

1945

January 1, 1945
Belgium

Dear Papa,

Happy New Year. These years really go by fast & the faster they go the better it is especially during the war. Surely hope the next year we will be together & celebrate. Maybe open up some of those quarts you have put away.

I received letters 16 & 19 today & surely glad to get them about the bonds. I discontinued buying them several months ago which is the reason you haven't been getting any more. I have been putting some of my money in the Quartermaster Savings, I like that plan better, as you can put in as much or as little as you want to & when ever you want to. It works like a bank. You can draw in out for any essential use & it brings 4% interest. I meant to write you before about this but it skipped my mind. As far as helping the war effort, I think the savings account does as much good as the bonds, as the Gov't still has the money, & can use it the way they want to.

I received a Xmas card today from Irvin Speckels & he enclosed a picture of himself. Thought it was real clever. Also received a Xmas card from Martha Kahanek. Don't know when I'll ever get to write all of these people & thank them. Right now, we are not provided very well for writing & the such.

Well this is about all for this time.

Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

January 7, 1945
Belgium

Dear Papa,

Well I received another Xmas package yesterday & I really have been enjoying it just a lot. Everything was in perfect condition. Thanks a lot. I also received a package of eats & shaving cream & soup, so you see Santa Claus was pretty nice. Oh, yes, I almost forget I got another nice package from Mollie Rheinstrom today. She sent me cookies, candy, a can of tuna & shrimp. I'll have my own kitchen here before long. That chow will come in handy. Now I am going to have to do some tall letter writing now. We haven't such good lighting system now. We have been using flashlights, & a kerosene lamp. I am sure you can tell by this writing that it is done in almost a daze. Hope you can make out what I am scribbling about without straining your eyes.

I got letter No. 8 yesterday & surely glad to get it. It took it quite a while to get here, but I imagine we will be getting most of our back mail now. Hope you received the package I sent sometimes in October. & I sent another one on Dec. 16th. Hope both of them arrive in good condition.

Well this will be about all for this time. Thanks again for the nice package. Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

January 12, 1945
Belgium

Dear Papa,

Will write you a V-mail for a change. There is not much going on for news right now. There is plenty of snow & more falling everyday. We have found one thing that it is very good for & that is ice cream. We take snow & mix it with some sort of canned fruit & milk & a little powdered eggs, & it makes a pretty good dish.

Haven't received any mail from home in about a week. It is probably delayed someplace. Hope it comes in soon. This is about all for this time, will write more next time. Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

January 14, 1945
Belgium

Dear Papa,

Today I received a box of pecans from the Fire Dept. Thought that was a very nice gift. Am going to try & get a letter off to them soon as I can; thanking them. Also received a Xmas card from Christine. By the way I was glad to get the address of Fred. If I ever see his outfit around will look him up. It has been quite a while since I have seen anyone from home. I didn't get any letters today. They have been coming in awfully slow, but I am sure they will be coming is soon.

We had a good dinner today. Fried chicken & it was pretty good. We have been eating two meals a day for the past month. We have coffee about nine o'clock. Then have a meal at eleven & at four o'clock have another meal. It really is better having it that way as the days are rather short now & we have found that two good meals is a lot better.

How are the cattle coming along during the winter months? I imagine you are feeding them now. Domino must be a pretty big boy now & the king of the pasture.

This isn't much of a letter, but there's not much news in the air now.
Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

January 16, 1945
Belgium

Dear Papa,

I just got back from a pass. Spent the day in Verviers & enjoyed it a lot. Got a hair cut & a good hot shower. That's really celebrating don't you think. It is a nice city about 700,000. There are some beautiful stores, one of the nicest is the Grand Bazar & it is as nice as any of the Dept. stores in the states. It has four floors & elevators & beautiful fixtures. Then there is a five & ten cent store. It is very much like our Kresge's & Woolworth's at home. & all the stores have English interpreters, & that helps a lot. I am sure, because it is awfully hard trying to get the French people to understand. They have quite a few nice cafes with orchestras. You can't get much to eat, but the beer is pretty good, not very strong, but it has a good beer taste. All these places are open until six in the evening, then everything is closed & all the civilians have to be off the streets. The soldiers can stay out until eleven or twelve & another thing they have is ice cream I really enjoyed it, three big dippers with flavoring & a cookie. So I had a pretty nice time, & am ready to go back.

I had a letter to day from Celia. She said she has been coming over to Schulenburg regular to take treatments & visits your regular.

We have electric lights in our la mazon that's home in French. I don't know if that is spelled correctly, but anyway I am surely glad we have them & don't have to use lamps anymore.

Well this is about all for this time. Surely hope I have some mail from home pretty soon.
Hope you are feeling fine & taking care of yourself. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

January 17, 1945

P.S. For some reason or another I didn't mail this letter today & glad I didn't as I have something to add.

I received another package from you today & was surely glad to see all those good eats. Everything was in good condition. Thanks a lot. I am surely enjoying it & that stationary will surely come in handy. That is exactly what I needed.

Thanks a lot.

Lovingly,
Leslie

January 22, 1945
Belgium

Dear Papa,

I just received letter no. 21 & surely glad to get it. They are starting to come in, it is a little behind time, but just let them come on old or new. I got a flock of Fayette County Records today from one of the fellows that lives near LaGrange, so I can read all about the county news which I am sure I know from the letters.

I was in town again for a day. I saw Paul & he said he got a Xmas card you all & he asked about all of you. We had a pretty nice time, all the taverns were open, so we drank a little beer; it is like water, that is no kick, but it taste a lot like beer. Most of all the places have either a music box, or some sort of orchestra, & they play all American numbers. "S. A. Rose" was one of the main ones & they really sound good. In the five & dime store they have American records for sale. They people are good business people. They know what the Americans want & do they get a price for everything. They don't have too much stock, but they have pretty nice things whatever they have. They go in a lot for fur coats, & there are some pretty ones.

I bet the store does look strange being so empty, but I am sure everyone is contending with the same thing. That is all in the game of war everything is fair.

Well this is about all for this time. Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

January 24, 1945
Belgium

Dear Papa,

Was surely glad to receive letters no. 24 & 25 & also a Nov. Issue of the Sticker. Also got a letter from Aunt Haysie. Know all of you wre glad to get through with inventory even though there wasn't much stock, but it is just the idea. Aunt Haysie said they finished theirs too & Uncle Julius was going to Dallas & try to buy a little mdse. Said they haven't seen a salesman in months. She wanted to know what happend to Mr. Bowman, he hasn't been around in such a long time. I imagine he is taking it easy now.

Was glad to hear you received the package. Surely took a long time to get there. I sent the other one Dec. 16th so hope it gets there in good condition. I just did get it mailed in time, as the Heines broke through on the 17th so they almost got part of their equipment back. We did leave the radio behind, but there is one near by that we can listen to. They say these people used to buy radios very cheap, but all they could get on them was Hitler's properganda. That was one of his ways of keeping his people fooled. The news really sounds good from the Russian front. In todays paper it stated the Russians wre 135 miles from Berlin & all the people were leaving as they were afraid of the Russians. We expect Joe Stalin to drive up to see us anyday now because he is really covering the country. We would all be glad to see him I am sure.

I had to quit for a while & have a little mid-night lunch. We have two meals a day, breakfast at 10 & dinner at 4 & you get sorta hungry around 8, so we usually have a little to eat.

What do you think of my picture? Take it out to Domino & see if he still knows me.

Well this is about all for now.

Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

January 28, 1945
Belgium

Dear Papa,

Received letter no 18 today & surely glad to get it. & I also received two issues of the "Sticker" the Dec. issues.

