

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

*Department of English
and Foreign Languages*

BLACKSBURG, VIRGINIA

1 August, 1942

Dear James,

Somehow we seem to have lost touch completely in the last four months or so. Hence this is another tracer letter in an attempt to find out where you are stationed now -- in Texas or in another far corner of this global world. Then, if I still don't hear from you, I shall address my next to Littcarr. Perhaps family or friends there will have some later address than mine. Everywhere, however, the story seems to be the same: there is inevitable delay in military mail. And I realize that you may not have received my letters, especially if you have been transferred somewhere else.

My sister-in-law -- do you remember her?-- is here for the summer, as she finds New York in wartime a place to stay away from. We were talking about you the other night. It was just a little before this that you came to New York two years ago, and we straightened out our previous impressions after that meeting at the Pennsylvania station. How the world has gone into a tailspin since that time!

Ever since you went into service I have wanted to send you something, but didn't know what might be suitable. (I don't even know your brand of cigarettes.) If you are still stationed with no prospect of immediate removal, I would like to send you the Untermeyer anthology of the Book of Living Verse. There is an edition now small enough to be packed conveniently and at the same time representative enough to give a fair selection of the best poems from the early ballads down to Frost and Eliot. I thought it might be something you could keep around and look at occasionally. Can you use it? If you'll let me know where to send it, I'd like to ship it on. Or if your plans don't call for extras in your equipment, I'll send something you can use in more practical fashion.

The weather here has been unusually hot for Blacksburg. But there has been enough rain to keep my garden going, and I spend most of my extra time hoeing and weeding. Have finished an article on Ellen Glasgow for Hatfield. It doesn't please me particularly because I've never been able to grow excited over her work either pro or con. Besides, I can't get accustomed to the idea of a regular session of the college year in the summer time.

Add gossip notes: Time announced several weeks ago that Miss Porter has sued for divorce in Reno. I hope that she will get her novel finished and in print this fall as now scheduled.

And that's about all for this hot afternoon. One thing more, though. I am seriously thinking of trying to get into the naval service myself. The Navy is taking English teachers for some reason or other. I am trying to think of some possible arrangement for Jean and the kids; that is the chief delay. One should be doing something more these days than teaching English on a mountain top.

Best regards, as always, —

Hg. + Hg. 52. Air Corps
Duncan Field
San Antonio, TX

July 7, 1941

Dear Jim -

Wish to get your letter which was full of news. The activities you are engaged in are some I know something about. The ones, and your time is so full incidents they must pass swiftly. To-day August 1st, Saturday, primary election day. Huggins Chandler + John Young Brown contesting the secretaryship. Very quiet for an election, but I have been very busy in the office. Went to Pitt Camp to cast my vote but only stayed for an hour. I am pretty tired, but since a good bath I feel better. If I had a glass of wine I probably would like it. Our canning is about all done except apples and they will come a little later. Rostings are in full swing now but beans are getting scarce. We have had the best garden we ever had with plenty to divide with our neighbors, and we have had enjoyed it.

Ronia is going to dead more ground with more soon for a few days and I will keep house. The flood water caused our school so much damage I am having to work extra hard to make everything as comfortable as possible for the children. Melvin said tell you he was going to fall out with you if you did not write soon. Uble is in New Port News and has a good job so he says. Edgar is now in the army and we don't know his location as yet. Aluey has landed safely somewhere overseas.

^{Edwin is also in the army some time ago.}
nobody never has asked to rent your house, I suppose they know it's no use. Mamon will probably move somewhere near Coty, maybe at Wath's place. Laird is now in the signal corps with Morton Combs. Purvis pigman is still here, for some reason his appeal is still pending. 78 more draftees leave here the 18th, which takes all my single teachers. I am without a penmanship for Kirkman school and I do not know who to write.

sun. 7 AM

we just about stayed in bed all day today, just had breakfast, and we are planning on going to church this morning for a change, and then afternoon to see Moulpa who is not doing so well.

Got seven fingers yesterday, and trying to get one filed for summer, but not sure I can make it.

Our flowers are very nice in our yard, and we can now almost run the lawn mower over all our yard. I bought two roses in Louisville since you left and they have ^{been} continually blooming since they started.

Your picture was fine and so natural you hardly ever see one like that. It now seems possible that you may come soon. We only can say best of go with you all. We will be anxious to hear real often from you after you land overseas.

