Correspondence; WWII; 1943

J. Edward Nash, Sr.

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Correspondence With Soldiers

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Feb. 5, 1951.

Y.W.C.A. Staff
Providence, R.I.

Dear Friends:

This is to certify that Louise Leftwich of this City, now seeking resident privileges as a permanent guest with your Y.W.C.A. Fellowship, is one of our Honor girls. Recently graduated from Oberlin College, she did her pre-college work in this city, including elementary and high schools. We highly commend her to you for any consideration for which she asks. You will find her capable, congenial, and appreciative of everything you may be able to do for her.

Sincerely,
February 24th 1943.

To whom it may concern:

As one who has known Mr Kenneth Martin since his birth, I am very glad to bear testimony as to his genuine worth.

Mr Martin has an excellent background. He was born and reared in the city of Buffalo, N. Y. He is the product of the grammar and high schools of Buffalo. He is a member of and has been a student in the Michigan Ave. Baptist Church of this city.

His mother and Father are two of the most respectable persons of our city. His grand mother and grand father were of the very best reputation. Not many young men have had a better and more helpful background than has Kenneth Martin.

I hope that all with whom he deals may find it a pleasure to give him the consideration that he in such a fine way merits.

Mr. Martin, born and reared in this country knows nothing about divided loyalties. He is a one hundred per cent American. And is and always has been ready to do every thing possible to help his country to maintain a rightful position among the great nations of the world.

I am certain that no one will ever have any reason to regret whatever you may do to help Mr. Martin to prove his real worth.

With kindest regards, I am respectfully,

[Signature]
March 23rd 1943.

Pvt. Harry R. Dover,
Flight 717-1269th Tech. Sch.
Keesler Field, Miss.

My dear Harry:

You were very kind to drop me a card, for I am anxious always to know how things are going with you. I know you must use your body constantly in the affairs of the army, but the secret chambers of your heart may be, and I trust will be often occupied with other noble lofty thoughts also.

Harry as one who is unselfishly interested you may I counsel you to think upon those things that bring most joy to your heart and make you conscious of the fact that God is the source of your security.

I shall always remember you when I commune with our FATHER. For he is still on the throne ruling the destinies of men. Surely I hope you will keep well in body mind and SPIRIT.

Let me have a line from you whenever it is convenient to do so.

I am as ever sincerely your friend,
March 23rd 1943.

Sergt. Alfred B. Butts,
371 St. Inf. Co. F,
Camp Joseph Robinson,
Camp Robinson, Ark.

My dear Alfred:

There are a great number of soldiers right across the St. from my home in the old convention hall, and I get, I think quite a correct idea of army life from the way I see them taking exercises and drilling. And I know it is not play by any means. So I know you must be quite busy, I therefore appreciate your taking time to write me. Do it again when you can.

Nothing could please me more than the fact that you remember that you were a soldier of the cross before you became a soldier in the national army. And I am certain, whatever your experiences may be, in the national army to remember that fact will always help you, encourage and comfort you.

The entire church was very glad to hear your card read.

I am certain it will be gratifying to know that things in our little church are moving on in a very pleasing way.

As in other places, the people here have been paying income taxes and victory taxes and buying War Stamps and Bonds, and are trying to do their part so that you men who are trying to do the job for your country shall not lack anything.

Tell Sister Christine that she will have to attend church more now than ever to makeup for your forced absents.

We shall be thinking about and praying for you until we meet again.

I am as ever your pastor,

[Signature]

[Handwritten Note: "E. J. [Name]"
March 23rd 1143.

Priv. William Wilcox,
Co D, 1213 Fort Niagara,
Youngstown, N. Y.

My dear William:

A communication like the one I received from you the other day comforts, cheers, and encourages me. For I too am in an army contending against a mighty foe. And I know you too are in this army; for through baptism and the hand of fellowship I induced you you into this army. I am glad very glad that your message to me shows that you have not forgotten that fact.

I am glad that you are learning to adjust yourself to our national army life. We shall always remember you when we approach the throne.

Let me have a word from you whenever it is convenient to do so.

I am as ever in all sincerity your Pastor,
April 8th 1943,

Fvt. William Wilcox,
Co. E 3th Qm. Rct.
Camp Lee Va.

