

## 1945 July 2-8

### Blue Star Banners



The Service Flag

(American Legion)

During World War II, many windows in La Crosse County were festooned with Blue Star Banners or flags. Also known as the Service Flag, each blue star stood for a family member serving in the armed forces.

It was created by Army Captain Robert L. Queisser of Ohio in 1917. Queisser had two sons serving in Europe during World War I. It was adopted as the unofficial symbol for parents who had a child in the armed forces. A [Blue Star Mothers organization](#) was formed during World War I.<sup>1</sup>

The Department of War issued specifications and guidelines for the manufacture and display of the banner during World War II. The banner could have up to five stars.<sup>2</sup>

This week, we feature a couple of families who had multiple blue stars on their banners. These are just two out of many.

## Five Stars On Service Flag At Carl Miller Home In City

Five stars are on the flag in the window at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Miller, 705 Pine street.

The first to go was Earl, now a captain serving as a Thunderbolt fighter pilot with the 12th Air Force. He enlisted in 1939 and was sent to San Antonio, Tex., for his airplane mechanic instruction. At that time the family was living on a



RICHARD

farm at Barre Mills and like most farmers, he was a mechanic by experience. After completing that course at San Antonio, he was sent to Puerto Rico, where he stayed 13 months and helped build Losey field.

On Jan. 2, 1941, he was returned to the States for flight officers' training. Feb. 2, 1942, he was graduated from this course and went to a gunnery school in Florida. From there he was assigned to overseas duty and left in time to take part in the North African campaign. Sicily, Italy and the invasion of southern France followed.

### Makes 186 Missions

One of the Thunderbolt planes was flown on 96 missions, although Capt. Miller made 186 himself. After completing 50 missions, he



EARL



RAYMOND

was given a rest period at Casablanca. When he finished 100, he was sent to the Isle of Capri for another rest, and while there met another pilot by the name of Miller.

While in North Africa he wrote about buying eggs from the Arabs at 30 and 40 cents apiece, but fried eggs, bread and jam made a feast for any one after eating rations.

His missions and other service have given Capt. Miller the

American defense, Mediterranean and the ETO ribbons, with five battle stars on the Mediterranean. He has the air medal with one silver oak leaf cluster for his work in Africa, the distinguished flying cross for a special mission, not requested, in Italy, a gold star and a silver star "for gallantry in action" and a presidential citation, given his unit for meritorious deeds in the face of enemy action.

He already has 127 points but instead of asking for a discharge is taking an advanced flying cadet course and will teach at Luke, Ariz.

Raymond, the second son to go, enlisted in the navy in May, 1942. After taking the aptitude test at the Great Lakes training station,



HARVEY

CHARLES

he was sent to Madison for a four-month course at the radio school. From there he went to New York for advanced training. At New Orleans and Hitchcock, Tex., he studied navy construction and storekeeper work. A course in welding he had taken at night school in West Salem helped him in the construction work.

His overseas service has been in Pacific areas. A recent letter stated a Christmas box mailed Oct. 10 reached him on May 11, being in good condition after all the many miles it traveled.

### Is In Navy Air Corps

Harvey, the third son to enlist, joined the navy air force in March, 1943. He was graduated from the University of Wisconsin as an honor student and winner of the fellowship in agricultural economics in 1941. He went to Bozeman, Mont., to do research work, on which he wrote a book and for which he received his master's degree from the University of Montana. From there he went to Washington, D. C., in June, 1942, to work, but in December was selected to go to San Francisco to help with the lend-lease program there.

While there he was married to

the sweetheart of his college days in Montana, Daphne Roddy, who had been awarded a scholarship at Mills college at Oakland. The ceremony took place in the college chapel.

His navy air corps training was received at St. Mary's, San Louis Obispo and Susanville, Calif., and Corpus Christi, Tex. He was graduated and commissioned at the Texas base. From there he was sent to Shawnee, Okla., for further training and assigned to duty overseas Feb. 1, 1945. He is a copilot on an army transport with headquarters in Hawaii. He has one daughter, Charlene, in Montana with her mother.

Charles was the farmer, but with his brothers gone, the work was too heavy. The family moved to La Crosse in November, 1943. Charles was inducted into service in March, 1945, being sent to Ft. Knox, Ky., where he was assigned to a motor tank corps. He now is taking his basic training. He is married to Juliet Bergsrud of La Crosse. They have one son, Douglas Charles, one year old.

### Enlists In Navy

Richard, the fifth to go, is only 17. He was graduated this spring from the West Salem high school, where each of his brothers had graduated before him. He enlisted in the navy and left May 24 for Great Lakes where he is receiving his boot training. He was able to attend the class day exercises of his class, but at Commencement, his mother and four other mothers received the diplomas for their sons.

Their sister, Eloise, left at home with the parents, will enter junior high school next fall.

## 4 Weber Brothers In Service; Brother-In-Law Gets Discharge

Four sons of Mr. and Mrs. John Weber, 716 Sumner street, are in service. They are



**NISSALKE** John, who is with a combat engineer unit, went overseas in June, 1943, after training at Fort Lewis, Wash., Fort Pierce, Fla., and Camp Pickett, Va.

He arrived in North Africa and took part in the invasion of Sicily July 10, 1943. After action in Italy he was in the invasion of

Pfc. Robert enlisted in the army Feb. 3, 1943, and trained at Camp McCain, Miss., before going overseas. He was shot through the neck by a Nazi sniper in Bappard, Germany, and received the purple heart.

### Sees Brother In Germany

While in Germany he visited his brother, John. Bob drove 260 miles in a jeep through rain from Bruck, Germany, to Rosenheim. It was the first time in 32 months John had seen anyone from home. Bob now is enroute to the States.

Nissalke served three years in the army before receiving a medical discharge. He trained at Camp Wolters, Tex., and fought on Guadalcanal until he caught malaria and dysentery. He was in hospitals for 20 months. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. William Nissalke, Dresbach, Minn., and his wife is the former Mary Weber.



**FRANCIS**



**ROBERT**



**JOHN**



**JOSEPH**

southern France in August, 1944, and entered Germany Dec. 14, 1944.

### Helps Free Prisoners

At the time of the Nazi surrender, he was in Austria and had freed prisoners at Dachau, a concentration camp. John, who has 95 points and six battle stars, is believed to have left for France in June and is expected home soon.

His wife is the former Elayne Wrobel and lives with their daughter Sharon at 1238 West avenue south.

Pfc. Joseph entered the service in September, 1944, and trained at Fort Knox, Ky., before going overseas to join the 4th Armored Division. He landed at Le Havre, went by train across France, into southeastern Belgium, through Luxembourg, Germany and Austria to Czechoslovakia. He was at the latter place until the end of the war and on May 27 went back to Germany.

His wife, the former Aletta Werrel, and children live at 900½ Mississippi street.

Francis now is on one of the Marshall islands. He received his training at Camp Perry, Va., then went to California and on to the Hawaiian islands where he stayed for training. He enlisted in the Seabees May 15, 1943.

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Jeff Rand  
Adult Services Librarian  
La Crosse Public Library  
jrand@lacrosselibrary.org

**Sources & Notes:**

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<sup>1</sup> "Blue Star Banner," *The American Legion*, accessed 2020 July 12, <https://www.legion.org/troops/bluestar>.

<sup>2</sup> *The American Legion*.