

Tully Archive: LeHand Papers

Correspondence: Flanagan, Rev. Edward J., 1937-1943

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library & Museum

Collection: Grace Tully Archive

Series: Marguerite ("Missy") LeHand Papers

Box 10; Folder = Correspondence: Flanagan, Rev. Edward J., 1937-1943



# FATHER FLANAGAN'S Boys Home

NON-SECTARIAN  
NON-PROSELYTING

FOR HOMELESS, ABANDONED BOYS REGARDLESS OF RACE, CREED OR COLOR

BOYS TOWN, NEBRASKA

December 24, 1937

M. A. LeH  
7

Miss Marguerite LeHand  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Miss LeHand:

Please accept my sincere thanks for your gift of five dollars to help bring Christmas cheer to our 200 homeless boys. I am most grateful to you for this kindly thought and in the name of my homeless boys I also thank you.

It is interesting to see the boys today as they are rushing around, planning and hoping that tomorrow will bring them real happiness - and it will - thanks to you and the other kind-hearted friends who have made this possible.

It would be nice to be in Washington during the Christmas Season, particularly at the White House, because it must be very lovely there. However, we enjoy our Day at Boys Town a great deal because these boys are so appreciative of every gift they receive.

Wishing you and yours all the peace and happiness of this Christmas Season and everything good in the New Year, I remain

Yours most sincerely,

*Father Flanagan*  
Reverend E. J. Flanagan

ejf-cd

X

8, 17/38

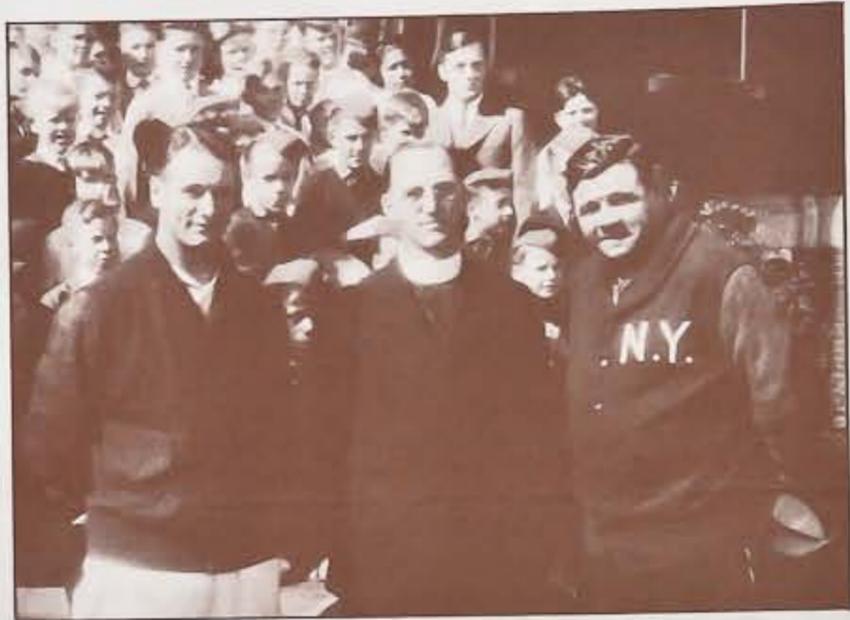
Reprinted from "THE FAMILY CIRCLE" Magazine, April, 1937, Issue

# HIS HEART IS BIGGER THAN THE LAW ALLOWS

THE STORY OF BOYS TOWN, NEBRASKA, THE WORLD'S MOST UNUSUAL "CHARACTER FACTORY"—AND OF THE GREAT PERSONALITY WHOSE DREAM-COME-TRUE IT IS • BY PAUL W. KEARNEY



Champions come and go, but Jack Dempsey holds a place high in the hearts of American boyhood. He and the late Jim Corbett (seated on steps) visited Boys Town together



Lou Gehrig and Babe Ruth of the New York Yankees stopped at Boys Town on one of their barnstorming tours. And it would be hard to say who got the biggest bang out of it—the boys or their heroes

**T**WENTY-FIVE years ago the young Edward J. Flanagan, newly ordained in the priesthood, surprised the Catholic hierarchy of Omaha with an odd request.

He didn't ask for a pastorate of his own—or even for a curacy in a good diocese. He merely asked for permission to rent a vacant house near the police station in which he might try his hand at a job of his own conception.

His idea was to do something tangible for the down-and-outers he had come to know so well in his voluntary visits to the city jail. And when his superiors granted him the authority to go ahead, he got a handful of these human derelicts together and among them they scrubbed and swept and renovated a four-story building which had been gathering dust through years of idleness.

The drudgery finished, they threw open the door to anybody and everybody who had no other door to welcome them—other than the one in the police station across the way. Thus began the Workingmen's Shelter, the idea which had stirred so long in the mind of the young priest but which was eventually to grow into something much greater and finer and more lasting than anything he dreamed of at first.