My dear William:

I have so much correspondence, that I hardly know what to do first. And as you know, I have no secretary. So I have decided that whenever my boys in the armed forces are kind and thoughtful enough to write me a letter letting me, and the church, for I shall tell them about you, how you are getting on, I take great pleasure in answering them immediately.

Your letter and your fine religious program came two days ago or April 6th. And this morning, before I do anything else save have our devotional exercises, I am writing you.

I understand that you and your two brothers also are in the Army. We are quite certain that though in the Army, that you will maintain your faith in God and his teachings.

All of us shall be thinking about you and praying for you that you may do your whole duty and come back to us when it is all over.

I suppose you know that you are down in my native state. And I know you are enjoying fine weather, and that you will soon be catching the sweet fragrance from the magnolias and dogwoods.

Well Will this simple message is bringing much love from all of us to you.

We shall be glad to receive a letter from you at any time.

I am as ever your Pastor,

J. Edward Nash
My dear Leon,

June 14th 1943.

Your very fine letter came to me just today. And I made up my mind that I would not sleep until I had answered it.

First of all let me thank you for sharing with me and the Church the joy that has come to you in the elevation of your Brother Calvin to second Lieut. Like you, we all are very proud of him and his achievement. A very noble brother indeed are you.

Then you have been very thoughtful in revealing to us something of your camp life, especially the religious part of it. I am very glad and pleased to know that you are a careful observer and get impressions that will help you to give proper counsel to your fellow comrades. And I hope you may do your best to make them understand the course they should pursue.

Our church is putting on a rally to raise $2,000 with which to make needed repairs on our building before cold weather comes on. Suppose you send them $100 check aha aha.

As I think you understand I have not been very well for a long time. So we had to postpone our baptism in May. But if I continue to improve we hope to baptize 12 or 15 the 3rd Sunday in July.

I shall carefully observe your request when I bring your letter before the church to be read. Margaret Jackson our Clerk is very good in reading. There seem to be no blunders in your letter. But if there were she would attend to every thing before reading it.

Continue to be a good soldier in the army of your government and in the army of your Lord.

Write when you can. God bless and keep you and make you strong in body mind and spirit.

I am as ever devotedly your Pastor,
June 31st 1945.

To whom it may concern:

I am very glad to bear testimony as to the real worth of the bearer, Mr. Leon Wilcox. I have known him all of his life. Indeed I married his mother and father, with a great deal of interest and satisfaction I have watched him grow into manhood. It has been mine to baptize and receive him into the church of which his whole family are members, and of which I have been pastor for 51 years.

He has had a very fine Grammar and High school training here in our city. During his school career he was a master athlete, majoring in foot ball.

Mr. Wilcox is intelligent, congenial, good natured, industrious and ambitious to be constructive in his activities.

I hope Mr. Wilcox may receive from all who may be in position to help him the attention and favorable consideration that I feel that he in such a large way merits.

I am very truly,
July 26th 1943.

Pvt. Oscar Hall, Jr.
37523800
455th Ldnj. Co.
Vancouver Bks. Wash.

My dear brother Hall:

I feel that first of all that I must get your address straight. I have come to the conclusion that it is not as I have it in the beginning of this letter, but as you have it in the body of your letter, which I take to be Pvt. Oscar Hall, Jr. 37523800-455th of M. Ldyj. Co. Vancouver Bks. Wash. This is what I shall put on the envelope. If this is not right, the next time you write please print the address so I shall be sure to have it right.

Your picture I placed into the hands of the armed forces Com. and they have put it into the vestibule. Everybody sees it and thinks it is fine, they will also see that your letter is read on the Sun. that we have services specifically for the boys which is every second Sun. at 11 o'clock.

You say you would like to have a paper. Do you wish a colored paper or a regular daily paper? Please let me know, and we see that you get it.

All of us have missed you, but think about you much and pray that every thing may go well with you, and that you may be saved from going over seas.

Our Young People's work has closed for the summer and will open again the 3rd Sun in Sept. We shall remember you when we open up and shall imagin that you are at the secretary's table taking the mins.

The third Sun. in this month I baptized a class of 11 and have 5 more to baptize. I gave the hand of fellowship to 12 last night. Things in our church are moving on in quite a satisfactory way.

