

## I'M STILL IN THE ARMY!

By  
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### En Route To Highland Park — II

ABOARD THE LUXURY LINER SS MATSONIA AS SHE APPROACHES SAN FRANCISCO'S GOLDEN GATE.—

San Francisco's beautiful Golden Gate is just ahead!

Shortly this giant troopship will nose its way into the bay and under the massive Golden Gate bridge and to the dock which will be the first contact with home in months, and in some cases years, for 2,406 Army weary and battle weary GIs aboard.

There is excitement in the air as I sit here in the captain's cabin writing this column. I have never seen a happier group of soldiers — and I share their happiness. We should be happy. We're going home!

#### A RAINY WAIT . . .

Most of us spent from five to 10 days at Oahu, T. H.'s Personnel Center, waiting for a ship to take us stateside. It was an unpleasant wait what with the poor living conditions and the hard rain-falls and the resulting mud.

So . . . you can see, we were right happy when we learned that our transportation had arrived . . . and it was the famous Matsonia, No. 1 luxury liner in the Pacific in pre-war days and since Dec. 7, 1941, the best troopship in the Pacific.

At the Personnel Center I was under one of the nicest and most helpful first sergeants I've met since I donned a uniform 38 long months ago. His name is C. E. Hiltunen and he comes from Pontiac, Mich. I told him I'd mention him in this column . . . so there you are, Sarge . . .

#### WE LEAVE HAWAII . . .

The day of our departure dawned dark and dreary. It was not like Hawaii, where the average temperature is about 60 the year around and the sun shines just about all the time.

We were loaded aboard large Army trucks at the Center and rushed to the pier where the Matsonia was docked. After the usual waiting time, we were ordered aboard. My quarters are in the fore part of the ship, F deck.

After depositing my heavy barracks bag in my bunk, I — and hundreds of others — went topside. Soon came two blasts from the ship's horn and we were set to depart.

A band played and all the people on the dock waved as this stately liner, still painted a combat gray, was tugged to open water. By this time the day was bright and lovely and this soon-to-be-a-civilian had never seen Honolulu and the surrounding country look more picturesque.

#### CHATS WITH COMMANDER . . .

I went to see Comdr. Charles V. Elliot, commander of all the troops aboard. He is a most cordial person and extended certain privileges which have enabled me to get around on the ship with greater freedom during this 4½ day voyage.

My quarters — and the quarters of 91 other GIs from nearly every state — were located where the ship's swimming pool used to be. And, by the way, where Dorothy Lamour, Irene Dunne, Shirley Temple, Jeanette MacDonald and other movie queens had enjoyed a dip in those carefree, pre-war days.

Shortly after we got under way I was taken to the tidy cabin of Lt. Comdr. C. L. Christian, a big, genial, white-haired gentleman who is chief steward and a man who has sailed on the Matsonia longer than any other person.

We had an interesting chat and I learned many facts about this ship . . .

#### CARRIES 170,000 TROOPS . . .

To date — and this is presumably her last trip as a troopship — the Matsonia has made 37 round trips between San Francisco, Honolulu, and battle stations down under. She has hauled a total of

170,000 troops since she became a first class troop-carrying vessel. "Someone knew trouble was coming for we began converting the Matsonia weeks before Dec. 7, 1941," Comdr. Christian told me.

On Dec. 14, 1941, the Matsonia left San Francisco with 3,000 combat-equipped soldiers. This was the first convoy to leave San Francisco in World War II. On the return voyage she was carrying women and children evacuated from the Hawaiian Islands.

#### MORE FIRSTS . . .

She was the first ship to take combat troops to Australia; the first to take Marines to Pago Pago. And back in July, 1944, she, being the fastest ship in the Southwest Pacific at the time, rushed 3,100 fighting men from Milne Bay, New Guinea to New Zealand and Aitape.

During my conversation with Comdr. Christian, Capt. Frank A. Johnson, the skipper of the Matsonia, stopped by.

