

*The following is mostly Merrill's Feldman's letters mostly to his father Alfred Feldman during his time in the Army during the Second World War. These "me to you" letters take us from Merrill's training in Pennsylvania and West Virginia to his time as a soldier on the front lines in France, Belgium and Germany. There are a few other letters included here as well, including one from George Voek who was in Merrill's Company, one from George Feldman, Merrill's uncle who was serving in the Pacific theater, and a few excerpts from the journal of his teenage sister Louise.*

*No envelope and no date on letter. Letter written on University of New Hampshire stationary.*

Dear Dad,

Received your letter and the 9 dollars. This was only secondary, however, as the sentiments enclosed therein and your frank discussion really moved me.

It gave me a feeling of real manhood and maturity to read of your confidence in me. I think your letter really cemented a firm father and son relationship between us and I'll never forget it.

I myself have always wanted to see you make something out of J. Feldmans, knowing it would only be your capability and not Uncle Arthur's or anyone else's with all respect to them.

However more than any thing else, I'd like to see you branch off, become independent, set out your own shingle more or less, because I know you can do it and deserve it.

As for myself, I guess this is the first time I've told you this but my heart is set more on entrance to Illinois or Northwestern Dental rather than Tufts, not only because they're better schools but because I want to travel and meet different people than I would if I remained in Boston.

I suppose that same feeling overtook you when you hopped on a train and went to California. That's what I'd like to do, may be it's your influence.

Well, the Army is moving us around March at which time I'll get a vacation. We're going to get more definite news tomorrow and I'll write then.

Well, take care and have nice time in New York for a change. I think you need it.

Love to all,  
Merrill

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*Letter postmarked Indiantown Gap, PA June 11, 1944 sent to Mr. Alfred A Feldman, 115 Chauncy St Boston MA, written on Indiantown Gap Military Reservation Stationary*

PVC. M. Feldman 31358409  
377 Med APO 95  
Indiantown Gap, PA  
W.V.M.A.  
Elkins W.VA

Dear Dad

I'm writing this letter rather than send you some silly card or talk to you because I think I can express what I want to say much more easily and clearly.

I know that nothing could possibly say or do would compensate for Grandpa's death but please feel that I grieve his loss as much as you and extend my sympathies to you as your son.

I'm sure you took the situation as coolly as you possibly could and I'm terribly sorry that I wasn't present Sunday to be of some comfort but family exigencies are secondary for a short while longer and I'll see you soon.

We are leaving in a few hours and I'll write you separate letters telling you what goes on down in West Virginia because I don't intend to mention any of our training to Mom and you no doubt would like to know.

Well, we'll call it quits for now. Take care and as you often say to me, keep your chin up.

Love,  
Merrill

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*Letter postmarked Indiantown Gap, PA June 22, 1944 sent to Mr. Alfred A Feldman, 115 Chauncy St Boston MA, c/o J. Feldman's and Sons, written on Indiantown Gap Military Reservation Stationary*

PVC. M. Feldman 31358409  
377 Med APO 95  
Indiantown Gap, PA  
W.V.M.A.  
Elkins W.VA

Dear Dad

I hope you enjoyed the Dad's Day gift that Louise picked out for you. She really used discretion in her choice, as the pipe outfit was just what I had in mind myself.

Again, the separate letter to tell you more intimately what happened in West Virginia. To begin with you really can't appreciate what went on unless you've seen these newsreel picture of operations in Italy and South Pacific with the mud up to the men's knees and hips. This is what we had to contend with when we pushed up from our bivouac training area to what was to be our line of assault.

We started up a winding slippery mountain trail loaded down with our equipment – rucksacks, pack boards, litters, blankets, rope and medical supplies – 80 to 90 pounds per man.

Well, we trudged and slushed on up, winding back and forth, for about 8 miles, which is worth 25 on the level any day. C-rations and halayone purified water was our subsistence. It wasn't bad since the mud was only ankle deep and the rain hadn't come yet.

We, the medics, reached the first battalion at noon and then split up to join our respective companies and since I was a 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion man, I had to hike 2 more muddy miles to their bivouac where I, with my other buddies, had a chance to catch a few winks and get somewhat settled.

Well, in same Army fashion, we no sooner got bedded down when the order comes then to get ready to move up at 10 that night. We hiked about 7 miles through deep muck and mud in pitch-blackness with nothing to guide us except phosphorescent root, which we attached to our helmets.

We, the infantry company now, reached a very wooded area, stumbled into it and just flopped in the safest and most comfortable spot we could find with our hands.

In the morning when we finally could see what was what, tents were pitched and small gasoline stoves were started so that we could heat our C-rations.

After resting that day during which the rain started and the mud got deeper and I got wetter and wetter and blacker and blacker, we started our assault at 9PM on a hill which lay 800 feet on the other side of a rocky canyon.

