

Stieltjeskanaal, 9 Sept, "40  
Dalen, Dente.

Dear Jeanette,

I was so very glad to receive from you a letter last week and because you asked it me and I have spare time I will answer you immediately.

I feared that my letter didn't reach you, but happily you received it.

In the same time when I wrote to you I sent a letter to Agnes and in the beginning of this year I got a little card from her, which she told me she was married and she promised me she would send me a long letter, but I never received it. Perhaps it may be lost. When you write her, will you tell it!

I was very astonished to hear that she was married. What is her husband doing! She is so young yet. Here in Holland most boys and girls do not marry so young. Most of them are above twenty-five, when they have finished their studies. And when you have finished your studies it is often very difficult to get a good job, in which you earn so much money. You can marry.

At present several boys and girls do not think to marry at all. What will bring the future? When will this war end? Will it be soon or not? What will come after it? We do not know!

Sometimes I fear the future. The ideals of all young men are swept away; to serve mankind and once to marry. To get a wife, deal with and woe with her, and perhaps to get a child and work together for its future. But now it likes or we are born to starve in the trenches. Young men fell, thousands and thousands. It's all war what you hear and see. When you meet a friend in the street, you speak about the latest news; when you get a newspaper you read about it; you hear it over the radio and you see it on the cloth in the film. It is war, war.

But now we must not think at it too much. We must study and work for our future and for our native country. It is not a time to vent, but even we must work harder than ever.

As you know I study mathematics, and I can do my first examination in 1942 and I hope to end the study in 1944. You see also I have a good program for the next three years. And I have also no intention to marry in the coming years. When I can finish my studies I am twenty-five and let us hope that was has then ended; so I can get a good job and can marry (if there is a girl who feels like I do .....).

This year I spent my holidays at my parents' house. Now they are nearly gone; and with the holidays summer. Autumn is coming and then winter with its cold long dark evenings. It can be so cozy, but not in this time. You wrote you could see a red cross burning from a church steeple; here you see not a single light in the evening, it's all darkness and darkness by the obscurity.

The only wish from everyone is may this war soon end and never come back.

Jean, I have a friend in the Netherlands-East-Indies, but she heard nothing from me during the war; will you write for me to her and tell her I am well-sound and back home; Her address is: Lies Johannes, Ketalangboulevard 71, Loerabaja, Neth. East-Indies. You can write in English.

You have chosen a fine profession. You must send me a photo (not a snapshot) from you in uniform, then I shall send you a photo of myself in my next letter.

Write soon.

Many greetings from your boy  
Herman.