

WWII Veterans continues with the "W" letter of the alphabet

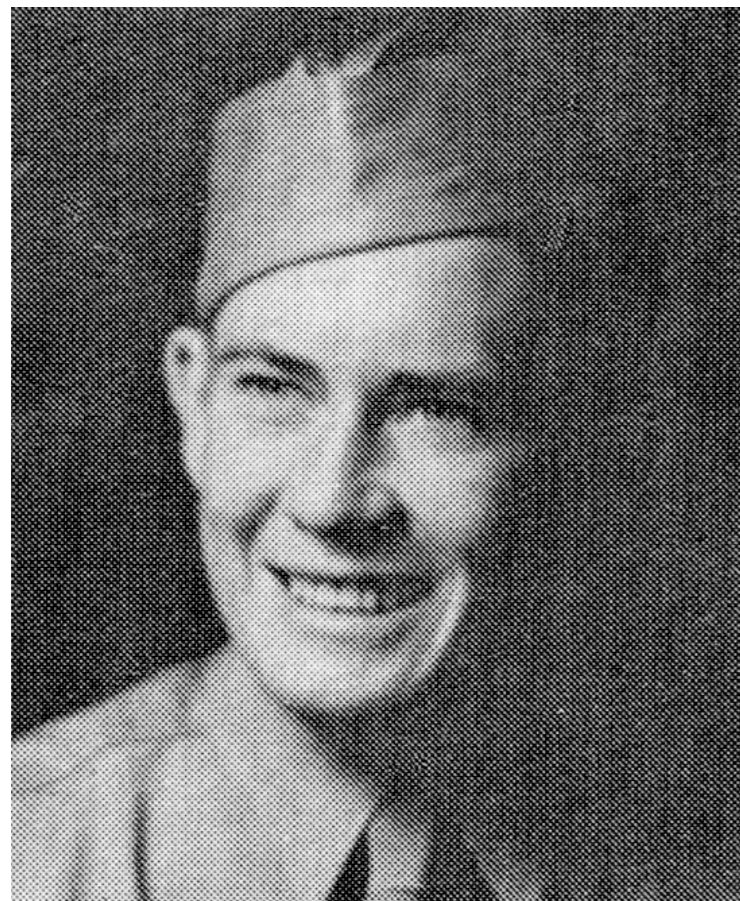
By David Kusel

Unless someone comes forward with pictures for these first two Veterans there won't be any in the Veterans' book. While their are images of them in the Aspinwall Centennial book they just don't scan worth a darn for re-use in a new publication.

My hope is that someone who has a Veteran in their family and was friends of the Wegner family, may have some pictures they were given...many times I'll find pictures of other Veterans in people's scrapbooks. For instance, I found several pictures of another brother, Frank Wegner, in Wilbur Karsten's scrapbook.

When a family dies out in the community, so goes the old pictures because many descendants are not interested in preserving their family history and pictures, so into the garbage they go.

#561 Paul William Wegner (no pictures, some very basic information, 4 Monitor articles)



I guess it can be argued that even a poor image like this is better than nothing but if you would spend as many decades as I have in trying to preserve Manning's history, you too would want the best you can get...

Four sons of Emil and Margaret (Vehrs) Wegner attended the Aspinwall school and later served their country. The family lived in Aspinwall from 1927 until 1939.

Paul spent 11 years in the Army, serving during World War II and the Korean Conflict.

He was also stationed in the Pacific area. Paul died November 27, 1980.

Fortunately, Paul's mother submitted some letters to the Manning Monitor that her sons had written home or we would basically have nothing about their service...here are a couple of those articles.

Manning Monitor 1945 PAUL WEGNER LEFT SAIPAN NOVEMBER 25 FOR HOME

Pearl Harbor, T.H. T-5 Paul H. Wegner, son of Mrs. M. Wegner, of 135 First St., Manning, is on his way home.

Wegner is one of 1,000 high-point army veterans whom the "Magic Carpet" is back to the states aboard the USS Marine Adder.

The USS Marine Adder is one of over 250 carriers, battleships, cruisers, and attack transports in the navy's famed "Magic Carpet" fleet left Saipan, Nov. 25 and was scheduled to arrive in San Pedro, December 9.

