

GIs On All War Fronts Keep Up Studies In U.O. Courses

Reading between the lines of the countless letters received in the general extension division of the state system of higher education, Eugene, from the servicemen scattered over the world who even in the midst of war's destruction find time to continue with their education, one gets a story of monotony, loneliness, and heart-break mingled with curiosity, ingenuity, courage, and a desire for knowledge and progress.

While educators and administrators theorize about the trends of post-war education and plan courses which will interest returning service men and women, a lot of GI Joes are taking advantage of available courses and demanding others which interest them. Figures released by Miss Mozelle Hair, head of correspondence study, reveal that 831 were enrolled as of June 31, with 453 through the armed forces institute and 378 directly with the extension division. At the rate of present enrollment the figure will soon have reached 1,000.

Registrants are stationed all over the United States, and outside the greatest number are in the jungles of the south Pacific. Others write from the Aleutians, Alaska, Greenland, China, North Africa, Panama, Sicily, South America, and although enrollees by this time must be in France, so far no lessons have been returned from there, Miss Hair reports. A large proportion of the men take courses in mathematics, to further their college careers and to help them shoot more accurately; structural engineering, and meteorology, both of which are useful to a soldier.

Botany Popular
Botany attracts many registrants, probably because the men are in strange surroundings and do not know the names of the plants and trees. A soldier in the Aleutians, who had studied botany before, had enrolled again, and is sending specimens of plants to D. E. Detling, assistant professor of botany at the university, for assistance in classification. A lot of Oregon men would like to study agriculture, but unfortunately the only correspondence course offered is agriculture accounting. Forestry is also very popular, as is journalism, busi-

ness administration, particularly accounting. One man has continued his accounting studies in three colleges and in the port of New Orleans, where his studies were interrupted by his ship's abrupt sailing. Now he is studying through correspondence.

Often lessons are prepared under the most trying circumstances and in primitive surroundings. A man writing from the South Pacific apologizes for the grease spots on the paper, explaining that mosquito oil was dripping from his arms as he wrote on a rickety box by candlelight. Another excused the use of a pencil, saying it was all he could find in the jungle. And still another from the Pacific sector used paper evidently confiscated from his Japanese predecessor.

A student, who had received his bachelor of science degree from Ohio State University, requested courses which would lead to an advanced degree. (Unfortunately, no credit can be given for advanced work through the correspondence study of the general extension division. Even without credit he desired the course because "the uncertainty of any soldier's future makes those details quite secondary to the training, and I shall appreciate any advice you can give."

Hill-Miss Study
From Saipan in the Marianas came this letter: "I am very sorry for the delay between previous assignments and the present. Conditions prior to the invasion and at present are similar to those I witnessed on Tarawa when I first started this course in civics (high school course). We are in combat on Saipan and have been so for many days. However, we are now to have several free hours daily, and I will try and complete this course. Research work is almost impossible under present conditions. I have only the two supplied textbooks available. Thus far no physical or mental afflictions to change my future plans. Please advise on research problem."

A marine sergeant deplored the impossibility of finding the proper envelopes in which to reply. "Being in this island home is no paradise; in fact, the common things of life are hard to obtain. When my texts have arrived, I will be only too glad to prepare lessons for correction. I guess we stagnate over here a bit unless we are able to put our minds to something that may help us when this war ends YEARS from now."

And like most sergeants his attention digressed a bit from academic interests and centered on the supply of girls left in the states. His query was to "whether the girls are as pretty as ever at home" brought first-hand reports from several girls in the office. He explained that he hadn't spoken to a woman for over a year, and that it was a bit lonely. "Oh there are a few native women, but we seldom see them, and they are just a bit too dark and too ugly to encourage any thoughts of companionship. I hope you don't mind my asking this question. It sounds so little, and means so much."

From a sailor stationed in the naval liaison office at Concepcion, Chile, comes a request for courses in advanced writing and principals of good writing. He urged that his application be sent via airmail since the steamer mail would take from two months to ETERNITY. A captain in the quartermaster corps wanted to continue his studies in advertising; another, who received his bachelor of science degree from Oregon State wanted to write a doctor's thesis on soldier athletics and recreation. His status in the army was that of assistant special service officer for the entire middle east (Asia Minor).

Most Are Oregonians
The largest proportion of men in the armed services enrolled through the general extension division are Oregon men, Miss Hair believes, although she has no statistics. Many of them had to quit college because of the war and desire to get a junior certificate or a bachelor's degree, while others had not finished their high school education. Miss Hair often checks with the registrar's office either at the university or Oregon State to see what courses a man lacks. The enrollees are distributed about equally through the army, air corps, navy and merchant marine. Merchant marine men often take courses "to have something to do."

Since entering the army many

students have changed their major or at least their work interest. A student who studied journalism in 1935 and 1936 has switched his attention to architecture, although at the present time he is employed in a medical hospital. A graduate of West Virginia State college in economics and history expresses his determination to become an aeronautical meteorologist. This letter is revealing of a trend for a great many soldiers are interested in meteorology as a post-war occupation. He writes, "I am profoundly interested in this new field, which has completely captivated me. I want to continue in it when I get out of the service."

Three sailors, whose APO is San Francisco, pooled their letter-writing talents to ask for courses in liberal arts. An Englishman, with the same APO, stated he had received the senior school certificate through Oxford, England, and now wants to get started on a medical career, or at least take premedical courses. Are women in the armed services equally interested in continuing their education? From a sampling of the letters, it would not seem so. There were no requests for home management or home economics courses. One wave asked for courses leading toward her teacher certificate. And a second lieutenant, army nurse, stationed in a desert training center in California, signed up for aeronautical engineering, as so many of her brother officers have done.

Educators who have had to contend with the disinterest of the typical pre-war "Joe College" may be heartened by this postscript from a typical GI Joe, who did some undergraduate work at an Oregon college and now wants to continue with his course in civil engineering: "P. S. Written in a foxhole. Not a fox or beaver in sight."

AT CAMP DELAID
Thirteen flatcars on a Southern Pacific freight train jumped the rails on the Klamath Falls-Eugene line 30 miles below Eugene yesterday, Southern Pacific officials said here. The train, running on a side-track at the time of the derailment, did not delay other trains passing over the main line. Officials said no injuries were reported.

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From where I sit... by Joe Marsh

What Made Our Invasion a Success?

With 57 blue stars on our Service Flag, our town's been mighty excited over the way things are progressing on the Continent.

"Shucks," says Bob Newcomb happily, "I knew we were going to lick them Nazis, soon as the Invasion started."

From where I sit, Doc's mighty right. The success of our Invasion began months ago—when the English Tommies and the GI Joes got together over friendly beer, and games of darts—and learned to like each other in spite of differences in tastes and habits.

And that spirit of tolerance and understanding between men and nations will go far towards building a secure Peace, too.

Joe Marsh