

1944

All my Sergeants are darn good...

A year in the life of Brame P. Morrison

(as told to his mother)

Introduction

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1944

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Battle of the Bulge. Morrison captures the feeling of his times. I have done my best to duplicate his abbreviations, sentence structure and punctuation—and even his occasional typos.

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Edited by B. Perry Morrison, Jr.

Northern Ireland
December 6, 1943

Dear Mother,

I've been expecting to hear from you everyday for the past week, but haven't gotten any letters from you. I've got a card from Mary Fort, and one came today from the Women's Auxiliary of the church signed by M. I haven't gotten any more packages since the one from Henderson. One never knows when they'll come.

Introduction

Brame P. Morrison was inducted into the U.S. Army in 1942. He was thereafter identified as a candidate for Officer Candidate School (OCS) and left his unit to travel to La Crosse, Wisconsin. He graduated with his class and was commissioned a Lieutenant.

As a supply officer, Morrison was responsible for keeping his battalion well-stocked with clothing, food, water and ammunition. The following letters describe his experiences just prior to and during the year 1944, leading up to D-Day and ending with the Battle of the Bulge in January 1945. Attempting to recapture the feeling of his times, I have done my best to duplicate his abbreviations, sentence structure and punctuation—and even his occasional misspellings.

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--Ed.

Northern Ireland
December 6, 1943

Dear Mother,

I've been expecting to hear from you everyday for the past week, but haven't gotten any letters from you. I've got a card from Mary Fort, and one came today from the Women's Auxiliary of the church signed by Ms. Lea. I haven't gotten any more packages since the one from Henderson. One never knows when mail will come.

We have rented a radio, and these American songs & programs really sound good. Life is a great deal more pleasant with it. Hearing things from home feels your heart with joy. Besides home programs, American songs dominate the British programs. We are going to try to get "Lord Haw Haw" later on tonight. We heard a program by Bob Hope earlier this evening.

I finally got down to Belfast last weekend. It's sort of a little Chicago – plenty of night life and glamour girls. Irish style, but I'm all for the USA. I don't go for Irish girls.

You folks at home really don't know what a great and wonderful country the U.S. is. I had a bath today – the first in ten days – merely because of lack of facilities and finding warm water when I got a chance to bathe. We are getting accustomed to things but, nevertheless, the U.S. is the place for me.

I've got to stop now for tea with the folks. I'll finish later.

(Change of pen – different color ink). It's about an hour later now, and I'm listening to "Lord Haw Haw." The radio just cut him off in the middle of a sentence, so I guess there's a raid in Berlin. According to the papers, they are flattening the city. Whether bombing will weaken the Germans is a matter of conjecture. It will take ground forces to conquer them, though, and we are here. The meeting of the U.N. leaders may have some outcome, but from my observation, the democracies are softening up a bit. We can't win the war with threats of force; we must attack soon and let the Germans feel the force of our power. Better to lose a few more lives now to eliminate a German threat to world peace in the future than to give them a breathing period to gather their reserves again and scourge the world in ten more years with the hot fire of the rule by sword, which is the only rule which a German can comprehend. "Peace will not exist in Europe by democratic but wishful thinking." It will take two generations of education in different thoughts of living and social and economic rehabilitation. Economic conditions are the underlying source of political unrest. The "export or die" necessity of national self-preservation breeds cartels & monopolies, state-control, the subjection of individuals in economic poverty within the state to provide an exportable "surplus" to maintain a balance of trade against those items which must be imported – food is the number one item. Economists must write the peace – not warlords or politicians. Finding the economists is our Herculean task. European and British economists can't do the job, since they are first of their own nation, and are not internationally minded. German

minds must certainly be considered, since they are too smart a race to be ignored. Hitler, with all his methods, is but the brute expression of a fact to which the thinker can find no solution: to-wit, the proper racial and geographic allocation of the resources of Europe. The impossibility of national trade since every race or nation must "get" more than it "gives" plays hob with geography and Mother Nature in a world of transportation and knowledge. Europe just grew up too slow. Small (as a nation) groups of people happened to be confined to small areas bounded by peninsulas, rivers, mountains, etc. and had the misfortune to develop racial characteristics and ways of thinking that gave them the idea they were "God's chosen children" to have a sovereignty of their own to determine the rules under which they would live as it suited them. Thus, we have in Europe a great number of races, but no nations fit to rule as such. The bully British by force of being an island have become extroverted as the other races have become introverted. Thus, they have acquired, in other portions of the globe, the qualities of a nation, all the while, keeping Europe from coming under one rule.

I could write on all night and make this a politico-economic thesis, but I'd better close and go to bed. Someday perhaps, I may be in a position to expound to a larger audience. Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

Northern Ireland
December 10, 1943

Dear Mother,

Your letters have at last started coming through. I received two today and one yesterday – dates – November 2nd, 15th, and 22nd. The November 2nd and 15th ones came last. No doubt from my letters, you wondered why I haven't answered any questions or commented on your news in certain letters. However, since later letters sometimes catch the fast plane and get here first, it's sometimes confusing in the answers you get, but with all three of these letters in, I can let you know a few things you asked.

But first, let me tell you that airmail is, without a doubt, the fastest and the most satisfactory communication and, in that respect, the envelopes with borders and of thin paper of the type the P.O. sells always travels airmail and get here fastest. For instance, I received your letter of November 22nd one day before of November 2nd in a plain envelope with two 3-cent stamps. Use both airmail envelopes and stamps, if you don't use the P.O. envelopes, to guarantee fast delivery.

And now to answer questions:

My cable address is "AMUBAC CHarming". The address I first told you is incorrect,

can do, now.

Now yours of the 29th – I'm glad to hear that they finally cleared up that old bond deduction. It is now correct -- \$12.50 was deducted for four months (\$50.00) making me due 2-\$25.00 bonds and \$12.50 cash; so all is okay. I was glad to get the store's figures for the month of March, but I still haven't got what I want. I've got to know how much of the store's earnings have got to be charged to me – my one-quarter partnership share of the earnings on which I pay tax. Dad absolutely had to get the figures up to pay his own tax, and it's as simple as ABC. Just say,

“Dear Brame,

The store's net profits for 1943 were \$ _____, divided as follows:

$\frac{3}{4}$ MSM \$ _____
 $\frac{1}{4}$ BPM \$ _____”

I don't want Edward Joyner or anyone to make out my income tax reports – all I want to know, my dear, is how much of the store's profits are chargeable to me?

It's too bad about all the men from home having to leave for the Army and, oh my, all those dear little Air Corps & A.A. men that have been put in the rough old infantry!: Ain't it awful? No glamor, no air medal (5 routine flights), no soft life, no fast promotion – why, it's not even American – sort of Russian you might say, but who's running the war?

I've been working pretty hard the last few days. It doesn't get dark now till about ten. We are not so “busy” but I've been on the go myself. Today is Good Friday and Sunday is Easter but I'm afraid I won't slow down a great deal. My job goes on – it's almost like the drug business.

I'm still getting along fine. Must close now. Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

Northern Ireland
April 9, 1944

Dear Mother,

Today was Easter and it was really a lovely day. I got up and went to church this morning but I can't say that I especially enjoyed the service since they chant the Psalms and sing hymns I don't know and the sermons are dry. We also missed lunch by going to

I'm glad Ace finally settled up – it has been hanging far too long. I believe I wrote you about cashing the check for \$40.00. After my first expenditures, I have been getting along pretty well, but may cash another before long.

You may be interested to know that my former outfit as an unlisted man in Louisiana has pulled into Northern Ireland to rest and for replacements after the Sicilians and Italian campaign. I'd like very much to visit them, but don't know whether I can get to see them or not. They've had some casualties, of course. Except for OCS, my dear, I would have been right there in the thick of it; so maybe I'm pretty lucky today. I'm still getting along fine – have been pretty busy the last few days, but routine is not bad. As long as I'm here, you should not worry about me because I'm living the life of an English (or Irish) gentleman. We have rented a radio now, and really enjoy listening to the American programs. I don't go out so much, except to the show occasionally, since I'm not especially crazy about Irish girls, or maybe I haven't found one very interesting. The entertainment is either very homey and simple – church party – nicey nice or hell-bent for a good time like Belfast. I like the middle ground semi-sophistication. I guess we never had enough “down-on-the-farm” social gatherings for me to enjoy them, and the night life is a little too rough – I mean low-class people. La Crosse is the most perfect set-up I've ever seen, and right down my alley.

I'd better close this now. I've almost proven myself a bore and a kill-joy tonight in writing this, since we are having a little party – popcorn, candy, piano-playing, etc. – great for those who like it, but I'd rather write to you, so I've braved them all to write.

I must close now. My love to both you and Dad. Merry Christmas again. My thoughts are with you.

Love,

Brame

Northern Ireland
December 25, 1943

Dear Mother,

Well, here it is – Christmas Day, 1943, and I'm spending it very, very quietly as Officer of the Day. Service Company had to furnish the O-D's for today and tomorrow, since we don't pull the regular guard details; so we all cut cards and, needless to say, I won or lost, as the case may be. However, it's not so bad. It just means hanging around regimental headquarters today and, since there's nothing else to do, I'd just as soon be here.

So far as Christmas is concerned, it's strictly no go. The companies will all have nice Christmas dinners with a few decorations and Christmas trees in the mess halls, but as for the Christmas spirit and gifts, etc., there's not much to it. Christmas packages have been

coming in, of course, for the last six weeks, but they are all opened immediately and, as for the civilians, there's not so much they can buy without using those precious ration coupons, so Christmas turns out to be just another day.

I haven't heard from you since my last letter, but I'll probably get several letters at once, as usual. They seem to come in droves. There's not much news. I'm still getting along okay. I've written another check for \$40.69, as it is impossible to get along on my allotment balance after I pay for the necessities. I've also lent Lieutenant Tedeschi about 5 pounds (\$20.00), since he's also allotted all of his and his wife has the bank account; so he has to write for money orders.

We have not been working so very hard this past week, and things are rolling along about as usual. I hope that you and Dad are both getting along fine, and that Dad had a good Christmas at the store. Let me know what the total business was for the year. I wish I could there with you.

Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

Northern Ireland 12-25-43
Western Union Telegram
EFM Mr. and Mrs. M. S. Morrison
301 Whitehead Avenue
Wilson, NCAR

Love and Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year for all at home. All well.

Brame P. Morrison

Northern Ireland
December 28, 1943

Dear Mother,

I'm writing you a short note tonight, since I've got to go to bed soon. I'm not feeling the best in the world – probably a touch of flu, but I'm taking Acetidine, so I ought to be okay tomorrow.

I received several Christmas cards today, and answered Ms. Thompson's and Mr. MacDonald's.

I heard yesterday that Billy Morrison was stationed here, and I've written him. We'll try to get together some weekend. I got your Christmas card and letter of December 2nd today. Don't bother about sending any more fruit juices, but I would like candy and nuts. A request follows:

Dear Dad,

Please send me a box of candy and nuts of any kind.

Brame P. Morrison
First Lieutenant Infantry 0-1301012 (APO #2, US Army)

I'll try to write a longer letter tomorrow night or day after, but I must close now. I wanted to let you know about Billy, who is my main reason for writing this.

Love to both of you,

Brame

Northern Ireland
January 2, 1944

Dear Mother,

I haven't written to you since my short note of several days ago, since I haven't been feeling very well, I thought perhaps it might worry you. However, I better now – had a very deep cold and couldn't break it up. Yesterday was a holiday, and I stayed in bed until 4:00 p.m. I've had a little fever along with the cold, but have been taking Aspirin or some Acetidine capsules I got from the dispensary.

We had a very nice party here at the house New Year's Eve. It was Lt. Dodd's birthday, also, and Ms. MacNeil and daughter think that he is just perfection, so they insisted on a party, which just grew and turned out to be quite an affair – a combination both of civilians and the military.

The Irish played quite a few games, which would be considered childish at home – you know, played by 12- & 14-year-olds – but they enjoy it, so we join in. No one would believe us if we told them that we went to a party and played "spin the bottle", etc.

There were only four good-looking girls at the party. Two of them I brought – nieces of Mr. Donnelly, with whom we live. These were the first Irish girls I met with any class at all – most of them here in Newry are rather naïve and simple – just plain "country" – which is right down Lt. Dodd's alley, because he's a good old Texas country boy, and

has a wonderful time.

The Colonel held a reception last night at our Officer's Club, to which I went, but left as soon as possible, since I needed the bed.

My work has fairly well settled down to routine – not too much and not too little. This is the finest set-up I've had since being in the Army. We don't get up until 7:30, start work at 8:30, and quit about 5:00. My typical day – up at 7:30, breakfast and to company by 8:30, censor mail at 8:30 to 9:00, 9:00 report at office and get all information on supply – 9:15 til 5:00 (turned tape over) – deliver supplies, rations, etc.

I've gotten Pattie's package and have written everyone. Received quite a few Christmas cards from Wilson & LaCrosse. I appreciate all of them.

There's not so much news, so must close now.

Love,

Brame

Northern Ireland
January 9, 1944 (Sunday)

Dear Mother,

I've received your letter enclosing the one from Miss Wagner, and also the one of December 22nd, since I've written last. I purposely have been waiting to write because I was a little sick and didn't want to worry you. Must have had a touch of flu – in fact, there's no doubt about it. I kept going with Aspirin and Acetidine and, finally, went to the dispensary. The doctor wanted me to go to the hospital, but I just took a day off instead in my quarters and dosed up on Sulfadiazine. It was the first of the sulfa drugs I had taken, and I didn't know what effect it would have, but I didn't notice it at all and, believe me, I took a big enough dose – 6-7.5 grain tabs at night followed by 3 the next a.m., then 3 the next p.m., and 3 the next a.m. – a total of about 112 grains in two days. The medicine was wonderful for knocking the aching and fever, but leaves you a little weak, and I've had a cough since to get all the congestion out of my chest. I am getting back into good shape now, though, my appetite has returned, and I feel like doing something again. Getting a cold really inside you in this climate is really bad business, because you slop around in damp ground all the time and it rains all the time; so you get more cold every time you cure yourself a bit. Staying in completely is about the only remedy. We have a little work to do this afternoon distributing some supplies they need for tomorrow. In supply, you may be working almost any time. I've been taking it easy this past week, though – not even getting up until about 9:00 or 10:00.

I appreciate the addresses of Miss Wagner's folks, but looking them up is a matter of luck. Transportation is not like the States, and time off is almost too precious to spend looking for someone, although they are not so far away from me, since I'm also in County Down. I heard about the big train wreck on the radio, and guess I knew about it almost as soon as you, and also about the severe weather you had.

I haven't heard from Stuart in quite a while. I suppose he was busy with Christmas and then with other things coming up, I guess he's pretty much taken up with his own affairs.

I've written and thanked everyone for their Christmas cards and presents. I have received no further packages from you since the one with the fruit juices.

We are still enjoying our radio. I've been to the pictures once or twice lately, and went over to our Officer's Club last night to a dance. It was good to hear our own orchestra playing our tunes our style. I thought I'd forgotten how to dance after pushing some of these Irish girls around by their music, but last night, I found out it wasn't me, but them. There were a few Red Cross girls and some American nurses there, and I found a couple who could dance very well. Being away from home, things American become more dear to us. The novelty of the Irish and English has more or less worn off now, and none of us can deny that there's anything here that can compare with the U.S. At first, we were amused and tolerant of these folks in the way they do things and their ideas of entertainment, etc. We thought it was possibly because they didn't know any better, but they do things inefficiently by our standards of time and manpower and won't change. They are 20 to 30 years behind and proud as peacocks of their "modern" ways. They think Americans are bragging them when we tell them about our ways of living and doing business. I don't mind their doing anything they want to, but the "pride" of the Irish in the "excellence" of the Irish way is what gets us. They haven't got a darn thing, but yet they think it's the best and are so proud of it. They can't even conceive of the size, power and might of the U.S. or what we can produce or do. This applies to all of Europe - I'm talking about the average citizen. The sum and substance of all I've said above brings us to the question of "what are we fighting for?" - I mean the American troops - the individual soldier. I read some comment in one magazine which stated in effect that the British Tommy had Dunkirk, the London Blitz, (something tangible to fight for) and the Russians had memories of a razed and raped countryside, the siege of Stalingrad and plenty to fight for, but to the American, beating the Germans is just a distasteful "duty" that we want to get over with so that we can "go back home". In other words, the only reason that the individual American soldier wants to fight at all is to get the work over so that we can come back to God's country and the American way of living. The vally British will let American blood even the war and then step into run the peace. The U.S. will get sucked in again. Why should we keep saving Europe when Europe doesn't want to be saved? They don't want to change any of the conditions that cause these "world" upheavals to maintain cartels, monopolies, poverty, low wages, and human dissatisfaction to maintain what is referred to by high-thinking idealists as the "democratic right of peoples to determine their own form of government". A dozen little states or countries that must keep their population with its nose to the grind the stone on a low standard of living so that they will have a trade advantage of low-cost production to

trade in world markets. Britain has a much more healthy respect for capital than does the U.S. All you need to do is once get it and you remain forever in the glorious land of "substance". They feel so "poor" because they live on the income from "investments" in all parts of the world. That is the same old story of rich people who feel so, so, poor because they have to live on a little income and wouldn't touch that capital, even if they starved, since their own earning capacities are zero.

Competition in business is bad because it affects the "national plan". Who wants an enterprising merchant to increase the consumption of a product by his own countrymen? The more they consume, the less there is to export and "our country" cannot then be "greater" and "richer" than the "other countries". The British eat cheese from Australia when ours is better, nearer and probably cheaper, but then that means a loss of "national wealth"; so they still haul an inferior cheese about 6,000 miles farther to "keep it in the family". You can also bet your life that a Britisher would never eat pineapple which would have to be bought from the U.S., unless we purchased some commensurate amount of "Yardley" or other British goods, and if the British developed an inordinate taste for pineapple that ran their purchases over ours very soon, "shipping space" would not be available for pineapple.

I'm using a few simple illustrations to bring out the fact that we can't save Europe without changing it economically, and we can't change it economically because it doesn't want to be changed; so, we are wasting time, money and blood fighting to preserve an evil system – or perhaps medieval is the word.

Well, time marches on, and I have several other letters to write, so I must close. I hope this long letter will make up for shorter ones I could have written. I wrote to Dad several days ago. I hope he'll let me know how much business we did in 1943. It was a great year in a way. I am hoping 1944 will see us home again, but even after this mess is over, it will take a long time to get home from over here.

I have not, as yet, heard from Billy or had any further news about him.

My love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

Northern Ireland
January 11, 1944 (Tuesday night)

Dear Mother,

Your letter of December 16th got here today about four days after that of the 23rd, which I

answered Sunday. Must have caught a slow plane or boat or have gotten sidetracked. I have not, as yet, received the box of candy. One never knows when things will show up, but I'm looking forward to that candy – oh boy for some good old American sweets!

I've just about recovered from my little touch of flu, but I still have to be careful in the weather. I haven't heard from Stuart in a long, long time. I trust that everything is okay with him and Doug, though.

I do not have much news at the present. Things roll along in the same old way – sometimes busy and sometimes not so busy. You probably know more about the war than I do. I have gotten the latest "Time" here – December 27th, which I plan on reading tonight. We get the "pony" editions photographed on thin paper and small sheets through the Army Special Services – also Life, Newsweek, Coronet and Esquire previous to the foolish ban on it going through the mails. Esquire is "life-blood" for the U.S. soldiers overseas. I also read somewhere about Prohibition raising its ugly head. Don't let the soldiers down by letting politics ruin that beautiful country we left behind – the only decent place to live in the world – while we fight for this God-forsaken Europe.

I'd better not get started on that theme again before I run into pages and pages.

Tell Dad to let me know how business was in 1943.

Must close now and answer a few other letters.

My weight is now 151 lbs.; so I must be getting along okay, despite being sick.

Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

Northern Ireland
January 25, 1944

Dear Mother,

I'm writing this during dinner hour as it seems to be pretty difficult to find much time at night, since I've been pretty busy with work and going. I think I wrote you last on Friday, the 21st, the day after I got back from Belfast, when I went down to try and contact Billy. I also went down Saturday night, but again failed to see him. I had no time to write over the weekend and went to an Irish party last night and tonight. I'm going to Belfast again to see "This is the Army" – Irving Berlin's show. The regiment got some tickets that were not available last week, so tonight will be the only chance I have.

After writing you last Friday that I had not heard from you in quite a while, a big batch of mail came in. I got 13 letters in all, some of the mail evidently was held up somewhere along the line or probably came over by boat, since I got a letter from you mailed December 14th, and in the same batch, one mailed on January 13th, then two days later, one of December 29th. If my letters don't always click with yours, you will know then that I haven't gotten them in order. I also received two letters from Stuart, one from Mr. Schaum, one from Tommy Morrison, one from Leila Morrison, and Christmas cards from Joyce, Mary Clare, and others. When mail comes, you usually get three or four. I haven't had a chance to answer any of the letters yet. When you get this, write Stuart and tell him I'm writing in a few days, and that I received two of his letters that were held up quite a while. My cable address is "AMUBAC" so he can cable me when the big event happens. I hope everything goes off okay. I guess you are excited about becoming a grandmother, too.

I enjoyed the news in all three of your letters. I think I told you that I received the box of Whitman's and face powder, etc., the one from Henderson and Concord and, also, yours with the fruit juice. If you send anything, make it food – candy, nuts, either in shell or out, anything to eat. We get plenty of food, but the niceties of the States are missing. I don't need cigts. or blades or any of the necessities. I've been getting along fine since my little touch of flu.

Will try to write you later on in the week. Must close now. Love to both you and Dad.
I'd like to know how much the business the store last year.

Love,

Brame

Northern Ireland
February 1, 1944

Dear Mother,

I'm writing another letter from the company, since I'm still pretty busy and don't get much chance to sit down at the house and write, and wanted to let you know that I received the package yesterday with the pecans and the box of Fairhill. You are really treating me nice there. "The nuts" over here and the candy was just right, since I had just finished the Sampler – I stretched it pretty well, considering the rounds a box of candy makes over here.

I'm still getting along fine – have not been sick any more. Stayed in this past weekend and wrote about eight letters to catch up on my correspondence – I know too many people, almost. Christmas sort of renewed old corresponders. I finally wrote Stuart. I

guess he will be a papa by the time you get this.

I hope Dad is getting along okay at the store. I'd rather not pay my income tax or make the report until I get back or check the figures myself. The first \$15.00 of Army pay is not considered as income, and Mr. Joyner may know his civilian reports, but I'm making mine out of the Army way. I don't have to make the reports while I'm overseas.

Must close and get on the job.

Love,

Brame

Northern Ireland
February 1, 1944

Dear Mother,

I wrote you this morning, but am writing again tonight to send you the program of "This Is the Army". Save it for me.

I'm also enclosing a clipping from a little publication of Owens & Minor for their men in the service. Mr. Bowers put me on the mailing list.

I have a letter of yours of January 3rd, which I have not answered, but I've received a later one which, more or less, covers this one as to answering. I told you about receiving the box in my morning letter. I just opened the candy tonight. I believe the Fairhill was much fresher than the Sampler, since it tastes much better. The Irish have never seen pecans as well as hundreds of other fruits and vegetables that we have like watermelon, cantaloupes, butterbeans, snap beans, applesauce, etc.

These little short letters are not as interesting as my long ones, perhaps, but I can write them more often. I haven't done much writing or thinking lately. My job is also keeping me pretty busy – routine, but I have to keep in touch and control over a lot of activities that are going on at the same time. Must close. Love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

Northern Ireland
February 6, 1943 (1944, sic)

Dear Mother,

I haven't heard from you for several days now. Your letters have been drifting in out of order. The latest one I have received is of January 8th, although I received one of a later date about a week ago. I'm glad to hear my bank balance is coming along in such good shape. It doesn't take long to mount up, does it? I've written two checks of \$40.00 and one for \$3.00 to the Infantry Journal since I left. I'm getting along okay financially right now, and don't contemplate needing any more money this month. A little nest egg wouldn't be bad when I get back. Those bonds also should be mounting up. In regard to those checks, you guessed right about them. I've been in all day today catching up on reading, writing and sleeping. I see that they have finally approved the bill for mustering out pay, but I don't like the amounts. The men who are overseas in comparison don't get enough. They should have four categories – one: less than six months; two: more than six months in the States; three: overseas, no combat; four: overseas and combat. Those congressmen don't realize that it's worth a thousand dollars just to have to live outside the U.S. and the longer you stay away, the more it's worth.

Likewise, the men in combat ought to get more than just those in garrison overseas. It's almost a crime to pay those that stay in the States \$200.00 and only \$100.00 more for overseas service away from friends, conveniences, warmth, good food, ice cream, candy, nuts, and a 1,001 other things that the U.S. has to offer. You get used to it after awhile and don't mind it individually because life is good almost anywhere.

I enjoyed your news very much. The letter of the 8th had more in it than I've received yet. It was good to hear about everyone. I can understand how Ms. Daniel feels about Adrian's wife – only by living here can one understand the European or continental mind, and their attitude towards lots of things, both economic and social, that vary with ours.

The radio was very good this afternoon. The American forces program was almost a Sunday night at home – Jack Benny, Fitch Bandwagon, Clifton Fadiman, etc. It is not so good tonight, only British stations.

Lt. Tedeschi took some pictures a while back that were pretty nice. I will try to get a few prints. Photographic materials are very scarce, and getting films and prints is no easy job.

I've been trying to get some of the hard British coal to burn for about an hour and, finally, have a pretty decent fire going. All the others are out tonight, and I'm keeping the home fires burning. Our quarters are getting fairly full – about ten officers stay here at the house with us now. Varying jobs make it more convenient for them to stay near headquarters.

My work goes on as usual. I'm still getting along okay. I have heard nothing further from Billy since missing him in Belfast and haven't been to Belfast in a couple of weeks, but I may go next weekend.

By the way, I'm growing a little mustache – every man probably tries one once. Mine is not heavy enough to be very successful, though, and they are a lot of trouble, but I'll probably keep it another week.

There's not much other news. My love to both you and Dad. Let me have some figures from the store. Hope everything goes along well with you. Stuart's probably a pop by now. I haven't heard, of course. Must close.

Love,

Brame

Northern Ireland
February 10, 1944

Dear Mother,

The mail is picking up – I've gotten two really "fresh" letters from you in the last two days – one of January 31st and one mailed February 2nd telling about Stuart III or Mat as Stuart says he's going to call him. I know he's a proud Papa, and you and Dad are just as proud grandparents. It is also good that the first should be a son, since it looks at present as if Stuart will be doing all the reproducing for our branch of the family. If this war lasts much longer, I'll probably be clean out of the running. But I suppose as Dad always said, "My time will come." At any rate, when I do get married, I'll run nature a close race on that first baby.

And in regard to the war being over, I don't know what bunko the papers are giving you at home, but to the soldiers, this war hasn't even started. There's plenty of Mr. Churchill's "blood, sweat and tears" left for us. We'll be lucky to get home by Christmas, 1945. There are several cartoons and cracks about the home front in our papers.

As for ourselves, we are still getting along okay. Rumors and ideas abound as usual, but no one knows anything definite and if even so, would not even think it. You may recall some of my past predictions and ideas which haven't changed much, but then one never knows.

I have received a statement of my calculate Army pay for 1943 -- \$1,926.13 – this is my base pay only. \$1,500.00 of this will not be considered income which will leave only \$426.13 to report as income from the Army. I don't know what my store income will be but, even so, the tax will not run into much, since my last year's payment carries some credit on the consolidation. I will have to use Form 1040, but there is no hurry since I don't have to file a report until the war is over or I return to the States. I'd like to file a form, anyhow, to keep the records straight. Dad has more than likely received my form,

but in no case should he file it before I okay it because that \$1,500.00 is definitely not considered income, and Mr. Joyner or anyone else not informed on Army income tax procedure is going to include it in my report-that's an order.

It was nice to get a letter so soon because the news was still fresh, so to speak. I imagine you are having quite a bit of trouble with the maid situation, but I guess you can struggle along okay. They say there's quite a bit of flu in the States. I hope and pray that Dad won't get it, and that he will take good care of himself during these hard days. What he's going through now in the way of work is more than any soldier is doing for the country. Tell him to take care of himself as well as possible because when I come back, perhaps, we can enjoy some of the things for which we have all struggled for so long. My work is not so hard, but it's pretty complicated, in a way, keeping things straight and in ship-shape condition. We had an inspection by division of our records last week, and I received two Superiors, two Excellents, and one Satisfactory for the Bn – second highest in the division – only one other Bn out of our regiment topped me, and that was due to the fact that they made corrections from the few minute items which kept me from getting four Superiors. I was inspected first and had no prior information on what to prepare for. But for regiments record it's probably best that they hit me first, since I feel sure we would have lost two or three Superiors had they inspected others without the corrections which they were enabled to make from our inspection. Everybody's happy about the whole thing, though, so all's well.

My mustache is coming along very well, but it's a lot of trouble. I'll try to get a picture to send you. Time is fleeting, and I must close. I believe I told you about receiving the two boxes with the Whitman's. The cookies held up okay, as did both packages, so far as shipping goes. I've been able to buy gloves, socks, etc. at the traveling P.X. which visits us about twice a month. I don't need a thing in the world except a good American girl. My weight is back up to about 148, and I'm feeling fine.

By the way, Curtis and May Nottingham sent me a subscription to "Time" for Christmas. I've received only one issue so far, but it is very welcomed. I'm planning on writing and thanking them, but I can't write short letters, and don't start to write unless I have a whole evening, which is not so often.

Must close now. Love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

Northern Ireland
February 20, 1944

Dear Mother,

Your letter of January 18th came a few days ago after I'd gotten the one about Stuart's baby and another you wrote about the 29th. Stuart's cable-gram which he sent on the 14th of February came yesterday and a letter of his of the 5th came today. The cable-gram took five days and the air-mail of yours took eight days, but that letter happened to hit things right and came directly through. They usually take a little longer.

They seem to be keeping Stuart pretty busy and a long way from home, which is tough on him, since he just became a father, and would like to be around his son. I guess he's lucky to still be there after the Army, though. Plenty of men have never seen their babies.

He also wrote that "they" sent him a \$100.00 bond which I take to mean you and Dad. That's fine and dandy. Dad must be in pretty good shape for cash. I remember when that much would have really been a sacrifice – back in '37 & '38 when we were paying off those notes to O&M [Owens & Minor] and Dr. Yelverton, as well as the house payments and I was "splurging" on \$1.50 a week and skipping even the thoughts of marriage. The first grandchild ought to get that bond, but it's from his uncle, too.

I like the name M.S. III, but that Matt sounds funny. I bet he's a nice little rascal. When I get home, the first thing I'm going to do is get married and give you about three grandchildren as fast as they can come.

I've been staying in today and writing letters, cleaning up, etc. Was out in the field one day and night this week. It was plenty cold and damp. What we'll do I can't say because I don't know, but since we are here, there's a good chance of some action when things break. At present, everything goes along okay and life is pretty good except for the lack of any real relaxation. There are shows, dances, etc., but the lack of any female companionship is bad. Irish girls are not my type. I don't go for them. Give me the good old U.S.A.

My mustache is coming along wonderfully. I look like a British officer by now. The only trouble is some blonde hairs on the left side that make it uneven looking.

About six of us had a wonderful time one night last week, and you'd never guess at what – frying eggs – the kind that come in shells. We borrowed a frying pan and cooked them over our open fire. I ate four and believe me, they were really good. All our eggs are powdered, and eating them for several months gets a little monotonous.

I haven't received any figures from Dad as yet but, not doubt, he's mailed them. I'd like to have my income tax report so I can file it. Time doesn't make any difference as to filing, since I'm overseas and my tax won't be so much since the "forgiveness feature" should do me a little good.

Must close now and write some other letters. I'm still getting along fine. Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

Northern Ireland
February 27, 1944

Dear Mother,

Time is really flying by. It gets by so fast that I can hardly realize that it's been a week since I've written. I've received only one letter from you this week and one from Dad mailed the 9th and 10th.

I was glad to get some figures about the store's business, and I'm looking forward to seeing the complete report. It looks as if the profit ran around \$9,000.00 gross, which will, of course, be cut down some for net, but even then, it will be a pretty nice profit – almost too much when that income tax comes due. The cash balance means a strong financial position, as well. Being so far away, it is pretty difficult to know the whole situation, but I think it would be a very good idea to set up some fund of bonds on a regular basis to invest a little surplus cash to retire that house mortgage in one lump when it gets down within striking distance. Some financial planning for the future is necessary because if we leave it haphazard, fortune will certainly change sometime. It is important to me that there be no debt to absorb the substance of current income. Don't let that money that's coming in now get away.

