

War Era Story Project 2012

Submitted by: Linda H. Meisner

Current home town: Pickerington, Ohio

Age: Not given

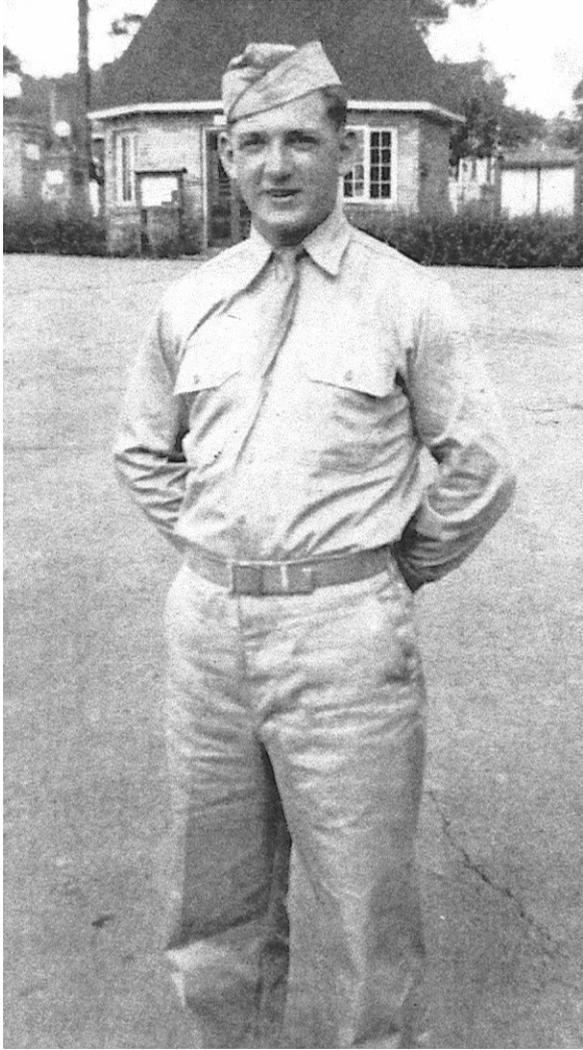
My father, Alex Hamas, served in WWII from January 20, 1943 to his separation date on January 18, 1946. His overseas locations included England and Germany. During his time overseas, Alex corresponded frequently. His widow, Mary Hamas, currently living in Pittsburgh, PA, has a shoebox full of treasured letters. These letters give a picture of life for the young soldiers. The comforts of receiving mail and attending church are frequently mentioned. The actual letters illustrate the tiny size of paper allowed, and the censor's stamp on each.

Describing life in England while Alex was connected to the 199th General Hospital there, he spoke of the Thanksgiving meal in 1944 that was such a morale builder. Afterwards, the men gathered and sang songs to pass the time. They followed events back in the States, and Alex wrote that he had to endure some insults from the other soldiers when his team, Pittsburgh, lost to Illinois in a college football game. He wrote that he frequently spoke of his hometown of Pittsburgh, as did the other soldiers speak of theirs. Like the others, he missed ice cream, Coca-Cola, and other American favorites.

While in Germany, Alex wrote of spending time at guard duty and KP. The men looked to stay active, set up volleyball courts, and played football, horseshoes and cards. Alex wrote of seeing Germans (he used the common term "Krauts"), as well as Poles and Russians, returning home as the war ended. He wrote that there were many different flags waved by these tired, yet joyous people. He expressed that the best of them all was the American flag. On the American radio were lessons on simple German translations. Yet, he wrote, it seems that they were scolded for fraternizing when they attempted to use their German. It seemed confusing to him.

Perhaps the most amazing letters to his family include the drawings. He made these as greeting cards, since that item of civilization was not available during war. On the tiny officially available paper, he included items and messages that fit the appropriate holidays such as Christmas and Easter. His talent and ideas were so popular that he did this not only for his fiancée back in the States, but the other men asked him to provide the same service for them. He ended up being a fairly busy man keeping up with demand.

When Alex returned to the States, he picked up his life and married in August of 1946. He was active in veteran organizations his entire life, especially the Veterans of Foreign Wars. He took leadership roles in these organizations and actively worked to promote their causes and to help fellow veterans obtain the benefits they were entitled to after service. He continued these activities until his death in 2004. These activities are proudly remembered by his wife, two children, and grandchildren. He is memorialized in the perpetual Registry of Remembrances, part of the National World War II Memorial.



Cpl ABIE HARRIS. 33420359
199 GENERAL HOSPITAL
A.P.O. 17130 1/6 Post MASTER
New York N.Y.

