

### HEART SPEAKS OUT IN MOTHER'S LETTER

#### Censor Not Daunted by Suitcase Full of Mail After Hours

### WHAT TEXAS NEGROES FELT

#### "I Want People to See Your Raising in Me," One Boy Writes Home

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:

The worthy activity manifested by "Our Paper" that led to the sending of a shipload of Mothers' Letters across the sea to the ones waiting back here was what I stuck the writer, about the last word among its collection of worthy stunts—even topping by a shade, in my humble opinion, the orphan movement.

In my capacity as commander of a company of 250 men, of whom 27 are white non-commissioned officers and 223 are drafted Texas negroes, I did my best to rise to the occasion at the pace you set. I plastered pages of "Our Paper" all over the bulletin board, talked "Mother" to the boys, and had the orderly room supply the stationery envelopes stamped in vivid red—a violation of A.R. 822, and justified by circumstances—as per your specifications) and the C.C. pass it out at Saturday inspection.

The results overwhelmed us. They all did it. Saturday night and Sunday morning everybody was doing it. And Sunday we all worked. That night my mail orderly took a suitcase full of letters to the base censor headquarters, and some unknown captain just shutting up shop peddled off his raglan and sat him down then and there to affix the Great Seal of the U.S.

#### All Breathe Same Spirit

But this is the thing that will interest: Did you ever censor a letter from a Texas cotton-patch dandy to his mother? I was irresistibly moved to make pencil extracts from three, anonymously, of course. They weren't ALL like these; but, no matter how high the education of the writers had progressed, those letters all breathed the same spirit—the spirit that makes the American soldier, by and large, a sort of nut that no victim of the Prussian iron heel can ever crack, much less crush. *Requiescat:*

"Mother, when I stop to think what I am here for, and of the thousands that are here with me fighting for the same Cause, it makes me feel big and proud to know that the good Lord has given me health and strength to be one of the number. And, Mother, you must think often of your soldier boy, and pray that he may return to you, when our country is at peace, just as strong and healthy as when he left you."

That extract is verbatim—not edited in the least by myself. Its writer never had a college education. Had he been just *ten weeks* after the draft would not have called him. He is married, and, as the allotment records show, a



### EVERYONE WRITE— G.H.Q. ASKS YOU TO

#### One Way to Help Win War Is Keeping in Touch With Family

To write home frequently and regularly—that is one of the soldier's most important duties. In the present G.H.Q. has just put forward in a general order. G.H.Q. goes into the subject thoroughly and explicitly, having this to say:

"Duty to one's country does not end on the parade ground, nor even on the battle field, but consists in doing everything in one's power to help win the war. To write home frequently and regularly, to keep in constant touch with family and friends, is one of the soldier's most important duties. Mothers and fathers will suffer if they do not hear often from sons fighting in France. In the present large companies, it is not possible for officers to write letters for their men. Every man must do it for himself.

"When no letters are received from overseas, the greatest distress is caused to those at home. They either feel that letters have been written but lost en route, or else they imagine all sorts of evils, such as sickness, wounds, even death. Both are bad for the active militant spirit which every true American must possess if our Army is to obtain the real victory that all so earnestly desire.

"Everyone in the United States who has a son or brother in the American

### ETIQUETTE HINTS FOR DOUGHBOYS

#### Questions Answered By BRAN MASH

X.—If the Major greets your punctilious salute with a slap on the back and a jab in the ribs and a playful kick in the anatomy and a line like, "Well, you senny-dogging, late-for-reveille, good-for-nothing old skeezer, what'll I get you out of now?" the only thing you can do is to humor him and pretend you like it. Once in a while a Major with exactly those foibles will crop up even in the best-regulated Army. When he does, he means awfully well, and should be treated, not snubbed. Give him a good comeback.

R.—No, it is not good form to flash the wedding announcement of your bunkie's ex-best girl on him just as he is going up into the line. It might get awfully peeved and actually go out and kill a German, just to work off his spite. And that, you know, would never do.

Y.—If your lieutenant-platoon-commander passes out real cigarettes because he's just got a cable saying he is the father of twins, take the cigarettes and then add some tactful remark such as "What was they, Loot? Boys or girls or mixed double?" Or, if the missus been specific and don't you know? That will put you in right to a fareyou-well, and is good for a first-class-privy recommendation any day in the year.

I.—If you are invited to take part in a raid, accept at once. Raids are often as interesting as surprise parties used to be back in the States—with the exception that they play kissing games afterward when they hand out the Croix de Guerre.

V.—No, it is rather better taste not to roll the bones when the Captain is making his inspection tour. The Captain would like to roll 'em, too, and try to catch up for that pay check and travel commutation that's due him—but he doesn't. Don't tempt the good man.

### ALL NIGHT DETAIL HAS EXTRA BIG JOB

#### Sergeant in Charge of Burial Party Is Still Pretty Sore

He was ordered to take five men and go out into No Man's Land and bury a dead German. He picked his quintet for that pleasing bit of policing, and went out, expecting to be back in about half an hour.

