

A New Normal:

ADJUSTING TO LIFE AT HOME

LILA OLIVER, ARTIST

WORLD WAR II | USO

Oliver sketched wounded troops while they recuperated in military hospitals

LETTER TO A FRIEND, 1940s



You ask if the boys have changed much. Some, having had experiences enough for a lifetime, are older, and even have gray hairs. And yet, they have a greater zest for life. Sound contradictory? It isn't. They've seen much, so they are older, but what they have lived through makes them appreciate each day and each hour...

The disabled ones? They want to be treated squarely and honestly. Most of the boys have more courage than I knew existed. If we don't pity and stare sideways with long sad glances, they'll be O.K. They need a chance. I say we shouldn't pity them; I didn't say we shouldn't help them; most assuredly we must not forget them. How can we repay the loss of a leg to a 20-year-old?

Photo credit: Untitled sketch by Lila Oliver, courtesy of the artist

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