they're away.

You sit at home and read your paper,

You jump and say "We'll win."

Just where do you get that "we" stuff?

This war will be won by men.

Just what do you think, Draft Dodgers,

That this free nation would do

If all the men were slackers

And a scared to fight like you?

Well, I guess that's all, Mr. Slacker,

I suppose your face is red.

America's no place for your kind,

And I mean every word I've said.

So I'm closing this letter, Draft Dodger,

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Just remember what I say,  
Stay away from my girl friend, you dirty bum,  
For I will be back some day.

How is everybody and everything at home? Are the tires still up on the car? Has Gene wrecked your car yet?

Send me my suit case and five or six coat hangers, please. We were building bridges today and I still like the army. I am in a good bunch of men and officers. I think I will soon be driving for a lieutenant. Tell Gene not to worry about the army for it is a great life. We didn't have much to eat the first two weeks but sure have plenty now and get plenty of sleep. We took a ten mile hike last Friday. Some of the boys were all in but I came in on high.

I went to the theatre last night. Saw "Flying Tigers" and was it good? Oh, Boy. We heard an awful explosion. It shook the theatre and shook bottles off the trvern wall.

Got a letter from Carlos and he thinks he is going across soon and wants me to come and see him but I guess I can't make it. Also got a letter from Tommy R. and he says he is in the army now. Just home on his 14-day furlough.

I had better go to bed so Goodnight, Mom.

Your son,  
Wayne Reese.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, October 27, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JACK KOFRON

Oct. 28th.

To My Friends in Rochester:

Words cannot express how much I have appreciated the thoughtfulness of all my friends on my birthday in the armed forces. As it would be impossible for me to answer all the cards that I have received, I am writing on behalf of each and every one of you, and I hope this appears in The News-Sentinel so that you may all have the opportunity of knowing how much I have really appreciated your remembrance, and thanking you again from the bottom of my heart. I remain as ever one of your boys in the service.

Pvt. Jack G. Kofron

I received 45 cards and letters in all.

Pvt. Jack G. Kofron  
Co. 8, 36th Bn. SCRTC,  
Camp Crowder, Mo.

[The News-Sentinel, Thurscay, October 29, 1942]

### LETTER FROM LAMOINE HARDACRE

Dear Sisters and Family:

Received your letter and will drop you a line tonight to tell you I am O.K. Well, I don't know if you folks look forward to getting my letters or not but I sure look forward to getting yours.

I'm a pretty popular guy now. Look in the news reel or "The March of Time" at the theatre and you may see me.

I sure wish you folks had some of the bananas, cocoanuts and pineapples we have here.

There sure are a lot of cocoanuts going to waste here. The cocoanuts here look like apples hanging on the trees. The bananas here aren't very good. They don't have much taste to them.

About the only thing I'm crazy about here is the Hawaiian music. It sure gets in your blood. Yes, the grass skirts are really made of grass. Besides making skirts they make baskets, pocket books, rugs, shoes and thousands of other things.

I've sure seen some pretty sights. One day we hauled gravel but it didn't look like gravel to me, it looked like ashes. At one time the stones were so hot they burned up. Later in the day we went to the fire pit. It is 783 feet deep and 750 feet across. We threw some things into the pit.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Before they were half way down we lost sight of them. Other places steam was pouring out of cracks in the ground. There sure are some spooky places here. We saw some real bamboo trees.

I went to get my hair cut the other day and wow, what a barber. The barber was a woman Jap. She cut my hair O.K. but when it came to shaving me, the cold chills played tag up and down my spine. I was sure glad when she finished.

Tell Liz I said hello and that I'm getting along fine with the grass skirts. Ha.

Army life isn't so bad after all. You know we don't have to wash our own clothes now. We send them to town to be washed. As for K.P. and guard duty, I think I've done my share. I've had one day of each in the last eight days. Last evening I was on guard duty until 9:30. When I got off I thought I would sleep for a while, but the mosquitoes were awful. Finally I covered up, head and all, with a woolen blanket, but that didn't stop them. I could hear them coming ten feet away. They sounded like dive bombers and when they lit it felt like drills going through you. So you see how much sleep I got.

Well, must close. So until then, Aloha and the best of luck to you all.

I remain, your soldier brother,

Pvt. Lamoine Hardacre,  
254th Sig. Const. Co.  
A.S.N. 352517256  
A.P.O 960, c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco, Calif.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, October 30, 1942]

### LETTER FROM HOWARD SUMMERS

October 26, 1942

Dearest Friends,

At the present time I am free and will endeavor to give you an idea of what routine we go through here at the Naval War College. As you know out of a company of 116 men, two men Donald E. White of Bismark, Mo., and myself were chosen to attend this school to study for quartermasters. The duties of a quartermaster are on the bridge of a ship. He is the assistant to the chief navigator, considered one of the better jobs of an enlisted man in the Navy. We will be in schooling here approximately 16 weeks with two weeks already gone. Figure on graduating around the 12th day of February.

Day's routing:

5:30 a.m. The lights go on and someone yells "hit the deck," and you had better hit it.

5:45 a.m. Fall out for morning exercises.

6:00 a.m. Dismissed from exercises and you go back into barracks and take showers.

Between this time and the time for chow you clean up the barracks too.

6:40 a.m. Fall out for chow, Navy name for breakfast, dinner, or supper, whichever it may be. If the barracks isn't completely cleaned up when you get back from chow you finish it.

7:45 a.m. Fall out for "Muster" or in other words roll call.

8:00 a.m. Go to classes.

9:30 to 9:15 a.m. Resting period for smoking, etc.

9:15 to 10:15 a.m. Classes again.

10:15 to 10:30 a.m. Another rest period.

10:35 to 11:30 a.m. Classes again.

11:30 a.m. Classes dismissed until 1:00 p.m.

12:00 noon Fall out for noon meal.

1:00 p.m. Classes resumed.

2:00 to 2:15 p.m. Another rest period.

2:15 to 3:15 p.m. Last class of the day.

3:15 p.m. Classes dismissed and then you are supposed to fall out for exercises at 3:30 to last until 4:30 but we haven't been doing that. We have the rest of the time to ourselves until 5:40 p.m. when we eat chow again. In that time you can wash some clothes or anything you want to.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

We have supervised study periods on Wednesday and Friday evenings from 7:30 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. On Tuesday evenings we have compulsory educational movies which sometimes consists of both movies and lectures. Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Thursday nights we have movies. If you don't go to town on Saturday or Sunday nights you can stay in camp and go to the movies.

9:30 p.m. All lights out and quiet.

This concludes the average day at the Naval War College here in Newport, Rhode Island. We have an occasional air raid drill too. Generally comes right after the lights go out.

Best Regards,

Howard

[ This most interesting and informative letter was written by Howard Summers, and reveals how busy camp life really is. How precious must be the time spent in writing such a letter home. Each boy loves to receive mail from you. Why not write to some boy who is now in camp. Write today.]

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, October 30, 1942]

### LETTER FROM VIVIAN E. COLE

Trinidad, British West Indies

Oct. 24, 1942

Dear Mother:

Well, here I am in Trinidad. Made the trip fine and didn't get sea sick, but Clark (my buddy) was for two or three days. It was plenty rough for a couple of days. Sure is hot here. Has rained a lot and tis awfully muddy. People here are all black except the sailors, officer's wives, etc. Clark and I ate a lot of cocoanuts at first but I have my fill now. We have good grub here and nearly always some good cold drink with it. The town here (Port of Spain) is about like the jungle towns you see in the movies. Some place! We can go to free movies every night, double features. It sure is beautiful in the evenings with the bright moon out and the cocoanut trees.

I saw a lot of various fish on the way. Flying fish, jellyfish, sharks, baracuda, porpoise, etc.

I will be having every other day off to myself. I think I stand a good chance for a rating and advancement. The nights are always rather cool and pleasant sleeping. I have a peach of a sunburn.

They have lots of snakes, tarantulas and some alligators here, but we are pretty well protected from them. Send me Ossie's address and have Lena give him mine. Also send me Julian's when you get it and don't do any worrying either.

How is Wilson and every one? Also the farmyard family? All we will use here is British money, sure seems funny. Cigarettes are only 50c per carton. Clark and I are going to do some sea fishing. Can hardly wait till I get paid as I am broke. Be sure and send me the pictures I took while I was in Idaho, as I am anxious to see them. Always write me air mail, othwise it might take several weeks to get here. Always put "Armed Forces" in the lower left hand corner of envelope. See if you can subscribe to the Fur-Fish-Game magazine for me and the "Outdoorman" for one year and have it sent to me. That would be about the best treat I know of down here as I have nothing to read. It is very monotonous here all over the island. I don't like the hills so well when it comes to walking. Guess this is about all. There isn't much I can write about. Hope I hear from you real soon. I'll try and write often after I get paid once. I sure have gone a long ways between pay days, haven't I? From Idaho to Trinidad. Give my best regards to all.

Lots of love, your son,

Vivian

Vivian E. Cole, S. 2/C, U. S. Navy

Naval Air Station

Barracks 2, Group C,

Trinidad, British West Indies

[Vivian Cole is the son of Mrs. Wilson Drudge]

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, November 4, 1942]

## SvcMen WW II Letters

### LETTER FROM ROBERT E. BURNS

Robert E. Burns, Sea. 2-C  
Navy Section Base  
U.S.C.G. Army of Pilotage  
San Pedro, Calif.

Dear Mother:

Received all three of your letters and sorry I didn't keep my promise to you and answer sooner. I have been advanced to Seaman 2-C now. Can't take my test for first class seaman until November. Three months ago today I was sworn into the service.

I have been transferred out of Company D, the guard battalion. Am now on armed guard. My duties are to go along with an officer and guard him when he is piloting a ship in through the mine fields. I have been out about 15 miles. Boy, it is really swell out on the ocean. I am stationed out there two days out of the week. I really like this job. My officer is really swell.

I saw "Baby Snooks" last week at the NBC. Last night I saw "Abbott and Costello," then later I saw "Rudy Vallee" and his program.

I sure do like my new job and have been treated swell since I have been in the service. Mother, will write more later. With all my love.

God bless you,  
Bob

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, November 4, 1942]

### LETTER FROM HAROLD DEAN CLEVINGER

Dear Mother:

How are you and the kids? I hope you are all right. I am just fine. I think I will be shipped out before long so don't write because I may not be here long enough. I have more clothes than I know what to do with. They sure do feed you good. I will be seeing you sometime so don't worry about me. I will send you a picture of me as soon as I can. You should see me in my uniform.

Tell all the kids I said hello and tell dad I said hello and if you see Metha or Willnetta tell them I said hello. I will come home and see you when I get a furlough and don't forget tell grandmother I said hello and I hope she is all right. Well I don't know anything more to say so I think I will close for tonight it's almost 9:00 o'clock and that's when they turn the lights out. Well goodbye for now.

Pvt. Harold Dean Clevenger  
Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, November 4, 1942]

### LETTER FROM HAROLD DEAN CLEVINGER

Pvt. Harold Clevenger  
Company I, Reception Center  
Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana  
Nov. 3, 1942

Dear Mother:

I hope you got my other letter. I am just fine and hope you are too. They have free shows here and we have good meals here too. I was on guard duty last night and I like it. I have a lot of friends here and I think I will get along all right. I have plenty of warm clothes and shoes that never will wear out. I think I look pretty good in a uniform and I wish you could see me in it. I will be home sometime, then you can see me. Tell Norman, Harry, Bob, Anna May, Metha and Willnetta and Dad I said Hello. I can't think of any more to say so I think I will close for now. I will write to you some more when I get time. I wish you could send me some money but I don't

## SvcMen WW II Letters

know how long I will be here so you don't write till I find out then you can write. So goodbye for now. I hope I will see you soon,

Your son,  
Pvt. Harold D. Clevenger

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, November 5, 1942]

### LETTER FROM RICHARD E. KOCH

Buckley Field, Colo.

Nov. 4

Dear Folks:

I've been wanting to write and thank you for the cookies and cake but I've been waiting until I get settled. You see, I've moved again and my stay here isn't permanent. I moved from the 765th squadron to the 769th. As soon as some are shipped from here the soldiers who came with me are supposed to move together, so maybe, finally we will get settled. Nine days is the longest I've been in any one place and that was Fort Benjamin Harrison.

I've started to school again. Last night was the first. I go from 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. The first gun is the 50 caliber machine gun. One week is spent in study on this and by that time you are supposed to be able to take it apart and reassemble it, besides knowing the main parts. There are eight men in a class and every man has a gun to study. I will know more about this in a few days.

I had a pass to go into Denver Sunday. Two other boys and I decided to try to go up into the mountains. We put our names in at the USO and we hadn't waited five minutes until a call came for three men to go. We jumped at the chance and in about half an hour three ladies came for us. One was about sixty and the other two about thirty or forty. The people here invite boys out to dinner, to go on trips, etc. They try to show soldiers a good time.

We left Denver at 1:30 and returned at 6:30. I don't know how many miles we drove but we finally were up high in the Rockies. The highest point we reached was 9,000 feet. I could hardly hear the car motor and voices seemed a long way off.

I saw Buffalo Bill's grave, it is on top of Look Out Mountain, overlooking Denver. We were right in the middle of the gold-mining territory, but as you probably know, the government has them closed now.

I can't begin to describe the mountains to you. The only way to appreciate them is to see them. We have a plain view of them from here on a clear day. The peaks are covered with snow. The weather here for the last two days has been very pleasant.

Well, goodbye for now. My present address is:

Pvt. Richard E. Koch  
769 T.S.S., E-340,  
Buckley Field, Colo.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, November 11, 1942]

### SECOND LETTER FROM CHARLES COCHRAN

Dear Friends:

I thought I would write a few lines today. I am thinking that winter will soon be coming on in Rochester and the near surroundings where I lived almost 19 months ago. I had hoped to be back home by now but I am not, so I can wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and all the good things that every good family is blessed with among them food, clothing and fuel. I am warm the year around where I am and we no need coal or wood to keep us warm. But it is going to be good old Indiana for me when this is over and in that regard and speaking of other states and countries there is no place like Home Sweet Home.

Pvt. Charles Cochran,  
A.S.N. 35176307  
Battery F, 83rd C.A. (A.A.)  
APO 832, c/o Postmaster,

## SvcMen WW II Letters

New Orleans, La.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, November 11, 1942]

### LETTER FROM LOWELL G. HENDERSON

Isaac Shelton received a letter from his grandson this morning saying he had joined the Air Corps, and is stationed at Atlantic City, N.J. His address is: Pvt. Lowell G. Henderson, 924 T.S.S., Flight A, Room 190, Atlantic City, N.J.

Pvt. Henderson enlisted October 15 and left Rochester on November 2.

Mr. Shelton just has three grandsons, all of whom have enlisted in the service. James H. Henderson, the oldest, is an airplane inspector some where in unknown foreign service; Jesse Lee at the U. S. Naval Air Base at Peru, Ind., and Lowell G. Henderson, the above mentioned.

No need to explain how proud Mr. Shelton is of his grandsons.

The News-Sentinel, Thursday, November 12, 1942]

### SECOND LETTER FROM LEMUEL FLYNN

Camp Butner, N.C.

Nov. 6, 1942

Dear Mother and Brothers:

I'll drop you a few lines to let you know that I am still among the living and feeling fine except I am pretty tired and sleepy. We left Fort McClellan Thursday at 11:45. Got here at 10:00 Friday morning. We slept in our seats all the way here so you imagine how good I rested. If you see any of the others, Dave or Willie, give them my address. You go down to the News-Sentinel and have the paper sent down here. Well news is getting scarce so write often so I can receive mail. My address is:

Pvt. Lemuel H. Flynn,  
Co. M, 309 Inf., A.P.O. No. 78,  
Camp Butner, N. Carolina

The News-Sentinel, Thursday, November 12, 1942]

### LETTER FROM RUSSELL SEE

Pvt. Russell C. See, U. S. Army,

Btry B, 399th C.A.B.B. Bn.

Fort Brady, Mich.

Nov. 8, 1942

Hon. Mayor Minter:

I am feeling fine. Rather cold up her. Quite a lot of snow and ice. We are as far north as we can go. The St. Mary's rive is all that's between U.S. Canada. So far I have gotten along swell in the army. We had a swell trip up here. Intersting thing about it is when you leave a camp you don't know where you are going until you arrive. We left Fort Benjamin Harrison at around nine o'clock last Thursday and arrived in Chicago around three o'clock. There we waited at the union station until seven o'clock. We also ate our meal at the Union station. Then we took the Milwaukee and rode all night. We each had berths and meals on the train, and very good food.

Well, it seems rather lonesome at times when you can't see your loved ones back home. But after all I am here for a good cause and am sure I will see you all again soon. I would be glad to hear from any of my friends.

Sincerely yours,

Pvt. Russell See

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, November 14, 1942]

### SECOND LETTER FROM BURL E. EBER

November 9, 1942

Dear Juanita:

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Monday evening about 5 to 9. How is everything up there? Got lots of mail today. Got a letter from each one of the family today and one from Elsie and Lewis in Illinois. Just wrote Mom and Dad yesterday so will write you and you can pass it on. How is Dad by this time? Hope his flu is all O.K. again.

We have been pretty busy around here today. We got in a bunch of new fellows today and tomorrow we lose some. Keeps us busy trying to keep track of who we do have.

Say ask the folks how much rent they have to pay for the garage where my car is. Glen asked sometime ago how many men we have in the squadron. We got some new ones in today and tomorrow there are to be some leave. I could tell you the exact number we have each day but will just say there are several. Also know where the fellows will go tomorrow that leave but military secrets, you know?

Went to the Shrine Circus Saturday night as you probably know by this time. Saw Clyde Beatty and a lot of good acts. Sounded some like to hear them announce Beatty. Had a free ticket and it was well worth the price of admission to me. Remember the time we went to the circus and then watched them load out? Bet Mom will never forget it.

Have a letter here from Treva and she said she had a headache. Then in the next sentence she said that Glee and Oren had been there the night before. Is there any connection there? Sounds bad. She will be getting in bad with Glee and Oren.

Feel pretty good after making Sergeant. Next jump will be to Staff Sergeant. Is that what Bob Tracy is yet or has he advanced again?

Do you know what camp Bob Miller is in? Did you ever get Claude Bilyew's address?

Tell Oren to send me one of their calendars for in my room here. Guess my roommate is going to move to town. He is quite a case. A little Jew, always in a hurry. He is nice to get along with.

Did Oren get any pheasants?

Don says you and Gus had your pictures taken together the other day. Were they good? Are you going to send a proof or something down? Still think of writing him but just haven't gotten to it. Has he heard any more from the draft board?

Say it sounds like somebody is in our chicken house. Sounds for all the world like a chicken squawking.

Got a card from Treva today. I'm O.K. and hope everybody is up there.

Don't have much more to write. If you run out of a job come down. Whatever you do don't join the W.A.A.C.'s. Saw in the paper sometime ago where Rochester's WAAC was home on furlough. Will close for tonight with love to all.

Burl

Sgt. Burl E. Eber  
77th P.F.T.S. (B.N.)  
Ellington Field, Texas.  
[The News-Sentinel, Monday, November 16, 1942]

### SECOND LETTER FROM JAY CARR

268th C.A. Sp. Bn. (H.D.)  
A.P.O. No. 37, c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco, Calif.  
October 25, 1942

Dearest Folks:

I just received your letter of October 7th. Thanks a lot for the Christmas card. The boys here are getting Christmas cards every day. It seems that we received your letters sooner than you get ours.

Everything is about the same here. I'm feeling swell. I'll try and tell you some of the things we do, of course some of it may be cut out by the censor.

We get up at 5:30 a.m. every morning, have roll call at 5:45 a.m. From then until 6:15 a.m. we get ready for breakfast. We sure get our share of oatmeal, just about every morning. We get

## SvcMen WW II Letters

one egg a week. The day's work starts at 7:00 a.m. Some of us go on the water truck as we have to haul it from town. Some police up the area. Everything looks very clean around here. It sure looks different from the first time we came here. We've been doing quite a bit of cement work. We have to dig a latrine down one side of one of the cliffs. It's quite a walk down there that we just about need road signs to get back. We knock off at 11 for dinner and start back to work at 1:00 p.m. Three or four of us go on the ration truck. None of us work too hard on account of the hot weather. We knock off at 3:00 p.m. and have supper at 5:00 p.m. That is the way one of the days roll by. One day we are on special alert. That is the bad day. We get up at 4:50 a.m. and stay up and do duties all day long. The third day we do 24 hours of guard. It isn't a bit bad. We have a half day off every three days. Everything is run on three day basis. Something over and over again. We have Saturdays and Sundays off unless we are on guard or special alert. Sunday afternoon we all go down to the beach for a swim. It sure is swell down here. That is the only time we get to see any white girls and they are army nurses, so that lets us out. Our passes run about every 9 days. It's from 1:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m. We go into a nearby town, they have one hotel there which serves drinks and meals. The drinks are terrible but the meals are wonderful. They serve the meals at 6:30 p.m. It usually takes an hour to finish a meal. By that time we go to take in a movie that maybe we've seen five or six years ago. It's something to do. There is a truck that comes and picks us up right after the show is over. That takes in about everything in line of duty and passes.

Our lighting system is terrible. We just have kerosene lights. They're terrible to read and write by. Most of our writing is done during the day time. Once in awhile we play cards. It is hard on our eyes. I played some this evening. I had about \$1.50 to last me until payday. The result was I lost it.

The other day we got in a lot of athletic equipment, but up here in the hills we have little use for it. They bring a movie here once a week. They are usually pretty good features. But no "Mickey Mouse."

One canteen does pretty well on getting in supplies we can use. The other day was the first soda we've had since we got off the boat. We had Pepsi-Cola, orange and root beer. Of course all of this is rationed out.

Most of the eats are fairly good. None of the food comes from the U.S. We are all getting along on it.

The mail service from here must not be so good. I hear from you folks about every other day. I answer them all as soon as I get a chance. So you should get quite a few letters from me before long.

Our washing and bathing is done in a stream about one mile and a half away. It's quite a walk down there. We don't need swimming trunks there. It's just like when us boys would jump in the river when we lived along it. You should see me in the middle of the stream on a big rock and hiding my pants and other clothes on another rock. I'd sure like to have a picture of it.

That about finishes up all the news and things we do around here. So you can see we don't work too hard. Oh, yes, I think our bunks are lousy but they could be much worse.

Hope that everyone is feeling well. Tell Dad to keep is chin jup. Tell the girls to keep in there and pitch (I mean in school). I was glad to hear that Deverl is still in the states. What is he doing now? I wrote Bette and Bob yesterday.

The next time you see Mr. Overstreet, tell him I'm getting the paper and thanks a lot. It sure has a lot of news in it. We have no way of getting news here. I read a lot of the letters the boys put in home.

Well, I'll sign off for this time and write.

Love to all,

Jay

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, November 16, 1942]

LETTER FROM EARL D. THOMPSON

November 12, 1942

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Dear Friends:

I got your card and sure was nice. I thought I would drop a line and let you know where I am at. They got me out here in the sticks, but I guess I'll make it allright. This camp isn't near as good as Wheeler. But I'm beginning to like it. Well John, how is everything at the old town? When this job is over and I come home we will have to pitch one. I suppose you have seen Mel. He sure is a nice guy. I hope we can all get together again, but it's impossible 'til this is over. I don't get any furlough 'til it is. The General said he wanted this outfit to be ready to go across by early spring. Can't tell though, they keep shipping them in and out of here all the time. I might be somewhere else by tomorrow nite. I think they are shipping them to outfits that's going across. I hope I get to one of them bunches. I'll get this war over. Well John I better sign off for now. Say send me Wayne's address I'd like to drop him a line. So long and take a drink for me.

Your buddie,  
Earl

My address is:

Pvt. Earl D. Thompson  
35368999 A.P.O.  
Co. A 303rd Eng's Bn.  
78th Div., 2nd Platoon,  
Camp Butner, N.C.  
[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, November 18, 1942]

### LETTER FROM EARL BAILEY

Nov. 12, 1942  
Gulfport Field,  
Gulfport, Miss.

Dear News-Sentinel:

I am now transferred to the comparatively new field at Gulfport which was just started to be built this summer and as we are located out near the edge and the first to occupy this area and barrackes it seems like we are almost pioneering. There were a large number of instructors transferred here yesteeday with the squadron men so we are also a new squadron on a new field.

We instructors were marched over to school headquarters which must be a little more than a mile from the squadron, and were checked in the field as instructors and will report for duty tomorrow morning. I am assigned to the (test blocks) aircraft engine operation branch and will have work in the branch until we are assigned classes to instruct.

The weather has been very nice here the past few weeks and was chilly enough last night to have a frosty coat on the roofs. It warmed up today and was most comofrtable in shirt sleeves to work around the squadron area. This field is about 12 miles west of Keesler Field so we didn't have a transfer which was made by motor truck convoy. We are about four or five miles out of Gulfport to a northerly direction so we won't be so close to the Gulf as we used to be.

Please change my address of the Sentinel to the 592nd T.S.S., Perm. Party, Gulfport Field, Gulfport, Miss. and thank you very kindly as home town and home folks news is always most welcome to one in the service.

Sincerely,  
Pfc. Earl J. Bailey

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, November 18, 1942]

### FOURTH LETTER FROM JAMES E. SWEET

Pvt. James E. Sweet  
Co. A, Devel. Bn., N.S.C.  
Camp Haan, Calif  
Nov. 15, 1942

Dear Friend Ed Vawter:

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Just a few lines to let you know that I received your most welcome letter and card and sure was glad to hear from you. I showed the boys here the card and they said it was a wonderful place and I agreed with them.

I sure hope this war is over with soon so I will be able to come home. But we still have a job to do and we boys will do it. But soon, I hope. We go to church. Every night we have church. I woke up this morning and started reading my Bible. I read my Bible every day and night before I go to bed and we pray to God that He might help us and He will.

I wrote to Captain Minter a while back and haven't received any answer from him yet. Of course after election day he is very busy. It was very nice to hear that he got in for mayor of the city. I was very glad to hear that. I bet the people at home had a swell time on election day.

Well, I just had my chow and I thought I would try to finish this letter to you. We had a very fine dinner today. We had steak and a lot of everything we could eat. It was very fine. Well, my youngest brother went to the army the 14th of this month, and I really will be glad if he behaves himself as I do and he will do fine in the army. I don't know where he will be stationed at. But I sure wish him the best of luck and may God bless him, and watch over him.

I haven't heard from my brother Bill in quite a while. I don't know whether he is sick or not, but I do hope he is well. Well, it won't be long before I will be another year older than I am. I will be 22 the 19th of this month. I am getting older every year.

Yes, our chaplain uses a lot of fine scriptures and they are wonderful. We have quite a number of men and some women in our services. That is what I love. I always attend the church services.

Well, some of the men here will be coming home on furloughs very soon, but I don't think that I will get to come home. I had a furlough when my mother was ill, so I won't be able to come home for Christmas. I would love to but I can wait until after this war is over. Then I will be free to do what I want to do. I don't want to come home until after this war is over. I will keep on doing my part in this war and it won't be very long until it will be over.

Well, I will have to close for this time. Hoping to hear from you very soon. Tell Bill and all I said hello, and may God bless you all.

Your friend,

Pvt. James E. Sweet

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, November 20, 1942]

### LETTER FROM RICHARD S. ZOLMAN

Mrs. Dewey T. Zolman of Athens, Ind., received the following letter from the USO director in St. Louis, Mo., about her son, Private Richard S. Zolman, who is stationed at Jefferson Barracks, Mo. The letter is a fine example of the work the USO is carrying out throughout the country.

November 16, 1942

Dear Friends:

I thought I would drop you a line to tell you about your boy, whom I had the pleasure of meeting at our center last week-end. He enjoyed himself immensely, he looks fine and is in good spirits.

We hope to have the privilege of serving him and making him feel at home whenever he comes to St. Louis.

With kindest regards, I remain

Cordially yours,

Laser Grossman,

USO Director,

St. Louis, Mo.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, November 20, 1942]

### SECOND LETTER FROM BOB HARTMAN

Dear Captain Minter:

## SvcMen WW II Letters

This nice Wednesday night here in Texas I will write you a few lines. I get our old home town paper and am very glad to see that things are going along all right. I hope this war will hurry up and be over so I, and the other men, can come home again and live in Rochester and community.

It will be six months the 13th that I have been in the army. I have been here in Camp Wolters except the first three days that I was at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Ind. I was home on a furlough for 15 days from the 6th to the 21st of October and I would have liked to see you but I did not get the chance but I did see some of the boys and then I had dinner with my uncle, Jack Gordon. He told me that Robert Miller is here at Camp Wolters and I am going to try to see him some time tomorrow. It is good to see someone from your home town.

I am the baker here at Camp Wolters for my company, and we have 300 men in this company. I made 50 pies and they ate them in one meal. Then also I make rolls, cookies, cakes and doughnuts. Last night I made 450 doughnuts and a lot of cakes also. That is quite a lot of baking for one man to do in one night. But that is all I have to do and I have the rest of the time for myself and can go to town or do whatever I wish to do. The Texas weather has been nice and you can go in your shirt sleeves most of the day but some days it is cooler and then perhaps warm again the next. Camp Wolters is a very nice camp. We have good officers. My captain is from South Bend, Ind.

Well, November 11th was a happy day for the soldiers of World War I and I hope our time will also come when this war will come to an end. I will close and hope to hear from any of my friends here.

Cpl. Robert Hartman  
Co. B, 53rd Inf. Trg. Bnm.,  
Camp Wolters, Tex.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, November 20, 1942]

### FIFTH LETTER FROM JAMES E. SWEET

Dear Friend Capt. Minter:

I received your most welcome letter and was very glad to hear from you and to hear that you are in the best of health. I can report, too, that I am in good health and am trying to do what I can to win the war and of course all of us wish the war would be over soon. I have quite a few pals here at camp and we all stick together in our duties that we have to do. And we are on our own all the time and doing our part to help get the war over with. We are just now having very bad weather for it is very cold and has been raining hard for several days. I do not mind the rain except that it stops, in a way, some of the duties we have to perform, but after all we get it done. A pal of mine and I go to church every night we can. They have services here about three nights a week and I love it.

I had very very bad news. My girl got married to the other fellow. That sure did hurt me a lot but I can take it. There are other boys here in camp that have had to take the same kind of medicine, but we are not worrying too much about that and are trying to do our duty here in camp for the army and do it willingly.

I am sure we will not get a furlough this Christmas but as for me I would as soon stay in camp and train and help in winning the war as to coming home too much now but want to come home for good after it is over and we will be living in a free country which we helped to keep free. That is the way we feel about it all.

We have excellent doctors in our hospital here and I had to go to an army dentist and got a tooth extracted and then, too, I had four teeth filled and it was such good work, they surely take good care of us in the army. I am sure that it is the same in other camps as it is here with us. That is one reason why we are in such good health and we get the very best of food also.

Well, it is late but I want to get this letter out to you. Tell all my friends I said "Hello." I am, very truly your friend,

Pvt. James E. Sweet,  
Co. "A," Devel. Bn.,

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Camp Haan, Calif.

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, November 23, 1942]

### LETTER FROM ROBERT C. REICHARD

Fort Ord, Calif.

Nov. 17, 1942

Dear Mother and Dad:

It is raining here now and I am not doing anything so I guess I will drop you all a line. I hope you all are O.K. For I am.

This morning's paper looked pretty good, 30,000 Japs killed, if it is all true. If you get into Rochester have them to send the paper to Fort Ord, Calif and also put my new address in the paper so those who would like to write will know my address.

We are staying in barracks now and not tents. This is sure a nice looking place here and we will be ere until we ride the deep blue Pacific.

The states we came through were: Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, Terre Haute, Ind., Illinois, St. Louis, Mo., Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California. We also rode up the Mexico and U. S. border. So you see I have seen a lot of states since I have been in the army.

After we got out to Kansas most of the roads run right along the railroad. Because they had stock yards to load cattle at the railroads all along. From there on out it was that way. Lots of cattle. I also seen some wild horses. I seen some big cotton fields in Arizona. But out through the West where they grow very much of a crop they terrace the fields. I saw some alfalfa fields of hay. There were places along where they ground up the alfalfa hay or what we call alf mills.

When coming through the states I got my foot off on the ground every place I could. Just so I could say I had my foot in that state. The way I done that was when I stood guard on the train with my rifle New York, New Jersey, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California.

I just about forgot to tell you but Wednesday morning about 10 a.m. when we were in the state of Pennsylvania we saw a train where it had got off the tracks. There was an oil car on fire, an engine upside down. It sure was not a very good looking thing.

Friday night I think it was, we were out on the desert, and all at once the train came to a stop. It stopped so quick that it about put every one out of their seats. I don't know what happened, but maybe it was a steer or something on the tracks. Who knows?

Please excuse me if I jump around a little in telling of my trips for I may forget a few things.

When we were coming through Pennsylvania in Atlantic City, there was a horseshoe bend. The Susquehanna river that we crossed has the largest masonry stone bridge in the world.

The train was 19 cars long. It was whatyou call a troop train. We had a lot of fun on it, playing cards and telling stories and doing a lot of singing. It seemed to be a lot of happy boys on the train. For they were sure glad to leave the hell-hole of Massachusetts. We started out on the New Haven, Hartford train line, then the Penn., New York Central, Burlington, Rock Island and the Southern Pacific line.

Well the closest town we have to us out here is Monterey. It is as big as Rochester or bigger and it is just 4 1/2 miles from camp.

Well this is just about all I can think of right now so I will close until I hear from you all. Tell everyone "Hello" for me.

Love,  
Bob

Pvt. RobertC. Reichard, 35363940  
Hq. Co. Shore Bn.  
542 Eng. Amph. Reg.  
Ford Ord, Calif.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, November 24, 1942]

## SvcMen WW II Letters

### TWO LETTERS FROM MYRON REED

Cpl. Myron C. Reed  
38th General Hospital  
A.P.O. 616, New York, N.Y.  
November 3, 1942

To: Mr. and Mrs. Alvin C. Reed  
426 Fulton Ave.,  
Rochester, Ind.  
Dear Folks:

Finally arrived at our destination November 1st after a long and tiresome trip. I'm feeling fine and everything is O.K. now. We are eating good now but the food we had during the trip wasn't so good. I have received several of your letters since I arrived. So glad to hear you rented the store. Let me know about the election as soon as possible. The only thing that I know for you to send me is cigarettes. They are 50c a pack here. Wish I could send you Christmas presents but don't suppose I will be able to as we haven't been paid yet. Note the change in my address. Tell all my friends about it. I'll write again soon, Please don't worry about me.

Love,  
Myron

Dear Mother and Dad:

Just a few lines to let you know that I am still O.K. That is just about all that I am allowed to tell you. We got paid yesterday and I went into town last night but I didn't care so much for the place, especially at night. I want to go in again in the daytime as there are several things of interest that I want to see.

I received several of your letters shortly after I arrived here, but haven't had any in the past few days. Keep writing as often as you can because our mail service from the States is real good. I'm hoping that you get my mail as quickly. Wish I could tell you where I am but it can't be done. I'm just "somewhere in the Middle East." Take good care of yourselves and please don't worry about me.

Love,  
Myron

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, November 25, 1942]

### LETTER FROM RAYMOND WALTERS

Atlantic City, N.J.

Dearest Uncle and Aunt and Joey:  
(Arlie S. Wynn)

My address is: Pvt. Raymond D. Walters, 920 Squadron, A.A.F.R.T.C., A.S.N., 35566631, Atlantic City, N.J.

Well I have a little time to scratch you a few lines although I'm pretty busy at times. I get up at 4:30 in the morning. There are no electric lights or lights in our rooms at all. This city is on the Atlantic ocean and is really blacked out. There are no bulbs in our rooms. We dress and make our bed and clean the room in total darkness.

Our trip out here was really made in a hurry. Over 1,000 miles the way we came, in 23 1/2 hours and part of the time we had to stop on the siding. After I boarded the train in Indianapolis I did not get out for 24 hours. What I have seen of this city it is the most elaborate and beautiful place I have ever seen. The famous Boardwalk runs for 14 miles along the city.

It took me only two days to be outfitted and processed in Indianapolis. If you write be sure that you write and use all the letters and numbers. We are taking about eight to ten days of basic training, then we will be shipped out. We are on the beach of the Atlantic ocean and I had my first view of it. I have not been able to see much of the town because we get no leaves until we are here seven days. So we have to stay in the hotel. It's a large one, though.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Did my clothes get through alright? Aunt Lulu, you may do as you like with them. I suppose that if you get a few moth balls in them and seal them up it will be alright for them. Some of the boys got pretty homesick. There's one right across from me now who looks as if he's almost ready to cry. No one around here even talks about leaves any more. They say that very few get time off unless there is an emergency. One lieutenant said unless there is death in the immediate family. Well, will close for this time, with heartfelt best wishes for a happy and most beautiful Thanksgiving.

Your loving nephew,

Raymond Walters

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, November 27, 1942]

### LETTER FROM J. HOWARD BLACKBURN

November 21, 1942

Editor News-Sentinel

Rochester, Ind.

Dear Sir:

I receive The News-Sentinel every day, and I read of so many other fellows writing so I thought some one in Rochester might be interested to hear from another soldier.

My parents are Mr. and Mrs. Carl W. Blackburn, formerly of your city, now of Golden, Colo. I am their son Howard. This is just a makeshift introduction of myself.

Possibly some of your readers would like to hear what we soldiers are doing. I am in a medical detachment of an army air force training school. We are being trained to be medical soldiers, so when we are in actual combat we can care for the sick and wounded on the battlefield. At the present time we are treating the students of the air field to which we are attached. We have a regular hospital with wards and all of the facilities for taking care of the sick. Well, that sums up our future as well as our present duties.

Yes, the food is good, but not as good as Mom's.

We are only one mile from the city of Sioux Falls and are free to go as soon as we are free from work. This is most every night starting from either 5 or 7 p.m. Right now we are on a 7-day schedule of working days, so we are really busy.

For about a week now this camp, that is part of it, has been restricted to post on account of a hint of some measles. Our barracks don't have them but we have to be careful.

This is the first time I have had to live with boys from all sections of the country at once. I really enjoy it.

Tell all my friends in Rochester Hello. I'll be back to spend another vacation in Indiana.

Sincerely yours,

Pvt. J. Howard Blackburn

Barracks No. 3

Medical Detachment AAFTS

Sioux Falls, S.D.

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, November 28, 1942]

### LETTER FROM ROBERT TRACY

Roswell, N.M.

November 1, 1942

Dear Folks:

I know it has been a long time since I last wrote to you, but to be truthful with you it has been a long time since I have written to anyone other than the people here on the field. I just can't get around to writing this kind of a letter any more. I am writing official letters of all types every day and it is very boring. I really don't write the letters myself, but I scribble down what I want and my clerk types it up for me. Some of my letters go to Wright Field, Washington, D.C., airplane manufacturers, etc.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

For the past two weeks I have been sick with a cold and although I worked every day, I was in bed nearly every night by six o'clock.

We have been trying many new things here and it seems that I get in on all of them. At present in addition to being squadron technical inspector I am also technical advisor and inspector for a major that has charge of all engineering of three bombing squadrons. I have been in on accident investigation, squadron promotions, squadron demotions, and plenty of confidential things that have been going on here.

I worked all day today on some bombing equipment that we are trying to change and tomorrow I am to go with the major on a test flight to see if the changes prove satisfactory. If so, all planes here on the field will be changed to incorporate this new feature. This is just one of the many things that have been keeping me busy.

I am enclosing a picture that was snapped one day while we were inspecting an airplane. I have my head halfway up in a wheel well but it is a good picture of the plane.

Thanks a million for the cookies. They were sure good, but I was sick and had to give most of them away.

Please write soon and I will try and write again real soon, too.

Staff Sgt. Robert Tracy

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, December 1, 1942]

### LETTER FROM MELVIN LEE SHRIVER

Akron, Ind.

November 28, 1942

Editor, News-Sentinel

Dear Sir:

I'm sending a copy of a letter for the paper, "News from Boys in the Service." Mrs. George Kotterman of Akron received a letter from her brother, Pvt. Melvin Lee "Pike" Shriver. This was the first word from him since September 2nd. Melvin was stationed in Ireland, but was moved some time ago.

The letter read:

Sometime and Somewhens

Dearest Sister:

Just a line to let you know I'm O.K. and hope this finds you the same.

Well, Sis, how is everything around the little town of Akron? Fine, I hope.

Well, I have started my second year in the army and it seems like ages. Is George still working at the factory or not? Have you seen the folks lately? I haven't heard from any of them for about three months. I can't imagine what the trouble is. Are the kids still going to school? How does Orabelle like school by now? Better, I suppose, than she did at the first of the year.

Well, Sis, I can't think of anything else to write. Will close for this time. Hoping to hear from you soon.

Your loving brother,

Pvt. Melvin Lee Shriver,

A.S.N. 35170621

Co. "B" 168 Reg., A.P.O. 34

c/o Postmaster

New York, N.Y., U. S. Army

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, December 1, 1942]

### SECOND LETTER FROM DONALD HARTUNG

Cpl. Donald Hartung 15084573

35th Fighter Control Sqd.

35th Fighter Group

A.P.O. 929 c/o Postmaster

San Francisco, Calif.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

November 10, 1942

Mr. Ed Vawter  
Rochester, Indiana  
Dear Mr. Vawter:

I received your letter this evening so I had better answer it right away. The longer I wait to answer a letter the harder it is to answer it.

Everything has been going along as well as can be expected. I'm in good health and getting along just swell. We finally are getting a few things that we might entertain ourselves with. We have put in a boxing ring, a baseball diamond, volleyball and badminton courts. We have a fine canteen and a pingpong table for us. We are really getting a first rate camp for this part of the country.

I wish to thank you for writing me. I hope this finds everyone in good health. Please give my regards to the rest of my friends there at church.

I have not met any of the fellows since I left the States. Mother sent me Bill Skidmore's address but he is in Australia and I'm in New Guinea. I have met no one that I knew before I joined the army. I'm looking forward to seeing you all soon.

Yours truly,

Don Hartung

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, December 1, 1942]

### LETTER FROM R. L. BABER

Dear Mother, Dad and Betty Jo:

There isn't much to write about but I'll see if I can fill a couple of pages at least.

Yesterday I received your Christmas package. I was going to keep it until Christmas, but every time I looked at it I just couldn't wait so I opened it. Thanks for every thing. The stationery and gum were the most welcomed of all.

I suppose the sucker idea was Betty Jo's? We ate them last night at the movie. The candy didn't last very long, but it was good while it lasted.

Today we, (two other fellows and I) blacktopped the road through the camp and we were tar from head to toe. We took a bath in gas first and water second. My skin is raw from so much rubbing.

I haven't gotten my knife as yet; sure hope it gets here.

Well, I guess this is about all for tonight so I'll close.

Love,

Ron

P.S. - My address has been changed again to:

R. L. Baber, Seaman 1/C

U.S.N. Advanced Base

N.A.D. NHaumes

New Caledonia.

[Mr. and Mrs. Ross Baber are the parents of Seaman 1/C Baber]

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, December 2, 1942]

### SECOND LETTER FROM EARL D. THOMPSON

Earl D. Thompson

35368999

Co. C. 303rd Eng. Bn.

Camp Butner, Nort Carolina

11-26-42

Dear Friends, John Scott:

Well how are you? I hope you are all feeling fine. Here it is Thanksgiving. We had to work. I don't mind though. Don't know what I would do anyway. They had a very nice dinner here. But I would like to have been home today, but there is lots of us that would. I see the boys

## SvcMen WW II Letters

over there are giving them rats all they want. They'll find out what real men are when they run into our boys. We have something to fight for. I hope on Dec. 7 that they drop a bomb and blow Japan clear off the map. They say this is a motorized outfit. I haven't seen it when they walk us about 10 to 12 miles every day and part of the time we run. I suppose they want to toughen us up. They're not me, I am getting stiffer instead of - - -. They really feed us well. I guess this is about all for tonight. Answer soon. My address is changed again, see the envelope.

Your friend,  
Earl Thompson

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, December 2, 1942]

### SECOND LETTER FROM RUSSELL SEE

Dear Friends:

Received your greetings and very nice of you both. John I miss you a lot. I always liked you and hope to soon come back and start up in the taxi business and haul you fellows again. I am right on the Canadian border. It is cold up here, has been zero already. I am drilling hard every day. We have our rifles. Some job for me to learn all this army stuff. I appreciate your nice greeting and hope to hear from you folks with a nice long letter. I am feeling fine, a bit lonesome. I am as ever, your friend,

Russell See

Pvt Russell See, U.S.A.  
Btry H. 399th C. A. P. B. Bn.,  
Fort Brady, Michigan

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, December 2, 1942]

### THIRD LETTER FROM JAY CARR

(Air Mail)

Dear Captain:

I received your letter of September 28th about a week ago - this is the first chance I've had to answer it. I am feeling swell. The climate here is perfect although I'd rather be in the Indiana weather much better. I am getting a swell tan, we run around stripped to the waist and during off hours we wear shorts.

A part of my pay is being deducted and my home allotment is all working now and I want to thank you for the part you have played in helping all around in this matter, too, I thank you a lot for all.

It seems that a lot of the young fellows are leaving there now. Maybe it won't be for long and let's hope not but since it is for such a good cause it is not so bad being away.

(Here half a page was cut off.)

I have seen a lot of the country since I have been in the service and it looks as if I will see a lot more if everything goes alright. - - - - (Rochester girl) wrote me a fine letter after she got my address out of the paper. She and I used to correspond but when I started to move around so much I lost her address and I was not able to give her mine. She is an excellent young lady.

We have a new radio here. It is a battery set. We are still without any electric lights here also, and I do not think we will get any. We heard a program from the States and now for the past few nights we have been listening in for the news. But I figure what we don't know won't hurt us. Here we take the war very seriously while some of us feel that in some parts of the States the folks could take it more serious than they apparently seem to do.

Well it looks as if I should sign off for this time, and hope that you will keep in correspondence with me. It may be early but I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and that goes for all in Rochester and community.

