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World War II alumni and the State Teachers College at Towson: a brief history of the school at war and its support for alumni in the armed forces

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Presentation given at Alumni Association luncheon held at the Charlestown retirement community in conjunction with a Patrick Young's talk about veteran services at TU, Catonsville, MD.

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World War II Alumni and the State Teachers College at Towson

A Brief History of the School at War and its
Support for Alumni in the Armed Forces

Currently Enrolled Male Students Depart STC to Enlist

After June 1941, when the provision to defer enlistment due to college enrollment expired, many male students took extended leaves of absence to enlist in the armed forces.

The Selective Service Act and the College Student

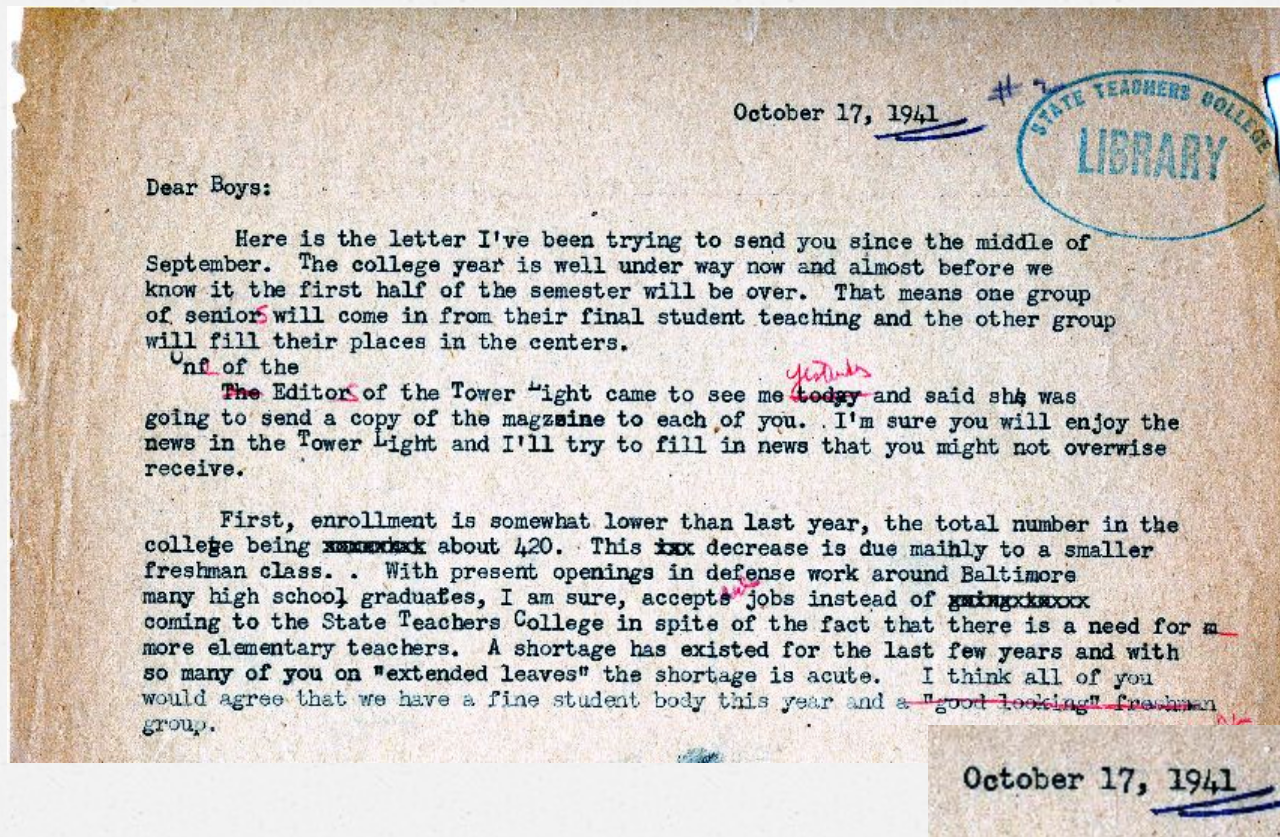
by COL. WILLIAM H. DRAPER, JR.

