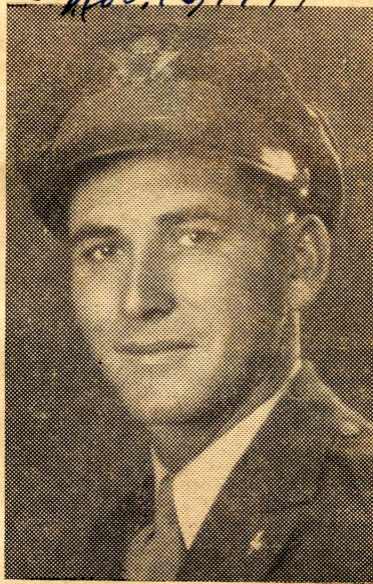


Capt. Birch Home From Italy

Nov. 16, 1944



Captain Paul E. Birch (above) is at home after 28 months overseas, getting acquainted with a two-year old son, Paul Gene, and visiting with his wife and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Birch of South Muddy township. He is to leave November 21 and will report to the redistribution center at Miami Beach, Fla for further assignments.

Since leaving the states Capt. Birch has had a part in six major campaigns and the U. S. Air Force to which he was attached had an important part in the Italian and North African campaigns. Planes from his command had a part in the bombing of the great Roumanian oil fields at Ploesti and in the major air activities that resulted in the Italian victories.

For these accomplishments Capt Birch has been awarded the Presidential Citation with two clusters, the bronze star for meritorious achievement in combat and his European campaign ribbon is studded with six campaign stars.

From the states Capt. Birch, then a second lieutenant, went to Egypt for his first assignment. From Egypt he was transferred to Palestine and while there was enabled to make visits to Jerusalem and other points of biblical interest in the Holy Land.

From Palestine he was sent to Libya then to Tunis from which base the planes in his command bombed Sicily, then to Italy from which base bombing missions went out over the Balkan countries and over Southern France.

He was raised from the rank of second Lieutenant to first Lieutenant and then to Captain during these various campaigns.

Captain Birch is a graduate of the Effingham high school and Eastern Illinois State Teachers College. He was engaged in teaching in the Clay City School when he enlisted in September, 1941.

A younger brother, Dale Birch, left last Thursday for induction into the army.