They took it over at noon today and even at this late evening hour—some ten hours later—one can “feel” the significance of the move. They (the War Manpower Commission, acting jointly for the War and Navy departments) took over the age-old Yale University.

By a twist of fate and war orders from higher command, I find myself here tonight to watch the early days of the “evolution.” Assigned for special duties in connection with the Army Air Corps for a period of fifteen days some 3,500 miles from my “home base”—Pendleton Field, Oregon—I shall enjoy my tour of duty in New Haven, Connecticut in more than one way. It shall be a privilege to be on the “inside” watching the transition of one of America’s major institutions of higher learning swinging under a democracy to an all-out war effort. With years of civilian work in university activities behind me and with the hope that in the years following the peace to come I may be privileged to participate again in rebuilding for higher education, this drastic move is being studied from every point of view. Throughout all of these United States, as of this hour, the “evolution” is taking place. For the duration, major colleges and universities will use facilities and teaching staffs largely in training men in uniform. Two hundred “taken over” in the move of today causes me to wonder at this far distant eastern seaboard point tonight, “How is my own institution, the University of which I am a part, faring?”

She will weather the storm! Reverse after reverse is in store for us—much ground must be given, many points out of all this extreme effort will rise a stronger America. As of this hour, this drastic move will fall into their “trundle bunks” and undisturbed homes—once more! And—“it is not easy, when the crisis arises; when everything dear to our American tradition is answered the challenge! Out of it all will grow something more lasting than peace—the spirit of American citizenship will rebuild and heal the scars caused by the momentary sacrifice!”

It’s a strange path—this Riding the Sooner Range—in recent months! Six months ago tonight, at this exact evening hour, army orders caused me to step off an Eastern airmailer at Miami Beach, Florida. There for weeks in the midst of intensive training, I saw this government of ours move with lightning rapidity in taking over famous hotels, tanks, golf courses, resorts—some weeks later Army orders again put me on duty at stations far away in the change of our way of life. Vesper service with “Onward Christian Soldiers.”

She got through—her famous College Green and age-old dormitories I see to the immediate left as these lines are being written—the “bulk” of her towers, chapels and halls of learning in this 95 per cent blacked-out coastal city—listen to her chimes (left as a memorial decades of years ago to a famous son) sound out this Sunday evening. Vesper service with “Onward Christian Soldiers.”

Just as she survived, so will many others, though the price will be hard to pay. Yale, which survived seven wars, including the Revolution, Civil War and World War One is tonight on its way to help pay the price of making democracy safe—so is O, U. This afternoon (and so it will be for all hours to come until a permanent peace shall have been established), I observed commanding officers of high Army rank rapidly setting up an Army command where eminent professors and administrators had dispensed routine higher education a few days before. Young American soldiers (indeed many many) in formation executing routine Army training—Army guards and M. P.s on posts; America’s young manhood being classified, assigned, and starting into a grim task. Army officers of all ranks busily engaged at their posts of duty. Soldiers from every cross section of the American life being assigned their banks in the Army Air Corps for a period of fifteen days some 3,500 miles from my “home base”—Pendleton Field, Oregon—shall be a privilege to be on the “inside” watching the transition of one of America’s major institutions of higher learning swinging under a democracy to an all-out war effort.

So they are the boys who have traversed the盖 of thousands of them coming from all of our leading universities and colleges) answer the old criticism of too many non-essentials in the educational training of our youth! Indeed, they have answered the challenge in every theater of war today. The interesting items naturally are to meet in person or observe from reports the work of the thousands of O. U. cadets in the midst of this effort. Hourly historical items are being recorded of their contributions. So they are the boys who have traversed a strange path (and never looked back), and I look to the future, when in the hour of peace, more Riding the Sooner Range can be done with them!

MARCH, 1943