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Letter from Marseille, France, July 15, 1945

Ralph Mouw

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15 July 1945
Marseille, France

My dear folks;

Sunday evening and time to write you folks a letter. As you probably have already noticed from the heading of this letter - I have moved to another country. So before I forget I want to tell you that my new APO will be 772.

We left Heidelberg Germany by convoy last Tuesday morning and after traveling four days we arrived here at Marseille which is as you have undoubtedly known in Southern France. It is roughly speaking about 100 miles from Italy.

Our trip south was very picturesque. We traveled down the

a new motor.

This particular route was the main Convoy route so along the way they had tent cities where we could stop overnight. Midway between these tent cities they had V.C.I. for Sandwich ships where you could drive up with a big convoy and get free sandwiches & coffee. At all army run of course and the actual sewing was done by German P.W.s.

This particular city is of course located on the beautiful blue Mediterranean sea. The shoreline is very pretty since the city is built around the bay and directly behind and surrounding the city are high white rock cliffs.

I am billeted in a small hotel on the main drag of the city. All I have to do is slip out to the

Phone Valley going through such
French Cities as Nancy, Dijon,
Lyons, & St Rombat. If you will
glance at a map you will
notice that this route comes within
75 miles of both Switzerland & Italy
at places, so we could easily
see the snow capped Alp Mountains.

I rode the tail end of the Convoy
all the way down and had
the responsibility of seeing that
any trucks that fell out would be
taken care of. Was rather fortunate
in that our motor trouble was
quite limited I did however have
to trade off one $\frac{3}{4}$ T weapons Carrier
with Ordnance so I talked them
into a trade since mine needed

strut to see the Sea.

This afternoon I took a motorboat ride around the Port of Marseilles. It lasted about an hour and a half. The sea was quite rough today and it really was fun riding the waves and getting sprayed by the salt water whenever we hit a white cap head on.

Yesterday was a big day over here since the French Celebrated "Bastille Day" which corresponds to our Independence Day. Traffic was literally tied up for hours by Parades and street dancing - they really had quite a festive spirit.

I suppose you are wondering just what I could be doing down here. Well I don't know

myself as yet but it will be some
work or other.

Today the Orders come through
finally giving us the credit for
the final two battle stars so now
in all that gives me 5 battle
stars and the Bronze Arrowhead
for being part of the actual landing
force in Normandy. These last
two stars give me a total of 86
points which is sufficient to
be released on provided I am
not declared essential which I am
almost certain they won't. Of
course it will very likely be
several months before I will get
back, but all I care about now
is getting back for good.

The climate out here is very warm in fact it is semi-tropical, so it isn't too bad a place to work for awhile.

Must close now and get some sleep. I hope you are all well as I am

Love
Your Son
Ralph