Capt. Johnson, a colorful veteran of the sea, became captain of the Matsonia back in 1935. Prior to that time he was master aboard the Yale, a well known ship which cruised between Los Angeles and San Francisco.

Together Capt. Johnson and Comdr. Christian have made over 200 round trips between San Francisco and Honolulu. And during that time they have safely and comfortably (judging by the description given of the catering service, delicious food, and plushy quarters) transported 275,000 people to the Hawaiian islands aboard this \$8,500,000 liner.

#### RETURNS TO BRIDGE . . .

Capt. Johnson excused himself after spending 20 minutes with us and returned to the bridge.

"It has been a great experience carrying all these men, but it certainly will be nice to once again return to a civilian status," Comdr. Christian said.

In addition to the 2,406 GIs, officers and nurses (pretty ones, too!) aboard, there are 317 civilians, including many mothers with babes in arms.

#### MEETS ROSS TWINS . . .

Naturally I met many GIs aboard. Among them were the Ross twins, Bart and Dick, two of the nicest and cleanest-cut men I've ever known.

They come from Los Angeles. For hours at a time we talked about our futures, about the world situation, about how important the sanctity of the home and practiced religion are for a strong, morally-sound nation.

We were in complete agreement in our beliefs and it was indeed refreshing to talk to Bart and Dick and learn about their high ambitions, their happy home life, and their deep faith in mankind . . .

The Army liaison officer, Capt. Rex K. Escudillo, asked that I help him broadcast news aboard ship and together we gave the troops news from their home towns.

All in all the trip has been most pleasant with a minimum number of persons seasick. It is, indeed, a gay group and we are treated well.

And we're nearly in port . . . and now I've just got to leave this typewriter and go topside to see the majestic Golden Gate bridge.

See you soon!

(Ed's note: Last week a lovely spray of orchids arrived, via clipper, from Hawaii. Pleasant surprises like that, Whitt, are among the nicest things in life. Many thanks, sergeant.)

### Third Ronan Son Soon to Be Separated From Army Service

Major Frank J. Ronan Jr., son of the Frank J. Ronans of 324 Park, who is stationed in Hokkaido, Japan, as intelligence officer with the staff of the 9th corps, hopes soon to be released from service, although strongly urged to remain. It is his tentative plan, upon being discharged, to travel west in a trip around the world before returning home.

Former Marine S/Sgt. Jack, a brother, now 3 months a civilian, after a long, rugged service in the Pacific, has returned to his pre-war position with the Public Service Co. Frank Ronan, Sr., served as his son's best man, last November, when the former Marine married a Fredericksburg, Va., girl whom he had met at the USO club while stationed at Quantico.

Former Lt. Perry, who was stationed in England with the AAF, now several months out of service, is living in Chicago, and has returned to his former position with the Addressograph Co. there.

### Pfc. Ralph E. Ward, AAF Veteran, Reenlists in Service

Pfc. Ralph E. Ward, 21, for the last 29 months a member of the air corps, has reenlisted in the service. Stationed at various posts in the States, his last post was at Tynsdale Field, Fla.

After a 60-day furlough, to which his reenlistment entitles him, he may choose the field to which he is to be assigned.

He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Ward, 154 S. First.

### Marine Capt. Norvik To Establish Residence In Milwaukee, Wis.

Returning from a short visit to Milwaukee, Capt. and Mrs. Adolph Norvik have announced that they will take up residence there; the captain having been offered a position with the Price Erecting Co. His terminal leave will expire on March 14.

The young marine, who has spent four years and five days in the corps, served for 13 months of this time overseas. He was stationed at Pearl Harbor, New Caledonia, New Hebrides, Guadalcanal, and during the invasion of Tarawa took over the command of his unit, the colonel having become a casualty. He was a 1st lieutenant at the time.

After the invasion of Tarawa, Norvik was given a leave — December, 1943 — and since then has been stationed at posts in California.

He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. August Norvik, 1747 Broadview. Mrs. Norvik is the former Sylvia Price of Milwaukee.

