

# Mr Norman Webb, The Champion of the Bricks

## Webb's Archive – Digitised Files

The significance of the soldiers' inscriptions was first realised by local resident Mr Norman G Webb, a lithographic corrector working for the Government, who passed by on his way to work every day. In May 1973, a row of terraced houses further up Western Esplanade, on the opposite side to the Wall, were marked for demolition. Mr Webb wrote to the City of Southampton Museums Service and highlighted the historical importance of the bricks. At the same time, he wrote to American newspapers in an attempt to trace the men or their relatives. It is not certain how many names Mr Webb identified, but his file contains a list of addresses for thirteen men that he wrote to. Five of the men replied back – Misters Moore, Breech, Wells, Groth and Harvey. By July he had secured agreement with the City Council that the best-carved bricks would be preserved. By September 1973, the site had been cleared and was being dug by archaeological students. Construction of the new residential development did not begin until January 1981.



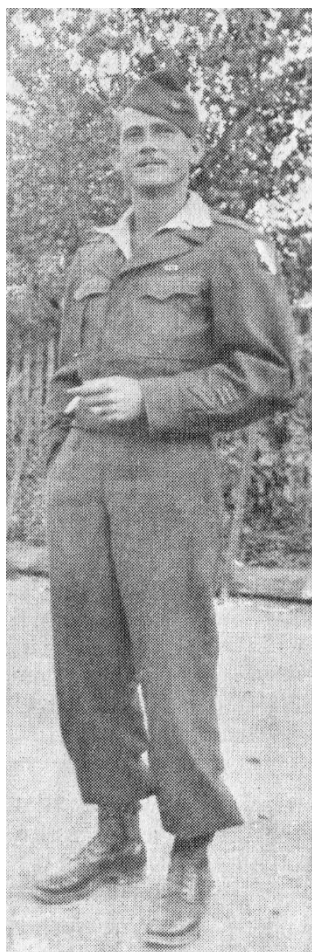
*Left – Forest View, opposite the wall, which remains relatively unchanged today. Right – These houses were demolished and replaced by flats. The arrow marks the position of the bricks recorded by Mr Webb.*



*The house bricks in situ. Photography by Cyril Foster.*

Three American newspapers took up the individual stories of Wells, Harvey and Groth. When interviewed they were asked what they remembered about carving their inscriptions:

Wells laughingly admits scratching his name and Cleveland Miss in walls and bricks all over England, France and Germany during his service as a line sergeant during the war. "We did that for (soldiers) coming behind us. A lot of times when we would be behind (other outfits) we would see the same thing – names and towns inscribed in the wall" (The Bolivar Commercial).



*Left – Photograph of Walter Wells, 1945, and his brick.*





"While waiting for the ship to leave a group of young soldiers passed their time away by sightseeing around the city. One of these young soldiers was Wayne Harvey. On one of these walks some of the soldiers got the idea of writing their names and addresses in the crumbly old bricks of one of the houses" (Ravenna News July 19<sup>th</sup> 1973).



*Above: Wayne Harvey, California. 11th Armoured Division, and his inscribed brick.*



Groth told the Times Democrat reporter "This is really unbelievable that someone would find my name there after all these years". Above: Wayne Harvey, California. 11th Armoured Division, and his inscribed brick.

*Ralph LeRoy Groth 1915-2013 Davenport Iowa. 88th Engineers Heavy Pontoon Battalion 3<sup>rd</sup> Army, and his inscribed brick.*



Sadly, the whereabouts of Wells, Harvey and Groth's bricks is currently unknown<sup>[JS1]</sup><sup>[HW2]</sup>. Of the thirteen men named in Mr Webb's files, six of their bricks were saved: Breech, Christensen, Draper, Helmling, Moore and Greenwald. The latter is in the care of Southampton Museums and the rest were built into the small wall behind the main section. The stories of these men can be found in this viewer. <sup>[JS3]</sup>

Cliff Moore sent Mr Webb a roster of veterans belonging to his unit, the 799<sup>th</sup> Ordnance Company, dated 1971. On the roster were five other names found on the houses: John Helmling (Ohio), Daw Draper (Tennessee), Jules Dransert, Frank Sabo and Robert Breech (all Pennsylvania). Several of these bricks are dated 4 November 1944; this ties in with records of the 99<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division sailing from Southampton. Mr Moore and his wife continued to correspond with Mr and Mrs Webb up to and after Mr Webb's death in April 1982.

Mr Webb's files are kept in the Southampton City Heritage Services archive, were digitised as part of this project, and are illustrated below grouped by soldiers and subject. Street names and zip/postal codes have been redacted to preserve privacy. In cases where replies to letters might have been expected, none were discovered within the archive. The archive mentions in several letters about pictures/photographs/slides but only those found in the archive are included below.

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**CITY OF SOUTHAMPTON**

**Museums Department**

P. S. PEBERDY, FMA, *Curator*

**Tower House, Town Quay, Southampton SO1 1LX Tel 20007**

MY REF    PSP/BLS

YOUR REF

N. G. Webb, Esq.,

Totton,  
SOUTHAMPTON.

21st May, 1973.

Dear Mr. Webb,

I am most obliged for your kind letter notifying me of the inscriptions made in the bricks of houses fronting the Western Esplanade by American troops during the Second World War. I did not know of this; neither did any of my staff, and I thank you for bringing it to my attention. We shall certainly take facsimiles of the inscriptions recorded and secure some of the possibly more interesting bricks when the houses are in process of demolition.

Again many thanks for your kind interest and most useful suggestions.

Yours sincerely,

*Philip Peberdy*

Curator.



Your ref:- PSB/BLS.

Totton,  
Southampton,  
SO4 4DX.

P. S. Peberdy Esq., FMA.,  
Curator,  
Museums Dept.,  
Southampton.

Dear Mr. Peberdy,

Further to our earlier correspondence concerning inscribed bricks in houses in Western Esplanade; you may be interested to know that I continue to receive letters from the U.S. some from newspapers, and some from the men themselves. Two newspapers are to feature the bricks in articles, and the letters from the men express great pleasure and "honour" that 'their' brick may be put into a museum!

Some of the letters are quite touching especially one from a lady who did the writing despite the fact that her husband is alive and well.

One correspondent has sent me a list of known survivors of the 799th Ordinance Corps who meet every year to exchange reminiscences. Six of the names on the bricks appear on this list.

My initial enquiries, (from which I did not expect such a response), have now landed me with quite a lot of writing, photography, and expense; but never mind it seems to have given considerable pleasure in the U.S.!

Yours sincerely,

N. G. Webb.





**CITY OF SOUTHAMPTON**

**Museums Department**

P. S. PEBERDY, FMA, *Curator*

**Tower House, Town Quay, Southampton SO1 1LX Tel 20007**

MY REF      PSP/BLS

YOUR REF

N. G. Webb, Esq.,

Totton,  
SOUTHAMPTON. SO4 4DX.

22nd June, 1973.

Dear Mr. Webb,

Thank you for your letter concerning the inscribed bricks. It must be most gratifying to receive such a response to your original discovery. I have passed on your letter to the City Museums' Keeper of Archaeology, Mr. R. G. Thomson, who will be keeping a "watching brief" on the bricks to ensure their recovery during the period of demolition.

Again thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

*Philip Peberdy*

Curator.



# Resumé of Mr Webb's Summary Correspondence

Schedule summarising Mr Webb's correspondence with America, undated but post late July 1973

FIRST WRITE		SUBJECT	FIRST REPLY
20.5.73	*	R. D. BREECH CATAWISSA PENNA.	11.6.73
		J. H. CHRISTENSEN ALDEN MINN	
25.5.73	†	J. J. DRANSART JENNETTE PA. 11.4.44	
20.5.73	*	DOW DRAPER HAYDENBURG TENN.	
20.5.73	*	RALPH L. GROTH DAVENPORT IOWA	30.5.73
21.5.73	*	WAYNE HARVEY VAN NUYS CALIF	15.6.73
21.5.73	*	JOHN HELMLING ELYRIA OHIO 11.4.44	
25.5.73	†	J. W. METZ So. BEND INDIANA 11.4.44	4.6.73 DREW BLANK
25.5.73	†	F. SABO WEBSTER PA 11.4.44	
26.5.73	†	W. L. WELLS CLEVELAND MISS. 1944	11.6.73
21.5.73	*	C. J. MOORE BRUCE WISCONSIN	1.6.73
		JOHN S. LUDDY, HATBORO, PENNA. NOV 4 <sup>th</sup> , 1944	
22.7.73		SIDNEY GREENWALD BRONX NEW YORK	
* Since writing have heard from Poberdy. † Was able to say bricks <u>would</u> be preserved.			



First Wrote	Subject	First reply
20.05.73	* R.D. Breech Catawissa Penina.	11.06.73
	J.H. Christensn Alden Minn	
25.05.73	† J.J. Dransart Jennette PA. 11.4.44	
20.05.73	* Dow Draper Haydenburg Tenn.	
20.05.73	* Ralph L. Groth Davenport Iowa	30.05.73
21.05.73	* Wayne Harvey Van Nuys Calif	15.06.73
21.05.73	* John Helming Elviria Ohio 11.4.44	
25.05.73	† J.W. Metz SO. Bend Indiana 11.4.44	4.06.73 Drew Blank
25.05.73	† F. Sabo Webster PA 11.4.44	
26.05.73	† W.L. Wells Cleveland Miss. 1944	11.06.73
21.05.73	* C.J. Moore Bruce Wisconsin	1.06.73
	John S. Luddy, Hatboro, Penna, Nov 4 <sup>th</sup> , 1944	
22.07.73	Sidney Greenwald [REDACTED] Bronx New York	
	* Since writing have heard from Peberdy. † Was able to say bricks <u>would</u> be preserved.	

The following list was received by Mr Webb from Clifford Moore,  
who enclosed it in his letter dated 11 June 1973 to Mr Webb.

*this address sheet was made in 1971*

NAMES & KNOWN ADDRESSES OF VETERANS OF 799th ORDINANCE COMPANY

1. Carol O. Anderson, Brainard, Minnesota
2. Chester Andrews, Cicero, Illinois
3. Max Baldishwiler, Okmulgee, Oklahoma
4. Anthony Barcelona, Chalmette, La.
5. Joseph M. Barg, Elkins Park, Pa.
6. Robert M. Barnwell, Lincoln Park, Mich.
7. Ted Biesterveld, Menominee, Wisconsin
8. Herman Benischek, Oxford Junction, Iowa
9. Frank Boucher, Sault St. Marie, Michigan
10. Chas. F. Bradford, Lima, Ohio
11. Robert D. Breech, Catawissa, Pa.
12. Donald Brownell, Portland, Oregon
13. Robert Bushman, Elmhurst, Illinois
14. Louie Callier, Pinedale, Wyoming
15. Dominic Calvaruso, Akron, Ohio
16. Edwin E. Carol, Natchez, Mississippi
17. Wendell Carr, Massena, New York
18. Cecil Clemons, Knoxville, Tennessee
19. Iral Cook, Cumberland, Wisconsin
20. Robert D. Collins, Falls Creek, Pa.
21. George W. Cox, Indianapolis, Indiana
22. Frank Cukale, Fort Worth, Texas
23. Leo L. Currin, Dayton Plains, Michigan
24. Wilbur Danielson, Lancaster, Pa.
25. Will H. Darrah, Burlington, North Carolina
26. George Davis, Fredonia, Kansas
27. Wallace C. Dawson, Long Beach, California
28. Robert H. Dewey, Lansdowne, Pa.
29. James Dole, Chetek, Wisconsin
30. Charles P. Dorian, Hilliard, Ohio
31. Eugene Doud, Black River Falls, Wisconsin
32. Jules Dransert, Jeanette, Pa.
33. Daw Drayper, Haydenburg, Tennessee
34. Paul Ecton, San Jose, California
35. Walter Emigh, Emporia, Pa.
36. Roger K. Erickson, Superior, Wisconsin
37. Harry Evans, Biloxie, Mississippi
38. Isaac Evans, Lakewood, Illinois
39. Eugene Freyer, Lakewood, Lima, Ohio
40. Joseph Fullen, Cleveland, Ohio
41. Joseph Ging, Columbus, Ohio
42. Albert L. Gojmerac, Rib Lake, Wisconsin
43. Arthur Graham, Harmony, Pa.
44. Lester Graynolds, Bristol, West Virginia
45. Robert H. Haegerty, Monett, Missouri
46. Henry M. Hardebeck, Kalamazoo, Michigan
47. Edward J. Harkey, North Carolina
48. Lawson D. Hedrick, Ottawa, Illinois
49. John Helmling, Elyria, Ohio
50. Nick Helt, Oneida, New York
51. Earl R. Hickman, North Little Rock, Arkansas
52. Sylvester Hochulski, Buffalo, New York
53. Floyd W. Hoeg, Waterloo, Iowa
54. Dowell Howard, Cincinnati, Ohio
55. Robert B. Howard Jr., Newark, Delaware
56. Richard E. Hutchings, Oak Park, Illinois



