



With the Oct. 1, 1944 Colors

Fred M. Hoecherl, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Hoecherl of Willow Hill vicinity, writes from Sicily:

"I wish you could have gone to high Mass with me yesterday. It isn't every day that one can go to a cathedral built in the twelfth century. It was certainly a beautiful building with gold inlay. They claimed that it will hold seven thousand people and it was filled to capacity. Our artillery chaplain said the Mass and a lieutenant colonel in the Chaplain Corps gave the sermon. After Mass, a bishop gave a sermon in Italian and another priest interpreted it in English for us.

"We were in about three or four battles over here in Sicily. It was fairly quiet most of the time except for one day. Our battery didn't have a single casualty here, but in Africa we had six killed, eight wounded and four or five shell shocked. In one day we lost two lieutenants from shells. They were killed instantly. When a soldier is killed, he is wrapped in a blanket and buried about two feet under the ground near the place where he was killed. The place is marked and later on the quartermasters take up the body and bury it in a base cemetery.

"Most of the time it is so hot up at the Infantry's line that it is impossible to move the wounded out in the day time. They patch them up the best that they can and leave them in a ditch or ravine for protection until dark, when they can be moved out. Hospitals aren't supposed to be bombed, but they are just the same. Sometimes when the enemy doesn't have time to care for prisoners, they shoot them. That is a horrible way to fight a war but it is true, nevertheless.

"Up to this time we are supposed to get five stars. I have seen several Purple Hearts that the boys received but I don't care for any myself.

"Our howitzers are still in fairly good shape, having fired about 1,300 rounds in each of them. The barrel is supposed to be good for 7,500 rounds. The shells are to be fired at the rate of four rounds per minute but one day in battle we were putting out ten to eleven rounds per minute. Each shell cost about twenty-five dollars.

"I went to town the other day and bought something to send home. While in town I went into a cathedral that was built in 1130. At the base of one altar lies the body of St. Clement, who lived in the third century. His body is in a casket with a glass side. I had never thought that I would ever see a dead body over 1700 years old. I saw a movie while in town and at a Red Cross recreation hall."

Lieutenant Otis Maxwell sends the following poem from North Africa to his wife at Newton. He says it describes the place perfectly:

Lament

Somewhere near -----,
Where the sun is like a curse,
And each day is usually followed
By another slightly worse;
Where the brick-red dust blows
thicker,
Than the shifting desert sands,
Where a Yank man dreams and
whistles,
For greener, fairer lands.

Somewhere near -----,
Where women are never seen,
Where the sky is never cloudy,
And the grass is never green;
Where the jackal's nightly howl
Robs a man of blessed sleep,
Where there isn't any whiskey,
And the beer is never cheap.

Somewhere near -----,
Where the mail is always late,
Where a Christmas card in April
Is considered up-to-date,
Where we never have a pay-day,
And we never have a cent;
But we never miss the money,
Because we never have it spent.

Somewhere near -----,
Where the snakes and lizards play,
Where a thousand more flies
Replace the ones you slay;
Please, take me to my hometown,
And let me hear a church bell,
For this God-forsaken outpost,
Is a substitute for hell.

He says they sleep under mosquito bar and take pills four times a day to keep from getting malaria. They had a parade September 12. He said he had to shovel and shake the dust off a suit of home washed, unpressed clothes and get dressed up.

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Private Charles Wooden Jr. writes the Press from Amarillo, Texas: "To-day I received the Newton Press from my folks. In looking through 'With the Colors' I was very agreeably surprised to learn James McCoy was here at the Amarillo Army Air field. He is in the 902nd Training group

while I am in the 904th.

"I met McCoy when he boxed Fay Clark at Newton Community high school. After chow tonight I went down and visited him for a while, and after discussing people around Willow Hill, he told me that a Rose Hill boy, Calvin Winter, was in a barracks a few numbers down. I then went down and gave Aviation Cadet Calvin Winter a surprise.

"I came to this camp, August 22. They came August 26. I thought there was surely no one here I knew. Winter told me he was here two weeks before he knew McCoy was there and they're only about three barracks apart on the same walk.

"So you see I'm glad our paper prints "With the Colors." I'll be happy to receive and will answer all the letters anyone cares to write to me."

His address is Private Charles Wooden Jr., 904 T. G., B. T. C., Squadron 46, Flight A, Barracks 333, Amarillo Army Air Field, Amarillo, Texas.