In absolute quiet and darkness, the Battalion proceeded, company by company, down a 1000-foot slimy, rocky slope to reach the canyon. About ¼ way down I had to treat a snakebite victim with only a flashlight for light but the guy's still living so I guess I did what the book says, correctly, or maybe the snake wasn't poisonous.

Halfway down the treacherous trail, difficult for even day climbing, we stopped and for a reason we were t later discover just stood with our 80-pound packs for 1 hour, 2 hours, 5, 6, 7 from 12 to 7 in the morning just waiting for the word to advance and afraid to set our packs and equipment down lest we lose them in the dark and unable to sit down because we were on a steep slope and standing in the middle of a stream.

When dawn came, we went down to the bottom of the canyon and found that the babbling brook had risen 3 feet in an hour and was now a raging torrent; the engineers and AP platoons had been unable to bridge it and so we caught flat-footed in the valley by the enemy high upon the hills and theoretically wiped out, but the colonel called the deal off since it was so dangerous crossing the river; one man had drowned, two close

cases, and one engineer had had his chest crushed, and we had to evacuate him along with 10 other simulated casualties to the collecting company.

Getting a man up a 1000-foot, 75-80 degree slope is no joke but it's quite less tedious when the methods we were taught are used.

Well, that day and the next were used in checking in equipment and getting cleaned up and at 4 in the morning we headed back to the Gap. What a relief to be back in civilization.

Now for the big news: The reason for cutting our maneuvers short was that the division has been alerted for overseas movement and we had to get started at P.O.M. as soon as possible. Mail will be totally censored starting July 10 and quite a bit of work has to be done, equipment etc. The alert is nothing to get excited about as I imagine it will be quite a while before we actually go and I'll get home a few times at least. So all the going to do now is sit back and enjoy myself in casual style.

Well, I'll write more later; don't tell Mom until things are more definite and indicative.

Could use another ½ dozen of those sox, they're excellent.

Love,  
Merrill

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*Letter postmarked Elkins, West Virginia, June 15, 1944 4PM sent to Mr. Alfred A Feldman, 115 Chauncy St Boston MA*

PVC. M. Feldman 31358409  
377 Med APO 95  
Indiantown Gap, PA

June 3, 1944

Dear Dad,

Am writing this letter from my pup tent by the light of a candle, as it is growing fairly dark out.

We've been working hard lately since an order came thru shortening our maneuver period and we've had to cram 8 days of training into 4.

The mountain work is naturally not new to me since I've been doing this stuff at the "Gap" but we keep at it all day and even in down pouring rain as we did today. I got drenched since I didn't have my raincoat but that's one of the hardships of the field.

The food's been very good which is exceptional and these sleeping bags are a blessing.

Every evening a truck takes a bunch of us swimming on one of these mountain streams and it's great fun as well as refreshing. Of course, we wear our birthday suits.

Well, we have a few more days of mountain work, river fording, evacuation of wounded, and then our combat problems start as a combat team with a defending and offensive army, live ammunition and all.

That's all for now, have to hit the hay.

Love,  
Merrill

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*Written on USO stationary. Postmarked Harrisburg June 26, 1944 addresses to Mr. Alfred A. Feldman, 115 Chauncy St., Boston MA*

Pvt. M. I. Feldman 31358409  
377 Med APO 95  
Indian Gap PA

June 26, 1944

Dear Dad,

*Well*, we've been going hot and heavy on our P.O.M. and should be pretty well finished by next week and maybe they'll start dishing out 3-day passes again.

All work has been spent in getting the rifle companies qualified with their range firing, close combat test, village fighting etc. and we've been working like mad, shooting everyone in the regiment with their stimulating doses.

To-day we had a big show down inspection to find out what we were missing, what was unserviceable for combat and other equipment needed. Some companies have even been issued their POE duffle bags.

All our records and forms have been checked thru interviews and co-owners and beneficiaries and junk like that straightened out so that you see this is the real thing.

Rumors, of course, are flying thick and fast as to where and when we're going but as usual they're not worth repeating.

I received the 35 and I want you to be sure it came from one of my bonds and not your pocket or else it goes right back.

Well, take care and love,  
Merrill

P.S.

Between you and me only.

P.P.S.

If the watch can be fixed inexpensively do so, otherwise forget the doggone thing.

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*377 landed in UK between 10-17 August 1944  
377 landed in France 15 September 1944*

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*Letter postmarked November 5, 1944, US Army Postal Service sent to Mr. Alfred  
Feldman, 115 Chancey St, Boston, Massachusetts*

Cpl. M. Feldman 31358409  
377<sup>th</sup> Infantry Medical Det. APO 95  
c/s PM NYC, NY

Somewhere in France  
November 3, 1944

Dear Dad,

Again one of our private letters and as you can probably guess, it's to tell you of my being in combat and on the front lines. I'll write a letter telling Mom that I'm way back in the rear but you and I will know better.

Up to now censorship has prohibited my telling you of my being in action for quite a while but now we're allowed to write about it. Unfortunately **DEDACTED** – **literally two lines cut out off the letter**. I saw Pont-à-Mousson, Hagendingen and Metz.

