



## With the Colors

7/25/44

Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Nagle of Willow Hill have received a letter from their son, Captain Howard J. Nagle, stating that he is now in Italy, "doing the same work as I did in Algiers. I've been working all day and until nearly midnight. The work should ease up after a week or so and then perhaps I can get out occasionally to see some of the interesting things around here.

"The new officers' mess here isn't good yet and I hope they improve it in a hurry. Life in Italy is certainly different. The country isn't so bad, much better than North Africa, except that I prefer to stay on the roads where one doesn't run the chance of stumbling on to a booby trap or mine left here when the Germans left the area.

"I have seen the Volturno river where so much heavy fighting went on recently. I'll tell you all about Naples, Pompeii, Cassino, and others places later when I can. I had a long over water flight, sitting up front with one of the pilots and practically had to fly the ship at times when the pilot got overly sleepy.

"I am living in a Italian officers' barracks. There is running water when it runs. One day there isn't any, the next morning the bath may be flooded. We are not supposed to drink the city water without treating it. An Italian girl cleans up the apartment in which a couple of majors, two captains and I live. She takes our laundry in the morning and brings it back all finished the same evening. Some service? So far she doesn't seem to want any money, but we are supposed to pay those people a moderate amount.

"Most of the Italians working for us here can't speak any English or French, so we just don't try very hard to make them understand anything. The towns are about as dirty as one can imagine, just about as bad as the Arabs were in Africa. These people seem honest, though, and appear to have been under suppression for years. In fact they have been kept down by bad rulers through the time of the Roman empire and time of Christ.

"I have already seen some of the great palaces, castles, etc., built by Romans of the past. They certainly kept the average Italian in a state of poverty and hard work. I have been on the Appian way, which leads to Rome, and hope to visit Rome before long. The people seem friendly and many of their military people have now joined with the British and American forces and others are still in Northern Italy with the Germans.

"It seems that the Germans must have left things pretty normal. Of course, Italy was fighting with Germany before the Allies had invaded Italy, and that would make a difference. Some towns were completely destroyed when our forces came through. The buildings are all made out of heavy concrete, masonry, etc. Both the building I am living in, and the one I work in have been partially destroyed by bombs or artillery fire."

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Miami Beach, Florida, July 24.—First Lieutenant William L. Mineo of Newton, returned from service in Europe, and now is being processed through the Army Air Forces Redistribution Station No. 2 in Miami Beach, where his next assignment will be determined.

This is one of the Redistribution stations within the AAF Personnel Distribution Command. At an AAF Redistribution station, AAF returnees from theaters of operation are examined by specially selected medical and classification officers whose joint findings are used in recommending new assignments.

The theme of the AAF Redistribution program is designation of each man to duty for which he is best fitted. Returnees live at a Redistribution station under conditions that encourage response to processing, the greater part of their two-week stay being devoted to rest and recreation.

AAF personnel, enlisted men and officers alike, are assigned to a Redistribution station upon their return to the United States, but do not report to the station until completing a furlough or leave of three weeks.

Lieutenant Mineo, a B-17 bombardier, flew thirty missions during six months in the European theatre and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, and Air Medal. He is a son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert T. Mineo of Newton, and his wife, Eleanor, resides at 3333 Prairie avenue, Mattoon.

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Corporal Gerald Geier, a son of Frank Geier of Wakefield, has arrived safely in England. He is a laboratory technician with the Medical Corps. He hopes to get in touch with his

brother, Staff Sergeant George Geier, who has been in England for six months with a Reconnaissance group.

A son-in-law of Mr. Geier, Staff Sergeant Benjamin F. Parker, is enroute back to the United States after having successfully completed fifty missions over enemy territory in a Flying Fortress based in Italy. He was on one of the shuttle raids between Italian and Russian air bases. Sergeant Parker's wife is the former Viola Geier.

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Dale Bickers, who is in New Caledonia with the United States Army, sends this to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Perry Bickers of Ingraham vicinity:



### "So Long Son"

There was no band, no flag, no ceremonial. It wasn't even dramatic. A car honked: outside and he said "Well, I guess that's for me. . . ."

He kissed his mother and held out his hand to me. "Well, so long," he said. I took his hand but all I could say was "Good luck."

The door slammed and that was that—another boy gone to war.

I went then to my room. On the wall was a picture of a little boy, his toothless grin framed in tawny curls—the same boy who had just taken my hand and said: "Well, so long." Not much time, I thought, between the making of that picture and the slamming of the front door. Not much more than a decade. . . .

Well, curlyhead—you're a man now, bearing your bright new shield and spear. I hated to see you go out of my house and close the door behind you; but I think I would not have halted you if I could. I salute you, sir. I cannot pretend that I am not sad; but I am proud, too. So long.

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Corporal Raymond Dhom recently sent his mother, Mrs. Henry Dhom of Newton vicinity, several articles wrapped in a March copy of the Newton Press. He is in the South Pacific. Included in the package, which she received a few days ago, was some elastic and an emblem of an order he had joined. He was well.

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Private First Class Keith Crampton son of Mr. and Mrs. Orlin Crampton of Willow Hill, has arrived safely in England. His address may be obtained from his parents by those who wish to write him. He is a grand-son of Mr. and Mrs. Sumner Cox of Willow Hill.

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Floyd "Whiskers" Portlock, mail specialist third class in the Navy, has been sent to a rest camp in Yosemite Valley near Fresno, California, to recover from an old back injury which returned on him while he was working in the fleet post office in San Francisco.

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Sergeant George H. Staley writes his parents, Mr. and Mrs. George Staley of Falmouth vicinity, that he is now in a hospital in Rome, Italy, with a broken leg. How he was injured is unknown.

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Staff Sergeant Sylvan Kocher is visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Kocher of near Newton. He is stationed in the Army Air Force at Selman field, Monroe, Louisiana.

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Private James Howard Babbs of Newton vicinity is attending a specialist course in automotive maintenance at the Antiaircraft Artillery school at Camp Davis, North Carolina.

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Henry Fehrenbacher, a son of Mr. and Mrs. Ed Fehrenbacher of Newton, has been promoted to ship's cook third class. He is in the Navy stationed in New Guinea.

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Seaman Second Class Harold Alvis of Camp Farragut, Idaho, is spending a fifteen day leave with his wife and baby of Newton vicinity.