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In Their Own Words

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Local historian, teacher, and band director Ed Pierce wrote this passage as part of his program entitled, "Music, A Mirror to Our Past."

I'll Be Home for Christmas

By 1942, with the Second World War raging, more than one million Americans were serving overseas in 65 parts of the world. It was with those men and women and their families in mind that two talented New Yorkers, lyricist Kim Gannon and composer Walter Kent, went to work on a new Christmas song.

"I'll be home for Christmas, there the love light gleams. I'll be home for Christmas if only in my dreams."

When recorded by Bing Crosby in 1943 it became the most popular holiday song of the time, more even than "White Christmas."

Music that inspired our young Waukesha County men to answer the call sometimes had tragic consequences. The local paper, the Eagle Quill often published the letters of our local boys.

"Corporal Francis Splechter writes:

Dear Dad, Thanks for taking care of my insurance and bees for me. I haven't forgotten you. I will never do that. Please don't worry about me, Dad. I'll take care of myself and will write as often as I can. I hope we can settle this war once and for all, and settle it fast, maybe by next spring it will be over. Old Hitler is feeling the effects of our planes and men right now and he is going to see a lot more of them before it is over. Well Dad, I won't be able to see you for a while, remember I am always thinking of you, and I'll be back, don't worry.

May God bless and keep you always,

Love, Francis"



The Quill later published: "With deep regret we announce the following:

Corporal Francis Splechter was remembered in a memorial Mass at St. Theresa's Church on Friday. He died while his plane was on a bombing run over Germany on October 17th, 1944."

Pearl Harbor, Normandy, Guadalcanal and Bastogne may have been in distant lands, but the people who made the victory possible came from all across the great plains of this nation. This included those from Eagle, Wisconsin. Spare your journey to Arlington. The names of our sons and daughters can be found on the grounds of the Eagle Historical Society. It is a memorial to their sacrifice.