I don't know of a thing to write. There hasn't been much of anything going on for the past couple of days. Just a little more snow fall everyday; by spring we should have plenty of snow. The mornings are plenty cold, but the sun usually comes out during the day & it warms up quite a bit, but it is plenty hard getting out of that warm bed in the morning. We usually try & keep a fire going all night, so we can wake up in a warm place, but we have one of Hitler's stoves & can't always depend on it. We have a large tent that we live in, eight of us, & there is usually enough B.S. floating around that should keep us warm, but we probably need a little something stronger than that. I don't imagine that we will get a chance to live in houses from now on, as most of them will no doubt be blown up. If it doesn't get any colder than it has been, I am sure we will make it without any trouble. We have a fairly good lighting system; a little generator. It runs for about two hours on a tank of gas, & it puts out a bright light.

We noticed in tonight's paper, where the Russians are 125 miles from Berlin, & Stalin says he is sure his army will be in Berlin by spring, so that sounds good to me. They are near Breslian now & that is one of their target cities. We also noticed where the Americans have St. Vith that is where we were for a while & then the Heines took it during their breakthrough. They say the town is flat; not a building standing.

Well this is about all for now. Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

January 29, 1945

Didn't get this letter off this morning, so shall scribble a few more lines. Had about six inches of snow last night, but it is a lot warmer now.

When I was in town last week, I tried to locate Albert because there are a lot of outfits there & thought it might be possible that he may be there, but couldn't find his A.P.O. no. & I also looked for Fred's A.P.O. no. but they must be in some other sector. We be on the look out for them.

Belgium
January 31, 1945

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to get letters 23 & 28. So you had a nice trip to S.A. but didn't have much luck in getting any mdse. I imagine everyone is having the same difficulty, but the trip does you good. Did you see Mr. Houston? I am sure he is still the same & hanging his head.

I had another chance to go to Vernias yesterday, but didn't go because the weather a little too bad & I have been there twice this month & my pocket book was a little slim. Things are rather expensive, so I think I'll wait until next month. Meals cost around \$1.50, a shot of cognac is 75¢ & it is cut--they dilute it with water. Beer is the cheapest thing they have & about the best about 20¢. I bought a pipe. Every once in a while I take a notion to smoke a pipe, so I saw one I like & it cost \$5.70, back in the states you could get a very good pipe for that price & I got a finger nail clipper. It looks like a pretty good one & it was \$1.30. So that sorta gives you an idea what prices we pay over here, but these people always take advantage of the Americans when they go into a place, because the Americans have money & they are willing to spend it. We hear in the sectors where the British troops are the prices are about half. But I think it is worth it whatever price it is to go into a town & buy the few things you need, as there are not too many towns left over here that haven't suffered from the war such as bombing or buzz bombs, but in this place there are only a few buildings that have been bombed & the stores are real nice, a few of them are as nice as the stores in S.A. or Houston.

Have you been keep up with the news on the Russian front? We just heard on the radio they were 70 miles from Berlin. We heard part of Hitler's speech last night. There wasn't much to it as usual. He just wants the people to have more courage, etc. We have a radio now & it certainly is a lot of company to us. Hope we have better luck with this one than we had with our other one. Some of the fellows went up to where we stayed when the Heines broke through & the house where we stayed in flat with the ground. In the last group of postal card pictures I sent you, there was a picture of a rock building--two story I believe. That was our mess hall & that is one of the few buildings in the town that are still standing.

Well this is about all for this time. Hope you are feeling fine & taking care of yourself.
Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

Belgium
February 3, 1945

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to receive letter no. 29 yesterday & I also received an issue of the Sticker which was Dec. 15th. Have you sold all of your rationed prints? I imagine that is about the best way to sell it, as there are a lot of customers that will naturally try & get more than their share. We noticed in the papers where cotton materials will be very scarce this year on account of them needing so much in the Pacific, so they will probably release a little more woolens. Over here in the stores most all the materials are of wool & they have beautiful pieces. I saw some in one of the stores the other day & all they asked for it was \$7.00 a yd.

All our snow is melting now. Don't know if this is going to be the end of cold weather, it seems a little early if it is. We will probably get a real cold freeze & there will be all kinds of ice. Yesterday was groundhog day if that means anything but any way he didn't see his shadow, so we may have a little better weather.

How is the new calf? That old cow is always the first to score. It seems that she tries to set a standard for the rest of them & she is doing a good job of it.

Didn't get to finish this yesterday, as I was expecting some incoming mail but it didn't come in. It will probably catch up with us today. It started in raining this morning & now it is snowing, so you can see the weather changes here as fast as it does in Texas. It is not too cold, but quite a bit of wind.

Well this is about all for this time. Hope you are feeling fine. How are the teeth? Hope you are having them taken care of.

Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

P.S. The picture enclosed is one of a "Heinie" Soldier. You can use it on a dart board.

Letter to Miss Ruth Vogel
Belgium
February 8, 1945

Dear Ruth,

Thanks a lot for the Xmas gifts. They came just about at Xmas, & that made things seem a lot like Santa Claus time. I received some of your letters today & surely glad to get them.

Yesterday we had wash-day. We found a hand washing machine, so got busy. It will probably take them quite a while to dry, since the weather has been so damp. While we were at St. Vith, we had the civilians to do our laundry, & that was real handy. but we just as soon not have any civilians around, even though they do those things for us but we experienced something with civilians, & learned that they don't do us too much good. When the Heines broke through our lines, some of our fellows were trapped in a basement of a house, & they had an opportunity to watch some of the civilians come out in to the streets with hot meals for the Heinie soldiers, & they took the injured into their homes & gave them first aid. So that night our fellows got out of the basement & made their escape. That was quite an experience for them, as they watched the enemies all during the day & the civilians even pointed out the houses where the Americans were staying & they went into the house, went through all the equipment, but as luck was with them at that time, the Heines failed to see the trap door leading into the basement. So today we passed through that some town & we hardly knew it as every building is flat. The building we stayed in is completely gone.

We just had supper a little while ago. Had roast, spuds, string beans, & peaches. Not too bad of a meal. We only have two meals a day now since the days are so short. Have breakfast at ten, & the next meal at four in the afternoon. We usually get sorta hungry by bed time, but we make a run on the kitchen about that time, & have a mid night snack. After the days start getting longer, we will probably have three meals a day, & that will be a lot better. Hope by that time this war will be over. The news sounds fairly good. One of the things that has been holding up the armies is the weather. If it would turn a real cold, so the ground would freeze everything could get going. For the past week it has been awfully sloppy as most of the snow melted.

Well this is about all for now. Give your mother & folks my regards.

Thanks again for the Xmas gifts.

Love,
Leslie

Germany
February 12, 1945

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to receive letters 30, 31, 32, 33, & 35. That was quite a collection to get in a couple of days. Hope they continue to come through like that. Was glad to hear that you got the package, as I was a little afraid something might have happened to it since it was mailed a day before the breakthrough, but a couple of days ago one of the fellows whose home is in Chicago received a letter saying that his package arrived, so I was at ease because we mailed our packages together & it usually takes a couple of days longer to get to Texas. Was surprised to hear that the War Dept. sent one of the pictures to the "Sticker." They gave me two of them, so you should have one by this time & I sent the other one to Aunt Haysie. After the war, we should buy a Piper Cub, as you could get above the farm & look the whole place over in just a few minutes time, they you wouldn't have to do much walking. One could be landed in the pasture. They hold twelve gallons of gas, & that will keep a plane in the air for

two hours. They only have a four cylinder motor & they hold a gallon of oil. They are pretty nice planes, to be so small. They weigh around 850 lbs. & most of that weight is in the motor. They are covered with a good grade of domestic smeared with a dope. Maybe that is the reason it is so difficult for you to buy domestic.

I am sure you noticed on the heading of this letter that we are back in Germany. We are located in a very pretty section, lot of hills, & large wheat fields. We have noticed a lot of wheat in the barns that hasn't ben thrashed yet. If that were in the states now someone could certainly get a good price for it.