The night wore on into morning, and the sergeant and his gang didn't come back. Their captain began to feel a bit uneasy. They might have been sniped off or something, and the captain didn't like the idea.

About dawn the sentry at the sallyport in the wire heard an "It's me—hurry! hurry!" returning, received the necessary password, and let them through, dirty and sore.

"Say, sir," the sergeant said in an aggrieved tone when, a little later, he confronted his captain, "you told me there was only one Hun out there. There was six—a whole squad of 'em! We've been working all night to get 'em underground!"

### MOTOR MINSTRELS PLAY FOUR NIGHTS

#### Show Is Advertised on Billboards in True American Style

"One hundred people, 30 piece orchestra, and a jazz band, together with two carloads of special scenery, gorgeous costumes, all the newest and many original songs."

So read the posters which adorned the billboards for miles about the vicinity of the Motor Transport Repair Shops, and they were regular billboard posters too. The show was scheduled to play a three-days' engagement, but popular demand necessitated a fourth performance. Reports of the first night circulated so fast—perhaps due to the fact that among those present were noticed five telephonettes (sergeants or corporals, we are at a loss to know which, but not to show our ignorance we call them all captain)—that on the second evening they started arriving in trucks, automobiles, and motorcycles (no, no, not more telephonettes, but members of the A.E.F., who were anywhere within 50 miles.)

Six days following the conception of the idea the show was put on with the aforementioned results, acclaimed by all as being one of the best, if not the best, minstrel shows they had ever attended and worth two bucks a seat; but the only change made was "be early" as the S.R.O. sign was hung out every evening at 6:30 and the curtain did not rise until eight.

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### BY WAY OF F. REWELL



The war of the Trojans and all the Greek crew  
Was fought for the sake of a fair lady who  
Went absent without leave, for weal or for woe,  
And took her permission to Paris to go.

All Greeks grasped steel helmets and trench knives and tanks  
And wheel teams and chariots and fell into ranks.  
Shipping boards gave no trouble with quarrels or slips:  
The beauty of Helen had launched all the ships.

Class A provider. Also, he is what is termed a 100 per cent man—he is a confidential orderly and never forgets a detail of instructions or routine.

#### Proud of His Raising

Here is another:  
"I never shall forget what you and papa said to me before my leaving for Camp Travis—My boy, in all your trials do not forget to be true to your country and your God; and, whatever you do, obey orders." I have been trying to do this—not only while here, but I mean to keep that in my heart throughout my life; not that I may be praised, but that people may see you and your raising in me.

That chap, a full-blooded, dark-skinned, fine-looking negro, was an undergrad in a southern college for negroes when he was drafted. Like the writer of the first extract, he is a natural leader among his fellows—one of the sort we depend on as a nucleus for good discipline in a command. This extract is likewise verbatim.

And here's another bit, thrown in for good measure—from a letter by a youngster who has rambled over the face of God's earth and learned a few things in the Big School, but is not a college man:

"Mother, I am a long way away from you, but my thoughts are always with you. Every day is Mother's Day for me, for I think of you by day and dream of you at night. Don't worry about me, for I am getting along fine."

#### Good Doctrine for Whole A.E.F.

Pretty good doctrine for all of us of the A.E.F., enlisted men or officers though we may be, to "try on." And may I query: Was any letter to Mother, homeward bound on that famous ship,

All cautioned their sweethearts that since they must go,  
To keep home hearths heated, on flirting go slow;  
For such warrior was off to the battle and strife  
To make the world safe for a good looking wife.

But they'd never have fought if they'd read Helen's note,  
Which just before leaving she hastily wrote:  
"Menelaus just entered our once happy home  
With an *overshoe* cap on the top of his dome."  
FAIRFAX D. DOWNEY, 1st Lieut., F.A.

Expeditionary Forces is proud of him, is constantly thinking of him, is anxious to hear from him. Letters home will bring many letters in reply, and the closer home ties will have potent influence for good both in France and in the United States.

"All officers should realize this fact, and help by encouraging their men and providing them with the proper facilities, do everything in their power to interest them in the vital question of writing home."

truer in its ring or tenderer in its sentiment than these three, picked at random from the outgoing mail of a 250-man company? Could any of us do better than to trim his sails according to the second sentence of that last extract?

And remember: The writers of those letters were our southern darlings—many of them descendants of black men and women brought to America in the slave ships of the forties and the fifties for which the beautiful French river city of Nantes was noted. It is a romantic circumstance that many of these fellows are here as American soldiers on French soil, offering their lives for the country whence, in less enlightened times, came those who took them from their native Africa to enslave them in the sugar-lands of the very nation to which slavery in any form is today the most abhorrent.

The men who sanctioned my making anonymous extracts from those letters are all enlisted men in Company B, Engineers. It must be added that every letter that went out from this company had enclosed with it the touching Mother's Day pamphlet distributed by the M.C.A. "THE OLD MAN."

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