Also in regard to the "feeler" letter that Dad had from Williams, I'm in the mood to sell after the war. Twice in his life, Dad has bought high and had the bottom drop out, and I think this time, we should be smart and sell at the top – not only from the basis of cashing out, but also from the standpoint of making Dad's work easier. Mind you, I'm not suggesting that we rush in a hurry, but just to keep it in mind. You know and I know that for a few years after the war, things will be prosperous and then comes the depression. Someone else is going to take it on the chin this time. Although business is good and will continue to be good for awhile, we'll have to put in a new fountain and probably some more cash to keep operating competitively. Instead of putting in more, I'd rather cash out, pay off the mortgage and, perhaps, buy another house for rental. If we sell shortly after the war, we should be able to get a couple of thousand dollars extra for "good will" and "opportunity" which have cost us so dearly in the past. From my standpoint, I know that I'm not going to stay in the drug business forever, and will eventually sell out at Dad's death; so I'm planning now to get out while things are high rather than investing more in a fountain and probably selling in a few years when things are at the bottom. This would serve a double purpose of consolidating our financial position, freeing all debt, and above all, of giving Dad relief from business worries and so much work and freeing me for any opportunity that might come along. It looks to me like the best thing to do. I'm sure Dad would have no trouble finding some job that would be enough to

keep him busy and yield some small income – it wouldn't take so much. As for me, I'll save my cash till the bottom drops out again and possibly buy back in for a song after someone else gets all snarled up in financial difficulties by jumping on a fast freight. Getting a job does not worry me in the least. There are both Wilson Tobacco Company and any one of several wholesale drug houses. I'd like to spend about six months getting my civilian hand back in, but that's about all. And as for marriage – that's also a #1 problem that I'm settling soon after I get home.

I'm still getting along fine. Things roll along as usual. There's not much I can tell you about the future. Some things I know, others I can only guess at. Whatever happens will happen, though, and we may be lucky and never hit combat. The course of events will be controlled too much by what the Germans do or what success others have and we have. For the present, all is well, which is sufficient.

My mustache is coming along very well – it's been about four weeks now, and it looks very well. Will try to have some snaps made and send you a picture. I've been feeling fine – no colds, etc. and my weight is around 145-150.

I enjoyed reading Time and Newsweek about the political conflicts. My prediction – Roosevelt will be re-elected if he runs – only for his personal magnitude. Any connection between him and that true Democratic party is purely coincidental and any other candidate would be defeated. Roosevelt is too outstanding a man for the party – one strong man hinders the rise of others in the same fold – while he rolls along in emblazoned glory leadership atrophies in the ranks. The Republicans will control Congress and the Governorships. Even Democrats that ride the party in will not be "Roosevelteans". Conclusion – Roosevelt with a bucking Congress, a rejuvenated Republican opposition would be worse for the country internally, externally and eternally.

I've had only one letter from Stuart since the baby was born. I know all of you are interested and proud of him and especially Dad to have a grandson, the IIIrd. I hear Tommy's wife is also expecting, so we'll soon have another family. Billy and I are carrying Uncle Sam's burden, it seems, to make U.S. safe for their sons to grow up in and don't have time for such things as wives or babies. From the way things are back home, sometimes I don't think it's worth what the soldiers are putting in or out.

Must close now. Love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

Northern Ireland
March 2, 1944

Dear Mother,

Time continues to fly away. It almost goes too fast. Speaking of fast mail, your letter of February 22nd got here yesterday, which is just eight days and almost fresh, as news goes. The mail for the last two or three weeks has been pretty slow – just a trickle – one or two letters here and there. That's the way it goes for awhile, and then a boat load comes in, and we all get eight or ten letters apiece – some old and some new.

Since your last letter is “fresh”, let me answer it first. Stuart's cable was dated February 14th and his letter was mailed February 5th about “Matt”. I got your letter of February 1st on the 10th, and it was old news when his cable & letter arrived. I trust that everything goes well with both Doug and little Stuart. (I still like that name better). You need not worry about my getting in the same trouble as Tommy Jenkins, since steps have been taken to prevent that.

What you said about taking other men than those that have “established homes” being fairer is true in one sense. It all depends on your outlook – from society's standpoint – better for the community and better men with no worries about dependents, etc. a big “Yes”. But, from the individual – what about the fact that the man with the established homes have already, shall we say, enjoyed a sip of the elixir of life, have known the joys of connubial bliss, and have completed nature's cycle of life while thousands who have no “established homes” will be denied that privilege which is their heritage equally. From death's standpoint, who is ready? That's a bit of sophistry (get out that dictionary), but it all goes to show that there are two sides to any question, even the obvious. If you didn't have a son with a new-born babe, you'd probably be saying about someone else “Why can't Joe Blow go?” -- just because he's got a baby. Hmph. His wife and folks can look after it. Why, I know 50 men who've left in worse shape than he is, etc., etc., etc. Watch out, Grandma, don't let your situation decide things. No kidding, though, I do hope Stuart can stay out for lots of reasons – not for Doug or the babe – but for himself and the absolute deflation of his civilian ego, the fact that he'll probably get into the infantry, have 13 weeks of training and come over as a replacement in a combat unit. He won't have time to acquire the mental attitude of a soldier. As for me, I've got it – no mental struggle about anything – orders are orders, and that's what you accept and do. So much for that.

My correspondence also, I'll have you know, is not free – you've probably noted those neat little six cents air-mail imprints on those envelopes and Uncle Sam doesn't give those away, yet. We do have free V-mail and regular mail, but airmail is “on our own”. As for my letters, I'm getting to be quite a corresponsder – regular with you, Stuart, Mr. Bowers, girls in La Crosse, Minneapolis, Detroit, two in Washington, D.C. besides offshoot letters now & then to Leila, Tommy, Billy, Joyce, Mr. Schaum and friends from North, South, East & West – quite a cosmopolite, eh what, I haven't mentioned any girls to you in quite a while, have I? As for Ireland, the score is absolutely zero and even below – definitely nothing I could ever create the least interest in. There's one girl in Washington in whom I am interested. The sad case she's only 17, but mature beyond her

years. She goes to Chevy Chase Junior College and is quite on the up & up in everything and writes very interesting letters. The other girl in Washington works there (from La Crosse) and is also strictly okay, but not quite the socialite as my little girl at college – but the future is too far off, so why bother?

Russell Stamper can't learn supplies in a few weeks. I've been in it two years and learn something new every day. Some more Stamper exaggeration of minutiae.

By the way, mentioning two years reminds me that March 10, two years ago, I took off for this great adventure. I haven't done so bad. First Lieutenant is about as high as I will go, though, which suits me okay. I love my job. I'll take it to anything less than General. I'll be out in the field next week for a few days and may not get a chance to write. I had a nice trip today – reconnaissance & business to Belfast & other areas – pretty cold. We've had a wee bit of snow this past week – not much, just to cover the ground. The cold clears the air of fog & mist and brings out lots of different views. The view of Belfast from the top of the hill was really something today – the whole city nestled in the valley with the blue water of the bay – reminded me of Port Au Prince, Haiti – the only other place I've been on a mountain or hill and seen a whole city below.

We were all issued a pound box of candy in our P.X. rations last week and fixed up our sweet tooth. The cost was the equivalent of 80 cents (3/9 of British money). I really know how to figure it now.

I must close now and hit the hay, since it's almost 1:00. Will try to keep letters coming to you as often as possible. In several weeks, there may be a lapse of time in letters from my end which you can add on to from the receiving end and figure accordingly. Don't let it bother you if I skip a week. Training exercises sometimes keep us busy, and on the move. Love to both you and to Dad.

Always,

Brame

Northern Ireland
February 12, 1943 [1944]

Dear Mother,

There's not much news to tell you since my letter to your Thursday after getting yours telling me about Stuart III. I have not yet heard from Stuart. I suppose he's pretty busy, though. It's probably tougher on him than Doug right now.

Everything is getting along okay. I haven't been too busy the last few days. I went out to a dance last night and will probably go to the Club tonight. I haven't been to Belfast

lately. My going seems to come in spurts. I stay home for awhile and then I seem to go out every night.

My "Time" magazine is coming in okay. I really enjoy it. I usually read it from cover to cover. It is a little behind your issues, but still good news. The issue of January 31st got here yesterday.

I suppose the political situation is warming up at home. I can't be too interested in it this far away, but if he runs, it's Roosevelt again, so far as I can see. For once, we are in the middle of the stream and the horse is not too bad, although I still don't like his domestic policies. But being so far away, it won't concern me so much – just lay off Prohibition and a couple of other deals they put over last time. Must close. Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

Northern Ireland
March 5, 1944 (V-mail)

Dear Mother,

I haven't had so much to do today and find time to write, although I didn't think I would. V-mail is all I have available.

Everything is still going along okay. What I told you in my last letter about my mail is correct. I haven't had so many letters in the last two or three weeks, but expect some to come in before long. I got an airmail from Tommy a couple of days ago. He's still in Syracuse.

I hope everything at the store is fine. I haven't received any complete reports, but I suppose Dad has sent them.

There's not so much to write about in these V-mails – as soon as I get started, I hit the bottom of the page. I haven't heard anything else from Stuart. Did he get his deferment again? That would be nice. And how's little Matt doing?

I'm still in good shape. I've been eating fine, but haven't been out much – pretty busy. Must close. Love to you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

Northern Ireland
March 8, 1944

Dear Mother,

I've been super busy the last few days and haven't even finished up at night until about 9:00 or 10:00. I'm a little tired and sleepy tonight, but I'm writing anyhow since I want to get off some pictures and a handkerchief I have for you.

I haven't bought any linen or gifts over here up till now since it is all too high. However, I found a few handkerchiefs, a tablecloth and some napkins at a decent price. I'll send the cloth & napkins in a few napkins. They are not cheap by any means but reasonable as Irish prices go on such items. I bought them at another small town I visited.

You will probably have received V-mail I sent you Sunday by the time you get this. You will note no doubt that some of it might have been a little out of sequence of thought about mail. Just start a new paragraph and it will read better. It's sometimes hard to write – when you are in a hurry.

I'm enclosing a couple of pictures of Ms. McNeal, Hilda and myself taken by the house in which we are billeted, and also one of all the supply officers and warrant officers. I may have more later. I've received two letters from you this week – of February 15th and 28th. Mail has still been sparse.

Must close now because I'm ready for the bed. Hope everything at home is okay. My love to both you and Dad. I'm still fine.

Love always,

Brame

Northern Ireland
March 9, 1944

Dear Mother,

I wrote you a quick letter last night and sent the handkerchief and photos. I did not have time to answer any questions in your previous letters, which I'll try to do tonight.

The fact that I can cash checks is because I know a gentleman at the bank, but they will cash checks for most officers. Of course, they take a chance, but then an officer would get in international hot water by writing a bad one.

It's too bad about Hunter Fleming's accident. I'm glad to hear that Bunn Hearn & Jimmy Dempsey are Majors. Rank is cheap in the Air Corps. They get all the rank and glamour, but the infantry will win the war. Nuts to the Air Corps. They are just another support for the infantry; sort of like the Quartermaster and service units. They exist to keep the infantry going. We fight and they just bomb.

I'm glad Dad was able to get Jack back. I think Jack and Clenon will get along okay if Dad will let Jack know that Clenon is the top man. Jack is better than girls, but he's not worth risking on Clenon and he is definitely lazy about cleaning up. I hope everything goes well with the store. Tell Dad to take it easy as much as possible.

I haven't been quite so busy today. Things are rolling along okay, but we are pulling against time. We can't stay here forever. I'll write you as often as possible.

Must close. Hope everything goes okay at home.

Love,

Brame

P.S.: Will try to get all the tablecloth and napkins this weekend. Have just written Stuart. Trust everything goes well with him.

Northern Ireland
March 12, 1942

Dear Mother,

Will write you just a short letter tonight.

I have not heard from you in the last three days and all your letters I've received have been answered.

I just finished wrapping your package containing the tablecloth and six napkins and will get it off tomorrow. I hope you like it okay and it will get to you soon.

Today, two years ago I was sworn into the Army. It hasn't been so long in a way and then again it's been ages and I've been lots of places and done lots of things – two weeks at Bragg, five months in La Crosse, three months at Benning, then Robinson, etc. I've pretty well covered eastern U.S.A. plus overseas and I'll probably see more of the world yet before this is all over. The Army has taken many of us places we never would have gone. I often wonder how many men will settle down elsewhere than home when this war is over. Most of us will certainly feel cosmopolite after having seen the world to go

back to small towns. Wilson somehow doesn't especially appeal to me, but I suppose it will be take some time for anyone to get used to civilian life again just like it took time to get used to the Army. Fitting back in may be quite a task. But then that's a long time in the future.

As for news there's not much. While you'll just have to read your own papers. This has been nice here, but can't last forever.

I'm waiting for some reports from Dad to make my income tax report. For goodness sakes, don't pay mine until I can check it because I've got that \$1,500.00 forgiveness of income and it's got to be figured in that way. How is my bank account coming along anyway? I'm planning on writing another check tomorrow to keep a little cash on hand.

I'm going to have a little tea now. Must close. My love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

Northern Ireland
March 19, 1944

Dear Mother,

I haven't heard from you since I wrote last and there's not much news.

We are still getting along okay. The weather is much better – not so rainy and a little warmer.

I've been very busy for the last week or so and am catching up on writing this afternoon, although I don't have many letters to answer since mail has been awfully slow this week. I just finished a letter to Stuart. He sent me a picture of little Matt. I think he looks a little like Grandpa Morrison. I haven't kept up with the news lately. My last "Time" is of February 28th and a lot has happened since then. Roosevelt seems to be having a little trouble with Congress – no more steamroller tactics. The people will accept him as a great man and a great leader but his bureaucracy of crackpots and nonentities in domestic affairs is off the beam. I never have cared for his internal administration although some of his policies I like.

I hope you get the package and the handkerchiefs and photos okay.

I'm still waiting for some store news to make out my income tax report and know how things are going.

I'm getting along fine and am holding my weight okay. Our food is very good. We are getting a few oranges and have chicken every Sunday. Fresh eggs can be purchased from the farmers of the area, although. I think it's against British regulations, but we get a few now and then.

I haven't much more news. Hope you and Dad are doing fine and that Clenon & Jack are working together okay. Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

Northern Ireland
March 27, 1944

Dear Mother,

I haven't written to you in quite a while both because I haven't received any letters from you and we have been pretty busy. Work has slacked up the last few days, though, and ought to be about as usual for awhile now. You understand, of course, that it is sometimes fairly difficult for us to write as often and as much as we would like to both for our own safety and to keep from worrying the ones at home.

I'm still getting along fine and am in about the best physical shape I've been in in a long while. I can use a little sleep, though, since I've done a little night work of late. We get tomorrow off and I can catch up.

The weather now is really beautiful – warm and the awful rain and dampness has let up. We get days of sunshine now, but still need a little fire. We have been doing some extensive spring cleaning.

I got my first mail today for about ten days. I haven't heard from Stuart lately. Is he in the Army yet and how is Matt coming along? I suppose Dad has sent me some store figures. I'd certainly like to know something and also have my income tax blanks. What is my bank balance?

I received the "News from Home" sheet from the National Bank today and enjoyed the bits of news about everyone. There seems to be quite a few youngsters in the Army and – note that Palmer is in New Guinea. I also received a letter from Mr. Plyler thanking me for a \$25.00 check sent to the church.

As for more news, I don't know much. You get more at home than we do. I'd like to get this thing over with, but the powers that be will have to decide when and where. It looks like another year at least but one never knows.

I enjoy reading "Time" quite a bit. The last few issues have been late but it is still welcome news.

I'll probably hear from you in the next few days and can write more then.

My love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

Northern Ireland
March 30, 1944

Dear Mother,

I received your letter of March 20 yesterday and ones of the 6th and 9th today as well as the package containing candy, nuts, and my income tax forms.

It is much easier to write if you receive mail since you more or less have something to tie yourself to. As I told you in my letter of Tuesday night the 28th it is sometimes impossible for us to always write as often or as much as we'd like to both because of time, training, and security. Then, too, our mail is sometimes held up or slow in coming.

I will try to answer your letters in some sequence. I was very glad to get the income tax forms, but the information I want, need and must have is how much money did I make from the store? I know that Dad has had to get up these figures to make his own reports and I want to know how I stand. By making all allowances for time, trouble, inconvenience and "busy" business it's been too doggone long. I want a report at once if not sooner. I would also like to know definitely the problem:

1. What exemption does the State of North Carolina give for Armed Service pay, if any?
2. What is the State of North Carolina policy on time of filing for soldiers overseas?
3. How much was Dad's income tax?: (a) Federal; (b) State.
4. How much is my bank balance?
5. How much is the face value of my bond?

6. What is my share of the store's earnings?

If you can't answer these questions get Dad to.

I greatly enjoyed the candy and nuts. They are really swell. The billfold is nice, too, but I bought a new one before I left the States. It would make a nice gift without the Coca-Cola imprint. I'll keep it for future use. Thanks a million.

It's too bad about the bathroom lavatory but such things happen and perhaps that's one way of getting things done that you keep on putting off. Your description of that Tom doesn't sound like he's so hot but I guess it takes all kinds to make a world.

Your news about all men and boys going into the Army is quite interesting. Personally, I'm glad I got in when I did because there's not so much opportunity left for those who come in now. As for the rejections the Army will throw you out or not take you quick as a flash for any part for kidney ailment. They are the half-well men that we have to make allowances for when no allowances can be made; so we'd just as soon not have them.

I'm going to close this letter now and write another immediately since I've got a lot more to say and some comments to make on your clipping from "Incidentally" and a few of my own ideas. It would make this letter too bulky for airmail. I also have some postal views to enclose.

For this letter just answer my financial questions. Love to both of you. I'm fine physically – fat and strong as the proverbial ox.

Love,

Brame

Northern Ireland
March 30, 1944

Dear Mother,

I've just finished one letter to you and I'm continuing in this one. I hope you get both at the same time.

Before I get into the main topic of discussion I want to make some comments on yours of the 20th. "Reconnaissance" is exactly your definition per the dictionary; however, we use it very loosely to apply to any action we might take to get the lay of the land, learn a route or just to look around so you'll know what the score is when you operate over the area. When I've traveled a road it ceases to be just a line on a map and becomes a living

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It's too bad about the bathroom lavatory but such things happen and perhaps that's one way of getting things done that you keep on putting off. Your description of that Tom doesn't sound like he's so hot but I guess it takes all kinds to make a world.

Your news about all men and boys going into the Army is quite interesting. Personally, I'm glad I got in when I did because there's not so much opportunity left for those who come in now. As for the rejections the Army will throw you out or not take you quick as a flash for any part for kidney ailment. They are the half-well men that we have to make allowances for when no allowances can be made; so we'd just as soon not have them.

I'm going to close this letter now and write another immediately since I've got a lot more to say and some comments to make on your clipping from "Incidentally" and a few of my own ideas. It would make this letter too bulky for airmail. I also have some postal views to enclose.

For this letter just answer my financial questions. Love to both of you. I'm fine physically – fat and strong as the proverbial ox.

Love,

Brame

Northern Ireland
March 30, 1944

Dear Mother,

I've just finished one letter to you and I'm continuing in this one. I hope you get both at the same time.

Before I get into the main topic of discussion I want to make some comments on yours of the 20th. "Reconnaissance" is exactly your definition per the dictionary; however, we use it very loosely to apply to any action we might take to get the lay of the land, learn a route or just to look around so you'll know what the score is when you operate over the area. When I've traveled a road it ceases to be just a line on a map and becomes a living

thing of dirt, stone, rocks, etc. lined with fences, hedges, houses, barns, streams, and with bridges, crossroads, etc. There's absolutely no point in your wondering what I might be doing because you will nine times out of ten be wrong either by making it either much too fearful and dangerous or much too important for very simple and routine action and it is also definitely out for me to mention anything that I might do since none of us know the whole picture -- least of all you at home. We are sometimes just "busy" and then again not so "busy".

No matter how much rain you've had, you can never approach the absolute dampness of this place for several months, although it is very nice now and on the dry side. I also know what you mean by the spring. We've had plenty of crocuses -- yellow, white, and a delicate lavender. The jonquils, daffodils or buttercups are really beautiful and I've seen some gorgeous ones with double bells that would be the envy of some of our better gardeners. Forsythia is not so much in evidence (time out for tea).

I'm enclosing a photo taken this week which is my latest picture. Lt. Tedeschi has a camera and we've taken a few pictures but developing them is difficult. I don't especially care for the picture since I look a little annoyed at something and that stance is something terrific also, but it's a picture at any rate. I'm also enclosing a couple of coastal views.

I'm planning on playing a little golf Sunday if I get the chance. There's a course some distance away and I hear we can rent clubs.

Now for a few comments on Nell Battle Lewis' "Incidentally" and the pertinent remarks in regard to the post-war world and the extent of participation of the U.S. Having read the comments of the 23 great and near-great of our fair State, I find that all of them are suffering from national claustrophobia. In other words, they haven't been around. They toss the world around like it's the U.S. apple as there are a lot of very smart, intelligent people of other nations who will have a lot to say about any ideas of what's to be done about their sovereign rights and who are willing to fight about it. The "respondents" all approach the question from strictly American attitude and will probably be at a great loss to understand why the British, French, Russians, etc. won't agree with them. Having lived a lifetime in such a wonderful, bounteous, free country as the U.S., they can't understand European mind -- the subtleties that go to make up the different nationalities. They can't understand that in the desperate struggle to maintain a national superiority that a Czechoslovak had rather live all his life ill-fed, ill-clothed and ill-housed as a Czechoslovak than to have one iota of Czechoslovakian national wealth be expended outside his nation to give him a good life because that very expenditure would add to the well-being of those outside his nation. The same situation would exist at home if we refused to eat meat from Chicago because it would make a Chicago packer rich -- result, if N.C. produced no meat, we'd eat no meat before we would buy it from an outside source. The U.S. citizen absolutely can't understand being all enjoyers of bounty how any European could subject himself as an individual to the welfare of the State. The matter of national pride also raises too big a question. The Irish think that any product made in Ireland is "ne plus ultra" even though the U.S. would consider the product too

inferior even to offer for sale. An European of any nationality is particularly interested in the sovereign rights of his state – interested enough to tell the U.S. to either put up or shut up – meaning if you want to impose your will, do it by force – either arms or economic sanctions – but don't be telling us – a sovereign state – what we should do just because it tied in with your security, welfare, etc. – after all we've got a "right" to exist, to feel our way along the rocky path of national benefit as we see it.

My answer to N.B.L.'s queries is that there should be an international organization and the U.S. should take part as an equal member. Economic sanctions followed by force of arms – arms controlled by sovereign nations and not an international pool of arms – to be the means of maintaining peace – or negatively of preventing a world conflict. There can be no justice or peace as long as there are ambitious men and nations (please note -- Dr. Graham).

This is getting to be quite an epistle. Perhaps I should have written direct to N.B.L. to enlighten her and some of the other nimblewits on their international banking. However, I cannot close without expressing my opinion of the bally British and make a few comments about them.

To begin with, we must understand that Britain in itself – meaning "this isle" – has absolutely no basis to exist as a world power and the funny part is that they know it. The British are interfaced with existence by their only resource – brains – play one against the other – while they swear themselves out either against each other or a common enemy. Britain conserves and emerges on top of the mastodon nations that blunder blindly – U.S. & Russia – mere children in the game of international politics. Britain dominates Europe by dividing and ruling. My opinion – there will be no invasion of Europe until the Russians have either quit or been held up or the U.S. tells the British to go to the devil and takes off on its own. Any invasion will be made by 90 percent American men and material. Why should the British fight as long as Russians, Americans, Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders, Indians, etc. will carry the burden of keeping the Empire great?

Furthermore, Britain deserves no strong power on the continent. Defeat of the German Army in the field leaves Russia a dominant European power – no buffer state would exist for alliance against Russia and the U.S. would probably not be anxious to maintain a garrison and Britain for protection. It is highly important to the British to maintain rather than destroy German arms at this stage of the game. Politics make strange bedfellows and British supremacy in Europe now depends on letting Germany and Russia expend their men and material while waiting to strike one final blow and attack that peace table with all the spirit and drive that her Army lacks in the field. Destruction of German arms leaves the measly British with no ally to fight for her against the dominance of Russia.

Bedtime calls now and I must close. You can send this letter to N.B.L. if you wish & I trust that U.S. citizens will wake up and realize their place in the world. Why should we continue to maintain the British?

So long until next time. Hope you get my package okay. Love to all you. How's little Matt doing? Must close.

Always,

Brame

Northern Ireland

April 7, 1944

Dear Mother,

I've received two letters from you in the last three days – one of the 15th and 30th of March. That mail boat finally came in. I've gotten about eight or nine letters in the past few days. I suppose it will slow down now then all come in at once again. The letters were all very interesting – one from Leila M. [Morrison] and Joyce Gibbons in Richmond – the first I'd had from Joyce since a Christmas card, one from Mr. Plyler thanking me for the check, and several from girls here, there and everywhere, but none from Stuart of date. I guess he's busy as a Papa.

Yours of the 15th first. It was too bad about Tommie Jenkins. There are other things than combat that can take us away. I don't think you have to worry about me on that score specifically since I believe I told you before that we were fit for it. Tommie was pretty young too, only 22.

My "little college girl" as you say is named Nancy Phillips, but I guess we'd better forget about her since I haven't heard from her in about five or six weeks, which is too long if anyone is the least bit interested. She's really a very, very sweet girl with all the necessary accomplishments but she's only 17 and 11 or 12 years is too much differential. She is from Wausau, Wisconsin; her father is a wholesale grocer and she goes to school at Chevy Chase Junior College.

Who the girl was that came in the store and said she was a friend of mine from LaCrosse and stationed at New River in the Marine Corps, I can only guess. I knew two girls there that I think might have joined the Marines – Rita George and Dorothy Kutsbonsky – Rita is blonde and on the hefty side while Dorothy is also blonde but more delicate. Rita is the one whose parents owned the cottage on the Mississippi to which we went and would probably be the one to come in since she was more of a friend than Dorothy. I never dated Dorothy but just met her in the crowd. I think both joined the Marines. They are both good-looking and pretty nice. I knew some wonderful people in LaCrosse. The only trouble is that they were mostly Catholics.

That V-mail letter I mentioned has probably never come since I'm not sure it was ever mailed. I gave it to another Lieutenant to mail. I'll tell you all about it someday, but no

can do, now.

Now yours of the 29th – I'm glad to hear that they finally cleared up that old bond deduction. It is now correct -- \$12.50 was deducted for four months (\$50.00) making me due 2-\$25.00 bonds and \$12.50 cash; so all is okay. I was glad to get the store's figures for the month of March, but I still haven't got what I want. I've got to know how much of the store's earnings have got to be charged to me – my one-quarter partnership share of the earnings on which I pay tax. Dad absolutely had to get the figures up to pay his own tax, and it's as simple as ABC. Just say,

“Dear Brame,

The store's net profits for 1943 were \$ _____, divided as follows:

$\frac{3}{4}$ MSM \$ _____
 $\frac{1}{4}$ BPM \$ _____”

I don't want Edward Joyner or anyone to make out my income tax reports – all I want to know, my dear, is how much of the store's profits are chargeable to me?

It's too bad about all the men from home having to leave for the Army and, oh my, all those dear little Air Corps & A.A. men that have been put in the rough old infantry!: Ain't it awful? No glamor, no air medal (5 routine flights), no soft life, no fast promotion – why, it's not even American – sort of Russian you might say, but who's running the war?

I've been working pretty hard the last few days. It doesn't get dark now till about ten. We are not so “busy” but I've been on the go myself. Today is Good Friday and Sunday is Easter but I'm afraid I won't slow down a great deal. My job goes on – it's almost like the drug business.

I'm still getting along fine. Must close now. Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

Northern Ireland
April 9, 1944

Dear Mother,

Today was Easter and it was really a lovely day. I got up and went to church this morning but I can't say that I especially enjoyed the service since they chant the Psalms and sing hymns I don't know and the sermons are dry. We also missed lunch by going to

church since the hours don't click with our messing time – 11:30-1:00 – and we eat at 12:00 so I don't usually break my neck to get to church.

I'm still getting along fine. I hope you received the tablecloth I sent sometime ago. I'll try to get you some other gifts soon but doubt if I can get one off in time for your birthday.

Everything progresses smoothly. We are kept "busy", but not too much to hurt us. I went to the usual club dance last nite – about the same. I go just to get out.

It's getting late and I haven't much news. Will write later in the week. I hope that you and Dad had a nice Easter. Must close now.

Love,

Brame

Northern Ireland

April 23, 1944

(This letter censored and part of it is missing).

Dear Mother,

I received four letters from you yesterday of March 27, April 4, 7 and 11. This is the first opportunity I've had to write in sometime since I've been pretty busy.

[The next part was cut out by a censor]. And also explains any delay in letters.

I'm still in good shape and am getting along fine though the last few weeks have been pretty busy as you can well imagine any job.

Dad's letter also arrived with the business reports. That is exactly what I wanted and what I've been pleading for. I'm satisfied now. I have the figures I need. It looks as if things turned out pretty well at the store last year. Although I do not have to file a report until I get back, I see no point in waiting since it will be difficult to trace down figures and the amount due will still be there and possibly so big I could never pay it. A time extension without eliminating the debt is just putting off the evil day when I may be less able to handle it financially. Now, with these figures, I can make out my report and will probably send it on in with a check. I don't know how much it will be, but should not be so bad since my first \$1,500.00 of Army pay is not considered income which leaves me about \$400.00 Army pay plus the \$1,300.00 from the store to pay on. The forgiveness feature on last year may help out some as well.

It seems that death is removing quite a few of the older ones back home. I'm glad

Clenon and Jack got along okay. With both of them, Dad should be able to get a little rest now & then.

I'm glad to hear that all the boys are getting promoted. I've just about hit the top myself in my job. Once you get overseas the positions are full up and they transfer in to fill vacancies instead of promoting and training new men.

[This part of the letter censored]. . . . We'll probably owe them when the war is over. U.S. is taking a licking on Lend-Lease in reverse. The British values are cock-eyed but there's nothing we can do since they are inevitable partners. I don't have time for elaboration but perhaps when it's all over I can tell you more. By the way, the only "English" are those that live in England over here. The others are Irish, Scotch, and Welsh – all British, but not "English" – about the same as being a Georgian, Texan, New Yorker, etc. in the States but U.S. above all; however, the characteristics are more clearly defined since they are not as polyglot a people as we are. I have quite a few letters to write to catch up and must close now. Will write you more as censorship bans lift. I'm okay and in good shape. Hope that you and Dad are both well.

Love,

Brame

I CERTIFY THAT THE ENCLOSED ARTICLES ARE BONA FIDE GIFTS FROM A MEMBER OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES ON DUTY OUTSIDE THE CONTINENTAL LIMITS OF THE UNITED STATES AND UNDER PUBLIC LAW 790 ARE ENTITLED TO FREE ENTRY. BRAME P. MORRISON, 1ST LIEUTENANT If0-1301012
Fv. Co. 38 Inf. APO #2
Contents – 1 tablecloth 6 napkins.

England
April 30, 1944

Dear Mother,

I have not received any mail from you since my last letter. I suppose you haven't written since you hadn't heard from me as regularly as usually since correspondence was difficult.

The weather in our new location in England is very much nicer than the last place. We have quite a bit of sunshine and it is warm enough to do without fire most of the time. Spring is here also with green grass, apple blossoms, etc. I have seen very few iris and tulips.

We are getting along fine. Our new camp is pretty nice – a little more plumbing and I now have a wash basin and showers available. Things roll along smoothly. I'm kept fairly busy and time passes very quickly.

I went to the pictures last nite and saw "Gentleman Jim" with Errol Flynn. Some pictures I haven't seen are getting here now. The people are much cleaner, better dressed, etc. than the Irish. Prices are just as high, though. Laundry and cleaning as usual are a problem. A field jacket costs seven shillings for washing which amounts to \$1.40. Most things are on a little higher plain. Whereas it was formerly forty years behind it's now roughly twenty years behind although some things are right at the snuff.

I know there are lots of things in which you should be interested that I'd like to write about; however it is impossible to tell you much.

I'm still getting along fine. I have not written you lately but I'm around 145 pounds.

I had a couple of letters from Stuart and have written to him. He said he was going to try to come home in May and bring Matt down. Tommie and Sara are expecting in June. He is back at Benning. I don't think Stuart will have to worry about the draft. He's over age for what the Army needs. I haven't made any contact with any boys from home since we can't travel much.

I'm waiting a while now before figuring on my income tax. I intend to get it in before I come home but for the present it can wait until some other things are finished. For more news you'll have to read "Time" and the newspapers. After it's all over I may be able to give you some details but for now they know more than I.

Must close, love to both you and Dad. Keep your letters coming even if mine are held up.

Love always,

Brame

[England]
May 7, 1944 (Sunday)

Dear Mother,

I've gotten your letters of April 14th and 24th since my last one to you. I've wanted to write sooner but somehow I haven't been able to find the time. I've been very, very busy and then when I finish up at nite my quarters are usually chilly and not very conducive to letter writing. It's about 11:30 now and I've just finished getting a fire started – the

I'm glad you've gotten your room fixed up. I know it's lovely and I would like to be able to see it. Perhaps I may be next Spring. If I stay in the Army much longer, you'll hardly know me when I get home. You should see my mustache now – I've had it about three months and I'm used to it.

