Ottumwa, Ia.
March 28-43

My Dear One:-

Here I come all tired out as can be. I wonder what you are doing today down in the city of Vicksburg or was the urge to great that you had to go down to Kentwood for today? I am wondering what the attraction is over there. Or did you try to find a church in Vicksburg today or wander over the hills and up to the tower?

I did not leave the ranch all day, I worked so hard Friday washing all the curtains, covers, rugs, quilts, blankets and everything that I could find and I am telling you they were legion. I had to change and change the water as it would be just black after every batch of curtains and rugs.

Saturday I called the Metropolitan about the check to see if it was in before I went to town and it wasn't so I just got busy on the ironing and ironed from 9;30 in the morning until 2 in the afternoon without stopping for dinner or anything and I was dead tired, then I started in on washing the woodwork and cleaning the windows in our room and getting the curtains up in there and vacuming the floors and then went to the bathroom and washed the walls, ceiling and woodwork in there and when I finished it was ten o'clock and after. I gave my self a good washing and gave Bobby a bath and then we went to bed and the last I heard the clock strike was 1:30.

This morning I was so sore and stiff and my legs hurt in those veins until the big ones from my knees on up were just green and I had to be so careful not to tak the cramps too so I just stayed home and I haven't even dressed today. I listened to the broadcast this morning and will listen to it this evening. I am so sore across the back of my neck and shoulders that I can't hardly move. I am going to roll in early this evening to get some sleep and then pile out early in the morning because if the Metropolitan calls me that the check is in I will have to go to town and get it, cash it and get busy on the rest of the things which is needed to be done in case you come popping in.

Speaking about you popping in, I watch every one of the fast trains from Chicago that comes in in the day time to see if you are looking out and watching for me so that you can wave. Silly isn't it? but of course you realize that I am just an old fool mother that hasn't any more sense than to expect her little boy which is now such a man of the world, to wave to her.

Boy is it ever a job getting things lined up and knowing what I want to take and will need and putting things away to the best of my knowledge that they will keep O.K. until I come home. Thinking of the other things that has to be taken care of and all that.

I'm some drive to have a driving license rated 94% and nver taken the car out since, aren't I? Well I have just been too busy since the kids got out and then I would have been ashamed to have taken it out today with it as mud stained as it is, in fact I wouldn't. So just as soon as it gets warm enough in the afternoons Jennifer is going to get one good going over, believe me.

What was the matter that I didn't get a letter Saturday? I know that I got several Friday and all that but I was so disappointed when I didn't get a thing, not so much as an add or dun.

I waxed the kitchen and bathroom floors today and washed the shelves in the dining room corner cupboard and all the dishes. They were just black and I mean black. I am waiting for the water to heat from the furnace now, I just whent down to look at it and caught it in the nick of time for it was all but out. I will have to have some heat in the morning and with no kindling to make a fresh fire I have to keep this just going.

I was talking to Mamie today and she said to tell you "Hello" and send her regards and that she had not heard from you since she sent the last card to you, and Pangborn hadn't heard from you the last time I talked with her, what is the matter, have you gone back on all the folks back here or what? Must be some wonderful attraction down in the part of the country for you to forget the good friends back here who has remembered you so well. You say it is not the climate, the scenery, etc, so I am just wondering what it is, so are some other here. So jar loose and get a quickie or something off to them so that they will know where you are and what you are doing.

I am getting awfully anxious to see that country down there, you got me all worked up about that lake with bass and all that scenery around Vicksburg and the mountains and all that. To say nothing of that lovely milk glass pitcher and tumblers. I sure would like to see it. Maybe you think the milk glass doesn't look lovely against the dark walnut of the table.

Well, I have a slip lying here on the table by me to hem yet and there is one more dress to make and still the wash dress to finish. If I get them done before you come O.K and if I don't we are taking off just as if they were finished. My how the flowers are popping up out in the yard, it seems a shame to see them coming up and no one here to love and care for them as Mother did. I know the kid in the neighborhood will just play havoc with them and if I could catch them I certainly would take them apart. Nora is having a terrible time with the kids up by her house. She told them Sat kindly that she had put grass seed on the parking and on the corner of her yard and for them not to run over it and it wasn't a half hour until they came tearing down the hill, over the parking and over her yar yard.