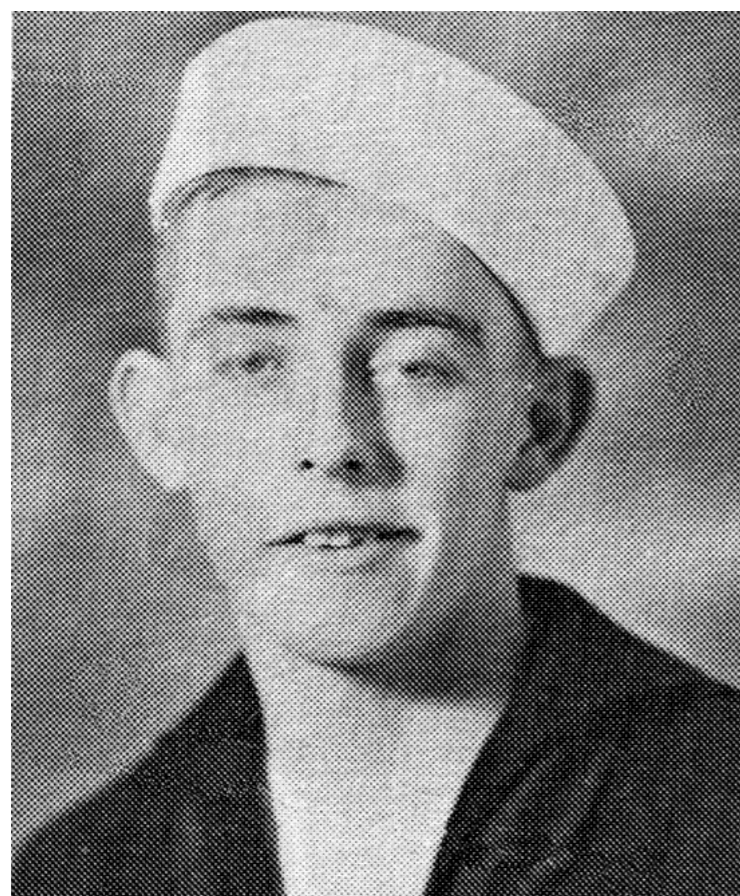
Wegner Re-Enlists In Regular Army

Paul W. Wegner, son of Mrs. Margaret Wegner of 135 1st street, Manning, has re-enlisted in the quartermaster truck corps for a period of three years, it was announced today by Maj. Walter A. Swinhoe, commanding officer of the Sioux City station of the army recruiting service.

Paul has thirty-five previous months of service in the Pacific theater of operations. He stated that he was desirous of making the army his career.

By enlisting for three years Paul was allowed to choose his branch of service, QM truck corps; and his overseas theater, European; Major Swinhoe stated.

#562 Warren W. Wegner (no pictures, some very basic information, 7 Monitor articles)



Another scan from the Aspinwall history book. Original photos are the only way to get a good scan so if anyone has pictures of the Wegner family please let me know.

Warren's mother submitted several letters to the Monitor that Warren had written home while in the service...here is one of them.

Manning Monitor article 1944 Letter From Hawaii Hawaii, December 25, 1944.

Dear Friends: It's high time I'm letting you know that I am no longer aboard (censored) at present I am stationed on some rock in the Hawaiian Islands. Believe me it is just okay out here too, after being at sea for 14 months. This is the best place I have been since leaving the U.S. We even have women out here. Some Hawaiian gals are very beautiful.

I was transferred from my old ship to this beach nearly three weeks ago, so my Monitor is probably still going to the ship. I surely miss the paper but I can't give you another address because I will only be here for a short while.

Do not send the paper to this address, just cancel it until I notify you of my permanent address. I'm only here for further transfer. I'm headed back to sea soon for some similar duty to my old ship.

I will dread it very much because any beach is better than sea duty.

In the past 14 months I have been in all the major sea engagements of the Pacific and now rate 9 battle stars. As far as I'm concerned I've seen all the action I want to, but the way things look will be going right back into the midst of it again. War is really a terrible thing and worst of all to my opinion, it has just a good start. I hope it will all end soon, but I can't see how it could. These slant-eyed Japs have to be showed and it will cost to show them. I was really sorry to read in the Monitor about some of my buddies from home who were killed and wounded. (Censored)

The war has turned in our favor, but the home front still can't slow up. It is movie time so will close for now. As ever, Warren W. Wegner, R. M.2/c.

#563 John M. Weible (no military pictures, some very basic information, 3 Monitor articles)



Fortunately I took this picture during the 2003 Manning Memorial Wall dedication or I would not have any pictures of John Weible, seen here visiting with Jeff Musfeldt (left).

Here again, all I can do is hope a relative will see this article and come forward with pictures and information so we can properly honor John and preserve more details about his service in the Manning Veterans' book.

Manning Monitor article 1945 JOHN WEIBLE GETS BRONZE STAR MEDAL

John M. Weible, who was discharged from service two months ago with 131 points, received the bronze star medal recently for meritorious service in France and Germany from August 14, 1944 to May 3, 1945.

At that time, a sergeant in charge of the surgical section of the 11th evacuation hospital, semi-mobile unit, he performed his duties in a superior manner.

The citation reads in part: His willingness to do more than was required of him, thorough knowledge of every detail and duty on his service and ability to improvise to meet all demands, made him an outstanding member of his command.

Manning Veterans Home With Parallel Careers Saw Identical Action in More Than Two Years

Two Manning boys who have seen a great deal of service overseas, returned to Manning together Tuesday night, coming from the European theatre on the same ship. Both have received an honorable discharge from the army.

The boys are S. Sgt. James Albert, son of Mrs. John Campbell, and Sgt. John Weible, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Weible, and husband of the former Helen Kuhn of Manning.

Sgt. Albert has served with the second armored division, Co. C, maintenance battalion, and had nine months, serving at Casablanca overseas for two years and Africa, Sicily, England, Normandy, Holland, Belgium and on to Germany. He had been in the army four years and seven months.

