Byrnes, '42 Editor, GI's It in New Guinea; 'Legs', Cocoanuts, Billed Army Favorites

Back in 1942, Bill Byrnes was managing editor of TE-HI NEWS, energetically gathering up news, writing stories for the Queen of the Meet contest, and finding time to have a lot of fun.

Now Bill Byrnes is in New Guinea, and a serious note has crept into his letters home which may sound strange to those who knew him. (Bill has not lost his sense of humor, however, as is evidenced by the cartoon and poem reprinted on this page.

Writes Letter Home

In the letter which follows, Bill's family feels that this is the real Bill, saying for the first time the thoughts he has in common with thousands of other boys who have grown up in the Army and are preparing themselves for a new life when war is over.

Dearest Mom and Dad:

I just came back from the movies. The picture was "Sweet Rosie O'Grady" and I enjoyed it twice as much as I did the first time I saw it. All the boys simply melted when that Betty Grable came on the screen. There's something about her I like, but I just can't describe it. Am I kiddin'? She's really something! The boys' morale was boosted a hundred per cent. I was the first picture I had seen in ten days, as I've been working till midnight for the past ten days.

Lives in Leaky Tent

New Guinea is still the same—ditto my tent. There are more leaks in that tent than you'll find in our former kitchen ceiling. I've put my shelter half over my bunk and mosquito netting; then I put my raincoat over the shelter half. The place looks like a supply room.

Today I drew some new clothing. A new set of Khakis, three undershirts, several pairs of socks, and two new caps. I'm saving the new khaki set for my furlough home in Englewood. Boy, what a sense of humor! It kills me! But as long as I keep thinking of it, maybe it'll happen before I know it. It was three months ago today that I left the States and it honestly doesn't seem that long ago. Things have been happening fast enough to keep me busy, and I haven't had a chance to notice the time slipping by. Hope the next eighteen or twenty months go as rapidly.

Rains Falling Again

The rains are falling once again, so if this paper is a little smeared, blame it on ole Jupe Pluvius. That boy really gets around—New Guinea, mostly. Boy, just look at those palm trees shake. Hope a few coconuts fall. They taste pretty good. Funny thing, I like these "wild" coconuts, but I just can't eat coconut candy. And I'll be darned if I'll eat it after the war, cause it'll always remind me of this place. And I don't want that to happen—ever.

When it's all over, I'll not talk about it. I won't want to talk about it. Yes, I know that the boys'll have weekly bull sessions, get together and tell how many Japs and Nazis they've knocked off, but as far as I'm concerned they can shove it down their war-fit mouths.

When guys you knew fairly well—like Clyde Houghton—get it, then it isn't very pleasant talking about it. Some of the fellows will look on their life in the Service as an adventure. That's true, but I'll not want to remember it as vividly as will a lot of them.

For me, Mom and Dad, there's just one objective: get this thing over with and get home to you and the family, and forget everything. It'll be the beginning of a new life for me, I thought, for a while, that I'd be able to pick up right where I left off, but I know it won't be like that. It might be a little difficult for you to imagine it, but I know darned well I've changed . . . changed a lot since you last saw me. I don't like it either. I wanted to have fun during these years, but when a boy spends fifteen months in the Army as I've done, I guess it's only natural that his outlook on life changes. Natural or not, it has happened to me. I only hope that I'll be a little like you remember me. Perhaps folks, it's my imagination, but I don't joke about things I used to mimic. Everything has taken on a more important aspect. I've tried to stay the same, crazy Bill Byrnes of Teaneck High School and Washington and Lee, but I'm afraid it just can't be done.

Golly, I really "sounded off" during that paragraph. Wonder what happened? Isn't it strange how once you hit upon a subject, it's tough to leave it?

Stars Shine

The rain has stopped and there a few stars in the sky. A star in New Guinea is as rare as seeing F.D.R. with his Eleanor. Guess you know how unusual it is when a star shines over New Guinea.

Can't think of much more to say. Oh yes, will you please send me that photo of Helen and me taken at my Senior Prom? The sight of that tuxedo will build up my morale. I've forgotten the color of a tux. The only clothes I can remember wearing have been of the tan and olive-drab color. Very repulsive, but they say that that's what the well-dressed man is wearing nowadays. A guy in civilian clothes is as conspicuous as a woman in a dress.

One more thing. Try to take a picture of my room and the view from the window—or does this room have more than one window? In any case, try to send me the pictures I've asked for. I can't find any film so the possibility of getting any snapshots from me is very slim.

All my New Guinea love,

BILL.

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TeaneckMenin Texas

Five enlisted men and a chaplain from Teaneck are stationed in San Antonio, Texas, Clarence H. Roth said in a letter to Mr. George Humphrey.

First Lieutenant S. George Bayer was a minister of the Methodist Church on Degraw Avenue. Clarence was a member of his church for many years.