Pvt. J. H. Carr, ASN 35172389  
268th C.A. Sp. Bn.(HD),  
A.P.O. 87, c/o Postmaster

## SvcMen WW II Letters

San Francisco, Calif  
(South Seas)

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, December 2, 1942]

### LETTER FROM LOUIS D. BALL

Hi Goldie:

Just to keep my promise I'm telling you all about my new position. This is the first time that I've had to write to you as they keep you so darned busy here. I'll start at the beginning and tell you all of my movements.

I arrived at Camp Perry, Ohio, on October 15th. This is a reception center and the place where we get our clothes and shots for typhoid. You certainly were lucky if you got anything to fit you. It rained all the time I was there. I caught cold there and still have it. We left Camp Perry on October 16th and got to Atlantic City on the 17th. It took us 20 hours.

Atlantic City is a replacement center. We finished getting our shots there and were interviewed and placed in our respective positions in the air corps. I volunteered for aerial gunnery. I think the main reason was because Norve was in it. It was here in Atlantic City where I got my basic training. Was supposed to get 16 days drilling but only got two days out of six. The rest of the time was spent on K.P. guard duty. The captain there said it was 50% of our basic training. I believe him. We left there on November 4th and got here the morning of the 7th, taking 50 hours to make the trip. We could not leave the train at any time. Was only off of it once and that was to eat breakfast in Jacksonville, Fla. The rest of the time we ate on the train.

Our camp here is about 12 miles out of Panama City, Fla., and we are right on the coast of the Gulf. They don't allow us to go swimming in the Gulf at all. There are sharks too close to the shore. They say you can see them from the air. We went down to the beach for a while last Sunday. A couple of the boys caught a small octopus. They sure are ugly and mean looking devils. As for the south, they can keep it. There is nothing but sand and pine trees here and then just more sand.

The people that live in the country here live in shacks and unpainted two and three room buildings. Our barracks here are very nice but a half hour after you clean them they are filled with sand. Thank heavens I'll only be here for five or six weeks. The food here is terrible. Just for one example, as there are so many I couldn't remember them all, for supper one night I had potatoes and bread and water. Not even any butter. The coffee they make here stinks. We are not allowed to go to town while we are going to school. That don't make me mad because Panama City is so small there isn't anything to do there. The only time I want to go there is when I leave here.

Clark Gable is in our class here but there are over 300 in it and it is divided up into 12 sections. I'm in section 3 and he's in 12. I see him quite often, though. I have finished my first week of school and had six exams and have an average of 93%. The highest average is only 95%. I have a week and a half yet to spend in the school rooms and a week and a half to spend on the range. Here we shoot skeet and trap with shotguns. We also shoot a B.B. machine gun and the .30 and .50 calibre machine guns. Our fifth and final week is spent in the turrets on the airplane in the air. We shoot at a big sack carried behind an airplane. Upon graduating we receive a pair of silver wings and become a buck sergeant. In other words, we get a raise.

Well, so much for that. I lost Izzy's address. Would you be so kind as to send it to me. Tell your mother and everyone I said hello.

It's time for chow now so I guess I'll go over and see what kind of crap they got this time. Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain,

Your friend,  
Louis Ball  
Aerial Gunnery School,  
Sqd. D, Class 4250  
Tyndall Field, Fla.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, December 2, 1942]

## SvcMen WW II Letters

### SECOND LETTER FROM HOWARD SUMMERS

Howard E. Summers  
Co. 1558, G. M. School  
Coddington Pt.,  
Newport, R.I.  
November 23, 1942

Dearest Mother and All:

Received the very nice box and will write to have you tell all my friends back in Rochester that it was swell of them and was greatly appreciated. I am not much of a hand at writing but just the same I think they know what I mean. The things that we received in packages of that sort are all available out here but the sentiment connected with it means much more than ever could be put into words. All the boys that receive packages share with the others and they in turn do likewise. It helps keep us all satisfied with our new environment and it helps us all to keep bigger smiles on our faces, knowing that the people back home are behind us 100%. Not only do I thank them but along with my thanks go the thanks of all the boys who were fortunate to receive some of the contents of that box. It was really swell.

How is everybody? Hope O.K. I am fine and am studying hard to the present. Want to get the most out of this I can as I consider myself lucky to have such an opportunity as was given me.

Must close for now as my time is short. Again I wish to thank all my friends and hope soon to be able to see everyone again.

Regards to all,

Your loving son,  
Howard

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, December 3, 1942]

### LETTER FROM ROBERT C. SHOBE

November 22, 1942  
629 T.S.S. Flight B  
Gulfport Field, Miss.

Dear Hal:

Received your letter at noon mail call. I was so glad to hear from you that I thought better answer right away. Have been kept so busy that I do not have a lot of time to write. It seems as I can't write a letter as it should be. This school field is just 15 miles from Keesler Field and 80 miles from Camp Shelby. I go to school from 12 p.m. midnight to 8 a.m. I have a schedule that keeps me busy until 2 p.m. and then supposed to sleep until 10 p.m. with two hours to get ready and eat breakfast before school starts again. This was just a swamp, slightly drained enough to build the buildings and get from one to another, when this group of fellows arrived here two months ago. We look around now and can't figure the locations we were in when we first arrived. We have paved roads, all kinds of courts for athletics, air field with cement runways and are getting nice lawns built around our barracks. We thought that as soon as a lot of this work was done we would have more time, but they have changed our program to make it even tougher on us. Don't worry the Air Corps will be one of the toughest armies of men in the U.S.A. Got four boys out of our barracks in hospital from strenuous routine. It seems the tougher and harder they make it for us the better we all like it. Also have a tough obstacle course to run twice a week which keeps us in pretty fair shape. It looks as if a fellow would lose weight but I have put on at least 20 pounds. I finally got into our Gay Room last Sunday night and WGN came in over the radio as plain as it would at home. I have made several trips this week as I have found a few minutes, to Gay Room to try the radio, but couldn't get anything but stations from around here. Cole Bros. circus was in Gulfport a few days or maybe a week ago. I took time off and went to town and saw several people that was with them when they were in Rochester. Had a nice talk with Mr. and Mrs. Terrell. They told me that help was awful hard to get now. It was surprising how several of the people do six or seven other jobs besides their own to keep the show going. I want to thank you for the letter of recommendation and other letters from Fred you forwarded to me. I haven't as yet

## SvcMen WW II Letters

subscribed to The News-Sentinel but figure on doing so next week. Of course, like every other soldier I am waiting on Pay Day. Well Hal, the boys here all think the war will be over before we get across, but if not we hope to finish it up quick and as soon as that's done everyone will be back in Rochester to go to dances and meet at the Coffee Shop for a midnight snack. You fellows did it before and when we get there we will try to beat your record and By George we will do it.

I just can't help thinking of the rest of the boys from home and hope they will get back home soon. Keep the home fires burning and if you should happen to be awakened in the night and think the town is burning down, just remember that that is the fellows coming home, finished with their job and trying to raise more whoopee when they get home than they did before they left.

Yours truly,  
Pvt. Robert C. Shobe

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, December 3, 1942]

### LETTER FROM DALE BIGGS

November 23, 1942

Dear Mrs. Fultz:

I received your most welcome card. It isn't often that I get mail from Rochester other than from my mother and grandmother.

The weather out here is very hot in the day time but you can freeze at night.

We live in tents. There are seven of us in mine. We are a bit overcrowded but we always manage. We have cots to sleep on now but up until a few weeks ago we slept on good old Mother Nature.

We haven't any heating or lighting systems. At night we use candles to work or read by.

Other than a few grains of sand in our meals they are swell. The sand blows here at times as bad as the snow does there. There have been times when I couldn't see the front of the vehicle that I drive. It is called a half back M-3.

The candle is low and I am quite tired (after a hard day's work) so I will close until later. Tell everyone I said hello. I hope to be home the first of the year and will make it a point to see all of you then.

Your friend,  
Pfc. Dale Biggs

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, December 3, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JESSE J. CALVERT

Dear Mrs. Fultz:

I received your season's greeting card today and thought it very beautiful. I also received the bulletin on "Your Manhood and Alcohol" and I thought it very logical and interesting. It is certainly a very truthful bulletin in every statement therein.

If every man in the army would take heed to such advice it certainly would be a grand thing. But there is always a certain amount of people that don't heed to good advice. I'm very proud to say that neither my close buddies or I are users of alcoholic beverages. I have seen enough of its evil work since I've been in service to always keep me from indulging in it.

Are the members of the Women's Christian Temperance Union sending greeting cards to boys in the service? I think it is very thoughtful and nice of them to do so. We boys in the service really appreciate the thoughtfulness of the people at home and the members of our church. And we are all looking forward to the day we can be home with our families and friends and once more attend the services of our church.

You probably wonder if we had a big dinner today. We did have a very nice dinner with roast turkey, pumpkin pie and all the rest of the trimmings that go with such a dinner.

Well, I wish to thank you again for the wonderful card.

Your friend,  
Jesse J. Calvert

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, December 3, 1942]

## SvcMen WW II Letters

### SIXTH LETTER FROM JAMES E. SWEET

Dear Capt. Minter:

I just received your ever welcome letter today and I am glad to hear from you and the city of Rochester, Ind. I am certainly glad to know that yourself and all the rest of the folks in my home town are in the best of health. I am doing well in that way except that I do have a cold occasionally in my head and lungs but it is not so that it is necessary for me to go to the doctor about it for I want to do my work, or my duty as we call it in the service. We will be on duty on Thanksgiving day which is tomorrow but at that we will get to go to church that day and some of us boys go to church almost every night and I love to go to church as much as I love to eat and both are, it seems to me, necessary.

I have been transferred to a new camp (Camp Haan) and I like it much better than Camp Ord. The weather has been pretty warm and we have had quite a bit of rain but we have plenty of warm bedding to use and sometimes we have to use them, too. We have a very nice city close here, nine miles from us. It is Riverside, Calif. I go to town about once every three weeks, but that is enough for me because I have my duty to perform in camp and that comes first. We are all kept pretty busy here during the day. But being busy is one thing I like about army life.

I will not get home for Christmas although some of the men will get furlough, in particular those who have not had furloughs.

Ed Vawter is a fine gentleman and a good friend to have. He writes me often and I like to get letters from him. He writes interesting letters and they do me a lot of good. I have not had any news from my home folks for quite a time. One thing I like about army life is that when you have a job to do you do it, and that is all there is to it. I want to try to visit San Diego. I understand that is a beautiful city. I have been in San Francisco, but I would like to get a permit and go agsain. I am told there is a large and beautiful military reservation there called the "Presidio." I am so busy all the time that I do my duty and try to visit and see some other places.

Well, I am happy to say that it was a mistake when I wrote you and told you my girl was married and it made me feel bad for a while, but she did not get married to the other fellow and I just think she will not. She is a very nice girl. Some mean person just wrote me that to scare me and make me feel bad but it did not do them any good.

I wish that some of you could have been a tour camp last evening when some of the Hollywood talent came out and entertained us. I received a nice package from Mrs. Hartman for the Spanish-American war auxiliary and it was a nice Christmas package.

I will close for this time and hope you can read my writing and I am closing hurriedly as I have to get ready for retreat. Tell everybody I said hello and wish all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I do wish I will get a chance to fight those Japs.

Very respectfully,  
Pvt. James E. Sweet,  
Co. 1, Devel. Bn., NSC,  
Camp Haan, Calif.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, December 4, 1942]

### THIRD LETTER FROM HOWARD SUMMERS

November 26, 1942

Dear Friends:

Wish to extend my appreciation for the fine card. Have never had the pleasure of meeting you, I don't believe, but would really like to do so. It makes a person proud to know he has friends back home whose thoughts are with him.

This is Thanksgiving day and although I find myself separated from home and all those I love, including my friends back in good old Rochester, there is lots to be thankful for. I am

## SvcMen WW II Letters

thankful to be able to be in the armed services, although it means lots of sacrifices, and help win the one thing that means to much to all of us, Liberty. I am thankful for two of the finest parents a fellow ever had, my dear mother and father. I am also thankful for a dear wife such as I have and may God keep them all safe until my return.

Again I want to express my appreciation for the kindness shown me and may you have a very Merry Christmas.

Regards,  
Howard Summers, S 2/C  
Co. 1558 Q.M. School  
Coddington Point, U.S.N.T.S.,  
Newport, R.I.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, December 4, 1942]

### LETTER FROM CHARLES C. COFFMAN

November 23, 1942

Dear Mrs. Fultz:

Today I received your very nice Christmas card. Many thanks to you and to the ladies of the Women's Christian Temperance Union of Rochester. It is nice to know that you think of me.

The slogan of the W.C.T.U. is very fine: "The W.C.T.U. will not quit until the liquor traffic quits." I don't believe that you will quit. You did it once; you can do it again. I am 100 per cent for you. And I wish you a triumphant victory.

The article, "Your Manhood and Alcohol" is a very fine article. Henry Louis Smith in his fine article asked, "What will you as an individual do with the liquor problem?" My answer is that I will not patronize liquor establishments and will try to guide my friends away from them.

Mr. Smith said, "Be man enough to form an inflexible decision." To this I can say that I have formed a decision, as a non-commissioned officer in the army must be able to think clear and quickly at all times. And I know that alcohol will lessen my ability to think clear and quickly. Alcohol can and very often does cause a soldier to "shoot off his mouth" and reveal information of use to the enemy. About this I am on guard. As Mr. Smith said Alcohol benumbs the brain.

Count me in, Mrs. Fultz. If I were home I would give your fine organization my wholehearted support.

Perhaps you noticed my return address and wondered if I were in the States. So many of my friends have. I am not in the States. I am somewhere overseas.

One of Rochester's popular young men, Bill Gilliland, is stationed at a post near to where I am. When I was around Rochester I never met him. Capt. Minter in his letter wrote very highly about Bill Gilliland. I hope some day I run across him.

Whenever you see Capt. Minter, W. A. Howard and Mr. Taylor give them my regards. They are fine men.

Keep up the fight and the liquor traffic will quit.

Very cordially yours,  
Sgt. Charles C. Coffman,  
A.S.N. 15060866  
A.P.O. 825, c/o Postmaster  
New Orleans, La.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, December 4, 1942]

### LETTER FROM HOWARD HENDERSON

804 T.S.S. (SP)  
Sioux Falls, S.D.  
December 1, 1942

Dear Ed:

Sorry I haven't written sooner but I just didn't get around to it before.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I haven't much to write about as there isn't much of interest happening around here.

The weather has been cold here for almost a week, and it was down to and below zero on a couple of occasions.

It has been snowing here some every day and it is snowing rather hard now.

I don't have much opportunity to attend church or Sunday school nowadays. I have to work on Sundays.

There isn't a whole lot to do around camp or town, except to go to the shows or USO or service centers.

The people are very friendly and I like the city very much, but I don't like the weather.

I sure hope that I can be back home to catch suckers, any size, by next spring. If not possible, I would settle for some ice fishing next winter. Just save me some fish, will you?

Army life isn't so bad, but it will never take the place of home. It is just what you make it, so I try to like it.

I am busy most of the time and that makes time pass fast. Guess that I will quit now. "Merry Christmas" to all of you.

Sincerely yours,

Howard Henderson

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, December 7, 1942]

### SECOND LETTER FROM HOWARD SHERBONDY

By V-Mail

Pfc. Howard Sherbondy  
A.S.N. 35169544, APO 25,  
Antitank Co., 27th Inf.  
c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco, Calif.  
November 24, 1942

Dear Ed:

I was sorry that I haven't answered your letter any sooner but I have been very busy and haven't had time to do much writing. I was very glad to get your letter.

As you can see by my new address I've been transferred to a different regiment and it's the regular army. The regiment I was in is made up of New York National Guardsmen and was the army of the United States. A lot of my friends that came into the army when I did were left behind but most of them came along to this outfit. I like this better even though we've been kept busy and don't get any passes. We've really been training hard. This company is made up approximately the same way as the other outfit. I am one of six truck drivers for one of the platoons here but we don't have any trucks yet. We're supposed to get new ones later one.

Thanks for doing me the honor of putting my letter in the paper. It sure surprised me.

Well, I guess I'll have to sign off. I haven't been able to send any cards out because I couldn't get to town but here's wishing you and yours a very Merry Christmas and the happiest of New Years you've had.

Your friend,

Howard Sherbondy

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, December 7, 1942]

### FOURTH LETTER FROM JAY CARR

268th C.S. Sp. Bn (H.D.)  
A.P.O. No. 37, c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco, Calif.  
Nov. 20, 1942  
(South Seas)

Hi Korb:

## SvcMen WW II Letters

What's new? Hope this finds everyone feeling well. I never felt better. This is a swell climate. It's been some time since I've heard from you. I've a few minutes so will take advantage of them. This letter will take the place of a Christmas card (I hope). We can't get any here at the present.

I've been playing soft ball. We have about three games a week. So far we've been doing alright. We received quite a bit of equipment in the past week or so. We are building a volley ball court now. I stay away from the boxing gloves. They brought us a new radio last week. It's the first I've listened to the news since I've been in service. I always believe what we don't know doesn't hurt us. It was a battery set. We don't have electric lights here.

Well, Korb, there isn't anything else to talk about so drop me a line once in a while. Tell the family I said "hello." Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.

Your pal,

Jay

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, December 7, 1942]

### LETTER FROM WARREN CORNELL

Co. H, 2nd Bn., 508 Parachute Inf.

Camp Blanding, Fls., U. S. Army

Dear Mother and Friends:

I am in Florida where it is very warm. I am in the 508 Parachute Inf. I think the parachute troops are the toughest service in the army. In March or the 1st of April I will make 5 jumps, around 15,000 to 18,000 ft., from a plane. It sure will be a thrill. If I complete my jumps O.K. I will receive my wings. Then I am going to report for Officers Training School. Which I hope to become a 1st or 2nd lieutenant. It sure will be an honor. My best regards to my friends and to all at Rochester.

Pvt. Warren L. Cornell

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, December 8, 1942]

### LETTER FROM CECIL TAYLOR

Nov. 25, 1942

California

Dear Sister:

I received your package, was very glad to get it. To tell you the truth it only lasted around 1 hour. You know sometimes it doesn't pay to have friends. For you see we live in tents, six of us in one tent. And it so happened that our chow that evening was lousy and everybody saw me carrying the package to my tent. And you'd be surprised how many fellows came to see me that night. I took the cigarettes and candy and gum out before they had a chance to get them. Everybody are friends, what one gets, it's for all. It's the best way to be.

Well Dola, we were in Tennessee for eight weeks. I didn't mind them so much. Although we'd have a 3 or 4 day problem every week and on them we'd not get much sleep or much to eat. Some days we'd not have a thing to eat. And on a week-end there'd be no place to go, but the scenery and everything was different from living in the barracks at Pine Camp. I expect we will never go back to Pine Camp again.

Well on Nov. 16 we loaded our vehicles and mounted the Pullman cars for California. It took us 5 days and nights to reach our destination. I enjoyed the trip very much for having never been west of the Mississippi. We went across part of the Grand Canyon, went through 10 states altogether. We unloaded 30 miles on the other side of Needles, Calif. We then drove 149 miles to our location. Wow! What a place! Sand around everywhere as far as the eye can see. But all around in the background are mountains. They look as if they are all stone and not one living thing on them. I will admit it is beautiful in a way especially the sunsets. The nights here are pretty cool, takes three blankets to keep warm. But the days are warm enough. It gets from 80 to 100 degrees.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Well today is Thanksgiving, it's a holiday for us. But no place to go for it's around 80 miles to any town, 300 to Los Angeles. For dinner we had turkey, mashed potatoes, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, cranberries, doughnuts and later we had some beer. But I couldn't drink much because I am in charge of camp today.

Every day we have a half hour of sunning. Everybody runs around in their shorts. They don't have to worry because there's no civilians around.

I don't know just how long we will be here. It's hard to tell. You see we didn't go to Camp Young. We are out here to have desert training.

Well, Dola, will close this chatter. Tell everybody hello and tell them to write, for I like to hear from everybody. Forgot to say we have lots of desert rats out here. They are brown with a bushy tail.

Your brother,  
Cec.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, December 8, 1942]

### SECOND LETTER FROM LEO D. ZIMMERMAN

Lemoore Flying School  
527th School Sqdn.  
Lemoore, Calif.  
November 20, 1942

Dear Friends:

Your most recent letter arrived on Thanksgiving Day. The folder enclosed was very nice especially the message on the back. We do have so much to be thankful for. I could think of nothing else all day. We should have more such days, to remind us of the many fine things we have been blessed with. The entire folder was filled with many fine thoughts.

We had a regular banquet for dinner, even handed out cigars.

Haven't heard from Emerson yet as he must not have left for the Army. We are so busy here that it will be a long time before I can get up to see him again.

It has been very cold and foggy here the past week, but the sun usually manages to peep through some time during the day.

Had a letter from Jim saying Major had been called, but perhaps it was only for reclassification.

My new work here is keeping me plenty busy, but I like it very much, and overwork won't hurt me I am sure.

One of the most beautiful sights to be seen is Reveille in an Army camp. The bugle sounds, and the band comes forth with that beautiful piece, "The Star Spangled Banner" all soldiers stop where they are and face Old Glory as she is lowered for the day, vehicles stop and all dismount and stand at attention and salute the flag. It always fills one's heart with pride to know he is a part of what the flag stands for.

Well it is almost time for it now so I must close. May god bless all of you,

Your friend,

Leo

P.S. - Your Thanksgiving letter was very much appreciated.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, December 8, 1942]

### LETTER FROM ROBERT HARTUNG

Cpl. Robt. W. Hartung  
December 2, 1942

Dear Friend:

I've received two letters from you and now I've received a very lovely gift from the Sunday school. I'll answer my tardy letters to you and also thank you for the gift and hope you will convey my gratitude to all the thoughtful people for remembering a Rochester boy in the service.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Yes, I'm still a Rochester boy even if it has been almost ten years since I've lived there. I've lived in a very lovely state but still the thoughts of Rochester are with me and whenever asked about my home town I'll puff up like a toad and really brag about all of the better points, and it has so many. I've traveled around quite a lot and never have I ever come into contact with a more congenial group of people. I would enjoy attending one of those good get-togethers that the Sunday school had quite often.

So Ed, thank every one for being so kind and thoughtful on the eve of this most sacred holiday. The world is in such a turmoil and it makes Christmas seem so much better when you know people at home are really thinking of you and wishing you well.

Since I last wrote to you I've covered a lot of ground and also have been given an advancement. I am now a corporal and I am quite proud of it since I got the rating in such a short time. I hope to receive another advancement soon but would sooner have this war end. My rating was not a reward for my work as ward master and I'm doing my best work to show my appreciation for their faith in my ability.

Two weeks ago Monday I left Aberdeen for a trip to California as medical aid on a troop train. I enjoyed the trip very much, although 7,000 miles traveling in two weeks is a lot. I saw a lot of new country and met a host of new soldiers that are being moved West to establish schools like we have here on the proving grounds. The soldiers were all very jovial and I think they have every right to be as the climate out west will be much better than the east coast.

On my return trip I stopped over in Chicago for three days with my mother, father, brother and my wife. It was very nice being with them but the time flies so very fast when a person is on leave and having an enjoyable time. Maybe I will be able to get back to Rochester and see you good people but if things go as predicted I will be moving on to new lands soon. My wife will be here at Aberdeen soon to spend the remaining time in Aberdeen with me.

It is now drawing close to taps time so I must close. I want to take this last chance, though, to thank you you swell people again for remembering a lonesome soldier on this beautiful time of the year. May you all have the very Merriest Christmas and Happy New Year.

Yours truly,  
Cp. Bob Hartung  
191031634, 1340th S.U. (S.C.) M.D. Sec.,  
Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, December 8, 1942]

### THIRD LETTER FROM MYRON REED

With the U. S. A. Forces  
in the Middle East  
November 26, 1942

Dear Mother and Dad:

Here it is another Thanksgiving Day, and even though I am so far from home, I guess I have plenty to be thankful for. We had a swell dinner today, roast turkey and all the trimmings except cranberries. We had pumpkin pie, though, so that was just as good. I hope that all the boys who are out on the front doing the fighting fared as well but I doubt if they did. I don't think that many of us in this outfit realize how lucky we are. I hope that you both have had a pleasant Thanksgiving. Wish I could have been with you. Maybe next year, I hope.

Our canteen opened today and I was just over and bought my quota. We are rationed on most everything but even so we are allowed a plenty. We are allowed a pack of cigarettes a day and a bar of candy a day. A package of razor blades a week and a tube of tooth paste and shaving cream a month. There are a number of other items which we can get that aren't rationed. I feel that we are very lucky to be able to buy all the things that we need over here and at a moderate price, too. Cigarettes are three Piastres a pack or the same as twelve cents American. Not bad at all.

I started writing this when I first came to work at four o'clock but I got busy and had to stop so I will try to finish now. I just went to the mess hall and had a piece of apple pie and some

## SvcMen WW II Letters

coffee for my supper. I'm still full of turkey from dinner so couldn't eat much. We have been having very good food all the time since we have been here. Just about the same as in the States except not many Irish potatoes. Plenty of sweet potatoes, though. We had some strawberries one day a week or so ago and boy, they sure were good. They were fresh frozen. You don't need to worry about my not getting enough to eat because we have plenty but I do get awfully hungry for some home cooking every once in a while.

We are having to wear our winter uniforms now whenever we leave the post so I wish you would pack my and cap belt and send them to me. [sic] I don't know why I ever sent them home in the first place 'cause I'm sure not going to want them after I get out of this army. It probably will take quite a while for me to get them but maybe they will come in time for me to get to wear them a few times this season.

From the news we receive in letters over here, things must really be getting tough back home. One of the boys had a letter stating that the government was making everyone give up the spare tire from their car. Is that right? If so, I don't imagine they would want mine, the shape it is in. By the way, how is my old buggy, does it still run? Boy, I sure miss my car more than anything else that I had in civilian life. I hear that they have places over here where a person can rent automobiles but I haven't tried as yet.

Well, I have done a little sight seeing since I've been here. I have been to Cairo and the Pyramids and I enjoyed both very much. I can't begin to describe those pyramids. But I will say that they are much larger than I ever imagined. There are several of them. The largest covers 12 acres and is over four hundred feet high, so you can get some idea of the size. I am going to try to go again some time if I can. Some of the boys want to spend Christmas in Palestine and I'd kinda like to myself if we can get the time. That would really be an experience.

Well, I've written just about all I know for this time so I guess I'd better just say so-long for now. I hope this finds you both in the best of health. Write as often as you can, I enjoy your letters so much.

With love,  
Myron

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, December 10, 1942]

### LETTER FROM FRED J. BROWN

Los Angeles, Calif.

Wednesday, Dec. 2, 1942

Dear Mother and All:

We got here last Monday night at 12:30. We unloaded our trucks and jeep. We were the seventh train to come from Fort Leonard Wood and there are 45 more trains to come.

We are just across the California line. The nearest town is Yuma, Ariz., 18 miles away.

We were just a couple of feet from the Mexican border. The best town in Texas, I think, is San Antonio. We were in Texas for two days and went through Arizona overnight. We aren't to our regular place yet. The part we are in now, nobody was here before we came. It's just all sand and mountains. There are mountains on all sides of us. The nearest one is about five miles away. Coming Sunday some of us are going over to it.

We are putting up tents today. The tents are big enough for seven people to sleep in. The last few nights we have been sleeping on the ground. It gets warm in the daytime and real cold at night.

We left Fort Leonard Wood on November 26 at 3:00 and it took us until Monday night at midnight. We took turns being guards on the trucks. We had around 63 trucks on our train.

We don't have any lights or much water. We have one and one-fifth gallons each day. That is, drinking water, washing clothes or anything else you use water for. We don't have any way of getting water. They go into town to get it.

We are going to build a camp, and train at the same time. The last time it rained here was in May. They say when it does rain, it really rains.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

We are going out tomorrow with our packs and will stay out for a few days. They want you to get used to anything that will come up. It's time for chow so will close.

With love,  
Fred

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, December 11, 1942]

### LETTER FROM RAMON ALBER

Nov. 29, 1942

Dear Folks:

Here I am, trying to write on the train, Northern Pacific. We left Chicago Friday night about 8:00. About 7:00 Saturday morning we were in St. Paul, Minn. Saturday night at dusk we were in Cushing, N.D. What beautiful country! It was night when we went through Iowa. Do we have the eats! We are still in Montana. We have gone through the northern end of the Rocky mountains. Also through tunnels, one a mile long or better. We are not allowed off the train any time. All the boys are sure tired resting. No exercise except back and forth to meals. I bunk with 5 other boys. Swell boys. There is one from South Bend, three from Chicago and one from Gary, all my age. All six of us have done nothing but write, eat, sleep, look at the country, read papers and magazines and play rum.

I sure am glad I wore my overcoat. The snow is to 2 feet deep in Montana. Lots of wild game and horses. We came by the main entrance of the Yellowstone National Park this morning. We will probably be at our destination late tonight or early Monday morning, if the snow isn't too bad. All the boys are in the same boat as I am in. All of us thought we would be at the Great Lakes. Surprising isn't it? There are 240 boys and a few men going. It's to be a new Navy Station where we are headed. The Chief Petty Officer did not tell us yet where we are going but probably around the tip of Idaho. But he said about 40 miles from Spokane, Wash.

It's 3:45 now and we are still in the mountains, but not the Rockies. Lots of sheep here, and streams, fir trees, ducks, pheasants, rabbits and horses. The officer said it is around 1,850 miles from Chicago, long ways. We travel around 45-55 miles per hour. I shaved this morning. And are my clothes getting dirty! We get 18 shots when we reach camp. We had dinner today at 1 o'clock. We had beef, mashed potatoes, green beans, peas and carrots, bread and butter, pie, jelly, coffee or milk and all you want of everything too. Not like eating in a restaurant. We have pop, peanuts, candy, anything you want. The chief gets us papers and books to read. It's the berries so far. The porter, a negro, is a killer! He helps us with our bunks and so forth. We stopped in Helena, Montana. I'll be glad when we arrive there, where we go, as I can clean up better. As far as we know we will be there Monday morning. I will write at camp as soon as possible. Well, all of you take it easy back there. I have spent only 60c so far. I can maybe still save money, I hope. I hope Aunt Marietta is O.K. Well I hope it is warmer there than here. It's 20 above now. Snowing awful hard. So long for this time.

Your son,  
Ramon Alber

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, December 11, 1942]

### SECOND LETTER FROM JESSE J. CALVERT

Pfc. Jesse Calvert  
15th T.C.S., S.P.A.F.S.,  
Lubbock, Texas  
12-18-42

Dear Friend:

I'm sorry I haven't answered your letter soon, but I've been on K.P., guard and now I'm assistant in charge of quarters for tonight. Well you haven't anything on me. It's been snowing all day about five inches of snow has fallen and it's still snowing. So I can have snowball fights and go sleigh riding the same as you. Thanks for the wonderful letter, I really appreciate them and also the church bulletins. I received a package of stationery from the church last week. I've got to

## SvcMen WW II Letters

write and thank them for it. I will try to write you a letter next time, but I had so many letters to answer, as I received them for my birthday, so most of them I'm answering with cards. Let me hear from you again soon. As ever,

Your friend, Bill

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, December 11, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JEAN WALBURN

Myrtle Beach, S.C.

Dear Dad and Mom:

I'm afraid my morale is cracking. Why? Because we are so hampered by insignificant equipment. Oh, yes, the city is nice. The scenery is grand. But who wants to live in barracks out in the middle of a pine woods? I think I can speak for all the men when I say that we would be glad to put up with the poor living conditions if it were getting us any place. For the past week several of us have been laying around just waiting our turn to get in some practice in planes, but there aren't enough planes, and what few we have are old, and are outfitted with old broken down equipment.

I was scheduled for a flight today, but couldn't get off the ground because as soon as one break was fixed another would show its ugly head. Three times we attempted to start, but each time we were grounded because of bad instruments.

I'm not telling you this to make you unhappy nor make you give up trying. I only hope it makes you better understand our need for more and better planes.

I saw an old newspaper today, and someone said that recent battles are pretty much in our favor. Maybe those boys are getting the new planes. I hope so.

I know, Mom, that you don't have many tin cans, as you do most of your canning in glass jars, but I know that you have a few. Have you turned them in on the scrap drives? Dad, have you picked up all those old plow points and given them for scrap? Each little bit of scrap helps. Don't wait for someone to come around and pick it up for you. Gather it up yourself and take it to your salvage depot, but don't make an extra trip. Rochester surely has a scrap depot. If all the people who went into Rochester would take what scrap they have just laying around soon there would be a huge pile. Then when the government calls for more metal there it would be - ready and waiting to be converted into new protection for liberty.

Don't sit back and say, "My little pile of junk won't help," but talk it over with the folks you meet in town or at your clubs. Sure we're on the offensive, now, but can we stay in that position without new equipment flowing in? That question is up to you. Answer it as you wish.

There are thousands of us boys who are eager to get at those yellow spined axis vultures, but we can't do it all ourselves - united we stand. We must have confidence in each other, so I shall take new courage, knowing that I can depend upon you at home to furnish those things that we can't build.

Your son,

Jean

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, December 12, 1942]

### LETTER FROM HERBERT ZIMMERMAN

Tuesday, Dec. 8, 1949

Dear Friend:

Your lovely letter and the postal cards received and I sincerely thank you.

I was over to visit Ed Perschbacher at the hospital again since I wrote you last and, of course, conveyed your message to him. I found him feeling pretty well and hopes to be out again in a short time.

We have been having a shortage in milk and butter for sometime. Have not had any butter for a month. About six out of seven days we have to use half Carnation milk and half water on our cereal for breakfast in place of milk but we don't complain because Uncle Sam has a lot of us in here to feed.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

It has been raining the last couple days so it has been rather disagreeable here. Rain never matters though, as our hikes and activities go on just the same.

Thanking you again for your lovely letters, I am, as ever,

Your friend,

Herbert Zimmerman

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, December 16, 1942]

### LETTER FROM GEORGE D. HOLLOWAY

FortBragg,N.C.

Dec. 7, 1942

Dear Friend:

Sorry to be so late on answering your pleasant letters but since I'm back on my duties have been very busy. We have been going out all day in the field training and don't have too much time to ourselves. We have a night problem every week on Friday nights from around 4:00 Fridayafternoon until Sturday morning about 11:00. By the time we get back to our barracks we're very tired and want to rest. The only thing that is bad about it is the weather. I ets very cold in the evenings and don't get but very little sleep or rest during the problem. We have fun during it all but always glad to get back.

Just a year ago today brought very unhappy news to us all. It doesn't seem possible that our great country is at war. One could hardly believe the news that came on the fatal Sunday. This morning around 5:30 a.m. we were all awakened by explosives and really made us all go to action. We had a black-out and us trying to get a full field pack ready with the rest of the equipment in the dark together. We fell out, ran over to our open field to gather around for a talk. They had a big fire and our General gave us a talk of thehappenings of last year at this time. You can imagine what he talked about and we all have thatfighting spirit and ready to go. After the explosions we had here dring our sleep, we know in a way how they felt during the bombing. It shook our barracks and really seemed like the real thing. It took us a few minutes to open our eyes to realize what was happening. A year ago I didn't believe that I would be in the service of Uncle Sam but was ready at the call. Dec. 7, 1941 brought much disaster, tears, heart-aches and brokenhomes. That's why we are doing our duty now. No one can stab an American in the back and get by with it! They arousedthe American people and are really going to suffer for it. We all have to give and take to keep what we hold and will always keep.! We have to give up a lot but it's for the greatest cause on earth - freedom - may it always ring. You're all doingyour duties at home, like we are and nothing can be the outcome but victory!

I'm a different man now altogether. My darling wife came down Nov. 28 to stay until I leave. It sure makes a big difference in having the loved one so close. I can only go in town three times a week - Wedesday night and week-ends. We have that much to be thankful for. Three times a week to be together is better than once in several months. It's really going to be a white Christmas for us even though we don't have any snow. I'm going to try and get off from my duties Thursday night 24th until Monday morning. She got a job in town and gets off all day Saturday so we could have a very pleasantholiday.

I want to thank you sincerely for the stationery, handkerchief and gum the church sent. I appreciate it very much. It's a wonderful feeling to have such people at home to think of us boys in the service.

Will be closing for thepresent and get to work. Give my best regards to all and a very happy and pleasant Christmas.

Your friend,

George

SvcMen WW II Letters

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, December 16, 1942]

LETTER FROM FRED GORDON

Co. L, 16th Inf., APO 1,  
c/o Postmaster, New York, N.Y.

Dear Dad:

Well I expect you think I must have dried up and blowed away. Well, I'm still in there pitching for the dear old U.S.A. I feel great and am gaining weight. My, but this boy is sure getting around the world. Now it's England, now it's North Africa, off again, on again Finagan.

I'm writing this letter under great odds. This d---d oil or gasoline burning lamp isn't worth a whole lot. Well, I'm being christened right over here. I'm sleeping in a pup tent and believe me that ground is plenty hard. This getting up in the morning with this heavy dew makes it mighty uncomfortable. Golly, shaving in cold water and a biting wind. What a life. Boy, when I get home I'm really going to feel fortunate. Believe me, I never knew I was so lucky in little old Rochester.

Well, I'll continue your letter. We moved out of the hills and are now on the outskirts of a small village somewhere in northern Africa. We are still living in pup tents and it's no fun. Getting up in the morning and putting on your clothes is tough going - damp as rain.

I'm getting along fine, though, and have a swell company commander and a good bunch of officers to work with which means a lot. I have a good platoon and some good sergeants in my squads. The big problem is water. I don't think I've had a good drink of water since I've been over here. I sure have got the coffee habit, though, three times a day. I had some beer the other night which tasted pretty good, believe me.

These Arabs who live in this desolate country are sure miserable people. They scarcely have enough clothes to cover their bodies and then they are only rags. They dig up dead soldiers' bodies and get their clothes even - pretty bad, eh?

Our company had quite a few wounded, shrapnel wounds, a couple of maghine gun wounds. Pretty tough work, this war business. Well, I'll close. Will write more later.

Love,  
Fred

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, December 16, 1942]

LETTER FROM ALBERT L. FISHER

10th Tech. Sch. Sqd.  
Lowry Field, Colorado  
December 4, 1942

Dearest Mother and All:

Received your most wonderful letter yesterday and was very glad to get it too. Your letters are so welcome. Just like taking a tonic. I certainly look forward to your letters all the time. All the boys look forward for letters from their home. I guess it is only natural that I should also. It is so seldom that any of us fellows gets home, therefore we certainly appreciate hearing from home. The place that everyone loves so dear, yet they never realize it until after they have been gone for sometime. - - - - - [The rest of this letter is too long to copy. WCT] - - - - -

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Your Soldier Son,  
Albert L. Fisher

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, December 17, 1942]

## SvcMen WW II Letters

### LETTER FROM DEVERN BRUBAKER

Nov. 20, 1942

Dear Folks:

Well here it is almost time for Thanksgiving. I suppose it is rather cold around home by now? Probably wearing heavy clothes and overcoats?

Now let me tell you how I am dressed at the present time. I am stripped to the waist setting in the sun. I am getting a little tanned. But not as much as I would if the days weren't so short. Some of the fellows say it is quite a lot like California weather. Very warm in the day and cold at night.

We were told that we could write home but of course we are under the same restrictions as we always have been. You know how that has been. We can tell you this but nothing of that. Tell them that you are well, O.K. getting along fine and a few personal matters.

I am O.K. and feeling fine. I don't believe I have ever been in better shape. I have enjoyed this country very much. Of course I have seen better, but it is just as the pictures show it and as history describes it. I am now in North Africa. I can just see you now, as you'll read this "Oh! My Goodness! How he gets around." Remember when I told you that I had a chance to join the navy under construction for foreign service and it was to be in Africa? Remember how far it had seemed? Well it really doesn't seem as far now as it did then. I have enjoyed seeing some of the natives and their ways. You see there are a lot of Arabs and Mohammadans around in Africa. And the country and habits of the people and many other things reminds me of history I have read. It's even described in the Bible. I made the remark to one of the fellows as we passed a very shabby beggar. I said, "I think I'll take one of those home to Mother so she can put a real beggar in the church's next Christmas play." I don't care how you try you'll never be able to make a good looking beggar. You can't sew enough patches together in the states to make a typical beggar. They are just as I had always pictured them. Then the pictures of the old man with his little pack mules. Some of them are hardly any bigger than a big dog. All of this blends into and makes the civilization that exists here in Africa. They seem to have an abundant supply of grapes. As they certainly have large grape harbors (as we call them) here.

Well between these two paragraphs we have had a baseball game. I have gone to the Post Exchange and had chow. It is dark now and I am in my tent writing by candlelight. I am taking things easy, smoking a cigar. The only thing is that we aren't able to have a chair in our tent, as we are in pup tents and my height sometimes is a handicap.

As for me and the Army I still feel as I did quite some time ago. I don't regret it at all. I don't feel that I have missed anything and I'm quite sure that I have really got a kick out of some very inconvenient spots where several stood and made themselves miserable by griping. I still say that it isn't going to get me down. Of course, I'll admit that sleeping on the ground isn't like sleeping in a hotel room, but I don't regret it at all. I have gotten a lot out of it and I hope to get a lot more out of it.

The only thing that worries me is when I can't write and let you know that I am O.K. I know that you all worry and I don't like for you to do that. I honestly think that the folks back home have it harder than most of the fellows in the service. I know that everything is rationed at home now. And as much as I'd like to be around there, I'm sure that it would be somewhat disappointing to me. As I remember home and the states it was full of activity and there were lots of places to go and now I know that that is impossible. I wouldn't even be surprised if we don't have better food than a lot of people back there. I don't know as to that. Anyway I just don't want you to worry. I have seen evidence of some real fellows and cooperation and I am very sincere when I say that I am proud to be one of the mass of men now with Uncle Sam.

I had a little tough luck with my wrist watch. The balance staff broke and I wasn't able to get it fixed. I am carrying it in my barrack's bag. I got a chance to buy a watch from Neal. And I might add that it really is a good watch. I paid him \$21 for it. It's a very plain watch. Swiss made, 15 jewels. I really think it's O.K.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

How are Sis and Don? I have not written to them for quite some time, but then I really don't have much of a chance to write so let them read the ones I send home. Tell them to write as I would like to hear from them. I think they owe me a letter anyway.

I might add that I have another A.P.O. 528. Send my mail by Airmail and it shouldn't take long for me to get it. Don't worry about the mail that has been sent to previous A.P.O.s as I'll get it sooner or later.

I haven't picked up any souvenirs as yet. I intend to pick up somewhere. Tell Maxine that I still remember the promise I made her (to send her something from somewhere that I thought she would like). I'll still do it if I have to buy in Rochester before I go down to see her. Tell everyone else that I said hello. I won't be able to write as often as I did so someone will not get mail as regular.

Tell them all that I send my best regards for the coming holiday season. I sure wish I could be home for Christmas, but I don't suppose it'll hurt to miss one. We've had a lot of very nice Christmases and I don't have any reason to think we'll not be able to have a nice one after this next one. I am rather hoping to be able to help enjoy some of the dancing at Colonial next summer. Maybe that's hoping too much, but I don't hardly think so.

Well, Mother, I guess I'd better get to bed.

Lots of love to all,

Devern.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, December 18, 1942]

### LETTER FROM E. R. MARTZ (WILLIAMS)

Nov. 4, 1942

Dear Folks:

Will try and answer your letter to my best ability. I am just fine, never felt better in my life. Things are real dull down here south of the Equator, but we make the best of it.

Coming down here makes me a shellback. A lot of us fellows were initiated when we crossed the equator. It was more fun. Some of the old times did it. They cut a cross in our hair - and V's too. Some of us got eggs broken on our head and salt and peppered.

After we landed and got situated we started looking around. The natives have a dance which they call the virgin dance. It's for girls not over two. They dance more or less of a hula, and they are the high chief's daughters. The girls are not bad to look at. They are pretty dark. At night you can't tell whether they are dark or white. The language is hard to learn, but we do a good job trying.

The natives are very religious. They go to church all day Sunday and at night until eight. They are most all Catholics. They have a mighty fine breed of horses here. They seem to have a lot of race horse blood in them. They have an awfully lot of cattle here. They run in fair sized herds. And they have burros here also. The people use them to gather cocoanuts, by putting iron baskets on their backs. That is, they pile the cocoanuts in this manner. They they come along with a team of oxen hitched to a two-wheeled cart and haul them to the mill. I'm getting so that I can climb a coconut tree just like a native. So much for that.

So Edward has joined the navy. How does he like it? The rest of the guys must be joining the U.S.O. (Army) by the news clipping you sent. I sure wish I were there to eat some of that ice cream because I know it was good.

I received the package you sent in fine shape. The cookies were fine. The gum sure hit the spot. We don't get much of it down here. The cigarettes were alright but we can get all of them we need and cheaper than you can. Just send cookies and gum and things like that. Save your money that you put out for cigarettes. We get them for 60 cents a carton. Thanks a million for everything.

Mother, we are getting air mail service here now which takes eight days. If you want to send me anything for Christmas just send me some tape and things for cuts and the like. That will be the best present of all. And a pair of colored glasses. Will close for I have to go on guard. Good night.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Your son,  
Grant

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, December 19, 1942]

### SECOND LETTER FROM RAMON ALBER

Ramon Alber, A.S.  
U. S. Naval Training Station  
Camp Ward, Co. 132  
Farragut, Idaho  
Dec. 13, 1942

Dear Folks and All:

Well, here I am, writing as ever. I sure have done a lot of writing lately. I received mail on Friday for the first time. Was surely glad to hear from you. I have written you three or four letters already but I guess it just takes time to get there and back. Write whenever you can. If you don't have my clothes yet, you should get them any time now.

Well, back to the eating part. We have swell meals here. Meat once or twice a day and ice cream once or twice a week. Since I've been here several days, I can write more. The trip out here was wonderful. All through Illinois, Iowa, North Dakota, Minnesota, Montana and Idaho, up in the tall peak. If you look on the map and look up Coeur d'Alene, you can just about know where we are. We are 25 miles south of that town on the shores of Lake Pend Oreille (pronounced Ponderay). My barracks are about a mile from shore. I have all my naval clothes now. I am learning to talk navy way. "I sleep on the starboard side." We have a swell recreation building. There is an indoor pool to swim in and we have basketball and other games. Last Saturday we were practicing swimming, diving and jumping in life belts.

