

OUR FIGHTING MEN

Have been around France now going on six months and have been able to visit Paris several times. While it is a beautiful place, I would give anything to be able to walk down Park Avenue again.



Right now I am trying to locate my friend Bud Muir who I understand is located near me.

I notice with pride how the people of SP are responding to all the Bond Drives and always over-subscribing their quotas. It surely makes us feel good over here."

And just eight days later, "Bud" Muir, then a Technical Sgt. and since promoted to Master Sergeant, wrote that Chester's search had been fruitful and that they had met. (His address is M/Sgt A. Muir Jr., (32778 290), Engr. Sect. Com. Z, C&Q Div., APO 887, c/o PM, NY) and he V-mails:

"Congratulations on keeping up the fine job you started. We all do appreciate it and enjoy the newsy atmosphere of our paper. It is always welcome even when delayed in transit.

I have been stationed in Paris for sometime now and have enjoyed visiting those places we read about in history classes or in the foreign news of our home papers. It is a grand city but of course some of its activities are curtailed at present.

Sgt. Runsey of SP and I found out that we are neighbors here. Consequently we have had a few "bull" and "elbow-bending" sessions.

If there are any other local men or women around here, I hope they look me up at Engineer Sect., Com Z, C&Q Division.

Best wishes to all on the home front. Bud Muir."

Les Thompson's letters are always interesting but we think his last one written January 4th tops them all. (Incidentally Les, we received a press release from the Public Relations Office, Headquarters of U.S. Strategic Air Forces in Europe, informing us that "A third Oak Leaf Cluster to his Air Medal has recently been awarded to First Lieutenant Leslie F. Thompson for meritorious achievement while participating in heavy bombing attacks against military and industrial targets in the Reich and enemy installations in the path of the Allied armies in Western Europe). Congratulations Les, but let's get back to your letter:

"Not even the erratic Xmas mail schedule stopped my Nov. issue of the Plainsman from getting thru. It came at a time when letters were pigeon-holed for the #1 priority Xmas packages."

My sis, Doris, had told me her picture would be in the J V cheerleader group and there she was just as cute as ever. The new "Junior Set's" page is a worthy addition to our paper. Although I know very few of the fellows mentioned in "Chit-Chats", I enjoy her light, spirited, humorous style.

Just as M/Sgt Tommy finds my letters occupying his attention, his in this issue took my eye. I hadn't heard from T. G. so his published letter was very welcome.

As I read the High School history I noticed the mention of the ivy (a gift from Trinity College at Oxford, England). Will you check and see if there are two Trinity Colleges over here? My first pilot and I were guests at Trinity College on our last 48 hour pass. This one is located in Cambridge, England. It is very old and its tradition dates back many years. Yes, it too wears an ivy coat over its old walls, giving it a distinguished, beautiful appearance. Our visit was very interesting. We were away from the atmosphere of war while there. We dined at the faculty table and the black-robed students were seated at their long tables with backless benches for seats. Conventional, or traditional dining ceremony is still observed. The silverware is that which the early kings and knights used. Long tailed waiters served flawlessly.

Following dinner, we adjourned to a spacious anteroom. The large fire place provided both warmth and dancing shafts of light which glanced off the leather-backed chairs and reflected on the walls which were adorned by oil paintings of the masters.

A large, round table was in the center of the room. Its face was of highly polished oak. It was circular, with a royal, inlaid, border insignia and coat of arms decorating it. I think this is reminiscent of King Arthur's Round Table when he used to sit down with his Knights. In front of the Head Master's place, were three bottles of old wine in silver containers. A silver goblet was in front of each man. Cigars and cigarettes were on silver trays and the cigarette lighter was in the form of Aladdin's lamp. The wine circulated in clockwise motion from the Head Master around the table. We talked and laughed in this congenial atmosphere. Later I learned this room is called the "Commons Room".

Our recent visit made SPHS early history very interesting indeed. I would appreciate it if you would check on Trinity College and see if our ivy in Scotch Plains came from this same old English place of learning.

I now have twenty five raids over "ye olde Reich". Recently we have had a break in the weather and have been able to do the ground troops some good. The Luftwaffe's wings haven't been fully clipped but they will be! We have had some large air battles during the past weeks.

The Plainsman enabled me to write Ben McPherson (France), also U. S. Army Nurse Betty White (almost had a reunion with Betty but passes could not be synchronized).

Thanks again for the swell paper. It is a wonderful tribute to a fine Yank Town."

(Trinity College at Cambridge is not the source of the ivy which covers School No. 1. The ivy came from Trinity College at Oxford. Trinity College at Cambridge (which Les visited) was founded in 1546 absorbing several earlier foundations, while Trinity College at Oxford was founded nine years later in 1555). In browsing through the encyclopedia for the answer to that question, ye managing editor thinks he has dug up some questions to stump the experts on "Information Please.- If we ever find time to phrase the questions.

Pfc. Edward W. Krempa (32566281) APO 16901A - Sq. A-2, c/o PM, N. Y., writes:

"Your November issue finally caught up with me. I can't tell you how much I appreciate it and how much I enjoyed reading it. You can bet your life that its TOPS. The Chit-Chat section is something new since I saw the last one and you can tell the editor of that section, it's OK!

I haven't been over here very long but I've run into one member of the (censored), a Lt. Charlie Gabac, who played football with the boys. He told me he was a B-17 pilot and craving action. It was swell seeing him and I hope I run into a lot more of the boys who are stationed in these parts.

I'm living quite a rugged life from that in the States, sleeping in a tent, writing by candlelight, going to bed with two suits of clothes on and wallowing around in ankle-deep mud all day long. There are many more discomforts which I don't care to mention but if the Infantry can do it and survive, this part of the Air Corps can. Thanks again for the paper and keep sending more."

A thickly-wadded envelope from Benny Checchio (32452674) 1340 AAF BU, APC, APO 627, c/o PM, New York, contained a Christmas Greeting from China, some Chinese money and a poem which we will print one of these days. (Thanks lots, Ben). He writes:

I have received every issue of The Scotch Plainsman and I want to thank you very much. It sure does things to a fellow out here in foreign countries. The paper is very good and through it I have located some of my old school pals.

So far I haven't met anyone personally but I hope to soon. While I was in India, I slept about a block from Cpl. Arthur W. Leitner of the 18th Field Hospital. I didn't know about it until after I arrived here in China and read about it in the paper. Harry Daniel, of Westfield Ave., is here in China and I expect to see him one of these days. He is my next door neighbor.

Enclosed is a poem I have worked on for a long while and thought you would be interested in printing it. I will have a picture there some day soon.

I thank you again for the paper and keep up the good work. Benny."

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