

# Spokane celebrates its 125th year

## SECOND-LARGEST CITY IN STATE

It's branched out from its roots in logging, mining, farming

BY NICHOLAS K. GERANIOS  
The Associated Press

SPOKANE — Happy 125th birthday, Spokane. You don't look a day over 100.

The state's second-largest city achieved this milestone in late November, and took time to celebrate.

In truth, age becomes Spokane.

Downtown is booming, filled with new stores and hundreds of new condominiums, and a massive urban-village proposal would add more than 2,000 new residents to the city center.

Real-estate prices have soared. The arts scene is vibrant. The streets roll up at 11 p.m. now instead of 10 p.m. (just kidding).

Spokane will always be the ignored little brother to glamorous Seattle in the larger Washington family, but if you live in Colfax, Colville, Kellogg or Kalispell, this city might as well be New York.

The unchallenged capital of the Inland Northwest (or, if you prefer, Inland Empire), Spokane dominates a swath of mountains and plains in eastern Washington, northern Idaho and western Montana. Those who need specialized medical care, a trip to Nordstrom, a direct flight to Chicago or some Moroccan food have few other options.

Not even the new city slogan, "Near Nature, Near Perfect," has dimmed the appeal.

Bill Stimson, a local historian and journalism professor, said the 125th birthday is much better than the 100th, which came at a time when the city was struggling.

Spokane boomed after it was founded in 1881 and grew quickly into a good-sized city, Stimson said. As a major railroad hub, Spokane had 100 to 150 trains, many filled with passengers, coming through each day.

But as its core logging, mining and farming industries matured and the boom times ended, Spokane struggled for most of the 20th century.

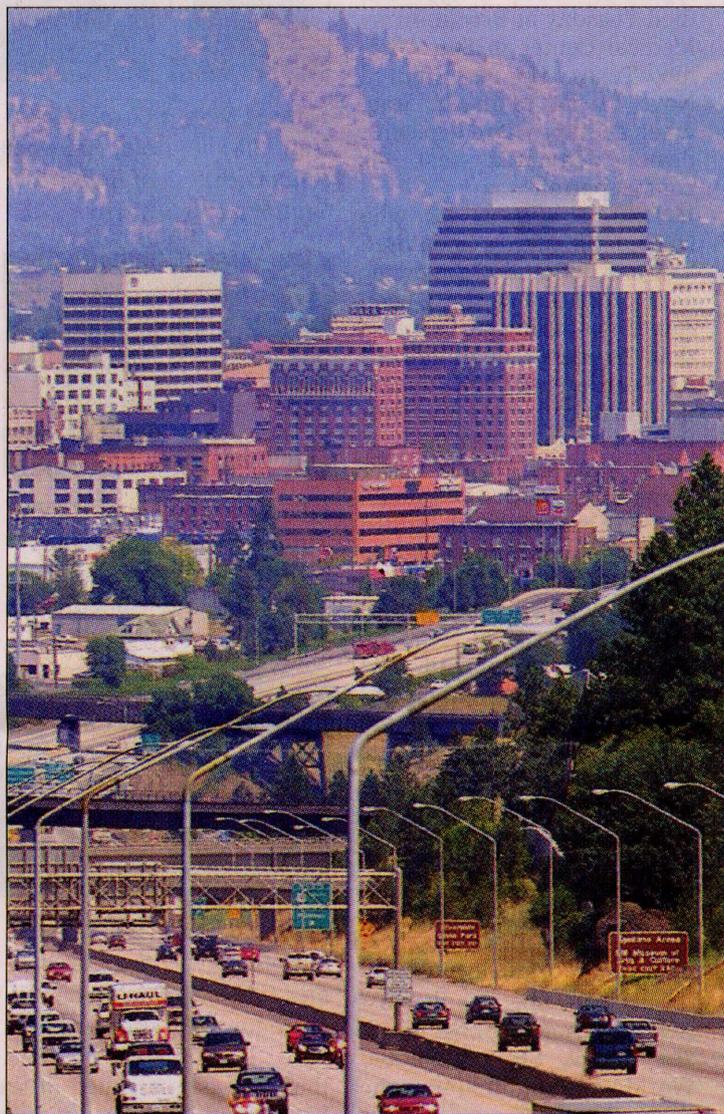
"From 1920 to about 2000, Spokane was constantly searching for what was supposed to be its role," Stimson said.

In recent years, the new economy has turned into a savior, as people who can live and work anywhere are drawn to places with much outdoor recreation, little traffic and superior quality of life, Stimson said.

"Our isolation out here is not the great drawback it used to be," Stimson said.

Spokane, with an estimated 201,600 residents, is the second-largest city in Washington and the biggest city between Seattle (pop. 578,000) and Minneapolis, or — as some local wags like to note — the second-biggest city on a line between Tokyo and Minneapolis. Its name is an Indian word that means "Children of the Sun."

Indians were first drawn to the site by the Spokane River



ALAN BERNER / THE SEATTLE TIMES, JULY 24, 2002

Downtown Spokane rises at the other end of I-90 in Eastern Washington.

families began to arrive.

Spokane became an incorporated city on Nov. 29, 1881. It was known as Spokan Falls and had fewer than 1,000 residents. The "e" was added in 1883, and "Falls" was dropped in 1891.

