Dear Fellows,

Enclosed is an article and sketch of our new proposed lighted field for next year. I have not written you about this lately because I wanted to be sure it was practically settled before I went out "on a limb" about it. Am sure all of you will be happy when this comes true. Plans are being drawn to make this a memorial for you fellows who richly deserve one. It should be something you can enjoy when you come back. Mr. R. B. Howard of the school board deserves plenty of credit for the pushing on this project. Hw has worked hard on it and has been keeping it going. A letter to Mr. Howard of Howard & Roberts Electrical Shop, Queen St., would be appreciated by him. The priority for this project was finally obtained so nothing should hold it back now if the Legion gets going. You will notice in the inclosed news article that Chuck and Shaner sent in money for the lighting project. This they did on their own volition. I hope that nothing I have said caused them to feel that I expected it. This job is to be a memorial to you fellows and personally, I feel that if it can't be handled by the people who have stayed at home it should never have been attempted and should be dropped at once.

Senator "Happy" Chandler was elected to fill Judge Landis's position as Czar of Baseball. It is a 7 year job at $50,000 per year. However, the Federal gov't gets about $27,000 of it. The "Giants" are on top in the National and the Yankees are tied for top in the American league at this time. (May 3).

Since my last letter some of the boys have been by for visits. Among those home were Hoggy Bradley on March 24 for 40 days. He has been in the Pacific area. Roy Nelson came in on March 26. Nelson is on the USS OKALA, A. R. S.-T2 out of N.Y. Harvey Bryant came March 27. He expected to be sent overseas soon. Phil James was home over Easter holidays. He is in a Navy school in Washington D.C. Jack Hollingsworth was discharged from Fort Knox on March 28. He is now working but has many fainting spells. Shorty was home on April 5th. He has gotten so large he was afraid to give exercises for gym classes. His trousers were so tight, he was afraid they would pop and his aft side was facing the school. Robert Wade was by on April 9. He still is in Philadelphia.

On April 8, about 60,000 visitors were allowed to inspect a new carrier, the "Boxer" at the shipyard. She was to leave for her shakedown cruise within a couple of days. They allowed only a visit to the flight and main deck. She was in the south side and lying along side the new 45,000 ton "Midway" which had just been launched. The Midway has a flight deck of 3½ inch steel and is big enough to have locomotives land on her and then take off.

Mr. Rickett recently became part owner of the Peninsula Bus Corp. He wishes to be remembered to all of you whom he knows so well.

This may be my last letter until next fall. The end of the term will soon be on us and it will not be possible to get the mimeographing equipment or a girl to do the work. Soon now the teachers will demand much of their time getting out copies of their exams. I hope to take up again when I have the opportunity and will keep in touch with those of you who write during the summer. If you mail me a letter which you think will reach me after June 8, please send it to Columbia Ave.

Track season was over Saturday. We had 4 meets. We beat Portsmouth 61-56 and lost to John Marshall 49½-67½. The Tidewater meet and the District meet in Norfolk were gobbled up by Newport News. There will be no State meet for them to feast on this time. It was eliminated.

To those of you who thought that the quality of athletes would drop when the war came just read this: Sunday's paper stated that this was the best Newport team in history. They score in everything and in most events will score three places in dual meets. Granby had a 4'55" miler this year and he couldn't score a point. In Williamsburg they made no new records but pushed practically everyone. Here are a few of their times and distances. The shot, 51'8"; Discus 122'; Javelin 175'; Broad Jump 21'3"; Mile 4'49"; One, two, and three; Half mile one, two, three 2'07; H.Hurdles 16.1"; L. Hurdles 25.9"; Hundred yd. dash 10.1"; 440 yd. dash 51.8". In Norfolk Newport News scored 88½ points. They broke 4 records, among these being Roy Nelson's 2'08" with a 2'07.2" half mile. They broke the javelin mark with 177 ft, and the shot with 51'3"; Granby also broke the old shot record but came in second. They missed the hurdle records by one tenth second in each and lopped off seven full seconds from the mile relay. Maury had set a new one last year at 3'44" but it is now 3'37".

I never saw such large boys as are now showing up in this league. Don't know how many are 4F. This improvement has been outstanding and to many, hard to understand. The secret however lies in the fact that every boy at Newport News must take Phys. Ed. every day. All the coaches are teachers and the recreation program of the city lends its aid to the utmost. These are three or four workers in recreation that try to make them faster. I need not tell you what happens at the school. They have an excellent program and have to be given their dues. We are far behind and with the set-up as it is here, no one will even be able to compete with them. T.J., Granby and Maury in the Tidewater also had good teams. We were inferior. There was one letter man back; Paul Burbank in the pole vault. He failed to place in our first dual meet but came through in the others. He got 9'9" twice. This was a first against John Marshall but only a tie for 4th at William and Mary. Our best time in the 100 was 11 seconds. The mile and half milers improved but couldn't place in the district meets. We got 1,2,3 against JM in the mile. Thirty-eight feet was our best in the shot and 100 ft. the best for the discus. Bobby Tysinger got the javelin 143 ft.