U.S. ARMY
OCT 30
5 30 PM
1944
POSTAL SERVICE



PAID BY
U 46235 S
ARMY EXAMINER

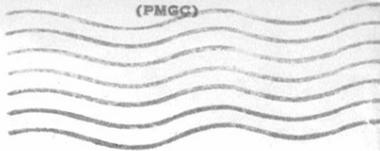
Capt. J. J. [unclear]

MISS MARY LOU KUCAN
19 WOODLAND FIVE.
N.S. .12. P.H. PA.

WAR & NAVY
DEPARTMENTS
V-MAIL SERVICE
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

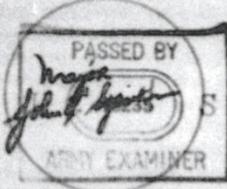
POSTAL SERVICE
APR 20
11 4 PM
1945

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE TO AVOID
PAYMENT OF POSTAGE, \$300.
(PMGG)



To: Miss Mary Lou Kucan
19 Woodland Five
N.S. PITTSBURGH PA (12)

No.



(CENSOR'S STAMP)

To Miss Mary Lou Kucan
19 Woodland Ave
N.S. Pittsburgh 12 Pa

From Col. W. Thomas [Signature]

499 East 117th St
St. M. New York, N.Y.

November 23, 1944
(Date)

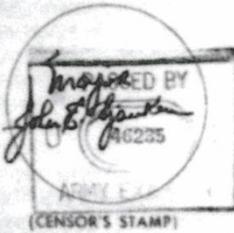
Thursday 11/23/44
Thanksgiving Day

Dearest Mary
 Darling, wait you tell you tell me when we
 will meet again. Today is Thanksgiving every day
 and really Mary, every body had a grand
 time, and I think every body had their
 morale built up almost laughing the sky.
 you know if the ocean were to freeze I
 honey I think I would take a chance on
 skating back to your honey.
 We haven't had mail call for 5 days
 and today after having in dinner
 we did manage to guess a out some
 time for mail call. And then again
 we found time to sing a couple of
 songs. I did receive 2 letters from you
 honey. And I could just sit there
 and song songs all day and night.
 About this day found say your name and
 looking forward to meeting him some day.
 A friend of yours. honey could always be
 a friend of mine.
 No kiddin' honey every body was looking

V-MAIL

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1943 O-26148-6

No.



To

Miss Mary Lou Ryan
19 Woodland Ave
N.S. Pittsburgh 12, Pa.

From

Col. A. H. Haines - 3372354
(Sender's name)

192 East 73rd St. H.P.D. 17130
(Sender's address)

U.S. New York N.Y.

November 23, 1944
(Date)

2

(cont) - 11/23/44 Truly Dep

I forward to this dinner. It sure was good to see every fellow come in with a big smile on their face. I was on A.P. at the time. I am on a day and off a day. When I was off I was allowed to go out on a pass. But sometimes it wasn't worth it to take a pass. The customs here are really funny. So honey if I have some funny customs or say some slang things just overlook it and I'll remind me. And I am sure I could explain. It sure was good to hear that you received a letter from your brother. There is another I am looking forward to meet. In fact I may as well you family.

Honey I write just about every day. I do write men under a bit of stress. So honey close and wishing I could deliver my kisses some day. I'll be closing with my love to you, honey. My dearest Mary pleasest dream of you. Always. Yours truly
A.H.H.

V - MAIL

Germany

Dearest Honey

Dear I just had to write more. Because I know I
there is a lot I have to say. The Infanterie really does things
funny in ways. Over the radio they are telling us how
to translate sentences into German language. But
I know if we talk to the people here they get us
for fraternizing with people. And then they finish us.
But there are a lot of people here who are Polish
Russians and Yugoslavs. And I talk to them. But
again this fraternizing. But honey how could a G.I.
enjoy himself. And honey in this one home here, we
have electric lights. This is also for the first time.
Honey I am with the 7th Army and I know you have
read about them. So when I return I have plenty
to tell you. Honey when returning I hope we don't
waste too much time in getting married. Because
honey marriage is a great thing. And honey I know
you are the one for me. Because I love you
with all my heart. We are having a little snow.
How the weather back in the states. I started
to get a little sun tan. But that is fading
away. I hope you are not working too hard. And
I hope you are keeping your shape. But
honey blowing with all my love and love a
drink on me. And give all the fellows in the back

Print the complete address in plain letters in the panel below, and your return address in the space provided on the right. Use typewriter, dark ink, or dark pencil. Faint or small writing is not suitable for photographing.



