

SECOND THOUGHTS

By javie aiche

LETTER TO DIKE BROWN: Greetings, neighbor! Or have you forgotten that for all of three days I was a resident of your precious Dallas; during the presentation of "Let's Take Council?" Remember? Go back a little farther in time and you surely cannot forget Willow street, in Plymouth. Our houses there were on opposite sides of that same street. What I am trying to get down to, Dike, is your brother, John. He's on the Plymouth Draft Board, isn't he? Well, I think he has made a misjudgment.

If he is the John Brown who ordered the induction of Bob Coursen, I think he ought to do something about it before it is too late. Bob, you ought to remember, was quarterback on the 1925 Larksville High School football team, when Big Bialek was doing such magnificent work as fullback and Larksville was marching steadily ahead toward a championship year not too far in the future. It was our impression then that Bob Coursen was about the smallest quarterback we had ever seen, and we were under constant fears that among the pile-ups consequent upon fast tackling and hard play there would be one from which they would take little Bob in as many pieces as he has torso and limbs.

Well, Dike, I met Bob Coursen with a draft contingent out of New Cumberland. In fact, I rode a considerable distance with him and talked all the way I rode, and I'm of the opinion that Bob Coursen ought to be salvaged from that draft allotment, recognized a veteran of three years' regular army service, and sent back to a job of work he was doing in Ordnance, a job far more important than the work that will be assigned to any soldier on any front in this world-fung strife.

From my conversation with Bob I know I am writing this piece on his thirty-eighth birthday anniversary. Your brother, Dike, drafted Bob that late in life. So far as I have been able to determine, and I have gone quite deeply into the subject, Bob Coursen generally was considered about as aloof from the army he served for three years as any American well could be. Undersize, underweight, an accredited member of U. S. Civil Service, holding by virtue of veteran status and ability one of the most important of Ordnance assignments, Bob's associates no less than his family and himself were fairly certain he had found his niche in this war.

Of recent years, Dike, there has been development of a secret camera lens. I couldn't tell you a lot about it, but it's a topographical lens; when it takes a picture it gathers the country around-about it as though it had a global eye. As near to it as it can be that new lens is indeed global. There's more than that to it, Dike. The lens is directly related to the question of how many of our boys will survive a given action. You see, this camera with the topographical lens is taken over enemy terrain just before an attack. It spots every position in direct relation to the maps of battle; it makes exactly certain that when our boys move in they will not get under their own barrage, nor even within the danger perimeter of those siege guns they roll around now with about the same ease you and I used to push the truck at Lackawanna station down there in Plymouth.

There's a catch in all this, Dike. That lens has got to be perfect before it is installed in an aviation camera. It has got to be as truly right as heavenly justice. And it must be installed with a precision that even a tool-maker would envy. If there comes up a flaw of texture or the minutest angle of maladjustment, then the film that comes out of the camera will be out of alignment with the topographical battle map. A contingency like that means that U. S. soldiers are going to be killed by their own guns, and a lot of them are going to be shot or captured by the enemy whose defense will not be in the position it appears to be in by testimony of the faulty

film that is the product of that camera lens. I think you get the idea, Dike. Tell John about it. Right now there is nobody to exactly fill Bob Coursen's shoes in Ordnance. Ask his superiors if you don't believe me. The nearest to a success that I have heard about is a girl recruit, a WAC, and last time I got any report on the matter she just wasn't getting the lens idea at all. In Civil Service Bob Coursen was listed as an expert, one of a kind that isn't made overnight or even substituted by wacky processes.

Bob Coursen was about the most downcast man I have ever met. Psychologically he would be judged unfit for service. You see, Bob is worried. Not about the dangers of battle; not about his wife and little baby; not even about the army service of which he already has had three years' experience. What Bob is worried about is how much more he is worth back of that topographical lens than he is behind a gun. I'd like to see you do something about that, Dike; you and John.

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THE OUTPOST

Where those at home and the men and women in the armed services from the Back Mountain Region—in camps and on the fighting fronts—keep contact with their fellows throughout the world.

