



## "Dear Folks"

*Andrew Metal*

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"Dear Folks" is a collection of letters written by a young soldier to his family during World War II from his first day at an Army Reception Center to his last, leaving Frankfurt, Germany, Headquarters of the US Army of Occupation. These letters read like a diary depicting a GI's daily experience in basic training at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, assignment as a clerk in a bureaucratic outfit at Ft. Meade, Maryland where daily hundreds of citizen soldiers were processed in anticipation of the D-day invasion, and the further adventures of this soldier in wartime Paris on assignment with the War Department Observers Board accompanying his Colonel who was on a special reporting mission covering the Armored Divisions in battles across Western Europe.

The letters cover in astonishing detail the daily routine of the GI at two major military installations, the relatively luxurious life of a GI in recently liberated Paris and the less than glamorous life of the GI on the battle front following Patton's Army across Northern France and Germany with revealing accounts of local reaction to both Allied conquests and the final liberation of the city of Pilsen, Czechoslovakia. It's an intimate history of World War II life and culture recording the popular music and movies of the time, the cost of common, everyday items of purchase and foremost, the general attitude to wartime life by both the GI and their civilian relatives.

The very personal content of the original letters has been edited out but enough retained to reveal the close family ties of the soldier and the warm family support. This is history experienced by one teen-age soldier in World War II told in his own words.

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