I've seen quite a few things and experienced much of interest as far as the War goes but I'll let those stories go and tell you about them in person as I've been making careful notes mentally of course.

Incidentally, I almost forgot. Happy Birthday and Happy Returns for the day. To-day is your 43<sup>rd</sup> Birthday, isn't it? I sure wish I were home to help you celebrate this day but next year, maybe, it will be possible.

Well, so much for now. Don't worry and Take care, I am.

Love,

Merrill

*Note: Alfred was born on May 6, 1898, which would have made him 46 ½ years old at this time.*

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*V-Mail postmarked November 16, 1944 sent to Alfred A. Feldman c/o J. Feldman & Sons, 115 Chauncy St, Wendell Phillips Building, Boston, Massachusetts. Postmarked November 21, 1944 by Boston MA Essex Station on inside of letter.*

Cpl. M. Feldman 31358409  
377<sup>th</sup> Infantry Medical Det. APO 95  
c/s PM NYC, NY

Somewhere in France  
November 6, 1944

Dear Dad,

Nothing much now to report on the front lines, that is, censors will allow. I guess all you can do is read the newspapers and listen to the radio and you'll probably get a good idea of what's going on, generally speaking of course.

I'll have quite a bit to tell when I get home about this war business but whoever said, "War is Hell", was really putting it mildly.

I saw **DEDACTED** recently; does that name ring a familiar ring to your ears?

Well, take care and write soon.

Merrill

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*V-Mail postmarked November 20, 1944 sent to Alfred A. Feldman c/o J. Feldman & Sons, 115 Chauncy St, Boston, Massachusetts*

Cpl. M. Feldman 31358409  
377<sup>th</sup> Infantry Medical Det. APO 95  
c/s PM NYC, NY

Somewhere in France  
November 11, 1944

Dear Dad,

Am still keeping the ball rolling on our person to person correspondence and I'm sure that you want to know what's really going on.



Recently, I participated in a full-scale pitched battle and it was quite exciting knowing its meaning and all that. I can't write that much about what happened but I came out in the best of health with my only misgiving being that I was covered with mud from head to foot and pretty damn tired.

My C.O. complimented me on the job I did with medical evacuation but I'll tell you about it in the future.

Take care and don't worry.

Love,  
Merrill

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*Letter postmarked December 3, 1944, US Army Postal Service sent to Mr. Alfred Feldman, 115 Chauncy St, Boston, Massachusetts*

*Postmarked inside letter Dec 20, 1944, Boston, MA, Essex Station, Parcel Post*

Cpl. M. Feldman 31358409  
377<sup>th</sup> Infantry Medical Det. APO 95  
c/s PM NYC, NY

Somewhere in Germany  
December 1, 1944

Dear Dad,

The War goes on and so do I.

Did you receive the V-Mail I sent you warning about the wounded in action business and did you get time to stop the W.D. letter.

This idea of the paper and envelope is the nuts and sure makes the letter writing real easy.

I'm sorry to hear about the home deal and also Millie's leaving the office but I guess everything will work out OK.

Received my Alumnus Bulletin and I can hardly wait to read its news. Boy, I sure wish I were back at UNH.

Well, I'll write soon and soon from Berlin I hope.

Love,

*Lou (?)*

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*Letter postmarked December 18, 1944, US Army Postal Service sent to Mr. Alfred Feldman, 34 South Main St., PO Box 221, Attleboro, Massachusetts*

*Newspaper clipping stapled to letter: In the Saar Basin, Nazis have been pouring 6,000 shells a day on the Saarlautern and Dillingen bridgeheads. Fighting was savage in Saarlautern where the enemy was holding out in a brickyard in the Roden suburb. Men of the 377<sup>th</sup> Rgt. Who fought bitterly for two city blocks captured a big hotel, in which they fought a pitched battle for the ballroom, according to The Stars and Stripes front reports.*

*Note: Letters now sent by Sgt. Feldman instead of Cpl Feldman*

Sgt. M. Feldman 31358409  
377<sup>th</sup> Infantry Medical Det. APO 95  
c/s PM NYC, NY

Somewhere in Germany  
December 15, 1944

Dear Dad,

I received your "you to me" letter of the 4<sup>th</sup> and it was swell hearing from you.

The clipping enclosed should give you a very good idea of my whereabouts and activities and only half describes the deal we've got here.

Today, a combat photographer took a picture of me working on a casualty on a litter and later evacuating him. I wonder if they'll ever get printed.

Have you received my Purple Heart as yet?

Am looking very anxiously to the "finis" of this war but am still being as "careful and cautious" as possible.

Well, the stationary idea is great and made this letter possible.

Luck and Love,  
Merrill

P.S.

Here is hoping you have a good Xmas.

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Somewhere in Germany  
December 26, 1944

Dear Dad,

I just received your letter of the 1<sup>st</sup>, Dad, with the pictures in it and it was quite interesting to see my division's name in the paper. Only, I hope you're straight on the facts that I'm in the Third Army and not the 9<sup>th</sup> as we originally were.

