

Saturday eve 12/30

~~Sunday aft~~
12/31

My darling,

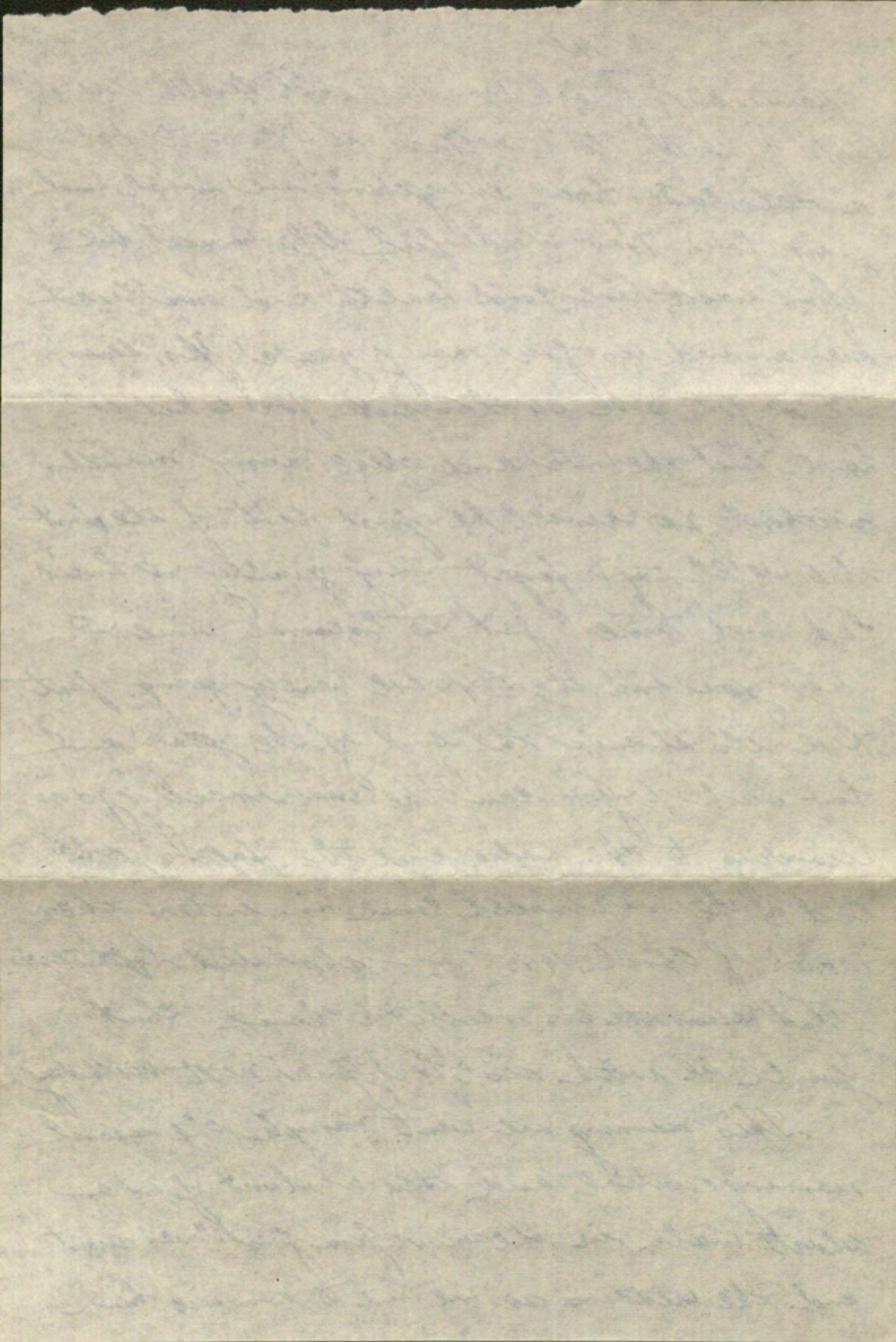
To-day was so full of merrymaking with Jan, Jim and Bea that we're completely exhausted and expect to sleep like logs to night. And besides, I've received a batch of mail from you - 3 V-mail letters dated Dec. 7th, 8th, 11th and a long, sweet letter dated Dec. 15th. All this makes my heart so light and full of hope and visions of our future life together. You write that you're well, and I believe you, my dearest, so be a good boy and be assured that all is well with me and baby. In fact, I've been feeling swell since I've made these trips to the country and I'm sure I've gained some weight. We've taken some snapshots again to day and I'll forward them as soon as they're developed. Honestly, we're fine and hope you're not worrying your fine head off for nothing. Please don't.

1841
The following is a list of the
names of the persons who
were present at the
meeting of the
Board of Directors
of the
City of New York
on the 1st day of
January 1841.
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Naturally, if Joel was in good health we'd look forward to a happier New Year but we ~~marvels~~ can't have everything we wish and pray for. How wonderful life would be if we could have good health and our loved ones around us for many years. Yes, dear, we are got to be so thankful for what we have and the war and these many months without you will be just part of the past that we'll try to forget very quickly. I haven't had much time to get to know you since I left you and the days are really going fast. Here it's already the end of the year and how much longer can the war really go on. According to the radio and the papers, the end of the war will come in either the month of April 1945 or the latest September. That means there's really a chance that you'll be with us for your next birthday.

This morning we went through the usual morning routine and then went out for a short walk in the snow. Jim just loves snow and the outdoors so we had to convince him



that his lunch was waiting him before he came ~~in~~ indoors. He's a dear and is eating so well these days. His behavior is excellent and I'm really proud of the little fellow.

