
Riding the Sooner Range

By TED BEAIRD

It's deep dusk here on the West Coast. Deep dusk in the midst of thousands of soldiers in training at this large and ever-expanding training center. Even the dusk has settled into the four walls of the squadron headquarters as these notes are being dashed off on this late evening of Homecoming, 1942! That Homecoming back HOME—back at O. U.!

Sure, Sooners in and on every corner of the globe together today—maybe by the dozens; maybe in “pairs”—but they “assembled” to relive Homecoming at the world's leading university (O. U.)! Many Sooners in the armed forces are likely still checking at this late hour, wondering why we did not completely “twist the Tiger's tail” by kicking that extra point after touchdown.

Sure we had a Homecoming get-together today—only two, Lt. Larry Cotton, '33, and “Yours truly”—but we went through the ritual and staged all steps—even though it was “in retrospect.”

Yes, Larry and I “checked the blueprint!” We visualized the annual Homecoming meeting of the alumni executive board in the Oklahoma Memorial Union

Building, this lasting memorial to the service men of World War I.

We pictured the ringing of telephones; the hurry of Western Union boys; the back-slappin' of ole grads who had met for the first time in twenty or thirty years; the jam in the Union Cafeteria trying to hurry a bite of food before the game; the Sooner rally in the Fieldhouse; the pride of Oklahoma (O. U.'s band) steppin' out; the thousands pouring into the Stadium; the game—then all quiet on the Southwest front, indeed TAPS for the 1942 war Homecoming at O. U.!

TAPS?—Yes, that's taps sounding outside! Thousands of soldiers to get “tucked in” only to “rise and shine” at 5 a.m. tomorrow! Rise and shine—and continue to TRAIN! Wonder where Homecoming of 1943 will find 'em—these many, many O. U. grads scattered into every theater of combat throughout the world? May we hope—BACK HOME—back home to drop down on the campus and enjoy old friends and college activities! Whatever the 12 months to come may bring, we are all aware—those serving in civilian as well as in uniform ranks—there are a few tasks ahead to be performed and *all* will not be roses as we jog along—Riding the Sooner Range!

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THEN AND NOW

A few months ago Larry Cotton, '33, civilian war worker representing the Treasury Department in sale of war bonds, called on Ted Beaird, '21ba, alumni executive secretary, in the alumni office in the Oklahoma Memorial Union Building where the latter was busy helping the Army Air Corps solve its officer procurement problem. On Homecoming afternoon, November 14, they met again—and this time both were in the uniform of the Army Air Forces. Lieutenant Cotton (right above) is public relations officer for the IV Air Service Area Command, Sacramento, California, and Captain Beaird is commanding officer of “1,016 of the world's finest American soldiers” at McClellan Field. Together they checked reports on the Sooners' Homecoming football game.