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December 25, 1944

2 A. M.

Dear Lee,

Shirley and I are sitting in bed writing a few letters so here I am.

This Christmas Eve started with church this morning followed by a choir carol sing. Shirley appeared in an orchid which was tele-graphed to her by Fred. Hot stuff, huh?

We arrived home, walked in the door to answer the phone. It was Fred calling from Plainsfield saying he was home until 6 o'clock Monday night and could he come down? We were all thrilled, of course, so at 5:30 Shirley, Walt, May and I drooled down to the station to pick him up. He just left about an hour ago.

During his short stay we trimmed the Christmas tree. We have a table tree

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this year but it's nice and full and touches the ceiling. I'm afraid the pup would have a floor tree torn down at first sight. Miracle of miracles, all the lights worked, although Shirley had broken one extension cord up at school. We could be very choosy about our balls since the tree was smaller than usual, and we used blue and silver tinsel. The effect is very nice.

Oh yes, Shirley and I have received our Christmas present already. Friday we went to New York to see "Rigoletto" at the Metropolitan Opera House. Tibbett sang the title role supported by Josephine Antoine and Charles Hellman. We were duly impressed with the great, deep, stage covered with numerous curtains. The scenery was wonderful and a thunder-storm was produced very realistically. All in all it was really a thrilling performance. We spent the night at the Children's Village outside of Dobbs Ferry. It's sort of a private home for orphans, problem children, etc. situated in the mountains and the Hudson River. It was beautifully snowed under when we arrived. Saturday we planned to spend shopping in New York, but as it began to sleet we decided to start home since the driving would be dangerous. Coming across the General Pulaski Skyway leading from New York, we saw over a dozen accidents where cars had piled up due to sleet. Luckily just outside New York the sleet stopped and we made it home in about three and one half hours. Pretty good time, huh?

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Shirley and I exchanged our presents tonight. I received a neat pair of brown and white mittens with a white scarf to match and gave her a silver bracelet.

Walt gave me a nifty alligator purse.

Well, it's not much like Christmas without you home but we're always remembering you and hoping you'll be home to celebrate next Christmas with the family.

May God Bless you and keep you,

Love, "Bun"