



# With the Colors

Sept. 21, 1943

## ODE TO LESTER L. WOLFE

The following poem was composed by Wayne Wolfe in memory of Quartermaster First Class Lester L. Wolfe, who has been missing in action in the South Pacific since last spring, following a battle with Jap forces:

The great Pacific stretches far,  
Its waves they dash and roar;  
And once a ship was anchored there,  
Upon it's peaceful shore.

The sky above in fleecy cloak,  
Was spread in all its grandeur;  
This day the Barton launched to sea,  
In charge of its commander.

Its course was planned, the day was  
set,

A course in which to fight;  
The crew that lined its every deck,  
Beheld a handsome sight.

Upon the bridge with charts at hand,  
His watchful eye aglow,  
The quartermaster does his trick,  
While his buddies sleep below.

The days wore on and nights passed  
by,

And then with God's permission,  
All hell broke loose; yes, this was it;  
The Barton filled its mission.

Nobody knows, may never know,  
The tortures these boys knew;  
But we can feel and know for sure,  
These lads were brave and true.

The public might well realize,  
The tragedies of war;  
And some have wakened to the fact,  
What we are fighting for.

But no one knows the heartaches,  
For the loved ones that are "in,"  
'Till they lose a faithful brother,  
Or another next of kin.

So to this one whereof I speak,  
Of the Barton over another;  
The quartermaster of this ship,  
Was my fighting sailor brother!

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Private Eugene Hartrich writes his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ferdinand Hartrich of Sainte Marie, from Sicily:

"At last I got a letter from home. It was seven weeks, and, believe me, they were long ones, since I last heard from you. Well, I guess there is more important things crossing the ocean now. I'll write, too; I know you don't worry so when you hear from us boys.

"I had a letter from Sonny. He was trying to tell me where he was, but it was so censored I couldn't make it out. This darned island isn't very big, but try and find someone, you just can't. So Francis Ablinger was home on furlough! That's fine. I wouldn't know, I've never had one. I guess he was wearing khaki; we are wearing wool O.D.'s, steel helmets and leggings. They are hotter than hell, but from the rumors we hear, we will be glad to have a steel helmet one of these days.

"I'm glad to hear Eddie Huber has his wings. New Guinea is a long way from home, too. How many of us first cousins are there in the service now, fourteen or fifteen? When this butchery is all over and we all get together again, won't there be lots of tall stories told, and the most awful, could easily be true. If anyone thinks this mess over here is a soft snap, he'd better change his mind.

"I still don't think much of this island. Most of the men, at some time, have been to the states, made a wad of money, came back and bought a little farm, then old Mussolini took it all away from them in taxes, so it might be said: 'We are fighting our own money.' For my part, they can give it back to the dagoes, and let us move on to something else.

"Glad to hear the threshing turned out so well. Oats is good but wheat is a lifesaver. If you could see these farms over here. When they plant a fruit tree, or patch of grain they have to build a stone fence around it to hold it on the hill side.

"They know, too, what pay we service men get, so when we try to buy anything they hold us up. They have the idea because we took 'em over, we owe them everything. Then, too, they don't have the horses or the women the Frenchmen did in North Africa, do, (notice I wrote horses first).

"Speaking of women, there's a woman in Berlin, who broadcasts to us Yanks, and of all the dirt, propaganda and pity she passes out. If we didn't know better one would think we were still on the defensive. The soldiers call her 'Dirty Gerty.' She then plays American hit tunes over the radio, and if she thinks she is breaking down our morale she is mistaken, for we get a big kick out of it, and sing along with the music.

"That old gal may not know it but she is going to have a lot of Yank visitors one of these days when we get going through Hitler's haunts.

"Well I must close. 'Stu,' Meeks and I are all fine. 'Little Tex,' is

worrying for fear that little papoose he left out in Oklahoma is going to be big enough to lick him, before he gets this war won, and home again.

"P. S. We'll be seeing you but we will see Hitler first."

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Sergeant Carl Chesnut writes his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Elza Chesnut of Smallwood township from New Guinea:

"They have made me a sergeant now. We sure have been busy. I guess you have read in the papers what we have done. We can take things a little easier now and can sleep at night.

"The natives have been a lot of help; will do anything for us and go right up in the front lines for us and they say they treat a wounded Yank or Australian as tenderly as a baby.

"They are black and the Allied troops call them the Fuzzy Wuzzies, as they wear their hair in a mop on top of their heads, sticking out in all directions. One Aussie wrote a poem about them, calling them the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels," and they are just that.

"One young native wanted me to bring him to America when I come home. The older men and young men can speak a little English. I would trade a coconut any day for a ripe peach or bunch of grapes from home."