I thought about you on your birthday and also Mother's Day is next Sunday. I'll probably be busy but here's my love and many more happy birthdays. I hope Dad can get enough candy to make a good showing.

I'm also glad to hear that all the boys from home are getting up in the Army – 1st Lieutenant is my top.

I hope Stuart and Doug will be able to get home on the 24th. I know they are a happy pair now with Matt. I haven't heard from him in quite some time.

I got a letter from J. Gibbons some weeks ago and he said he was going in July 1. How's Robert Williams? -- Still in the States?

The weather here is still lovely and quite pleasant. The foliage is beautiful and it is very quiet and peaceful looking – although also good war weather – almost good.

I have been washing tonite – our laundry facilities are not the best.

It's getting late and I had better close this and hit the hay. I've written one check here and may write another – money goes fast for what you need.

I hope Dad is getting along okay at the store. I'm not doing anything about my income tax at present till I have more time and things come out.

My love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

England
May 14, 1944

Dear Mother,

I got your letters of May 4th yesterday and am glad you finally heard from me. I can't exactly place that letter, though. Please give me the dates of my letters when you are talking about them. Also, one of your letters to date have intimated that you knew that I am now where I was. It was probably cut out.

I've been pretty busy all day. Today is Mother's Day, but it doesn't mean much over here since they don't have one and we are all "sans" mothers. However, I'm thinking of you today. In fact, all last night and today I've been in that "U.S.A. mood" – not caring a thing about going out or seeing any girls or doing anything – it's not homesickness but just a sort of disgust for things locally.

It is pretty difficult to write much since you at home know what the situation is and how things stand with all of us over here. We are still getting along fine; the weather is very nice, warm and sunshiny; the grass is green and fruit trees are in bloom; the girls are passing fair; we work neither too much or too little; the food is excellent, chicken on Sundays, steaks, etc.; eggs are still scarce; the bread is still brown; tea is still drunk; the beer and ale is better than Guinness; prices are still high, blackouts are still black; cars are still on the left; the money we can all figure now.

I'm still busy and may be even busier. Perhaps before long we can roll back the curtain and tell you what goes on.

I haven't heard from Stuart lately. I hope he's still getting along okay and can come home on the 27th. I don't think the draft will get him – he's a little over age and time is too short.

Must close now and for news you'll have to read the papers. They know more than we do. Will write every chance I get but my letters will have to be short. It will be a great adventure.

Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

England
May 21, 1944

Dear Mother,

Just a few lines tonight to let you know that I'm okay and in good shape. I'm still busy and everything is going along fine, although it is rather chilly at night now.

I haven't received any mail in about a week but should hear from you soon.

I hope everything at home is okay. I'd like to be there now myself.

There's not much news I can tell you so must make this short and close now.

Love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

England
May 26, 1944

Dear Mother,

I received your letter of the 14th yesterday – the first I'd gotten in over a week.

We have been addressed by a few of the big shots lately and if you read "Time" magazine, you can get a pretty good picture of things since they're reporting as fairly accurate as far as it can go from a civilian standpoint. You may also notice something familiar in some of the pictures in the May 1st issue: Look it over carefully. It may be a good idea to study some of the maps as well so you can keep up with the news reports. I cannot, of course, give you any locations as to where we are, or will be although I have been fairly well-informed. But the fortunes of war change fast and one never knows.

Of one thing you can be sure – our forces are well-prepared and well taken care of with every conceivable preparation down to the little minute things. You people at home can well be proud of the things your bonds and sacrifices are giving to our soldiers. I am very well satisfied myself with the look of things although it will not exactly be a Sunday School picnic there should not be too much danger.

I got a letter from Stuart yesterday mailed April 24th by regular mail. That is so slow that you'd just as soon not write as use regular mail for any satisfactory correspondence. Stuart and Doug and Matt are probably home with you now. I'd like to be there myself but then I'd miss the ring-side seat in the big show – admission about three percent per 100 which is worth the gamble.

I've been getting along fine here and my work suits me to a "T". The things I've learned are coming in handy especially when we get away from the book references and have to depend on what you've got in your head. Knowing the proper names of items is important in getting them quickly as well as getting all of them. Physically, I'm also in good shape – pretty active but nothing too hard. I've been to several shows lately – rather recent pictures, too. Must close now. Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

England—29 May 1944

(Editor's note: written on a piece of v-mail reply memo paper)

Dear Mother,

Just a short letter tonite to let you know that I'm still getting along O.K. There not much news to give you. I've been pretty busy the last few days as usual.

The fellows in the tent are all kidding and it is hard to write. I haven't had but one letter—of May 15—from you in the past 2 weeks but that is to be expected since my mail is still going to Service Co. first and I'm not with them at present. I'll probably get about 10 once when it does come in.

Next Sunday is my birthday—29 yrs.—it doesn't seem possible does it—my 3rd in the Army also, but I expect this one will possibly be about as exciting as the others put together, but then one never knows.

I must close now. Will write every opportunity. All my love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

England, 31 May 1944

(Editor's Note: written on notebook paper)

Dear Mother,

My stationary supply is not available at the moment so I'm writing on this. I received your letter of the 18th today, which is not bad considering.

Things are going along smoothly and all is well. Yes, our regimental Commander is the same—I'm one down from whom you mentioned I was under now, and the same as the one who had my first outfit when I was drafted. You may also remember what Uncle Alex was in when they were in Massachusetts. We have not had any of what John T. said was dangerous.

I'm glad Florence P. could get down with her baby and hope Stuart can make it O.K.

I did not know Clinon was out or not with Dad. You may have written it in a letter I did

not receive. I hope he's getting along O.K. at the store. I know you'll enjoy have Stuart, Doug and Matt with you.

I've seen several pictures lately—we have them every night now at camp—some entertainment and diversion at any rate. I don't get out much now as I used to. Must close now. Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

England

1 June 1944

(Editor's Note: Last letter before D-Day)

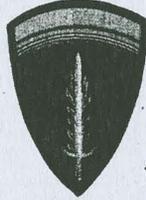
Dear Mother,

I got your letter of May 9 after receiving yours of the 10th yesterday. That letter explains about Clenon's not being at the store—not getting letters in order sometimes makes it hard to tie up later letters without knowing what's gone on before. I suppose Dad can get along without him, though. Holding help is pretty difficult now.

I enjoy some of your comments on what the papers at home say, but what they don't know would fill a book—especially the comment about Germany having a short time to make up her mind to surrender or be destroyed—they can't quit now—we can't let them—we should only lose again. As long as force is the only language the Germans understand it is only by the absolute rout and destruction of the German Army “in the field” that we can destroy the myth of the invincibility of German arms. We can not let them believe that they were defeated by any other means than a superiority of commanders, weapons, and men—men that outfought, outguessed, and out maneuvered the great German General Staff and its highly touted, “Wehrmacht”—men that, not holding in the highest esteem the art of waging war, have defeated those whose ultimate aim and highest goal has been the planning and waging of war and more war. We must let the German soldier and civilian feel within their hearts and souls the cold fear of overwhelming power—a power that not even those super Aryans can cope with—destroy the German arrogance and give to Germans the feelings that have existed with the French, Poles, Belgians and Czechoslovakians as the “might” German Army stalked through their countries bringing with them the curse of Nazi domination. These things we must do to save the Germans from future domination—their faith in arms must be destroyed—utterly wiped out, lest some future Hitler again leads them along the path of destruction by dangling before them a German superiority and invincibility—the German must be made to realize in his soul that he is neither superior nor invincible.

Your idea of the British Empire growing stronger by the meeting of the Dominion heads

SUPREME HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE



*Brane P.
Morrison
1st Lt. Inf.
S.V. Co. 38 2nd Inf.
June 7, 1944*

Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Force!

You are about to embark upon the Great Crusade, toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you. In company with our brave Allies and brothers-in-arms on other Fronts, you will bring about the destruction of the German war machine, the elimination of Nazi tyranny over the oppressed peoples of Europe, and security for ourselves in a free world.

Your task will not be an easy one. Your enemy is well trained, well equipped and battle-hardened. He will fight savagely.

But this is the year 1944! Much has happened since the Nazi triumphs of 1940-41. The United Nations have inflicted upon the Germans great defeats, in open battle, man-to-man. Our air offensive has seriously reduced their strength in the air and their capacity to wage war on the ground. Our Home Fronts have given us an overwhelming superiority in weapons and munitions of war, and placed at our disposal great reserves of trained fighting men. The tide has turned! The free men of the world are marching together to Victory!

I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty and skill in battle. We will accept nothing less than full Victory!

Good Luck! And let us all beseech the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

in London is also a little wrong. It is just a case of the parent calling the growing up unruly children in to try to explain to them that their best welfare is to stick to home ties (so the parent can continue to enjoy benefits that it no longer deserves nor can demand and enforce.) The British rule by a seduction of others to their will. The give an inch—you give a mile. We are kept very well informed as to current events by the “Stars & Stripes” daily paper and news reels ast the shows. Hoey’s defeat of Cam [Morrison for U.S. Senate] was in the paper yesterday for instance.

I’m still getting along fine and am kept busy. Will write again at the first opportunity. Sunday is my birthday and I’ll be thinking of you. Love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

12 June 1944

[Editor’s note: first letter after D-Day. June 6, 1944. First letter for two weeks after writing almost daily, and Sallie Morrison did not know whether he was still alive.]

Dear Mother,

I know you are more than anxious to hear from me now that you, or course, know that the invasion has begun.

There are thousands of things that I would like to tell you—what war is like and places, but censorship still holds and I can only tell you that I am in France. I can’t even say how long I’ve been here, but you can understand that I have seen war as it is and in that respect as much of it as any soldier in any war. The things that I would like to write are so many that I chafe with the necessity of not telling you many thanks that to you would be horrible and fearsome but to us become just part of a grim business. Combat no longer has fear. We are resting now and things are quiet and peaceful. Of course, there is still some action.

My French is very, very good. I speak it very well and have no difficulty except with my vocabulary which is limited, but I’m learning the words quickly.

I’m writing tonite by candlelight in the home of a French lady in whose front yard we are bivouacked. They are very nice people.

I’m still well and happy. It would be nice to be home again and perhaps soon the war will be over and all of us can come home.

I have, of course, had no mail from you for some time, but perhaps soon I shall receive some. I hope you enjoyed Stuart and Doug’s visit.

My love to both you and Dad. Will write again at the earliest opportunity. I am O.K.

Always,

Brame

France
June 21, 1944

Dear Mother,

I know that you are sitting on pins & needles to hear from me; however, it is pretty difficult to find time to write since my job is almost a 24-hour one now. I haven't written in about ten days and now that I find time to write it is difficult to tell you much. From my last letter you must know that I've seen some war. I can't tell you too much about it now but then there will be just that much more to tell when it is over. As for myself I've been in some rather warm places but if I'm careful I should pull through okay.

We've been living off of "K" and 10 in one rations which is something like mountain rations since we've been here. Life in the field is really something. We could all stand a good bath but get a chance to shave every two, three, or four days depending on the situation. I don't bother to wash handkerchiefs – just capture German or use U.S. abandoned. I would like so much to tell you so many things about the war – the fighting, life, etc. but it can't be done.

I'm getting along fine so far. You probably know more about the general situation than I do. As for me, I'd just as soon the war was over right now but it looks like it will be some time yet. I wish they'd send over some of those troops they've got trained, though, and let us get back a few days to rest up, clean up, eat, and take stock of personnel and equipment. As for casualties, they have not so many considering. We get mail now everyday. I've gotten two from you – of June 1st and 5th and one from Stuart written in May sometime. He won't write airmail and his letters take about a month.

My love to both you and Dad. Will write again as soon as possible.

Love,

Brame

France
June 22, 1944

Dear Mother,

I wrote you a short quick letter last nite but have a little more time now. I'm sitting under an apple tree enjoying the late afternoon sunlight. Today has been lovely and bright – just cool enough for comfort. I haven't yet told you what we wear – a cotton undershirt, wool undershirt, O.D.F., field jacket and a suit up impregnated fatigues over all – that sounds like a lot but it hasn't been too hot yet and it feels darn good at nite. At nite we just roll up in a blanket and sleep in a foxhole. Old Mother Earth is the soldier's best friend. When there's a shelling or bullets flying, believe me, you hug it close or get down on it. As for a toilet, you just get a shovel and dig a hole. We all carry toilet paper in our helmets and sometimes an extra handkerchief or pair of socks.

There are plenty of cigarettes – they are in all the rations and there's also a P.X. distribution of a pack a day (part of my job). When things are rolling, I'm plenty busy with water, rations, ammo, evacuation of wounded and dead, salvage, etc. I bring them blankets, food and coffee right up in the lines. Jerry's [Germans] not much of a nite fighter. He's got to do all those things, too; so you are really safer in the lines than farther back when they do a little shelling.

It's a funny thing about the way you learn sounds and can identify weapons and artillery, etc. There are a few shells going over now that would put new men in foxholes but don't worry us. We know by the sound that they are ours and going over. You also learn the sounds of machine guns, automatic rifles, machine pistols, mortars, howitzers, etc. and whether they concern you or not. Believe me, if a German machine gun cuts loose pretty close with a low bass-putt and the slugs go zwack-zwack around you, you hit the ground or hug a hedgerow. You can tell whether you personally are being shot at or there's just an area spraying. Snipers worry some of us but we don't bother with them much now. Action under fire is the best policy till you get to cover. The moment you stop they zero in – keep on the move as long as there is fire. You won't believe it but we unload our individual weapons at nite in our own area to prevent anyone from getting trigger-happy and shooting at imaginary or real figures in our own area. It just creates unnecessary excitement and may possibly hurt someone to have any Joe Blow cut loose. When I walk around after dark, I go right down the middle of the road singing a popular song in a low voice – guards are dubious of single, silent figures – they are liable to shoot first and question later. You are safe enough in a jeep, though. They know the sound of our motors and patrols are usually out so it's not unexpected.

As for death, I am of course well acquainted with it that being part of my job. The medics don't bother with the dead beyond tagging them. The medics really do a super job in taking out the wounded right under fire. They are probably the unsung heroes of the war. As for the sights I've seen and see and handle every day, they become commonplace – part of the routine. What to civilians is horrible or terrible is just part of war – we don't even think about it. A casualty to me is just another source of equipment – I've got to keep it to issue to those still in the game or to replacements. I keep a man at the aid station who does nothing but recover arms and equipment from casualties. If a

man is knocked out, chances are that same afternoon I've given his rifle, cartridge belt, canteen, etc. to someone else. It's a grim business, but it must go on. I also handle baggage & personal effects of the wounded and K.I.A. [killed in action] – turn back in the Govt-property for reissue and personal effects are turned over to higher headquarters for return to relatives or individual himself if in the hospital. Mine is a great job – I see plenty of action but don't have too tough a time. I should come through o.k.

Give my love and regards to everyone. It is very peaceful at the spot I'm in at the moment and only a short distance away they are the frontlines. What a contrast. I haven't time to write Stuart or maintain much correspondence until we get relieved and hit a rest area.

My love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

France
June 23, 1944

Dear Mother,

Just a short note this evening to let you know I'm okay. I haven't been so super busy today and have had a little time to clean up and rest a bit. I've just written a letter to Stuart. He sent me a couple of pictures of Matt. He's a cute little rascal. There's not too much news. I got the issue of "Time" for June 12 which was fairly interesting since I was in on part of it. The issue came by airmail with a note inside that it was sent by airmail to give the subscriber a better, quicker view of "D" Day. What a laugh for me! I started to send it back with a note that the view was a little late and not so good as my own.

I'm becoming pretty good cook fixing the rations.

It's getting a little late; so I'll have to close this and make a mail run.

(I pick up & deliver mail).

Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

France
June 29, 1944

Dear Mother,

I'm right now sitting in the cab of a 2-1/2 ton truck to get out of the rain. We've just had a nice little hail storm also. We've had a bit of rainy weather the last few days and it is really miserable living in foxholes when it is rainy. Just for a tale, here's an experience in a foxhole – several nites ago, it was pretty wet; so, to find a dry place for most of my body, I reversed positions and slept with my head at the far end which the cover had kept dry. About 4:00 A.M. I woke up and had to pee in the worst sort of way – so bad I knew I couldn't get out of the foxhole in time so I reached for my helmet and the action caused me to let go and just like a baby, I peed all over myself. After that, there was nothing to do but pull down my pants, cut off my drawers and undershirt with a knife and get as comfortable as possible with a blanket – about 6:00 I got up and put on fresh underclothes but my O.D. trousers were still wet; so I just cut a foot-square patch out of a blanket and lined my rear-end till the trousers dried out. This is just a little incident – a thousand of which I could tell you.

Yesterday I got (or rather our whole Battalion got) the first chance to clean up and put on fresh clothes after three weeks in the lines. We've done a little shaving, etc. but have had no real respite to bring up baggage and change into fresh clothes until now.

Mail has been coming in very good. I got nine letters day before and three yesterday. Your latest was June 12 in which you surmised wrong about my still being in England. I was right there from the first and my birthday was spent afloat. "Time" magazine of June 19, pages 9 & 10 (&7) will show you a little bit of it and incidentally those pictures happen to be of our area. By the time you get this news of our division, we'll probably be in some of your papers, because we've done all right and have won some battle citations. Our Bn. is in the ball and we've gone through some Germans alright.

Property ownership doesn't mean a darn thing on the front. All equipment is U.S. property and one man out means that much for another. Personal items are returned to relatives but socks, underwear, handkerchiefs, toilet articles are all grouped for any who need them. Our salvage system really works. There's also plenty of German stuff floating around.

I could write pages on end about war experiences but a lot I can't tell you so far as names and a lot of other things. We'll just have to wait until it's all over – when that is, nobody knows.

I get the little sheet from the National Bank about doings at home, and it seems to be full of soldier shows at war bond rallies. What we at the front want to know is why don't they send the soldiers and hire civilians for war-bond rallies & shows. We appreciate the

bonds & what they provide but we'd surely like to get relieved every week or ten days to clean up and "lick our wounds" so to speak. It isn't any fun to be committed for two or three weeks and even when you aren't attacking to be diving to foxholes from mortar and artillery shells. But even if we get fresh troops, we'd probably have to go in to relieve them until they got over "combat fear" and learned the little tricks of the trade to keep you alive and that are why they say "Old soldiers never die". You learn fast about walking across fields and keeping under cover and behind hedgerows, and out of machine gun fields of fire and observation of mortar squads. Of course, when your time comes, it will get you anyhow, but there's a lot you can do to cut down the percentage of risk.

I must close now because nite descends and have a light showing means a dead man.

Love to both you and Dad. I think of you always and pray that God will save me for you and you for me until this mess is over and we can be together again. All my love, the best of luck and God bless you both.

Always,

Brame

France
July 3, 1944

Dear Mother,

I've just received your letter of June 18th and am answering immediately since I have a few moments.

The weather continues miserably wet and it is mighty uncomfortable to get out in it and foxholes are all a mess. Being around a 2-1/2 ton trucks, I usually sleep under them to keep dry unless I'm too near the lines and subject to shelling or mortar fire. By spreading the canvas end curtains from the side of the truck, we can make a pretty fair shelter and a curtain on the ground keeps out the dampness from below. We sleep with our clothes on and one or two blankets is sufficient. I sometimes take my shoes off depending on how near I am to the lines.

Your letter was quite interesting. You had not received any of mine at that date but I see that you know I am in France and your surmise about the date just missed one. You will probably be hearing from me about now. I write as often as possible but conditions keep me more than busy as my work covers so doggone many things that I got to keep under control and check on even though I can't personally handle it all. Who'd water, ammunition and the 1001 items of equipment for a battalion is some job, but I'm keeping them darn well supplied in all phases.

I can't mention names, but our battalion cracked one of the strong points and got a commendation for it. We've had plenty of awards for merit, but I doubt if I come in for that since I do all these little things that keep them in fighting but don't show up as an individual action – the battalion is just known as well supplied and the means thereof considered as just good administration along the line which is justifiably true, but the supply officer is still the key man through whom all requests go.

I've just had a phone call and will have to go in a few moments. Chances are we'll go back into position soon.

It's too bad about Doug having to have the operation, but that's part of life. Such civilian things seem too trite to us who are concerned immediately here with war, combat, danger and death. An appendix operation would be a heavenly thing to us when bullet slugs and shell fragments are flying and you flatten your body even deeper into a foxhole. That APO #574 stamped on the letters you got from me is London APO # through which our letters were cleared from our station prior to embarkation for the invasion since we had no APO # at those camps. Our APO doesn't operate in a moving situation and mail is held and cleared through central APO's which is why it sometimes is so long.

As for war news, you probably know about as much of the general situation as I, since I don't get much time for reading or keeping up with much more than the local situation until I get "Time" magazine. That is a godsend. I've gotten the issue for the 19th already.

Must close now and get to work. Will write again later. Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

France
July 9, 1944

Dear Mother,

Here it is Sunday, but you'd never know it so far as the war is concerned. The Catholic chaplain holds a mass here & there and in the rear areas, the Protestant chaplains hold some services. Most of the pictures you might see are taken of what we call the rear areas or the rear, rear – so far back they are clean out of the war. The rear area we call Service Company bivouac which is around a mile or two back. They may get an occasional shell but life goes on just about like on maneuvers. The rear, rear – from which you get most pictures are towns and places we were in weeks or days ago and that are coming back to life – most of the soldiers you see are QM [quartermaster] or A.A. or some engineers. It tickles us to get pictures about ten days or two weeks later of soldiers cleaning snipers out of buildings when we trod all over the same place when it was still

smoking. They walk around in the rear with rifles cocked like there are some Germans around – at the front, we carry them unloaded or put them where we can get them quick. The front is within 300 to 800 yards of the enemy and you are subject to mortar and artillery fire as well as small arms – you live in foxholes and walk close to buildings or hedgerows. If the first shell doesn't get you, you've got a pretty good chance to hit a foxhole or lie low. For the last couple of nites, I've slept inside which is not bad.

I got a letter from Stuart enclosing some pictures of you and Matt and of you, Dad & Matt. You look like you have a little more grey but Dad looks the same.

I'm still getting along fine. They keep me pretty busy but things haven't been so bad the last few days and I've had a few moments off. I haven't heard from you since you heard from me from France, but I'm expecting a letter any day. Mail is coming in pretty good. The last letter from you is dated June 19th.

I hope everything at home is O.K. and that Dad is getting along fine at the store. Things are going well with me. I could stand a good bed and a great, big juicy steak after foxholes and "K's", but life goes on without those things. As for the war, you probably know more than I but anybody that thinks it will be over in a matter of days is full of baloney – one never knows, but I'm home for my next birthday. But if I'm home for my next birthday, I'll be lucky and satisfied. It will take me almost a year to get used to civilian life again though, but I'm ready to try.

Must close now.

Love,

Brame

France
July 13, 1944

Dear Mother,

I got your letter of June 29th today – the first since you've heard from me from France. I'm now in the Aid Station tent to get out of the rain. You can see some raindrop marks on the stationary. It was good to hear that you had heard from me and knew I was O.K. after the first go-round – and today after another battle I'm still sound – but the last little event was plenty rough – I felt like a football player that had played three Saturday afternoon games all in one day – up 23 hrs. in a stretch this time.

It is hard for anyone who hasn't been in combat to realize the utter exhaustion of the human body – both physical and nervous energy burned out – you could absolutely sleep on rocks in a rainstorm.

I can't mention any casualties – they have not been excessive but of course war is war. We've taken prisoners of war and you can take it from me the so-called Nazi supermen are just a bunch of human rats – more unkempt than combat necessitates and not big or fine specimens – quite a few very young men still with fuzz on their face. They seem glad to surrender when the opportunity presents itself.

Yes, I did see Herbert Ellis at our first battle site to which our (time out for shells) battalion got the commendation. I hadn't mentioned it because I've had so many other things on my mind – [changed to pencil] no ink now – it's good to hear that he was just wounded – being wounded and out of it all you at least know your fate. As for myself you may be glad to know that my chances are a little better than the front line companies – I'm in plenty of shell fire and stray bullets but not out directly in front. If it's going to get you, it'll get you but you need not worry too much about me. I've heard that Billy's division was here; so he's probably in it too. I hope we will be relieved soon because combat is no fun, but I hate to get out and have to go back in.

By the way, I landed the same time that Herbert E. did about 4:00 P.M.

It's a great life and I'm happy despite it all. Love to both of you. I can't even see now to write – must close.

Brame

France
July 16, 1944

Dear Mother,

I rec'd 2 letters from you yesterday – June 27th in which you hadn't heard from me and of July 4th after yours of the 30th which was the first I'd gotten after you heard from me.

There's not much to answer in the letter of the 27th. I'm glad Doug is getting along O.K. and that things at the store are still rocking along.

It is fairly quiet here today and dry for a change. There's not too much shelling – maybe the Germans are observing Sunday, too.

That evacuation of the dead and wounded is not my entire job – by that I mean that others do it but I take out any I see and can help and also notify the regular crew of blacks as to the location of bodies. I didn't learn anything about that in England – nobody does until you get into combat. One might think that part of war would be revolting but you get used to it and dead and wounded don't bother us at all. The sights are sometimes not good to look at, but then it's war. We have no battlefield burials of individuals – all

bodies are collected into a regular cemetery – no families need fear an “unknown” soldier because identification is positive.

It was too bad about Jack Riley being killed. There’s no chance of my being promoted because 1st lieutenant is all my job calls for – no matter how well it’s done.

I’ve heard that all the Bn. S-4’s were recommended for the Combat Infantryman’s Award which means an extra \$10.00 a month. I haven’t been paid for a couple of months but I understand we are getting some today – it won’t be much though – we have absolutely no need of money – there’s nothing to buy and you can’t carry it anyway; so who needs money?

I have some other letters to write so I must close now. I hope we will be relieved before long. Other than about 6 days when the other Bn’s relieved us, we have been in the lines since we landed which is too doggone long for any troops. Everything seems to be going along O.K. Will write again at first chance.

Love,

Brame

France
July 19, 1944

Dear Mother,

I guess I’ve done less today than any day since I landed here and there’s nothing pressing right now. We are back in that good old reserve and you can at least move without a mortar or artillery shell dropping at your feet although we’re still close enough to get it and now at 8:30 P.M. we still say that it has been quiet “so far”.

If I remember correctly my last letter to you was written in the rain and a little splotted. I haven’t heard from you since then, but did get a letter from Leila M. in Richmond. We’ve been writing about every 6 or 8 weeks since I’ve been overseas just to keep in touch. You knew I suppose that Tommy had a girl and now has 21 days rest leave after getting over jaundice. A rest leave sounds silly to us because here there is no leave or rest until the job is done and you rest only when you are physically worn out and then only to keep going. Our division is still in combat and I don’t know when we’ll be relieved. In a defensive position is just as bad as an attack because you never know when that artillery & mortar will come and it’s nerve wracking. Contact with the enemy means subject to fire and there’s not much rest.

Twice since my last letter shells have hit within 10 or 12 yards but I’ve come out O.K. – got one man near me and I bandaged him up until the medics got there. (I’ve retired to

my foxhole now to finish this – a couple of shells just started whizzing over – it's a great life.)

Quite a few of the men are getting bronze and silver star awards. The bronze is for excellent performance of duty in combat and the silver for an outstanding performance even beyond the call of duty – usually volunteers for hazardous missions. I may be in for a bronze star because they called me up today for some facts that usually go on those recordations such as place you entered Army, etc. I think that my battalion has been darn well supplied and I've gotten coffee, donuts, soup, blankets and the extras for comfort up to them under some difficult situations. Our battalion up to now has carried the brunt of the regimental attack and our supply has kept us in fighting trim both as to the equipment and the physical fitness and moral of the men. Hot coffee and soup with "K" rations plus plenty of water, ammunition, clothes, arms and equipment make the men at the front have confidence that they are being looked after and they need not fear, being hungry, uncomfortable beyond need, out of water or ammo or out of weapons. When a machine gun is knocked out at 4 P.M. and I bring in another at 10 P.M. they don't have to be afraid of sitting up there without any protection. When wounded are hauled out by my jeep before the medics get there, they don't forget it, either.

Combat fear is something we all have to contend with. I've been afraid too, but I'm usually too busy to stop and think about it. Some men are built differently from others in that respect – a few crack up. Concussion shock is an entirely different thing. Combat fear is inside the head – a mental ailment that can usually be controlled while concussion shock is from some outside cause that usually results in an unusual allergy to shell explosions at any distance. Being at the front you get accustomed to shellfire and are not as jumpy as you are in the rear when you get an occasional shell. Believe me your reaction becomes automatic – you absolutely hit the ground before any thought could possibly activate your body.

My issue of "Time" for July 10 arrived today and the war news reads good. It is true that the Germans cannot muster the men or material to stop us any where we choose but the point we are interested in here is how long will they continue to fight a losing battle – sure, we take a town, we take a hill but it costs us, too, even though the German sacrifice is by far greater. We slaughter them, take prisoners and capture plenty of equipment. How long will their spirit hold up? As long as it does U.S. casualty lists will grow because any action will take its toll. Let us hope that it will end soon. I personally hope that it's over before we have to go back in once we are relieved. Being here we know it's our job, but if we get away from the front going back into action won't be easy. I hope Dad is getting along fine at the store. Being here there's not much I can do to help. Just keep putting the cash away in my account and in bonds to get the house free of debt and perhaps afterward we can all relax a little. By the way, after the war I'm going to get married which you can count on. I'm too far behind now on this family business. My number one girl right now is Nancy Wolf from La Crosse – her father is a doctor, family fairly well-to-do. She works in Washington for the H.P.B. We write about once a week. She's O.K. – blonde about Doug's height – but that's too far in the future. Must close.

Love,

Brame

France

July 23, 1944

Dear Mother,

I haven't received any letters from you for the last few days, but am expecting some tonite. I'm still getting along fine and haven't done too much the last few days since we are in reserve.

Our division orchestra played for us a few minutes the other nite. It made me feel funny to hear them and think of other times and realize that possibly somewhere in the U.S. & England now that other orchestras were playing and people were dancing and having a good time – people to whom the war was a vague sort of thing which probably meant a better job for them or for which they bought bonds, saved fats, paid taxes, practiced blackouts and a 1001 other little things but who had no possible conception of combat for what it is to the front line soldier – those civilian things we have gotten have even existed and are beyond our thoughts now until the job is done.

All of us have received our combat infantrymen badge which entitles us to an extra \$10.00 a month. That plus our overseas ribbons and the stripes will make us much beribboned and bemedalled when we get home and believe me we deserve it – all we are interested in now is getting home and hoping (each of us) that our luck holds out and we can come marching back after having personally done our share in conquering the enemy. The Purple Heart is one decoration I can do without, though. That's the one you get for being wounded in action.

I've bought a pair of combat boots – you'd hardly recognize me now with mustache and all. My weight is holding up pretty good. Our rations are now "B" (fresh meat and canned other components) which we eat when not in the line. It's pretty impracticable to feed "B" in the lines – too much enemy observation and mortar fire. We give them "K" plus soup and coffee and doughnuts.

I haven't had much opportunity to speak French a great deal in our present position since there aren't many civilians around. I can speak it pretty well, though, and have no trouble understanding it. I need to know a few more words but I get along O.K.

We hear quite bit of news about Russia and some sort of revolt in Germany as well as Walter Winchell's forecast that the war will be over by July 28th. If we were in N.Y. we'd say the same, but here we think he's full of bull. Actually we don't know and don't do much wishful thinking. We do know that the German soldiers are still defending and

we are still attacking and, until they withdraw and quit, the war will go on. These few days of being in reserve have made most of us feel better and we'd just as soon sit around till it's over provided we get out of the line every week or two rather than get completely relieved and have to go back in a month or so.

We've figured out workable systems of supply and things roll along smoothly enough. Most of the men have conquered combat fear and do their job well under fire. It's what you don't know that bothers you. When you find out what's firing and where, you can work fairly well. We don't expect men to walk or drive directly into fire, but when they drop everything just because a shell lands half a mile away it's exasperating and doubly hard on you to get the job done.

I went to church this morning – or shall I say services in an orchard – mostly singing with a short sermon by the chaplain on baptism and embracing Christianity – the only trouble is that all the men were there because they were already Christians and had been baptized without a doubt to the last man – but such is religion. Somehow, that has never bothered me since I've entertained no such ideas as dying, although I've thought about being wounded and hoped for legs and arms – it's chest and head wounds that kill.

I've found time the last few days to read a little of "Inside Benchley". It's pretty good – his wit and humor are tops.

I've heard nothing from Stuart for about 10 days. I suppose the rest of the family is O.K. Time is hard to keep up with. We deal in "D" days and "H" hours. The calendar or days of the week don't mean much, or affect any of our actions. It's yesterday, today, or tomorrow.

