

June 29, 1945

Dear Alums and Ex-Students:

There remains but one and one-half days in the month of June for it is now almost eleven o'clock of June 29. This letter will not get out until well into July I know and I regret that we have had to delay so long. The only alibi I have to offer is a tremendous amount of work, and of course you know this already, my tendency to procrastination. Also these last two days have not been the best days in which to write an alumni letter for we have had an unusually high wind and dust in the air. It was not good for the nerves. Again the absence of a week on field work offered the weeds in my garden a chance to get ahead of me and that is not good for my morale. Then there is the uncertainty about the immediate future with reference to the field work of the summer and plans for the fall. Well, just to sum it up, it has not been quite right for the past two weeks, but I do feel now that things are taking form and probably by July 4, when everyone should be feeling optimistic about the future, I will be on even keel again.

For those of you overseas who may not be in a position to sense the feeling we in the States have about the new charter for peace, let me say we are most optimistic. We know we did not get everything that the idealist would like to have had and many compromises were made, perhaps too many. Nevertheless, those nations whose representatives signed the charter have agreed to make a first step. There is every reason to believe that the United States Senate will ratify the charter. It is a good omen for the future, certainly, and one which we should support.

There is a good omen also for the future spread out before me as I look out the east window this morning. With very rare exception, everything is a clean luscious green because of the excessive rain we have had in the past few weeks. Riding along the Lewiston grade the other day, I noticed that the grain fields at the lower level are turning into that color indicative of maturity. The fields to the east of Moscow have no such indication. Here and there a cut of hay is indicative of the harvest, but nothing else suggests that within a very few weeks all those fields will be a rich brown—probably before some of you get an opportunity to read this alumni letter. Of course Moscow ridge is that deep dark bluegreen color peculiarly enhanced this morning by a bright sun shining through the clouds scattered over the sky. Perhaps mother nature is getting ready for a thunder storm and is not waiting for the fourth of July.

Our office family is widely scattered and somewhat changed in personnel. Dr. White is plugging away at the perennial questions about the chemical structure of wood. He has just completed an adventure into the structure of mesquite and is most happy and enthusiastic about his results. He will not be able to publish for another month until after he has checked everything thoroughly. I am thrilled as I watch these men gradually get closer to that thus far unanswered question, what is lignin? Dr. Deters returned today from a journey into the state of Washington where he participated with others in a panel discussion at Cheney. The discussion had to do with the possibility of sustained yield in the northwest. Others on the panel were representatives of the Industry, Labor, and the Forest Service. Professor Wohletz is at summer camp with 14 boys. We are operating summer camp but 6 weeks this year because it seemed inadvisable to take an extra instructor to camp for the courses in surveying. They were offered by special arrangement on the campus the past semester. The four girls who were in the office part-time when the last alumni letter went out have not scattered to their homes in Idaho, California, and Washington. Miss Marian Stillinger is looking after the office full-time in the summer and is the co-editor of the alumni letter.

Dr. Young will be with us as of September 16 this year after 2 years absence on special war work. He will be the first one of the absentees to return. Professor Pierson wanders in the office far too infrequently in connection with his very exacting work having to do with the distribution of labor in Idaho. He has some nasty problems to solve. Dr. Proctor's activities in the army as Lt. Colonel are increasing in their variety and their demand upon his time and energy. He spends a great deal of his time traveling, mostly by air, into all sections of the United States. The time of his return to us is to be gauged entirely by the duration of the war. We still mourn the decision of Dr. Ehrlich to shake off the dust of academic life and to enter that more practical field of industrial research. Although I know the official period has been put upon the closing sentence of his employment at Idaho, I still maintain a faint hope that somehow he may return. Dr. Blipp has been carrying on in a fine way much of the work in the field which Dr. Ehrlich had underway. At the present time, Mr. Blipp is on a trip into Canada but we expect he will return by the 15th. The alumni of '37 and previously will be interested to learn that Dr. E.C. Jahn is scheduled for another trip to Scandinavia. He returned a few months ago, after 14 months of study of the forest chemistry industries over there, as Research Collaborator of the U.S.D.A.