57. Albin L. Jackomin,	Euclid, Ohio
58. Claude D. Jennings,	New Orleans, Louisiana
59. Thomas C. Johnson,	Columbus, Ohio
60. Marshall R. Jones,	Attica, Indiana
61. William T. Jones,	Waterloo, Iowa
62. Tom Kimball,	Black River Falls, Wisconsin
63. Paul H. Klatt,	Waterport, New York
64. Raymond G. Knudsen,	St. Paul, Minnesota
65. Joe J. Kohl,	Hollywood, Florida
66. Leo Koppes,	Onslow, Iowa
67. Henry J. Kotnik,	Cleveland, Ohio
68. Willard Liedtke, Benedict,	Nebraska
69. Frank H. Liscauskis,	Guyaux, Pa.
70. Larry Lubben,	Cedar Rapids, Iowa
71. Robert McDonald,	Rochester, New York
72. James L. McIntosh,	Calhoun, Louisiana
73. Nevelle E. McKinney,	Dallas, Texas
74. Earl D. Markwell Jr.	N. Delaware Place, Tulsa, Oklahoma
75. Frank T. Marshall,	Janesville, Wisconsin
76. Jimmie Minyard,	Odessa, Texas
77. Cliff J. Moore,	Bruce, Wisconsin
78. Clifford N. Nelson,	Toronto, South Dakota
79. John W. Nielson,	Berlin, Conn.
80. George O. Nixdorf,	Granite City, Illinois
81. Reuben Oehldrich,	Sheboygan, Wisconsin
82. Elmer H. Olson,	Chicago, Illinois
83. John E. Pajkos,	Chicago, Illinois
84. Charles G. Ralston,	Trenton, Missouri
85. Frank Reddington,	Los Angeles, California
86. Rodolphus W. Reeves,	Fitzgerald, Georgia
87. Dave Revier,	Glencoe, Minnesota
88. C. Dean Roley, Stewardson,	Illinois
89. Robert K. Roup,	Alliance, Ohio
90. Ernest N. Saad,	Los Angeles, California
91. Frank Sabo,	Elizabeth, Pa.
92. Isaac T. Seymour,	Goldsboro, North Carolina
93. Bertrum S. Shelvik,	Madison, Wisconsin
94. Jack E. Simmons,	Costa Mesa, California
95. Horace A. Smith,	Yardley, Pa.
96. James V. Smith,	Fenton, Missouri
97. William R. Southerland Jr.	Henderson, North Carolina
98. Charles H. Stein,	Shelbyville, Indiana
99. Gwyn J. Stimson,	Lenoir, North Carolina
100. Andrew Swayne,	DuQuoin, Illinois
101. James A. Tanner,	Baltimore, Maryland
102. Terry W. Taylor,	Clinton, Illinois
103. Thomas J. Trippe,	Gulport, Mississippi
104. Herman Viegen,	Minnesota
105. Joseph J. Weglarz,	Chicago, Illinois
106. Robert A. Wickesser,	Minneapolis, Minnesota
107. John H. Zachara,	Kenmore, New York



Correspondence between Mr Webb and Mr Ralph Groth including *The Times Democrat*.

Schedule by Webb of his correspondence concerning Ralph Groth

DATE	RALPH L. GROTH, DAVENPORT, IOWA.
20.5.73	Wrote to:- "The Local Newspaper," Davenport, Iowa
30.5.73	Reply from "The Times Democrat."
30.5.73	Replied sending more details as requested; also took pictures of brick and houses with "Old Walls." Included copy of Peberdy's letter.
7.6.73	Sent pictures of brick and house. (Copy of letter filed)
9.7.73	Received envelope post marked June 28 <sup>th</sup> from "Times Democrat", cut open and empty. Returned envelope to Postman for investigation. Cabled "Times Democrat" advising them of this. Received further letter 2nd Post.
" " "	Wrote answering above. (Copy filed under).

Schedule by Webb of his correspondence concerning Groth

Date	Ralph L. Groth, Davenport Iowa
20.05.73	Wrote to: - "The Local Newspaper", Davenport, Iowa.
30.05.73	Reply from "The Times Democrat"
30.05.73	Replied sending more details as requested.; also, took pictures of brick and houses with "Old Walls". Include copy of Peberdy's letter
7.06.73	Sent pictures of brick and house (copy of letter filed)
9.07.73	Received envelope post marked June 28 <sup>th</sup> from "Times Democrat", cut open and empty. Returned envelope to postman for investigation. Cabled "Times Democrat" advising them of this. Received further letter 2 <sup>nd</sup> post.
9.07.73	Wrote answering above (copy filed under)





May 25, 1973

Mr. N.G. Webb,

Totton,  
Southampton, Hants,  
England:

Dear Mr. Webb:

Your letter arrived at my desk today concerning the brick bearing the name of Ralph L. Groth. (I was amazed at the speed at which it arrived, inasmuch as it was written just a few days ago).

I am fascinated by the brick, and its story. Yes, there is a Ralph L. Groth residing in Davenport, according to our city directory, and I am trying to contact him as of this moment.

Meanwhile, I would like to take you up on your offer of a photograph. Could you take a closeup of the brick, bearing Mr. Groth's name? Also, could you shoot an overall of the building in which it is located?

I would also appreciate any more data, details, etc. which you might be able to provide on the building, and whether or not it is going to be wrecked.

All of this sounds like it will make an excellent feature story for our newspaper.

Many thanks,

Wm. Wundram,  
associate editor.



June 7th, 1973.

Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants,  
England.

Dear Mr. <sup>u</sup>W~~ndra~~m,

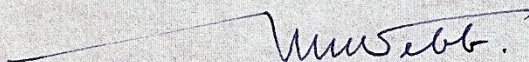
Further to my letter of May 30th which gave more details about Southampton and the house upon which Mr. Groth carved his name, please find enclosed two transparencies showing the brick and the house in question.

I hope that the picture of the brick will have sufficient contrast to enable your photographic department to make a good enough mono print for the block makers to make a printable stereo.

If you will look at the right hand side of the picture showing the house ——— between the two ground floor windows and just below the main cross glazing bar is the brick upon which Ralph L. Groth's name appears. ( you might like to print an arrow to indicate same).

Hope you have indeed tracked down the correct  
Ralph L. Groth?

Yours sincerely,



N. G. Webb.





July 2, 1973.

Mr. N. G. Webb,

Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants, England.

Dear Mr. Webb:

Thank you so much for sending us the transparencies of illustrious brick containing the name of Mr. Ralph L. Groth of Davenport. Your help in putting this story together is very much appreciated.

The story appeared as a full page feature in one of our recent editions. I am sending you several copies by special delivery. We will also be sending you a small gift of appreciation for your efforts.

Thank you again so very much. Should you ever be in our part of the world, please stop for a visit and have some good Iowa corn on the cob, some homemade vanilla ice cream, and some good old fashioned Iowa pork chops.

Again our thanks.

Sincerely,

William Wundram  
Associate Editor

WW:kmn



July 9th, 1973.

Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants,  
England.

Mr. W. Wundram,  
Associate Editor,  
"The Times Democrat,"  
Davenport,  
Iowa.

Dear Mr. Wundram,

Very pleased to have your letter of July 2nd, but before answering it I must give you my end of a rather mysterious series of events regarding your letters!

Today, there came by first post an envelope from yourself postmarked June 28th which had been returned to you for extra postage due. This was paid and the envelope posted on the same day, June 28th. It was delivered here deliberately opened with a sharp knife and was empty. I advised the Post Office at once and they are investigating. Sent you a cable to let you know.

By second post came another envelope again post marked June 28th but with your letter inside dated July 2nd! What is missing from the first envelope I do not know, neither can I guess how a letter written in July could be posted four days earlier in June!

However; I am delighted to learn that you found the information in my letter of use to enable you to write a feature on Mr. Groth's Brick, and I thank you and shall look forward to receiving the copies of the Paper. It is most kind of you to send a gift as well ——— I just hope it was not in the envelope which arrived empty!

Thank you also for your kind invitation should I ever find myself in Davenport and may I say that should anyone of your staff, or yourself, or Mr. Groth ever be in Southampton, just phone [redacted] and my wife and I will do our best to meet



you and show you a round Southampton.

A footnote to our story..... since writing to you last the wreckers have indeed started to pull down the houses mentioned but I have checked with the man in charge there and he was aware that these bricks are to be preserved. I would think that Mr. Groth's brick stands a good chance of preservation because it is one of the best carved ones there.

By the way, I have not heard from Mr. Groth. If he cares to write to me I will send him some more photographs, this time colour prints.

Again thanking you very much indeed,  
Sincerely,

N. G. Webb.



WESTERN UNION  
TELEGRAM

WESTERN UNION  
TELEGRAM

IPMDRMA DVP

1-002830C190 07/09/73

ICS IPMMMB MPS

02075 (1-031829G190 0330) ICS IPMIIHA IISS FM RCA 09 0329

PMS

WUE3684 UYS409 BSC531 F37 URUX HL GBB 020 BRISTOL TF DE TOTTON 20  
9 0858

LT WUNDRAN TIMES DEMOCRAT

DAVENPORT IA

YOURS OF JUNE 28 RECEIVED CUT OPEN AND EMPTY STOP POST OFFICE

INVESTIGATING

WEBB SOUTHAMPTON

0849 EST

IPMDRMA DVP





July 10, 1973.

Mr. N. G. Webb,

Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants, England.

Dear Mr. Webb:

Something of a mystery has developed concerning our mailing of copies of the newspapers and a small gift to you as promised in my letter of July 2.

Apparently the package was damaged or broken in some manner. I am enclosing a copy of the telegram which I received today concerning the package.

Keep the faith, for I will make up another bundle of newspapers and another little gift.

Perhaps we will have better luck this time.

Sincerely,

William Wundram  
Associate Editor

WW:kmn  
Enc.



August 4th, 1973.

Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants,  
England.

Mr. Wm. Wundram,  
Associate Editor,  
The Times Democrat,  
Davenport,  
Iowa.

Dear Mr. Wundram,

Many thanks for yours of the 10th July received today. You should by now also have my letter which followed cable giving such detail as I could concerning the mystery of the empty envelope.

Incidentally; yours of the 9th July had also been opened with a sharp knife as had the empty envelope dated 28th June, but this time it had been re-sealed with sticky tape and the contents of letter and a copy of my cable, were intact.

Very many thanks for posting papers ect a gain and I shall look forward to receiving them. As you say; better luck this time!

If I may trouble you in an effort to unravel this business of opened envelopes ——— I should be grateful if you would advise me if the latest envelope was in fact opened in your office when it was returned to you by the U.S. Post Office for extra postage? If it was not then this happened in tansit and I will do my best to track down the culprit.

Sincerely,

N. G. Webb.





September 18, 1973.

N. G. Webb,  
Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants, England.

Dear Mr. Webb:

Well, here we go again.

I have had a little delay in reordering your promised "gift"—anyway here it is, and I am attaching the letter directly to the box in the hope that it will arrive safely in England.

I thought you might appreciate this book because it is one of my favorites. It very vividly and accurately tells about the area in which I live.

