Tuesday Afternoon
March. 30-43

Dear, dear little Boy:-

Your two wonderful, precious letters just came this morning and how I did enjoy them and what wonderful news they brought with them and the spirit of a happy little boy who will soon see his dear old home after these six long months, yes short in some ways, long, very long in others. And to see his little dog. I think Bobby feels that something is in the wind because we had a long long talk. I am quite sure that he is looking for "Boy". I know I am.

Mr.Breeze the Fuller brush man was just here and we had a long long talk about his accepting Christ. When he became a Christian and his wife didn't she told that he was living the life of a hypocrite and he said that he never would so he no longer attended church but has lead a clean moral life, nevertheless but he has back sliden and after I gave him a good talk and used his on quotations of the bible and added a few more, when he left he asked me to remember him in prayer. I immediately asked Jesus to deal with his heart, to draw him back into the fold and I believe that the Lord is dealing with him but he just won't yield. He was so glad to know that you and I are witnessing for the Lord and wants us to continue and when he left I told him that I hoped to see a change in his attitude when I saw him again. So do remember him too. I hate to see him so close and still just outside the door. I got a lovely hand mirror from him as I didn't have anything decent in that line to bring with me and is it a beauty. There is a glass on both sides and the rest of the mirror is the same plastic material as the handle of the clothes brush and hair brush is in the white. I have something beautiful and something to be proud of in that line, in fact it is so lovely that I will be scared to death to use it for fear I get it broke in some manner.

Well here I am back at my letter again. I went out to rub the car down since I washed it yesterday and it has had time to dry and Harold drove in with Pop Barton. He sure is fat and well looking. He is awful tired and he is staying out with the kids until he gets rested up. He was so happy to get back. Edith said he never was so sick of Calif. in his life, the wounded are being brought in to Calif and he was going with the kids thro some place where they were and he just stopped and couldn't go any farther. He said he just couldn't stand to see any more of it. Edith said he was a lot more human than he used to be and he said we didn't know anything about war back here. It just made him hearsick to see the young 17 year old boys that was out there in uniform and in the hospitals. It has taken Dad Barton a long time to begin to grow up.

You surely haven't got some of my letters because I know I have written many times since March 20th and I wrote you immediately at that time that Jack and Betty had moved. They got a place on north Court right across from the cemetery two doors north of Kembles green house. I am glad that they are at least settled and out from here. I would not want to leave the house in their care because he isn't here enough now and she is not to be depended on to take care of hereself let alone the house. I will feel more satisfied with it closed than to have some one in it that you can't depend on and then I have too much in it to turn over t two kids.

Wow, is it ever hot here today, the thermometer has hovered around 78 all day. The wind has blown a regular gale for two days now and I hope tomorrow will be the last one. There is generally three days stiff wind this time of the spring and I hope it lets up so that I can get some raking and picking up done in the yard. I carried the cans and the pop bottles away last night about 9:30 as the water had got in them and froze and bursted them. I had four loads of cans and things like that. I have a lot of old stocks to cut out of the flowers and the roses to prune for they sure did winter kill.

Well here is more news. Nora is selling her home again and going back to Oregon. His health is so bad and Helen's is too that they think it will be better for them and now is the time to sell and make money if you want to unload property. So they will be here until about the middle of April and then if the place is sold by that time they are leaving and it is just about to break Nora's heart. She is going to sell the furniture right in with the house and make a clean break of the whole thing, only take out her personal things. So thats that. And what do you think. She has her heart set on settling in Eugene. She said it was a beautiful place and the garden spot of the west. Hair cuts are gettin close to the $1.00 mark out there and so much business that they can use all the barbers that come that way. I don't think that the change will help Joe much be-cause he is just getting plain old and worn out and he is not well at all. Helen has sinus terribly and that climate is fine for curing it.

I was so glad to know that you will be here by the 19th or so soon after. I am all excited. I am sure trying to get everything done that I can. I tried to work on my coats today and it seems like everyone calls on my most busiest days. I talked with Atterbury and told her to save you six copies of the song so if I don't get them before you come we will have to drive over after then. Opal's baby is due in a few weeks and her husband is in Pearl Harbor now.