I am sure they have sent you all the bonds, as I figured I was supposed to have eight, as soon as I get a chance I'll go in & check on the records, as there is a record of each one you are supposed to have. You are still supposed to get an allotment check each month so in case you fail to get it let me know. What that is a class E allotment. They take \$30.00 out of my pay & send it home. Thought I'd tell you what kind of allotment it is, as there are five or six different kinds of allotments... it is a pretty good thing for any one over seas, as it makes it sorta handy for everyone.

Well this is about all for now. Hope you are feeling fine & taking care of your self. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

Germany
February 17, 1945

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to get no. 36 & also the notes from Pinky & Rip. Tell them I surely appreciated hearing from them. How is Mo Schaefer getting along? He has been having a time of it since he fell.

It seems that there is a lot activity going on around home with realestate changing hands. That shows that the town is still alive & it helps a lot as they usually improve it to some extent after they buy it.

We surely are having some nice weather now. The nights are still cold, but the days are beautiful. Only hope it stays that away now. It seems rather early for spring as I always thought it stayed real cold until spring: of course it is possible that it will turn cold again.

Haven't received my watch as yet but I imagine it will be along before very long. One of the officers here has two wrist watches, so he has been letting me use one, & it surely comes in handy.

Received a letter from the Maynes in Ireland. They wanted to send you a Xmas card, but they didn't know the address. I'm going to send it, & they will probably write you. I am sure you would enjoy hearing from them.

Well there isn't much for news now. Hope you are feeling fine & taking care of yourself.

Lovingly,
Leslie

February 18, 1945
Germany

Dear Papa,

Received my watch just a few minutes ago, & surely happy to get. It is really a nice one & it runs good. Many thanks for it. Now I won't miss any meals. It's not that, but when one gets used to carrying one you miss it a lot when you have to do with out it for a while. At times I was afraid the package might have been lost, as about one percent of the packages were lost around Xmas time.

We have been having a lite shower all day. & it is fairly warmer. If it doesn't get cold again, everyting will be awfully pretty, as all the trees & bushes are sprouting.

Have you decided to sell "Ken" yet? I think it is rather hard to keep him penned up all the time, as he likes to get out in the pasture & if you could sell him to some one with a small pasture it probably would be better. Wish you could see all the horses & cattle here that have been killed. We noticed along the roads other day where they are lying there in rows. The Heinie army used quite a few horses in their army. It is a pity seeing all those animals like that when people in other parts of the world could be getting alot of use out of them.

Well this is about all for today. Not much news stearing around now. Thanks again for the watch.

Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

February 19, 1945
Germany

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to receive letters 37 & 38 today, but sorry to hear of the sick folks at home & hope they are well by this time. This is really a bad time of the year for sickness & one has to take particular care of their selves. We wre just talking last night about how we have withstood the cold weather, but you get used to it, & it doesn't bother you at all.

I didn't think they would put my picture in the paper, but I imagine that is one of the reasons they take them. They took one of our pilots sitting at a table playing solitare. He said he hopes they don't put that one in the paper as the folks back home might get the wrong idea about the war he is fighting; incidently the plane that I was standing by on the picture was forced down & overturned a couple of days after the picture was taken, luckily no one was hurt. That snow make a nice soft place to fall into, but who likes to fall.

Had a real nice letter today from Mr. & Mrs. Henry Meyer, so when you see them, be sure & tell them that I received it, & surely glad to hear from them. I would like to write them & if I get a chance.

There is a beautiful stream of water near where we are staying. It doesn't seem to be over four feet deep, but it is very swift water, so we went down this evening & threw in a couple of little throw lines & tomorrow we'll go get the fish (maybe) but there should be some nice trout there. This part of Germany is beautiful. There are large hills all around & all kinds of streams flowing out of them. On the other side of the Rhine it is supposed to be pretty rolling country. That old Monsur Hitlet had some good country over here, but it is surely getting the Hell knocked out of it now, & now they are talking about preparing for World War III. They are nuts.

It is almost bed time so I had better bring this to a close. I want to listen to the eleven o'clock news, & hear whats cooking in the world. They give quite a bit of news from the States at that time in fact it somes directly from the States.

Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

February 23, 1945
Germany

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to receive letter no. 29 today. We had just heard that we probably wouldn't get any mail today & here comes one of the fellows with an arm full of mail, so that suited us very well.

Yesterday I was in Oachen. That was one of Germany's nice cities & you should see it now, now a good building left. They really lowered the boom to it. It will take many a day to build it up again. There is some beautiful country around there, rolling country, & the grass is pretty & green, it doesn't

seem like it had over two months of snow on it, but as soon as the snow melted, the grass was as pretty as mid spring. The roads around here have been terrible. There has been so much traffic on them, & most of these roads weren't constructed for that type of traffic, so they are really sloppy & some places the vehicle goes down over the axle. They are building what they call carduroy roads. Constructed by laying heavy logs & covering them with a carpet of heavy wire & then throwing on crushed rock. It seems that that will make pretty good roads, as least there won't be so many people getting stuck.

I am surely anxious to get my package of sausage. I know I am going to enjoy it.

I have been wondering how you have been getting along with your diet & are you having your kidneys checked every once in a while. Surely Hope you are taking the eats rather careful, especially, the starchy foods and sweets; infact they are none to good for anyone. We don't get too many sweets now & I feel a lot better, as too much of them will get the best of any person. So hope you are taking it easy on your food, as you will benefit a lot by it.

Was glad to get Buddy's letter. I imagine he is well on his way in getting started. Hope this all ends soon, so he won't be sent overseas. According to the papers, they are taking in as many now as they ever have but they do need a lot of them & one of these days soon I hope old Hitler will have a lot of visitors at his back door steps.

Well this will be about all for this time.
yourself. Tell everybody hello.

Hope you are feeling fine and taking care of

Lovingly,
Leslie

February 28, 1945
Germany

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to get letters no 40 & 41. Go no. 40 two days ago & 41 yesterday. The mail is coming in a little slow now, but we noticed in the papers where the mail service will be speeded up now since they have train service. There are regular daily schedules now. It really looks good to see the old engines puffing up the tracks. & there are a lot of U. S. engines & cars; they are all run by soldiers.

So Mr. Schaefer passed away. He was really one of the old timers around home. Did Rip get to come home. Do you ever hear about Russell? Was thinking about him the other day.

Guess who I got a valentine from today. My colored friend Sylvia Coleman. That it was cute, so be sure & tell her I got it. Is she still running her business on the hill.

I know the Demel boy was glad to get home. I knew that he had gotten injured back in France, but didn't know he was in the Hospital seven months. Did he say he was coming back over here? I am sure it would be rather hard coming back. One of our fellows got a ten day emergency furlough to the States, & got an extension of 20 days after he got home. Well just any old day they want to send us home it won't take us long to get ready, infact we stay ready, as long as I have some clothes on I'm ready, but I guess we will have to go visit Hitler first. Everything looks pretty good now & everybody thinks we are on the home stretch now.

Well this is about all for this time.

Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

March 1, 1945
Germany

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to get letter no. 43 today. We didn't think we were going to get any mail today, but just before dark a call came in that there was mail about five miles up the road, so a couple of fellows jumped in a jeep, & traveled up the muddy roads in a fairly heavy rain & got the mail. So that goes to show you how glad we are to get mail. Hope the box of sausage gets here real soon. Can taste it now.

It is too bad that you have been having so much rain around home & the farmers can't get their fields plowed. It is getting rather late now. It started raining here this morning & we surely don't need it, as a little rain puts the roads around here in bad condition & it slows up the war.

The people won't have to be cold next winter; with all the wood you having cut. I bet the pasture looks like a wood yard. The pasture should be pretty well cleared out now. I am sure it looks nice & with the rain the grass is probably coming out so before very long you won't have to feed the cattle.