Funny thing about Uncle George learning about us all the way in Hawaii, small world isn't it.

I can't tell you much of my experience but I have had many close calls. I remember how in our first attacks at night a tracer bullet ricocheted off my helmet and how I was pinned down by 88's the next day with shells bursting 10 and 15 feet from the shell hole I was lying in. In our drive on Metz, a sniper bullet hit the dirt an inch from my heel as I was giving first-aid to a man. An artillery shell hit the house we had our first aid stations in – Ok I could rave on and on but enough is enough. I'm in charge of the litter bearers and evacuation and as a [can't read a few words as letter fragile and missing ?medic] go up forward of the aid stations to see that all the wounded get back, are taken care of and I give blood plasma if necessary and I've had to perform this somewhat

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*Letter postmarked December 30, 1944, US Army Postal Service sent to Mr. Alfred Feldman, 34 South Main St., PO Box 221, Attleboro, Massachusetts*

Sgt. M. Feldman 31358409  
377<sup>th</sup> Infantry Medical Det. APO 95  
c/s PM NYC, NY

Somewhere in Germany  
December 28, 1944

Dear Dad,

Just to chase up that V-Mail letter you never received I'm writing this to you besides the letter I wrote home this evening.

I was nicked by a piece of shrapnel while in action a short while back and because I thought the War Department would send out a letter to the effect that your son was wounded in action, etc. I wrote that V-letter the same night and gave it to a rear echelon trying to head the W.D. letter off because it would have gone to Mom.

I wasn't hit bad enough to be hospitalized or anything like that so there's no need of worry as I am in perfect health.

That V-mail was probably lost or censored but you know the story now.

It looks as if the 95<sup>th</sup> is getting quite a bit of publicity in the States and I personally think it's well deserved, it certainly is considered a crack outfit.

Well, I think I'll write to Uncle Arthur now.

Good Luck

Love,  
Merrill

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*Letter postmarked January 3, 1944, US Army Postal Service sent to Mr. and Mrs. A. Feldman, 21 Nazing St, Roxbury, Massachusetts*

Sgt. M. Feldman 31358409  
377<sup>th</sup> Infantry Medical Det. APO 95  
c/s PM NYC, NY

Somewhere in Germany  
January 1, 1945

Dear Folks,

Just think one more month and I'll no longer be a teenager. Glory be!

We missed our Turkey 8-day because of some pleasant unforeseen circumstances but they're holding it for us and when we get settled again we'll get it and also our pay, I understand.

Last night we had a pretty nice party in the aid-station and at 12 mid-night we rang in the New Year with a toast of champagne while you were probably eating supper. I wonder what this year holds in store.

I think you might be interested in knowing what happens to the civilians of the towns we take. All Germans, of course, well all of the them, are ordered to leave by the retreating Wehrmacht and those who disobey the order are taken in tow by our Civil Affairs teams, evacuated from their homes and, in the case of the town I'm in now, live in an abandoned mine or caves. There are quite a few there now. Their homes are a wreck because what the shells don't get visiting, GIs take care of. And I don't have one ounce of sympathy for these people because they're the ones who not so long ago were "heiling" the destruction of France etc. I'd like to see every house in Germany get the going-over I've seen done on French and Belgian homes, maybe it'll teach them a lesson.

Boy, some lucky Joe from our Battalion hit a 30-day furlough home –plus 2 months traveling time. What a deal! One com is chosen every month but I don't think I'll even cut in on that deal.

The weather is still pretty good with only a little now having fallen since winter set in.

I'm gaining weight and feel swell. Hope all of you back home are in the same shape.

Loads of love and New Year's Greetings,

Merrill

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*Letter postmarked March 15, 1945 by US Army Postal Service sent to Mr. Alfred A. Feldman, PO Box 221, c/o Feldman's, Fourth Main St., Attleboro, Massachusetts, also postmarked March 30, 1945 in Boston, MA, Essex Station*

March 13, 1945

Sgt. M. Feldman 31358409  
377<sup>th</sup> Infantry Medical Det. APO 95  
c/s PM NYC, NY

Dear Dad

Haven't heard from you in 3 or 4 days now but there should be a letter today as I know your regularity in writing. Received one from Mom yesterday, which I should answer directly after this one and also a very nice letter from Aunt Florence.

Dorothy wrote a real long interesting letter to me and among many other things told me about the beautiful ear rings you gave Mom which makes me real proud of you, in fact I'm real proud of you both.

This clipping shows you that I've not been idle recently. It was taken from the Stars and Stripes and is the only non-censorable information I can give you at present.

Since quite some time has elapsed I can tell you that I was in the Bulge Area at the time of our big counter-attack. I saw Houffalize, Bastogne and various other towns, which was quite newspaper-famous at the time. The ride north was totally rough as we went up in open trucks for air security during zero weather for our whole day. Well, I don't think I'll complain about cold weather again as I had my share of it then and its quite a different feeling of cold knowing you can't go into a nice warm house in a while and get warm again.