The snow here is melting fast since Thursday. The "Old Sun" sure does melt things here and today the snow is about all gone. The temperature is 64 degrees above.

I wrote to Sis the other night. I hope uncle Wes is better and also Grandma. And hope Marietta is well enough to go back to her work this coming week. Glad she got lots of birthday greetings. Sure was a lot of them.

Sorry Morgan and Shorty didn't pass for the Navy. I hope Pat will like it if he has to go. Did Harold and the rest have a nice visit? The snow must be rather heavy down there. I mean over there from here.

About the Army, well, the Navy is a whole lot different. Here the work is white work and I mean white. Also neat - that is personally. As to grumbling, it doesn't do you any good. You do things, even if it is the hard way. So clean you must be. Also the barracks. We get up at 5:30 sharp. I mean sharp, move. This morning one boy from Chicago was in bed a little longer, about three minutes, and he got four hours guard duty from 2 to 6 in the morning. This navy life is sure interesting so far. It's sure a big kick to watch things that go on. One boy talked in "ranks at colors" and he had to hold a hat in his mouth so he would not talk any more.

This Saturday we got our other shot in the right arm, the double typhoid shot. It sure weakens you. We all went to bed after the shot for a couple hours. Two boys passed out. I guess they were scared more than anything.

I do have a lot to learn and I have learned a lot already. By the way, I am sending a newspaper home, which each boy at camp gets, "The Farragut News." Read it carefully. It tells a lot of the camp.

I am sending pictures from here too. They are taken close by but not of the camp. All pictures are taken by regular navy photographers. I cannot have a camera nor a radio either. But I could use a pen and eversharp. Tell the girls to send me pictures of what they take. I would be glad to get them to show to my shipmates. If you send me any Christmas presents I could use the pen and pencil and a nice white scarf. When I get liberty for 12 hours I am going to Spokane and have my picture taken. We will get it probably a week from Tuesday or Wednesday.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Boy the time sure flies here because we are always on the alert. I found I can go to school after "boot" camp. I think I'll go but won't get to come home on leave. But if I take fleet duty, I would be home for five days before I went to sea. But I think I will go to school.

Tell all my friends "hello" for me. Write as often as you can.

Will close, wishing you a happy Christmas,

Your son,

Ramon

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, December 21, 1942]

### THIRD LETTER FROM LEO D. ZIMMERMAN

December 15, 1942

Dear Friend:

Received your very nice letter several days ago, and of course was very glad to hear from you again.

Due to a heavy fog we have not flown for the last two days, so really will be busy trying to make up for lost time.

Should get my furlough around January fifth, and arrive home around the eighth. However, one never knows for certain until the last minute. As the time draws nearer I become more anxious to see Rochester and all its fine people.

From your description of the weather I had better wear a double set of red flannels, as the coldest it has been here is freezing and then only once.

You will excuse me, I am sure, if I cut this short as I have some work to do and must write home.

Your friend,

Leo

P.S. - Yesterday I received a very nice package from the church. Will you please be so kind as to thank them for their thoughtfulness.

Cp. Leo D. Zimmerman, 36398225

527th B.F.T.S., L.A.F.S.,

Lemoore, Calif.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, December 22, 1942]

### LETTER FROM NORMAL PALMER

Dec. 20, 1942

Hi, Lois:

Sorry you had to wait so long before getting this letter, but I have never been so busy in my Army career than I have this last week.

I came to pre-flight last Tuesday and ever since then they have had us on the ball every minute of the day. In the evenings we have regular study periods so we have to do our home work. It reminds me of my high school days, only it is a little harder.

My subjects are Code, Mathematics, and organization of Army Ground Forces. I've had part of the mathematics and org. of the Army, but the Code is something new. It is harder than what I thought, although we are making good progress. We have learned 12 words in 3 days. Our classes each last one hour, practically like our high school days.

The underclassmen sure have a lot of hazing from the Upperclassmen and if you were a hot-headed person you would have a hard time here. We have to, at all times, walk with our chests out, shoulders back and at a rigid attention. It is very tiresome, but it improves our posture.

We are restricted to the area for 4 1/2 weeks and after that we become Upperclassmen and can go anywhere. The Upperclassmen have "Open-Post" today, so we get "open-hill" which means that we can go anywhere in the pre-flight area. Also to the show, which otherwise we could not. Being "open-hill" today we didn't have any call to quarters, so we got to go to the show. It was "Thunderbirds" and a fairly good show.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

At mess we have to eat at attention and ask the Upperclassmen whether they care for a certain food before we can get it. All in all, we can get plenty to eat because the K.P.s serve us and we can get as many dishes of food as we can eat.

One nice thing here, we don't have to pull K.P., for they have colored ones, but we do have guard and that comes about every 10 to 12 days.

Well, Lois, this is about all I have to say about my training so I will talk about something else.

Thanks a lot for the Christmas card. It was very lovely. I hope you get to have a nice Christmas. For me we may get the day off, but I don't know for sure. So if you will when Christmas comes, just think of me.

Sure would have liked to get in on the Alumni game, but I guess they done alright without me.

I sure would like some of the weather you are having up there, but I guess not, for here all we have is hot dusty days.

Our football team has broken up. We had that in the classification, but since we have come to pre-flight we split up into different groups. We won 4 out of our 5 games.

The cadet that is writing to you is one of my buddies. I showed him your picture one day, and he wanted to know whether you would write, if he wrote first. I told him I thought you would, so you know the rest. He is a very nice fellow and we get along O.K. He may talk a lot, but it is mostly to kid his fellow buddies.

Charles Schmitt is still in Miss. We have been writing quite regularly. He has made a P.F.C. rating and is expecting a Corporal's rating soon.

Well Sis, I guess you have it all now so will end.

Love,  
Pete

My new address is:  
Av./C. Normal Palmer  
A.A.F.P..S. (Pilot)  
S.A.A.C.C.  
San Antonio, Texas  
Group 18-2-C.  
[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, December 29, 1942]

### LETTER FROM EVERETT TAYLOR

Dec. 17, 1942

Dear Elsie and Family:

Well, sister, will try and answer your letter now. I received the package and Christmas greeting. I was sure glad to get them and thank you all for every ounce of it. I got two packages today from Santa. Tell the folks I received the cold medicine O.K. We haven't done a whole lot this week. Tomorrow we dress up in our blues and hold a parade. We have to stand at attention for 1 1/2 hours and that means not even blink an eye. Saturday will be my first pay and then we break detention. You see, so far we are in a batallion of 1,200 men. A fence all around our unit, and guards. We are not allowed out without a pass. I was in the sick ward six days and they let me out. I feel pretty good now. Hope to continue.

I don't like the weather here a bit. Day before yesterday was very nice, yesterday was raining and snowing, and this morning it was cold. Anyway after Saturday we will get liberty every few nights and Sundays. Norfolk is no place for a sailor. They do not like us. Things are sky high and no place to go to enjoy yourself, but I guess we are not here to enjoy ourselves for I know we are not on a vacation or picnic.

Unless I should be taken for replacement I should get a leave in January and leave for Island X around the last part of January. You understand you never know anything until it happens. The chow is fair, the big thing, I suppose is getting used to it. I got a letter from Fern today and one from Blanche last week. Fern said she had been sick. Sorry to hear that Robert has

## SvcMen WW II Letters

a cold. Tell Mary Ellen I received hers and Robert's greeting and letter and it was very interesting. I sure look forward to receiving my mail. I get a letter from Santa most every day.

I had to stop here for a while and the drill instructor came in and gave us a change. The outfit I'm in now I will stay in permanently. It makes a little change in my address but will put the same address for a day or so yet. We have had nothing but military training so we can protect ourselves. We will not use our trade any till we get to Island X. Well, Elsie, I hope you get through the winter in tip top shape. Hope to be seeing you soon.

Your brother,  
Everett Taylor

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, December 29, 1942]

### LETTER FROM JAMES S. SNYDER

Nov. 9, 1942

Dear Folks and All:

How is everyone by this time? Just fine, I hope.

I am just fine and couldn't expect to be better.

At the present time I am sailing on the high seas headed for some unknown destination to take up the most important job of my life.

So far I can say that I haven't been seasick but with the exception of one day. It has really been beautiful here on the water and then the other day it was a little rough but I got through without the feeling of sickness.

Will you please tell the girls and Ed my address so that they can write. Give them all my best regards.

I will sign off now. Please do not worry as I am feeling the best of my life.

Loads of love,  
Your son, Jim

Regards to everyone and will write more later.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, December 29, 1942]

### LETTER FROM HOVEY J. BALL

Akron, Ind.  
Dec. 28, 1942

News-Sentinel  
Rochester, Ind.

Am enclosing copy of letter and new address of Louis Ball, also letter and address of Jimmy Ball for publication in your paper under the heading, "News From Fulton County Men in the Service of the U.S."

Thank you,  
Reatha Ball

Dear Mom and Bill:

This is Thursday and I just got two shots, one in each arm. They are beginning to get sore too. Just signed the payroll but will have to wait until I get to my permanent base before I can have them send any home. I just have one more day of processing and I start my basic training, then in from three to eighteen days I'm shipped to my permanent base for my schooling. I'm trying to get in as an Armorer, it is a fast moving part of the Air Force. I'll get a furlough soon in that. The gnnery is slow right now and I want to be shipped out of here as soon as I can. I would like to go somewhere that I could go home on a week-end if I wanted to, and I want to. I sent a card to L. L. Patterson. Am expecting an answer very soon now. All they do is march us everywhere we go, and we got a lecture on marching and camping out, and I thought this was the Air Corps. The ocean was pretty tonight. I was as blue as anything I ever saw, and wind was blowing the palm trees back and forth. The ocean was covered with boats way out on the horizon. We have to turn our lights out at nine, and before nine we have to have our shades down so the light won't show out of our windows. We have a dim ouhere every night and after 11:30 we have a total black-out.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I went out on the drill field yesterday and was eaten up by the ants, they are thick down here.

Tell Bob to tell all my friends in Rochester and South Bend I said "Hello" and give them my address if they want it, as I sue would liketo hear from someone I know. It is really swell down here bt I would ratherbein Indiana. I am sending you something I got here in Miami and I hopeyou like it. It is for the both of you and Bill can putitout at her next party for refreshments.

Tell Grandmā I said "Hello" and I hope she is well.

I can't think of anything else to say so will go for a walk along the beach.

One of our Army sons,  
Jim

Pvt. Hovey J. Ball  
581st Tech. Sch. Sqdn. (S.P.) Fit. R.  
A.A.F.T.T.C  
Basic Training Center (No. 4)  
Miami Beach, Florida.

### SECOND LETTER FROM LOUIS D. BALL

Dear Mother and Sis:

Hi, everybody! Here it is Monday noon. My mind is in such a whirl I can't think. We arrived here about 10:00 a.m. Sunday, had our inspection and got placed in our barracks. I start today having my teeth fixed.

I suppose you got my mail from Evansville. We came on through Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas and to Denver. We all had a good trip except one boy who had his wallet with \$50.00 in it stolen.

We are having grand weather her. There is no snow and the sun shines in the day time but it gets cold at night. We see a pretty picture every day with the sun shining on the snow-capped mountains.

We were told we would be here for nine weeks. Our course covers a lot that we already had but a lot of it we didn't learn thoroughly enough so it will be a big help to us. I am on the best shift there is here. I go to school from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. We can't go to town or leave our area as we are quarantined with measles. Can you imagine that? One heck of a way to spend Christmas and New Year's.

As much as I've seen of this place I think I'll like it a lot better than any place I've been yet. The food is so much better and you get more of it.

Thanks for the Christmas and birthday gifts. We had cake on the train but I saved the nut meats for myself. Be sure and let me know if you get the check. I'm going to try call a telegram in for you as we can't get over to the Western Union on account of our quarantine.

Well I guess I had better close as I have to wash some underwear and sox, take a bath, shave and go to the dentist.

Answer by Air Mail. I want to see if I get it any quicker that way. When I get settled I'll see about your allotment.

Write soon,  
Love, Louis

Tell everyone I said Hello. They have 3 big fields here, Lowry No. 1, No. 2 and No. 3 and they are all under quarantine.

Sgt. Louis Ball  
2nd Tech. Sch. Sqdn. Sp.  
Lowry Field, No. 2  
Denver, Colorado  
[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, January 5, 1943]

### SEVENTH LETTER FROM JAMES E. SWEET

James E. Sweet

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Co. A, Devel. Bn., N.S.C.  
Camp Haan, Calif.

Dear Friend:

Just received your most wonderful letter last week, and those pictures. I sure did love them. Makes me think of home. The lake sure must be very pretty since I left home. I have been away from home quite awhile. This makes the second Christmas I have been in the service. I entered the service on September 30th, 1941. It isn't so very long but it seems years to me. I am not sorry that I am in the army. The army is the best place for any young man. There are some men that don't like the army. But it doesn't do them any good. We all have to do things we don't like.

Well, how is the weather at home? I sure bet you are having wonderful weather. It rained from the 23rd to the 25th with just a very little let-up. We are looking for more rain soon. I was on duty the days it rained and caught a very bad cold in the head and lungs, and a sore throat. I am doctoring it up myself because if I went on sick list I would land in the hospital, and I don't like the hospitals. I would rather be on my feet doing something.

I haven't received very many letters since Christmas but will soon. When I get mail it seems that people all write the same day, as I get my mail all in a bunch. I love to get mail. It helps to pass away my night time. I just wrote to my brother Charles before supper. I get three letters a week. I wrote to Mayor Minter yesterday. He always writes to me when he gets time.

Yes, Bob Hope was here, but I never went to hear his program. The boys said he sure was fine. Yes, we did have a very nice Christmas dinner. We couldn't want a better dinner than we had. You just spoke of Bill. Yes, he is a very nice worker, that is if he loves his work. There isn't anything he won't try to do.

Well, Ed, this is all I can think of right now. We hope the Lord will help us win this war and to keep us in real good health, and he sure is doing it. God bless all.

Your friend,  
Pvt. James E. Sweet

Tell all I said hello. Hoping all are in the very best of health.  
[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, January 5, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM FRANCIS BLACKETOR

Dec. 28, 1942

Hello Folks:

How are all of you folks feeling now? I am just fine. I suppose you folks had a nice Christmas. Shields and I went to Statesville to see Willard Holland and his mother. When we got there we found out that Willard had been in the army a week. He is at Fort Bragg in the hospital. He burned his leg before he went to the army and they put him in the hospital. Willard has been married since last June. He has a real nice wife, too. We stayed and talked to Mrs. Holland and Willard's wife for quite a while. We met Willard's father-in-law and nothing would do him but that we have Christmas dinner with him. We did, and really enjoyed ourselves. They really showed the southern hospitality to us while we were at Statesville. I am going to try to get up to see Willard this week and if he is still there.

I have gotten a lot of Christmas cards and presents. About 25 cards. I got a package from Merle and Byron, box of candy from Josh and Rae, box of candy from Junior's, box of candy from Carrie and John, box of stationery from Ma and Etta.

It has been real warm here the last few days. We have been getting in a lot of practice loading and unloading gliders since getting here. We haven't rode in them yet, but I expect we will before long.

I will have to quit for now.

Francis

My address is:

Pfc. Francis A. Blacketor  
A.S.N . 35110743  
Co. A, 326th A/B Eng. Bn.,

## SvcMen WW II Letters

101st A/B Division  
Fort Gragg, N.C.  
[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, January 7, 1943]

### LETTER FROM HAROLD SPURLOCK

Dec. 31, 1942

Hello Folks:

1942 will soon be gone. Wonder what 1943 will bring. We'll soon find out, huh?

How are you folks feeling these days? I am O.K. and feeling fine, only my arm hurts this morning, because I got my shot. I had to take it over again because they lost the record. Isn't that something. It's very nice here today, nice and warm. Is it still winter up there?

Word out on the range for marksmanship, I didn't do so bad. In fact the sergeant said it was darn good. Anyway if I keep at it I'll get better. We got paid today and the boys are having some time. Don't suppose I'll get much sleep tonight. There are 15 fellows in here and the shack we are in is just a shell construction. If it gets real cold we would freeze because it has lots of cracks in it for the wind to come in.

If I had a camera I would take some snap shots of different things down here. You could see what it looks like. Well, I guess I had better close for this time. Can you read my scribbling? I am surprised if you can. Oh, I forgot to say, I got your letter today, the only mail I got today. Will write again aoon.

Love,  
Harold Spurlock

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, January 8, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM NORVAL BALL

Hello Willodean, Mother and All:

Well, I am now in Australia. The people here talk funny and drive on the opposite side of the road than we do. It all seems funny to me. The money we use is like the English pounds and shillings and so on. It also seems funny.

We are limited on our writing so can't say much and all letters will be about the same. Just got a letter from Jim but he didn't say where Louis is or what he is doing. I have changed A.P.O. Number 705 to the new one. How does Louis look in a uniform? Bob is next, and Jim said he felt like joining. That will be four of us in and just one more to go. Sounds like a football game.

I'm fine and hope you are all the same. Tell grandmother I will buy her a little something from here the first chance I get. I will get you something also.

Bill is still with me. I see him every once in a while.

Love,  
Norval Ball

New Address:

Pvt Norval Ball  
A.S.N. 35258793,  
321st Bomb. Sqdn., APO 704,  
c/o Postmaster,  
San Francisco, Calif.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, January 8, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM HAROLD MILLER

Dec. 31, 1942

Dearest Folks,

Thanks a million for the boxes. Both were greatly appreciated by the boys in this tent and myself. Everything came through in fine shape and sure tasted good. Tell George that I really appreciated the bag of peanuts or whatever he contributed.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Well we just got back from a four day problem on the field. We were in a sham battle last night and the enemy came right through our guards about 11:30 to the rear of us. They thus had us whipped as all the territory was taken by them. I was on guard from 8 to 10 last night so I can't be blamed for them getting through our lines.

We didn't do much while on the field. The only work I did was to dig a slit-trench and stand guard last night so you can see we didn't do much. Oh we drilled some and had a sun bath and a tug of war and had some classes, but we had a lot of fun.

I suppose you thought I had forgotten you but we didn't dare take any writing facilities to the field as we didn't have room to carry any more than our regular equipment. That is why I was late in answering your letters.

We are having a New Year's beer party tonight but I am writing letters instead. I don't care for beer but I did drink a couple of cokes and ate some popcorn and potato chips, but that was all.

Well folk I must close for tonight and turn in as my candle is burning low and I can hardly see to write anymore. Bye for now.

Your loving son,

Harold

P.S. - If you see any of my friends tell them all I wished them and you too, a very "Happy New Year and many more to come. Also if any of them have written me and I haven't answered tell them to drop me a card and I will write. I just received too many to answer all of them the last couple of weeks.

Pvt. Harold Miller 35363941  
Co. B, 6th Med. Bn., 6th Mtz. Div.  
A.P.O. 6, Desert Manevers  
c/o Postmaster  
Los Angeles, Calif.  
[The News-Sentinel, Friday, January 8, 1943]

### LETTER FROM HAROLD McCALLA

Jan. 3, 1943

Dear Friend:

I received your letter today. If all the people were as thoughtful as you are we soldiers would really be happy. I am enjoying myself while doing my duty. With all reports we are getting it looks as though Germany is getting a hard beating. I hope '43 is the year of victory. The cards you sent me remind me of Rochester. As you probably know I am in the Coast Artillery. Our job is to protect and guard our shores. By you old men buying war stamps and bonds you are doing just as much as we do only maybe not as daring. You buy the guns and we fire them.

Would enjoy hearing from you soon.

Your friend,

Harold McCalla

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, January 9, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM DON HARTUNG

Dear Friend:

I received your letter some days ago but put off writing until now. I have gotten behind in my correspondence in the last couple of weeks. There for some time I had hardly any letters at all and now they are coming in regularly.

I wish to thank you for your wonderful card and your prayers for me and the other boys. I believe that if I hadn't my faith in God I'd be pretty jittery most of the time. I know that he is with me and will help me when I need him. God has never failed me as yet and I know he won't.

I have quite a few Christian friends writing and praying for me in California. I get very interesting letters from a young minister in California. This chap had a great deal to do with my wanting to become a better Christian. I had stayed at his home and have played basketball and

## SvcMen WW II Letters

associated with him. He now has a small church that has about doubled the attendance and has a very nice young people's group. It was friends such as this that have helped me grow stronger in my belief.

Everything is going along fine here and I am in very good health and about as happy as one can be under the circumstances.

I hope this finds you and your family well and happy.

I hope you will give my regards to my friends there for me. It is pretty hard to write all of them but I have thought many times of them.

Respectfully yours,  
Don Hartung

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, January 9, 1943]

### LETTER FROM DONALD L. SMITH

U.S.S. Beale  
Dec. 29, 1942

Darest Mother:

I received your letter yesterday and was very glad to hear from you. I hope you aren't sick now. What was wrong with you anyway? Was there something wrong with your back or something like that? You better take good care of yourself till I get home, because if you don't I am going to get very mad and I'm not kidding you a darned bit.

I am writing this letter from where it says on the stationery. I don't want to write my personal letters aboard ship, because they censor them now so as long as we can go ashore I will write them ashore. We are going to see Benny Goodman and his orchestre, then I will go back to the ship and get some sleep.

This letter is just to let you know that I am alright and that I always will be. I am on one of the best ships that has ever been built for the U. S. Navy and it is always going to stay that way; so don't go worrying about it. You better take care of yourself.

Write soon.

Love,  
Don

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, January 9, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM RAMON ALBER

Ramon Alber, A.S.  
U.S.N.T.S.  
Camp Ward, Co. 132  
Farragut, Idaho  
Sunday Afternoon  
Jan. 3, 1943

Dear Folks:

Imagine, it's 1943 already. I'm really feeling good since I was sick. I'm really well, I guess. There is one thing, my clothes are a little big for me now. I have lost some weight. I have more muscle now. I got two letters Friday from you so I waited until today to write. I have plenty of time on Sundays. Also, I got a letter from Auntie and Morjorie on Wednesday and I answered it Wednesday night so they cannot say I stall. I'm glad you all enjoyed Christmas.

I bet Johnnie is sure mean, isn't he? So he finally got two teeth? How much does he weigh now? If you have any pictures of him, send them to me. My shipmates would like to see what a brother I have. I suppose all my clothes are back O.K.

By the time you get this letter it will be around January 8th some place. So from me to Grandma, it's "Happy Birthday, Gram." I couldn't get any birthday cards here, so I guess it's the best greeting I can give her. I hope she is feeling fine. Oh, yes, I just got two Rochester papers Saturday. One was dated Dec. 18 and the other Dec. 28. Sure was familiar news to me. Too bad about Uncle Frank and Aunt Mary.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

About sending me things to eat. Don't. Because I get everything here at camp. The best I can say, is just write and you are doing your share.

I got a package from Sis and Auntie. I got the sewing kit, an eversharp and a box of candy. I have got several more Christmas cards and a nice box of candy from Faye Wright. I have written you nine letters, so if you have not received that many, they may be lost. I hope you get all of my letters from now on. I aim to write you once through the week although I really don't have much time.

Have Wally's moved yet? I will have to write to them.

It's really nice weather here this last week. Sun is sure out warm. Monday, Dec. 28, I got a 12 hour liberty. I went to Spokane and had my picture taken. So be expecting one soon. Have you got my Christmas menu card yet? Keep it.

So Pat is going to Indianapolis? Well, a soldier shall he be.

I have gotten a letter from Betty Leiter and one from Hazel, too. So I have lots of writing ahead of me yet. Hope Rae got to see Harold before he left New Jersey. I think I will write to those addresses. Thanks, because I didn't know their addresses. Now I can thank them for their Christmas cards at least.

We study every now and then for test to see if we are learning. We had our A to N test on Thursday through our Battalion Commande, Lt. Com. A. L. Carieneau. The week before this test we had our classification test. We shall graduate sometime around Jan. 26 as far as we know now. If everything is as they say I will probably go to San Diego, Calif. for schooling. I shall let you know later. There are 20 listed as I am, a Menial Navy Corman for the Marine Corps. The others are for sea and ship Co. I wanted the submarine course but they changed my mind. You have to be 20 years of age. So I didn't go any further. Honestly you have to study to qualify for anything.

We run the Commando Trail once a day. That's sure fun. Mostly for strength and quickness. We were down on Lake Pond Oreille yesterday, rinning the whale boats or life boats. We marched and sang as we marched. The whole company, 16 persons to a boat. Sure fun rowing those tugs. And boy! What scenery!

I got a card from Dwight from Mrs. Deck. I wrote to Don Kanouse the other evening. Don's and Dr. Meeks sent me cards so I wrote to them finally.

Oh yes! Saturday morning we were issued our hammocks. I've been wondering if I can stay in it let alone sleeping in it. Sunday is all ours after we go to church. We had just as big a dinner New Year's as we did for Christmas. I went to the show last night for the first time. Could have gone before, but I always took that time for writing letters. I saw "Sun Valley Serenade."

The Navy gets better every day. Mostly it's the change of life that bothers.

Well, I am going to quit for the time being. Be sure and write this week. And may this letter find you all well and happy. Tell Gram "Happy birthday." So wil close. Write.

Your loving Son,  
Ramon

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, January 11, 1943]

## LETTER FROM ARTHUR V. DUDGEON

Dec. 29, 1942

Hello All:

Well, how is everybody back home? I am feeling OK except I have caught a slight cold. It isn't very much wonder, though, as it rained here two nights last week and it rained all day yesterday and last night and all day today, and is still at it. Maybe it will get rained out before long. I suppose it will turn cold and snow before it quits. Was out on a hike this afternoon. What kind of weather are you having now?

Did you have a white Christmas? We didn't. Boy, did we have one swell Christmas dinner. I will put in one of the menus. We had everything on it and also ice cream. Well, it should have been a good one as I was on K.P. that day. It wasn't bad as about 75 per cent were on leave over Christmas. We had all of eveything we wanted.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Have you heard from Harold lately? How does he like it out in California? Haven't been here long enough to tell how I am going to like it here. One thing we have better eats here than we did at Crowder. Otherwise I believe I liked it as well there or better than here. We are sleeping in tents here. They aren't bad yet. I imagine barracks are plenty cold now. We have a small hard coal stove to heat it with. We sure can heat it up. The worst is the cement floor of a morning when you get up. It is a little cold on the feet.

Well, I started to school again Monday morning. It sure is a lot different than in K.C. We sure had things nice there. There are six in a tent. One is a Spanish boy from Colorado. He was in my class at K.C. The other four are from New York state. One used to live in Indiana several years ago.

Well, where did you spend the 25th? Did you have a good time?

I guess I am eligible for a pass out of camp now so I may take in a few sights one of these days. I figure I might just as well if I have time. Didn't see much on our trip here as when it was daylight we were going through where I had already been, Indiana and Illinois, although I saw part of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. We are just about 40 miles from New York City, and not very far from the coast. The closest town of any size is Red Bank. There are a couple smaller ones a little coser.

They have two shows here on the post and two post exchanges. I went to a show Saturday and Sunday night. They were good ones. If you haven't seen them, if you get a chance you would like them, I'll bet. They were "The Black Swan" and "Pittsburgh."

How is Dorothy? You can tell her I said hello. I really don't have time to write at all, just do the best I can. Well, Alta, seems like I can think of a lot to write about before I start and then when I get busy don't seem like I can think of anything. So I will wish you all a Happy New Year and call it quits.

Answer when you can.

So long,  
Arthur

Cpl. Arthur V. Dudgeon  
Co. M, 15th Sig. Ser. Reg.  
Fort Monmouth, Red Bank, N.J.  
[The News-Sentinel, Monday, January 11, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM JESSE J. CALVERT

January 8, 1943

Dear Ed:

I received your good letter today. It found me feeling well but a little tired. I've been pretty busy the last couple of days.

Marjorie said she was secretary and has really been busy with her books and I believe she said she was to a meeting of the Sunday school teachers the other night.

So now there are 23 of us boys in the service. I guess that the church is pretty well represented in every branch of the service.

It sure would be great to be present for service next Sunday. I'm sure looking forward to when I can be.

Weather here is pretty nice, rather chilly of a morning though.

Isn't too much excitement around here. A little bit ago a plane of ours slid in on its belly as the hydraulic system went out and the landing-gear couldn't be let down. It broke both props but that's about all the damage it did. No one was hurt. But this is one incident you can expect in the air corps. I guess I'll have to fly tomorrow night so I'm catching up on my letter writing tonight.

I hope this letter finds you and Mrs. Vawter both well, and that I'll hear from you again soon.

Your friend,  
Bill

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, January 13, 1943]

## SvcMen WW II Letters

### THIRD LETTER FROM ALBERT L. ESHELMAN

January 7, 1943  
Sebring, Fla.

Dear Folks:

I am feeling fine and hope this letter finds you all the same.

Yes, I had a nice Christmas, as nice a one as any soldier could expect away from home.

I never received so many greeting cards before in my life and I really enjoyed receiving them from the folks back home. I received around 40 cards. Will you please thank everyone for me? It certainly is nice to have lots of friends and a person never really appreciates his friends until he has moved on.

It sure is pretty down here. The grass is velvet green and the flowers are in full bloom. It is citrus picking time now. This is all more than what you can say. It has been very warm here until this evening it cooled off a bit and we have a small fire in the barracks.

I went into Sebring today on our 36-hour leave and took several pictures with the camera I got for Christmas. I certainly got a lot of enjoyment out of it. Those apples Dad sent were sure good but Mrs. Smith used the crate for fire wood the day before Christmas, I believe.

It is nearly time for lights out so must quit for now. Please keep up the good work of writing letters, it helps one to read letters from home.

As ever,  
Pfc. Albert Leroy Eshelman  
1039 Guard Squadron,  
Hendricks Field, Sebring, Fla.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, January 13, 1943]

### LETTER FROM HUBERT SHOTT

Mrs. Gus Shott, of this city, was overjoyed today when she received a letter from her son, Private Hubert Shott, from whom she had not heard since September 30th.

In his letter Pvt. Shott said:

"Dear Mom - You thought that I was stationed in Africa or Australia, but you are mistaken. I am on an island, a French speaking island, and a very remote place south of the equator. It's quite hot in the daytime and cool in the night and we have a lot of mosquitoes. My health is pretty good. When I get home I will have a long, long story to tell you. I have seen a lot of the world by now." Pvt. Shott was inducted into the army at Chicago in May 1942, and left the United States from California in September, 1942.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, January 19, 1943]

### LETTER FROM JIM GILLILAND

January 16, 1943

Dear Friend:

I received your letter and was glad to hear from you. I hear from mother every once in a while. In her last letter she said dad was going to the hospital for an operation. I sure wish I could be home so I could see him for a couple of days, but I know I have a duty to do and it must be done. I go to the chaplain once in a while. He and I have nice long talks. There isn't much more to write about. I haven't seen any snow since I have been here. It did snow for about an hour one day last week only it didn't cover the ground and it melted as soon as it hit the ground.

I go to church every Sunday. The people down here are sure swell and they are friendly, too. I get liberty twice a week. I met a fellow from Alabama when I first got here. He is a swell kid. He and I run around together all the time. I have been on guard duty four times since I got here.

I am getting along O.K. in my school work. I go to school from eight in the morning until five in the afternoon. Then there are night classes, too. If you don't pass our test every Friday you are compelled to go to night school. If you do pass, you can go if you want to. There is an engine

## SvcMen WW II Letters

here big enough you can take an elevaor ride on the piston. You can just imagine how big they are. Well, here it is 6:30 and I have got three more letters to write, so I will close.

As ever, your friend.

Jim Gilliland

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, January 20, 1943]

### LETTER FROM FREDERICK WAGONER

Pvt. Frederick J. Wagoner 35563112,

Co. H, 43rd Armored Reg.,

A.P.O. 262

Camp Campbell, Ky., U. S. Army

Sunday, Jan. 17, 1943

Dear Merrel and All:

Well, I hope this finds you O.K. How is the weather down there by now? I hope you didn't think I had forgotten you all for not writing to you, but sure have been busy; work during the day, have gun school at night. We have shot the 37 mm. gun. I got 105 points, which is a first class gunner score. Monday we shoot the 30 caliber machine gun. Saw Glen Cleland last Sunday. He got expert on the machine gun. It is pretty accurate, only on the firing sheet you have to do so much figuring as they give you so many rifles to take and range. You shoot 50 rounds in 2 1/2 minutes; if you get just one mille off you are done, for it throws you off an inch at 400 yards. Same goes with all of the guns we have shot.

Are you done picking corn yet? Have you butchered yet? I suppose so. It was so warm yesterday we went around in our shirts; this morning we can hardly keep warm when we go out and it isn't very nice here in the barracks. The weather here sure is lousy. Got a letter from Francis Carlson. He said he had been in the hospital 10 days. Also got a letter from Bob Cessna. He said he was sunburned and goes swimming once a week.

We are sending all our old tanks to a new camp and are getting new ones. They are - - - and - - -, but haven't got the tracks yet. I have been busy for I have my army driving license, do quite a little driving. Our - - - ton truck has double duals. Takes a 7.00-20 tire. The duals will drop down in a hole at least two feet deep and the other two will be on level ground. It sure is nice. Most of them are GMC, but I don't know what the new ones will be. The jeeps are Willys and Fords.

Well, did Mom give you your picture yet. It isn't very good but maybe it will do.

If the war don't change in our favor more I don't think I will get a furlough. The correspondents over in Libya say tanks is what they need. The eighth armored force has gone across, as they came here to get organized. If I don't get a furlough before the first of March I don't sppone I'll get one, as I know the supply sarge and he said everything had to be turned in by the first of March. It is a mixed up mess here.

Oh yes, you said something about visitors. Most of the boys here have visitors who live close. One fellow's folks who live in Evansville have been here three or four times. I see quite a few Indiana cars. Come on down and I'll show you around. If you come get here on Saturday noon and I can get off until 6:00 Monday. Well, can't think of anything else for now so until next time don't work too hard and think it over about coming down.

As ever,

Fritz

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, January 21, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM HOWARD SHIREMAN

Cpl. Howard Shireman

Dearest Mother and Dad:

Have neglected writing you this past week, but have been working so many hours and such peculiar ones that have not had time. Sixteen straight hours Friday, nine Saturdy, eight Sunday.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Getting off at five in the evening and then back at one this morning and will get off at nine this morning.

Did Sis or Carla come home for Thanksgiving? Wish I could have been there and we could have chicken. We had plenty of turkey over here but gave it to the army and civilian hospitals and had pork ourselves. In the morning I attended services at the Westminster Abbey. In its long history it was the first time that it was ever turned over to anyone except its own clerical for any services. The sermon was by our army chaplain, organist was an army corporal, and the choir composed of American soldiers and officers. It was most impressive with over 3,000 people in attendance, with the highest officers of the Allied Nations to the lowest private in the American army, with the American ambassadors Winant and Biddle, a sprinkling of British civilians, and a large group of American army nurses, but most numerous by a large majority was the American privates, corporals and sergeants. Of all denominations and creed.

Saturday night went to the "Paris Cinema" to see a broadcast by the American movie actors Kay Francis, Martha Raye, Carol Landis, and Mitzie Mayfair, who have been over here for the past three weeks putting on shows at the army camps and hospitals. Kay Francis had a terrible cold and could hardly talk above a whisper, and Mayfair had a wrenched shoulder from throwing some big "bruiser" over her shoulder during a jitter-bug exhibition at one of the camps but both carried on and gave a grand show for us. A recording was made of it to be sent back to the states for re-broadcasting. Tonight went down to one of the American Red Cross clubs for a few hours but came home about eight to catch a little sleep before coming back on duty at one this morning. And for the first time in ages am finding time to get this letter off. Incidentally, what do the people at home think of it?

Has Dale left yet, and was he accepted, if so what is his address? Have been hanging around the Red Cross clubs of late in hopes I might see someone I know from back home or of the other cities have worked in, but no success. Have not had any letters from Myron Reed yet, so don't know if he is here, or just where. When I find a little extra time will check on it and might be able to find out something. It would be a treat to see and talk to some friend from back home again.

Received your package, one with clothes, cigarettes, candy and smoking tobacco in, and the candy sure tasted good. We are rationed to one American and one British (which is about like bitter chocolate) a week. So a little candy is always welcome.

Bye now and all my love to you both. Hello to everyone for me.

Yours with Love,  
Howard

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, January 25, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM ROBERT C. REICHARD

Fort Ord, Calif.  
Jan. 22, 1943

To the Readers:

I was lucky enough to hear Captain Rickenbacker speak. This is one thing he said that I as a soldier of the U. S. Army thought it was very true. He said if they would take all factories' workers and put them in the army and let them do the fighting of this war and put the soldiers in the factories the production would speed up twice as fast as it is at the present time.

The people of the United States don't know what freedom is. They also don't know that there is a war going on. Oh yes there is a few people that know there is a war and those are the Fathers and Mothers of the soldiers who are working very hard every day to win this war.

These soldiers don't have the freedom that the factory worker has. But still the people want to win this war and they are doing very little for the soldier.

I am in the Engineers Amphibian Command and they are fixing to send us overseas and we do not have the equipment that is needed in our regiment.

This is all due to the fact that the factory workers are still striking for higher wages. But still they think the soldier is getting enough.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

No, you don't hear the soldier say anything about the pay they get. But you hear them talk a lot about the people outside of the Army. When the factory workers draw all the way from \$5 to \$10 a day.

But still the soldier gets \$50 a month, a lot of the soldiers who have wives at home only get \$28 a month. The government takes out insurance, their washing and by the time they have that taken out, they have just about \$23 left. But still the factory workers got to have more money.

When ever you people will wake up and forget about how much money you can make and go to work and produce the goods for the soldiers this war will soon be ended.

Pfc. Robert C. Reichard  
A.S.N. 35363940, Hq. Co. Sh. Bn.  
542nd Reg. APO 3383  
c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco, Calif., U.S.A.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, January 27, 1943]

### LETTER FROM ROY D. BRUBAKER

Cpl. Roy D. Brubaker

Jan. 11, 1943

Dear Friend:

I hope that this letter will help to relieve some of the guilty feeling which I have been carrying since before I left Eng.

It was in Eng. that I received the first letter from you. And since then I have received some in Eng. and some in Africa.

I don't have any real good excuse for not writing. I guess I'll have to contribute it to negligence. I guess too I rely on my folks to speak for me a little too much. I do write to them as often as I can. I know how they worried about Ken and I didn't want them to be worrying about me. It's quite often that we don't have much time to write. And of course there are times that it is impossible to write.

There is one thing that I can say for myself and every man in the service and that is we do enjoy receiving mail. This is one thing that we all look forward to. I must say that I have been very fortunate in receiving mail. Thanks to my immediate family and to the many friends that I hardly realized that I had before I came into the Army. It seems as though every day or so I hear from or receive cards from people that I though had probably forgotten that I even existed.

When a person gets into foreign lands he really begins to think of just what life in the states really is. It's not until one gets among different people that he realizes how much his friends that he has left behind meant. And then when things are dull and there's not much to occupy your mind you find yourself reading or thinking about letters that you have received in the past. And really the names of the people that sent them. And then is when you single them out and recall all of the good times you have had with them and all of the nice things that they have done for you. It almost takes something like this to really wake some people like myself up to the realization of it all.

As for my life in the Army it has been a wonderful experience. As you know at first I was in South Carolina. There I saw for the first time cotton and tobacco fields, and the typical southern negro. Then of course the thrill of crossing the Atlantic. In Eng. we had a chance to get three day passes to visit London. We were among English speaking people alright but their customs are so much different than ours. One big difference was that they drove on the opposite side of the road to what we were accustomed to. Then another boat ride. This time we experienced going from rather cold weather to a warm climate. We were even able to take a swim in the Mediterranean in November.

As for things here in Africa I can't say much because of censorship. The people here are made up of three types, French, Mohammadons and Arabs. The French language seems to be dominant.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Here they raise lots of grapes and oranges. The Arabs seem to be the laboring class of people. They can be seen going out into the vineyards trimming vines or doing most any other kind of work. They are very poor people as they aren't able to dress very well. They have here the typical beggar that they often try to imitate in various Christmas plays. To sum it all up Africa is a place that seems to have everything from the most modern to the extreme primitive. I don't think it has an equal any other place in the world.

P.S. - Will you please thank Myron Berkheiser for the lovely stationery, gum and handkerchief that the Sunday School sent to me. I'm sorry that I cannot thank them personally but that is one of the impossible things at present.

I certainly did appreciate the gifts. I came in from work this morning and a boy friend handed me the package.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, January 27, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM CHAS. COCHRAN

January 14, 1943

Dear Friend:

I received your letter just today, better late than never. I realize that it is mighty cold there now. But anyway, it is never too cold or too warm to write to one's friends and relatives.

I must correct you. I have not been in Camp Shelby nor the 38th Division for nearly 14 months and during all that time I've seen the best part of overseas where it does not snow and where a person does not need fuel or winter clothing. That's the best part of it all. My mother is the only one that knows where I am and she is the one who should know if any one should, that is, I mean a soldier's parents. So please continue to use the address you have used before, it remains the same, unless something happens that I'll have to go elsewhere, which I hope I don't until it's the day for me to return to the good old U.S.A. Then that will be the happiest day of all and which I'm hoping for in the near future. I'm praying that this year does it all to the Nazis and the Yellow Dogs once and forever. If everything goes right by the time I return home, I'm going to get married to Miss - - - and I'll want you to be at the wedding. It has been cool enough at night to sleep well and I sleep like a log in this climate. I will now sign off with best regards.

Pfc. Charles Cochran,  
A.S.N. 35176307,  
Btry. F, 83rd CA (AA)  
A.P.O. 832, c/o Postmaster  
New Orleans, La.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, January 29, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM FREDERICK GREER

Jan. 1, 1943

U. S. Army

Dear Mother:

Sorry that I haven't wrote you sooner but have been busy. I would like for you to send me Robert's address. I lost my pocketbook with it in. Also all of my clothes so I have got all new ones. I'm sure a long ways from you. The talk of people here is French. What a time I have of trying to understand them. By the time I get back home I will be talking like them. One thing they are friendly. How are things going in Rochester? Haven't heard any news of the town for a long time. This last draft will tap all the boys 18 to 20. But I have got the jump on them all. The fourth one will be twenty and got almost two years in the Army. Sure glad that I joined up. Hope Robert is getting along alright. God Bless him. I have been wanting to write him but didn't know where he is at. Hope Bing is still working. The last letter that I got from Robert was before I left the states. He was sending his money home to Dad to save for him and asked me to look after it too, to see if Dad was doing it. I wish that I could take care of it for him. You remember when I sent my CCC money home. Robert looked after it for me. That is why I'd like to look after him. I sure had a good time at 1 o'clock. The old year out and the new one in 1943. Where I'm at I

## SvcMen WW II Letters

cannot buy New Years' cards so will not be able to send you any. I would like to. I got the gift you and Bing sent. It was nice of you two in sending it. Those things I was getting short on. Well my new address will be on a slip of paper in side. Well this will be all for this time. Will write more the next time.

Your son,  
Frederick R. Greer  
[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, January 30, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM HAROLD McCALLA

Sunday, Jan. 24, 1943

Dear Ed:

Here is another day of salvation and rest. For the past week we have been on the firing range. I made a score of 146 which calls me a marksman. All the boys in our platoon did very well. Harry beat me by three points which also makes him a marksman. Next week we will start our training on the 155mm. That gun will shoot 100-12 miles with direct hits. We will train for almost three weeks on them and then for about one week we will have training on the use of our bayonets and dirty fighting. After all this takes place we will be ready to go to another camp.

Harry and I are just fine except for a little cold. All the boys out here have a cold as they are not, and are not able to get used to the weather. It has rained four days and four nights. The rain let up last night but it looks pretty much like rain tonight.

In our camp there are some 18-year-olds coming in now. It looks as though before long no one will be left in Rochester.

The boys as well as I get a kick out of the cards you send. They sure look real. I hope mother is feeling better. I know she will be but you have Rev. Coverstone to call on her. We certainly can use the prayers you people back home offer.

Your friend,  
Harold  
[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, January 30, 1943]

### LETTER FROM ANSEL SNOOK

Jan. 28, 1943

Dear Friend:

Received your letter and cards and was sure glad to hear from you but sorry to hear that John Lowe passed away, but it was the Lord's wish and so as you said it is better than suffering.

They have changed our time here. We go to school now at 4 p.m. and off at 10 p.m. - six hours, and one hour for exercise each day. The rest for study and sleep. So much extra time off to study does not seem right after the way we were going and also every Thursday off, and a pass to town if you have a 90 average, of which I am way over.

Started on engine test blocks last Tuesday which is the last of our regular schooling. Will finish it next Wednesday, then out to inspections for 16 to 30 days and that will be all for here although they keep changing the inspections every few days (as to time).

Had a letter from Charles Bryant. Said he wished we could be in Rochester on Sunday to see all the class. Wishes sometimes come true so will pray for it to.

Give my regards to all the boys.  
Your friend,  
Pvt. Ansel Snook

P.S. - Thanks for the church bulletins.  
[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, February 2, 1943]

### LETTER FROM J. W. SHELTON

Pvt. J. W. Shelton  
31st Technical School Sqd.,  
Flight A,

## SvcMen WW II Letters

U. S. Army Air Force,  
Jefferson Barracks, Mo.  
Jan. 28th, 1943

Dear Friend:

I greatly appreciate receiving our letter and cards today. To express my gratitude I'll answer promptly.

I'll try to give you a mental picture of this post at which I am stationed. It is approximately 12 miles from St. Louis, situated in beautiful rolling country which reminds one of Brown county, Ind., and is bordered on the east by the Mississippi river. (I wish it was the Tippecanoe.) There are approximately 40,000 men stationed here, most of them attending schools of some description. Upon gradating they are non-commissioned officers. Those who are fortunate enough and are simply reclassified here are sent to officers' candidate schools in various posts of the United States.

I have been given eleven exams since I've been here and have missed only three questions on them. I am not conceited when I say I'm proud of myself, but I did work hard, Ed, and it paid off. I will be sent to officers' candidate school in the very near future, just when I don't know.

Thanks a lot for the compliments on our daughter, darn it, Ed, she's just the sweetest thing there ever was. I miss her and her mother so much, and I think that's the principal factor in my trying so hard on my exams because with an officer's salary I can afford to have them with me. It's a pretty stiff assignment to be taken from the easy going civilian life and plummeted into military discipline. I think all of the fellows have had considerable difficulty in adapting themselves to military courtesy and discipline.