At Santa Anita

Dear Sirs:

I want to thank you for sending me the Dallas Post each week, for here, more than 3,000 miles from home, it sure keeps one in close contact with our folks and friends at home. The issue I get each week serves a double purpose. You see, after I read it I turn it over to 1st Lt. George B. Schultz, who as you know, is the same as I, just a local boy. It is funny when you think of how one runs into someone from Dallas, whatever camp he or she happens to be at. George and I are here at Santa Anita. He is one of the officers in the Automotive Section of the school here and I am an instructor at the present time.

Camp Santa Anita, as a camp, is one of the best and biggest here on the West Coast. The location, grounds and everything about it are ideal, except for our barracks, which happens to be the horse barns turned into barracks. We sleep two men to a stall and a man outside of each stall. Many of you have heard Bob Hope kid Skinny Innis about the stalls at Santa Anita. Then it was a joke for Skinny, but at the present time he is in one, and might I add that he is one regular fellow. He is in charge of the post band and I will tell you it is one of the best.

When we stand in front of our "stalls" and look out, right in front of the camp stand two of California's highest mountains, one being Mt. Wilson, the other the almost-year-around snow-capped Mt. Baldy. Our school here is very much like Aberdeen in many respects, except we do not prove materials. Our job is to train men in all branches of the service. We teach the technical branches, such as tanks, automotive, small arms and light artillery, heavy artillery, fire control, ammunition, machine shop and carpenter work.

The people here in California are very nice to all servicemen, as they are almost everywhere you go. I must close now, for I could go on telling you of the West Coast here. At present the chow call is on so I must ask you to excuse me. I'll drop you a line from time to time. In closing, I want to thank you all again.

Yours truly,
Sgt. M. W. O'Boyle,
Camp Santa Anita,
Arcadia, California.

We've thoroughly enjoyed your letter, Michael. What's become of Jim? Don't believe we've heard from him since he was married. That's a long time ago. When I saw your address, I thought at first that I was going to be able to tell you the name of another Back Mountain man at the same location. But I was wrong. Rev. Lynn Brown, formerly of Lehman, is a Protestant chaplain at Santa Maria, California.—Editor.

From Larry Isaacs

Dear Editor:

This is to notify you of my new address. I have been quite busy since my change of stations and this is the first opportunity I had to write you.

I was home for a very short time and really didn't see nearly all my friends. I had meant to drop in and see you, but my time was too short.

I enjoyed the Post and this fall, besides keeping me posted on my friends, I'll expect to see the local high school football scores. Keep up the good work.

Respectfully yours,
Larry Isaacs
c/o Fleet Post Office
New York City, N. Y.

Larry, I've heard lots about you, especially when you were in college, but I'm not sure that we ever did meet each other. Drop in when you are home again. Your mother, Mim and Barbara were in the office yesterday to see us. Everybody was happy.—Editor.

"Old Salt" Shilanski

Dear Editor:

I haven't written in a long time so I reckon I will drop a few lines to find out how everything back in the sticks is getting along.

Well, I still think I made a wise decision when I chose the Navy. I cannot say where I am at the present, but I did get a little dizzy when we left our former station, and started out to see some new things and places that have proven to be very interesting.

Boy, there is sure plenty of excitement in the Navy. There are times when we have fun and enjoy ourselves and there are times when we are very serious with our work.

Well, I guess that's enough about the Navy. I'll bet you're bored already, with me telling you all about

The Engineers

The rest may weave the laurel wreath
From dawn to setting sun
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Are heroes, everyone.
They seek the strength of hostile camps,
They mine and sap and dig.
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Nor any task too big.
They rush to strengthen shattered lines.
They make a midnight raid;
Or their hot guns are laid aside
For axes or a spade.
Like slaves they work the shell-torn road,
While high explosives crash;
Or blaze their way up to the foe
In the hot shrapnel splash.
They spanned the tarnished Meuse one day
Before a leaden rain
That moved them down like a new scythe
Mows down the ripened grain.
Their Captain stood before them, then,
And with a will he roared,
"We're going to get that bridge across,
If it takes the whole damn corps!"
They leave their dead; then go their way,—
Without an empty boast.
Come! Fill your glass with blood-red wine,
And pledge a long-due toast.
A toast to men with fighting heart,
Who scorn all thoughts of fear.
A toast to him who stood the test:
The U. S. Engineer.

you have my new address as soon as possible.