Jesse and wife are well and send love to you.

Write when you can.

I am very truly your Pastor,
Pvt. Alan E. Howard
Co. C, 804 S.T.R.
Camp Crowder, Mo.

My dear Alan:

Your Letter, as all the letters from the boys in the armed forces, was received with a great deal of joy a few days ago. My custom has been to read the letters from our boys to the church. But we have decided to have a service specifically for our boys every second Sun. and the Com. has asked us to have our letters or a part of them read at this special service. But whenever I get a letter I tell them about it so that those who are especially interested will be out on the soldier boy's Sun.

It is very pleasing to me to know that you are in school and are aspiring to be something above the ordinary, I am quite certain you will have great success.

You have a lot of faith and hope, and you are in a good place to use these virtues, and I hope you will do so. For if you have faith and hope you will not be over concerned about what takes place. You may remain in this country for the duration. But whether here or there it matters not. For his divine rules your lot. I hope you will keep good and well in body mind and spirit so that you may have nothing to fear. But my hopes are like yours, that the war may be over before you are required to go over into the conflict.

You will be glad to know that you made me feel very good when you wrote that the fellows think a lot of me. Surely their thoughts are reciprocated, for I think a lot of all of you, and pray that all blessings from our Father may be yours.

Your people all seem to be in good spirits, and that will be comforting to you.

I am trying to keep as well as possible and do as much of my work as I can. The church is very good to me and does not require too much of me.

When you return I hope you will be true and active in the service of the KING.

Be good, write when you can. Wife and Jesse send love to you.

To every your Pastor;
September 2nd 1943.

Rev. Charles E. Boddie,
137 Adam Street
Rochester, N. Y.

My dear Brother Boddie:

We are more than pleased to know that you will be with us Sunday, Sept. 19.

We are arranging to have our evening service combine with our Young Peoples' meeting, start at 6:30 and be through for the day about 8:30.

We are looking forward to having an inspiring helpful time, and we hope it may be the end of a perfect day for you.

If you are planning to arrive on the train please let me know over what road and the exact hour you will arrive so that we may meet you; or if you are driving you may come right to the church, 611 Michigan Ave.

With kindest regards, I am very truly Yours,
August 26th 1943.

To whom it may concern:

I have known the bearer, David Lee Presley for a number of years. I baptized him, and he is a member of the Michigan Avenue Baptist church of which I have been Pastor for fifty one years.

David is a fine exemplary young man, and is anxious to do all he can to help his country to be the great Democracy that it is.

I am certain that any opportunity that may be given him in the armed forces to prove his genuine loyalty and patriotism will not be in vain.

As he goes forth I am wishing for him favorable consideration from all who are in position to help him.

I am very truly,

[Signature]

[Address]

[Date]
My dear Leon:

My letter, always welcomed with much pleasure, came to me a few days ago. I can hardly tell you how much I appreciate and enjoy your letter.

You write about the being a long time since you wrote, but the boys in the army force us to be so. You mention a certain matter, and I wish you to know that I appreciate your constant interest in me and the people back home here. I think I told you that our Committee that has charge of our boys in the army is trying to have a service every Sunday and that I have been writing our letters and have been sent to the boys. You may be glad to hear that the other letters are not so soon received as I receive your letters. It is a relief to know that many of them will pass the test. Good luck.

You will be glad to know that things in Buffalo are going very satisfactorily. Everything is going well. I think the people are very happy with the things that are happening. And the favorable industrial conditions seem to have a good effect upon the church. Our congregation and officers are exceptionally good, and many people have been found who wish to take the time to be active and help. I think the people in my church are happy and that you are in our church. And the favorable industrial conditions seem to have a good effect upon the church. Our congregation and officers are exceptionally good, and many people have been found who wish to take the time to be active and help.

I think it has been said that you have attended church here. I think that you have attended church here. And the favorable industrial conditions seem to have a good effect upon the church. Our congregation and officers are exceptionally good, and many people have been found who wish to take the time to be active and help.

I think I have not written you since I baptized a class of eleven and four or five more to baptize. So you see that we are back where we were every day. I think it has been said that you have attended church here. I think that you have attended church here. And the favorable industrial conditions seem to have a good effect upon the church. Our congregation and officers are exceptionally good, and many people have been found who wish to take the time to be active and help.

