

17 January 1945

Dear Dr. Allen,

Say, my Christmas card certainly brought forth a nice dividend! Thanks a million, Doc, for adding my name to your mailing list of the "Rebounds." Never was news more welcome. I've read and re-read that November issue and I must say that you've packed a whale of a lot of good reading into those pages. I must now confess that for the first time since leaving the campus in May of 1943, I feel up-to-date and fully informed on the adventures of Jayhawkers, whose gridiron, basketball, and track achievements I once had the opportunity to write up for The K.C. Star.

If those damn Japs hadn't dragged us into this fricas, I'de still be turning out sports copy on K.U. athletic teams. Now that I'm in this war, I wouldn't trade my "blues" for the snappiest sport suit that may be even now on display at Carl's. No sir! As I look at it, Uncle Sam is giving me a wonderful opportunity to see a part of the world outside the continental limits of the good ole' U.S.A. and fight for those "freedoms" that every man in the armed forces and those we left behind...want preserved!

Really, Doc, so much water has flowed under that proverbial bridge since my leaving the "hill," that I hardly know where to begin in bringing you up to date on my activities and adventures in the Navy. So, I'll retrace my steps and go back to July 1st of 1943, when I began my V-12 training at Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio. I spent four months happy months at that quiet, conservative school. Made a lot of new friends. Since my major was journalism and because the school did not offer a curriculum by which I could continue work toward my degree, the V-12 Unit Commander arranged a transfer to Northwestern.

On November 3, I arrived on the N.U. campus. I was enrolled in 14 hours of journalism and 3 of navigation. So, although the Navy was paying my tuition, board and room, I felt almost like a civilian student again! When I entered the Midshipmen's School at Columbia University, I soon found out I was really in the Navy. Those sixteen weeks of training were really rugged. Don't know when I ever studied so hard in all my life. Really, Doc, I think I could make Phi Beta Kappa now if I returned to K.U. and practiced my "middie" school study habits! Heh, heh!

Well, to continue, I became an "officer and gentleman by Act of Congress" on the 28th of June of 1944. Yes, I finally became an Ensign. Left Columbia U. with a pretty good record, too. Stood 164th in a class of 1400, which isn't bad for K.U.'s perennial "freshman," for as you know, I had a little trouble getting initiated into A.T.O. Just couldn't make a "C" average! Guess I just played around too much with those Chi O's and Pi Phis.

With my midshipmen's training behind me, I thought I was through with book-learning. Was I ever wrong! When I reported to the Amphibious Training Base at Coronado, Calif., on the 12 of July, I found out I was still an Ensign under instruction. That I remained until the 4th of September, when I and eleven other officers were given a draft of "boots," to train as a transport boat group. This we did, spending another six weeks, teaching those kids the ship-to-shore movement applied in amphib operations and small-boat handling. You see, as boat officers, we lead in a wave of landing barges. Yes, that's my duty in the Navy.

On the 21st of October, our outfit received orders to pick up a troop transport, the U.S.S. Eastland which was just commissioned at one of the West Coast ship yards. I reported aboard on the 28th and it was then that I began drawing that ole' sea pay! Heh, heh.

AIR MAIL