I'll bet it's cold back home now, and how I wish I could be home for a few days so that I could roam the woods and really feel at home.

I wrote to many of the people from the Outlet, but I don't know if they received my letters. If they did, I wish they would answer so I would have something to do in the evening.

Well, I guess I said about enough. The main thing is to keep the Post sailing to me and I will appreciate it very much.

I'm getting to be an "old Salt".
Sincerely,
Edward Shilanski, S 2/C,
c/o Fleet Post Office,
New York, N. Y.

P. S. Tell Frances Crispell I was asking about her.

Eddie—Knowing your real address—and the ship you are on, we suspect you have had some lively experiences. Sorry you didn't have a chance to drop in when you were home, but we know that furloughs are pretty short. Can't understand why the folks at Outlet haven't written. Hope they read your letter and get busy pronto. So far the hunting season has been pretty slow. Game is scarce. Good luck to you sailor.—Editor.

Chasing U-Boats

Dear Editor:

I guess there isn't much I can tell you about. I can say, however, we have been out to sea for the last two months. We visited quite a few nice and famous places along the Atlantic Seaboard and also a few very nice islands out in the Atlantic. Except for chasing a few U-boats, life hasn't been too exciting.

I appreciate your sending the Post to me.

I sure do love to hear from Joe Polachek, Francis Polachek, John Seletski and all the other boys in the service. I guess it won't be long now until we'll be hearing from Elmer Phillips and William Calvin who are at Sampson. It sure does feel good to hear from the folks back home.

At this time I would like to give my love to Mr. and Mrs. Charles Miller, at Star Route, Dallas, the grandest parents a sailor could have.

Again thanking you for that fine paper, the Dallas Post, I remain,
Respectfully yours,
Elias W. Miller, S 2/C,
c/o Postmaster,
New York, N. Y.

P.S. Give my regards to Mr. and Mrs. Jeffreys, at Demunds, who are keeping the gang's gathering place going.

At the Breakers

Dear Editor:

I wish to thank you for the many copies of the Post that I have been receiving and to notify you of my change of address. I have been moved from Denver, Colorado, to a General Hospital in Palm Beach, Florida.

It seems nice down here, but I have not been here long enough to say much about this place, but I do know that I am going to miss the ice skating and snow that you will have up there this winter. I was wishing I could stay in Denver, because up in the mountains they have lots of snow and ice. I was up high enough that I made a snow ball from the snow on the 15th of August.

I would like to say "hello" to the folks back home and the old gang and hope that they are all as well as I am.

Yours truly,
Pvt. Roland Masters,
33603679
Med. Det.,
U. S. Army Gen. Hosp.,
Breakers' Hotel,
Palm Beach, Florida.

The Rockies in the summer and Florida in the winter, that's not so bad for an 18-year-old Sweet Valley lad. We know lots of folks that would like that. Mr. Ragno and the Lehman H. S. Band were over for the Hallow'en Parade Saturday night.—Editor.

In The Merchant Marine

Dear Editor:

I want to thank you for sending me the Dallas Post. It really is a very wonderful paper and it is doing a very good job. I am very sorry for not thanking you sooner, but I am very busy here in the Merchant Marine Officer's Training School.

Our academy here was formerly the Walter P. Chrysler estate. It is a very beautiful estate. The War Shipping Administration purchased

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THE SENTIMENTAL SIDE

By EDITH BLEZ

My Dear Grandchildren:

I haven't written to you for some time. It isn't that I forget you. As a matter of fact you are in my mind more than ever because I keep thinking that you will know how this miserable war ends, and I know nothing! The Allies are moving slowly forward but the end is certainly not in sight.

More and more boys are being shipped to far-off places. You know, of course, about the invasion of Sicily, but things have been more or less at a standstill since then. Speaking of the invasion of Sicily, just this past week I had a strange experience in which that invasion figures. A woman I know has a son who is an officer in the Seventh Army. The young man sent his watch home to be repaired. He said it had stopped and he could find no one in Sicily to repair it. When his mother took it to the jeweler's he said it was beyond repair because it had been water soaked. He said the works were ruined with salt water. I had held that watch in my hand. It seemed quite wonderful to me to hold in my hand the watch of a boy who had waded in from a ship to a strange land where he faced the enemy. The watch had stopped at 1:15 and as I held it I wondered if that was the zero hour. Had all watches stopped at 1:15?