As ever
Your affectionately
D.

Hadsden, Ala.,
Aug. 3, 1942.

Dearest James.

Sure enjoyed getting your picture it's very much like you. A boy wish it was so you could drop in to see us for a chat.

Papa, Fannie Will, Mrs Adams' Mary and Rose Mary spent last Thursday with us Mrs Adams went back with Papa and Fannie Will. Corner and Mary went to keeping house. We seem old feel them to be close around. We taken supper with them Sat. nite sure enjoyed it. It to been raining here for quite a spell. Douglas

was just finish filling
out his occupations question
will mail to moman. In a
few days they will get him yet
Our plant is one hundred %
on buying war bonds.
Billie and Aunt Mollie is
coming in a few days for
a week. The Busses and Tex
has been on strike for a week
will be back on the road
Wednesday. Write often
come to see when can

Some & me. We had a
good time in Fla.
Nathan came up Thursday and
brought his mother, granddad
and grand mother in.

151 East 21st Street,
New York, N. Y.
August 5, 1942

Dear Jim:

Yes, well I know that your time for going overseas may be near. I dread to think of it but I do think of you and pray for safety all about you. Can scarcely bear to dwell on the seriousness of it all, though you who must go must have it in your dreams.

You, with your wonderful work, Jim. God keep you. That is all I can say. I've thought and thought of what to write and today there just isn't anything. Will send this note and write a letter tomorrow when there may be a better prospect.

Where shall it end? This much we know, the leavening is in the masses. The stirring is there and it must be for our branches haven't done too much to keep our roots alive. The sadness of it is that many fail to see even the roots, or if they do see them they call them ugly.

I firmly believe the spiritual to be the motive power of the world, Jim, even in its black struggles. It seems too that the process of history is directed toward rendering the unconscious impulse a conscious one. When we waken, we may learn how to face changes without having wars. Yet, how slowly we waken. Men, in the final analysis, must be Man and Man strives toward the awakening.

No, I know you cannot write your stories now. Yet remember them. You shall never be empty. Not you, Jim.

Pan [Sterling]

Duncan Fick
San Antonio, TX

May 6, 1942
Wadswell, Ala

Dear Uncle James

I receive your letter long
time ago but just never did
answer it. I saw on the picture
you sent mother that you are
a ~~sergt.~~ glad to know you
have advanced so fast.
Keep the good work up and
you be a general ~~sergie~~
soon.

I have got nearley
enought stamls to get
me another ~~bowl~~, so
you can shoot me three
or four faps. That is about
all I have to say
Keep your Fr. bying
Peanut.

151 East 21st Street,
New York, N. Y.
August 10, 1942.

Dear Jim:

Started a couple of letters but never did get to finish them. The father of a friend of mine died and I've spent a lot of time with her because she has taken it so hard. She's becoming steady now and will be all right. He had lived a long time in her life and was very welcome but for her to make a new pattern will be a difficult thing.

We've had two days of non-stop rain. Maybe now there is another inch or two in our reservoir and the Little Flower is happy. Our water ~~shortage~~ shortage had him plaintive. A week or so ago, one evening at about 6:30, whistles stretched from ticket windows around Lewishon Stadium where Helfetz was featured in a Brahms Concerto, lightning struck the stage and down it came. They say that LaGuardia was there within ten minutes (Lewishon is on the campus of the College of the City of New York) and that in the middle of the night all the wreckage had been cleared away and plans for a new platform under way. Wish you could come for some of the Stadium programs. Expected to hear the one last night but rain forbade.

Jim, have you read any of the Seven Gothic Tales? If you can get them at a library there, wish you would. Or, if you have time, maybe you'd like to read Gates of Aulis. Tom and Laurette got back yesterday after their visit with Gladys Schmitt.

Work keeps me very, very busy, and there are many people. 49% of me wants to be with them and 51% wants to be away, because be away I must. I keep longing for the time in February when I plan to quit the day job and have all that precious time again. God willing, there'll be a bit in the bank then so that if the evening work isn't steady through all the weeks I won't have to worry. Never worried much anyway, so should be fine. By that time, "The Sleepers" will undoubtedly be ready for display to an editor and - who knows? How I wish you had your time too, Jim. Let the whole tragic affair be over soon.

How I wished that the English had been big enough to set India free.. Sometimes it seems we face the great paradox of fighting for what we are fighting against. India would know how to handle her problems but she cannot do it as a slave nation. At least, she will not do it. I fear that England considers princes of more importance than masses of people.