(Synopsis by CATHERINE SWAIN)

PRONOUNCED effect of the present war on the United States was evidenced on September 16, 1940, when the Selective Service Act became law. This act, the first peace-time conscription law in the history of the United States, has, in some way or another affected everyone in the country. Men students in our colleges and universities are no exception. In order to more clearly define the position of these men in relation to the Selective Service Act, Col. William H. Draper, Jr., recently delivered an address at the University of Michigan to a group of officials representing various universities and colleges.

April • 1941

STC Supports Enlisted Alumni With Letters and *Tower Lights*



Female Alumni Also Support the War Effort

The establishment of women's organizations such as WACS (Women's Army Corps), WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service), and SPAR (U.S. Coast Guard Women's Reserve) provided female STC alumni with opportunities to serve.

NAME Benson, Elisabeth E. (CLASS) 1924



PLEASE RETURN NAME BELOW

Name Benson, Elisabeth Date when sending information 10 April 1944

Date of entering military service August 1943

Branch of service WAC - teaching lip reading - Ward Of Hearing Clinic, Borden

Training Centers attended Ft. Oglethorpe, Georgia Gen. Hospital, Chickasha, Okla.

Present rank with list of various promotions and (approximate dates) since entering service None --(as yet)

If picture is enclosed give date and place where picture was taken
Borden General Hospital, Chickasha, Oklahoma, March 1944

STC Creates Accelerated Curriculum

College Gears to Defense

Out of a possible 295, 283 students have decided to come to the 1942 summer session.

The accelerated curriculum is in, as far as State Teachers College is concerned. From now on, the majority of the students will work on a yearly schedule of 44 weeks. The former four-year course will be fitted into three years. Because of a sharp teacher shortage, some of the present Juniors and Sophomores will find themselves teaching on part-salaries while still working on their degrees.

What are the implication of these changes? Approval of them, as the best that could be worked out under the circumstances, has been given by 96% of the student body. But what will be the effect on enrollment of the Freshman classes of June and September? Will the stiffer program make us less appealing to high-school graduates? Will students whose budget demands that they earn their tuition during vacations be forced to drop out of school? How will extra-curricular activities be altered by the new program?

Students in every class are discussing these questions. . .

What about Tuition?

The returns from the questionnaires handed in on Registration Day show that most students will have no difficulty raising tuition for the summer school.

Yet a lot of the talk has centered about the finance problem. Several members from each of the three lower classes explain that they depended upon summer jobs to meet tuition. They are wondering how they will manage for the fall semester.

For the Juniors, a student loan fund is ready to help out. (This is sponsored by the College.) What will the Sophomores and Freshmen do? A hoped-for solution that may crystallize one of these days is federal subsidies for students in accelerated colleges. Until it does take form, however, the students who cannot attend the summer session will still be able to complete their work on a

four-year basis, as "specials." Entering Freshmen who find it necessary can follow this plan too.

Schedule too Heavy?

Contrary to the testimony of a few harried Juniors, this semester's schedule, for most sections, has only the normal number of credit hours. All Junior sections are carrying one more hour than usual—but although this extra work is necessary for the present Junior class, the administration says that next year it will be absorbed in the light autumn schedule of the Juniors.

County Apprentices

In the Junior sections that would be eligible to teach in September, 26 students have agreed to accept jobs if recommended, and 12 have not. Some of the 12 live so far from the college that it would be impractical for them to come back every week to attend the Saturday Workshop. A few are eligible for the draft and naturally want to take their degrees as soon as they can.

Among the 26 who said "yes," feeling shades from delight at an unusual opportunity, to firm determination to give the best possible service in the national emergency. We were a little surprised at the amount of enthusiasm the Juniors showed. It should be remembered that they all made their decisions before having any student teaching experiences. . .

Salute

In the students to whom we talked while getting this article together, we noticed an attitude that would have

February · 1942

they support the accelerated curriculum so heartily.

STC addresses teacher shortage by compressing academic program into 3 years. The school adds trigonometry, civil aeronautics, and physics to the curriculum to support civil defense.

Tower Light Begins Reporting on Enlisted Alumni

As STC students suspended their academic career for military service the student newspaper marked their departure. *The Tower Light* was sent abroad to enlisted alumni who relished news from home and helped them stay in touch with one another.

