

Riding the Sooner Range

By TED BEAIRD

OBSERVING "War Activities" through the window to the West at the close of this December 1, 1942 day, is a new experience in Riding the Sooner Range! Not that there is anything unusual about the window on this third floor—not that it is unusual for a heavy fog to settle over this West Coast and the sun fail to break through until late afternoon (as it has this December 1)—not that it is unusual for planes (real American war machines) to zoom in and out at this large air base—BUT UNUSUAL that I find myself "temporarily parked" (No, not due to gas or mileage rationing) to receive "repairs" at this blacked-out, reinforced concrete and steel, plus excellently equipped, base hospital on the Coast! And—the days *can* grow into weeks—the nights into months (and *do*) during this "relax" period—following weeks of 5 a.m. rise and shine to late evening taps with hundreds of real American soldiers on the drill fields, on the rifle range—on the "alert" of training!

But—in a pause such as this, one can (and does) look over the field of the hurry and scramble, the thousands of changes, the hardships and tragedies caused during the period of the first year of World War II as it draws up to the one-year line this week.

Sooners of O. U.—by the thousands—are in this fight; in it to the finish! Your well organized and excellently functioning alumni office at O. U. has a staff devoting endless hours to keeping track and recording the list of sons of O. U. throughout the world who are serving. And—now the struggle is beginning to take its toll. Late last night a bulletin came to me—"Lt. AL NAIFEH, '37ba, '40law, of the U. S. Navy, lost in action, Solomon Islands." Thus—the war is brought home closer—ever closer. One of O. U.'s finest students of law—a young man in the beginning of an outstanding career—an O. U. alumni board member at the time of his untimely passing. Thus the war is brought quite close to us! Yes, there have been O. U. sons before him, and there will be those to follow before we are privileged to return to civilian ranks in an America *at peace* once more!

O. U. men taking a few minutes out from war activities at their various posts of duty all over, drop a hurriedly written letter my way and they have reached me finally at this "relaxation" point. Indeed, there are many notes breaking the monotony of the hour. Major C. GUY BROWN, '23ba, from his post of duty, War Department Headquarters of the Army Air Forces, Washington, pauses long enough to say, "Enjoyed a visit recently here in the capitol with HERB SCOTT, '26ba, '26ma, and J. H. "Zeke" VAN ZANT, '25ba, '26ma." The venerable dean of the O. U. extension division and the big butter and egg oil executive of Enid were probably forced into the nation's capitol on war problems of their own.

From far away "Somewhere in Australia," another alumni executive board member writes—Maj. BUS MILES, '26bs, '27med, Anadarko contribution to the United States Army Medical Corps. In part Doc says, "This young brother-in-law of yours, Lt. FRANK HAXEL, '32, seems to be doing OK in acting as the protector of O. U. in these climes! We are here *strong*—O. U. is well represented, but the Texas Longhorns are here in my outfit also, and we have 'struggles.'" Lt. CY ELLINGER, '26ba, in Las Vegas, Nevada, no longer the big-time banker in peaceful Purcell, Oklahoma, writes us—"Catch a cross country bomber and drop in some day." Yeah—we will *catch one!* When this struggle is over we will *catch* a ride to the cabin near Purcell and along with Cy and the rest of the McClain County gang, enjoy broiled Oklahoma Sooner Select Steaks—and sleep past "revell—re!"

Mrs. "Maj" Malone drops a note our way from her war industry employment center in Atlanta,

Georgia—to say, "Oh boy—Maj (J. F. MALONE, '37ba, O. U. staff member and the fair lady's husband) will graduate from officer school tomorrow, December 1, and has a ten-day 'furlo' heading toward Georgia. I have seen him twenty-four hours *once* in seven months."

From "Somewhere in Scotland" a glamorous engraved Christmas card has just arrived from one of my Union chaps—Lt. L. D. "Bill" THOMAS, '41ba, who, while asking the latest news on ANDY CROSBY, '39ba, '41law, Lt. HAROLD REEDY, '41, RALPH KENYON, '37ba, '38law, and numerous O. U. cronies, states, "I was in England for three months—now (and have been for three weeks) in Scotland. Even though it's thousands of miles from this spot to the campus of the University of Oklahoma, 'my heart's right there!'"

A letter from GEORGE ED WALTON, '39law, an O. U. alum "lifer" recently of Camp Wolters, Texas—more recently of a specialized training school in Santa Monica, California—gives complete details on his training unit and announces the fact that he graduates this week and will be on his way "somewhere" for the U. S. Army Air Corps.

From across the way—indeed, *how* far across the way, Boston, Massachusetts and headquarters of the Interceptor Command of the U. S. Army Air Corps—C. O. HUNT, '38ed, '40law, advises, "Had a one week leave at home (Purcell, Oklahoma) and brought my family back here. I hope to have them with me so long as I am in the continental confines of the U. S."

Thus it goes—notes, cards, letters (more than *welcomed* letters) drift in from loyal Sooners scattered to the four corners! Men who have given up homes, professions, families, to contribute their part in the task before us—but there will be a turning point and smoother gallopin' on the Range! Turning point? Yes, for your Range Rider, here is a "turning point" that has just flashed through via teletype, "Capt. Ted Beaird, U. S. Army Air Corps, relieved of duties (Camp Stockton, California) as of this date and will proceed to Pendleton, Oregon, Flying Field for new duties." HO HUM—now—to get this period of "relaxation and repair" over—dash down to Camp Stockton, California, load in Kathryn and Sallye and hit the Range *again!* Well, even at that, we *will* meet other Sooners (they will be along the trails and there at that new post)—so this all adds up to Riding the Sooner Range (*in war times in the Army!*)

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Sooner Reunion Down South

Sooners down Tennessee way congregated for an impromptu shindig November 17 in Memphis after word got around that several members of Eddy Young's orchestra, on an engagement there, were former musicians in the Varsity Club orchestra while attending the University. The reunion took place in the Balinese Room of the Hotel Claridge where the orchestra was playing. Present for the celebration were Ernie Hoberrecht, '41journ, former reporter on the *Memphis Press-Scimitar*, and Mrs. Hoberrecht (Mary Jane Royal, '37); Lewis Mock, '38-'40, optometrist at Greenville, Mississippi, and Mrs. Mock (Rosemary Fair, '39-'41). Mr. Mock was pianist with the Varsity Club orchestra during student days and his wife was vocalist. Mrs. Mock is now singer and announcer with radio station WJPR in Greenville. Sooner members of Eddy Young's orchestra were James Emery, '42ed; Marvin Rice, '41, and Jack Musick, '40-'41.

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