Here's a paragraph from a letter received from one of our boys in Alaska. He is a friend of Tom's (and mine), and is a Navy radio operator. The 3rd paragraph of his letter was deleted. Shall always wonder what he said. Here's the paragraph.

"It has been nice writing to you because it sort of gives me strength to write my next letter. That is going to be a tough one. I've got to answer a little cousin of mine. She is a bloodthirsty little wench of about 14. I'm sure she paid not the slightest heed to me all the time I was in New York. Since I have joined the Navy

however, she has pursued me with a determination that would fill the Royal Mounted with awe. I have no particular grudge against younger cousins, mind you, but this one seems to be bent on turning me into a martyr. If, Allah forfend, I should return alive after this war I am sure she will never speak to me again. But that is what I am hoping."

Meant to say too that if you have time and the opportunity look at the latest number of Bazaar. Tom's friend ^{Laurette} has a poem in it and what is written in her own handwriting (reproduced) is written for Tom. In other words, he is the Tom mentioned. The poem, of course, mentions no name. She will have a story "The Pink Coat" in the next issue.

Perhaps I shall send you a copy of Bleeding Eidolon. It is short and will fit into a letter.

Am sending Jamie another box and in it shall be some of our stock of sugar for we do not need our full ration of it. I hope they were not washed out. Will you let me know, and right away? I've thought about them often.

Now must work. My love to you.

Pau.



SHIPPING DIGEST

INCORPORATED

THE NATIONAL SHIPPING WEEKLY

16 BRIDGE STREET

NEW YORK, N. Y.

August 10, 1942

Dear Jim,

Pan Sterling called me the other day and gave me your army address. She stillx seems gravely saddened by the world and a personal melancholy that conveys itself swiftly, even over a phone.

I have been working here as editor for the past eight months and trying to do my own work all the time. My novel has made all the rounds nowx but for three publishers or so, and I have no reason to think, conditions being what they are, that it will be accepted. My faith in it is still undiminished, as is that of a few, a very few, staunch believers, particularly one editor who resigned when the book had practically been taken upon her recommendation and then sent out of the publishing house for a report which did not recommend publication. In spite of the always discouraging rejection I manage to get some work done, and the "road moves forward very slowly, but it does move forward."

It is quite some time now since I have had word from you, Jim, and I would like to hear from you. Drop me a line. My home address is below.

Yours as always,

265 Kosciusko Street, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Boris Tokin

August 11-19-42
12 p - 2

Dear James -

Just a few lines to let you know I hadn't forgot you. I receive your letter a few week ago sure was glad to hear you. That certion is a good picture of you. I carry it with me last Sunday to the State Reunion. They all said good thing about you and how you had change. I feel proud to have a brother like you. Although Comes don't even come to see me when he came down to see Mary before ^{he} had move north to Hasdon. I think he has don't the wrong thing. Papp and Janie, also Kathrine and Martha left Monday evening to go see Cousin Rudy. Still for a day two. My work was tie up where I couldn't go. I am hemming towel for the doctor in the army. Look out for the letter stamps on the hem. M. D. U.S.S. I have been work hard this year can't I have about 100 fat can in peach - bean apple and Tomatoes and 1 bush of dry butter bean. If you ever get hungry just drop in I always have something. I am get little worry about Charles for I have heard from him two month. Alvin usual write once a week, but fail last week.

for some reason they certainly are a big
crowd leave out the Friday - 14.

Do you ever have a chance to go see
them he would be thrilled to see you
and it will mean so much. Jessie had
to sign up this time. We think he will
be next. He also likes the naval too.

May new to run low please at the shop
with a lot of mistakes out of ink.

I remember you all in my prayers

Love

Louis

Box no. 296

151 East 21st Street,
New York, N. Y.
August 18, 1942

Dear Jim:

Tom goes tomorrow for his first physical examination and classification. What this will mean, of course we don't know. It's the first step though and it hurts. One by one you go through with it.

He wants me to take his apartment if he has to go. His room is an unusually fine one for writing. It is private and quiet and spacious with its long terrace. I want to keep it for him so that he can have it when he returns. He's put a great deal of work into it. It suits him. It costs a bit more than mine does but he will make up the difference. Write to the present address however as, of course it may be weeks or even months before Tom will have to go.