The biggest event in securing the future of the city was the completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1881, with Spokane as a major hub, said David Nicandri of the Washington State Historical Society.

"When the NP, and then later the GN [Great Northern], made Spokane a major section point on their lines, sub-regional hegemony shifted from Walla Walla to Spokane, cementing its place as the state's second-largest and arguably second most important city," Nicandri said.

The discovery of gold, silver, lead and zinc in the region, coupled with agriculture and logging, poured wealth into the new city.

A fire on August 4, 1889, destroyed much of the city center. Many of the buildings were insured and were quickly replaced with brick or stone structures. By 1900, Spokane had a population of almost 40,000.

The Spokane Stock Exchange, formed in 1897 to trade mining stocks, operated until 1991.

### "Place to raise a family"

An immigration boom between 1900 and 1910 pushed Spokane's population to more than 100,000.

Among the people who moved in was the family of Harry "Bing" Crosby, who grew

up and honed his performing talents in Spokane.

When he performed in the Gonzaga Dramatic Club's play, "It Pays to Advertise," on Nov. 8, 1923, a reviewer for The Spokesman-Review wrote: "Mr. Crosby bursts over with spontaneity in getting his amusing lines across the footlights."

Sonora Smart Dodd of Spokane came up with the idea for Father's Day after listening to a Mother's Day sermon in 1909. Raised by her widower father, William Jackson Smart, Dodd wanted to show him how special he was. Her father was born in June, so she chose to hold the first Father's Day celebration in Spokane on June 19, 1910.

The arrival of automobiles made the area's many lakes accessible to the public, and "going to the lake" became the standard summer activity.

During World War II, Spokane was home to the Velox Naval Supply Depot, the massive Galena Army Air Corps supply and repair depot (which became Fairchild Air Force Base), Geiger Field, Fort George Wright, and the Baxter Army Hospital. In addition, two aluminum plants built the skin for thousands of warplanes.

Many veterans returned to attend local colleges, bought houses in new developments, and raised children in "a good place to raise a family," which remains Spokane's unofficial slogan.

In 1964, a young Spokane attorney named Tom Foley was elected to Congress. He became Speaker of the House in

1989, but was defeated in the 1994 GOP takeover of Congress.

### Changing picture

In the 1960s urban sprawl developed — particularly with the completion of Interstate 90 in 1967 — and downtown declined.

The Spokane River area, long a polluted eyesore, crisscrossed by railroad trestles, became the focus of attention. An ambitious plan to restore the river and surrounding area took shape. It would lead to Expo 74, a world's fair with an environmental theme. Spokane is the smallest city to ever host a world's fair. More than 5 million people attended.

The first Bloomsday, billed as the largest road race in the world where all runners are timed, was held in 1977. It has grown to more than 50,000 participants.

The nationwide slump of the 1980s resulted in high unemployment and a stagnant real-estate market in Spokane. Many of the city's best-educated young people left.

But the picture changed in the 1990s, when the Spokane Arena was built, downtown was revitalized and dwindling

manufacturing jobs were replaced by service and technical industries. The landmark Davenport Hotel was refurbished and reopened in 2002, and is such a success that a 20-story addition is being built, the first significant high-rise downtown in two decades.

The rise of Gonzaga basketball put the city on the national sports map, and now Spokane draws events such as the NCAA basketball tournament, the U.S. Figure Skating Championships and the Olympic wrestling trials.

Spokane's biggest splash in the national pond in recent times came last year, when the local newspaper outed Mayor Jim West as a closeted homosexual who offered perks to young men in exchange for sex. West was recalled from office; he died of cancer in July.

In an interview earlier this year with PBS' Frontline for a documentary on the scandal, West still waxed poetic about growing up in Spokane.

"You can imagine being a kid and having this as your backyard," West recalled. "You can go out there and play forts and army and basically get lost in your imagination for a few hours."

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# A Day of Infamy, Two Years of Hard Work

Here, 64 years late, are edited excerpts from a dispatch sent to *The New York Times* by Robert Trumbull, the paper's correspondent at Pearl Harbor. It details a triumphant but mostly forgotten story of World War II: the salvage effort that rebuilt the Pacific Fleet after the Japanese attack.

A city of seamen, engineers, divers, carpenters, welders, pipe fitters and other industrial workers arose overnight at the Pearl Harbor Navy Yard. Its slogan was "We keep them fit to fight," and within two years the yard raised all the damaged ships except the *Arizona* and the *Utah*.

One year after the attack, with the harbor still choked with wreckage, Trumbull wrote a 15,000-word, three-part series about the round-the-clock operation. But wartime censorship killed the articles. Like the civilian rescue workers and hardhats at ground zero, the shipyard workers dispersed, unheralded, when the job was done. Trumbull died in 1992. The full text of this article and more photographs are at [nytimes.com/opinion](http://nytimes.com/opinion).

By Robert Trumbull

PEARL HARBOR, Dec. 13 (Passed by naval censor) —

**T**WO of the great stories of world naval history concern Pearl Harbor. First is the stunning blow dealt the United States Pacific Fleet in the Japanese sneak attack here Dec. 7, 1941. The second, which may well be the more significant story when the world returns to the ways of peace, deals with the miracle of reclamation and repair accomplished here to undo the incredibly complex destruction wrought by the Japanese bombers.