Fortunately, a break in the weather came a week later and it wasn't too bad going from then on, also our new winter equipment really proved tops.

One area I saw happened to be the section where a group of doughboys on a hill and in fox-holes had stopped a German – tank – infantry assault cold and the terrain was just littered with dead white-clad S.S. troops and Heinie's before bombed burned-out tanks. It was an awesome sight and quite inspiring and I'll tell you more about it in the future.

Well after a while we took a nice break in Belgium – passes, movies, shows, beer, soup, and quiet – kind of getting ready for the big show I guess which as you see in your papers is now on.

I received all your airmail stamps and I am really flush now.

That's about all there is to write about at present.

Take care and love,

Feller

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*Letter postmarked March 17, 1945 by US Army Postal Service sent to Mr. Alfred A. Feldman, PO Box 221, c/o Feldman's, Fourth Main St., Attleboro, Massachusetts, also postmarked (inside and out) April 6, 1945 in Boston, MA, Essex Station*

March 13, 1945

Sgt. M. Feldman 31358409  
377<sup>th</sup> Infantry Medical Det. APO 95  
c/s PM NYC, NY

Dear Dad,

Received your letters of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> all in quick time and all welcome.

I'll bet you really worked the first few days in the new house and if I know, Mom, she probably did the work of 5, as you say.

Well, you could have knocked me over here with a feather when I read that article about Chaplain Baker or Chapy as I called him. Of course 'tis I and I remember the occasion well. In fact on one of those trips I had one of my narrowest escapes. A sniper's bullet hit the dirt right at my heel and I never hit the dirt so hard in my life.

I was cited for bravery and gallantry in action not for this deal but previously in our night attack when I set up an advance aid station practically in the middle of the attacking and defending forces. Well done and politics, etc. I never received the medal to go with it and so here I sit what the h\_\_\_ all I want to bring home is me.

I'm going to keep this clipping and will you please buy about 6 or 7 more additions of that paper and send me more clippings. After all it isn't everyday I get my name in the paper.

Chaplain Baker sure was a swell scout and we got along famously. I'm going to write him now.

Take care and loads of luck.

Feller

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*Letter postmarked March 18, 1945 by US Army Postal Service sent to Mr. Alfred A. Feldman, PO Box 221, c/o Feldman's, South Main St., Attleboro, Massachusetts*

March 18, 1945

Sgt. M. Feldman 31358409  
377<sup>th</sup> Infantry Medical Det. APO 95  
c/s PM NYC, NY

Dear Dad,

Nothing new to write about except the news that I'm no longer in the Third Army but now a member of the Ninth.

*Yup*, we are now off the secret list and as you probably read, played a significant part in this recent Rhine push, in fact, I've seen the old Rhine River itself.

We were last with the Third around Bastogne during the counter-attack against the Bulge and then went further north into Belgium where we really had a deal. I stayed in a house with some civilians who were really tops and we became so endeared to them, Platoon HQ I mean, that they were crying like babies when we left. They, the mother whose name is Clementine and her 17-year old daughter, Margaret, baked for us, washed our clothes, made coffee for us and made our beds and fires in our room. Boy, we lived like kings.

Since it was a rest area we had passes, showers, shows, movies, (beer) and dances.

We took quite a few pictures there and the Telkin family promised to send them so I hope that some day I get them.

I'm returning the clipping to keep it preserved and prevent me from bragging.

Well, that's the news for now. Write soon.

Love,  
Feller

1/L. [Louise, sister]

Are they making the combat medic badges in Attleboro and if so can you get me some. Oh, and yes would appreciate 3 or 4 bottles of Vaseline Hair Tonic. How about sending me some film – as much as possible.

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*Letter postmarked March 18, 1945 by US Army Postal Service sent to Mr. Alfred A. Feldman, PO Box 221, c/o Feldman's, South Main St., Attleboro, Massachusetts, also postmarked (inside and out) March 28, 1945 in Boston, MA, Essex Station*

March 13, 1945

Sgt. M. Feldman 31358409  
377<sup>th</sup> Infantry Medical Det. APO 95  
c/s PM NYC, NY

Dearest Dad,

This is my second “me to you letter” today and as you can very well guess, due to the reception of your revealing and startling letter of the 26<sup>th</sup> which came in this evening.

Dad, dear, you don't know how pleased and grateful I am that you wrote me the present difficulties in J. Feldman and Sons and confided in me to such an extent. I hope my advice is worthy of your confidence and not too much at this present writing because I'm boiling mad and quite filled up to learn of the dirty deal that is being handed to you behind my back by a bunch of cheap, chiseling good-for-nothings. From this day on I'll have nothing to do with anyone connected with this outrageous conniving, dirty underhanded business and I really mean that.

I suppose it is true that such things happen in the best of families and also the poorest; the figurehead of the family goes and right away everyone starts squabbling over his financial remains and estate like a bunch of cats.