I've a feeling Jim, a deep one, that this ghastly thing will be over in a matter of months, perhaps before another summer, though there may be policings for long afterwards. That's just a P.S. theory, however, (even in all this darkness) and not a war dept. communique.

"Bleeding Eidolon" is not quite ready. You shall have it when it is. Am not finding a great deal of time to write but as I'm working toward it, it's still all right with me.

Do you have time to read, Jim? Is there any time at all at your work? I think of the vast difference between your place there and that at the Settlement and I wonder how it tries your being. I'll write often and if I see a paragraph here or there I'll send it on. This morning at the breakfast table I was reading a page of Santayana. He was speaking of Buddah. He said, (or had Plato in Limbo say): "I had not thought that among either gods or men there could be found so merciful, so just, so sad a being." But his virtue, being founded on pity, could only end in sadness."

Tom and I had one of the finest conversations of our lives last Sunday evening. I ate dinner with him and with Laurette at a tiny French restaurant on 3rd Avenue and 50th Street. They have red checked table cloths and red wine - besides good food. Laurette left after a time because her parents were coming home from out of town and she must meet them. Wish you might have been with us, though I was grateful for that moment alone with Tom.

My "boss" has given me work to do now, Jim, so I must close. He is leaving town tonight so perhaps tomorrow after the work is caught up another letter or two can be written. If you'll get a furlough, I'll take you to see "Bambi." Do you remember Snow White in Saratoga? Know that I think of you often, Jim.

Pan

(12) 8th Fl^y Sq. AAF
Duncan Field
San Antonio, TX

Fairfax, Ala.
August 18th 1944

Dear James:

We received your picture the other day. I think you looked nice in your uniform.

Lois showed me two or three pictures you had sent her. She seems very pleased with them.

James, I'm sure you have heard the old expression, "no news is good news". Well, there sure was not any news in your letter. Other than you was well. Your picture told that.

I am following your suggestion and hoping you will do the same.

We received a raise in pay this week. It amounts to about seventy cents a week.

The fixers and hour hands will get the real benefit of the raise. They received about five cents an hour, which will amount to ~~two~~ dollars a week for forty hours.

Elice is working now. She sweeps in the weaver room. I am on the third shift and Elice is on the first.

The kids are well except Michael. I think he will be all right in a few days. We had a time with all three of them while back. They had the whooping cough at the same time.

But all three are never it now,

James, right after you was here we changed around some. The man that lived in the house with us got a three room house. Therefore, I applied for the whole house I was in. And to my surprise, Mr. Hanson gave it to me.

We didn't need four rooms so I traded houses with Mrs Finch. Where we were we did not have much back yard and the floors and walls were bad. The company had just finished going over Mrs Finch's house and put in new floors and a bath tub.

We live on the highway just above the ball park now. And have plenty of yard for the kids. Also enough back yard for a nice size garden.

James, I would like some personal information about myself. How much did you pay Doris for me? The reason I want to know is, that by the time the war is over, I hope to have enough war bond to take care of it. I am putting a little money aside each week and when there is enough I am going to buy a bond in your name. Also, how do you want them made out?

James, do not tell any one else about this and when I turn them over to you, I want you to tell the rest that it is paid.

We already have two bonds paid for through the payroll department. But yours I will buy in West Point. Because it is nothing to any one else.

Do you think you could guess my weight I am as fat as a hog. I tip the scales at one hundred and sixty four pounds.

I was very glad to hear of your promise. Keep it up, I'm sure you will go much higher.

I hope you didn't have too much trouble decoding this letter. This is about the third I have written in about one year.

Answers soon

~~Yours for winning
as ever
Alfred~~

8th 1/2 sq. AAF
Duncan Field, TX

[20 Aug 1946]

[918 Spruce St.]

Gadsden, Alabama

6:30 P.M.

Dear Jim:

Sorry I waited so long to write;
 but I am on the third shift and
 I spend most of the day trying to
 get five or six hours sleep. I like
 my work fine. I got a 5¢ an hour
 raise last week. I'll draw about \$6
 a week. I'm buying \$3 worth of bonds per
 week. I expect to buy more when I
 pay up the thirty five dollars I owe.

We have a very nice place. A
 six room house for \$25 a month,
 which is cheap rent in this place.

We live one block off the bus
 line. Can go to work for a nickel

Nathan is at Hunter field.

