

Betty writes to Jim

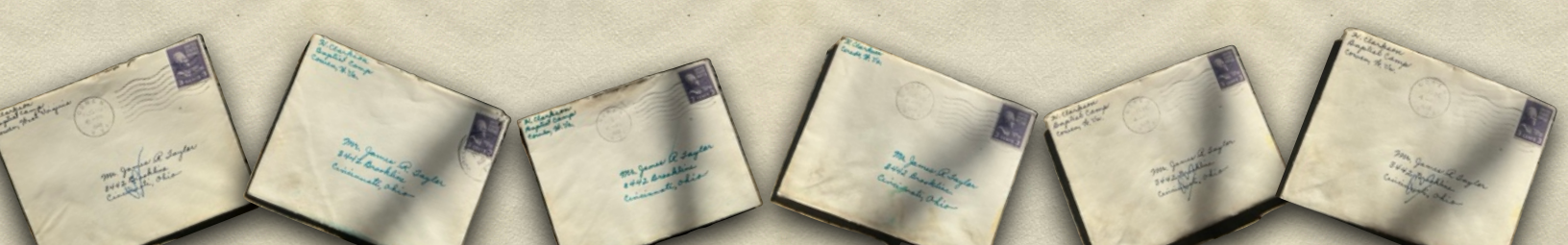
July - August 1948

2 weeks

11 letters

a smattering of church camp gossip
a daydream of days growing old
and some pin up pictures

held together with stationery and the best of pens





July 27, 1948

start

July 27, 1948

Jim, Dear,

I've read your letter four or five times and each time I find something I didn't see the first time. I expect to keep reading and reading it until I get another.

It was [illegible] long days. I wish I could go to sleep and sleep until time to go. Then I would'nt have to wait those long days.

My Grandmother wondered how I got downstairs the other night to answer the 'phone so quickly. My cousin (she called to us from across the street when we got back from the fire) asked me what I meant by keeping such late hours. I told them

made me feel so safe and secure when I'm with you. I surprised myself when I suggested that we go see a fire that early — I mean late at night. I let you take me by the hand and lead me through some boggy lumber mill when at any other time I would have been apprehensive about going out and even thought for much good dollars.

I want to know — Jim and can not all the rest. I want to know everybody who meant much to you.

Jim, I don't know what you mean by publicity, but here's my idea. We can talk about it in Richmond. I want Mother to meet you first. I think it only fair to her and Daddy to get in the habit of seeing you around. Then we can shout it from the house tops. Oh, yes, I want a proposal too. Did you forget?

I found a picture I had made several years ago. Doesn't look too much like me.

Oh, Jim, Honey please don't build me up to much too yourself. I will pray and try to live up to your every expectations if may. I would so much to be what you want me to be.

[illegible] say. The only way I [illegible] what I want to say is perfect love,

Perfect love knows no ending
Lowly we kneel in prayer before
thy throne,
That ours may be the love that
knows no ending,
And breaks upon eternal love
and life.

My love to you, Harriet

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birds with one stone.

When I stop and think about meeting all your folks Sunday, I get butterflies inside. I didn't realize how important that meeting was. I would have worried if they liked me and cleaned up for you. They were [illegible] and I could tell that you mean much to them.

I was proud of you too. Proud to think that you would take me with you. Proud of you when the girl, I forget her name, at young people's meeting asked for "Jimmy" Taylor to dismiss the service. Proud of you when Dr. Trimmer told me that I was in good company. Love you because you

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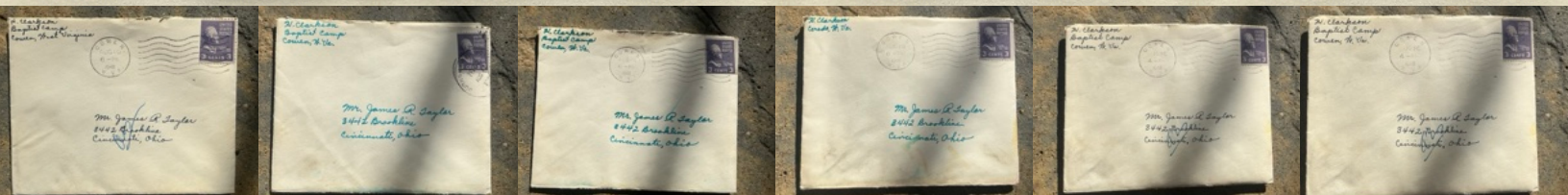
I had to keep you awake so you would'nt miss your train.

