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New York, N.Y.
6 June 45

My dear Family:

A year ago today - and the real business was just getting under way over here. I, myself, heard the news about 6 or 7 A.M. on one of the wards of a General Hospital in Salisbury, England, where I was a patient. For a long time I'd been troubled somewhat by two large warts - one on my big toe and one on my thumb. Both had grown well up under the nails & were nuisances. While we were living in tents, waiting to be sent to France, I thought I'd get rid of the warts, & so got myself sent to a hospital. They took about 10 times as long to heal as I'd anticipated, & so D-Day caught me laid up nursing a very tender thumb & a foot which hurt when I walked. I was worried sick for fear I'd be left behind in England when the unit sailed for France. Actually I limped

around on that sore toe for weeks
after we got to France, & did
dressings on it in more cow pastures
& apple orchards than I can count!
But they both healed eventually. As
we used to say - "I got by!"

It has been a momentous year.
I can still remember the uneasy
feeling I had those hours of D-Day.
Aside from the eerie feeling that
hundreds of good, strong, healthy
young bodies were being destroyed in
those very hours, one knew that
at least certain aspects of our lives
were being forecast in those few
hours, and that much of the
character of the future world was
being shaped. For if we were
thrown back (& one still wondered
if the Germans would pull an
effective "secret weapon" out) I
felt all of us - this time - would
have to go through what only the
South suffered before, & possibly
even worse. It has been a year
to witness, & I'm glad we were all
able to experience it, & I pity those
who must come after us & learn
about it by reading books!

All this activity in the field of (3)
statesmanship, international planning,
etc. certainly fires your blood
doesn't it! I have recently finished
a magnificent book. "Woodrow
Wilson & the Lost Peace" it's called,
written by Thomas A. Bailey. It's
an absolute must. Bailey is a
History Professor out in California.
He has written a very careful, detailed
study of Wilson's part in the World
War I & the making of the peace.
It is one of the most illuminating
works I've ever read. It is
absolutely fascinating! Please get it
& read it - You'll love it, I'm sure.
About the same time I saw the
movie "Wilson" which is also
excellent, & I'm now reading a
thing called "The Time for Decision",
by former Under-Secretary of State
Sumner Welles. It, too, promises
to be very instructive; apparently
a study of what was done after the
last war to establish a peaceful
world, & why it didn't work.
You'll enjoy it too, I'm certain.

As I become a little more informed, I wonder not so much why we are now having a World War II, but rather how it was postponed thus long. Read these things & let me hear your reactions to 'em.

The process of deployment, as they call it, or re-deployment, I think it is, is getting under way. You have probably read published accounts of the plan. As I understand it men & women of the Army & associated organizations are to be deployed in three main zones: ① Army of Occupation, ② C.B.I. (China - Burma - India Theatre, ③ Z of I (Zone of the Interior, U.S.A.) Return to Z of I ~~is~~ or rather eligibility for return to Z of I is to be based on several factors. Length of service, Length of ~~that~~ service overseas, combat service, dependents, decorations. These are evaluated in terms of points. For example each month service contributes one point & each month overseas also a point (counted up to May 1945. So for my 36 months service I have 36 points, & for

my 34 months overseas another 15
34 points. I was in units which
were declared to have participated
in three campaigns - Battle of
Normandy, Battle of Northern France,
& Battle of Germany - so I have
3 Bronze Stars - at 5 points each.
This brings me to $36 + 34 + 15 = 85$
points. After working out all that
one's fate is still dependent on the
primary consideration of military
necessity; in other words if they
say they need a man or a unit, the
points are so much ink on so much
paper. Nevertheless, military necessity
aside, the number of points is a
factor. At one time 85 points was
minimum for returning to Z or J,
at another time all those with over
115 or 120 points will go home &
be discharged from Army, etc. It
varies from time to time, & the
reports vary even more. But the
important thing, it seems to me, is
to remember that we are part of
an Army which is in the middle
of a War which has been tragically
costly both in men & materiel,

I expect I'll spend the rest of (7)
the war in 2 of 3 where I can
keep in touch with you, MM &
this cheers me more than I can
tell you. I become increasingly
certain all the time that I want to
quit Anesthesia & do Surgery, and
I intend to make a really strong
bid for it before we set up again.
If ~~it~~ it is impossible to make the
change, I propose to go after a
majority. I carry more work and
responsibility than a good many
Majors, & if I am to continue, I
propose to have the rank. It's a
good deal more money, which I'm
gonna need, post-war. On the
other hand, I think that once I
accept a majority I'm labelled
as Anesthetist for the duration,
for my surgical experience &
ability would hardly justify a
majority on a surgical service.
But I'd prefer doing surgery as a
captain than Anesthesia as a Major.
But I certainly don't think it wise

to do Anesthesia indefinitely as a
Capt. - Not without a fight, anyhow.
So you see things are complicated.
One of the boys - a recovered prisoner -
is en route to N. Y. C now where
he's gonna see Whipple & write me
what Whipple has to say about
Surgery, & Whipple, & Presbyterian, &
us - all relating to after the war,
Whipple probably will retire soon
after war - I understand the strain
is telling on him. I've always
wanted to work with the Boston
group - Harvard - but Presby-
terian is doing a lot of expansion
right after war - And as you can
see I just don't know yet - It's
hard to know how to jump.

Well, if you've managed to
get this far, write me & talk to
me - I wish I could see my way
a little clearer, but I'm strain-
ing my eyes to see what I can
see - I'm fine & healthy - & I
know one thing for sure - I
have a wonderful family & I
love you dearly -

Yours
Elmer Key