Must close now. Love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

France
July 24, 1944

Dear Mother,

I received your letter of July 9th last nite after I had written mine and am dropping this to you to answer some of your questions – ask as many as you can because I don't know what you'd like to know unless you do, and I'll answer what I'm allowed to.

Our lockers, personal belongings, good clothes, uniforms, etc. were stored somewhere in England. We packed and crated them up and turned them in.

I did not get sick crossing the Channel. I've never been seasick and don't ever expect to. The Channel was pretty quiet so far as I was concerned. Rough water makes me feel better instead of worse.

I still have my mustache. It's not too big as I'm not heavily bearded. You get used to them and hate to shave them off.

I actually saw & talked to Herbert Ellis for about five minutes, but it was in the heat of battle and we were both too busy to say much.

Sophie probably did not see me handing out K-rations; however, I don't know what photographers might have been around sometime when I was doing that. I don't remember any at any times like that. You might see me in some pictures of some blown-up German vehicles or an aid station in which some German medics were attending their own wounded. They were captured and put to work tending their own since we were busy with ours. It is difficult for anyone at home to recognize a picture since with our helmets and equipment, sometimes dirty, and unshaven, we don't exactly look like home folks remember us and most of us look alike, as well. Photographers don't all venture up into the fire fight and I can't blame them.

I'll probably be busy again after today. I'll write again as soon as possible. If you have any more questions, just ask them and I'll do my best to answer. Love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

France

August 2 (or 3), 1944

[Envelope had been opened and resealed with tape that showed "U.S. Army examined".]

Dear Mother,

I don't know exactly what the date is. We've been rolling and fighting so long – somewhere around 7 or 8 days – I can account for only 25 hours sleep in the last 6 days. We are all pretty well worn out and have stopped for 1 day today, but it has been no rest for me getting them ready to go again tomorrow. The Germans are retreating so fast, we can't keep up with them on foot and tomorrow, we ride. How long this will last, I don't know, but I'll be glad when something is over – either we hit a strong defense or the war is over or we are relieved – just so this run is over. I can't describe war to you – you can't even imagine it. I'm not sleeping inside – that was only 1 or 2 nites or any nite we can find cover in a house or barn – you roll up in a blanket and hit the floor. I've got to

close now and get some sleep. I'm still O.K. Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

P.S.: Have rec'd yours of the 24th July and 1 other date. I forget.

[On back of letter] 3 August Definitely I'm still O.K. but in a rush. I'll be thinking of Dad on his birthday.

BPM

France

August 6, 1944

Dear Mother,

At last we've stopped for a while and can recuperate a bit. I'm telling you this last little operation was something when it comes to endurance and we really covered a lot of ground. You'll probably read about it in "Time" as the things are progressing well in Normandy. Since our last stop I've gotten 4 letters from you of July 10th, 15th, 19th, and 24th.

In your letter of the 19th Ms. Wagner's fantastic hope about her Jim is foolish. If the War Dept. gave her a K.I.A. then he is definitely killed in action. One never learns the tales and this having been over a year ago it is out of the question [change of pen] that he could be a prisoner. We keep up with men too well for that.

Any idea that you might have that supplies are all in the rear is wrong. I take chow and rations right up to the front lines and believe me finding these companies at nite is no easy or safe job. They call it my patrol now every nite.

By the way I did get that Bronze Star for "Outstanding Performance of Duty in Combat". Almost all of us that have been and are still here got it. Our battalion has really been spearheading the attack up to now. My last description of combat fatigue was nothing in comparison to this last move. How we kept going no one knows. I got 21 hours sleep in 5 days.

It is difficult to describe combat because there are so many different situations and things also that we can't tell to an unknowing civilian that would not be nice but which to us are by now commonplace. A sense of humor is a wonderful thing to have, though – such as a crack that an aid station looks like a sorority house. The medical aid men do a wonderful job. My Jeep is equipped with a litter rack and I haul out a few myself if the occasion

permits. My job covers so many functions that it is hard to tell all of them. I'm just about the busiest man in the battalion.

Tomorrow makes 2 months of combat which is plenty long but I guess we'll be here till the finish. It's not much now but chasing Jerry over the country with an occasional strong point. Why those Germans are fools enough to continue fighting is beyond me. I hope it will be over soon though and we can all come home. German soldiers are very happy prisoners. They are tired of war.

I haven't heard from Stuart for quite a while but got another letter from Leila and one from Mary and Ad. I've got several other letters to answer now and must close. It's a great war and I can really give you some tales after it's over.

My love to both you and Dad. Keep things going at home. I'll be thinking of Dad on his birthday.

Always,

Brame

France
August 10, 1944

Dear Pop,

Tomorrow is your birthday so I'm writing tonite to wish you many happy returns. You know I'd like to be home to be with you and help out at the store. Perhaps soon, this mess will all be over and we can come home.

I write most of the news that I can right to Mother for both of you. I'm still getting along fine. This war is a great game – it's pretty wearing and it takes a lot to keep going under fire. Open warfare is not so bad, but these hedgerows are hellish things to take. Our army operates beautifully and the Jerries haven't got a chance – their fight is just a delaying action to slow you up. We've had some pretty stiff resistance at points as one can naturally expect.

I hope everything at the store is going well. I imagine you can sell all you can get. We are well supplied with cigarettes, toilet articles, blades, etc. Help must be rather unsatisfactory and hard to hold onto.

I'm enclosing a money order for \$50.00. They persist in paying us off over here, but there is absolutely nothing to spend it on. I bought some parachutist's boots and a combat field jacket for \$14.00, but other than that, I haven't spent anything. We are paid off in francs now at 2 cents each. This M.O. cost me 2500 francs – sounds like a lot of

money, doesn't it? If I stay in the Army much longer, I'll know all the monetary systems.

I must close now and write some more letters. Please give my regards to everyone at the store, Curt Nottingham when he's around, and all the men at Wilson Tobacco Co. when they come in.

Take care of yourself and take it easy as possible.

Devotedly,

Brame

France
August 11, 1944

Dear Mother,

I'm starting this to you now a few minutes before supper and will probably finish it later.

I wrote to Dad last nite and sent home a money order for \$50.00. Today is his birthday and I'd like to be there myself but I'll have to finish up this deal over here first.

It is rather warm today which is O.K. by me. We've been having a little rest for the last few days but will probably be going again soon.

The last letter of yours that I've received was dated July 28th. Mail has been coming in pretty well – almost more than I can answer – Stuart, Joyce G., Leila M., and 2 or 3 girls here, there, and yon. I've been catching up though fairly well on my correspondence in the last few days.

There's not much news now. Things are going along well. We will probably be busy again, though, shortly, I'm sure. I'll have to close now to get this off. Will write more later.

Love,

Brame

France
August 17, 1944

Dear Mother,

I've gotten about 3 letters from you in the last several days – one of the latter part of July, Aug. 1, and I think Aug. 8th. I don't have the letters with me now to refer to the dates.

I'm writing this at Bn. Headquarters. We have a little electric power plant we take with us to provide lights and run radios. It is really very nice – as a rule, we usually move into some French houses that are still intact and set up just like home – of course, we black out the windows, etc. We don't have to worry about the French occupants at the front because the civilians usually evacuate the battle zone – in the rear, you have to go through all sort of red tape to get a house – rent, etc. but here, we just move in and clean it up for a nite and then move on. Some of the French houses are pretty nice and then we do have trouble finding one that's not blown to pieces. Any pictures you've seen of gutted towns are not exaggerated. We've seen some of them completely flattened.

You mentioned something about not hearing from me regularly, but it is pretty difficult to write when we are in action because it is practically a 24-hour job for me and writing time is hard to find. We had our first picture show last nite and they are having USO shows, etc. tonite.

As for the War, it hasn't been so bad lately – mostly just a lot of work moving and trying to keep up with Jerry. I captured my first prisoner the other morning and 2 officers and I captured 11 when we were on reconnaissance for a C.P. a little later. They were just waiting to give up. The German soldier knows darn well that he's beat all over the place. I'm telling you our Army really operates – it's beautiful from a tactical standpoint – overlooking some of the not so tasteful part of the job. My job is much more simplified now, too, since I've got a radio on my Jeep and keep up with all that's going on in the Bn. – it both sends and receives – I can call anybody and they can call me. It makes operation much better – I know where the companies are now and when I go back to the rear, I just call on the radio to find out what time they want chow and what the enemy situation is that would affect my feeding.

Physically, I get along very well – as yet, no wounds. I've been lucky. I'd like to tell you the names of some places I've been, but no can do, but when you read about them, you can always wonder if I were there.

I've gotten another letter from Stuart lately, also. I hope Dad had a nice birthday. I'd like to get some battle pictures of myself, but I've no camera. I also captured a German pistol which I'll bring home with me. If you are wondering how I'm armed – I had a CAL. 45 automatic just for ordinary purposes plus a machine carbine that goes "Boop" for about 15 shots which I carry when I'm wondering around these draws and hedgerows – you never can tell when a Jerry will turn up that's been by-passed. Don't worry, I don't wonder around alone.

I've a good idea what our next objective is, but can't let you know – just read about it in the papers.

I must close now. Love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

France

August 22, 1944

Dear Mother,

I started to write you day before yesterday when I had a little time but instead I took off on a little trip to look up Billy Morrison. We are now in the same area that he's in after being separated for quite a while. We were both in the same group when we were in that other location but they sort of borrowed us for the great event and now we are back in our place as planned. Nevertheless, I was determined to see him and as I had a couple of hours that no one would miss me I went over into his division area and was lucky enough to contact him. He's now the company commander of Service Company there. We had a nice little chat for about an hour about folks and experiences, etc. They have not had the fighting we've had – mostly just a field day in which is what we've had for the last few weeks also. Believe me they don't know what hell war can be. We've met more civilians here than we've seen before and the towns are not all flattened by bombing & artillery. Some of the French girls are darn good-looking and they dress and care for themselves better than the British or Irish. The French also seem a happier race with more of an enjoyment of life – more like us than the bally British.

I haven't received any letters from you since the one of Aug. 8th but should get one today.

It is more rainy here than it has been but the sunshine is also warm.

I must close now and get back on the job. I hope everything goes well with both you and Dad. I'm still getting along fine and jabbing French like a true Frenchman. It's a great life – this war. Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

France

August 27, 1944

Dear Mother,

I got your letter of Aug. 13th yesterday. I'm writing this in the midst of a little action – planes are overhead doing a little strafing and bombing of the enemy positions – this is a little tougher nut to crack than some of the previous battles. We've had a short period of chasing Jerry that wasn't so bad – it was almost fun after some of our first experiences.

I'm still getting along O.K. I told you in my last letter about seeing Billy Morrison. I don't know whether I'll get a chance to see him again or not since they are some little distance from us and also in action.

They say that we can mention some names of places that we've been now since it has been more than two weeks. You may have read about some of them – our #1 action was at Trevieres, then Cevisy la Foret, Hill 192 at St. Lo, Vire, and Tinchebary. The advances at most of them were by hedgerow 100, 200, or a 1000 yards a day under plenty of mortar and artillery. Ernie Pyle's column is darn good from the soldier's standpoint and gives a good idea of what it's like. There are thousands of antidotes and tales for a correspondent to write about that I couldn't take time to tell. You've heard the old saying about "The show must go on" – that's also true here, only more so – the show keeps going even when you want it to stop and you become an automatic actor in the play.

I've got to close now. Hope you and Dad are getting along O.K.

Love,

Brame

France
September 2, 1944

Dear Mother,

I'm enclosing a money order for \$30.00. They paid us off again and there's absolutely no use for money here. All the towns are off limits and even if not there's nothing to buy in any town that's been fought over – it's all either blown or burnt up or been through by either ours or German troops or any civilians that happen to have remained or gotten back into the town right after the troops – In war property loses value other than the momentary need for sentimental reasons.

We've just finished another little operation and are taking it easy for a day or two – that's about the way it goes – you fight and push for about a week, take 2 or 3 days off to shave, clean up, rest, clean & replace weapons and lost personnel -- then off you go again and repeat the process. Supply has not been as quick or ample here as before – we've had plenty but you have to look after things a little better. Our cigarettes were cut down but I've still had enough by smoking any brand. We don't get the Luckies & Camels that are

in short civilian supply but there are quite a few Chesterfields and Old Golds.

You asked me once how my watch was operating, which is O.K. It's been running fine. Watches are pretty scarce unless we capture some Jerrys and get a few.

How is everything going at the store? If it's not too much trouble find out about how much business we've done this year and what's the status of my bank account and war bonds now. It ought to be pretty good. I haven't kept up with it, but it ought to be between \$800 and a \$1000 on the account and as for the bonds about \$500. That mortgage ought to be within striking distance now as well. Time really flies after it's gone by. I'll be glad when this mess is over and we can come home – as for the Pacific someone else can fight that war so far as we are concerned here because if we come out of this job whole the U.S. has gotten it's money's worth from us. However, I hope that both wars will be over about the same time – at least the Pacific won't take so long after this is finished. All the Jerry soldiers know right now that their goose is cooked – they are anxious to become prisoners but can't give up as long as they have officers. Only Hitler and his Nazi cohorts are keeping this war going which for us is good since we won't have the "undefeated German Army" boogey to put up with again. They are beaten in the field by superior tactics, weapons, and men and best of all they know it as an army. Their resistance is very good but you can't fight when the opposition has all the stuff – and we've got the stuff. As for war production – it better keep up because we've just started consuming all this stuff they've been making and when a shortage occurs it slows up operations.

I hope everything is going fine with all of you and that Dad is coming along O.K. I haven't heard from you for a few days but letters come in in batches. Must close.

Love,

Brame

France
September 4, 1944

Dear Mother,

I got your letter of Aug. 17th today with the clippings. That Capt. Ericsson is not the captain of the Cristobel – it puzzles me as to why you evince so much interest in him – even if he were the same man it wouldn't mean a thing to me. Who is playing him up anyhow and giving him all the publicity? – he's only a ship captain doing his job like plenty of others – these correspondents like to have someone to write about. The clipping of Gardner Ashe and the Queen is about the same – a routine inspection – he just got snapped when she was there. I also don't see why there should be a scare about typhus fever – 20 cases is not many – it's a good idea to get rid of the rats though.

The combat infantryman's badge you described is the one we all have. Any soldier that is in about a week of combat gets one. We don't even care about wearing them now that everybody's got them. The \$100 extra pay is for enlisted men only. After it's over the badge may mean something but as for now we'd just as soon not have it in regard to the way we've all earned it. By that I mean that the \$100 and the badge doesn't exactly compensate for combat – and we'd be perfectly happy to swap our badge and pay along with the combat with anyone that wanted to.

In regard to the Bronze Star, I definitely got that. They've also spread them around pretty freely – almost everyone that's still around has one. The fact that you are still here is evidence enough of your knowing your job and doing it well.

One thing that civilians should understand with soldiers is that all these awards don't mean a darn thing to the individual here – they don't remove you from combat or danger, the enemy doesn't know that you are a "hot shot", and they don't make your job easier. The Medals are just something for civilian consumption, to dress up in, or to stow away. There's no strutting or bragging about medals or awards – if you are a man battle will bring it out – a chest full of medals will convince a civilian that you are a great warrior but we look at actions more than medals. It was the toughest, roughest garrison soldiers back home that turned out to be the yellow-bellies here and some of the sorriest soldiers turn out to be the men of the outfit. You can't bully shells & bullets so the "tough guys" are lost and intelligence, grit, and determination come out. Enough for that.

I'm still getting along fine. This operation now has not been too tough on me. The war news sounds good but it's yet a big job and will take time. Must close now.

Love,

Brame

France
September 7, 1944

Dear Mother,

I haven't heard from you since my last letter but am writing while things are a little dull. We are in the lines but just staying here waiting to attack. When the companies don't move my job is not complicated, since I don't have the problem of finding them and it's just a matter of getting the time and seeing that the supply and mess sergeants get the chow, water, etc. up to them. Consequently, I've had time to read & sleep a little. We have some "Armed Forces" paperbound books furnished by the Special Service as well as a few overseas editions of our popular magazines.

In the last week or so I've completed by reading in snatches the famous "Grapes of Wrath" by Steinbeck. Prior to the Army I'd have thought the language was pretty raw probably, but now it sounds about like everyday language I hear and probably speak as well. The book reminded me a lot of the Army – that is staying in no place for long, sleeping here, there, and where you can – in foxholes, barns, houses, haylofts, on the ground – eating usually when you are hungry if you have "K" rations or with some regularity when you are out of action.

We operate pretty smoothly now since after this much time in combat we've gotten most of the kinks ironed out and almost everybody knows and does their job – battle-wise, so to speak. The weak links have been fairly well eliminated and you don't have to put up with combat fear as well as doing a job. Combat fear is comprised of what you don't know and until men find out what will and won't hurt them and how to recognize the distance by sounds it's hard to keep them going. All my supply sergeants and mess sergeants are darn good. They usually go with me to find the companies and then take over delivery while I check to see that everything goes O.K. All the sergeants stayed with their companies when we first got here and got plenty of experience. They now stay back with me and we shove the stuff they need up to them. They are as fine a group of men as one can find anywhere for loyalty, bravery and what have you that makes a man a man. That also goes for almost all the rest of the soldiers since 3 months of this stuff makes men recognize values and work together pretty well. I've also read a few stories in the July "Cosmopolitan" – simple little love stories. They are nice to read but you sort of build-up a mental attitude toward the combat that you hate to read such stuff to tear it down.

Tomorrow we make another run – it should not be too tough but there may be some danger from mines. I must close now. Love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

France
September 12, 1944

Dear Mother,

Just a short letter tonite in answer to yours of Aug. 2, 7th which I received yesterday. I also got one from Stuart and Leila M. in Richmond.

We are just sitting here now in reserve waiting for things to break – life is not so bad. We've captured a Jerry P.X. and distributed a lot of goods. The fortunes of war – to the victor belong the spoils. I know you'd be interested in knowing where we are. This Army is really broadening – you get around plenty.

As for Christmas there's not much of anything I need – I have plenty of food, clothing and all that anyone can imagine. This is one place you don't want much because you can't take it with you – what I have on my back and pockets plus what I need on the Jeep is all I want. The necessity of moving, ruining by getting wet, and the liability of theft, pilfering or just plain lifting makes you strip down to rock bottom. When clothes get dirty we swap for clean at the showers. Keeping anything dry when it rains is next to impossible. Hoarding or saving is foolish. Clothes mildew, metal rusts, things are broken or disappear when you move. In finality, possessions are more of a liability than an asset beyond your immediate needs. For Christmas I don't need anything. If you'd like to send anything it will be greatly appreciated though.

I'm still getting along fine. I had a warm shower today and all fresh clothes. It really feels good.

I suppose you will have received my letter about my bank account when you get this. I would like to know how it's running. This war may be over sometime you know.

Best of love to both you and Dad. I hope he's getting along fine. I think of you a lot.

Always,

Brame

France
September 14, 1944

Dear Mother,

I wrote you day before yesterday and got your letter of Sept. 2 yesterday. It was a pretty newsy letter. I'd like to get those clippings about the boys from home. I imagine the paper is full of news about all the men in the far corners of the earth and their awards, etc. I was glad to get the news about George Hackney, too but that "leaving for overseas combat duty" may be just a lot of bunk – everyone is "leaving for overseas combat duty" every time they finish some sort of course and about 20% get over. It makes good reading though.

I'm glad you've got a boy from the college to stay at the house and tend the furnace. That ought to help Dad a lot and it's good for you to have someone around the house.

I imagine everyone is grieved at Bishop Lyles' death – it was sort of like Billy Young's – especially happening at a time like that – not in combat and when things were just shaking up for him. I guess every Mother whose son is in the fighting more or less steels herself for news like that but for it to come like a bolt from the blue makes it hard. I

know it really hit Mr. Lyles too because he worshipped Bishop but such is life and war.

The air medal that Palmer got is just a routine medal for 5 flights – everyone gets it that makes 5 flights just like our combat infantryman's badge – if you are here 30 days you get it. The Bronze Star on the other hand is an award of merit not given to you for just being present somewhere, but to an individual singled out for “outstanding performance of duty under combat conditions”. It means you've done your job plus a little extra not called for in line of duty. The Silver Star is the next higher award given for “gallantry in action” – that's out for me since I don't have much to do with the actual fighting – I just keep those men going with food and supplies although I get in there where it's hot plenty of times.

The “C.P.” I mentioned is a command post – the center of any unit in which can be found the one in charge or his staff in case of the higher echelons. You can have a squad, platoon, company, battalion, regiment, or division “C.P.” There are lots of other abbreviations you ought to be familiar with by now to make my writing easier:

Bn. = battalion
C.O. = Commanding Officer
S-1 = Personnel (assignments, etc.)
S-2 = Intelligence (info about situation)
S-3 = Operations
S-4 = Supply (me)
Co. = Company
Regt. = Regiment

There are a lot more but remember these.

All of us are under Bradley. I haven't yet gotten to the place you mentioned since we are engaged on another little operation that takes some crack troops. We'll be there when the resistance gets tough. Patton makes gains by by-passing resistance. It takes 2 kinds of generals – one to forge ahead with daring tactics and another to follow up and save his skin. The forager gets the glory, the skin-saver does the non-front-page job – together they make a good team.

I'm enclosing the message from Eisenhower that all of us got that took part in the invasion as well as a Nazi insignia. I could send home worlds of Nazi stuff because we've captured plenty. It's no longer a novelty to us now. They really have some wonderful equipment – not like the British. The German stuff is equal or better than ours but so far as I've seen the British had nothing worth a tinkers dam[n]. Thank goodness we aren't fighting them because we would not capture a thing that wouldn't be fit only for a junk pile. (Nice double negative, huh?)

I've read several stories about the invasion in Readers Digest, Sat. Eve. Post, etc. so maybe I can now tell you something about it without giving away military secrets. In a story in the Post a sailor tells about being on a battleship standing by and “sweating it

out". It all sounds so adventurous and heroic. What about those guys that knew they were going into it and had no big guns on their ships to roar back? Were they "sweating it out"? – you can bet your life!

Well here goes without giving away names of places and dates. From our location when we came overseas we were all of a sudden alerted and moved to England where we spent about a month before moving to a camp near the coast for the grand finale. At both of these we jumped about with plenty of hurry & bustle getting everybody equipped with everything. One fine day we marched to the train which took us directly to the docks and the ship which was fairly well crowded. We hung around the dock for a day or so to get everything loaded and sailed one nite. We followed a pretty circuitous course going slow and then fast waiting for the time. Everyone was briefed, given maps, and told exactly what to do and where to go – just like maneuvers. We sailed a lot of miles to nowhere because we were on the boat about 6 days circling around. Finally they announced on the speaker system that the invasion had begun and we pulled up that nite to stand offshore at our location. We all got up the next morning pretty early and went out on deck to see the sights and you can believe me I did not think there were that many craft in all of the oceans of the world much less in the channel. There was a line of battleships, cruisers, and destroyers parallel with the (continued in another letter of same date – 4 pages is about all that airmail can stand)

[Second Letter]

(continued) shore as far as you could see along the horizon. Behind them the transport and supply ships – thousands of them and the smallest vessels shuttling men and supplies into the shore. The coast was fairly well alive with smoke, planes, bursts of shellfire, explosions, shrapnel and everything else. About noon our first landing craft came up and one group took off followed by two other craft. The first ship returned and my group loaded on. It was an L.C.I. (Landing Craft Infantry) and had a ramp down the side from which you debarked after the ship got as near to shore as possible. Well we buckled on our helmets to keep from losing them as we went down the net. The sea was a little choppy and the smaller craft slapped beside of the transport – one minute the clearance was a foot and the next 3 yards and you hoped when you got down it would lurch in instead of out because one would not particularly relish the thought of being between the 2 ships. Everyone checked their equipment and took their seasick pills – we did not know when we would get into land. We finally started in toward the beach and as we neared the shore things came into view – barriers, railroad rails sunk in the beach, knocked out craft, floating mines, debris of every imaginable kind, floating bodies, rocks, great holes blown in the sand, concrete pillboxes, thousands of men, the flash of timed artillery, hundreds of craft, lines of men already landed filing up into the hills and out of view, taped off cleared lanes, marking flags, litter bearers, a Red Cross hospital tent, our own artillery, "ducks", tanks, Jeeps, 2-1/2 tons, tractors, demolished buildings, a mass of confusion straightening itself out. Our landing craft personnel took up the battle positions and we waited anxiously for fire or air attack but were lucky enough to miss it. About a hundred yards from shore we stuck on a sand bar but the engineer gave her the gun and the ship teetered for a second and ploughed over scraping the bottom while the propeller churned. The bow plowed in the beach about 50 yds. out and they let down the

landing ramp. I was about the 5th one off in about 3 feet of water. We slogged on up the beach dripping like a bunch of puppies, sloshing at every step, and weighing a ton with all the wet equipment. The so-called directors-of-traffic and a beach brigade was not on hand so we just followed the group ahead off of the beach. By that time we were sweating and the dust of the road caked the dampness of our clothes. The front was not as far along as was expected in the plans and we soon heard small arms fire ahead and pulled off the road into a field and took the weight off our backs. Meanwhile the Colonel took off to find the rest of the battalion who came off on different boats. After a couple of hours he came back and one company came straggling in. It developed that their L.C.I. couldn't make it over that sand bar, they got shelled and had to land in about 15 ft. of water. They had lost one man by drowning and about 20 had dumped all their equipment to stay up and swim; so I took off for the hospital, the beach, and any place to get them re-outfitted. The beach by now was a little clearer of men but wreckage was everywhere. With 2 or 3 men I picked up what I could find. Bodies were strewn all about in all states of being torn up. They were still dressed and the salt water preserved them O.K. and no decomposition had set in. Rifles, web equipment, ration boxes, clothing, gear, ammo, and about everything imaginable was strewn all over the place. Shells were landing about 100 yds. away so I scooted on back to the battalion. By this time everybody was located, including the enemy. The report came back that snipers were active and going after officers and non-coms so we all grabbed some mud and covered our insignia, camouflaged our helmets, and the non-coms ripped off their stripes. It was about 9:30 then so we moved up nearer the lines to spend the night. After we got in our area I went back to the beach again to get more stuff. They had an enclosure for prisoners by then and we stopped to take a look at the Nazi supermen who were not so super. There were more dead Germans along the road – these had definitely not turned out to be super. Heavier equipment was coming in by then and our artillery was starting to give Jerry the old 1-2. It sounded good to hear that stuff going over and to know that more was there than just us. I got back to the area about 11:30 and hit the hay – or foxhole after a pretty rugged day. Such was my D-day and baptism of fire.

They are waiting on me now to cut off the lights so I've got to close. I'll continue the experiences in a later letter. They'll make good reading. In retrospect this stuff comes back clear as a crystal.

Must close. Love to you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

France
September 15, 1944

Dear Mother,

This is a continuation of battle experiences started in the other 2 letters. So far I've only gotten through the first nite. That took 8 pages so if I keep up that pace for 3 months it should make quite a book. I've got to have the time, though, and be in the mood and of course leaving out names of places and dates makes it less interesting. This second story will take you through our first battle and cover 2 days.

(continued) After getting to bed that first nite I slept till about 10 the next A.M. After getting up I figured I'd better go back to the beach to see what supply agencies were set up if any and what we could do about the rations since we had only 2 days of K's and D's with us. With about 3 men I set out. We found a couple of German carts and hauled them along in case we had any luck. At the hospital which was a tricky busy place we saw signs reading Class I Supplies which was what I was interested in since Class I is rations; so we took off in that direction. It turned out to be just the place they had selected for the dump and nothing had landed yet. After that I figured I better locate a water point since we were getting pretty dry. This done I started back to the Bn. to give them the info about rations and to get a detail to come back and wait till they came in. When I arrived the Bn. had moved up and one man had been left back with a map to show me where they had gone. He also had a couple of other maps of a larger area. He said the Bn. had only gone forward a 1000 yards – now traveling on a good road in a car a 1000 yards is a very short distance, but it's quite a different measure across fields, fences, hedgerows and draws with the enemy out front. My map reading wasn't too hot at that point but nevertheless we started out – myself and 5 men – in the direction the Bn. had moved. After a couple of 100 yards we turned right and saw some troops that said they were of "E" Co. I figured we were lucky and had hit the trail of a column. It turned out that they were of another regiment, though, and we were on the wrong trail. I knew their officer, though, back in the States; so we studied the maps together and got it straightened out whereupon we doubled back on our trail and started forward again along a draw in which there were other troops. We finally came to a good road along which were troops of another division. We were all jammed into a pretty small space. They went up the road and after they passed I thought I'd follow along because I knew we were there somewhere. We passed a German vehicle knocked out with several bodies around it. I'd gotten used to seeing the dead by now and we just passed with hardly more than a glance. The troops of the other division turned right but I went left to get back in our zone. After a bit we met an officer of our Bn. and at last found them. They were digging in for the nite. I told them where the ration dump was and somebody got hold of some Jerry bicycles and went after some rations while I located the companies and distributed them when they got back and then turned in for the nite. (I'm out now. I've got to get on the job) –

(2 nites later) The next A.M. we were all up pretty early since we figured on attacking or meeting the enemy at least. Our orders from regiment were to continue to advance so the Colonel, the S-2, and I along with the usual men in a command group started forward to take a look at the roads. After we had gone about a mile a runner came up from the rear and said there was a change of orders and they wanted the Colonel at regiment. It developed that some engineers ahead of us were receiving fire from a small town as they

were attempting to repair a bridge and they wanted us to clear out the town. It was thought that there were just a few Krauts there (little did we or they know). Well, the Colonel came back and with the same little group we took off down the road for that town while the rest of the battalion got ready to move out and follow us. About a mile down the road we met the engineers who were in a hole. They pointed out the bridge and we went down a little farther for a look see when Jerry opened up with a machine gun and we all hit the ditch at the side of the road. Now this was the first time I'd ever been shot at and I lay plenty flat in that ditch and the bullets whined overhead. The Colonel and a couple of others had gotten off the road. Since we couldn't stay there all day, one by one they ran back out of range while each time Jerry opened up and bullets zinged around that road. After waiting a decent interval I hopped up and took off too. We went back and met the battalion and the Colonel put a company on each side of the road with the supporting co. following the co. on the right while we took off again to the right down a sunken road. Well we hadn't gone too far till we got in a little gully and Jerry opened up again. That's where we had our first casualty – a head wound. Somebody yelled for the medics and they got up in a few minutes and got him out. Meanwhile the Colonel and the Duty Liaison officer crawled forward to get a little artillery on that gun. I just stayed in that gully with the rest. Soon the shells came whizzing over and “ha-whumped” about a 100 yards ahead which silenced the gun. I was getting hungry by then so I ate my “K” ration while sitting in the gully and listening to the war out front. Soon the Colonel came back and we all moved to a new observation point (O.P.). We had no communication with regiment since all our radios and phones were still on the vehicles as yet unloaded. At 3:50 the Colonel sent me back to regiment to give them the information as to our whereabouts and to also contact the Bn. Surgeon and the S-1. I started out alone retracing our steps and as I cut across an orchard a couple of shots zinged overhead (it was a punk sniper). I hit the ground and rolled over with my carbine in the air hoping to locate the sniper and expecting more shots but evidently he took those two and took off. Well I didn't like that open stuff so I backtracked through a hedgerow and by a house and located the Bn. Surgeon in the draw we had first come down. There were about a dozen of sorted wounded in the aid station and an ambulance taking them out. At the entrance to the good road I found the S-1 and gave him the message and went back to regiment and told them our situation. Then I loaded myself down with ammo and made about 3 trips packing it back until finally a truck came in and we carried a good load of it as far as we could. We found out that they were in the town by this time and we could get across the bridge; so with some of the A.&P. platoon we went down the road, across what was left of the bridge and found the battalion in a little orchard behind some buildings. The town had been practically demolished and was still burning, dead Jerries were all over the place. In some way, we got some men together and loaded each one with as many bandoleers of ammo and grenades as they could carry and lugged it down to the orchard and filled everyone up again. The bridge was passable only on foot and the engineers were starting work on it. This was about midnight and they said she'd be O.K. for vehicles about 3 A.M. Meanwhile some of our jeeps and trailers had come up and we were doggone glad to see them because we needed those machine guns, mortars, and ammo. I got a call from regiment about that time that I could get some “C” rations; so I located the jeeps and trailers and we unloaded 3 of them and went back for rations. I was really glad to sit down in that jeep because playing pack-horse for a Bn. with that ammo

was some job. We got the rations about 2 A.M. and started back. Needless to say the 3 o'clock bridge wasn't open for traffic so I figured I'd better get a little sleep. I pulled the jeeps off the road – ate a "K" ration and lay down to sleep with instructions for them to awaken me at 5. At 5 the bridge still wasn't finished but about quarter to six they let me go over while they were still nailing. We then got the rations distributed and hauled out a few dead and wounded. I got another call from regiment that our 2-1/2 ton baggage and ration trucks were in as well as my jeep. The Bn. moved up to another area to reorganize and I went back after the trucks. They had not all come in yet but I got hold of my jeep O.K. and went back to Bn. which was moving on again. I received instructions to get the trucks and meet them in the new area; so off I went again. Finally about 5 P.M. I got the trucks and we started off after the Bn. When we reached the appointed place it seems that there was no resistance so they kept on going; so I followed other vehicles going the same way. Finally, they bolted and a sniper was holding up the column. I didn't like this at all because I had to get those trucks up and by now I was a little scornful of snipers. I told the trucks to stay in line while I went on ahead to find the Bn. I located regiment and they told me Bn. was just outside a little town (the other side). I took off on foot to find them. There were still quite a few bullets zipping about the streets and in the approved manner we went from door to door with bullets ricocheting all over the place. I located Bn. and went back after the trucks but meanwhile the S-3 had gone to look for me and brought up the trucks. We parked them along the road and started distributing rations. Then's when we were shelled by our own artillery. I'm telling you that's one time I uttered a prayer. We were scared to death when that stuff started flying through the air. They soon got it stopped though and we finished putting out the rations – it was now 3 A.M. so I hit the hay.