I havent heard from papa or any of the family in a couple of weeks.

I suppose you heard about Elsie's house burning. I dont know the extent of damage. Im going to write her this week.

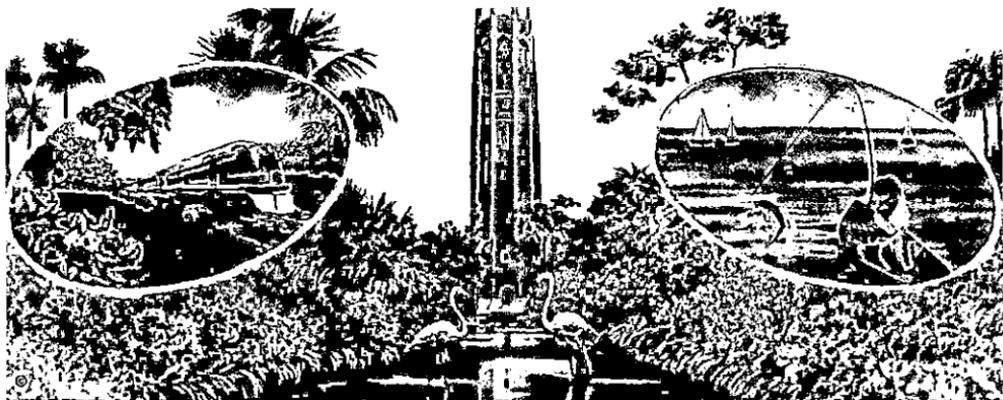
Mey and Dany come over every day or so.

What about coming down for a vacation. Record your uncle would let you off.

Thanks for the pictures they were good. send some more when you have some made.

Hope to see you before you go over your bed.

Corner



Florida, "The Land of Sunshine"
[TO: Duncan Field, TX]

Bushnell, Fla.
Aug. 20, 1942

Dear Jim,

I was writing Bill a letter
so I thought I would write
you.

We are not doing much
at present. Of course it
being summertime we never
do much.

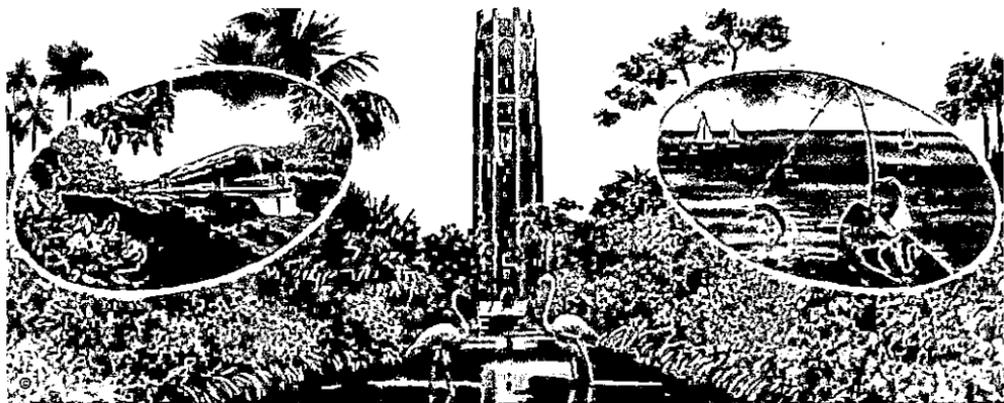
I have all my canning
done. And have started
planting me a fall garden.
I have canned about 250 qts.

This is a mixture of peas, beans, tomatoes, corn on cob, peaches, pickles, relishes, soup stock and a number of pints of Jug, strawberry and plum preserves.

The weather sure has been hot here. It has rained almost every day for nearly a week.

~~I went fishing twice this~~ week. One time I caught a good mess of fish and the next time I got a good mess of red bugs.

This draft situation is getting serious around here for the single boys are all gone nearly. Everyone is wondering who will be next.



Florida, "The Land of Sunshine"

I hear from Bill often. He says he is to go to Quater Master school in New Port R.I. soon. He seems to like the navy fine.

Mamma and Daddy lost part of the roof off their house about a week ago by fire. They had a little insurance on the house so as soon they get that they will have it repaired. It didn't do very much damage but sure made a mess.

