



With the Colors *August 20, 1943*

Master Sergeant John Neal, wrote the following article while riding on the train enroute to Camp Campbell, Kentucky, after spending a furlough at the home of his mother, Mrs. Daisy Neal, widow of Will Neal, formerly of Willow Hill, in Hoopeston:

"Squads right," "Column right," "By the right flank march!" These commands emanated from the husky-voiced sergeant while he gave his instructions to the fresh, new batch of recruits. Through the throng could be heard the hushed whispering of many of the men. Most were talking of the grey days to come in the charge of this hard-boiled, well disciplined soldier. What would they be like?

Yes, that is true. These feelings are not new and I witnessed quite the same ones when I, too, was a recruit. But do they really think that those sergeants are as hard boiled as they are painted? Or are they not human beings quite the same as the little private in the lines, both here to serve and do their bit in this grave emergency?

Can you picture one of these so-called "tough guys" having a heart? One who is ready at all times and perfectly willing to give a hand to any of the many baffling little problems the Army has to offer? Yes, and giving it too without a growl? Well, I can. I have been in Uncle Sam's service for seven years and during that period I have found it necessary to give plenty of orders and many a growl. However, I never thought that I would see the day when I, a tough sergeant, would literally choke up inside during the experience on my recent visit home.

I was given a three day pass. Could hardly wait until I saw my three brothers, two of whom are in service, one of whom I had not seen in over seven years. Unfortunately, my older brother, Lieutenant Haskell Neal, who is in East Africa, was unable to be present. Then, there was the sister whom I hadn't seen in seven years and also my mother who is always so good to see. It has been seventeen years since mother had had all of us kids at home at the same time. This was real cause for celebration and how pleased and happy she was!

What a wonderful feeling it was looking about that large living room at the two boys in khaki, the three sisters, my mother, eldest brother and the guests who were present. I can't properly describe exactly how I felt, but I do know that it was wonderful.

The time spent in their company was most enjoyable but seemed to come to an end far too soon. The days slipped into hours, and hours into minutes, and suddenly I realized that very shortly I must make my goodbyes. Goodbyes, at best, are unpleasant and mine were no change from the accepted rule. I noticed that mother too was thinking this, and looking at her I could see a distant look in her eyes as she sat in the living room surrounded by "her boys." I could almost read her mind. She was probably thinking, "Will this be the last time I'll have them with me?"

Then the question of seeing me off arose. I have always been averse to seeing off groups. They can be so depressing. I thought that if necessary, my youngest brother and his wife, whom I hadn't seen for so very long, could bid me goodbye at the station. This at first seemed a happy solution but before many minutes had passed they all wanted to come. I hastened to explain that I really preferred to go alone and asked if they wouldn't see me through on this count. Everyone seemed to understand and that point was finally agreed upon.

Twenty minutes before train time I picked up my hat and bags and strode boldly into the group into the living room. I walked to my mother first. She stood up very erectly, looking for all the world a better soldier than I at the moment. I bid her goodbye and my heart began beating fast. Next, two of my sisters.

I had gotten to my oldest sister when I realized that I could go no farther. There were so many there and I fully realized that if I should continue making individual goodbyes I would be a nervous wreck by the time the last one had been reached. I simply couldn't take it. My mind was wandering and I couldn't talk. I made a hasty retreat to the adjoining room where I saw my oldest brother. I was anything but the tough, hard-boiled sergeant of whom the fellows were afraid.

I asked my sister to get my bag which I had left in the living room, explaining that I was sorry but that I could go no farther. I asked her to give the rest all my regards and

explain that I sincerely hoped that it wouldn't be another seventeen years before we met again in that living room.

Leaving the house things were quiet, and I walked down the street wanting so much to look back—but I didn't dare!

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Charles E. Geltz, petty officer third class, gave his mother, Mrs. Joseph Geltz of Sainte Marie, a very pleasant surprise, Friday evening, when he came for a three day furlough. I had ben almost three months since his mother heard from him.

He has been to Sicily and they brought 800 German prisoners back with them. On his return to New York, he is going to look for his brother, Gerald Geltz, whom he hasn't seen for over a year, but who has been sent to New York from Camp Bowie, Texas.

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Having completed his basic military training, Private First Class Leo W. Butler of Ingraham, has entered the second phase of his training to become an Ordnance soldier at Camp Santa Anita, California. He is now attending a special school of the technical training section as a general clerk at this Ordnance Training center. Part of his training will be in the classroom, but for most of it will be working out practical problems under field conditions.

Private Butler is a son of Mrs. Anis Butler of Ingraham.

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Marvin Marshall, carpenter's mate third class, is spending a furlough with his wife and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Marshall of Newton. He is in the Seabees, Navy Construction battalions, and says that the next heard from him he'll be with a group at some advanced American base. The Seabees are composed of skilled mechanics in many lines and do construction work for the Navy at stations outside the United States.

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Aviation Cadet Howard B. Riley has completed his course in the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and has passed all required examinations for his pilot training at Nashville, Tennessee. From there he will be sent to a pre-flight school as yet unknown to the cadets.

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Don C. Danforth, ship fitter first class, United States Navy, is now stationed at the Naval Air Station at San Diego, California. He was on the U. S. S. Lexington when it went down during the battle of the Coral Sea a year ago and more recently has been on a small aircraft carrier.

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Private Charles Weber, who is on an unnamed island in the Southwest Pacific, writes his aunt, Mrs. Frank Holt of Newton, that he is well and feeling fine. He recently bought a horse to ride to help pass the time. He was in New Caledonia and New Guinea before his present post.

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Private Lloyd E. Jourdan has been transferred to Bloomington, where he is attending the Commercial Trade Institute, receiving advanced instruction in refrigeration. He has been at Camp Shelby, Mississippi.

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Master Sergeant Dwight Huddleston was home on a three day pass from Camp Campbell, Kentucky, over the week end, visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Huddleston of Yale vicinity.

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Miss Virginia Ann Graham, daughter of Mrs. Irma Graham of Newton, will leave Thursday, August 26, for Hunter college, New York City, where she will report for training as a Wave

in the United States Navy.

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Miss Lois Mildred Weck of Newton, who is training for an officer in the Waves, has been transferred from Hunter college, New York City, to a training station in Nashville, Tennessee.

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Seaman Doyt D. Hamilton of Great Lakes is here for a week with his wife and parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Hamilton. Doyt likes the Navy fine.

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Everett Loving Jr. has returned to camp near Seattle, Washington, after a fifteen day furlough with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Everett Loving of Willow Hill vicinity.