Sgt. Weible has served overseas two months longer than Albert, and was in practically the same theatres, including Anzio beach head. He did not serve in England, however.

Sergeant Weible's wife has been making her home with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Kuhn, and has been teaching rural school.

#564 Merlin D. Welch (no pictures, no information, 2 Monitor articles)

While obituaries are sometimes the only source of information I have for a Veteran, unfortunately there are very details written about their service.

To show the difficulty in finding information about a Veteran I'll show Merlin's obituary. Fortunately, I have two articles from the Monitor that provide at least some insight into his military service.

Merlin Dean Welch

Date of Birth July 8, 1921

Date of Death October 24, 1998

Place and Time of Services:

Memorial Service First United Methodist Church of New Port Richey, 11:30 AM

Gravesite Military Honors Ceremony Bay Pines National Cemetery, 2:30 PM Wednesday, October 28, 1998

Services Conducted By Reverend Rusty Belcher First United Methodist Church of New Port Richey

Chaplain Warren Bridgeman United States Air Force

Arrangements By Morgan Funeral Home & Cremation Services

Merlin Welch lived and enjoyed life to the fullest. He loved his God, people, the ocean, a good laugh, airplanes, traveling, bowling, and gardening. He served his country proudly and well through three wars. More than anything, he dearly loved his family as a faithful and giving husband, supportive and caring father, fun and affectionate grandfather, and gentle great-grandfather. Merlin was also a loyal brother and a good friend.

What an amazing example his life was. He showed us what love is.

Manning Monitor article 1945

Mrs. Merlin Welch received word Monday that the B-29 bomber, Thumper, on which her husband, Sergeant Merlin Welch, above, engine mechanic, had worked the past year on Saipan, helping keep the plane in condition for missions, was to be on exhibit at the Martin, Nebraska, B-29 plant Monday and Tuesday.

She was invited to inspect the plane and accompanied by Sergeant Welch's mother, Mrs. Ben Welch, and his sister, Mrs. Mac McCullough of Omaha, they saw the plane and were conducted on a tour of the plant where this type of plane is made. Sgt. Welch has named the engine which he services, "Betty" for his wife. He also has a daughter Gwendolyn, who makes her home in Manning with her mother. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ben Welch, also live here.

Sergeant Welch entered the service March 15, 1943, and took training at Miami Beach, Florida, Gulfport, Mississippi, Ypsilanti, Michigan, and Pratt, Kansas, and left the states in July 1944.

According to Lieutenant Colonel, Robert E. Haynes, pilot of the plane, Thumper is the only one left of the planes participating in the first B-29 raid over Tokyo.

On the side of the plane are 26 Japanese flags indicating the number of enemy planes shot down by the plane and also 40 bombs, the number of bombing missions to the credit of the plane.

#565 Orrin Sanford Welch (no military pictures, no information, 1 Monitor article)



Serial Number 17198265; Enlisted Camp Polk, Louisiana, June 29, 1946; Private, Air Corps, Regular Army.

The only recent picture I have for Orrin is this thumbnail image I grabbed off the funeral home website. The resolution is 2.9 by 2.2 by 72 DPI. In professional publication like with the history books we have published for Manning, the publisher/printer requires a minimum of 300DPI. Then if you want a picture to be 6 inches printed the scan should be made that size. So at best this image of Orrin would only properly print at just less than 3 inches wide including the excess border on the right.

This is why I continually write about the need for me to do the scanning, so we have the proper resolution for use in professional publications.

For Orrin I have even less information than his brother. His obituary shows that he was a brother to Merlin, and Roland who will be featured next.

They were the sons of Benjamin and Abel (Dietz) Welch, was born March 26, 1924, in Manning, and entered into rest May 29, 2012, in Quitman, Texas. He was a retired Master Sergeant with the U.S. Air Force.

Manning Monitor article 1945 Orrin Welch In Panama School

Orrin Welch, son of Benjamin and Abel Welch, is now attending business administration school at Albrook Field, Panama, according to a letter just received by his parents.

His address is: Pvt. Orrin S. Welch, 17198265 211 5th Service Union Avn., APO 825 % P. M. New Orleans, Louisiana.



Don Mohr and Orrin Welch - from the Mohr collection.



This was the home of Ben Welch when he moved to Manning from the rural Gray area. Today it is the home of Terry Mundt.

#566 Roland Welch (no military pictures, no information)

For Roland, all I have is his obituary to glean information from.

He was born March 17, 1914, at Manning, to Benjamin and Abel (Deitz) Welch. He graduated from Gray High School in Iowa in 1931.

His teaching career was interrupted during his service in the U.S. Army during World War II. He was stationed in Aberdeen, Maryland; San Antonio, Texas; and Burlington, Iowa. He was honorably discharge July 6, 1946.



Roland Welch - Another low resolution image I grabbed from the funeral home website.

#567 Ted Welch (no military pictures, no information, 1 Monitor article)

Sadly the information deficit is even worse for Ted with only one very small Monitor article. I have no idea if/how he is related to the Welch brothers above.

Manning Monitor article 1944 Seaman second class

Ted Welch completed his leave and returned to the Great Lakes Naval training station for a short time.

WWII continues next week with Jack West.