



# VETERAN'S DAY

Wednesday, November 11, 2020

*Letters Home*

**PERRY COUNTY • WWII**



# MELVIN WALTER, U.S. NAVY

## Perryville

Melvin Walter, 22, of Perryville, served as a Fireman, Third Class aboard the USS Grunion, a Gato-class submarine that sank at Kiska, Alaska, during World War II.

According to a cousin, Walter was "tall and handsome and interested in drama."

He had a big part in the yearly church play that was a major social event in the town. He was said to be popular with the girls.

Too poor to consider college, he decided to join the Navy and was eventually assigned to the Grunion, which was launched on Dec. 22, 1941, and commissioned on April 11, 1942, with Lt. Commander Mannert L. Abele in command.

Assigned to the Pacific, the Grunion set sail on May 24, 1942, and as she headed for Panama, rescued 16 survivors of the USAT Jack, an Army transport vessel which had been sunk by a German U-Boat.

The Grunion reached Pearl Harbor in June, and after some extensive training, touched Midway Island before heading north toward the Aleutian Islands for her first war patrol.

Her first report, made as she patrolled north of Kiska Island, stated she had been attacked by a Japanese destroyer and had fired



torpedoes at her with inconclusive results. She operated off Kiska throughout July and sank two Japanese sub-chasers and possibly damaged a third as she waited for enemy shipping.

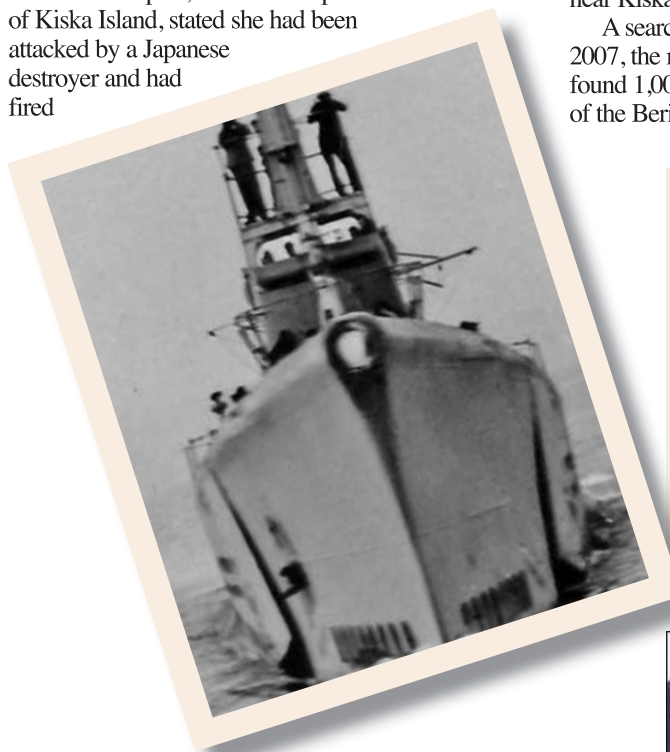
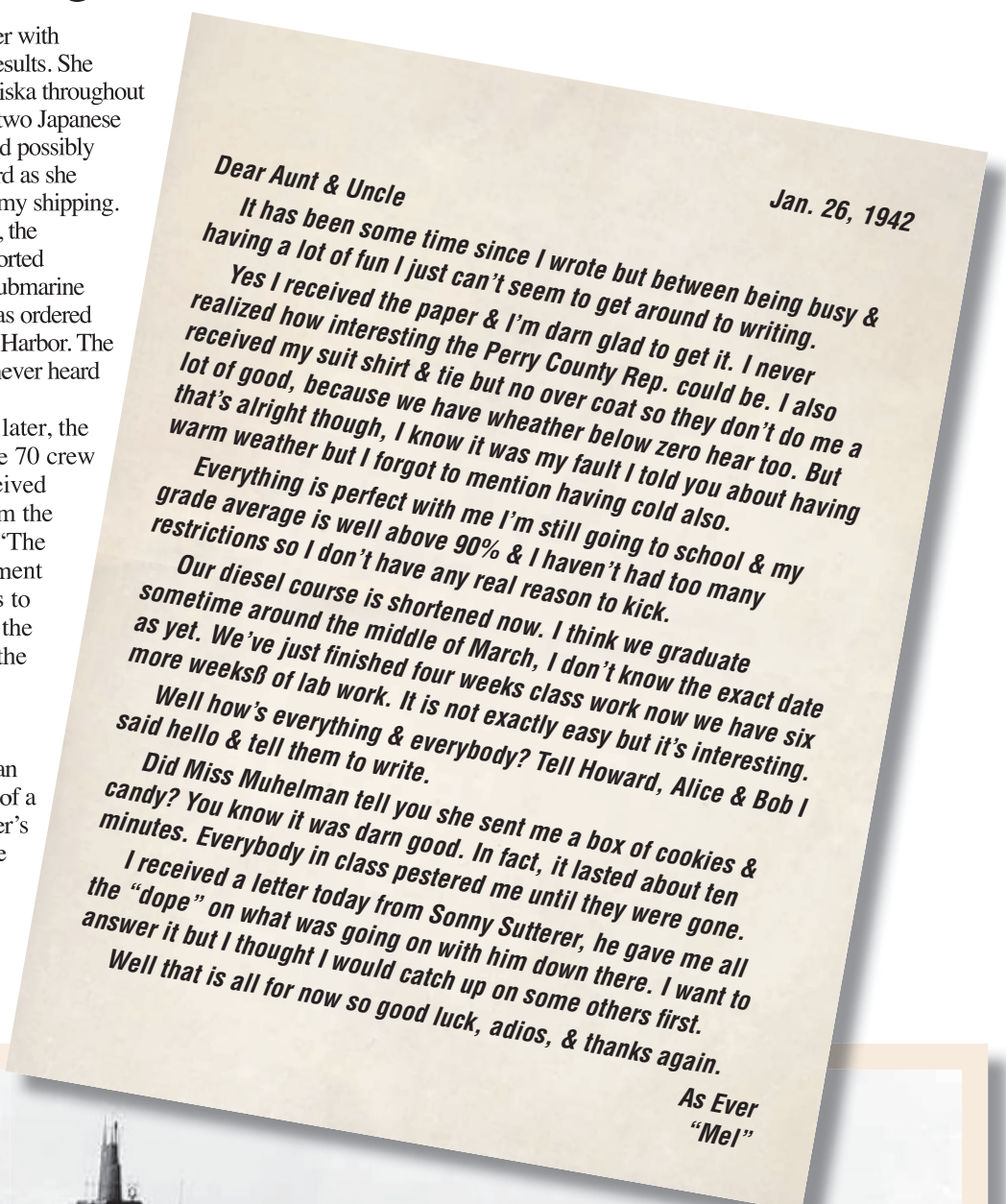
On July 30, the submarine reported intensive antisubmarine activity and was ordered back to Dutch Harbor. The Grunion was never heard from again.