Now comes the most painful duty I've ever performed. I've debated very much about writing you this and asked many for advice. The concensus of opinion is that you have or will have heard of it sooner or later and since most of you already know it isn't news to you. On April 10 or 11th, Wendell Fuller lost his life. It happened in a plane over England and there are no more details. It was like a bolt out of the sky to us at home, and very hard to take in. The telegram was definite. Unlike the case of Jack Rhea, it was final and left no hope. Fuller wrote me on March 10 and again on March 31st. Until March 10, he had 8 missions and on March 31, it was 17. In his last letter he had determined to go to college and play ball. It was his desire that the '42 squad could get together once more at some school. He never expected to get his 35 missions because he didn't think the Germans would last that long. He was living good; things were as he liked and he compared his life with that of an infantry major. He had signed to enter a big track meet on May 30 in which he would high jump. The family took it in a daze. They didn't know until 10-15 days after it happened. Rosemary was hit hard. There will be no cowards where Fuller and Rhea have gone.

Lolly Wilson asks me to write that the entire squad of '42, Billy, Bailey and myself will be his guests at a big party just as soon as it can be done when the war is over. He wants everyone to be there and I am sure it will be the happiest day of everyone's life. The time and place will be settled later but all must be there. Lolly will be sent overseas soon after June 22.

Lt. Frank Williams, former history teacher here, has been ashore only once since December 16. He is on the USS Flint CL-97. He finds no place to spend money and for all that time 10 dollars has been a burden in his pockets. He is keeping a lookout for you fellows. He got some action in January at Hong Kong and Formosa. Frank was in on the Iwo Jima and Tokyo raids. He had a post card from a friend stationed two miles from him. It arrived in three weeks.

Blimp Garrison at Keesler Field, Miss. is having a time. They bivouaced over Easter holidays, and he lost lots of weight. He gets plenty of mail and thinks army life is a cinch, altho he doesn't believe what the manual says about K.P. duty. He is classified an aerial gunner now but would like the infantry. I'm sorry I can't give you Blimp's description of how hard it rained on his pup tent. This letter has to go thru the typing room where there are girls. Mr. Rickett and I had a big laugh over it today, April 9th.

Jimmy Wallace has a 95 average on his physical tests but x,y,z on some of the academic studies at VMI. He has a short furlough now, April 30th. Conway Adams couldn't sit down on the job for quite awhile. No, the officers weren't too tough. It was just a case of Conway having an inconvenient boil. He had a job on Linkous ship recently and they were together each night for a week. Conway is in a ship's repair unit in the Admiralties. Harry Mann admires the men in his crew. They remind him of the '42 gang. There is one fellow there like Chuck. Always wants to argue. Harry does not think a high school education will be enough after this war and thinks Heflin's idea of all going to school some place after the war is good. Expects to be sent to Hawaii soon. Otis Garrison was sent to Miami and now trains gunners. He is with 7 fellows who started with him. Otis ran into Yokemick in a Miami hotel in April. A Jap sub followed Wally Albertson's ship waiting for dark but some "cans" got it. Wally backs Chuck Morris's recent statements about Australia. He had 31 days there. His 18 mos. are up and his flotilla received a presidential citation. John Yokemick is an Ensign not at school in Fla. He has been in 5 invasions and has three ribbons. He was a Sp (A) and on a carrier. Bill Tuck has been seeing right much of an English girl. Her name is Pamela Hickson and don't be too surprised if Bill slips. He has broken with his Hampton girl. He was sent to France and likes it but did not like to leave England because of Dish? He gets his Elks Tooth each time and enjoys it. Do you get yours? If not, let me know or let Mr. King Pifer, c/o the Elks Club, know about it. Dish is taking it easy now that his missions are over. He is willing to discuss college with any of you who wish. He keeps up with Harry and got to France at Easter time. You remember, Dish finished his missions. Charles Dunton hasn't seen a Hampton boy in 28 months. He is in the Philipines with the 5th air forces. Has not been getting much "fox hole" duty these days but had his share of it. Likes it much better than New Guinea. Chuck Morris is now in the Philippines working night and day on planes which are wrecking Formosa. For one period of two weeks he never had more than 6 hours sleep per day. The weather is fine. Disease and insects are scarce and he gets in on some deer hunting once in a while. "Deer" is correct, not "dear". Jack Kolcum has changed to Chicago and is in the same mid'n school Horace Pearce attended. Jack's parents moved from Hampton and Jack is considering remaining in the Navy after the war. Says he found out why Chicago is called "Windy City". Bob Willis is on the USS Dixie now. Herbie Boulter is getting fat. No hard work and lots of eating. He missed seeing Pearce by very little. Has seen Billy Martin's LST often. Gene Edmonds says things out his Pacific way are looking better but the boys are taking lots of punishment. They had their semi-final game recently and won decisively. The enemy plays very dirty tho and it costs. Gene is set on college and wants the old gang to go along with him. If he can do this, it should be a cinch for those of you who are single. Billy Martin has been getting nearer and nearer Japan. They heard the war in Europe was over and celebrated on March 25, but of course it was a dud. He thinks perhaps "Tokyo Base" whom they often hear, had something to do with it. She works hard on their morale. Billy's boy "Chippy" is a "husky" now.

