

Riding the Sooner Range

By TED BEAIRD

MAY DAY (and not "A" Day)—May 1, 1945. And—thanks to the response that has rolled in from all quarters, signifying interest in overseas mail—mail from thousands of Sooner sons riding the seven seas, and participating otherwise—let us again take a glance this morning from recent communications received from the various "Ranges" of your friends and associates of the Armed Forces.

From Capt. MENTER G. BAKER, JR., '42bus, Muskogee, Oklahoma, now in the European Theater:

"From *Sooner Magazine* I learned that Life Memberships now total over eight hundred which is fine, but wouldn't it really be fine if we had eight thousand. We'll really *get* after them when the war is over."

From Tech. Sgt. TULLIE B. HARRIS, '36-'39, Willow, Oklahoma, now with the 94th Fighter Squadron overseas:

"Have put in 31 months on this side since what seems like years ago, but have managed to keep in contact with two or three members of old gang, and I still know that O. U. is on the ball."

From Staff Sgt. JACK P. DRAKE, '43bus, Wagoner, Oklahoma, now in the Philippines:

"I received the *Sooner* November issue and even though it was a little old, it is good to know where the boys and girls are located and what they are doing. Would have given anything to see the good O. U.-A. & M. basketball game. The war news is looking very encouraging at the present time, and I am looking forward to returning to Norman and looking up all of my old friends."

From Pfc. PERCY BLAIR, '42eng, Tulsa, Oklahoma, written from Belgium:

"Can't figure out where all the Sooners that are supposed to be in this theater keep themselves. The last alumnus of O. U. I've run into was a gob in a Washington, D. C., bar, 18 months ago."

From Sgt. JAMES HOWARD McELHANY, '42, Norman, Oklahoma, written from India:

"I'm playing around in radio over here—mostly operating plus a little minor engineering now and then. Of course we spend a good portion of our time smearing on mosquito repellent. I'm sorry to be so late with my renewal to *Sooner Magazine* but, confidentially I got into a little game of chance and lost all of my rupees. Therefore I had to wait until the eagle screamed again."

From Sgt. LYLE D. COPMANN, '41-'43, Oxford, Kansas, with the 9th Army in Germany:

"It pleases me greatly to receive *Sooner Magazine* so promptly in view of the terrific pressure on the mails. My copy reaches my hands I assure you.

Both O. U. men and Aggies alike in my outfit share it since it so comprehensively covers the postwar plans of our home state—and State University."

From Yeoman BILL VAN DYKE, '38, Norman, Oklahoma, on the *U. S. S. Mayfield Victory* (AK-232) out on the high seas in the southwest Pacific come these words:

"While stationed in Hawaii, two long years, I ran into a lot of O. U. boys, and of course, the Alumni Association we started brought many more in. It was plenty nice to see all of them but now I find that the nearest thing to another Sooner is our Navigator . . . and the nearest he ever came was making the annual Dallas trip with the University of Texas people.

"There is darn little I can say about this duty, it is just water and more water. We've had little real excitement, but enough to keep me stampeding when I hear that bell start clanging away."

From JOHN A. PAYNTER, '26ba, Wichita, Kansas, now of the American Red Cross staff, stationed at Tripoli, Tripolitania:

"The Italians in the streets all sing as if their voices were trained. I thought of Joe Benton and the many times he has told of the vocal qualities of these people. I attended the whole week of Opera at the Theatre Di Monte Carlo which was worth a trip over there.

"Well, I learned that I was selected to take the choice spot in Africa as Field Director of the swankiest new A.T.C. base in Africa, Mellaha here at Tripoli. I learned that I had served better than I thought at Khartoum so got this advancement. I have six Red Cross people here under my command, choice people of this area. I don't see how I could have been so well treated. This is actually one of the most beautiful places I have ever seen any place. Tripoli is only a few minutes from the base. This base is the former race course Mussolini had for the elite of Italy. We are in the middle of moving into this fine base. It is reported to have cost nearly \$16,000,000. A real marble fox hole."

B-29 Drive Progresses

Bond receipts to be applied on the \$600,000 total set for the O. U. B-29 drive had started arriving by air mail from alumni overseas by early May. On May 1, bonds totalling \$209,700 had been credited in the Alumni Office to the University's "purchase" of a B-29, the first such program at any school in the country.

Of the amount registered by May 1, \$168,475 was contributed by students, faculty members and Norman residents.

Bonds purchased anywhere in the county, except those bought on a payroll deduction plan, since March 12 may be applied toward the B-29 "purchase" upon receipt in the Alumni Office of certification that they have been bought. Individual counties may receive credit for the bonds on their quotas at the same time the O. U. drive does.

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