I don't know about the vibraharp but I am sure Bobby will think it is grand to go on a nice long trip again. He gets so mad at me because I don't take him for a ride. Maybe you will lose some of that waistline if you don't have someones home to run into and eat. You sure struck it lucky on the films. Here they will only let us have one roll if we are lucky enough to land at the store when films come in. That sure is a terrific name that the drug store or store where you got the film, has.

If you come home by the 19th I would suggest that you only get a one way ticket but if you get the rates on the round trip and it isn't much more I would get that in case something happened that you would have to go back on the train. I really think that you should get the round trip ticket but I will leave that up to you. You may not get traveling time and of course your time for coming home may not meet up with the dates in the book but I think they will because this page of stamps is good until May 21st. They became usalble March 22nd and I haven't used any yet so you will have 32 gallons in that book and the ration board will give you enough to drive back if you go to them but I cannot do it for you, see? Then the "B" card which Jack got is good from March, 16th so that means eight gallons for March and eight for April on that. So I think we can make it with the extra from the ration board but I would get the round trip ticket because it will be the safest and cheapest in the long run.

I think we are going to have rain, for two days the smoke has been coming down and I think it will finally get around to it when this wind stops blowing and I am more sure than ever because I have the car all washed clean but I am not taking it out in the mud, you can bank on that.

I am sorry that Jim has such a bad burn, they are so sore and take so long to heal, they are not like a cut. I know because I have had my share of them in life, powder burn and scalding water. I'll bet it does seem strange to have two springs and another one coming up. You will have to hurry to beat ours the. It is surprising how things have grown in the last two days of warm sunshine. They would because the ground is so full of moisture and thesun so warm. The grass is so green and the tulip leaves about four inches long and the elms have got all fuzzy and tasseled out today. You should see the tree tops along the river, they look so heavy and brown, just like leaves were not far behind. The air is full of birds and bird songs. The robin is singing this evening and how good it sounds to hear him again and the other birds early in the mornings.

If Skinner is the ugliest man in the bunch, there must be a pretty good lookin bunch of fellows around there.

Doesn't it seem strange to have so many niggers around? But I'll bet they know that they have to keep their place don't they? I notice that the little girl is barefoot, is it because of poverty or will the weather permit it? I am barefoot right now as I am writing and feel like I could wade in the creek and not mind it at all. Elsie Lea looks like a nice child.

You say you hope that I feel as good about your coming as you do. Say Keed you don't know the half of it and I am not going to tell you either because you would just laugh.

I am glad you enjoy being at the camp and I'm sure Jim appreciates your staying there now that he is in the hospital. He has someone he can depend on and that means a lot to him.

Yes I know I will enjoy the trip down and when I get there too. I like tovisit new places and pilfer all around them. I will get a kick out of the stores and museium and all the things round about. You boys will have to be careful of the park and learn to keep it looking well. A good lesson for many and I wish some of the brats in this town were in some training place where they would learn not to trespass on peoples lawns and parkings.

Don't worry about me not going back with you when you come because I am. I have all that I am going to do about clothing now for the time being. I might need some wash dresses, but everything so far is ready. I am going to work on my coats this evening and get them hemmed, that is get the hand work done and there will be a few little things to do up town yet but that will only take a half a day.

I will call Ruby and find out where camp McCain is and if Benny and the boys are still there. I am so a twitter that I can sit down and relax or do anything but just run around from here to ther and try to do everything at once. Well it is 8:30 and I think I had better sign off and get to bed because I think I will have to build a fire in the morning as the wind is turning cold. It may be fair in the morning but I have my doubts tonight. I must fly into the work for tomorrow is the last day of March and you know what comes after that.

Bobby has curled up on one of the dining room chairs on which I have put one of the little pads or covers and giving me those big rolling looks out of his eyes as if to say that it is about time to go to bed. He is a rotten one. I expect that he feels a little bit chilly now. I feel like putting my shoes on again. I didn't get the black coat finished but will have to do it tomorrow then start on the tan one. I am still very proud of my mirror. You know a person receives a little bit better thought and respect when they have nice personal things when they go among strangers like I will be, so I do not feel the least bit wasteful getting this to go along with my other nice brushes. If I should get over to Upchurchs while down in that part of the country I would like to appear fair as I believe they have things pretty nice and maybe I can get to do some singing for him altho I am just common. But too goodfor 2nd and Jefferson to be able to digest it. Mrs. Stoltz said last week that if I had put in as much time and study as she had that I would be, or would have been a double for her for our voices are so much alike. She went to Chicago saturday to hear some opera and I know to take some training too. She doesn't let herself get stale.