Undoing of the Pearl Harbor damage is a story that continues today; as this is written its climax is still in the future. Its first full telling in this series of articles reveals the greatness of American industrial ingenuity, which has reached at Pearl Harbor a historic flowering.

What has been done here to put back into fighting trim the once proud warships that were unmercifully rent and shattered by bomb and torpedo, the ships pounded and broken into an unholy mess and then jammed by their own great weight into the muck of the harbor bottom, could scarcely be grasped by anyone who has not seen it.

To understand adequately the staggering problem that faced the naval engineers Dec. 7, 1941, one must go back and survey Pearl Harbor as it lay in the silence of death and ruin after the attack.

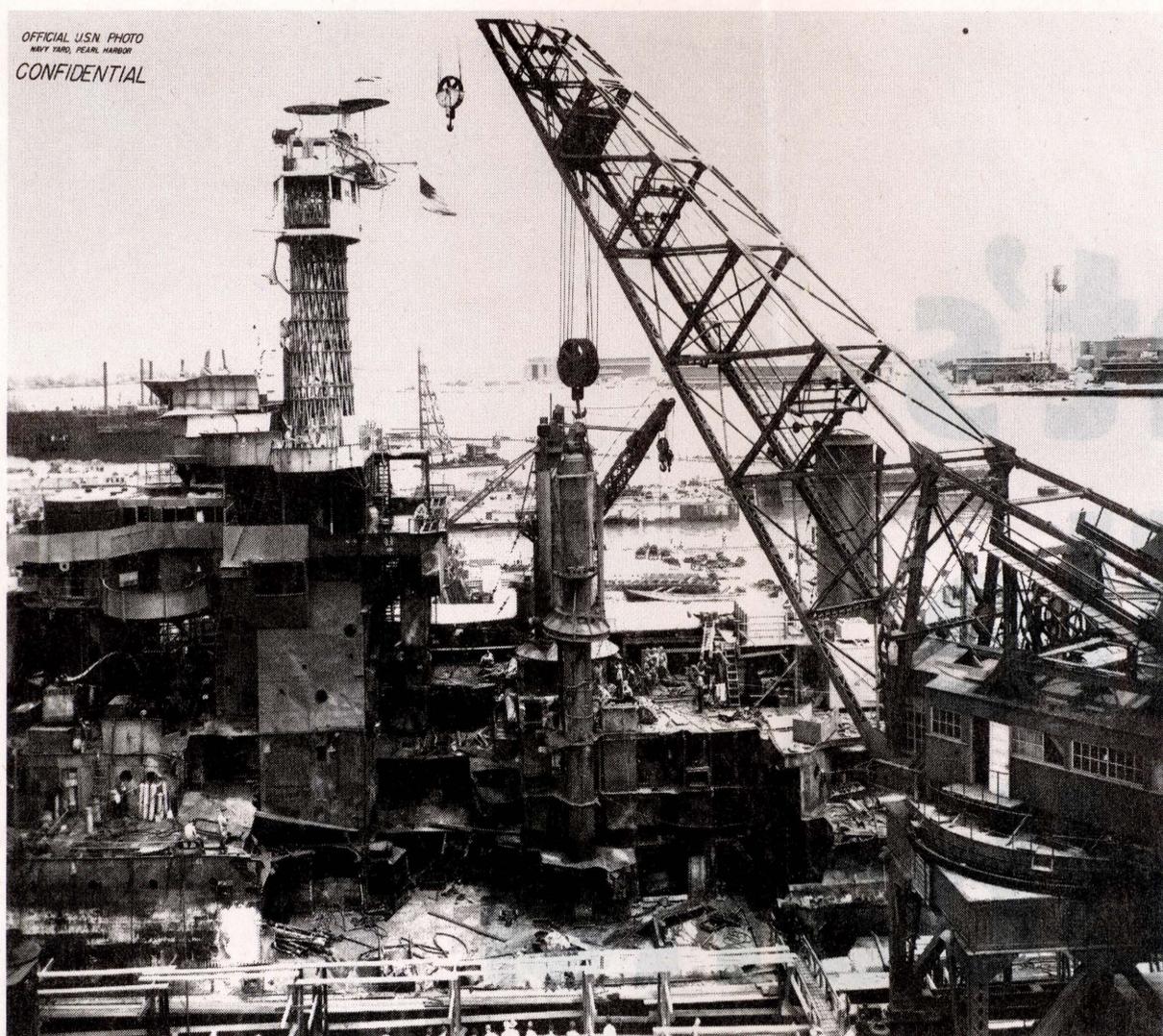
The battleship *Nevada*, staggered by a number of heavy bomb hits and punctured by a torpedo that struck near the bow, was able to get underway and leave the hell that was Battleship Row. It beached itself in the channel and sank back to rest with water lapping its quarterdeck.

The *California*, its bow burned and its insides horribly scrambled by torpedoes amidships, sank at its moorings, settling in the mud with a list of five to seven degrees. Only its high turrets poked above the water, which swirled over its stern and quarterdeck, and rushed inside the torn hole to add its own vast weight to the mass pressing into the soft harbor bottom.