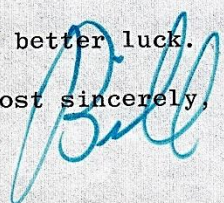
The particular chapter "A Land Of Plowshares, Wine, Cheese and Honey," beginning on page 64, tells about the immediate section of the Mississippi River where Davenport is located.

I have also sent a copy of the paper which I long ago promised, and which disappeared in the mails.

This, hopefully, will be coming to you under separate cover.

Perhaps this time we will have better luck.

Most sincerely,

  
William Wundram  
Associate Editor

WW:kmn



September 22nd, 1973.

Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants,  
England.

Wm. Wundram Esq.,  
The Times Democrat,  
P.O. Box 3828,  
Davenport,  
Iowa.

Dear Mr. Wundram,

Very pleased indeed to have your kind letter telling me about the book you have sent me. I shall look forward keenly to receiving it and am sure it will prove most interesting.

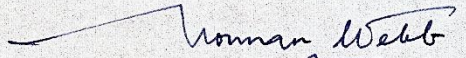
Incidentally, I am a member of the National Geographic Society and have taken the the N.G. Magazine for twenty-five years. This splendid publication takes me round the World and gives one a lively picture of the geography, wildlife and industry of the United States.

The book you have sent will add further to that knowledge and interest.

You say inter alia that you were attaching your letter directly to the box containing the book but it came by air mail in it's own envelope without sign that it had ever been stuck to anything. I would imagine here that the U.S. Post Office would not allow a letter and parcel to be posted in that way and no doubt the box is on it's way by sea.

Again thanking you very much indeed.

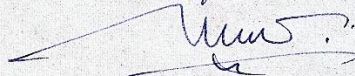
Very sincerely,



N. G. Webb.

P.T.O.

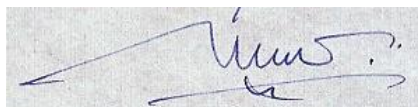
P.S. The 'old' houses have now gone and students digging gently with trowel and spoon under the direction of our City Archeologist are slowly turning up the past; first the 19th and now the 18th and 17th Centuries. They will probably reach back to Norman times before Summer gleams it's last





**P.S to Webb letter 22 September 1973 to Wundram**

P.S. The 'old' houses have now gone and students digging gently with trowel and spoon under the direction of our City Archaeologist are slowly turning up the past; first the 19<sup>th</sup> and now the 18<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. They will probably reach back to Norman times before Summer gleams it's last.



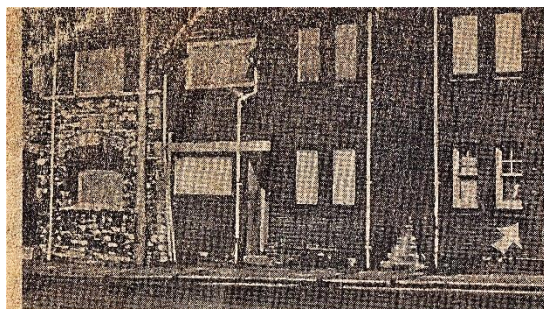
(Webb signature)

**Copies of *The Times Democrat* sent by the newspaper to Mr Webb  
with their letter dated 18 September 1973**



**Continued overleaf**





An arrow shows the location of the brick in the old building. These photos were taken for the Times-Democrat by N. G. Webb, of Southampton, England.

By Jim Arpy

**R**alph L. Groth, 2720 Pacific St., Davenport, never dreamed he was making history 29 years ago when he chiseled his name and home town on a brick in an old house in Southampton, England.

He was a bored GI in the spring of 1944, waiting to take part in the invasion of Europe, and the incident had long been forgotten until N. G. Webb, a resident of Southampton, jogged his memory in an unusual way.

Webb noted Groth's name, still quite visible in the brick, and wrote to the Times-Democrat to ask if it were possible the man who had carved it was still in Davenport.

GROTH IS, and says he vaguely remembers the carving incident. He was in the Army with the 28th Engineers,

"We were stationed close to Birmingham at the time. I'd never even thought about leaving my name on that brick in England until I heard that Mr. Webb had photographed it and contacted the Times-Democrat. I was dumbfounded. It was so many years ago that it all happened," Groth said.

He had been employed by the Firestone Tire and Rubber Co. in Davenport prior to his Army service and returned to a job with that company after the war, accumulating 33 years of service.

**WHEN WEBB** learned that the old home containing the brick had been declared substandard and was going to be razed, he initiated a campaign to have those engraved with the names of American servicemen preserved in his town's Tudor House Museum.

P. S. Peberdy, curator of the museum, wrote Webb that he and his staff had been unaware of the engraved bricks, but would make facsimiles of all the signatures and secure some of the bricks for the museum when the home is razed.

his stood the wearing effect of 28 years' weather very well," Webb wrote in a subsequent letter.

**NEAR THE HOUSE** is a commemorative plaque attached to Southampton's Mayflower Memorial, noting the fact that many thousands of American soldiers passed through the city on their way to the liberation of Europe.

The old house stands only a few yards from the West Gate, the opening in the 14th century walls through which the Pilgrims passed on their way to the New World. The Mayflower sailed from a spot about 200 yards from where Groth carved his name, Webb noted.

Groth served three-and-a-half years in the Army, a year and a half of that time overseas. Though he did not take part in the main invasion, he was in Europe a month later and often came under heavy fire as his battalion erected pontoon bridges for the advancing troops.

"This is really unbelievable that someone would find my name there after all these years," Groth said.

The narrative is expanded below to improve legibility.

By Jim Arpy

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**SOUTH BEND TRIBUNE**

SOUTH BEND, INDIANA 46626

May 30th, 1973

Mr. N. G. Webb

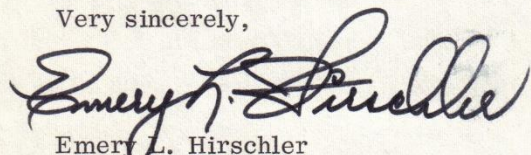
Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants,  
England

Dear Mr. Webb:

We are sorry, but we are unable to locate a J. J. Metz or any member of his family. We must assume the family no longer resides in the South Bend area.

Thank you for writing The South Bend Tribune. We are just sorry we couldn't have been more help.

Very sincerely,



Emery L. Hirschler  
Ass't Public Relations Dir.

ELH:ls



Catawissa, Pennsylvania

June 3, 1973

Dear Mr. Webb,

Several days ago my husband and I were very much surprised to get a phone call from Mr. Brown telling us about your letter. I might add, Mr. Brown edits the news for our small town, and is also a school teacher, and an acquaintance.

In reply to your letter, maybe you would like to know something about Mr. Breech, my husband. He served as a Sgt. in the 799<sup>th</sup> Ordnance Co. of the 99th. Infantry Division during World War II and is very much alive today. He was in Southampton about Oct. 1944, for several weeks, then went to France, Belgium, Battle of the Bulge, Germany, Switzerland. He was waiting to be shipped out, as he



remembers it, and just casually  
Carved his name there on the  
building. He remembers his Grandmother  
telling him his ancestors came from  
Scotland. It also occurred to him,  
maybe someone would know of his  
ancestors bearing the "Breech" name.  
After twenty-nine years, it was  
such a surprise to find out, that  
anyone would even notice a soldier's  
name on a building so very far from home.  
My husband and I are very happily  
married, have four wonderful  
Children, 3 boys and 1 girl, and 3  
darling grandchildren, 2 boys, 1 girl.  
God has been very good to us.

My husband worked in a  
machine shop for 38 years, and  
hauls coal to supplement our  
income. He works very hard, and  
long hours. We are hoping one of these  
days we can take a vacation.  
We planned to go last year, but



had a very bad flood in our town,  
and many towns in Pennsylvania.

We live along a creek and had  
to evacuate for 8 or 9 days. It was the  
worst flood on record since 100 years  
ago. Many people lost everything.

We have a small piece of land, where we  
raise most of our own vegetables,  
and can, and freeze them. I  
guess maybe we think of ourselves as  
the typical American family.

Our family would feel very  
honored, if you would be so kind,  
as to send us one of the  
photographs you mentioned in  
your letter to Mr. Brown.

Very Sincerely,  
Mrs. Robert B. Bredt.

P.S. Please excuse my writing. I'm afraid my  
penmanship is very poor.



**Letter 3 June 1973 Breech to Webb**

Catawissa, Pennsylvania

June 3, 1973

Dear Mr. Webb,

Several days ago, my husband and I were very much surprised to get a phone call from Mr. Brown telling us about your letter. I might add, Mr Brown edits the news for our small town, and is also a school teacher, and an acquaintance.

In reply to your letter, maybe you would like to know something about Mr. Breech, my husband. He served as a sergeant in the 799<sup>th</sup> Ordnance Co. of the 99<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division during World War II and is very much alive today. He was in Southampton about October 1944, for several weeks then went to France, Belgium, Battle of the Bulge, Germany, Switzerland. He was waiting to be shipped out, as he remembers it, and just casually carved his name on the building. He remembers his grandmother telling him that his ancestors came from Scotland. It also occurred to him, maybe someone would know of his ancestors bearing the "Breech" name. After twenty-nine years, it was such a surprise to find out, that anyone would even notice a soldier's name on a building so very far from home. My husband and I are very happily married, have four wonderful children, 3 boys and 1 girl, and 3 darling grandchildren, 2 boys, 1 girl. God has been very good to us.

My husband worked in a machine shop for 38 years, and hauls coal to supplement our income. He works very hard, and long hours. We are hoping one of these days we can take a vacation.

We planned to go last year, but had a very bad flood in our town, and many towns in Pennsylvania.

We live along a creek and had to evacuate for 8 or 9 days. It was the worst flood on record since 100 years ago. Many people lost everything.

We have a small piece of land, where we raise most of our own vegetables, and can, and freeze them. I guess maybe we think of ourselves as the typical American family.

Our family would feel very honoured, if you would be so kind, as to send us one of the photographs you mentioned in your letter to Mr. Brown.

Very sincerely,

Mrs Robert Breech (signed)

P.S. Please excuse my writing, I'm afraid my penmanship is very poor.



June 12th, 1973.

Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants,  
England.

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Breech,

Delighted to have your most interesting letter and to learn that you and yours are still thriving in Catawissa.

To date I have had five replies to similar letters which have gone out in query all over the United States. Two letters, including your own have come directly from the person named upon one of the bricks, and two further letters have come from Newspapers who say that they have found the person I named to them. Only one replied saying that they had been unable to trace any family of the name mentioned. I include with this a list of those already enquired of, and it may well be that some of the names may 'ring a bell'.

Since writing to your paper I have been able to secure the preservation of some of these bricks and include for you a photostat copy of a letter from our museum curator.

Please accept the enclosed transparencies as a first instalment. I have taken some more scenes of Southampton that may recall memories and will send them on to you as soon as I can.

The picture of the brick itself is self explanatory but you may like to be reminded just where the brick is situated on the house front

If you will look at the two windows on the ground floor at the right hand side of the picture your brick is situated between these two windows, touching the right edge of the left-hand window of the pair, and five bricks above the window sill. Having said that I see now upon looking again at the slide that my directions are not quite accurate. The windows mentioned are to be seen between a long window on the extreme right and a few steps just to the left of the pair.

Glad to learn that though you had to evacuate your home during last year's floods, you were fortunate to escape damage yourselves. When you get these terrible floods in the States we see the pictures on our television news bulletins. You certainly do have some terrible disasters out there. Hurricanes, Whirlwinds, Floods. We are very lucky here in England for although we may have some flooding on a small scale the winds powerful enough to do extensive damage are unknown to us.

I had not heard of the name 'Breech' being Scottish. It is a rare name and there is not one to be seen in our telephone directory.

I'll write again and send you some more photographs and hope to make them colour prints next time.

Very Sincerely,

N. G. Webb.



July 29th. 1973.

Mr. N. G. Webb,

Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants,  
England.

