

Write From The College Front

Family, friends and men in service will enjoy accounts of your experiences, says Mary Dodds

THE "Free" in the upper right hand corner of every letter you receive from a serviceman is evidence of the fact that our government realizes the value of mail as a morale-builder.

Standing in your undecorated dormitory room that first day, amid baggage and unfamiliar faces, you felt that the soldiers weren't the only ones who needed morale building. A letter from home would have been welcomed hungrily although you had just left there the day before or even that morning. Since you had to get it off your chest, you sat down at the bare desk and wrote to Mom. You dumped all your troubles into two pages, sealed it up, and sent it on its way. There, you felt better. But did Mom?

If you must have an outlet for your grievances, jot them on a piece of paper, tear it up, and throw it away. Then write the folks at home. Describe your room, how your curtains fit in, where you put all the stuff they helped pack. Link the unfamiliar with the familiar, and they will be able to picture the substitute for your empty room at home. Add diagrams or sketches wherever you can. Enclose a small map of the campus on which they can follow your activities throughout the year.

If you write to your family as a group, personalize your letters by mentioning topics of particular interest to each of them, as "Say, Dad, I saw something today that you would like . . ." Make your letters lively even if they are just to the folks. Describe amusing incidents from your classrooms or the dorm as you would if you were at home. Make them laugh. Your letters can become an anticipated event, read by all.

Beside your parents there are others at home from whom you'd like to receive letters. Some may be attending other colleges in the state or farther away. Wherever they are they will be interested in the same things you are — dances, exchanges, dormitory life, interesting professors and classes — anything that is connected with the fun of being in college.

The girls remaining at home form a different audience. Tell them about college life, but don't fill your letters with that. Comment on changes at home, people you both know and happenings that are similar to experiences you have had together.

Avoid the temptation to write one long letter and send a copy of it to all your friends, with proper editing. Such letters lose their zest, and you lose your flare for letter writing.

There also are girls you met during vacations or at camp with whom you would like to correspond. One

girl carried on a post card correspondence with a group of girls whom she had met at a summer conference and thus kept in touch with them with minimum effort and expense.

Your letter writing list seems staggering now, but it can be shortened easily with a little planning. Make a complete list of the letters you owe, placing the most important ones at the top. Set aside a certain time each day, perhaps the half hour before or after dinner, and write at least one letter a day, crossing off names as you go. Soon the list will be conquered, and you can keep up with yourself by answering letters as they are received. What once was an effort will become a pleasant habit.

There may be a man shortage on campuses this year, but there is no shortage of masculine correspondents. Perhaps you are keeping up the morale of one special serviceman by a daily letter. Do your letters really keep up his morale or are they dull repetitions of what you have told him in other letters?

If he was in college before he went into the service, he will thrive on news of professors he knew, favorite hang-outs and classroom gossip, colored by your own ad libs. For general campus news, clip the servicemen's edition of the campus newspaper and relay it. Tell him your minor worries about finals and what goes on at home for he wants to know those things. Sketch figures in the margins to emphasize your tales, or cut a cartoon from a magazine. Any thoughtful enclosure brings your personality closer to him.

But don't think your letter to him is enough. Ask him for the addresses of your friends and his that are in the service. Write to them regularly because they'll like to hear from you, and you can keep them indirectly in contact with each other. Watch the alumni magazine and local newspapers for news of people they know. Before you realize it you will be conducting a private news service, appreciated greatly by all of your servicemen friends.

Another way in which you can cooperate, is by using V-Mail when writing to men and women overseas. Write it as you would any lively letter, ignore the fact that it has to be photographed, and don't write too daintily. Use black ink, preferably, and bold, legible handwriting. If you know that you could include more in a letter, but there isn't room, write the remainder on another sheet.

Whoever your audience is — parents, friends or servicemen, make the letter sound like a friendly conversation. You will enjoy it and so will they.



This coed's letter will contribute to military morale