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S. A. T. C. ENDS—R. O. T. C. BEGINS

Knox's Enlisted Army Demobilizes Just Before Christmas—College is Now Perfecting Plans for Establishment of Officers' School

By JAMES L. McCONAUGHY

ON November 26th the faculty, at the request of the War Department, spent two hours considering the future of the Students' Army Training Corps, making suggestions for alterations which would improve military and academic efficiency. Half an hour after the meeting, like a bolt from the blue, came a wire from Washington ordering the demobilization of all S. A. T. C. units within a month. No full explanation has been given by the War Department for this action although it has been stated that as the S. A. T. C. was a plan for military training in war time there was no justification for continuing it after the signing of the armistice. Many people believe that the War Department was afraid of the criticism which would come from Congress for the expenditure of about a hundred million dollars, which would have been the cost of the S. A. T. C. from the time of the signing of the armistice until July 1st.

The action of the War Department was a definite breaking of the contracts which they had signed with each of the 500 institutions, as all arrangements were made in this contract for continuing until at least July 1, 1919. The sudden ending of the S. A. T. C. brought up hosts of problems to each college concerned. The experience of Knox with the military training had been much more favorable than in many institutions and there were regrets at the ending of the Corps. The college was glad, however, that discharges could be secured by about fifty odd men who entered Knox last fall only for the military training and with hope of a future officership, and who in November had by their attitude shown that they did not particularly care to continue at Knox.

The demobilization of the unit meant that about fifty more men whose college

education this year had only been made possible by the government's financial aid, have had to give up their college course entirely. We expect that about 130 of the 229 men in the unit will return when college opens in January. This percentage is a little higher than seems to be general throughout the country. In many institutions at least 60 per cent of the men in the unit will not return. According to statistics the Knox unit was larger than that at either Beloit or Carleton and nearly as large as the Grinnell unit. It seems to be obvious that the male enrollment of the college after Christmas will probably be larger than at any Illinois college.

The month of December was a difficult one from both the academic and the military standpoints; the men who knew that they were going to leave college had little interest in their studies and men who likewise knew that they were to be discharged from the unit showed a tendency to relax in their military duties. All of the men secured their discharges on December 20th. The preceding evening the college entertained the unit and its officers at a farewell dinner in the mess hall which was followed by a theatre party, financed by the Company Fund.

The faculty voted early in December to return at once to the two semester plan, which brings examinations the end of January, and to adopt the former college calendar. Sincere efforts were made to aid all the men who wanted a college education at least to complete the work of the first semester, scholarships covering the tuition charge for January being offered to men who needed them.

In spite of the ups and downs of the past four months, the change in officers, the effect of the signing of the armistice, and the

inevitable loss of military interest when the men knew they were not to be selected for the Officers' Training Camps, the college is sincerely proud of the record of the unit. Every inspector,—military, financial, and academic,—who has visited the unit has been warm in praise. It was the largest unit in any Illinois college; co-operating with the other students in the college it made a record on the War Drive for the seven welfare agencies, the Liberty Loan and the Red Cross unequaled as far as we know by any unit of its size.

The college is now carrying on financial negotiations with the government in regard to the final settlement of the affairs of the unit. The college has paid, in equipment and running expenses, something over \$25,000.00 which it was expected would be repaid by the one dollar a day per man charge. No decision has been reached in regard to any future use of the Mess Hall and Barracks. If the building can be altered so as to be temporarily valuable to the college it will probably remain on the campus, otherwise it will be wrecked. The temporary floor has been taken out of the gymnasium and when college opens in January the building will revert back to its former uses. The "Y." hut will continue to operate, although probably the War Council of the Y. M. C. A. will provide a part time instead of a full time secretary for the remainder of the college year.

Early in December the college renewed its application for a Reserve Officers' Training Corps. In the spring of 1917 the college had applied for the establishment of an R. O. T. C. and the War Department had approved the application but on account of our entry into the war had been unable to detail an officer. The exact details of the R. O. T. C. will probably be modified on the basis of the experience from the S. A. T. C. The original plan in 1917, actually carried out in about seventy-five institutions, included three hours theoretical work and drill for all students who elected the course, the course to be continued for at least two years. The War Department will detail an officer, will provide uniforms, and for upper classmen of military ability repay living expenses during the last part of their college

course, send them to summer training camps wholly at government expense, and give them commissions in the reserve. The faculty voted in 1917 to require the R. O. T. C. training of Freshmen and Sophomores in place of gymnasium work. A Corps is only established in institutions that can guarantee at least one hundred members.

Academically the ending of the S. A. T. C. means much less confusion with Knox than is true at other places, due to a delay on the part of the government in notifying the college regarding certain special military courses which, accordingly, were not actually added to our curriculum. All of the S. A. T. C. men have been taking regular college work for which they are given full credit toward graduation. The war aims course, compulsory for all students during the first semester, will be made elective during the second semester and will consider particularly the problems of reconstruction, peace and modern citizenship. Freshmen will be admitted the beginning of the second semester; this admission is particularly for men who had completed their high school course and then went into service and now wish to enter college. The college also expects at least twenty-five of her undergraduates who left for war service to return and take up their college course again. By vote of the faculty all men in war service who complete the second semester satisfactorily this year will be given credit for a whole college year.

Large Gift to Knox

Three hundred and twenty acres of Illinois land and \$15,000 in money are bequeathed to Knox College by Mary E. Porter, of Lewistown, Ill., who died recently. The land is in Fulton county, Ill. Mrs. Porter's will directs that \$5,000 of the money be used for establishing a scholarship in honor of her son, Edmund C. Porter. She also endows, with \$25,000 of her estate, the chair of economics and sociology in the name of her son. Mrs. Porter attended Knox in '48-'49, '50-'51.

Members of the Knox board of trustees and faculty dined at Whiting Hall on December 20.