

Tues. Sept. 30, 1941
(In the woods near
Mansfield, La.)

Dear Fred: (Ware)

I really have intended to write you long before this, but something has popped up to take precedence. My family will feel like they should have priority at this time when they hear I've written to you, and only sent them a convenient one-cent post card. However, should they learn the content of this letter, I know they will be in harmony with the thought and spirit of this epistle as they are not only ardent fans of all sports, but firm believers in the advantages afforded by a training in our competitive sports.

Our Regiment is in Bivouac $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles west of Mansfield, La., for the purpose of rest, personal and clothing cleanliness, and to give the necessary attention to some 200 vehicles before starting a move to our assembly area for troop movement back to Camp Robinson. As I sit at my improvised desk and office here in the midst of some of Louisiana's pine trees completing a few of my duties as the Executive Officer, I can see a sight that is good for my kind of sore eyes--I am sure you will appreciate the point as I try to develop it in these hastily written lines.

About 200 yards across the fields to a clearing where our vehicles are properly lined in a motor pool, and all drivers and assistant drivers are supposed to be busily engaged in what we call 1st and 2nd Echelon of Maintenance, I see this sight. There are some 40 men in non-descript uniforms, and of all things, playing football. They have hastily organized sides, use a huddle, give some kind of instructions, jump out of that huddle with a spirit, speed, and enthusiasm that would do justice to a major eleven. The ball (yes, a football) is snapped and a smash off tackle or an end run was never enjoyed more. The tackling is fair, there is no flinching when the ball carrier rams the line, and the pile-up is one effervescing enthusiasm and pleasure. Fumbles, bad passes from center, poor blocking, etc., are greatly in evidence. That does not matter--it is the game, and spirit of the contest that they are enjoying. They are their own officials, and the ball changes side with very little other than a kidding dissent. I know I should insist on a return to duty, but I also know they are not in condition to stand the "gaff" and that in a very short time they will return to their duties refreshed and in a better frame of mind. The field is rough, and the weeds are waist high, and a poorer place to play could hardly be found. Therefore if they escape without any serious injuries I'll be glad and feel the laxity in duty justified.

Now for the real reason this message is written. I have before me an A.P. story quoting our good friend Phog Allen on the death of Intercollegiate football, given at a football dinner at Wm. Jewell College. I am aware of the fact some individuals desire publicity, whether favorable or unfavorable, as long as their name is kept before the public. Sometimes in seeking this publicity some individuals really do not believe what they say, and issue statements that will be challenged for the above stated reasons. Therefore it would be good logic to let their stories die a natural death and let the facts speak for themselves. However, I had an uncontrollable desire to "come back" and feel as tho' I'm entitled to be a commentator on the game this year in as much as I cannot participate as I love to do, in coaching the game.

The scene before me of young men playing, and Dr. Allen's challenge, was too much, hence the following reflections.