Sometime later, the families of the 70 crew members received telegrams from the government. "The Navy Department deeply regrets to

inform you that ... is missing in the performance of his duty and in the service of his country."

Nothing was known of the Grunion's fate until 1998, a few years ago when a Japanese historian discovered a report by the captain of a Japanese ship detailing the freighter's battle with an American submarine near Kiska on July 31, 1942.

A search was launched, and in 2007, the mangled remains were found 1,000 feet under the surface of the Bering Sea.



Letters, photos and biographical information for this special section were provided by the Perry County Military History Museum and curators Carlene and John Rauh.

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# CURT VOGEL, U.S. ARMY AIR CORPS Altenburg



Curt Vogel was born October 19, 1916, in Altenburg to the Rev. Adolph and Magdalena (Spilker) Vogel.

He married Billie Jean Bumgarner on Feb. 7, 1941, and opened a law practice in Perryville in August of that year. Four months later, the Japanese Navy launched a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, ushering the United States into World War II.

"On Dec. 7, 1941, Jean and I were at the matinee at the Mercier Theatre in Perryville, and as we left the theatre we were told the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor, Hawaii," Vogel wrote in a memoir. "We lived only a block from the theatre, and rushed home and the radio was

giving constant coverage of what had happened. We knew, as millions of other did, that this meant war."

A month later, Vogel enlisted in the Army Air Corps with the intention of becoming a pilot. He was 25, just nine months below the maximum age for acceptance into the flight program.

Vogel, who died in 2007 at the age of 90, wrote in his memoir that the acceptance test wasn't too hard aside from the part about aviation.

"I had never flown in a plane, except for a 15-minute ride in a Ford tri-motor plane and had never touched the controls of an airplane," Vogel wrote.

By August, Vogel was in training as a cadet, two months before his oldest son, Curt Vogel II, was born.

"Jean and I seriously discussed the implication of having a child with the impending war, but

both of us decided we wanted

a child although sheer logic and conservative common sense would have ruled against that decision," Vogel wrote.

After graduating flight training, Vogel was commissioned as a



second lieutenant and began training for combat aboard various bombers, including the B-25 Mitchell and the B-17 "Flying Fortress" before finally being assigned as pilot of a B-24 Liberator.