As many as a thousand men ate and slept in the Shelter on a single night—some of them paying a few pennies for accommodations, most of them with nothing to pay with. And while that may strike you as a noble enough work for any man to attempt singlehanded, the farsighted Father Flanagan soon found that it was being totally eclipsed by another, bigger idea.

The analysis of some two thousand case histories of these unfortunates, pieced together from little confidences freely offered once they had warmed to Father Flanagan's persuasive Irish charm, showed him that the vast majority of these drifters were mired in the gutters because of a neglected, homeless childhood.

"That," said Father Flanagan as we waited for a rehearsal of Phillips Lord's "We, The People" program at Radio City recently, "started me on a new track. Five years' work with these men convinced me that it is futile to try straightening a gnarled oak, and I decided to go after the saplings. I wanted to make something out of my life—to do something constructive, something permanent. So I decided to get homeless boys still in the formative period, when something could be done for them."

That is the background of per-

haps the most unique institution in America—Boys Town, Nebraska. And if you heard the broadcast of the "We, The People" program on which Father Flanagan spoke, you got a summary of the present development of a grand idea.

**B**OYS TOWN is a haven for wandering boys regardless of creed, color, or race. The only requirement for admission to Boys Town—when there is room!—is that the youngsters be homeless or deserted. Situated ten miles west of Omaha, Boys Town stands today as a million-dollar plant with three hundred and twenty acres of fine Nebraska farmland and eleven modern fireproof buildings accommodating about two hundred boys.

It is not by any stretch of the imagination an orphanage. It is a complete community in itself—the smallest incorporated city in the country—with its own second-class post office, its own grade school and high school, trade school, print shop, gymnasium, movie theatre, swimming pool, and dormitory. Naturally, it has a mayor and city council, elected at the polls in the prescribed manner, under the supervision of Douglas County election officials, after a spirited campaign between two parties.



Mayor Dan Kampan of Boys Town, Nebr., and his city council: Dan Adrian, Health Commissioner; Joe Mancuso, Parks; Tom McGuire, Public Works; Hizzoner; Tony Villone, Buildings; Leonard Pratt, Police; Stanley Lacz, Streets

You and I never heard of these parties, however, because they don't happen to be Democratic or Republican. One of them campaigns under the cryptic label of the BBT's (the Build Boys Town Party); the other is the Help Our Town Party, familiarly known as the HOT's. And one strange thing about them is that all their voters are **under** the age of twenty-one!

For Boys Town is a self-governing community with the control completely in the hands of the boys themselves. The present mayor is the seventeen-year-old Daniel Kampan (who was on the radio program with Father Flanagan and whom I also met at the rehearsal). He is the youngest mayor of a real city in the world. His six commissioners who comprise the city council range from twelve to sixteen years of age.

Rumor has it, of course, that Mayor Kampan copped the election because his ward heelers cornered the supply of Christmas candy and doled it out where it would accomplish the greatest good. But every campaign is productive of mudslinging; we can dismiss this as the squawk of a disgruntled manager, because the successful candidate obviously has outstanding ability. Playing forward on the basketball team, catcher on the baseball nine, and left halfback (he's also captain) of the eleven, he has still had time to win a scholarship to the State University.

Under the leadership of this alert administrator, the city council conducts the affairs of the city with all its varied problems. To be sure, the board of advisers, con-

sisting of members of the school faculty, are in the background for consultation when needed, but the basic idea is that they shall remain in the background.

In matters of discipline, for instance, where faculty members or the good Father himself might be expected to step in, the lads are quite able to operate unassisted. Minor offenders against the peace are punished by the retraction of certain privileges, such as going to the movies or using the pool. More serious offenders are sentenced to manual labor in keeping with their age—mowing lawns, weeding gardens, and so on.

"What," I asked Mayor Kampan, "is the toughest rap anybody gets?"

"A repeater," said the Mayor grimly, "has to stand all through the movie show with his back to the screen."

Astonished at this unique notion, I glanced at Father Flanagan, who nodded in confirmation.

"It's their own idea, not mine," he said apologetically. "I think it is savage and I've tried to get them to abolish it, but they won't."

"It works!" said the Mayor laconically. "Nobody holds his chin out for that dose twice."

Later on, when Dan had gone up to the mike to rehearse his piece, I asked the priest if there weren't occasions when the advisers or he had to step in and straighten out the juvenile ship of state.

"No," he said, "they get along marvelously. In a little more than three years' trial, the self-government plan has proved to be the most successful method of admin-

istration we have ever had. In years past we have relied on the usual routine of counselors, instructors, and directors, who were selected for their experience in handling boys. And although we have had some pretty good men

## BOYS TOWN BRIEFS

Upon admission to Boys Town, each boy is appointed by the mayor to perform some particular duty which takes about an hour a day (average). The boys serve table, wash dishes, and help with the cooking, laundry, farming, and general "housekeeping." The amount of work is determined by the boy's age and ability.

