

Somewhere in France
3 January 1945.

Eleanor, darling:

During a drive thru the country to-day I had a grand opportunity to visualize some of my own personal post-war plans. I passed some very attractive private homes, and it was no trouble at all to dream about you and Jim helping me cut the grass on our own lawn. We'll make it our little paradise, and love will always be the order of the day. It'll be one place which will not put up with politics of any nature, and I feel certain that all problems, domestic and foreign, will be solved by us by unanimous vote. The future is not so distant, my sweetheart, so let us ^{be} patient, not weary, and keep smiling.

To-day was a banner day for mail-call, at least as far as I was concerned. Received your Dec. 11th, 15th, 16th and 17th V-Mail letters, together with 2 from Pinus and 1 from Bob. I know you have been writing long letters but so far the V-Mail forms get here the quickest. There are probably many questions answered in these letters so I'll not ask any, unless I think it is original. No packages to-day, so I continue to look forward to a Merry Xmas. Bob has little if note to write about but knowing he's in the states makes me happy. Pinus' boy became a Purple Heart and I dread to think about the reaction he and his wife had to this bit of rotten news. Why do such fine people get all the bad breaks? I am writing him to-night.

Also received a V-Mail from Eleanor who sounds as though she was out of work. A card in yesterday's mail advised me that she and your dear mother subscribed to Reader's Digest for me. It was very kind of them, but hardly necessary, since I expected you to send me the second hand copies. However, — oh well. Teddy Carbone wrote yesterday that the "1939 Masters' Assn." forwarded me a Xmas package to Fort Snelling; see what I mean. Here I am supposed to be fighting a war, and my pals back home don't even know I'm overseas. I suppose when I return someone will ask me if I've been away.

I guess I better explain the enclosed snapshot before I proceed any further. Accompanying me is Cpl. Robert Halbrook of Atlanta, Ga., who is company clerk. I think you met him at dinner in Snelling. Notice the street is wet, but it had ceased raining about an hour prior to the snapping of this

picture. We were on our way to New Year's eve dinner at my
favorite home. This is in the center of town, and my friend's
son is out of sight at the curb awaiting us. You'll notice
that my pockets are stuffed, with candy, gum, soap etc.

The package in my hand contained some soap and I had
purchased in England. Is it not strange, my darling, what
strange gifts I bring my most recent friends? a far
cry from what you and I are accustomed to give, but
believe you me these items are preferred and more enjoyed
than anything we ever gave anyone, anytime. You can
readily see I'm not really skinty yet, and that I'm looking
well, if not fit. As soon as the camera arrives I'll
really give you some real shots. Am sending one of
these to the folks. Sorry I can't tell you where I am but
you can see this is of no importance. Please note that
although it is most unusual for soldiers to wear ties in
a theatre of operations both Bob and I are wearing ours,
and our trousers will beased, see what I mean?

Primo wrote the firm distributed a bonus amounting
to a little less than last year, and I'm anxious to learn if
you were included; also please advise how you and Jim
enjoyed the holiday season. It was most thoughtful of Mr.
Labs to send Jim a tag, I do not know whether or not he is
still with the firm so please advise his home address, and
I'll drop him a V-mail. Thanks for attending to our annual
charitable contributions, but did you send a check to the
Widows and Orphans Fund? It seems as though Metterson
has switched to a quarterly dividend policy, which would
seem to make the check the correct amount. As yet I have
received no acknowledgement of the packages and funds I sent,
but since there are letters of previous dates still missing
I assume you advise me of all this news as events
come to pass. Did you ever read the August 14th issue of
Life on "The Break-Through in France"? The October 30th issue
also has an interesting article you should read. Incidentally
did you ever send me several celluloid pocket calendars
for 1945?

Your most recent letter states that Joel is not
showing much improvement. I have on many, many
occasions inquired about him as to the facts about his
illness. I know you wish to spare me, but since I know

he is as seriously ill as he is, perhaps you feel that I can now stand all the facts. It is a pity, and I know only too well how badly Thelma must feel. Hope Maurice gets home in time, but do not be too optimistic. A furlough from over here, even in dire emergencies, are difficult to obtain. Between Joel and poor Birdie Kellner you must feel down in the dumps, but you have demonstrated tremendous mental courage in the past, and I have every confidence in your ability to be stable.

Several packages went out to you to-day, included were prices of pottery and other souvenirs. The Belgian prices were obtained for me by one of the boys who visited the country. As a matter of fact I sent the folks a pair of wooden shoes from there. It is almost impossible to buy these shoes painted in France, so I had them bought there. The bundles I sent you are packed in wooden boxes, and I have every hope they arrive in perfect condition. Please advise about this. I have another package to forward and will do so as soon as I have purchased another bottle of perfume. Hope you like everything I've picked up, but if any of the odors do not suit you, it is all right with me if you sell them. The price runs a bit high, but this is no concern of mine. I'm buying these little trophies for the sweetest girl in the world, and that's all I'm thinking of, behind me. Anything you want for yourself, please write. However there isn't anything here that you can't buy in Mary's, and unquestionably cheaper.

I quite agree with you that I'm missing much in not being with you and Jim during his present stage, but your descriptions help very much to keep me abreast of his actions. Write more about him, his anecdotes, and send more snaps of himself and you. Sorry Jim and Joel can't play together but such is destiny. Keep our little fellow secure, my darling, don't let him become spoiled, and teach him the right from the wrong.

The folks sounded pretty good in their letter, and I feel less anxious about them, since Bob wrote

me how well they were taking all this. It's a tough deal on older people, and they should be taking it easy instead of worrying so much. But then, I suppose every parent has his or her own troubles, even as you and I.

The picture last night ("Hollywood Cavalcade") turned out to be a stinker too, in addition to being shown in an heat-less theatre. I chill just thinking of the 2 hours I sat there. My good friends enjoyed the melbae. Many chocolates received in the package yesterday, as I believe they haven't had any like this in over 4 years. May see them again on Sunday.

I feel fine and dandy, a little busier the past few days, and dreaming of you all the time. Will not request anything until I receive the packages en route, but thanks for Charlie's samples. All the boys are all right, but I have a pet peeve with Harvey these days. His story will also have to await my return.

Stay well, my only fun-up girl, be patient, kiss Jim and the folks for me, and I'll kiss you in mind. My very best to everyone, and feel free to be a good boy and become healthy as his cousin Jim. If I believed in the efficacy of prayer I'd pray for him - but, under the circumstances I'm pulling for the youngsters. All my love, darling, and I adore you

as ever,

Geary.

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