



With the Colors *June 1, 1945*

Seaman First Class Donald Fithian, who is on the USS Natoma Bay, a CVE or baby aircraft carrier, writes his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Cecil D. Fithian of Newton: "I haven't heard from you for quite a while. I suppose I'll get your letters eventually. They have a hard time keeping up with us. We don't stay in one spot long enough. That's probably why we have the most enviable record of all the CVE's. We keep on the move.

"I don't know whether you know it or not but the old Natoma Bay is classed as the 'fightin'est CVE afloat.' If you knew this crew you could see why. They like to horse around, pulling practical jokes and arguing, but when things get tough they can buckle down and work just as hard as they play.

"We've finally been given permission to tell some of the places we've been. It's quite a long list so I'll just tell you of the places at this time. When I left Shoemaker, California, I went to Treasure island, San Francisco. There I boarded an Army transport, the USS Cape Nedlick, and traveled to Pearl Harbor. I've got to admit I felt a bit woozy the first couple of days, but I've had sea legs ever since.

"At Pearl Harbor, we were assigned to the Natoma Bay. My first impressions were not very good but I've changed my mind since then, for she has weathered some pretty bad storms, including one typhoon with the waves breaking over the flight deck. We had planes lashed down with everything available.

"After we left Pearl, we proceeded to Eniwetok in the Marshalls, then on to Manus in the Admiralty islands. When we crossed the equator, the initiation was 'some time'. My head was as bald as an egg. We then went to Leyte, back to Manus, then to the Palaus and then to Mindoro. After we had taken on supplies we headed for Luzon.

"We were in the battle of Samar island. It was sure rough to see those Jap 16-inch shells fall just astern of us. The engineers were throwing everything but their shoes in the boilers that day. The engines almost came out of their mountings. In the end, we were doing the chasing, though. In the Marianas, Frank Worthey came aboard and visited Utley and I. We were at Iwo Jima, too."

Corporal Cecil Paul Richey has written his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Richey of Effingham, formerly of Grove township, that he has been moved from India to a secret base somewhere in Southeast Asia. He adds: "I am just fine. The weather here is lots better than it was in India. It is pretty warm during the day but is cool at night. We can go

swimming most any time. We get all American food here."

Another son, Seaman First Class Roy Edmond Richey, is in the Southwest Pacific with the Navy. He states that he is wearing the Asiatic-Pacific and Philippine Liberation campaign ribbons with stars for three battles, including Lingayen Gulf and Iwo Jima.

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Fireman First Class Arthus Pickens, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Pickens of Wheeler, arrived home last Thursday for a visit with relatives and friends. He came by plane from San Francisco to Chicago, where he was joined by his wife and son Stephen. He was granted a furlough while his ship is being repaired.

The Pickens' have two other sons and a son-in-law in the services, Machinist's Mate First Class Rex Pickens of Davisville, Rhode Island, Private Thornton Pickens of Camp Maxey, Texas, and Private First Class Lawrence Harvey in Greenland.

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Mr. and Mrs. John E. Jones of Rose Hill vicinity have received a letter from their son, Oliver L. Jones, stating that he was on a seven day furlough in the French Riviera when the war ended. He is now in Southeastern Germany.

They have two other sons in the service, Sergeant William W. Jones on Kwajalein island in the Marshalls and Private First Class John F. Jones at Harlingen field, Texas. Both are well.

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A nine pound son, George Gerald, was born to Mr. and Mrs. H. G. Vrechek of Chicago at Passavant hospital, May 21. Mrs. Vrechek is the former Geraldine Benefiel of Newton, a daughter of Mrs. Dollie Benefiel of Chicago and W. E. Benefiel of Newton. John M. Swick of Newton is a great grand-father. Mr. Vrechek is a chief petty officer in the Coast Guard, stationed at Chicago.

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Private First Class Merle L. Eveland, who has been in the Southwest Pacific for nearly three years, writes his parents, Mr. and Mrs. William C. Eveland of northwest of Newton, that he is being moved. They are expecting him home on leave and a possible discharge. He was in the New Guinea and Philippine campaigns.

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Petty Officer Third Class Dale M. King is spending a thirty day leave with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ona M. King of near Falmouth. He has been serving on an aircraft carrier operating in the Northwest Pacific ocean and East China sea.

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Specialist First Class and Mrs. Roland Clark are visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Merritt A. Clark of Newton. Roland is an athletic director at the Naval Air Station at Pensacola, Florida.

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Seaman First Class Norbert Geltz returned to his base at Newport, Rhode Island, Saturday, after spending a ten day leave with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Geltz of Sainte Marie.

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Lieutenant and Mrs. Robert H. Rugh and little son Jimmie of Chi-

cago came Wednesday for a visit with her parents, Mayor and Mrs. Charles G. Batman of Newton. Lieutenant Rugh returned to Chicago, where he is in charge of a warehouse for the Navy, but Mrs. Rugh and son will be here during June.

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Specialist First Class Dale E. Robinson, is returning to the Naval Station at the University of Chicago today, after a five day leave.

He and his wife, visited with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Henry C. Robinson of near Newton. Both families spent Decoration day with relatives at West Liberty.

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Private and Mrs. Lawrence Cochran and little daughter Sandra were here last week on a visit with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Cochran of near Newton. Private Cochran was home on a furlough. He returned to Monterey, California and his wife and baby went to their home in Rock Island.

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Private First Class and Mrs. Gerald Ellis are the proud parents of a baby daughter, born Sunday, May 27, at the Allen sanitarium at Robinson. Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Griffith and Mr. and Mrs. Henry Ellis are the happy grand-parents. The little miss has been named Carolyn Marie.