Okay, Dad, clean the decks for action; you're going to get out and get out fast before they drag you under with them.

You know what I mean. I've always wanted you to get out on you own and you're going to do it now. You're going to act first and I'm positive for the best. You've got a marvelous foothold in Attleboro; civic activities, sound business policies – for God's sake don't ruin it all now and above all don't let them ruin it for you.

You were perfectly right in not accepting Grandpa's set-up; there's absolutely no sense and no need for your trying to feed and clothe these families when you have your own to worry about.

Now listen Pop, and I mean this more that I've ever meant any thing in my life.



I have a small sum of money in the bank, what with bonds, allotments, etc. and also my insurance money is coming due. Take every single cent of it, get backing from your friends if necessary, get legal advice from Uncle Izz, the soundest you can get, and get out; get on your own.

Whether you realize it or not you've got a little war of your own to wage and as any soldier knows from a general to a Pvt.; attack is the best defense. So you hit first and you hit hard, fast and quietly.

Now I imagine there are legal entanglements and difficulties, which I don't quite understand, but they've got to be overcome.

Please, Dad, for my sake, Mother's, Louise's and your own, do everything you can and break away from that worthless bunch even if they are your own brothers and sisters.

You know too well yourself, that once Attleboro is lost to them, their whole business will collapse and they'll hang themselves and by God they deserve it.

Now as far as those disparaging remarks go about my Mother, if you even happen to hear another one you tell them for me that I'll take care of anyone of them personally when I get home, uncle or no uncle, aunt or no aunt – those insipid so and so's. Knowing my dear [underlined for emphasis] Aunt's I can very well imagine how they run having heard them before only at the time my mind was too immature and weak to either comprehend or retaliate but that's a thing of the past now.

Please show this letter to Uncle Izzy and see if he agrees. Write me your views post haste. In fact, I'll be very disappointed if you haven't acted by now.

Stick to your guns, pal, and I know you'll come there with flying colors; you've got what it takes.

You'll have to agree that now above all times is the time to take the risk of getting out on your own because should something go haywire there are plenty of opportunities open for a man to keep a family going and stay on his feet.

I'm behind you 100% in whatever you do but would really feel grand if you got out of a family business, which usually winds up as this one has, and got on your own two, capable feet.

I sure wish I were home to help you make plans but if you have to beg, borrow, or steel, get away from that bickering bunch before they knife you in the back.

As far as I'm concerned you are definitely the only success in the whole bunch; just take a look at your family, friends, situations and everything else. The whole thing is that they're all jealous which is the reason for their remarks and their trying to get you.

As you can very well see – you made the best marriage in the whole family.

Well, Dad, write real soon and let me know how you make out.

Loads of love and luck,  
Feller

P.S.

Tell, Mom, I also received another package tonight.

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*V-Mail dated April 5, 1945 sent to Mr. Alfred Feldman, 34 South Main St., PO Box 221, Attleboro, Massachusetts*

Sgt. M. Feldman 31358409  
377<sup>th</sup> Infantry Medical Det. APO 95  
c/s PM NYC, NY

Dear Dad,

By now you've probably received a "wounded-in-action" telegram from over here, yup, oak leaf clusters on my Purple Heart.

I hope you're not worried as it's very slight and I'm able to be around as well as the next person. You see, I was creased in the hand by a Kraut rifle-man, quite a narrow escape as it only took some flesh off, no broken bones or anything and I'm feeling fine, in fact enjoying my stay in the hospital.

When I get my permanent hospital address I'll write you and Mom that I've been transferred there for a rest.

Take care

Love, Feller

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*V-Mail dated April 5, 1945 sent to Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Feldman, 58 Colborne Rd., Brighton, Massachusetts*

Sgt. Merrill I. Feldman 31358409  
377<sup>th</sup> Infantry Medical Det. APO 95  
c/s PM NYC, NY

Dear Dad and Mom,

Sorry I haven't been able to write sooner but as you see by your papers we've all been quite busy over here.

Hope the break in my correspondence hasn't caused you any worry as I'm feeling great and in the best of health.

Haven't heard from you for quite a while but should receive some letters soon.

War news certainly looks great doesn't it? Received a package from Gramma a few days ago.

Love and regards to everyone.

Love,  
Lou

---

*V-Mail dated April 18, 1945 sent to Mr. Alfred Feldman, PO Box 221, South Main St., Attleboro, Massachusetts; receipt postmark dated April 23 in Boston, Massachusetts, Essex Station*

Sgt. M. I. Feldman 31358409  
377<sup>th</sup> Infantry Medical Det. APO 95  
c/s PM NYC, NY

April 9 - France

Dear Dad,

Well, I'm settled now and sure would appreciate a letter from you post haste. I'm in tip-top shape and it will probably be a month before I leave this place. My wound is superficial and is coming along fine, the bullet having merely grazed my left hand between my thumb and forefinger ripping the flesh slightly [*note: had thumb almost shot off*]. I told you that I was lucky. Soon I'll be able to tell you where and when it happened as it was at quite a significant place and I'm proud of the job on the Krauts there.

