



With the Colors

10/3/44

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Geier of Wakefield have heard from their sons, Corporal Gerald Geier, who is in England with a General hospital, and Staff Sergeant George Geier, who is in France and Belgium with a Mechanized Cavalry division.

Gerald writes: "This is Saturday afternoon and everyone has gone in for athletics except me. Frank and I made a trip to Birmingham last week and had a pretty nice time. I have an invitation to Crewe and Manchester for my next pass, but my intentions now are to look up Russell Desch.

The transportation situation is really terrible over here. The trains are so crowded that you're lucky to get standing room. That's one reason I hate to go far.

"So Ben thinks Army life back in the states is rather rugged, since he completed his missions. I guess there's some truth in a little line I heard the other day: 'While the English drank their tea, and the Americans had their inspections, the Russians advanced five miles'."

George in his letter said: "We've killed or captured the last German in this sector and it sounds so damned quiet after being under fire for so long that one begins to realize how much of a strain he has been under. I still have the same platoon and boy, what a bunch of fighters they are. I believe they would follow me to hell if I asked them to.

"I used to wonder how I would feel after I had killed my first German, but I don't have to wonder now. It makes you feel as good as if you are ridding the world of a dirty so and so who isn't fit to live in the same world with an American. You would know what I mean if you saw one of the dirty tricks they pulled on us.

"It is such a change that I couldn't go to sleep last night until about 2:00 o'clock. If I could have heard only a little noise it would have helped. It looks as though we will get a week or so's rest now that the job is done here and we sure can use it. It will feel good to wash and eat regularly again and just take it easy for a time."

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The Second Armored or "Hell on Wheels" division has been formally commended for its part in exploiting the break-through above St. Lo, July 26 which resulted in the large scale movements that now have fanned out all over France.

In a letter to Major General Edward H. Brooks, commander of the Second Armored, Major General J. Lawton Collins, commander of Seventh Corps, said in part:

"The Second Armored division, along with other elements, broke through the German positions between Marigny and St. Gilles on July 26 and the division then spearheaded the drive to the Seine river at Cerences, thus effectively cutting off the German forces east and north of the Seine river. In this drive to the southwest, the Second Armored division displayed remarkable dash and exceptional fighting spirit and played a major part in expanding the break through, which operation, I am sure, will go down in history as one of the decisive battles of our war in France."

First Lieutenant George W. Kasserian Jr. of Newton is with this division.

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Yeoman Third Class Ruby J. Brackett, Ship's Service Office, Naval Air Station, Olathe, Kansas, writes: "I have been here for some time, but it was a possibility that I might be transferred, so I did not have my address changed before. I appreciate getting the Press very much for it is my only means of keeping up with my home town, since most of my friends aren't there anymore.

"Life on a naval air station is quite interesting, especially since the station is primarily concerned with the Naval Air Transport Service. One can learn many interesting things here. I have only recently started working in the Ship's Service department and it is quite interesting."

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Private First Class Bernard D. Cornwell, who is in New Guinea with the Infantry, writes his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Hal Cornwell of Newton, that he is well. He said that the Japs were more like beasts than men. He enclosed a number of snapshots of natives and scenes in New Guinea.

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Staff Sergeant James C. Bailey, who has just returned to his base in the Aleutians, after spending a twenty day furlough, writes: "While out on the rifle range I saw a real sight. In one of the streams that come down from the hills were thousands of sal-

mon. The stream was working alive with them. I never saw so many fish in my life.

"The humpbacks are all dying but not the silver salmon. It certainly was a sight well worth seeing. Tell Clarence Urfers that Elbert's outfit has left and possibly he will be home by the time this letter reaches you."

Private Paul R. Ping, who has been on Military Police and Port Guard duty in Australia since June, 1943, writes his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Claude Ping of near Willow Hill, that he has been transferred to New Guinea. He said the weather was getting very warm there and added that he did not like it as well as Australia.

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Ronald J. Chapman, machinist's mate third class, stationed at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is spending a nine day leave with his wife at Terre Haute and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Chapman and son Billie and Mrs. Chapman's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lindsey and daughters Bette and Catherine of Hunt City. He will return to his base, Saturday.

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Samuel Drake, machinist's mate second class, is spending a few days with his mother, Mrs. Emma Drake and sisters, Faye McKinney of Bogota, and Ruth Sparling of Ingraham. He is stationed at Davisville, Rhode Island.

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Seaman Second Class Bert Ward Jr. has been assigned to a Naval Air Base at Jacksonville, Florida, to operate a motion picture machine, his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Bert Ward of Newton, have learned.

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Gunner's Mate Third Class and Mrs. Roy Reynolds have returned to Norfolk, Virginia, after a visit with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Reynolds of Newton. He is on a battleship with the Atlantic fleet.

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Private First Class Don Sowers, who was wounded on the Anzio beach-head in Italy, is visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Sowers of Hidalgo. He is able to use his left arm some.

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Relatives in Newton have received word that Private Robert D. Ferguson of Willow Hill has arrived in France.