Please don't mention fishing to me again, if you do I'll go AWOL, and show you how to catch them.

Lights out so - good night.

As ever,  
J. W.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, February 2, 1943]

### LETTER FROM FRED SHOBE

Somewhere in North Africa  
January 19, 1943

Dear Friends:

Received your very nice and thoughtful Christmas present and do not know who made the selection but Camel cigarettes are my favorite brand and they really came in very handy.

North Africa at this time of year is very beautiful since the rainy season is well behind us. Up to date we have not been bothered with any mosquitoes or other pests but if we are here long enough we shall get them eventually.

The natives here are very gullible and pick up the American language very easily although they say it's very hard to talk. The natives talk to us in French, Spanish, Arabic and some English and they sometimes get mixed up and break off in a monologue so you do not know what they are talking about but they have learned to beg everything from cigarettes to our G.I. clothes. They are especially fond of our chocolate candy and coffee.

Looks like this war is in the last stages to me and I have predicted our return to the States between Decoration Day and the Fourth of July. (Purely guess work, you know, but I have my fingers crossed.) Have received word from Mr. and Mrs. Charters, Mr. and Mrs. Gus Swanson, Mr. and Mrs. George Deamer, Jr., Dr. M. O. King, Harry Page, Mrs. O'Brien and a number of other Rochester people and I sure enjoy hearing from them and most especially from those of our church.

Very truly yours,  
Fred G. Shobe

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, February 6, 1943]

## SvcMen WW II Letters

### SECOND LETTER FROM WARREN CORNELL

News-Sentinel

Dear Friend:

I want to say hello to all my Rochester friends. In ten (10) days I will report to Fort Benning, Ga., to Jump School. I will there complete my five (5) jumps in which I will receive my wings and also my diploma from Jump School. It will be quite an honor for me to receive something which really takes nerve. I have made one jump so far and hope to complete my five jumps for my wings. It is a tough division to be in but nothing is too tough for us Indiana boys. After my jumps I will receive a 10-day furlough which I hope to be back in Indiana. Give my love to Marjorie and Mr. and Mrs. E. Cornell Brown,

Yours truly,  
Pvt. Warren L. Cornell  
Co. D, 2nd Bn.  
508 Parachute Inf.,  
Camp Blanding, Fla.  
U. S. Army

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, February 6, 1943]

### LETTER FROM GLEN W. FLOYD

Jan. 31, 1943

Dear Folks:

How are you all? I am way down south. We left Fort Benjamin Harrison about 1:30 last Friday on the train and headed south.

The train had 16 cars counting the chow cars.

We went through Cincinnati, Ohio. I saw the Ohio river when we pulled into Cincinnati. When we left Cincinnati it was dark and didn't see the mountains in Kentucky and Tennessee and it was light when we hit Georgia.

I could feel the train when we went over the mountains.

We were all day crossing Georgia and got into Florida about dusk.

We were all night in Florida and Sunday about 11:30 we reached our destination in Miami Beach, Fla.

I sure saw pretty country. In the north part of Georgia it was hilly with pine trees on their sides.

The southern part of Georgia was getting pretty level with real red clay.

The people live in old shacks in the hills and still use the old oaken bucket method.

In Florida in the north end is not inhabited very much, and in a few places it looks like a typical jungle scene with real white sand.

I will be here about 18 days for my basic training.

I will be here about three weeks so I am going to send my mail air mail.

I think this is the most prettiest spot in the world.

The Atlantic ocean is about 10 rods from our hotel. There are several hotels that were taken over by the government.

They are the most beautiful I ever saw and the houses are like dream houses. Mostly rich people.

With palm trees in the yards with cocoanuts on them.

I am in the air corps but I don't know which branch it is yet.

I hope the pilot's training.

Robert Lockwood came with me down here and we are trying to hang together.

We are going to train pretty hard these 18 days.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Well, I think I will close for now because the lights go out at 9:00 o'clock and it is about five minutes till now.

So good-bye now for this time.

Your son,  
Glen Floyd

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, February 6, 1943]

### LETTER FROM DEVON PFEIFFER

Devon Pfeiffer  
Company E, 35564079  
508th Parachute Inf.,  
Camp Blanding, Fla.  
January 30, 1943

Dear Mom and Dad:

Well, I am still a machine gunner. That makes three days so if they don't change me tomorrow I guess I will be one from now on.

It is raining here again today. It rains most of the time now. Gets cold at night.

Today we took the guns inside and worked on them all day. I was on the regimental supply the other day and I drew the ration detail. Well, we go to the camp supply warehouse and get feed by the truckload. Then divide it between the companies. Weigh out the sugar to the ounce, also the coffee. We also had apples, oranges, cheese and cookies.

I went out on the rifle range three days last week. Every day we got up at 8:00 in the morning. Didn't get in till 8:30 or 9:00 any day. After that cleaned guns until 11:00. We did that Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Monday we got off. Sunday night we went to bed at 9:00 o'clock. About 9:30 they woke three of us and said we had a pass. So we signed out at 10 o'clock and went to Tampa with one of the three of us to see his folks. We drove his car around all day Monday. Got back to camp at 6 o'clock just in time to get up.

I don't need any more popcorn for a couple of weeks. I think I will be pretty busy for the next month. There are new men coming in here so I suppose we will be moving soon. I will have three weeks of jump training at Camp Benning.

The men that have completed their jump training get wings something like the ones the air corps get. Hope I get mine.

Camp Blanding is the largest army camp in the world. They have every branch of the army here.

So long,  
Devon Pfeiffer

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, February 10, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM JAMES LOWMAN

Sgt. James Lowman  
332 F Squadron  
Orange Co. Airport  
Santa Ana, Calif.

Dear Folks:

Just a line to let you know that I am well. I hope everyone back home is all right. I may be able to get a furlough soon if everything goes well. I hope I can stay here long enough so I won't miss my turn.

I have been promoted to sergeant now and I am very happy about it. The pay is quite a bit higher. I make \$78.00 a month now and I get out of a lot of detail work.

How is the farm going? Do you folks have any trouble getting gasoline and tires so you can take your stuff to town? How is Charles getting along in school? If he should have to go into the army tell him to get into the air force because I think he would like it.

Well, that is about all for now. I will write again soon.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

James

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, February 13, 1943]

### LETTER FROM DEAN MEYER

Pvt. Dean Meyer

Feb. 3, 1943

Fort Bliss, Texas

Dear Folks:

Received your letter today and was glad to hear from you. So you got four letters in one day? Well, they probably got held up some place. Well, I got me a new job today. I'm a cook. I went on KP this morning and they wanted to know if I wanted to learn to cook, so I said I would try so now I'm a cook. I go on at noon and work until about 9 o'clock at night and then I get up at 4 to be to work at 4:30 and work until noon and then I'm off till the next noon. That way I'm on a day and off a day. We are cooking for 200 men, so you know it really takes lots of food. We wear white uniforms and white hats. We get ratings at the end of our training period which is a month, I think and then I'll be a Pfc. Not bad, eh?

Well, I must sign off and get shaved. We go to the range again tomorrow. We cooks get to fire but that's all. No drilling or marching. Will write soon, and I'll do the same. Tell everyone Hello.

Your son,

Pvt. Dean.

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, February 15, 1943]

### LETTER FROM HARVEY PALMER

Harvey Palmer

153328161, Flight 4, 40th S.S.

Keesler Field, Miss.

Feb. 4th, 1943

Dearest Mother and Dad:

Received the package and hangers today. Thank you both very, very much. Everything was swell.

We had a cold spell this morning. Actually dropped down to 40 degrees. Everybody that's used to living down here in warm weather about froze to death.

I'll send you some snapshots as soon as I can. And Mother, you were mistaken on those other five proofs. They are different than the ones you sent me and I would like to have you send them to me. I want several pictures made, so I want to be sure and get the best one. Of course I'll send them all back to you. I just want a couple made off of them.

I sure was glad to get the shaving kit. We weren't issued razors down here and we have to shave every day. I've borrowed from everybody in the barracks.

Nothing different has happened here worth mentioning since I last wrote you. We just train about the same every day. We were issued gas masks the other day so I expect we'll have a gas drill soon. Our flight was on K.P. yesterday. Boy, was that work. We went on at 3:30 in the morning and got off at 8:00 that night. We only have to do it once a month, thank God.

If anybody says anything about not hearing from me, explain to them that I will write everyone as soon as possible. I have so little time that I can't even answer half the letters I get. I'll have more time a little later, though, so tell them just to be patient.

As yet I haven't been able to find a box to send my clothes home in. I'll send them home as soon as I find one.

Got a letter from Babe yesterday and today, but haven't heard from Mae or Faye. Can't understand it.

Well, I want to write about three or four more letters tonight so I'd better sign off. Thanks again for all the swell stuff you sent me and please don't worry about me.

Lots of love,

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Harvey

P.S.- I washed out all my underwear, socks and towels Sunday and went to church Sunday night. How's that for you?

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, February 16, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM MICHAEL ZARTMAN

Somewhere in New Guinea  
Sunday, Jan. 11, 1913

Dear Rochester Friends:

Having been born and raised in the vicinity of Rochester, I am writing all you Rochester people how much "we" over here in New Guinea appreciate your wonderful effort to help us in our "great cause."

The regular letters, which I have been receiving from my dear mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. Cora Zartman and other Rochester friends, all indicate the great effort you Rochester people are putting forth to help in our hour of need.

I know all you people back home are doing without numerous things now so that "we" over here can have whatever we need. Therefore, I am sending all you loyal American Rochester people my deepest sympathy and highest admiration.

"We" over here are trying hard to finish this war as soon as possible so as to return home to the good old U.S.A. which we all know and love so well. Also to return home so as to help all our friends to shoulder and carry the hard times and depression which are sure to follow.

My strength and courage are needed elsewhere, but my heart and affection and admiration remain with you loyal people back home.

Sincerely yours,  
Michael Zartman

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, February 17, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM WARREN CORNELL

News-Sentinel:

I am now at Ft. Benning, Ga. I will be here for three weeks at Jump School. I hope to receive my wings and also my diploma here. Yesterday I saw 300 boys jump. It sure is a beautiful sight to see 35 or 40 boys in the sky floating around at once. I heard a Lieutenant say when his chute opened it was the most beautiful piece of silk he had ever seen. It is really a thrill to jump. I am a Sargt. I hope to be a Sergeant after jump school. I will not be home on a furlough after my jump. I am going out as a cadre man so until I hear from my friends I remain yours.

Pvt. Warren L. Cornell  
Co. D, 2nd Bn.  
508 Parachute Inf.,  
Fort Benning, Ga.

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, February 18, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM DALE MILLISER

Dear Mom and Pop:

I received your card Thursday. I waited a while before answering to see if I would receive your letter. I asked at the post office about it. They said that if I didn't receive the letter in two or three days it would probably be sent back home and that was three days ago. If I do receive it I will answer right back.

Well, how are things at Home? I hope you are both well. I am feeling fine. It took me a little while to get used to the high altitude here. It is 15,000 feet above sea level at Lowry Field. I have seen my first snow for this year.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

When we first got here we were starting to school at midnight, and going until eight the next day but our sergeant raised a row about it and we are going at six in the morning till twelve noon.

This clipping out of the paper will give you an idea of the kind of school this is.

Did I tell you that this is an Army base? Half of our class are soldiers. The Army takes anybody now. I have seen fellows with one arm, fellows almost blind, fellows about 60 years old; well, you see almost anything. I am sure glad that I am in the Marines. Our living conditions are even much better.

This is about all that I can think of to say for today.

Love,  
Pfc. Dale Milliser  
20 T.S.S. Lowry Field,  
Denver, Colo.

Note: Dale with two other soldiers had their pictures published in the February 14th issue of the Rocky Mountain News. Dale is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Surphes Milliser of Route 6, Rochester.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, February 19, 1943]

### LETTER FROM R. L. ZIMMERMAN

Feb. 15, 1943

Dear Friends:

This is my first attempt at writing to the public. I've been asked to write a letter for the Sentinel several times but could never think of enough to say. With censorship so close here it's very hard to write. I receive the Sentinel in every mail, usually from 1 to 16 copies. In most of the letters from Service Men Overseas it's evident censorship isn't as close as here. But there's a reason or it wouldn't be done.

I'm stationed with the "Sea-Bees" for an indefinite length of time. They have no medical corps so they transfer men from the regular navy to take care of them. The work keeps us very busy but it's far from hard work. CB's are, as the name and initials stand for, a construction battalion. They are very efficient in everything and anything they do. We are now at one of the United States' best overseas depots. I was very surprised to find such a place here. We have the finest recreational facilities money can buy. There's a number of movies to attend every night. The pictures we see are the newest. Also we have an occasional dance, but it's a problem because there are so few of the opposite sex. There are several bands on the base and I was fortunate enough to get to drum in one. We spend many would-be dull evenings playing. Not only the players, but also the onlookers have fun. We found a new radio and record player here and wasted no time in buying it. ("We" is the boys in the hospital corps). At night we get the U. S. stations with no trouble at all. Good news and music from home is welcome here. I haven't seen a newspaper since leaving the U.S. There is a small town nearby where we can purchase new records for our player. It's a typical western frontier town. There are no sidewalks, dirt streets and false front buildings. It consists of a couple cafes, jewelry shops, a hotel and one theater. The native people are very friendly.

The scenery is beautiful - - - (censored) - - - . I like it very much.

Due to the fact that I'm limited to only three letters a week, I can't write as many of my friends as I'd like. But I'd really appreciate letters from anyone as mail is one of the most important things and in time I will get them answered.

This is as far as I can think to write so I'll close now.

Sincerely,  
R. L. Zimmerman, H.A. 1/C, U.S.N.  
Navy 8230, c/o Fleet Postoffice  
San Francisco, Calif.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, February 26, 1943]

## SvcMen WW II Letters

### THIRD LETTER FROM HAROLD MILLER

Pvt. Harold Miller

February 14, 1943

Dearest Folks:

Well, I finally received the box you said you sent me. I had to go to Yuma to get it and I also had to carry the card for it for a week. I could hardly get a pass to go but finally I went to the company commander and he arranged for me to go with one of the sergeants to get some paint. M watch was also there as I had to get it. The box came through in fine shape except for the fruit. All the bananas and some of the apples and oranges were spoiled but otherwise it was really swell. Thank whoever was responsible for it for me. I am taking the most of it to the field with me to eat out there so I know I won't starve.

How is everone at home? I sure would have liked to have been there to see Herman. He must be looking fine according to your letter. I don't know whether we will get a furlough or not after maneuvers but here's hoping.

We have been having tests on everything we have had since I came in the service and some things we haven't had. I passed all but two and now I have to take written tests on these before I can get a pass again. Those two are "Materia Medica" and "Organization and Function of Arms." I have had Materia Medica but never the organization and function of arms so I knew I wouldn't pass it without studing on it.

I leave in about an hour or two on the three-weeks' problem to finish up the maneuvers. On this problem everything will be tactical. That is, it will be just like actual combat. Artillery, infantry, anti-aircraft, anti-tank, etc. All will be firing so this will be a little more interesting to those of us on our first maneuvers.

We were issued two helpful things this last week for out here. One was goggles and the other a dust respirator mask. They both really come in handy.

I am enclosing a little souvenir I bought in Holtsville. I hope you like it. I thought they were pretty cute.

Well, I must close for now but will write later on the field. Thanks again for the box. Bye.

Your loving son,

Harold

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, March 2, 1943]

### FOURTH LETTER FROM RAMON ALBER

Ramon Alber, S2/C

U.S.N. Hospital Corps School

Farragut, Idaho

Feb. 21, 1943

Dear Auntie and Sister:

As you two are together, I am only writing one letter, which goes for both of you to read.

Well, girls, I guess I am situated for a few weeks. You can write me any time for I love to hear how old Mishawaka is getting along.

Well, down in my heart I've come to the conclusion that school back home was O.K. after all. In the school here, you really work. Four hours in the forenoon (that is straight hours) and four in the afternoon. At night is the only time we have to study. Most of the time in school we are taking notes. I am keeping my books and some time I'll show you what they are like.

This last week our subjects were chemical warfare, anatomy, physiology, first aid and bandaging. I have surgical work later which is really hard. Later we have materia Medica. All in all it is not easy. There are 12 of us taking this course. Girls, I guess it will take brains and lots of hard work to cover 1,015 pages in six weeks and I mean they really shove it to you. Saturday I worked in the hospital under Lt. Com. Mergin, medical doctor. Sure swell and (wow) the nurses. About 500 here. By the way, the hospital itself isn't little. I'd say it covers about 2 acres of land. There are 180 beds, 16 wards and hallways. I bet I walked 7 miles and didn't even get outside the building.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

So much for that. How are you girls and the buddies? Have you seen them lately?

The old sun us sure out today. And lots of speed boats on the lake, too. Next week-end I get a 36-hour liberty. My buddie and I are going to have some pictures taken if the sun is out. His girl friend, who lives in Spokane, said we could have her camera to use. I will send you some pictures if they are good.

Since I am back to school I feel more like a pledged sailor. Is Sis working again after her operation?

Well, I think I shall close for I have to be shoving off for chow (or supper). You know I bet the old Dodge don't know what's coming off nowadays. I bet it misses its driver. Ha! Well, I hope to hear from you soon,

Love,  
Ramon

P.S. - Did you get my picture I had taken while in "boot camp"? Oh yes, girls, I bought a music sheet, written for the station. The name is "Up, Faragut." I will send it home as soon as possible. And thanks for your card. It was O.K.

Ramon

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, March 3, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM RAY McGRIFF

Dear Mother:

Just a few lines to let you know I am O.K. and hope you all at home are the same. Tell Florence, Toots and the Ladies Aid I said thanks a lot for the Christmas boxes they sent. I was sure glad to get all of them. I received them on Thanksgiving day, so I just had to open them before Christmas. I didn't get Leona's boxes, but will later. Tell her that is one time it is better that she was late. I will have something to look forward to.

You can buy a bond with the money Orville sent for my Christmas, and when you write to him, tell him thanks a lot. I haven't seen any of the Rochester boys yet, only Tony Miller. There was a boy from Bremen to see me, but didn't get to see him. I was working so don't know who it was. I am not driving a truck any more. Would like to tell you what I am doing but can't. I have been getting the papers you send. Sure glad to get them. They are one of the best things a guy can get from home, but you don't need to insure them. I get them just as quick, if not quicker, if they are not insured. How is Dad feeling by this time? How do he and Roy get along on four or five gallons of gas a week? Not very good, I bet.

Well, as I have no more time, I will close.

Love,  
Ray

Pfc. Ray McGriff, 35258803  
Sig. Hq. & Hq. Co. A.W.S., VII F.C.  
A.P.O. 958, c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco, Calif.

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, March 4, 1943]

### LETTER FROM DEAN MYERS

Dear Mother:

Well, just a line to tell you the good news. I got a Pfc. rating this morning. Boy, am I glad I get one stripe for all my clothes. Isn't that swell? See, I told you I could cook. Ha, ha. When we move from here, which will be soon, I go as second cook and then I will get a corporal's rating which will be two stripes.

I will finish this letter tonight. Tell the folks the good news. Well, I am back again after a good supper and some swell letters and I feel pretty good. How are all of you at home? O.K., I hope. We are quarantined again with measles.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Gee, I am glad I was made a Pfc. today. I get \$4 more a month now. I was told tonight not to sew many of my stripes on because I would get a corporal's rating in two weeks. I sure hope so. I haven't got the money yet that you sent me but maybe I will get it tomorrow.

Well, bye now. I will write tomorrow again. Write soon.

Love, Your son,

Pfc. Dean

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, March 4, 1943]

### LETTER FROM EDWARD DREW

Feb. 28, 1943

Dear Folks:

Just a few lines to let you know that I am O.K. We have been flying an awful lot lately. I'm pretty proud of our record. Our crew has more flying time than any other in our flight. Now I don't want you folks to start worrying. If you do I won't write and tell you anything anymore. We are not going to Eglin Field, Florida (thank goodness) but we will move out of here within two or three weeks. We have to draw some more overseas equipment. Of course that don't mean we are going right away. But things are beginning to come to a head and I'm really glad. Because it isn't right for me and the rest to sit over here all the time and the sooner we all get over, the sooner we can come home. I figure that God means it to be this way. So I have no fear of going, in fact I'm happy about it and you folks must feel the same way. I have a hint of where we will go after so long a time, but I can't tell. Any way you know where Albert is, don't you? We may or may not get a chance to come home first. Let's pray that we do, because there are boys here who haven't been home since they have been in.

Well, let's not think about it for a while yet. It will be some time before we go. How are you folks feeling? Is uncle Eli any better? I hope so. How about that little monkey, Dickie? I'll bet he is a lively one now. He sure is cute. Have you heard from Herb lately? I wrote to him last week and I do hope he answers it. I have been trying to get a three-day pass so I could go and see him, but no soap. I think maybe I have the wrong job, because no airplane can take off without an engineer, so I'm hooked. Do send me the picture of his wife though. I'm so anxious to see her. How are things going with you, Dad? Do you have everything under control? You better start planning your garden so you can have a lot of fresh vegetables and a few chickens. It will save you a little money or ration stamps. I guess this is almost all for now. Take good care of yourselves and give my love to uncle Eli.

Your loving son,

S/Sgt. Edward Drew

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, March 8, 1943]

### LETTER FROM HUGH HOLMAN

Navy 200,

Fleet Postoffice, San Francisco

January 22, 1943

Mr. H. B. Holman

Rochester, Ind.

Dear Dad and Faye:

I have received your letters of December 9th and 24th. I was sure glad to hear that Kline Reed won his suit. Faye, I have a tortoise shell heart which I'll send by air mail very soon. I also got one for Louise. I think I could enjoy some of your cold weather. Tell Aunt Edith I heard the Jesters over San Francisco KWID (I think it was) sing "Pass the Biscuits Poppy." Today is my birthday - 27 - a nice ripe old age. I wrote Louise last week. How is Aunt Lucile getting along?

The natives had a feast this morning just about 10 feet from where I work on the lawn of a Catholic school (strictly native, thatch roof, etc.) It was for the Crown Prince and the feast will be this noon. Several pigs were baked and there will probably be lots of yams, too.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I hope your business is good and stays good. I get a weekly news letter from the Employment Security Division which does a lot to keep me up on their activities. Did I thank you for the Air Mail envelopes? They were very welcome since we have very little chance to buy them. By the way, would you give The News-Sentinel my new address which is above. We have a basketball tournament in camp. My team played last night, but we lost 16-10. I got six of the points. Pretty lucky at that. Are the Zebras still undefeated? The last I heard they had won six straight.

Love to all,

Hugh Bankson Holman

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, March 10, 1943]

### LETTER FROM LEE DAKE CHILSON

Editor's Note:

Capt. Chilson, the author of the following letter which was written to his father in Florida, is well known to many of the younger people in this community. Lee Dake, who is the son of Dr. Lee Chilson, of Bradenton, Fla., has spent many of his summer vacations at Lake Manitou. Dr. Chilson was formerly a dentist of this city.

Capt. Lee Dake Chilson  
A.P.O. No. 520  
L. Bomb Squadron, 0-306-309  
c/o Postmaster, New York.  
North Africa  
Tues. Dec. 29, 1942

Kate's letter of Oct. 8 and your letter of Oct. 26, came in yesterday. This is the first word I have had from the home front since September on account of the fact that the mail was held in England until the move into Africa was completed. Your line "Thought you had gone to Africa," gave me a grin for we are sure as hell deep in the heart of N.A. The country is an awful lot like Asia and New Mexico with same type of terrain. Some of the walled cities of Rome and Carthage still stand and Rome's military genius stands out once again in the strategic positions of her outposts. We follow the roads of the legions of Rome and battle in the ruins of their battles.

The towns of Oran and Algeria. No use figuring where I am as we only passed through those towns are beautiful cities, modern, rich and prosperous before the Boche came to grab everything in the name of Der Fuehrer. The land is surprisingly fertile along the coastal ranges and made to produce by the thrifty French. Wine, citrus fruits, wheat and meat for the bellies of the continent. Looted by the Germans for the guts of the Fatherland. The story is as old as time and dressed up in any slogan the same old way, war of conquest and commerce.

This nostrum is and always has been a prize sought by the warlike and commercials alike with only the names of the countries changed and the methods of conquest modernized. Once Carthage challenged the power of Rome and was destroyed in the conflict and now from the screens of forgotten Carthage vices a new nation, a new array to smash the power of another nation and people who would rule the world through force and govern her conquered slaves by fear.

The French are not dead - they hate the Boche first, the British next, but for the Americans nothing is too good. Betrayed by her leaders to be raped by the Boche, they arise here to fight again reminding me of Kipling's words "If you can stand to hear the words you've spoken, twisted by the knaves to make a trap for us, or see the things you gave your life to broken, and stop to build them up with worn out tools."

Weigand built here an army that was disarmed and demobilized, left with only the relics of arms but they rise to fight again.

This, in truth, is not our war. We were again forced into the struggle through lack of foresight and a determination to blind ourselves to certain facts that are ageless, one of which is that the weak are destroyed by the strong. Every individual is beaten eventually by one opponent, Joe Louis included. But a nation shall survive so long as the collective individuals are strong in

## SvcMen WW II Letters

their thinking and willing to back it up with action. It is not necessary to subject other people to slavery to show strength, but it is necessary to be able to destroy the mad dog at the gate if the nation is to survive. Enough of this. Russia and China, not U.S., so far - have shown the world what it takes to survive. Churchill's words: "Blood and sweat and tears, have been transmitted into deeds by Stalin and Chiang.

Our boys are growing into men here and our army grows in size and more important in the craft of warfare. The end is not yet in sight but the tide has begun to ebb for the invincible ravagers of Poland, Czechoslovakia, France, Greece and Italy. For Italy too, is a victim of the Nazis. Perhaps I see it wrong, but at least it's the way I see it and you get some seeing here.

This life is a good deal like those on maneuvers, only we "ain't" shooting blanks. After one time under fire it's not necessary to be told to dig in. Cold and wet but we have alleviated that thusly:

### NEW CHILSON APTS (picture of dugout censored)

Keeps me warm and offers good protection from Jerry's whistlers. Sure would like to trade it for a house and lot in Flethurst.

Sure sorry to hear that Cynth lost her pups. One of our boys flew a black Cocker down from England and he is having the time of his life. He has been on five raids and has five white stars on his collar. Barks like hell at all the Arabs, and runs all over the place having himself a time. Getting big enough to notice the girl dogs but most of them are wild as the country.

Hate to think of Lou losing her baby and I know she feels terrible about it. She's married now and her own boss so if she wants to stay in Tampa and work I think she should. She'll be busy and won't have time to fret and worry and she's still close enough that you can see her often. She has the Chilson head too, so don't worry her by insisting that she does other than she wishes. We grow by our own efforts, failures and things we learn the hard way. Judgment is attained and not taught and Lou will do more for herself than we can for her.

Pa, I wish you'd contact Marshall Cony and find if he knows anything about the price and availability of land on the Braden River in the fish and food section.

The A.P.O. is now 520.

Have looked for Bud in the new show, but so far have heard nothing of his outfit. Think perhaps they could be used here but so far no word.

We have no regular hours here nor routine, do the jobs as they come up and try to keep the ball in the other fellow's yard. Chow is good but much stew and all canned. Everyone down to fighting weight but anxious to see the U.S.A.

Some Xmas bags have come but some not yet. Couldn't tell you why I suggested not mailing same but I knew we were leaving England. It'll come in due time. Keep plugging and give my regards to all.

Love,  
Lee Dake

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, March 12, 1943]

### LETTER FROM KENNETH PAULK

From Pvt. Kenneth Paulk

Dear Mary:

I thought I'd drop you a few lines. Well, here I am in town again. I'm sure having a good time. I got paid Friday and I'm celebrating. I didn't get a bed check either. This Austin is some town. There sure is a lot of things to do. Last night I sure had a good time. I think I did everything that there was to be done. I bowled, skated, played ping pong, danced, and also drank a little. I think a little too much. Well, anyway, I had a good time. Today I'm going to get some pictures taken. It will take about ten days to get them back. I sure hope they are good. I bought a pillow case last night for you. I hope you like it. I think it's kind of pretty.

I'll tell you something funny that happened last week. We were out hiking and wore a full field pack and gas mask. You see, we have a lot of school on gas. While we were on this hike we

## SvcMen WW II Letters

had a gas attack. So we all put on our gas masks. The funny part of it was, the gas we smelled was a skunk. Everybody sure got a kick out of that. I can say one thing, that our gas masks sure do the work.

I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I am going to send forty dollars home. I'm going to give you ten of that and I want you to save the rest for me. I don't care how you save it, just so you save it. You can put it in the bank or keep it at home, I don't care. Then if I ever get a furlough, I'll have some money.

How does Dick like his job by now? I hope all right. I still think that was a nice place to work. Well, that's about all I can think of to say. I hope everybody is O.K. Tell Dad and Dick I said hello, and tell Dick to tell the boys at the bakery hello, too. Be a good girl and write real often.

Lots of love,  
Kenny

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, March 12, 1943]

### LETTER FROM HAROLD BRYANT

Sgt. Harold Bryant 15105687  
Co. B, 411th Eng. Base Shop Bn.,  
A.P.O. 704  
c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco, Calif.  
U. S. Army

Dear Dad, Lou and Junior:

Well, here it is February 16, 1943. I just received your Christmas card. How are you folks getting on these days? I hope fine and dandy.

Dad, I suppose you wonder where I'm at and why you haven't received any mail from me. I'm in Australia now, Dad, and like it just fine. I'm only about 12,000 miles away from you folks now. Sure wish I could tell you where but that wouldn't be playing right with Uncle Sam. I don't want you folks to worry about me as I'm quite well and will soon be toughened up. Dad, there will be times when you won't hear from me for a while but that's no reason for you folks to stop writing to me. Now is when I would like most to hear from home so see if you can't sit down and write me once a week anyway. Well, how's the shop going, Dad? Alright, I hope. I will close for this time. Hope to hear from you real soon. Bye.

With lots of luck,  
Love to all, Harold

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, March 13, 1943]

### FOURTH LETTER FROM ALBERT SWANSON

Pvt. Albert Swanson  
Somewhere in Australia  
February 6, 1943

Dear Mom:

I received your lette the other day but didn't have time to answer it until now. I hope this letter finds you all well. I am feeling fine, only have a little cold. It has rained most every day since I got back from the hospital.

Did Frank get home for Christmas, and where is he at? If you will send me his address I will write to him.

I got the package from the Lutheran Ladies Aid, and please thank them for it. I enjoyed it very much. I also got two packages from Carl the same day. I got a letter and Christmas card from Miss Blanche Swihart and a Christmas card from the Athens U.B. church.

Are Carl and John still working at the same place? Will they have to go to the army? I haven't received any pay for three months. Did you get the checks for November, December and January?

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Well, I will close for this time. Answer soon.

Your son,  
Albert Swanson

Note: I think the reason he didn't get paid was because he was in the hospital.

Pvt. Frank Swanson has been transferred from Camp Blanding, Fla., to Nashville, Tenn. His address is: Pvt. Frank Swanson, A.S.N. 35357049, Co. L, 313rd Inf., A.P.O. 79, c/o Postmaster, Nsshville, Tenn.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, March 17, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM FRED GORDON

Sunday, 9:15 a.m.

Dear Dad:

You wouldn't even come close to guessing where I am writing this letter. It is in a so-called fox-hole. Yes, I have finally been christened to this front line fighting. Believe me, it's no cinch by any means. It has mostly developed into an artillery battle right now. I had my first real scare day before yesterday when one hit about 10 yards from my fox-hole. The blast was so terrific the sides of my fox-hole came in one-half foot all around. God, what an awful noise, too. I have had a headache for two days since.

The artillery shells the Germans shoot have a peculiar whizzaing noise they make as they go over your head, you hope. We have been very fortunate in our outfit as far as casualties are concerned; one man killed, 3 or 4 shrapeneled. It's a mighty nerve-wrecking proposition to hear these shells, and not knowing whether they have your name on them or not.

We aren't troubled too much by airplanes, however, around meal times they come zooming over trying to pick up men who might be lax enough to be carrying their mess kits around, which shows up in the sun. One has to shield anything and everything whatsoever that glistens or else you might be machine-gunned by these Nazi planes. The planes have a very distinctive sound as their motors are not synchronized like our planes and they sound like a truck which has been overloaded. This makes them very easy to be picked up and the air raid alarm to be given in time.

I have a bit of paper which was one of many thrown out by Nazi planes the other night. Some propaganda for the French people whom the Nazis wish were on their side now, as the French are giving a grand account of themselves now. I'll enclose it in this letter and you may let Rochester people get a chance to at least hear about it. Please save it for me, however.

I hear Rocheste has a good basketball team. Well, if they're as good as our 1937 or '38 team I'm sure glad for Lyle and the Rochester fans. Hope they can knock off a state championship.

If this letter gets through you might let Rochester read it. I think of them quite often.

As for myself, I am well. I am only hoping this war ends soon so I can come back home.

God bless you and keep you, Dad. I love you.

Your fightin' son of a gun,  
Fred

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, March 17, 1943]

### FIFTH LETTER FROM RAMON ALBER

Ramon E. Alber, S 2/C  
U.S. Hospital Corps School  
Farragut, Idaho  
March 7, 1943

Dear Folks:

Here I am back trying to write again. I think I have received all your letters so far and the ones delayed.

This week end I have moved a step higher. I was a junior, now I am a senior in school. Have three more weeks of school. From there on I am a senior in school. From there on I reckon

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I will either be here or some other hospital for my internship or practice. I have done rather good so far, so keep your fingers crossed until I finish.

My routine for the day is, get up at 6:00, wash, shave and so forth. Go to chow and while at chow the stewards of the hospital make my bed and straighten things up. Usually I am at chow by quarter of seven and back by 7:30. Then I get my equipment and head for class. At 8:00 we start the class of the day. Strictly military at school, too - address all officers as at any other time.

Well, I and about every one here goes by their last name. Names are used alphabetically, so on most occasions I am first as mine starts with "A."

We go through our classes till 11:00, then out to chow and back at school by 1:00 and carry on, through till 4:00, then the day is supposed to be ours. But, as for mine, I have to use that time for my study period which all of us do. There are only a few with me in my class. This week we are studying X-ray work and blood smears. That's all I can say.

We have about anything we want and get anything we ask for mostly, in the way of liberties and so forth. My room is in the hospital, in the left wing. It's really swell.

Our meals are O.K. In fact, I am gaining a little. Ha! Today we had fried chicken, carrots and peas, mashed potatoes, salad, bread and butter, ice cream and choice of coffee or milk. All the food is swell and we get the same as the patients. I could say how big the hospital is but in short words, "It's big." Covers about 20 acres, I'd say. In general, I have a swell place, but for how long I don't know.

I am planning on taking some pictures this week-end, if I can get the films. Last week I couldn't get any, for so many got films and they get low on supply.

I am sure looking forward for those pictures of Johnnie. He's a big boy, I'll bet. How is Addison's sprained ankle and how is your arm and your cold now, Mom? I sure hope you're better. I sure hope Dad makes lots of sugar.

Oh, yes, the views are O.K. here, plenty of mountains around. The road to Spokane is O.K. only you ride uncomfortable. You think too much of rinning over the sides. A little different than Indiana. All you think of back there is the corners and fences. But here, when you look down the side, you wonder where the bottom is. It's really thrilling. We are about 8,000 feet above sea level.

I am writing to Creamer Farry today, too. Well, I must come to a stop. I am getting to where it is hard to find time to write letters. But I will write again soon.

Tell everyone hello for me.

Love,  
Ramon

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, March 19, 1943]

### FOURTH LETTER FROM HOWARD SHIREMAN

Dear Friend:

Received your most appreciated letter this noon's mail call, of course, there is no need telling you that it was most appreciated. Father has mailed me a few of the local papers and of course read the letters from other boys in the service which were published in the papers, noting that one or two were addressed to "Dear Friend, Ed", so presumed they were yours. Am I correct? Was very much interested in the one from Robert Hartung, it has been so long ago that I had almost forgotten him.

Am still located in the same place and like the work real well, except for the changing of shifts every week. Here eight hour shifts, changeable each week, running from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., to 1 a.m. to 9 a.m., of which at the present time am working the latter, and about six o'clock in the morning (which it is right now) you get darn tired and sleepy. Still though, when I stop to think of what thousands of others are putting up with I really don't have a thing to "gripe" about, but of course, being an American, and a G.I. dog-face, it wouldn't be natural if we weren't all the time complaining about this or that - have to let off steam some way, you know.

Am really getting a seven-days leave although still have another month before it comes around. Except for 36-hour week-end passes it will be my first leave since being home for the

## SvcMen WW II Letters

holidays in '41. In many ways, it seems like a much longer time than what it really is, and in others it has rolled around very quick. Have been debatng with myself whether to take a trip to Scotland or find some nice quiet town or village and just lay around doing nothing but eating and sleeping for about four days, with possibly a little side trip to some point of interst thrown in. The longer I think of it the more the latter seems to be most inviting, especially with transportation facilities, etc. as they are. Couple of my friends returned from Edinburg couple weeks ago and had to make the entire ten-hour trip standing, and I can assure you the English railroads are not built to accommodate passengers standing up. Whichever it is though I am sure it will be of very much enjoyment and interest to me.

Couple of us have been planning on taking a week-end trip to Shakespeare's home at Stratford-on-Avon, but seems like we can never get together at the same time, or else some other cause to keep us. Of course, can always find places right near us to go, and the bright lights (although at present they are pretty much blacked-out) has their beckoning. Also the Red Cross Clubs always have somethng for we boys, and since we have one, we have adopted it as our "second home." They have certainly done a most splendid job toward the boys here, providing rooms, meals, entertainment, and books far beyond any other nations, in fact I doubt if theirs combined could equal ours. Of course, they are also opened to the service men of our Allies, as long as they come as a guest of some Yank. Again the end hoves in sight so again I must be saying good-bye for the present. Best wishes to you and yours.

Howard

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, March 19, 1943]

### LETTER FROM EVERETT T. ZINK

Sgt. Everett T. Zink  
204th Q.M. Serv. Grp. (AVN)  
A.P.O. 926 c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco, California, U.S.A

Dear Mother and Dad:

Well, here I am again to write you a few lines. I am feeling fine and eating regular meals, getting plenty of sleep and miss you both very much. It is hard to think of something to write will try and do better in the future. I hope you notice the change in my address. I am still somewhere in New Guinea. I like it here. The mosquitoes aren't as bad here as one would expect. It rains often, but then one gets used to the rain.

You have heard of the tropical moon, well, there is nothing like it. "Don't get me wrong." I would rather see the moon on the Wabash, ha! I will try and get some pictures finished. I had my picture taken with two natives and will send them to you. I have a little grass skirt that was made for a little Pigmy, but I was able to buy it and will send it to Beth. Then you can see it. Gee, it will be wonderful to get this over and get back home with all of you folks and live a normal life again. I would like to see some good old white snow.

I am glad to hear that you have heard from Mrs. Flanagan, also that they spoke of me as they did. I am fortunate to have the bringing up that I have and I will try and remember the things you taught me. (I do.) I am glad Harold is getting along fine in his work. I hope he has got my letter by this time.

Write and let me know where Dick (Richard Knepper) is and what his honors were. No, I did not hear the President talk. I haven't heard an American broadcast since I was at the Flanagans (Austy.)

Tell Grandpa Lemon I think of him and tell him to take care of himself and I will see him when I get home. How is Aunt Jennie and the rest? I suppose Kenny Brubaker is back where he was. I am not far from there. Tell Reathel and Bill Evans and kids I said Hello.

Tell all that ask about me where I am. I miss all that are doing everything in their power to make it easier for all we boys over here. Remember me to W. Omer Millers.

Your loving son,  
Everett

## SvcMen WW II Letters

{From Australia, woman with whom Everett Zink stayed in Australia. He is Sgt. in Quartermaster Corps.)

Australia, Aug. 16, 1942

Dear Mrs. Zink:

You will be surprised to hear from me, but we have had the pleasure of meeting your son, Everett. I have two sons about Everett's age, both away from home, they are doing a university course, one commerce and the other dentistry. I know how much they miss home. Everett is such a home loving boy that we are very pleased to have him visit us to try and compensate for the home he misses. We mothers are always anxious about our sons when they leave home as there is such wickedness and vice but you can rest assured Mrs. Zink that Everett will return to you as good a boy as you sent out into the world. He has some very nice friends.

My youngest son will be 14 on August 26th, so we are planning a party to celebrate Everett's and Kevin's birthday together. Today is a lovely spring day, a day that you feel you would like to be the idle rich and lay in the sun. However, we will soon have summer with its hot dusty days.

I suppose you are feeling the shortage of certain foods. Our petrol ration is 4 gallons a month, so motoring is almost out of the question. We just have enough to do short trips around the town. I am afraid we have been spoiled as we never thought of walking anywhere. One blessing we have plenty to eat. There is no shortage of foodstuffs. Living in the country has one advantage, you can always grow your own vegetables and plenty of eggs, milk etc.

With kind regards and very good wish.

Yours sincerely,

Elizabeth Flanagan.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, March 19, 1943]

## LETTER FROM HAROLD D. ALSPACH

March 10, 1943

Dear Mom and Dad:

I received your letter the other day and was glad to hear from you, even though it was rather small, but then a postage stamp from there looks good to a sailor, and I'm afraid that I don't like your new stationery as it isn't any faster getting here than your other letter, if not a little bit slower, as the one took about six days where the others came in about four days.

That's quite a phone number you have. How come the two letters after the number. I only remember ever seeing one. I guess things do change while one's away though.

It looks like about all those guys in the States do is get leave and draw their pay. Who were the five sailors you mentioned? That's more than I ever knew were in the navy from around there.

How do you like your work where you are working and what do you do there, and how is dad getting along. Is he still working or is he fired? He should be boss of the place if he is still there. Guess I'll have to go on relief when I get back home as all the goldbricks that are too good for army life won't want to give up the good life for guys that are doing something besides drawing too much pay and complaining about having to work eight hours per day.

Do you ever see Ann and Jerry any where around town? If you do tell them hello for me.

How is that club of yours doing, the latest one you joined with? I don't suppose I will have to worry about having to go to their meetings as it will probably be quite a while before I get home. Perhaps I might be able to manage it some time next year.

I am enclosing a miniature pin of an organization to which I belong and this outfit has an auxiliary for the mothers, wives, etc., of those belonging to it, so if you would like to belong to it you can join up. I belong to Post No. 10 so let me know if you would like to belong to another club.

I have just one more desire and then I will be satisfied, and that is to belong to the Masonic lodge there if I could find any way to do it. Could you find out what the qualifications are on it, and what and whom I have to know in order to join (and let me know). Well, I guess I had better stop for now so don't forget to answer these questions, as you have a very bad habit of never

## SvcMen WW II Letters

answering my questions, and if you don't I'm going to quit writing till you get in the habit as it's my only way of learning what goes on around home and what people are doing. But you insist on never telling me what I ask about, so how about doing it once and see what happens.

How is sis? Has she forgotten about the pony yet? Have you seen any that look decent for her to have? I don't want you to get her some scrub pony. It's worth \$40 to get a good one that won't die the first year, as usually happens to some horses I remember you used to buy.

Well, I will sign off. Hoping to hear from you soon.

Lots of love to all,  
Harold D. Alspach, R.M. 2/C  
U.S.S.S.C. 530  
c/o Postmaster, New York, N.Y.

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, March 20, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM SGT. JEAN WALBURN

Columbia Army Air Base  
Columbia, S.C.  
March 11, 1943

Dear Mother:

In spring a young man's fancy turns to love. It's a beautiful spring day and my thoughts of love are for you, mother. Today is your birthday. I wish I could think of better words to use than the usual "happy birthday," but since I can't the same old words will have to do. So, mother, happy birthday.

The love that always is between mother and child will carry the thoughts I wish to express, more forcibly than writing. There is something more alive in love than visual things. At moments like these we call on those spiritual things which comprise the love in our hearts, and we converse without interruptions from the outside. So, mother, call on those hidden voices and listen for my wish to you on your birthday.

Remember, mother, I used to like to walk in the woods across the road? Look there, and listen. I'm still there. I'm there lying on the couch, reading, or in the garage building one of those contraptions that never materialized. Remember?

Then the times I came home from work, when all was hurry, hurry - I had only two or three days at home, then back to work. Then remember those days last December. Oh yes, mother, we both remember and meet often in our reveries.

Today we've met again, and had another talk. This letter is only a material conception of our wordless visit.

Your son,  
Jean

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, March 20, 1943]

### FOURTH LETTER FROM WARREN CORNELL

Warren L. Cornell  
March 14, 1943

Editor News-Sentinel

Dear Friend:

On my third jump I was hurt. When I left the plane at 1200 feet I didn't duck my head enough. One of the risers hit me on the side of the head. The doctor at the hospital said it was a minor concussion. I was out for two days. I didn't know a thing. I guess I won't be able to jump any more. I received my wings. But I sure wish I could keep on jumping. It is an air borne command that anyone who can't keep on jumping will be sent to Pennsylvania and from there will either go overseas or go out and train recruits. I don't know what I will do as yet. But I hope I go overseas. Jumping is a great thrill if you don't get hurt.

Give my love to Marjorie Rynearson, and Mr. and Mrs. E. Cornell Brown.

Love,

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Warren Cornell

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, March 22, 1943]

### LETTER FROM CLAUDE STEFFEY

Camp Forrest, Tenn.

Dear Mother:

How is everything in Indiana? I hope O.K. It has been raining up here for a week. How is my little man? Tell him I said hello and to write to me. This army life isn't so bad. But I wish this old war was over so I could come home. Tell Jim when I get home we are going out and get so - - - that we - well just tell him. We have to run a mile with full pack in five minutes. This army is either going to break me or make a man out of me. I hope it make man out of me and I think it will. I don't think I will get a furlough in April but it will be some time in the summer. So I guess I will see you soon, I hope. Tell Grandma and Pa I said hello and for them to write me too. Mother, you will soon get your money. It will soon be my birthday, the first one I ever spent away from home. I will spend a lot of them away from home now. I am a gunner, that is the toughest job in the army. Well, Mom, I will have to close now. Goodbye now.