Vogel and his 10-man crew left for England in January 1944. During the trip, the crew dubbed their aircraft "Rough Riders" and painted their logo, a winged white horse, on the nose.

Vogel and his crew flew 30 combat missions in Europe — 29 in "Rough Riders" and the last in a plane called "Princess Pat" — as part of the 755th Squadron, 458th Bombardment Group, 96th Bombardment Wing (H) and 2nd Division of the 8th Air Force.

He wrote a letter to the families of each his crew on the eve of their first mission.

"I realize how priceless a boy is to his parents, and I assure you, that as his pilot, I will guard his safety as carefully as I would want my boy's safety guarded."

After serving in WWII, Vogel later served in Korean conflict.

February 20, 1944

Dear Mr. and Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_:

The time will soon come when our crew, of which your boy is a member, will be called upon to do the job we've been prepared to do.

There are three things I want you, as his parents, to know, hence this letter.

First of all, we want you to know that we are glad to have him on our crew because he knows and does his job well.

Second that your boy, and the other nine members of the crew, have been given the most complete training possible to prepare them for their work. This of course means that your son has the best possible chance of coming back to you and of doing his part well in this war.

Third, that since I have a boy of my own (he's just a little fellow 16 months old) I realize how priceless a boy is to his parents, and I assure you, that as his pilot, I will guard his safety as carefully as I would want my boy's safety guarded.

Trusting in God for the safety and well-being of our crew.

Sincerely yours,  
Curt M. Vogel,  
2nd Lt. A.C.

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# CHARLES MOORE, U.S. MARINE CORPS Perryville

Charles Moore, 20, of Perryville, was the son of Roscoe Moore, himself a veteran of World War I and his wife, Mildred, a teacher.

Charlie was active in his church, and played guard and halfback on the Perryville High School football team.

He worked at the local drug store and wanted to be a lawyer like his father. He graduated from PHS and, one month later, enlisted in the Marine Corps. He saw action on Guadalcanal and Tarawa, then Saipan.

As a Marine serving in the South Pacific during World War II, Moore participated in at least two amphibious landings — one on Guadalcanal, one on Tarawa — before his final one on the island of Saipan.

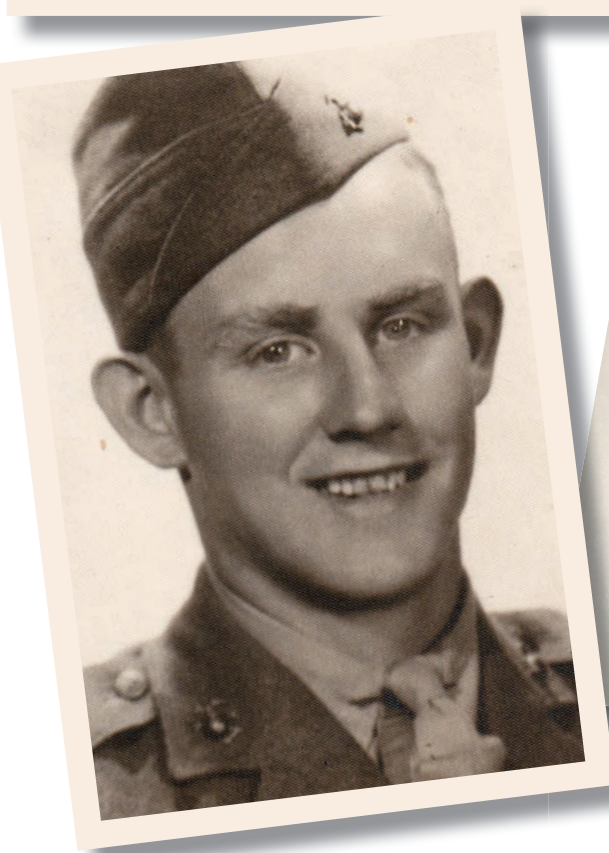
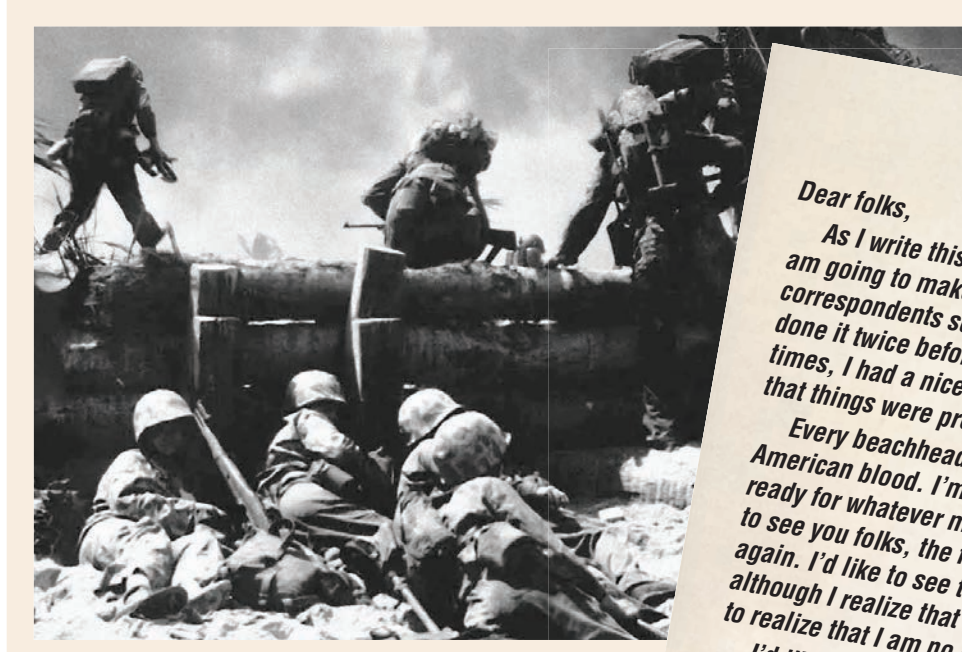
“Both times, I had a nice comfortable beachhead set up ahead of me so that things were pretty easy,” Moore wrote in a letter home before the battle on Saipan, one he hoped his parents would never read. “This time I’m in an assault wave.”