This ends Chapter II. Love to you and Dad. I hope you enjoy this. If you want me to continue in detail let me know. Must close – it's late.

Love,

Brame

France
September 21, 1944

Dear Mother,

Mail has been a little slow for me the last week or so but maybe that's because I've had more time. We are now completely out of action – not only out of action but even out of a combat zone – I call a combat zone anywhere the enemy can reach you. After the completion of the last little mission, we are all taking it easy – shows, movies, a little training, cleaning up and re-outfitting. My job still keeps me busy because supplies go all the time. Right now I'm living in a pup tent. This is the first time we've pitched them since we've been here.

No one knows how long we'll be here but it's a cinch that they won't leave a unit like us out of combat for long, but none of us is complaining because it's great to know that the Jerries are a long way off and life is a bit more certain.

I hope you've enjoyed my combat experience letters. They take a lot of time to write, though. I'll continue them as I get the chance.

Right now I'm getting along fine. The war news is very good and we are hoping it will be over before it gets too cold because winter campaigning will be no fun. Even after the European part is finished it will be some time before the overseas soldiers will get out and for officers it will be "ad infinitum". I'm afraid, especially those with combat experience. The Army will be very dull without combat or expectation of combat – no reason for being so to speak. As for predictions no one knows what will happen. One can guess but you never know when Germany will crack. The Nazis have things pretty well under control at home. The Army knows that it is beaten but they still fight to the end since there's nothing else to do. After we eliminate the German Army I guess it will be the people, land, and finally the rotten core that has led them toward the path of destruction. This might stretch out for quite a bit of time.

[different color pen] I'd better close this now and try to write more later. Love to both you and Dad. If you get a chance there are 2 things I'd like to have, need, and could use – one is a fresh jock strap and the other an etui lipstick. I've sent you a package which you'll probably get in a month or so containing a beautiful linen tablecloth, some perfume and a little dress saver – captured from a German naval hospital. All the soldiers got a lot of stuff. There was a German P.X. and warehouse full of junk that they distributed. We've been eating Jerry sardines & tuna fish, coffee, flour, sugar, etc. as well as copious quantities of wine, cognac, liqueur and an occasional bottle of champagne and a little beer. The booty of war is great. Whatever was German we take and try not to bother anything French. That's not difficult because the Germans took for themselves everything they wanted and left very little for the French (Time out I've got to go).

September 22, 1944

[change of pen color]

I'll try to finish this now. I went to a little party yesterday – we have had some French with us and one had a party for the christening of his baby. I don't know if you remember the Lt. Compton with whom I came up to the 2nd but he was also there. It was the 2nd time I'd seen him since we've been overseas. In this game you never know if you'll ever see anyone again.

We are still taking life easy. Right now they are having a show.

Will close. Love to both of you!

Always,

Brame

France

September 25, 1944

Dear Mother,

I've got to make this very short and quick since I have a lot to do and very little time to do it in.

In the first place, change my address to facilitate and speed up the delivery of mail to:

Lt. Brame P. Morrison – 0-1301012
Hq. Co., 2nd Bn., 38th Inf., A.P.O. #2
c/o P.M. New York, N.Y.

It's too complicated to go into details but we are going on a separate mission and I will be with the Bn. and not with Service Co. The A.P.O. will automatically send the mail to the 2nd Bn. but if I have my address with Service Co. it means 3 or 4 weeks longer getting the mail. I'm pretty sure that we will visit Paris and I don't think this is a combat mission. My job will really be something now because I will be on my own and have no regimental connections but will bill direct.

After this it will probably be sometime before I can get off another letter and even then there may be a change of A.P.O. # but make this change anyhow and wait for further news.

I got your letter of Sept. 8 yesterday – will answer later.

Love to both you and Dad. It's a great life.

Always,

Brame

France [Paris]

October 4, 1944

Dear Mother,

My last letter giving you the change of address was written in a hurry and I sent it to speed up mail delivery. I will still get mail addressed to Service Co. but it will take longer.

Right now I'm in Paris and I've seen quite a bit of it. Anything you've read or heard about it is not exaggerated – it is really beautiful – the buildings, statues, avenues, parks and gardens are all wonderful. It's a bit like Washington on the streets, though – circles everywhere and it's difficult to get the right one and find your way. I never thought I'd get to visit here but it is really grand.

I can't tell you too much about it now but later on I may be able to and if I ever come back I'll be a good guide for someone. As for the women and styles they are also all that you've heard. There are very many beautiful women and they dress like Harper's Bazaar – “Tres chic”. The Germans did not hurt Paris to any extent, but now it's like a city awakening and the Parisians can again enjoy life. Stores and cafes are reopening and goods seem to be fairly plentiful except for some items.

Enough time has passed for me to mention some names and you'd be interested in knowing that we were at Brast and took the city along with others. It was during that campaign that I went over to see Billy. I don't know where they are now, though. Brast was really torn to pieces – absolutely demolished. You can hardly imagine the destruction. It was not a very difficult time from my standpoint, though. Supply was very easy.

Speaking of names of places you'd also probably like to know something about Ireland and England and time has elapsed enough to make military secrecy unnecessary. In Ireland we were at Newry, County Down about 30 miles from Belfast. From there we went to Carmarthen in Wales some 60 miles from Cardiff until just before we jumped off for D-day.

We are now out of combat for the present and have very nice quarters in an apartment. You need not worry about my being wounded in action now, for a while at least.

My French is very good for an American. I speak it and understand it “beaucoup bien”. (very, very well)

Must close now. It's getting late. I probably won't hear from you for a while but will keep writing.

Love to both you and Dad.

Brame

France [Paris]
October 11, 1944

Dear Mother,

I'm still in Paris and enjoying the sights. Sunday I went to Notre Dame Cathedral and they were having services. It is very, very beautiful with the lights, altars, etc. and there were many people. I have been by many other famous places but have not as yet been able to go through them. I have the Louve, Cuileries, Chamber of Deputies and others on my list to visit, but I do not have much time today to see them. I am always busy and here more than ever. It is impossible for me to write you too much about my visit here.

(In reading this I can see that speaking French is affecting my English expressions. They say many things differently in a literal translation and I've gotten the habit of thinking our words as they would express them and then translating.)

Last nite I took my first ride on the "Metro" or subway of Paris. If one knows where to get on and off it's all right, but it is very easy to get lost when you do not. There are very many beautiful girls and women and we go out several nites a week. I have had to get another uniform since it is required. For which reason I am just about out of money since I draw very little and have sent the last 2 months pay home. When you get this send me a money order for \$100. I will probably not be here, but I can use it anyhow or return another money order to you in case I don't need it. Our A.P.O. is always available to cash money orders. American money is very valuable here also. I have heard that the exchange is about 4 to 1 in francs or actually 8 to 1 since the franc is set at 2 cents in U.S. Army finances but they sell dollar bills for 400 francs and one receives only 50 francs to the dollar on payday. The exchange is definitely forbidden and against regulations but it is practiced on the Black Market. The inflation makes it difficult for us to buy anything or go any place also since French money is worth nothing to them but is very dear to us. A 1000 francs costs us \$20 in U.S. currency on payday but on the Black Market it is possible to take the same \$20 and get 8 to 10,000 francs – that makes these 1750 francs I draw for \$35 strength to about \$5 to \$6 in purchasing power which is definitely no good. I hope they get this currency straightened out. The cause is that the Allies issue notes, the Germans issue notes, and the Banque of France issues notes. The German backing is gone, the Banque of France is disorganized, and only the Allied notes are backed with 2 cents per franc out of every doughboy's pocket. 2/3 of the paper currency is just floating and the backing of the other 1/3 is carrying the load till they get reorganized. Not being able to enter into French commerce we are stuck.

I must close now and get to work. Love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

P.S.: I'm enclosing a copy of the special orders on which I was awarded the Bronze

R E S T R I C T E D

GENERAL CROSSC)
NO. - 71)

HEADQUARTERS 20 INFANTRY DIVISION,
APO#2, U. S. Army, 24 July 1944.

I -- AWARD OF BRONZE STAR MEDAL -- In accordance with AR 600-45 and Circular 66, Headquarters First United States Army, dated 18 May 1944, the Bronze Star Medal is awarded to the following named officers and enlisted men for exceptionally meritorious achievements in performance of outstanding service against the enemy in France, on the dates shown:

The citations are as follows:

BOWER, GLEN A.	38423647	Sgt	7 June 1944 to 19 July 1944
ETHELL, EDWARD C.	01013595	1st Lt	9 June 1944 to 19 July 1944
FARRELL, EDWARD L., JR.	0445912	1st Lt	16 June 1944 to 19 July 1944
GOODE, FREDERICK W.	6559950	Sgt	9 June 1944 to 19 July 1944
HAWKES, DEAN A.	6574281	Sgt	7 June 1944 to 20 July 1944
MORRISON, BRAME F.	01501012	1st Lt	7 June 1944 to 19 July 1944
FOWELL, ROBERT W.	01291001	1st Lt	7 June 1944 to 20 July 1944
RUTH, JAMES A.	18020867	T Sgt	7 June 1944 to 20 July 1944
VOLSTENHOIME, WILLIAM, JR.	3334184	Pfc	9 June 1944 to 17 July 1944

By Command of Major General ROBERTSON:

JENN H. SIXES, JR.,
Colonel, G. S. C.,
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

HERBIE BRAVERMAN,
Lt. Col., Adjutant General's Department,
Adjutant General.

TRUE COPY:

Stratton F. Callier, Jr.
STRATTON F. CALLIER, JR.,
Captain, 38th Infantry.

R E S T R I C T E D

Star Medal. This is a certified true copy of an official order so don't lose it or throw it away because it is important to me.

France [Paris]
October 15, 1944

Dear Mother,

My mood today can be described by only one word – melancholy. I sit here now writing in a large beautifully appointed room with very large windows through which I can see the Eiffel Tower not 200 yards distant. Today we have had a steady wetting rain and it is a bit chilly – I've stayed in all day reading "Time" of September 4 and 11th which have very much in them about Paris and Paris to me is now well-known – the streets and places I see quite often. The rain has put a damper on my day because I had planned to take a walk and see some places but it is too miserable to be out. Even Paris in this kind of weather is disagreeable.

The articles in "Time" are very correct. Paris has felt very little of the war. The women still dress beautifully – they have all the luxury items – furs, perfumes, silk stockings, etc. Champagne we drink like water – the prices are from 200 to 700 francs per bottle and the supply seems inexhaustible – the French now dig out of sellers and hiding those things they have hidden from the Germans.

Beauty is everywhere – the creation of that which appeals to the esthetic [sic] senses here reaches its highest state. All the clubs and shows are getting into full swing again and life is bustling – after 4 years France again returns to its place in the sun – a place that the English do not understand at all but which we do. For myself I love Paris and the French. I now speak it very, very well and I understand even when they speak quickly and among themselves.

But even though life is very happy now for a short while I still think of combat and the things I've seen and done and been through. Today it is a wet, rainy and miserable and I think of those soldiers at the front who live in foxholes and for whom this weather makes existence miserable – damp clothes, damp blankets, damp holes and now it is also chilly. I also see here in Paris those soldiers who never know or will know combat and who squabble and complain over the little things and it makes one wonder sometimes the eternal "why".

I have received 2 letters from you of Sept. 21 and 27th since my last to you. Thanks for the info about the bonds and the account. Those things make me feel very good – to know that all goes well and to know that there is something to look forward to when and if I return.

I also read in "Time" about the Army's rehabilitation of soldiers returned from overseas

and that, I think, will be a problem of a magnitude so great that it is impossible for you at home to even conceive. It will be impossible for all the men who have been to the 4 corners of the earth, who have known combat, danger, disease, fear, horror, death, discomforts, etc. to return and take up again a small place in a small community. We left as simple children and we will return cosmopolite and worldly wise. You at home will not know us and we will not know you. Our experiences will be a gulf between us and there will be thousands who will not return to their communities. The so-called "veteranes" you have now receive some attention but they are only a drop in the bucket.

You haven't mentioned receiving my "battle experience" letters as yet but probably you will have gotten them by now. I hope to continue them some day.

I must close now and go to supper. All my love to you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

P.S.: Thanks for the picture. It is very nice.

France [Paris]
October 20, 1944

Dear Mother,

I got your letter of Oct. 9th today which was pretty good service, and I no doubt have other letters of yours in between it and those of Sept. which I have received.

You mentioned not having received any of my letters dated Sept. 4th and 25th and I know you should have about 4 between those dates because I sent you about 3 in one week at Brest recounting some battle experiences as well as one package from there. Those battle experience letters were all 7 or 8 pages and may be too heavy for airmail.

You also mentioned a lot of people having bad news – there's probably plenty of it you don't hear about as well. That bad news is about the only way to convince the people at home that this war is not over and just a game. As for worrying about me now for a month or so, you need have no worries because combat is a long, long way off and I'm not even remotely connected with war as I know it. I sometimes wish I were back in combat, though, because I'd just as soon face the Germans as fool with red tape in getting supplies and sometimes I get completely disgusted with some of the unwarranted supply demands for unauthorized, unapproved, and unavailable equipment that I've got to attempt to get without a supply leg to stand on.

You need not worry about my getting nervous by being in combat so long. If you are

going to get nervous you do it the first week and get eliminated quickly. The longer you are in the less nervous you get. Nervousness is fear and fear is caused by the unknown. I know things pretty well from experience now and the knowledge cuts out fear. I fear combat not at all, although I can't say that I like it, because it's a pretty rugged life in the open and on the move and the chances of being alive are not those of everyday life. You get used to the outdoors though. We have very few colds living in the open, and you'd be surprised at the filth and dirt that won't hurt you.

In my job I got more rest in combat than here – less mental harassment, and also had the regiment and division to pass on my requests while here I deal direct with depots and everything has to have about 4 or 5 office's approval before you can get anything. Here I battle with the big shots for release of supplies which are allocated to front line units which we still consider ourselves, although temporarily out of action. As for Paris it is still wonderful, but I'm getting a little bit sick and tired of it and the financial strain is almost too much. I'm attempting to sell my German Lugar pistol now to keep things on the up & up and I plan on sending that \$100 money order right back to you because I'm not willing to swap \$100 in good American money for inflated francs that can buy about \$25 worth. I can dispose of the pistol for about a \$150 to \$200 worth of francs which will be O.K. Just to give you an idea, cigarettes can be sold for 1000 francs which is \$20. Imagine cigarettes at \$20 a carton at home and you have Paris.

Everything is going along fine with me now though. I hope you and Dad are doing O.K. as well. My love to both of you. Must close.

Always,

Brame

France

Sunday, October 29, 1944

Dear Mother,

I've received your letters of Sept. 14 and Oct. 5 since my last to you – both of them are fairly old since yours of Oct. 12th came before either of them.

In the letter of Sept. 12th you mentioned the Eagles being up in the air over Fred and something about an "awful assignment", etc. Why is he any better than anyone else – there are plenty of people whose sons have really awful assignments that don't raise a howl but who are proud that they have sons whom our country can trust with the awful assignments. You say you wonder which Army I'm with and I say that if I told you it would probably be changed by the time you received the news. So far we've fought with 3. You are attached wherever there is a job to be done. After it's over I'll tell you all about it.

I'm not much interested in the political situation. The hubbub over soldier voting is a tempest in a teapot. The G.I.'s at home may want to vote but the ones overseas and especially in combat are not in the least interested who is President because it makes absolutely no difference till we become civilians again.

I've gotten one letter from Stuart of Oct. 11th since I've been here and he enclosed a picture of Matt. It looks to me like he's a little cross-eyed or funny-looking about the eyes, and although I know he's the darling of the family I must say he doesn't look so hot to me now as compared with his earlier pictures.

I'm still getting along fine here in Paris, but I don't like the approaching day of my return to the line, because this wet, chilly, muddy weather doesn't appeal to me in the least and after this soft life here it will be rough.

I hope everything goes along well with Dad at the store. I suppose it's pretty hard to do business with goods and labor like it is but perhaps it will ease up before long -- if he's in good health that is the main thing.

There is some perfume available here. I don't know exactly what you like but I'll send you something. In the A.M. I'm going to try to get some of "Guerlain's Shalimar". They sell it only at 10 and 2 and have just a few bottles at each time. Guerlain has a swanky shop on the Champs Elysees which is always crowded. I haven't located Lanvins shop as yet but I'm out to get some "My Sin" as well. Perfume prices are controlled and compared with other things it's pretty cheap. I'm getting the "Shalimar" for my girl in Washington.

I must close now. My love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

France [Paris]
November 5, 1944

Dear Mother,

I got your letters of Oct. 14th and 21st on the same day. I'm glad you rec'd those 7 letters of mine because I knew there at Brest that I was writing quite a few since it was not a moving situation.

You did not make any comment on the battle letters except that you enjoyed them. What do you think of them? Would you like more and what comparison did you make between

a real experience direct from the battle and a lot of the bunk & ballyhoo you read & see?

As for Christmas just forget about sending me anything. There's nothing I need and anything to eat is the best gift of all – peanuts, candy, etc.

It's too bad about Billy Crute but say "c'est la guerre". I can't figure how QM officers get near enough to combat though to get knocked off. The infantry or Air Corps yes but QM? Never. This talk about the QM trucking supplies to the "front lines" is a lot of hooye, but I guess that's just my idea because having been in and in front of the front lines I consider 5, 10, and 25 miles back a haven of peace and security.

You'd evidently not received any of my letters from Paris up till Oct. 20th which is not good because I'll be away from here before I get any answers. I'm going to try to get some perfume yet. The brands known in the U.S. are practically impossible to obtain. They are snapped up in no time.

After you get this letter you can address my letters to Service Co. again. It's difficult to explain but I will get mail at both addresses because I'm a member of Service Co. but I'll do duty with the battalion as the S-4 and contact both everyday. I prefer the Service Co. address because the Reg't. mail section is part of Service Co. and I get my mail quicker by getting it at the source unless we are not with regiment.

I have enjoyed Paris very much but I do not have many souvenirs. We've taken some pictures but have not had them developed as yet. I'm not crazy about going back into combat but I guess it's necessary to finish the war, but winter campaigning will be rough. I now have my Bronze Star ribbon and we are authorized 3 campaign stars on our ribbon for this theater of war. "E.T.O." A lot of soldiers have about 5 ribbons already – Good Conduct, Pearl Harbor, E.T.O., Bronze Star, Purple Heart, etc.

I hope everything at the store is going along O.K. and that Dad is fine. I don't guess Christmas will be so big because of the lack of merchandise. For us I can't see much but cold, slush, snow, dampness and probably combat. Let's hope this will be the last one of the war, because I'm getting plenty tired of it and I guess everybody else is, too.

We are having an officer's party tonite and I guess I'll have to go. It's foolish to have a party because every night is just about a party if you care to go out, since Paris nite life is very gay now – the women beautiful, the champagne plentiful and music, bars and clubs by the dozens. One or two nites is O.K. but you get sick of it after a while.

I must close now and write some more letters. I'll try to write again before I leave and also as soon as I get to Germany. By the way the cathedral at Reims is very beautiful. I got up there one day last week. I've covered France pretty thoroughly of late.

Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

France
November 11, 1944

Dear Mother,

Well, here it is Armistice Day again and I wish it applied to this war as well, but perhaps soon we'll have another armistice day.

I'm no longer in Paris but a little bit nearer to the scene of action and still inside. The weather is pretty rough – snow, mud & slush. It's hard to get used to after the soft life of Paris. I'm pretty tired and sleepy tonight since I was on the road all last night in charge of about 16 vehicles and night convoys over new routes are no fun and the weather was vicious in an open jeep.

Things are all going along O.K. and my job will probably be less now that I'm not on my own. I did a pretty good job in Paris and got a few commendations for it. With my experience I know my way around pretty well now in supply channels.

I suppose we'll be right up there before long but it will be a pretty static situation because this weather is no good for combat.

I hope to get in a lot of sleep and reading now because I can really use it. I also want to write some more combat letters and catch up on correspondence in general.

Here's hoping both you and Dad are getting along fine. I'll write more a little later. Will close now and hit the hay.

Love,

Brame

Germany
November 15, 1944

Dear Mother,

I haven't received any letters from you for several days which is only natural, but I suppose they will be coming in again before long.

I'll probably have much more time for reading and writing now since it gets dark here plenty early and there is no movement at night. It is pretty cold outside but comfortable enough inside. We have plenty of warm clothes and high overshoes which we wear all the time. The snow is now about 6 to 8 inches and it snows a little everyday. I don't know what it will be when winter really comes. We are just biding time at present, but no one knows when the ball will start rolling or if. I do know that this weather is no good for warfare.

I'm glad that I've had some arctic training before because I know a lot of little tricks about keeping warm and dry and have had experience in winter operations.

Everything is going along fine so far. We had a wonderful time in Paris. It's hard to get back to being operational again though and to get used to hearing a little artillery. A few buzz-bombs go over also – on the way to somewhere.

I see Roosevelt was elected again which was to be expected. I did not vote because it doesn't make much difference to me who is President and in addition we were rather busily engaged with the enemy last July when all this ballot requesting was going on in that 80% of the Army that's "just in the Army" if you know what I mean – no combat, no expectation of combat, rough life, no work, no sweat, no blood, no rain, no snow, no mud, no slush, no cold, no hunger, no foxholes, no wounded, no dead – in other words all those who are "in the Army" but not soldiers. Believe me we saw plenty of them in Paris – the S.O.S. commandos – our scorn is only natural, but then we were among them for a while ourselves and it was a great life. From combat to garrison is a great change and it makes a difference in soldiers, especially in discipline. They hold the rod over lots of soldiers by threatening combat if they get out of line but for combat soldiers there is no fear of being sent into combat but a sort of devil-made-care attitude about going back. For a sergeant to be busted doesn't worry him at all because he knows darn well that when you get back to combat that you've got to have a man and men don't grow on bushes. In addition he'll probably be doing the job with or without a rating and who needs money in combat?

What happens now I don't know. If much rolls we'll probably be in it but no one knows. I don't think this war will be over so soon myself but then what's my opinion? I'll take up my battle letters again soon. I must close now.

Love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

France
November 30, 1944

Dear Mother,

I got your letter of Nov. 16th today which is almost up to par on getting them on time; however, I have received more dated between Nov. 2 and 16 and am sure you wrote some within that period. Neither have I received the money order which you said was mailed Oct. 25. There seems to be a big lag in mail probably due to Christmas packages, some of mine have come, and priority of shipping to other things more important. You seem to have received mine of Nov. 5 pretty fast, as well, although those Brest letters were a very long time in getting to you and the package also. You mentioned the sword but not the perfume and tablecloth. Was the perfume unbroken and what did you think of the quality of that tablecloth? I suppose it's only natural that you should be interested in the souvenirs. I could send you a lot but we've seen so much and Boch stuff by now that it is no longer a novelty. I still have my "P-38" pistol that I got the day we captured the 11 prisoners, but I sold my Lugar in Paris to defray some of the expenses. When the money order comes I will send it right back.

I left Paris on Nov. 10th – was there about 6 weeks. It was really wonderful and about the only place other than home that I've ever been that I got that lump in my throat and tug at my heart about leaving. That was probably because after the 4 months of combat Paris seems like heaven and also because we were returning to the front. (I'll start another page – this is too thin a paper for both sides.)

Things are O.K. not so bad here and although I'm keeping pretty busy during working hours there are the long nites and there's not the enemy activity that we have known and things are fairly static at present. Incidentally, tonite I'm duty officer at Bn. and will have to stay up all nite to answer the phone, receive reports, etc. I have a "Time" and some other reading material as well as letters to write. The volume of letters from here is terrific. I have the lights until 12 o'clock and after that the kerosene lamp and candle. These lights are coming & going now – I don't whether they will last until 12 or not.

My last "Battle Experience" letter was a bit more inclusive of time than the first ones and plenty sketchy if I remember correctly because I brought you right up to date in about 4 pages in an attempt to cover a lot of time but I can tell you right now that there were plenty of incidents that I omitted. It will probably be best for me to write incidents since they will not take the time that covering days would take. I ought to catalog a list of them and write as I find the time because they would make some very interesting and hair-raising tales and somehow they come back clear as a bell when I start writing. I find that I can do my best writing at nite when everyone else is gone to bed and things are quiet. I like to work at nite anyway and I don't mind this duty officer because no one bothers me with chit-chat.

I do feel sort of medieval or "Abraham Lincolnish" though, writing by this flickering lamp.

I'm sorry that you have been sick and hope that you are up and about again now. I

suppose it is pretty difficult to get along without help. Don't do too much though and don't worry about me. You'll just have to be a good Presbyterian and believe that everything will be O.K. I've seen too many men killed in supposedly safe places to even let the thought of fear enter my mind. If the shell's got your name on it, it will get you no matter where you are. I'm glad Dad got more gas. That will ease the harassment somewhat.

Your remark about the slow campaign in Italy being due to the scarcity of men is what civilians don't know about warfare. The trouble was the inability to employ men due to the nature of the terrain and the narrowness of the front. The attack was channeled by mountains and the easily defended passes and progress was measured in yards. The principle of warfare is the flanking movement. When you hit resistance stop and hold with part of your forces and scurry around the resistance with the rest. With no room for maneuver, you can't keep the enemy guessing – if he knows where you've got to attack it is very simple to find the roads, blow up bridges, make gun emplacements, etc. – but when he doesn't know, he can do just as much and hold his defense till he finds out when he's hit. The weather also impedes movement and Italy is not Florida. We went slow also in Normandy – weather & hedgerows – but rolled across the plains of France like nobody's business. There was no defense because it could not be defended from a modern army other than a passing rear-guard. I'll start on the Incidents now. 1 – Hill 192 – about July 5.

We jumped off for this attack at 6:00 A.M. and according to reports should reach our objective at 8:30; however, this turned out to be just about our roughest day. At 5:00 A.M. I reported to the C.P. just to be around. Everyone was up early -- getting ready for the jump-off – finishing up before 5:40 when our own barrage would be laid. We all got in foxholes and inside while the shells whistled over. About 1 minute before 6 it got awfully quiet and then the first rifle co. reported in that they had jumped off. Machine guns, rifles, mortars and everything started popping soon on our right and the Colonel took off for his O.P. After about an hour things were humming right along and they were bringing wounded and prisoners back. I went out to the aid station and plenty of men were being brought in. The medics gave them plasma and morphine and dressed the wounds as well as possible. The ambulances evacuated as many as they carry. I went back and forth between the C.P. and the aid station to keep up with the progress of the fight and also took a gander into the field in which they were rounding up the prisoners as they were brought in. About noon the battle was still raging and I took a runback to Service Co. to make plans for chow. It was about 3 when I got back with the “K” rations and water on the jeeps and trailers. Things were still hot but I figured I'd better run up and take a look-see. Our reserve rifle co. was moving up and I soon contacted them. The Jerries had dug a ditch across the road; so I got a detail to fill up the ditch in order to get the vehicles across. The C.P. was moving up by now and they sat back up in some houses at about my location and I went forward again. On the reverse slope of a hill Jerry had caught the reserves Co. moving up and equipment, wounded, dead were scattered all over the hillside. The medics were getting the wounded out and I started picking up the weapons and stuff they would need. Plenty of bullets and a few mortar shells were flying around but none too close. I evacuated the weapons out of action to

get them replaced and it was about 8 P.M. when I got back. The battle was still hot so I checked in at the C.P. to find out the score. I had received a telephone call from Service Co.; so I called back to check up. The mail clerk just wanted to tell me that there were about 4 sacks of mail for the Bn. (At this time I was hauling mail too since all of Service Co. had combat fear. Well, I pretty near blew up to think that in the midst of battle they were interested or would even think of my getting mail; so I just told them to blow it out their barracks bags and call me again sometime when I did not have a war on my hands. This time I figured things were coming to a head so I took off to contact the companies. When I got up someone said the Colonel wanted to see me so I found him and he asked about rations. I told him they were waiting and he said bring them up; so off I go after the jeeps & trailers. Another Lt. knew the Co. locations so taking a Co. at a time we started – 1st “K” rations, then water, then blankets while the ammo platoon took them ammunition. There were no roads and we walked with the jeeps behind us. Tanks had knocked some holes through the hedgerows which we found. In getting over one, the trailer was so heavily loaded it couldn’t make it and it got what we termed high-centered – both wheels off the ground and the body resting on the mound of dirt. Well there was that trailer loaded sky-high with blankets sitting on top of that hedgerow like a duck in a pond. I was thankful that nite for a good strong jeep-driver. Our 1st trailer had gotten over so we delivered it and unhooked the jeep, then came back and with 2 jeeps and plenty of pushing got that trailer over the hump. It was about 3 A.M. when we finished all the Cos. so since I’d had about a 24-hour run I took off for the old C.P., found a nice bed upstairs with 2 mattresses on it and collapsed not giving or caring much for anything except rest because I’d had about as much as the front-line men for one day. My driver and I both just crawled on that bed. After I got on it though I remember now that I’d deliberately spent about 15 more minutes eating a “K” ration even though I was pooped since I hadn’t eaten since noon. I think I almost smoked a cigarette before drifting off.

That’s enough for one time. My next incident will give you a little shelling experience.

Must close now. Love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

France
December 1, 1944

Dear Mother,

I got your letter of Oct. 25th today enclosing the money order and thought I’d let you know right away. I wrote you a long letter last nite with all the news.

I’ve been feeling punk today after being up all last nite – sort of dull – although I did get

some sleep this A.M.

I've been addressing a few Christmas cards tonite. I'm enclosing one for you to see. Before I got these I had already sent some letters to the Hookses. These are pretty nice. I have no envelopes to fit but got a few. Here an envelope is an envelope. I've been trying to think of Frances Hackney's street address and for the love of me I can't remember the street.

I'll cash the M.O. as soon as possible and probably send it back.

I must close now because I'm not in a writing mood.

Love to both of you.

Brame

Germany
December 6, 1944

Dear Mother,

Have received no other letters of yours since your last but will drop you a short letter to let you know I'm O.K. We are out of the lines for a couple of days to clean up and relax. I've gotten 2 Christmas packages – one from Stuart and one from Mark & Melissa – both fruitcakes and they really taste swell.

All is going along O.K. It is not too rough here and livable enough. I cashed the M.O. and will keep some of the money for a while because I may need it again in the future on a pass or "finis la guerre" and it will be a good idea to have a little on hand just in case.

I got a letter from Mary & Ad and also Leila this week. I've been able to do a lot of letter writing here and I think I've written to about everybody I know.

A lot of bombers are going over right now. The largest nite concentration I've heard. I wonder what's getting it tonite.

We'll close now and write again in a few days. No time for any battle experiences tonite. Love to both of you. Hope Dad won't have to do too much for Christmas – tell him to take it easy.

Love,

Brame

Belgium
December 12, 1944

Dear Mother,

I haven't written you the last few days since I've been pretty busy, but figured I'd better write tonite because I'll probably be busier tomorrow and maybe a few days after that. Even now, I won't have time to hardly begin this because there is a meeting in a few minutes and everyone is assembling now. I sort of hit the Jackpot on mail today – 3 Christmas packages and 4 letters – packages from Stuart, Mary & Ad, and the Schaums from home. Stuart's I didn't open and Mary & Ad's I opened, but had to cram in my bag along with Stuart's to store because baggage will just be in the way for a while. The Schaum's package was really lovely – packed by some N.Y. house and very well thought out as to contents – mostly eats with a book and a little flashlight. Mary & Ad also extended themselves on their package – a little bit of everything – a washrag, peanuts, candy and most needed of all -- a chapstick. By the way, I have not received the Jock straps and Etui from you yet.

There has been plenty of snow lately and I am not looking forward to this next little play because it will be pretty rough but then it's all in the game and the only way to win this war is as our famous armchair fireside speaker says to push and push and push and give the Army no rest. Those are beautiful words but no fun for the G.I. that's doing the pushing.