Your son,

Pvt. Claude Steffey

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, March 25, 1943]

### LETTER FROM GEORGE C. NUELL

March 16, 1943

Dear Sister and Family:

Well I suppose you are all thinking that I am dead. But every thing is O.K. We was on maneuvers for three weeks. And maby you think that not a job. You don't get any sleep to speak of some night not any.

Then when that was all over, we started getting ready to move. So I didn't have time to, right. We are moved now. And don't think that all of us was not glad to get out of the desert. We have plenty of hot and cold water and - - - good eats out here. The best we had any place I been. And you should had been along on this trip. Because we seen more on this one trip.

Then all the others we been on. Maby you think the ocean is not nice. I can't say just where I am.

Well since we been here I got a new job. I am working in the Bn. Supply with my truck the best in the Company. And not having much to do.

Well I suppose everything is the same back home. Well I suppose Ralph is thinking about planting corn by now. Well that is about all I can think of now. Close with love to all.

Your brother,

George C. Nuell

P.S.- It won't be long till I'll be in the Army a year. But it don't seem like it been half that long.

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, March 25, 1943]

### LETTER FROM RALPH P. CHAPMAN

Cpl. Ralph P. Chapman

Co. E, 318 Inf., A.P.O. No. 80

Camp Forrest, Tenn.

Dear Folks:

Well, how is everybody tonight? Fine I hope. I am just fine.

I got another stripe today so I am a Corporal now, and now I can give some orders too. I am pretty happy about my stripes.

I got your letter today, and was very glad to get it, also one from my wife.

It has been raining here too and is quite warm down here.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

We are still in quarantine but are going out somewhere tomorrow and stay over night. I will have to be ready for it, so will close for tonight.

Lots of love,  
Your son, Ralph

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, March 26, 1943]

### LETTER FROM E. C. LEWIS

Sgt. E. C. Lewis  
Co. B, 638th T.D. Bn.  
Camp Livingston, La.  
March 17, 1943

Dear Mother and Dad:

Wednesday eve, and I am in charge of quarters so will try to drop you a line if too many of the officers don't come in to molest me.

Sure have been having nice weather the past few days - suppose you are having better weather up there, too.

We have been pretty busy these past few days. We're getting rid of so many trucks and tools that it seems we never get through checking equipment. Then too, we have been doing lots of night work - last week we had scout school and now we are having meetings every night with the officers. I guess tomorrow night from four until twelve we are going on a twenty-five mile hike - think I can make it? I'll bet I can.

Well has Lonnie Varel came back or is he still with his mother and say mother - where is Lonnie now? I just happened to think of him and wondered where he was at now.

Today we were supposed to get out of quarantine but another of our fellows took the measles today so I suppose we will be quarantined for at least another fourteen days. These measles have almost got us all down. The heck of it is none of the fellows are sick with them - they are the three day kind and don't amount to much.

Has Irene came out to stay with you or is she going to before she goes back to work?

By the way - what was the matter with Mrs. Campbell? I see in the papers where Frank was back at Peru working after being at home for the past few days taking care of his wife so I was wondering what was the matter with her.

Well we heard more about the cadre again yesterday. Yesterday morning our first sergeant called me into the office and told me to learn all the duties of a motor sergeant as I was going out on a training cadre before long so I don't know when it will be but I sure hope soon. I don't much care where to as long as I get out of this outfit.

Dad I'm glad to hear you are getting along with the car so well. I just hope nothing more goes wrong with it. Do you have the tires recapped as yet. I don't believe I'd get that 650-16 tire racapped and be sure and don't put on the rear wheels. Keep it in front when you use it.

Well I suppose I'd better close as it is time to make bed check. Now take care of yourselves and don't worry about me as I am fine and be sure to write. Hope this letter finds you both feeling O.K. Love,

Your son,  
Bud

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, March 30, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM FRED SHOBE

Somewhere in Africa  
March 15, 1943

Dear Friend:

Received your letter of Feb. 2nd some two weeks ago. Have been real busy and just now had time to write. Sorry to hear of John Filbrandt. Are the Schell family of the A. & P. still in Rochester? Glad to hear of your efforts in the tire rationing and food business. Must keep you pretty busy. Have received a nice lot of correspondence from local peole there. How did

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Rochester come out in the state basketball tournament? I hope they won it. Give my regards to Hubby Z. and Charlie Hoover if you see them. I'll have some tall stories to tell you when I get back and I won't have to make them up either. Wouldn't get through the censor now so why try? We get plenty of eats, cigarettes, sometimes some candy and cigars and a day off now and then. Have learned quite a little French, altho I cannot talk it very well. I can understand better. Health is fine and climate agrees with me much better than England. Please write if you have time as I appreciate very much any news of Rochester people.

As ever,

Fred Shobe

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, March 30, 1943]

### LETTER FROM BOB DeBRULER

Somewhere in England

March 13, 1943

Dear Mother:

Your cables, letters and packages have all gotten here O.K. I returned from London yesterday and found your last three "V" mails so I'll try to answer them, plus a few more from the past. Apparently one of my letters has been lost because you have never mentioned it. It was written at Christmas time. There wasn't much in it so you aren't missing much.

I spent Christmas night in the home of a man whom I met at a Masonic meeting in a nearby town. His family have been wonderful to me. They have done everything but adopt me. They gave me a lovely wool scarf and tie for Christmas, and on my birthday a party for me and my room mate.

The English people are very temperamental when it comes to accepting their hospitality, and these friends of mine are no exception.

They insist I spend at least one night a week with them, and if I don't their feelings are hurt, but who am I to turn down fried eggs sunny side up and bacon for breakfast. At times I feel like a heel for accepting so much when it is impossible for me to do anything for them.

At the first of the year I went to Cornwall for a week. Although I was very busy all the time I was there, I did find time to enjoy what I think is the most beautiful part of England. If you see the show, "Random Harvest," you'll see a few typical scenes taken in Cornwall.

I was released from guard duty in January and now have a swell job. It is very interesting and not as long hours as the last.

I share a swell big room with another sergeant from Oklahoma. We have a radio, thanks to our major, a couple of folding chairs, table and desk. To make it a true American room we have the walls covered with pictures from Esquire.

A staff sergeant from Michigan has a room next and when the three of us get together look out.

You want to know something about the chow. The best way I can describe it is by giving our dinner menu today: pork chops, mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans, carrots, lettuce, salad and coffee. The bread, butter, jelly and pickles is always on the table. We have some kind of juice for breakfast and fruit at least once a day. The past few Sundays we have had chicken. Not bad, and a little ice cream thrown in on top. Once in a while we have cake and hot rolls. All in all, the food is darn good.

At the present time we are listening to a program coming from 42nd street and Broadway in New York. It is a man on the street program, and they are asking the question, "What do the American people think of the English?" Some rather good answers being given.

A new Red Cross Area club here on the field. It is a swell place, has a wonderful snack bar where we can get waffles, doughnuts, cakes and cokes - everything to make us feel at home.

There is a small town near here about 12 of us go to dance. We have been going there since October, and so far we are about the only Yanks that go. We know almost everybody in town, even in the blackout. Two weeks ago they had an American week which ended with a big dance. It was our night and we made a big one of it.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Somehow or another I was drafted onto a special drill team that we have here but it turned out to be a lot of fun. We got to take part in the Wings for Victory parade in London day before yesterday. The enclosed picture shows part of it. After the parade went down to the Rainbow club and looked through the register of Indiana boys and found Howard McGowen. If you see his sister tell her I am trying to run him down, but don't know his squadron number.

I can hardly wait to hear how the basketball tournament comes out this year. I have my fingers crossed for the good old Zebras.

There isn't much more to write, so will say so long for now.

Love,  
Bob

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, March 30, 1943]

### LETTER FROM DEAN NEHER

March 23, 1943

To My Friends:

I had great pleasure in receiving letters from you good people back home. I am quite well. I believe the Army Air Corps is the best branch of service. The army can do a person a lot of good if he will obey and put forth some effort to understand things the army way. I like the army and like most of my buddies, am always ready to defend it against other boys' remarks. I feel sure I will be a better man when the war is over than I was before I entered the army. I want to express my appreciation for everything and add a congratulation for the valiant Zebras. There are plenty ways to be entertained in a clean way here. Sometimes it is said war creates hatred and ill-feeling in the hearts of young men. I, by the help of the teachings I have had, am determined to uphold my beliefs and ideas of right living. Just so-long until I come home again to good old Rochester.

As ever,  
Pvt. Dean J. Neher  
2064 Ord. Co. Avn. (Serv), Det. 3  
Ft. George Wright, Wash.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, March 30, 1943]

### LETTER FROM JULIAN A. POWELL

March 28, 1943

Dear Friends:

Just a line to let you know that everything here is O.K. I have been wanting to write to you for a long time, but I could never get around to it.

Where I am stationed there are thee of us from Rochester, Dick Baker, Harvey Clary Jr. and myself. I was out the other night with Harvey, but we never done anything but get a few drinks.

As you know I have transferred out of the armed guard until winter comes and then I will go back to sea again. Once you get that sea life in your blood you can't get it out.

I have been receiving the papers about every day since I have been back in New York. It sure is nice to have them to read.

Today is Sunday, and Sunday from one to four is visiting hours. I hope to have some visitors. Strictly fellows though. I hope to get a seven-day leave in September, but I won't know until that time comes.

Well I guess this will be all, as they just called for me. My visitors are here.

Sincerely yours,  
Julian A. Powell  
Armed Guard Center  
Brooklyn, N.Y.  
c/o Boat House

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, March 31, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM HAROLD DEAN CLEVINGER

## SvcMen WW II Letters

March 21, 1943

(It won't be long until I will be 21)

Dear Mother:

How are you and the rest of the family. I hope you are feeling fine. I am alright. A mule kicked me in the leg the other day and I couldn't walk for a while but I am all right now. I am writing this letter in my tent. I am out in the Texas plains now. There is cactus all around here and there is a lot of coots here. I have been out in the plains for six days today and we are going to stay 11 more days.

I am going to put in for a furlough April 2nd. I have been to Mexico twice now. American money is worth five times as much as Mexican money. When soldiers go to Mexico they have to go across the Rio Grande river and we have to be back across the bridge at 11 o'clock.

I went to a carnival a week ago and had lots of fun. I will send you a picture of me when I get back from the field. Well, mother, I think I will close for now. Tell Sis and Bob to write to me. The weather here in Texas is hot in the daytime and cold at night. I sure wish I could come home for two weeks. Has dad got the porch built yet. Tell Norman and Harry and Bab I said hello. Good-by for now.

Your son,

Harold

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, April 2, 1943]

### LETTER FROM ARTHUR HUNTER

Sgt. Arthur Hunter

North Africa

March 13, 1943

Dear Folks:

Just a few lines this evening to let you know I'm still alive and well and hope everyone at home is O.K. Have been going pretty steady as I expect you hear from the radio and read from the papers. You can get more news from them than I possibly could give you.

Haven't received a letter from you for a while, but possibly it is delayed somewhere. Have had quite a few letters from Rosie lately. Just received one last evening. She is so good about writing here lately and that is what a person needs to spirit them up. I do hope this war hurries up and gets over with. Honestly, I feel like I'm about 65 years old any more, possibly it's the strain on a person's nerves. I know Rosie is worrying a lot by the sounds of her letters at times, but all we can all do is hold our chins high and trust to the good Lord to keep us safe.

Did I tell you I had a long letter from Rut a few days ago. He seemed like his old self once more.

I heard the news this evening and it really sounded like Germany was really getting a pounding from the air force. I hope that they blow the entire country clear off the map some of these days.

Had a letter from Clurel H. the second one in the last few days. He was sweating about the draft getting him before long, but I don't think it will him with three children, or at lease it shouldn't.

Have you heard from Harry or Bill? I imagine Harry likes the army a lots better by now or he should. Tell them both in your next letter I said Hello and work hard for we've got a tough battle to fight alright.

Well, I better close hoping to hear from you soon and I'll write again when my work will allow me to. So keep a prayer to the good Lord and everything will be alright. So goodbye and good nite for now.

Love, Brother and Son,

Jack

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, April 3, 1943]

## SvcMen WW II Letters

### SECOND LETTER FROM DEVON PFEIFFER

Devon Pfeiffer  
Co. D, 35563074  
Camp McCall, N.C.  
March 26, 1943

Dear Mom:

Well, all I forgot was my shoes. Those dirty clothes, too. Send them down, will you? I think I will need those shoes soon. We haven't done anything but clean up after Mother Nature and the labor crew.

They are still working on the barracks right close to us now. The logs are piled up where they cut them down to build.

We have one theatre here. They show a show that is a little bit old but that is all there is to do. So we have been pooling together to get 15 cents apiece so we can go.

I never saw so many men so broke all at once. All the crap games and poker games have disappeared completely. I have five pennies. I'm not going to tell anyone. Then I am going to get a candy bar tomorrow night.

We will get paid the 31st, I suppose, and it will be somewhere between 125 and 150. Then things will happen again.

One of the fellows has got a car here. Some of us are going to get together and get some gas so we can go to a town (if we can find one).

Did you look this place up on the map? As soon as we get paid some of us are going to look around.

We have something here I bet you never saw. There are some glider troops stationed here. You know, they fly in large gliders as big as transport planes. They fly over here, one transport towing one glider. Then they go over by the dozens.

We have one fellow in here with a guitar and he can sing, too. When he gets started he can go for an hour. Every one listens.

Where is Betty living now? I don't have her South Bend address now.

She wanted to come down. Well, the only place I see for a visitor to sleep is up a tree. May be after I get to town I'll see some then in a couple of weeks.

So long,  
Don

[The News-Seninel, Thursday, April 8, 1943]

### SIXTH LETTER FROM RAMON ALBER

Ramon E. Alber  
U. S. Naval Hospital  
Navy Yards, So. Carolina  
April 1, 1943

Dear Folks:

Well I got here at the hospital at South Carolina around 12 o'clock Tuesday night. I reported for active duty on Wednesday noon. I don't really know how long I will be here. But I am going to see if I can get a leave here. At Farragut I couldn't get one. They don't give anyone any. I may have a chance to get one here, but actually it's a thing of the past.

Wednesday, I was shown around most of the Navy Yard here. I went aboard a British Tin Can (destroyer). It had been hit by a depth charge. It really was battered up. Couple chiefs said that when it reached dock here they could drive a car in and turn it around and out, where the hole was. It is here for repair. Also saw several others.

Wednesday morning when I woke up birds were singing and the sun coming out just like Indiana in mid-summer. Here there are sure a lot of beautiful flowers out. The trees are green. Just in shorter words, it's really beautiful here.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

There are all kinds of sailors here. A few British sailors, Norwegians and Canadian and about 400 Marines. As I get it they are here as guards.

About my surroundings. I have it just as good as at Farragut, if not a little better. The buildings are white with green trimmings and red roofs and it sure goes good with the flowers here. As at Charleston as a town I know nothing about it as yet.

I eat in the dormitory which is in the hospital as in Farragut.

### Something to Fight For

On my cross country trip I saw lost of beautiful states. As a word, if all the people could be able to see the United States, as state to state, as beautiful as it is, they would realize why we are fighting. We came through the Glacier national park toward Canada and of all the things we saw that nature had done. Saw lots of small deer, several eagles and other animals. We came within three miles of the Canadian line. We circled and came down through Montana and Wyoming. There we saw lots of Indians. One place we stopped it was a railroad depot called "The Crow Agency." The Crow tribe run it. The conductor told us the main Indian that ran it was Chief Yellowtale. This took us to South Dakota, the southwestern tip, then Nebraska, Iowa and Illinois. Then Indiana. Here's when I really felt at home. When we left Chicago train yards, I asked the porter if we would go through Plymouth. He said, "Yes, and would stop." Well, I tried to write a few lines but I couldn't for the jmping of the train. It's really hard to write. Well! I was lost for things did not seem natural, as the towns we sailed throgh were LaCrosse and Royal Center. Then I knew we were not going toward Plymouth. When we stopped it was Logansport. I hope you got my few lines I sent from there. Just think. I could almost say Hello! But I guess no use hollering for we were late the way it was. I was to report here Monday noon, but I didn't 'til Wednesday noon. So you see we had no time to stop. We then hit Ohio. At Cincinnati we stopped again. I sent you a card from there. Then we came through Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, then South Carolina, last stop was here at the yards. The Friday morning we left Farragut the Captain inaugurated us a real greeting.

When you get this letter, write for I want to know if you got my diploma and my picture? Write and tell me everything that's happened lately.

Mom, the paper you sent me was really nice. But if you can, fix it so I won't have to bother with it. If you can't then leave it go. You can write me and tell me all I need to know.

I could write a lot, but I kinda have to make it short for I just haven't the time to write a lot at once. I'll write whenever I get a chance. Lots of others write, but it is really hard to keep my correspondence up. Tell everyone "Hello" for me and take good care of Little Johnnie. How is Gram and also Grandma Alber and the girls? You send them my address. Write soon. Bye now. Love.

Your son,  
Ramon

[The News-Seninel, Thursday, April 8, 1943]

### LETTER FROM HOWARD W. McGOWEN

S/Sgt Howard W. McGowen  
15085232, 450th Bomb, Sqd.,  
322nd Bomb Grp. (M.) A.A.F.,  
A.P.O. 634, c/o Postmaster  
New York, N.Y.  
March 10, 1943

Dear Mother and All:

## SvcMen WW II Letters

How is everybody and everything by this time? Hope O.K. Little tired tonight.

How is your winter by this time?

Oh, yes, you wanted to know how Kaylor was. He is just fine.

Say, by the way, I am staff sergeant now.

I get the paper, but it comes about a dozen at a time.

Tell Bea to tell Nina hello and I will try to write to her later.

It soon will be spring and you all will have plenty of work to do.

By the way, Ruth writes Linda Lou is sure getting big. I expect she will be a young lady when I get back, which I hope is soon.

How's the car and tractor, Bus?

Say, Mother and dad, I was thinking the other day how old I was and I realized that you both were getting old. You know, I'm not as young as I used to be. Ha! Ha!

Well, I'll be darned if I know any thing else to write so I guess I will go to bed. So, so-long and good luck. Tell everybody I said hello.

With love,

Howard

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, April 9, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM FREDERICK R. GREER

March 26, 1943

Dear Dad:

Writing you a line to let you know that I'm well and getting along alright. Got a letter from Mother today. She told me that you broke two of our ribs. Sure is too bad. Tell me how you done it in your next letter. I'd like to know how it happened. Sure getting along well over here. If you need any money to pay a doctor bill let me know and I'll help you and be glad to do it and it won't hurt me at all. So don't be afraid to ask me. I haven't heard from Robert for a long time. What I call a long time is four months. Since I have been over here I have put on a little weight. We go to town once a week and what a time we have trying to understand people. It sure is a lot of fun talking to them. Today I went up a grade in rank. Instead of one stripe, I have two. You know what that is. Uncle Ray was one in the first war. I'm going to send you a picture of myself soon so you can be on the lookout for it. I would like to tell you about where I'm at but that is one thing that we can't do. How is everything going in the city. I bet a lot of the boys that were running the streets are in the Army or Navy now. How is Hael and the rest? All right I hope. I sure hope that the war ends soon, so I can return home. Georgia wrote me a letter and told me when Robert was home the last time. He tied himself with a gal. He is one boy I would like to see after eating that Navy food. I bet one thing he isn't a small one the way he ate at home. He sure could put it away. I am taking after you the only thing I smoke is an old straight stem pipe. I sure like to fill it up full of Velvet that is my best pipe tobacco and I like it. At the bottom of this sheet I will draw you a picture of my new rating. I am getting quite a piece of money now. I think it is \$79.90 a month. I don't know for sure. But this won't miss it five dollars. I'm sure keeping the Greer family going in war service. Well, be on the lookout for the picture. Hope you are well soon. I'll close for this time. Write soon as you can and don't forget what I told you if you need any money. God bless you.

From loving Son,

Frederick R. Greer

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, April 16, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM HOWARD SHERBONDY

Pfc. Howard Sherbondy

March 13, 1943

Dear Mom:

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I received several of your letters in the last few days and was sure glad to get them. I wrote you a V-mail a few days ago and meant to write the letter sooner but I couldn't find time till now. I've been kept on the road so much and also busy working on my jeep.

I enclose a permit for you to send me a package. I thought that since you were going to send me stationery, perhaps you can get some candy in the same box, too. Candy is very scarce here. I've had only four bars of Milky Ways since I've been here. They sure tasted good. I've made up my mind that when I get back I'll always have a box or two on hand at all times. You haven't any idea how good candy tastes over here for a change.

I get the papers the same as always. It sure seems good to get them. There aren't any papers or radios here. The army prints a little news sheet. They tell us a little of what's going on but I find out for sure when I get my News-Sentinel. I got a letter from Joe Sissel today. He writes every time I write.

I suppose by now Richard is in the army. The latest letter I have from you is Feb. 11th and in that one you said he was in Indianapolis taking his exam.

I can't think of any more to say except I'm happier now that I'm driving a jeep and things are going along about as I expected under the circumstances. I'd sure like to have one of these little jeeps after the war. They're really something . . . Take it easy and be careful. Write soon and I will too in a few days.

With love,

Howard Sherbondy

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, April 16, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM LOUIS D. BALL

Louis D. Ball

Pocatello, Idaho

April 44 [sic], 1943

Dear Mom, Bill and All:

I just received your shocking news. Thanks for letting me know. I could write a letter of condolence but in times like these I believe it would be better if I take an oath instead, "I swear by any power invested in me to make the enemy, whosoever it shall be, to suffer as they have never suffered before."

I was told by a civilian who of course didn't have any loved ones in service, and I quote to his exact words: "It is an honor to die for your country, to help make it a safe place in which your loved ones may live in peace and happiness."

O.K. If that's the way they want it I can assure you that I will gladly die for my country but - first I want most of all to make them know just what the meaning of suffering is.

My life as a whole has never amounted to anything, therefore it means little to me now. The first enemy ship that I blast out of those once peaceful skies goes to Norval. God have mercy on the poor devil's soul.

If anything, which undoubtedly will, should happen to me, I want no tears or fretting. Just say that I took that honor in order to help make this country a peaceful and happy place in which we proud Americans can live. I only hope I may be spared on my missions, not for my life alone but so I may carry on with the one thought in my mind for Norval as well as myself.

Hoping your thoughts will be with me with a hearty wish of luck and God Speed.

Our group arrives tomorrow according to their schedule. I will do my best to be one of the best gunners in the whole group. All I want to do now is get over there and get a crack at them.

Thanks for all the clippings. I can't think of anything else to say so I guess I'll close and write Aunt Evelyn. I will boost my insurance up to the limit the first chance I have. Only one thing I want you to remember. If anything happens to me I don't want you to feel sorry or any tears. Just remember me as you see me in that picture of mine.

Give my love and best wishes to all. Here's hoping I hear from you soon.

As ever, Love,

Louis Ball

## SvcMen WW II Letters

P.S.- I'm sure Norval would want us to do the same for him so chin up and here's a toast to his undying efforts to gain that goal just beyond our reach.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, April 20, 1943]

### LETTER FROM ALBERT E. FLORA

Albert E. Flora  
With the Tank Busters  
Camp Hood, Texas  
Sunday, April 11, 1943

Dear Belle:

Well, here I am back in Texas. The weather and scenery sure is fine here. How is everything back there? I hope all O.K.

Seven men from 608 and 772 Tank Destroyer Bns. left Leonard Wood, Mo. Friday. We were in two groups. Three men in one group and four men in the other. Each group left at different times, but we joined each other by accident at Fort Worth, Texas. I was in charge of my group. There sure are a lot of responsibilities on one's shoulders when in charge of a party, when traveling hadn't got any sleep all that night. I coaxed the agent at the depot to let us sleep inside on some baggage. He finally consented and we bedded down, expecting to sleep until noon and then come on out to Hood, but we no more than got to sleep when a soldier came from Hood after us in a truck. Boy did the boys ever exercise some fancy language as we supposed we would be assigned to some detail as soon as got to camp (which usually happens). We were lucky though, as we didn't get any special details to do, but we did have to spend most of the day signing up papers and taking different tests before entering school.

We start our first classes Monday morning. This school sure is a fine one. Anyhow it looks like it should be. There are several large buildings. Each building concerns one subject of the course and each subject taught is thoroughly taught from beginning to end. This course will last three months or longer and covers everything concerning automotive and tank destroying vehicles along the mechanical line.

We will not have much time for anything but study as we start classes after chow in the morning and finally end up at nine o'clock at night.

I don't know whether I can stand all of this or not as this wide open country sure gives me the urge to travel. But I guess I'll stick to it and take all the knowledge back to my outfit that I can because my motor officer picked me out for the job and I don't dare to blunder now.

My outfit is leaving Fort Leonard Wood this week, and are going to Tennessee on maneuvers. I sure miss my buddies back there but guess I am lucky as I will get out of a lot of rough living and drilling and believe me I've had my share already. I guess I've lived through it and done alright though as I got a Corporal's rating just three months after entering the service. So I suppose I shouldn't kick about anything. I don't know where I will meet my outfit when I get out of school but I sure hope it will be somewhere near Indiana as I sure would love to set my feet on good old Indiana soil again. As far as Missouri goes for me - well they can give it back to the Indians and for Texas well it's a land of señoritas and sunshine. Will close giving my best regards to everyone back home and will do my best in helping end the war.

Yours,

Cpl. Albert E. Flora  
Co. E. Student Enlisted Battalion  
Student Regiment  
Tank Destroyer School, Class 25  
Camp Hood, Texas.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, April 20, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM HUGH HOLMAN

Hugh B. Holman, Y2/C, USNR  
Navy 200 (Two Zero Zero)

## SvcMen WW II Letters

c/o Fleet Post Office  
San Francisco, California  
April 10, 1943

Dear Carl:

I have just finished reading the report of the Peru-Rochester 33-31 game in The News-Sentinel and was wishing that I could have been there to see it. I'll bet it was almost as exciting as that Rochester-Culver game in the Regionals of 1938 when the Zebras pulled up to a tie in the final 15 seconds and went on to win it in the overtime. That was the most exciting game I ever saw or reported. Things must be pretty dead around town now with most all the fellows gone. Besides the Sentinel I also get the Indianapolis Star and distribute both of them to the fellows from Indiana who are here. After I finish them I pass them on to Harold Costello from Star City and he gives them to G. H. Pendry from Indianapolis who in turn passes them on to Max Large from Lebanon who used to work for Barr Construction Company and was taught in school by our portly friend, Kenny Overstreet. (By the way is he still the active promoter of new businesses?) I received a letter the other day telling me that Lebanon had beaten Rochester in the Semi-finals. That was the first I had heard since the Zebras won the sectional. I have the duty yeoman watch this morning and just posted your Hap Hazard column on the bulletin board for the fellows to read that item about the Captain of the Head. I remember back in Boot Camp a fellow got a letter from home addressing him as Captain of the Head. That title is sorta deceptive to the uninformed.

It was just a year ago day before yesterday that we boarded the transport for our trip to this island we are sure going to enjoy any change in climate when we leave. We haven't any idea when that will be, however. The Seabees have done a darn good job here but the fleet and Marines have sorta pushed the Japs away from this spot and so we have a back seat as far as action is concerned around here. The first of April I was advanced to Yeoman Second Class for which I am darn glad. We were under complement for along time and there wasn't any opening because there was an excess number of yeomen and hence no chance for advancement. In fact three-fourths of the yeomen were doing other work. Since I've been here I have worked as a storekeeper for commissary stores, carpenter on buildings, electrician wiring huts, yeoman in communications office where I typed and mimeographed the daily radio press news, a mechanic on a diesel-generator maintenance watch and now finally as a yeoman in the construction office.

We have quite an assorted bunch of fellows in our hut (quarters). There are twelve of us and each one from a different state: Indiana, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., Louisiana, Texas, California, Arkansas, South Carolina, Michigan, Maryland, Tennessee and Ohio. There are among them, survivors of the Lexington, West Virginia (Pearl Harbor raid) and a fellow who was lucky enough to break his leg here when a horse threw him. He was a member of the crew of the cruiser Atlanta which was sunk about a month after it left here. He was left here when it pulled out.

The climate here is nearly ideal with warm days and cool nights. A breeze is usually blowing off the ocean which keeps the temperature moderate. The dampness, however, causes mold to form on our woolen uniforms and it's necessary for us to air and brush them off occasionally. The Seabees built a diving raft about a hundred yards off shore and it is a real relief for us to get some relaxation swimming and diving during our hours off duty.

Since we are part of the first battalion of Seabees we are all hoping to get some leave and recreation between here and our next job. However the major aim is to win the war and that necessarily takes precedence over everything else. Tell all The News-Sentinel force "Hello" for me and "keep the News-Sentinels coming" for they certainly are welcome and help to keep us up on the happenings in Rochester and Indiana.

Sincerely yours,

Hugh Bankson Holman, Y 2/C

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, April 26, 1943]

LETTER FROM WILLIAM C. WILLARD

Pvt. William C. Willard

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Co. D, 57th Bn., 12th Reg.  
Camp Robinson, Ark.  
April 18, 1943

Dear Mom, Dad and All:

Well, here I am at Little Rock at the main U.S.O. It sure is a swell place. They have everything here.

We really had an experienc this morning. Everyone in the entire camp was told to assemble at the parade field. There were 300,000 of us lined up across the field and who do you suppose came past? President Roosevelt, the secretary of war and about 10 generals. It was a surprise to everybody, but we were later told that he was making an inspection tour of some of the army camps of the United States. I don't think he is still here. He is supposed to leave early in the morning.

It's been raining here for a week. It sure is a mud hole and we drilled all day yesterday in it.

The outfit I'm in are going to have boxing and wrestling lessons starting next week at night.

Little Rock is a nice place. It's a little larger than South Bend. They have four U.S.O.'s and they're all nice. If I can get an overnight pass I'm going to Hot Springs one of these week-ends.

How's everyone back home? Got a letter from Lionel yesterday. He's about through his cycle now. Well, must close now. Will write again later.

Love,  
Bill

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, April 26, 1943]

### LETTER FROM RAYMOND E. ADAMS

Pvt. Raymond E. Adams  
General Delivery  
New Port News, Virginia  
April 27, 1943

Dear Mother and Rosalene:

Just a few lines to let you know that I have been transferred from Camp Croft, S.C., in Virginia.

I sure had a nice trip up here. It was night when we got her and it's cold at night. Well, if you have written to me at Croft I will get it either Monday or Tuesday. I wote to Rosalene last week and I'll get a letter from her soon. I sent some pictures back home. Well, I'll close for this time as we're pretty busy. Please write soon and also tell everyone I said hello.

Your son,  
Raymond E. Adams

P.S. - Let me know if you got the card I sent to you while at Camp Croft.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, April 30, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM CLAUDE STEFFEY

Pvt. Claude Steffey  
Camp Forrest, Tenn.

Dear Mother:

I would like to have a poem put in the paper. I made it up. Well, here it goes:

Our Army and Our Flag

I enlisted in the army about seven months ago,

I didn't like it much at first but better as I go.

I am glad to be in the U. S. army because it's brave and strong

And if you do the best you can I'm sure you can't go wrong.

Some days are tough and mighty hard, that is the army way,

But I will try to do my best for the good old U.S.A.

I am glad to be an American, for our hearts are brave and true,

## SvcMen WW II Letters

We never want to lose our flag of red, white and blue.

Our flag that waves so bravely into the bright blue sky,

We all should salute it as we pass it by.

How do you like it, Mom? It took me three weeks to think all that up. How is my little man? Tell him I said hello. Our captain said we would all get a furlough by June. Well, I will have to close now.

Your son,  
Claude Steffey

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, May 4, 1943]

### FOURTH LETTER FROM ROBERT GREER

R. L. Greer, F 1 C  
c/o Postmaster, New York,  
Somewhere Overseas,  
April 18, 1943

Dear Dad:

Writing to let you know I am O.K. Hope this letter finds you the same. Are you putting my money in the bank? I want you to so I can have some money to get started on when I get out. I should have quite a roll when I get back. I might have enough to buy a home with. I am saving a lot of money here because there is nothing to spend it on. If transportation was better I would go and see Fred. He is not far away. I am not sure, but I think he is coming here. If I see him I will let you know. We are not allowed to tell where we are. It wouldn't do us any good if we could. You still wouldn't be able to see us. Well, I guess I better close for now. Write soon. Tell the rest of the family I said hello.

So long and good luck.

Your son,  
Robert

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, May 7, 1943]

### LETTER FROM KENNETH T. CORBIN

Camp Lee, Va.  
May 8, 1943

Dear Editor:

I have read a few of the letters published in your paper in regards to the point rationing.

I wonder if some people ever stop to think how lucky they are, or even if some people think.

Many times I, as well as 300 others, have walked into the mess hall for chow and sit down with a plate that is covered with about 1 cubic inch of meat (xoquated) and a couple of sweet potatoes. For breakfast, we have 2 quarts of milk for every ten men. With cereal and coffee, that doesn't last long. I might add that the cream line on the milk is about 1 inch above the cup.

As for sugar, I have drank more coffee without sugar than with sugar.

I am not complaining about army chow. I only want to bring out the fact that civilians aren't the only ones that are "starving."

My company has a dog for a mascot. He does not go hungry, but at yhe same time, he is not given the choice of meat. He has his heart in the war and is able to exist on a little less than usual.

It may be unjust for the civilians to buy butter, cheese, lard, etc. with their ration points that are for meat. I suppose it is all well and dandy for the boys in the service to give up all of the privileges of choice of eats and leave their dear friends and relatives. That is OK for those who don't give a damn about others, but just try it yourself.

I have not seen my Mother in three months. This cannot be helped so I take it like any half patriotic person would and don't say anything. It seems to me as though people who can see their friends, get home any time they wish, and have spare time, should appreciate it.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

In the life I and millions of others are living, we soon learn that aiding the enemy in any way is one of the most serious crimes in the Articles of War. Anything that is kicking our Government laws is aiding the enemy.

We, the millions that are away from home and the ones we love, are proud to be patriotic enough to offer our lives so that you civilians can keep quarreling over a few ounces of meat. We all complain but we all love it and few of us will ever turn down a chance to protect our country.

There probably is enough whiskey and cigarettes and transportation enough to deliver it. Did you ever hear about morals? That is what will bring victory to our country. It has been proven that whiskey and cigarettes help the morals of the boys in the army. If a baby wants a new rubber ball and gets it, he is happy. The soldiers of the United States Army aren't babies by a long way, but they are happy if they can get what they want.

Talk to a soldier and I am sure any civilian can be thankful for what he has.  
Just think!

Sincerely Yours,  
Pvt. Kenneth T. Corbin

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, May 8, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM MICHAEL ZARTMAN

Michael Zartman  
A.S.N. 35170624  
A.P.O. 929, c/o P.M.  
San Francisco, California  
Fri., April 23, 1943

My Dear Friend, L. G.:

Hi-ya Johny, ha ole devil you. Ha. I say I was much surprised, but very overjoyed and highly appreciative upon receiving our very nice letter, dated March 15.

Yes, I'm still at it, going strong, and doing a fine job here. I'm alive, well and still in one piece, at th present time.

Yes, I wish I were home, too, as I have been over here in this for fourteen months now. [sic] I'm getting awfully lonesome to see dear Mother and Dad, to see the old home, and all my friends once more. But I shall have to grin and bear it. For as you know, we have a rather big, nasty job to do here and we won't be cominghome ntil we have "completely" finished the job.

I am very upset and downhearted upon hearing of my dear friend, Arlie Wynn's bad luck. I send to him my deepest wholehearted sympathy. I sincerely hope he comes through "on top" and becomes the best benefactor in the matter. I wish him all the luck possible.

Well, L.G. I have always looked upon you as a hard working, kind-hearted, willing, helpful gentleman, and friend to everyone. I am most highly honored, knowing you, and having you as a friend.

Remember how I used to supply you and Arlie Wynn with pheasants during hunting season? And how I used to haul you about town on my motorcycle? Gee, those were the good old days. Long gone, but not forgotten. But if the good Lord stays with me and my luck holds out, we may be able to live those good times once again. How about it L.G.?

I hear from my twin brother "Pete" quite often. He is in Hawaii somewhere. I miss him terrivly. Well so long L.G. old pal, and thanks for writing to me.

As ever,  
Mike Zartman

[The News-Sentinel,Thursday, May 13, 1943]

### LETTER FROM CEDRIC D. UTTER

Cpl. Cedric D. Utter  
May 7, 1943

Dear Friends:

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I am writing this letter to thank all of the fine friends who sent me those lovely birthday cards, Easter cards and presents. I really do appreciate getting mail. As it is surely appreciated in the service. I would like to answer them all personally but at the present time it is impossible. I will try to drop you a few lines in the near future. Thanking you,

I remain a friend,

Cpl. Cedric D. Utter

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, May 13, 1943]

### LETTER FROM JAMES L. FALL

5-8-43

Dear Folks:

I was transferred from the San Antonio Pre-Flight school here to Victory Field, April 24th. Victory Field is rated as one of the army's finest primary schools. It is located 6 miles south of Vernon, Texas along the eastern edge of the pan-handle region. The field in itself is a beautiful place. It is entirely modern, being constructed in the last two years. We have over a hundred training planes, all of them Fairchild PT-19s. They are nice ships and are comparatively easy to handle.

Since our arrival here two weeks ago a surpris ingly large number of fellows has washed out due to air sickness. I think that most of this sickness can be contributed to the rough weather we've been having. I myself, was bothered the first four or five days by sickness, but in my case I believe it was due mostly to nervous tension, for since I've gotten the feel of the air, I've been literally "flying the pants off the old crate." If we hadn't lost so much flying time this week I probably would have soloed the first of next week. But today it rained, and yesterday we had a terrible dust storm. That is something I certainly won't easily forget. I was over at auxiliary field No. 2 shooting landings with about a dozen other ships. All at once we noticed a sudden darkening of the sky to the northwest. We knew what it was - and we roared away to the home field. Just as I was taxiing my ship into the hangar, the storm struck in its wildest fury. In the blinding sand driven by the high wind, visibility was practically zero. Six ships were not fortunate enough to get in to the field before the storm struck. After the wind had subsided, they were found, and all had been brought down safely.

Each instructor has four students. My instructor before he came into the army, was a stunt flyer, skywriter and cotton duster. He is a good instructor and a wonderful flyer. He can certainly give you all the thrills you want. The other day I was out flying a rectangular course. For some reason or another I couldn't seem to hold my altitude. To impress upon me the fact that the ground was down there, he went down to about 50 feet of the ground and turned the ship upside down. There I was, roaring across the fields at 100 miles per hour, hanging only by my safety belt and expecting momentarily to be swatted in the face by a tree top. Believe me, when he turned it right side up I was conscious of the ground being there. Tuesday he was in a playful mood and he took me for a little ride. He showed me how not to make a turn. In his turn he clipped the wheatheads with the wingtip. We have a lot of light moments while in the air but as a whole, army flying is quite a bit of work. The preciseness of the army way is very tiring. After two hours in the air you're ready for a little rest.

The acrobatics we have the first 20 hours are very elementary, but I enjoy them very much. We have stalls, spins, slow rolls, snap rolls, elementary eights, etc. I will never forget my first spin. We were flying nicely along at 5,000 feet. The instructor had the controls. All at once the ship rolled over on her back and began her dizzy autogyration earthward. When we pulled out I found one of my hands on the safety belt and the other on the rip-cord ring. Strange, wasn't it?

Upon my transfer here to primary I was advanced from rank of Cadet Captain, which I held at pre-flight to Cadet Major. I am group commander now, and have charge of about half of the boys here. They are a fine bunch of fellows, and the group is just like one big happy family. They all have their minds on the same thing: flying. We are all eagerly awaiting the time when we get the chance to "slap the dirty little Jap."

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I would be very happy to hear from anyone, and will try to answer any questions you might have concerning the life of an aviation cadet.

Very sincerely yours,

A/C James L. Fall  
Victory Field,  
Vernon, Texas

[The News-Sentinel, Friday May 14, 1943]

### LETTER FROM HAROLD MOORE

Camp Bowie, Texas

Dear Folks:

Well I will start this letter saying thanks for the box, and the other fellows told me to thank you for them too, just keep 'em coming. Well did I have a lovely Easter and did I go to services. Well it was a lovely Easter here as far as weather was concerned. Yes, I went to service. I serviced about 500 dishes and some pots and pans. Yes, it was a lovely day for K.P. So the next day it was not my time for K.P. but I did it for another boy, as his folks came to see him. I have been receiving several letters from the folks around home and the gang too. I am sure glad to get them. We had fun this week we went in bivouac. Then at night they sent us out in groups of two with a compass, they gave us directions we were to follow. We had to simulate battle conditions, no light, quiet, etc. To see the compass we laid on our stomach, then threw a raincoat over our heads to hide the light. I found the right place believe it or not. We are studying the 50 cal. machine gun we shoot next week. We went out one night and sat on a hill. They flooded lights, fired shots, and made sounds so we could estimate distance and recognize human sounds in the woods. We do so many things down here we are always busy. We had a test the other day and I was one out 17 in our company that made a 100. Not so bad, it is for me? I have been singing and playing another boy's guitar and entertaining, so I may want you to send mine some time. Well, I had better close and don't worry about me.

From Harold

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, May 19, 1943]

### LETTER FROM JOSEPH WILDERMUTH

Anacostia, D.C.

May 21, 1943

Dear Folks:

We still are busy getting moved in and learning our which stations, etc.

I don't see much hopes for a leave now. The fellows already here are in line for them first, but I'm going to apply for one anyway, now that I know the squad, platoon, company, section and division I'm in. All you need for my address is: Joseph Mark Wildermuth, AM3/C, U. S. Naval Air Station, Anacostia, D.C., c/o 1st Div.

So far this place has been like heaven compared to Jacksonville. The Waves, Marines and we sleep, eat, play, go to the ship's laundry, ship's service store, small stores, post office, and to a nightly movie right in one building - the same building with all the officers. After walking a half mile for chow at Jax and everything else like that you can see how it is. The officers are friendly.

This is just a small place where first and various things in all navy planes are tested and tried.

Our job will be to install various experimental equipment and changes and then fly along sometimes as ballast. Don't be surprised if I call from Columbus or Chicago sometime. The fellow who bunks in the next bunk got a ride as ballast last week to Miami, Fla., and back the same evening or next day. The only hops we get will be ones in which we return the same day or next morning. Every month we fly at least four hours we get 50% of our base pay in addition - total \$117.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

We are in sight of the capitol dome. The Potomac river is just out back of the hangar we will work in. They just roll the planes out one end of the hangar onto the river or the other end onto the field.

You can't be much more sorry than I that I'm not there right now, but be glad I'm at such a nice base.

Love,

Joe

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, May 25, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM GERALD REESE

Dear Mom and All:

I hope this finds all of you feeling fine and happy. I enjoyed the little boat ride I had and never got one bit sick. I feel fine and look the same as I did.

We arrived in Australia this afternoon and it is sure a lovely place. Just about the same as it is back in the States. The one thing that got me, was all the cars, what few there are, have their steering wheel on the right side and they are all old time cars and quite small. I might be able to tell you more about the place later one.

They are just going into winter. Now I have to have three winters in one. Ha. Ha.

Well, bye bye and good luck,

Pfc. Gerald Wayne Reese

P.S.- Don't worry about me. I will be O.K.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, May 25, 1943]

### LETTER FROM WATSON CURTIS

Pvt. Watson Curtis

33rd Tng. Group. Sq. B, USAAC,

Jefferson Barracks, Mo.

May 21, 1943

Dearest Mother and Frances:

Here I am in Missouri taking basic training for the Air Force Engineers and it is a tough outfit. We take 56 days of basic training and when we finish we will be hardened soldiers and I am not exaggerating a bit. We have to be fit for overseas service at that time, although we will probably be sent to a specialized training school for training after we leave here.

All we do is drill, drill and drill. Before we finish we have to take 30-mile hikes with fullpacks, so you can see what we have to go through to be tough enough for that. I'll be hard as nails the next time you see me. We have tough obstacle courses through mud, water, and up and down hills with all sorts of hazards in the way. This Air Force engineers is something new and they are trying to make a good showing, as the training is really severe. I like it though, because I'll have something to be proud of when I finish.

I'm certainly glad to be in the Air Forces too, and I like this better than the Signal Corps because you get such good hard physical building-up. I was glad to get your letter at Fort Thomas. It was certainly welcome. You can write me here as often as you want because I'll be here at least until the middle of August. Take careful note of my address on the envelope.

We are having some bad floods here. They called out all the trained men in our engineer's training group and sent them down the river to help take care of the situation. We came through flood waters when we came over to St. Louis from Cincinnati Tuesday. Jefferson Barracks is about 15 miles south of St. Louis.

I am getting pretty tired, so will close. My love to you all. Write soon and tell me the news.

Love,

Watson

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, May 26, 1943]

## SvcMen WW II Letters

### SEVENTH LETTER FROM RAMON ALBER

Dear Folks:

Received your letter (written the 17th) today, the 20th. Well, I missed that draft. It left today for Paris Island, training for commando duty with the fleet marines.

'Thanks for the paper clippings and sure wish I could have taken in Nina and Frederick's wedding.

That pre-schooling I am taking is for my own benefit. I didn't have to take it but as I can take it, I might as well, for I haven't anything else to do in my spare time. The school is here, a 3/C pharmacist's mate teaching it. It's the course of physio-therapy-rays and so forth. What I am in, I'll never get to know too much anyway.

It rained here today for a while and then turned out hot. And I really mean hot.

Is lumber that scarce in Fulton county now?

Well, it's now 4:00 o'clock Friday morning and I was just called to Ward E for a cup of coffee. It was rather strong, too. Doyou get all the coffee you can use, Mom?

There are five of us corpsmen on nights. And we shoot the breeze amongst ourselves all night.

Last night I went with a first class mate in the ambulance for an emergency in Charleston. He was a sailor, got in trouble with the Coons and they sure cut him up. They must have been part cannibals. Ha!

So Johnnie likes meat. Have you still got any ham left or anything? Listen, Mom, if you are saving any for me, you needn't, for I get all the meat here I want. We have it at least once a day.