Did anyone ever call you an absent-minded professor. You may have locked the keys in the car, forgotten your check book, and have lost your pen, but Jim, I didn't get any pictures. I opened your letter several feet from the post [illegible] and I was elated [illegible] I ran home — but I didn't find a picture. I retraced my steps but could not find it. Did you forget it, or keep some other woman in town now have a picture of my man?

You can write psychology to me all you like. Not that I understand it or appreciate it as much as other letter subject matter, I'll let you talk too









July 29, 1948

start

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Mother called us out, we told her that it was a dog's hair. Imagine, a dog with hair just like mine!

Chapter Three - "I Go to School"

you know that in every room, almost all, there's a little girl plumper than all the rest — that was me. So I studied hard — was almost a book worm — to compensate — to give me self confidence. However, since then I have learned that people like you for just being you — not for what you see seen.

I was a "Blue Bird" in music, like spelling, and history. Wrote a play about John Smith in the sixth grade that was presented in class.

Jim, this is fun, writing about things that have happened — sharing with you my favorite memories of the past. Pears like I'm going to close this part of Chapter three — and under separate cover begin again. I can just keep rattling on and you can't say a word in self-defense.. cont on no. 2

July 29, 1948

Dear Jim,

Just got back from up town. Spent practically all of my last month's check. I do that. Save and save and then spend it all at one time. I consider it money well spent so I don't have a guilty, spend-thrift conscience.

The [illegible] boys, possibly a few others, are planning to spend this week-end in Cincinnati. My first impulse was to include myself in their plans. Then we could have that wonderful week-end that you have planned. But on second thought I realized that Daddy would disinherit (sp?) me of all the millions that would be mine from his latest inventions.

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Chapter One, "I Was Born"

On October 16, a year and a day after the Taylor twins had caused such a stir in the neighborhood, a daughter was born to the Clarence Clarkson's. She wasn't an unusual baby. Ate, slept, and cried like the best of them. To keep a friendly feeling among the fair folks, they name her for her two grandmothers — Harriet for her maternal [illegible] and [illegible] paternal grand mother.

Chapter Two - "Like Father Like Daughter"

I'll never forget one experience I had before I started to school. There was another Betty who lived in the house on the corner. Her father, too, was a barber. Need I say more? Having just had my hair trimmed made no difference to me, I let the other Betty cut mine and I cut hers. We hid behind the swing, when

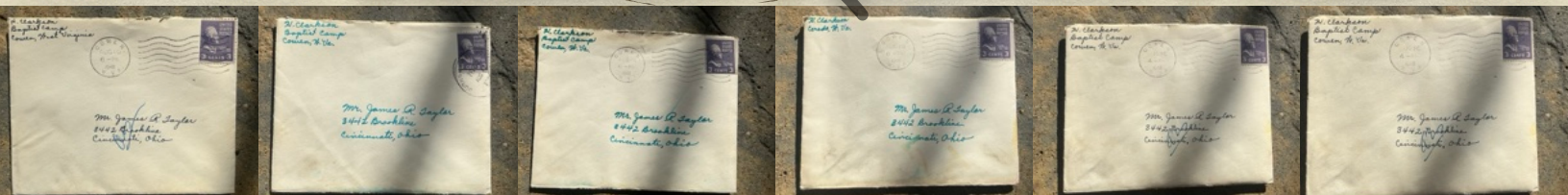
-2-

I've been looking forward to going to Richwood but hasn't been delighted by making the trip; but now — in such wonderful company — this will be one trip that is absolutely necessary.

Just saw in the paper that Easter Parade is now showing in Huntington. On your recommendation that it was "a real good," I'll make special effort to [illegible].

Joe seems to be taking good care of you. Bless him! If he keeps you entertained your attention won't wander toward some of those "good-lookin'" blondes. I'd like to meet Joe so I can thank him.

