

Lancing, Tennessee
August 23, 1945

Dear Bill and Russell,

I wanted to send you another news letter--Since I have been teaching for two weeks this is all I can manage. If you could see me trying to get 49 wiggley 3d and 4th graders to study and be quiet--,I really don't know what you would think.

I called Nashville this afternoon to tell Bernice that we would see that she was met tomorrow. She was out. The girl that took my message said she had gone to a show, and wouldn't be back until nine o'clock. I called about five thirty, but I guess she had gone to town to shop some before coming home. It's funny, I always get excited when I call long distance. I was sorry Bernice was out for I could hear the girl as clear as if she had been at Wartburg.

Blanch told me that Billy had to go back to his old base before coming home, and there wasn't any likelihood of his getting to come or start before the first of October. I believe she said he had to go back to Germany.

Happy Birthday, Russell; even if it is late.

Did anyone tell you about our celebration here;--? Yes we had one. Betty Ann came right up to ring the Presbyterian Church bell..Someone else went over to ring the Baptist.

I got the alto horn out and blowed it until my mouth swelled up. I was so sorry I couldn't play "the Star Spangled Banner!" I told the children that they should parade. So they borrowed some rythm band instruments from Mrs. May, took the horn and went down the road singing, The Marine Hymn, "Caissons"; They started with Julia Mae, Alice, Kenneth Potter, . As they went along they picked up other children. Two Vespies, George Hall, Marjorie Bonham's children, then finally the grown people. Mr. Hutchison, ~~Miss~~ Stella Maden, Helen Kreis, Mrs. Eldridge. They got two flags and carried. (excuse grammer!)

I sat seething because the Methodist bell had not been heard. Mama had gone to milk Caroline was eating supper. We had no rope on the bell. Such a pity--such a pity thought I. The best bell in Lansing and it could not be rung on V*J day. I walked up the hill. No one knew I was going(the plot thickens). I shall ring it thought I, with my onw hands\$, Oh me--Dad had nailed up the door that led into the closet. I would not quail--I had no time to go back for a nail- puller..I looked around in desperation -The poker-someone had put it down in the stove. but I found it . I worked hard, pounded back the nail. I was boogering up the door; but what was that in comparison to the importande of hearing the bell on this day... There! I go into the dark closet and look around. My heart sinks. No one but an expert could risk going up that make shift ladder.. I felt my way back toward the middl of the partition. I decided to try going up over the arch.

I felt up for the uneven boards that had to be the ladder. It wasn't long until dark and I surely couldn't climb in the dark. What if I stepped on a rotten board. I started the climb. I was doing all right until I thought.. "What if I should fall here and kill myself--no one would know where I was. As I climbed I got shakier. Carefully I pulled myself up. Then I crept over the rafters toward the front. I mustn't step off----Then I reach the belfry.. There is some more climbing to do--When I finally reach the place where I can reach for the wheel--I start to turn it over-- But the whole place shakes. I am afraid the whole thing will fall and me with it...What shall I do? Shall I give up? There is the toll--I can reach it easily. So I lean over and with both hands begin to pound the bell with the toll in even strokes to imitate the bell ringing. It sounds loud to me.. I pound away and thrill to the sound.

Of course one must get back down after climbing up..
~~It~~ It was even harder-- But the job was done.

I came down the hill to see a long procession strung down from the Jones place to Pemberton's. Mama and Aunt Mary was in it,, coming home with the milk. The Baptist bell was ringing again. The flags were waving.. They were singing. I was black from my climb but as I came up to the m I joined them and walked a ways.

Mama said later she recognized the bell as she was milking. She wondered why it was as weak as it was.

At 8 we had a prayer service in the Church. The house was full. Ralph Pemberton and the Ownie's were there.

and other people that never go to church. The Baptist people were there.

We couldn't listen to the celebrations.. Our radio was dead/ It died the day that Japan surrendered! Dad brought a battery for the little radio home Saturday.

Dad has been having a time this week--and the week before. A new man bid the Agent's job there--an operator from Robbins that doesn't know that ~~in~~ kind of work.. Dad said he couldn't even sell tickets when they were foreign roads. He is henpecked--didn't really want the job..His wife made him take it! You know how Dad can tell such tales. Dad can hardly get his own work done.

The grapes are ripe at the farm but we can't go get them.

Our renters are moving-

Wartburg school is still waiting on a new building.

Lancing has an enrollment of 208. (a new attendance law)

I mean the school of course!

Bernice Owens is teaching down here and has 55 enrolled.

Gippy Lane is home.

We hope to see you soon.

Love,

Jewell