In 1936, fifty-two boys were learning one of fourteen trades. There were sixty-six boys in high school and one hundred and thirty in elementary school.

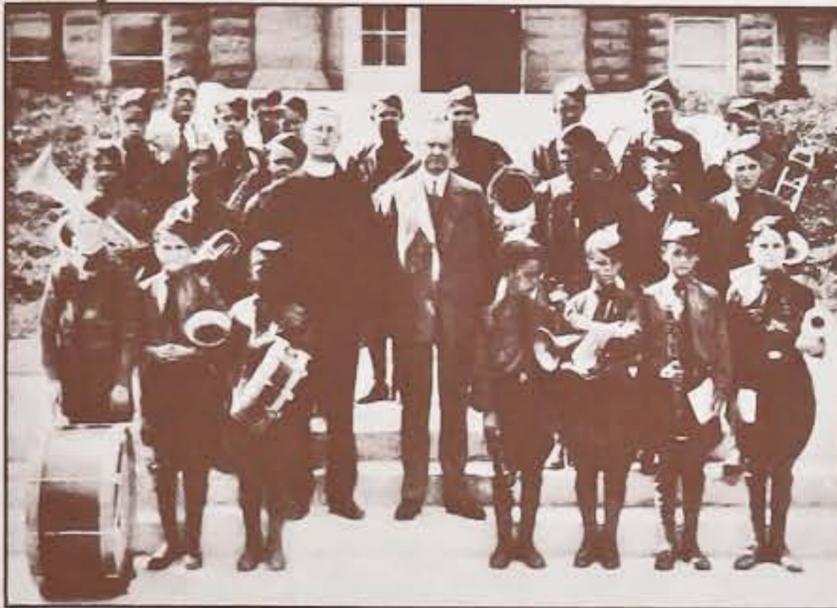
No boy is turned out of Boys Town until some definite job has been found for him. Contacts are maintained with friends of Boys Town throughout the country who might be in a position to employ a boy. Jobs are provided mostly by people interested in the work. Some of the famous friends of Boys Town: Will Rogers, a frequent visitor; Admiral Byrd, who spent his forty-seventh birthday there and got a cake decorated with a candy South Pole on it; Eamon De Valera; Tom Mix; Jack Dempsey; Babe Ruth; and Lou Gehrig.

The boys of Boys Town range in age from six to eighteen, although the age limits for admission are twelve to sixteen. Boys have stayed as long as eleven years.

Most boys are admitted following an application made by some person or agency interested in them, although many boys have come to Boys Town themselves. There is always a waiting list. Because of lack of room, an average of five hundred boys a year must be refused admission. Admission is granted as facilities allow. Boys Town wishes it could care for all the boys who need it, but due to financial limitations, it just can't. Its facilities are always pressed to the utmost.

there, the best of them never approached the control wielded by the boys' own city council. Boys understand boys better than men do, that's all."

"But," I asked, "what about the bad boys? You must get some pretty tough hombres among kids



Boys Town bands have taken part in many important national celebrations. This one had the special honor of giving a private concert at Boys Town for the late President Calvin Coolidge during his visit



Nothing was dearer than Boys Town to the heart of this man who was so dear to the hearts of the world. The late Will Rogers had a soft spot in his heart for the homeless boys and visited them often

who drop off boxcars and tramp in off the road."

Father Flanagan smiled a tolerant smile, and his penetrating eyes twinkled a little.

"There are no bad boys," he said quietly, "in Boys Town. Because a bad boy is simply a lad with a lot of energy and vitality and, very often, imagination. He has nerve, self-reliance, and thirst for action. His chief fault is that he has nothing constructive on which to expend that energy—nobody to guide it in the right channels—no one to substitute a wholesome form of excitement for the illicit."

He turned and tapped my knee for emphasis. "Give me the so-called bad boy any day," he said. "Properly directed, that fellow will go farther in this world than the 'good boy,' who is good mainly because he hasn't the initiative to get into trouble!"

As he spoke, my thoughts flitted back twenty-five years to the band of roughnecks I used to trail with. I checked off comparisons, then and now, between them and the kids on the other side of the railroad tracks, who never knew what it was to be chased by the cops. I started to speak my recollections when Father Flanagan broke in.

"Yes," he said, as if he had read my thoughts. "And remember, you boys had homes—people to care for you, to give you that social consciousness which steered you in the right direction. But my kids have nothing—nobody. They are abandoned and homeless—just human riffraff to be kicked around from pillar to post.

"In twenty years we have cared for and then sent into the world four thousand, four hundred, and forty-six boys with just such a background as that. With just exactly the background which bred the bums and panhandlers and drunkards I used to feed and bed in the Workingmen's Shelter in

#### ORAL SUPPORT

"We owe Father Flanagan much for his service to humanity, and Nebraska will be a better place because he has lived here," says Governor Arthur J. Weaver.

"If Boys Town were financially able to care for all the boys who need its help, crime would be dealt one of the most crushing and effective blows I can imagine," says J. Edgar Hoover.