Also sunk at its moorings in Battleship Row was the *West Virginia*, terribly wounded by both bombs and torpedoes. Like the *California*, it remained in an upright position. This circumstance made reclamation more readily workable, although discouragingly complicated problems remained.

The *Arizona*, the only battleship listed as lost — and rightfully so, as will be seen — rested on the bottom near Ford Island, devastated by fire within as well as wrecked by bombs and torpedoes.

On the opposite side of Ford Island, the *Oklahoma* lay capsized, 150 degrees from the vertical, its ravaged port side turned under. It was anchored to the bottom by its own



The *West Virginia* in dry dock in 1942. It returned to action and was in Tokyo Bay for Japan's surrender in 1945.

bomb hit a Ford Island hangar, setting it afire. This plane, having done its share in nullifying the fleet's air power, circled, turned and flew back by the *Oglala* at eye level to the admiral. "I could have hit the plane with a potato," Admiral Furlong said.

Thus Admiral Furlong saw the terrible damage done. Shortly, as commandant of the Pearl Harbor Navy Yard, he was assigned to get it undone. He had the entire Pearl Harbor establishment at his call for a job that was heroic in its broad proportions, and which in detail was often seemingly impossible, frequently discouraging and always physically arduous, filthy, stinking and dangerous.

Nowhere in the world, according to Navy officers here, have Navy and civilian workers toiled together in such close coordination and harmony on a monumental task. Their joint achievement has never been equaled, either as a feat in mechanics or as an example of cooperation between military and nonmilitary men.

When the subject of the *West Virginia* is mentioned to the men who worked on its salvage, they seldom say anything. They just whistle.

The Japanese left this \$27 million beauty a model for destruction. It will be amazing and disheartening to them now to learn that it will return to the war a better ship than it was before.

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Seven torpedoes had hit its port side, blowing out a series of gashes

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The support from the top was given by frames of steel I-beams, from which the cofferdams hung as from a coat hanger.

Now for the troublesome problem of sealing at the bottom, where a snug fitting of the wood was impracticable: Hundreds of tons of tremie concrete were poured from hoppers into funnels high above the water. This quick-setting cement, which hardens under water, oozed through thick pipes and formed about the *West Virginia's* uneven crevasses far below. It hardened and made the cofferdam part of the ship watertight.

As the pumps strained to suck out the fouled sea inside, the *West Virginia* rose, inch by inch. Each new day disclosed a new surface ring of oil and black muck from the harbor bottom marking on the cofferdam the laborious progress of the ship's flotation.

During this time, the workers lived close ashore in rude huts built for them so they could stay near the job. They came to work on foot, over a bridge laid on floats. These were sailors all. The "yard workmen," civilians, had their customary quarters elsewhere, and were taken to and from the ship by boat.

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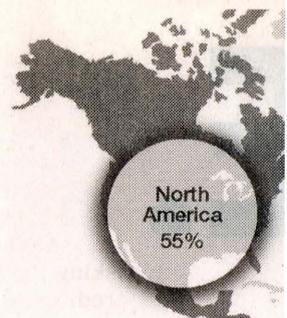
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Sunk by a heavy bomb hit was the big floating dry dock, which contained the destroyer Shaw at the time. The minelayer Oglala was sunk on its side at its dock, and the two destroyers Cassin and Downes were lost in the dry dock. The Downes was literally blown in two by the explosion of its magazine. The Cassin, which lay alongside the Downes to starboard in the dry dock, also caught fire and, its hull mottled like wetted paper, fell off its blocks and leaned over wearily against the Downes.

Rear Adm. William R. Furlong, a gray, stocky Pennsylvanian, was commander of the Pacific Fleet mine force on Dec. 7, 1941. He rose early, as is his custom, that Sunday morning. He was on the deck of his flagship, the ungainly Oglala.

Admiral Furlong's amazed blue eyes saw the first Japanese bomb dropped in the Pearl Harbor phase of the attack strike a seaplane ramp on Ford Island. He saw the second



Robert F. Walden Collection, University Archives and Manuscripts, Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii at Manoa

The West Virginia in dry dock in 1942. It returned to action and was in Tokyo Bay for Japan's surrender in 1945.

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The boat deck was a shattered mass. Bombs laid open four decks that way an earthquake might tear away the wall of a four-story building, leaving the rooms indecently exposed. Up on the bridge, Capt. Mervyn S. Bennion had lain grievously wounded, refusing to be moved, and there he died. Posthumously he was awarded his country's highest honor, the Congressional Medal.

Japan's dive bombers did their work well on the West Virginia. The heavy bomb abaft the bridge that had damaged all the upper works had pushed one deck clear down upon another, and a five-inch gun in a rended casemate fell a full deck below, as if sprung from a trapdoor.

The heavy armor belt showed the marks of six torpedoes. Another tore into its vitals under the stern, breaking the rudder.

Inside, the West Virginia looked as if she had been crumpled like paper in a giant hand. When the engineers went to work on the West Virginia, almost the only point in its favor was that the ship was not capsized. The great slash in its port side was too large for any patch. Delicate matching of the timber frames to the lines of its hull was out of the question, for the sides of the ship had writhed in their agony, and it no longer fitted its blueprints.

