

NAME: Walter

RANK: Corporal

ORGANIZATION: VII Fighter Command

OVERSEAS WARTIME SERVICE: Asiatic-Pacific Theater of Operations

- The following excerpt is directly from an original wartime letter written by Walter. This is the only letter from Walter in the site curator's possession.
- The following excerpt is presented under fair use provisions for educational purposes.
- No controversial material has been omitted from the following excerpt aside from edited profanity for the protection of younger readers. No grammatical or spelling errors have been corrected.

Walter writes his parents in the United States:

“TUESDAY, MAY 2 [1945]

...I CANNOT SPEAK AUTHORITATIVELY ON THE QUESTION OF FURLS AND ROTATION – I JUST GO BY WHAT I READ AND HEAR. AND ALL OF THAT MAY OR MAY NOT BE AUTHORITATIVE. HOWEVER, I WILL WRITE TO MAC AGAIN, AND EXPLAIN AS FULLY AS I CAN JUST WHAT THE DEAL IS. I REALIZE THAT IT WOULD BE A FINE THING IF THESE FELLOWS WHO HAVE BEEN OVERSEAS FOR THREE OR FOUR YEARS WITHOUT ANY KIND OF A BREAK SHOULD GET SOME SUPPORT FROM THE NEWSPAPERS AT HOME...I BELIEVE THAT ERNIE PYLE WAS BURIED ON IWO JIMA, A LITTLE ISLAND NEAR OKINAWA, NOT IWO JIMA. THE TWO NAMES SOUND ALIKE WHEN HEARD OVER THE RADIO. I’M NOT WORRYING VERY MUCH ABOUT THE SAN FRANCISCO PEACE CONFERENCE. FRANKLY, I BELIEVE THAT THEY CAN HAVE PEACE CONFERENCES FROM NOW TILL DOOMSDAY AND WE WILL STILL HAVE WARS EVERY FEW YEARS...IT SEEMS TO ME THAT ALL OUR RECENT DIPLOMATIC MOVES IN ALL THEATERS OF THE GLOBE HAVE JUST ABOUT SET THE STAGE FOR THE NEXT WAR, AND I’M TRYING TO FIGURE OUT AN ANGLE TO AVOID THE DRAFT. I’LL EITHER HAVE TO BE TOO OLD OR 4-F, AND I’M AFRAID IT WON’T BE THE FORMER. THUS, I THINK I’LL START NOW IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF FLAT FEET OR SOMETHING SO THAT I CAN GET RICH WHEN THE NEXT WAR COMES ALONG. NO, I’M NOT EXACTLY CYNICAL; I JUST DON’T GIVE OUR LEADERS CREDIT FOR THE IDEALISM THEY PROFESS. AS LONG AS ONE MAN CAN’T GET ALONG WITH HIS NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOR, WE CANNOT EXPECT TO HAVE WORLD PEACE. I BELIEVE THAT THE ONLY THING TO DO IS TO ALWAYS BE PREPARED FOR WAR, NO MATTER WHAT THE COST; THEN, WHEN IT COMES TIME TO FIGHT, KNOCK H _ _ L OUT OF THE OTHER GUY BEFORE HE HAS A CHANCE TO DO ANY DAMAGE. BUT I CAN’T SETTLE IT ONE WAY OR THE OTHER. I JUST HOPE TO GOD SOMEONE DECIDES TO GET THIS MESS OVER WITH... AND SOON! ...MY HEAD IS TIRED TONIGHT, SO I’LL BRING THIS TO A CLOSE. MAYBE IN A COUPLE OF DAYS, I’LL BE ABLE TO WRITE A BIT MORE INTERESTING LETTER.

LOVE, WALTER.”

- Walter made it through the Second World War and passed away in his 70s.
- **For visual context, this link connects to an original wartime period film in the public domain that covers the above time period and Walter's organization on Iwo Jima (viewer discretion advised):** <https://archive.org/details/CF-0504>
- **For additional detail, this link connects to the Wikipedia article that covers Walter's wartime organization, VII Fighter Command (reader discretion advised):** https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/VII_Fighter_Command