I am yours very truly,

[Signature]

August 23rd 1943.

P.V.C. Leon Willcox
322 Orange Co. Arm.
APC. 7230 000 P.M.
New York.

Dear Friend:

I am as your Pastor.
Corporal Leroy Farmer,
Co. G, Bldg. 64th
C. C. S.
Pt. Francis R. Warren,
Wyoming.

Dear Leroy:

Your very much appreciated card came this morning. As the ancient Romans would have said, it was mulsum in parvo. Wife, the boy and I enjoyed both sides of it very much. I like that cowboy language, hi you Rev.

It is surely gratifying and comforting to those of us who know and love you to have you possess, though in the Army, such a fine matter of fact spirit.

A lot of things have happened since you have been away. A large number have gotten married. I think you will not remember many of them. But I am quite certain that you will remember Augusta Steen who married a young man, James Johnson who used to live with Mr. & Mrs. Luis Martin 154 Chester St., Lulu Washington and James Sessions became companions in May. Miss Anna Sythe King Weston's niece became the wife of Mr. James Warmack last Dec. Well these are enough to give you an idea what is doing in the matrimonial field. Now for the field in which you are particularly interested just now, with yourself I have the names 8 of our boys who are in some branch of the army. They are as follows: Corporal Leroy Farmer, Elmer Suggs, Malcolm Fisher, Mr. Ernest Williams, Ruben Colly, Clarence Brown, James Warmack, and Fredrich Steen. Then recently a great number of our folks have been getting killed, some revolvers, some by autos and a few by real weapons razors. So much for these folks who have not been willing to wait for Uncle Sam to say, Take aim and fire.

I suppose your people have told you about the long siege of sickness I had during the months of March, April, and May. And I have not fully recovered yet. I suffered with bladder trouble, to which most men of my age are subject. Prostrate hands caused me to have three operations and to remain in the hospital 9 weeks. I suppose too that they told you about the church celebrating the 50th Anniversary of my pastorate here of the Michigan Ave. Baptist Church. E and as you cowboys would say I am still going strong, doing my work as chaplain of the City Hospital. And preaching every Sun. at 11 A. M. And then we have a varied service Sun. nights. Leroy you will be interested to know that since I came out of the hospital the 21st of May I have baptized ten persons, and have received into our membership another preacher, the Rev. Mr. Sterling Mills and his wife. He has been to us, so far a great help. You will be interested also to know that our church and the churches and citizens in general gave me in the neighborhood of $12,000 for my Anniversary gift; $102,000 of which came in the form of a receipted bill from the Klipper Bros. for work done on my car. And more than $100,000 was given me by members and friends while I was in the hospital.

I must stop now so I shall have something to write the next time. Every body sends much love to you. Write when you can. Your Pastor.
Pvt. Oscar Hall  
37523800  
455 Qm. Ldry. Co.  
Vancouver Bks. Wash.  

My dear Brother Hall:  

I have not answered your last letter as soon as I would have  
if I had not been trying to get some things straightened out with  
our Com. That has charge of our men in the armed forces, who are  
members of our church. This Com. is endeavoring to attend to all  
matters connected with our men. So they have it all arranged now.  
Mr. Smitherman has kindly agreed to send his paper the Buffalo Star  
to all our men. It is very likely that you will get next week’s  
issue.  

You will be pleased to know that the Com. is divided up into  
Camps, and that they had a very fine entertainment last Tues. so  
that they may be able to take care of the men in the armed forces  
by Christmas. The Affair was quite a success, they took in ninety  
six dollars and some cents.  

The third Sunday in this month we are planning to reopen our  
Young Peoples Work for the season. We are planning to have Rev.  
Charles E. Boddie of Rochester, N. Y. come and give the address. I  
am very glad to believe that you will be with us in spirit.  

Things in general in Buffalo and in our church move on about  
as usual. Every now and then a soldier comes and takes away one  
of our girls. But he leaves a five dollar bill with the fortunate  
preacher.  

I think you will remember Mrs. Bettie Anderson, who was very  
sick here last Spring. She went South and returned the other day  
looking fine, and is getting very well so that she can attend church  
services and other church functions.  

