

8/RS. OTIS THOMAS

THE DOPE

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for its sons in the Service. No. 6.

We had a white Christmas and a damp New Year's - and by 'damp' we don't mean alcoholic. Al Lundberg said it snowed during 20 of the first 24 days in December (certainly we had plenty of it) then along came a January thaw and some April showers - and boy, what a mess! But that's all behind us now - few traces of the slush and snow are left - and we're off to a new start on winter and a big new year. We hope it will be a happy one for all of you - happy, fighting and victorious.

News reached us on December 20th that the first issue of The Dope (published Oct. 15th) had arrived in the South Pacific. As far as we can learn, no salutes were fired and no battles were postponed - but we got a kick out of it just the same.

And on December 28th we received the following letter from Capt. Bill Tisdale, written "somewhere in Australia" on December 10th: "Dear Editor: Received my first copy of The Dope this morning and was very pleased to get it. It is nice to get news from the old home and learn what has happened to the boys..... Have not seen any of the (Douglas) boys over here for several months.... I celebrated the first anniversary of Pearl Harbor by completing my sixth month in the hospital on that date. Am well on the road to recovery and have every hope of regaining full use of my ankle. Wishing you and all readers of The Dope a very happy new year". Thanks, Captain. We're all pulling for that ankle - and a big 1943 to you.

Wallie Williams got a card from Steve Millar recently (from Camp Endicott, Rhode Island) saying that his new address was care of Fleet Postmaster, New York City. Just as we were picturing Steve somewhere on the cold Atlantic, along came another card, from Chicago, saying he was on his way but not saying where. It's all pretty bewildering to us country folks, but at least we know Steve's on the move.

And Lawrence Shumaker, breezing in from Norfolk on Christmas Eve and staying less than 24 hours, announced that his new address also is Fleet Postmaster, New York. That's pretty fast work for a boy who joined the Navy only six weeks ago.

The following excerpts are from a letter from Ev Thomas, written to his mother from "somewhere in New Guinea": "Now I know what they mean by a Guinea Pig.... Please think nothing of it if my letters are covered with finger prints etc. ..But things are not bad and personally I have it pretty good...The other night I felt something bite me on the elbow while I was in 'bed'. Flashing on my light I found a black widow spider sitting where my elbow had been. It was'nt a very big spider, but big enough. I rushed to the Medics, where they calmly painted my arm with iodine and said they were afraid I would live.... It pained me for about 36 hours, otherwise no ill effects. ..Already I have picked up various odd and sundry curios with which to clutter up the house. These natives are really black, quite friendly, and will sell anything for five to ten times its worth..... Have'nt seen any of the (Douglas) gang for a few days but all were well and happy at last report". Ev also sent a photograph (of his new girl in Australia) on the back of which he had written: "Dear Censor: Is'nt she lovely?" It came through all right, probably because she was.

Two more for Douglas: Orville Millar entered the Army on Dec. 28th, reporting for duty at Camp Grant; and Charles Dailey has been commissioned a Lieut. J.G. in the Coast Guard, reporting at Toledo during the winter months and aboard his ship on the lakes during the summer. Congratulations, boys - and our hats are off to your plucky wives.

We had a letter from Billy Goshorn last week, now at the new aerial Gunner School in Laredo, Texas. Billy writes as follows: "Thanks for sending me The Dope. It's swell to know how the folks at home are and how my buddies of peaceful days are helping to win this war.... This is a brand new gunner school and we really have to get on the beam and study... Got 93 in our first test; made me feel pretty good....course lasts five weeks...Will come out a Flight Sergeant. Then I hope to get right over there in the thick of it.... Say hello to all the boys for me". Douglas is proud of you, Billy; and we'll sure be watching your beam.

This issue of The Dope is mailed to all Douglas men in the Services through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. George Durham.

Have you heard about the rookie who wrote home to mother: "The food at this camp is absolute poison. And such small portions".

We had a visit with Mrs. Joe Sabo recently and picked up some news about Matt. It's Sergeant Matt now and, what's far more important, it's Sgt. and Mrs. Matt. Mrs. Sabo is the former Montye Sue Wood of Nashville, Tennessee, where Matt has been stationed for some months as instructor in mechanics and maintenance at Berry Field. Congratulations, big boy, and all the best to both of you from Douglas.

The Commercial-Record scooped us on Gene Bieler's operation, but at last report Gene was sitting up in bed and clamoring for food. We guess everything's O.K. with the big fellow.

And Floyd Thomas had a hospital session lately; sinus trouble. Tommie's principal concern, however, was that his outfit might hightail it for Africa and leave him fighting the war in bed.

Excerpt from a recent letter from Ev Bekken in New Caledonia: "I suppose the two towns (Saugatuck and Douglas) are pretty well buttoned up. Gosh, there can't be anybody left there now but old men and cripples". You'd be amazed, Ev, at what some of these old guys are getting away with.

T/Sgt. Max Campbell sure had some visitors recently: his father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Alec Campbell, and his three sisters, Jean, Betty Ruth and Mary Jane. The Campbells spent three weeks in Austin, Texas, not far from Camp Swift where Max is located. They report everything fine down there (Bob Dempster to the contrary) with Max healthy and happy and working hard. Max had been scheduled to attend Technical School in Detroit early in December, but one of his buddies came down with the mumps, so Max got quarantine instead.

No basketball since our last issue. Next: St. Joseph, Muskegon.

We got a first-hand glimpse of the Army last week when our brother-in-law, Pvt. Johnnie Murphy of Truax Field, Wisconsin, spent a Christmas holiday with us. The army appetite was not particularly notable, though in no way disappointing; but the army capacity for continuous slumber was almost unbelievable. In our opinion that Private would be sleeping yet if his leave had not expired.

Flash: Jack Powers, of the Crow Bar in Saugatuck, has arrived somewhere in North Africa, and Jack Cobb, formerly of Douglas, is in French Morocco. Look out now, you Wops and Heinies.

So long,

H. S. K.