

T H E D O P E

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for its sons in the Service. No. 11.

It looks as though Old Man Winter is on his way at last..... And it's all right with us.....he's been around a long while. Douglas has'nt been clear of snow since the latter part of November. So long, in fact, that we've wondered at times what our village looked like under its endless mantle of white. But the brown earth is coming through now, the sky is turning from gray to blue, and that old spring feeling is in the air. So, good luck, Old Fellow. Been mighty nice to have you with us. You certainly did a swell job in Douglas.

Here's a new one, the first report of its kind on one of our boys: Arnold Garrelts, Private in the Medical Corps down in Miami Beach, Florida, became the father of a nine-pound son in Douglas Hospital on February 26th. We're happy to report that Mrs. Garrelts and Arnold Jr. are both doing well - and Douglas sends sincere congratulations to Arnold Sr.

The following excerpts are from a letter from Ev Bekken in New Caledonia, dated February 12: "Everything fine here and still in the same place...wonderful weather lately....still busy and lots more to do...Have seen Admiral Halsey a few times...sure hope his prediction of victory in '43 is right...It can happen.don't have to worry about ration books here.....pancakes every morning, right off the griddle and dripping with butter and maple syrup (Stop it, Ev; stop it!)Started my second year overseas today....doesn't seem like a year since we left the good old U.S.A."

And herewith our latest from Vic Culver out in Kearns, Utah: "Not much going on now, except that they can't make up their minds where they want me to sleep, or whether they want me to sleep at all. Have moved three times in less than a week.... Rationing also in effect out here.....and do they watch you! You eat everything on your tray, and if you don't, you go back and sit there until you do....even if you choke on the stuff. Another rumor around that I get KP tomorrow...that will make thirteen times since I came to this lousy state. Some fun!"

(Editor's note: Two states have now been definitely classed as "lousy" by our boys: Texas and Utah. Are there any others? Of course we mean outstandingly lousy; compared with Michigan they're all a little lousy, naturally.)

Two hundred and twenty-five dollars. That sounds like a lot of money (and it is) but as the Douglas quota in the annual Red Cross drive it was just a breeze. Douglas not only made it; it topped it by nine dollars in less than 48 hours. And we're told by the head of the Red Cross in Allegan that, of the thirty-odd towns in Allegan county, Douglas was the first to complete its quota. Credit Blanche Campbell, Hannah Dempster, Elsie Martin, Louise Van Syckel, the Rev. MacCarthy and Father Nugent for a fine job of solicitation - and practically every inhabitant of Douglas for a fine job of "coming through".

Jake Jennings writes from "somewhere in England" that after 8 months in the Army he's right back where he started 3 years ago, "in a garage". Jake did'nt say what sort of garage - tanks, jeeps or what - but we'll bet he is'nt collecting ration tickets. (Speaking of jeeps, did you hear about the rookie who was so dumb that he thought a jeep was a female Jap).

Cpl. Fred Ash showed up in Douglas this week - all the way from Seattle, Washington. Spent a couple of days each with Ray Goodin here, his wife's folks in Grand Rapids, and a sister in Kalamazoo. Freddie looked like a real soldier and did'nt seem to have a worry in the world.

And Leonard Shumaker has been home for a short stay, making a sort of detour from Camp Peary, Virginia, to a new station in Rhode Island. "No more highway jobs for me", says Leonard, "I'm in the Navy to stay". Looked as though he belonged, too.

Did you hear about the drafted hillbilly who was told to be sure to take a bath before having his physical exam? In the course of the exam the doctor asked casually "Ever had a bath before?" and the hillbilly replied "Ain't never been drafted before".

The following letter, dated February 20th, reached Ky Walz this week from Australia: "Ev, Benny, Jack and I are back together again. We were spread around for quite a while (in New Guinea) but Australia really looks good to us. All I have done since getting back here is eat and sleep.Ran into Johnnie Smith a short time ago - he's doing O.K. ...Tell all the boys 'Hello' for me...Best regards, Smoky" (Miller). In a letter to Dale Crow Smoky says he lost thirty pounds in New Guinea and is now "as skinny as Jack Powers". He also reported that his first act on landing in Australia was to rush out and buy four hamburgers for himself, plus one quart of ice-cream - which were followed by "a bellyache that damned near killed me".

Lieut. Jim Greene, of Saugatuck, was home recently, on leave from his tank-destroyer outfit down in Camp Hood, Texas. Jim looked fine and was full of enthusiasm for the tank-destroying business. He's going back for three more months of specialized training, then takes over as Motor Officer of a T.D. battalion.

A number of moves by our boys lately: Charlie Ash has been transferred from Camp Grant to Camp McCoy, Wisconsin; Orville Millar from Keesler Field, Mississippi, to Lowry Field, Colorado; Max Campbell from Camp Swift, Texas, to Camp Polk, Louisiana; Bruce Gates from Great Lakes, Illinois, to Kansas University at Lawrence, Kansas; Robert Mueller from Great Lakes to the Armed Guard Center at Brooklyn, New York; Gene Bieler from Field to Coast Artillery, though still in Alaska; and Gordon Durham (after travelling God knows where) has arrived in Australia.

Basketball: Saugatuck wound up its season on March 5th - with Fennville in the Saugatuck gym - and wound it up with a bang. Three games - all won by a single point - and all won by the right side. Here they are: (1st game) Saugatuck 2nds 19 Fennville 2nds 18. A fast, snappy game. Kent Davis was high scorer, but all the boys (Miller, Hoffman, Bolles and the two Engles) - all looked good. They had to be, as Fennville came up with some hot youngsters. (2nd game): Saugatuck H.S. 27 Fennville H.S. 26. This game could've been closer if they'd played it in Hollywood. The lead changed hands with almost every score - Saugatuck 9-8 at the quarter, Fennville 17-16 at the half, Saugatuck again at the three-quarters, and Saugatuck by an eyelash at the final whistle. Ed Olsen played his heart out, sinking some beautiful shots from the back court, and Bob Anderson turned in his usually fine performance, scoring ten points for his team. (3rd game): Douglas A.C. 53 Fennville Independents 52. Here again the boys turned on the heat, just when it was needed most. Fennville led at the half 35 to 27, then Douglas got going and it was all over for the apple-pickers.....Altogether a grand evening - and a great windup for our side.

This issue of The Dope has been mailed to all Douglas men in the Services through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Bob Waddell.

And just to let you know what the home front has come to - here's an ad from a local paper: "Owner of 1940 Ford would like to correspond with widow who owns two tires; object matrimony. Send photo of tires".

So long,

H. S. K.