Not only does he understand what's going on but he actually takes my side and even protects me. After lunch, he and Jan slept for $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours and then we took them out in the carriage. We walked to a farm nearby, bought 2 nice chickens and then picked some mountain laurels along the road. It was a gravel afternoon and when we arrived home, Leo took the babies upstairs and I went to Monticello with Martha and Jack. I did a little shopping in town and enjoyed the ride along the snowy country roads. It's sure a great life, my darling and a rich life. A nice roast beef was on the table when I got home and we all enjoyed the dinner very much. Monticello sure has everything and plenty of the shortages that are in the city. No trouble getting butter, sugar or meat in town and just a slight shortage of cigarettes. And people still complain.

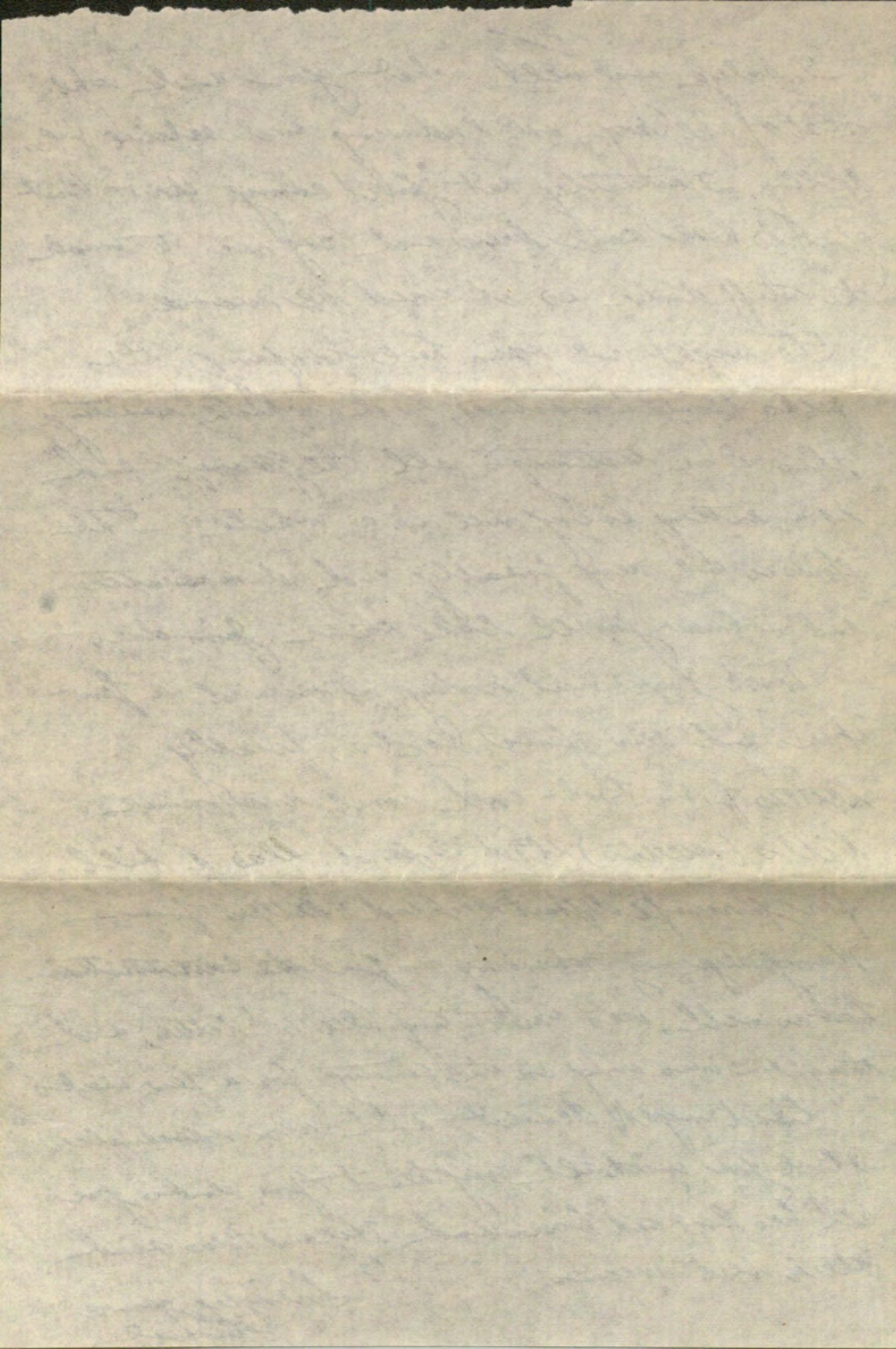
I realize very well what you and the rest of the boys are enduring and believe me, darling, I actually eat your army stew. But you'd better have some brandy and cognac to wash the stuff down so it could be worse.

To-night we again have company, the folks from downstate, and while waiting this I'm listening to all the gossip and commenting every now and then in a while. The Downers are very friendly and democratic and I know you'll like them. Jim does.

With your mail today, I received a few Ymas and New Year Cards, finally a letter from Bob and some insurance bills (receipts) that I paid. Also a bill for your safe deposit box and a letter from Mary McLaughlin thanking us for the contribution. Bob is well, was instructing (see 16th letter) and thought I was away in the country for a few weeks.

Good night, dearest, and also remember I love you with all my heart. Jim sends you all his love and wishes and Nef and Ben send their best wishes.

Sincerely yours,
 Ethel



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