

Your Letter From Home

The height of embarrassment—Two eyes meeting through a keyhole.

From "Belvoir Castle,"
Ft. Belvoir, Va.

Sent To You With The Best Wishes of
Veterans of Foreign Wars
The Gates Dry Goods Co.
The Fort Dodge Creamery Co.
The Fort Dodge Serum Co.
The Tobin Packing Co.
The Elks Club of Fort Dodge
The Loyal Order of Moose
American Legion and 40 & 8
The Clinic Pharmacy and Supply
Larry Geer Ballrooms
Iowa-Illinois Gas & Electric Co.
Fort Dodge Tent & Awning Co.
Rialto & Strand Theatres
Dr. Macdonald's Vitamized Feed Co.
Brady Transfer & Storage Co.
The Becker Florists

Radio Station K V F D

Sponsors of "Your Letter From Home" heard over KVFD daily 12:45 p. m., Monday through Friday.

Mother: Why is your right shoe muddy and not your left?

Daughter: I changed my mind.

From "Belvoir Castle,"
Ft. Belvoir, Va.

Vol. 2. No. 15

WRITTEN EVERY FRIDAY

February 2, 1945

☉ **DEAR JOE:** There's something in the air. We can feel it over here. The clouds are lifting. That great day can't be far off. When once more we'll make plans for all the carefree, happy things of individual lives, dancing and hunting and marrying and love making. Think of living in a world again free from the horror of war. There is no ease in the world today. No matter how the flowers may bloom, or how the birds may sing. There is no escape from the shadow of cruel death. No matter how sunshine and shadow may play upon water, no matter how graciously snow may clothe the Iowa fields, no prospect is ever so beguiling as to still that uneasy feeling that disaster is just behind us. But there's a great day coming and it isn't months away or years. No, this time it's sure and certain. It might happen tomorrow. And so we are dusting off those programs that we planned rather light heartedly last summer when we were so sure it would be all over before the snow fell. It's with a heavier heart today, but with a great deal more certainty . . . You've done the job, Joe. It's like the night before Christmas. We can hardly wait.

☉ **AROUND THE TOWN.** Fort Dodge is to have a chapter of "Alcoholics Anonymous." This is an organization of drunkards who want to cure themselves. The organizer who is here is from the Des Moines club . . . 2nd and 3rd floor guests had to scamper Monday morning when the Crawford Hotel caught on fire. Mr. and Mrs. W. J. O'Brien were carried down fire ladders and so was 10 year old Kenneth Horner. James Dooley slid down a fire escape in the rear. Many others were up and out in their scanties and it was cold, too—down to zero. The fire destroyed most of the hotel. \$40,000 worth. Guests lost their shirts. No one was injured . . . Jr. Chamber got its Charter last week . . . Robert Lee Johnson, aged 11, received an allied expeditionary force insignia from Gen. "Ike" this week. Bob had written him a letter . . . Dale Spurlin has gone back to Eldora. He was the one who stole the 10,000 cigarettes from the M. & St. L. warehouse. Elmo McCormack fined five people who bought cigarettes from him \$100.00 each . . . Lt. Ron Schwendemann gets his picture in this month's Ladies Home Journal showing how guys eat steaks on subs . . . They burned the mortgage on the Riverside Methodist Church last Sunday morning. Then they celebrated with a pot-luck dinner . . . Wanda Rowe was elected last week as "Miss Gowrie High for 1945" . . . H. H. Nelson of Humboldt was found dead in the basement of the Eilers Hotel last Friday morning . . . R. J. Fisher of Des Moines has purchased the Quick Supply Co. at 522 So. 22nd Street . . . Jim Bowns, Bob Waughal, John Bourke, Clem Ford, Robert Walker and Gerald Peterson, Jr., Chamber Committee on mile of dimes, had calloused thumbs last Saturday. Their block-long line collected 8,236 dimes and one penny. Mayor Poole laid down the first ten-center.