Sundays we get chicken for dinner. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday it's either steak, pork-chops, veal cutlets or hamburger. Fridays, fish. Saturdays, usually ham.

About every morning for breakfast we get eggs, toast, bacon, milk and cereal, coffee and either an apple, orange or grapefruit with that.

Our suppers are all things and everything from carrots to crackers. The only cold meal we have is on Sunday at supper - cold meats, cheese, pickles, dessert, chocolate milk usually or tea. We only get coffee at breakfast. Then it's milk, chocolate milk or iced tea.

As far as I know, we service men get the nicks in eats.

The fault comes in where guys have lived on ice cream and cake all their life. I think it's a lot of baloney when they say the food is terrible.

Since I have been here at Charleston, I haven't had beans yet.

Tell me about how the crops are when you write. How they are coming with the work and so forth.

Since the boys have traded old Colie for their calf, ask Dad if it would be alright to get the boys a pony.

Tell Dick, Wayne and Addison to write when they will. I like to read their mail. If they want any more candy, tell them they better write. Ha! Ha!

Well, I had better close for I have some book reports to fix up yet before I go off duty.

Will write more later,

Love,

Ramon Alber

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, May 26, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM HAROLD MOORE

Pvt. Robert H. Moore

Camp Hood, Texas

Dear Folks:

Well I am writing to tell you about our march to Camp Hood. It sure was a grand march. Friday we cleaned up Camp Bowie in preparation to leave. We went in Bivouac Camp Saturday morning we pulled out. They gave us plenty of food and water. We spent almost ten days getting things ready. We kept marching getting less food and water. Several passed out. I got plenty tired but I kept at it. The first day or two I didn't march with the company. Don't laugh but I was a

## SvcMen WW II Letters

scout and flank guard. I scouted through the weeds looking out for the enemy and I didn't get lost, what a wonder. During the afternoon we had a tactical problem. This was the set up. Enemy parachute troops had landed by a river in the vicinity. Each platoon had its own special job. Our platoon sent four men at a point to contact the A company. The rest of us were to contact our point and take a position facing the enemy beside the rest of the B company. The commanders got our objective twisted up and our point got lost so some of the men got lost for awhile but after we all got together, I tell you Texas is a big place to find some one in. This is another eve, I have been marching with the company today. We have to march some at night. I would rather march at night its so pretty and cool. We march over the hills and could look down for miles. Their wasn't much farming or houses. The hills looked blue instead of green and they were pretty. The next morning we started out. Guess who led the battalion so it wouldn't get lost? Our good old company B. I happened to have been assigned to a destroyer that day and didn't have to walk. Here's what happened. It was so hot they shut off our water so we couldn't have any. For dinner a couple of cheese sandwiches I think there was only one man passed out. The commander said we were a real outfit to come through what we did. He said we did as well marching as seasoned troops.

We went swimming in the creek one night, boy it was muddy. The next day we marched in the farmland and we had been in the hills for quite a while. They raise lot of goats and farm the valleys. The houses are sure some shacks. It's really beautiful. The breakfasts and dinners have been pretty skimp but they feed us pretty good at night. When I don't get water I chew gum. The crops look good. They are plowing corn, it is about ten inches high and the oats are turning yellow. They also raise cotton. I saw some real saddle horses. They all wear big hats here. Then we hit the lower rolling country. There they had big sheep ranches. The houses were better but they were few and far between. Then we passed through the town of Goldtwaite and one hickwatertown. They were pretty every one would line up to watch us pass. We went through some more sheep country. It sure looked desolate we hardly ever saw any one. They plant there corn in slanting rows. They also plant two rows together and have a big space between. We traveled east and north east. We always ate our breakfast in the dark. We slept on our blankets in the open. One morning I awoke and found a snake in my blanket but I like the great out doors. When we got to Camp Hood a brass band marched ahead and played. Some march my feet sure did burn. We marched 110 miles.

From Harold

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, June 1, 1943]

### LETTER FROM HERBERT MYERS

Pvt. Herbert J. Myers

Camp Hood, Texas

May 23, 1943

Dear Mother:

Have changed camp now and am at Camp Hood, Texas. Certainly had a lot of fun on march over here. However, it was hard at times and didn't know whether I would make it or not. But, I marched the total distance. I like this camp fine and expect to try to do better than I did in the other camps. I know that the training here will be hard but it will be very good for us.

Yes, I see the boys from Rochester occasionally but it is not often enough to suit me. I saw Pvt. Robert Newcomb about four or five days ago and talked with him sometime. We met when we were swimming in a river. He had to soak some clothes also. Just saw Pvt. Abraham Enyart once while we were marching over here. He seems to look in good health to me. I am gaining in

## SvcMen WW II Letters

weight now. I eat everything that I like and think it is good for me. Actually have to loosen my belt after each meal, ha!

Glad you are free to work at home now. It seems that it would be better for you and my brother and I both think it would be much better.

Certainly glad that Robert Calvert got to go to Detroit and was very surprised to learn that he also got to go to Canada. I think that was swell for him to get to go there. Hope they continue to get along alright.

Glad to hear that grandmother is feeling well. Is Aunt Ida well? How is Uncle Russell? Wish he could see some of the horses I've seen out here. They are really beautiful.

Glad the farm work is in good hands. Tell Andy that I may get a furlough sometime in August. Then I can see the corn and be home for a while. We have good corn growing weather here and have seen corn knee high and taller. One field in particular, I noticed, was very level and the corn was at least a foot and a half tall all over.

Tell Frederick Hubbard I said congratulations. Is he going to live close to Talma? Hope they get along well.

Have seen a few snakes and lizards. They are very green and are hard to see and can move very quick. Have seen one water moccasin about four and a half feet long. Certainly hope I have a rock handy the day I see a rattlesnake. Well, I will close now and please write soon. As I can't always find time to write to you as soon as I would like.

Your son,

Pfc. Herbert J. Myers.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, June 2, 1943]

### LETTER FROM DON PFEIFFER

Camp Mackall, N.C.

Dear Mom:

You know where I have been? I spent a short two weeks in the station hospital all bandaged up and a good looking babe feeding me and washing my back.

When we were out, on a two or three day problem we went through an infiltration course with barbed wire, shell holes, land mines and machine gun fire to make it seem real. Well when I go on top of one of the mines they set it off.

It tore the skin off the back of both hands, made my right shoulder and the right side of my face look like bloody hamburger. Then it ruptured my ear drums too. They are about back to normal now and you can't even tell it happened.

As soon as I got away from the Co. they went on eight days of it in South Carolina and it rained most of the time.

My stuff has all been stored and I haven't went to get it yet so I have to borrow almost everything.

I don't do anything but sleep if anyone says anything about work I just tell them where to get off.

So long,

Don Pfeiffer

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, June 9, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM HARRY W. DAWSON

Somewhere in the S.W. Pacific

(U. S. Marine Corps)

June 5, 1943

Dear Mom:

I've sure been in action on Guadalcanal and I've also killed a couple of Japs, and I've seen plenty of bad things as you would say. And hard fighting. The Marines on Guadalcanal are the ones who secured that place. I got shot in the right shoulder and they cut it open and I now have quite a few stitches. I'm all right now, weigh 180 pounds again, and I still stand 6 ft tall and can

## SvcMen WW II Letters

still fight the Japs. I'm back in service. I've been in service since April 1st. I've been in New Zealand, Guadalcanal, Tulagie. Guadalcanal is where I was wounded. They're talking of going back into action but all the fellows have malaria fever. I've never had it yet. They're all pretty run down. I know a kid that weighed 170 pounds come down to 130 pounds. We may be coming back home if we don't go gack in action. I'm in x x x x now. Say hello to everyone. Harry Hogans and family and George Fleegles and all my other friends and Pat too. Say hello to Vi Jr., Eileen, Bobbie Joe, and how is grandma. I hope O.K. I hope you are O.K. and you too Mom. I have to sign off now. Be good Mom. I got all your letters. Lots of love.

Pvt. Harry W. Dawson  
United States Marine Corps  
c/o Floeet Post Office,  
San Francisco, Calif.

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, June 10, 1943]

### LETTER FROM WARD McCARTY

Naval Training Sta.  
Great Lakes, Ill.  
June 9, 1943

Dear Editor:

Many people have said, "There is no place like home," but you really don't believe this until you actually leave it. We have one consolation, and that is we are fighting to defeat our enemy.

Here at Great Lakes we are put through a thorough training. It consists of marching, boat drill, swimming, guard duty, military discipline, and recreation. All of these activities are under the direction of experienced officers.

It has been the impression of most people that the Navy doesn't dwell much on marching. This is wrong because marching is the main activity. Every body strives to win the regimental marching contest. My company at present holds the trophy for this contest.

The most important thing the Navy teaches you is cleanliness. We have battalion inspection every day and Captain's "white glove" inspection on Saturday. Everything must be spotless on Saturday.

The working hours here are from 8:10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. After 4:30 our time is our own. We arise every morning at 5:00 a.m. and run a half mile around the drill field. Most of the time you run this in your sleep.

I would recommend the Navy to any young man who is entering the armed forces.

I plan to be home on my nine day furlough the last of June and hope to see all my friends then.

Sincerely Yours,  
Ward McCarty, A/S

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, June 12, 1943]

### McCARTY'S LETTER TO BE BROADCAST OVER STATION WKMO

USNR Recruiting Officer W. Johnson, of the Kokomo recruiting station announces that a letter carried recently in The News-Sentinel from Ward McCarty, who is stationed at the Great Lakes naval station, Ill., will be broadcast Wednesday morning at 9:15.

Local people desiring to hear the local youth's message as well as other interesting features on the program are requested to tune in on station WKMO at 1400 megacycles.

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, June 15, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM JEAN WALBURN

India  
May 28, 1943

Dear Folks:

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I guess I won't have to tell you that censorship is pretty stiff in India. I hope you will not be too disappointed if I write short letters.

There are so many things that I'd like to tell you, but cannot because of the war. I met an English officer this morning. He's a jolly good fellow.

I finally got some mail. Oh boy, was I happy! I got 59 letters, there were several of us who got our mail at the same time. We swapped cards and information from early evening 'till early morning, ha! I got my birth-day greetings exactly 1 month and a day late, but I enjoyed getting them that way. I had two birthdays this year, ha!

I bought a new shirt last evening. The soldiers here can wear different uniforms from the boys in the States. Our insignias are a little different too. I had to pay 13 chips for my new shirt. That equivalent to about four dollars in the States. India is the land of the very poor and the very rich. The poor people aren't much, if any, better than the negros back in slavery times. I understand that one of the poorer class makes only three chips a month, or one dollar. I still cannot understand how these Indians can carry so much weight on their heads. I've been sitting here watching some women carrying bricks. I don't see how they can do it. They can carry more on their heads than they can pick up. They have someone help them boost the load on their heads then away they go. I think they get fourteen cents a day for this work. Of course they are slow and almost everything is done by hand. One day I saw some natives building a road. They were carrying all the gravel and stone in baskets on their heads. It seemed awful slow to me, but during the course of a day they get more done than one would expect. They call us Sahib or Master. They think we are very rich, ha! Boy! I'm sure thankful I was born in the States.

You can't imagine the filth and poverty of the people of India.

Your letters are not censored. You can tell me anything, and from now on I think it would be better for you to use ordinary mail. None of your V-mail letters are photographed. I wish you would send them air mail though. I think it goes through faster.

I bought some soap this morning. Palmolive costs 14 "armas", 28 cents a bar, that's pretty high, isn't it? Fortunately Lux costs only eight "armas" or sixteen cents a bar. I bought some leather shoe strings. I forget how much they were, but I think it was between twenty-five and thirty cents a pair.

Your son,  
Jean

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, June 15, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM HOVEY J. BALL

Harlingen, Tex.  
June 6, 1943  
Pfc. Hovey James Ball  
Student H.A.A.F.

Dear Mom and all:

Well I went to town the other day and this town reminds me a lot of Rochester. The business section is about twice as large and the population is somewhere around 15,000. The people sure are swell. Four other boys and myself were sitting on a curb stone resting when a lady who runs a fruit stand called us and gave us a big watermelon. It sure was good. While we were eating it a fellow came up and we gave him some. We were talking and he said he was from South Bend. That's getting close home.

Yesterday I went to the pressure chamber. They only took us up to 30,000 feet. Later we'll go up to 38,000 and stay about two hours. They say about 55% can't go that high. I sure hope I can take it.

I was over to the field today trying to get a ride but didn't have any luck. Am going to try again tomorrow. You know I've never been up before, maybe I'll get air-sick or something. I hope not.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I still haven't started school yet and all we do is a couple hours drill and work call. So far I haven't been here for work call. This laying around sure is getting the best of me. I want to get through this school and go where I'll do some good to get this war over.

I rolled my sleeves up the other day and did I burn my arms. They are so sore now I can't stand to have my sleeves down so I have to take the sun, and it sure is hot.

The dive bombers here are really thick, mosquitoes to you. They're bigger than any I ever saw. Some are as big as house flies, but sting worse. They should catch them and give to the Red Cross, would get a lot of blood but it would be no good.

They don't have many different kinds of planes here. All they have is AT6's, 11's and 18's and a few B-24's. There were two T20's here today but they weren't here long. I think they were part of the Gulf Patrol. I went inside one of the AT18's and looked at the radio equipment and after not seeing it for so long it sure looked good. All they have on them is the command set and the radio compass. They call those AT18's the flying coffins. They built the ship for England and pilots over here don't know how to fly them.

There was a soldier got killed here Wednesday. He was walking on the runway with a box of ammunition on his shoulder and couldn't see to one side of himself and an AT6 taxied up and just chewed his head off. I didn't see it - a fellow was telling me about it at the mess hall. He stopped talking for a minute and started to eat. He took one look at his food, dropped it and left the mess hall. We had a pretty good meal that day, too.

This weather down here doesn't agree with me. It's so hot you don't know what to do and you can't keep cool. I do keep cool about an hour ever other day. I go stand under a cold shower. It's so hot down here if you carry any cigarettes they get so damp you can hardly smoke them.

Well, can't think of any more to say but hurry and send me some more cup cakes, candy and cookies and don't forget the hometown papers. Well so long for now. Write soon. Tell every one I said "Hello."

Jimmy

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, June 16, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM EARL D. THOMPSON

Pvt. Earl D. Thompson

Dear George:

How is everything going? I suppose you have everything under control. Tell the boys to write as I have not heard from them. I'll be like Tarzan when I get out of this jungle - lots of interesting things - I believe I get around more than Lowell Thomas - am in - - - - - now.

Tell the boys to write. I haven't heard from them. When I get out of this jungle I'll have lots of interesting stories to tell. I suppose the old home town is somewhat bare, isn't it? This life makes a guy think of how good he had things at home.

Remember, I said I wanted to go where it was hot, well I got it and I sure would enjoy a cold bottle of good Old Hoosier beer.

Well, George when I get back home I'll have a lot of things to talk over. Write often and I'll do the same.

Pvt. Earl D. Thompaon

(Editor's Note: Mr. Thompson was a former employee of The News-Sentinel and the Barnhart-Van Trump Co.)

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, June 17, 1943]

### LETTER FROM RUSSELL WILLIAMS

Russ Williams  
San Antonio, Tex.  
Tues., June 15th, 1943

The News-Sentinel  
Rochester, Ind.  
Hello, "Pete":

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I reckon it will be rather a surprise for you to hear from me. I am now an aviation cadet, and am taking my pre-flight training (pilot) here at San Antonio. I want to thank you for the recommendation that helped me to get me into this training.

I hope that you and the rest of my old fellow workers at the News-Sentinel are in the best of health. I'd sure like to see you, but I imagine that it will be quite some time before I'll be in Rochester again.

We are really busy here at pre-flight. Our schedule includes military training, physical and academic training. I'm getting along fine so far. We won't get any actual flying training until we get to primary school. (six weeks yet for me.)

Between you and I, had you heard that I'm a married man? Maybe you remember the girl that I used to go with? We have been married for a few months, although it wasn't generally known until now.

I'll be here at pre-flight about the first of August. So long for now. Take care of yourself and write to me sometime soon.

As ever, your friend,  
Russell F. Williams  
San Antonio, Tex.

(Editor's Note: Russ Williams is a former employee of The News-Sentinel. Friends who desire to write him may secure his address at this office)

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, June 19, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM JAMES S. SNYDER

Sgt. James S. Snyder  
APO 528, c/o PM, N.Y., N.Y.  
June 3, 1943

Dear Mom, Dad and all:

How is everyone by this time? Just fine I hope. I am feeling just fine and getting along as well as can be expected here in Africa.

Well I finally ran across Fred Shobe this evening. He is stationed only a short distance from me. He was certainly surprised to see me.

How is Ed getting along by this time and is he still stationed in the States?

I certainly wouldn't know much news as to what is happening because we haven't received any mail recently.

How is the farming progressing and how is the little colt? The colt will be a grown horse by the time I get home.

Well as there isn't any news I will sign off for this time.

Loads of love to All,  
Jim Snyder

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, June 19, 1943]

### LETTER FROM JOHN T. HALL

Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Hall, East Ninth street, Rochester, have received word from their son, John, who is imprisoned in a camp in Italy. The card sent to the Halls came by way of the Vatican. It read as follows:

"My Dear:

"I am alright. I have not been wounded. I am a prisoner of the Italians and I am being treated well.

"Shortly I shall be transferred to a prisoners' camp and I will let you have my new address.

"Only then I will be able to receive letters from you and to reply.

"With love,  
"Pvt. John T. Hall."

Private Hall was captured in North Africa on Feb. 15, and has been in Italy since then.

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, June 21, 1943]

## SvcMen WW II Letters

### LETTER FROM R. A. SURGUY

United States Maritime Ser.  
Training Station  
Sheepshead, N. Y.

Dear Mom:

Well I suppose you think I have forgotten you but this the the first time I have had a chance as I just got back from the training ship. Boy, what a time I had on there. You couldn't imagine how the eats were. The best of everything and as many helpings as you want. We sleep in bunks and not hammocks. I am in a special bunch which was picked to go on training ship four weeks ahead of time. As I made an average of around 95 in all my tests. We have our final one tomorrow and then I will go out on another ship for how long or where I don't know for sure. I have a good idea though. So if you don't hear from me for awhile don't worry. You might as well stop the paper as we don't get half of our mail while we are gone.

I was on a 10,000 ton ship and it was 450 feet long. The crows nest was 134 feet from the water. Boy, you could sure see from up there. When aboard ship we work four hours and off eight. Then we get time and a half for overtime. I got a letter from Marvin and he is coming out the 27th. I don't know if you will be here or not but I sure hope so. Well Mom, write soon and give me the news for I have to sign off as I have a lot of studying to do.

Loads of love,  
"Bud"  
R.A. Surguy

He is the grandson of Mrs. Stella Surguy of this city.  
[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, June 24, 1943]

### LETTER FROM CARL D. HEDGES

Here I am 940 miles away from Rochester. The exact location of the camp I cannot give you, for as yet I really do not know just where I am myself. But we are about 20 miles from the Atlantic Ocean and the weather is hot, by hot I mean ranging from 110 to 120 degrees. It gets so hot here that we work in the mornings or go to school and take a shower and lay around on our bunks. The air is dry and we have plenty of sand to add to it. But because of such things I shall not lose interest in Army life. I have a boy friend from Rochester, Louis Heckathorne, here in the anti-aircraft school with me. I do enjoy it very much here despite the fact that it is hot and dry. This water seems to be nothing like the good old Rochester city water. This water seems to have sulphur in it. I met a buddy from Huntington, W.V., whose father is a Methodist minister. His name is Fermuer Young and he is really a nice fellow. Everybody else is just swell and it is not hard to get along with the officers and non-commissioned officers. There are thirty or thirty-five thousand of us here and probably thirty to thirty-five hundred officers. So far I have volunteered for 11 detail jobs and I guess that is a record around here. But I intend to work for all I get and no complaint from me. First I was in a searchlight Bn., but now I am with tanks, anti-aircraft guns, 50 caliber guns, rifles and pistols. Our searchlight batteries in practice pick out planes every night. We have many war time facilities here which I am not permitted to tell about now. We expect kitchen police duty every other week and as our names come up in alphabetical order I am due for kitchen police tomorrow. We clean our barracks from two to three times a day. There is a Brigadier General here in command and plenty of colonels, lieut. colonels, majors, captains and lieutenants. I will close for I have to write others tonight. Write when you have time and I will do so too. We are busy here.

Carl D. Hedges  
[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, June 26, 1943]

### LETTER FROM ROBERT R. VAN DUYNE

R. R. Van Duyne  
c/o Postmaster, APO No. 980

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Seattle, Washington  
Somewhere in Alaska  
June 20, 1943

Dear Fred and all:

Received two letters today both of them from you, yours of the 30th and Mildred's of June 1st. I know my last letter was very interesting so I'll write again this evening.

In our section we now have every other Sunday off and this was my day. We don't have to make formations or anything so I really caught up on my sleep. Seems like I never get to bed before eleven o'clock or so, work hard and I'm always pretty tired. Went to bed last night at 11:45 and slept until 11:15 this morning, the first I've slept around the clock since I've been in the army. Didn't have any laundry so had the whole afternoon to myself. Read Reader's Digest, your letters, and I'm answering your letters, and I'm answering them this evening because I'll be real busy this week.

We are improving our tent, as we are able to get some lumber and a few two-by-fours and can now make it a lot more homey. We have a wooden floor in it for a longtime but not a very good one. We can now build a good floor and side walls which will make it a better. We have several hours of an evening to work on it as it don't get dark until real late. Guess that is one reason we never get to bed until late, just doesn't seem right to go to bed until it gets dark.

Had a good supper this evening but then our food is always good, wish I had some of the fresh vegetables you are having from your garden now. This evening we had boned chicken, dressing, potatoes, carrots and beans, cake, cranberry sauce and coffee.

Glad you were able to get all your corn cut by yourself by the tenth or so. It is too bad the farmers are so late in getting it out but maybe you will have a late fall and still have a good crop.

I'm glad Joe made it home on furlough and all of you had such a nice time. I hope Joe does stay at Paine Field and hope his nice setup isn't altered. He shouldn't mind it, the type of soldiering he is doing is far different from mine and that that Virgil is probably doing now. I'm glad he does have it so nice.

I'm glad Alice is hearing from Virgil. I haven't yet but hope to before much longer. I imagine you are right about Virgil. I'm sure he will make out O.K. though.

Received my watch today, certainly glad to get it and it arrived in good shape, came just as fast as Mildred's letter.

I'm Glad mother went to Evelyn's commencement Exercises and enjoyed the speaker so much. Evelyn's class was fortunate in getting a speaker of Preston Bradley's caliber. It isn't often that the graduating classes have that well-known men, is it?

Would like to have a piece of one of those fried chickens and some of the lettuce from your garden. Maybe I'll be home for it next year though. I hope so.

As for seats in our tent is either a can or a box, maybe we can make a chair or two from the leftover lumber that we are using in our tent.

Write often,  
Bob

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, June 30, 1943]

### LETTER FROM JOE VAN DUYN

Cpl. Joe Van Duyn  
Paine Field  
Everett, Washington  
June 18, 1943

Dear Fred and all:

Received your letter today, took it in for Helen to read at noon. Yes, we did see some wonderful sights and you are sure right about the crops. Sure was a small amount of corn cut. A lot of small grain drowned out. There is a lot of land laying idle. One place a deer was along the road and we stopped and it came up to us, took some pictures of it. Saw three more in another place.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

We went to Logan, took 24 over to 150 to 36, took it on to 30 and on into Everett, all were the best of roads. We drove 2502 miles and averaged 18.9 miles. Did not have any trouble. We stayed in cabins, all were very nice, some with radio and all had baths. Eats are about the same all over. The boys have all the work done at the office so haven't done much. I go to a show and gym every day.

Several WAACs are here now. All the boys are trying to date them. Had two letters from Bob, he sure will make it OK. Wish he could get a few days back in some town, I am sure it would help him a lot. Sure would like to hear from Virgil, but no news is good news now. I think you will hear from him before too long now. As we have control of the air his department should not be so bad since he is in the heavy unit.

Yesterday Helen and I had our day off. We got some fishing done. As you know we have our rods and reels with us, first we went to a private lake but did not do so good there, just caught several small ones but did not know what they were. We then went to another lake and after casting for awhile I landed a bass weighing between 5 and 6 pounds. Had another good strike but missed it. Will go again real soon.

Oh yes, strawberries, they have acres and acres here, all so large and sweet, we have them every night for supper. Glad you have all the corn out and are getting along so good with your work. Also glad you got Mother's fence up. Did you get any fishing done? Should be good up around the island or on the north side. Haven't heard from Mother for several days. Will close for now and try again in a few days.

Your brother,  
Joe

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, June 30, 1943]

### LETTER FROM VIRGIL R. VAN DUYNÉ

Pvt. Virgil R. Van Duyné  
c/o Postmaster, APO No. 761  
New York  
Somewhere in North Africa

Dear Fred and All:

I bet you have been worried about me.

You don't need to. For I'm all right. I'm somewhere in North Africa.

It is real hot in the day time. And cool at night. They sure have some big mosquitoes here.

Had a pretty nice time coming over. Saw lots of big fish. I wasn't sick a day. There were lots of fellows that were. It was only real rough one day and night.

I've sure got lots to tell you. But there is so little you can say.

I sure hope you and Frederick are getting along with the work.

This is pretty hard on Alice and Mother. But maybe it won't be long. Let's pray and hope not, and then we can all be home again.

There were two boys came in a little while ago from Warsaw. They said they knew lots of people in Akron.

So Fred don't worry about me. For I will make out. The food is pretty good.

Write me often,

Love,  
Bus

P.S.- I don't suppose I will get to write very often. But will when I can.

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, June 30, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM JAMES NIXON

Sgt. James Nixon  
Somewhere in North Africa

Dear Mom:

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I received your letter of May 12 yesterday. Had to get a calendar to find out what day it is today. Every day is the same over here and you get so you don't know one from the other. I got Al and Annie's letter yesterday too. Also all of my papers up to May 10th. I think there were twenty-one of them, at least it took me one whole evening to read all of them. We don't get much news here, practically no papers. There is a bulletin issued by the army every so often and that is our newspaper.

I am getting along fine and feeling the same. The country really is beautiful, especially in the evening, but it is too hot to suit me in the daytime. You should see the Arabs out here threshing their wheat. They do it the same way they did a thousand years ago. In fact I don't believe they have changed their type of living in the least. Well, they can have all of this style of living they want and my share too. I think I can say without reservation that when this war is over I will have had all the traveling I will ever want if we don't move another mile.

Expect you are having rather nice weather over there by this time. Did you put out a big garden this spring? Shouldn't be surprised if it wouldn't come in mighty handy by the way your rationing seems to be operating. We haven't any kick on the food that we get here at all. It isn't the deluxe style we used to have but it is probably better for us than any we ever ate.

Well, so long for now and drop me a line now and then and have anyone else you think of do the same. Mail is a very important thing over here. In fact we think it the most important.

As ever,

Jim

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, July 2, 1943]

### LETTER FROM WALTER FUNK

Pvt. Walter Funk  
APO No. 634  
c/o Postmaster  
New York City, N.Y.  
June 9, 1943

Dear Sir:

Just a line to give you my new address to put in the paper.

I arrived here in England safe and like the country swell. It is much like Indiana right here where I am.

Will close hoping this finds all my friends back home well and happy. I'm sure I couldn't be happier or feel any better. We are all in good spirits over here and all going to be home soon, we hope.

Yours,

An Akronite

Pvt. Walter Funk

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, July 6, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM DAVID A. WILSON

Pvt. David A. Wilson

Dear Mother:

Will answer your most welcome letter received a few days ago.

This isn't my day off, but I took it off anyway as my back isn't feeling so good again. I guess I lifted too much a couple days ago while I was crating a two ton airplane engine for shipment. As you know I am in full charge of the carpenter shop now, and have all the work to do by myself. I don't mind it tho if it was not so hot in the shop.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I am going to make some awnings to put over the windows some time this week and then see if I can get an electric fan to help keep my shop a little cooler.

I have almost a complete set of tools and machinery to work with. I ordered a table saw (electric) and all accessories last Monday and am going to have a lathe put in soon and I have a 14 inch throat band saw and a electric mortising machine plus all my hand tools.

My work consists of making inside doors, window sash, office desks and chairs, stools, what-not, fancy flower boxes for the Staff Sgts if they furnish the lumber and putting up new buildings and making new wooden parts for airplanes. Also a hundred and one other things that comes in to be made or made over. I would rather make a new part than try to fix one that is just about beyond fixing.

Well, Mother I finally made Pfc. and have been recommended for Cpl. rating by the Major and Master Sergeant.

Well, I should get it as hard as I have worked. I am busy every minute of the day from 7:30 till 5:15 in the evening. I even work then at noon hour on things the other soldiers want made that is not supposed to be worked on during my regular hours.

Mother, you folks must have had a lot of rain in Indiana from what the papers say. Well, we got a couple of showers here is all and we sure needed it. It was getting pretty dry here.

Are you bothered with the heat up there. Boy it sure is hot down here. We sure welcome a cloudy day to hide that hot sun.

Oh yes, I made a drinking fountain a couple weeks ago and the plumbers just got it connected up. It holds 200 pounhds of ice and has a 50 foot length of copper tubing under the ice and boy the water sure is cold to drink. It tastes good tho on a hot day.

Has Albert got his corn planted yet? Corn down here is knee high and the oats are ready to cut and also the wheat and rye. We have ripe cherries and peaches and have had new potatoes to eat for a couple of weeks.

We have a victory garden at our base called the Atlanta Army Base 10 acre victory garden. I haven't yet worked in it but it looked real nice and the mess hall will get almost all of the fresh vegetables out of it.

Well, I will close for this time, hoping to hear from you real soon.

With love, your son,

David

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, July 8, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM MELVIN LEE SHRIVER

Co. B, 168 Inf., APO 34  
c/o Postmaster  
New York, N.Y.  
U. S. Army  
North Africa  
May 23, 1943

Dearest Dad and All:

Just a line to let you know I'm O.K. and hope these few lines find you the same. Well, Dad, how is everything around home, fine I hope. I suppose you are getting pretty well done planting corn by now. If I remember right it has been a long time since I have been on the farm. Ha, Ha. Dad we hear you can send five pound boxes now. If you can please send a five pound box of candy and you can get it with the money I sent home.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I got a letter from Dood yesterday, the third one I got from her since I have been in the army. She writes about as much as I do.

Well, Dad, as I can't think of anything else to write about I will close for this time. I will write later. Tell everybody I said hello.

Your loving son,  
"Pike" Melvin Shriver

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, July 8, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM EVERETT T. ZINK

Sgt. Everett T. Zink  
Somewhere in New Guinea  
June 20, 1943

Darling Mother and Dad:

Will try and write you a few lines. I received your letter today you wrote May 8. Glad you are all O.K. and sure glad to hear you have a Mothers of World War No. 2 unit in Rochester. I sure wish I could drop in on your meeting some evening. I suppose it does you Mothers good to get together and talk about your boys in service.

When you mention about your sandwich, you and the two Mrs. Millers were making for the unit, gosh, it made my stomach turn over and yell for some good food like yours. Don't get me wrong. I am eating three square meals a day. I haven't lost any weight since I came back here. I haven't had a sick day either. I am doing alright, (knocking on wood.) Please don't worry.

Mother, you asked where I went on my furlough "if I could tell." Well I found out this p.m. that we could tell where we went. I went to a little inland town in Northern Queen land, Mosman. Mrs. Trimble gave me a pup, he is nearly 10 weeks old now. I did not see the Flannagans, not far enough south. Will see them on my next furlough.

When we hear about the strikes back home it concerns us a lot every time. They strike some of the boys over here fighting and losing their lives so they can live in and work in a free coduntry. We don't strike in the Army. We have something more worth while to fight for. I hope the people wake up some of these days and put some of their big talk into practice. "We need their help."

Some strike for more money just so they can live like the Jones next door or the Smiths up the street. Well I guess I had better change the subject.

Now don't worry too much. I am O.K. and will try and write more next time and sooner next time, so will close.

Your loving son,  
Everett Zink.

Sgt. Everett T. Zink 35168146  
APO No.939, c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco, Calif., U.S.A.

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, July 12, 1943]

### FOURTH LETTER FROM FREDERICK R. GREER

Cpl Frederick Greer  
June 2, 1943

Dear Father:

Writing you a line again. Hope you are well. As far as myself, fine. Was so glad that you sent me such a nice letter. About a month ago, I saw Bob over here. Was I glad to see that kid! Was with him about six hours. I had dinner with him and all his shipmates. They sure did have a good dinner. Sure enjoyed being with him. He gave me one of his pictures. I would send you one, but we can't get any taken here.

By the way, how are the fish biting this time of the year: Would I like to be pulling them in. How did the suckers bite this spring? The first thing I'm going to do if I get back is go fishing. I think we will have a boat of our own, then we will not have to rent one. I am saving all the

## SvcMen WW II Letters

money I can. That is \$59 a month in the Quartermaster Corps. So far, I have \$218. What do you think of that? Going to keep putting in every month.

Tell Hazel that I said hello and hope she is well, also the rest of the Wolf family the same. I hope this is over soon so I can come home and see you again. That will be a happy day when we get together and start off where we left off. Well, I will have to close for this time. All I can think of now. God bless you.

Your loving son,  
Frederick R. Greer

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, July 13, 1943]

### FIFTH LETTER FROM ROBERT GREER

From Robert Greer

Dear Dad:

I received your letter yesterday saying you broke your arm. It sure was too bad. I am enclosing \$60 to go to my bank account. I want you to write and tell me how much money I have in the bank. I am stepping my savings allotment up to \$40 a month. When I get back into civilian life, I am going to take a three months' vacation on my money. I think I will have it earned.

I have seen six foreign countries and I want to see some more of the States when I get back. How is everything at home? Fine, I hope.

How is Ed's laundry making out? Fine, I hope. Tell Ed I said hello. He is one of the best friends a man can have. I can't wait until Fred and I come home and can go fishing with you and Ed. I will show you how to catch real fish. Well, I guess this is all for today, Pop. Don't forget to find out how much money I have in the bank! Good luck!

Bob

P.S. - The best of luck and a speedy recovery from your broken arm. Write soon and often. Tell my old friends to write. Tell Hazel and the kids I said hello.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, July 23, 1943]

### LETTER FROM KEITH BARTS

Pvt. Keith Barts

Dear Mom, Dad and Kids:

I suppose you have received my post card by now. Doesn't the hospital look beautiful and that's the very thing it is. Mother, you should see the inside of it. It's simply gorgeous. You see the hospital used to be a summer resort hotel where only millionaires could afford to come. It used to cost between fifty and a hundred dollars a day to rent a room. It is surrounded by tree-capped mountains extending up a thousand feet in the sky. You know, for an Indiana Hoosier, who has never seen a mountain, it is an unbelievable experience.

The weather down here is rather funny. It's foggy until about ten-thirty in the morning, then the sun comes out and it gets quite warm. At night it is cool. So you see the weather isn't bad here at all. Another thing that is nice is to see the sun go down behind the mountains.

I'll tell you a little about the recreational facilities. It's really swell. A fellow can play croquet, horseshoe, golf, tennis, go horseback riding, the movies and swimming. We have a swimming pool right in the hospital. The golf courts, we have two of them, which are the largest in the country. We do have swell tennis courts too. It's strictly on the beam.

The little city of White Sulphur Springs is just a little jog from the hospital and is a very quiet town. One of the finest things about White Sulphur Springs is that the people are very friendly and will go out of their way to do things for you.

The train ride from Camp Campbell was swell. The four gents, whom are now my best buddies, were very entertaining. We had a swell time on the train. Dad, I'll have to bring you down here for a train ride along the eastern part of Kentucky. It is just as the people have told me many times. The grass is strictly blue. When we went through Frankfort, state capital of

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Kentucky, we saw the state building setting upon a hill. The dome on the State House was gold and it really shined.

You should see the place where I stay. It is a building built like a southern mansion. Jack, John and I have a room together. By the way, the place where we live is not on the picture, but as soon as I get my camera, I'll take a picture of it and send it to you. Getting back to the room - we have one window, which gives us plenty of light. We have three cots, two dressers, table, three chairs, a wash bowl with hot and cold water, and a rack to hang our clothes on. We have steam heat for winter. It's just like being back in college.

The traveling facilities are good. A railroad, the C. & O., runs within 150 years from our beautiful barracks and the depot is not farther than 300 yards. We have a bus every hour that we can catch to town.

There is so much going on that I'll never think of homesickness. It is what every soldier that has been here calls a soldier's paradise. We have some towns her within a radius of twenty miles.

Ken, Mike, Jack, John and I went up in the mountains Sunday aftnoon on a bike. It was only nine miles up but we only went four of them. After coming back from our hike, Jack and I went horseback riding. The horse I had wanted to run up the mountain trail but I preferred walking. We didn't ride clear up to the top for we didn't have the time.

Say, will you send me my camera, those pictures I took of Maxine, bathing suit, and saxophone. I didn't very well think they would have a band here but they do and they want me in it. I've got everything here, including my music, recreation, and a good job. I shall be grateful to Lt. Warren Wise as long as I live for getting me down here. I met a boy from Mshawaka here.

Love,

Keith

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, July 23, 1943]

THIRD LETTER FROM FRED G. SHOBE

Fred Shobe

Somewhere in North Africa

July 6, 1943

Dear Mother and all:

Have received no word yet this week and do not know whether or not I told you of meeting Omer McIntyre from Rochester. He is the son of Erie R.R. ticket agent at Rochester, Mr. and Mrs. Quackenbush. I met him on pass in the city of Constantine and then on the following Sunday I visited him at the home airport some forty miles distant from mine. He took me for my first time, inside a B-17 which is the Flying Fortress. He is the lower or belly half turret gunner of this particular crew. I met the rest of his crew, who seem to be a regular bunch of fellows and they get along swell. All of his crew are Staff Sergeants and the pilot and co-pilot are commissioned officers. They showed me a very enjoyable time and I am going to visit them again as soon as possible. I had saved some clippings that you sent me from The News-Sentinel and he was very glad to learn a lot of the news which had happened only two weeks after left the states about May 15.

It is very hot and dry here at present as it always is in the summer and the torrid winds of the Sahara desert almost wilts us.

The war news looks good to us with Hitler having a nervous breakdown and all our bombings on Italy and the smaller islands. Looks like it will be over by my birthday Oct. 2.

Omer McIntyre said he had met Fred Gordon who has a Purple Heart decoration which came from a wound in the leg. He still limps from the effects of it. I think Fred is a Second Lieutenant in the infantry. I can't find where Claude Bilyew is but I am still searching. He may have gone back to Algiers or Oran to one of the convalescent hospitals or even back to the states. If you learn of his army address, serial no., organization since he was wounded please let me know.

Have you sent the cigars yet? And where is Bob now? Also Bert and Joe.

Love to all,

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Fred

Pvt. Gortrie F. Shobe  
A.S.N. 35357043  
A.P.O. 464 c/o Postmster  
New York,N.Y.

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, July 24, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM HOWARD HENDERSON

Cpl. Howard J. Henderson  
804th Tch Sch. Sqd.  
Sioux Falls, S.D.  
July 22, 1943

Dear Ed:

Well, how's the fishing these days? Don't catch too many of them beause I want a few left when I get home to stay.

I saw in the Sentinel about Charles Copen being killed. It really is too bad as Charlie was a nice fellow. Also, I saw about the Army transport plane being at the airport. Also, did you see it? I have been in the Air Corps for over 14 months and I have yet to get a plane ride so I am not positive whether I am in the Air Corps or not.

I don't get letters from the people at home except from Rev. Coverstone and Capt. Minter. Of course, my own mother writes regularly, but,my dear friends in Rochester are slow about writing, as I don't know much that they are doing except what I read in the Sentinel.

I suppose you know by now that I was made Corporal last month. I am really happy about it, and I hope that I can get another stripe to add to the two I have. It means extra pay each month.

How is everything and everyone in Rochester? And how is the weather? I am fine and we have been having some nice weather for some time now. It rained some Sunday and Monday morning but it has been very nice since. The nites are cool like they are at Lake Manitou and covers feel good before morning.

I am still working on my old job and am pretty busy most of the time as the time goes pretty fast. I have been in the Field for over a year now but it don't seem that long.

I am going to put in for a furlough during the latter part of September, or from 5-15 of October, so I can be home for my birthday. Of course, that depends on how things are here by then.

I don't do much except to go to the movies and write letters and play pool at the service centers in Sioux Falls. I work every Sunday so I don't get to church as often as I should.

I haven't much to write about so I guess that I might as well sign off now. Will try to write more often when I answer our next letter.

Your fighting friend,  
Howard Henderson

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, July 24, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM GEORGE D. HOLLOWAY

Sgt. George D. Holloway  
July 14, 1943

Dear Mother and Dad:

Just a few lines to let you know that I'm well and safe. Probably you have read things in the papers or no doubt heard and are all worked up. Everything is all right and we're still here at the same camp. We're not going to be here very long though but there's nothing to worry about. The papers just stretch things and make them sound worse. Just hold tight and hope for the best until you hear from again which won't be too long. Things may change and we'll stay right here for awhile. What ever way it goes I'm prepartred to meet it with the best results. Your son may be little but can sure take care of himself. Just don't worry.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

So far today, I haven't heard from you or anyone at home except Beth for some time. Yesterday we didn't get any mail but hope today brings better results. They really help out and mean so much. We can't expect to get mail every day but sure look forward to it. Just enough one time to make us look forward to the next.

Imagine by this time Opal and Howard are a very happy bunch now that Bonnie is home with them. Maybe I'm jumping ahead of myself in thinking that she's home with them. I'll bet Patty is really having a big time with her and thinking she's the big shot around the house. Doubt very much if I would even know her by this time.

I've seen Nixon, Spohn and Rhodes quite a lot since we got here. We get together once in awhile for a good talk. We always talk of what we're going to do when we get back home. The people there at home may as well lock themselves in their houses because we're going to take it over. Ha. They're all going along swell and all well.

The weather here has been quite a change for the best. It's been a little cooler but still plenty warm. At night it's just right. Every night we listen to the radio about 11:00 before we go to bed. Being the position we're in, very much interested of the big battles. Things are really going along in good shape. Just hope they keep up the good work and know it will. Maybe we'll all be home before we realize it, we are hoping.

Have to close and get to work. Take care of yourselves and write soon. I'm well and safe. Tell everyone hello and to write.

Your loving son (The Wonder boy)

George

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, July 24, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM HAROLD D. ALSPACH

Harold D. Alspach

In North Africa

Hurrah:

I finally received one letter which you wrote on June 24. As for me, I have written six or eight times and I don't know what happened to them.

I suppose you listened to the radio on the tenth of this month. How did you like the report of it? I imagine it sort of rated the headlines of the paper around there. Well, our little boy was there. In fact, he was one of the first in. You can't imagine how bad a case of "coffee nerves" I had at first, but it soon wore off. Sure could tell you lots more, but don't imagine it would pass. Sure had a bad feeling when we started for that place, as one didn't know if he were going to weather it through or not, if you get what I mean. It really put all the Fourth of July celebrations that were put on at Culver in the back seat of the show. It was quite a "show," if that is what you want to call it.

I missed so much of my sleep that when I did get a chance, I laid down on the floor and the other radioman said, "I almost beat the devil out of him." Don't know anything about it myself. Must be getting as bad as when I was small, don't you think?

I'm afraid I haven't seen anything of Jim Good. I don't think he was in on any of what happened the tenth of July. It is impossible to find any of those guys unless they tell me what outfit they are in. Also their APO and all the dope.

Have you seen Dr. Dean lately? From the way you wrote, you didn't get my letter where I asked you to see him if my chance of joining the lodge held until I get home.

Well, I must sign off. Will write later.

Love to all,

Harold

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, July 28, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM JAMES KINDIG

Somewhere in New Guinea

July 11, 1943

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Dearest Mother:

Hello, Mother dear, and everybody else up that way. Am hoping this finds you all well and O.K. Am fine myself. Well, safe and working hard.

We are running wire today, and I have some paper in my truck, so am trying to get a letter your way while I have a chance.

I received your V-mail and air mail letters the same day, so I guess the air mail is best, as it seems more like a letter.

Oh yes, before I forget it, will you send the Rochester paper? I would sure like to have it and see what is going on, for we don't hear a thing over here or have any way of finding out anything.

Am glad to hear you are working where you are. But please, Mother, be careful with those things you are working with, because they will go off! And how! For I know!

Well, Mother, there isn't much I can write about, only it is very hot and shaves are far between. Have my hair cut very close to my head, and if a fellow likes beer he is out of luck here. Oh yes, I was in swimming yesterday. The water was fine. Wish I could do it more often. Well, Mother, tell everyone I said hello and am still somewhere in New Guinea and for everyone to write.

Jim

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, July 28, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM HAROLD MOORE

Pvt. Harold Moore  
Camp Hood, Texas

Dear Folks:

I got a nice Bible at church Sunday. They give you one if you want it. I lost mine I took from home when we left camp Bowie. My air test may be tough, but it's tough to fight buttoned up in a destroyer or tank. The reward for air test will be Second Lieutenant bars. I got my recommendations and thanks. I'm going to write and thank them for sending them to me.

I saw Hugh Moore from Rochester and see Bob Newcomb often too. Hugh Moore's outfit moved right across the street from us.

We spent a week on the Battle Conditioning course. We learned how to live in the woods, make grenades to shoot and run obstacle courses. This consists of crossing a stream on a rope, climbing walls, running, crawling under barbed wire and climbing a steep hill. Then we had an infiltration course in which you crawled on through barbed wire, across ditches while machine guns were shooting real bullets over your head. We had lots of close calls and some were actually pretty close. We are studying tactics now. My guitar goes where I go. My sergeant said he would take the guitar if he had to leave out some ammunition.

I had a chance for an office job, but turned it down. The corporal of the guard asked me to type for him. I was just banging away when a guy came in and watched me a long time. He asked me to look at what I'd typed and I hadn't made any mistakes. He asked if I would work there but I told him I didn't want that kind of work. I got more tired from sitting typing than I do working at something else.