This hospital is the most swanky hotel with a theater, more rooms for bands, good chow and beautiful weather. Good deal, I calls it.

Well, take care of yourself and write soon.

Feller

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*14-½ year old sister Louise's Journal -Wednesday, April 18*

Boy what an exciting day. We got a telegram that Merrill was wounded. Mother was terribly stunned. Aunt Bertha saved the day by coming over in the morning and taking

her out to dinner and stawp. She's a darling. Babs and I went too. I hope he stays in the hospital a long time so he doesn't have to go back. Babs and I walked over to Elaine Regulsky's house afterward. It's beautiful. At night we met her and went bowling. I hope everything's okay; Dad got a letter from Mel saying that everything's okay.

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April 22, 1945

Dear "Spitz"

Here I am sitting in my office, I assure you it's a beautiful place. We have been having it easy since you left. I hate to write this about Sgt. Kallehan .. he died several days later in a hospital. The rest of the Boys back here said Hello and the Best of Luck. Say! Spitz and I turn you in for the D.S.C. [note: Dr. Feldman indicated he was not considered eligible for the DSC as a medic he was not supposed to be armed or engage in offensive action] I hope you get it. I told the editor all about the fine work you did and am sure proud of you. Hope you can come back soon. We all miss you, especially one fellow \_\_\_\_? Tell Boccock and Kline I said hello. Lt. Katz is back with us now. Glickman just came back the other day. Did you hear about the Russians are in Berlin now. We all have clean and new clothes. We're Garrison Soldiers now. Are you getting any mail lately? Remember Sgt. Pinson? Well he went home on a 30-day furlough! Tikie? Well I haven't much more to write about only we sure having it easy now. So long Spitz. Hope you can join us in the near future.

Your Assistant,  
George Voek

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*Letter postmark May 3 to Alfred Feldman*

May 3

Dear Dad.

Here is the story. It's 2 weeks after the action so here goes right from the beginning.

My regiment was assigned to an armored division to form what it known as a Combat Command and when we were a Task Force of this Command. Such an outfit is a fast moving, hard hitting self-sufficient unit and is used to break thru and keep going- by passing small resistance to slower, mopping up Infantry. We, in other words, were the guys you see riding on tanks.

Well, everything went pretty nicely for 3 days or so. We bowled along pretty rapidly stopping at the beginning to bridge a canal, to clear road blocks, get gassed up and eat our K-rations at the same time. Notice no mention of sleep. We didn't sleep for 3 days or nights except for a few hours snatched here or there.

It was quite exciting being what to you was a tiny arrow on a map in a newspaper, being the first to enter German towns, seeing the white flags, liberating Allied Prison Camps, slave laborers watching German reaction, I think it was my most exciting experience yet.

Everything happened. We were strafed by German fighter planes, we surprised a German gasoline truck company & shot them all up (show you how sudden & unexpected we appeared), I helped capture 3 prisoners at a road block by going with one into the woods and talking to him in German have him call his **Volkssturm** buddies out & they came. I had my hand in my pocket on my pistol every minute ready for any thing.

We were opposed by all **Volkssturm**, kids of 7 to 15 of the Hitler Jugend, the regular Wermacht and last but not least the SS. All of them gave up or fled, we had no trouble at all for 3 days and nights until \_\_\_\_ (redacted)

We were approaching a town near some high ground and stopped for a break & gas. By this time we were so tired we could hardly hold our heads up and figured we'd be relieved any day now.

Well, all of a sudden a Heine tank started to move in on us and our tanks took cover leaving us to dig in & hold off the Panzer with bazookas and our other small arms. The Heine pulled out & we hopped on board our tanks and went 50 yards up the road when BAM, a Kraut bazooka knocked out the tank in front of mine and we all hopped off ready for the show down.

This, then was to be it, the was where the Germans had elected to toss their best troops, the fanatical SS troopers, to prevent us from linking with the First Army and close the trap on the Ruhr.

Well my platoon quickly formed up and after briefing we moved up on the left of the road & swung to the left of the town with a machine gun firing over our heads. We attacked them while they were in a house. The S.S. threw bazookas & everything at us but we moved in on them and killed every one of them even those that tried to surrender (we don't take SS prisoners) they wouldn't retreat an inch and we gave 'em hell.

Then a few of their tanks started to move in on us but decided against it & took off. We sure had our fingers crossed because they would have flattened the houses we occupied. Buildings were burning all around us and I treated all the casualties and saw that they were evacuated.

Well, we figured that our job was done but we were told that we had to clear the town that night & occupy a vital road junction. Still no sleep.

Well, we did this all night and fought off a German counterattack and then in the morning we jumped off with some of our tanks supporting us.