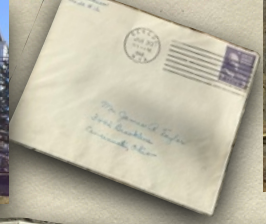
I've let you get two chapters ahead of me on these autobiographies so I'll take you as far as I can on two pages.















start

July 29?, 1948

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P.S. I read your version of the Psalm and compared it to the original. your way makes it seem so plain that anyone could understand it. I agree with your version. Just changing the words to fit our way of expressing makes a lot of difference.

Speaking of Psalms, one of my little girls, 4 yrs old, says," He maketh me [illegible] green pastures. Another said in John 3:16.." Gave his only forgotten Son ...": So some people, far too many, he is the "forgotten Son.

'Bye again,
H.E.C.

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Chapter Three (Con't)

In high school I became quite a writer. Friday's in the eighth grade was a day set aside for special talents in English. I considered one of my short stories very good. In the nineth grade I wrote a description to which I've planned a sequel but have never written it.

So when I took speech I had developed quite a "[illegible]" and liked to hear myself giving a speech without practice. [illegible] I wrote two plays we gave in class. Now I think they were only lukewarm; but then they were hot stuff.

It wasn't until the tenth grade, while I was taking Geometry, that I became interested in math. The teacher had a dynamic personality. I think she had me hypnotized. She would take us through theorms as if she were taking us by the hand and leading us through a deep dark forest to a place of

-3-

I look in the mirror but I look the same to me. But just today Lulu (you must meet Lulu, she's blonde and a character and a half) and I were in the drug store with one of the older teacher's at school. Lulu said, whispering to her," Betty's got a "feller". Miss S, said quote: I know it you can see it in her eyes. When people get to reading your eyes that's pretty good.

[illegible] say," Darkie, I love you"; and I [illegible] know the world must surely be a bed of roses - with no thorns.

If I don't hurry I won't get this volume in the mail and I may get put in the dog house.

So, Bye for now.
Love,
Betty.

Sorry, I mean,
Harriet (over)

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bright sunlight on the other side. I thought math was the most fascinating thing I had ever known. I'd have rather work problems than eat (I didn't get any dinner though).

I proceeded to study solid geometry, trig, chemistry and had a class in physics for which I am very grateful. That little bit of physics that I had I've kept me from being too ignorant [illegible] some of the things that goes on 'round about me.

So, the story goes, I went to Marshall and I'm now teaching that which I learned in the 7th grade. "Ain't" an education wonderful?

As for chapters four, that's the future and you can help me write it.



















Aug 3, 1948

start

August 3, 1948

Dear Jim,

After noticing the date, I think we should give 15 rahs for Christopher Columbus! It was many, many Aug. 3's ago that he set sail for America. But for him, you might have been a Tayleropoulos or Taylerinski. Maybe I'd been born in India or China and never heard of you. The more I think of it the more I realize what good ol' Chris did us a big favor. — was your trip back? your charming companion did'nt cause you any displeasure. He sounds very interesting. (Dog, that is).

Speaking of publicity, I think a right nice job has been done in Ceredo! Last Sunday afternoon I walked out to my Great-Aunt Ellen's. You know her but perhaps you didn't know that she is part of the family. She has a very nice last name - Tayler. She's Camille's grandmother. I had talked to her on the 'phone about an hour before and she said that she heard I had a bean. So we spent an hour or more talking about this and that and she talked a lot about D. Ann and you. She likes you all a whole lot. While we were talking I played some of Camille's records. Almost as good as Saturday; only we were speaking of you and not to you. I prefer the latter). So you have another buddy in my family besides Uncle Cecil - Aunt [illegible] and biscuits at camp for us? that's [illegible]

Recall back to Saturday (wonder day) again. Remember the 'phone call from my cousin who wanted me to go shopping with her. She called again yesterday and we went shopping. Some other people rode to town with us, but as soon as we were alone, she said, "Now, tell me about this boy from Huntington". Before I was through she was naming people who, she said must be your aunts and etc. I don't know that she knows them personally, but you see the Tayler fame is wide spread. Ah, Jim, Honey, you're in, but solid! Not that it matters, but good.

'Pears like every time I plan to go swimming, the weather man plans and mine don't coincide. Today, Lulu and some girls from Catlettsburg and I planned to go swimming, but there's a — the patter of rain on the roof, so — no swimming.