We had some good roast today. The cook put a onion in the center of each roast & baked it & that really tasted good. We have been getting quite a bit of good steaks lately, infact we have been getting plenty of good chow. One of the cooks is from San Angelo, his name is Orsak, he said has an uncle living around home. Said he has one son & a 1914 Model T Ford, that was about all he knows about him, as he hasn't seen him in quite a few years.

Well this isn't much of a letter, but just a note to let you know everything alright.

Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

March 10, 1945
Germany

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to get letters 43, 45, & 46. Got the first two about five days ago & the third one this morning. Our mail has been delayed for a few days, as we have been moving so much & we haven't been able to do any letter writing. The old Heinies are really on the run now. Hope it continues that a way from here on out. Some of the towns that we went through you can see Heinie soldiers walking along the streets; everything is going so fast they miss a few here & there, but they seem to be happy that they don't have to stay up front & fight. One of our fellows said he heard one of the Heinies say he was getting married in a few days, so they must be satisfied not being with Hitler's army.

For a few days we were at one of Hitler's Schools. It was a beautiful place, built of rock, and most of the buildings are underground. They had apartments and each one had beautiful fixtures & all sorts of built in cabinets. The families must have lived there, as we noticed women's clothing & toys. They had a modern steam laundry, bowling alleys, shows, & every room in the place was steam heated, & electric lights, & it was really a beautiful place, but a great portion of it has been bombed & the soldiers going through try & tear up as much as they can. We sailed plates & dishes through the halls & found a lot of champagne glasses & threw them against the wall, just to listen to them splatter. The more property a person can ruin over here the longer it will take for them to rebuild & get ready for another war, & you should see the towns that is most of them, they are completely down to the ground.

The place where we are staying now, is an old German flying field. We are living in their barracks & when we moved in there were spuds cooking on the stove, so that shows you how fast they take off. It is really a race.

I got a letter today from Mollie. She said she had sold her home in Hallettsville. I am sure she is glad to get rid of it since she stayed in Chicago all the time.

Was sorry to hear that you had a bad cold. You will hae to take care of yourself, as it is awfully easy to catch one of those old colds, & they make one feel miserable.

I am enclosing some pictures. Maybe if you have them enlarged, they will show up much better, that is if you can have that kind of work done.

This is about all for now. Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,

Leslie

March 13, 1945
Germany

Dear Papa,

Received letters 44 & 47 & surely glad to get them. Glad to hear you are getting over your cold. Also got the package of stationary & Houston Post. They surely had some beautiful cattle at the Houston Stock Show. Wished you would have gone as know you would have enjoyed it. Of course, I guess the cattle at the Lippman are as good, only not quite as big & fat.

We are living in some of the Heinies homes now. They are fairly nice & we enjoy sleeping in their beds, that is one of the main things, a comfortable bed. There are from five to ten families in some of the houses here. They make them double up like that so we can have a place to stay. They don't like to do that very much, but this is war & they brought it on their selves.

Yesterday we went through a factory that had been bombed. They made all sorts of electric supplies for the German army & they had big store rooms full of equipment. I wish I could send some of the things home, as I know you can't get them now. There was all kinds of connections, wires & motors. All of their motors & bulbs were 220 volts, but we can't use them at home as ours is 110. We have a bunch of instruments they used for measuring, but I am not sure if we can send them home, as they are clamping down on the packages going home. I found a German barometer. I always wanted one & as we were going through one of the rubbish piles from one of the buildings that had been bombed, I found a barometer. I surely hope I can send it to you. It has to be set according to the altitude, & that can be done at any weather bureau. I'm going to find out about that as soon as possible.

This is about all for now.

Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

March 17, 1945
Germany

Dear Papa,

Well I got the package off on its way this morning. I surely hope it gets home alright. There is a stamp in the box that you might use for the store, & the barometer will probably have to be set according to the altitude & it may work the way it is set now. The rest of the things are measurements that are used for shop work. I don't believe they can be used in the States, as they use inches in Germany, & we use inches, but you all can have fun playing with them & seeing what kind of tools these Mumsers use. They are really nice & over here they have quite a value, but I don't know if they are worth much in the States, but if any one can use any of them, I'd be glad to let them use them, as I am sure they are fairly hard to get at home.

Some of the fellows found a beautiful radio. It has a phonograph & a couple hundred Heinie records & it has an attachment to make records. The other day when we were going through the factory we found a lot of chemicals & paper for making photos & one of the fellows did that kind of work in civilian life, so he is kept busy trying to figure out how to mix the chemicals & another fellow has a Heinie wagon & he is building a trailer out of it & a couple others have a Heinie car & they are taking the engine out to run the light plant. I almost forgot to tell you I got a little Spanish pistol. It's a revolver, & about eight inches long. I don't know if you can get ammunition for it here, but I am sure you can get it in the States, as they have almost all kinds of it there. I really would like to send it home, but we can't send arms like that home now, but maybe later on we will be able to.

Last week some outfit found a big brewery of cognac, & they say those soliers were really having a time. They took it out by the case & barrell, but they have guards around the place now & they ration it out. We had some of it yesterday. It's strong enough to knock a mule out. I don't care for it much. Well this is about all for this time.

Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

March 19, 1945
Germany

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to receive letter no. 49 this afternoon. Glad my letters have been coming regular & hope they continue. For a while we had quite a bit of spare time, & could write often, but for the past three weeks we have moved quite a bit & when we move, it takes up a lot of time, loading & unloading & getting things set up. Our vehicles look like jipsies with stove pipies, bed springs, radios & bdding. Now we have a Heinie trailer & that will help out a lot, but we are always picking up something to add to the load. We figure there is always room for one more thing. The other day we found a one cylinder motorcycle & we been having a lot of fund with it. They don't go as fast as the U.S. cycles, but it is really nice riding & smooth running.

We have been having beautiful weather for the past few days & surely hope it contues, as that is what we need for the war. Everything looks might good now, & it seems like it is on it home stretch. It will really be a wonderful feeling to know that this big mess is over. That it what we have been waiting for since we have been over here.

You should see the nice buildings they have in the larger towns. Modern & nice streets, but a lot of them are really getting torn up. You see big tanks sitting in the drive ways of homes. Some outfit captured a civilian laundry & now they are making the civilians to their laundry for them. That's a pretty good deal. At th house where we are staying there a flock a hns, so we have fresh eggs quite often. The civilians come there everyday to hunt eggs, cut they never find a one, they are just out of luck now, because we are right at the nest when the hen starts cackling.

Well this is about all for now. Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

Germany
March 19, 1945

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to receive letter no. 49 this afternoon. Glad my letters have been coming regular & hope they continue. For a while we had quite a bit of spare time, & could write often, but for this past three weeks we have moved quite a bit, & when we move, it takes up a lot of time, loading & unloading & getting things set up. Our vehicles look like gypsies with stove pipes, bed springs, radios, & bedding. Now we have a Heinie trailer, & that will help out alot, but we are always picking up something to add to the load. We figure there is always room for one more thing. The other day we found a one cylinder motorcycle, & we been having a lot of fund with it. They don't go as fast as the U. S. cycles, but it is really nice riding, & smooth running.

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You should see the nice buildings they have in the larger towns. Modern, & nice streets, but a lot of them are really getting torn up you see big tanks sitting in the drive ways of homes. Some outfit captured a civilian laundry, & now they are making the civilians do their laundry for them. That's a pretty good deal. At the house where we are staying there a flock a hens, so we have fresh eggs quite often. The civilians come there everyday to hunt eggs, but they never find a one, they are just out of luck now, because we are right at the nest when the hen starts cackling.

