

important person besides Mom and Dad, namely Jeanne, to whom I was not yet engaged.

I drove over to Charlie's but did something stupid. I guess I was excited and in a hurry, since at a big intersection, I tried to beat a light. I was unsuccessful as I found out when a cop whistled me to stop. "What's your hurry?" he asked. I told him I was trying to see a friend and say goodbye since I was due to report to the army in a few days. He thereupon amiably shook my hand and said, "Good luck, kid. God be with you, but don't run any more lights."

Charlie and I had been friends at New York University and had once walked from 9<sup>th</sup> Street (NYU) to 160<sup>th</sup> Street where I lived. I had driven him home from there. Well, we chatted a while and then I returned home, stopping at all red lights! It had been good to talk with him and say farewell.

When I reported in, as requested or commanded at Camp Upton, our first event was a physical examination. After about twenty minutes I was ushered into the doctor's office. He was a middle-aged gentleman who handled the examination professionally. He told me that everything was fine and then we had a brief discussion. He had read my NYU records and then, to my amazement, offered the following statement, "You probably realize that in this war we unfortunately are going to lose quite a number of men, and the enemy forces most likely will be able to prolong the war for quite a number of years, after which we will, of course, win. In your case, I know that your field is Education, and I know that after the war we will need many teachers or administrators. I can help you to get into inactive service if you wish and want to tell you that in doing so, I

am also thinking of the future of the United States. We certainly will need good schools, administrators and teachers.”

I replied that I realized what he was saying and that I had great respect for him as well as of the plan, but how could he have me placed on inactive duty? His answer was that he could base his judgment on the basis of the myopic condition of my eyes.

What I have not stated previously is that at the age of twelve I had come down with a bad case of scarlet fever. For over a week, I had had a day and night nurse until I recovered. After a thorough examination, I was told that because of the effects of the fever and sickness, I had developed severe eyestrain and my eyes had weakened and from now on I would have to get used to and wear glasses. Thus I always wear glasses and must have stronger lenses every few years.

Now back to the doctor. I told him that, of course, the army provides us with additional glasses whenever a soldier needs them, even in the gas masks, but his idea seemed quite plausible. I then asked, “Doctor, how much time do I have before I give you a definite answer?” He then glanced at his watch saying, “You have ten minutes before I see my next patient.” You can imagine my agony, but after five minutes of soul searching I was ready. “Doctor, I really am impressed by what you are doing and I want to thank you, but I’ll take my chances on active duty.” With that we shook hands and I left his office actually sweating quite a bit. It had been a serious decision.