☉ **ENJOYING MOM'S COOKING.** 1/Lt. D. J. Hicks, home from Italy on a one-day stop over in Fort Dodge . . . John Estlund, EM 3/c, of Barnum from a P. T. boat base in England. He is on his way to New York City for re-assignment. His brother, Tom, is expected home soon from Farragut . . . Cpl. Ralph E. Christensen from Kingman, Arizona . . . 1/Lt. William Hesser, invalidated, home from Holland because of malaria. Bill served in Sicily, Italy and France as well as Holland as a glider pilot . . . Sgt. Joe Rutledge from Percy Jones Hospital, Battle Creek, Michigan . . . T/5 Allan Holbrook from Italy. He was with Co. B when it left Fort Dodge but afterwards joined a commando outfit . . . Pfc. Paul Hoyer from the Pacific . . . Lt. D. F. Edwards from Europe . . . Lt. Melvin Essary from the South Pacific . . . Stanley G. Stine, MM 2/c, is home for good, honorably discharged. He served in both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters . . . Lt. Robert Perkins from the E. T. O. . . Sgt. Floyd Messerly from Camp Croft, So. Carolina . . . Pvt. Richard Kreiman from Camp Bowie, Texas . . . T/Sgt. Charles Bickford from the Southwest Pacific . . . Sgt. Ambrose Crowley from Liberal, Kansas . . . Thomas McAnally, AMM 2/c, from Norfolk, Virginia.

☉ **WAR'S GRIM TOLL.** Robert Lanning, GM 2/c, has been reported wounded in action . . . Pvt. J. R. Deaton, reported missing in action, was only slightly wounded and is now back in the U. S. A. . . Pfc. Jerry Coughlon, seriously wounded December 22nd, has had both legs amputated but is showing improvement . . . Lt. J. P. Geiger was killed in action in Italy, January 16. His brother, Alan, is in O. C. S. at Ft. Benning, Georgia . . . Pvt. Glen W. Grazier is missing in action in France since January 6th . . . Pfc. Gerald Schmoker is missing in action in India. His plane failed to

return from a flight over the Himalayas, January 15th . . . Pfc. Glenn Kruse, slightly wounded, is in a French hospital . . . Pfc. Leonard Sheker, of Callender, was wounded in Luxembourg, January 9th . . . Pfc. Robert Hamlow was wounded in Belgium on January 11th . . . Pfc. Kenneth R. Jorgenson was wounded in Belgium on January 9th . . . Cpl. J. R. Doyle was slightly wounded in France on January 12th . . . Pfc. Robert McMahon is in a hospital in England. He was wounded in action in Belgium, but not seriously, on December 30th.

☉ **SCOREBOARD.** Harcourt took the boys' county tournament defeating Lanyon 30 to 27 for their second consecutive championship title. In the consolation, Gowrie took Lehigh 54 to 28. Lanyon has a fine team but was not in the groove while Harcourt was hot . . . Pocahontas defeated Corpus Christi 37 to 22 . . . Dodger wrestlers threw the matmen from East High in Des Moines 29 to 9. Dodgers, Lyle Schuh, John Harrison, Howard Steinhoff and Forrest Prine all got falls . . . Corpus Christi defeated Sacred Heart 23 to 19.

☉ **TWO HEARTS THAT BEAT AS ONE.** Viola Anderson, of Livermore, and Lt. Don Schoeberlein, at Malden, Missouri, January 13th . . . Rosita Miller and Floyd Rodewald, of Rockwell City, at Fort Dodge, January 28th . . . Rita Wingert and Charles P. Fay, P. O. 2/c, of Churdan, in Long Beach, California, on January 11th . . . Betty White and Donald Meyer, of Clare, in Ft. Dodge, January 14th . . . Betty Bielenberg, of Davenport, and Pvt. Roger P. Lisher, in Knoxville, January 14th . . . Nina Culver and Sgt. Paul E. Larson, both of Harcourt, in Harcourt, January 17th.

☉ **HOME TOWN BOYS MAKE GOOD.** Kenneth William Vieth has been awarded a commission and wings as a navigator. He graduated last week at Monroe, Louisiana . . . To first Lt., Floyd M. Veale, B-17 pilot in England, with the 8th Air Force . . . To Capt., Jalmer M. Ekedal, pilot on a C-46 in Iran . . . To Sgt., Warren "Bud" Winslow now serving on Leyte in the Philippines.

