

Groman, Charlie

"Everyone Must Dig In," Writes Seabee in Letter from England

"You and everyone else at home can go to bed at night and thank the dear Lord that you are fortunate enough to be Americans, living in good old U.S.A."

That is what "Charlie" Groman, a member of the Seabees, wrote to John Griffith, president of the Bethlehem Tobacco Club. Before joining the Seabees, Groman was a paint foreman in the employ of the Bethlehem Steel Company. The letter was written from "Somewhere In England."

The letter continues: "You over there will never be convinced that you are gifted with the most wonderful country in the world until you have seen how other people live, and what they have gone through and are still going through."

"Try to picture our women taking a pick and shovel or a street cleaner's job, or chipping rust off the hulls of ships. You can't name a job from the highest to the lowest that is not done by women."

"The people at home gripe about being rationed. They should be glad to do that little towards the effort. Here, everything from shoes to nuts is rationed. Even the poor kiddies must have ration points for a few pieces of candy. When I look at the poor kids, what they have, I think of mine and all he has, I fully realize why I am over here."

"I dread to think of Bethlehem

ever going through what some of these places have suffered. If the people at home could see the destruction that war has already done, they would forget their selfish desires and double their efforts to bring this whole dirty mess to an end.

"I am not a flag waver, John. I never was, but I've seen the real thing, and it wasn't until then that I fully realized it must not last much longer. Everyone must dig in, not a few."

"Although over here only since September I feel like a veteran. The outfit I'm with is a hard working bunch. We move in on one port, do a job and waste no time in moving out to another task. The longest we were stationed in any port was six weeks. Our days are long and at times tiresome. But no complaints. We all know there is a job to finish so we just plug on. We have a seven-day week and not an eight-hour day."

"Our outfit up to now has made

quite a name for itself, and I think I can truthfully say that every man in it, is mighty proud of it. I'm damn proud to be a part of it."

January 19, 1944