The boys just kept running & firing. I treated two men who had fallen and kept moving forward to catch up. Then as I was about to cross an open lot between 2 houses I saw 2 boys lying there and started to run for them. One of the boys was one of my best buddies- Sgt. Kallenmeyn was his name. Just as I reached him I heard a crack and felt my hand go numb and then I held up my hand (while still running) and saw my thumb bone. I kept on to the forward house & some of the boys bandaged me up and then I helped the other 2 casualties in and treated them with my good hand.

Well, we knocked out 3 tanks in the deal, Infantry vs Armor and I call that pretty good and took that town which closed the trap. That's when I left. I'm enclosing the letter

which my platoon Sgt sent me which I consider more of a tribute than a Congressional Medal.

The Medic Combat Badge is given to everyone, Dad, I was talking about a medal. Well, this letter is pretty long so I'll just close

Fellar

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*14-½ year old sister Louise's Journal -Saturday, May 5*

We got two beautiful letters from Mel today. He's so wonderful and I miss and love him so much. I hope he gets home soon, safe and sound, and we have everlasting peace. I hope David gets better soon. He's a swell kid.

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*14-½ year old sister Louise's Journal -Tuesday, May 8*

Stayed home from school today. The War in Europe is over. Thank God. Oh, I only hope the war in Japan is over soon. I hope Mel comes in for a furlough for good. I'm not so excited as I thought I would be but I'm glad for the Europeans. Today is Truman's birthday. A wonderful birthday.

---

Nancy le 10 Mai 1945

Cher Monsieur Feldman,

C'est avec regret que nous sommes parties de Vittel sans vous avoir vu comme vous nous l'avez promis. Maintenant, comme la guerre est finie, nous espérons que vous obtiendrez vite votre permission facilement, et nous vous souhaitons chaleureusement de venir chez nous et passer votre permission avec vous. Nous vous espérons en bonne santé, et espérons de vous voir bientôt. Cher Monsieur Feldmann, nos sincères amitiés.

Roseufart

Nous comptons sur vous pour un de ces jours.

*Translation:*

*Dear Mr. Feldman,*

*We are sorry that we left Vittel before having visited you as we had promised. Now, as the War is over, we hope that you visit us with your next pass, and you would be welcome to stay with us. We wish you well and hope to see you soon.*

*Roseufart*

*We count on seeing you soon.*

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*Letter postmarked dated June 4, 1945 sent to Mr. Alfred A. Feldman, 66 Colebourne Rd,  
Brookline, Massachusetts*

Lt. Geo. W. Feldman  
B Co., 3<sup>rd</sup> Signal Battalion  
APO 331 c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco

Somewhere in the Pacific  
June 3, 1945

Dear Al and Sadie,

Just a few lines to let you know that I received a letter from Ina in which she says that the past Mother's Day was the worst one she ever had due to some foolish family quarrel, and you didn't go to see her.

I don't know what it's all about nor do I care, but if you people haven't got enough common sense to see her and keep her as happy and comfortable in her waning years as possible, then I really don't know what to think of you.

There are enough things here to keep me guessing besides what is going on at home, so I think it would be a good idea if you went to see her and offer some apology for not showing up on Mother's Day.

Did Merrill get home yet?

George

Nothing is to be removed from this closet or room. (small sign enclosed with letter)

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*377 returned to Boston 29 June 29 1945*

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*15-year-old sister Louise's Journal – Sunday July 1*

At last Mel came in at 2:00. Oh he looks so wonderful! We all were thrilled and excited. We talked and at night went to **Thrashland Law Pitlow do Rasl. (?)** Good.

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*15-year-old sister Louise's Journal – Tuesday, August 14*

War Over. Thank God. Listened to the radio and went boating Campfire (victory).

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*Letter postmarked dated October 15, 1945 sent to Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Feldman, 58 Colbourne Rd, Brighton, Massachusetts*

*Note: First letter from Lieutenant Sergeant Feldman*

L/Sgt. M. Feldman 31358409  
71<sup>st</sup> Infantry Medical Det. APO 44  
Camp Chaffee, Arkansas

October 15, 1945

Dear Folks,

This may be my last letter to you as a G.I. as I'm almost sure my orders will be in later next week or the week after and I'll be out before the end of the month. I'll call you when I do get word to move.

If this fellow in my outfit from Lawrence and I get out the same time, we're planning on traveling to Boston by way of St. Louis and Chicago and in general take it easy on the way home stopping off a night and sleep in hotels or YMCA's and not go through a grueling train trip which I dread and since we aren't pressed for time I think it's a pretty good idea especially as I'd like to see the deans of some Dental Schools in Chicago and take in the Army-Notre Dame game and a few stage shows and bands in N.Y.C.

What are we having for Thanksgiving, Mom?

I sent a package with some clothes and personal belongings home the other day and in a few days I'm going to send my duffle bag with some extra G.I. stuff I have, collect by Railway Express so you'll be expecting it.

Mrs. Katz sent me those pictures of Bob, pretty nice, aren't they?

Well, I'm taking things easy and feeling great – hope you're all the same. Clean my clothes and have things in ship shape – I'll be home soon!

Love,  
Merrill