



## With the *June 5, 1945* Colors

The following letter was written from Naples, Italy, to his mother by a soldier, known only to us as Maurice. It tells a novel phase of Army activities, hitherto secret.

"I'm stationed at Naples just a detachment of thirty-five of us. Fred from Peoria and I have been working down at the port ever since we've been in Italy. We hook up these big tankers with gasoline, 130,000 to 160,000 barrels, and we maintain all the installations, five of them. These installations consist of big tanks and pipe lines holding all the way from 20,000 barrels to 80,000 barrels.

"There's a lot of work connected in it keeping the pipe line repaired when there are leaks, repairing the valves, packing them, and replacing lots of them as it's all old line, eight, ten, and twelve inch line. We have a storage capacity of approximately 3,000,000 barrels. We also set pumps to discharge cargo to the main docks and loading racks, where the soldiers get their supply of gas. Our line runs from here to Bologna which is about 700 miles. Our boys are scattered all the way from Naples to Bologna. Every ten miles or less, depending on the terrain, there's a pumping station, where there are three operators and a maintenance crew to repair the line in case of fire, or leaks.

"The Italians are bad about tearing the line loose and getting gas, as it costs them \$5.00 a gallon on the black market, and they're always bringing in a bunch of them for stealing gas. I guess Fred and I have about the most important job as it all depends on us for the gas to be unloaded and stored. I like the work fine. We are subject to call twenty-four hours a day in case of a leak or if a strong wind comes up and breaks the tanker loose and tears the line out.

"We too have a lot of trouble with leaks as the Italians here loosen the flowage so they can get gas. We unload diesel, 80 and 100 octane gas, black oil and kerosene. We also have lines running to all airports fueling all the planes, and lines running clear up to the front supplying the Fifth army, and other divisions and armies.

"There's so much that we do that I can't write it all, but can give you an idea. We have unloaded around 300 of these big 130,000 barrel tankers — English, American, French, Dutch, Belgian, practically all the nations ships. We have loaded up that many (300) or more 70,000 and 80,000 and smaller ones to shuttle run up near the front, on islands, like Corsica, Sardinia, Capri and Ischia, where there are air fields and troops.

"We build these 500 to 10,000 barrel tanks. Last Christmas I wrote and said we were out on a job, I was out on Ischia island building tanks for a submarine and PT boat base for refueling. These lines from Naples to Bologna were laid by us. Every twenty feet is a joint of pipe and 700 miles is a long way. They're laying a line through the Brenner pass now by Bologna. We are the only company that handles all products, the others only handle gas. Incidentally we were scheduled to go to Burma, but it fell to Japs just when we loaded at New York. We also run supply depots, gas racks where companies get their gas, and lots of other construction work. We did some type of work back in Africa and Algeria. I was stationed at Constantine.

"We probably will be here for some time and then go to the Pacific to do the same type of work. We were attached to the Fifth army when we first came over. We handle several million barrels of gas each month. We were supplying the Air Corps while they were doing all the bombing on Berlin, and Italy also all the other various places. I was in Rome two days after it fell. I have been to Cassino and Anzio and several other places. I have a lot of pictures of them.

"We are going up to Bologna one of these days on pass. Leghorn is really wrecked. We've been in Naples for seventeen months, going on eighteen. The lines to the front consisted of four and six inch lines. The island of Capri is a very pretty place, also Ischia. You can see now what we've been doing now for the past twenty months. Back in Bizerte we lived in pup tents and rain. I didn't know it could rain so hard."

\* \* \* \* \*

Second Lieutenant Gordon E. Martin, son of Mr. and Mrs. Elbert L. Martin of Yale, has reported to Strother field, Kansas, to become a weather officer at this Seventy-second

Fighter Wing base of the Second Air Force. He came here from Sedalia Army Air field, where he had been stationed for more than eleven months.

Lieutenant Martin, a graduate of the Casey high school, was a student in the University of Illinois when he entered the armed forces in October, 1942. He took his officers' training at the Army's Technical school at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he was commissioned on June 5, 1944.

While Lieutenant Martin is on duty at Strother field, he and his wife, the former Millicent Mallory of Yale, will reside in nearby Winfield, Kansas, maintaining residence at 1224 Main street.

\* \* \* \* \*

Private Harold L. Schuch spent a ten day delay enroute with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John A. Schuch of near Newton. Private Schuch, who entered the Army in January, was being transferred to Fort George G. Meade, Maryland, from Camp Hood, Texas.

Another son, Lieutenant (j. g.) F. J. Schuch, who has been in the Pacific the past eighteen months, has arrived on the west coast. He expects to reach Newton sometime this week to spend his leave with his parents. He is a Naval flyer.

\* \* \* \* \*

Second Lieutenant Esther C. Earnest of Route Six, Newton, is now stationed at the AAF Overseas Replacement depot at Kearns, Utah. A daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Earnest, she has been in the Army Air Forces since May 6, 1943, and was previously stationed at Santa Ana, California.

The Overseas Replacement depot, commanded by Colonel Weldon W. Doe, is an installation of the AAF Personnel Distribution Command.

\* \* \* \* \*

Orla Books Houser, gunner's mate, second class of Newton, has arrived at Norfolk, Virginia, to undergo pre-commissioning training for duties aboard a new destroyer of the Atlantic fleet. A veteran of two years in the Pacific, he wears the American theatre and the Asiatic-Pacific theatre ribbons with one star.

His wife, the former Janette Cline, and daughter Margaret Ann, 10, reside in Newton.

\* \* \* \* \*

Seaman First Class Bert Ward Jr. is spending a leave with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Bert Ward of Newton. He has been on a Navy tanker in the Atlantic, and is here while the ship is being overhauled for transfer to the Pacific.

Another son, Don Ward, will receive his wings at the Naval Air Station at Corpus Christi, Texas, tomorrow.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sergeant John F. Weber Jr. left Saturday for Fort Sheridan, from where he will be sent to a B-29 station at Geneva, Nebraska. Bud has been spending a furlough with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Weber of Newton, after service with the Mediterranean Air Force in North Africa and Italy.

\* \* \* \* \*

Lieutenant Minnie A. Alcorn, wife of Lieutenant Fred B. Alcorn, has been ordered back to Charleston, South Carolina, after being on a hospital ship making trips across the Atlantic with wounded men. She is an Army nurse.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sergeant Russell Harrison, who is in Germany with an Ordnance Maintenance company, has sent the Press several copies of Yank, the European edition of the New York Herald Tribune and the Stars and Stripes. Russell is well.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sergeant and Mrs. Paul E. McCormick are the parents of a seven pound, eight ounce daughter, born June 1 at St. Anthony's hospital, Effingham. Mr. and Mrs. Carl G. McCormick are grand-parents.

\* \* \* \* \*

Jack Shaffer of Route Five, Newton was sworn into the Navy at Springfield. He will be on inactive duty status on about a month and will then report to a Naval station to begin seaman training.

\* \* \* \* \*

Chief Yeoman Thomas S. Marshall is here on a thirty day leave with his wife and little son, and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Marshall of Newton. He has been stationed for eighteen months in Naples, Italy.

\* \* \* \* \*

Seaman First Class Norbert H. Geltz has been transferred to Newport, Rhode Island, where he has been assigned to a ship detail.

\* \* \* \* \*

Medford Raymond Wilson and Emil Mullen have been discharged from the Army on points, after service overseas.