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Title: Letter from Whitfield Bell Jr. to Mr. & Mrs. J. Wesley Potter

Date: June 6, 1945

Location: I-BellW-2001-1

Contact:

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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: MR. & MRS. J. Wesley POTTER
620 WALNUT ST.
CARLISLE
PENNSYLVANIA

See Instruction No. 2

From: Vol. W. J. BELL JR
AMERICAN FIELD SERVICE
A.P.O. 226
DET A
New York, N.Y.
6 June 1945
(Sender's complete address above)

FOLD HERE

FOLD HERE

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Potter: How good it is to know that part at least of the war is over, and that the killing and the pain are coming to an end! Here in Germany, where I am now, things cracked wide open at the end, and though we all knew the end was only a matter of days, it was a little hard to comprehend when the first cease fire came. In some ways the hardest part lies now ahead. Certainly there is no peace in Europe today; and from everywhere taking Hitler, they have now all turned to taking one another. I worked for some time at one of the most hideous of the Concentration Camps, filled with men and women of all nationalities. And as soon as they were feeling better, they fell to abusing the men and women of other nations. The Poles only want to go home to fight the Russians. The French charge the Poles with being ~~worse~~ worse than the Nazis. The Belgians say the French withheld their food. Everyone criticizes us for not shooting all the Germans in sight. Now a Concentration Camp is hardly a fertile soil in which to grow the Greater Virtues; but it is a little discouraging to see what venom is spread throughout all these peoples. But we have destroyed much that was in the German system, and if we are willing to pay the price - Mr. Absence from home, tough decisions, hard thinking, and ungrateful actions, we may be able to sanitize a bit of this sorry old world.

HAVE YOU FILLED IN COMPLETE ADDRESS AT TOP?

REPLY BY
V...-MAIL

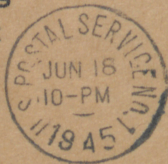
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UNIT 0514



6-1945

To:
MR. & MRS. J. Wesley Potter
620 WALNUT ST.
CARLISLE
PENNSYLVANIA

From:
Vol. W. J. BELL. JR.
AMERICAN FIELD SERVICE DET. A
A.P.O. 228
NEW YORK, N.Y.

6 June 1945

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Potter: - How good it is to know that part at least of the war is over, and that the killing and the pain are coming to an end! Here in Germany, where I am now, things cracked wide open at the end; and though we all knew the end was only a matter of days, it was a little hard to comprehend when the final "cease fire" came. In some ways the hardest part lies now ahead. Certainly there is no peace in Europe today; and from everyone's [hating?] Hitler, they have now all turned to [hating?] one another. I worked for some time at one of the most hideous of the Concentration Camps, filled with men and women of all nationalities. And as soon as they were feeling better, they fell to abusing the men and women of other nations. The Poles only want to go home to fight the Russians. The French charge the Poles with being worse than the Nazis. The Belgians say the French withheld their food. Everyone criticizes us for not shooting all the Germans in sight. Now a concentration camp is hardly a fertile soil in which to grow the greater virtues; but it is a little discouraging to see what venom is spread throughout all these peoples. But we have destroyed much that was in the German system, and if we are willing to pay the price – in absence from [home?], tough-mindedness, hard thinking, and prayerful actions, we may be able to [illegible] a bit of the sorry old world.

Whit.