

To: Chad Collins
1st Installment - Pearl Harbor to VJ Day
and its effects on your grandparents
John & Tilly Adams.

Sunday, Dec. 7, 1941 - A date which will ~~live~~ ^{live} in
infamy - The United States of America was suddenly
and deliberately attacked by Japanese ~~land~~ ^{naval} and
air forces.

How well I remember that Day!
I was in my room above the office of the Berea
College Store. I was laying on my bed listening
to the Radio waiting for a 4 o'clock date with Tilly. I
knew as soon as I heard the news that the event would
have a profound effect on my life.
Tilly and I both took our meals
at the Boarding Hall which was located in the basement
of Fairchild Hall where Tilly roomed. We had a good
Sunday dinner and had received the Tradition sack
lunch to take with us for our supper. (Dinner with them or else)
The attack started at 7:50 am Honolulu
Time or 1:20 pm Washington Time.

This was before the Time of TV and
students were not allowed radios in their rooms. There
was a radio in the lobby of each dormitory.

I went to the Pointery and got
Tilly and we left for a walk around the Campus. We knew
that we would have to re-think a lot of the things we had
been thinking about.

We were not engaged but I had made
my choice. I needed to graduate and get a job so
I could support a wife. I was a senior and your
grand mother was in her junior year of College. We both
arrived at Berea the same year (1939) I was a freshman in
College and she was a High School 11th grader. We never
had a class together.

Berea requires every student to work
at least 10 hours per week and provides jobs. The pay might
be 10¢ an hour or Top Wage for my job was 25¢ an hour.

This will sound low to you. Keep in mind that Berea does not charge any tuition. I came to Berea from the farm where during the depression we hired men to work for 1 per day and fed them their lunch. We hauled apples to the coal camps and sold for 25¢ per bushel. Gave away a lot. People could not afford to buy at 25¢ bushel!

My freshman year I went home for the summer and worked for Agricultural Conservation Program. Mowing crops of corn in Letcher County, after that I stayed at Berea and worked at the College gardens. I was the person for a good sized operation. We grew vegetables for Boone Tavern and the boarding Hall. We sold vegetables for the Cinema etc. We also ran a Conroy which required a lot of labor. We put up food in gallon cans. Our specialty was black berry jam.

My best job was my junior year when they opened "Powell Hall" a recreation center for students. I was in charge. The kitchen facilities had to be repaired but there was no charge. A schedule was posted showing times we were open. We had 4 good ping pong tables, shuffle board, record player with lots of records, magazines, puzzles, games etc. More of the High school students used it than College students. That's where Tilly and I found each other. I had to give it up my senior year when the agriculture Teacher who was in charge of the gardens developed a cancer and was sent to John Hopkins Hospital for treatment. Where I had worked as person during the summer. They asked me to move out of the dormitory and go down and be in charge of the Gardens.

War on Japan was declared by the Congress of the U.S shortly before 1 p.m. Dec. 8, 1941.

Tosca Bay Navy at Pearl Harbor: 91 Officers, 2,638 enlisted men were killed — 20 Officers and 636 enlisted men wounded. The battleship "Arizona" was sunk. Battleship "Utah" used for training was destroyed. Listed as lost were 3 destroyers, "Cassin, Powers, and the Shaw", and the mine layer "Ozark". Many other vessels were damaged. The battleship "Oklahoma" was capsized but probably could be righted and repaired. About 2 weeks after Pearl Harbor Berea turned out for "Christmas Holiday" Tilly and I both went home — Hyden & Whitesburg.

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Our Govt. realized that it needed to increase its Armed Forces in all branches of the Military - Both Officers and enlisted men. Recruiting stations were established in the Courthouse in each County in Ky.

While home for Christmas Vacation I visited the Marine Recruiting Station at Whitesburg. When they found out I needed only 1 semester to graduate from College they asked me to complete some forms they had just received, I did this. I'll enclose a photo copy of my first letter received 21 Feb. 42 setting up a physical examination, interview and possible enlistment at Berea College Hospital 3 March 1942.

They had already had the FBI make a background investigation before the interview and had on hand 5 letters of recommendation, three were from Whitesburg - (1) Honor member American Legion, Douglas Day Dept 152 - (2) Letcher County Circuit Court Clerk, (3) - a local business man who was a former revenue agent for the U.S. from Berea, one was from the Head of the Upper Division and the other from the Head of the German Dept, who was my coach for cross country team. They said they could not enlist me until I graduated, that they would file my records with the Central Recruiting Division in Louisville and that all I would have to do would be to take another physical and be sworn in. They were ~~not~~ marking my records to approve for officers training.

I graduated 1 June 1942. Went to Whitesburg to visit my family, then to Hyden to visit Tubby. Without a car it was difficult to get around, while I was at Hyden one of the neighbors, Mr. Bagley was taking a son about my age to Louisville to enroll in a dental college. Just a one day trip so I went with them and they dropped me off at the Marine Corps Office.

My records were there and all went well until they put me on the scales. I had been running track and working hard at the Gardens and my weight was just a few lbs below the accepted level for my height. They said we can not judge our records but we can stop the spurs and give you a chance to try what others have done. So I all the bonuses you can and drink all the water at noon. That you can hold.