Germany was reported surrendered Saturday, April 28th and everyone sat tight

by the radio. Later President Truman got in touch with Europe and claimed it false. People were getting ready to blow their tops.

Gibby Firth has gained 28 pounds since last Spring and now tips the beams at 153. Gibby remembers that last year at this time he was trying to get a 2:15 half mile. Now he thinks it would take him 2:30. He is in the infantry in Europe. No doubt in or around Berlin at this time. The Army is definitely improving for Bernie. He moved to another spot which is heaven in comparison. He lives in a big house with an individual room and hot running water in it. Grass and trees grow all around. The Show and Px are across the street. Nearby is the finest beach he ever saw. Lots of Waves and Wacs are nearby but---he still wants to move. Wonders what he will be able to brag about after the war when all of you get together. Gilly Sorrell at Otterbein plans to transfer elsewhere next year so he can study Phys. Ed. Chigger broke his ankle early in March after jumping 5'10" indoors. Gilly missed the honor roll by only 1 "C" and says he and Chig are reformed men. Eric Ahlmark was out for 28 days on his last trip before March 23, during one half that time travelling about 20,000 miles. He sae Kenny Snyder in the Admiralities. Snyder's engines quit once and he was forced to land on the ocean at night without any power. It was miraculous that they came thru. In commenting on 15 year old Capt. Sookie Hill, Eric wants Rickett and Shorty to remember that he and Flossie were responsible for his success since they coached him in 1941. Frank Lawson's outfit had a crack basketball team and were playing for the championship on March 26. Don't know who won. Frank has been very busy but is not quite so busy now. Bobby, his young brother, was selected for a course in very confidential work by the Navy. Bailey Rollins left for somewhere March 20. He is an athletic specialist in the Navy and expected to be sent to India. Garland will be 18 in May and is the last of the '42 squad left. Red Chalkley was not in on the Iwo Jima invasion as I thought he might be. He lost his best service pal, a fellow he has run aroung with for two years. Ed expects to come home soon. Leon Hardy, on LST 28, in the Atlantic has had a swell time in England. Says he walked over the graves of England's most famous men. He did not like his trips into France.

If any of you have the opportunity to see or visit famous places of history, don't fail to do so. No matter how "matter of fact" it may seem to you now, it will make great food for reminiscing in your middle life when you want your grandchildren to be impressed with what you say.

George Hardy has been near some of you but did not know until he received the letter with the addresses. He hasn't seen any of the fellows he knows in the Navy. Heard from George and Leon on the same day recently. One is in the Pacific, the other in the Atlantic. Thirteen months ago they met in England. George Heflin is flying in the new plane which is so large. He likes it very much and is beginning to really enjoy things a bit. George says he will be home about Sept. 15th. Little does he know now but he will be here in time to become ass't coach as was Pearce last year. I can put any of you who wish to work at this. Harold Kolcum was sent to Great Lakes for 4 weeks to be reclassified. Garrett Leonard is at Sheppard Field, Texas. He had been awaiting appointment by the Air Corp for some time. He played regular No. 4 back last year at 134. Now he weighs 148. It must be the Texas weather. Gat called in last night (May3) from Texas and reported that he and 12 others had been selected from 97 to continue the course.

There will be a coaches meeting in Richmond this coming Sunday, May 6, to establish an association to iron out problems. One of the things to be taken up will be the proposal of a basketball tournament to take the place of the present set up for determining Championship. For the last 6 years the champion has been the team which played the final game on its own court.

Remember I wrote you that the temperature was around 90 the middle of March. Well, April was chilly and May is cold. Frost is predicted for this week and several places in N.C. and Penn. had snows lately.

Some more addresses----Ask for others.

Phil R. James AS USNR 1907 35th place N. W. Washington D. C.
Roy M. Nelson Mo MM 3/C USS OKALA (ARS-T2) FPO, N. Y.
W. Bruce Wood AS 2nd Platoon 1st. Co. V12-Unit Long Hall, Charlottesville, Va.
George K. S. Hardy MM 1/C USS Fitch DMS-25 FPO, San Francisco, Calif.
Leon T. Hardy, Jr. Mo MM 3/C USS LST 28 FPO, N. Y.
Otis L. Garrison VF10 Moster Field, Gr. Training NAS Miami, Fla.
Shaner Carneal S 3/C Navy 3205 Co Y F. P. O., San Francisco, Calif.
Kenneth A. Simmons S 2/C ARM V-C 19 FPO, N.Y.
C. C. T. H. Wilson 2nd, 33858182-1st. Co. 3rd S. T. R.-T. I. S. Fort Benning, Ga.
J. B. Rollins Sp(A) 3/c Receiving Bks. Navy 3964 c/o FPO, San Francisco, Calif.
John H. Yokemick Ens. c/o B. O. Q. Everglades 506 Miami, Fla.

Let me hear from you all summer long. Others will want to know about your changes of address and I'll be glad to be the middle link in this. Press the censor with news about your experiences. Best of luck to you and may you be coming home soon.

Bye til the fall,

Coach Eason