My new dresses are hanging in the closed and every time I go to the door they say when do we go? I sure am disappointed because I couldn't get the one from Lane Bryant that I liked to well. I could not get my coats Saturday either as I didn't have but 20¢ to my name. Now don't go and send me money because I say this because when the check comes then all will be O.K. You save every cent you get to come home on and to go back or something like that. How about it? are ther any leaves being granted yet? Be sure and let me know when they start and about when you are due on the list if you know. I hope that Jim is getting along now. He must have been drunk to get gasoline on him and then to get on fire. Poor fellow, some day it will catch him in a worse predicament than that if he don't leave the stuff alone.

Dear me but I am so sore thro my back and my chest that I can't hardly sit up to write. Bobby is so pretty and clean today, snow white and jet black. I called you, saying, LeGrand, Oh, LeGrand and he goes looking around the house and listening. Don't you think for one minute that he has forgotten his boy and you had better brace yourself for a good old going over when he sees you. You can just count on getting taken down and worked on good. Dear little dog how happy he will be when you come.

Well I went out and did the dishes while the sun was flooding the kitchen. It is six o'clock and the sun is still high, it sure looks good to see the days getting longer. I'm sure glad that I have the kitchen all cleaned up and ready to begin washing the walls and ceilings in the morning. The dining room sure looks nice this evening, all nice and clean and dusted and our table and chairs looming up on the new rug like a million.

I hear from the news that the soldiers are now being given an instrument to carry which will penetrate the tanks and blow them up or make them harmless and unable to carry out the work of the enemy. I heard it by broadcast on a special broad broadcast last night and it is call the bazooka by the boys.

He also told of an explosive 1/3 as strong again as T.N.T. and some of the girls who are married to soldiers who have come home on furlough from London and other places say that they were told by their husbands that while the war would not be over but that the heavy fighting would be by July. The news also states that an invasion of France, Italy and other countries about there will begin soon. If the fliers keep up dropping those block busters on those countries the supply lines which Hitler has feeding his underground submarine shops and other places will soon be cut off and then you will see him laughing out the other side of his mouth. When our boys invade Europe there will be plenty of the people over in those conquered countries rising up and coming to the aid of our boys. In fact Findland, Poland and Norway has already begin many acts of sabotoge and other acts against Germany. I know that all the prayers which have risen to the throne of God will not be forgotten and God is answering prayers right now.

I hope it is warmer tomorrow for there is so much I want to get done but most of all I want that check to come so that I can get my coats and get busy on them. I know there will have to be buttons set and maybe shortened.

Tonight I am so lonesome to see you. I can't hardly wait. I feel each day just like I will start out for Miss and not wait for you to come and then I think what a mean thing that would be for me to do when you want to come and see the dear old home and the new things I have gotten for you. I know it isn't so much and I would have gotten more, such as a new occasional chair for the dining room and some throw rugs and coffee table and many things like like only for the coming to be with you. I thought that would mean more to both of us to be together than to have things fastened up here in the house and now one to enjoy it with me. Sure I could find the public ready to share it will me but who are they anyway and what would I have left after they had used it? Oh no what I have is for my little boy as long as I am able to keep it for him.

Just now the sun is going down behind the park and as I stand in the kitchen looking out, it is as far north now as the direct center of the plum tree at the north end of the pool. Going down in glorious splendor, a great ball of fire and the sky is red around it. Red sun at night, sailor's delight, red sun in the morning, sailor's warning. Oh how my heart cries out for you my dear little boy when the beautifl sun comes up and when it is going down in such splendor I want to be with you, to share its beauty with you as we used to do on Monkey mountain and on our rides together. Sometimes I think I will die, but we are not put together so that we can die so easily, no, we must go on and on, dying by inches, by hours, days, minutes and by the every tick of the clock, that much closer to eternity, so Iwant every minute I can have with you. Do you love me that much too? I just went out to watch the last rays of the sun as it disappeared behind the park and the dark trunks of the trees against it looked so black and I just had to have a good old bawl. The first I have had since the kids came but I saw a pair of striped overalls and a dinner bucket swinging down between the trees in my minds fancy and you coming thro the park and Bobby and I would watch you come closer and close and sometimes whistel our call and you would answer, do you remember? Oh God help me, help us. I must not write like this, it is not strong and brave of me but women's eyes were made for tears and their hearts to ache for those they love and mothers, well they have to take that and much more no matter how much it hurts. I know there are happier days ahead for us and they are soon to come. I praise God for keeping you in the states and even at the humble work that our blessed Saviour followed while on earth going about preaching and being an humble carpenter. I praise him for all the good things you have received and would sacrifice my own life to give them to you, for without you my life is nothing.

