Oct 8, 1942

Dear Capt Hack -

I find myself beginning the letter with conflicting emotions which I hope you will understand for it is difficult to express my feelings and perhaps best that they remain unstated. I am sure however, that you do understand how I feel in not being with you.

You are familiar with the factors which influenced my application for this service so I shall not review them again. After I wrote and talked with you Dr. Ochsner wrote Col. Hall and Col. Rankin regarding my commission as a captain and explained to them that his only concern was that in this rank I would not be able to qualify for the position of Chief of the Surgical Service at the Station Hospital here and that my training and experience would therefore not be applied to the greatest effect. In his answer to Dr. Ochsner Colonel Hall stated that my age was the deciding factor as far as rank was concerned but that I still

at Doctor Schneider's

could be made Chief of the Surgical Service." I therefore accepted the commission and reported here for active duty. Colonel Strong who is the commanding officer of the Station Hospital here then told me that I would be made Chief of the Surgical Service and that he had received a letter from Colonel Hall requesting this. Thus, as soon as we move into the hospital which we hope to do in about three weeks I shall be appointed Chief of Surgery. At present I am organizing the service and making the necessary plans for its operation. Everyone here has been most cordial and cooperative and I am determined to exert my best efforts towards a smoothly functioning surgical service.

I am glad you liked the illustrations on chest surgery I sent you and hope you will find them worthy of consideration.

The abdominal compression injuries referred to in your recent letter were most interesting. I am wondering if some type of sponge rubber abdominal binder would not be a

means of prophylaxis against such injuries. They could be made in such a way as to be surface sealed and thus buoyant so as to act as a life preserver as well, and the men could strap them on snugly against the abdomen just before going into battle. In this way they would act as an effective substitute for a life preserver and their elasticity would not interfere with effective movements on the ship during battle. Sponge rubber has been shown experimentally to protect against "blast" injuries of the chest and I believe they might also protect against the compression injuries of the abdomen for the mechanism is probably the same. This of course could be determined experimentally relatively simply by placing the sponge rubber binders on dogs in a tank of water containing a comparably small depth charge. Obviously it would be necessary to do control experiments on dogs not having the sponge rubber binders. This is only an idea but I am sure some effective means of protection could be worked out. If only

ten or 15 % of the men exposed could be saved by such a device it would be worthwhile.

In closing let me express again my sincere and grateful appreciation for your kind efforts. While I have been denied the pleasure of being a "more or less permanent shipmate of yours" for the present my feeling towards you will always be the same and I would like to be considered in your mind as one of the boys you have given guidance and stimulation. I sincerely hope that I shall have the good fortune of hearing you at the College of Surgeons meeting and the pleasure of seeing you there.

Sincerely yours
Mike

You would of course understand how much a letter from you at your convenience would mean to me.