Well this is about all for now. Hope you are feeling fine & taking care of yourself.
Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

March 25, 1945
Germany

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to get letter no. 52 today. Well we are in a very beautiful part of Germany now. Right next to the river & we have been having a big time going through the river barges. They are some real nice ones, have very pretty little quarters -- just like an apartment. We built a fire in the boiler today & took a good hot shower. Yesterday we went through a soda-water factory & they have a large warehouse full of 7UP & apple pop, so we filled a jeep full & we have really been having our fill. The whole place was full of soldiers & they were having a big time. We found a couple of labels showing where they made some kind a mineral pop for some concern in Penn. They have mineral wells here & it is supposed to be very healthy. They also have some swimming pools with this mineral water & we hear some of the fellows have been going in swimming everyday -- the water is real warm when it comes out of the ground.

I am sending you a German rifle. It is all stripped because the box had to be as short as possible. There is one part missing on the stacks, but I have it now & will send it the next time I send a box home. I guess you wonder what I'll send home next. Well it is not much telling what I'll find. But those are good rifles -- they are about a 30 cal. bolt action.

Well this is about all for this time.

Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

March 29, 1945
Germany

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to get letter no. 53 & I also received the Sticker today, so I have had plenty to read for a day. We have been having a big time going through these Heinie factories. For the past two days we have been around a button factory. They made bone buttons & the scraps they used for fertilizer, then next to this building they had a factory where they made enameled buckets & electric fixtures. They had some beautiful things. We found a bunch of typewriters & adding machines, & we have two of them now. Tehy really put out some good machines. You should see the soldiers going through these places, & tearing up everything they come to. I guess when we get home, we will forget ourselves & do the same thing. ONe of the fellows was standing outside a window & shooting at a big safe trying to blow it up. I believe he found out it was empty.

Last week we found about tow hundred dozen of black & white thread no. 50. Wish I could have sent it home, as I know you could have used all of it, but we can't send commercial items home. If we could, I imagine they would have put on another fleet of ships.

The roads are full of Slave Labors. They are getting liberated from the German camp. You see French, Italina, Africans, and any one imaginable. They really seem to be happy to be free again & can be able to go home. I am sure a lot of them have been under the Germans for quite a while.

Well this is about all for this time. Hope you are feeling fine and taking care of yourself. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

Germany
April 1, 1945

Dear Papa,,

Surely was glad to receive letter no. 48 & also along with the letter was an Easter card from Sylvia Coleman. Thought it was real cute of her & thank her for me, as I hardly believe I get to write her any time soon, as we are traveling across Germany at a rather rapid speed as you are noticing from the news. Everything looks might good now & if they keep on going like they have in the past weeks this war might end before long. The German soldiers are giving up by the hundreds. We saw at least 20 truck loads of them today. & you can see them walking around these towns just waiting from some American to take them as prisoners. Yesterday morning about seven o'clock four German soldiers walked up to our area & went to the kitchen & asked the cook to take them as prisoners, so he said he didn't have time to fool with them, as he had to fix breakfast, so he searched them & told them to wait until someone got up, & they would take them to the collection station. That is the way they feel about the war.

I am sending another box from home. It has part of the stock from the first rifle I sent & there is a German 22 rifle, a flag, a compass from a Heinie plane & a part of a Heinie parachute. All of you will have enough material to make scarfs or drawers & some arm bands for all of you. So if any one uses the rifle just inform them to be careful, as I wouldn't want any one to get hurt with it.

I hope this letter reaches you about the time of your birthday & here's wishing you a Happy Birthday & lets hope we will be able to celebrate it together before very long. I would at least like to send you a Birthday Card, but none of Hitler's stores have any kind of cards for sale now, but this little note will have to serve the purpose for the time being.

Well this is about all for now. Hope you are feeling fine & taking care of yourself. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

April 5, 1945
Germany

Dear Papa,

I received the package of sausage yesterday in good condition & talk about good eating. Well it was a real treat, it really tasted good & we ate the last hunk this morning. All the fellows enjoyed it a lot & they said they were coming to visit me after the war if they could get food like that. Was glad to get the films. Maybe I'll be able to snap a picture of Hitler, & I enjoyed the stick candy & know I'll enjoy the story book, so thanks a lot for the nice box. Everything was really nice & enjoyed it a lot.

I received letter 57 yesterday & surely glad to get it. The mail man was real good to me yesterday. I bet that income tax is a big pain in the neck & only hope that it does some good. I read an article in a magazine last night about the object of that report & it seems that they want to let the merchants have the same amount of mdse. they bought in 43. So it remains to be seen how it will turn out.

Tell Pinkie I was glad to get her note, & hope to be back soon so I can make my daily visits to the bakery shop.

Well this will be about all for this time. It is about time to go to bed, as we are getting up early in the morning & moving. Wish we would move all the way to Berlin.

I am enclosing some marks for all of you. We got paid today in German marks. I don't know what they paid us in German money for because we can't buy anything in Germany.

Hope you are feeling fine & taking care of your self. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

April 7, 1945
Germany

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to get letters no. 51, 54, 55, 59. That is really getting the mail isn't it? Surely glad to hear that everything is coming along alright. I am sure you are busy now with all the calves being born. It is good to have an early crop like that & how are the non rationed shoes coming along. I can imagine about what quality they are & how they look & most of all how they wear. The farmers will have to work in the fields barefooted. Why don't you make some wooden shoes out of those big trees you have at the farm. You already have a pattern of a pair I sent you from France. It really is a problem, but what can you do, if you can't get them. It is not your fault. So you have some hay to store in the barn. It is pretty early for that, but I am sure it will make good feed stuff as it is tender & this is a much better time of year to work with it since it is not so hot. Surely hope you don't get out there & work. Hire two or three, or four fellows to take care of it for you.

I got a letter from Margaret. She said her Dad sold his business Feb. 1st so she is working in the bookkeeping dept at Levy's. I also got a letter from Mrs. Frank Schlinder. She said she goes by the store every time she is in town to find out if you had heard from me. She said she had just received several letters from D.J. Be sure & tell her I was surely glad to hear from her. I would like to answer her letter, but we move so often & we haven't too much spare time.

Today we went into a town that the Heines just left yesterday & we went into one of their supply rooms & of all the equipment they left could supply a couple thousand men. They left their guns, a lot of them were still cased the way they came from the factory & plenty of shoes. I know you could have sold every pair that was there.

I was talking to a Russian this morning. Said his home was in Moscow & he had been working as a Slave for two years in Germany. He really had no love for them. Said he used to play football with them, & he would kick the H--- out of them every chance he had. He & his wife were pulling their belongings in a little wagon. They seemed to be happy to be free again. His mother lived in Hassel, so they were going there.

Well this will be about all for right now.
yourself. Tell everybody hello.

Hope you are feeling fine and taking care of

Lovingly,
Leslie

Germany
April 14, 1945

Dear Papa,

Received letter 56, 58, & 60 & surely glad to hear from home. They home town is getting into the big time stuff with people jumping out of windows, but that is a rather foolish thing for anybody to do.

This is the first day in the past week that we have had any time to do any writing. We are just like a circus at a different position every night. We have really covered a lot of Germany in the past few days, but now we will probably stay here for a while. We have been meeting a lot of Polish & Russians that have been in Germany as Forced Laborers & they are certainly happy now to be free. Yesterday we saw three drunk Russians on a motorcycle & talk about a show, well they were really putting one on. In one of the towns we were in a couple of days ago we were watching them break into a Dry Goods store & everyone of them came out with new shoes & a new suit on. Then there was a silk factory a little ways out of town & there was big warehouses full of rolls of silk, there must have been at least fifty yds of material to each roll & each person was carrying two or three rolls. They'll have enough material to last them the rest of their days & it was real pretty. I would have like to have sent some of it home, but these people really deserve it, as some of them have been over here working for the past five years & all they would get to eat was a little soup & a piece of bread. I was talking to a Russian man yesterday; he talked German very good & he said he has a wife and three children & hasn't heard from them for three years. There is one organization over here that has three Russians, & they took them to a store & dressed them up in new clothes & got them an automobile, so they are going along with the organization until they get to the Russian front. They painted a big sign on the car "Joe Stalin's Forward Command Post."

