

May 11, 1902.

Dear Father:-

I am ashamed that I have not written sooner, but today is really the first day that I have had plenty of time. During "Graduating Week" we had no studies but the drills and dress parades made up for that. Annapolis was crowded that week with people from all over the country and most of the graduating class had their relatives here. President Roosevelt was here to give the diplomas, and his daughter, Miss Roosevelt, staid over for the Graduation Hop. I invited Nuddy to come sown from Washington but on account of her studies, she couldn't leave.

The Board of Visitors proposed the following changes:

1. That we should be called "Midshipmen" instead of "Naval Cadets."
2. That we be given our commissions

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as ensigns upon graduation

They also recommended to Congress that the pay of naval officers should be on the same basis as that of the Army officers. We all hope that Congress will make these changes especially the one to commission us as ensigns on graduation. The West Pointers do not have to study two years longer after their graduation before they receive their commissions. Why should we? The course of study here includes nearly everything that they have at West Point, and a great deal more besides, such as navigation, etc.

From what the President said in his speech here, he was in favor of these changes.

Now that all the excitement is over, we are reviewing the work for the past term, preparatory to the final examinations, which will

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come in the first week in June. We start on the cruise on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June, and will come back to Annapolis about the 28<sup>th</sup> of August.

This below will illustrate to you the benefit derived from our years training in the Naval Academy. Every year, the cadets have to undergo a "strength test" and a rigid physical examination. ~~By the strength that we~~ Last September, I made 524 points (according to a system of physical measurement) in my strength test. Out of 144 cadets, I stood 97 in strength. Last week, I made 783 points. This shows a gain of 259. This time I stood 28 in strength. I will have my physical exam sometime this week, and I think that my ears are all right.

So far, about 40 of the new fourth class have entered, but they are not plebes yet.

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They are called "functions" now ad they will not become "plebes" until we become "youngsters" which will be on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June. They are a scared-looking bunch, afraid to look to the right or to

the left. But this only shows us how we looked and how green we were when we first entered. There is only one Texan in the lot.

Last Friday the Battalion of Cadets was taken to Washington to be present at Admiral Sampson's funeral. We arrived at Washington at 9 o'clock in morning and marched from the Penn. Depot to Sampson's residence (I did not notice how many miles that was). There we stood at attention for an hour or so. There, I saw Dewey and all the admirals and other high officers of the Navy. From there we

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escorted Sampson's body to the Arlington Cemetery (about seven miles outside of the city of Washington). Besides the cadets, there was a battalion of Marines and a battalion of "Jackies" from the U.S.S. Alabama. It was 3 o'clock before all the ceremonies were over and before we got back to the city for something to eat. I did not get to see Nuddye or Mr. Slayden at all because we were not given any liberty at all. After dinner, we marched to the depot and 5:30 we were back in Annapolis. We were certainly tired. These military funerals may be a fine and imposing sight, but when it comes to taking part in them it is very different. The weather was very warm that day. We left Annapolis that morning so fresh and

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fine in our dress uniforms. By the time we got back, we looked and felt very different.

Is every one well at home? Is Mr. Slayden still in Texas? Are the children well?

Well father, I close with my best love to Mother, the children and all the rest.

Your loving son

[signed]

Chester W. Nimitz