☉ **OVER HERE.** N. F. Knickerbocker, PR 2/c, is now rigging 'em at Port Columbus, Ohio . . . Pfc. Ray J. McMahon is with the Marine air facility at San Diego, California . . . Doing ward work, Pvt. Richard Glendening is stationed at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D. C. In September he hopes to start his studies at Georgetown Medical school . . . Laid up with the mumps, Delmer Adel Pearce, A/S, is in the hospital at Farragut . . . Alva Leo Long, AMM 2/c, is at Shoemaker, California . . . Mabel E. Lindstrom, AMM 3/c, is now honorably discharged from the Waves and is Mrs. F. W. Thaanum. She is living in San Diego, at 2420 A Street . . . S/Sgt. R. M. Haugen is at Robins Field, Georgia . . . Faye M. Jurison, S 2/c, is now in Washington, D. C., Wave Qtrs., Mass. and Nebr. Avenues, N. W. . . . Robert Ditzenberger, S 1/c, is leaving Memphis, Tennessee, on his way to gunnery school . . . John Mertz, A/S, now at Great Lakes, Co. 57, would like to see anyone from Ft. Dodge . . . Pfc. Earl Murphy is now at Camp Howze, Texas.

☉ **GOOD FELLOWS GET TOGETHER.** S/Sgt. William Hubel and Andy Stensrud at Camp Atterbury, Indiana . . . Ensign R. E. Schwendemann, Ensign Bud Smith and Ensign Ray Carlson somewhere in the Pacific. Bud flies a fighter, Ray a torpedo bomber. R. E. is with a fighter squadron on a carrier . . . Bob Ewing, S 1/c, and Nels Jorgensen, S 1/c, both of Callender, somewhere in the Pacific . . . Mary Ann Umsted, HA 1/c; Joan Mills; Betty Lou Fleissner; Helen Huebner, from Laurens, and Betty Snyder, from Davenport, in the U. S. Naval Hospital in San Diego . . . Pfc. Roger F. Grant and Leonard Ackerson somewhere in the Pacific. "We have had some good talks and both agreed the old home town would be a swell place to be right now."

☉ **SUNNY ITALY.** With six missions behind him, S/Sgt. Glenn W. Machovec, flying out of Italy on a bomber, is in a rest camp now. His plane was forced down at sea. "Must say the Adriatic is a bit cold this time of the year." Glenn is looking for Herb Lee, former Dodger, who is on a B-24. Glenn is at APO 520.

☉ **HOLLAND.** As of January 13th, Pfc. Foster Funk, writing from Holland, says everything is about back to normal and mail is again coming through.

☉ **LUXEMBOURG.** Pfc. Pat Derrig has been in and out of Luxembourg several times and is on the look-out for Don Derrig who is in that same area.

☉ **PACIFIC.** Ronald Flickinger, S 1/c, is somewhere in the South Pacific. "I haven't been here very long, but already I see I'm not going to like it very well" . . . Wayne Laird, Ph M 3/c, of Otho, is somewhere in the South Pacific. We'll play that number, Wayne.

⊛ **PERSONAL.** Mrs. James Elmer Craft wants us to say to her husband, Pfc. James E., that she is writing every day even though the letters do not seem to be getting through.

⊛ **BELGIUM.** T/5 Ned Ackerson is with the Seventh Armored Division that about Christmas time was holding off Rundstedt's panzer army. Ned is now in Belgium . . . In a hospital in Belgium (nothing serious), Pvt. Don Haring writes, "Think it's cold in Iowa? It's so damned cold here even the thermometer shivers."

⊛ **LABELLE, FRANCE.** Pfc. Paul Webb, who used to work at the Stacy Fruit Company, is now in France. He was in Paris recently and picked up some souvenirs.

⊛ **SERVICE PAPERS AND INSIGNIA.** The patch of the 771st Tank Bn. from Cpl. Paul Brooks in Belgium, with the First Army. Thanks, Paul . . . "The Air Scoop" from Lt. Eugene Soppeland, Pueblo, Colorado. Thanks, Lt. . . Sgt. H. M. Kinseth somewhere in the ETO sends us the Sunday edition of "Stars and Stripes." Thanks, Sgt. . . "The Ford Island" from Kenneth O. Wertz, HA 1/c, Pearl Harbor. Thanks, Ken. . . "The Command Post" from Cpl. Robert Zeka somewhere in the CBI Theater. Thanks, Bob.

⊛ **NEW GUINEA.** Pvt. Donald Stewart is somewhere in New Guinea.

⊛ **OVERSEAS.** Pfc. George Belthius is overseas with the Service Command of the 15th Air Force. We'll play that number, George . . . A ball turret gunner on a heavy bomber, Cpl. Don Ellinger is on his way to ETO . . . Richard Newsome, Y 2/c, is now getting his mail FPO, San Francisco.

⊛ **HIGH C'S.** Ron Wearmouth, Coxn., is on the U. S. S. Hyman.