Years later, a former student at PHS wrote a letter about one of his teachers, Mrs. Moore.

“One of my teachers was a very elegant lady named Mrs. Moore,” the letter read. “Mrs. Moore always seemed so sad. Her husband was a successful lawyer. She had a nice home and a wonderful family. When I would talk to Mrs. Moore, you could see the sadness in her smile. Why was this one of the most popular teachers in school so sad?”

The letter, sent in response to a collection of letters home published in the local newspaper, was titled, “Now I know why.”

“I truthfully believe that I’m ready for whatever may come my way,” Moore wrote in his letter. “I’d give anything to get home to see you folks, the folks at Albion and just to



May 5, 1944

Dear folks,

As I write this I am pretty much in the dark but I do know that I am going to make another landing on enemy soil. What the news correspondents so gleamingly call amphibious operations. I have done it twice before once on Guadalcanal, once on Tarawa, but both times, I had a nice comfortable beachhead set up ahead of me so that things were pretty easy. This time I'm in an assault wave. Every beachhead setup by Marines is paid for with blood, American blood. I'm not afraid now. I truthfully believe that I'm ready for whatever may come my way. I'd give anything to get home to see you folks, the folks at Albion and just to look at Perryville again. I'd like to see the kids that I knew when I was at home although I realize that none of them are kids anymore. I have come to realize that I am no longer a kid.

I'd like to go fishing with Dad, swimming at the old split rock with Rog and the gang. I'd like to tease Ruthie some more. I'd give anything to just talk with Mom or help her with her washings. I'd like to find the right girl, get a job and settle down. These are the things that I'll be giving up if I do fall at the hands of the cruelest, toughest, and meanest enemy that our country has ever had.

I said a minute ago that I'm not afraid, I don't mean that like it sounds for everything inside of me seems to be in my mouth when I think of it. What I mean is that I'm willing to give up all those things myself if it will help others to get what I'm missing now. I want Rog and Ruth and their kids when they are born to have those things.

Please don't grieve for me because I know exactly what I'm doing. I think now that I knew all the time. My greatest prayer is that you'll never read this letter. I'm almost laughing at myself for writing it, for right now I know I'm a better man than any Japs in the world. As we say, you don't worry about that piece of lead or steel with your number on it, but the ones to look out for are the ones flying around with miscellaneous written on it.

Love as ever,  
Charlie

look at Perryville again. I'd like to see the kids that I knew when I was at home although I realize that none of them are kids anymore. I have come to realize that I am no longer a kid.”

Moore was killed in action June 15, 1944.

