

Papowitz, John

Local G-I Back From War With Dutch Girl As Bride

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The romance of a comely Dutch lassie from the land of tulips and an American soldier which culminated in a simple but impressive wedding ceremony in Maastricht, Holland, April 14, 1945, brought joy to the household of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Rice, 1435 Orchard St., Bethlehem.

Mrs. Rice's brother, John Papowitz, met his bride, the former Maria VanNunspeet, in New York City, July 8, when the SS. Brazil docked in New York harbor with 481 G.I. brides on deck. Eight brides were from Holland, several from Russia and Italy and the majority from France. Only 12 children were aboard.

The Rice's are very much impressed with their new sister-in-law who speaks a bit of English. She is the daughter of a wood carver and one of a family of five girls and five boys. She delights in telling how she met her American husband through one of her brothers in the Netherlands Army who invited Corporal Papowitz to their home. Corporal Papowitz enjoyed the hospitality of the VanNunspeet's and then fell in love with Maria.

The couple rode to the St. Lambertus Catholic Church, Maastricht, in a horse and buggy on the eventful day of April 14, 1945, and the bridegroom has the honor of being the first American soldier to take the marriage vows in that church. Friends of the family of the VanNunspeet's pooled their ration points that day so that there might be meat on the table for the wedding dinner.

In speaking of the English language, the bride said she learned most of her English from her husband and in return taught him the Netherlands language. Some of her



MR AND MRS. JOHN PAPOWITZ

friends went to English schools, and would meet at one or the others' homes to improve their English. She said, "These were friendly gatherings and we had much fun."

It was hard to leave her devoted family in Holland, she said. However, she wants to leave the horrors of the war in the past and start life anew in a great country with her American husband and his hospitable family.

Corp. Papowitz, a member of the 288th Signal Corps, served with the Third and Ninth Armies under the late General George Patton and General Courtney Hodges for three and a half years. He will leave Bethlehem shortly with his bride for New York City where he will be affiliated with the Chaspec Company as an embosser.

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