We heard of the President's death yesterday morning, & surely sorry that he couldn't have lived to see this war end. Wonder what kind of President will Truman make? When we first heard of the President's death, we wondered if it really was true, as the German propaganda stations put out reports like that every once in a while, but we heard it again over one of the allied stations, then we knew it was true & last night someone was listening to a propaganda program & they announced it too.

Well this is about all for today. Hope you feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

Germany
April 17, 1945

Dear Papa,

Surely glad to get letter no. 61 yesterday. Hope by now all of the O.P.A. business has been straightened out. I imagine it was a pain in the neck, but lets hope it will do some good. I have noticed a couple of articles in the papers about the system, & it sound as if it is a pretty good plan.

We had a real summer day here today & it felt might good, hope it stays that a way for a while. The place where we are staying has a couple of small locomotives, so we built a fire in it & got it to running & rode all over the area, had lots of fun until the steam ran out.

You should have seen these Russians & Polish here yesterday. There are about fifteen steers around here so they kill a couple of them, they said it is the first meat they have had in three years, & they are really having a feast. It sounds like St. John. One of them came up today & asked if he could have a steer, so we told him to help himself to the Heinies cattle. Some of the fellows went out & killed three deer, so we had them for supper today. They have real small deer over here, look like rabbits. We heard today there were some soldiers out hunting rabbits & about thirty Heinie soldiers came running out of the woods to surrender. They had a pretty good hunt.

Well this is about all for this time. Hope you are feeling fine & taking care of yourself. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

April 21, 1945
Germany

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to get letter no. 62. The letters are coming in fairly regular now, & hope they continue. Our mail is traveling a little further into Germany all the time, so maybe before very long, we will get our mail in care of Hitler's address.

For a couple of days we were close to one of the German Laborer camps. There were people there from Russia, Poland, France, & Italy, so we went over & had a big time. Most of the people worked in the factories & last Sunday was the last day they worked. The Americans came in Sunday morning & closed all the factories around. The Germans & Italians didn't have it quite as bad as the others. They had to march to & from work evryday, which was five miles away. If they missed a days work, they were put in a separate group where they got very little to eat & slept on the floor & they stayed in this group for two months. They had guards with them all the time. Eight of them slept in a small room, went to bed at nine o'clock & got up at five. So they are really happy now. They are wishing the war would end soon, so they will be able to go home. We found a pretty little Ford car in an apartment garage so we drove it around a little & left it over at the Polish people, so if they can get some gas maybe they will be able to ride to Poland. While we were at one of Heinie airports, some Frenchmen drove up in a German car & put a 50 gallon drum of Heinie gas in the car & took off for Paris. That would be about seven hundred miles if they made it.

Well this is about all for now. Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

April 25, 1945
Germany

Dear Papa,

Just a few lines to let you know everything is coming along honkey dorey. Haven't received any mail from home for the past week. Guess they have been bringing up the supplies instead of the mail, but I imagine it won't be very long before we will be getting a little mail. I did receive the Sticker yesterday, so I have had a chance to read a little news from home.

We are living in a real nice home now. It is a three story building, hot & cold running water, electric lights, & we are really enjoying it. But you should hear the people that own the house they are mad at us, they had really liked to have the Heinie soldiers there but we told them their lucky the Russians didn't come through their sector, because the Russians don't have pity on anybody.

How is everything coming along at the farm? I imagine the grass is starting to come out pretty now & how is Domino coming along? Bet he is getting to be a big boy.

How has the weather been at home? It is still a little cool here during the night but it gets warmer during the day. The place where we are staying has a big park near by so we have a nice place to walk around, & directly across the street from our house is a large Heinie Soldier hospital & we watch them walk around with their girl friends, some of the Heinies are really bunged up.

Well this is about all for this time hope you are feeling fine & taking care of yourself. tell everybody hello,

Lovingly,
Leslie

April 28, 1945
Germany

Dear Papa,

Surely glad to receive letters 61, 64, 65, 66 & 67. Really got a load of them this time & along with the letters I got a package from Reichman's. Sent some real good home-made cakes, candy, gum, & tooth paste. Was a very nice box. Was glad to hear that the report was just about a thing of the past and only hope it proves to do so some good. I imagine it will take things like that to get this world straightened out.

I am sure you heard that the Americans & the Russians have linked up. They are only a short distance from where we are & you should see how worried these people are. They are wondering if the Russians will come here & occupy this part of Germany. The lady who owns the house where we are staying comes here ceryday to get something; she uses that for an excuse, what she really come for is to findout if the Russians are coming, I always tell her it is a good chance that the Russians will be here & you should hear her. She is scared to death of them, & if they come she is leaving & everyone of them says the same thing. This ladies husband is a captain in the German army, so she had better get her little "twatt" a moving when "old Joe's" boys come. I asked her why they didn't boot Hitler out when he first started all of this mess, & she said if the people would do or say anything they would either get hung or locked up. Now the Americans are here & they say the Americans are good people, so I asked one of them if they said that before we got here? I bet they did. To hear these people talk & feel sorry for their self is a regular joke & makes one laugh, because all these years they have been living over here & then let a man like Hitler come in & tear up everything.

Well this is about all for now.

Hope you are feeling fine & taking care of yourself. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

P. S. The pictures enclosed were taken when we were on the Rhine.

Czechoslovakia
May 5, 1945

Dear Papa,

Surely glad to get letter no. 68 several days ago. Wanted to answer it sooner than this, but we made a very long move, & today is the first day we have really gotten settled to where we have a chance to write. I also received a letter from Mrs. Schlinder. She wrote me a very nice letter. Tell her I surely was glad to hear from her. She said J.J. was still in Germany.

I imagine you will be rather surprised to hear that we are in Czechoslovakia. Where we are the people all speak German, but that all seem very friendly, & glad that we are here. We went into one of their homes this afternoon & the man brings in a big hunk of ham & bread & asked us to eat, but we couldn't eat those poor peoples food, since they get so little of it, & we get our fill of American chow. Most of the people around here seem to be rather poor. It is a sort of agriculture country, but awfully hilly. It is good pasture land, but they have ditches dug all through the pasture for the water & when you walk, it seems like you are on sponge. It is a lot like Ireland. I would like to go a little further into this country, as there some beautiful cities here, but I had rather see this war end, which it seems like it will do at almost any time. The news sounds very good no, with Hitler dead. This thing is ending fast now. We just heard a special news cast that northern Germany & Switzerland's German troops have surrendered, so all that is left now is this part over here & that is only a matter of time. Now when this is over hope Russia declares war on Russia, & everybody thinks they will. We are really sweating this out now. We have three Heinie radios & we keep one hot all the time just waiting for the news.

Well this is about all for now. Hope you are feeling fine & taking care of yourself. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

Czechoslovakia
May 12, 1945

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to get letters 68 & 71, & glad to hear that you received the packages. I have a few more things to send & will try & get them off one of these days. Well the war is over, over here, & we have been having a nice time since we have been here. These people have been wonderful to us. They can't do enough for the Americans. The first day we got here we met one of the butchers up town. He is a fellow that weighs about 250, he looks like a real butcher, & he invited four of us to his home & you should have seen the spread he & his wife put on the table for us. All kinds of sausage & meats, bread beer, cognac, cigars & cigarettes. We ate until we couldn't any more. & any thing we wanted he said it was at all possible he would get it for us.