"We need forty-eight Boys Towns—one for each State. They could be financed, but there aren't forty-eight Father Flanagan's," says William Randolph Hearst.

Omaha. Yet, to the best of our knowledge—and we check just as carefully as we can—not a single one of those four thousand and more kids has ever run afoul of the law since they left us to tackle the world on their own!"

And where do they go in place of jail? The regular letters from the "old grads" tell the story. Frankie J is the office manager for an importing firm of national repute; Eddie R is foreman of the machine shop for one of the big railroads. Gustave H, who could

not speak English when he came to Boys Town at the age of sixteen, is treasurer and general manager of one of the largest advertising agencies in the country. Joe B and Sammy M went out together and are now the publisher and editor, respectively, of a western newspaper.

If they'd gone on past Boys Town, you know where they would probably be today just as well as I do. But they stopped there, just like little Jimmy did a few weeks ago, and found haven.

Jimmy is eleven years old, and when he came through the gate his clothes were dirty and torn and his feet were half out of his shoes. With two hands he struggled with a battered suitcase holding his belongings, and in a weak voice he piped, "Where's Father Flanagan?"

Directed to his office, he pulled off his cap and blurted right into his appeal as if he expected the worst.

"You gotta take me, Father!" he began abruptly. "My old man's drunk all the time; I got no mother. The fellow who runs the cigar store on the corner told me about you, so I walked and hitchhiked all the way here. I ain't had nothin' to eat since last night, but I don't care now, 'cause I'm here." And with that he threw himself across the desk in a deluge of pent-up tears.

The priest patted him on the shoulder and stared out of the window. There wasn't room for another kid, no matter how small, no matter how forlorn, no matter if he had come three hundred and



Recently, while on a tour of the country, Admiral Richard E. Byrd canceled a speaking engagement just so he could spend his birthday with the boys at Boys Town. Note the South Pole on the cake



Because they will know a trade, these boys will be builders of society, not parasites, when they leave Boys Town. An experienced woodworker initiates them into the intricacies of the revolving lathe

fifty miles to this refuge. It was overcrowded already, and they had turned away others . . . .

Jimmy turned up a muddy face and looked into the priest's troubled eyes.

"You will keep me, won't you?" he whispered.

"Yes," said Father Flanagan, "we will."

And that's the kind of man he is. Receiving no support from any church, governmental agency, or community chest, his institution's facilities are necessarily limited by the amount of voluntary contributions he receives from friends who know of the work. The upshot is that Boys Town is always "booked to capacity" and is turning down an average of five hundred boys every year. Yet in spite of that, a Jimmy appears every once in a while who just can't be turned away, and the good man squeezes him in somehow.

For Father Flanagan's heart is bigger than the law allows, and the best testimony to that—if his work needs anything further—was given me by Mayor Dan.

"Some years ago the kids decided they wanted a dog," Dan told me, "and Father Flanagan said he'd get one. One Saturday, during a snowstorm, he went in to Omaha after a pup, and when he started to get on the streetcar to come back with him, the conductor wouldn't let him take the animal aboard. He explained what it

was for, but it was no go—against the rules. He just couldn't ride with that dog.

"Well, the only other way to get back to Boys Town was by taxi, but he didn't have any money for that, so what do you suppose he did? Why, he wrapped the dog under his overcoat and walked the whole ten miles back with him through the snow! Just because he couldn't bear to disappoint the kids after saying he'd bring them one!"

A noble character, indeed, and the fitting head of a "character factory" where saplings can be nursed into stalwart trees instead of being twisted into something misshapen by the winds of adversity and the numbing sleep of neglect. To this oasis of human understanding they come from the freight cars, the highway, the hobo jungles. Whenever it is possible, they are taken in without any religious rigmarole, without any strings attached, without any quibbling about where they came from, what color they are, or what tongue they speak.

There is only one question asked at Boys Town: "Have you got a home?"

And when the answer is no, the dormitory door swings open—if there's room inside.

I went home after that interview with Father Flanagan filled with a warm glow of elation at

having met the author of a monumental work: To date, almost forty-five hundred biographies which can be proudly signed with respectable names instead of, quite likely, penitentiary registration numbers. I envied the man his achievements more than I have ever coveted the success of any other human being. And as I mulled over the personality, the insight into human nature, the genial modesty of the priest from Omaha, I opened the evening paper to glance over the doings of the day.

A picture of a young man getting on a train caught my eye and I paused to read the caption. "The seventeen-year-old James Sullivan," it said, "boards train which will take him to Sing Sing, where he will be executed for a murder committed during a nine-dollar holdup."

In another column were more details, including one paragraph which stood out with shocking severity:

At the present time there are eight other prisoners in the death house awaiting execution. Two are twenty years old; four are nineteen; one is eighteen; and the other is also seventeen, although five months older than Sullivan.

What a far cry from Boys Town, Nebraska!

And what a calamity that there is only one Father Flanagan!!