(CENSOR'S STAMP)

TO: Miss Mary Lou Kucan
19 Woodland Ave.
N-S Pittsburgh Pa (12)

SEE INSTRUCTION NO. 2

FROM

Cpl. Al. Hamm 33420354
Co I 8th Inf. APO 4
4 P.M New York N.Y

(Sender's complete address above)

Germany

Dearest Mary Lou

Here it is wee hours of the morning, and the reason is I am of guard. And I really hate guard duty, I like my sleep. But there is'nt much to do at nights, and the last few nights I didn't have the time to write. And if I did have the time, their would be know writing material around. Honey I cant tell you how much I really miss you. But when I get to come home, I sure will show you that I really mean when I say I Love you with all my heart. I love to type, and any time a typewriter is handy I make use of it. And tonight no better way to spend my time than to write to the one of my heart and the one I Love. No I haven't enough points to reach the 85 but someday I will. The fellows in the outfit who have the necessary points some of them are on their way home. The lucky dogs. But they really earned the trip. See if we were married and had about 3 kids the points would really add up. Tell me now if the chance does come soon that we could be together and get married, just like anyone would expect. SK how many children do you have in mind. Tell me more where you would like to stay. and things you would like to have and things that would help us out. Because now is the time I would like to know these things. Honey what we have plenty of here is guard and more guard. We are trying of setting up some recreation here. So far we a volleyball court, we would of played today, but no sooner we the court it started to rain. So we are trying to book a game with the Wacs. Things really feel different now with all the fire works over with. But it gives one a different opinoin when he a bunch of Kraut Soldier on their way home. And now we are wondering what we were fighting. We don't know. We are kept busy all day with a training schedule, such as hikes and drilling. This we could do in the United States.

And also on their way home are the Polish and the Russians. And they really are happy. And before leaving I think they would like to give back to the German people some of the medicine they received from. I really talked to a lot of Poles and Russians and the German people really used them as work horses. But most of them are on their way home. And as they pass by in the trucks they keep their flag waving, and they are really proud of their flag. No flag is as great as ours, but so far I only had to see three American flags. Anything the Krauts took as Conquers they really had their flags waving. But honey again I must mention I really miss you and I Love you with all my heart, closing with kisses, tell Jean I said hello. And tell your sister Margie I said hello. I remain yours.

All my Love to YOU
Abie

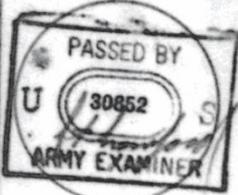
HAVE YOU FILLED IN COMPLETE ADDRESS AT TOP?

REPLY BY
V...-MAIL

HAVE YOU FILLED IN COMPLETE ADDRESS AT TOP?

18

Print the complete address in plain letters in the panel below, and your return address in the space provided on the right. Use typewriter, dark ink, or dark pencil. Faint or small writing is not suitable for photographing.



(CENSOR'S STAMP)

TO: Mrs Mary Jane Kucan
19 Woodland Ave
N S Pittsburgh Pa (12)

SEE INSTRUCTION NO. 2

FROM

Col Al Hamat - 33422854
Col 8th Inf 310th
To Ft New York N.Y

(Sender's complete address above)

Dear Honey

I sure wish you could be here to help me argue about good old Pittsburgh. Day in and day out. I know is when I have time we fellows here argue about our hometown and I sure give them a argument. I think all us fellows forgot what a lot of things are. Such as, ice cream, coco cola and several other things. Honey we are kept busy and honey I mean every minute for several days now I haven't been able to look at my poor toes, or clean my finger nails. And around my neck is circle a black one. You could tell just how much of my neck I wash. But honey all this amounts to that I love you, and that I miss you every minute. And when times here get tough thinking about you, I shed tears. Do you see honey that with all my heart which belongs to you. I miss you. And that is my every day prayers. I include you in them. And I always will. Love you
Tell Leon I said hello. Love later Dear
Al Hamat
Al Hamat

HAVE YOU FILLED IN COMPLETE ADDRESS AT TOP?

V - MAIL

HAVE YOU FILLED IN COMPLETE ADDRESS AT TOP?

18

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1945 10-10149-5

Dearest May.

I just finished playing cards. I do feel a little tired. But honey I had to just and write you this letter. So honey as long as time permits. You could expect a letter every day. I probably will fall asleep fast tonight, because after church this morning I was on a detail that lasted all afternoon. But I needed this for exercise. Then after supper I played a little football and pitched some baseballs. And then a bunch of the fellows started a base card game and I joined. I thought I would play only for a while. But this lasted for 3 hrs. I broke out even. Then as I said, I had to just honey. to write.

Our barracks is like a merry-go-round. When the wind blows it really blows and rocks the barracks back and forth, so you see we are rocked to sleep. Not bad but.