I like rain though. If you were here, we'd put on rain coats and take a nice long walk. It isn't raining hard like it was the day at the creek. Just a nice rain - on a small scale. Watch out, there's a big mud puddle —

Lo Jean called last night. Said she's going to camp. I knew she was planning to go, but didn't know for sure. If she's any fortune teller at all we should heed her words. She promises a big time (?) for us at Richwood. Seems as if there might be a lot of fun at our expense. That's o.k. by me, we're good sports.

Just two more days and I will be home again. Am I ever lucky that [illegible] such good excuses for coming home! Saturday was wonderful and to think that they (Saturdays) can go on, and on and on & a dream I thought could never come true.

The more I'm with you, Jim, the surer (?) I am that I was waiting for you.

Love,
Harriet










August 3, 1948

start

love, so ——— why shouldn't I be the happiest person in the world!

The following is part of a song that has been going in and out of my mind:

There comes a stillness in the heart,
Like twilight after rain,
When gloom is gone and mists depart,
And new-born smiles remain.

That burden with their care
Grow lighter if we only ask
God's help in silent prayer.

The melody is soft and sweet—tranquil.

I just dropped in to say hello and I've been here a long time so I must be going.

Bye now,
Love
Harriet

August 3, 1948

Dear Jim,

Don't have anything in particular that I want to say. Been thinking of you all day so decided I'd better stop by for another visit.

It stopped raining this afternoon but the sky stayed rather dark and dreary.

Spent the biggest part of the afternoon writing a letter for Aunt Ellen to a missionary in South India. She has been corresponding with her for the past 3 or 4 years. She was at the church this past year so personal acquaintance has strengthened their friendship. She wrote the letter first and I copied it for her.

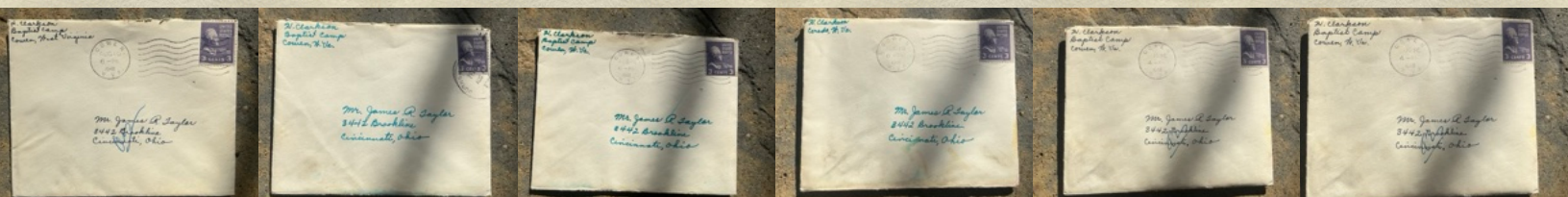
I just remembered tonight to tell you that I have relatives in Cincinnati. They're Mother's Uncle and his wife (my Grandmother's brother). He is yard man at St. Claire or some such rail road shops. They've been there as long as I can remember. They are Mr. & Mrs Ezra Ball of 47- Mott Street. Is that in your part of town?

Your speaking of animals in Barnett Woods reminds me of my visit to Cincinnati when I was 8. I stayed about 3 weeks visiting Aunt Alice and Uncle Ezra. I recall that there was an elderly gentleman who lived accross the street. Often the squirrels(?) would come upon the porch banister where he fed them.

Sometimes they ventured into our back yard. That was my first and only visit to Cincinnati. I see I'm going to have to cultivate the friendship more intensely of that part of the family tree.

I'm getting real excited about going to camp. I think I've missed a lot of life's fun by not getting a lot of pleasure in anticipating things that are going to happen.

Honestly, Jim, I haven't felt so down right happy, and secure — settled I guess I mean, so anxious for tomorrow and so eager to make every second of today count. Once I envied no one for I had no health, family, friends, and a God who watches over me. Now I have all those things plus the love of some one I





August 9, 1948

start

August 9

Dear Jim,

My pen ran out of ink so I had to borrow Lois's. It must not be a fine point pen. Am writing on my knees so the lines may be quite crooked.

We took a wonderful drive yesterday after dinner. The scenery is beautiful. I've seen pictures of hills behind hills behind hills each layer back getting lighter (or is it darker?) — anyway it was picturesque.