Well, my darling, each day brings you nearer and I must hurry now and have things well under way. So I will hie me off to bed and dream of you. Bless you my little boy and hurry up. Bobby and I are waiting. God bless you and bring you safe home to us. Be careful and don't run around at the stations, stay inside. Betty said for you not to leave the Union Station at Chicago as it is not safe on foot in the daytime let alone at night. Well Goodnight darling. I will look for your letter tomorrow.

Love - Mother
& Bobby

You should have your electric plate now or very soon as I sent it Mon morning insured.

Friday Evening.
April 2-43

My Dearest Angel:-

What are your doing tonight, writing to me I'll bet you? Well so am I writing to you and what joy it will be when I will be talking to you my darling little boy, I can't hardly wait to see you. Or will we be just so happy and thrilled that we just sit and look and look at each other? Well we will see what happens when you arrive.

I didn't go to church again this evening as I didn't know whether Welshon's would be on the job or not. He has been scouting around with the sailor preacher to Bloomfield, Pella, Burlington and other places and I wasn't going up to hear some one like Darner talk because if I did I would get the itch right in front of everyone and might go to scratching.

Today was my lesson day, and when I told Stoltz that I would only have two more lessons at the most she nearly went up the spout as she said she just had me going good again. She ordered some music for me, a sacred song which is so good just at Lenten season and she suggested that I sing it at the church but they would declare that they were in grand Opera or something like that if I did for it is one of "Bachs" lovely songs, "Come Dear Jesus".

I got home about 1:30 and then got to sewing on the dress I am making out of the yard goods which I got back when I was working. I sewed until it begin to get dark and I couldn't see to do any more and was so nervous that I just had to quit I will try to finish it tomorrow unless I go to town. I am out of food, that is bread, etc. I don't know whether I can get any meat or not because I used 10 points of my 16 weekly points and got hamburger and Bobby got all but a few cakes of that. He ate a big dish of Strongheart dry food tonight. I soaked it and cooked it a little while before giving it to him.

K.B.I.Z. is playing a record which we had, Gypsy Baron Sweetheart and how it brings back the days when Mother and you were with me and we played it and liked it so much. Sometimes there are pieces of music whic nearly kills me to hear but after all it is still as beautiful to me as it ever was.

Tonight I have to copy my dill pickle receipe for the ladies at the church as they just fell in love with my Kosher dills at the conference meals. Well I am good for something at least, aren't I.? I am going to have some of my favorite receipes with me when I come down there and if I can make those dear boys some pies I am sure they will enjoy it won't they? I know I have a stack of the lemon pie filling to make you some of those good lemon pies that you liked.

I sent you two post cards today and I hope you get them. Funny that you don't get mail sent to Vicksburg. They had better be getting it to you or I will start the ball to rolling down there too. Your letter of the 30th came today. There was two days that I didn't get any mail from you, Wed. and Thurs. I hope I get a letter from you tomorrow. I got another check from the Government today and it was just for $37.00, that makes $148.00 that they have sent me or in other words for four months., so I suppose this one today makes it up to date until another month rolls around. Next week the insurance check will come I suppose, as that will make ten days around the 9th that it was sent in and Rickard said that ten day would be the length of time that it would take. Everything is taken care of but the weekly Metropolitan and the houshold insurance and I will take a day to go up and wind them up. I have some more clothes coming either tomorrow or Monday but by Monday being the 5th I will have to fan up and pay the light bill whether or no, so I will take care of some other little things then if I have to go after my dresses and lounging robe. I just have to have some nice things if I should happen to get over to Upchurch's.

My brassiere hasn't come to Nora's yet so when that comes and these other things I will be pretty well set. I have my two new coats all shortened and the buttons on and I wore the dark one with my new black felt hat and the new navy blue shirt waist dress and got a fine compliment from Mrs. Stoltz on all of them.

I am glad that Jim is back and I hope his ankle gets along all right without any complications. Maybe he will remember the next time that gasoline will explode very easily. It is too bad that you are so shorthanded at this time with the boys sick and some away.

