

Bill Mineo ^{5/23/44} Writes of Scotland

Tells of Sights in Edinburgh He Saw While on Leave There; Had a Fine Time Seeing the City

Second Lieutenant William L. Mineo, bombardier on a B-17 Flying Fortress, writes his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert T. Mineo, of Newton:

"Another day practically gone and I'm a bit sleepy tonight. We had a chore (mission) to do today for the fourth in a row so I'm really eating them up. Comparatively speaking I got a good night's sleep last night; had six whole hours and that's more than I had in the previous two nights put together. I was so tired yesterday evening that I wasn't even hungry, which is rare for me.

"After supper Mac and I took our laundry up to our wash lady and she gave us six eggs to bring back with us to boil and eat. Everytime I go up there she gives us some eggs and they are scarcer than hen's teeth over here; worth their weight in gold so to speak. When we finish up our job here she is going to bake a hen and stuff it with dressing for us to have a celebration supper. How do you like that?

"She is a swell old lady and goes out of her way to be good to us fellows. I'd like to find something nice to give her for a present when I leave here to show my appreciation for her kindness.

"It was nice of Rev. Mr. Finlayson to conduct services the way we had them over here and tell him I said thanks a lot. I hope everyone enjoyed the services. I was sure glad to hear that Merl Vanderhoof's folks got word from him and that he is alive.

Trip Took All Day

"We had a few days leave or rest a couple of weeks ago and I will give you an account of our trip. We left London, Sunday morning and arrived at Edinburgh, Scotland, about 8:30 that night. We put up at the Caledonia hotel, which is the finest in the city. It's where the king and queen of Norway stay when they are in the city. I spent most of my time loafing and laying around, just taking life easy and seeing some of the sights. One could see ancient buildings and spires and steeples in practically any direction.

"In what I guess to be the heart of the city is the castle of Edinburgh and it was really an interesting sight; an old old castle situated high up on what is almost a sheer bluff rising about 300 feet from the valley. One end or side of the bluff goes out into a long high hill, which is the only means of access to the castle, I believe. I'll bet that no one ever stormed that castle in the old days of knighthood, as it looks just too formidable to be taken.

"Personally I think the heart of Edinburgh is one of the prettiest cities I've seen in my life; old historical buildings everywhere, especially along what is known as the royal mile. That extends along a street containing Holyrood castle and other buildings famous in Scotland's history. I can't very well explain or describe it on paper but it is a marvelous sight.

Beautiful Parks

"All along the north side of the royal mile is a low spot or valley. They say it used to be a marsh or lake but was drained and is now a beautiful park with walks, lawns, trees, flowers, etc. The main street of the city is Princess street and one can look around and see towers and steeples in practically every direction. Down at one end of Princess street is another high hill with an observatory on it and also some monuments. One of them is the Nelson monument.

"There is also a partially completed copy of the Greek Parthenon. Sights like those above were really great to see. I'd like to be able to go back after the war and see everything at my leisure. They say Northern Scotland is beautiful too and I'd like to see that too. I wrote down the place where the Rev. Mr. Finlayson's sisters lived but lost it somewhere along the line so I didn't know where to start looking for them. I am sure sorry for I would have liked to met them."