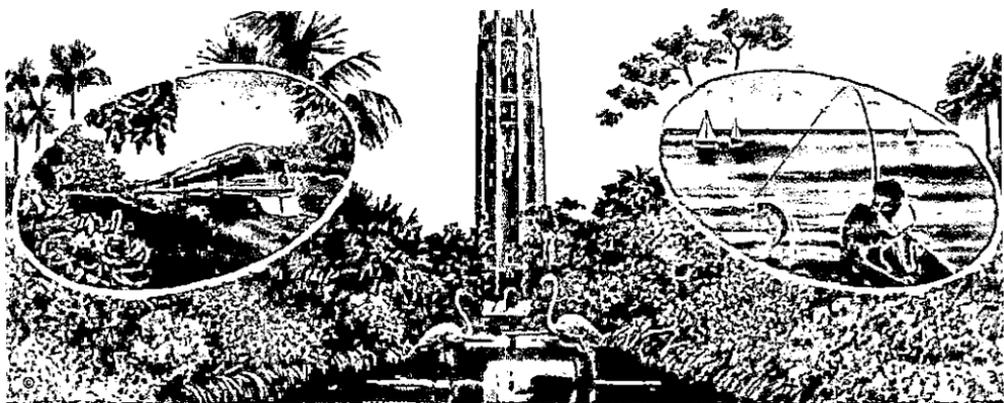
Hervey has been down
once to see us since they have
been married. I like his wife
but she sure isn't pretty.

Tommy and Patsy sure are
growing now. Patsy is five
and Tommy is three. Patsy
sure wants to go to school
this term, but she can't go
until next year.

~~Carl isn't doing much hauling~~
now. About all that he has
done for a month or two
is buying and selling livestock

We never hear from the
folks up in Ala. I guess
they are busy working.

I am sending a picture
of Tommy and Patsy taken



Florida, "The Land of Sunshine"

about three weeks ago.
The sun was so bright
that Tommie couldn't help
but frown.

As there is no news I will
close.

As ever,
Helen [Swain]

P.S. Tom + Pat said, "Hello."

oth Hdq. 22, 111 111
Duncan Field
San Antonio, TX }

MARJORIE KINNAN RAWLINGS

HAWTHORN, FLORIDA

Box 550
St. Augustine

Dear James Still:

I was appalled to notice "May 26" on your envelope that contained the exquisite verse. I have to plead a most mundane activity that prevented my writing you---I have been doing a practical "Cross Creek Cookery", and August 15 was the publishers' deadline.

One of my old maid aunts on the Kinnan side, which for generations has gone in for "plain living and high thinking", wrote me, "I just do not know what to think about your writing a cook book. Somehow, it does not seem at all classical or literary." So it isn't, but Lafcadio Hearn's "Creole Cookery" is one of the rarest and choicest of collectors' items, commanding, when found, a fabulous price, "Cross Creek Cookery" will never be a collectors' item, but I still

MARJORIE KINNAN RAWLINGS
HAWTHORN, FLORIDA

insist that good cooking ranks among the arts. Last week-end my husband and I had as guests at Cross Creek seven Army doctors, Boston men. We went to Silver Glen in the Scrub to fish for blue crabs, and the next day had dinner of baked sherried ~~grape~~ grapefruit, Crab Newburg, raised rolls, guava Jelly, carrot souffle, tomato aspic with artichokes, Burgundy, fresh peach ice cream and orange cake. One of the men said, "This meal was a symphony." Another said, "I wouldn't know about that, but it's the best Goddam dinner I ever ate. So in spite of Aunt ~~Ida~~, good cooking has its points---

You remember "Aunt Ida"? She speaks of you often. She had a bad spell last week, the beginning of the end, though the doctor said that even so she might live for years. She is 82, and still amazing.

I am in St. Augustine much of the time, but go to the Creek at least twice a month. St. Augustine is

MARJORIE KINNAN RAWLINGS
HAWTHORN, FLORIDA

practically a military zone---passes necessary over the bridge, blackout at night, ship-sinkings heard and seen and so on.

