



**A Dance to Eternity: Story of Love and Honor 1st
Lieutenant Dexter Bowker World War II Letters
and Memoir Excerpts 29th Infantry Division
Combat Officer**

Margaret Ellen Bowker Johnson

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1st Lieutenant Dexter Bowker and his wife Margaret were true soul mates and just beginning their married life when on December 7, 1941 their lives were turned upside down. Called up in January 1942, Dexter shipped to England in November 1943, leaving behind his beloved wife, a young son and an unborn daughter. He was assigned to the elite 29th Infantry Division, 224th Field Artillery Battalion. Serving as a Liaison Officer, Forward Observer and Survey Officer Lt. Bowker was always at the front of the battle lines from D-Day until the meet-up with the Russians in March 1945. He fought with courage and distinction and was awarded the Bronze Star for bravery. Dexter's letters are beautifully written and very detailed about his surroundings and military activities. A man of great wit, he even injects humor into some of the situations in which he finds himself. Above all, Dexter's great love for Margaret comes through in each of his letters. Knowing that she is waiting for him keeps him moving forward through the worst of times. His memoir excerpts eloquently and dramatically put the reader directly into combat training and then in the midst of the actual battles, expressing Dexter's emotions and thoughts about his life in the middle of the most horrific war in history. They are often heartbreaking as the gritty details of the 29th Division's race across Europe are vividly described. FROM D-DAY MEMOIR: "In the darkness we slowly inched our way up the path leading out of the beach to Vierville, and I noticed that it was lined with stacked bodies of soldiers awaiting burial. I smelled death for the first time, and there would be much more of it in the coming months. As I grieved silently for those courageous young men and boys who had given their all so that others could live, I saw clearly the meaning of "Greater love hath no man..." The sensing of total violence that pervaded the atmosphere, the deeply felt awareness of the magnitude of events that had just taken place were so shocking that everyone spoke in whispers, and not for reasons of security. We were literally overwhelmed, and I have never been the same person since that initial exposure to raw death and violence." A DANCE TO ETERNITY is a beautiful love story, an exciting war story and a true representation of a generation like no other.

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