

Those "Marching Men"

The war was very much on the minds of Emmanuel Missionary College students as they began the school year of 1941-42. War imagery abounded in the pages of the *Student Movement*: the annual campaign for newspaper subscriptions was waged with references to "subs," parachutes, guns, and armies. Students reflected on the meaning of World War II for them and their beliefs.

Then came December 7 and the attack on Pearl Harbor. The students could think of nothing else: "An air of unreality hangs over the college these days. . . ." Some of the "EMC boys" were posted to their assignments over the holidays. No sooner had the students returned from Christmas break than others began to leave. Louis Ludington was the first to depart from campus.

The "boys" wrote home from afar, from Louisiana to Alaska, and later from England to "Somewhere in North Africa" to the Philippines. In the fall of 1942, as the letters flooded in, begging for return mail, the *Student Movement* began a special column dedicated to the welcome letters. The "boys" became "our marching men." The following excerpts are taken from "Mementos of Our Marching Men" and trace the experiences of young men thrust into army training and war.

First there was the shock of separation and loneliness. GLENDON CONNER wrote to Sibyl Partain: *By now I suppose school has opened and is well settled into the new routine. I feel queer not being there. This is the first year I never went to school. Consider yourself lucky that you still can be there.* GEORGE BOSSE wrote from Alaska: *I am healthy and happy but lonesome-lonesome for my friends and school. I certainly wish I could be there struggling with history, English, and Bible with the rest of you.* And from ALBERT GREELEY: *Tonight I am a little, quite a little, homesick for E.M.C.*

Then came the stories of army life. The *Student Movement* editors opined, "It is good to know that the army has not robbed MILTON MURRAY of his sense of humor which will be readily noted in the following excerpt from one of his recent letters: *To also insure a restful night, we spent half an hour today breathing the atmosphere through a pair of goggles called a gas mask. I like to drill with a gas mask on because then the Sergeant can't see me grin and finds no opportunity to say, 'Wipe that smile off your block, this ain't funny.'*

OLIVER DOLL wrote: *It has fallen my lot to get off to a good start here. By that I mean some K.P. duty. My left arm is swollen from one of the shots the doctor has been giving me and it hasn't improved with the exercises we have been going through.* From PAUL R. CONE, the former business manager at EMC who was inducted into the army, came this report: *I've done fatigue and K.P. already and Friday we scrubbed barracks—and scrubbed every inch.* TOM ZWEMER wrote from Georgia and signed his letter "A lonely Buck Private": *I helped fix turnips one day and the cook added right in front of me a fourth pound of black, black pepper and said without the trace of a smile that he thought he would go easy on the pepper that day.*

The reality of war began to seep in as the men trained. ROBERT PADDOCK described field maneuvers in Yakima, Washington:

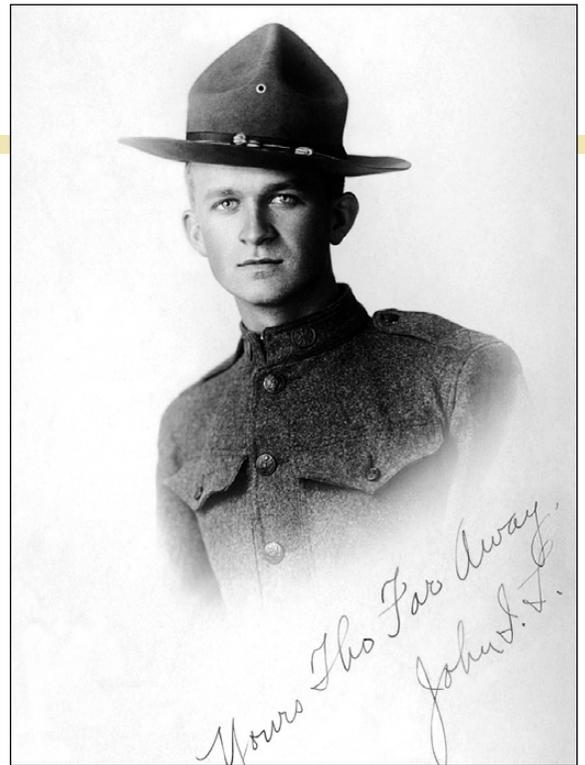
The last day of maneuvers, I was up at the forward observation post where the General and all the brass hats observe. We were about 1000 yards from the target during the firing. Each battalion fired separately to get the range and after the range was found, the whole division artillery fired a salvo—forty-eight huge guns at one time, firing at one target! The explosion was terrific and the destroying power of just one of these guns is great.

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The whole earth for miles around trembled as the guns fired their deadly projectiles. Just one of these shells cost \$90 dollars [sic] and I have seen just one battalion fire 500 rounds in one problem.