## THE HOME OF A NATION'S HOMELESS BOYS— AMERICA'S MEN OF TOMORROW



Recently, while on a tour of the country, he canceled a speaking engagement just to spend time with the boys at Boys Town. Note



FATHER FLANAGAN'S  
BOYS' HOME

"HOME  
TO A  
NATION'S  
HOMELESS  
BOYS"

BOYS TOWN, NEBRASKA

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THE HOME OF A NATION'S HOMELESS BOYS—  
AMERICA'S MEN OF TOMORROW



FATHER FLANAGAN'S Boys Home

NON-SECTARIAN  
NON-PROSELYTING

FOR HOMELESS, ABANDONED BOYS REGARDLESS OF RACE, CREED OR COLOR

BOYS TOWN, NEBRASKA

September 6, 1938

Miss Marguerite LeHand  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

*M.A. LeH  
7*

Dear Miss LeHand:

Please accept my sincere thanks for your kindness in becoming a member of our BREAD CLUB. This is, indeed, very kind of you and in the name of my 200 boys I also thank you for your thoughtfulness of them. I know, however, that it brings you real happiness to supply these boys with bread for one day - and they are so appreciative of every kindness shown them.

*M.A. LeH  
"B"*

I hope it will be possible for you to see the 'Boys Town' picture when it is shown in Washington, which should be within the next week or ten days. The World Premiere will be in Omaha tomorrow evening - and we are all very happy over the picture. We want our friends to see it in order that they may know more about the work they are sponsoring.

Thanking you again and with every good wish, I remain

Yours most sincerely,

*E. J. Flanagan*  
Reverend E. J. Flanagan

ejf-cd

*X*



*Nebraska*  
*Boys Town,*  
*Father Flanagan's Boys Home*

**Will You Help Spread the News  
of the  
"BOYS TOWN" PICTURE?**

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer is making a motion picture about the Home, to be called "Boys Town". With Spencer Tracy and Mickey Rooney playing the leading roles it promises to be one of the finest pictures of 1938.

They wish to send personal advance notices to the important and outstanding citizens in each community. Will you be kind enough to help by sending me as soon as possible on the attached card, the names of ten outstanding citizens in your community? I shall be glad to send them on to M-G-M. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely yours,

*Rev. E. J. Flanagan*



# FATHER FLANAGAN'S Boys Home

NON-SECTARIAN  
NON-PROSELYTING

FOR HOMELESS, ABANDONED BOYS REGARDLESS OF RACE, CREED OR COLOR

BOYS TOWN, NEBRASKA

July 17, 1939

*Received  
9/11/39  
EJB*

Miss Marguerite LeHand  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

My dear Miss LeHand:

I want you to see this sketch of our new buildings. We have started construction on the dining hall and two of the dormitories, which we hope will be completed by Fall. Then we will be able to admit three hundred more boys - boys who have no home, who are destitute, and who would otherwise be denied every opportunity.

While we are engaged in this expansion program, I have been giving much thought to the future of Boys Town. It is my ambition to set up our system on a sound, business-like basis. In other words, I would like if possible, to determine our approximate income each year, so that we may budget our receipts and expenditures. In order to do this, I have thought of writing our friends who, like yourself, have been contributing to Boys Town in response to our various "appeals", to ask if they would contribute a certain amount each year about equal to their annual contributions in the past. These friends would be known as "Honorary Citizens" of Boys Town, and would receive a Certificate designating them as such.

You are a very dear friend of Boys Town, Miss LeHand, and I would like to have your frank opinion of this suggestion. In addition to being our good friend, you have been successful, and will appreciate the value of a systematic plan in carrying on our work. If you think well of it, will you be kind enough to start it off by sending your subscription to me now in the enclosed envelope which requires no postage? I would like to suggest \$10.00, but you know best the amount you can give. Whatever you send will be sincerely appreciated. Please feel free to write any suggestions you may wish to offer.

As soon as your subscription is received, I will send your "Honorary Citizen's" Certificate. I will also send you one of the fine new books we have just prepared showing many Boys Town scenes in words and pictures, including a photograph which I will autograph for you. Sometime when I am in Washington or its vicinity I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you. In the meantime, please be assured you are always welcome at Boys Town whenever you come this way.

With my kind personal regards, and best wishes for your good health and happiness, I am

Sincerely,  
*E. J. Flanagan*  
Father Flanagan

EJF:m

ma L H  
1

September 1, 1939

My dear Father Flanagan:

I have received your recent letter and have noted with interest what you say about Boys Town. In compliance with your suggestion I have pleasure in enclosing my check for \$10.00 as my contribution for the purpose you indicate.

With best wishes, and with many thanks for your kind expressions,

Very sincerely yours,

M. A. LeHand  
PRIVATE SECRETARY



Reverend E. J. Flanagan,  
Boys Town,  
Nebraska. X

edb

Enclosure Check No. 16 - Bank of NY payable to Rev. E. J. Flanagan, \$10.00 signed Marguerite A. LeHand.