In Service

ON DECEMBER 7, 1941, THIS COLLEGE WENT to war. Many of our graduates entered the service; and some undergraduates have left their college careers incomplete to heed the call to the colors. Of those fortunate enough to have remained in school, many have already enlisted in branches of the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps reserves.

The men to date who have signed up are:

JOHN BAREHAM, ERC	KENNETH MARTIN,
RALPH BARRETT, ERC	Army Air Corps
JAMES CHEATHAM, V-7	JOHN McCAULEY, ERC
NOLAN CHIPMAN, V-7	CARLISLE REFOE, V-7
JACK HACKMAN,	ITZ SCHKLOVEN,
Army Air Corps	Army Air Corps
PAUL HARRIS, ERC	SAM SHARROW, USMCR
HAROLD KATZ, ERC	BARK SPELLMAN, ERC
BURTON LOCK, ERC	MAYNARD WEBSTER, V-7
HARRY LONDON, V-7	

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER • 1942

Tower Light Features Excerpts of Letters from Enlisted Alumni

NEWS FROM CAMP

In many mailboxes here at State Teachers letters from students who have entered the army turn up regularly, reminding us that "the Sun do move," times do change, and that four years in Teachers College does not necessitate a career spent placidly within four classroom walls. And if we never before have observed that schoolteachers take well to soldiering, we do so now, as we give you this month's crop of letters.

Private James G. Jett writes from Fort McClellan, Alabama, in crisp military idiom:

"... This fort is on a plateau in the southern foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. Consequently, it is quite cold up here—especially in the morning when we turn out at 5:45. In our tents (we have no barracks to sleep in) fires must be made in the bitter cold of early morning. Then the Company is called out to stand reveille. Next we fall out, take our jackers off, and are then called back out (in our shirts) in the still cold morning. After exercises comes the soldier's delight—'chow.' When breakfast is over, the sun is just beginning to come up over the mountains. Then the day's work really begins, and we're on the go—drilling or on special details—until the sun goes down, beyond Birmingham, beyond the Mississippi, and beyond the great Rockies, far to the West. . ."

"... Of course, the contrast between a classroom and the Guard House is great. I find that I am able to adjust myself to the new environment, though. And one benefit I derived from being in the M. P. Department was a chance to go home. On December 28th I was assigned to escort a military prisoner back to his home station in Fort Bragg, North Carolina. After delivering the prisoner, I was given the privilege of visiting Baltimore for 24 hours. That was quite a break, since no one on our Field has been given a furlough since war was declared. You should have seen the expression on my mother's face when I walked in unannounced, wearing my .45 automatic, with a 'billy-club' in my hand and a pair of handcuffs hanging from my belt. . ."

"Bill Podlich and I often get together in bull sessions and recall the good old days at Towson. We get a kick out of some of our Army experiences. Incidentally, the boys gently chide us at times for being so 'professional' in attitude.

"Danny Austerlitz and Bernard Goldberg, two more of Towson's alumni, are out here. We could almost start a school of our own. . ."

March · 1942

Tower Light G.I. Spotlight

Report on alumnus Ensign Aaron
Seidler's completion of Naval
Aviation training and marriage



Official U. S. Navy Photo

WINGS OF GOLD: Aaron Seidler, U.S.N.R., was in Baltimore recently, after having completed his several months' training in Naval Aviation, sporting his braid and his Navy wings of gold. He stayed in town for a week or so (getting married meanwhile) and is now once more on active duty. Ensign Seidler was a three-letterman at STC, starring in basketball and soccer.

THE NEW YEAR • 1943

Tower Light G.I. Spotlight

Report on the internment of
alumnus Lieutenant Luther Cox
in a German prisoner camp



Lieutenant
LUTHER COX

Editor's note: Lieutenant Cox had completed almost enough combat hours to be eligible for the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Official notice has been received that Lieutenant Cox is a German prisoner.