ROY MATTHEWS wrote from training camp: *Tomorrow morning we go through the infiltration course. We crawl on our stomachs seventy-five yards under constant machine fire, which is 18 inches above our heads. We crawl under barbed wire fences, over logs and ditches while dynamite goes off all around us. If we raise any part of our body an inch too high, well, it is just too bad. I guess this is as good a way as any to break us in for actual combat duty.*

The men began to ship overseas. From NOBLE



EMC and AU students, including student and World War I serviceman John I. Lundquist (pictured above), have served in many wars. For more memories of war and the university, see "Lining Up With Uncle Sam" and "From College Boys to Marching Men" in *As We Set Forth*.

VINING in England: *I had quite a good voyage over, I guess, compared to what it could have been, but it was none too pleasant. I was seasick for a few days. My room was in the front end of the boat where it rocked worst. I dread that part of coming back.*

ALLEN CRAW, "Somewhere in North Africa," explained that because of "strict censorship," he couldn't reveal much about where he was or what he was doing, but that he could talk about his impressions of the country. He thought the local people looked "almost as if they had walked out of the New Testament" and reported, *It is very interesting to see them go riding along on burros or on camels or dromedaries. They have learned just enough English to ask for cigarettes, candy, and chewing gum from the American soldiers. The little boys have also learned to ask the soldiers if they want a shoeshine.*

Some of EMC's men went into battle . . . and the fear came through in the letters. ARTHUR HARMS wrote from the Pacific:

Things have quieted down now, but recently we were engaged in combat, and I must confess that there are many more things much more pleasant in the world than being in "action." We had some very close calls as far as bombing and strafings go, and what I mean, that really scares a person. Anyone

who says that they are not afraid when the stuff goes on, is just a liar. During one strafing, bullets kicked up the dust five feet from the hole we were in, and about that time I was wishing that I was as small as an ant, but I really felt as big as an elephant.

DAVID BARNETT wrote: *I have been over here in England for four months and have made numerous flights over Germany. Believe me, the Lord is with us on every mission and it is nice to be able to trust in Him when danger is so imminent. Atheists don't exist in fox-holes, neither do they fly in bombers—take it from me.*

These were probably the experiences of many young American men who went to war, but the Seventh-day Adventist soldiers faced special issues. Throughout their letters they shared their problems and victories with Sabbath observance. **WILBUR HAINEY** wrote:

The other day I went up to see if I could go into town to attend church. They told me I would have to do the best I could out here, but when Sabbath morning came, one of the boys started asking me questions about why I didn't work on Saturday, and about what we believe. I answered them the best I could. During our talk there were several more boys who came along and started talking about the Bible. In the afternoon some coal came in to be unloaded. They told everybody to fall out, but I stayed inside my tent. The first sergeant came around to see if all were out. When he came into my tent, he asked me if I heard the whistle blow. I was reading my Bible when he came in, so I looked up and said, "Yes."



A group of medical "Cadettes" meets on campus

After he saw who I was he said that I would not have to go and to forget what he said, then he walked out. Everything was O.K. I believe the Lord wanted me to stay out here that day so I could talk to the boys that morning.

Many of the soldiers described solitary study and worship on the Sabbath. **TOM ZWEMER**

wrote: *I have no complaints as I get my Sabbath off. I spent the last one reading Romans, I and II Timothy and Revelation. I sang myself hoarse on hymns. I was alone in the post chapel so I didn't disturb anyone, and I felt better afterwards. Others joined with local churches for Sabbath worship. And many, just like Wilbur Hainey, felt that their trials gave them the opportunity to speak about their beliefs. **ARTHUR HARMS** told his story:*

One day we were informed (all of the medics) that we would attend classes Saturday morning. That of course,

meant going in and making arrangements to be excused from classes. I was quite nervous.

After I had stepped into the office, the first sergeant coldly demanded, "Well, what's your story?"

I was no longer afraid. It seemed as though new strength came to me and my words and thoughts flowed very freely as I gave him a brief summary of my convictions. He looked straight at me and said, "Did the army know anything about your religion when you came in?"

"Yes, sir, they did," I answered.

Then in a very pleasant manner, in fact as pleasant as I have ever heard him speak, he said, "Well, I guess we can't buck religion." He then dismissed me and told me to stay in the barracks, if I wanted to, during classes. I am positive it was the Lord that softened his heart.

Perhaps the news that warmed the home hearts most were the unaffected testimonies that their "boys" become men wrote home again and again, testimonies that suggested EMC had helped to instill a steadfast faith:

After having an experience of this nature, I can no longer doubt that God is leading me.

—**LOUIS LUDINGTON**



Medical Cadet Corps members present flags, 1943

Almost without exception the S.D.A. boys that I have met have been faithful. Their faith and knowledge of the Lord has increased.

—**DREW FIELD**

In the army living does as much as preaching, I believe. So my prayers—and I ask your assistance—are that I may be faithful in my representation.

—**ALBERT GREELEY**

I can truthfully say that during the past four years I have become completely and absolutely convinced that there is no way but the Christian way to successful living.

—**ALLAN R. BULLER**

We continue to remember you in our prayers.

—**GERALD WILKINSON**

Andrews historian and professor of English Meredith Jones Gray (BA '76, MA '77) is author of As We Set Forth.