Thanks for the \$10.00. . You are now an Honorary Citizen (see attached certificate)

Flanagan's Boys Home NON-SECTARIAN  
NON-PROSELYTING  
BOYS REGARDLESS OF RACE, CREED OR COLOR

BOYS TOWN, NEBRASKA

September 7, 1939

Miss Margaret A. LeHand  
Private Secretary  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

My dear Miss LeHand:

It is kind of you to send me ten dollars for our poor boys, and I thank you from the very bottom of my heart and wish you God's choicest blessings.

We have taken on just a little bit more than we anticipated with our building program. Our five buildings will be finished in about a month and a half, or two months, and then we will be able to care for 500 boys. Then, we are going to start on a new church, but this will not cause us any financial worry as it is already paid for, or will be paid for as it is being constructed, as this is a gift from a real friend.

Thanking you again, dear Miss LeHand, for your great kindness and wishing you every success, I remain

Sincerely,

*E. J. Flanagan*  
Reverend E. J. Flanagan

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Sincerely,

*E. J. Flanagan*  
Reverend E. J. Flanagan

ejf-cd

**Father Flanagan's Boys' Home  
Boys Town, Nebraska**

**In Appreciation**

*Of the assistance rendered to Father Flanagan's Boys' Home,  
during the year 1939 the title of*

**Honorary Citizen**

*has this day been conferred upon*

MISS MARGARET E. LEHAND

*This certificate of Appointment has therefore been issued by the Officers and Governing  
Board of Boys Town under the authority vested in them by the Citizens.*

**Given** under my hand this Seventh day of September 1939.

*Sam Turner*

MAYOR

*F. Flanagan*

FATHER FLANAGAN



# FATHER FLANAGAN'S Boys Home

FOR HOMELESS, ABANDONED BOYS REGARDLESS OF RACE OR CREED

NON-SECTARIAN  
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*Boys Town, Nebraska*

*M. A. LeHand  
" 7 "*

July 17, 1940 *y*

Miss M. A. LeHand,  
The White House,  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Miss LeHand:

My boys join me in this expression of sincere gratitude for the contribution of \$5.00 which you have so kindly sent us. Thank you also for the encouraging letter which accompanied your gift.

I wish you could spend a few hours with me here to see how we care for our boys. Homeless, deserted little fellows -- thrown out into the world at much too early an age to understand life's problems -- the way they respond is truly amazing.

Here at Boys Town they are given a comfortable home, good food, and an education of the head, heart and hands. They leave here ready and determined to become useful, self-reliant citizens.

Now that they are occupying the new quarters you cannot imagine how happy my boys are. They are so proud of their new homes and so appreciative. They will never forget the generosity of our friends who are making it all possible.

Sincerely appreciating your gift and hoping that our work for these unfortunate youngsters will merit the continuation of your interest and help, I am

Sincerely yours,

*F. J. Flanagan*  
Father Flanagan

EJF-b

FLANAGAN  
SKA

July 1, 1940

*Private Secretary*

*77  
cuss  
7-13-40*

Honorary Citizen's Certificate for 1940, photographs which I want you to see. The taken several months ago while our new build-  
struction. The five buildings in the fore-  
ormitories and dining hall.

The other photograph, taken a few days ago, shows one of the four new dormitories. They are completed, and we are moving into them now. They will accommodate 500 boys.

With these pictures, I am also enclosing a copy of a letter I received from a visitor who spent an afternoon here during my absence recently. Because of your interest in Boys Town, it occurred to me that you might like to read it.

The boys who graduated this year came to Boys Town from ten different states. I wish you could see them - fine, self-supporting young men - equipped to share their responsibilities as American citizens. As they leave, hundreds more will be admitted to take their places, and to occupy our new buildings. In this connection, Miss LeHand, may I ask that you kindly help me pay for the dormitory shown on the enclosed photograph? In doing so you will provide a home and an opportunity, throughout the years, for thousands of homeless, deserted youngsters. You will have our everlasting gratitude, and I know your generosity will be rewarded manifold.

Wishing you God's every blessing, and thanking you again for your kindly interest in Boys Town, I am

Sincerely,

*E. J. Flanagan*  
Father Flanagan

EJF-m  
4-encls.

THE RT. REV. EDWARD J. FLANAGAN  
BOYS TOWN, NEBRASKA

July 1, 1940

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Sincerely,

*EJF*  
Father Flanagan

EJF-m  
4-encls.

THE RT. REV. EDWARD J. FLANAGAN  
BOYS TOWN, NEBRASKA

July 1, 1940

Miss Marguerite LeHand  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

My dear Miss LeHand:

With your Honorary Citizen's Certificate for 1940, I am enclosing two photographs which I want you to see. The airplane view was taken several months ago while our new buildings were under construction. The five buildings in the foreground are the new dormitories and dining hall.