### William J. Cortesi Returning from Japan

PEARL HARBOR, T. H. — Cpl. William H. Cortesi, 88 Clifton, Highland Park, returned to the States on the SS Goucher Victory, leaving Japan Jan. 22, and arriving in Seattle Feb. 5.

### Jean Hornung Receives Discharge From WAVES

Miss Jean Hornung, 311 Vine, was last week released from service at Great Lakes.

### James Bowden, Civilian Now Employed by Chicago Firm

Eighteen months in service, one year of which was spent in the European theater, where he acted as interpreter in nine countries, James Bowden, 22, has received his discharge from service and is now employed by an advertising firm in Chicago. Aside from this, he is working for his master's degree at Loyola and Northwestern.

Before entering the service Bowden attended St. Benedictine college, Atchison, Kansas. He is the son of Mrs. Margaret Bowden, 625 Central, who wears a gold star for her son, Marine Sgt. Robert, who gave his life at Tarawa, at the age of 23.

### Lillian Olson A Civilian Since Last Saturday

Miss Lillian Olson, of the WAVE, was separated from service last week at Great Lakes, after serving for over three years. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David Olson, 241 Prairie, Highwood.

### Pauline Costo, WAVE, Is Separated From Service at Gt. Lakes

Pauline Costo, SK 2/c, of the WAVE, was discharged last week at Great Lakes after nearly three years of service — April, 1943-February, 1946. During this time she was stationed at Norfolk, Va. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Costo, 216 North.

Her plans for the future are, as yet, indefinite.

### Shirley Lauridsen Home from Florida; Again a Civilian

Shirley Lauridsen, P. O. 2/c, of the WAVES, nearly two years in service, and stationed at the Atlanta, Ga., air base since D-day, has been released from the navy and is now at home of her grandmother, Mrs. Sophie Lauridsen, 374 North. A graduate of Highland Park high, she attended Occidental college in California, and received her training at Hunter college.

### Thomas Strenger of The Seabees Is Honorably Discharged

Thomas E. Strenger, SF 1/c, of the Seabees, who has been stationed on Okinawa for the past year, was released from service last week at Great Lakes, and is now home with his wife and daughter, Mary Jane, at 132 S. First.

### Mary Fleager of the WAVE, Terminates Service at Gt. Lakes

Miss Mary Fleager, Y 3/c, of the WAVE, who entered service over two years ago, and spent a large part of her term of service in Hawaii, in personnel work, received her discharge last week at Great Lakes. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Fleager, 559 Forest.

### Home from the Wars

Gerald H. Gould, SKD 1/c, 315 N. St. Johns, was last week honorably discharged from the navy at Shoemaker, Calif., according to official notice from that separation center.



## Killing the "Outlet Octopus"

Our hero has the right idea . . . the "Outlet Octopus" has to go . . . but the solution isn't the axe — it's adequate wiring.

Maybe yours is still just a baby Octopus . . . but it'll grow unless your wiring is adequate. Not only are "double plugs on double plugs" unsightly but they are also dangerous. Think of those little wires behind the plug, they just aren't built to carry such a load.

Avoid slow heating and inefficiently operating appliances. Adequate wiring means no more dimming lights . . . no more "Outlet Octopuses." You'll have plenty of convenience outlets . . . and no more "steps in the dark" — multiple switches will light your way ahead.

In your present or future home, plan to have adequate wiring so your new electric appliances will serve you better. Talk over adequate wiring with us or your electrical contractor today.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS

## HOME FROM THE WARS

### Col. Demonte Waite Terminates Active Service in May

Now on terminal leave, with his wife and son, Demonte Jr., at 1637 Judson, Col. Demonte Waite will return to inactive status on May 4.

In active service for over five years, he spent one year of that time in the Pacific theater with the adjutant general's department.

### Elmer A. Benson, Enters Chicago U

Thirteen north side students, including five veterans, enrolled under the "GI Bill of Rights," are among the 184 students who entered the college of the University of Chicago at the mid-year term January 28.

Among those who entered the college at the mid-year is Elmer A. Benson, 2323 Eastwood Ave.