

Holland,
13 February,
1945.

Dear Dad:-

Just want to write you a short note to say = "THANK YOU".

All my life I've wanted to thank you for the countless things you and Mother have done for me, but I just couldn't seem to make the words come out.

We've always been a nonchalant family, and I guess that on the surface it seemed as though those "crazy kids" were very unappreciative, but honestly we just couldn't say it; but I know the others feel just as I do.

It is sad that I had to wait 26 years and travel 5,000 miles before I could write those words but it is better late than not at all. This war has taught me more than I ever learned in college, and I'll never again feel it is "^{of}out/~~order~~" to openly love one's parents or be appreciative of the things they have done. I have been through real terrible hell in the last month. I have seen more men die in one afternoon than I'll ever see ⁱⁿ/~~a~~ life time of medical practice. I've seen many fall out of burning tanks and die before I could touch them; and I've been scared, not that I'd die but might die without telling you just how I felt.

You have both been so good to me I can't count all you have done. I've never forgotten how big you were that time I got into a "jam" in high school, and when most parents would have shouted their heads off neither of you said a word. Everyone has forgotten never that. Mary/~~knew~~ of it and I'll never tell her but I am sure she would do just like you. You were entirely right when you said she loves me; I know that, and as long as I live I'll never do anything

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to make her regret that. She is the most sincerely "good" woman I have ever encountered and she ^{sees}/~~nothing~~ but the good qualities of everyone around. She has been everything I want out of this life since the night we met.

I know it meant a sacrifice to send me to college and medical school; you had to do without some things that would have meant more pleasure, but neither of you ever mentioned the fact; and you provided everything with such little fuss I had little chance to even thank you---most important of all.

I want to thank you for keeping me a Catholic through some rough times until I finally reached the age where I could see all Catholic and nonCatholic die side by side. Once anyone has seen that he will be a real Catholic for life if he has ever had eyes.

There are many things I owe you but I could never mention them all; so I'd just like to say---Thanks for being the finest Dad in the world. I hope I can do half as well.

Love,

(sig) JOHNNY.