I am delighted to report that two of the men who were listed as missing in action are now very much alive and back in the United States. Word came from the Red Cross on May 1 that Dick Campana '43 was a prisoner of war and would be released and sent home. I just had a letter from Dick the other day indicating that he is home and very much enjoying everything that home life offers. Harlan Pulley '41, who was reported missing, is a prisoner of war and is expected home very soon. I have no other details.

Our joy at the return of these men reported as missing must be mixed with sadness as I report the death of four others. Fairly J. Walrath '27 was killed almost instantly May 26 when a falling tree struck him on the back of the head. The accident occurred near Camp 54 on the Potlatch Forest Inc. of which camp he was foreman. The camp is about 14 miles from headquarters on Washington Creek. The saw gang was working on a hill above the road along which Walrath was walking. It is reported that several caterpillars and other equipment working in the area could have prevented him from hearing the call "timber" as the tree started to topple. Walrath had been foreman of this camp for the past two years.

John Arthur Johnson ex-'42 was killed in a plane crash at Birmingham, Alabama, September 16, 1942. He had received his orders for overseas duty the day previous, September 15. (This item should have been reported earlier. It was in the record of those killed in action which was part of the commencement program of June 1944 but, somehow, it slipped by our attention.)

Delos Wilson ex-'43 was killed in action in Belgium, December 18, 1944. The news of his death has just come to my attention. No details.

Gordon E. Hanke ex-'48 was killed in action on Okinawa. He entered the service in July of 1944 and was in action with the armed services within 4 months after he entered. He was with the Marines. No other details are available at his time.

Bill Read '41 has been reported officially by the War Department as killed in action. Bill's father sent a newspaper clipping of a report by a Sgt. Lawton of the last days of fighting on Batuan, and the death march to Camp O'Donnell. At about this time, on the east coast, a Lt. Read (Rean) was killed when a shell hit his tank putting it out of operation. He was uninjured by the first shell but

another exploded under him as he was attempting to free the rest of the men from the tank...I learned later that Roy Underwood of Mississippi stayed with Lt. Reed (Read) and held him on his lap as he died..."

Paul H. Gerrard '23 is now a supervisor of the Ozark National Forest with headquarters at Russellville, Ark. He leaves the position of Tennessee Area Forester for T.P.W.P.

Paul Bieler ex'23 is in Washington D.C. on a special military detail. This news item came via Art Sowder '25 who is an excellent source of news.

Carl A. Gustafson '27 is the new supervisor of the Plumas National Forest with headquarters at Quincy, California. Carl has his master's degree from California. After he worked on the Neopce in Idaho and the Wasatch in Utah, he was transferred to the Sierra in California in 1931; to the Klamath in 1933, and then to the regional office. In 1941, he was made supervisor of the Klamath. Best of luck to you Carl.

In the Forest Log of June, 1945, (published by the Oregon State Board of Forestry), Harry Nettleton '28 M.S. (For.) has a poem "The Call To The Forest." It is so good I want to quote the closing thought and to urge you to read it if it is accessible to you:

Some claim life is what we make it;
That may be true I cannot say--
But to me 'tis lived the fullest
Where the timber land holds sway.

Charlie Genaux '29 M.S. (For.) has accepted a forestry teaching assignment at one of the Army University Study Centers soon to be established in Europe. The report is that he will be assigned at Fontainebleau. Charlie is being processed now to leave the country early in July. These university study centers will have an enrollment of about 4,000 and will present a variety of courses of academic grade. This is an excellent opportunity for Charlie.

George M. Jamison '31 sent me a copy of a bulletin, "The Effect of Basal Wounding by Forest Fire on the Diameter Growth of Some Southern Appalachian Woods." This is his doctor's thesis. Perhaps you did not know that it is now Dr. Jamison. Hereafter all you foresters be respectful!

Corland James '33 is back in Washington D.C. in connection with his forestry appraisal work. He hopes to return to the northwest and the Rocky Mountain Region sometime this summer.

