St. Clair 1923

Nathaniel James McCluskey
St. Clair, Pa.
1923
Dear [Name],

I am writing in a hasty manner to let you know how much I miss you. It's been a long time since we last spoke, and I hope this letter finds you well.

I wanted to let you know that I am doing as well as can be expected under the circumstances. The work here is demanding, and I am constantly learning and adapting. I am grateful for the support of the Sisters and the other chaplains who are here.

I have been able to visit with [Name] a few times, and it is heartening to see how much he has grown. I am sure that he misses you as much as I do. I have been able to send him small gifts, and he is happy to receive them.

The weather here is quite variable, with frequent rain and storms. It is challenging to perform my duties, but I am doing my best to stay positive and find ways to bring comfort to those who need it.

I hope that you are able to stay healthy and happy. Please take care of yourself, and know that I am thinking of you always.

Yours sincerely,

Father McCluskey
1. Outside view of military chapel of 20th General Hospital. Originally constructed by Hindu natives as a ward for war patients. Cross on top is blown out of picture by hot sun of India. The embankment dips steeply into a creek which rises seven fathoms beneath the little wooden bridge at bottom. The bridge originally was used only by natives and cows during the monsoon season. It is now the only entrance for the nurses and American patients coming across from a wide, marshy field. Cobras have been killed along these banks. The steps are merely dug-ins on the hard clay. Very slippery too when wet. The Chaplain, Lt. Louis J. Mayer of Philadelphia, Pa., sits on the top step with "the boys" who modernized the inside of this native basha.

2. This picture represents the Catholic answer to a military problem—undenominational! So the priest conceived the idea of converting one half of his office into a repository for the Blessed Sacrament; of making this also a shrine for the daily visit of a devotional confessional. You are looking from the office door entrance. A ceiling-high curtain is drawn back for the photographer. And you, but normally hangs full to shut off the Divine Presence. The room is just six feet all around—the tiniest chapel in the service. The altar is made from two old wooden hospital beds. The tabernacle cover is part of a native satin sari. The statues, crucifix, vigil light are from New Delhi. The walling is native bamboo matting. The flowers are gardenia from the outside jungles.

3. The inside of this unique military chapel certainly not G.I. Not according to specifications. Bamboo from one end to another. Imagine the leaks during the monsoons! Often times these structures blow down during the rainy season. Even the support are bamboo. Notice the tin just above the altar to protect the Mass, the vestments, the celebrant. Birds nest in the leafy roof. Lizards house themselves in the sides and chuckle at the worshippers like little cynics. The floor is just plain Mother Earth. The kneelers are rough boarders laid across red brick. The windows are merely holes in the wall but do have bamboo covers. The altar railing is bamboo. Bethlehem could not have been more humble.

4. A close-up of the military altar. Notice the frame of an old wooden hospital bed! Even the legs elevated on stilts!! This was the idea of a soldier-boy whose father was a church sexton back home. Bamboo altar-railing painted white and green. Good Old Glory over looks the scene as if to protect freedom of religion. In war areas such as this, men are free to worship as they wish—if they can get any materials to work with. "Priorities" block every move to construction and the church or chapel is away down on the bottom of the list. But try to beat the American soldier on finding ways and means. "For God and Country" was the song for everything they foraged.
To you who answered the call of your country and served in its Armed Forces to bring about the total defeat of the enemy, I extend the heartfelt thanks of a grateful Nation. As one of the Nation’s finest, you undertook the most severe task one can be called upon to perform. Because you demonstrated the fortitude, resourcefulness and calm judgment necessary to carry out that task, we now look to you for leadership and example in further exalting our country in peace.

LOUIS J. MEYER
June 1942 to Jan. 1946

Harry Truman

THE WHITE HOUSE
20th General Hospital Burma
"THE PAIN OF LOSS"

I think that none shall ever tell
The PAIN-of-Loss in warfare's Hell.
A PAIN whose void resounds in jest
To ev'ry plea of Mem-ries blest.
A PAIN that wrecks the toil of years;
And mocks a Nation's sweat and tears.
A PAIN that bleeds a woman's heart;
And tears a soldier's mind apart.
Within whose realm romance is woe;
Who feasts in greed on friend or foe.
SUCH PAIN we Humans bring to birth;
Blame God and curse the Earth.