(They turned the lights on me last night so this is tomorrow — I mean today.) Lost my tooth brush and no one will let me borrow one. How unneighborly!

The meals we've had so far make me bow my head in shame and ask forgiveness.

Barb has the bunk above mine.

much this week so don't worry. There are no men? here I would even look at.

Gotta go.

Love
Harriet

Long about time to get up, there was the mostest squeeking above.

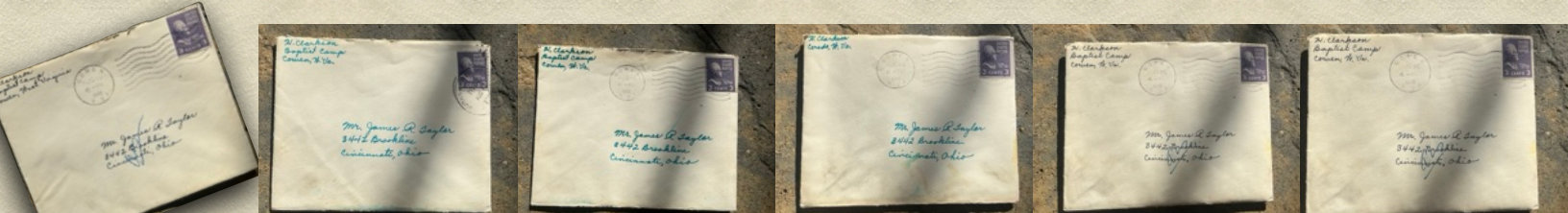
Everybody's gone now. I don't have a class 'til second period. So I'll have an hour free right after breakfast. Terry just breezed in — she and I have the same class.

Jim, you do mean things to me keeping me out so late. I slept 12 hrs night before last, about 9 last night but still I can hardly keep awake. I can't figure out why I should be so sleepy. We never did stay out too late.

(short nap)

Bell woke me up. Bible hour now.

Please, Jim, I may not write





August 11, 1948



start

Lois informs me that Jim Hamer (Sara's pa) is bringing her and some Sr. Hi's up Monday and that we can go home with him. I'll go home first for a day or so before I go to Uncle Cecil's.

Having a wonderful time wish you were here.

Lost a ping pong game today 15-17. Pretty good for a beginner [illegible]

D. Ann just returned. It's time for lights-out so must turn in for now.

Miss you.

Love

Harriet

Aug. 11

Dear Jim,

Proper greetings would be "Dear Old Man", for Son Lee greets me as old Lady — hence old man. You didn't tell me that I'd be acquiring 2 men at once. No other woman in his[illegible] can make that statement. [illegible] have 15 minutes to write. [illegible] responsible, however, for what [illegible] say [illegible] is Barb. H. I'm a[illegible] not responsible for what it writes.

Went swimming yesterday but not in my bathing suit — I had Lulu's. Had an inner tube to hold me up so I ventured out into the deep water.

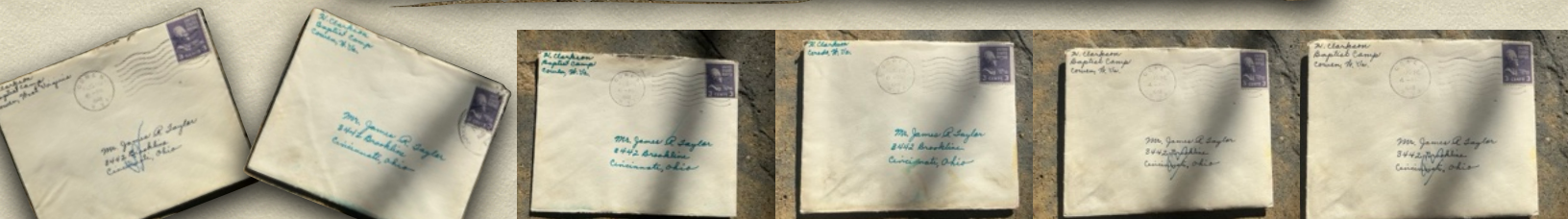
Had a most impressive good-night service last night. Had council fire. Recalled to past experiences at council fires. One was three years ago at our first retreat — remember. The other was our visit to the lumber yard fire. Last night though the fire was really beautiful. You know that the smoke [illegible] through a [illegible] of trees. The embers towered at least 5 feet above the fire. Sang songs. Roscoe had good night service.