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ferdams, watertight chambers that could be built and attached to the ship. So huge cofferdams were built, their wooden sections braced with steel. They were lowered, bolted to the hull as on other ships, and meeting so as to form one tremendous outwall. The cofferdam was further secured by long steel rods running vertically upward from their attachments inside the timber structure to A-frames fastened to the deck above.

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There were instances of heroism in the salvage that deserve to go permanently into the annals of Dec. 7. One day an unexploded 1,750-pound bomb was discovered, held in a section of steel that it had penetrated. An officer risked his life to unscrew the live fuses.

Another time the workers came upon the uninjured air flask of a Japanese torpedo. The officers spent an uncomfortable time searching for the warhead. They came to the conclusion that it had dropped off before the fish entered the ship. This torpedo, weirdly, was encircled, when found, by one of the ship's barber chairs.

Workmen prowling the ruins below decks made several tragic discoveries of the type that can only be expected when a city of more than a thousand men is hurled to the bottom of the sea in a space of minutes.

An incidental point of interest is that the West Virginia yielded to the cleanup crews a fine reservoir of powder that conceivably will be used to propel missiles at the Japanese. The powder was not in usable condition when recovered, but was suitable for re-blending.

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# Postwar moral stumblings

'Good' films offer a less-than-romanticized side after WWII

BY JAKE COYLE

The Associated Press

While World War II often is portrayed as America's finest, most heroic moment, two new films offer a less than romanticized view of politicking, compromising and exploiting that followed the war.

Steven Soderbergh's "The Good German" and Robert De Niro's "The Good Shepherd" overlap, in part, as they depict American hypocrisy abroad through cynical, contemporary eyes.

Soderbergh's movie, made in a black-and-white '40s style, is set in Berlin after its fall; De Niro's movie follows the history of CIA agent Edward Wilson (Matt Damon), who is early on posted in the same postwar Berlin.

Clint Eastwood's companion films of the Battle of Iwo Jima – "Flags of Our Fathers" and "Letters From Iwo Jima" – shows the dirty business of even the most altruistic of wars. De Niro and Soderbergh's visions pick up the narrative with the war's aftermath, where battle lines are dissolved.

"I'm not surprised. Why should things change so much between then and now?" De Niro says, then pauses to seemingly ponder an elaboration, then simply adds: "It's not surprising."

De Niro, who directs and co-stars in the film, maintains the war itself "was a clearly justified war, as far as the Allies going in and doing what we did to end it," but that "things have gotten much more muddied."

"The Good Shepherd" follows Wilson from his recruitment for the Office of Strategic Services (the wartime intelligence agency that became the CIA) through the Bay of Pigs.

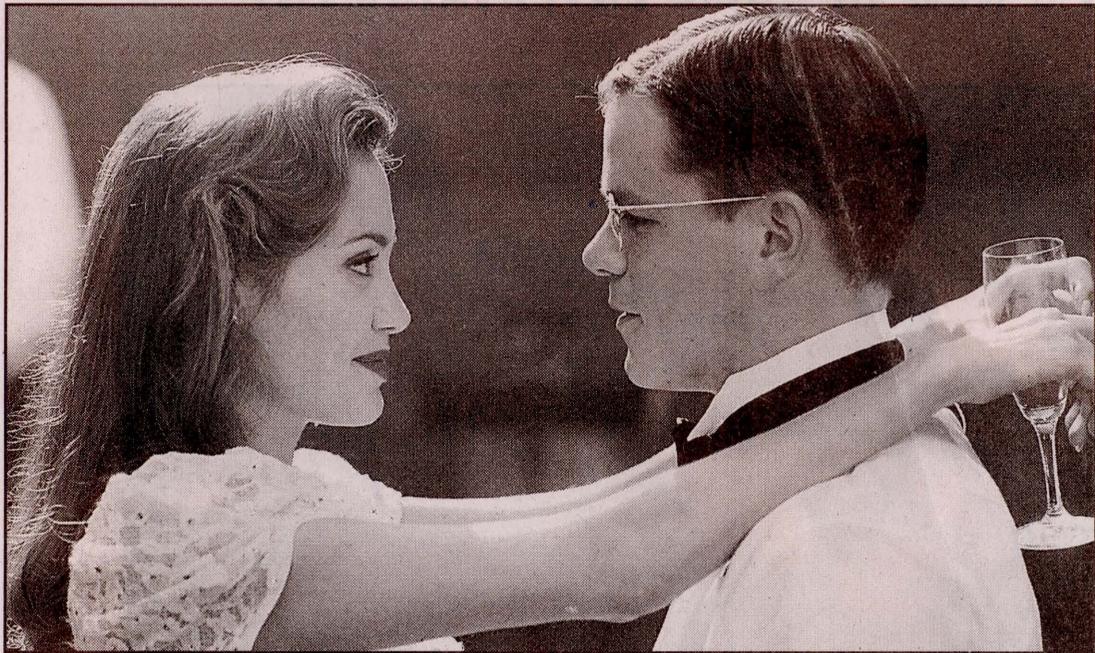
Wilson sees the CIA gradually build from modest beginnings into a modern behemoth. Though the movie is fictionalized, De Niro was advised by a former, long-term CIA agent and earned a thumbs-up from former U.S. ambassador to the U.N. Richard Holbrooke, who has said of the film: "There's no way to understand the present without understanding how we got there."