I can't write too much tonite because I'm going to have to get up early in the A.M. I'm still getting along O.K. and despite the weather I have not been sick. I hope that both you and Dad are getting along fine and that you are better now.

You should get this about Christmas and here's wishing you both the best of Christmases and may we be together next year at this season.

I got a letter from Stuart today with pictures of Matt. He seems to be coming along.

Well I must close now and I'll write again as soon as possible. Love to both of you and Merry Christmas.

Always,

Brame

Belgium
December 24, 1944

Dear Mother,

After writing you this morning I have a little more time tonite and have sort of gotten all my letters out. I received one from you yesterday and 2 more today. This was the first mail I had received in about a week since all of us have been "busy". I now have 5 letters from you since my last one to you – the dates Nov. 9th, 10th, 28th, Dec. 5th & 9th. Writing letters of late of course has been the least of our thoughts and even now not too many of us are writing being more concerned with keeping warm and alive. This past week has been plenty, plenty rough – the weather has been bitter cold and most of the men had to abandon their rolls and overcoats – how they've stayed alive and going is a story that means plenty of suffering and hardship. Your Americans today will equal Valley Forge and then some.

I only hope that the German push will make you at home realize that the Jerries are no pushover and that the success we've had so far has been by plenty of fight and effort. This may end it though a little sooner. There's some pretty heavy stuff falling outside right now. I'll close for the present and write more later. Love to both of you.

Brame

Belgium
January 9, 1945

Dear Mother,

I got your letter of Dec. 19th and hope that by now you have received my first letter after our little action and know that I'm O.K.

Your mentioning that with so much fighting you can't even hope that I'm not in it is true, but you can also be sure that we will be in just about any fighting over here.

I've been a little bit upset the last day or two since I had a little disagreement with our Bn. executive officer over too many demands for a lot of non-authorized stuff. I've been doing too much work lately anyhow, I think, and the nerve strain just made me blow-up. Our Bn. is in very good shape despite the weather since we have really done a lot of work to give them the most for comfort – straw, sand-bags, flooring, stoves, blankets, overcoats, lights, radios – things that you have to scour the place for, since none are available through channels. Keeping up with everything going on is a whang-doodle job. Oh well, I've had enough of this war anyhow; so what's the difference?

This Willie that stays with you at home sounds like a hot shot. If he bathes a lot he ought to be with us; he'd get out of that habit pretty fast. We have a bath-house for a sponge bath and are getting some showers tomorrow. I'm sort of like Dad used to say "Thank

goodness, I'm not so dirty". Bathing doesn't worry me. We bathe when we get dirty – and by dirty I do mean dirty. You'd be surprised what you can get used to.

I haven't so much news to give you. Things are still pretty quiet. We've had a lot of snow. The weather is cold but not so bad as Wisconsin. I'm living pretty well now myself – in a theater in an ex-camp. I have all my kitchens in the building – it's a pretty good set-up, but I think we'll move shortly to get closer to the troops.

It's still a little early to give a battle experience letter. I'll write it a little later.

I imagine you do have lots of trouble with labor. After the war maybe it will all settle down. Let's hope so.

I must close now. I hope that both you and Dad are both getting along fine. My love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

P.S.: I have not yet rec'd your package. It may come through in the next few days.

Belgium
January 13, 1945

Dear Mother,

Just a short note tonite since I may not get a chance to write for a few days. Tomorrow I take off on a little leave combined with a little work. I don't know exactly what it is except that I report to some Major at Corps Headquarters supposedly to advise some Belgians on supply. It is supposed to be rest since I've been doing a lot lately and sort of blew off the other day as I mentioned to you in my previous letter.

It's a funny thing that combat with bullets, shells, casualties & strain doesn't bother me, but the strain of winter supply gets my goat. I feel sort of liquid inside and get along O.K. as long as things are going smoothly, but if they get "snafu" or they start yelling for too many things that can't be supplied immediately I just tell them to blow it out. At any rate my [Bn.] is about the only one on the line that is so well supplied that they don't have to be pulled out because of the physical rigors of the weather – in fact, they are in such good shape that they are staying there since there are no quarters or accommodations in the area as comfortable as their front line foxholes. You should see them – with stoves lined with hay, blankets, sleeping-bags, candles or oil lamps. They eat hot meals – we have a bath house with a barber shop and a change of clothes. We

have dug or built log "C.P.s" – some of them have double bunks with strong mattresses. All that stuff didn't appear from nowhere and I've been running a factory like Henry Kaiser with over 100 men and about 30 vehicles. From early morn till late at night it goes on. There are also about 6 electric generators going – to provide electricity for lights & radios. Maybe I'm too good – the more they get, the more they want. Anyhow I'm getting a week off – it may be work but it should be a little rest. I don't know where I'm going but if I get to Brussels I'll write you.

Things are pretty quiet here now and physically I'm in good health. There's plenty of snow and it's cold, but otherwise O.K.

My love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

P.S.: I resubscribed to "Time". I also got 4 Xmas cards today – from Uncle Frank & Orion, Mr. Shackelford (business), Louise W. Hackney & Ms. Barnes at the church. I'll write them in appreciation when I get the chance. My girl from LaCrosse also sent me a wallet but this foreign money is too big for our U.S. made ones – you almost need a briefcase for it.

Belgium
January 23, 1945

Dear Mother,

I have not rec'd another letter from you since I last wrote but tonite I may make this a better letter since there aren't so many people around.

I'm enclosing another little map from the Stars & Stripes which will give you an idea of things. I suppose enough time has elapsed now to tell you a little about my own experience. I am pretty well acquainted with some of the places at which the Jerries had the greatest success since for awhile I was there but luckily moved about 10 days before things got hot. One never knows though – perhaps if we had been there we would have made the same stand as here and followed up Von Runstedt's offensive from the very start. However, I suppose the German intelligence knew where to strike.

However, to get on with the tale, we happened to be in the attack for several days prior to Jerry's upheaval and everything was going along smoothly as an attack goes. We were just tailing along another outfit and the day before had just taken over our phase of the attack when we stopped for the nite. I got the chow and blanket-rolls up and the Colonel said that we could expect a counter-attack and to get up extra ammo, which we did rather

grudgingly since counter-attacks were always rumored and turned out to be just local action. The next day nothing happened on our front but we heard rumors of a breakthrough in another sector which didn't worry us much. Well the rumor grew and nobody knew exactly what the score was. They said something about pulling us back but we did not lend much credence to it but about noon they started one Bn. back. I went ahead with preparations for supper. My kitchen trucks were sent to me to load and then they called them back – then sent them back again. About 4 o'clock they said we were pulling back to a little town and for me to come up and get the blanket-rolls; so at 4:30 I take off about 4-1/2 miles up the road to pick them up. The engineers were mining the road and had to wait for me to get out to finish up. We didn't know it then but the Jerries were already behind us and had tanks on our only exit route. I got everything loaded and held it in my kitchen area and the troops started back along the road. One Co. was to stay behind as a rear guard. I then took a little reconnaissance run into the town to look over our new area. There was quite a bit of shelling but no small arms fire which did not bother me because I was used to it. Our location was changed about 3 times since information was still "snafu". Finally about 6 our first troops came up and between time we had heard the enemy was about a 1000 yards away. The first Co. started toward them to their area and in about 15 minutes things broke loose and plenty of small arms fire was flying around. When I saw what the situation was I figured I'd better get the rest of the Bn. which was still coming up the road. I met them with our operations officer and told them the score. He doubled back to get our rear guard co. and I led the Co. up into the town to the point that we had had the fire-fight and where the Bn. C.P. was located. I had lent my small jeep to the operations officer so I started walking back along the road to my kitchen area. The road was jammed with vehicles by this time trying to get out. Jerry tanks were in the town and one road was cut off. Confusion existed to put it mildly. This was only about 8 o'clock and I wasn't worried about my vehicles yet and was still planning on bringing up the rolls and hot chow. When I got back to my kitchens the reserve co. was coming up which left me with no one behind me. I had my small jeep back; so I went back into town. The fight was still raging and I could see there would be no chance of hot chow or blankets; so without waiting I figured I'd better get mobile and had the kitchens dump the chow and the blanket-rolls and load up pronto and leave what they could not carry. It was a case of men against property and I couldn't carry both. It was now 10:30 P.M. so I went back into town to the C.P. and the Colonel gave orders to load the vehicles. I told him I'd already done that and would be ready to roll in 1/2 hour. We then brought the vehicles up to the C.P. Another Bn. had left its kitchen trucks back in the same areas so I took them also under my wing and attached them to us to get them out. Their Bn. S-4 had left them without orders and could not get back since he was cut off and knowing the situation as I did I figured I'd better take over since the men were getting panicky from lack of information and I knew they'd better get out of that spot. We finally got the vehicles lined up at midnight – 10 2 1/2 ton trucks and 36 others (jeeps, etc.). We then had to wait for clearance, since Jerry tanks were all over the town. I sat up all nite at the C.P. waiting – just waiting. Jerry shelled intermittently. He could really have ruined some vehicles if he'd known they were there. At dawn the clearance had not come and we were still cut off and had to disburse the vehicles. I got my 2-1/2's off the road and had just finished when the clearance came. I had 25 minutes before our own barrage on the town opened and we'd have to run the gauntlet through town. My men

had all just flopped after being up all nite. I went back to this house and told them we were pulling out in 15 minutes and if they had rather sleep and die it was O.K. by me, but I was taking off with the trucks that were ready. I probably wouldn't have left them but I was dead serious then and I really kicked them awake and routed them out. When I got back outside I hopped in the jeep and took off for the main street just in time to see the last vehicle of the smaller ones go by and took off behind it followed by just 3 of the trucks that I could see. The jeeps pulled out faster than I could go and I lost sight of them. I got down to that crucial corner where straight ahead lay death and the right turn meant safety. The jeeps had gone by and I wasn't sure. I stopped and asked a medic but he was pretty wrought up and said no jeeps had been by. Men get that way in combat. They don't even know what goes on around them. Another "Joe" was there who still had control of his senses and he directed us to the right. About 300 yds. down the road I caught sight of the jeeps and knew I was right. I checked up on my trucks and found they were all there and took a sigh of relief. After that it was a routine to get them back and the kitchen in operation.

But I also went back into that town which was an inferno of battle. The Bn. stayed there 2 days and the next day I got word to take them water. I took off with 5 jeeps & trailers and got to the outskirts of the town. I figured I'd better find out what the score was and checked in at the Regt. C.P. Everybody was busy as bees ducking shells, etc. and nobody knew exactly where the Bn. C.P. was. Well, I knew doggone well that I wasn't taking vehicles up until I found out the score; so I parked the vehicles and took off on foot with my driver. Now I had a Cal. 45 automatic and that is a rather puny weapon so I picked up an M-1 and loaded my pockets with ammo. To make a long story short I found Bn., delivered the water and also got some rations up. Tanks and snipers were keeping the town hot and plenty of stuff was flying. I got 1 jeep hit by a mortar shell and had to tow it. The most exciting part started then. They had decided to pull out of the town. At 4:30 I was told to clear out by 5 o'clock and leave the water cans. I got the vehicles all lined up and since I'd been running around town I couldn't see so much danger. So I started out. About a 100 yds. to the left I heard the darndest concussion like an ammo dunk going off. It almost lifted the jeep off the road. I didn't know what it was but a little farther down we came to a corner and about 60 yds. away a Jerry tank was cutting loose with an 88 in the direction from which I had come. I cleared that corner pretty quick to get those jeeps by before he could swing the turret. We got out of sight before he could take action and from then on it was just a breeze.

This is enough for tonite. I'm still getting along O.K. Hope you and Dad are doing fine.

Love to both of you,

Brame

02/25/09
Perry - Put this with the Brame Morrison Story.

John Hackney III

Thanks!



To: Perry

Subject: RE: Letter about my Dad

Perry -

Great letter! There were some Curley's from Richmond who used to be in the excess and surplus lines insurance business.

Wonder if they are related?

jh

From: Perry [mailto:pmorrison@nccomplaw.com]

Sent: Wednesday, February 25, 2009 9:03 AM

To: JOE FRANK JONES

Cc: John Hackney III; BOBBY BOYKIN

Subject: Letter about my Dad

I was going through some old letters recently and found this gem. I don't know whether I ever showed it to you before.

Charles Curley lived in Richmond, and he was a friend of my dad's in the war. They lost touch afterwards. When one of the Dr. Bob Stone's sons got married, Burt Gillette went to the rehearsal dinner, and he happened to sit beside Mr. Curley, who I recall was a good friend of Frances Stone's family. Mr. Curley asked Burt, with whom I dove-hunted, whether he knew Daddy. Daddy has just died, and Mr. Curley wrote me a note for Burt to deliver with his address. I wrote to him, and he sent me a book he had written about his experiences in WWII. I wrote him a note of thanks, and this was his reply letter. If he's alive today, he's bound to be in his '90's.

I thought you might enjoy it. Johnny, please pass it along to your dad.

B. Perry Morrison, Jr.
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2/25/2009

3 July 1994

Dear Perry,

No, I didn't forget, but since I returned after a week in Normandy, I have been on an all time high. I didn't want your mother to say, "I told you so". I am going to try and remember some of the things that come back to my mind about your father.

As you already know, he was the 2nd Battalion S-4 (Supply officer) of the 38th Infantry, 2nd Division. A supply officer was to see that the companies received all their needs, ammo, clothing, shoes, food, and the like. When it came to food, the front line troops were suppose to send back carrying parties to a food distribution point and pick up the rations for their units. Many times, your father would have none of that. After a hard days moving forward, the troops were beat and that when he would personally drive forward with a Jeep and trailer with hot soup, coffee, and water and distribute it to the troops.

I mentioned soup, we were on K-Rations for a long time in Normandy and somehow or another, he would find the ingredients for the kitchens to make hot soup. Then he would get it to the forward units.

I remember one night when we had more right far forward, we heard a noise coming down the road and I be damn, if it wasn't Major Morrison in his Jeep and trailer. He unloaded the cans of soup, water, and coffee over the hedge along the road and left. It seemed just a few minute later that we thought that we heard him coming back. The noise was louder than a Jeep as it got closer and all of a sudden the men got to firing, then there was a big explosion and fire. It ended up being a German truck pulling anti-tank gun. I don't know how your father missed running into the Germans, but he did.

Later, on the 13th August, we had moved forward without too much resistance. After dark, we got to the cross-road that we were suppose to be securing. I heard noises from behind a hedge across the road from my men and getting closer to see who it was, heard them talking German. It was too dangerous to start a fire fight, so I left them alone. Later, I think that they just melted away.

Your father, as usual come up with the goodies and we placed them in the road in beside a house. He left and I and one of the sergeants went around tell the men soup and coffee were available. When we walked back towards where we had left the food, I realized that someone was following behind us. As we walked through a gateway, the sergeant pulled out a pistol and started firing besides my head through the gateway behind us, He had heard German voices where the soup and coffee were sitting. Of course, the Germans ran off. Again, I wondered how

Morrison had missed running into them. Just Luck.....

Later, supplied us with hot food where we could slip back and managed to get a bit. I remember this happening outside of Brest also. In Brest, a young lady moved back into an apartment after I told her that she couldn't, due to some artillery fire. That evening, I did get her some hot food and bread. I had a few bottles of wine and brought it up to have supper with her. Before we hardly started to eat, I heard many footsteps on the stairs and my company commander and some of the officers from the battalion headquarters came in and made themselves at home and proceeded to drink up my wine. I believe that your father, who was with them, could speak a little French. My company commander did better in French than English, being from near New Orleans. Well that crowd drank up my wine and kidded the girl a lot. I couldn't understand a word of it and finally got upset. They finally laughed and left.

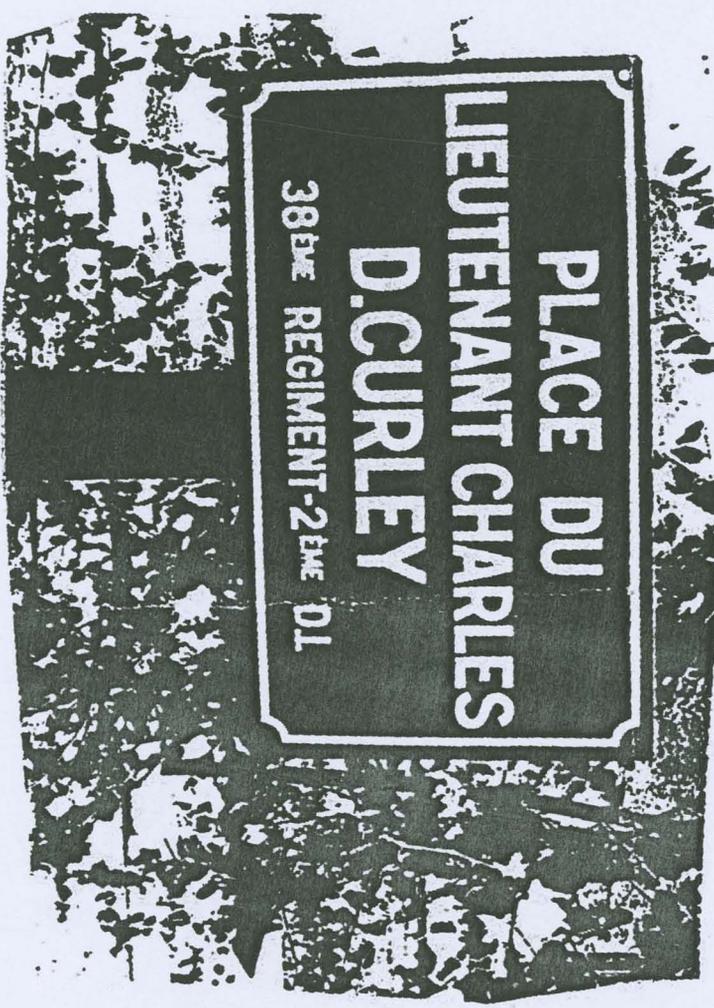
I didn't see much of your father while we were in Paris. After we got up into the Eifel Mountains, things were different and I didn't see as much of him as I did in Normandy.

I just spent a week in Normandy with the Germans and the French. We went out and located the areas where we had fought against one or another. I mainly went over to unveil a plaque in the town of Couvains. They had a big reunion and I had been invited to attend. After unveiling the plaque I then had to unveil another small one covered also with a American Flag and about fell on my face. I have enclosed a copy of a photo of a plaque erected in my honor so you can see what I mean.

Take it from me, your father did his job his job over and above the call of duty. He saw to it that we had anything that was in his power to get for us. I think that he was supreme scrounger and found things that others never did. He always stood high in my thoughts. I am sorry that I never did get with him after the war. I really believe that he was a modest man and did not want to talk about his exploits.

I must say that the French have not forgotten the Second Infantry Division and think that the Indianhead patch is something to have. This is the younger generation, I am talking about.

Sincerely
Charles Curley.



PLACE DU
LIEUTENANT CHARLES
D. CURLEY
38th REGIMENT - 2nd DL

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B. Perry Morrison, Jr.

pmorrison@nccomplaw.com

November 8, 2007

Mr. John N. Hackney, Jr.
1120 Watson Drive
Wilson, NC 27893

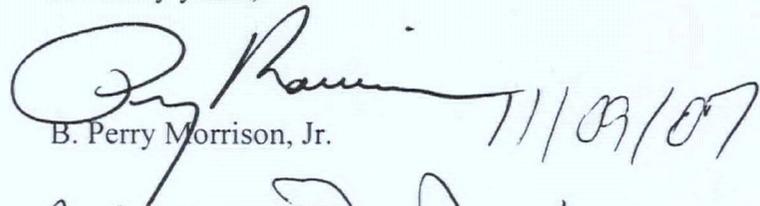
RE: Additional Brame P. Morrison letters

Dear John:

I am continuing with my project related to the transcription of Daddy's war letters. Enclosed please find the batch from 1945. If you would add these to the collection you have of his letters I would appreciate it, so that it can be as complete as possible. The second letter dated June 1, 1945 was to a Mrs. Bessie Thompson, and she obviously brought it to my grandmother, which is how it ended up in the collection. I'm not sure exactly who Mrs. Bessie Thompson is, but I am sure that you do.

I have only got 1942 and 1943 to go now. Whew! I look forward to talking with you soon.

Sincerely yours,


B. Perry Morrison, Jr. 11/09/07

Enclosures

BPMjr/kmm

THANKS AGAIN P.P. ! MRS.
BESSIE (J.W.W.) THOMPSON WAS
RUSSELL'S GRANDMOTHER. BESIDES
HER SON RUSSELL - SIDE PAISED BETTY SETZER
LAW - HER NIECE - LATER MRS WARD WARDEN
SHE WAS A CLOSE FRIEND OF MY GRANDMOTHER
DEANS WHO LIVE IN THE SAME BLOCK - AND
MRS W.A. FINCH - A HOPE-BLOCK EAST - (OVER)

Her house stood on the corner of Nash and
Jackson Diagonally across from the Library.
Her husband ran Wilson First Electric
Appliance Sales and Repair Shop Next to
The Wilson Theatre East.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to be 'John'.

January 24, 1945

Dear Mother,

I wrote you last nite, but received 2 letters from you today of December 24 and January 9. I am so glad that you had heard from me after the German offensive and knew that I was O.K. I suppose it is pretty tough on the ones at home to "sweat out" their loved ones over here - especially the ones in action.

Your Christmas sounds as if it were pretty nice, and I'm glad Dad got a couple of days off. This war is pretty rough on some of the home folks, as well.

You mentioned it being cold, but I suppose it's all by comparison. After Wisconsin, Ireland and Belgium, N.C.'s worst winter will be like spring.

I was very surprised at the death of Mayor Bill Daniel. What was the trouble? What is T. Forbes doing still out of the Army?

I got a Christmas card from Louise Hackney. She told me "Little Will" was in Italy. I also got one from Mr. Shackelford and Frank & Orion. I've written all of them a short note.

I have not, as yet, received your package. I wish it would hurry up because I need those jock straps. Mine are pretty well shot now. I've been wearing some British jobs I bought in Ireland. We are issued silver dog-tag chains, but yours will come in handy. Mary & Ad sent a chapstick in their package, which will bridge the gap until yours comes. The package may have been lost. That is quite possible. I'm still waiting for one from a girl in Minneapolis, also, and Stuart says he sent two, and I've received only one. By the way, I got a letter from Stuart, also, today. He's finally gotten so he writes on airmail stationery envelopes, and stamps, which makes correspondence worthwhile. When too much time elapses, correspondence is dull. He seems to be getting along fine, and I know he and Doug are wrapped up in Matt. Leila also gives me news of the other grandchildren.

I'm getting along fine now, since my little rest and things go smoothly, since the pressure is not so rough after a certain point.

I'm glad you are getting along better now, as well. The news of the Russian front sounds very good. Maybe this mess will be over sooner than I expect.

Must close now. Love to both of you:

Always,

Brame

January 29, 1945

Dear Mother,

Your letter of January 16 came in today. Mail is getting back on the ball. I haven't written you in several days, since I've been a little busy. This cold weather entails a lot of supplies, and we've also gotten a little stuff that we had at McCoy. It solves the "cold feet" problem pretty well.

To answer your questions – I was not at Bastogne – I've only passed through it. However, I was at the famous St. Vith for a while, but luckily left there about ten days before Jerry cut-up. Our little town was a pretty hot place, too, but not big enough to make the headlines. Our regiment was the bulwark of two divisions – we held and saved the day in this section. The corner of the bulge was us. The place that Jerry met his equal when he was chasing everything else to the rear.

Lt. Dodd is still here, but Tedeschi was captured last July. I never mentioned it, since we can't write until the W.D. confirms it. He's O.K. and his wife has heard from him in a German P.W.-camp.

I got clothes in Paris by borrowing money. Money is just so much paper to us. I could probably get \$10,000.00 in an hour if I wanted it. Foreign currency doesn't seem to have value, and the "G.I.'s" think nothing of spending five or ten thousand francs in one nite on a binge – that's about \$100.00 or \$200. 00. Champagne was five hundred francs in Paris (\$10.00), and money just faded away.

As for shoes – I could have a new pair everyday if I wanted to – being supply officer. G.I. clothing doesn't worry me. The officers here get the same stuff. We like to have some personal clothes though. As for my own shoes, I have a pair of parachute jump boots and one of combat boots – both of which I bought, since they are not for general issue. I also have issued shoe pacs and Arctic overshoes, plus plenty of socks. There's so much clothing, I can't get the men to take it. We also have plenty of cigarettes – they pile up in the kitchens, and I've even thought of turning them back in. Tonite, we are serving coffee and donuts before a little local action. You couldn't believe the way we live.

An "echelon" is just about what R.A. said. It consists of any group, and is the channel through which something is done. The lowest or first echelon would be a company – 2) Battalion, 3) Regiment, 4) Division, 5) Corps, 6) Army, 7) Army Group, 8) Supreme Headquarters. A base section for supply troops – Q.M., etc. takes the place of the Army Group for combat troops. In Paris, I was dealing with a base section directly and, also, with the office of the chief Q.M. – the top & one echelon down. When any unit is a component part of another unit, all transactions

are through "channels" or echelons. Example – a company wants supplies – requisition comes to me – from me to regiment – regiment to Division, Division through Corps to Army. Corps & Army groups are mostly administrative units. A company could not requisition directly to Regiment to Corps. No echelon could skip a channel. In the Army, that is the most "heinous" crime – to get "over the head" of your immediate supervisor. However, it is possible for a company to be attached even as high as Supreme H.Q. and deal administratively direct with them. In Paris, we were attached to a Base Section, and I submitted requisitions directly to them and skipped Regiment, Division, Corps and Army. I dealt with the same depots that filled Army requisitions – maybe I got a 100 while they got 10,000. This may explain "echelon" to you.

It is getting pretty late, and I must hit the hay, since we will have a little action tomorrow and give Jerry back a bit of his war. I don't think the enemy will be much, but the weather will be rougher than rough. This winter operation is no fun.

I hope both of you and Dad are both fine. How about a few business figures?

Love Always.

Brame

February 1, 1945

Dear Mother,

No letter from you since my last, but just a short note to let you know I'm O.K. after the last little action. I'm the only D-Day Bn. S-4 left now. One got wounded in this go-round – not too bad.

The weather was a killer-diller on this deal – about 0 [degrees] and 3 or 4 feet of snow. I had 3 light tanks for supply and even then, we had to follow a “dozer”. They call me “Blood and Guts” now. Those tanks are a lot of fun – no shrapnel or small arms fire to worry about – you just duck behind the armor. It was a beautiful operation from the supply standpoint. I think they are giving me some horses, too. Before long, I'll be a “tanker” and “cowboyman” – It's a great war.

Hope you and Dad are O.K. The Russians seem to be going good. I hope this war ends soon now. We'll get going, too, on this front. Those Germans can't hold out much longer.

Must close now.

Love,

Brame

February 2, 1945

Dear Mother,

I wrote you last nite, but got your letter of Jan. 23rd today. The mail is really good. 10 days makes the news fresh.

The 2nd is getting into the news now a bit. Why do you always try to figure out which and whose Army I'm in? An Army is so big, that when you read in the papers that units of it are on the move, it can easily be 50 or 100 miles away. Army commanders are so high up and so far back that it's silly for anyone to say their son is under them unless it's a Corps commander who is also a 2-star general. Armies have around 1 or 2 hundred thousand men spread over an area from Wilson to Concord, so figure it out for yourself.

If Oscar Farmer is reported M.I.A., then he is missing and possibly dead. The letter dated the same day is no indication because you will recall that you got several of mine postmarked Dec. 24th that were written before that. Sometimes, several days elapse before they are mailed. If you know which division he was in, I might be able to tell you his chances. The 106th and 99th didn't do so well, and we were mauled a little ourselves. We finally made "Time" magazine of Jan. 8 – still incognito, though, as a regiment of one of the overrun divisions. The 38th Infantry saved the whole northern salient and kept Liege from being captured and not Rumstedt plan in the head. The 101st stand at Bastogne is a lot of good publicity promotion.

The men in the Navy don't know what war is. Outside of an occasional battle or invasion, all they do is swab decks and polish guns – no marching, no cold, no hunger, no K-rations, no foxholes, no wetness that can't be relieved, no shrapnel, no advancing underfire, no blood, death, stink, dead cows, horses, sheep, pigs, mud, manure, slop, sweat, 90% of them are living better and making more money than ever in their lives. Only the infantry knows war at its worst – artillery next. The Q.M., Air Corps, and Navy – positively not – it's just a great adventure for them.

I must close now. Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

P.S.: The glue on your envelopes is no good. Your last 3 letters have arrived with open flaps – not censored, but just open.

Germany
February 6, 1945

Dear Mother,

Another battle and I'm still O.K. It was mud this time instead of snow, and I used "weasels" to get the stuff up.

Your package with the jock straps came yesterday, but I haven't had a chance to open it yet. We are back in houses of a sort now – at least a roof and, with us in the offensive, things have assumed a more normal aspect as to combat. This little action was short, but rough from artillery. It's hilly, wooded country – you can be seen from a long ways and, then again, not at all behind the hill. I've received no letters from you since my last.

I hope you have most of your health troubles solved by now.

The 2nd has been getting a little more publicity of late, and we spearheaded the drive back into Germany here in this sector.

I hope this war will be over soon. With us and the Russians both on the move, they can't last very long, but those Nazis won't give up.

I must close, hope everything is going O.K. at home. Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

February 7, 1945

Dear Mother,

I'm enclosing a few clippings from the Stars & Stripes. The 2nd is finally getting at least a little mention in the papers.

I opened your box tonite. The chain is fine, and the etui is just what I need, but those jock straps – oh my! – The war has really shot American merchandise – even the British have better than those. I'll try them but, without elastic, they won't be much good. I need that belly support. Tell Dad if he gets in any pre-war type, to send me a couple, but don't send any more of the same type, and I also want a wide-belly band –

Everything is getting along O.K. Hope it's the same with you. No mail for me today. Must close – Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

February 9, 1945

Dear Mother,

Mail seems to be still coming in fine since I received your letter of January 29th today, which is pretty good time and makes the news fresh.

In regard to Oscar Farmer, it will probably be about 3 months before they can get any direct news from him if he is a P. [O.]W. It took Tedeschi's wife from July till September and, personally, there were an awful lot of "M.I.A.'s" in the Jerry offensive that are probably out of the picture that the W.D. must report as "missing", since no records or individuals can confirm a report of K.I.A., and they can't take a chance without positive identification in the form of a body or sworn statement by responsible persons as eyewitnesses in case of a non-recovery of the body when a soldier is known to have been killed and, even then, it's risky. That's why I told you in the case of "Miss Wagner's" husband, that if the W.D. reported him K.I.A., then you could bet your last dollar that he was. There is the 10 million to one chance that recognition is impossible and the wrong dog-tags are on the body, but recognition is scarcely ever impossible, and the wrong dog-tags is practically out of the question, since this is a dead serious game and soldiers don't play like children in things like that.

It is too bad about Herbert Ellis. It seems that war is taking its toll in homes all over the U.S. and, perhaps, the sad recipients of those notices more than any other will realize that war calls for the supreme sacrifices. I suppose Wilson will be quite changed when I get back – the old folks dying and the youngsters being killed and wounded – but such is life in a village city. We all serve our term on this celestial globe and await the swing of the grim reaper, blessedly not knowing when we shall be called to meet our maker.

I was very glad to get the business figures. That was exactly what I wanted – a simple little slip that won't trouble Dad or you in the least. The figures look as if Dad had a good year – certainly with the scarcity of merchandise – and with expenses no higher than last year, you should be in O.K. financial shape, which is quite comforting to me, since it eliminated a nervous strain on you that is physically debilitating. I only hope that Dad is holding up O.K. Make him take it easy whenever possible – relaxation is wonderful for the body – it can take more than you can dream of if those nerve ends get a chance to relax and slow down the tempo. I should know – we punish our bodies in battle – nervous tension, cold, mud, no sleep, little to eat – but a couple of days rest and you are a new man.

In regard to your mentioning that it would be better to replace whole divisions in the line and let those rest that have been in the fighting for so long, that sounds

good, but the replacement system that we have now is better. You can't imagine the confusion of "green" troops in combat, my dear, that was our trouble in the breakthrough of the Jerries – 2 "green" divisions on our flanks, which left us as the Bastion of the whole salient. It was not the G.I. Joe in the front lines that gave way. It was the inexperienced higher-ups that couldn't handle the situation that got panicky, but communication and pulled out leaving us holding the bag with no information on the situation. As it stands now, you could give our division 75% replacements of privates, pfcs, and even corporals leaving us a corps of squad and platoon leaders, company and battalion commanders and staffs, Regt. & division Commanders and staffs, and our fighting efficiency would not be greatly impaired if at all. The soldier is only as good as the men directing him. If they know and he knows that they know and has confidence in them, he has confidence in himself. There have been too many "green" regiments and divisions going to pieces in first actions not to bear out the fact that replacements are better.