Dear Mr. Breech,

Sorry to have kept you so long for the prints that I promised in my letter of June 12th. Various things have happened to prevent my sending before. I did not like the first prints that the printer sent me and had them done again; then I was in hospital for a few days followed by a couple of weeks sick leave from work. Anyway, here they are at last and the notes I have fixed to the backs should be self explanatory without my writing more details here.

Since writing to you last I have had another letter from Mr. Cliff J. Moore, Bruce, Wisconsin and he has sent me a list of members of the Veterans of 799th Ordinance Company, your name being number 11 on the list. I wonder if you will be going to the re-union this year in August?

I have photographs of six of the names on the list, but have heard nothing from the following..... Mr. J Dransert, Jeanette, Pa., Mr. Daw Drayper, Haydenburg, Tennessee; Mr. John Helmling, Elyria, (or Elvri Ohio, or Mr. Frank Sabo, Elizabeth, Pa.

Have you met any of these old comrades since the war? I should point out that my original letter were sent as was yours, addressed to "The Local Newspaper", and I did not know at that time the actual addresses of those named above.

There is another photograph of the rebuilt Above Bar Street Southampton, now partly closed to traffic and a pedestrian shopping precinct. Mysteriously this picture has "vanished" but rather than hold up sending the others any longer I will just send it on to you when I find it.

Every good wish to you and yours, and thank you for your help during the war.

Yours sincerely,

N. G. Webb.



Office Supplies ★  
Publishers ★  
Printers ★

CLEVELAND, MISSISSIPPI

*The*  
**BOLIVAR COMMERCIAL**

Clark Rumfelt  
News Director  
June 6, 1973

Mr. N.G. Webb

Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants, England

Dear Sir:

Thank you very much for your recent inquiry regarding the "carved" bricks you secured. I am happy to report that Mr. Walter L. Wells is in all probability the man who carved "W.L. Wells Cleveland Miss. 1944" into one of the bricks.

Mr. Wells is alive and employed in a local drugstore here in Cleveland. When I located him, he was delighted with the discovery, and indicated his intentions of writing you.

Mr. Wells said he had shipped out of Southampton several times as a soldier during World War Two.

The history behind the story is fascinating. I would like very much to do a feature story on the discovery and would like to obtain a picture of the brick (black and white) and as much information about it and yourself as possible. I will appreciate any help you can offer.

Thank you again for your consideration in this matter. I have given Mr. Wells your address.

Sincerely,

*Clark Rumfelt*

Clark Rumfelt

THE BOLIVAR COMMERCIAL



June 30th, 1973.

Mr. N. G. Webb,

Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants,  
England.

Mr. Clark Rumfelt,  
News Director,  
The Bolivar Commercial,  
Cleveland,  
Miss.

Dear Sir,

I write immediately the black and white prints you requested came to hand and I am sorry it could not be done before.

Southampton has had a stormy history. The Romans had a settlement here; Clausentum. The Saxons followed and a mile or two away, nearer to the present town built the settlements of Hamwich and Hamtun from which the name Suthamptune wa derived and first ~~a~~ appeared in a charter of King Edgar dated 962 A.D.

The Danes made many raids here begining in 837 and were beaten back by King Alfred, only to return in greater numbers. But it was here that the Saxon Council chose Canute as their King in 1017.

Only a few years later came another invasion, this time the Norman French under the Duke of Normandy who was looking for promotion and after defeating the Saxons at Hastings was able to claim his desire in the Crown of England. Swiftly settlements and towns were established and in Southampton two distinct communities were deliberately set up by William, a French and an English one; the exact number of persons in each community are recorded but I regret I cannot remember. These ~~to~~ quite different types of culture were centred upon two parallel streets, Rue Anglais whcih became in time English Street and then High Street which it remains today; and Rue Francaise which is French Street to this day.

At the top of Fr<sup>e</sup>nch Street is St. Michael's Square containing among other buildings St. Michael's Church built 1077 and the oldest building standing in Southampton, and Tudor House, a 16th Century dwelling wonderfully preserved and used now as one of the town's museums. For a space the Lord Chief Justice of England lived in the house.

Mediaeval Southampton was a walled and battlemented fortress and included in it's defences a castle and the massive Bargate, (the North Gate of the town), but a chain is as strong as it's weakest link and one Sunday morning in 1338 when the townsfolk were at church French raiders landed easily upon the beaches or "hards" at the bottom of English, Fr<sup>e</sup>nch and Bugle Streets and swept through



the town burning, murdering and pillaging as they went. The town, encompassed in those days by a wall that was only one and a quarter miles long, was largely destroyed and many survivors of the raid fled the town as refugees.

In 1346 we got some of our own back when King Edward III set sail from Southampton taking with him companies of English and Welsh archers who with their new and powerful weapon the Long Bow wrought havoc among the French at Crecy. But only a few years later again, in 1348 The Black Death ——— Bubonic Plague ——— entered the town. Probably brought back by returning soldiers it swept throughout England killing a quarter of the population. It took Southampton over 100 years to recover from the combined effects of the French Raid and the Plague and to strengthen the towns defences.

The town began again to prosper becoming a very important wool exporter and wine importer. Quilter's Vaults, built in the 15th Century is preserved today beneath High Street. Quilter's grew rich upon imported wine.

Early in the 17th Century there was much religious persecution in England and one group who had fled to Holland returned to Southampton in 1620 and in company with others passed through the West Gate on August 15th, 1620 to embark at the West Quay upon the Speedwell and the Mayflower for the New World. The West Gate stands as solidly now as it did then. Through it passed soldiers on their way to victory at Agincourt and all the wars since.

Just up the road from the Westgate; about 200 yards are some red-brick houses built into the old town walls and three and a half years after Southampton lay in flaming ruins again following visits by German bombers the Forces of the Allies gathered in great strength in Southampton before invading France. Along Western Esplanade by the Old Town Walls the Soldiers of Britain, the United States, Canada, Poland, and the Free French, paused to have their vehicles waterproofed before embarking for France as so many had embarked before through the centuries. American and some Canadian soldiers waiting for something to happen whiled away the hours by carving their names into the bricks of these houses.

One of the Americans, Mr. Walter L. Wells carved this message deep enough to last the last 29 years very well. " W. L. Wells, Cleveland, Miss. 1944".

The writer thought it would be a good thing if these bricks could be saved when the houses were pulled down. Accordingly I wrote to our Museum Curator and enclose a copy of his letter. Since writing first in May the breakers have started to pull down the houses, but I am assured that the best of the bricks will be preserved.



When the houses are gone our local archeological people will spend a year digging into the past beneath the foundations of the houses. And so things move on. Wars come and go and the soldiers that fight them pass by leaving, some of them, indelible mementoes of their journeys.

For myself there is little to say. I am a citizen of Southampton born here fifty years ago and have made no mark. The only thing about the writer that is out of the ordinary is that I have a very rare and unusual job. Employed in the Government Service I am a Lithographic Corrector, working upon zinc and aluminium printing plates when necessary before they are printed and sometimes when actually in the printing machine. This work is done with a fine-pointed brush and a magnifying glass.

It is gratifying that I have been able to trace some of the U.S. Veterans who passed our way during the last war and I am glad that I have been able to do something toward the preservation of this piece of history.

Five minute walk from where Mr. Wells carved his name stands our Mayflower Memorial. Some years ago another plaque was added to the number already there. It reads:-

#### 1944-1945

This tablet was presented by the 14th Major Port, United States Army in Proud Tribute to over two million men and women of the United States Forces who, together with their Gallant Allies, sailed from Southampton between "D" Day June 6th, 1944, and the Day of Victory to liberate the Continent of Europe from aggression, in order that the Freedom for which the Pilgrim Fathers strove should not be lost.

Leo J. Meyer  
Colonel T.C.  
Deputy Port Commander.

Sherman L Kiser  
Colonel T.C.  
Port Commander.



Office Supplies  
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Printers

CLEVELAND, MISSISSIPPI

*The*  
**BOLIVAR COMMERCIAL**

Clark Rumfelt  
News Director  
July 9, 1973

N.G. Webb

Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants,  
England

Dear Mr. Webb:

Thank you very much for the pictures and the interest you have shown in the matter of the bricks. The story appeared in today's Bolivar Commercial, a copy of which I have enclosed for you. I certainly hope I did the story justice in my writing.

Mr. Wells has indicated his intention of writing you shortly. I understand he took sick soon after I first contacted him and was unable to write. He was well pleased with the discovery of his handiwork.

I have the pictures you sent in hand, and if you wish, I will return them. If not, I intend to give them to Mr. Wells or keep them in our files.

Again, I thank you for your kindness. If there is anything more I or the newspaper can do for you, please feel free to call on us. With warm good wishes, I am

Sincerely,

*Clark Rumfelt*

Clark Rumfelt  
THE BOLIVAR COMMERCIAL

CR/sv



July 14th, 1973.

N. G. Webb,

Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants,  
England.

Clark Rumfelt Esq.,  
The Bolivar Commercial,  
Cleveland,  
Miss.

Dear Mr. Rumfelt,

Thank you very much indeed for your letter and the July 9th copy of your paper carrying the story you wrote about Mr. Well's brick. I think you have made a very good feature out of the material and am pleased that Mr. Wells is gratified.

Very sorry to hear that he is not well ——— perhaps you would be kind enough to let me have his address so that I may send him some more photographs? You are of course welcome to keep the shots I sent in your files.

I'll send you a copy of our local newspaper, "The Southern Evening Echo", which you may find of interest,

Sincerely,

N. G. Webb.



Office Supplies  
Publishers  
Printers

*The*  
**BOLIVAR COMMERCIAL**

CLEVELAND, MISSISSIPPI

July 18, 1973

Clark Rumfelt  
News Director  
The Bolivar Commercial  
P.O. Box 820  
Cleveland, Mississippi 38732  
U.S.A.

Mr. N.G. Webb  
Southampton,  
England

Dear Mr. Webb:

Thank you very much for your kind comments on my story. Newspaper writing is only as good as the information it contains, and for that, I thank you.

I have not had any contact with Mr. Wells in the past week or so, but you can contact him by writing:

Mr. W.L. Wells

Cleveland, Mississippi  
U.S.A.

I am looking forward to reading your local newspaper, "The Southern Evening Echo." Please keep in touch with us here at the paper. With warm good wishes, I am

Sincerely,

*Clark Rumfelt*

Clark Rumfelt  
THE BOLIVAR COMMERCIAL

CR/sv



July 21st, 1973.

N. G. Webb,

Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants,  
England.

Dear Mr. Wells,

I was sorry to hear from Mr. Rumfelt that you had been unwell of late, and I trust that you are feeling much better now?

I have a copy of "The Bolivar Commercial" with Mr. Rumfelt's feature which he wrote about "your brick" and must say he did it very well.

Please accept the enclosed pictures which I hope will bring back memories of your time spent in Southampton during the 1st war. You will see that Above Bar Street is completely rebuilt and has been for some years, but not everything is as yet. The air raids dealt the town a very heavy blow and it takes a long time to recover fully.

Some things will never be rebuilt ——— Holy Rood Church for instance. After the war most of those parishioners who would have worshiped there moved to new homes outside the town centre. So the ruin was turned into a memorial to those members of the Merchant Navy who lost their lives during the War at Sea.

Since writing originally to your paper the houses where you cut your name have been pulled down, but orders were given to the breakers to preserve the bricks carrying American Soldiers names. As yours was one of the deepest cut examples I hope that it has been preserved.

Every good wish to you, and thanks for your help during the war.

Very Sincerely,

N. G. Webb.

P.S. Do you remember how the kids used to bother you with cries of "Got any gum, chum?"



# WWII graffiti reaches 29 years for W. L. Wells

By CLARK RUMFELT  
SOUTHAMPTON, England—  
"Carved into the bricks of a house in the old part of Southampton are the names and home towns of American soldiers awaiting shipment to France during the second World War.

One such was:—  
W. L. Wells  
Cleveland,  
Miss. 1944

I wonder does Mr. Wells still live in Cleveland?"  
This inquiry to the Bolivar



Walter Wells

Commercial from Mr. N. G. Webb of Southampton on last May 26 prompted the newspaper to seek out "W. L. Wells."