In an interview, De Niro says he didn't plan for the movie to resonate particularly with current times, but it's difficult not to see a few overt references. In one interrogation scene, a Russian spy is tortured with a technique similar to waterboarding – one of the controversial methods authorized by the Bush administration.

In another scene, Gen. Bill Sullivan (De Niro) speaks about the formation of the CIA, which was the United States' first peacetime covert intelligence organization. Sullivan voices his concerns that it could become too invasive of citizens – a subject of considerable debate lately.

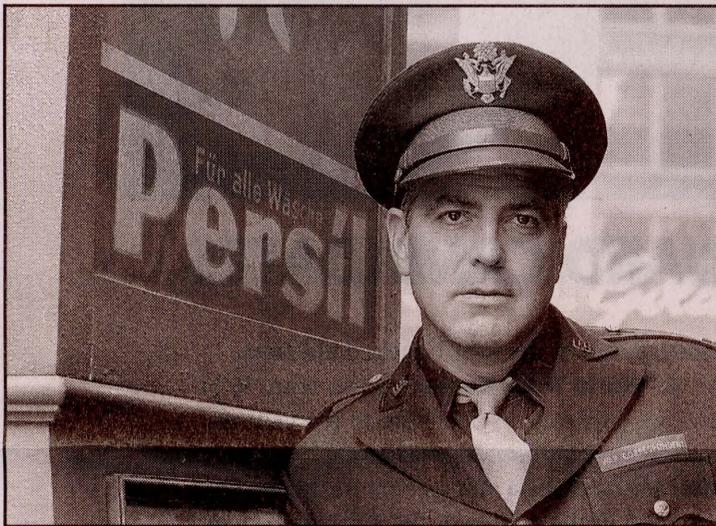
"The Good Shepherd" is taking up serious issues," says Time magazine film critic Richard Schickel. "The question of over-privileged people organizing what would eventually become the CIA and imposing their arrogant sense of 'We know what's best for this country and don't you forget it' upon the nation as a whole and leading to the Bay of Pigs."

Soon after the war, one of Wilson's early assignments is in Berlin, which was then a kind of capital for international espionage and ground zero for the developing Cold War. It was divided into four sectors: American, Russian, British and French.



ANDREW SCHWARTZ / UNIVERSAL PICTURES

Matt Damon's Edward Wilson (with Angelina Jolie as his wife) uses the moral complexity of Berlin as a springboard to a career of trafficking.



MELINA SUE GORDON / WARNER BROS. PICTURES

Jake Geismer (George Clooney) is disillusioned by a covered-up murder and the secret shuttling of German scientists to the U.S.

"Many of the Berliners – and that's one of the ironies of history – experienced the incoming Western and in particular American troops as liberators from the Soviet occupation," says Andreas Daum, a history professor at the University of Buffalo. "That is very important in understanding why Berlin could turn into a turf in which Americans perform both as liberators and Wild West men gambling on the black market."

In "The Good German," that's precisely the business of Patrick Tully (Tobey Maguire), a corporal who never wants to leave the corruption of Berlin. Both "The Good German" and "The Good Shepherd" allude to the considerable racketeering then going on in Berlin, as well as the intense competition to acquire German scientists previously working for the Nazis.

It was an ugly scene – thousands of German women were raped during Soviet occupation, venereal diseases were spreading and some of the city's harshest winters came in the years after the war.

The Berlin of "The Good Ger-

man" is undeniably bleak, but some critics have reproached Soderbergh's film for being an exercise in style that exploits a harrowing time.

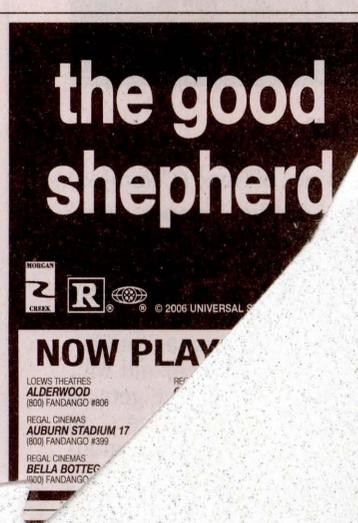
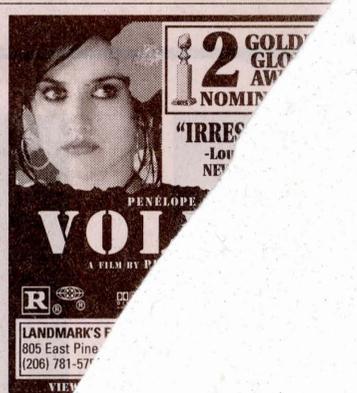
For war correspondent Jake Geismer (George Clooney), a covered-up murder and the secretive shuttling of German scientists to the U.S. to aid the Manhattan Project bring him further disillusionment with his country – while the U.S. was celebrating the triumphant conclusion of war in Europe.