FEBRUARY • 1943

Tower Light G.I. Spotlight Mourns Loss of William Jett

In Memoriam

RESOLUTION FOR WILLIAM JETT

WHEREAS, William M. Jett, in his relation to the State Teachers College at Towson as student and leader of student affairs, attained a position of especial prominence and respect in this College,

WHEREAS, his belief in and adherence to ideals of democratic leadership were in accord with the finest traditions of this College,

WHEREAS, his qualities of open-mindedness in respect to dissimilar opinions and his initiative in formulating various ideas into a practical plan for the benefit of all have definitely furthered the democratic ideal in this College,

WHEREAS, we are in complete accord with these beliefs for which finally he fought — therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That as a student body, we will endeavor to perpetuate those principles so highly prized by him; and be it further

RESOLVED: That this resolution shall become a part of the permanent annals of the Student Government Association of the State Teachers College at Towson.

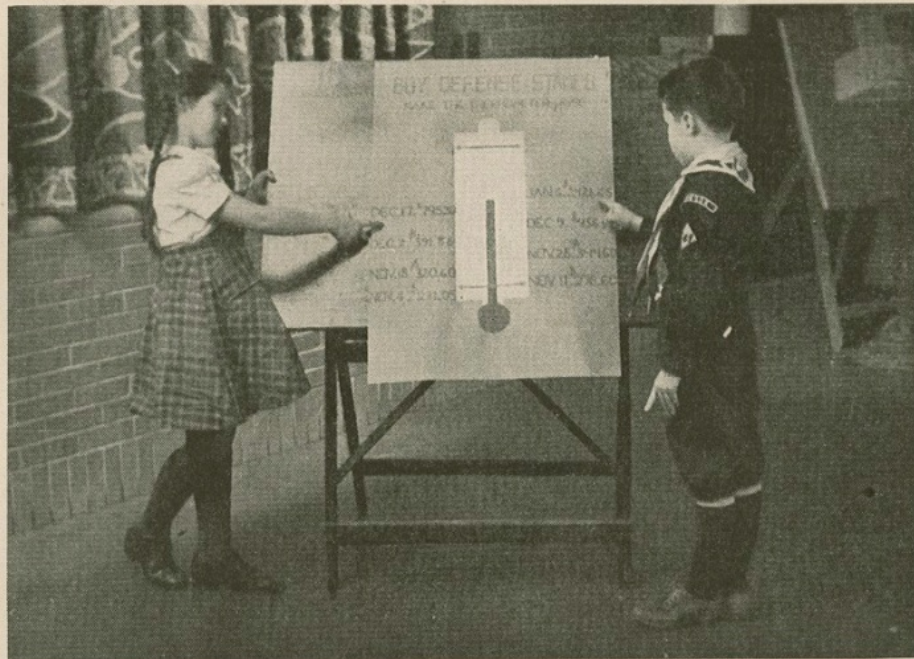
(Signed)

August 24, 1943

The Student Government
Association of the
State Teachers College
at Towson.



Campus Elementary School Sells Defense Stamps



Defense Stamp Sale At Lida Lee Tall School

STC also held a rally to promote the sale of war bonds, kept chickens and ducks, and grew a Victory Garden.

STC Plans for Support to Veteran Alumni Returning From War

**Dr. Wiedefeld and the Alumni
Association begin plans in 1944
for the post-war support of
alumni veterans – Alumni Victory
Pool. Wiedefeld also established
the junior college program to
help returning veterans complete
their degrees and transition back
into civilian life.**

OPEN LETTER TO THE ALUMNI

It was appropriate that our Founders Day celebrations this year were permeated with thoughts of our men and women who are in the armed services. They marked the culmination of long deliberations and conferences in which were considered plans for paying tribute to our own service groups.

We, like all colleges and universities throughout the country, are concerned about the future of our men now on combat duty. We know that we must make post-war plans to rehabilitate them socially and spiritually. The changes brought about in them by the experiences of this horrible war will make it difficult for them to adjust to civilian life. Unless those of us at home prepare to help them there will be a repetition of conditions which followed World War I. Then, too many of the men became greatly embittered by what they found. They accused those who stayed at home of profiteering on the altar of their sacrifice. They cursed the nation for which they had suffered and many felt that their sacrifices had been in vain. We must not permit a repetition of that condition. We cannot do much. We can do something. That we might present our alma mater with some symbol honoring these men and women has been the desire of all our college and alumni groups. All agreed that it should be in keeping with the spirit of the college and college life, and that it should afford opportunities for education to the entire college community, student body, and alumni.