Combat to us is, by now, such a routine affair that we operate just like a business. All the weak have been eliminated, and you've got a pretty good idea that no one will let you down, and everyone will do his job. Squad and platoon leaders can handle the situation. Company commanders know the score – where to go, the best routes, what's safe terrain, the estimate of opposition, and a 1000 things you don't know that you know, but that you do by instinct. I'm pretty well acquainted with Jerry's mine-laying technique – so far I've guessed right. A lot of it is luck, but I've missed them when others had hit them. I'm plenty careful when I know he's had time to lay them, and I figure that I'm on the route he figures we'll come. I don't like to go around roadblocks because that's exactly what Jerry wants, and he's got those mines cunningly concealed on the sides. He can't dig a paved road without tell-tale marks; so he lays them just at the edges – on intersections he backs up about 50 yards; so you'll think you're safely by. It takes cunning – just like an animal at a trap. You've got to out-figure him. All this you learn by experience – little things that you don't realize you know, but that save your life. It takes combat experience and "green" troops can't lick Jerry because he's pretty smart, having been fighting for about 4 years. The only thing we don't like about replacements is to have them too "fresh" from civilian life – it takes at least 6 months before you feel like a soldier and forget civilian softness, and some of these "G.I.'s" that were civilians as late as July and August amaze us. Imagine getting replacements that left the U.S.A. on January 8th, 1945! And we've been overseas 16 months with over 8 of it in combat.

Next month, I will have 3 years in the Army, which makes me an old soldier. I'll also start getting an extra 5% "foggy" for service – that will be around \$8.00 and bring my base pay up to \$175.00 a month. As for promotion, that is out of the question as long as I'm a Bn. S-4 – the next step up is Regt. S-4 – and major and you can't hop. Service Co. commander is the only route up, and that is not a very often vacated position.

I must close now. I hope both you and Dad are O.K. My love to you.

Always,

Brame

February 12, 1945

Dear Mother,

The mail is getting "super" – your letter of February 5th came in today. So the 2nd Division is getting a little publicity at last. I've been with them all right – my little week off was only for a week and because nothing was pending. Officers are no longer expendable because infantry officers don't grow on every bush, and getting new replacements takes quite awhile, and even then it takes time for them to get experience and learn the "know-how" the counts of battle. My knowledge of supply has not stepped up any channel although, as a combat supply officer, I'm pretty well versed. Right now, we are just sitting, but one never knows when we'll start again.

After these last battles, the percentage of officers left that landed D-Day has gone down a little more. 8 months of combat takes its toll. The weather makes it mighty rough. The fall here, though, has helped a lot – you can go around mud, but snow has you stymied to cleared roads.

The civilians in towns in our path usually move out – if not, they are immediately evacuated to the rear when we move in. Some few hole up in the cellars and stay right through a battle. The destruction is terrific. We usually clean up the debris and take over the houses. The Bn. has about 8 gasoline motor generators, so we have lights and radio right with us. We use blankets for black-out (BLACK-OUT here his "black-out" in capital letters – a ray of light means shelling or bombing, and it's not play like at home).

I hope everything at home is O.K. I haven't heard from Stuart in quite awhile. It would be nice if he and Doug and Matt could get home. Matt's about a year old now, isn't he? I must close now and write a few more letters. Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

February 15, 1945

Dear Mother,

No letters from you, but am dropping a short note to let you know that all goes well.

For the present, we are just taking the war easy. I don't understand why because the 2nd is usually pushing toward Berlin ahead of all the others, but maybe they figure we deserve a little slow-down. Duties are routine, and without the extreme cold, the supply demands are negligible – we have houses with stoves and are pretty comfortable.

The terrain here is very, very beautiful – high, wooded hills with still a few spots of snow, bubbling mountain streams with the water breaking its neck to get down, making cascades over the rocks and rushing through the narrows at about 20 m.p.h. The weather has been clear, and those beautiful bombers (ours) can go over all day & nite to convince Jerry that he's "finee". Psychologically, they are a wonderful help, and knocking out the rear cuts down their ability to make war and keep them undercover on transportation.

I've sent you a package containing a couple of lovely matched pictures. Jerry (INAUDIBLE) – taking towns gives the soldiers a high time looking over whatever is left after the destruction. I also included a Nazi flag that Dad will probably be proud to display. I haven't sent home many souvenirs (sic) because I'm not that way and, after so long, most of that stuff is commonplace with me. I can send you oodles of German insignia, helmets, etc. Maybe I ought to because it would be interesting to you and, maybe in later years, I'd like to look back over it.

It's getting late, and I must close. I'm sending another clipping, which might interest you about our little return to the scene of the great offensive.

I hope both you and Dad are well and fine – my love to you.

Always,

Brame

February 20, 1945

Dear Mother,

No letter from you in the last few days since my last to you, but am writing tonite, since I expect to go on a pass and visit Paris tomorrow. They seem to be pretty liberal with passes now for us. Instead of relieving whole outfits, they hand out individual passes to Paris, the U.K., and a very few to the U.S.A. to the men who've been in action the longest. I'm high on priority in that category. I didn't expect a chance to ever go back to Paris but, since they offer a pass, I'm glad to take it. It won't be like being on duty there. I'll have the daytime free now and should be able to get around a bit. I will have 3 days there and about 2 each way coming and going, so will have a total of at least 7 days away.

No one knows what's shaping up in this war. It may be over soon now. I figure about 3 or 4 more commitments for us ought to do it. I hope it ends soon, anyhow.

I hope everything at home's going along O.K. and that you and Dad are both fine. I'm still in good shape - had a slight case of what we call "the G.I.'s" - dysentery, but am over it now.

I must close now - will write again as soon as possible.

Love,

Brame

Germany [*Editor's Note: Written on American Red Cross stationary*]
February 27, 1945

Dear Mother,

I am just back from Paris and thought I'd drop you a few lines. Your letters of February 10 and 15th came while I was away, and I got them tonite.

I had a pretty good time in Paris. It was not like when we were stationed there though, and they were still celebrating the liberation. The winter was pretty tough on them – no coal and most of the nite clubs were closed. They've just begun to reopen. People are also getting back to work, and things are settling down a bit.

I stayed at a hotel taken over by the Red Cross – they have almost all the bigger ones, since American troops are about the only "tourists". My days were free this time, and I saw Paris like a tourist – went in most of the places I'd just passed by on a jeep. I learned Paris by subway this time. I know it very, very well by now.

I also took in the famous "Folies Bergere". I'm enclosing a program – you can't read the French, but keep it for me for a souvenir. I'm also enclosing a few pictures. I can't keep all the stuff I picked up – it's too much to carry, and it gets wet and ruined. Baggage is one thing that's in the way in combat. I'm stripped down to practically nothing in the way of clothing – I get fresh clothes at the showers – officers and E.M. (enlisted men) all wear the same. I store one bag with my uniform and nicer officer's clothing, and carry one duffle bag with me. All I have is in the 2 bags. When we move, it takes me about 3 minutes to go anywhere.

I have about 20 of the enclosed pictures, which I'll send to you a few at the time – keep them for me too – I'm putting the labels on the back.

I'm glad Stuart, Doug and Matt could get down to see you, and know you enjoyed their visit. That bank balance sounds good but, as you say, it doesn't amount to much as money is valued now. In 1938 or 39, that would have been a nice little nest egg, but \$1,000.00 now will hardly re-outfit you in civilian clothes.

As for Oscar Farmer, he was in the 28th Division. They were on the flank of the 106th and got pretty well battered, also. The 28th is a combat-wise outfit but, like us, they could not stem the tide when the others gave way. As far as any hopes about that "office work in a rest-camp" – no place was safe when Jerry came through and, least of all, the rear areas after frontline troops were knocked out. You asked about St. Vith and Bastogne, and enough time has passed to tell you. When we left Paris, we went to St. Vith and had positions in the Siegfried line near there. After having had that little so-called vacation, we were known as the

“Paris Bn.” and used to relieve everybody else in the line. We went in for a week or 10 days and out for 2 and back in again. About 10 days before Jerry’s push, we were relieved by the 106th and shifted to the North to attack. In the middle of our attack, Jerry hit with the greatest force in the position we had pulled out of just before. The 106th folded up – they were overwhelmed. The 99th was routed while the 2nd on the North and 28th on the South bore the brunt of the attack – held the flanks and channeled the Jerries into the Bastogne area where the 101st mocked up the glory. I have also been through Bastogne, but don’t know it very well. I’m covering France pretty well in my travels. You can add to my visits now Liege, Dinant, St. Quentin, Rheims (2nd time), Aachen. Aachen is pretty well torn up. We ought to demolish every German city so that the “super race”, Lebenstaum, Fatherland people can feel and know in their hearts and souls the scourge and destruction of war on their own soil – that they may feel the ravages of war that, for a century, they have imposed on the soil of other countries.

I must close for now. I hope that both of you are getting along fine. Love to both of you.

Always.

Brame

February 28, 1945

Dear Mother,

I'm sending some more pictures of Paris and, at last, one of myself – the first that has come out and that I've been able to get hold of since I've been in France. I'm also sending the negative – I want you to have at least 3 or 4 prints made and return them to me. This is not the best picture in the world, but it shows you how I look in action as a soldier. The picture was taken about December 19th or 20th just after I had gotten the vehicles out of that little Jerry push. What I have on is just what I wear in action. I have a .45-automatic on my hip. That stance is a bit characteristic. The picture was strictly impromptu – I was passing one of the sgts. that was taking a few pictures, and he said "How about your picture, Lt.?", so I turned and he snapped it.

I've had quite a few more made recently and, if they come out, I'll send them to you.

I've been back on the job today catching up with things. We are out of action for the time being, just waiting.

I must close now. Love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

March 5, 1945

Dear Mother,

Well, another battle and I can still write. Your letter of February 21st came a few days ago – I don't remember what day. I'm sorry to hear that you've been having fever and are in the hospital, and hope you'll be O.K. by the time you get this.

The weather is still rough, but not killing like it was – you just get wet, cold, killed and miserable, but it doesn't knock you out. It is still mean to fight in, but an improvement over what it was.

This battle gave me a new experience – for the first time, I've been in a firefight (that's what we call it when you see and shoot and are seen and shot at). Most of the Jerries I've seen up to now were either at a distance pulling out or prisoners. This time, I was close enough to see and shot, and they shot back. I had about 5 men with me and a bunch of medics looking for a company that had by-passed these Krauts. Believe me, we high-tailed it out of there – then circled around and came back to capture nine of them. This time, I did not have to share credit for the prisoners – all mine – and these were not just waiting to give up like that bunch back in July. Anyhow, I'd just as soon that somebody else do that work.

If anyone thinks that I am "behind the lines" as a supply officer, they are "nuts". Don't tell anyone that I am "in supply" – that's silly – Q.M. officers behind the desk in Washington are also "in supply". Tell them I am a Battalion Supply Officer of a combat infantry outfit, and am either with or, oftentimes, in front of the most forward advanced into the Fatherland –

I hope that you have recovered from the fever and that Dad is O.K. I must close now, since it's a little late and I'm tired. Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

March 10, 1945

Dear Mother,

Another short letter tonite to let you know that I'm O.K. and to acknowledge yours of February 24th and 26th, which have come since my last to you.

I've been busy on the move the last few days – getting ready for a little jump – where you can well imagine. The weather is much better, thank goodness, and in a few weeks, half of my supply problems will be solved by sunshine and fair weather. This winter has been super-rough, and I'm glad it's about over and we can dump and turn in all the camouflage suits, blankets, etc. – the impediments of winter – that has been a headache and backache carrying getup.

Perhaps this war will be over soon – the Krauts can't last long and we'll move in, regardless of their best resistance – it will cost, but it will still be done. Why they don't realize it and give up is beyond me. By the way, any rumors that the Germans don't have anything is the bunk. It's the bally British that don't have it. These Krauts live O.K.

I hope you have recovered from your fever and all goes well. I must close now – we'll write more later from deeper in Germany – across the Rhine. Love to both you & Dad.

Always,

Brame

March 14, 1945

Dear Mother,

No more letters from you since my last short note.

Things are still getting along fine. For some reason, we've been pretty quiet for the last few days. It's strange for the 2nd to be out of it when things are hot. They rushed us here, and now we just wait and have showers, movies, etc. It's a great life, though, and I'm not complaining.

And, oh, this beautiful wonderful weather. We've had 2 clear days in a row. It's not yet warm as you know warm weather, but it's warm enough to get rid of the extra winter clothing and equipment – the impediments that, by sheer weight and volume, is a supply man's headache. Turning that stuff in is a joy to me because this winter has been a rough tough problem of doubling back and hauling up all the blankets, overcoats, etc. (Our load will be about 1/3 now of what it was. Of Daylite has increased also to give you more hours to do less.)

As for the progress of the war, it is favorable, as you know. The Rhine has been crossed, and the bridgehead expands gradually. The last week with us was about like Normandy after the breakthrough – trying to catch the Krauts – one night stands – pack up and move.

We are billeted now in German houses. We just moved civilians out & troops in. There is no fraternization, just ice cold disdain and disregard of the few civilians left. It's rough on Americans not to be friends, though, even with German civilians whose greatest crime is being born German and, as such, not fit to associate in a free world.

I hope that you have completely recovered from your fever and that Dad is doing O.K. at the store. If he has per chance finished any of the yearly business sheets, I'd like to know how much is credited to me this year. I hate to think about all that income tax when I get home.

I must close now. My love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

March 17, 1945

Dear Mother,

I got your letter of February 28th yesterday. I'm glad that you are getting along O.K. and hope you'll be completely over the fever and able to get up and about by the time you get this.

I'm glad Palmer dropped by to see you. You say he's matured a lot. Combat has a way of doing that to a man. It is difficult for the older generation ever to realize that the younger ones mature because you remember us as children, and that mental picture remains even though, in the course of events, the older generation reverts to childhood and their place is taken by the younger. You probably consider me and, perhaps, Stuart as still children but, in reality, we are now the mature ones in the sense that we are the able and responsible human beings. He's 34 and I'm almost 30. That makes me already an old "young man".

Also due to the war, the experiences I've probably hit the depths of life more than you or Dad or Stuart, since all of you have existed in the serene valley of peace and civil life, whereas I've been exposed to the stormy mountaintops of war, death, disaster, poverty, misery, pain, etc. that you have never and will never know. From the standpoint of maturity, a combat soldier, by sheer force of events, is thrown above those in civilian life. If you can take it and get out alive, it's valuable. If you can't, you crack up at the start.

I've digressed enough in that direction. Spring here is also coming along – not many flowers or buds yet, but the grass is green on the hillsides and the views are beautiful, and there are a few sunshiny days.

If Tommy comes overseas, there is not much possibility of his getting into combat. He'll probably get some good job at Corps or Army, and there's a remote possibility of combat if he's with a new division. You cannot put a man in charge of a company when even the lowest pvt. knows more than the Company Commander about combat.

I could probably get a company myself if I asked for it, but I have no desire to run the risks and, although my combat experience is extensive, I have had none in tactics. My only hope for advancement is through supply channels – munitions officer, Service Co. Commander or Regt. S-4 – all of which I could handle with ease. The casualty rate in these jobs is 0, though. Only normal changes about like Garrison take place there. I'd like to continue in my present job in which I am #1, than change even for a promotion. "S-4ing" from knowledge and experience is duck-soup for me.

We are still taking it easy, but I suppose we'll be on the go again in a few days on the other side of the Rhine. I think Patton and Montgomery are a little bit vexed that someone else got there first. The British haven't got what it takes, and Patton just ran into too much sheer resistance. He'll be a "going Willie" when he does get over though because he just couldn't take it if someone beat him to Berlin, which is O.K. by me because, personally, I won't feel left out if someone else does the spearheading, although that's usually our job along with the 1st and 4th or 29th Division. The Army has about 10 "crack" divisions that keep on doing all the breaking through while the others come along to chase the enemy and think war is a lot of fun, and the Krauts a bunch of dodos till they hit a defensive line, then there we go again to crack it.

I must close now. I'm keeping myself in jock straps by washing and alternating the ones I have left. I have 3 British jocks that are pretty good.

I hope you and Dad are both O.K. Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

P.S.: This is Kraut stationary. They have some pretty good stuff.

March 18, 1945

Dear Mother,

Today has been another nice day. It being Sunday the schedule was light. I went to services this A.M. for the first time in quite a while. We have a new chaplain – Episcopalian – and he's pretty good. Church attendance with all the replacements we have now is good, since most of them still retain a bit of their civilian reverence. We sang a lot of good old Presbyterian hymns and, on the whole, it gave me a bit of a lift.

I've been taking it pretty easy the last few days. I also got to see a movie today. We've had a couple of good pictures of recent vintage since we've been in this spot. We are all billeted in houses; so life is not so bad.

Quite a few of the men and officers are going on pass to Paris, the U.K., and even the U.S.A. The Bn. Co. is away right now for a short period, and since the Bn. Exec. O. is commanding, I'm sort of "duddling in brass" in the administration end of things – making inspections, etc. My work is in that line, anyhow, so, instead of working through the Exec., I just do it myself. With all the new officers and others on pass, there's not much old "stock" to fall back on when it comes to getting things done. I'm almost a stranger here myself as to the officers – 2nd Lts. are in Hq. or the company areas that I've never seen before. You no sooner learn them than you have an action and get a few new ones. You miss the "know-how" of the old officers, and when they are away on pass or some detail, it's even worse because you don't get replacements. As for my little encounter I wrote you about with the Krauts in which I captured 9 of them, I understand that I've been put in for a Silver Star medal. I personally think that the action is not deserving of that high an award, but such is the stuff of which most of your "heroes" are made – a lone action with witnesses and proof at a time when no one else was outstanding. Also, you didn't start out to be a hero, but got into a situation that you just did the best you knew how with luck. The Silver Star is next below the D.S.M. & D.S.C. – about the 3rd highest of the U.S. awards. I don't think it will go through, though, and if it does, I'll be surprised – it may be knocked down to a Bronze Star, and I'll get a cluster to the one I already have. I'll let you know the final outcome in the next few weeks. I must close for tonite. I'm writing a check to the church for \$25.00 and mailing it, also, at the same time as this. My love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

March 25, 1945

Dear Mother,

Just a few lines tonite to let you know I'm O.K. We've been in action again, and I've had no chance to write you for the last few days. I got your letter of March 7th, the nite before this attack. I've lost count of the days - it's been 4 or 5 days. Hours and days don't mean much in battle.

The weather has been perfect - clear and not too warm. Needless to say, we are on the Kraut side of the Rhine. Have been for several days - and it's still a matter of chasing the Jerries and clearing out pockets. There's no organized resistance - just 10, 40 or 50 left behind - they fight until surrounded and give up. I've gotten 7 more this trip.

I have a Kraut camera and some film, and will take a few pictures. The loot is great for all the G.I.'s. They are sending home half the stuff in Germany. The Krauts have plenty of good stuff, and they live O.K. about like the U.S.A.

This is a borrowed pen, and it doesn't write so well. Must close. Love to both of you.

Brame

April 2, 1945

Dear Mother,

We are temporarily at a halt, and am taking this chance to write you. Last nite was the first nite's sleep in about 8 days. Otherwise, it's been an hour here and there.

You are probably keeping up with the news in the papers and, by the time you get this, the news will certainly have caught up with us because we are a long, long ways into Germany. This is the fastest move I've ever been in on - 20, 30, and 40 miles a day. The Krauts military highways are bouncing back on them. Good roads are just duck-soup for the U.S. Army. You will roll up to a town and, if there's any resistance, you just back out and flatten it with the tanks. Most of them just hang out white flags. A lot of the civilians are glad to see the army come because they are tired of war. Others are still a little arrogant and unwilling to accept the facts. The French civilians always got out of the combat area, but the Krauts just stay here and are a nuisance. We put them in cellars or get them out of the way somewhere. They put up a squawk about their houses sometimes, but we just recall to them the French, Poles, and every other nation they've overrun, but never having been invaded, they think we are rough to turn them out. They should have the Russians or French here, and they would find out how bad it could be.

Their houses are A-1 - modern, good furniture, radios, etc. - plumbing about the best in Europe, which is still not saying much, but at least they've got some.

I don't know whether the Germans can get organized enough to surrender. Their Army is just about finished, but scattered units still fight a little.

The weather has been perfect, but it's raining a little today. I have a new jeep, since my old one was about shot. Everything is going along fine so far. We are about the farthest forward of all units in this mad race for Berlin. The mail has not caught up with us for a week, and when this will go out, I don't know.

Yesterday was Easter - in the morning, we shelled a town and had a little war. In the afternoon, we moved in and had services midst the burning houses and debris. What a war! We also liberated about 2000 Polish prisoners who have been P.W.'s for 5-1/2 yrs. - almost all officers. Their joy was magnificent, but they are a problem on feeding & evacuating - not mine, thank goodness.

The terrain is beautiful - green fields with hills in the distance - and the trees are just beginning to come out. It is not too warm yet, but it never gets hot here as we know it.

I hope everything goes well at home. I had a letter from Stuart the other day written Feb. 26. I must close. Love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

March 28, 1945

Dear Mother,

I've just sent you by regular mail a booklet about the 2nd and a clipping, but am sending this by airmail to let you know I'm O.K.

I have your letter of Mar. 7 and 12. I think I wrote you a few days ago after getting the one of Mar. 7, but I don't remember. This chasing the Jerries scarcely gives you time to eat & sleep or clean up, much less to write. I'm about 8 letters behind right now.

If you read about armored spearheads, that's us because we are, at present, attached to an armored division as supporting infantry, and we ride tanks and shove right on through towns and villages by the dozens – 24 hours at a time – by-pass any strong resistance and blast anything else.

The Krauts give up by companies. We don't even have time to officially take prisoners – we just disarm them and let them march back along the roads to let someone else in the rear take charge of them. A spearhead is out to take a point and let others follow up to us. At present, the Krauts are completely disorganized on the western front. How far they will pull to get organized and put up some resistance is a matter of conjecture. This may be the finale – let's hope so, anyhow.

We now take towns with lights, water and electricity – intact. We move all civilians to one section of town and billet troops in the rest.

Other than being a race, it's not so bad.

Time is short and I must close.

Love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

P.S.: Hope you are O.K. by now.

April 7, 1945

Dear Mother,

It's getting late, but thought I'd write, anyhow. Got your letter of Mar. 17 yesterday and am glad you are home from the hospital.

Spring here is showing up as well – we have some beautiful days. It is not warm as you have it at home. I still have on my long drawers and am not uncomfortable – in fact, I'd be cold without them, and I don't figure on taking them off before June. As for spring flowers – forsythia & crocus are about the only ones I can identify, and the fruit trees are not quite yet in bloom. We are pretty far north, if you will look at the map. Your letters also come irregularly, not so much from a chronological standpoint as an ebb & flow – 3 or 4 at a time, then skip and 2, 3 or 4 more.

As for taxes, it's probably good that those taxes were paid in advance. So far, as I can figure, I'll owe about \$350.00 when I get home, even though \$1500.00 of Army pay is excused. How is my bank balance coming? And what about the bonds? Are they coming in regularly? I've heard they made a change in the method of handling bonds, and there has been some delay in getting them out. I have made no change in my allotments, and \$37.50 for a \$50.00 bond is still deducted from my pay every month. If they are slow in coming or too far behind, I may cancel the bond and send the bond allotment, and send \$137.50 home to you every month, and you can buy the bonds, if you desire. I don't like a system in which too much time elapses because it is too easy to lose track of those deductions, and if the bond doesn't come through to you, then I have no claim and no way to trace. It may take years later on to recover on account of screwed up records. If they clip me for \$37.50 each month, you should have in hand by the 10th of the next following month the bond for which the deduction was made. For example, if \$37.50 is deducted April 1st from my pay for March, you should have the bond by May 10th, so let me know how those bonds are running.

If Edward Joyner has finished up the stores' papers, I'd like to have a copy of the P&L statement, if it's not too much trouble. We are not moving so fast now – just plain infantry again, but slightly more mobile.

It's about time for the lights to go out, and I've got to finish this in a hurry.

The war news looks good. This stuff should be over soon.

Our battalion finally got that unit citation for that famous December stand. I am enclosing a copy of the order. Save it.

Love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

April 4, 1945

Dear Mother,

Well, we haven't moved for a couple of days, which is quite unusual for the pace we've been keeping, but I'm not complaining – it's great to pause and catch your breath, although if keeping on will finish this, I'm ready to go.

I'm enclosing another picture taken inside at nite – also in December at Camp Elsonborn, Belgium. It's not so hot, but still me. There's also a clipping from the S&S [Stars & Stripes].

Everything is still going along O.K. No letter from you in the last few days, and there's not much news from here. I guess we'll be moving again soon. Sitting is no good.

The weather is still good – a little drizzly, but not cold – am I glad winter is over?

There's not much to write about now. Hope you and Dad are O.K.

Love,

Brame

April 9, 1945

Dear Mother,

I got your letter of Mar. 28th yesterday – pretty good service. We are on the move again and, from the resistance, the Wehrmacht must have just given up. The soldiers surrender by droves, and the civilians are not quite so sullen as at first. They seem to be relieved that it's over, at least temporarily. Only a few of the S.S. still put up any resistance. They should all be killed, anyway, and the Hitler Jugend [*ed. note: German word for "Youth"*] show some of that fanatical face, but the power of Allied Arms is pretty well convincing the Germans that they are finished. Hitler is caught in his biggest lie – that the Allies have no army – tanks, men, etc., but when U.S. tanks roll into your front yard or blast your towns and you see columns of vehicles pass all day – well, seeing is believing. And when they see our abundance of equipment, rations, etc., they finally understand that the Wehrmacht can't compete on even terms. As for D-Day, there won't be any. Germany is not organized enough to have a formal surrender, in my opinion. As for the U.S. feeding the world, that's bunk & ballyhoo – outside of the cities, there's "beaucoup" food and means of producing food. The Krauts are in good shape, and this "European food shortage" is just pulling the U.S. leg. You folks at home have less than here. Britain is pretty tight, though.

As for the letter you mentioned about the Sgt. writing Gen. Marshall – that's just sour grapes. Winning a bronze star is no officer qualification. I will admit that Benning is a lot of bunko, and its cheap value is in seeing if you can take it. As a criterion for good officers, Benning is neither the best or the worst. Their training is out of date by the time it's in force, and they can't possibly foresee all situations. We throw the book away and do it the "common sense" way and save time, lives, etc. Every situation is different – you've got to work out your own solution. We don't operate by Benning methods – Benning teaches what we prove.

I'm getting way behind on my mail now. I have 3 "times" that I haven't even glanced at and several letters to answer. I must close now. Love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

P.S.: Spring progresses slowly here. Frost this A.M., but clear & nice, otherwise.

April 13, 1945

Dear Mother,

No letters from you since my last, but mail is a bit sporadic. This march into Germany is taking about all the transportation we can muster, and I guess the mail will have to wait on a bit. You can't move forward and go back for mail at the same time.

At present, we are just trailing – move some 15 to 25 miles a day – strictly non-tactical – from the enemy standpoint – no action. However, we'll probably catch up and be committed soon. There's a German city near us that will probably need cleaning out. The War news still is super good.

The news of Roosevelt's death has just gotten to us over the radio, and I imagine the nation is deeply shocked, but we cannot take time out to mourn and continue the mad race for Berlin. It is, indeed, sad that he should die when things are shaping to a finish, but such is life. His death will be a loss to the nation, but perhaps there will be others to fill his shoes.

I'm getting along fine so far. We usually have pretty nice billets now every nite. We just move the Krauts out and the troops in.

I have some Chanel #5 Eau de Cologne, which I'll send as soon as I get a chance – Kraut loot. These folks have plenty of things compared with others in Europe.

I must close now. Love to both you & Dad.

Always,

Brame

April 19, 1945

Dear Mother,

I haven't had the chance to write for several days, and have gotten 2 letters from you of Mar. 31 and April 5, and also the one containing the photos, as well as the package with the suspensories and other items. I still can't use those suspensories because they aren't what I need – just forget about them and the jocks. I can make out O.K. Also, I can get plenty of toothpaste and shaving cream, but you are “on the ball” with the etui and the candy. You probably have less in the States than we do here, so don't strain yourself sending me anything. Thanks a lot for the package, though, and the pictures. I'll send you some more pictures when I have them developed. We have cameras galore now and plenty of film. The “booty” of war is pretty good. All firearms and cameras are turned in, and we usually pick them over. We can't send cameras home, but can bring them. I have two beautiful shotguns I'm sending to Stuart to take care of for me, and my collection of pistols is also pretty good. I now have a Luger, P-38, and a Mauser 7.65 caliber. The only trouble is that we can't carry all this stuff. War & property ownership don't mix. When there's a battle in a town, the civilians clear out, then we clean out the Kraut soldiers and, for property, it's first come, first serve.

As for prisoners, I've lost count I've taken so many. Krauts give up right and left. We have been doing a lot of nite attacking lately, since the terrain is flat and the Krauts have been using A.A. “flak” guns against personnel. That is the most vicious stuff of all – it's just machine artillery, and there's direct observation, which is definitely no good for American soldiers. Anyhow, in these nite attacks, they by-pass a lot of Krauts, and I come along the next day and take a lot of them. They usually just give up and come walking in, which is not so bad. I've been doing the fastest work of the war as for speed. The troops get into a town at nite and by-pass these “flak” guns and the next morning, I come up with the chow and run from village to village at about 50 m.p.h. in and out of observation to keep them from taking a shot. A speeding jeep is not a very good target. We usually get these guns surrounded and drop mortar shells on them till they give it, or it's knocked out. Without much artillery, the war is sort of a sporting proposition now with all the odds on our side – pretty tough on the physical side from lack of rest, but O.K. mentally from the lack of strong resistance and enemy artillery.

As for where I am now, I can't say, but it's one of Germany's largest cities, and there are plenty of civilians around. It's just like a circus – people all over the place, milling in the streets and watching the war. Around the corner, hot lead is flying & a war going on, but civilians crowd the streets and get in your way. We set up our mortars yesterday, and it was just like a show – there might have been 200 civilians that formed a semicircle to watch them go into action, and the soldiers put on a show. What the civilians didn't realize was that it was no show, and those mortars were hurling death to someone. They probably had a great time watching the American “Wehrmacht” in action – especially since Herr Hitler and

Goebbel has convinced them that the feeble democracies had nothing and they can't understand American officers in the same O.D. battle dress as the men and our lack of the strict discipline and "hop-to" of the Germans. We operate like a football team, and your respective rank is because of recognized qualities and not because someone just said you are a major or colonel or whatever the rank.

You mentioned that the news at home was not censored, and that you probably know more than I about the news of the Armies. Don't fool yourself - we know at least 48 hours before it's released where everybody is. Of course, I may not see a situation map for a few days, but I know what's cooking and, in addition, the units concerned, as well, instead of just your vague "_____ Army spearhead".

I'm glad you got the pictures O.K. As for the Nazi flags, I could send you dozens of them. They are no longer novelties, and the little swords are a "dime a dozen", also.

About the notification of awards - that's strictly air corps - all they have to do with their excess personnel is blow their own horn. I'd like to bring the whole darn air force over here on the ground and let them see for themselves just how much damage they have not done to all these so-called flattened factories. There are some knocked out dwellings, apartments, and hospitals in this city, but the bally factories were still turning war goods - that is until the unsung G.I. Joe of the infantry got in there with a machine gun or a thermite grenade. The infantry can assure you that the Nazi war plants of this city are no longer producing on any scale, and will not, in the future, produce, unless for us. To recuperate from an air attack, you run out the next morning, sweep up the litter, and continue as before. If bombs come within 3 blocks of a factory, it's a bulls-eye. Their accuracy is lousy.

Furthermore, if any "air corps proud" mother is desirous of investigating, she will find that the widely heralded and publicized "Air Medal" ranks 8th or 9th among U.S. awards, is only slightly higher than the "Good Conduct" award, and only shows that some guy went up in an airplane a certain number of times, which is about as incidental as a civilian riding to work on subway, and also about as dangerous.

Incidentally, you may be interested in knowing that I have been recommended for a vacancy in the G-4 section of Corps. The choice has not yet been made, but I understand the job carries a captaincy, which will be O.K. If we go to the C.B.I. theater, I'd rather fight from the safety of Corps headquarters, but I hate to miss the "esprit de corps" of a regiment or division and taking off that 2nd Division patch would break my heart.

I've written a lot tonite, so I'd better close. Love to both you and Dad and hoping that it's all finished soon.

Love,

Always,

Brame

April 26, 1945

Dear Mother,

I wrote Dad this afternoon and am writing you tonite. The mail has been excellent. Yours of April 12 arrived yesterday and of April 17th today.

I'm so glad that you are able to get around a bit and I realize that you must have trouble shopping since you can't stand in line and go yourself. You civilians are doing without a lot of things and food you should have. The determination that soldiers shall have the first priority on foods of necessity keeps huge stocks of foods tied up in the process of delivery – in warehouses, ships, and Army dumps. No responsible authority wants to be "too little and too late" so they take their maximum approximations and the civilians get what's left. There is sufficient production, but distribution is too vast and complex to figure out and stakes are too high to gamble on.

