

VICTOR E. WARFORD

Chemistry will have to wait: "I felt someone had to fight if the need arose, and my training seemed to qualify me for the Air Force."

It's a small world, and here are three Air Force officers who have proven it. All University of Oklahoma alumni, they met recently at England Air Force Base near Alexandria, Louisiana. Together they practically command this installation.

# REUNION FOR THREE

**T**HE SEPTEMBER SUN was hot, though the time was still two hours this side of noon. Airmen and officers had turned out in short-sleeved khakis this Saturday morning.

Hundreds of them stood at ease, smoking and conversing in loose-formed groups near the entrance to the flightline's ramp. Dozens of others sat on a review stand down the way, near the jet fighters.

Then, as the first notes of a march were struck up by a band, cigarettes were dropped, chatting ceased and echelons were called to attention. A great many left feet stepped forward, keeping time to the heavier drumbeats of the music.

England Air Force Base was on parade.

If there were any very young O. U. alumni marching in the ranks that day—and

there undoubtedly were—then they might have been surprised to learn that the three virtually top-rank officers reviewing them were fellow O. U. alumni.

One was Colonel Victor E. Warford, '40bs. An Army and Air Force officer since graduation, he had come to England (near Alexandria, Louisiana) a month previously to take over command of its 834th Air Division.

A native of Chickasha, Warford went to high school in Ohio, then returned to the Sooner state to attend Central State and Northeastern State Colleges before shifting to O. U. When he entered the old Army Air Corps as a flying cadet, storm clouds were gathering on the international horizon. Soon he found himself in the storm's eye, a combat pilot in Italy.

"I went to flying school because we were going to war soon," Warford said. "I intended to be a chemist when the war was over, but decided to stay in the Air Force because I felt someone had to fight if the need arose, and my training seemed to qualify me for the job."

At war's end he entered the Regular Army and shortly thereafter was transferred to the Pentagon in Washington, D. C. In the meantime he married Margaret O'Shea, a graduate of Central State College, Edmond. They now have two daughters and a son.

Warford might have stayed on with the peacetime Army, but for Korea. When the Reds violated the 38th Parallel, back Warford went into the Air Force, and back into combat. He commanded a fighter-bomber



C. GUY BROWN

Quiet and graying, he had been on the base for three years when the other two arrived. Now they're having a reunion down in Louisiana.

wing in Korea for a year, and during that time he flew 100 combat missions.

It never got him down: "I'm happy with my job. I think it's an essential job. But, I guess like everyone else, especially school teachers, I think we're overdue for a pay raise, so that we can retain the qualified people we so badly need to operate the complicated equipment we're now using."

There is no man more sincere than Warford when he calls his job "essential." He's worked hard at it. The military honors he has received are too numerous to list.

The second man is Lieutenant Colonel William F. LaFon, '33bs, '37med. He is base surgeon and commander of the 4458th USAF Hospital at England. Relatively new to the Air Force, he privately practiced medicine from 1939 until 1953, when he

entered service. In the past four years he has been stationed in Bordeaux, France; in Enid, Oklahoma, and at England Air Base.

Why did he choose the military? "I found that I could render a great service in practicing good 'family doctor' type medicine in the Air Force; in addition, I was introduced to a new, exciting specialty—aviation medicine. There's something different about it all the time. And men who fly prefer to be treated by their doctor, the flight surgeon."

LaFon married Lucille Busby in 1936; she attended O. U.'s School of Nursing. "My wife," says LaFon, "is a truly good person, active in church work, willing to help those who need help. She makes a good home." They have a son and daughter.

LaFon reminisced a bit the other day. The funniest event he could remember about his stay at O. U. came on a final examination day. His philosophy professor failed to show up, and when contacted by telephone, the professor asked, "Oh, is that today? I thought it was tomorrow..."

LaFon has some sage philosophy about himself and his world. "I'm usually even-tempered. I blow my stack about once every five or six years. Then things are months in settling down. I enjoy life. I like to tell stories whether the listeners enjoy them or not.

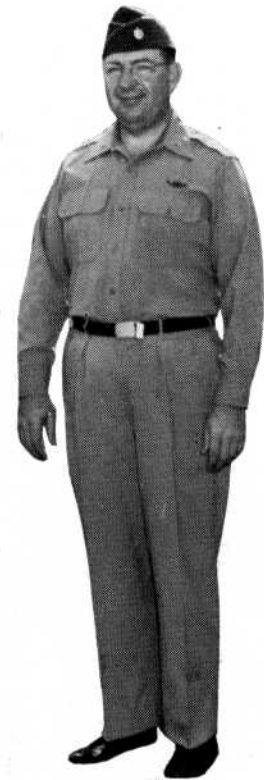
"The world it definitely going to pot. If you don't think so, look at me, or at four-fifths of the people you meet. If they don't show it, then the girdle people got there before you did.

"We have a world of contrast. More people going to church, professing religion, and crime of all types increasing. We pray for peace and prepare for war. We slander the capitalist and buy common stock. We are a crazy, mixed-up world that only the young people understand."

The other man, Colonel C. Guy Brown, '23ba, was the one who originally thought "It's a small world" when observing Warford and LaFon take up their new duties at England. Brown has been on the base for three years, commander of the 366th Air Base Group; now his position was altered to director of materiel on the air division staff.

A quiet, graying man, Brown was born in Texas but calls Oklahoma City more or less his permanent home. Institutions which he attended other than O. U. include the University of Chicago and Oklahoma City University, and he won his law degree from the latter.

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WILLIAM F. LAFON

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World War, then was a member of the Oklahoma National Guard for 18 years. An Army captain for two years during World War II, he soon transferred to the Air Force. After discharge he became chief of education and training with Veterans Administration in Oklahoma City.

Then Brown was recalled to active duty when the Korean conflict came, and he decided to stay with the service this time.

He is a former faculty member of the University of Oklahoma, by the way. He married Frances Cartwright, who attended O. U., and their daughter, Lynda, now is a freshman at the same school.

So, as Warford, LaFon and Brown would be the first to admit, reunions can come unexpectedly, in the most unlikely spots. They're having one in Louisiana.