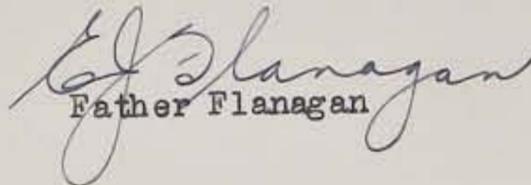
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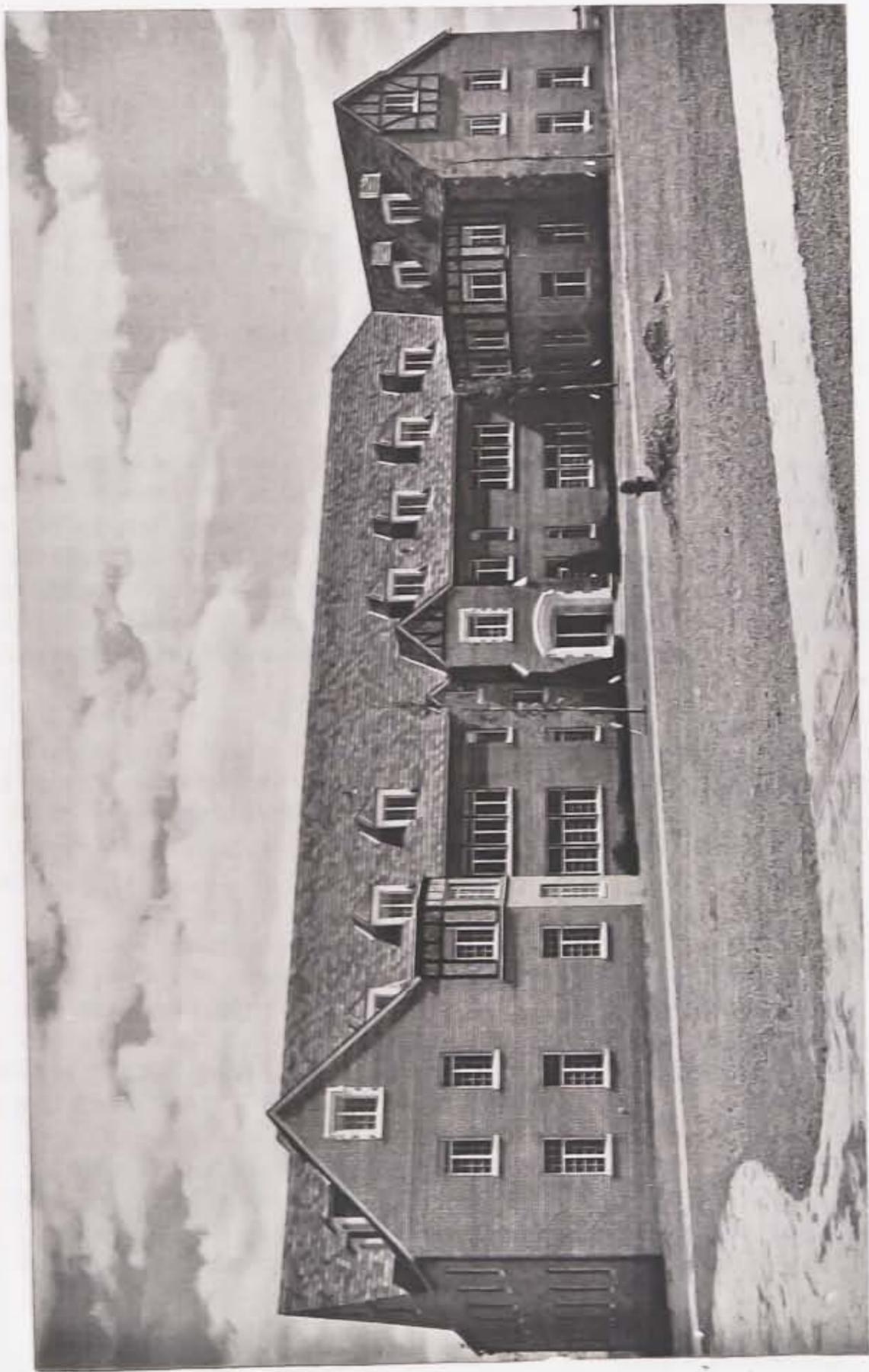
  
Father Flanagan

EJF-m  
4-encls.

Reproduced at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library



Reproduced at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library



C - O - P - Y

Dear Father Flanagan:

Your kind letter of April 22nd, thanking me for the gift of \$20 I left at Boys Town on my recent visit has been forwarded to me with my mail from home.

It gives me an opportunity to write the letter I was tempted to write at the time of my visit. I refrained then because I hesitated to trespass on your time; and it seemed that I could add no tribute that had not already been paid.

I am a very recent graduate of Harvard, and at present am driving myself all over the country to see America. I don't mean the scenery of America, but to see its cities and something of the problems of its young people because that is what interests me most. On the way I have had opportunities to do some work in colleges through the country. It is all rather new to me and very interesting. From Santa Fe, where I am writing this, I will continue to California and the north west, and return in the summer through the middle west.