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Dale N. Hotop - Navy Petty Officer E4  
Melvin (Moe) Wood - Army Corporal

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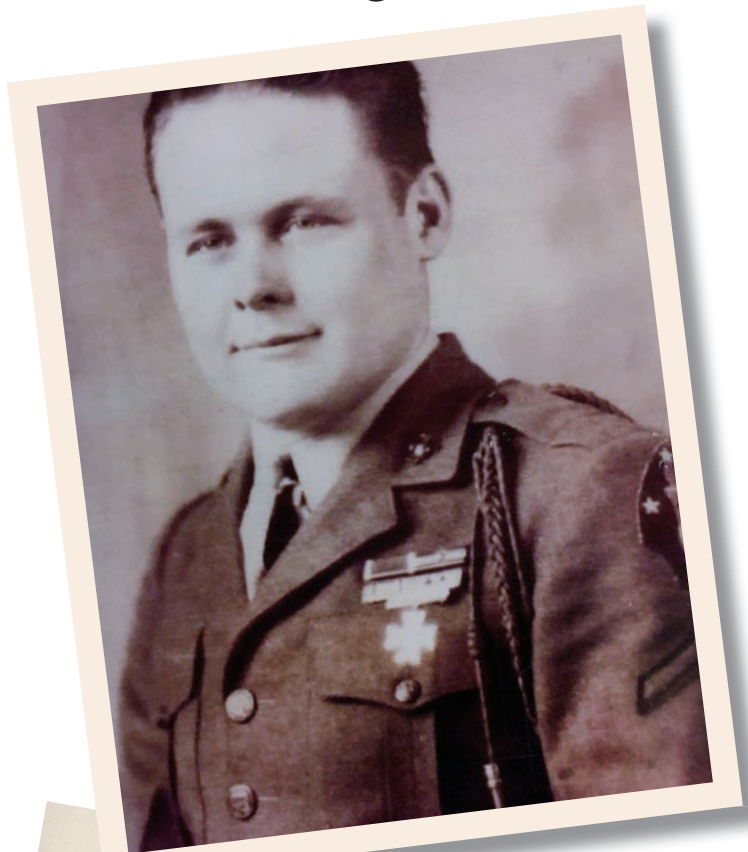
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# JOSEPH LUNDY JR. U.S. MARINE CORPS Perryville



*Dear Dad,  
Just a few lines today from Saipan after a hard battle but I'm glad it's over. Well Dad you may receive a letter from Navy Department saying I was wounded in action so don't worry. A Jap's hand grenade went off right near me and a few pieces hit me in the hand. Well Dad I have been over seas a year now and been in two of the bloodiest battles of the Pacific. I have also been in New Zealand, New Hebrides and Tarawa, Okinawa, Hawaii and now Marianas, and I guess we got a long way to go, yet they are sending boys home that have two years or more overseas. So maybe I will be home next year. Well Dad I got a Jap flag. I sent it to Minnie (Blaylock) to keep for me. I been offered \$200 dollars for it but I wouldn't take \$500. Well Dad I will close now so tell everyone I said hello and bunch of luck.  
Write soon*

July 18, 1944

*From your son on Saipan  
Joseph Lundy Jr.*

Joseph Lundy Jr. was born June 28, 1923, in Bulter County to Joe and Lillian (Sherrill) Lundy.

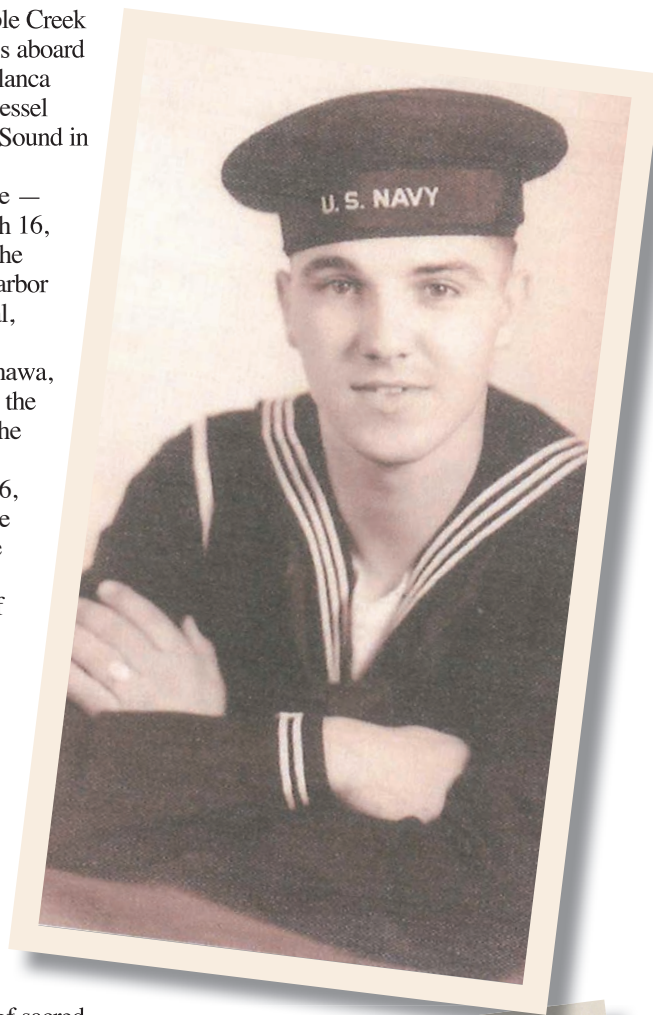
During World War II, he served in the Marine Corps, where he saw across the South Pacific and received a Purple Heart after being wounded in action. After the war, he married Viola Buchheit on July 7th, 1948, and raised three sons — Michael, Mark and John — and four daughters — Mary Ellen Lundy, Pat Baer, Carol Rhyne and Ann Koesterer.