There is a lot of tusseling and pillow fights. One night the second platoon crept in our barracks and they thought we were asleep. They turned the lights on and jumped us (sergeant and all) but we beat hell out of them because we were all set.

I saw "Dixie" and it was good. We don't tan here, we burn so we get well covered. The guys that get ahead here are the guys that are good with tools, mechanics, radio and cooking. It's the privates that really fight.

We knew Sicily was going to be invaded before it was because we are kept informed from a military standpoint. "What's cooking." Japan will be tough and take a while, but with Germany out of the way, won't take long. This island to island stuff is to keep the Japs occupied. Two to one the attack will come on Japan itself. They know it and that's why she's fighting so desperately. The allies will soon have Germany surrounded. I can't say how, but I know. I also

## SvcMen WW II Letters

know Japan can't live or depend on these islands alone, it must have Japan - see the drift. Time is just the factor. You were speaking of getting war bonds, do you know that each \$18.75 can buy a shell for our big guns. That's what each shell costs. By the way hereafter my serial number (35097938) must be put on my letter right after my name. So long for now,

Love,

Harold Moore

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, July 28, 1943]

LETTER FROM JAMES CLEMENS

OF ARGOS, IND.

June 21, 1943

Dear Folks:

Well, here it is Wednesday, How time does fly. I sure had it easy for a while on the ship. I didn't get up till noon and spent the rest of the time reading but am about out of reading material. Then I don't know what to do. So as soon as you can send me a few magazines such as true stories, movie magazines and western stories but no murder stories.

The Red Cross sure treated us fine. They gave us each a shaving bag, razor blades, a deck of cards, sewing kit, story books, cigarettes, chewing gum and stationery.

They published the news every evening on the ship and I don't see how the war can last long the way they are bombing places.

I want you to keep up the Plymouth and Rochester papers.

Tell Toots and Grace I will write them later, but am not going to write very many letters. I will try and get around to writing you two or three times a week. So they can read the one that I write you.

I am away out in North Africa about 4,000 miles from home and I am writing this laying in my tent.

The water is very scarce here, and hardly fit to drink. You have to learn to be saving with it. I took a bath this evening and had only two quarts of water to do it with. So you can imagine what kind of job I did. It hardly ever rains here during the summer months. The farmers water their crops here by the use of a mule and a two-wheel cart. It looks so odd when they hitch up a team. They hitch up a team ahead of the other and it sure looks funny.

We marched through town the other day and the people looked so odd because of the way they dress, I guess, and they're always wanting us to give them something. They're just crazy for American cigarettes.

I almost forgot to tell you what they raise. Mostly grapes, field after field of them. They also raise figs, and dates. You don't see any corn. They raise oats. They plant it in rows and cultivate it like we do corn. I saw a farmer threshing his grain the other day. He had a stone roller with a mule hitched to it, and he kept going in a circle. Just the way we used to elevate grain at the elevator.

I sure was surprised when I saw what kind of buildings they had. They are built of rocks and cement. They sure look swell and you never see any built of wood. Their barns and fences are even stone and cement.

I worked in the kitchen a while at noon today. And I saw some meat that was packed in South Bend, Mayer Brothers, and also saw some of the shells that were made at Kingsbury. So you see good old Indiana is not such a bad state after all.

There is a boy here from Claypool, Ind. We came in the Army together and are going to try and come home together, and are going to try and buy a jeep and come in one of them.

So don't forget to send me some magazines and a cigarette lighter. Matches are scarce here. Also send me some V-mail envelopes, you can't hardly get them here.

Well, I suppose I had better close. I got to dish out food tonight for supper. Tell Sam I said hello and be a good boy. So write often. Don't worry as I am O.K.

Love,

Jim

(Editor's Note - James is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Clemens of Argos, Ind.)

## SvcMen WW II Letters

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, July 30, 1943]

### FOURTH LETTER FROM HOWARD SHERBONDY

July 13, 1943

Editor, The News-Sentinel

Rochester, Indiana

Dear Sir:

A short time ago I wrote to you telling about meeting a hometown boy. I appreciate very much the honor you showed me by the editorial you write about it. That hometown boy was Weldon Sherrard. Today he happened to run onto Don Smiley down on the beach. They jumped into Weldon's truck and came down to my camp. Boy it sure was good to see these two coming in! If they would have arrived five minutes earlier they would have had to wait till I got back. As it was I just had to get back from a trip.

They stayed around all afternoon and we really had a swell time talking about the good old days and the different places we had been.

I had heard about Don's narrow escape over in the Mediterranean and always supposed that when he returned to duty he would be back on the Atlantic side. So you can imagine how greatly surprised I was to see him way over here.

We've really had some good times together, among them being the trip to California in 1939 with Don, his brother Dean, and Don Hartung and myself.

Don has been over here for quite some time but he never wandered away from his ship when it was tied up here. Today he walked a little way away and unexpectedly happened to walk past Weldon's tent and Weldon saw him.

We've decided that they want this war ended in a hurry and that's why they're sending Rochester boys out here.

It was a great experience to see Weldon again and also to see Don again after about two years. Do you notice that all of our initials of our last names are S? That must be a lucky letter or something. Maybe like the Three Musketeers.

Weldon is looking as good as ever and so is Don, maybe a little taller though.

Everything is going the same as usual around here. Once in a while we are rudely interrupted by "Washboard Charlie." The paper comes on through pretty good and is greatly appreciated, all my buddies here read it. It really goes around.

We "Three Musketeers" are hoping to be back soon but I don't know how soon. One thing we're certain is that it can't be too soon.

Thanks for everything and tell all the Rochester people to keep up the good work, we're winning now and the Axis is really on the run.

A soldier from Rochester,

Howard Sherbondy

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, July 30, 1943]

### LETTER FROM "BEEZER" BENNETT

From "Beezer" Bennett

Fort Benjamin Harrison, Ind.

Frida, P.M.

Dear Tony:

Have been going through a harrowing experience this P.M. trying to keep from being caught doing nothing. It keeps me busy trying to look busy so that some dear sergeant will not place me digging ditches, breaking rocks, washing windows, and all of the other disgusting stuff around the camp that soldiers have to do.

This morning I took my test for classification. On the I.Q. test I made a score of 123. It takes 116 to get in Officers' Candidate School so I feel pretty happy about the whole thing. They also classified me as a newspaper reporter (stretching the truth about it all, they didn't know what kind of a reporter) so I may get on a camp newspaper somewhere.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

All of the other guys from Fulton county are quite ready to leave here for basic at any time. They've been working harder'n h - - l today and yesterday. No, I got exempt because of my cut hand yesterday and because of my tests this morning.

Sadowsky is the only one of us who has made any major "faux passes" (how the devil do you spell that?). Last night he went into the Post Exchange, asked someone, "Say, soldier, know where to get ice cream?" The soldier happened to be a first lieutenant, who replied with helluva dirty glance. I laughed.

My salute is quite rusty so far. I hit my hand into my eye yesterday in a feeble attempt to salute a captain. He didn't enjoy the joke as I thought he should, so today I didn't salute him.

Tell McKelvery, Mary, Mollie and Jack that I said "Hi" and drink a Coplen-Shafer coke for me.

Ex-Reporter,  
Private "Beezer"

P.S. - Oh, yes, my address is on the envelope. If you'll write by Monday I'll probably still be here (in the Guard House).

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, August 4, 1943]

### FIFTH LETTER FROM WARREN CORNELL

Sgt. Warren L. Cornell  
Camp Edwards. Mass.  
Aug. 7, 1943

Dear Friends:

Just a few words to let you know I am feeling fine. August 6 I left for Camp Edwards, Mass. I will spend 2 weeks here in anti-aircraft school. We are along Cape Cod. It is really wonderful. After I finish school I will return to Ft. Dix, New Jersey again. I will then teach anti-aircraft in the 4th Division. It is a great thrill to be able to go to different schools as I have and then to go out and teach other fellows. I enjoy my work very much. I hope to be in Indiana on another furlough in September or October. It will be wonderful to come home again. But I would rather go the other way for once. I will close by saying, "Keep 'em flying" and here's to victory.

Sgt. Warren L. Cornell

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, August 10, 1943]

### LETTER FROM ED SNYDER

July 27, 1943

Dear Folks and Bob:

I haven't heard from you for a week or so but I have got most of the news out of The News-Sentinel.

We have permission to give you our location which is Iceland. I bet you would never have guessed my location in a thousand years. The scenery is pretty nice but they lack the trees. It is nothing like you would expect by the name. There has been volcanic eruptions on the island in the past and there is hot water coming from the mountains. This water is used for heating pools where we go swimming.

Last Sunday I went to another camp about 30 miles from here and our camp played their camp in softball. We won 8 to 6 in 12 innings and that was the first they had been beat this season. It don't get dark up here till along towards morning which makes it hard sleeping.

We work pretty hard since we have lots of fixing up in our camp in our spare time. We will have our shower-room completed in a couple weeks and we are also building a fire place in our day room.

Have you heard from Jim lately? I sure wish he and I could be together up here.

Since it is bed-time (12:00) midnight, I will close for the present. Don't worry about me because I am feeling fine.

Your Son,  
Eddit

## SvcMen WW II Letters

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, August 11, 1943]

### FIFTH LETTER FROM ALBERT SWANSON

July 14, 1943

Dear Mom:

Well I finally found time to write you a letter. We moved again. I am somewhere in the Southwest Pacific. But can't tell you where. I was glad to get out of Australia. I didn't think much of it. I would rather be in the good old U.S.A. I sure hope we will get to come home by the time I am over here two years. Only seven more months until the two years are up.

Did you get my letter I sent you asking for a wrist watch? If not send me one as soon as you can. My watch gave out on me.

Your son,  
Albert

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, August 16, 1943]

### LETTER FROM RAY ROY

From Capt. Ray Roy

Overseas

July 30, 1943

Dear Carl:

Thanks for your very interesting letter and the news it contained about things and people on the old home front. I hope that I can encourage you to write more often.

As the new plans and rapid changes are being effected covering future activities, we are all very busy, in fact, in high gear, and I can truthfully add in very high spirits. Not only from the successes of the invasion forces, but also over the progress being made over the other fronts. The Sicily Circus should be over very shortly.

Am still receiving the News-Sentinel, as many as eight at a time some days, and although they are several months old it is all good news to me and I look forward to their arrival. I must confess that I paid too little attention to the paper, as a nation wide traveling civilian, but now I practically proof-read every line. I know what Joe Ewing charges for red kidney beans - hand-picked deluxe special, extra nice - what Ike Wile is "sacrificing" (?) in gingham gowns for growing girls - and what not to grow in your Victory Garden - by Huxley.

I am enclosing the clipping from March 31st News-Sentinel, covering the news item from Cairo describing the "Sand Bowl" football game played by the Americans somewhere in the Libyan desert on January 20th. I attended hat game and watched the team from my service group win the championship by a score of 20 to 7. Furthermore the Red Cross Director, Bob Roberts mentioned in the item is now here in the same area with us, and Bob enjoyed reading the article from my home-town paper.

#### What's Cookin'?

Several days ago we emerged from one of those terrific African heat waves that we have all read about but partially disbelieved. If Hell is any hotter than that I am certainly going to amend my ways. Temperature in the sun ran as high as 128 some days and never lower than 115, with only a few degrees lower in the shade. The only difference between being in the shade and in the sun was the fact that you baked in the shade and you were parboiled in the sun, so don't ask me "what's cookin'?" It's me. A very good think that we are seasoned desert rats or I fear the casualty rate would have been high. Back to more normal summer weather now, and it is very pleasant along the sea.

Several weeks ago King George was here for three days, in fact returned direct to London from this point. There is a most interesting story connected with his majesty's visit here, but will have to hold that until some day when we get together around the stove at Black& Bailey's.

Several days ago I was on another one of my supply trips and I met our own Jimmy Doolittle. He is truly a two-fisted wide-awake American with a tremendous punch and lightning humor. Have always kept a sharp lookout for a familiar face from Fulton county, but no luck as

## SvcMen WW II Letters

yet. I suppose that after the war as the boys sit on the court house steps and trade tall stories, I will discover that Bill, Jim and Frank rode the same camels that I rode in Egypt, and dunked their torsos in Tunisia. Then of course we will all do some tall elbow bending in toasting that we leave Africa to the natives.

Please present my compliments to our mutual friends, and let me hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Ray

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, August 17, 1943]

### FOURTH LETTER FROM RAY McGRIFF

Cpl. Ray McGriff

Somewhere in Hawaiian Islands

Aug. 6, 1943

Dear Mother:

Just a line to let you know I am O.K. Hope this finds you all the same at home. I just received your letter you wrote the 29th of July and I am sure glad you are sending me some more pictures. I have some I will send in this letter, they are not very good but will send them anyway. I am still doing radio work and like it fine. I like it O.K. over here, but it's not as good as Indiana you know. We get some of the programs from the states, over the networks. I heard the President's talk the other night. I have been able to get WLS two or three times late at night, but not very good. Well, I hope we can soon get this war over. Haven't been homesick yet, but you know I may get that way if this d--- thing lasts much longer. I have been getting most of the News-Sentinels now. They are old when they get here, but I still like to read them. Well I can't think of much to write you know I never was much good at writing letters and there's not much to write about over here. But will tell you all about it when I get home. Tell everyone to write, will close for this time and try to write more next time.

Love,

Ray

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, August 18, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM ROLLAND NEWCOMER

Rolland Newcomer

Camp Livingston, La.

Friend Arlie:

How is the old home town now? Is it still on the map? I couldn't find it on the map today, so I thought maybe they had moved it.

It has been nice and warm down here. It has been around a 115 to 120 degrees.

We are killing those Japs and Germans every day by sitting under a shade tree or having a field inspection. They shipped in 550 more prisoners. They were Germans and Poles from North Africa. I hope I get the chance to shoot a few before it is all over with.

I am so tired of telling someone else what kind of a gun they got and how to shoot it. I wish I had never seen one. We are taking a new kind of training now. They call it basic training, road marches, withdrawals, and the same old thing we had back at Camp Shelby, Miss., in the year of forty-one.

What is new about it is we have a new second John or lieutenant. One of those we took all he knew over in Georgia in the year of forty-two. Now, he is trying to tell us what to do. Can you figure it out? If you can, you got me beat and I have two pair and a 45.

Well I hope you are OK and keep your chin up, till later,

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Your friend  
Rolland

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, August 27, 1943]

### LETTER FROM BILLY O'DELL

Pfc. Billy O'Dell

Dear Grandma:

Well, I finally found time to write to you. We are really working hard at this post. We only have 73 men left in my company, it all busted up. Some went to Topeka, Kan., to a German hospital. We don't know if we will even see them again. The rest of us are going to be split up before long, probably in two weeks at the most. We have no idea where we are going. Three boys I run around with have gone.

We had to borrow men from the 489th and the 456th to pull guard tonight. Our furloughs have been cancelled for the present so I don't know when I will get home.

They had a big piece in the paper here about us unloading prisoners. We unloaded 550 German prisoners in 27 minutes and 400 in 15 minutes. The ground here is as hard as the roads at home.

I am on guard now at the Officers' Compound. All I have to do is sit here, for there isn't anyone going in and out. I heard that you can't get cigarettes at home. Is that true or is it just a rumor?

Our company commander has a convoy to take us to the Belleville County fair Tuesday night. He is really nice to us. He put on a big party for us last Sunday. We had 200 pounds of fried chicken, 30 gallons of potato salad and ice cream. We have what they call a Class A pass which lets us off the post after retreat every night, then on till reveille in the morning.

Oh, yes! I got the cake. The piece I had was very good, also the cigars and candy.

Billy

P.S. - Tell James to write.

Pfc. Billy O'Dell

457 M.P.E.G. Co.

Prisoner of War Camp

Concordia, Kansas.

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, September 4, 1943]

### SIXTH LETTER FROM ROBERT GREER

Dear Dad:

Writing to let you know I am O.K. and hope your arm is well by now. Are you still in the laundry with Ed? Do you see much of Howard and Georgia? Tell them both I said hello. How is Ed Vawter and his wife? Tell them I said hello and to write to me. It sure gets lonesome over here when you don't get any mail. Mail comes before chow over here. I like them both at the same time. Did you get my picture postcards? I want you to put them in the locker. I'll try to get some more. Tell Hazel I said hello and have the kids write. I'm going to send you one hundred bucks for the bank, pay day. Write soon,

Your son,

Bob

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, September 11, 1943]

### LETTER FROM HAROLD B. CHINERS

Cpl. Harold B. Chiners

APO-4763, c/o Postmaster,

San Francisco, Calif

Letter received by Mrs. O. P. Waite, secy-treas of The Monday Club, who recently made and sent Red Cross comfort kit to boys in the service.

Dear Friends:

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I am one of the many, many, many who have received your wonderful gifts to our United States fighting men and women and I want to extend my happiest thanks for what you and your club are doing for the morale of our fighting men.

I can only wish one thing, and that is, if I could thank you in person it would please me a whole lot better than on paper. I'll close for now, wishing you a million successes in your work.

Sincerely yours,  
Cpl. Harold B. Chiners

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, September 15, 1943]

### LETTER FROM GEORGE W. DEARDORFF

Pvt. Geo. W. Deardorff  
Camp Lee, Va.  
9:55 p.m. Friday, Sept. 10, 1943

Dear Folks:

I've been back from Hampden Roads port of embarkation since Tuesday evening, but hadn't had time until now to write you about the events and sights that took place there.

To me these German prisoners of war presented a very interesting and spectacular sight, despite the condition of their apparel.

Most of them were dressed in a khaki uniform with billed-overseas cap, a form-fitting blouse complete with baggy trousers that strapped up at the ankles. Some shoes were of heavy hob-nail type but most of them were a canvas-boot with leather sandals (leather shoes, upper part of boot was canvas.)

A few of the prisoners wore nothing but shorts which exposed their blocky well-built legs. All the prisoners had a lovely suntan and a good percentage were blond and rather handsome.

On the caps of some prisoners the words "Afrika Korps 42-43" with a palm tree embroidered on each with black thread. Still others had "Tunisia 43" on their caps.

Afrika Korps could be seen on some prisoners, sewed as ribbons on their right arms above the wrist on their blouse. Others had "Hermann Goering" at the same place (the latter probably coming from Sicily.)

There were all types of uniforms and decorations on these vanquished foes. There goes a "Heinie" from the Luftwaffe, there's one from the navy, etc. Many wore the "Iron Cross" service ribbons and insignia and medals. The Nazi tank corps insignia in the skull and cross bones.

About one in 20 could speak English and we prevailed upon these for answers to our many questions. We found out the difference between a private, a corporal, a sergeant and sergeant major. These Germans seem to be great family men for they were free to show us pictures of their families and friends and such. One "Jerry" proudly showed us a picture of his sister. Some "Jane." Yes I talked to quite a few of them but failed to get any souvenirs for fear of involvement with the authorities.

It seems I haven't described the set-up by which we could so easily contact the prisoners.

A whole area of some 4 or 5 city blocks was given over to wharves for docking the prison ship (which incidently was the French liner La Pasteur and carried 7,000) and for processing the men.

It was after the men had bathed and were fumigated that passed out to the fingerprinting and classification tent that we could speak to them as they passed on the other side of a fence from our unit which was right up to the fence. We sterilized the prisoners' towels, which they threw over the fence to us.

I hope I've given you a rough idea of what I saw and heard at Newport News, Va., and of course there is more to tell.

We sterilized mattresses and such in the riggon regiment again today. My job was merely to operate the injector and exhaust valves on the unit and to keep awake in doing so. Unlike the army I had a one-hour nap at noon which helped considerably.

I've but one week of technical yet to go and after that I don't know the score.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

The news of the Italian surrender is very heatening but I'm still content on a long war. The Germans seemed rather happy but when we asked one how he liked America he said that it was allright but he'd like to be back in Germany "Ve vill fight again," he says. They believed that they were winning and were told that New York and Washington had been bombed, etc. Some seemed under the impression that they were going to Sing Sing prison in New York state.

Your son,  
George

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, September 17, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM HAROLD D. ALSPACH

Aug. 28, 1943  
North Africa

Dear Mom and Dad:

Just received another of your letters a little while ago dated Aug. 8th. Also received the one with the two pictures in it. I had already answered it and was lying around here so now I will answer both of them.

I will have to write Vivian since you gave me his address, but so far I haven't received any mail from him. Sure would like to know where he is. As for Jim Good, that's the outfit I have been operating with all through the Sicilian invasion, up until the whole island was captured. Certainly wished I knew what line of duty he is in, for example: is he in quartermasters corps, or what? If he was up to the front lines I probably could have seen him, as I spent most of my time up that way advancing along as the army moved. Though he might have been on the other side of the island from me.

We've been doing rather good to our credit for the "thing I'm on" as we have four landings behind the lines to our credit, plus one letter of commendation for what they called upholding Navy tradition and courage, and such stuff when we did a "little job" which I'll tell you about when I come home. Sure helps my personnel records out to get such things entered in it though.

It looks as though you don't have to worry about getting the lawn mowed with all that help, though I would like to see Sis trying to mow the lawn. By the way, did you receive the letter yet where I mailed some money to buy her that new pocketbook? Let me know what she said when you found that money and small letter to her.

If you keep on catching all those fish I don't imagine there will be any left back there, will there? Sure would like to have seen you go in after the "one that got away" or did it, you never said. I've been thinking that I would like to have a cottage along the lake remember that one? Don't suppose I will forget that phrase until I actually get one. Tho, I sure would like to be on the water's edge as you mentioned that you would have to pour water down my back when I get back home. Well, if I had that cottage I would just look out the window and see all that lake, and even have a boat when I felt like a "little sea-going" that would help solve the problem.

What good would a living room suite do me now? If you get one, it would be worn out by all the kid--s, by the time I got home -- besides, I will need a couple stero kettles, a rocking chair, a bed and orange crate to eat off when I get back and want to set up housekeeping or perhaps I should study the style of living these Arabs use around here. That way I wouldn't need much more than a couple of pots and some blankets.

I received a News-Sentinel paper the other day and in it was one of my letters that you had entered. The paper was dated March 20, that was while I was in Panama. By the way, I received a letter from Arlie Fugate a few days ago, and answered it. Sure was surprised to get it. I get a few copies of The Sentinel every now and then, a dozen or so at a time. They are rather old, but I get a kick out of reading them. I suppose the subscription ran out long ago, though I will get copies for a while yet.

Well, looks as though my paper is running out, so keep on writing as I have good luck in receiving your letters, though this one took 20 days. Tell Dad keep up the good work and tell Sis "Hello."

With love to all, your son,

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Harold D. Alspach

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, September 18, 1943]

### LETTER FROM RICHARD ZOLMAN

Richard Zolman

West Palm Beach, Florida

Sept. 14, 1943

Dear Mom, Dad and Dorothy May:

This has been some day for me. The slips came for my packages yestrday but I was in town so I had to wait until morning to get them.

I got a package from Wilma, also this morning, then at mail call I received four letters and four birthday cards. I got a card from Wilma and her folks and the rest from home, which made seven cards.

The box was really swell and I guess you never forgot that I like angel food cake. The cake was in good shape but you shouldn't of put syrup on the pop corn. You know this is a hot country and the pop corn was stuck to everything.

I'm sitting here right now and the sweat is running off of me.

I have ate part of the cake already and I am going to take the rest to the office tonight as we can't keep eatables here very long. They draw the ants so bad and we have plenty of them. Its nothing to see ants crawling around.

I also got Ernest and Helen's card and candy. It was thoughtful of them. I'll drop them a line this evening.

I also received an all-leather kit to put my toilet articles in. It has my initials on it in gold. I really had a wonderful birthday and I wasn't expecting hardly anything - in fact I hadn't give it a whole lot of thought.

Dorothy May thanks for the dollar. I can use that better than anything right now. The card was nice.

It seems funny to hear you say it is so cold back there, because it is so hot here. Last night about 7 o'clock in town it was 80 degrees. That isn't so good.

Dad how are you feeling by now? According to history the war should be over in two months, but I'm pretty sure it will last longer than that. It shouldn't be so awful long though because theyre really bombing Germany.

There were two planes brought in here yesterday that was shot full of holes but yet they could fly them. They were both bombers and one had been on 71 missions. It was written on the side of the plane where it had been, and it had been in Africa, Sicily, Naples and all over.

I'll keep my birthday cards awhile then I'll send them home to be put in my scrap book.

Love,

Richard

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, September 21, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM JAMES KINDIG

James Kindig

Aug. 29, 1943

Somewhere In New Guinea

Dearest Mother:

Hello mother and everybody else over there on the other side of the world. Am hoping this finds you all well, am fine myself, still safe and working hard.

Well mother I had quite a pleasant surprise yesterday and a very nice one. I was out in the middle of nowhere's doing just a little bit of nothing. I I - When what should I run into but Sgt. Everett Zink. I sure was glad to see him and I rather think he was also. I knew he was here somewhere, but never expected to see him for after all this is a pretty good size island and there are a lot of boys here and they all look just about alike. But come to think of it, this is a small world after all, this running across someone over here on this side of the world that you know, just

## SvcMen WW II Letters

goes to show you can't get so far from home but that you can't find someone you know. But Everett is the first boy from home I have seen since I left Camp Crowder a year ago May. He is looking swell and getting along fine, looks as though he is getting plenty to eat. Don't know when I'll get to see him again. I hope soon.

Tell Marietta I said Hello and sure hope she is better and able o go back to work. And tell Claude K. I said Hello, and sure wish he was here as I have already seen and done things that would put those big yarns of his he use to tell me to shame and make him take a back seat.

Well mother, I must bring this to a close and go down to the river and wash out some things and take a bath.

Sept. 10. Dearest Mother. Am going to try and write some more if my candle will hold out long enough. I'll try and answer a few questions you ask. As for your letter I think I get them all. I get one one night and then none for a week, then a whole bunch, as for U. S. broadcasts. Ha! Haven't heard one in a long time. As for The News-Sentinel, I get one once in a while. Did get one large bunch of them a while back. I read them over and over and now Everett Zink has them doing the same thing. Precious paper and you mother, we are getting plenty to eat, fresh fruit and vegetables. But stationery is very hard to get. So you might send me some, also a pipe, a box of cigars and a few of my good looking pictures, as I want to send some to some people I write to. I can't take any here. But did you have any luck in finding me a camera? I am going to send Marietta a string of beads that are made by the natives here, and am also sending some pictures of the natives here, so don't get alarmed when you see them.

Well mother dear I will close for this time and try and write again soon, so am closing with all my love and hoping to hear from you soon.

For Always your loving son,  
Jim Kindig

P.S. - Tell everyone else to write.

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, September 23, 1943]

### EIGHTH LETTER FROM RAMON ALBER

Ramon E. Alber, Phm 3/C  
Camp Parks  
Pleasanton, Calif.

Dear Folks:

Here I am at Camp Parks in our dispensary. At present I am not too busy so I thought I had better write a little.

We got here Thursday afternoon and this is Friday afternoon. The sun is out but it is not hot. A cool breeze all the time.

Well, my trip was swell, good eats and everything.

We left Camp Peary, Va. at 6 o'clock in the evening. Went through West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, Ind. thru Indianapolis to St. Louis, Mo., then Kansas, then Colorado. Ate dinner in Denver, then went north to Lamar, Wyoming. Then went to Utah. There we hit Salt Lake City and got to go across the Great Lake. It has one railroad track across, which is 30 miles. Then we hit Nevada, then California. Nevada is mostly desert, hot and dry. We saw the people. We are here in the grape country, 30 miles east of San Francisco.

Have to work this week end but aim to get the next week end off. I and two mates are going in and see San Francisco.

How did dad enjoy his birthday dinner? Did he like his shirts, jacket and gloves?

I think we will move from here soon.

Well, mother, I will close and will write more later. But you write me. Hello to all.

Love,  
Ramon

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, September 24, 1943]

### FANNIN' THE BREEZE

## SvcMen WW II Letters

At Camp Fannin, Texas

By Pvt. Beezer

The eyes of Texas were upon us! Two hundred and fifty of MacArthur's assistants (Hoosier division) were ordered from an 1870 model troop train one morning at three a.m. and stood viewing countless stars, an unbelievable amount of sky, and as they attempted to march to the newly assigned barracks their feet pounded on the dustiest dust in Texas. We had arrived in Camp Fannin and weren't too happy about the whole situation!

The days went by, slowly at first; then they sped along at a snail's pace. We learned first to "Hup, twop, threep, fourp," which is not double-talk, but the call of the sergeant as he exercises his lungs in marching cadence. Then we learned to gripe about dust, Texas heat, and Army food. We learned to make beds, wash windows, G.I. floors, do guard duty, K.P. duty (this is an abbreviation of "kitchen police." Police having nothing to do with and officer of the law. The exact origin of the phrase being lost in a discarded dish-pan during the Spanish-American fracas.) Then we were taught more marching drills, the use of all weapons used in the present war theatres, how to give first aid, military courtesy, tent pitching and care of equipment. We were given the whole damn works!

At the present time we are being taught how to apply what we have learned. We have daily classes in tactics and learn to attack Yoko-homo-Jerko from every side in any type of battle situation.

Personally, as mine was a rather listless and not-too-active civilian existence, I shook at the word "obstacle course." After I went over said course I was too tired to shake. The orgy began with a small fence to jump. Then another larger fence to jump. After that came a series of entangling alliances which wore me out just before I reached the 8-foot wall - my Waterloo. This wall looms big and massive against the horizon. When one comes rushing headlong at the wooden Frankenstein he either faints or goes into an upward swandive and finds himself lying pale and quite 4F in the sawdust. Mine was the latter case. After I was revived and found no broken (just bent) bones the obstacle course no longer held any awe for me.

Our next worry was that of heat and dust. We arrived in the famine-month of August. There were wild rumors, concerning the heat, but I didn't believe any of them. However, I know for sure how the heat affected the rifle range.

It seems there was target practice one hot day on the range. One of the guys aimed steadily at the target and pulled the trigger. Nothing happened. He couldn't figure it out so he looked down the barrel of the rifle to see why the bullet hadn't left the gun. The bulled called out to him that it was cool down there and if he didn't care it would stay in the rifle until the cooler part of the day. (When the temperature was only 130 degrees in the shade. We then wore overcoats to keep warm.)

- Robt. "Beezer" Bennett.

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, September 30, 1943]

### LETTER FROM GEORGE MILLER

Casablanca, North Africa

August 29, 1943

Thought I would write what you might call a circular letter, and tell you about my Red Cross tour of the large, very modern city that I am located close to. We started the tour in front of the Red Cross building. The city is divided into three parts:

The first part of the city is composed of the Post Office, House of Justice, and Court House, and different government buildings. There is a big park in front of these buildings and at the side of the park is a wooden building which the French used as their headquarters during one of the wars; I forget just what war it was. The building was fenced in and it is at the present just as they left it. The French value the building very much. In front of the Court House is a statue of General Marshall Lyautey. It was in front of this statue that General De Gaulle made his speech to the people here. The Post Office is very modern, and very similar to ours. Across the street is

## SvcMen WW II Letters

the beautiful Bank of Morocco. I was in the Bank one day this week, and I must admit that it is just as modern as any of ours in America. The residential section is located in this part.

The second part of the city is where Sultan's Palace is located. He has five palaces in all, and the one here is surrounded by a large stone wall. He stays at each palace a few weeks at a time. When I went on the tour, it happened that he was here for three weeks, and when he is here, you can not go in, however, when he is not here, you can go through the palace, by tipping the guides very heavily. The palace carries a great history, and the gardens surrounding the palace are very pretty. His father left him 30 wives, but I understand that he has only one legal wife. He is the Ruler of Morocco.

The third part of the city is composed of the Madenias. They have a new and old Madenia. The old Madenia is "off limits" to American soldiers, but we did go in the new Madenia. I do have some pictures of the old Madenia and information that perhaps I can tell you some day. The new Madenia is where the Arabs live, and the streets are very small and rugged. They have a prison there where about 500 women are imprisoned. They all have venereal disease and no one is allowed to go in. We were shown the prayer house of the Arabs, and when they enter they take their shoes off. The house is surrounded by a stone wall, and the only thing we could see was the entrance. There is a very poor class of Arabs, which you might say is unbearable to look at, then there is a class which looks just about as bad, but who do have plenty of money and just don't want you to know it. Then there is a well to do class of Arabs, which are very clean and polite. You can always tell what class an Arab is by the clothing he wears. The Arab women have a mark tattooed on their chin and forehead. That mark is the tribe that they belong to.

We were taken to several modern and pretty beaches, and also the home of the American and British ambassador. We saw a certain hotel that has made history in the past year. The taxis here are buggies drawn by horses. Our guide could speak four different languages, and could speak English very good. This is just a little that I am allowed to tell you, and trust before long, we will be together again, and then I will finish the story.

Sincerely yours,  
Cpl. George Miller

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, October 4, 1943]

### FANNIN' THE BREEZE

At Camp Fannin, Texas

By Pvt. Beezer

Another week or (weak) deep in the heart of Texas! This week the dust turned to red clay with an aid, called rain. Not having been an avid student of chemistry and knowing not the process that caused this change, I only know the result - mud!

Not only did we march, wade, waddle, and slide through that mud - we were taught the technique of stalking the enemy in it. Few civilians realize that this technique requires, muddy terrain, the prone position, and a kisser that can fit well into a mudback.

Since my proboscis has various enlarged portions, I was indistinguishable from head to toe after three hours of creeping and crawling in a mud-hole which was once the feeding place of a Texas steer!

After three afternoons of rain, the clouds floated away and Friday was once again hot and dry.

Since we had worked so well during the week, we were to have a vacation Friday afternoon! They told us, dern 'em!

Our vacation was well spent seeding the company area with grass, transplanting one load of dirt to another load of dirt, washing barracks windows and making our hands more calloused with other odd jobs. My special duty was that of preceding the grass seeders with a well-filled basket of fertilizer! I did my duty well and grass will be popping up soon due to the aid of my fertilization job. (Agricultural experts report that grass can be expected sometime between 1949 and 1950). (I'll wait.)

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Saturday, another life and death issue awaited we privates. Saturday was inspection day! On inspection day the rookie class at an unusually early hour, grabs his clothes in one hand and a mop in the other. As the two jobs must be completed immediately, he pushes the mop over the floors while trying to trouser himself.

We have one short hour to shine the rifles and shoes, straighten the wrecked lockers (containing all our personal properties from the girl friend's picture to unmended sox), hide last minute found dirt and generally clean for the fateful arrival of the inspection officer.

His Highness (the inspection officer) arrives midst much pomp and ceremony as the privates stand at attention - praying.

He goes his rounds, inspecting rifles, barracks, inductees and the general rookie habitat.

No soldier can survive his gaze when he stands before them. He looks genial, then critical, then dubious, and finally shakes his head and speaks a word concerning hair cuts, dirty fingernails, rusty rifle barrel or any of many nasty things an inspection officer can say. It's not WHAT he says, it's HOW he says it.

Finally he tells us we're the ugliest, scrawniest, dirtiest bunch of bums he's ever seen and makes an exit in the manner of Henry VIII leaving his court.

"Thank God, inspection is over," breathe we rookies and go back to messing up the barracks again.

-Rob't "Beezer" Bennett

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, October 8, 1943]

### LETTER FROM ARTHUR SHIVELY

S/Sgt. Arthur (Bill) Shively  
H.Q. Btry., 378th AAA-AW Bn.  
APO 610, c/o Postmaster  
New York, N.Y.

Somewhere in Iceland  
October 1, 1943  
Friday night, 11:00

Dear Sir:

I don't suppose you remember me, but about three years ago I was around Rochester about all the time. I was born and raised there. But I went to California and so I sort of drifted away from the town.

I have been here in Iceland since around March 1, and I can truthfully say that I don't like it. But that is not what wanted to write to you about. I received the good old News-Sentinel about once a month, and about 30 papers each time. In one of them I noticed that Ed Snyder is up here. I would like to have his address and maybe I could look him up. I am thanking you for this favor and remain,

Yours truly,  
Billy Shively

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, October 9, 1943]

### FOURTH LETTER FROM MICHAEL ZARTMAN

Cpl. M. L. Zartman  
Southwest Pacific

Dear Mom and Dad:

Just received your most sweet, welcome letter dated July 19 containing the three pictures. Gee-e-e-e. Thanks Mom. Dad looks good standing there between my favorite team - Rex and Babe. The horses are nice and plump too. Dad must be taking extra good care of them. That's

## SvcMen WW II Letters

sure a dandy hog house and corn crib. Wish I were there to build things like that for Dad. As you know, that was my job on the railroad - first class carpenter, building bridges and depots. I really learned the carpenter trade too.

You said your picture would have been better if you didn't have the handkerchief over your head. Gee, Mom, dear, I like it just the way it is. You will always look good to me, no matter how you are dressed. I sure would like a picture of Dad with one of those big watermelons that would be stretched across his puss, from ear to ear. Ha! Boy! How I long for a bite of watermelon. You know how I always liked them

Ask Dad and Louie at the Berghoff Cafe how they like the job we are doing over here. By damn we are really putting on the pressure now. The Japs seem to be a bit surprised and I see the boys over yonder have taken Italy. Good for them. Now they can get Germany.

Don't worry, I'm O.K. as of yet. There is a flock of pretty white parrots with bright yellow topnots making one hell of a racket above me here in these jungle trees. Making so much noise I can hardly think what to write.

Tell Louie hello for me. Glad to know Dad's heart is better, and that your knee and arm are better. You folks want to take better care of yourselves.

How is everyone and everything in Rochester? Please tell me all of the news you can in your letters. Sorry I can't tell you anything in mine, but will tell you all about it on my return home. Bye now and take care of yourselves.

My deepest love,  
Mike

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, October 13, 1943]

### FANNIN' THE BREEZE At Camp Fannin, Texas By Pvt. Beezer

The Rookie's pet hates today are the comic cartoons in Esquire, Colliers, etc., depicting the sore, tired marching, blistered feet of a soldier. It ain't funny, McGee!

Take for instance our aching ankles following yesterday's 20 mile hike into a town called Winona that is situated too far from camp for comfortable walking. We started off at 10:00 in the morning, carrying full field (they contain a 10 year supply of equipment) packs, gas masks, rifles, cartridge belts, bayonets, steel helmets and ourselves. The Texas sun saw us coming and turned on the heat, the dust got up and came to meet us, and the roads with cement covering decided to get harder.

We frolicked along through these rolling acres for three hours. Just before we entered the town to parade before the eyes of the scrutinizing civilians, we ate lunch. Lunch consisted of a chocolate bar, the army name being "D" ration.

After we had stuffed ourselves with those delicious repasts, we griped a bit and marched into the town. Civilians stared, hamburger signs blared and we hungry marchers just glared.

We marched back - the last hour our feet were so numb that we felt no pain. Then the march was over and we could once more lie on our barracks beds and think up ways to strangle ourselves for not joining the navy!

An amazing incident took place during this week's inspection. Our inspection officer had us lined up in the barracks surveying our countenances with his usual ugly manner, when he stepped on one of the Brooklyn soldier's feet. The Brooklynite smacked the good officer, knocking him flat on his back.

The officer got up, said nothing, and began to inspect a rookie from Detroit. This rookie also smacked the officer, knocking him clear across the barracks.

The officer jumped to his feet, ran back to the Brooklyn soldier and demanded a reason for his striking an officer. The Brooklyn Joe answered that the officer had hurt him by stepping on his corns.

The officer said it was alright and rushed to the Detroit soldier, demanding a similar explanation.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

"Hell," answered the guy from Detroit, "when I saw him hit you and you didn't say anything to him, I thought this damned war was over!"

So much for learning the easiest way to do guard house duty - the theme of my next lecture will be on homesickness . . . A topic I am well acquainted with.

The first month is the hardest until the second month and the following months arrive. The "boys from Indiana" (especially me) reached their peak of homesickness about two weeks after we had arrived. It was unusually hot, mail was not too regular, we still didn't know our lefts from our rights and the empty ache was pretty terrific inside us. We wanted our girl friends with us, not 30,000 other soldiers. We wanted our mothers to cook our meals, not some grouchy "man in white." What we wanted most of all was the privacy and friendliness of our own towns, our own streets, and our own homes. However, we were given work enough to give us little time to think of our homes and it was a good thing for as I remember, idle Sundays were the days we thought most of going "over the hill," but we didn't . . . And we won't!

-Pvt. Robert "Beezer" Bennett

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, October 14, 1943]

### LETTER FROM RALPH WHITE

Sgt. Ralph White

Oct. 4, 1943

Hello "H.L."

You will probably wonder who I am. Well I am the radio operator on Amer's plane. You, I guess, have been wondering about him.

He is in the Fiji islands. We landed there July 5, 1942. I flew with him until this past April then he quit flying.

He was shot down last Jan. 3 on a bombing mission over Munda on New Georgia Island. We made parachute jumps and landed about 10 miles off shore. He swam and floated for 15 hours, but wasn't hurt any all all. We spent 2 1/2 days on Dendova Island and then we were rescued by a U.S. submarine on the night of Jan. 5.

We spent 18 days in it on patrol in the Solomons then went to Brisbane, Australia. We were given 30 days leave in Sydney before coming back to Fiji.

He quit flying and didn't get relieved when I did but he was promised to be in next bunch. That won't be very long - maybe now.

I have really enjoyed flying with him and hope to be with him again. There really isn't much chance of us meeting again, though.

I only have two or three pictures and my Sis won't let me have them back - but he is looking very well and fat as can be.

In case he should lose my address please have him write to me at my home address. I want to keep in touch with him. My mother will send any letter on to me wherever I may be sent now.

Please tell him that I wrote to you and give him my best regards and wishes. I'll write to him as soon as I am permanently stationed.

Just a Friend,

Ralph

P.S. - Only wounded on the raid were the Pilot and Co-Pilot. Our Co-Pilot was lost. No one knows how. All we know is that he was injured and made a good parachute jump.

Bye

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, October 15, 1943]

### CHARLES FLAGG SAFE; WIFE RECEIVES NEWS VIA V-MAIL MONDAY

Mrs. Nylene Flagg, co-owner of the Tom Thumb cafe, this city, today received a V-mail letter from her husband, Charles E. Flagg, Jr., which though meagre in details, stated he was "O.K." and also added "not to worry."

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Flagg who was a baker aboard the U.S. tug Nauset, was at first feared to have drowned or killed when that small vessel was sunk in action off the coast during the U.S. landing operations at Salerno on Sept. 9.

Today's letter was the first news that either Flagg's wife or his sister, Miss Mary Flagg had received from him since the sinking of his ship.

Left U. S. Shores in April

Charles enlisted in the service of the U. S. Navy a little over a year ago and received his basic training at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station, in Illinois. From there he was transferred to Norfolk, Va., and served aboard naval craft in operations off the east coast for a few months and in April of 1943, departed aboard the tug Nauset for overseas duty.

In the news of the sinking of the Nauset it was reported that one of the high officers of the craft had been killed in action. No mention was made regarding the fate of the other members of the crew which was comprised of approximately 60 officers and men.

The Nauset was sunk on Sept. 9 and the letter received today by Mrs. Flagg was written on Sept. 18, which removes all doubt which friends and relatives had held regarding the safety of the Rochester seaman.

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, October 18, 1943]

### SGT. JACK BEALL, TAIL GUNNER, REPORTED MISSING IN ACTION

Mr. and Mrs. Roy C. Beall, of Howe, Ind., Sunday received word that their son, Sgt. Jack Beall, had been reported missing in action, presumably in an aerial engagement in the Italian-German war theatre.

Sgt. Jack Beall was a tail gunner on a U. S. Flying Fortress and had been in the U. S. Air Corps service for the past several years, according to information received today from his brother, Ancil Beall, manager of the Beall Tire Shop, of this city.

Lived Here Two Years

Jack resided in Rochester for a period of two years, a few years ago, where he assisted in the management of the local tire shop, and is well known among the younger people of this community.

His brother stated that for the past several weeks, Jack had been stationed at a North African U. S.-British aircraft base and he was known to have seen plenty of action in raids launched from that point.

Besides Ancil, Jack has two other brothers, Thayne Beall, former resident of the city, now of LaPorte, and Ray Beall, who is on the West Coast. A sister, Mrs. R. H. Williams, resides in Los Angeles, Calif.

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, October 18, 1943]

### LETTER FROM WARD NICKELL

Pvt. Ward V. Nickell

Dear Omer and Ida:

I just received your letter and I sure was glad to get it. I have found time to write so I'll drop you a few lines. In your letter I sure have been busy and its been a pleasure. How is everybody at your place. All fine I hope. How is little freckle face coming. I bet she sure is growing. Tell her I said to write to me. I have been getting all of your letters so please keep on writing to me every chance you get. I guess Thelma doesn't remember me, does she? Tell her I said Logan is a very bad town. Tell Omer to quit working so hard and rest up I can give him some boxing lessons when I get home. I only weight 196 pounds now. Ha. Ha.

I'll have to stop for this time.

Love,

Pvt. Ward V. Nickell

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, October 20, 1943]

FANNIN' THE BREEZE

## SvcMen WW II Letters

At Camp Fannin, Texas

By Pvt. Beezer

People are funnier than anybody, it was state and rookie soldiers are funnier than people, I state. It's a good change to a guy to be thrown in a melting pot or Army camp, meet the characters from all over the world, and choose from amongst those strangers a circle of friends.

In camp there are men from all walks of life - from plumber to playboy - from geometry teacher to professional pickpocket - from janitor to college Joe. They are all here. From Maine to California and from Austria to Ireland.

It's the most interesting thing I've known to eat, sleep, work and play with these fellows. To call them by name, to gripe with them, and to listen to their troubles as they listen to mine. To me it is the best thing I've gotten out of army life.

In my barracks alone there is a soldier from Oklahoma that once rode the range, one from Brooklyn that once rode the trolleys as motorman, another from Los Angeles that rode the ponies (at Santa Anita), and one from the hills of Kentucky (pronounced "Kaintuckey" by the natives), that didn't ride - he walked.

That is the way it is . . . Any type, race or intellect with whom one would wish to associate, can be found in an Army camp.

And with the present draft law dragging them in Camp Fannin has quite a few important personalities in the ranks.

### Notables in Ranks

Amongst those are Jan Valten, author of the best seller "Out of the Night," the arranger that formerly worked up orchestra leader Glenn Miller's hit arrangements, and a famous economist that wrote three books concerning labor problems in his New York home.