⊛ **MERRY ENGLAND.** Pfc. Leslie M. Sorenson is in England . . . Pfc. Frank Loftus is somewhere in England with Btry. C of the 66th Field Artillery . . . Ensign Q. L. Vandi, visiting the American Officers' Club in London, found the name "Lt. Hayes, Ft. Dodge" written on a map of the U. S. A. but couldn't read the London address. "I wanted to look him up and make words about the news from back home."

⊛ **DAS REICH.** T/5 Morris A. Peterson is with Patton's Third Army in Germany.

⊛ **FROM THE FIVE CORNERS OF THE WORLD.** S/Sgt. S. T. Soppeland, Philippines. "This is the bad season for flying over here and it's plenty tough. Our outfit has put up a pretty good record over here in the last two years. We haul in ammunition and evacuate wounded, drop supplies to isolated troops or Filipino guerilla bands. You should see some of the guerillas of the fair sex. Really are 'pistol packin' mama's."

S/Sgt. Ted Rule, Ft. MacArthur, San Pedro, California. "You would no doubt imagine that this far after Christmas I would have it a little easier here in the postoffice but it is anything but that. Just an idea of what goes on here now: This last ten days we have transferred over eight hundred men into the infantry from this post. Of course, I have to re-address and forward all of that mail in addition to replacements for each man going out, coming in. None of the replacements have a unit address when they arrive here so I have to reroute that all to the batteries as soon as they are assigned. I am still working from fourteen to sixteen hours every day. Maybe I'm getting old but I am really tired at the end of the day. This, as you can well imagine, is a seven day a week job. I can't get any help or relief. My leg is still causing me a great deal of trouble. Give my regards to Larry Geer as well as the other boys I used to know back there. Some day I hope to get back to Fort Dodge for a visit and I'm looking forward to it." (Thanks, Ted, for the Ft. MacArthur "Alert.")

Capt. F. H. "Doc" Ferguson, APO 18085, New York. "On our way, and hope the job won't be too long. Have been plenty sick on this trip and the fish shouldn't go hungry. One trip like this and you guys will buy plenty of bonds."

Phil Dorweiler, S 2/c, Lawrence Doyle, RM 3/c, Donald Spillman, MM 3/c, somewhere in Hawaii: "Today being Sunday and rest day we all decided to get together and have a little gab fest. It was with deep regret that we couldn't get together with the rest of the boys out here at the present time. Other Fort Dodgers around here are: Dick Waddell, S 1/c, (SM); Stan Olson, S 1/c; John Brough, RM 3/c; Earl Bittner, QM 3/c, and today we met a Marine from Gowrie by the name of Hastings. He sends his greetings to Larry Geer. He is scheduled for a furlough soon. Don has been over here going on 16 months; Larry just got back from another rest and recuperation leave; and "Boot" Dorweiler going on three months. All in all, we feel very fortunate to spend these Sundays together. New subject: Women. (a) "Aren't they beautiful!" says Don. "They're all alike," says Larry. "Hard to get along with. Hard to get along without," says Phil."

Pvt. Robert E. Arn, Camp Howze, Texas. "You will notice that I am now in the Army—that is, no more gravy train. We get up at 5:30 a. m. and maybe we are through at 8 p. m. at night. Really, some nights we are! They are really throwing the book at us, along with Texas mud on our feet. We are getting all the infantry training they can cram into us in six weeks. When a man finishes training here, he is so glad to go overseas—just to get out of this camp and Texas."

Major Charles Baker, APO 305, New York. "I damned near became a permanent war guest of Herr Hitler's awhile back. Was surrounded and pinned down for several hours but managed to sneak away with a whole hide but minus much of my stuff. An interesting experience."

Lt. Joseph F. Wall, Norfolk, Virginia. "South America, more specifically Brazil, was an interesting experience, but after a year and a

half my orders back to the good old Estados Unidos were more than welcome. The first months we lived under pretty primitive conditions, tents, outdoor showers, and Spam three times a day. It was exciting, though, and the land and people seemed colorful and picturesque. The bizarre colors of the native houses—everything from flaming cerise to deep purple, the shades of colors of the people themselves, the dark green of the omnipresent jungle, the habit of the natives of carrying everything on their heads from a complete dining room set to a single letter held on top by a small pebble—all this we thought quaint and interesting. After a while, however, we began to see less and less of the quaintness and more and more of the filth and poverty of these people and the United States in contrast began to take on the glow of Paradise. I got down to Rio de Janeiro just once and it is a beautiful and modern city, perhaps the most beautiful in the world. It has night clubs that would put the Stork Club to shame and more ostentatious wealth than New York City. The rest of Brazil though, is isolated except by means of air, poor, diseased and shrugs off any progress with a nonchalant "Amana"—tomorrow perhaps. While down there in that isolated pocket of this war I saw Don Hauser and Francis Wigdahl which certainly proves how plausibly true is the statement that the whole world is but a village." (Thanks, Lt., for the "Dope Sheet" and the "South Atlantic News.")

