MEMORANDUM

September 19, 1945

To: Military Personnel Office

From: J. W. Kennedy and C. S. Smith

Subject: T/Sgt William W. Lowe

Technical Sergeant William W. Lowe joined the U.S. Army in May, 1943, and was sent to Los Alamos in March, 1944. Before entering the Army, Lowe was attending Purdue University where he was in the last semester of his work toward a bachelorate degree in chemical engineering.

During the first four months at Los Alamos Lowe was engaged in the development of a method for the radiochemical assay of plutonium, one of the vital materials used in the manufacture of atomic bombs. In the following four-month period he did chemical research on methods for the purification of this element, and took part in developing and constructing equipment for the testing of these methods on a pilot-plant scale. On the basis of this experience a full-scale purification unit was designed, constructed and tested. Lowe participated in this work, and in February, 1945, was given larger personal responsibility for the construction and improvement of additional full-scale units. Subsequently, he was given increasing responsibility for the production of purified plutonium.

The quality of military personnel assigned to Los Alamos in the Special Engineer Detachment is very high, most of the men having had considerable scientific or technical experience prior to their induction into the Army. Accordingly, a large number of these men contributed in a major way to the success of the purification work in which Lowe has been engaged. The excellent way in which Lowe carried out his responsibilities and his ability to secure the utmost in cooperation from his co-workers have made him one of the most outstanding men in this field of work, and have resulted in the supervisory responsibilities described.

J. W. Kennedy

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C. S. Smith

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