Lest I forget it, as a general item of news, I want to tell you that Federal agencies and particularly the Forest Service is on the lookout for men interested in research work. If any of you should wish to engage in one or more years of that type of work before the cessation of hostilities, you should investigate the program. Correspond direct with the Division of Personnel Management of the U.S.F.S.

In the same breath let me say that the Forest Industry has scraped the bottom of the barrel so far as the supply of technically trained men are concerned. If you are interested in that most fascinating field of technical forestry work which is increasing every day, be sure to write me or get in touch with some company near your place of residence. Don McKeever '36 is in urgent need of men for research work in the field. If you want research in afforestation and forest economics, let me know or write Don, c/o Weyerhaeuser Timber Company, Tacoma 1, Washington.

George Turner '36 under date of June 21 sent word of a box of Philippine woods which he has collected and sent to the school. The main topic of conversation in his part of the army is the point system for discharge.

Marvin Marshall '37 in Texas training the new men in the art of warfare, Lt. (j.g.) George Calloway '39 aboard the S.S. Beloit Victory has seen but two foresters in the two years he has spent at sea. John Hoyer '39 who was hospitalized from Leyte and George Grogan ex-'39 doing special training at San Diego.

Mor Brigham '39 made a short call at the office recently. He is active in research work at Potlatch Forest Inc., Lewiston, Idaho.

Bob Frey '38 in the Mollucas Islands is leading a dull life. Too many conveniences of civilians—with electric lights, a refrigerator, and even picture shows. He would be delighted to be back in the States.

Frank Pitkin '39 was scheduled to leave for the induction center on May 25. The morning of May 23 his induction was recalled. Pit has sold his gun, had given away his dog, sold his cow and his car, and was set to go in every way. We had made plans for some temporary help in the nursery during his absence but now everything is back to normal. Thus far Pit is still with us.

Lt. Howard Johnson '39 is now with the first military air transport at Stockton, California. He is flying a C-47 with cargo and troops mostly at night. The other day at the San Francisco Airport, he parked his plane next to that of President Truman. The President was in town.

Clifford Latham's '40 picture was in the Idahonian (local paper) on June 29, showing him displaying a safety plaque award given his company's mill Potlatch, for the lowest accident record in 1944 of all pine mills in the western region. He is in charge of safety and personnel.

The same paper June 29 carried notice of Lt. Roger Guernsey ex-'43 receiving the Bronze Star for gallantry in the Belgium territory. He has just been made company commander of a rifle company.

Major Albert T. Larson '40 gives his address: 133 Tennessee Avenue, Pleasant Hills, Newport, Delaware. His present job is flying C-54 transports on the round trip to Paris. He has made three trips. He is very much interested in the post-war use of airplanes in forestry.

Lewis Folsom '40 sent a fine collection of woods from Australia. This collection is very much appreciated because he enclosed a complete list of identification and scientific names, etc. I am hoping to get a good start in a collection of tropical woods and Folsom is doing his part.

Tom G. Lazebrook M.S. (For.) '41 transferred from Alaska to Germany and is now supervising some logging operations with the armed forces on the continent of Europe.

There are births to report among the foresters. Janet Sue, born May 3, is gazed upon by the proud eyes of Boyd Leonard '39. David Warren, born June 22, is the new son of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas MacLeod '40. Robert Eamor Nord, born April 11 must wait a while until his father Eamor Nord '40 can start him on the straight and narrow path to manhood, for his daddy is somewhere in China. James Robert Lafferty, 308 W. Liberty, Weiser, Idaho, expects his daddy, Lt. George Lafferty '42 to return very soon.

