

Your friends - Henry Shenk, Elmer Schaake, Reg Strait and Ray Kanehl - all extend their best wishes and greetings of the Yuletide season.

Last Saturday morning, prior to the Kansas-Oklahoma game, Cpl. Harold E. Van Slyck, USMCR, of Topeka, Kansas, walked into my office and told me the story of how Lt. T. P. Hunter died on Guam. The Marines affectionately called him "Teep", but he was always "T.P." to everybody on Mt. Oread. Cpl. Van Slyck stated that on July 21, the first day of the landing on Guam, they landed around 10 o'clock in the morning. "It was a rough landing. It took most of the day to secure our positions. Everything was quiet, and we had started to dig in for the night. Our company was not tied in with anyone, and we were right on the coast. T. P.'s platoon went up around the hill to protect company headquarters. T. P. put his men out, and had called the sergeants of his squads to come in for the scoop (instructions).

"T. P. was kneeling down in a shallow hole with one of his enlisted men, waiting for the other men to come in. T. P.'s platoon was on the slope of the hill, and over on the other side was a cave partly concealed by bushes in front of it. A Jap raised up out of this cave and turned a machine gun on T.P. T. P. and the man with him were killed instantly. We carried them down and buried them that night beside the road, as we had to move on the next morning. Later the bodies were moved and buried properly.

"The loss of T. P. made the Marines fighting mad. They were out to bag their quota of Japs. That night when the Japs came out of the cave we were waiting for them. They came out and started to walk past - so close they could have touched the muzzles of our guns, had they known. Our boys with the machine guns waited until the Japs got right up close, then really mowed them down. We killed 50 Japs without the loss of another single man in our outfit."

I am sure all of you will be interested in a letter I received from Lt. James R. Surface, USMCR, now at Oceanside, California, a K.U. graduate in '42. He says, "I have just returned from about 18 mos. in Hawaii, and I have been assigned to a school here. Two of my instructors were with T. P. throughout his career in the M.C. - and left him just before the Guam campaign where he was killed. . . . They told of T. P.'s popularity with his men and officers. Of course, T. P. didn't always do things in the prescribed military manner - but he always got them done - and well done. They chuckled about the way T. P. would mother and worry over the boys in his platoon - according to them, "Teep was like an old mother hen with a brood." And naturally his boys loved him for it. They told of several instances when a man who was causing trouble in another outfit would be transferred to T. P.'s, and T. P. would make a good man out of him.

"As you probably know, T. P. was recreation officer for his battalion, and Fairfield told how on Guadalcanal, when everyone else was taking a siesta, T. P. would get his boys out for a fast game of basketball - and play himself, too. You remember how religious he was - they told of one night in their hut in N. Zealand - a gunner was saying some things about religion that T. P. didn't like - he tolerated it just so long - then calmly rose - socked the gunner right on the jaw and broke it in three places. This might sound a bit out of line, but these two assured me that the gunner really had it coming. . . . It is a tragedy that T. P. Hunter won't come back, but it is up to the rest of us to make ourselves deserve sacrifices such as his."