The World War Two graffiti artist and Mr. Walter L. Wells, who works at Simmons Drugs Store on Sharpe Ave., turned out to be one and the same.

Wells laughingly admits scratching his name and Cleveland, Miss. on walls and bricks all over England, France and Germany during his

service as a "line" sergeant in the army during the war. "We did that for (soldiers) coming behind us. A lot of times when we would be behind (other units) we would see the same thing — names and towns scratched in the wall," Wells said.

Webb, who is a Lithographic Corrector in the British Government Service, took an interest in the bricks and secured the museum preservation of some of them when the houses were recently torn down.

Military graffiti is a time-



Sgt. Wells, 1945

honored art, and soldiers from the Roman empire to Vietnam have practiced the craft from idleness or, more probably, from a sense of "comfort" in knowing that some soldier somewhere may read it and find something familiar in it.

Wells chose an interesting spot to make this one inscription. About 200 yards from where the inscription is found stands the "West Gate" in Southampton — a gate through which two groups passed affecting the lives of all Americans. The groups were the Pilgrims setting sail on the Mayflower and allied soldiers embarking for France after the Normandy invasion in June of 1944.

As Webb relates in a subsequent letter to the Bolivar Commercial: "Early in the 17th

Century there was much religious persecution in England and one group who had fled to Holland returned to Southampton in 1620, and in company with others passed through the West Gate on August 15th, 1620 to embark at the West Quay upon the Speedwell and the Mayflower for the New World. The West Gate stands as solidly now as it did then. Through it passed soldiers on their way in victory at Agincourt and all the wars since.

"Just up the road from the Westgate — about 200 yards — are some red-brick houses built into the old town walls, and three and a half years after Southampton lay in flaming ruins again following visits by German bombers, the Forces of the Allies gathered in great

strength in Southampton before invading France. Along Western Esplanade (street) by the Old Town Walls the Soldiers of Britain, the United States, Canada, Poland, and the Free French, passed to have their vehicles waterproofed before embarking for France as so many had embarked before through the centuries. American and some Canadian soldiers waiting for something to happen whiled away the hours by carving their name into the bricks of these houses.

"One of the Americans, Mr. Walter L. Wells, carved (his) message deep enough to last the last 29 years very well."

The fact that Wells' inscription was found and read is not so farfetched, but the fact that someone traced it is somewhat remarkable.



Walter Wells' Brick

"I'm very much surprised ever hearing from it again," Wells said.

The brick apparently has the wrong date on it. Wells said he must have carved the inscription in January, 1945 and just got mixed up on the date.

Wells spent most of time after Normandy invasion fighting in France and Germany. He was wounded near Le Mans, France and shipped back to England to recover. It was on his second trip back to England that he was sent to Southampton to go back to France again, and it was then

he carved his name into the brick.

Wells came back to Cleveland after the war and worked at Berger's Appliances until 1961. Then, he went to Alexandria, Va., where he worked until 1965. He returned to Cleveland and went to work at Simmons drug store in 1966.

Mr. Webb writes about himself: "For myself there is little to say. I am a citizen of Southampton born here fifty years ago and have made no mark. The only thing about (myself) that is out of the ordinary is that I have a very

rare and unusual job. Employed in the Government Service I am a Lithographic Corrector, working upon zinc and aluminum printing plates when necessary before they are printed and sometimes when actually in the printing machine. This work is done with a fine-pointed brush and magnifying glass."

Mr. Webb writes: "And so things move on. Wars come and go and the soldiers that fight them pass by leaving, some of them, indelible mementoes of their journeys."

One such memento was that of Walter L. Wells of Cleveland.



The Brick's location

## Deaths

James Alton Ivy  
MERIGOLD — Services for James Alton Ivy, 43, Ferguson Company employee, were held today at 2 p.m. from Thewatt King Chapel with the Rev. Robert W. Brady of Merigold United Methodist Church. Burial was in the Merigold Cemetery with Thewatt-King Funeral Home of Cleveland in

lived in the area most of his life. He was a tree surgeon.

Survivors are his mother, Mrs. Addie R. Langston of Boyle; a son, Randy Glen Langston of Shaw; a brother, William C. Langston of Bradenton, Fla.; and four sisters, Mrs. Mauride Peacock and Mrs. Billy Weaver, both of Cleveland; Mrs. Barbara Fleming of Boyle, and Mrs. Carol Runnels of Bendit.

member of the Christ Wesleyan Methodist Church of Greenville.

Survivors are his wife, Mrs. Denn B. Clark of Greenville; a daughter, Mrs. Russell B. (Frances) Clower of Leland; a brother, James Andrew Clardy of Starkville; four sisters, Miss Kathleen Clardy of Washington, D. C., Mrs. S. A. Henry and Mrs. Charles Crigler, both of Starkville and Mrs. A. Y. McElride of Mabon; and three



*This is what was in our paper*

# Briton Seeks Ex-GI Who Carved Name on Brick

Editor, The News:

Carved into the bricks of a house in the old part of Southampton are the names and home towns of American soldiers await-

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## PUBLIC FORUM

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ing shipment to France during the last war.

One such was carved by: — Wayne Harvey, Van Nuys, Calif.

I wonder if Mr. Harvey still lives in Van Nuys? I would willingly send a close-up picture of "his"

brick to him or his relatives.

You may be interested to know that these names were carved at a spot no more than 200 yards from the place where the Pilgrim Fathers embarked for the New World and near the West Gate through which they and no doubt Mr. Harvey passed.

The house is soon to be demolished and the writer is making efforts to have the carved bricks preserved in our Tudor house museum only a "stone's throw" from the spot where the house yet stands.

MR. N. G. WEBB

Totton  
Southampton  
Hants.



Wayne Harvey

Newhall,  
Ca. [redacted] U.S.A.

---

Letter of June 11<sup>th</sup>, '73  
acknowledge by Post  
Card, ~~17~~ 17.6.73.

Promised to send  
slides shortly.

---

Wrote letter 24.6.73. and  
sent 5 slides, list of names  
written to with results  
therefrom, and copy of  
Perberdy's letter. Said  
would try to send colour  
prints later.

Wayne Harvey

[redacted]  
Newhall

Ca. [redacted] U.S.A.

---

Letter of June 11<sup>th</sup>, 73 acknowledged by  
Post Card, 17.06.73.

Promised to send slides shortly

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Wrote letter 24.06.73 and sent 5 slides, list  
of names written to get results therefrom,  
and copy of Perberdy's letter. Said would  
try to send colour prints later

---





Unclear when this image was sent to Mr Webb.

*May & Wayne Harvey  
Jan, 1973.*

**May & Wayne Harvey Jan, 1973**

June 11, 1973

Dear Mr. Webb:

Needless to say I was surprised and shocked to see my name in print in our local newspaper. I am alive and well and have since moved from Van Nuys, California to Newhall, California.

I have a daughter and two grandchildren and I have been retired since 1971.

My family and I would appreciate a photo of the brick and would very much like to have it placed in your Tudor house museum. It would honor us greatly.

I was in Southampton the end of November and the first part of December, 1944. We were loading heavy equipment to transport to France. From France I was sent to the Battle of the Bulge and came home in 1945.

Thank you for taking the time and the interest to contact American soldiers in the United States. Please keep us informed of your progress.

Sincerely,

*Wayne Harvey*

Wayne Harvey

Newhall, California



June 21, 1973

Dear Mr Webb

The 799<sup>th</sup> was the engineers  
corps. Mine was the 11<sup>th</sup>  
armoured division attached to  
the third army. Although it  
has been many years I do  
remember the Bargate.  
Am anxious to receive  
photo.

Sincerely  
Wayne Harvey

Letter 21 June 1973 Wayne Harvey to Webb.

June 21, 1973

Dear Mr. Webb

The 799<sup>th</sup> was the engineer corps. Mine was the 11<sup>th</sup> armoured division attached to the third army. Although it has been many years, I do remember the Bargate.

Am anxious to receive photo.

Sincerely  
Wayne Harvey (signed)



Aug. 3/73

Dear Sir -

Would like you to know that we appreciate your interest in this brick which has my signature on it. All our relatives & friends have enjoyed reading the literature. This is a copy of the right up in my home town Ravenna Nebra. where I was born, sent the letter to my Mother who just had her 89<sup>th</sup> birthday & she in turn took it to the local paper there. Maybe some day you will be in this area, if so let us know & if we ever get to England will look you up.

Sincerely

May & Wayne Harvey

Letter 3 August 1973 Mr. & Mrs. Harvey to Webb

Aug. 3/73

Dear Sir,

Would like you to know that we appreciate your interest in this brick which has my signature on it. All our relatives and friends have enjoyed reading the literature. This is a copy of the write up in my home town Ravenna, Nebraska where I was born, sent the letter to my mother who just had her 89<sup>th</sup> birthday and she in turn took it to the local paper there. Maybe someday you will be in this area, if so let us know and if we even get to England will look you up.

Sincerely

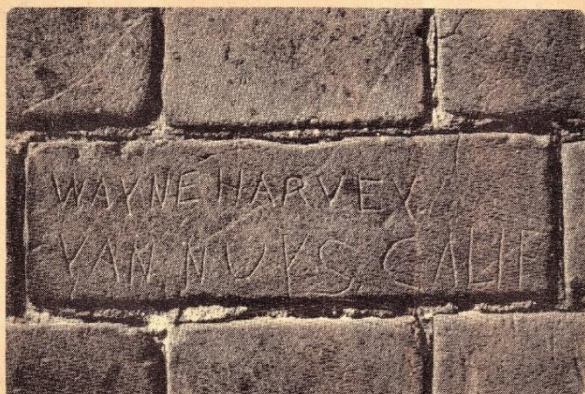
May and Wayne Harvey



## Wayne Harvey "Brick" to be on Display at War Memorial Bldg., Southampton, Eng.,



Wayne Harvey in 1944 while stationed in England.



The brick with Wayne Harvey's name and address carved in it.

In October 1944, a young soldier from Van Nuys, California, (originally from Ravenna, Nebraska) was stationed in Southampton, England with the 11th armored division. The division was loading heavy equipment to be shipped to France and on to the Battle of the Bulge. While waiting for the ship to leave a group of the young soldiers passed their time away by sightseeing around the city.

One of these young soldiers was Wayne Harvey, formerly of Ravenna. On one of these walks some of the soldiers got the idea of writing their names and addresses in the crumbly old bricks of one of the houses.

Today, almost thirty years later these houses in Southampton are being torn down, to make room for more modern developments.

But thanks to a Mr. N. G. Webb, Esq., of Southampton, England, neither the bricks nor the American soldiers who carved their names there, so

many years ago, will be forgotten.

When Mr. Webb found out that the old house was to be torn down he notified, the City of Southampton Museums Department and told them the story. They in turn contacted Mr. Webb and thanked him for the information, and notified him that the bricks would indeed be saved and put on display in the city museum.

But this is not the end of the story. Mr. Webb was curious. Just how many of these soldiers were still living? Would any of them be interested in the fate of the brick they had carved so many years ago? Mr. Webb took the time and wrote to the newspaper in the town in which each of these soldiers had listed as their hometowns. The letter Mr. Webb wrote to Mr. Harvey naturally went to Van Nuys, California. It went like this.

Editor The News:  
Van Nuys, Calif.

Carved into the bricks of a house in the old part of South-

ampton, England are the names and home towns of American soldiers awaiting shipment to France during the last war.

One such was carved by-- Wayne Harvey, Van Nuys, Calif.

I wonder if Mr. Harvey still lives in Van Nuys? I would willingly send a close-up picture to him or his relatives.

You may be interested to know that these names were carved at a spot no more than 200 yards from the place where the Pilgrim Fathers embarked for the New World and near the West Gate through which they and no doubt Mr. Harvey passed.

The house is soon to be demolished and the writer is making efforts to have the carved bricks preserved in our Tudor house museum only a "stone's throw" from the spot where the house yet stands.