Bill McMillan '42 corresponds with his wife, as you would expect, and therefore has little time to write me. I was happy to get the news from his wife of Bill's promotion to a 1st Lt. in the field. He is with General Patton's 7th Army. Lt. (j.g.) W. L. Price '42 has been in the Philippines again. He was with Ed Noble for a visit. Bill is now chief gunnery officer of his ship. Lt. (j.g.) Ed Erickson '42 is now commanding officer of the 25th Ln. Sqdn. Det. and is happy with the assignment. Ed has made some very interesting and excellent contacts with some of the local people in the Philippines. Captain Bill Musgrove ex-'42 is now in charge of the instruction at the Army and Amphibian tractor camp. He has a large staff of men and a W.R. 1st Lt. as a librarian. Bill uses visual aids for class work and has a workshop where he uses draftsman, sign painters, and commercial artists. His present address is: Capt. Bill F. Musgrove, Truckee Vehicle Bn., Camp Pendleton, Oceanside, California. Although he is the proud possessor of the Navy and Marine Corp Medal for heroism, he expects to return to Idaho and finish forestry "after the last nip has been properly indoctrinated to our way of thinking."

Major Kenneth M. Farnsworth ex-'42 is in Pueblo, California. He has been training Chinese pilots in the operation of B-24's. Soon he expects to change to B-29's. Kenny tell me that he expects his son to graduate at Idaho in forestry in 1965. I am afraid, Kenny, I won't be here then unless, of course, the newer medical science can create some better method for giving the "worn out skeletons a new retreat."

Eri Bolick '42 is now on Okinawa. He writes a most interesting description of the island, its people, agriculture, its traditions, and customs. I think it is fine that some of the boys have an opportunity and the inclination to profit by an inquiry into the localities where they are situated.

Burton Clark ex-'42 wrote me recently from the Philippines. He had all his plans made to see Hans Winbauer who was nearby, but the tides of warfare seemed to carry them apart. Clark has the right idea for he expects to utilize some of his spare time in studying. I sent him the first consignment of books yesterday.

Pfc. Warren R. Randall '43, Hq. Co. 1186 Engr. Combat Gp., APO 267, New York, sent a most interesting display from the European war. It is a book, "Afforestation in Southern Lands" by E. Maxwell. Inside the cover are two stamps as follows: "Flag XII B50 Gepriift" and "This book is provided by the Sick and Wounded Fund of the New Zealand Patriotic Fund Board." Randall put a note in the book indicating that "This book was obtained from an abandoned German P.W. stockade." Except for the repetition in the book of the stamp of the New Zealand Red Cross Society, there are no other marks. This book will be more than an addition to the library. It will have unusual significance in the years to come as future foresters handle it. Thank you Randall, that is a rare gift.

Marshall Spencer '43 gave us a great thrill the other day when he visited in the office. Mrs. Spencer was along too--a fine girl and thoroughly interested in Marshall as you would expect. It was good to see one of the boys who has had such experiences as Spencer. The most satisfying result of his visit was the air of optimism that he created wherever he stopped to say "hello." If his optimism is indicative of that which prevails in all of the Armed forces, I have no fear about the postwar period. If we can just multiply Spencer's attitude by eight million, then the future is assured.

Jim Girard's father-in-law told me that Jim '43 is on the island of Guam. No further news. Through another source I learned that George Nietzold '40 is also on Guam.

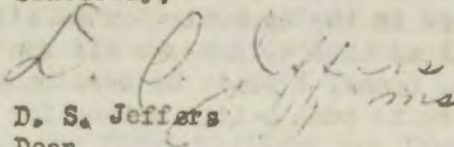
Lt. A. J. (Jack) Weddle ex-144 is on Tinian Island, a pilot on a B-24 with 25 missions to his credit. The War Records Committee kindly sent me his letter of June 26. Says he is sweating out ten more missions when he hopes to return to the States. He wants to know of any foresters who are over in that section of the world. Because we can't give addresses, you fellows close to him might see if you can locate him. He is in the 9th Bomber Group.

FLASH: (just before going to press). The large Washburn Wilson Warehouse burned early this a.m., July 7. Complete loss of machinery, stock, etc. Some of you fellows have worked there.

Applications for permit to register in September are rolling in. Looks like an increase in enrollment over a year ago.

I'm off for two days at summer camp and meetings at Pocatello Twin Falls and Nampa. Will write you again in September I hope.

Sincerely,


D. S. Jeffers
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