I hope you will get much satisfaction from reading your Buffalo  
Star when it comes.  

Mrs. Nash and Jesse wish to be remembered to you.  

Write when you can.  

I am as ever your Pastor,
October 28th 1945.

Privt. William Gregory,
22nd Chemical A.
Camp Gordon, Ga.

My dear Bill:

I have thought much about you, and I am very glad to know definitely your whereabouts.

In the beginning of your letter you write, "I have not forgotten you or your church." Permit me to make this correction, I have not forgotten you nor OUR church. For that is the way we like to have our Boys feel, who have gone out from Michigan Ave. Baptist church, that it is their church, and shall continue to be as long as they are on earth. On earth we are the church militant, and in the beyond we shall be the church triumphant. Well so much for that; we are not so much bothered as it might seem about technicalities. But we are very glad you remembered us, your comrades in God's army. And you may always count on us to remember you, our comrade in Uncle Sam's army.

We have a com, in our church, of which Mrs. Emma Williams of 86 Alexander Place, to keep in touch with our Boys. And we had her read your letter in the church on Sunday morning. Everybody was glad to listen to it and to know the reasonable sane attitude you sustain to the army. And we know that your wisdom will enable you even to adjust yourself and get your bearings in Georgia, so that you will not allow any material conditions to destroy your happiness, which after all comes from within.

We have a roll in the vestibule of our church upon which the names of all our Boys who are in the army are placed. The Com. has put, also all the snapshots that you sent so that every body can see and admire them.

You will be glad to know that we celebrated the 50th Anniversary of my pastorate here with the Mich. Ave. Baptist church. We had a great time. I had not, nor have I even yet fully recovered from my sickness with which I spent nine weeks in the hospital and had three operations for an urology, a bladder, thruble. But I am glad to report that I am getting on fairly well so that I am able to attend to my church work and my duties as chaplain in the Edward Meyer Memorial (City)Hospital.

Every thing here in Buffalo, in the church and out of the church moves on in quite a satisfactory way. Everybody has plenty work and is making good money.

All send much love to you, and hope that you will keep well and come back to us when it is all over. Write when you can and tell us if in any way we can make you more happy.

I am as always your Pastor,
December 18th 1941.

Mr. LeRoy F. Farmer,
Battery "A" 16th Br.
6th F.A.T.A.
Fort Bragg, N. C.

My dear LeRoy:

First of all let me sincerely thank you for your letter. It reveals a philosophy that only certain occasions and conditions make possible. From my general knowledge of you, and I have known you since you were a very small boy, I have never thought of you as a person that would take things, the only sensible way to take them, the way you are taking them. To me the general statements and expressions concerning the military situation of which you are now a part, a very important part, are exceptionally fine, comforting and relieving. I hope that whatever may be the part, and however serious it may be that you may always have the very fine spirit it manifested in your letter.

The way that you have described everything connected with your military life enables us to have fellowship with you in your experiences without being sad or sorrowful. So again I thank you for your letter. Wife read it over and over and felt as good over it as I did. And then I took it to the church and had her read it there. And everyone seemed as elated over it as I am.

In the first world war we had we had a great number of young men. But in this one so far we have only bad, including yourself, three, Melcom Fisher, Elmer Suggs and LeRoy Farmer. Of course I wish it might be so that we would not have any more. But it does not look that way now.

LeRoy you may think of me as being strange, in that I read and talk about the war just as little as possible. I think this is a time when all of us who are older should keep ourselves free of the horrors and horrors of war, and keep ourselves fit to help our younger fellow citizens to be brave, courageous, and hopeful. And above all we wish to help them to maintain an unflinching, abiding FAITH in GOD.

I am glad and proud of the fact we are related as we are. For it has privilege and joy through the years to watch your physical, mental and spiritual growth. You have not always grown just as I would like to have had you grow, but you have done what I think is far better, you have grown in your own way so that now you are a man physically, mentally and SPIRITUALLY, and I think you are described in I Cor. 13:11.

Well about all we are talking about and working on now is our Fiftieth Anniversary Drive in which we are trying to raise at least $2,000 and make some improvements on our church building, and celebrate my anniversary next June, if I can live that long.

We wish to have a line from you always, so write when you can.
Very truly your Pastor,

Edward Nash