Things are about the same with us. We are still complaining about ration coupons and lack of gas and all the time we know how lucky we are. Every week, every day, we read what the rest of the world is facing. We see pictures in "Life" of all the horrible things that are going on, not on the battlefields alone, but in the heart of civilian life, and yet we fuss and fume!

Some of the boys have been coming back. There are two boys in our town who have returned from Guadalcanal. One had malaria and is now stationed at Philadelphia Navy Yard. His malaria attacks him at unexpected times. One night last week he was riding on a bus and suddenly he went to sleep and the girl he was with couldn't awaken him. It wasn't until he got outside that he realized what had happened. When that boy joined the Marines he was nothing but a child and he has come home a man. I can scarcely believe that he has been through the terrible battle of Guadalcanal and come out alive. He came into a local dance last evening. I know he felt out of place. It wasn't too long ago that he always came to that same dance. I know he must have looked at the crowd of youngsters and felt years and years older. His generation will not only have given their lives, they will have lived a life time in a few months. My heart ached for him, as I looked at him. He is a hero to this village. He came through, but he has given the best part of his life!

THE LOW-DOWN
from
HICKORY GROVE

I been researching. Lit out to see what was taking place elsewhere. Found out three things. The first thing was that everybody had skads of foldin' money. And the second thing was that everybody was mad, and unhappy.

Most folks were mad about how many steaks they can have—if any— or how much gas is on a coupon. Nobody was mad about the price.

Any notion that just money, or something like "security from the cradle to the undertaker" will make you happy, is all wet. That is a good thing to find out. That is progress.

And the third thing I dug up was about gasoline. The gent I talked to savvied oil — backwards and forwards. One place where we could get more oil, he says—and maybe increase your coupon a gallon or so—and quick, is by rehabilitating a lot of our old wells. Easy as pie to do, he says, but a little too costly at present prices for oil. Well, I says, if pork chops and steaks are up, how come oil is held down? If you have any readers, ask them, or the Government, or somebody—not me, he says.

Yours with the low down,
—JO SERRA.

it and now it is the Annapolis of the Merchant Marine.

The courses were supposed to be four years and the course is now eighteen months. We have a cram course and it is a very stiff course. We are only here for ten weeks and then have advance training aboard a ship that travels and delivers the goods to all the fighting nations. After our sea time which is six to eight months, we return to the academy and have nine more months of intensive training in all branches of the Engine and Deck Departments. I am an engineer. After our nine months at the academy we are commissioned officers in the Merchant Marine or Navy.

I would like to send a message to all my former classmates of '43 at K. T. I hope they are doing well and would like to hear from them. And to the Seniors of 1944 I want to wish a very good year and loads of success in your senior undertakings.

I want you to also notice my change of address and again I thank you. I remain,

As always,
Cadet Midshipman
Bernard Novicki
U. S. M. M. A.
8402 Furuset Hall
Kings Point, L. I., N. Y.

It has been weeks since we were up on Bunker Hill. We used to like to drive that way to Luzerne in the fall when the leaves were changing. K. T. H. S. defeated Tunkhannock on Saturday by one point.—Editor.

From A Jungle Baker

Dear Howard:

As you know, I've left the States and I'm now serving the Army overseas. The trip over was long and tiresome, in fact, I only want to make it once more. That's when I come back. On the boat they had a P. X. and a Library, so most of the fellows read and played cards all day. During the afternoon they would have a few boxing matches which helped pass the time away. Each morning at dawn and evening at dusk, we all had to take our stations for stand-to. That is, everybody aboard has to stand on deck ready in case of an attack. They say the Subs always attack on these hours. However, we didn't run into any so saw no excitement while at sea.

We stopped at a few places before reaching our destination but it didn't mean much for we only stayed a short time. I can't tell you just where I am except that it is someplace in the Pacific (Southwest). Maybe later on they'll let us boys let the folks back home know just where we are but at present they must have a reason.

I've been very busy ever since

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