We are staying in a beautiful apartment & some of the people still live here in the same building. They made a big pot of potato salad for us today & it was real good homemade salad & yesterday they made a bunch of cakes for us & they keep the place spotless. Every morning a man comes in our apartment & cleans the bath room & asks us if he can do anything else for us. & the children are really cute. Every night they have a big singing jamboree & a dance & do they raise the roof. They are enjoying their self now for the first time in six years. While the Heinies were here they weren't allowed to sing or hold church services in their churches. They had to slip around to someone's basement in a private home & hold their services, but you should see these people, they are like they have just gotten out of a jail. When we first got into this town, a woman came running up to us with some flowers & kissed us & told us how glad she was we were here.

Am glad I am going to get some more films. I have been taking quite a few pictures. I bought some from a photoshop yesterday. I have a Heinie camera now. I had a little radio & I traded it for a 120 camera. Thought I had rather have another camera, as we have two other radios & there is a radio in the apartment where we are staying. Well this is about all for this time. Hope you are feeling fine & taking care of yourself. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

May 13, 1945
Czechoslovakia

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to get letters no. 70 & 73 yesterday. Well we are really having some real old good summer weather now. That old sun is about as hot as it is at home now I imagine. We got to see some of the Russian soldiers a couple of days ago. They were camping about a block from us, so we went over to see them. They are really some big boys & plenty rought looking. They had quite a few of our trucks, Fords and Studebakers. The civilians here in town had beer for the Russians, so we went over to help them drink it. They were all glad to see the Americans, but we couldn't hold very much of a conversation. I took some pictures of some of them & I should get them back a day or so, & I'll send them home, & you can see if the "Ruskies" have changed much in their looks. By the way, they have women traveling along with them. They use them as radio operators.

They are having a dance for us tonight, so will have to take it in. I can't remember the last time I was at a dance. I believe it was in England & that has been almost a year. Doubt if I'll be able to "shoffle" my no. elevens around any more, but I'll give it a try.

Well this is about all for now. It isn't much of a letter, but I'll write again in a few days.

Hope you are feeling fine and taking care of yourself. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

P. S. Tell Tubby I was glad to get her note.

May 16, 1945
Czechoslovakia

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to receive letters 72, 74, 75, & 76 & Pinkies note. Tell her to be sure & keep the beer on ice so we can have cold beer when I get home. Thought the picture of you were very good. You see to be holding your own in weight & look well. I am enclosing some pictures of some of your Russian Langeman. Maybe you will recognize some of them. There are still a few of them around here. They have a large building up town with Joe's picture on the front & decorated with flags & banners.

We had a nice time at the dance. They also had a Czech band & we had a lot of fun dancing the polskas. They have a beautiful dance hall & it seemed like the whole city turned out, there was really a crowd there. Saw two pretty good shows the other day. "Way Down in Indiana" a race horse picture & "Follow the Boys." Most all of the people ask when will they be able to see a Hollywood movie. During normal times they used to get Czech pictures from Hollywood, but for the past six years while the Heinies were here, they were not allowed to have them.

Was sorry to hear about the colt getting cut. How is he getting along now.

Well this isn't very much of a letter, but there isn't much news right now to write about so will have to close.

Hope you are feeling fine & taking care of yourself. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

Pilsner, Czechoslovakia
May 22, 1945

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to get letter no. 77 & I also got an issue of the "Sticker", so I am pretty well up on the news around home.

I am sure you have been wondering what part of Czechoslovakia we are at. It is the famous beer city, Pilsner, but you can't get very much beer now. There are a few places up town that have beer several times a week & usually get a couple of kegs during the week. One of the places is run by a Russian, he has about the best, as it is good & cold. When we first got here we found big kegs of Cognac, but it was so strong it would eat the lining out of your mouth. I didn't like that at all. The Skoder works is also here, but it is almost completely wrecked from the bombing. They made all sorts of war supplies there. I have seen several signs around here advertising Baata shoes. We used to get shoes from there. The factory is not very far from here.

Last week the weather was awfully hot, but it started to rain yesterday & it has cooled off quite a bit now.

In the apartment where we are staying, the lady made us some kolaches & they were real good & a couple of days ago she made us some dumplings. She is a real good cook. They haven't much sugar & milk, so we managed to get her some. Since we have been here they have been eating with us & they

think our food is wonderful, especially the white bread. They can only get the old black bread. It is like leather.

Well it is about time to go to bed. Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

May 23, 1945
Dal Lukarwitz, Czechoslovakia

Dear Papa,

Two big fat letters came in this morning, no. 78 & 79 & surely was glad to get them. So you are busy at the farm having the hay cut. Hope you have had good luck with it & didn't get any rain on it. Was sorry to hear about the colt's hoof. It surely must have been a bad cut. Hope he is getting along alright now. Am sure old Ken was happy to get out in the pasture since he was penned up so long.

Well I guess one of the main subjects of discussions are the points. It is the same thing here, everyone is talking about the points he wished he had so he could go home, & accumulate a few more points if you get what I mean. I have seventy points now & we got another battle star, but it hasn't been counted & we haven't heard if it will be added to our points since all the points are frozen now. Doesn't this make you think of the O.P.A. instead of shoes or pants being frozen, our points are frozen. The fellows that are getting out now have been in four or five years, & those that have children. I guess it is fair, but everyone wants to go home & they have to have some sort of system since there are so many people over here. Everybody seems to think that the Division will get to go home since it had so much combat time. It had over 290 days in direct contact with the enemy. So the only thing we can do now is wait & see what will happen. Someone just walked in & said we have two more stars & they will be counted, of course that is not official, but we surely hope they will be figured in with our other points.

This morning we saw about thirty German trucks full of Heinie Soldiers coming out of the woods. All their communications were disrupted & they were probably at a place that was cut off, & they didn't hear the war was over until now. You can see them coming in everyday & also civilians -- they bring them in by the hundreds every day. The other day when I was in town I saw a Czech policeman driving a Heinie soldier up the street & the soldier must have gotten smart with the policeman because he hit him across the head with a rifle. They surely don't fool with them.

Well this is about all for now. Hope you are feeling fine and taking care of yourself. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

Dalni Lukawitz, Czechoslovakia
May 29, 1945

Dear Papa,

Surely glad to get letters 80 & 81 & also the school papers. Some of the news I enjoyed reading & some wasn't too pleasant to read, but during war times that is what there is to be expected.

How are the robberies coming along, are they still on the "loose." I never heard of that many robberies at home in such a short length of time. Whoever it may be knows just who has the money, & where to go & get it. Hope he or she has been caught before this time. Wish it were possible for me to send you some sort of pistol to have around, but we can't send any kind of arms now, but maybe the piece of pipe you have will do the trick as well as a gun.

Was glad to hear that you got your hay put up with out having rain. Know you are glad to have that job finished, as it is a hot one. Maybe I'll be home to help with the next cutting, so you had better get the old rake greased up good with plenty of 3H oil.

A family invited us up to their home Sunday to eat kolaches & were they good. If these people have anything we are certainly welcomed to it. The butcher that I told you about in one of my letters gave us two long lengths of sausage yesterday. So last night we boiled two dozen eggs & we had a feast. We go around to the farm houses & trade eggs for cigarettes. They are crazy about American cigarettes, & chocolates. They said they haven't had any chocolates for six years & they have forgotten how it tastes. They are starting to open some of the stores in the towns around here, & they have almost nothing for sale. The food stores have bread, salt meal & a few things like that. I went into a drygoods store in Pilsin the other day & all they had in the store was six mattress covers, so these people have a problem on their hands too. They have most of the street cars running in Pilsin now, a lot of the tracks were bombed out & they have the German Prisoners doing the heavy work, getting the debris cleared away & the holes filled.

