

Way We Were

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Title: From Our Boys in the Armed Forces, Part II

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All was quiet on the western front for many years after World War I. The fortunate returned home to their families in living flesh rather than by words through the postal service. It wasn't until the United States entered World War II that the Park Record began posting letters from soldier boys again.

Understanding and emphasizing the effects of letters on morale, First Lieutenant Infantry Morale Officer Herbert Adamson wrote the Park Record, "Please notify your readers that their letters will reach the boys...Urge them to not delay too long in starting their correspondence."¹ This time however, letters from World War II provide us with a stark contrast from the battlefield of the Argonne Forrest in World War I. Most printed in the Park Record avoid details of their war experience, and even fewer hint at any feelings of homesickness or fear especially when writing to the women in their lives.

It has often been speculated that beloved Parkite Carrie Vivian Hodgson kept the company of other men. In fact her first husband divorced her citing such an accusation. While the validity of that statement may never be known, the former weather person, watch repairer, and jewelry store owner received friendly letters from soldiers during World War II which provide an excellent example of the drastic contrast in tone. Cpl. Eugene Correll of Park City wrote of his time in England, "Things here are very beautiful and much the same as at home. The farms are all green and wild flowers blooming at this time of year."² Pfs. Geo. Gasparac wrote similarly, "There isn't very much to tell you. I have had a swell time of it. I get to go to town often and see a lot of things. It has been a good thing, and one I don't regret."³

Perhaps censorship regulations were stricter at this time than in World War I, perhaps those overseas from Park City really did have a "swell" time fighting World War II, but

¹ The Park Record, *Write to Your Soldier Boys*, 21 August 1941

² The Park Record, *With Our Boys in the Armed Forces*, 16 December 1943

³ The Park Record, *With Our Boys in the Armed Forces*, 7 October 1943

odds are that while these letters are important they offer a slanted view of war. One in which boys chose to protect their loved ones at home from the harsh realities of the battles they fought against the axis powers and within themselves.



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Credit: Park City Historical Society & Museum, Carl Workman Digital Collection

Caption: The First Platoon - HMG in Shibata, Japan after World War II had ended. Courtesy of old-timer Carl Workman.