You sort of profiteered on your pie didn't you? Well I hope you all enjoyed it. I will just stuff you with pie when you are home. and some cake too.Eh? I'm sorry to know that you are blue when you are so near to coming home. But I know and understand that feeling too for I feel that way just because I am so anxious for you to get here and I know you are that way about coming home too. Well I told Bobby and he is all figets every time that I make a move he is down out of his chair and running to the door. When I tell him that boy is coming he runs and jumps on the back of the davenport and looks and looks and then turns to me as if to say, "You told me a fib.". But he will see in a few days won't he?

Well, everything is nearly ready for you, all but shuting of the water and the lights. I am getting things out that I want to take and things I am going to pack so with the finishing touches and getting out I am all ready. Jack and Betty have had their place and been in it since the 20th. I couldn't afford to leave them here, I will explain when I see you.

I got a birthday card off to Ralph Dial today, he is in the Teacher College at Eauclaire, Wisconsin. Raymond, Alfred Carman and Benny Doup are at Grenado Miss just north of you a ways. Alta just got back from there and she goes to Chicago and then out on the I.C. to Grenada, just nine hours from Chicago. I geuss we will have to go up and see them on one of your week ends off. It is on highway 51 and Alta said it was a beautiful road. You have to claim to be a relative in order to get in to see them as they will not let anyone else in to the camp. I will look for the map or it will be all right if you just bring it with you.

Glad you like the preacher down there and as you say, I don't think anyone of them could be just as good as Welshons. He is hard to beat. I'm glad that you got to play for them but wait until they hear the vibraharp, but don't puff me up too much to them because they may be like 2nd and Jefferson, I might not have that way of singing enough like the Colletts and Mrs. Welshons to please them and I refuse to sing that way for anyone. It is just murdering music.

You must have your eye on the pitcher and goblets, I'm glad that I haven't seen them or I might weaken. I'll bet they are beautiful. The glass plates are sure pretty and I think you will like the sherbert dishes too.

Well, tomorrow is the 3rd. Three days off of 19 leaves 16. I sure am counting them. It has been cold today and this evening before dark it was down to 32 but I hope it is warmer tomorrow. The wind has been from the north all day. Mrs. Stoltz and Morrell's chorus gave a concert out at the Naval Air base tonight. She was telling me that the Commander Grow has had the Submarine beer joint or night club closed here in Ottumwa as several of the boys got veneral deceases there and I hope he closes some more since our city dads don't do anything about it. Welshons sure has been ripping it into the fellows who are supposed to running the city.

Well it is ten o'clock and I geuss I had better be getting off to bed so that I can get up early and get busy again. Bobby is curled up in the rocker asleep. He gets to snoring every once in a while. The Zepher is coming in and how I wish you were on it.

I am tired even tho I haven't been working hard today. I have the kitchen all washed up clean and the windows cleaned and the clean fresh curtains up. I hope they stay that way until you can see them as clean for once. They were black when I took them down. I have the yard raked and leaves burned and I put grass seed in where we had the peppers and cucumbers last year. I hope it gets a chance to start this year.

I have written you telling you about Nora selling her home again and going back out to Oregon. I hope they make a go of it this time because they can't come back and build another one. I think it is a foolish move but Joe is bound that he is going and that he will feel better but I don't think he will. Helen has not heard from Benny since she came back from New York, he is on his way over and Merle will be called any time now.

Well I will say by now until I write again and Oh how I want the days to hurry but I want to get everything finished up before so I must hurry, hurry tomorrow and the rest of the days that are left.

Now tell me, did you get your electric plate and the tea? I have mislaid the insurance receipt. I would. Well you should see how I have to spin around here about things. Don't seem like I would just here alone but when I have to decide everything, do everything and chase around it makes me dizzy. Well here is Good night and God Bless you, and remember when you come thro Chicago, don't go out around that depot as it is a terrible place. Betty said to be sure and tell you not to go roaming around outside as the worst kind of humanity hangs around that place. I suppose I will worry about things like that until I see you. But do be careful. And don't miss your train connections. Lots of love from your anxious Mother and littel Bobby Boy., to our sailor with the Navy Blue eyes!

I love you so little boy, do come soon.

Love
Mother
+
Bobby