Well this is about all for now. Hope you are feeling fine & hope to be seeing you soon.
Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

Dalni Lukawitz, Czechoslovakia
June 2, 1945

Dear Papa,

Surely glad to get letter no. 83, & glad to hear that you got some of the pictures & hope you have gotten the others. I have some more at the film shop in Pilsen, & but they weren't finished, so Gurst went back this afternoon & hope they will be finished, so I can send them home. You were wondering how we speak to these people. Well, Gurst speaks Czech good, & most of these people speak German as they had to learn to speak German during the four years the Heinies were here, so I can get along fairly well with the ones that speak German. All the children here speak German, as they taught them German in school, so now they are opening the schools again, & they are going to teach them Russian. We have met quite a few people that speak American. Most all of them want to learn to speak American, as they all want to go to America some day.

Tell Leon I went to the Burgemeister (the mayor) & had him write a Czech letter to the folks in Prague, & asked them to either write to Leon, or me, & I'll forward the letter on home. The street address has been changed, & he knew what it had been changed to, I sent the letter registered, & had to send it through the Czech Postoffice, as there is no M.S. Postal service to Prague as the Russians occupy that part of Czechoslovakia now, & no Americans are allowed to enter Prague. I would really like to go there, & visit as it was a beautiful city, but we are not allowed to go anyplace around there. I asked about sending mail to Poland, but the Russian are there too as you know & as much as I could find out there is no postal service as yet. They have a little different way of operating than we have, & that makes it rather hard to deal with them. They have a Russian Headquarters in Pilsen, & you see them walking around. They were even at our dance having a big time. I left my address at the postoffice so if a letters is written to me they will put in the army mail & it will be delivered to me.

Well this is about all for now.

Hope you are feeling fine, & taking care of yourself.
Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

P.S. Have the 3 negatives developed. The photographer failed to give me the pictures. 2 of them were taken in the first Czech town we came to. The one of the German truck was taken as they were coming in to surrender. Notice the white sheet hanging over the radiator which shows that they want to surrender.

June 4, 1945

Dialni Lukawitz, Czechoslovakia

Dear Papa,

Received the two issues of the "Short Horn" & also the films, & surely glad to get them.

How is everything coming along at home? I imagine you are having plenty of hot weather now & that is probably what the farmers need. It has been real hot here for the past couple of days & hope it stays that away now.

According to all the reports we have been hearing, we should be in the States in July. That seems almost too good to be true. We are getting all ready now, & if nothing happens we will be on our way before very long.

We went to see our butcher friend the other night & you should have seen the spread he put out for us. Sausages, Cognac, wine, beer. We stayed there until after one o'clock in the morning, then when we left he gave us along link of sausage, so we ate it the next day with eggs. Last night we boiled 4 dozen eggs & four of us ate about 3 doz of them hard-boiled. We have really been eating the eggs.

Well this is just about all for this time.

Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

Dalni Lukawitz, Czechoslovakia

June 6, 1945

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to get letters 82 & 84, but sorry to hear that your arm was giving you some trouble. Hope that it is well now. No doubt it is caused from some of your teeth & you would probably be better off to have them pulled, as they can cause one a lot of trouble.

Well we are still sweating out our turn to go to the States. They days can't pass fast enough now. Everyone is wondering what camp we will be at most everyone thinks we will to Camp Shanks, NY & from there go to the respective induction centers, but we have a little time to see how it all comes out, but we are supposed to get a 30 day furlough. It really doesn't make to much difference what camp they take us to as long as we are in the U.S.A.

Hodges was in La. in 42. I don't know if he came through at the same time we did or not. I hardly believe he did. We saw in the paper where he had gotten back to the States.

We have also been noticing in the papers where there is quite a food problem in the States, so I guess we will have to start a large Victory garden. It is quite a problem over here, as there are so many civilians to feed in all these countries. Everyday, we see truck load after truck of people being hauled back to their homes & all these people must be fed. I am enclosing some ration stamps that they used over here. They are not any good now & think they are issuing their own stamps now.

Well this is about all for now. Hope you are feeling fine & taking care of yourself.

Lovingly,
Leslie

June 11, 1945
Kauto, Czechoslovakia

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to get letters 84, 85, & 86. Wish we could send you a little of the rain we have been having here for the past week. It is a real summer rain. These people are cutting their hay meadows now. I have never seen people spend so much time with hay like these people do. They cut it by hand, then turn it over a couple of times during the day, then put it in small piles for the night, & then the next day spread it out & turn it again. They put a lot of work in it, but it has a pretty green color when they get through with it. In this part of the country the hay is one of the biggest crops they have.

They asked us today what camp we wanted to go to after getting to the States to begin our furlough, so Fort Sam is the closer to home for me. You probably know as much about the score points as we do. I am in hopes that they will drop the critical score. They are supposed to release that within the next 2 or 3 weeks. According to the papers they think the critical score will be below 85 & we surely hope it is as it will help a lot of us.

We are still eating eggs. Last night we boiled seventy of them & eight of us ate all of them & a loaf of rye bread. We can get a five lb. loaf of bread for 10 cents. That's fairly cheap & it tastes good. Yesterday a fellow brought us a big dish of strawberries & cream. They have the little wild berries & they are real good.

Tell Mac if I ever run across a scope I'll save it for him, but is very doubtful if I can get one now, as they are supplying the Czech Army with all the arms they can possibly get. But if I have a chance to get one I'll do so. I'll have also been on the lookout for a rifle, but they are using all of them now, but probably after all of this is cleared up over here, we will probably be able to get them back home.

Well this is about all for now. Hope you are feeling fine & taking care of your self.

Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

P.S. Has Leon heard from Prague yet? The letter I sent hasn't come back yet, so do doubt they received it.

June 15, 1945
Kauto, Czechoslovakia

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to get letter no. 87 several days ago. Hope you have had some rain as it must be awfully dry. We are still having showers almost everyday & it has been fairly cool. A jacket feels comfortable. Did you go to Miriam's wedding? She surely looked pretty on the picture. I am sure they had a nice affair.

Well probably the next letter you will be from me will be from France. We are going to be there for a while, we do not know exactly how long, but that is where we get prepared & equipped to move to the States. We don't know if we will leave directly from France or to England first to leave from there. I was in hopes that we would fly back, but I doubt if we will. That would be a nice trip by plane & it only takes about 18 hours. If we go on the Queen Elizabeth or Mary it takes 4 or 5 days & that isn't bad. It will be a much nicer trip than coming over, as it took 10 days & the North Atlantic was pretty rough & the weather was cold a couple of days. Any way we go back I am sure everybody will be satisfied, but of course the faster the better.

I saw Paul yesterday, & he asked how all of you were. He is getting along fine & is glad he is going home too. He has the same number of points I have, so we are in hopes we will have enough when the time comes. We haven't or I should say they haven't added our last 2 stars to our score & we are in

hopes they will count them after we get in the States & then lower the score below 85. The papers say the score will be lowered a little below 85, so I hav my fingers crossed. That is what we are hoping & talking about. It is just like an election. A person can't tell how allof this will turn out, but everyone with points from 70 to 80 feel pretty good about the whole thing, as they are talking a lot about dropping the score.

This is about all for now.

Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie

June 20, 1945
Sommesons, France

Dear Papa,

Surely was glad to get letters 88 & 89 along with letters from Ruth & Tubby. Today is first day in a week we have gooten any mail. We are back in France now, had a nice trip going through Germany although it was hot & dusty. Saw some very pretty country, the poppies are in full bloom in France now, & they really look beautiful. The part of France where we are now is hot & dry. We don't know how long we will be here. We haven't heard anything as yet, but this is supposed to be the first step in going home. Last night we were near Nancy, France. We stayed at very nice camp run by Heinie Prisoners. They do all the cooking & keep up the whole camp. They are putting them to some good use, in fact they are working them all over this country; cleaning up the debris from the war & also exploding the mines.

So you are having some land cleared, that is a good idea. I think having it done with machinery as it has every advantage over having it done by hand. Hope it has rained, as it must be awfully dry. That makes it rather rought to have such a drought this time of year.

This is about all for today.

Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly,
Leslie