

T H E     D O P E

Feb. 1, 1943

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Published now and then at Douglas, Michigan,  
for its sons in the Service.                      No. 8.

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Seventeen days of snow in January - it's still four feet deep in spots - yet we've never seen the streets of our village look better than they've looked in the last month. In December we thought we were holed up for keeps. The snow-plough had broken down, just when it was needed most - and you never saw such a sore-headed lot of villagers in all your life. But it was just what the old town needed - the straw that broke the camel's back. Today we have a fine new plough (or rather the old one hitched to Ray Goodin's big truck) and it roars by the house in a beautiful cloud of white spray, and leaves the old street looking like a boulevard. Douglas has never been prettier, in our opinion, nor more pleasant to move around in, than during these last white weeks.

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Ev Thomas sent word on January 4th that he'd been in a New Guinea hospital for over a month. Malarial fever and temperature of 105 - but Ev says it was worth it to see some white girls again. And his brother Tommy, almost in the same mail, reports his hospital session behind him (a sinus operation) and himself back on duty.

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Speaking of New Guinea, we understand that the Government is preparing a phrase-book of Pidgin English for use of our troops in their contacts with the natives down there. So there'll be nothing to cramp your style now, boys - the book tells you exactly how to say it.

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Did you know that Saugatuck and Douglas now have a Red Cross unit turning out surgical dressings? Headquarters are in Douglas Schoolhouse and many women from Douglas, Saugatuck, Fennville, and Ganges are giving one or two days of each week to this important work. The unit is headed by Mrs. Harold Van Syckel, assisted by Mrs. Ben Bieler, Mrs. Joe Wilson & Mrs. Ken Martin.

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Orville Millar, inducted on December 28th, came home from Camp Grant a few days later looking like a million in his new uniform. Thought the Army was swell. But a letter from Orv down in Mississippi last week reported a session of KP. It didn't sound like the same Orv - or even the same Army.

Clair Schultz sends the following to Ky Walz from "Desert Man-ouvres" in western Arizona: "Hello Ky and all: We're out here in the desert - at least that's what they call it....sand in some places, but mostly rocks and mountains...Ground powders up real quick, that's where the dust comes from....Our Christmas dinner was seasoned like wienies at a beach party....you take a delicious bite and then all of a sudden your teeth start grinding on something that is 'nt food....Dust was so bad here for a couple days that you could 'nt see ten feet in front of you.....Have 'nt been anywhere since we came out because by the time you get to town your clothes are all dust and you look like a tramp, or 'desert rat' as they say here. Went to Yuma Christmas Eve, though, and got a shower and a haircut - that was my Christmas present to myself".

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We regret to report that the East Saugatuck campaign (Carl Wicks and Andy Jager vs. two blondes) has apparently bogged down. The boys have clamped on a air-tight censorship, and no details are available, but Cully Ash reports that no progress whatever is being made.

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Since Christmas Eve Lawrence Shumaker's address has been changed from Camp Peary, Virginia, to Fleet Postmaster, New York, to somewhere in Florida, to Fleet P.O. San Francisco. Some moving.

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And Gordon Durham sent word from Colorado about Christmas time that his new address was care Postmaster, San Francisco. Then along came word from Newport News, Virginia, that Gordon's ship was alongside and he and his mules and mountain artillery were shoving off. You figure it out.

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Did you hear the true story about the English barber who was bombed out of his shop and opened up next day with a big sign: "I've had a close shave - what about you?"

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The following excerpts are from a letter from Jack Campbell in New Guinea, dated December 24th, to John and Blanche Campbell: "Received your cigarettes and they pulled me out of a spot; my supply was reaching zero....Got my second Dope yesterday, also the Commercial-Record. The people back home are certainly remembering us....Pretty warm now; 100-105 during the day but cool at night.....Bennie is here with me, also saw Ev Thomas recently. Both as anxious to get back home as I am. Tell Cully he'd better get the jail swept out. We're going to turn the old town upside down when we get there".

After ten weeks in the Officers School at Fort Warren, Wyoming, Larry LaViolette was all set to get his commission this month when an old physical ailment cropped up and resulted in a medical discharge. Losing out in such fashion is more than Larry's share of hard luck - but old friends in Saugatuck and Douglas are mighty glad to see him around again.

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Father Nugent received the following from Leonard Shumaker last week, in Williamsburg, Virginia: "Sure like this new camp.... everybody 100%...Went into town yesterday...50 miles to Richmond. Standing room only and packed in like sardines...We got 3.2 beer at the Depot - but do they soak the service boys! Fifteen cents for an eight-ounce glass! Is 'nt that terrible, Father?"

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Basketball - and how! Six games to report since our last issue. January 19th at Saugatuck: Gobles 20 Saugatuck 16. This was a fast, scrappy game all the way but Gobles was just a little too good. January 22nd at Muskegon: St. Joseph 51 Saugatuck 17. Lawrence Monique, our Douglas boy, was out of the line-up in this one, so of course the team took a beating. It was a rough game, so much so in fact that one of the St. Joe muggs broke his own ankle. January 26th at Saugatuck: Hopkins 29 Saugatuck 25. This was a hard one to lose. It was tied at 25-all with two minutes to go, then Hopkins sunk two buckets and it was all over. A fine hard-played game. January 27th at Holland: Holland Service Machine 34 Douglas A.C. 28. The Club's first game of the season and a sort of warm-up for the boys: Bud Bekken and Bob Wicks, forwards; Jerry Bekken, center; Garth Wilson and Hallie Beery, guards; and Bud Edgecomb, Gene Lundgren, Demmy Deamerest, Bud Baker and Willard Beery, substitutes. January 29th at Fennville: (1st game) Fennville Independents 51 Douglas A.C. 44. Lawrence Monique joined the club line-up for this one and a number of shifts were made. The boys got off to a bad start but came up fast. The team is coming along nicely and about ready to click. (2nd game): Fennville H.S. 27 Saugatuck H.S. 25. This was a heartbreaker. It was anybody's game from start to finish; fast, heads-up basketball - with Fennville in by a whisker.

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This issue of The Dope is mailed to all Douglas men in the Services through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Otis Thomas.

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Flash: (just received) The East Saugatuck front has collapsed. Two sailors from Holland.

So long,

H. S. K.