Sgt. Joseph E. Nemecek, APO 255, New York. "In my last battle I probably was fighting along side of Lt. John A. Metcalf, because his division was right up there with us tankers. You can pass on to Lt. Metcalf that it takes lots of courage and guts to stay up on the line with a tank outfit and keep pushing on. The way I could see the boys from the turret, it was really a sight. Artillery falling all around and those guys got up and just kept on going to their objective. That was one tight place I didn't bring my tank back out of. It was just like buck shot coming down on you. You get so far then suddenly something hits. The only thing to do is bale out. Thank God, we got out of the thing before things went into flame. A tanker is lost without his tank. He is no good on the ground, so the only thing to do is to get to the rear and out of danger." (Thanks, Joe, for the patch.)

Pfc. Lorell E. McFarland, somewhere in New Guinea. "I was reading November 24th or Vol. 2, No. 5 edition and was sort of interested in Bob Zeka's snake business. I wonder how he would like to be here in New Guinea with me. We are in the gas supply and some of our stuff back in the jungle. We were loading trucks one day and ran into a python or rather two of them. We caught them and of course, they were very dead when we got through with them. I am enclosing a picture of one and it is one of the smallest we have caught. It is 14 ft. 6 inches long and 9 inches around him. We have caught several more but didn't get so excited about them as we did the first ones. We have some fellows that are really brave when it comes time to way-lay these fellows. We also have a few alligators here, too. We tried to kill them with a 1903 rifle but they are like shooting at a M-5 tank. The only way you can kill them is by shooting them in the belly. They are like a tank. That is their weak spot. One was 16 feet long and was really a mean looking fellow. We made shoes out of him and they are very comfortable and really wear good." (Thanks for the picture, Lorell. I'll save it for you.)

T/Sgt. John J. Steib, somewhere in Italy. "The best gift I got from Santa Claus this year was a trip to Midnight Mass at St. Peter's. It was a beautiful night—the stars shining brightly, and the moon in all its splendor and the air was crisp. I arrived between ten and ten-thirty and got myself a good place, about thirty feet to the left of the altar. It took a lot of pushing to get there and these people can really get around a guy in more ways than one. There are no seats or kneelers and a person gets pretty tired of standing and packed in like sardines for three hours but it is worth it. I came a long way and when I left camp it was still snowing and blowing and freezing. Once I got out of the hills and down into the valley there was only a trace of snow. When the Pope made his appearance through the side door, from the elevator, silver trumpets started to blow and the people started to yell and applaud. To me it seemed rather strange and that is one time I didn't do as the Romans do. He blessed the people on his way to the altar where he said two low masses in succession. The singing by the Sistine Choir and Silent Night by the Swiss Guards in German was beautiful. I also visited the world famous Crib. It was beautiful. I also climbed to the cupola and got a bird's eye view of the "two cities." It is an awful climb to the top with hundreds of winding steps. I also visited the Treasury where all the valuables of St. Peter's are kept—such as vestments, chalices with many jewels, cruets made of gold and many other things that are priceless."

There were wonderful letters this week from everywhere. We dawdled along over them, reading and re-reading, wondering what to put in and what to leave out. That leaving out is the tough part, but there's only so much room so only so much can go in. There were other swell letters from Cpl. Herschel J. Duker, APO 264, San Francisco; Major Harry Larson, APO 394, New York; Pfc. Harold T. Spittal, APO 957, San Francisco; Capt. C. T. Johnson, somewhere in France; Ensign L. B. Adams, FPO, New York and A/S Bobbie Williams, San Antonio, Texas. We're late with this letter this week. We gotta run like everything. Write when you have time, Joe. The new addresses have helped a lot. Last week YLFH hit an all time high of over 4300. Be seeing you and I do mean you, Joe, soon, I hope, I hope, I hope! So long.

Your home town correspondent,
Ed Breen.