Signed Mr. N. G. Webb

Mr. Harvey in the meantime has moved to Newhall, Calif., but the newspaper item was brought to his attention and he wrote Mr. Webb who indeed did send him photos and wrote him quite a lengthy letter telling of the city today as compared to the war years of which Mr. Harvey remembers. Of the eleven soldiers that have been contacted in the U.S. only 5 have replied with a personal letter to Mr. Webb. The rest either cannot be located or have not replied.

Thanks to one man who took the time and trouble to remember, a small part of history shall live on forever.

July 19<sup>th</sup> 1973, Ravenna News



July 22nd, 1973.

Mr. N. G. Webb,

Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants,  
England.

The Controller,  
U.S. Army Records Office,  
The Pentagon,  
Virginia.

Dear Sir,

At a spot in Southampton only 200 yards from the known embarkation point of the Pilgrim Fathers there stood until a month ago some old houses.

During World War II American Soldiers awaiting shipment to France whiled away the time by carving their names, home towns, and States into the bricks, and it occurred to me that it would be a pity if this historic record should be lost through demolition.

Accordingly I sought preservation of these bricks and enclose for you a copy of a letter from our local Museum Curator.

You may be interested to know that consequent upon writing letters of enquiry to "The Local Newspaper" in various small towns I have been able to contact five men; correspondence has been exchanged, colour photographs of the relevant brick together with others of the U.S. Forces commemorative plaque which is set into our Mayflower Memorial and scenes of Southampton, have been sent to the men and two American Newspapers have published features on the inscribed bricks.

I deliberately chose those men living in small towns feeling that the large National Newspapers might not be interested.

However—— the best carved and most complete inscription reads..... "On way to France. Sidney Greenwald [redacted] Bronx. New York". It is very likely that this particular brick will be preserved in one of our museums, and I should be grateful if you could give me any assistance in tracing this man or his relatives.

I have a photograph of "his brick" ready to send to him.

Yours faithfully,

N. G. Webb.



This tranche of correspondence has been reserved to the last as it includes the deaths of both Norman Webb and Clifford Moore.

May 24, 1973.  
Bruce Wis.

Dear Sir.

Received your letter from our local news editor and you will never know just how happy I was to receive it.

You should be commended for the time and effort you are putting in to this project and for what you are doing to preserve it. I thank you very much. I would appreciate a picture of the Brick. I have often wondered if it was still there it certainly brought back some old memories.

Your letter will be published in our local paper. about 7000 subscribers I think the public should know of your kindness for the time & effort to locate the names on the brick.

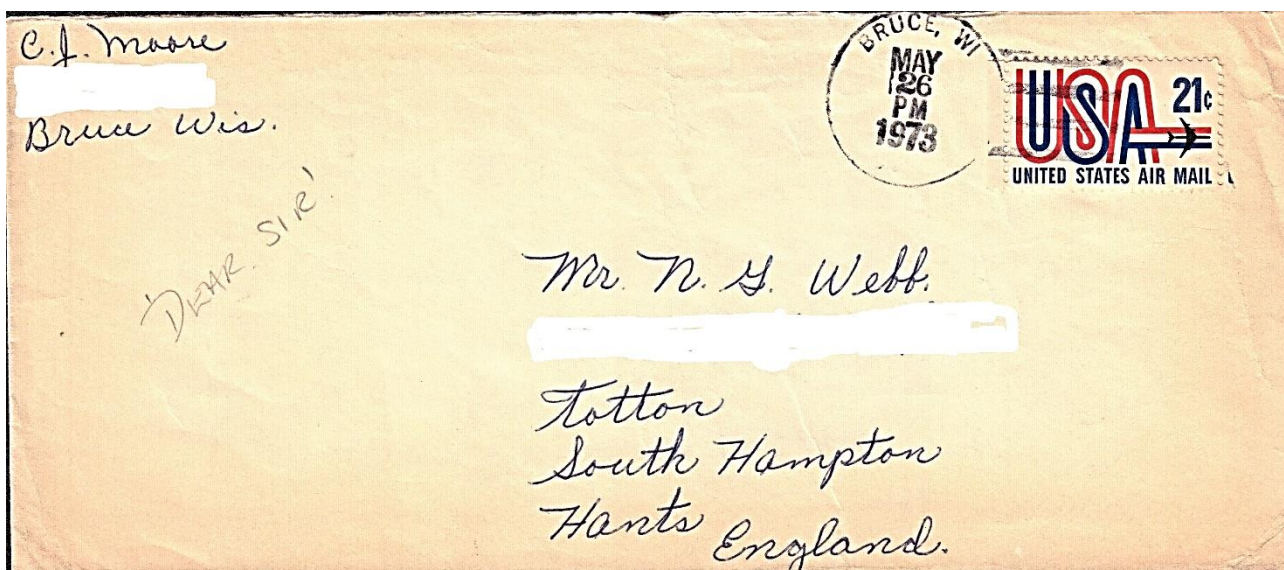
Please send the picture and I will reimburse you somehow for your time and trouble.

I thank you.

C. J. Moore

Bruce Wis.





**Letter 24.05.1973 Moore to Webb**

May 24, 1973  
Bruce, Wisconsin

Dear Sir,

Received your letter from our local news editor and you will never know how happy I was to receive it.

You should be commended for the time and effort you are putting in to this project, and for what you are doing to preserve it. I thank you very much. I would appreciate a picture of the Brick. I have often wondered if it was still there, it certainly brought back some old memories.

Your letter will be published in our local paper, about 7,000 subscribers, I think. The public should know of your kindness for the time and effort to locate the names on the bricks.

Please send the pictures and I will reimburse you somehow for your time and trouble.

I thank you,  
C.J. Moore (signed)

██████████  
Bruce Wisconsin ██████████



June 1st, 1973.

Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants,  
England.

Dear Mr. Moore,

Delighted to have your letter today and I hasten to reply right away before the picture of your brick and one of the house is to hand. They will be colour transparencies and I will send them on to you as soon as they are returned from Kodak Ltd.

If was a happy idea of yours to include a picture of yourself taken in those days and I'll keep it a bit longer if you don't mind and will probably make a copy.

So far I have written to eleven towns in the last twelve days, and yours was the second reply. The first came from Mr. Wndram, associate editor of "The Times Democrat", Davenport, Iowa, and was in answer to my query regarding one of your comrades Ralph L. Groth. Mr. Wndram says in part....."Yes, there is a Ralph L. Groth residing in Davenport, according to our city directory, and I am trying to contact him as of this moment." "The Times Democrat" seem to be very keen to make a feature story on the inscribed bricks and in response to their request I have furnished them with more details.

Since writing to your newspaper I have learned that some of the bricks are to be preserved when the old houses are pulled down shortly, as you will see from the copy of a letter from our Museum Curator which is enclosed. After demolition the ground is to be dug over by our local archeology department before more buildings are erected on the sight.

I enclose a list of other names carved into the bricks; it may well be that you knew some of them?.

Please — not a word about payment: it is only a few pence and my pleasure.

I am very pleased to record that our Archeologist and Archivist are also keen to preserve these relics of the last war and am glad that I did something about it.

Hope to write again and send pictures soon.

Very sincerely,

  
N. G. Webb.



June 7th, 1973.

Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants,  
England.

Dear Mr, Moore,

Herewith the first two pictures of your brick and the house into which it is built.

If you look at the ground floor window on the extreme right of the photograph, your name is on the fourth course up from the window sill and the third brick from the right-hand edge of the window frame.

As you can see the windows are boarded up and the house stands waiting the bulldozers attentions. I am told that demolition is due within one month.

Since receiving your letter I have had one other from the South Bend Tribune, Indiana, but they regret that they can find no trace of J. J. Metz or his family living in South Bend, and they assume that they can no longer be living in the area.

I have another partly exposed film in my camera which already includes a shot of the commemorative plaque fixed to our Mayflower Memorial after the end of the war by the American Forces. I will eventually send you this and one or two more to show the rebuilt shopping area and some views of the Old Walls ect.

Best wishes,

Sincerely,

N. G. Webb.



Bruce Wis  
June 11. 1973.

Dear Sir.

Received your letter and the pictures to-day and thank you very much. my family and I really enjoyed looking at them I must say. that your letter's and the pictures will be shown at our 799<sup>th</sup> Ordinance Army Reunion in August. our Ordinance has tried to stay together and we have 3 days every summer just harking over old times and just remembering. our experience to gether from 1942 - 1945.

I am sending an address sheet of the men we have the addresses of and some of these I see every year. Several of the names are listed on this sheet I hope it will help you. also do not return as I have another also keep my picture

I will try to get whatever information I can on more recent addresses (if any). and will send them to you.

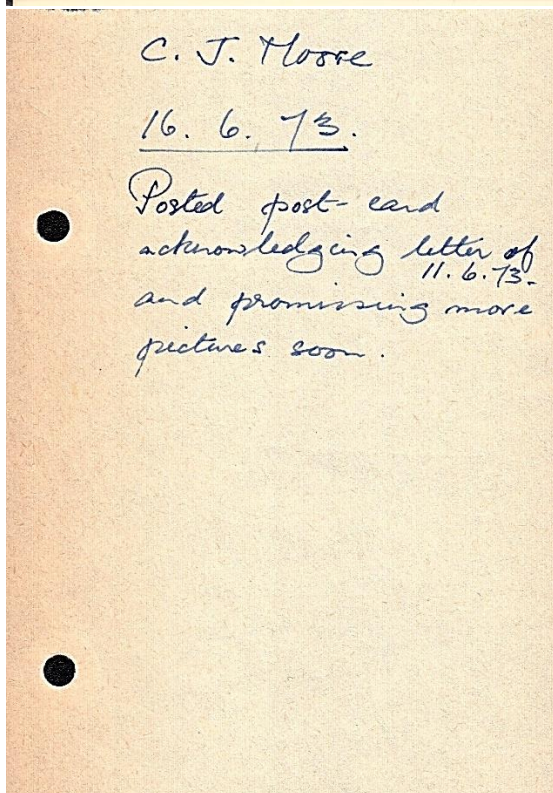
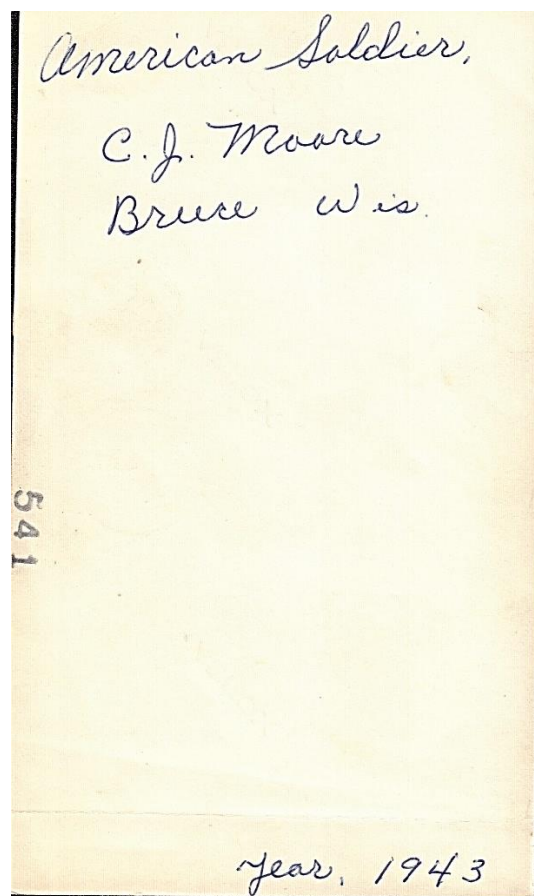
Hope you are in the best of health as we are, and thank you again for your interest time and effort.

Sincerely,  
C. J. Moore  
Bruce.





Sent to Mr Webb with above letter



C. J. Moore

16.6.73

Posted post card acknowledging letter of 11.06.73 and  
promising more pictures soon.



**Letter June 11, 1973 Moore to Webb**

██████████, Bruce, Wisconsin  
June 11, 1973

Dear Sir,

Received your letter and the pictures today and thank you very much. My family and I really enjoyed looking at them. I must say that your letters and the pictures will be shown at our 799<sup>th</sup> Ordnance Army Reunion in August. Our Ordnance has tried to stay together and we have 3 days every summer just hashing over old times and just remembering our experiences together from 1942 – 1945.

