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From Admiral Ford

5-122

NAVAL TRAINING UNIT,
PRINCETON, N.J.

23 January 1919.

CFG-emb.

From: Commandant.
To: Commandant, Third Naval District.
Subject: The Princeton Naval Unit, its history and work.

1. In all, the Unit comprised 530 men. Of these about 100 were Naval Reservists prior to entering the Unit, about 200 were inducted through the Provost Marshall General's office, about 30 were youngsters under draft age who joined as volunteers.

2. It is impossible to exaggerate the difficulties and inconveniences attending the 200 inducted. The Unit had almost reached its term before all the formalities involved were complete. I am informed that in order to get those 200 recruits into the Navy via the Army, some 6000 papers had to be made out. Whether this statement is strictly correct or not, I have had neither the time nor the patience to determine. Even if remotely true it should serve as a warning never again to let the Army have anything to do with the Navy's personnel.

3. All members of the Unit were Princeton undergraduates, taking up such courses as led to the desired degree, and all lived in the University dormitories, but under strict military (Naval) routine and discipline.

4. About 100 were formed into the First Division, and given exceedingly careful instruction in navigation, seamanship, ordnance, and gunnery.

5. In navigation, the ^{theory} ~~Navy~~ was supplemented by trips to Atlantic City, where use was made of the sea horizon for practical work.

6. It was the original intention to graduate the First Division at Xmas, and recommend the worthy to the Department for such further training as it might prescribe prior to examining them for commissions as Ensigns in the Naval Reserve. Of those remaining, the most promising 100 were to become a new First Division and graduate April 1st, the balance July 1st, but this scheme never materialized.

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7. Practical exercises for all members in infantry, boats, marlinespike seamanship, signals, etc., were instituted, and all studied the Navy Regulations, Naval Instructions, and Naval General Orders.

8. All attended special lectures by competent persons on the form of our Government, the history of our Articles of War, high explosives, and how the Navy uses them, etc.

9. A feature of the course (believed to be unique) was the sending out daily of "Observation Parties" who made "hikes" of five or six miles, and on returning were quizzed as to what they had seen.

10. At random the men were made to estimate heights, weights, distances and dimensions (e.g. of buildings, trees, chimneys, steeples, etc).

11. They were trained to carry messages correctly. The message been written, was read aloud twice to the messenger who delivered it and brought the message as received, written by the recipient.

12. As a result of work described in paragraphs 9, 10, and 11, I am told by members of the faculty that never before has there been in Princeton University a set of students so keen, alert and wide awake as the members of the late Naval Unit.

13. The fact should be of record that, until the very last week of the course, I was wholly without any assistant of commissioned rank.

14. I quote from the report of the General Inspector of Training Activities of his inspection of the Unit, and the Officer-Material School for the Pay Corps:

"The Naval Unit was housed in Little and Edwards halls, and messed in University dining hall. Were all in uniform, well set up, and presented a very attractive appearance. Housed in the regular college rooms, varying two to four, depending on the size of

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the room, with sufficient toilet and bathing facilities which were supplemented by the use of the swimming pool in the gymnasium. The boat house is also used by both units. 12 cutters and 2 whale boats afford all the necessary instruction in boats under sail and oars. Marlin-spike seamanship, knotting, splicing, and the usual instruction given from the Blue Jacket's Manual, is carried on in the boat house."

"During the Influenza, the college was hard hit. The steps taken by Rear Admiral Goodrich and Dr. Luby, in the establishment of an emergency hospital, with 70 beds, daily inspections, in which the droopy ones were immediately removed, and the establishment of a disinfecting plant, carried this institution through without a death, making it probably the banner institution of the country. All concurred in the feeling that this was accomplished by the admirable work of the Commanding and Medical Officers' of the institution."