Has been raining almost all day. Right hard now.

First edition of the paper came out today. Junior is editor. Got my name in the paper 2 times. One telling the fact that Ella's team beat my soft ball team 12-1. All the best players were on my team — Lee, D. Ann, Glenavie, Eugene (struck out 2), Norma. It wasn't our day to win. The other time I was noted was for the filibuster we had in the Senate tonight. All we, who were at I.C.M., gave a report by defending a bill against B.Y. [illegible] won though. The bill was thrown out the window.

Asa B. came in tonight. Mr. Rose, camp pastor, had to leave on account of a funeral, + so everybody (the pastors) are pinch hitting for him.

Barb just confessed to wounding you with her hot pin.





August 12, 1948

start

Smell onions! Had beef-roast last night. Predict stew for lunch.

See Lee sitting on a bench just sunning himself — with a brunette. Mary Gwen I think. Lee had good night service last night. Was very impressive. You'd have been real proud of him.

Honestly, Jim, D. Ann + Lee are wonderful. I love them both. Last night D. Ann was like a little girl. She was just beaming. Love that girl.

I have a feeling the bell is going to ring.

Love

Harriet

Aug. 12

Dear Jim,

Some teachers! They think their's is the only class that going. Still have a paper to write for class in the morning.

Have a few minutes before the boys (~~are~~ for possible?) come to sing to us.

Lee said, "Hello." He is being a real good boy !!!!! He sends you his love.

Flash! From D. Ann. She said, "Let me know when you're ~~go~~ coming home so I can kill the fatted rooster." Won't kill it till I hear from you.

We went ~~bathing~~ in the river. Took some glamorous pictures at the beach. You may have your choice of pin-up(?) pictures.

Jim, what they do to me around here. Singing the clicky song ending "My little Clarkie sings," "kiss me" (lights went out)

Friday

What I started to say last night was that I've been in on some of that fun at my expense. Last evening's program was one of 1 min speeches on selected topics (from a hat, all the same so you couldn't miss.) I expounded for a full 60 sec. on "What I Like about a Moustache". Such characters!

The boys sang very prettily last night. We are to return their serenade tonight.

I'm writing between classes so don't be surprised if I suddenly sign my name in the middle of a sentence,

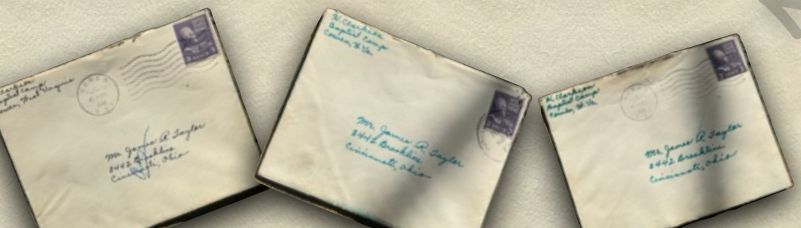
at last I've finished my paper. Haven't counted the words.

Well, what do you know? The sun's shining very brightly! First time in several days.

Katy just gave me the cook!

Is this Dr. Conrad a character! He plays the piano very well. Sings. Will send you his poem when it comes out in the paper.

Camp pastor is still gone. Left the other day for a funeral. Another customer died yesterday so he won't be back until tonight.






August 14, 1948

Harton is straightening up the front for morning worship so I'd better close.

But first – my thinkings about growing old. I used to think it would be awful to be old. But the growing old will be such an adventure that old age has lost its bitter taste.

When we're 60, won't it be wonderful to share all the joys and sorrows that we've had in a very wonderful life!

Bye now,

Amo te,

Harriet

Aug. 14

start

Dear Jim,

I felt very unhappy yesterday because you were unhappy about not getting any mail. I can know how you feel because the mailman (Roscoe) was a little late yesterday. I've finished my work (teacher [illegible] it) so I'm [illegible]

[illegible] night [illegible] characters and the things they do. Bob Withers and Bill (another K.P.) showed themselves. Bob played a trumpet and Bill a clarinet. Corn' was served with the music. They were in good spirits by the time we gave ours so they laughed at anything.