Lundy, who died in 2002, was a postal worker and police officer for 15 years and a

former employee of the International Shoe Company, and a member of American Legion Post No. 133, VFW Post No. 4282, AmVets, Disabled American Veterans and was the parade chairman for the American Legion.

Years later, his son Michael, who died in December, served as commander of the Perryville chapter of the Sons of the American Legion, and was instrumental in bringing the Missouri's National Veterans Memorial and the Missouri Veterans Hall of Fame to life, in addition to having Perryville declared a Purple Heart City.

# WALDEMAR TRAPP U.S. NAVY Apple Creek



Waldemar Trapp of Apple Creek served as a Seaman 1st Class aboard the USS Hollandia, a Casablanca class aircraft carrier-escort vessel commissioned out of Puget Sound in Bremerton, Wash.

During his time in service — from Jan. 24, 1944, to March 16, 1946 — he traveled across the South Pacific, from Pearl Harbor to New Guinea, Guadalcanal, Marshall Islands, Caroline Islands, Guam, Saipan, Okinawa, and ultimately Tokyo where the Hollandia was on hand for the Japanese surrender.

Trapp was born March 26, 1925, to Hugo and Josephine (Meyer) of Apple Creek. He was baptized and educated in the parish of St. Joseph of Apple Creek.

He was described as a talented farmer, and served as the caretaker of the holy grounds of St. Mary's Seminary and the National Shrine of the Miraculous Medal in Perryville for 21 years.

According to his obituary, published after his death in 2018, Waldemar was an amateur organist/pianist and a lover of sacred and classical music, new cars, baseball, bowling.

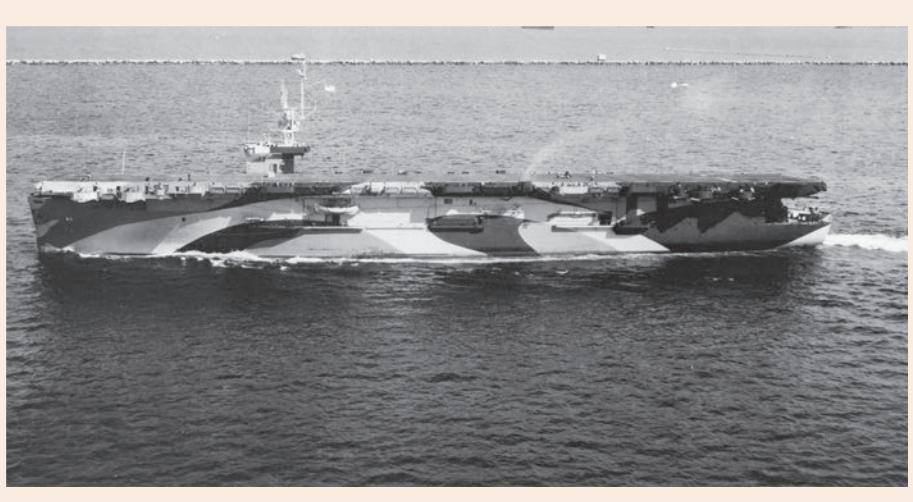
He also enjoyed travel for music concerts, sightseeing, cooking and grilling. His common sense of mind, good taste, kindness, charm and jokeful character identified him as a man deserving of many respectful friends and family members.

After the war, he married Ada Schnurbusch on Sept. 16, 1950, and raised three children, twins Kathy and Ken, and son Lynn.

