

The Home You Left

In November of 1945 thirty-two year old Captain Frank Y. Duncan of the Blairsville community was returning home from Europe to his wife, Ruth and three year old son, Frank, Jr. Captain Duncan had boarded the USS Antioch Victory at Le Havre, France, bound for New York City and ultimately home in South Carolina. Following his Clemson graduation he was employed by the Department of the Interior in the Soil Erosion Service and after his return from the war with the rank of Major, he rejoined the service and became a leader in soil and water conservation in York County. Through his knowledge of conservation and agriculture he developed the family farm into a picturesque and productive locale to raise his family.

Like most ships during wartime, the Antioch Victory published a newsletter to entertain the crew. The Antioch News in its Sunday November 4th edition carried a number of lighthearted articles as well as a list of the benefits and requirements of the GI Bill.

Among the cheerful articles was one entitled "This was the home you left--Remember?" which is printed below. Few Baby Boomers will hardly get the gist of these reminiscences, but we "seniors" will recall and smile.

"Back in 1942 and 1943, President Roosevelt was still in the White House....Hitler was still going pretty strong...the Nazis were pushing forward and were hammering at Stalingrad...the invasion was then known as the "second front"...the best selling book was John Steinbeck's "The Moos is Down" and Amber, heroine of today's best seller, hadn't even gotten to bed with her first man....rationing was placed on gasoline, meat, butter and almost everything else...the only thing we had plenty of was eggs....Casablanca was the scene of a Churchill-Roosevelt meeting...it was also the scene of the No. 1 movie, starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman, with Dooley Wilson given out with "As Time Goes By" Humphrey's present wife and latest screen sensation, Lauren Bacall, was then an obscure artist's model in N.Y....the movie colony started asking for birth certificates after Errol Flynn ran into trouble with a cuties under 17....Charlie Chaplin afforded some relief from the war news too....Joe DiMaggio headed the long list of baseball players drafted for service, and bush league ball became common in the Yankee Stadium and other supposedly major league arenas....your pals in the Pacific were fighting around Guadalcanal, Buna and Tarawa....Admiral "Bull" Halsey made his famous (and wrong) prediction that "the Japs won't last another year"...the gals started taking up riveting, welding and machine shop work...."juvenile delinquency" became a problem....the bobby-

soxer made her appearance, as did the art of swooning....a young Italian-American threatened the singing popularity of Bing Crosby, but “der Bingle” fought off the challenge of Frankie Sinatra....College football got messed up with Navy and Army ASTSs, ROTCs and what-have-yous that many traditional games went by the boards....West Point and Annapolis started getting good players....the N.Y. tabloids were having a field day with the Lonergan murder case....one G.I. Caused a sensation at home by going out with a British girl on night and fining out several months later that he’d managed quadruplets, he was never able to explain it satisfactorily to his Pittsburgh wife....Those are the things that were happening back home when you left....Remember?“