The enlisted men who represent Teaneck are Richard W. Orth, Johnny O'Connor, John Ritchie, Paul Neidhart and Clarence F. Roth.

'Hank' Dunning Now Missing in Action

After being in England only two weeks, Sgt. Henry "Hank" Dunning has been reported missing in action over Germany.

Sgt. Dunning received his training as a mechanic at Gulfport Air Field, Mississippi, and his aerial gunnery wings at Laredo, Texas.

Service Club Ends Successful Year

1943-1944 was a busy year for the Teaneck Service Club. At Christmas time 1400 Christmas cards were sent to servicemen. Each month birthday cards are sent out to T. H. S. alumni in service.

In order to add to the club treasury members have sold pop tags at several games. The treasury money has been used mainly to supply free lunches to visiting servicemen.

Mrs. Kathryn Lischer is sponsor of the club.

WOMEN IN SERVICE

Frances Wachs In Georgia

Miss Frances Wachs is completing her basic training with the Women's Army Corps at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.

Charlotte Gordon In Marine Corps

Miss Charlotte Gordon, a member of the United States Marine Corps is receiving her basic training at Camp Lejeune.

Byrnes Sends Poems From New Guinea

Sad Sack

The Sad Sack, bless his GI soul,
Is indeed a sorry sight;
To get one stripe is Sad Sack's goal
He looks with all his might.

But poor Sad Sack, with uniform rolled
Just can't get ahead;
All nonsome boil this guy is oil
Until his spirit's dead.

He mopes along, yes out of step
He can't keep up the cadence;
The sergeant tells him to get hep
Then tosses all his patience.

This lad, indeed a G.S.U.,
Is always S.O.L.;
Never knowing what to do,
Sad Sack catches hell!

Spends most his time on night K.P.,
Washing pots and pans,
The purpose of this Sack can't see—
Brings only chilblain hands

But Sack kept trying, always trying,
His goal nowhere in sight;
And soon he found his spirits dying,
Would he ever get that stripe?

Reported each dutad, night and day
From guard to the latrine;
The latter Sack had found okay—
For it was life serene.

Regardless of what you all might think
Of Sad Sack and his peak—
For here in the Army, and Sad Sack winks,
He's found a home at last!

A Soldier Prays

When a soldier says his prayers at night
And lifts his eyes toward Heaven,
He seeks the Blessed Mother's light
And the love that she has given.

His prayers are said not from the heart,
That's how he learned to pray;
And when he's done he will depart
To start another day.

Again a day for Christ begins,
True, all will not go well;
He aims to keep free from the sins
That lead a man to hell!

So, you see, a soldier's prayers are those
Coming from his soul,
Pure like Theresa's Holy Rose
That brings all to the fold.

Bill Byrnes, '42.

G. I. Jive

From San Antonio, Texas, comes a letter from Air Cadet John O'Connor who says that 'Richard Orth sleeps right next to me, and John Ritchie and Clarence Roth are in nearby barracks. We have gone through every phase of training together and will probably finish together if we are fortunate enough to proceed without repeating any semester or 'washing out' which is not impossible. We hope and try for the best and thus system hasn't failed us yet!'

Along the humorous side O'Connor reports that 'yesterday I won $1.40 on the cockroach races held semi-weekly in our barracks, Boy! You never did see such monsters—undoubtedly Texas-bred. Since there is money in this pastime, my tunkmate has taken to raising thoroughbreds in a peanut butter jar, but the results are doubtful as he loses as much as he wins.'

"Incidentally," he continues, "Willard Thompson ('43) is a S 1/c on the destroyer tender U.S.S. Dunsloin, c/o Fleet Post Office, New York. I think he used to be sports editor on the TE-HI NEWS." (Editor's note: He was.)

Private First Class John Gardner has seen action in New Guinea along with Sergeant A. McKelvey.

Elliott Baker, home on a twelve-day furlough from Texas, and Ned Johannesen, second chorus from the class of '43, held a reunion recently.

Private John Eberhart writes from somewhere in England, "I thought I'd drop you a note to let you know I'm in England. Thanks for sending me the school paper. Even here in England it does something for the morale. Give my regards to Coach Anderson and Coach Salerno, and to the rest of the faculty that remember me."

TimelyAwardsGiven Math Club Members

This year, instead of giving pins, the Math Club decided to give timely awards connected with mathematics. Some of these awards were protractors, pantographs, drawing boards, slide rules, and lettering devices.

The members who received awards were Margery Schumacher, Cathy Berger, Bobby Byrnes, Dick Lofberg, Dan Lufkin, Jack Goldberg, Marilyn Wertz, Beverly Weber, Cy Sanders, David Govan, Ronald Flucker, Evelyn Bensen, Dorothy Orth, and Bill Arvidson.

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