Written by Chaplain (World War II) Louis J. Meyer, U.S. Army Hospital Services, among the Jungles of N. E. Assam, India. The reflections were inspired while on countless visits-on-duty to Hospital and Engineer Units on the Ledo Road. (Sometimes called "The Stilwell Road.") Put to music by Jules Cavaliere, Yeadon, Pennsylvania.

Christmas Greetings

FROM EDDIE, MARY AND THE CHILDREN

Eddie Ryan
Dear Mother & Dad:

India has color this time of the year, but the winter landscape of Delhi would look much better to me. However, the New Year offers promise this time.

Yesterday I sent you a Government check, a Christmas gift — fifty dollars to each of you. We must send it in one name only. It is however for both of you. The New Year offers joys we have all been living for. Love to all, Louis.

With the season's greetings and all love,

[Signature]

[Photo of man in uniform]

[Photo of family]

Christmas Greetings

From Eddie, Mary and the Children

Eddie Ryan
Absence of Swastika Flag Makes Luther Cancel Talk At Germantown Gathering

German Ambassador Waits Two Hours for Nazi Emblem to Be Shown at Pastorius Celebration, Then Leaves Platform.

Dr. Hans Luther, German Ambassador, refused yesterday to speak at the Pastorius celebration in Germantown.

The refusal, according to members of his entourage, was because the new Swastika banner of Germany was not displayed on the speakers' platform in Vernon Park, Germantown ave., above Chelten ave.

A crowd of nearly 15,000 persons, many of whom had marched in a parade through Germantown in honor of the 250th anniversary of the coming of Pastorius, founder of Germantown, waited vainly to hear Dr. Luther read messages from President Von Hindenburg and Chancellor Hitler.

Finally, after waiting two hours for a swastika flag to appear, the German ambassador left. He paused for a moment on the platform, raised his right hand in the Nazi salute, and said, in German: "Hail, Germany, Hall, America."

The crowd cheered and the Ambassador departed, escorted by Heinrich H. Borchers, German Consul-General in New York.

According to Harry Baker, of the German-American Voters' League, who was present when the German Ambassador left the speakers' stand, the consul-general expressed indignation over the swastika incident, saying he felt they had been "insulted."

A big green town-car, with uniformed chauffeur and motorcycle escort, was assigned to the German

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Mountains

Mount Blanc (European Alps) 15,000 ft
Kilimanjaro 19,700 ft
McKinley 20,344 ft
Aconcagua 23,000 ft— "Monarch of Andes"
Cook 12,349— "New Zealand Alps"


India — Tibet

Everest 29
Makalu (Everest's nearest neighbor) 27,790 ft. (One of the most difficult peaks in the world.)
Annapurna 28
Kangchenjunga 28,156 (Very difficult)

From Darjeeling (town) Tiger Hill 7,800 ft.
Tonglloo 10,000 ft.
Sindabhphu 11,600 ft.
CLOUDS

I think that I shall never view
A sky-cloud otherwise than new.
A cloud that Travels night and day
And rolls and romps in sleep or play.
A cloud that knows the Earth's dismay
And still can smile at Heaven's sway.
A cloud whose mood, while dark or bright
Can face man's sphere yet see God's light.
In morning slumber stretched at length;
By evening high in Alpine strength.
How clouds are fashioned puzzles me,
But Saints-in-convoy see . . . Aw Gee!

WRITTEN

By Chaplain (World War II) Louis J. Meyer,
U.S. Army Hospital Services, at Camp Claiborne,
La., eight months after Pearl Harbor and before
“pushing-off” over the Pacific to India.

LEGEND

“Earth's dismay” = War; “Heaven's sway” =
Divine Providence; “Man's sphere” = this
 messed-up World; “Saints-in-convoy” refers to
our journey to Eternity as a parallel to the voy-
age of soldiers overseas.

“THE PAIN OF LOSS”

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The PAIN-of-Loss in warfare's Hell.
A PAIN whose void resounds in jest
To ev'ry plea of Mem-ries blest.
A PAIN that wrecks the toil of years;
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A PAIN that bleeds a woman's heart;
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Ledo Road. (Sometimes called “The Stilwell
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St. Louis J. Meyer Ch 0 - 475 218

To Mr. John A. Meyer,
90 Buckley Bros.
35-29 Walnut St.
Phila., Penn.