Postwar Berlin wouldn't gain its dividing wall until 1961, making it easy for spies and criminals

to traverse the various sectors. (Another upcoming movie – the acclaimed German film "The Lives of Others" – portrays life in communist 1984 East Berlin.)

While Geismer struggles to weed through the moral complexity of Berlin, Damon's Wilson uses it as a springboard to a career of trafficking in such waters. Neither can tell a friend from a foe.

The protagonists' muddled vision can be seen as a metaphor for America – where a paranoid postwar perspective would lead to not just the Bay of Pigs in Cuba, but to the Vietnam War and beyond. WWII may have vanquished a common, unmistakable enemy, but it begat a new and complicated world order where America's hands were increasingly less clean.



# Styron Visible: Naming the Evils That Humans Do

At a time when many of his contemporaries were documenting the domestic travails of middle-class suburban life, or excavating the geological layers of their own psyches, William Styron — who died of pneumonia Wednesday at 81 — was boldly tackling the big, unwieldy themes

MICHIKO  
KAKUTANI

AN  
APPRECIATION

of crime and punishment and redemption, and creating big-boned dramatic narratives set against the great conflagrations of history: slavery in “The Confessions of Nat Turner” and the Nazi death camps in “Sophie’s Choice.”

It was a tropism that stemmed in part from Mr. Styron’s appreciation for the gravity and swoop of the great modern writers of tragedy like Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Thomas Mann — his conviction, in Herman Melville’s words, that “to produce a mighty book, you must choose a mighty theme”; and in part



Ivan Crosencio/Associated Press

William Styron in his library at his home in Rome, 1960, shortly after publication of “Set This House on Fire.”

from his own belief that “human beings are a hair’s breadth away from catastrophe at all times — both personally and on a larger historical level.”

All his novels, Mr. Styron once observed, focused on one recurrent theme: “the catastrophic propensity on the part of human beings to attempt to dominate one another.” He speculated in a 1982 interview that this theme found him, as a result of being a young soldier in World War II, contemplating “the forces in history that simply wipe you out”:

“You’re suddenly a cipher — you find yourself on some hideous atoll in the Pacific, and if you’re unlucky you get a bullet through your head.” He added that “within the microcosm of the Marine Corps itself, you’re just a mound of dust in terms of free will, and I think this fact of

*Continued on Page 30*

# Styron Visible: Naming the Evils That Humans Do

Continued From Weekend Page 27

being helpless enlarges one's sensitivity to the idea of evil."

A native of Virginia, Mr. Styron wrote with a Southerner's fierce sense of history — guilt over the region's legacy of slavery, overlaid with a resentment of Yankee sanctimony.

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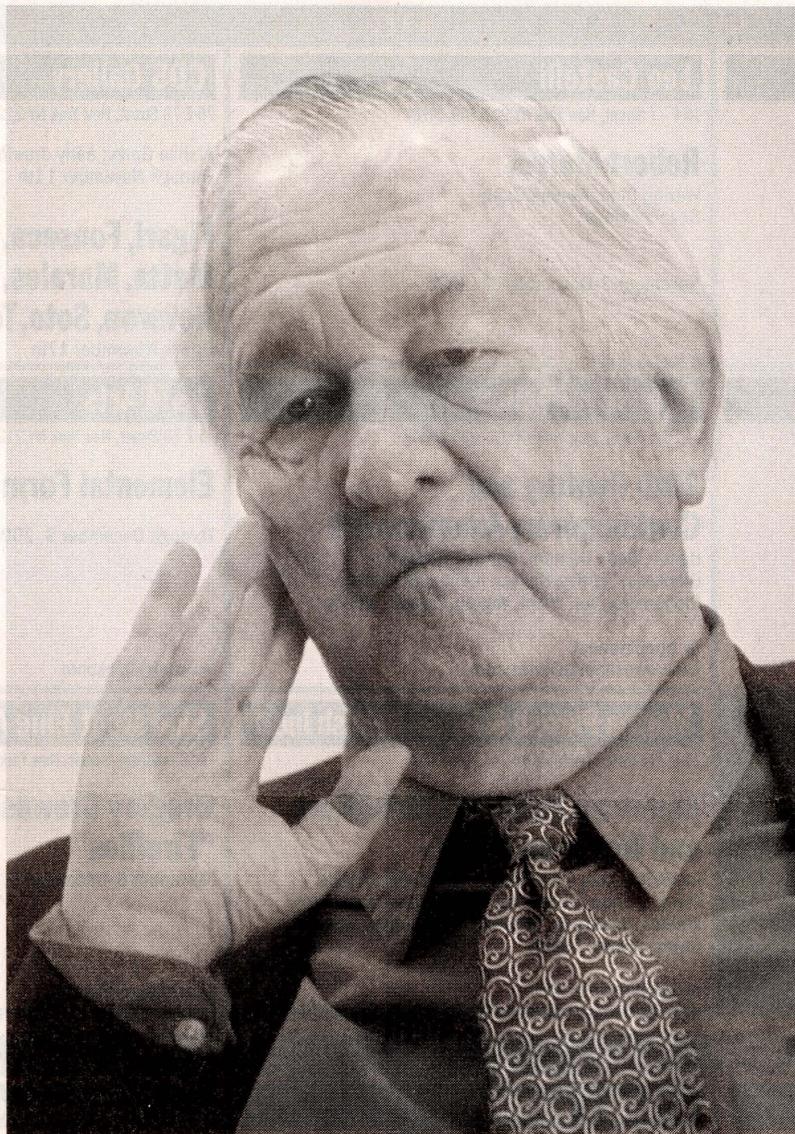
There was an elegiac tone to much of his work, a heightened awareness of loss and longing and regret.