Well tomorrow I am going to send the electric plate and some tea balls and a sack of tenderleaf tea. I know you will enjoy a cup of tea now and then. I wish I could come in and sit by your side and have some breakfast with you by the fireplace. Will you just imagine me there and Bobby lying down at our feet

We are going to have some swell times together and what kids we will be. We will make up for the past six months in the first six days, just see if we don't. I am praying to God to make the way to work out the time of your leave and our going back together. We will find a good church and many other lovely things to do together. Yes we will even take back some dill pickles and get the boys together for a weiner roast around the fireplace, maybe, some evening. Some of the good boys and you can play the vibraharp and we will all sing. And the boys who don't know Jesus will wonder what makes us so happy, won't they and maybe we can tell some of them that would like to know.

Well I could go on and on telling of the grand time we will have and I know you will have some plans too. I am going to listen to One Man's Family and then at eight to the church broadcast from the Colesium.

Now I will begin waiting for the morning's mail and hope that I will get one letter and maybe two from you. Don't be blue now dearest but keep looking forward to the time when we will be together and pray that the leave will come soon so that we will be together all the sooner. I love you so and want to see you so.

It is dark now and time to turn on the lights. I cannot see what or howI am writing so I will close and say Good night and God Bless and keep you safe from all harm and grant our prayers that you will soon be on the way home to get Bobby and me and we will be with you and have a grand and glorious time.

Now the time has come for the church broadcast and they are having a grand time. I would have gone but I know it would be midnight before I could get home. Welshons is just now announcing that there was about 1800 there this afternoon and that it is nearly full now. The Collett boys are going to sing Awake America. Oh how they sound like niggers. They are getting worse all the time and more conceited in their singing until they haven't a bit of form or sense with it. Mrs. Welshon sang this morning and honestly she slured her words until you couldn't understand what she was singing over the air. When the boys sang the word "bless" "blest" it sounded like "blast". Now they are going to take up the offering for the evangelist and then they have one for the church too.

Well I will close now as the preaching will begin and I want to hear what the sailor boy has to say. Write me soon dearest and if you get an inkling about your leave and have time to let me know it will be swell but if not just hop the train and hurry home, I'll be waiting for the dearest boy on earth and so happy to see you. I hope Jim is better. So by by now and I'll be writing you again tomorrow.

Love from
Your Mother
and
Bobby (Bow Wow)

P.S. Chief Gunners mate, Radioman Hudgens and Ships Cook 3rd Class were on the platform with Nelson Hinkle Evangelist
So Hudge is home again this week end
(Tight Lip)

At Home, Mar.25-43

My Dearest:-

I am at a loss as to know what to do with this letter after I write it but I am hoping that the mailman will come with a letter from you so that I will have an address to send it to. I sent one letter, S.D. earlier in the week to Kentwood and said for them to forward it to Miss if necessary, that is if they know enough. I rather looked for you to call me Sunday night if you got moved but you didn't so I suppose that you didn't know of a place or couldn't get away to do it or that something prevented. Well that is all right because I went to church. Billy Herman, Jr. moved the kids big things on Monday evening and Tuesday eve. Jack came down and took the car and I and we took up things such as a few of the groceries, milk bottles and clothing.

Yesterday I cleaned up the house and sorted things out and put this away and that away to have as much done in one day as possible. I checked my clothing so now all that is to be done on them is to get my coats when I get my money from the insurance and shorten them or adjust what has to be done and then get some more hose and pants, so I am going to town this morning to get my pound of coffee and five pounds of sugar. I have a ten pound sack that hasn't been opened yet and I am putting it up in a big glass jar to leave here at home so that the ants won't get into it.

I haven't used any of my ration points yet so I am going to get some pork and beans and other things which I don't can or won't can such as the beans and then I will have things lined up for the winter as I get my ration points because with spring fresh things coming on I won't need canned goods.

This machine sure has the whim whams. I don't know whether the weather man is going to send rain or clear up. If it clears up this afternoon I am going to do my washing. I want the curtains clean to put up when I leave and Nora is going to come down from time to time and look after the yard and see that destruction isn't carried on. I got Mr. Myers to take down the hard wood maple right in front of the dining room windows and he said that it was dead and it had been caused by bores. Then he cut down the apple tree so that the kids wouldn't have anything to tempt them on that score. So that is all done and over with. I didn't have him take those dead limbs out of the elm at the back because he is not able to climb any more and I thought you could get up there in a few minutes and push them off so that they won't fall on the roof at the back.