I am sending an address sheet of the men we have the addresses of and some of those I see every year. Several of the names are listed on this sheet and I hope it will help you. Also, do not return as I have another, also keep my picture.

I will try to get whatever information I can on more recent addresses (if any) and will send them to you.

Hope you are in the best of health as we are, and thank you again for your interest, time and effort.

Sincerely

C.J. Moore (signed)

Bruce.



July 30th, 1973.

Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants,  
England.

Dear Mr. Moore,

So sorry to have kept you so long for the prints and slides I promised. I enclose the prints herewith and am sending the slides under separate cover by the same postal collection. In some mysterious way a print showing the rebuilt Above Bar Street now partly closed to traffic and a pedestrian shopping precinct, has contrived in a few days to get itself lost! When it turns up I'll send it on to you. However, the same scene is shown on one of the slides.

Four of the names shown on the list you sent me were enquired of in the same way that I found yourself, by writing to "The Local Newspaper", but I have heard nothing from these four. If you should see any of them at your annual reunion perhaps you would tell them that I have pictures here ready to send to them.

The Names are..... J. Dransert, Jeanette, Pa., Daw Drayper, Haydenburg, Tennessee., John Helmling, Elyria, (or Elvria Ohio., and Frank Sabo, Elizabeth, Pa.

Slide No.7 shows Above Bar Street taken from the top of the Bargate and as you can see this is now closed to traffic and is for pedestrians only. It has been so for about two years and at a future date it is hoped to close that part in the upper part of the picture where you can see the red bus. When you were here this street lay in ruins as you will remember. It is rebuilt as you can see but does not have a very inspired achitecture! A few doors up along the right hand side of the picture is Woolworths the same one that you have in the States. To the left in the shade is the Odeon Cinema called the Regal when you were here. Until the last day of 1949 the old Trams ran down this street but on that night among wild scenes of singing and the playing of impromptu bands by a number of drunks the last tram covered all over in coloured lights and carrying about 150 people slowly made it's way through the crowds to the suburb of Shirley for the last time. After that buses took over. Quieter, but with much more smell!

Slides 4, 6, & 8, and one of the prints show parts of the Merchant Navy Memorial which is actually the ruins of Holy Rood Church destroyed in the war. The Blitz also destroyed the homes of those who worshiped there and after the war they were housed in new estates outside the town, so there was no one to need the church. So it was turned into the Memorial. Old men sit on the seats and sun themselves, and it makes a peaceful setting now.



Slide No. 1 is of course another view of the houses where you carved your name. Since I wrote you last June 16th they have all been pulled down. I spoke to the man in charge of the wrecking and he was aware of the need to preserve the engraved bricks, so I hope he did indeed see that this was done.

Slide No. 9 you should recognise and may I apologise for making such a poor job of it? I refer of course to the tape showing round the edges. I should have got rather closer to the original when copying it so that this was outside the lens coverage. I send it now though, because I thought you might possibly be able to project the slides at your reunion and any slide is better than no slide!! Should you wish to mount the slides in plastic and glass mounts you could ~~XXXX~~ of course mask out the ugly borders quite easily.

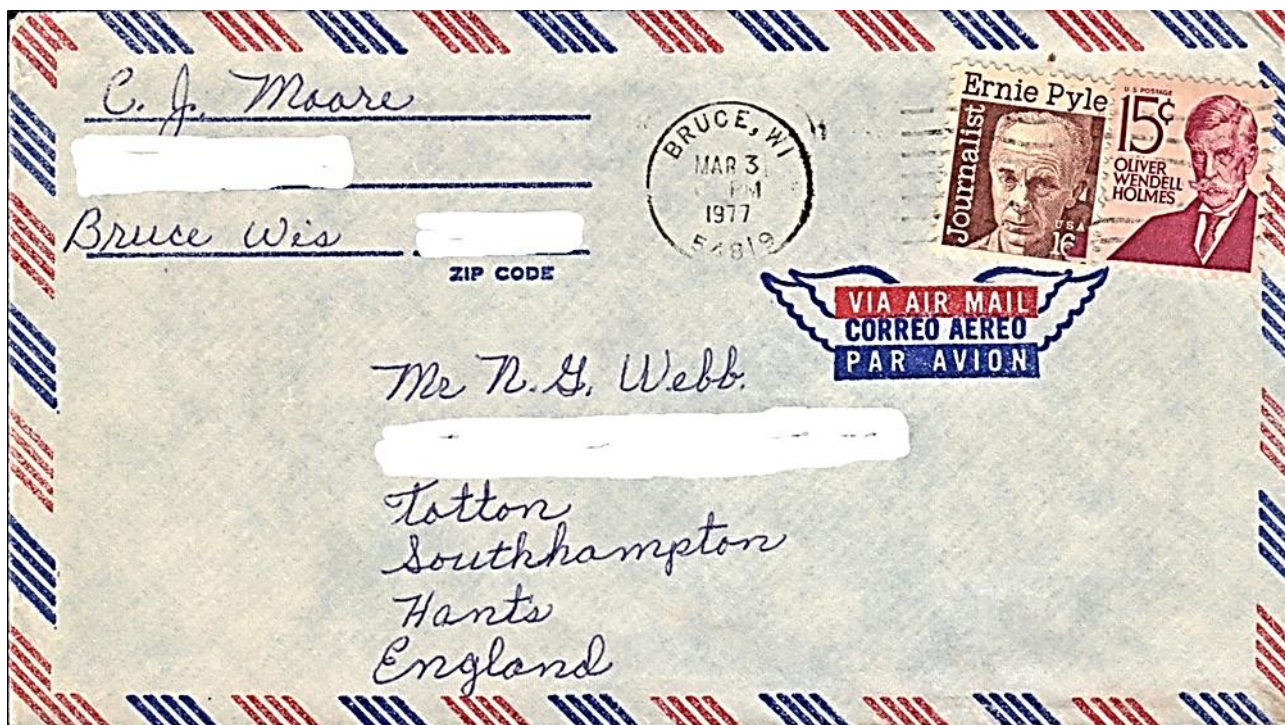
I think the rest of the slides and prints with brief captions attached are self explanatory so there is no need for further explanations. 'Sent some prints to Mr. Breech of Catawissa, Penna., yesterday, another of your comrades of the 799th Ordinance Co.

All good wishes to you and yours in the future, and I hope that your reunion in August will be very successful.

Sincerely,

N. G. Webb.







Bruce Wis.  
Mar 3, 1977

Dear Mr Webb.

I'm writing this letter and feeling ashamed of my self for letting so much time go by and not writing to you before.

Many times we have looked at the color slides that you sent with friends & neighbors and talked of the places I was during World II. and have often wished I could go back there and visit those countries now, but I don't suppose I will ever be able to,

I imagine the buildings are all gone by now, and are replaced by something else. I am so very glad to have the pictures you sent me. I had the slides made in to pictures and have made up a Album of all my Army pictures that I have, also. during the war I ~~was~~ kept a diary of all the places I was, arrival time and departure days & Dates and its quite interesting to look at now. I also have all your letters in my Album

I am wondering did you ever hear from any of the other names that you found on the bricks

We still have our 799<sup>th</sup> Army reunions every year and each year there seems to be one less of ~~you~~ us and we are getting smaller.



Hope this letter finds you and your family in good health as we are now. but we have had our share of health problems but all is well now.

Our only daughter is married now and has a little boy 14 months old. and he is a joy to us., and our son is 20 now. and still with us he likes to fish hunt & trap and enjoy the outdoors this summer he built a log cabin,

I am retired now. finally sold my trucking business that I had for thirty years, but I manage to keep my self busy. Mostly trying to catch up on some of the work on my home that I did not have time to do before. also help my wife Darlene run a youth camp, its a camp for youth groups like 'Girl Scouts' Boy Scouts' and 4-H. also church groups,

I would enjoy hearing from you again so if you find time and care to please write,

Sincerely.  
Chiff Moore,  
Bruce wis



**Letter 3 March 1977 Moore to Webb**

Bruce, Wisconsin

March 3, 1977

Dear Mr. Webb,

I'm writing this letter and feeling ashamed of myself for letting so much time go by and not writing to you before.

Many times we have looked at your color slides that you sent with friends & neighbors and talked of the places I was during World War II, and have often wished I could go back there and visit countries now, but I don't suppose I will ever be able to.

I imagine the buildings are all gone by now and are replaced by something else. I am so very glad to have the pictures you sent me. I had the slides made into pictures and have made up an Album of all my Army pictures that I have, also during the war I kept a diary of all the places I was, arrival times and departure days and dates and its quite interesting to look at now. I also have all your letters in my Album.

I am wondering did you ever hear from any of the other names that you found on the bricks.

We still have our 799<sup>th</sup> army reunions every year and each year there seems to be one less of us and we are getting smaller.

Hope this letter finds you and your family in good health as we are now but we have had our share of health problems but all is well now.

Our only daughter is married now and has a little boy 14 months old and he is a joy to us, and our son is 20 now and still with us. He likes to fish hunt and trap and enjoy the outdoors. This summer he built a log cabin.

I am retired now, finally sold my trucking business that I had for thirty years, but I manage to keep myself busy. Mostly trying to catch up on some of the work on my home that I did not have time to do before. Also help my wife Marlene to run a youth camp, it's a camp for youth groups like 'Girl Scouts', 'Boy Scouts' and 4-H. Also, church groups.

I would enjoy hearing from you again so if you find time and care to, please write.

Sincerely,

Cliff Moore

, Wisconsin

*Footnote – 4-H is a national youth and empowerment organisation.*



Jan 7 1981

Bruce Wis U.S.A.

Dear Mr & Mrs Webb.

I have just been going thru my photo album of my world war 2 days and right at the beginning is all the letters and pictures that you were so kind to send to me.

Its been several years since I have wrote to you, and Im hoping that all is well.

We are in the best of health Even tho old age is creeping up on us.

I am sorry for not writing sooner. but you and your kindness have been in our thoughts quite often.

I am retired now but I still help my wife with her job of taking care of a summer youth camp for our County. so Im still as busy as ever.

We have had a real nice winter so far very little snow and now we are getting some below zero weather But we can not complain when we hear about the problems in other parts of the world and United States the Earthquakes, Mountains Blowing up, and the disagreements in some of our Countries Im hoping that some time there will be peace for every one.



our family is all grown up now my daughter is married and we have 2 little grand sons of 2 yrs and 5 yrs old and we enjoy them very much.

Jim is now 24. but still single and lives with us yet. and we are glad, he works for the Forestry Department of our County.

We hope this letter reaches you in the best of health and would like to hear from you again

very sincerely.  
Clifford + Darlene Moore.  
Bruce Wisconsin

Letter 7 January 1981 Moore to Webb

January 7, 1981  
Bruce, Wisconsin U.S.A.

Dear Mr & Mrs Webb,

I have just been going through my photo Album of my world war 2 days and right at the beginning is all the letters and pictures that you were so kind to send to me.

It has been several years since I have written to you, and I am hoping that all is well.

We are in the best of health ever tho' old age is creeping up on us.

I am sorry for not writing sooner but you and your kindness have been in our thoughts quite often.

I am retired now but I still help my wife with her job of taking care of a summer youth camp for our County so I'm still as busy as ever.

We have had a real nice winter so far, very little snow and now we are getting some below zero weather. But we cannot complain when we hear about the problems in other parts of the world and United States – the earthquakes, mountains blowing up, and the disagreements in some of our Counties.



I'm hoping that some time there will be peace for everyone.

Our family are all grown up now. My daughter is married and we have 2 little grandsons of 2 years and 5 years old and we enjoy them very much.

Jim is now 24 but still single and lives with us yet and we are glad. He works for the Forestry Department of our County.

We'll hope this letter reaches you in the best of health and would like to hear from you again.

Very sincerely,  
Clifford and Marlene Moore  
Bruce, Wisconsin.