"I was struck by the thorough cooperation of the officers and students of these schools, and I feel it was due to this that the great work has been carried on so wonderfully, and with such great efficiency, and it was with great regret that I found that orders had been given for the demobilization of the Naval Unit, but was pleased to hear that the Material Officers' School will be continued for some time longer. Report was made by the Commandant, of the zealous and earnest cooperation of the officers and Petty officers to make the Unit and the Material Officers' School the greatest success of the University, also with the expressed desire of the President for the retention and continuance of the Naval Unit, which, after the inspection, showing the great work done, was to me most gratifying.

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"Desire to call attention to the voluntary unit called the Banner Unit. Made up of 25 college students under the age of 18, who pay all of their own bills, and, having joined the unit for its drill and great work, deserve the heartiest commendation. It was a great pleasure to make this inspection and to find the wonderful relations existing between the President, Faculty, and the Naval Representative. Report was made to me that the earnest cooperation between them was flawless. At no time had there been any friction, and the most earnest endeavor was shown by all, to make this new phase of collegiate life the greatest success possible."

"Called on President Hibben, and he expressed the desire that the Three Year courses, which had been worked out before the establishment of the Unit, could be continued, but it was desired to have a Naval representative in the faculty, who should be subject to faculty regulations. He too expressed the great pleasure in having Rear Admiral Goodrich as the Naval Representative. This wonderful feeling between the faculties of universities and colleges that I have inspected, has been almost universal. That zealous cooperation has been carried on, but no interference has been attempted on the part of the Naval representative to interfere, in any way, with the collegiate management. This has been universal. The Presidents have desired the retention of the naval units, feeling that it would be well to embody with the college curriculum the naval training, which has shown such great efficiency and harmony. I would, therefore, strongly recommend that this relation should be continued. The work has been too great to be closed. College material should be encouraged to know that the Navy not only desires them but is willing to aid in every way, to make them, not only good naval

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men, but also good citizens, President Hibben expressed the desire, that a three-year Naval course should be given by the university, and I was surprised at the small number of one hundred, which would make it attractive to the university. It is felt that this could well be done, establishing a Naval course in the university, in charge of the Naval Representative who would be a member of the college faculty, and with very slight interference with the regular college or university curriculum. The young men in the naval school, would gladly take up this work. Very efficient material would be turned out for the uses of the navy, and on passing a strict naval examination at the end of the course, could be given commissions in the Reserve Corps of the United States Navy. This would be most attractive. 70 of the present unit at Princeton would be entirely satisfied if given a practical cruise on a naval vessel. This was, what seemed to them, most desirable under the present system of demobilization, and I would earnestly recommend that this, if possible, should be granted, and that full consideration be given to the establishment of naval schools at the different colleges and universities, fixing the number for each one that would fill the requirements of the service as regards the Reserve Corps of the Navy. This, I hope, will not be considered an interference, but I feel so strongly in this matter that we should not allow our naval units to go out with any feeling other than that, that the United States Navy thoroughly appreciates the great work that the universities and the students have accomplished. The education offered by the various colleges and other institutions, adapted to the needs of the Navy, have been of inestimable value in the training of men to man our fighting ships, and the hearty spirit of cooperation shown by the faculties and other college authorities, has made it possible to utilize

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these facilities to the fullest extent, and a thorough show of appreciation is certainly in order."

15. Enclosed is a list of those who took the examination in seamanship, navigation, ordnance and gunnery, arranged in order of merit.

M/ 16. I should be lacking in gratitude if I failed to record my indebtedness to Professor I.P.Eisenhart who assumed the task of instructing in ordnance and gunnery; to Professors A.G.Mayor (a nephew of the late Rear Admiral Louis M. Goldsborough), R.S.Dugan, and Ulric Dahlgren (a grandson of the late Rear Admiral J.A.Dahlgren), for their cheerful, indefatigable and efficient cooperation.

17. In conclusion I may say that the relations between the members of the Unit and myself were quite ideal, in spite of my insisting upon the highest possible standard of conduct and morale on their part, and my enforcing my demand with, at times, no light hand.

18. The demobilization of the Unit was completed on December 31st, the date fixed by the Department.

C. F. Goodrich.