*Trapp wrote a letter home describing what it was like in Tokyo Bay on Aug. 14, 1945, the day the Japanese surrendered:*

*"The sea was very calm. That afternoon our ship got the word that the Japs surrendered. I will never forget how calm the ocean was at that time.*

*"All in all, I never got to see Japan."*



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# FREUD, EINSTEIN AND THE WAR

By Christopher Simon  
Special to the Republic-Monitor

Sigmund Freud, the Viennese physician-psychiatrist and founder of psychoanalysis, is often seen as the psychologist of the Second World War.

That is, he lived through the war and had a front row seat, as it were, to what the Nazis were doing in Europe.

As a Jew, he was forced to leave Vienna in 1938 and emigrate to England (although friends had been urging him to leave Austria as early as 1933).

But it wasn't just that Freud saw the horrors of World War II unfolding before his own eyes. Freud was always acutely aware of the destructive impulses in the human heart.

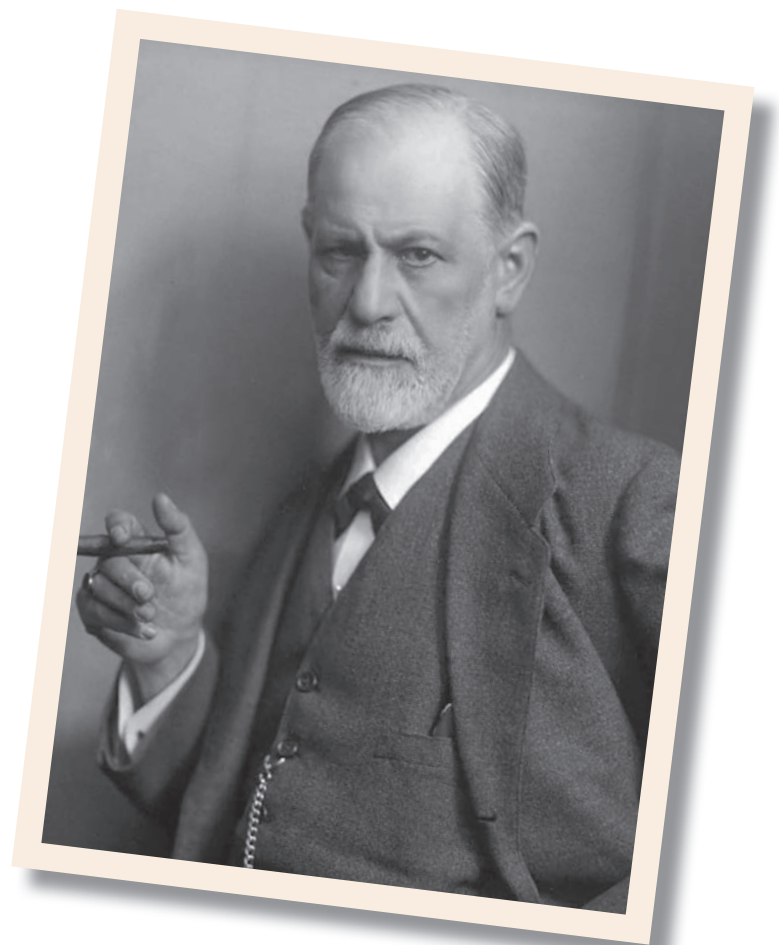
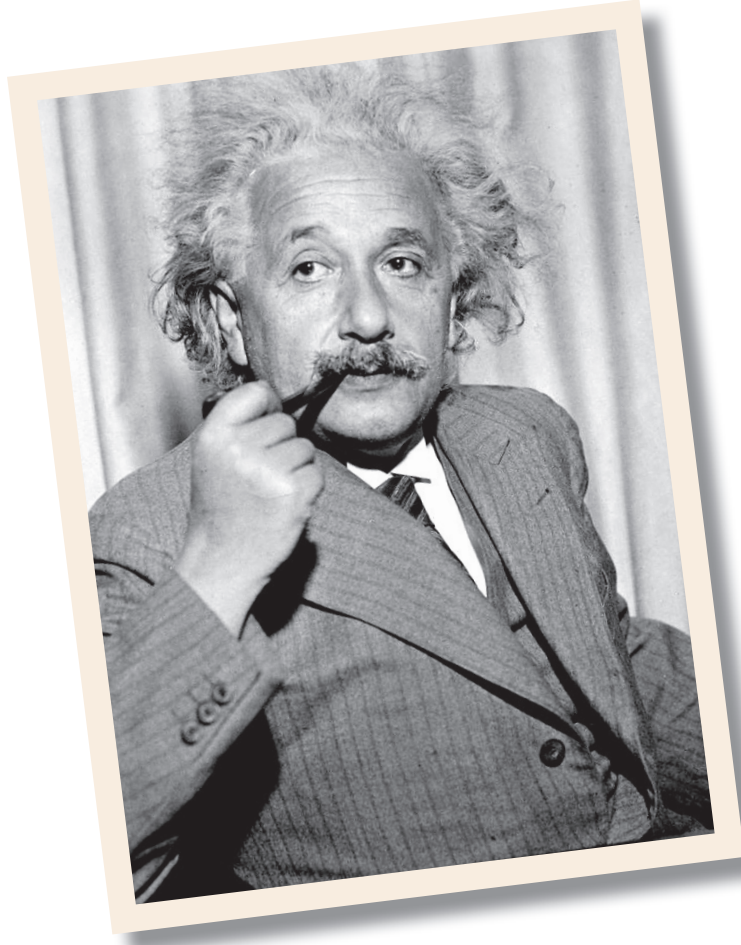
After all, he had lived through the First World War as well, and his division of the human psyche into the Id, the Ego, and the Superego was a powerful device for explaining what was going on in the heart and mind of man, both individually and collectively.

