

Ensign Russell J. Chitwood

On Friday, the 24th of August, we were shocked and grieved when we learned of the death of Ensign Russell J. Chitwood, Navy Ferry Pilot and star end on the Kansas 'Varsity Football team of '37, '38, and '39. Russell was killed Tuesday in the collision of his plane and an Army B-25 training plane near Rodeo, New Mexico, the 11th Naval District announced. "Russ" was flying a Navy Fighter based at San Pedro, Cal. His widow lives in Long Beach, California. Russell was the son of R. A. Chitwood of Conway Springs, Kansas.

We just received a letter from our Bob Allen this morning, Aug. 27, stating that he has left his hospital at San Francisco with 263 patients for Camp Lejeune, New River, North Carolina. He will fly back, and if possible, if he is lucky, and the breaks come his way, he may be able to drop off a few hours to visit his wife, Jean in Topeka. We are trying to make arrangements whereby we can pick him up and all of us meet at one central point for a short few hours' reunion. Bob thinks that it is a cinch that he will be in the service of the Navy from 18 to 24 months from the present.

Note: August 29, 1945 - We just received a wire from Bob from Washington, D. C. He will fly to Kansas City tonight where we will meet him and drive him to Topeka where Jean, his wife, is not well. The good Dr. Pfuetze would not let Jean travel.

Mrs. Allen and I also received a letter from one of our, and of our whole family's very good friends, Lt. (j.g.) H. C. "Cliff" McWilliams, USS Nehenta Bay, (CVE-74) Fleet Post Office, San Francisco, California, dated June 13. Long time no see, Cliff.

Cliff says, "Where there is smoke there is fire, and you've probably heard via the grape vine that I was on my way to the Pacific. This I speak of in the past tense. I am now there, and have been for over two months. In fact I am now salty enough to have a slight bow in my legs. The passageways are much too low for a man of my stature, (6ft. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ "). I have a head that is slightly out of proportion due to the numerous knocks on the noggin. I have been seasick twice. And, like Mark Twain, I felt that if I lived through those periods it would be tragic. but now my equilibrium seems more adapted to that of the roll and pitch idea. There have been many occasions when I have muttered to myself - home was never like this - or - man's place is in the home beside woman - or such similar sweet sounding phrases. And incidentally this brings up a subject which is so often discussed but never is a reality. Women! Most of the boys are married and they certainly do miss their wives. For us single men, I believe we find solace in seeing Lana Turner at the Cinema which has a time lag of about two years in current features. We have seen the same movies so many times we anticipate the actors' lines. I have come to the point where I find Laurel and Hardy sure academy award winners!"

"Well, I will close by saying that in the test of stern reality there is still a sense of humor that exists. The utter fantasy of some of the events through which we have, by God's grace survived, the fantasy of these have on occasion somewhat bewildered me. Through all the day and night's activity, however, there runs a strain of mental reflection and a gradual formulation of a certainty of purpose and an awareness of just what is the better life."

"My hair should be turning gray, but it isn't. However it has a tendency to stand up pretty straight at times. I would give up a week's leave and Sunday deserts to see you people now. I plan on darkening your door again so instruct the local militia accordingly."