To meet these individuals, either famous or not, is an education. I know Vienna from talking to an Austrian refugee. I know what is wrong with the Yankees by talking to a Dodger fan from Brooklyn, and I've found out that no matter where his home is, the soldier will talk hours about it and finally agree that there isn't any spot in the world quite as fine.

Sometimes during my ramblings about camp, an extra detail, a free evening, or just mosing, I meet a Hoosier, Happy Day! We cuss Texas, discuss Indiana, and decide that the Indianapolis Circle is where we would like to be.

And on especially lucky days I run into a Fulton County lad! What a field day in the bull session world! I've seen hometowners Maurice Sadowsky and Harold Emmons quite frequently and I've met a Pvt. Wilbur Doud from Fulton and a Pvt. Hurley from Kewanna. After talking over home situations, we part and see each other maybe tomorrow, maybe next month, but we always know that we're amongst friends from home.

As ever,

Pvt. "Beezer" Robert V. Bennett

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, October 21, 1943]

### FANNIN' THE BREEZE

At Camp Fannin, Texas

By Pvt. Beezer

There comes a day when the American Army private dreams of something better. On this day he plots and schemes as to what possible outlets there are to becoming either higher in rank, in a more distinguished branch of the service, or as to what wires he can pull to get a better position in Uncle Sammy's fightin' men. Then all at once "a break" comes his way.

Take your reporter's particular "break." I was drifting along in this Texas group of infantrymen when the First Sergeant announces one wet and windy afternoon that "all soldiers interested in making application for the Air Cadets please come to the Orderly Room and receive application blanks."

The mad rush was on!!! I found myself amidst a throng of onrushing guys between the ages of 18 and 26 just as eager to gain something better as I was.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Not that we have anything against infantry life, but why march when there is a possibility to get in the rising field of aviation? We grabbed the application blanks, filled them out as designated, took certain mental and physical examinations and on a day we won't forget three soldiers from our company and I received letters stating that we were now Aviation Cadets and would receive orders to report for pre-flight training at a later date. When I bore my tale of "no more marching" to the fellas in the barracks they either shot well-aimed pillows at me or asked with no sincerity whatever that if I ever became an officer, could they shine my shoes or at least speak to me.

We Cadets waited for days that seemed like years for our "shipping orders" to come and last week they did. On November 9 we are ordered to report to Keesler Field, Miss. to begin pre-flight training. What awaits us there, we know not; but what we don't know isn't worrying us in the least.

We do know that it is farewell to Camp Fannin, our first touch of army life and in Texas, our first touch of Southern heat and dust. It makes the old camp look entirely different when we know that we are leaving it and soon will have no connection whatsoever with marching, bayoneting, and all of those things our officers have taught us during our stay here. We see a strange beauty in the Texas autumn; we have begun to think that the "new recruits" who enter daily will profit immensely from their up-to-date training here.

That middle-aged lady who reads this stuff weekly will be interested to know that even though I'm leaving Camp Fannin, the column will come through. In my future columns I shall endeavor to do a "Pvt. Hargrove" on the training of an Air Cadet. My public (the middle-aged lady) can rest assured that the column will be just as boring, confusing, and illegible during the Air Corps writings as it has been during the Infantry notes.

Sincerely,

A/C Robert "Beezer" Bennett

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, October 29, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM ARTHUR HUNTER

Arthur Hunter

North Africa

Oct. 18, 1943

Dear Folks:

Received your letter and card today. Was so glad to get them. The letter was dated Aug. 25th and the card Oct. 4th, so you can see how my mail is coming. But it finally gets here.

Gosh Lucille must have got me wrong. I never had all my teeth pulled. It was 4 of my front ones. I had them injured last spring and had them yanked. Am getting some new ones put in. I also had a report from a party that some people had the impression that I have a nervous breakdown. Honestly how things can start. I am very well at the present. Have a sore hand so if the scratching gets bad on this paper I've got an alibi.

Have got to visit my friend again and we had a jolly old time just sitting and talking. It sure brought good memories of the past of our good times and I sure guess we used to have them.

You stated that you were sending a Christmas box. I can thank you all now as that is about the best I can do over here. There is nothing I can buy to send and things are so scarce. A person can hardly realize what shape this country was in.

I can't tell you very much about this country only it is better than any place I have ever been before and the Arabs are plenty thick.

Their dress is quite a sight. Just give them anything and they will wear it. It's quite often you see one around wearing underwear drawers and no shoes. It sure is really a sight to see one with holes cut through a barracks bag and wearing it. Their cities are quite modern and the white population dress quite snappy. You asked about cannibals. No I haven't seen or heard of any. Only ones we have are these G. I. chow hounds.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

So glad that Bill is still back there; hope he never has to pull out, but one never knows. He said something in his letter about me having a furlough. Honestly I'll really laugh on that. It's quite impossible over here.

Gosh Kitty sure made a nice looking girl. I can hardly believe that she is that big and old. It only seems like yesterday that she was only a kid but I guess time really flies. Your picture mother dear, was very good and you look so swell. Am so glad and don't let this thing get you down as I'll come through all of this. I might be battered up a little but I'll make it.

I must sign off now and write Rosie a few lines. Tell everyone howdy for me. Hope this finds you all well and happy. Keep the chin high and keep plugging away. Write soon as I'll be waiting. So nite for now.

Love, Son and Brother,

"Jack"

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, November 3, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM JAMES CLEMENS

James J. Clemens

(Overseas)

October 4, 1943

Dear Folks:

Well this is the first chance I've had to write for sometime so I'll write a few lines to tell you I am still O.K. I can't tell you where I am but I am still in combat so you can make a guess where I am, but don't worry, as I will be all right.

Yesterday was the first mail I had received for ten days. I got 12 letters and six Plymouth papers.

It sure has been raining hard here. I think the rainy season has started here and the mud is really so sticky and it sure sticks to your shoes you can hardly walk.

I had a good breakfast this morning. When we are on our rest periods we have our kitchen truck with us so we have it right with us and get good warm meals. But when we are on the front lines we get canned goods served cold and we sure get tired of it.

We did not have much to do this morning so I went out and bought six chickens and fried them. We had lots of fun trying to dress them. We did not have any hot water to scald them in so we had to skin them, then we did not have any flour to roll them in but they did not taste bad at all.

I saw my first team of oxen. They were plowing and they sure moved slow. Most of the farmers have these oxen. I saw one tractor and it was a 10-20 McCormick-Deering, saw several Deering binders and mowers.

I am sending three pieces of money home, a penny, nickel and a dime, and keep them for me. I will try and get some souvenirs and bring them home with me.

Well, Mom, I guess it's time for dinner so I'll have to close. I think we are going to have a good dinner. It sure smells good. I sure wish I could put my feet under your table, it sure would be a treat. But maybe I will before long, so don't worry about me.

Tell Sammy to be a good boy. Lots of love from your

Jim

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, November 3, 1943]

### FIFTH LETTER FROM MICHAEL ZARTMAN

My Dear Friend, Arlie:

I'm terribly sorry Mr. Wynn for not writing to you more often. But you see we have our hands pretty full over here. We have a big job to finish over here and it's taking most all our time for this job. Therefore not much time for writing. However, tonight I have a free moment, so am writing to you (Mr. Wynn), my dear friend and my Dear Daddy's true friend.

My dear Aunt of Warsaw has just written to me telling me of your wonderful exhibition of devotion and kindness in leading everyone present at my dear home Sun, Sept. 19 in sincere

## SvcMen WW II Letters

prayer for us boys' safety over here. No words can express my thanks to you all. So I solemnly bow my head in a prayer of thanks to all of you dear people.

The prayer for our safety touches my heart deeply. And I assure you your prayer has been upheld and answered by God many times, for which we are all thankful.

You know Arlie, I didn't think it was going to be like this, the day I entered and took the bus at Rochester to go to the induction center. The people were all crowded around. Mom and Dad kissed me goodbye and even though there were tears in all our eyes, I felt great. I remember my dear pal, Ray Pickens, slapped me on the back and said, "You'll be back soon, Pal." We said goodbye again and the bus pulled out.

I didn't know what I was fighting for then - but I know now. I'm not kidding myself. I'm not fighting for glory or medals or big parades with ticker tape and paper coming down like a snow storm.

I'm not fighting to cram my religion or my ideas down somebody else's throat. I'm not trying to create a new world order or a dream state.

Over here you catch on quick. In a gun pit you strip things down and what I'm fighting for is Home.

For the right to come home again to the town, the folks, the girl friend, the job I had before I went to war. Home to America, where freedom of speech means a man can grouse or praise as he sees fit. Where freedom of worship and freedom from fear aren't just talk but are taken for granted. America, where I can live like my folks lived. Where our way of living has always brought us new and better things and where there's freedom of opportunity for every man to plan and build and grow to the top of his ability.

That's home--that's America to me. Please keep it that way 'til I get back, won't you?

Everything is going nicely and according to schedule here. We're doing a thorough job of it. Hoping to end all this soon.

Thank you dearly Mr. Wynn for visiting my dear Mother and Daddy. I would appreciate a letter from you as this place is rather lonesome over here.

I must say goodbye now and my thoughts tonight are back home there with all you dear friends, although my body and fighting spirit must remain here, my thoughts are wishing you all happiness and freedom back home there.

Your sincere friend,  
Michael Zartman

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, November 3, 1943]

### LETTER FROM DEVERN BRUBAKER

T/Sgt. Devern Brubaker  
Oct. 5, 1943

Dear Folks:

Well that I have a little time maybe it would be a good idea if I would write a few lines.

Our mail has been coming through in fairly good shape. I think I am receiving most of my mail but the only thing is that it's so irregular. Some times we get mail in a little over two to three weeks and maybe again we don't receive it for that many months. The letter and card that you sent dated Sept. 13 I received today, Oct. 5, so that is good time. I also received a V-mail from Maxine dated Sept. 18, so that's not bad either and I just heard that we have a lot of mail today. I may not get any but there's always a chance. We'll have mail call around 5:30.

You know when we came into Italy I wasn't much impressed, but as it is on something like that we usually see things at the worst. Well since then I have been able to see some places that had very little of actual war. Honestly there really are some beautiful places here in Italy and the people much to my surprise are much more friendly than I expected. We have met many people over here that can speak English and are very glad to talk to us and I'm quite sure that if these people had the food and were able they would be more than glad to have us out to dinner and with all the trimmings. We have turned down many invitations to dinner due to the lack of time or transportation. Some people have their families in the states and many of them have been to the

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states and some in England. I honestly think the people here are as nice as any that we have met since we left England.

You know mother, I really wish that you folks wouldn't worry about the holidays. As for me one day doesn't mean any more than the tomorrow and it isn't much different than yesterday. So you see holidays and Sundays are often gone before one realizes it. Labor Day for instance. Art and I were having quite a chat and were never aware that it was Labor Day until someone mentioned it. Then we wondered if he was right as we didn't even know that it was Monday. Last Sunday is the first that I have realized was Sunday. In the morning everything was quiet and the church bells were ringing for the first that I've heard in a long time. Some places they don't ring any more. But honestly I really am not worrying about holidays. The Christmasses that we have known are something to remember and the ones to come we'll just make the best of it. I certainly am not going to worry about the small fact that I'll not be able to be home. The thing that is really to be thankful for is that we know our people and homes are OK. There is only one thing that I regret and that is that most of the people don't know how to appreciate what they do have. I ate a meal in a restaurant for the first time in over 6 months. We had a white table cloth, silverware and plates to eat off of and with. That was a treat for us. Maxine was telling about a trial blackout. Well I guess it was a success but to us it sounds silly. As since we left the states everything has been black-out. A city with street lights and neon advertisements and the like would definitely seem out of line. It's all in what a person gets accustomed to and the conditions. I want to impress upon you again that I don't want you to worry about me as I am not in the least worried. Whenever I get home we'll have plenty of time to celebrate the holidays even if it is in June or July or whatever month I can make it.

Well I guess I'd better close for now and I'll write more later.

Lots of love to all

Devern

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, November 4, 1943]

### FANNIN' THE BREEZE

At Camp Fannin, Texas

By Pvt. Beezer

By A/C Robert V. Bennett

The eventful day to pull stakes (Texas talk ma'am) is only a short snort away and while we wait, my pal, Bob Owens of Cleveland, who also goes to Mississippi with me has been inducing this reporter to get some of the fineness out of life. Owens was once destined to become an electrical engineer before his native Buckeye State draft board got him. Naturally he is quite a brain and his hobby is poetry and character analysis. That is what I have to combat when I'd rather talk about girls!

He has written some poems about life and people (from a purely psychological standpoint) so I listen with a pained expression as he recites.

We walk to the movies and just as I am about to let my mind go blank and be at ease after a hard day's work, my friend Owens sees a scrawny, underfed negro newsboy calling his sheets to soldiers at the mess hall door. To me a negro newsboy is a negro newsboy, but to Cleveland's quiz-kid it is a beacon of hope in a darkened world. (Nice place for a pun, but I won't). In this pickaninny he sees another Booker T. Washington in the making. Likely as not his oratory glands will function and he'll conceive an ovation concerning Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.

That is what I have to contend with while making a short jaunt to the movies. Gee, he'd go stark silly over some of the Rochester characters!

Speaking of Hometown, this week I've had time to thoroughly read my favorite paper-of-the-day, The News-Sentinel. (Mr. Barnhart and Mr. Van Trump, are you reading?)

It was certainly good news to me when I read of Betty Bigler's receiving Bob's medal from Uncle Sam. To me he is a hero and deserves the key to the city when the Fulton county boys march back on that wonderful day.

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It was also great that the Band-Parents and other clubs have taken such an interest in Rochester's high schoolers. I know how we kids feel about such things and with proper handling the R.H.S. "cliques" can be done away with and having known most of the kids, I feel that this will do away with quite a bit of the so-called juvenile delinquency, if there really is any.

AND I also read A/C William Tippy's letter in "Voice of the People" last week. He seemingly misunderstood my reasons for entering the Air Corps. I am not entering it because I think it will be easier than the Infantry. I know that it'll be tougher, particularly on the mental regions. I am entering it because in every guy's mind the Air Cadets are the men of tomorrow . . . the future is to be a flying future and why not get started in it now?

So much for defending my own illegible paragraphs. Hoping that Bill and the rest of you continue to read this next week when it's "Beezer at Keesler," I remain,

A/C Robert Bennett

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, November 10, 1943]

### LETTER FROM GRANT MARTZ

Cpl. S. G. Martz  
San Francisco, Calif.  
Nov. 1, 1943

Dear Folks:

I suppose you think I've broken my arm, well I haven't yet. How is everything there at home? I'm doing pretty good. My time is up in the Marines, but I've extended it for two more years. So I am in for two more years. I've gotten a couple of letters from Claudia today, but more from you. Claudine says the baby is doing fine. I sure hope I get back soon so I can see her. I have a few pictures of her. I've been transferred to Headquarters Company. I'm in the Quartermaster Section. I like it real well. I've been getting all of the magazines you have been sending. I'm in a barracks with a boy from Logansport. His name is Charles Ross. He gets a lot of papers. And then I read them mostly for the Rochester news. There sure are a lot of girls getting married now. Well more luck to them. Well tell everybody hello for me. Here's hoping the war ends soon.

Love,  
Grant

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, November 16, 1943]

### PROP WASH FROM KEESLER

By Beezer (R. V.) Bennett  
Keesler Field, Miss.

Tests, a soft life, conveniences that Camp Fannin never knew, and an important step--the first one--awaited we 200 Infantry refugees as the troop train chugged to a graceful stop at the Keesler Field main gate.

We were arranged, mixed up, alphabetically listed and assigned barracks before the hour of arrival was over. We found new friends from every branch of the Service who were as anxious to become cadets as the Fannin recruits. Many of my barracks partners were formerly overseas. A guy from Chicago was on Guadalcanal, one from Lorraine, Ohio, had been in the Medical Corps helping to evacuate South Pacific island hospitals. Again came what I like best about army life--talking to interesting people about interesting subjects.

An explanation of why we are here came next. The officer in charge of my squadron explained that since we were pre-service men, we would not have any basic training such as civilians who enter the Air Corps must take. He further went on to say, "You will take ten days of tests. These tests will determine whether you are fit to become cadets. They will classify you as pilots, bombardiers, navigators or gunners. If you pass these tests successfully, you will wait after the ten day until a college is open that you, as air students, may enter."

That is what we are in the midst of now--tests. Mental, physical, psychological--they will either let us in for the three to five months Air Corps college training or wash us out at this early

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stage of the game. I personally wish that my math and physics abilities were sharper. (High school students--take note!)

Our barracks are like those at Fort Benjamin Harrison. We live in a regular city with shell sidewalks, lawns, streets--unlike what we've known in the dust of Texas.

We are centrally located. The movies, PX, Service Club, post office, bakery and chapel are in the block across the street and they're giving us plenty of free time to take advantage of these facilities. Believe me, we do.

All in all, Keesler Field is a pretty sweet situation. It just ain't army though to have nothing to gripe about!

--Pvt. Beezer.

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, November 18, 1943]

### LETTER FROM JOHN J. BURKEL

Staff Sgt. John J. Burkel

(nephew of Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Van Vassen)

November 7, 1943

Dear Aunt Mary:

You need not make excuses about making mistakes on one of these things for I certainly make my share of them, especially tonight, for some odd reason or other I don't seem to be able to get these clumsy fingers of mine in the right place at the right time. I have never had much schooling at typing, but I have practiced on my own time, and have learned enough that I hold a job that calls for plenty of it, but I also have off days, and this seems to be one of them.

We have quite a bit of mail in that isn't sorted yet, but we are all sweating out a package from the folks at home, we did have a small mail call just before lunch today, and I got a package from Martha and Ed, I never have written to Aunt Martha and it makes me feel kinda bad them being nice enough to remember me while I am away, being so stingy with my letters, even though I don't write to everybody back there, I am thinning always of them. I wish you folks could realize just what a job it is to find time to write from here, especially where I am working, there is so much that just has to be done and when the day is over a fellow ready for a good night's sleep.

Glad to hear that the wild Indian is doing OK. Aunt Martha sent a picture of you and her, taken at the park. Both of you are looking very good too.

There was a quite a bit of candy in the package received by the fellows here in the barracks, and the ants are so bad, we put all of our candy in boxes and paper bags and hang them from the ceiling, and we put a ball of cotton between the box and the ceiling, for the ants can't quite make it through the cotton in case they are able to locate the string that holds what they are looking for. Not a bad idea, eh, what, ha!

I can just imagine how much of a job it was for you folks to do your Christmas shopping. Mother writes and tells me that was hunting for a cigarette lighter for Jimmy and a camera for me, and she said the clerks just looked at her as if to say, "Don't you know there's a war on, Lady?" I'd like to get my hands on a guy like that, most of the people that are wanting to know what you are doing to help win the war, aren't doing a damn thing themselves and from what I hear from some of the fellows that have been back there, there are plenty like that, too. I get so burned up at some of the things we hear over the radio, that I just want to grab some lousy skunk and ring his scrawny neck with my bare hands. I know that sounds pretty rugged, but I'm just the guy that can be rugged when it is necessary too. So much for that.

Sounds as if Jan Ellen is going to be a little song bird. I'd sure like to hear her singing those songs.

We had visitors the other night at our theatre, and was I ever surprised to see Gary Cooper, Andy Areari, Phyllis Brooks, and Una Merkel, and they put on a show for us. You could have knocked me over with a feather when I saw those gals, now I know what a white gal looks like again, and I don't think I will ever forget either, for I might meet one some day, I hope.

Well, Aunt Mary, that is about all for this time, nothing goes on down here, so all I can say is Happy Christmas to you all and a Happy New Year. Give Jan Ellen a nice big hug and kiss and

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tell her it's from Johnnie as a Christmas present to her. I would like to send all of you folks something for Christmas but isn't a darn thing to send besides cocoanuts and we are not allowed to send them any more. Some of the fellows make shell necklaces, but the price of them would break a rich man, I lack a lot of being rich. And I can't find the time to make them myself, so you see the fix I'm in.

All my love to all,  
Johnnie

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, November 19, 1943]

### FOURTH LETTER FROM LOUIS BALL

#### Louis Ball Gives Vivid Report of Bombing Mission Crack-Up

(Editor's Note: Mrs. Retha Ball, of Akron is in receipt of a most interesting letter from her son, Louis, tail-gunner of a U. S. bomber, who was forced down in the New Guinea area while on a bombing mission on October 18th. Louis, a resident of Rochester, entered the U. S. air service to avenge the possible death of his older brother, Norval ("Killer") Ball, tail-gunner, who has been missing in action since January 6th, 1943. Following is Louis' vivid description of the hardships he endured while working his way back to safety):

Some Place,  
Oct. 31, 1943

Dear Mother, Bill and All:

Seeing that it has been two weeks since I have written to any one and all that has happened, I think I will drop you all the news and get you out of suspense. I don't have my diary here so can't number this letter. When they found out we didn't come back they raided our tent and took everything that they could find. If you could get a Parker Fine Point fountain pen, please send it to me. I sent a cablegram today. I hope you got it quick enough. I am in the hospital resting up and eating everything that they put in front of me. Nothing serious is wrong with me, outside of being a little weight and a few square meals will fix that up.

Now on with my story. We were coming back from a mission when we had some mechanical difficulty and had to jump out over the jungle. Of course we were excited at first about it, but it wore off soon. I was alone for about 24 hours, then Taylor, Freeman and Fitzgerald caught up with me. For five days we walked and walked, never really knowing just where we were headed for or where we would finish our journey. It is true that the jungle has a musty cellar smell but after going almost a week without anything to eat you would be surprised at the odors of food that you imagine you smell.

#### Lost Much weight

Now that I have had three enormous meals in five hours and had a little rest on a nice soft bed, I'll try to continue on with my story. You can forget about the fountain pen as they found mine for me. Am I Glad? I was more worried about it than I was about my watch and it is ruined. I had to swim in the rivers many times and it got so rusty that I couldn't wind it. I will pick up another one when I go to Australia on my sick leave as soon as I get out of the hospital two more days, I guess. You will have to excuse my writing, as I am writing in bed. Oh say, I got your letter No. 1, dated Sept. 26, with the plans of the house in it. I am glad to hear you feel the way you do about Norval. That is the way I feel. I have gone through a lot and find a man can stand anything and go over any obstacle that comes before him. I found out. I got three letters from Aunt Evelyn, two from Sam, one from Jo Price and one each from Barton, Barbara and you. I didn't get the letter from Bart with Jim's picture in it. I only hope he did not try to put it in the V letter. I sure did like to get your nice long letter. Let's have some more. I had my picture taken just as soon as I got back to camp so will send them to you to let you see what I looked like after 14 days in the jungle. Believe it or not you could count my ribs and lost a lot of weight around my hips. Bill that is a good diet for you to try, but tough.

Nov. 2, 1943. Now on with my story. So much happened I could write a book on it. Never will I forget my first night in the jungle alone. Never! As soon as I got free from my parachute, I prayed for God to guide me and take care of me. I followed the river as long as I could that day,

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jumping from rock to rock, wading in water sometimes up to my neck, keeping always on the alert for water snakes and crocodiles, which kept me in constant fear, then when it was impossible to go any farther by stream I would crawl and force my way through the thick underbrush on the river banks. Darkness came, as I knew it would, and with it came the fear of being in the jungle alone. Over and over I kept telling myself that nothing would happen, but it didn't help much. I found a huge flat boulder in the middle of the river and on it was resting another huge rock with such an angle to it that I could lie down under the crevice and keep dry as it rained every night. Before I had completely dozed off, I prayed again that I might be able to run into some one else so it wouldn't be quite as lonesome.

### Friends Catch Up

I was awake at dawn the next morning and with the thought of ham and eggs for my imaginary breakfast, I started out once again on my journey. It was the same thing over again. No matter how much I tried, I could not drive the thoughts of python, water snakes and crocodiles out of my mind, but I knew if I wanted to get back home again that I had to go through with it. Also that I would have to take many, many more dangerous chances than I had already taken, which later proved true. On the second day the pilot, co-pilot and radio operator caught up with me. They were a grand sight. I asked how they were and the only one that was hurt was the co-pilot who had some sore ribs.

For five days we continued following the river, never knowing where it was taking us or when we would get to our unknown destination. Many is the time that we talked about food and got many imaginary food odors from the jungles. That was all we got too, for we were afraid to try to eat what little berries and fruits that we found for there was no way to tell if it was poisonous or not. In the evening of the fifth day we happened to see a fish swimming close to the top of the water. I whipped out my .45 Colt and fired at it. The concussion got it and it flopped around on the water for about two seconds before Fitzgerald had it between the palms of both hands with a vice-like grip so it couldn't get away. He dressed the fish while we built a fire. Of course we had no seasoning, so just held it over the fire until it was broiled. Good! Say I never tasted anything quite so good! It wasn't much but it sure helped out. After eating we decided to rest for the rest of the day right where we were.

### Swept Down River

The next six days were just like the first five. No food, nothing but river water to drink. It was during this period that we had to take so many chances. The river was much swifter than before. Once we tried to cross it but got caught in the current and were carried down stream until we caught hold of a vine to pull ourselves out of the water. Then we had to crawl over sharp, jagged rocks and many such things as that. Oh, I could go on indefinitely writing every little detail down, but you can draw your own impression from what I've already written above. To express it enough, I can say it was like going through hell, I imagine. One good thing that did happen, and that is it taught us more about God than we ever knew. Each night we would thank Him for caring for us that day and pray that He would give us the courage and strength to carry on the next day, and guide us to safety.

On the 11th day we saw a grass building next to the river with cocoanut trees around it and we heard some chickens so knew that some natives were around somewhere. How we shouted. Finally came a response from two little native boys across the river. How happy we were to see them. We fell on our knees and thanked God for guiding us to safety. Tears came to my eyes but they were tears of happiness.

Nov. 3, 1943. Here another day has passed and I still haven't finished this letter, but will do so today. I have been doing nothing but eat, sleep and rest since I came here. Eat, did I say! Well Fitz and I have been eating five meals a day then going to the kitchen for a snack in between times then they bring us a big sandwich just before we go to bed.

### Treated Fine By Natives

To go on with my story, the native boys ran and got their chief who in turn came and got us in his canoe and took us to their village. We were surprised to know how well they spoke the English language. Immediately they brought us bananas, cocoanuts and papayas, and some dry

## SvcMen WW II Letters

clothing. Ours was soaked and just about worn out. They sent a boy to another village about a mile away and he came back with a Catholic missionary, who I will never forget. His name is Charles Drolet and comes from Canada. He has been here for 12 years and knew all that needed to be known about the natives. The missionaries have done marvelous work here and can't be praised enough. Brother Charles had one more day to work on a chapel that he was building and asked us if we would stay and go on down to the sea shore with him. He said he could take better care of us that way. During our stay with him the natives brought us chicken, pork liver and plenty of other pork. How we ate! It took us 12 hours to make the canoe trip down to the coast where we met three Australians who couldn't do enough for us. They even gave us their own beds and cigarettes with plenty more to eat. We stayed one night here and departed the following morning on an Australian boat for our home base. We had a nice five hour boat ride and a fine meal with the Captain of the ship. After all this, all I can say is it feels great to be back and thank God for giving us the courage and strength to reach here.

The boys were over last night and brought us our mail. I got Bart's letter with Jim's pictures then I got one from Aunt Ruth, Sand, Jo Price and your letter No. 5. I have received No. 1 and 5, so will get the rest when I leave here. The doctor said I could go whenever I felt like it. Jo said Roy was going to Cadet school in Miss. Sandy sent me a picture of Sandra. Now more mail from you and the rest, and I'll be O.K.

I am sorry you had to receive the bad news about me. I did my best to get back and let you know that I was alive and in fine shape as soon as I could, but there were too many obstacles in the way that slowed me up. Anyway, by now you have received the good news and everything will be alright again. I'll write oftener even on my sick leave to Australia. Hoping you are feeling much better now and please do write often.

Love to all,  
"Little Lois,"  
Now a man, Ha!  
Louis Ball

[The News-Sentinel, Monday, November 22, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM GEORGE D. HOLLOWAY

Sgt. George D. Holloway  
Oct. 23, 1943

Dear Mother and Dad:

Greetings from your traveling son. Just a few lines to let you know I'm well and hoping this finds you the same. Things are coming along in pretty good shape and I know they're going to keep right on the same way. We're in the same place yet but for how long we don't know. In the Army you never know those things until they happen. We just sit tight and hope for the best.

Yesterday I had a very interesting and historical trip. I visited one of the oldest ancient cities in Italy that was destroyed by a volcano. Yes, I'm in Italy. I've been here in Italy for better than a month. It sure is lot better than what we've had and been through. There's not much that I can tell you about the trip because of the censoring. It was very interesting and something to see. It was a long walk and very tiresome. While I was there at this city I visited a Catholic church that was located in the new city. You see, there's the old city and the new one with the same beautiful thing you'd ever want to lay eyes on (except the U.S.A.) It was a huge church with inside decorations that were absolutely priceless. Words cannot be written of the beauty of it. It also had an orphanage that was built onto it. I was through it, also, and saw the many orphans they have. They have everything they need and can get under the circumstances. The inside was just as beautiful with its marble floors, walls, and priceless paintings and pictures. I really enjoyed every minute there and hope to get a chance to see it again. It has only been finished about two years. One man paid for all the material and work. It must have cost him thousands of dollars before they completed it.

Now I can finish this letter without much disturbance. Being this is Saturday afternoon we have nothing to do but the usual week-end duties to perform. As soon as my distribution comes in

## SvcMen WW II Letters

and I get it out to the different units, I'm through. If I get all my letters written, maybe I'll go uptown.

Just got word from one of the officers that they have relaxed on the censoring. So I can tell you a little about the battle we had on the mountain. It was all very rough and rugged all the way. Our loss was very slight but sure knocked the hell out of the Jerries. We were up there right over them for eight days living on "C" rations and in fox holes. All this time, we were unable to wash, shave or change one stitch of clothes. We started back down the mountains in the late evening. It was really tough going. We wouldn't have thought of going or attempting it in the daytime. Most of us slid down and not on our feet either. It was really a relief to get down on the flat ground and get cleaned up. We stayed in an orange grove for a couple of days before coming here in the city.

This is Sunday morning now so will finish this letter. Had too much to do yesterday afternoon and last night. We had enough fire works last night that lasted for 45 minutes. It was really hell to be in the darkness with these eggs being dropped from planes. We've had several experiences of this kind and sure glad when they are over. None of us were hurt but a few civilians slightly. We're used to them but sure hate to see them come.

I've got to close for the present. Take care of yourselves. I'm well and taking good care of myself. Write often.

Your loving son,  
George

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, November 23, 1943]

### THIRD LETTER FROM JAMES NIXON

Sgt. Jas. W. Nixon  
Somewhere in Italy  
November 9, [1943]

Hello Folks:

Are you able to keep warm back home these days? My blood thinned out so much in Africa and Sicily that I can't keep warm here in Italy, although it is really not bad at all. Guess I must be getting too old or something. I have visited Pompei since we were here and it quite a sight to see. Guess it was supposed to have been destroyed about 79 A.D. or somewhere close to that. I never did see Art Craig, so they must be in Sicily. I have never heard where their outfit came over here, as you know this is 5th and 8th. I have met lot of British boys and they are sure fine fellows. I can understand now what a hard job they must have had before we got into this thing. I don't see how they ever held up under it. I will always have all the respect in the world for them as soldiers and men. I am in great shape and in the best of health and getting along better since we have got to civilization again but I still want to have it over and get back home.

So long for now,  
Jim

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, November 27, 1943]

### PROP WASH FROM KEESLER

By Beezer (R. V.) Bennett  
Keesler Field, Miss.

We pre-Air Cadets have been restricted to Keesler Field for 28 long days. No passes to town are issued and we see the same gruesome grounds and buildings Sunday, Monday and Always.

As I adjust my harlequines, fill my Parker with Quink and write this jumble we are slowly passing through the 18th day of camp confinement. By now the little creatures who work at the P.X. (post exchange to those who haven't read Pvt. Hargrove's epic or have no I-A's on their mailing list.) have been transferred into Betty Grables. We G.I.s aren't girl crazy, understand, but there is pangs in our hearts for those guys on the Pacific islands who don't even get to see P.X. clerks.

As a poet once said:

## SvcMen WW II Letters

“I’ve just one wish and only--  
And so has every John;  
That P.X. girls be homely,  
So I could be waited on.”

He spoke words of great truth. These charming sellers of the coke and candy bars receive more gleaming smiles, winks and gentlemanly acts than Cleopatra did in her hey-day.

Grooves are worn in the sides of the ice cream counter at our P.X. Reason being that she who dishes out the frozen delicacy is in good form, has personality plus, and a Mississippi drawl that comforts the soldiers from below the Mason-Dixie and delights we Yankees when she counts out our change.

Most of the clerks are of a definitely cold nature to soldiers who inquire, “Why not marry me and I’ll take you away from all this?” or “How’s chances of dating me for the duration, Cutie?” I personally discovered this when my buddies gave me anti-freeze after several chilly episodes with these sirens of the army emporium.

There is a rumor in the better circles that all P.X. girls are sent to a school in the Antarctic where they learn the skills needed for being ice-boxy to we G.I. guys. I also understand the girls are taught jui-jitsu for handling soldiers who can’t take a subtle, “Hit the road, Bud. I’m just here to sell Hershey bars.”

The P.X. managers are elderly men with evil eyes. As we stand in line for a coke the soldier who gives the low whistle is glared upon by these ever-present managers. The heads of P.X.s must be chosen according to the glares of their optics, I do believe.

Aside from selling cokes, candy bars, sandwiches, beer and ice cream the post exchange sells magazines, stationery, soap and most things that the drug store back home sells. The juke boxes with “Paper Doll” and “Pistol Packin’ Mama,” (bless ‘em) add to this pharmacy atmosphere. Some of the larger exchanges sell army clothes, souvenirs, contain cafeterias, and at present are displaying Christmas gifts for the folks back home.

All P.X. merchandise is economical and priced to meet the soldier’s billfold.

We really haven’t any gripes in our army store but it’s too bad the vixens behind the counters must look like Hedy LaMarr and act like The Great Stone Face!

--Robert (Beezer) Bennett

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, December 2, 1943]

### LETTER FROM HUBERT SHOTT

(Editor’s Note: - Mrs. Gus Shott has just received the following letter from her son, Pvt. Hubert Shott, who has been returned to the States from overseas to the Hoff General hospital at Santa Barbara, Calif.)

Nov. 29, 1943

Dear Mama:

By the time you get this letter you will have had word from Rosie that I’m home again (not really home, but pretty close). It’s only a matter of a few weeks and then I will be.

I talked a few minutes to Rosie yesterday and it sure was nice to talk with her again. Hardly could think of a word to say but was so nervous and excited.

About 3,000 men returned here from New Zealand. I was there about five weeks. We really had a pleasant stay there. Everyone was so nice to us. The people in Auckland and the hospital staff were exceptionally nice. We had plenty of food and could eat all we wanted.

It took the boat sixteen days to reach Frisco and what a ride. Am very glad it is all over. I’ve just finished a letter to Rosie and as yet I could think of very little to write. I want to write to Rob and Alice when I finish this one to you.

I hope you are well, although I noticed in the newspapers the temperature is around freezing in Chicago.

This hospital is fourth I’ve been in since I left New Georgia and I’m about fed up with life in a hospital.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

Well I think I'll close this letter as I've a few more to write. I'll be writing other letters to you in a few more days.

Love from,  
Hubert Shott

[The News-Sentinel, Saturday, December 4, 1943]

### PROP WASH FROM KEESLER

By Beezer (R. V.) Bennett

Keesler Field, Miss.

We pre-air Cadets had been here for over a month. We lazied about, took the tests the gave us, finally received passes to go into the towns of Biloxi and Gulfport for an evening or Sunday. Then suddenly a new spirit was in the air. We gazed at the calendar and realized that December was at the mid-way mark. The "something new that had been added" was Christmas excitement!

Yes, even down here in the land of sunshine, in an Army camp, we got the same old feeling that always accompanys December 25th. To our amazement we thought the same kinds of things we always did at Christmas. We grabbed our pay in hands and started out to trample the herds in the annual feat known to all as "shopping."

It is different to shop in a P.X. with fellow khaki clads, instead of an ultra-smart department store with women getting the bargains in a mess with their infernal mauling, but we find that men can maul too and it takes much longer to shop because guys (especially us privates) know not what they want!

Finally the buying was over and then came the wrappng which to me is an ordeal with a capital "O".

In pre-war days, there was always a woman to wrap the presents men bought. But now--no wonder so many presents get lost in the mails.

After I had wound the gift, myself, two pillows and an old broom (I wrapped mine in the barracks) into a bulky mass, I stood in the G.I. line at the camp post office for a couple of hours until finally the business-like matron at the window took the "junk for the folks back home" and I was once again free from entangling yuletide joy vowing that next year Christmas cards would suffice for everyone!

To add to the spirit all orderly rooms and camp offices decorate with holly, lights, colored balls, ironic mistletoe and Christmas trees. The day rooms, service clubs, movie and post exchanges all deck the halls with holly too.

The truest indication of Christmas, however, is mail call.

Every day mail call is a treat but this month it's mass murder! We gang around the yodeling postman and 20 of us listen eagrlly as he calls a name and then slings a package containing anything from wrist watches to bunion pads. The letters contain folding money now and the Christmas cards bring back memories of friends gone by. After the call is over we convene to the barracks and gorge ourselves on the candies, cakes, cookies and other food that "new found Buddies" receive from home.

Christmas in the Army is still Christmas!

--Robert (Beezer) Bennett

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, December 17, 1943]

### PROP WASH FROM KEESLER

By Beezer (R. V.) Bennett

Keesler Field, Miss.

Want to delve into something with a homesick soldier. You needn't read this because it may bore you but I guess, due to the Christmas season, and all, I've lapsed into a memory of home.

It isn't sadness with which I write - rather gladness that I can remember all of the things I do remember when I think of the way my favorite holidays were spent in Hometown. I'm not trying to write a Woolcott or Sinclair Lewis. I'm just dreaming by press--do you mind? Just this once? It's Christmas, you know!

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I'm coming home now. I'm coming into southern Rochester as it was before the war on the afternoon before Christmas. Gee, it looks good--those circus posters should be taken down some day. There's Main Street! It still looks enormously big and the barren trees look good to me.

Past the ever present antique signs and the modernistic Catholic church, looking like something from another century amongst these ancient and stately homes built by Rochester's founders. The Baptist church--holding Christmas services tonight I see.

Here it come--Main and Ninth streets--my favorite cross-roads. There's Dean Stinson eating a sirloin steak in the Berghoff. The lake road looks deserted but it always was in the wintertime.

Court house lions look less alert than I remembered them as looking . . . The snow on the court house lawn is getting deeper so it looks like an old fashioned white one.

There's Mrs. McGuire in her brisk white uniform and black coat coming out of the doctor's office, stopping to chat with some lady now--probably telling her about Frances and Bill . . . Better hurry--must get into the Rexall before the kids take all of the booths. Somebody's evidently in a bigger hurry than I by the speed of that auto whooshing past--Bob Bigler driving, "Gabby" Young, "Cy" Stout, and Bob Zimmerman piled in around him.

Well, I'll buzz on into the drug store. Gene Copen standing behind the peanut case and Dave Shafer telling Pat Kriehbaum and her loud crowd to "quite down for the old folks' sake." The girls giggle and Percy Smith, Daniel Perry, and Bob Shafer look on from the soda fountain as if they understand youth.

"Blues in the Night" on the juke box but I'd like to inhale some more of the 3,580 populated best town. On down Main street--there's Mr. Remy helping carry groceries to a car beside Kroger's and "Trib" Biddinger leaving the jewelry business to run over to the Blue Drug store for cokes . . . I see school teacher, Rena Wright coming down the street. Walking briskly, wearing her leopard-skin coat and enjoying the vacation that the holidays bring . . .

Tom Thumb smelling of beer and a girl sitting in the cubby-hole the taxi uses for an office. Mayor Minter's "Sunshine Corner boys" sitting on the partly-spiked rail in front of Black & Bailey's debating the pros and cons of old age pensions, they look up as Mary Deniston rushes past, arms loaded with groceries. Maggie Karn standing in there giving the customers a hearty smile and gathering the latest gossip while Fay Holman has an afternoon coffee with Bernice Zolman.

Past the A. & P. store, Vern and Alma Schell waiting on last minute food buyers--no ration points in these simple days. Hubert Taylor giving his customers a verbal season's greeting and laughing as Hubert always does.

Across the street in the Arlington lobby "Ott" McMahan staring at the city as if he sees better things to come for our metropolis . . . The police car and "Rusty" Graham perched beside the liquor store ready to pounce on an innocent speeder.

On down Main Street, passing the feed stores and hatcheries, the streets lined with Christmas trees. Dusk is falling now and the lights are on. The courthouse lights look pretty from here with the falling snow making a mist around each colored bulb . . . just as it looked last Christmas. I turn to look at it a minute and wish I could stay but I can't. This is only a memory and I must go. Merry Christmas.

Sincerely,

Robert "Beezer" Bennett

[The News-Sentinel, Wednesday, December 22, 1943]

### SECOND LETTER FROM FRANK RAYMER

#### FRANK RAYMER WRITES LETTER FROM JAP INTERNMENT CAMP

(Editor's Note: The following is a letter received by Mrs. Florence Raymer, who resides in Knox, Ind., from her son, Coxswain Francis Raymer, who is a Japanese prisoner of war at Osaka prison camp on the island of Honshu. The letter was dated June 30th and was received here December 27th.):

"Dearest Mother, Dad, and All:

## SvcMen WW II Letters

"I am still okay and working at the same job as when I wrote you last, as a shoe cobbler. (Two lines following this were censored.) Will be glad when the war is over so that we can come back home to the U.S.A.

"Tell all my friends hello!

"Love,  
"Frank."

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, December 28, 1943]

### LETTER FROM VOLNEY WHEADON

S/Sgt. Volney Wheadon  
Somewhere in South America  
December 11, 1943

Mr. Reuben Scheid

Rochester, Ind.

Dear Mr. Scheid:

I expect you'll be surprised to get a letter from me, but I saw something today that made me think of you. My job in the army deals with the food supply for troops. We received a shipment of supplies today, and to my astonishment our peas were from the Rochester Canning Company, of Rochester, Ind. Believe me, I let everyone know that they were from my home town and I was sure of their quality. When I am eating them I'll think of all you folks back home, and how hard you have all worked on the home front to produce food stuffs and fighting equipment for we boys in the service.

We boys of the armed forces and I'm sure I can speak for them all, are very grateful for all your efforts. Keep up the good work and don't get discouraged, we're not because we are sure of our goal and it will take both of us to attain that goal.

If you care to you can publish this in The News-Sentinel, so our fine community and all your growers will know that their produce is reaching we boys from the home town. Tell all the boys at the factory hello and that I'm feeling fine, just waiting for the day when we are all at home again growing peas and sweet corn for the Rochester Canning Company.

Respectfully yours,  
S/Sgt. Volney Wheadon

[The News-Sentinel, Tuesday, December 28, 1943]

### LETTER FROM HAROLD BRINEY

Pvt. Harold Briney  
Nov. 25, 1943

Dear Mother and All:

Thought I had better drop you a few lines while I have a chance now.

How is everything with you all? I'm OK, feeling fairly good. We only get a few hours sleep of a night, for it is terrible hot here.

I received a few letters from you today and several newspapers and a few letters from the girls too. Sure glad to hear from all of you.

I also got a Christmas package from you today, was very pleased with it. Everthing was OK. I also got Bea, Joes, Eddies and Jerry's. Was very nice and one from Irene and all of them.

I also got one from Lorine and you last week.

I have never been able to write you until now.

The billfold was very nice for my old one is about gone.

You wanted to know in your last letter if I got your mail often. Yes, I think I get all you write. I use to get mail every two or three days, but here our mail only comes every five days.

I guess I'm not going to get the box of cigars you sent three months ago. Oh, Ya, the first Christmas box sent. I sure was glad to get the chewing tobacco for I haven't had any for almost five months and thanks Dad for the pipe and everything.

## SvcMen WW II Letters

I wish I could have sent you all something but don't know what it would be unless I'd sent my fox hole.

They said we could tell ou the islands I had been on. Society island, New Caledonia, New Hebrides for sometime and Guadalcanal but not there now.

Guess that all for this time and as the New Zealand boys say Cheero.

Thanks for the Christmas packages. Merry Christmas to all. Write soon.

Your son,

Pfc. Harold Briney

c/o Postmaster, San Francisco, California

[The News-Sentinel, Thursday, December 30, 1943]

### LETTER FROM D. CORNELL

S/Sgt. D. Cornell

Dec. 20, 1943

Dearest Grandma and Pa:

I received your letter today. I sure am glad you are feeling able to be about. I'll bet it's very cold there now. As for the weather here, it is very hot just like mid-summer is their.

I certainly do wish I could be their for Christmas. Perhaps by next Christmas I can be. Maybe even before that I hope.

I got a Christmas card from Dad and Emma today.

I'm sorry I din't write more often but I am kept pretty busy and often. I'm not where I can write. I think of you all just the same.

I am getting along alright and am in excellent health. I have lost quite a lot of weight but still I'm not skinny.

Our food is pretty good only I get awful tired of lamb and goat. I've eaten so much lamb I have got to watch myself when I talk or I go ba-ba.

We did have turkey for Thanksgiving and expect to have a very good Christmas dinner if I am here. I have been to Australia a time or two and also to New Zealand.

Out side of that I see no one only maybe a few black natives now and then. If anyone ever mentions South Sea islands to me when I get back, I'll go batty for sure. There nice and pretty but I'd just as soon have the good old U.S.A.

Nothing looks the same as in the states. Trees are different, grass, bugs, flies, birds and even the mosquitoes all different.

Well I'll close for now. Love always and God keep you well.

I am your loving grandson.

[The News-Sentinel, Friday, December 31, 1943]



FULTON COUNTY INDIANA

# HANDBOOK

Service Men, World War II, Letters  
1940-1943

By

Wendell C. and John B. Tombaugh

Limited Printing

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