



# **I'll Be Home for the Christmas Rush: Letters From Europe 1944-45**

*Albert W. Hoffman*

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Merriam Press Military Monograph 83. Second Edition (October 2012). These letters are one man's messages to his wife and children while he was in Europe during 1944 and 1945. Although the letters to him did not survive, in a sense his letters constitute half of an ongoing conversation with his family, as he responds to news from home and comments on what he has heard from relatives and colleagues. Wartime censorship regulations kept him from writing about combat operations (he probably would not have wanted to, had he been able), or about day-to-day movements in the combat zone, but he gave thoughtful descriptions about the country where he was, how it was like or not like his home in Texas, and about the non-military personnel he encountered in England, France, and Germany. Albert loved his wife, his family, his home. He had a sense that he would be home for the 1945 Christmas rush at the Post Office—always the busiest time of the year, and must have had that sense from the date of his National Guard Division's call to active duty in 1940, as he indicated in a letter of May 9, 1945. He was right. He returned from Europe in September 1945, and was back "in harness" at the Post Office in time for the Christmas rush. Hoffman's letters from Europe to his wife and children in Texas, covers his service with the 29th Infantry Division in the ETO. Born in Brownwood, Texas, Hoffman enlisted in the Texas National Guard in 1926 and served with the 36th Division after mobilization until 1943, and again after the war in reorganization of the Texas National Guard, as a Lt. Col/Battalion Commander from 1946 until 1956, and as a Colonel on Division staff from 1956 until his retirement in 1961. 27 photos, 3 maps.

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