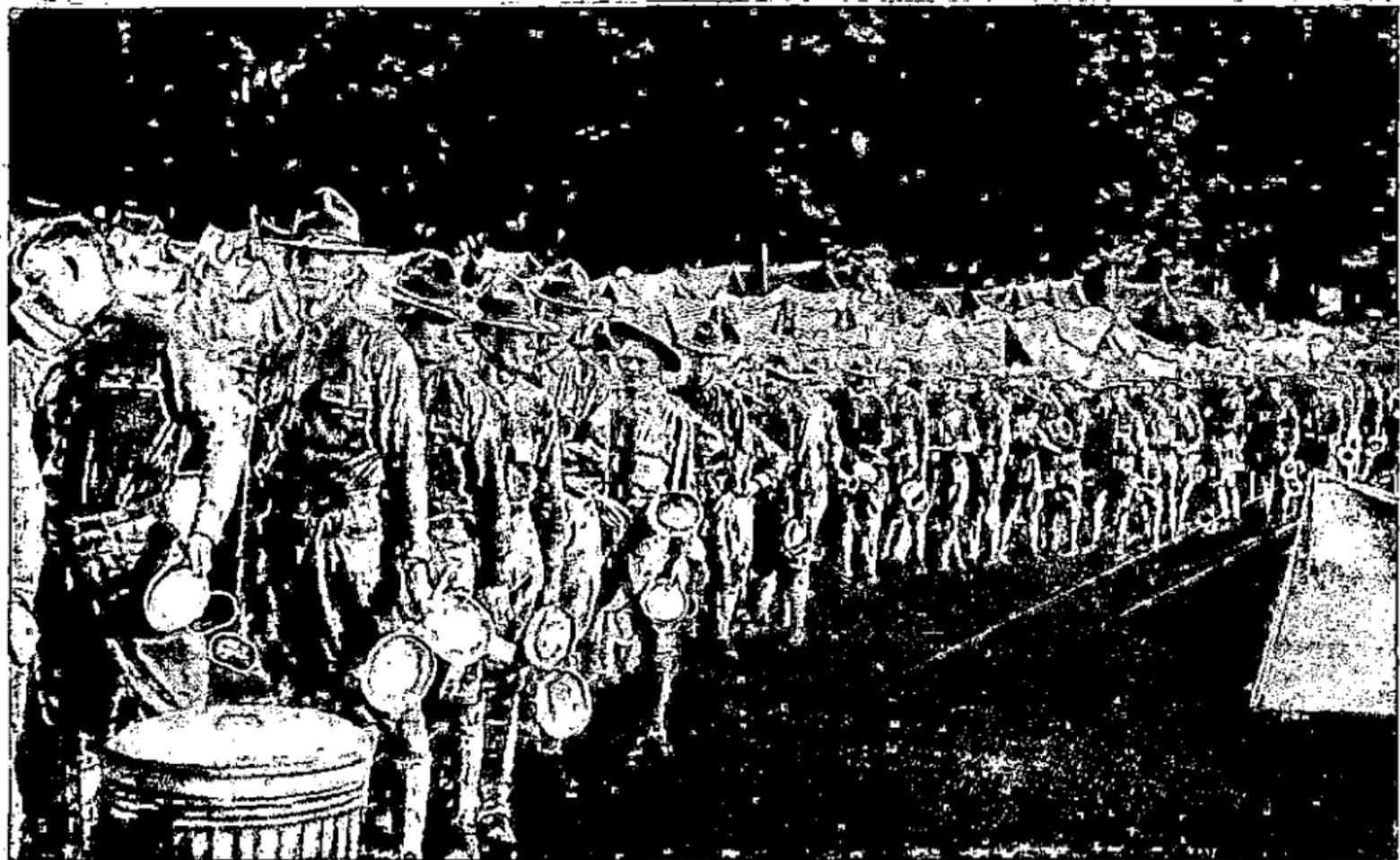
It is a grievous time, and the tragedy is that those of us who ask only to live in peace and to do unto others as we would that others should do unto us, have to bear the burden of personal and national greed and selfishness. Yet I am convinced that mankind is progressing, though slowly, and this is only a major struggle in that progress.

It is hard to think of you as a soldier, yet there must be compensations---and nothing is wasted.

The verse you sent me is perfectly beautiful. I hope that you find yourself able to salt away many such lovely things. Do let me hear from you.

My best,

Marjorie K. R.



THIS SPACE FOR WRITING MESSAGES.

A-75658

Souvenir World Wars 1 and 2

Cards Printed 1917

Sgt. James Still

4th Inf. Regt., AAF

Duncan Field,

San Antonio, Texas



THIS SPACE FOR ADDRESS ONLY.

auxiliary state president,

(life), P. C. B. XVII Century,

Are you in this
chow line?
(Photo 1917)

Jethro Amburgey
Hindman
Kentucky