

Kansas Citian on U. S. Cruiser Hears Nazis Claim Craft Is Sunk

Lieut. William Belt and Others From This Area Are on
Tuscaloosa, Which Distinguishes Itself Smashing
Shore Batteries During Invasion.

BY MARCEL WALLENSTEIN.

(The Star's London Correspondent With
the Allied Forces.)

ABOARD U. S. S. Tuscaloosa, June 9 (Delayed).—Standing beneath a portrait of John Paul Jones in the wardroom as guns above fired salvos into German positions at Cherbourg peninsula today, Lieut. William Belt of 1330 East Thirtieth street, Kansas City, and Lieut. Carl Gray of Girard, Kas., told their invasion experience. Belt is a son of George Belt and a graduate of Kansas university, where he was an instructor until 1942. Gray, now in the marine corps, once delivered The Star to subscribers in Girard.

As we talked the cruiser trembled under its own gunfire directed by shore parties. The Tuscaloosa, carrying other Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma men, distinguished herself by smashing heavy shore batteries. Since D-day I have watched her blowing heavy smoke rings as the guns spoke. All day positions near the coast have been crumbling under the blasting of this ship.

Blast Motor Transports.

Following dispatches from the shore arriving at rapid intervals, a plane reported ten motor transports hit.

Tuscaloosa's crew rescued many airmen and mariners during action and now has a new mascot in shape of toy monkey brought aboard by an air pilot after crashing into sea.

Enlisted men aboard from the Kansas City territory include William Bartley, Rubin Leve, Nick Podoba, Louis Ridenour, all of St. Louis; Forest Fain of Sweet Springs, Mo.; Bruce Kurtz, Wyaconda, Mo.; Chester Manness, Valley Park, Mo.; Carl Miller, Webb City, Mo.; Russell Pittman, Springfield, Mo.; Jack Swisher, Minneola, Kas.; John Graves, Muskogee, Ok., and Lloyd Henderson, Cherokee, Ok.

A Ship Nazis Fear.

All day today and yesterday these boys heard the German radio repeat a claim that the Tuscaloosa had been sunk. The Tuscaloosa,

which once guided Canadian destroyers against German raiders, is one of the most feared and hated of American ships by Germany and continues to make her name detested by enemy forces in this neighborhood.

Lieut. John Fletcher, 6522 Pennsylvania avenue, son of Mrs. Charles W. Fletcher, was a member of Admiral Don Moon's naval staff in the invasion. Fletcher is a graduate of Southwest high and of Kansas university in 1942. He is 22 years old and was present at all early conferences which prepared for the assault. He is a communications officer.

Also with Admiral Moon were Signalman Charles Cassidy, Wichita, Kas.; Hospitalman Clem Sears, Bartlesville, Ok.; Seaman Robert Byrne, Springfield, Mo.; Boatswain's Mate Clarence Neuman, Wilber, Neb.; the admiral's staff also included Lieut. Thomas Hieronymous, assistant United States district attorney, Oklahoma City; Lieut. Joseph Weindle, Miami, Ok., and Lieut. Holman Lee, jr., son of Holman Lee, Kemper Military school, Boonville, Mo.

Lieut. (j. g.) William Belt, 27 years old, entered the navy as a midshipman after receiving his master's degree in Spanish at the University of Kansas in 1941. After completing midshipman school at Columbia university, New York, he

took a 2-month course in aircraft identification at Ohio State university. He was assigned to the cruiser U. S. S. Tuscaloosa as aircraft recognition officer.

Lieutenant Belt was graduated from Westport high school in 1934 and attended Junior college for two years before going to Kansas university. He was employed by T. H. Mastin & Co. here for a short time. He is a son of Mr. and Mrs. George F. Belt. Mr. Belt is an independent buyer of oil leases.

Lieutenant Fletcher applied for a commission in the naval reserve soon after being graduated from college in 1942. He trained at Newport, R. I., and took a communications course in Washington where he received the highest grade in his class and was rated "outstanding and a credit to the naval reserve." He was advanced to lieutenant junior grade and sent to England in March. He is unmarried.

LAW "GRADS" TO A REUNION.

A reunion of the 1924 graduating class of the Kansas City School of Law will be held tomorrow night at the home of Jesse I. Moritz, 2317 Swope Parkway.

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