But honey I sure would like to show you how beautiful the surroundings are around camp. The woods, the trees and especially the lakes.

~~It is a great place for Daniel Boone with trees~~

3

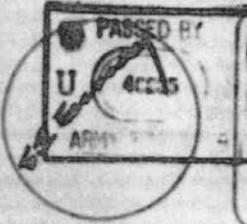
especially you. I know you are the sweetest
girl in the world. So honey nothing else
would I like to come back soon and be
near you. To have, to love and cherish.

I would if I had some ice cream, but the
P.X. was closed so our stop went over. Oh well
tomorrow is another day. Honey I think your
pictures will be held up for a while but
I hope. I have that smile on me, so I have
my wallet open and looking at you. and saying,
"I'm sending this to you honey."

You honey some girls could really talk. But
you are the quiet sort. But sweet honey. Some
day, one has to watch the quiet type.
Will Pittsburgh win this last football game, and
I know Selemak beat Pitt 39-5. And I sure
did take rubbing on that. In fact it is like
the every Saturday. Oh! Well better days to
come. Well honey after I finish I am
going to watch. break my teeth. kids but the
they. And dream of you honey. And until
I hear from you. I remain, A Pleasant
Dreams. I'm hoping better scores in bowling.
With Love.

1 Kisses

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(CENSOR'S STAMP)

TO: Miss Mary Lou Kucera
19 Woodland Ave.
N.S. Pittsburgh, Pa.

SEE INSTRUCTION NO. 2

FROM

Col. Al. Hayes-Jones
199 Gen Hosp. A.P.O. 350
76 PM New York, N.Y.

(Sender's complete address above)

*If I were to swim the ocean!
It would be a cruise
To get home to the sweetest girl
Across the ocean!!*

DEAREST MARY LOU

ENGLAND 12/10/44



How is wishing you

MERRY CHRISTMAS

And

Happy New Year!

*Love And Kisses
Always
Always You Always*

HAVE YOU FILLED IN COMPLETE ADDRESS AT TOP?

V-MAIL

HAVE YOU FILLED IN COMPLETE ADDRESS AT TOP?

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1943 10-21122-0

Print the complete address in pencil on the p...
the right. Use typewriter, dark ink or dark pen. Faint or small writing is not suitable for photographing.



(CENSOR'S STAMP)

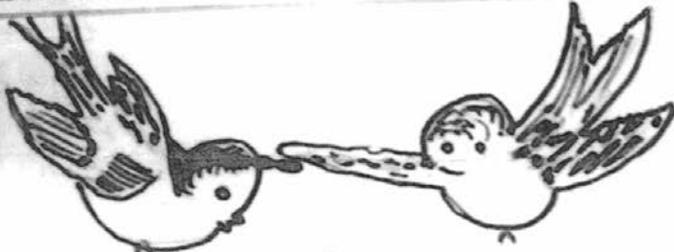
To: Miss MARY LOU KUCAN
19 WOODLAND FLUG
N.S. PITTSBURGH PA (12)

See Instruction No. 2

From:

Cath...
2049...
690...
Tom... N.Y. N.Y.

(Sender's complete address above)



DEAREST DARLING
BEST WISHES
FOR A

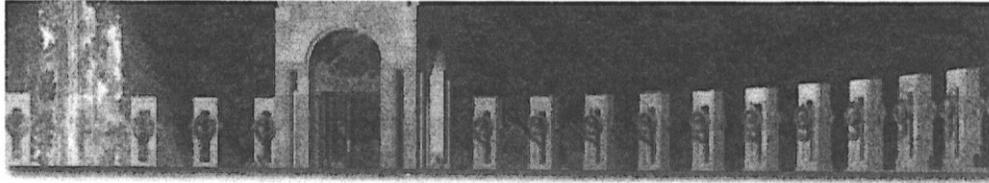
HAPPY
EASTER



HAVE YOU FILLED IN COMPLETE ADDRESS AT TOP?

REPLY BY
V...-MAIL

HAVE YOU FILLED IN COMPLETE ADDRESS AT TOP?



World War II Honoree

World War II Veteran



Alex Hamas

BRANCH OF SERVICE
U.S. Army

HOMETOWN
Pittsburgh, PA

HONORED BY
**Linda H. Meisner,
Daughter**



ACTIVITY DURING WWII

SERVED WITH COMPANY L, 8TH INFANTRY, 4TH DIVISION; 2 YEARS, 3 MONTHS, 19 DAYS. STATESIDE SERVICE; 8 MONTHS, 10 DAYS. FOREIGN SERVICE IN EUROPE; JANUARY 20, 1943 TO JANUARY 18, 1946. RECEIVED PURPLE HEART.