I hope I will be able to visit Boys Town again on my return. I feel that nothing I have seen in my travels answers the great need that Boys Town does. Of course I spent only one afternoon there, but it was a moving experience to me. It made me wish there might be a town like yours everywhere. I had looked forward for several years to seeing it, but the actual sight was more astonishing than I had anticipated.

It was a real disappointment to me not to see you. I asked for you and the boys told me you were away. But in a sense it was perhaps well that for my first visit I saw only the boys. Because what greater tribute to your town could there be than the fact that in your absence everything was conducted with the courtesy and good feeling that I would have expected in your presence? In any case, I would like to have you know that I will never forget my visit.

Ever since that evening when I drove on to Lincoln for the night, I have wished that I might do more for this work of yours. A check is not the kind of service I like best to give, but I will ask you to accept this check with my very sincere interest and my faith in what seemed to me a very real and very important work.

Yours sincerely,



# Boys Town

NEBRASKA

## In Appreciation

Of the assistance rendered to Father Flanagan's Boys' Home,

during the year **1940** the title of

**Honorary Citizen**

has this day been conferred upon

MISS MARGUERITE LEHAND

This Certificate of Appointment has therefore been issued by the Officers and Governing Board of Boys Town under the authority vested in them by the Citizens.

Given under my hand this 1st day of July 1940.

*Sam Turner*

MAYOR

*F. J. Flanagan*

FATHER FLANAGAN



Honorary Citizen  
of Boys Town  
Nebraska

MARGUERITE LEHAND

HAS BEEN ELECTED AN HONORARY CITIZEN BY THE MAYOR AND  
COMMISSIONERS OF BOYS TOWN IN APPRECIATION OF ASSISTANCE RENDERED

Father Flanagan's Boys' Home

1943

*F. J. Flanagan*



s Boys Home

FOR HOMELESS, ABANDONED BOYS REGARDLESS OF RACE OR CREED

NON-SECTARIAN  
NON-PROSELYTING

*Boys Town, Nebraska*

May 28, 1943

*File*  
*M. A. LeHand*

Miss Marguerite Le Hand  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

My dear Miss Le Hand:

I want you to read the enclosed citation for bravery. I am very proud to send it to you because Wesley Haggard is one of the hundreds of our former boys who are now serving in our armed forces, eight of whom, to my knowledge, have already given their lives for our Country.

Wesley came to Boys Town as a homeless orphan in 1935, and graduated three years later. He is married, and is the father of a baby girl whom he has not seen, as she was born since he left for the Pacific battle zone.

As you know, this is Boys Town's 25th ANNIVERSARY! During these twenty-five years thousands of boys of all races and religious creeds have come to us to be fed, clothed and educated. Some of these boys were just homeless, deserted and destitute, while others, because of want and neglect, had been in trouble. As a result of the sympathetic care and education they received here at Boys Town, they have all become good citizens.

Through your kindness as an Honorary Citizen of Boys Town, Miss Le Hand, you have had a part in providing the opportunity for these homeless boys to become honest, useful, upright young men. I am sure you enjoy the same satisfaction I do when we hear of their accomplishments.

I am happy to enclose your Honorary Citizens Card for 1943. With it goes the sincere thanks and appreciation of my boys and myself for your generosity in the past, and the hope that you may find it convenient to renew your Honorary Citizenship now, in commemoration of our 25th Anniversary. Any amount you send me will be of great assistance in providing for my large family of boys, and will surely bring many blessings to you and those dear to you. A self-addressed envelope which needs no postage is enclosed. Thank you - and God bless you!

Sincerely,

*F. J. Flanagan*  
Father Flanagan



EJF-m



# FATHER FLANAGAN'S BOYS HOME

FOR HOMELESS, ABANDONED BOYS REGARDLESS OF RACE OR CREED

NON-SECTARIAN  
NON-PROSELYTING

*Boys Town, Nebraska*

May 28, 1943

Miss Marguerite Le Hand  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

*file*  
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Sincerely,

*E. J. Flanagan*  
Father Flanagan



EJF-m

SOUTH PACIFIC FORCE  
OF THE UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER

In the name of the President of the United States,  
the Commander South Pacific Area and South Pacific Force,  
takes pleasure in presenting the SILVER STAR MEDAL to

WESLEY BURTON HAGGARD, PHARMACIST'S MATE SECOND  
CLASS, (372 09 05), UNITED STATES NAVY.

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For distinguished service in the line of his profession on the northern coast of Guadalcanal Island on August 10, 1942. While a member of a patrol advancing through enemy territory, HAGGARD, with utter disregard for his own personal safety fearlessly faced the accurate rifle fire of numerous enemy snipers to treat the wounds of incapacitated marines. Largely as a result of his valorous action the lives of several of the wounded were saved, and he set a fine example of courage to the members of his company."

*W.F. Halsey*

W. F. HALSEY  
Vice Admiral, U. S. Navy.

Temporary Citation