Last night the planes were doing night flying. I could hear them overhead and I had the bedroom window open most of the night. It was 45 degrees above at sun down and as I lay there I heard the geese going over, so surely the weather will break for the better soon. The robins have been staging a battle with the sparrow over in Barton's yard and the red birds, starlings, jays and kill deers are out with all their chatter. The buds are swelling fast and the flowers are coming up. and there is mud, mud, mud.

Now about the gas. I will say that if you don't get your leave between now and the middle of May that I will start out at that time as the coupon #5 expires the 21st of May and that will run me into two months supply of gas coming down and if you come in the meantime the ration board said for you to come to them and they would see what could be done about extra gas to go back on, traveling gas. I only talked with them on the phone but I know that it is being done with the other service men who has to use their cars getting around. This "B" card which Jack got was on the grounds that he use the car to go back and forth from our house to the base which he never did but if they check up on him since he moved he will be in a spot. He said he had to turn it back in when he quit using the car but I know this much, that I am going to get some gas on it if I have to use it around here because he used the car to move twice and didn't do any buying of the gas besides are two Sunday rides. Of course that was to keep the car limbered up but he had the pleasure of the ride too.

Well the mailman is not here yet and it is getting on to ten o'clock. Bobby is still in bed sleeping. He always does on a cloudy day. I must wash his quilts and have them and his blankets clean to take too. The new seat covers for the car are dandy. Jack drove me over last Sat and we had them put on and are they ever put on snug. Clamped and tacked. They took the back seat upholstering c lear off and out and fastened them on. They are fixed so that they will not slip or slide around and they are brown and white dog tooth check, very pretty and it makes the car look so much neater inside and will be easier to keep clean.

I think that you will get your leave now that you are at Vicksburg and I am working fast each day getting things ready to leave and putting things away in shape and having my clothing all clean and ready to lead right up and go. I want to tell you about the vibraharp. You know it has been standing right as you left it and I didn't touch it until last Tuesday night and I find that the bar in front that has the butterflys on it and the tubes, the big tubes, is warped just enough to keep the butterflys from turning so I laid it top down on the rug to see if it would go back into shape inthe meantime. I should have been using it and then I would have seen this condition coming on and done something about it sooner.

I have all the valuable papers in the bank and when you come we will have topay the water bill and lights and phone and water have the water shut off and the lights, etc. The vacation rates on the phone to leave it in will be 85¢ a month. If it is taken out I may not be able to get it again if I should want it because phones are almost impossible to get now. These things Iwill have to tend to after you get here or before I should leave alone.

Jack was all broken up at moving because it cost him at leadt $60.00 right off the bat, the apartment was $45.00 and to connect up and make deposit on lights and gas cost him $10.00 and he even had to go out and buy his own light bulbs and everything like that. He had a puddin here and he knew it. Well it helped me over the cold weather only it was a lot of extra work to have to do and manything to put up with. He is so blue and discourged with everything, his wife included that he is just about to the jumping off place. Well he would get married and get a little baby that he adores but he forgot that he had to have a wife and all the worries and headaches that she brought with it. She is good and all that but she gives him so little consideration, it is just all for Betty.

Now I will fix up the house insurance with Brenneman and pay him for three years and do all those things that has to be done when I get the money and when you come, which I know you are, Bobby and I will be all set to start out with you. I would have had the car greased the day I got the covers but the grease boy had gotten his eyes burned by watching the welding machine at the garage and was at the doctors that morning and as we were hunting an apartment for the kids we didn't have the time to stay and wait for him. So that should be done before we start out. I will have to washthe car yet and the car clothes are are washed nice and clean to begin on it. Well I think I hadbetter close now and get ready for town as the clock says after ten and the mailman will be along about 10:30 or 11 and tomorrow is my lesson day so that much of the day, at least 1/2 will be ruined again so I will close for now and when the mailman comes maybe he will have a letter from you with your address so I am leaving the envelope until then. Now keep me posted as to the possibility of the leave if you get any news about it but when you get it come, that is the main thing, come as fast as you can and do be careful on the way home. Betty said for you not to leave the station at Chicago as it is a perfect hell hole all around it. She said the element around it would just as soon shoot you or cut your throat as to look at you. She knows Chicago good and plenty, and hates every inch of the ground there. Well I must close and say so long until I hear from you again. Come and see me soon.

Lots of love from your anxious Mother and your little sweet heart Bobby.

Mother.

Dear Ione - No letter from you so I am sending this to Kintwood again.