

# The Lantern



ILLUMINATING HISTORY

March 2009

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE JOHN BROWN UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

March 2009

## JBU and World War II

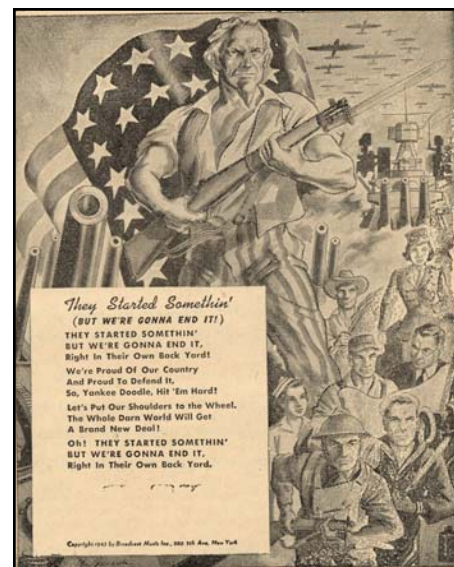
December 9, 1941: just two days after the attack on Pearl Harbor President Brown calls for a special chapel in which he urges the students to go on with “regular activities and not to get panicky about unverified reports.”

The first men to leave JBU to join the war effort were four young staff members, former students, who left in July of 1941 for the Marines. Two seniors left January 22, 1942—one was drafted, while the other was a volunteer. At the beginning of February JBU began a book campaign to collect books for service men; by the end of the month students had contributed over 150 books. Forty-two JBU students and faculty members registered for the service on February 16. The month of February also brought new rules about men leaving for the army, navy, or marines; these rules consisted of things such as: seniors going

to war who only have one semester left to complete will be given their diploma and students that have taken at least twelve weeks of class will be given credit for the course. March likewise brought about two more students leaving for the war.

KUOA announced on April 13 that it would have a new program called “Ozarks at War” to keep the people up to date on the latest war news. Tuesday’s topic was “You can’t do business with Hitler.” Girls were also urged to send letters to soldiers. The next school year brought a drop in student enrollment and school funds; therefore, the *Threefold Advocate* and yearbook were not produced again until after the war years. The lowest number of male students on the JBU campus was 11; these men were turned down from the army for medical reasons or had already served in the military.

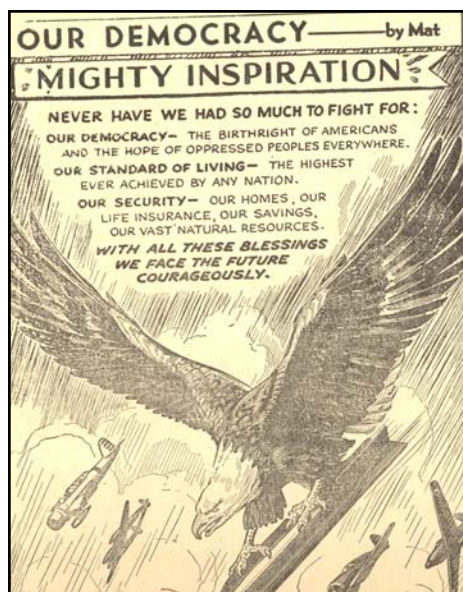
JBU’s main contribution during the war years was the training of pilots. By the summer of 1941 JBU already had a large airport (which consisted of 120 acres and three runways), six active planes, and was authorized to offer an elementary pilot training course (the first school in Arkansas to qualify). Furthermore, the school also purchased damaged planes so that the mechanical students could practice fixing them. In 1942 the War Department selected JBU as qualified to give war training service; therefore, the university was under contract to accept assignments from the War Department which included giving elementary training to a certain number of young men before they would move onto more advanced training. The War De-



Picture from February 1942  
*Threefold Advocate*

partment ended this contract late in 1943.

When the war finally ended and students started returning to school in the fall of 1945 JBU was faced with new obstacles. Many of the returning men were married; therefore adequate housing had to be supplied to them. Furthermore, these men were more mature and serious due to the war. Additionally the campus itself changed with the end of the war with a pool, gym, and tennis courts being constructed. Yet probably the most significant building to arise on the campus was the Cathedral which was in part to stand as a memorial to the fifty JBU students and faculty who died during the war.



Picture from March 1942  
*Threefold Advocate*

# ECHOES OF THE PAST

*Excerpt from the 23 of February 1940 Threefold Advocate*

A University staff member received a letter from relatives in England early this week telling of the conditions in Great Britain while the war goes on. From the letter we quote:

"I read in the paper that letters were to be censored, and no packages were to be mailed, but Kenneth says he is quite sure the letters to the states are not opened. We seal them up before mailing, but they have a way to open and seal again quite neatly. But now I don't feel quite so restricted.

We are 50 miles from London, and of course, the city was cleared of children, who were brought into the country. It has really spoiled all home life for the children, who were so dirty and were not sorted out at all. They were given a nice bed and nice homes, but they preferred to sleep underneath the bed. After upsetting, they would not stay and ever so many have gone back home. Of course, we expected

London to be attacked, but things have not happened so far. I think they know what awaits them, because every possible precaution has been taken. We are in the "Danger Zone" because we have a large air center here, which was erected during the last War.

There is no shortage but we have to pay so dear for things. We can have only a certain amount of butter, sugar, and meat. This is not because of shortage, but because of the imports. It takes so much longer for the ships to travel, and one does not get all they want. Everyone has to share alike. I think the worst is the Blackout. After a certain time no lights are allowed to show from windows, pitch darkness holding forth outside. We cannot go out. I shall be so glad when the days lengthen.

John is ever so short of work. No buildings can be erected, and he has nothing for the men to do. I last

ever so long. We are very thankful that we have not been treated like Finland.

A friend of ours has a large dugout to shelter in. I don't feel like I can bury myself in the earth, but if it was necessary, I suppose I should do like the others.

I really am glad that Grandma is away from all this unrest and turmoil. I shall not have to worry about her much.

I don't let it worry me at all about being bombed. I am so glad I can trust, but of course, I do feel we don't know whether they will pay us a visit or not. We had one alarm in September. The sirens went off early in the morning, but the bombers were driven back and did not get over the coast.

I do hope your country will be able to stay neutral and not have to enter the war."

## Milestones

**March 4, 1942:** For the annual Intramural's Day teams were influenced by the war as seen in the teams names: Blue Bombers and Gold Clippers

**April 27, 1942:** An article appears stating that high school grads will be accepted into the naval reserve.

**May 15, 1942:** US Army Colonel George A. Teachout speaks at Junior Senior Banquet about faith among the troops and army life in general.



## Insights

*From the works of John Brown, Sr.*

As the terrible clouds of war roll farther and farther away, and the vast armies become only a memory, and the battlefields grow still, there will come a clearer, saner, and more wholesome view of the world struggle and what it involved.

In the heat of passion, which during the dark days of the awful conflict overturned the judgments of men, it

was very easy for the leaders on both sides of the battle lines to convince themselves that all justice and all honor and all liberty were centralized exclusively in the issues for which they and their allied armies were struggling, suffering and dying. I myself argued the point that fraternity, equality, liberty, and Christianity were the high ideals for which we and the nations affiliated with us were doing battle, and that infidelity, heathenism, and slavery were united against us.

Speaking now as a soldier and the son of a soldier, and speaking as a one hundred per cent American, I do not hesitate to say that, insofar as infidelity and Christianity were concerned, there were no dividing lines in the world war: for on both sides of the battle lines infidel and Christian, heathen and civilized, democrat and monarchist marched side by side and fought shoulder to shoulder.

-Excerpt from *Slim Pits*