January 25th, 1931.

Totton,  
Southampton,  
Hants, SO4 4DX,  
England.

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Moore,

What a pleasant surprise to hear from you again and to learn that you and your family are all well. We have had our up's and down's healthwise, but nothing serious. During the past year there has been a "bug" going round which although not needing the doctor's treatment as a general rule has made people feel unwell for quite a long time; so of course Rhonda and I had to catch it! However, things seem to have improved quite a lot now and one does not feel quite so much as though one wants to drop off to sleep as soon as the day's work is started!

We were also pleased to learn that your winter has been pretty good so far, not only for your ~~akes~~ but ours too! We usually reckon that if the U.S. has a summer heat wave or a very hard winter then we will get it about a month later.

As you know the British Isles would not take up much room if dropped into the U.S. the total area of England, Wales and Scotland being only 88,137 square miles which in itself is only about one-and-a-half times the size of your own State of Wisconsin, (56,066 sq. miles), and yet it is remarkable how our winter climate varies from Southern England to Northern Scotland. Only about 600 miles North of Southampto in Scotland are the Cairngorm Mountains where the winter wind can often exceed 100 miles per hour and that with a temperature a long way below freezing. Nothing can live up there. And yet at the same time down here in the South the weather can be mild with just ordinary clothes sufficient to keep one comfortable.

We cannot find Bruce on the map and we assume that it is too small to show on the small-scale maps that we have of the States. What is the name of your nearest large town? We note also that you have a Post Office Box Number which would seem to indicate that you have to collect your own letters which again would seem to indicate a small community. We are lucky in Britain for even the most remote farm or cottage will have it's mail delivered directly when the Postman on foot, bicycle, motorised transport or even pony in a few parts of Scotland will call and push the mail through a letter-box on the front door.

We see that your son Jim is a Forester working for your County. I think the time will come when all the oil and coal is gone when we shall be very glad that we can still grow trees. Over here the Forestry Commission, a Government body looks after all the forest



doorstep ——— only two miles away ——— there is a great deal of hardwood, mainly Oak and Beech. You may have heard of the disaster which struck our English Elms a few years ago? They have been almost wiped out by Dutch Elm Disease, millions of them dying during the last five years. Another kind of Elm which is much more resistant to the disease is being imported I think ~~from~~ Japan and planted here, but of course it will take a very long time for the trees to grow to maturity. The English Elm was largely a hedgerow tree despite it's large size. The country roads were lined with them and the edges of our little fields so you can imagine that many parts of Southern England now look very bare without them. It has quite altered the appearance of the countryside.

Well, I have not retired yet! Two years and a bit to go; but I must say that I have had more than enough. Forty years of the same job on February 17th. I regret to say that there is much dissatisfaction among my colleagues and myself caused by a great reduction in craft work which has been superseded by computerised processes. I do not like what the computer is doing to people. It is taking away their pride and satisfaction in a difficult job well done.

As I write a Collared Dove is sat in the bare Ash tree next door enjoying the weak winter sun. The sky is blue with only a few small white clouds. There is no wind. It is a very nice January day. A day to make one think of Spring which, (if we can get through the next eight weeks or so without hard weather), cannot be very far off.

Bye-the-way; building has started on the site of the houses where you carved your name. I think it is to be homes again but I am not sure if they are to be houses or flats; (apartments). After the old homes were knocked down archeologists spent a long time digging down into Southampton's past. Among the usual coins and pieces of pottery etc., they also found a Bow Stave and leather shoes about five hundred years old but well preserved by the acid soil of an old peat bog.

Before signing off I really must apologise for my very bad typing and ask you to believe that it is not usually so poor! I put a new ribbon in the machine yesterday. Perhaps it has a jinx on it!

All the very best for 1981 and shall look forward to hearing from you again.

Very sincerely,



Bruce Wis  
Jan 20, 1983.

Dear Rhonda,

We recieved your letter on Dec 24<sup>th</sup>, our whole family was saddened to hear of the loss of a good friend of ours that took the time to write to us and also to preserve the bricks for History of our American Soldiers. Cliff felt so bad along with my self + Judy + Jim all tho you did not know it we spent our Christmass with you. and your letter was read + reread quite often, our thoughts were with you.

Now Im going to have you crying again Rhonda but wanted you to know how we felt. they say times heal's and I guess we all have to go thru the loss of a loved one. I know its very hard for you.

Cliff is having a problem of blood clots in his left leg on Dec 28 he was operated on and they took out sixteen. So I have him in a chair all day with his leg elevated and applying moist heat. Next tuesday he goes in for another operation of vein stripping its hard for him to be tied down like this as he was allways so active allways kept him self busy. but thats the way it is and were hoping he can get back on his feet again soon.

There seems to be on the news here lately a lot about this Benzene. Seems like there is danger in every thing you work with or even eat for that matter. I imagine you have heard of the poison (arsenic) in the tylenol capsules over here plus poison in the food.



I just read in this A.M. newspaper that some crazy person was putting mercury in the salad dressing also it was found in oranges there are some pretty sick people in this world. I just can't understand people that get a kick out of hurting people like that with all this drugs that everyone seems to be on. the foolish people are destroying their minds and its such a shame because there is so much to look forward to in their life time (but life is very short for people on drugs) I thank god that my 2 children are grown and I do not have any of that problem in my family.

I really don't know what this world is coming to we are having the same problem in this country. Stealing & burning you certainly did not need your property destroyed like they did I hope the person's were caught & punished.

you are lucky to have a wonderful mother to come and help you. my mother lives next door to me alone. she is 92 yrs old and still gets around good as is still able to take care of her self. I help her when she goes out side for she don't fall on this ice we have here.

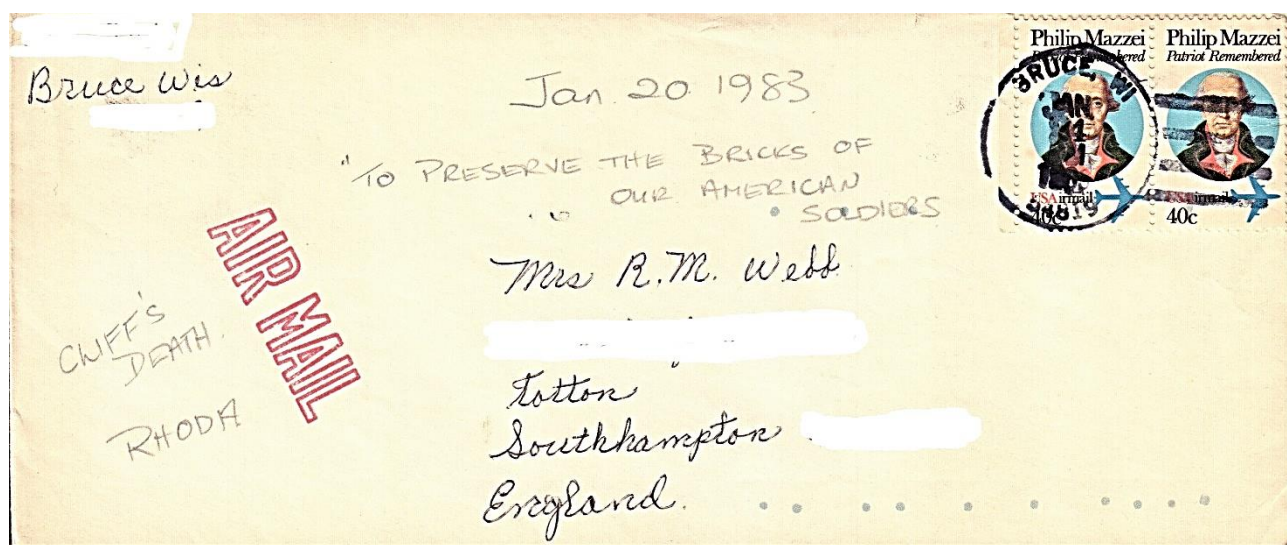
our winter has been different this year. usually is 40 below zero all thru January but every day its up in the 20 or 30 above zero. which is nice but were getting a lot of snow and freezing rain. I don't remember ever having a winter this warm.



Well I must get busy now and get some house cleaning done.

I know you are quite busy but lets please keep in touch we would be glad to hear from you when you find the time. Also Rhonda I'm sure you know that we have kept a Album of all of Paemars letters and pictures he sent us. Could I please ask if you would have an Obituairis card or clipping to put in our album.

Take Care now  
Marlene + Cliff  
+ Jim,



Letter 20 January 1983 from Marlene and Cliff Moore and Jim to Mrs Rhoda Webb

Bruce, Wisconsin  
Jan 20, 1983

Dear Rhoda,

We received your letter on Dec 24<sup>th</sup>, our whole family was saddened to hear of the loss of a good friend of ours that took the time to write to us and also to preserve the bricks for History of our American Soldiers. Cliff felt so bad along with myself and Judy and Jim. All tho' you did not know it we spent our Christmas with you and your letter was read and reread quite often, our thoughts are with you.

Now I'm going to have you crying again Rhoda but wanted you to know how we felt. They say time heals and I guess we all have to go thru' the loss of a loved one. I know it's very hard for you.



Cliff is having a problem of blood clots in his left leg. On the 28<sup>th</sup> he was operated on and they took out sixteen. So, I have him in a chair all day with his leg elevated and applying moist heat. Next Tuesday he goes in for another operation of vein stripping. It's hard for him to be tied down like this as he was always active, always kept himself busy but that's the way it is and we're hoping he can get back on his feet again soon.

There seems to be a lot on the news here lately about this Benzene. Seems like there is danger in everything you work with or even eat for that matter. I imagine you have heard of the poison (arsenic) in the Tylenol capsules over here plus poison in the food.

I just read in this AM newspaper that some crazy person was putting mercury in the salad dressing. Also, it was found in oranges. These are some pretty sick people in this world. I just can't understand people that get a kick out of hurting people like that. With all the drugs that everyone seems to be on, the foolish people are destroying their minds and it's such a shame because there is so much to look forward to in their lifetime (but life is very short for people on drugs). I thank god that my 2 children are grown and I do not have any of that problem in my family.

I really don't know what the world is coming to – we are having the same problem in this country. Stealing and burning – you certainly did not need your property destroyed like they did & I hope the persons were caught and punished.

You are lucky to have a wonderful mother to come and help you. My mother lives next door to me alone, she is 92 years old and still gets around good as is still able to take care of herself. I help her when she goes outside so she doesn't fall on this ice we have here.

Our winter has been different this year, usually is 40 below zero all through January but every day it is up in the 20 or 30 above zero which is nice but we are getting a lot of snow and freezing rain. I don't remember having a winter this warm.

Well I must get busy now and get some house cleaning done.

I know you are quite busy but let's please keep in touch. We would be glad to hear from you when you find the time. Also, Rhoda I'm sure you know that we have kept an Album of all of Norman's letters and pictures he sent us. Could I please ask if you would have an Obituary card or clipping to put in our Album?

Take care now

Marlene & Cliff & Jim (signed)





## CITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

DEPARTMENT OF LEISURE SERVICES

DIRECTOR JOHN BULLOCK, F.I.M.ENT., F.T.S., M.I.P.R., M.I.R.M., A.INST.PRA.

CURATOR ART GALLERY AND MUSEUMS ADRIAN B. RANCE, B.A., A.M.A.

TUDOR HOUSE MUSEUM, ST. MICHAEL'S, SQUARE, SOUTHAMPTON. SO1 0AD

TELEPHONE (0703) 24216

MY REF

ABR/JEN

YOUR REF

TH4.111

15 November 1982

Mrs Rhoda Webb  
c/o Social Services Department  
Arundel Towers

Dear Mrs Webb

This is to confirm the return to you of your late husband's papers relating to United States servicemen in Southampton during World War II, the research having arisen out of his finding their names inscribed on the walls of some houses near the Old Walls in the city.

These have been studied, and are most interesting, and I am very grateful to you for allowing us to borrow them.

Yours sincerely

CURATOR  
ART GALLERY & MUSEUMS

Received from Tudor House Museum

\_\_\_\_\_  
(signed)

Date: