

THE DOPE

Jan. 10, 1944

Published now and then at Douglas, Michigan,
for its sons in the Service. No. 30.

A very mild winter in Douglas so far - more rain than snow and more sunshine than both -- altogether a pretty swell season.

And a number of our men reached home for the holidays: Armour Wiegert, Chuck Dailey, Bill Tisdale, George Inman & Ted Engel. Ted was 'nt for long down there in Maryland; an old knee ailment kept him from an overseas outfit, and now he's in Fort Custer training for the M.P.'s. George Inman came on from Los Angeles, seemed mighty glad to be back in Douglas, and looked like an old-time soldier. And we're glad to report that Bill Tisdale is at last out of hospital; he and his wife and son were on their way to New York City, and a new assignment for the skipper. Armour Wiegert's still over in Chicago on ship inspection for the Coast Guard; and Chuck Dailey's ship is laid up for the winter in Toledo, where he too is on Coast Guard duty. Chuck, incidentally, spent most of his leave nursing the flu - which seems to be no respecter of persons at all. A lot of homefolks have had mild cases too.

Here's a V-mail letter that was received by Mr. and Mrs. L. A. Bartholomew (out on US31) on Christmas Eve: "Hdqrs. Btry. 27th Armored F.A., Somewhere in Italy, Dear Mr. and Mrs. Bartholomew: The officers of the Headquarters Battery wish you a very merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Your son Harold is driving a half-track for us and is doing a swell job, for which we and his country will be forever grateful. Sincerely," (Signed by the four officers of Harold's battery).

"Can I lead a good Christian life in New York City on fifteen dollars a week?" "My boy" was the reply, "that's all you can do!"

From Clair Schultz in Hawaii to his brother Howard, Dec. 28th: "Just a line to let you know I'm O.K. and thinking of you all. As I write I'm listening to Kraft's Music Hall and Bing Crosby. Was in Honolulu on pass recently; had a fine time. Also went out to Waukiki. ... Christmas here was a lot better than last year. (Clair spent that one in the Arizona desert). Went to a G.I. show in the afternoon, and in the evening the U.S.O. put on an all-Hawaiian show. King David of Hawaii got all messed up with Queen Somebody-or-other because he wanted a lot of hula girls. It was very instructive".

More dope on the "Red Arrow", from the Grand Rapids Press of Jan. 5th: "Once again, in the invasion of Saidor, New Guinea, the valiant 32nd division (Benny and Smoky, also Dick Severens, Fuzz Fosdick, Lawrence Stehle, Roy Slater & Hank Orr of Fennville), known since World War days as the Red Arrow division, was chosen for a tough assignment. When the men of the 32nd hauled their landing boats up on the sand at Saidor they didn't know that the Japanese had virtually abandoned the area. All they knew was that they had been selected to spearhead another important attack. . . It had been almost a year since the close of the Papuan campaign in which so many Michigan men of the 32nd fought and died. . . At the conclusion of the campaign, General Douglas MacArthur singled out two American divisions for special mention. One was the 32nd. . . Michigan is proud of the part the 32nd has played in this war and looks forward to the time when it can welcome home the men who have added so many shining chapters to the history of the Red Arrow division".

Did you hear about the Sailor who treated all his girls to wine?
Wanted a little port in every sweetheart.
Or the Marine who fell down 44 steps with a quart of whiskey?
Didn't spill a drop - just kept his mouth shut.

From Gene Bieler in Alaska (Dutch Harbor at last report), December 14th: "Nothing to write about here except the weather, and that's a military secret. . . Not that it's anything pleasant to write about anyhow. . . My address has been changed to APO 980 - the only change in my life in over a year. . . Be seeing you sometime . . . and best wishes to everyone".

From Ev Thomas in Australia to his mother, Dec. 13th: "I tried to mail a grass skirt home, in fact have tried to mail several to various people, but we can't send them - some U.S. law. . . One night at a native village in the mountains (in New Guinea apparently) about thirty natives sang for us. I was darn near dead that night from exhaustion. It was cool and quiet up there and when they sang it brought me right out of it. That was absolutely the most beautiful harmony I have ever heard without musical accompaniment. Wish I could have had a recording of it". (Ev winds up at the O.C.S. on the 25th of this month and, needless to say, we're all hoping it will be Lieut. Ev by then).

Lonesome for company was Tessie McGee,
Either Company A or Company B.

By the way, if your Dope does'nt hang together as well as formerly don't blame us. It's the bureaucrats. They need the steel in those little staples for guns and battleships. (One staple makes 12 ships). . . . And damned if that is'nt as accurate as some of the statistics we're getting at that!

Jerry Bekken's moved again, this time to Jackson, Mississippi. Does'nt seem to like it down there either. "Nobody here knows anything" he writes, "and they can't find out. And nobody cares, including me". You sound like an old regular already, Jerry.

Professor: "You don't know the first thing about syntax".
Student: "Lord, don't tell me they're taxing that!"

The snappiest furlough we've heard of to date was pulled off recently by Dick Bedes of Fennville. Dick got 7 days out in San Diego, California, spent 3 of it on the train coming to Fennville and 3 going back, and the remaining 24 hours having a glorious Christmas at home. If that was'nt a neat job of combining home and duty, we've never heard of one.

From Jack Powers in North Africa to Ky Walz, December 11th: "I'm beginning to think you've broken your arm, Unk; it's a long time since I've heard from you. Is that any way to bring me Christmas cheer? . . . Things are going about the same here but the weather continues bad. A few good days lately, though, so maybe the rainy season is about over. Sure hope so. This is the first time I've ever seen snowploughs used for plowing mud. That's a fact; the mud was so bad they had to plow it off the roads. . . . Had a couple of letters from Smoky lately. He's a Sergeant now. (Congratulations, Smoky!) . . . Wish you'd have loaned me some of your tools before I left. I could use them. Yesterday I cut another fellow's hair and he cut mine. You should see us. Really, Unk, it would break your heart".

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

And everyone said that they saw Hitler's end
When he lost his panzers in the Dnieper bend.

So long,

H. S. K.