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Private James Alva Beucherie, son of Mr. and Mrs. Al Beucherie of near Boos, who joined the Marines on December 11, 1942, was graduated from a Bombing and Air Gunnery school in El Centro, California, recently and is now in the Southwestern Pacific area, receiving advanced training.

Private First Class Everett N. Beucherie, another son, joined the Army on October 14, 1942, and received his basic training at Fort Lewis, Washington, and was then transferred to Los Angeles, California, where he served some time on desert maneuvers. He is now in the Hawaiian Islands, and writes that "Hawaii is beautiful and heavenly, compared to the desert."

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Second Lieutenant William Mineo, Jasper county's only bombardier, is spending a ten day leave with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert T. Mineo of Newton. Bill is a bombardier on a Flying Fortress and expects to leave for the war zone in the near future, probably to Europe.

Like all bombardiers, he considers the American Norden bomb sight the best in the world. Extraordinary precautions are taken to safeguard this important military secret.

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Mr. and Mrs. James Blair have just had word from their sons overseas: Lowell D. Blair, who is in the Merchant Marine, has just arrived in England from South America. He is an engineer on his ship and will receive his license on arriving in New York. Delbert L. Blair has just been promoted to master sergeant in the Army. He just finished a course in school in Edinburgh, Scotland. He has been across since August, 1942.

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Sergeant Delbert O. Chapman writes the Press from Camp Hulen, Texas: "I thought I would write you I got back off my furlough o. k., although I was a couple of hours late. I had a great time when I was at home. I want to thank all of my friends who sent me birthday cards. I had a whole mail box full of them."

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Francis B. Hall, seaman second class, has been spending a five day leave with his mother, Mrs. Edwin Aldridge of West Liberty. He left Sunday for Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he will get his ship. He is with the Amphibious Force, United States Navy.

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Lieutenant Neil F. Fisher, who will graduate from the Signal Corps Supply School in Dayton, Ohio, this week, attended the golden wedding celebration of his uncle and aunt, Dr. and Mrs. W. E. Franke of Newton, Sunday, and has now returned to Dayton.

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Private Paul Benjamin Utley has returned to Camp Kearns, Salt Lake City, Utah, after a few days furlough with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ben Utley of Newton. He is now an engineer on a bomber plane, following his graduation from a school in California.

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David Compton of Newton visited his son and daughter-in-law, Seaman and Mrs. Wilbur "Spike" Compton at Springfield a few days ago, and saw his new grand-child. Spike was home on a furlough from the Navy. He is in charge of refrigeration on his ship.

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Carl Allen, radioman first class, United States Navy, has been transferred to the Pacific ocean area with the ship on which he is stationed. He participated in the American landings in Africa last November and was in the battles in the Mediterranean.

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Corporal Theodore A. Kocher has returned to Lockbourne Air Base at Columbus, Ohio, after spending a seven day furlough with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Dan Kocher and other relatives near Newton. He is an airplane engine mechanic.

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Private E. E. von Kracht of Bradley field, Connecticut, spent Saturday and Sunday with his wife and son

Douglas. E. H. von Kracht of St. Louis also spent the week end with his son and family of Newton.

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Seaman Second Class Henry Fehrenbacher is now in Australia. He writes he is o. k. and so far he likes Australia fine. He arrived there some time during the first week of September.

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Leroy Duane Shaner, who has finished his boot training at Great Lakes Naval Training Station, is spending a furlough with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Guy Sempstrott, and his brother, Dean Shaner near Willow Hill.

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Private Pat Bolander is spending a furlough with his father, A. C. Bolander of Newton. He has been stationed at an Army camp in Montana. This is the first time he has been here in seven years.

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Lieutenant Paul Nix is spending a leave with his mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Bridges of Wendelin vicinity. He is in the Engineers and recently graduated from Officers' Candidate school.

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Corporal Gordon Romack writes his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Romack of Falmouth vicinity, that he has safely landed in England with an American Armored division.

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Mr. and Mrs. Guy Kinsel have word that their son, Forrest W. Kinsel, has been promoted to corporal and transferred from Oklahoma City to ASC, Repair Depot No. 2, Kelly field, San Antonio, Texas.

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Private Victor Wagy is spending a furlough with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Wagy of Newton. He is

in the 166th Infantry at Texas City, Texas.

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Private Florent "Bub" Faller has been spending a short furlough with his wife and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Faller of Newton.

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Leroy Wakefield, fireman third class, has been transferred to Unit A Prime, NOB, Receiving Station, Norfolk, Virginia.