

Gutfreund, Irving

Bethlehem Soldier Searches For Mother, Sister, Brothers At Nazi Horror Prison Camp

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A Bethlehem G.I., with the First Army when it entered Germany, is still hopeful for the safety of the family he failed to find when his unit reached Buchenwald, the German horror camp, where his kin were known to have been imprisoned because they were Jews.

The life of Pfc. Irving Gutfreund, 308 East Broad Street, has been dramatic to the nth degree since his birth in Hamburg, Germany. One of 11 children, he lived a normal life until Hitler's rise to power and his fanatical purge of the Aryans in the 1930's. When terrorization of the Jews became so intense in 1939, the Gutfreunds applied for passage to the United States, along with millions of others who were looking to the States as their last means of escape. Pfc. Gutfreund's passport was approved and one of his sisters when their ship's quota had been reached, leaving behind his mother, a sister and eight brothers.

Pfc. Irving Gutfreund enlisted in U. S. Army March 1, 1941, and after completing his training at Aberdeen, Md.; Camp Pickett, Va. and Fort Devons, Mass, he left for overseas duty with the 512th Ordnance Company in January, 1944. While acting as a German-English interpreter in the occupied countries, he was informed by his wife, that his family had been missing since 1940 according to information received through the Red Cross. Later she was informed that they were interned in the Ghetto, Cracow, Poland, before being sent to Buchenwald.

When the First Army reached the horror camp, Gutfreund was given a pass to look for his missing brothers, and found only one of them and a cousin, both badly in need of medical attention.

Mrs. Gutfreund, the former Beatrice Laster, received many letters from her husband since, telling of the terrible scenes in the prison camp. She is a teacher at Wilson School, Bethlehem Township.

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