Terry and Bill Parker are always together – have been since the day we got here. But did she ever blow her top last night when something was said in the paper. She blamed Lee because he's editor but the girls assured her that he had nothing to do with it. She's her own jolly self this morning.

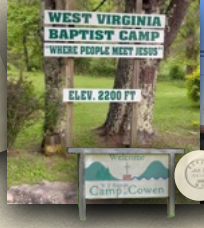
Last night the girls returned the boys serenade. Some of the girls questioned such a practice but they were the minority. Just at time for us to leave cabins it began to rain! We had decided to wait 'till about 6:45 this morning but the rain stopped. Have heard no comments this morning.

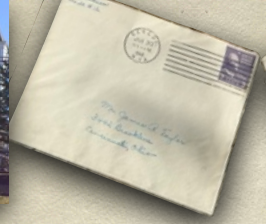
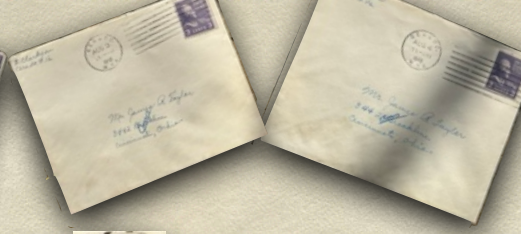
Flash – Lo Jean almost has a feller! Paul ?? came with J Mutter. Right off Lo was walking to vespers with him. He walked her (+ a few other girls) to the cabin last night. Lo Jean was on his side tho.

I got walked to my cabin one night. Lee was real sweet & walked me up – period. I believe he gets a big charge out of calling me the "old lady". I don't mind as long as I know you're "the old man".





August 14, 1948

start

-4-

Rev. Robert Rose, assistant pastor at Baptist Temple in Charleston, is camp pastor. He was gone about three days because of several deaths in the church. The pastor, Gene Austin, is away on vacation. From what I hear, Austin was asked to be camp pastor but he's vacationing. Most of us think that Rose is vague - maybe that isn't the word, but none of us are getting too much from his discussions. He, also, has vespers in the evening. In his absence, however, we've been able (?) to hear all the others speak. The others were very inspirational.

I'SPOSE, our camp paper was published about 3 or 4 times under the capable editorship of C.L. Taylor. I've saved a copy for you to read. Will be more interesting when I can give you my "views on the news".

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I'm writing with Almira's pen. It writes longer, better letters than Barb's.

(new paragraph)

Were having Consecration service tonight. Didn't have any vespers tonight. I could think of no better way I'd rather spend my time. Does it seem two hours ago that I dropped by? It was. About 6:30. It's 8:15 now and service is about to begin. Katy is in charge. From what I've heard her say, I think it will be a very impressive service.

Do you realize that this is the longest we've been apart since this all start. I got so lonesome for you last night I could have cried. But "big girls don't cry". I may not get to write anymore till I get home but I write to let you know when I go to Cecil's.

Just must go now.

Bye Hon,

Love, Harriet.

August 14, 1948

Dear Jim,

CARD

Aug. 14, 1948
Cowen, W. Va.

Hi Hon,

Bye,
Harriet

Now with that little formality over, I'll send you the news.

I live in Fairmont Association cabin; sleep in bunk 10, lower bunk. Ann's mine. Ours is the cabin nearest the mess hall, a little to the right. Dr. Ann is our cabin "what-do-you-call-it". I know she's enjoying her job here much more than she did at our camp. Girls don't talk (except Barb + Katy) after lights out. The cabin is quite a mess tho'. I'm surely glad that you can't see my mess. It might be discouraging.

-3-

Took a second service course in "Better Music in the Church". Mrs. Chandler, wife of the pastor at Mullens, was our teacher. She is a very quiet person but her classes were more interesting than one would assume by appearances. We discussed music in life. How music can express every emotion from deepest sorrow to the highest flights of love. That music speaks a universal language and breaks across barriers of race and color. We talked about the place of music in worship. That it calms the nerves and prepares people for an attitude of worship.

During the second hour, we used a book called Hymn Interpretation. It lists some hundred or more hymns and songs with short (not too short) comment about the composer.

We had 3 papers and our note book, & got an A, B+, B+, and C+. The C+ was on the note book. I could see no point in copying the text book in my note book. So there, too!