The Id, the source of our instinctual drives, is, according to Freud composed of two opposing forces, the Libido or life-instincts, and the Thanatos, or death instincts.

These unruly forces are kept in check by the Ego (our conscious decision-making faculty) and the Superego (essentially our conscience or moral faculty), but in times of war, we sometimes see the destructive forces of the Id unleashed in great upheavals of looting, raping and pillaging. And even where these "war crimes" are absent, war itself is essentially destructive.

Freud wrestled with this issue in a short treatise published just a few months after the onset of the first World War, titled "Reflections on War and Death," and also engaged in correspondence with Einstein before the second World War, which was edited and published under the title "Why War?"

In April of 1931, Einstein wrote the following in a letter to Freud: "I greatly admire your passion to ascertain the truth — a passion that has come to dominate all else in your thinking. You have shown with irresistible lucidity how inseparably the aggressive and



FILE PHOTOS

**Physicist Albert Einstein (left) and physician-psychiatrist Sigmund Freud corresponded over Freud's treatise, "Reflections on War and Death." Einstein wrote, "You have shown with irresistible lucidity how inseparably the aggressive and destructive instincts are bound up in the human psyche with those of love and the lust for life."**

destructive instincts are bound up in the human psyche with those of love and the lust for life.

"At the same time, your convincing arguments make manifest your deep devotion to the great goal of the internal and external liberation of man from the evils of war."

Einstein goes on in this letter to lament that great leaders of man in the realm of philosophy and religion, from Jesus to Goethe and Kant, have all been relatively ineffective in influencing the affairs of humankind.

Political leaders like Mussolini and Hitler have ironically and sadly been more effective at motivating large masses of men to take up arms and slaughter their fellow human beings than have religious and intellectual leaders at convincing them to do the opposite.

This is a problem that we have with us today: Why are people so

easily motivated to fear and hate their fellow human beings?

World War II drove home a salient fact about the human race: we are social beings, herd animals, if you will, and governments can all too easily convince us to turn against those who are perceived as "other" than us, whether those others are political others, or just different enough in appearance or lifestyle so that we can see them as alien and dangerous.

It is also worth noting that in the 20th and 21st centuries, the most prolific killer has been organized governments against their own people.

Hitler killed six million of his own people; Stalin probably killed twice that many in his purges; and the Khmer Rouge killed somewhere between 20-25 percent of the Cambodian people during their reign from 1975-1979.

These were all intentional

killings. If we count the unintentional deaths caused by misguided attempts at social engineering (such as the famines experienced in the Soviet Union and China), these numbers are even higher. What is wrong with us?

Perhaps the situation is not really so horrible.

The Harvard psychologist Steven Pinker has argued that if we take a broader look at history, we see that we are living in far less violent times and that things are much better than the foregoing paragraph might suggest. In his book "The Better Angels of Our Nature," Pinker outlines six major historical declines of violence, including the pacification process, the civilizing process and the humanitarian revolution. We are currently living in what he calls "the long peace" (the now 75-year period after the two great world wars) and also in what he

calls "the new peace" (the decline in organized conflicts since the end of the cold war).

And finally, there has been a rights revolution, which has extended rights to formerly vulnerable populations, such as ethnic minorities, women, children, gay and transgender people, and animals. All of this is perhaps reason for optimism.

But we do well to remember that history moves in waves, and like a pendulum, it swings back. The arc of history may bend toward justice, but it doesn't move in a straight line.

Amidst the long peace, we have the genocide in Syria. And on our southern border we have people lined up fleeing murderous or ineffectual regimes in Central and South America.

History can repeat itself, but it probably won't look exactly like it did in 1939.

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