



## With the Colors 10/6/44

Private First Class James Dewhirst sends this article by Paul V. Conners in Stars and Stripes, September 11:

"A year ago this month the Thirtieth Infantry division was going about the rather boring business of maneuvers in Tennessee, wondering if it would ever get the chance to wear combat ribbons. The "sharps" said the division would never go overseas, that it was a training unit preparing men who would serve as replacement for other organizations. The "sharps" were wrong.

"Last week the Thirtieth Infantry division received a special commendation given by Major General Lawton J. Collins, Seventh Corps commander. The award was given for the magnificent job the Thirtieth had one in holding off the last major attack of the German Seventh army in the vicinity of Mortain early last month.

"Addressed to the division commanding general, it read in part: 'Your division, with the aid of the Third Armored division and an Infantry regiment of the Fourth division bore the brunt of the desperate attack of the German Seventh army. With the assistance of the Artillery of the Fourth division and the Third Armored, the Thirtieth Infantry division checked this penetration and then destroyed the German force which made the advance.'

"General Collins paid special tribute to 'the tenacity of the Second battalion of the 120th Infantry, which isolated on a hill east of Mortain, held out for five consecutive days against determined efforts of the Germans to annihilate it.

"For five rugged days the 'Old Hickory' division slugged it out with the best of the Wehrmacht, five infantry-armor divisions, including the SS Adolf Hitler panzers. The Germans were shooting for Avranches and the sea, attempting to split the American armies in Normandy and Brittany. They didn't quite make it.

"The Thirtieth didn't just 'happen' to be holding the sector from Lo Mcsnil Tevo through St. Barthelmy to Mortain, when the Germans threw their last desperate punch before turning to run."

"Lieutenant General Omar Bradley, commanding the Twelfth Army Group, had selected the division to hold the major part of the bottom of the 'pocket,' releasing other units to work the side of the bag which thousands of Heinies were finally trapped.

"The German attack shortly after the Thirtieth took up its position. Taking advantage of good road networks, the enemy struck furiously in several sectors. The fury of the attack stunned the Yanks.

"A battalion was overrun in the St. Barthelemy sector. The second battalion of the 120th was isolated, and "lost" on a hill overlooking Mortain. An artillery battalion used direct fire, so close were the German tanks. In several instances engineers, artillerymen, and cavalrymen, fought as infantrymen. The bayonet was an over-worked weapon; it was that kind of scrap.

"The bazooka played the most prominent of roles, knocking out numbers of tanks and stalling others which were then duck soup for rocket firing Typhoons of the RAF, which flew to support the foot troops on the afternoon of the first day of fighting.

"And so it went with fighting division which a year ago wondered if it ever would see combat. After three days of wild mixing the Germans were beaten off in most sectors, the supply line between the peninsulas remained intact. It took five days to rescue the heroic "Lost Battalion." Though its casualties were high, the Thirtieth division had completed its assigned mission in a superb manner."

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Francis A. Huber, fireman first class writes from somewhere in the Southwest Pacific: "I thought I would drop you a few lines to let you know I am safe and feeling fine, only I would like to be back in Jasper county. I have a little poem I would like to pass along to you.

"Of course I'm not in New Guinea any more. All I can say is, that I'm somewhere in the Southwest Pacific area. I'm on an island base. I would like to hear from all my friends back there.

"Before I forget it, the Red Cross and the American Legion are doing a great job over here. Well here goes with the poem."

#### **New Guinea**

There's a place across the ocean,  
Known as God's forsaken land,  
Made of man-groves, swamps and  
jungles,  
Lofty crags and ocean sand.  
It was to this place we journeyed,



On a July day;  
While the sun beat hot upon us,  
And the devil led the way.  
Why the Japs would want to take it;  
Why they would ever want this land;  
Why the heck we're fighting for it;  
I will never understand.  
Let the fuzzle-wuggles have it;  
Let them have their lonely way;  
Give it to the Aussie "diggers,"  
And let us come home to stay.

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Private First Class Ralph Mineo, a son of Earl Mineo of Newton, was recently awarded the Good Conduct medal. He has been in the Army for four years and overseas two years. At present he is on New Britain island in an Infantry regiment.

Chaplain Robert C. Clingman writes: "Your son, Ralph, has been given the Good Conduct medal recently, and I wanted to offer a word of congratulation. The medal is awarded for outstanding work as a soldier in our country's service.

"I feel that Ralph merits all the commendation he receives and you may well be proud of him. He is a fine young man and is in good health. I am glad to be with him in this regiment."

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Henry LeRoy Bower Jr., seaman second class, who is a member of the crew of the U.S.S. Sumpter, writes: "**The Mighty Sumpter**

"She is a regular battle axe. She reals and rolls and how she creaks, but when it comes to the showdown, you never find her out of bounds. Always like a hunting hound, she's here and there an all around. And when she is out the Jap fleet hides. They fear the blood that follows her tides, and how they pray for their dam hides. Her crew is the rugged type. They take you away and bring you back, no matter how she rolls and creaks."

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Motor Machinist's Mate Second Class and Mrs. Boice "Barney" McCormack are here on a sixteen day leave from the Navy at San Diego, California, with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Roy McCormack of Newton. Private First Class Drexel McCormack was here from Camp Breckenridge, Kentucky, Sunday. He expects to be sent overseas in a short time.

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Mr. and Mrs. Amos Dufrain of Newton are in receipt of a letter from their son, Sergeant Donald "Fuzzy" Dufrain, stating that he is now in one of the islands of the Southwest Pacific. He and a number of other Jasper county boys are in an Antiaircraft Artillery division. All were well when he wrote.

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Corporal Manley Wever of the 578th Signal Air Warning battalion at Drew field, Florida, and his wife are visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Wever of near Hunt City. Mrs. Wever Sr. is home from a visit to Bedford, Indiana. She was accompanied home with her son and daughter-in-law.

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Earl M. Michl, 17, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Michl of Newton, is receiving his initial indoctrination at the United States Naval Training Center, Great Lakes. When his recruit training is completed, the seaman will receive a period of leave.

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Mrs. Eugene T. Jensen of 324 North Maple street has received word from her husband, Lieutenant Jensen, that he is stationed in Iceland. Lieutenant Jensen is a first pilot commanding officer on a B-17.

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Private Gordon Stanley is here on a furlough from Mayo General hospital at Galesburg with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lon Stanley of near Newton. His arm was injured in an accident on Attu island.

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Victor Warren Coleman of near Willow Hill, 17 years old, has enlisted in the Navy, and Wayne Cunningham of Newton vicinity went to Springfield for examination, Tuesday, for enlistment.

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Second Lieutenant Esther Earnest, Army Nurse Corps, is visiting her mother, Mrs. Nora Earnest of near Falmouth. She is stationed at an Army hospital at Yuma, Arizona.