-2-

Home runs? We played soft ball one time. I think I mentioned that game before. Katy was such a good pitcher that we lost the game. I don't remember whether or not I hit the ball.

Had volley ball yesterday and today. We lost two out of three yesterday but won by the same score today. I finally learned how not to hit the ball.

~~I have so been swimmin' - almost.~~ Been to the other side of the river and back - once. Yesterday Gene, Nutter, D. Withers threw B. Hammock in the water more times than you can shake a stick at. Washed my hair in the river one day or so ago. It was really nice and soft - surprised me.

Did a laundry at the creek yesterday. all the conveniences of home — cold running water

-5-

Remember the other night I told you about Dr. Conrad's poem? It wasn't published in I'SPOSE, but I've secured the original copy from which I quote:

"At home with wifey, I'm just hubby,
'But here at camp they call me Chubby.
'No doubt I've been a sort of chump
To think myself just mildly plump.
I guess I should be glad at that
you failed to note I'm just plain fat!
I'm an arch bishop on the march
So far I've only got the arch."

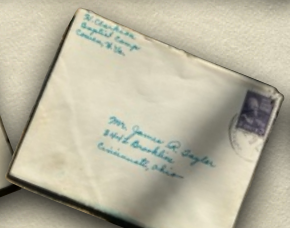
— Unquote.

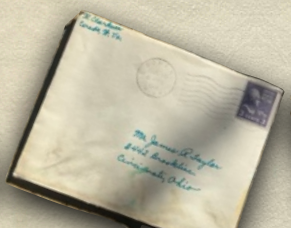
It was really wonderful the way he recited.

Jim, honestly, you're not really mean to me. I'm rested now and feel wonderful. So hence forth I shall use "mean" as a verb and ~~you~~ an adjective.

Exp: 1) Jim, you are mean to me. X
2) Jim, what you mean to me!

It all depends on the way you say it. Doesn't it.







August 16, 1948

start

The place looks desolater than when I began. Baggage sitting everywhere on undressed beds. Life is always doing things like that to people. Giving new friends and experiences and then taking them away. But there things that won't be forgotten from every new experience.

D. Ann [illegible] Barb, D. Ann + I) take a hike to get some ferns + such to take home. I must close now.

Bye Hon,

Love

Harriet

Aug. 16, 1948

Hi, Jim,

"Goin' Home". That's the song everybody's singing but nobody wants to sing it. Over half the kids left yesterday — Katy, Glenavee, Eugene, Johnny, Mary Lewis, Dr. Conrad, Mr. Rosey. So many left yesterday that we close [illegible] up activities yesterday at noon though camp isn't really over until noon today. Quite a few new [illegible] came in yesterday. Our "little" friends from Williamson are here. Ralph (remember him from our last night at T.P. camp?) He played his radio (portable) outside last night during Good-night service. Leroy Keeny is dean of the new camps. From the set up there is going to be some fun. Rule 1 — no smoking on campus. Rule 2 — (maybe) boys + girls have separate swim periods.

We think Rosco + Dick H. will try to talk them out of that one. You know, Jim, you can't impose rules like that on these kids. It's no fun if you don't have some girls to throw into the river.

Lee's staying as a part of the staff. Rosco asked him to help with the paper and stuff.

Hip! Hip! Hurrah! Joan Meeking just found her ~~black~~, black, life-time, Shaefer pen. She had misplaced it. Looked through 2 suit cases before she found it. I'm glad she found it, I've been borrowing pens all week (back to Barb's today) ~~lost~~ long so she won't have to worry as to what happened to it. (a joke, hon)

Consecration service was wonderful. Didn't have any vespers till 8:30. Rev. Rose certainly did improve the last few services. He talked with much sincerity and persuasion. After the service in the sanctuary, we had the Lord's Supper in the dining hall. Rev. West from Cowen conducted the service. He's an elderly man who added much to the service by his dignified manner. Mr. Barton, Mayer, and Jackson served Communion. From there we all went to the river. The procession was impressive. We walked by 2's to the river, singing as we went. Everybody had a lighted candle. At the river Dr. Conrad gave us a few thoughts about our letting our lights shine. Then the candles were put afloat on the water. Everybody thought it as impressive as any service they had seen.