I got a letter from Stuart today, also. He seems to be getting along fine. Tommy finally got overseas, he says. That's just like going to a play and having the final curtain go down before you get your seat, but at least he can tell his kids that he went overseas – just for the ride – in the war. Nuts.

I don't think the public will have a VE-Day. The war is just about "finee," "kaput," all over. Anything now will just be an anti-climax – probably still some bitter fighting with the Nazis & S.S., but the German nation is through for organized warfare. As for Roosevelt's death. We knew about it, of course, but so far, as the war is concerned, it still goes on at the front. I think Truman will pull through O.K. and perhaps since we've lost the "shining light", a lot of men with less candle power can together produce more general brightness. If you'll read the first article in the "Reader's Digest" for April, "the Road to Serdom", you may understand some of my feelings on the subject. Perhaps Fate plucks in time. Who knows? But watch out for Wallace next. In spite of the fact that the Allies are and will win the war, the ideas of National Socialism have permeated the world in our unconscious groping for a solution to an economics of abundancy, and it seems that once committed in that direction, all individual freedom is swept before the storm. If you as an individual are fortunate enough to belong to a pressure group – labor, farm, etc. – you may benefit, but woe is he whose group is at variance with the policy of the state – the Jews in Germany, landowners in Russia. The group must be ruthlessly suppressed. Unfortunately, groups are made up of individuals and while the people as a whole abhor, the individual atrocities they approve the policy for the state. Thus, we have a tacit approval by a majority of a policy that is tough on individuals only because they belong to a group whose existence is a menace to the avowed end or policy of a planned estate. The farmer with a "parity" check or laborer with his "unemployment" check votes for his own individual gain at the loss of his or future generations' freedom. If you don't belong to a group that benefits, then you are thought to be

unpatriotic. American democracy travels down that road. Four times, we have elected an "indispensable" and have no doubts about the outcome of the next election with Roosevelt alive. Just yesterday, I read the Constitution of the U.S. and was impressed with the fact that our Founding Fathers, having escaped Europe, were intent upon preventing the U.S. from becoming a dictatorship and set up a system of stops and balances and George Washington, by refusing a third term, set a precedent that should be followed since a term longer than 8 years, it is possible to wipe out these stops and balances by "packing" the Supreme Court and "buying" congressional approval.

This sounds bad to Roosevelt lovers (all those who are receiving the bounty), but is merely a rational opinion of the state of the nation. As for Foreign Affairs, I also toot his horn and out of all respect to him as a man, I believe that his internal policies got away from even as big a man as he was. Power is strong drink and will get even the best of him.

You said you were sorry that I was with an armored division – you are all wrong – armor bypasses and runs around resistance. It was the most fun and the least dangerous from the standpoint of casualties of all of our campaigns.

I'm glad they heard from Oscar F. [Farmer]. He should be liberated by now.

My recommendation for the Silver Star was turned down, which did not surprise me. You have to write up good stories for them.

I'm still getting along O.K. Must close now.

Love,

Brame

April 29, 1945

Dear Mother,

No letters from you since my last, but am writing anyway.

Today has been a lovely day – crisply cool this A.M. and warm during the afternoon – fruit trees and flowers in bloom, green grass and a gentle breeze over slightly rolling terrain. I went to church this morning and did not munch the rest of the day. We have been taking life easy the last several days.

No one knows what happens next. The Krauts won't give a formal surrender, so I guess it will take some time to finish cleaning them out.

Everything goes along O.K. There are a few changes being made. I haven't heard anything from the recommendation for the Corps vacancy, but from other events, I would judge that that is out for the present. Oh well, one never knows what will happen, so we can only wait and see.

I hope that you are able to get out more with Spring weather and that Dad is getting along O.K. at the store.

There's not much news, so I'll close for tonite.

Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

May 4, 1945

Dear Mother,

I got your letter of April 20th several days ago, but haven't written since we've been on the move again. May 1 was about the coldest day I've spent since I've been on the continent. After all the beautiful spring weather where we were, it is now snowy again. Believe it or not, we had about 2 inches on May 2. The weather is a strange conflict of spring and winter – cold & snowy on the mountain and warm and sunshiny in the valley. What Cedrick Foster said about the 2nd Division being in Leipzig was correct. I can tell you now that we are in the First Army and have been the whole time, with the exception of our little Brest deal at which time we were a separate task force. When I spoke of being North, I meant that geographically speaking, the continent of Europe is about the same latitude as Newfoundland and Canada, and that summer as such is not as warm as you know it.

It seems that the war is about over for everyone but us, and it's just our luck to be in about the only front left in Europe – exactly where I can't say yet, but will write again in a few days.

They want me to play a little bridge over at the C.P., so I'll close now. Tell Dad thanks a lot for the business statement. I'm still O.K. and all is going well.

Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

May 8, 1945

Dear Mother,

Well, tonite at midnite is supposed to be the end of the war and it finds me in Pilsen, Czechoslovakia. After so long a time, we can now tell you most anything you want to know. After leaving Leipzig, we went down to the Hulda River and waited to contact the Russians. The actual contact was made by the 69th Division. They held us back and just let us sit. That is also true about Leipzig – it was supposed to be the 69th's objective, but the 2nd beat them to it. How they ever permitted Cedrick Foster to even mention the 2nd is beyond me because our publicity has been so nil that we have a little joke among ourselves about being the "Veteran Unidentified Unit." The 2nd has also done so much fighting that it is no longer a novelty to us. The 69th is what we consider an upstart outfit. They didn't even leave the States till after Christmas, and they don't even know what war is. As for combat, it has just been a breeze the last couple of months since we crossed the Rhine – by the way, we crossed just below Remagen at a place called Sinzig. The opposition has been little or nothing lately.

The Czechs have been very joyous in their greeting to the Americans – even more so than the French. They line all the streets and shout and wave flags and offer us cakes, cookies, etc.

Today's been a holiday – everyone resting and cleaning up. I suppose that we'll sort of take up a garrison existence now, and I hope we stay in Czechoslovakia because the non-fraternization policy in Germany is hard on American soldiers.

As for what I think about the war being over – I'm glad of course and filled with joy, but I'm not too overjoyed because there's still the Pacific and I'm definitely not interested in going there. Eleven months of combat in this theater is enough for me, and I certainly think that I have done my share and more for my country than it could ask from any man. There is a certain freedom mentally in knowing that the war is over and that you made it because you always wondered before any action if you'll come through. I personally don't think about it when I'm in action, but before and after, I do give it a little thought – not so much now as at first because I've learned a lot, and fear of the unknown does not enter in. I'm careful and I take calculated risks on what I know, but I'm not scared or afraid in action.

What happens now – no one knows – we are all hoping for the States that there will likely be a period of occupation before we go anywhere or do anything.

Now that things are open, it's O.K. to tell you that in the battalion, there are 7 officers left out of 39 that landed on D+1 and five of those had been wounded and returned. Not all those have been wounded or killed – some had gone to other battalions or regiment but, nevertheless, they replaced someone that had been

knocked out. As for enlisted men, we had about a 4 times turnover. I'm the only one of the 3 Bn S-4's that have gone the route. Lt. Tedeschi was freed by the Russians and should be home by now and Lt. Dodd is back in the States convalescing.

It's been a great experience, and I'm glad it's over. It is hard to believe though because combat is now just about like a job at home. I'm so used to it, that it will be pretty dull with no action. Whatever plans the Army has for de-mobilization will take some time I'm sure. We may get home by Christmas if we don't go to the Pacific.

I hope that you and Dad are both getting along fine and that the news of the war's end will make things easier for all of you at home. I'll write again in a few days.

Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

May 14, 1945

Dear Mother,

It's just about supper time, but I'll start this anyhow and finish later. I've been spending the afternoon sewing and guess what on? – jock straps – I took the elastic belly-bands off my old straps and sewed them to the pouches of the straps Dad sent and made a good fresh strap. It was a credible piece of work!

Your letter of May 5th has just come in. I got 4 today, which is pretty good, but throws me behind on correspondence because it's hard to stay inside and write in this beautiful weather. It's the hottest I've felt in Europe and I've finally taken off my wool drawers and undershirt. I took a sun-bath for about an hour yesterday. I've been leading an ideal life for the last week – up about 9, just a little work in the A.M. and afternoons to clean up, read, relax, swim, sun-bathe, go to shows, etc. with dances in the evening. The son of the house in which I'm staying is an amateur photographer, and I've been interesting myself in some film developing. I'm enclosing a few – more about them later.

As for what we do now, it's still unknown. We shifted over to the 3rd Army for the final wind-up of war. They have some sort of educational program that is being set up to occupy our time, but it is not yet functioning. There's no doubt that some troops from this theatre will be sent to the Pacific, and that's what we are "sweating" out now. There is also a point system based on length of service, time overseas, awards & decorations, marriage and number of children by which they will deploy the troops. It looks as if it will be more of an individual proposition than whole unit. Some will be sent to the States and some to the Pacific and some will stay as occupation forces. Men with over 108 points are already scheduled to go home. I have 77 for sure which puts me neither at the top or the bottom. Children count 12 points, which makes single men really have to earn their points. Whatever happens we can only wait and see. I don't want to get back too fast to the States because there's too much chance of going to the Pacific for the next 6 months or so, and the Pacific is clean out of my plans. I believe I told you before that the recommendation for the Silver Star was turned down, but was resubmitted for a Bronze Star. I've heard nothing yet about the vacancy in the G-4 Section of Corps. To clarify that G-4 – 4 section of a staff is concerned with supply – n/a Bn. or Regt. It is known as S-4 and in a division corps, or Army as G-4. The relative rank is determined by the unit concerned and within the 4 section, there is also lesser rank as the higher units require delegation or duties.

I hope you had a nice birthday. It is hard to time anything to get to you for a gift. I thought that picture would just get to you then. The Chanel #5 eau de cologne is on the way – maybe it will come soon.

Speaking of birthdays, mine will be here in about 3 more weeks – 30 years old. Think of it! That more or less cuts me out of the field of young men – now I'm just a man. At 30, you sort of reach the top of the hill, so to speak, and get on the level plain for about 20 years before you start getting strictly mature. I don't feel the least bit old, but when they start jitterbugging, I know my time is past, and I don't cut much ice with the cute young girls. Now for the pictures – I'm enclosing just a few at random that you'd be interested and a couple of negatives.

I've got to close now and write some other letters.

Here's hoping everything goes well with both you and Dad.

Love to both of you.

Always.

Brame

P.S.: As you can see from the pictures, I'm still in good shape & weigh about the same.

May 17, 1945

Dear Mother,

Whoo! Your letter of May 9th got here today and sort of set me back. Either I wrote my letter wrong or you misinterpreted what I was trying to get over in regard to the store, finances, my getting married, and you and Dad. If my letter hurt you, then I'm deeply sorry because you know that I know that both of you have had a burden during this war, which is much worse even than combat and that your burden and load is of deep concern to me because it affects my whole life so completely – those imponderables that we cannot get around from the standpoint of responsibility.

I suppose my letter was also written somewhat cynically since combat has a way of making a man cynical – the mental strain and physical struggle along with the complete disregard of life and property sometimes makes you sneer when you think of some others.

The background of my letter goes back quite awhile – even to when I was a kid – and the sum and substance of it all is that I cannot help but feel that Stuart is ducking his responsibility to you as parents and that the entire burden has been on me prior to the war and will be the same if I return. This I do not mind because to me, as an individual, there is no finer way for me to spend my life than in giving up some things I might have had to care for you and Dad. I also feel that perhaps I have been spared in this war when others have been knocked out as probably recompense or reward if one has a belief in a just God and that also, I'm still safe and sound to return to you and again take up my duties.

The bone of contention is that from the standpoint of the same justice, it is not right that one should share in that for which he has not toiled and sacrificed and, in my heart, I do not feel that Stuart should share in anything that belongs to Dad and you and I since we 3, as partners, have sailed the ship and fought the tide as if he did not exist from the standpoint of contribution of effort. My letter was to point out that I want no legal entanglements at any time that will force me to put out in any way to clear myself or ourselves of any ties since from my standpoint, there are no longer any financial ties between Stuart and his family or you and Dad and I.

My saying that "I imagined you were quite the aristocrat" was not in any bitterness, but from a joy that I felt that you could possibly at last enjoy a coiffure, a new hat and dress without feeling that you would lose all sense. Financial security has a lot to do with physical well-being.

You are also entirely wrong if you think I want any dissolution of the partnership or at any time want to demand any cash out of the business. I'm interested in the business being run right and, since I know Dad's business nature, I was trying to

point out a few facts to him. As for selling out and Dad's taking a job, that is a decision entirely for the two of you who will know best what your capabilities are. Dad has my power of attorney and any action he desires if within his power. I've been away so long that I don't know what business problems are in the U.S. now and what's difficult for Dad might be simple for me. I can't give you advice when I don't know.

As for my getting married, that's just an idea I turn over in my mind occasionally. So far as I know, I'm in love with no girl – sometimes I wonder if I'm even capable of falling in love – I mean blind, foolishness, sentimental love. I don't even know what love is or how you feel. I've cut out any ideas of it because fulfillment was impossible that now I'm just perhaps a charming, interesting person, but cold to love.

On one point, I don't agree with you about a girl who loved me would want to come home with me to Wilson until things could be "adjusted." I don't believe girls today love that way, and I will ask no girl to share with me my life until that life belongs to me and we can direct our own course. You say my letter implied that I was marrying and pulling out. I am not and will not until I can "pull out." That also brings up the question of Stuart and reminds me that I heard no such call at the time he did just that. I feel in my heart that he deserted the ship, and I also cannot help but feel in the innermost part of me that his marriage was barren perhaps in retribution for those 7 years, which corresponds with my 7 years.

You mentioned my being dissatisfied, and I can assure you that I will be to return to the same life as before the war. Life passes in its way, and it's high time at so that a man makes some plans for a home. I'm struggling to do my duty and also live my life, which is hard to do when the two conflict. I make plans in my mind – I'm looking for a workable plan as any rational human being who realizes his responsibility in life.

I don't appreciate your rebuttle to my ideas – some may not work – I know that, but you must realize that there must be a solution. Sometimes, I wonder about Stuart and think how simple and serene life has been to him. How little he knows struggle and thwarted desires and how always there is the strength of others to support the structure while he gambles in the green Elysian Fields. My strength is always in Dad's words "Your time will come", and being philosophical, I look upon things as temporary. Indeed, the whole of life is that.

Now I hope that this letter will, in part, straighten out several things, which I probably put wrongly in the other letter, and also clarify my position on certain things. Some of what I've said, I perhaps should not. Of Stuart, I feel no hate, no envy, sometimes, just amusement at the freaks of life. I still love him and hope that he can continue on his joyful way without meeting the imponderables. For myself, I'm convinced I'll always have them, and as a brave man, I do not fear to meet them since strength comes only through the struggle.

I do not intend to marry hastily. I do not intend to demand any cash, and I do not intend to pull out of anything. I'm very sorry that my other letter has hurt you and Dad. Both of you hang on and I hope that I shall soon return to put my shoulder to the wheel once again. All my love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

P.S.: I enclose a clipping from O&M's publication and a menu of our "Victory Party."

May 22, 1945

Dear Mother,

I have no letters from you since the one of May 10 in which you seemed quite upset over my previous letter. I was hoping with that date on it, that it was your victory letter that you'd written after hearing the good news, but as yet, I have no news from you in regard to the reactions at home to the end of action in Europe.

As for myself, I don't see much chance of getting home soon. I have only 77 points by this point system, and as 85 is the minimum so far for release or redeployment, it looks as if I'll stick around for awhile. The furloughs to the States come in with over 85 have been stepped up considerably, and quite a few men are leaving. We also have to make arrangements to do without the men with over 85 and plan on replacing them. It will amount to a complete reshuffle of personnel. What makes it difficult is the fact that almost all of these men are your best NCO's and taking them away knocks out an organization. It will take at least 6 months to retrain men and, in addition, if you get them without combat experience, it spells danger in combat.

After 2-1/2 yrs. as a Bn. Supply Officer, I have at last changed jobs. I'm now the Executive Officer of Service Co. with the future as the Co. Commander. Since our present Co. Commander is over the line on points, they shifted me for training to take over if & when he goes. I've been rather busy in my new job after doing nothing much for about a week.

I have also been going to classes in Instructor Training in line with the Army's policy of conducting an educational program. I'll probably be teaching French or "managing a small business." I'll be kept busy at any rate.

We are still in Pilsen and will probably be here for a week or more since we are at present processing German prisoners and until we finish that, we'll have to stick around. This is in the Russian sphere for the final settlement, though, so eventually we'll get out. I'm now on the 3rd Army of Patton after fighting the whole war in the First Army - V Corps. If there is anything you'd like to know specifically that has happened in the past, I can tell you now, so all questions are invited.

I hope that you and Dad are both O.K. and that all goes well at home and at the store.

Love to both of you.

Always,

Brame

May 24, 1945

Dear Mother,

I got your letter of May 13th today, and was glad to hear from you since it's the first in about a week.

As for my points, the total is only 77 to date as follows: 38 (months in service plus 19 (months overseas plus 20 (3 battle campaigns plus 1 Bronze Star) equals 77. Yesterday's announcement of the battle campaigns may give me 5 or 10 more points and there's also a Bronze Star pending. The Silver Star was turned down and resubmitted for a Bronze Star. You do not get credit until an order is officially cut for those awards. 85 points is the unofficial minimum for discharge but that may be raised and there's also the fact that officers will not be discharged as fast as E.M. They are sending the men home on furloughs based on the point system pretty fast, but just a few officers. I doubt if I get home very quickly, but I hope to get home before I go to the Pacific if I do go.

Since starting this, I've gotten another letter of yours of May 15 carrying on this stuff about my planning to marry. What I can't understand is what has gotten into you and Dad. Because I mention some idle ideas and thoughts, you flare up like gasoline on ashes. I will have you understand right here and now that I have no definite ideas about marrying anyone, although I might look favorably on the idea provided conditions were right. I never saw so much hell raised over nothing in my life. So far as this "cannot live without" business goes, that's a lot of bunko. There's no one I cannot live without. Suppose we forget the subject until we can talk - letter writing is strictly no good in expressing what either of us think about the matter.

You evidently haven't gotten my letter about being in Pilsen, Czechoslovakia. After the whole war fought in the "silence" of the 1st Army, we got into Patton's 3rd Army the last 2 weeks of it and you hear something about us.

Believe me, if the 1st Army was not so tight on censorship, you would have thought the 2nd Division was winning the war if we'd gotten even normal publicity. We are still in Pilsen, but no one knows for how long.

I have heard from Lt. Tedeschi. He was liberated by the Russians quite sometime ago, and is back home. I just received a most interesting letter from him telling all his experiences as a P.W., about his capture, and escape. It was quite an experience, which happily came out O.K. He is on a 60-day rest leave now before being reassigned. Lt. Dodd, who was wounded Feb. 1st is also back in the States in a convalescent hospital. He had his pelvic bone and several ribs broken by the mine. I missed that same minefield by a split-second decision to turn back. It must be just plain luck. I also got a letter from Joyce in answer to mine. Is Evacuation Hospital took over at the Buchenwald Concentration Camp, pictures

of which you've seen, and he said it was pretty awful. I have no news of Billie Morrison, except that the 8th Division was around Cologne and was used in the Ruhr pocket to clean up there. I've also heard that Tommy was in Italy, but don't think he saw any action.

In regard to the P.S. in your letter of the 14th, I can't tell you anything about "my" girl, as such. I write to about 3 - 1. Nancy Wolf, the most regularly, her age - about 22, school - University of Wisconsin - one-year work with O.P.A. in Washington under Jimmy Byrnes - now at secretarial school in Chicago. Religion - Episcopalian. Met in La Crosse at the home of Capt. Ethell's wife. 2. Irene Lilla, Minneapolis, Minnesota - age - about 23 - school - don't know - religion - don't know. Met in Chicago on leave. 3. Betty Howe - La Crosse - age about 22. School - college in La Crosse - about like A.C. at home - Religion - Catholic (strict). Met at Lt. Tedeschi's (she's a good friend of theirs). #2 and #3 I don't consider. As for Nancy Wolf, there is a possibility. As for family, you'd have no complaint. Father - doctor - has two brothers who are doctors - both in service - one killed by a U.S. bomb raid on German P.W. camp after being captured, the other returned from South Pacific because of infectious skin disease - one sister married, mother chairman of La Crosse Women's Red Cross Chapter (bandages, Ltd.) She's blonde and although not the most beautiful girl in the world, she's O.K. for looks. A local society girl of the bridge and country club class. I stayed away from her when I was at McCoy because I didn't want to get too close and I'd just written her regularly since I've been overseas. Don't worry. I'm not committed.

I hope you are satisfied with all the poop you had now.

I'm getting along pretty well in my new job, but what I'm afraid will happen is that I'll miss out on a promotion since they are frozen til this readjustment is over.

I must close now.

Love to both you and Dad.

Hope all goes O.K.

Always,

Brame

June 1, 1945

Dear Mother,

No letters from you but just a few lines to let you know I'm O.K. and to enclose a few more photos. They keep rolling in from everyone that's made a snap and finally had them developed. Four of these pictures are "battle shots" that will give you some idea of how I look and what I wear in action. These pictures were taken about February 25th near Hellenthal, Germany. Two of them are overexposed, but the other 2 of those are O.K. The other 2 pictures with the crinkly edge were taken in Pilsen recently. The one with the troops is our honor guard for the Russians.

There are quite a few rumors of information of one sort or another about our leaving, etc., but my guess is that we'll be back in the U.S.A. sometime in July. The place is supposedly Camp Croft, S.C. which won't be so bad, but that's also just some guessing.

We are due to leave Pilsen next week, but it won't be a very long move. We are just getting out of the area.

Hope everything is O.K. with both you and Dad.

Love,

Brame

June 1, 1945

Dear Mrs. Thompson,

In the course of combat, a soldier seldom finds the time or opportunity to write all those letters that one ought to write to our friends and loved ones at home, but since the war here is over, one can once again find time.

I oftentimes think of all of you at home, nevertheless, and am reminded of a garden, a street, a home by the same sites in Europe. I am now in Pilsen, Czechoslovakia. I find the Czechs a friendly people, but they maintain a sort of reserve and do not take one into their hearts as did the French. Paris was really great. This may be, of course, due to language difficulties, since I speak French rather fluently by now; however, the French are still more spontaneous in their welcoming. As for the British, I decline to comment. This war has given those of us who've come through, and I say that seriously since there's been many who haven't been so lucky, a great deal of experience and a wonderful travel opportunity. Most of the places that used to be just something on a map are now a reality. It's funny how famous places become commonplace when you see them everyday. You hear about the Skoda works or the Pilsen breweries and think they must be wonderful, but here we are, and it's just another steel mill and brewery not equal to Pittsburgh or Milwaukee.

Germany and Czechoslovakia are not as backward in general housing as France & England. Some of my observations are rather concrete, and I don't like to express myself too freely. I will suffice to say that I'm no Anglophile.

Germany as to landscape, was beautiful when we went through it. Apple trees in bloom, green rolling hills, and the neat little villages. You understand, of course, from pictures in Time and Life that there were numerous places that were not beautiful.

I expect to be back in the States sometime in July, although I may not get home immediately after arrival. I have 92 points under the "point system," but I don't think points will govern release of officers, and I'll probably catch the Pacific end of the war, as well.

I've prattled on enough now. My regards to all of you at home and best of luck and health.

Always,

Brame P. Morrison

June 7, 1945

Dear Mother,

I got your letter of May 26th yesterday and I don't understand why you haven't gotten any of my letters for so long. They must be giving priorities to personnel returning home. There must be 6 or 7 letters enroute. Mail from the States has been arriving in good time.

I think I've written you most of the news that I know about coming home and for the present, there's no change. I still expect to be home in the latter part of July. We have moved from Pilsen to a little village named Lahovany - near the Czech-German border. You won't find it on a map, but it is near Domazlice, which you may find.

I had a letter from Joyce G. telling me his location which is about 20 miles from me; so I ran over to see him and spent the nite last nite. We had a pretty nice visit and talked about things in general. He's about the same - hasn't changed much. It was the first time I'd seen him in 3 years. I hope to get over again before we leave this area.

I'm kept fairly busy in my new job, but since V.E. day, there's not too much for anyone to do.

I've got to close now and see about getting some ice for the Co.

Hope both you and Dad are getting along O.K.

Love always,

Brame

June 13, 1945

Dear Mother,

Your letter of June 1 came day before yesterday and yours of May 31 came today. I'm glad you finally got a letter from me after V-E day. You mentioned only 2 letters though and I must have written about half a dozen.

Some of the questions you asked I have already answered, but to go over them again. I'm not in the 15th Army and will not be in the Army of Occupation. The latest announcement is that the 3rd and 7th Armies instead of the 15th will be the A.O. although I'm in the 3rd Army, the attachment is merely administrative since the 1st has pulled out and all 1st Army units were attached to the nearest adjacent Army. We are scheduled for redeployment to the Pacific through the U.S. I've already told you that I expect to be home the latter part of July for at least 30 days. I'm still in Lahovany, Czechoslovakia, but expect to move Sunday to an area about 70 miles east of Paris in which we make preparations to move back to the States. That should be about 3 weeks from now.

So far, as your "planning to marry" letter, this concern – let's forget about it. The timing on it was pretty punk, though – it being the first letter after V-E day.

I've been back to see Joyce G. for about 5 straight nites. There's nothing doing in this little village, and it was great to get back into some normal social life with American-speaking nurses. 20 months is really "long time no see." An evacuation hospital is just about like being in the States so far as life is concerned. Joyce's unit pulled out yesterday though and will probably get home before we do.

In regard to my points, we are doing O.K., but the Combat Inf. Badge & Unit Citation carried no points. The latest tally is as follows: 38 (months in Army) plus 19 (months overseas) plus 25 (5 campaigns): 1 invasion, 2 France, 3 Germany, East of Rhine, 5 Ardennes (Bulge) plus 10 is 1 Bronze Star with oak leaf cluster as 2nd award equals 92.

Please note that officers are not governed by the E.N.'s score card; so there's no guarantee that I will either get out or not go to the Pacific.

I've been kept pretty busy in my new job. It covers just about every phase of my work: S-1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and special jobs like athletics, recreation, orientation, etc. Service Co. being a special unit of an infantry regt., it operates similar to a battalion as both a headquarters and a company. I can explain all this much better when I get home.

I have some more letters to write now and must close. Love to both of you and hope everything's going O.K.

June 21, 1945
Sommesous, France

Dear Mother,

I got 2 letters from you today of June 4 and June 12th.

I don't have much time to write and I also figure that I'll be home almost as soon as this letter since I'm on an advanced detail for the regt. and am leaving day after tomorrow ahead of the rest of the division. I figure now that I'll get home between 1st and 10th of July – about 2 weeks ahead of the others. I don't know whether I get a leave immediately or not, where I'll land, or where I'll go after landing.

It is my plan now to wire you as soon as possible after landing and set a time to call so that you'll be expecting it and then I can tell you the score.

From the sound of your letter, you must be slow in getting mine or else you are reading them wrong. Points don't mean a thing for officers and I'm definitely slated to go to the Pacific; so don't get up any false hopes about my getting out of the Army.

I got all my papers straightened out tonite and I'm ready to come home. I imagine we'll be at Le Havre, which is a port in France, for a few days before sailing.

That's all for now. I hope to see you soon. Love to both you and Dad.

Always,

Brame

P.S.: Don't write me any more letters till you hear from me.

Always,

Brame

02/25/09
 Perry - Put this with the Beane Morrison Story.

John Hackney III

Thanks!



To: Perry

Subject: RE: Letter about my Dad

Perry -

Great letter! There were some Curley's from Richmond who used to be in the excess and surplus lines insurance business.

Wonder if they are related?

jh

From: Perry [mailto:pmorrison@nccomplaw.com]

Sent: Wednesday, February 25, 2009 9:03 AM

To: JOE FRANK JONES

Cc: John Hackney III; BOBBY BOYKIN

Subject: Letter about my Dad

I was going through some old letters recently and found this gem. I don't know whether I ever showed it to you before.

Charles Curley lived in Richmond, and he was a friend of my dad's in the war. They lost touch afterwards. When one of the Dr. Bob Stone's sons got married, Burt Gillette went to the rehearsal dinner, and he happened to sit beside Mr. Curley, who I recall was a good friend of Frances Stone's family. Mr. Curley asked Burt, with whom I dove-hunted, whether he knew Daddy. Daddy has just died, and Mr. Curley wrote me a note for Burt to deliver with his address. I wrote to him, and he sent me a book he had written about his experiences in WWII. I wrote him a note of thanks, and this was his reply letter. If he's alive today, he's bound to be in his '90's.

I thought you might enjoy it. Johnny, please pass it along to your dad.

B. Perry Morrison, Jr.
 Morrison Law Firm, P.L.L.C.
 P.O. Box 2046
 4612 Nash Street North
 Wilson, NC 27894-2046
 (252) 243-1003
 (252) 243-1004 (fax)
www.nccomplaw.com

3 July 1994

Dear Perry,

No, I didn't forget, but since I returned after a week in Normandy, I have been on an all time high. I didn't want your mother to say, "I told you so". I am going to try and remember some of the things that come back to my mind about your father.

As you already know, he was the 2nd Battalion S-4 (Supply officer) of the 38th Infantry, 2nd Division. A supply officer was to see that the companies received all their needs, ammo, clothing, shoes, food, and the like. When it came to food, the front line troops were suppose to send back carrying parties to a food distribution point and pick up the rations for their units. Many times, your father would have none of that. After a hard days moving forward, the troops were beat and that when he would personally drive forward with a Jeep and trailer with hot soup, coffee, and water and distribute it to the troops.

I mentioned soup, we were on K-Rations for a long time in Normandy and somehow or another, he would find the ingredients for the kitchens to make hot soup. Then he would get it to the forward units.

I remember one night when we had more right far forward, we heard a noise coming down the road and I be damn, if it wasn't Major Morrison in his Jeep and trailer. He unloaded the cans of soup, water, and coffee over the hedge along the road and left. It seemed just a few minute later that we thought that we heard him coming back. The noise was louder than a Jeep as it got closer and all of a sudden the men got to firing, then there was a big explosion and fire. It ended up being a German truck pulling anti-tank gun. I don't know how your father missed running into the Germans, but he did.

Later, on the 13th August, we had moved forward without too much resistance. After dark, we got to the cross-road that we were suppose to be securing. I heard noises from behind a hedge across the road from my men and getting closer to see who it was, heard them talking German. It was too dangerous to start a fire fight, so I left them alone. Later, I think that they just melted away.

Your father, as usual come up with the goodies and we placed them in the road in beside a house. He left and I and one of the sergeants went around tell the men soup and coffee were available. When we walked back towards where we had left the food, I realized that someone was following behind us. As we walked through a gateway, the sergeant pulled out a pistol and started firing besides my head through the gateway behind us, He had heard German voices where the soup and coffee were sitting. Of course, the Germans ran off. Again, I wondered how

Morrison had missed running into them. Just Luck.....

Later, supplied us with hot food where we could slip back and managed to get a bit. I remember this happening outside of Brest also. In Brest, a young lady moved back into an apartment after I told her that she couldn't, due to some artillery fire. That evening, I did get her some hot food and bread. I had a few bottles of wine and brought it up to have supper with her. Before we hardly started to eat, I heard many footsteps on the stairs and my company commander and some of the officers from the battalion headquarters came in and made themselves at home and proceeded to drink up my wine. I believe that your father, who was with them, could speak a little French. My company commander did better in French than English, being from near New Orleans. Well that crowd drank up my wine and kidded the girl a lot. I couldn't understand a word of it and finally got upset. They finally laughed and left.

I didn't see much of your father while we were in Paris. After we got up into the Eifel Mountains, things were different and I didn't see as much of him as I did in Normandy.

I just spent a week in Normandy with the Germans and the French. We went out and located the areas where we had fought against one or another. I mainly went over to unveil a plaque in the town of Couvains. They had a big reunion and I had been invited to attend. After unveiling the plaque I then had to unveil another small one covered also with a American Flag and about fell on my face. I have enclosed a copy of a photo of a plaque erected in my honor so you can see what I mean.

Take it from me, your father did his job his job over and above the call of duty. He saw to it that we had anything that was in his power to get for us. I think that he was supreme scrounger and found things that others never did. He always stood high in my thoughts. I am sorry that I never did get with him after the war. I really believe that he was a modest man and did not want to talk about his exploits.

I must say that the French have not forgotten the Second Infantry Division and think that the Indianhead patch is something to have. This is the younger generation, I am talking about.

Sincerely
Charles Curley.



CHARLES
D. CURLEY
LIEUTENANT
38th REGIMENT-2nd DIV
1st INF