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Master Sergeant Charles C. Smith of Newton, now stationed in the 1850th Service unit, part of the Army Service Forces at Camp Chaffee, Arkansas, was awarded the good conduct medal by Colonel Charles J. Deahl Jr., camp commander.

The good conduct medal was awarded to those enlisted men who had "demonstrated fidelity through faithful and exact performance of duty and whose behavior had been such as to deserve emulation."

The medal is represented on the soldier's shirt or blouse by a red ribbon with three vertical white stripes at each edge. After the war is over, the medal itself will be awarded. It is a bronze spread eagle with the words "Efficiency—Honor—Fidelity" surrounding the eagle, hung from a red ribbon with white stripes.

"The cost of one of these ribbons to manufacture is only about a penny and a half," said Colonel Deahl at the presentation, "but what the ribbon represents is of the utmost value."

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Mr. and Mrs. Boyce Romack of Mattoon, formerly of Newton, are in receipt of a letter from their son, Private First Class Harold L. Romack, from somewhere in North Africa, that he is well and hasn't seen a sick day since he entered the armed services, January 16, 1942. He also says they have plenty of fried chicken but it doesn't taste like it does back home because it isn't corn fed. They have lots of ripe tomatoes and cantaloupe, too.

He writes he met his sister Jewel's husband, Technical Corporal Gordon C. Watkins, who is also in North Africa, the first of his kinfolks he has seen since he left for the Army, and that they were both glad to meet once again.

Private Romack has been serving overseas almost thirteen months.

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Two Jasper county men are now receiving instruction in seamanship, military drill, and naval procedure at Great Lakes Naval Training Station. Soon they will be given a series of aptitude tests for determining whether they will be assigned to one of the Navy's service schools, or to immediate active duty at sea.

Upon completing their recruit training, these men will be home on a nine day leave. They are Daniel Jefferson Matson, 17, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Dayton Matson of Route Six, Newton, and Grendle Dean Hinkle, 17, son of Mrs. Clara Hinkle of Route One, Rose Hill.

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Herschel A. Jones, son of Mr. and Mrs. V. A. Jones of Newton, is now enrolled as an aviation cadet in the Army Air Forces Pre-Flight school for pilots at Maxwell field, located on the outskirts of Montgomery, the capital of Alabama.

Here the new class of cadets is receiving nine weeks of intensive military, physical and academic training preparatory to beginning their actual flight instruction at one of the many primary flying schools in the Army Air Forces Eastern Flying Training Command.

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Mrs. Ray Vanatta of Rose Hill has received word from her husband, who is in the Anti-Aircraft Artillery at Fort Bliss, Texas, near El Paso. His address is Private Walter Ray Vanatta, Battery A, 513th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Gun battalion (Sem), Fort Bliss, Texas.

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Staff Sergeant Lowell I. Lewis of Camp Polk, Louisiana, is spending a ten day furlough with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Lewis of Hunt City.

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Staff Sergeant Leslie L. Isley has been transferred to Camp Van Doren,

Mississippi, with a cadre from Camp Campbell, Kentucky. He is now in Company F, 254th Infantry, Sixty-third division, which is just being formed.

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Private and Mrs. John A. Batman of Centralia are the parents of a daughter born last week. Mr. and Mrs. Delbert E. Batman of Newton are grand-parents, and George S. Batman of Newton is a great grand-father. Private Batman is stationed in Camp Fannin, Texas.

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Thomas Newsome of Newton has been promoted from seaman first class to torpedoman third class, United States Navy. He is serving aboard a destroyer in the Atlantic somewhere.

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Sergeant Delbert Chapman has been visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Chapman of near Newton. He is in the Headquarters battery 888th Anti-Aircraft (AW) battalion, Camp Hulen, Texas.

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Sergeant Clayton Wright spent Sunday with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas C. Wright of Newton. He is stationed at Champaign-Urbana, with the Army's Special Training program.

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Corporal Jerome B. Ebel of Camp Custer Michigan, is spending a seven day furlough with his wife and daughter. Mrs. Ebel and baby are making their home with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Barthelme of Sainte Marie.

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Second Lieutenant Esther Earnest, Army Air Nurse stationed at Jefferson Barracks, St. Louis, is in the county, visiting her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Earnest, and other relatives.

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Private First Class Vincent B. Boehl of Huntsville, Alabama, writes his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Otto Boehl of the Bend, that he has been promoted to private first class, since September 1.

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First Lieutenant and Mrs. Raymond Harms and daughter Terry Rae were dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Miner, Thursday evening.