The long shadow of William Faulkner, along with those of Thomas Wolfe and Robert Penn Warren, fell over Mr. Styron's work, and like many members of the postwar generation, he struggled, at least initially, to come to terms with the daunting achievements of his predecessors. His prose bore the full imprint of the Southern tradition: it was lush, luxuriant, sometimes purple, and it was often put in the service of decidedly violent and gothic storylines.

From the start, a sense of melodrama informed Mr. Styron's work, and it would thread its way through his entire oeuvre. Evil, both personal and institutional, continually stalked his protagonists, leaving them haunted by a sense of guilt and mortality — a personal apprehension, in the words of Norman Mailer, of "the gulfs and hazards that lie beneath the surface of social life." Many of Mr. Styron's people would turn out to be victims — of history's random corkscrew twists, of malign social ideologies, of an individual's pathological power games, of their own cowardice and weakness.

Mr. Styron's debut novel "Lie Down in Darkness" (1951), a hot-house pastiche of Faulkner and Fitzgerald and Wolfe, chronicled the dissolution of a Southern family and its members' bouts with alcoholism, madness and suicide. "Set This House on Fire" (1960), set in Italy and the United States, turned the story of a murder into a brooding, pseudo-Dostoyevskian inquiry into the nature of guilt and salvation. And "The Confessions of Nat Turner" (1967), a fictionalized account of the slave leader's 1831 revolt, was a "meditation on history" that explored the bloody tragedies of the era, even as it reverberated with echoes of the civil rights struggles and social upheavals of the 1960s.

As for "Sophie's Choice," Mr. Styron's 1979 magnum opus about a young American writer and his



Alexa Welch Edlund/Richmond Times-Dispatch, via Associated Press, 2000

"Human beings are a hair's breadth away from catastrophe at all times."

## Tackling big themes with characters touched by history.

friendship with an Auschwitz survivor, it opened out into a harrowing meditation on the destruction of innocence. The novel was constructed around two intertwining story lines. The first recounted the story of the tormented Sophie, the survivor who was forced to make an impossible choice: decide which of her two children would go to the gas chambers and which would have a chance to live.

The second story line recounted the story of Sophie's neighbor, a

young Southern writer named Stingo, who was based on the author's own younger self. Sophie would initiate Stingo into a knowledge of the world; he would acquire an intimate apprehension of evil and its terrible imprint on one woman's life, and in doing so, come to some acknowledgment of his own family's complicity in the racial crimes of the South.

The sections of "Sophie's Choice" dealing with Stingo's coming of age — his harried and sometimes comical literary apprenticeship, his emotionally fraught sexual awakening — were the most keenly observed parts of the book, and in many respects, the most persuasive, avoiding the grandiosity that sometimes afflicted his work. Instead they left us with a classic portrait of the artist as a young man while reminding us just

## Worldly Words

William Styron, who died Wednesday of pneumonia at 81, married grand historical themes with his own fraught life as a Southern writer who struggled with depression. Below is a bibliography.

**"LIE DOWN IN DARKNESS"** (1951)

**"THE LONG MARCH"** (1956)

**"SET THIS HOUSE ON FIRE"** (1960)

**"THE CONFESSIONS OF NAT TURNER"** (1967)

**"SOPHIE'S CHOICE"** (1979)

**"THIS QUIET DUST, AND OTHER WRITINGS"** (1982)

**"DARKNESS VISIBLE: A MEMOIR OF MADNESS"** (1990)

**"A TIDEWATER MORNING: THREE TALES FROM YOUTH"** (1993)

how strong the autobiographical impulse was in Mr. Styron's fiction.

After his father and stepmother died, he said that "Lie Down in Darkness" was a projection of his "own sense of alienation" from his family, and the stories in "A Tidewater Morning: Three Tales From Youth" (1993), he later wrote, represented an "imaginative reshaping of real events" from his own childhood in Virginia.

In 1990, with "Darkness Visible: A Memoir of Madness," Mr. Styron dropped the scrim of fiction he had used in his earlier books, and wrote openly about the suicidal depression that overtook him in 1985. He wrote about feeling a sense of foreboding. He wrote about being unable to write. He wrote about seeing the kitchen knives as a suicide's tools and the garage as a place to inhale carbon monoxide. He wrote about entering a dark, Dantean wood of madness and somehow emerging intact at the end.

Although Mr. Styron's oeuvre seems somewhat slender in retrospect, each of his major novels built upon its predecessor's achievements, working variations on earlier ideas, while amplifying them through the echo chamber of history. Mr. Styron observed after "Sophie's Choice" that he no longer saw a writer's career as "a series of mountain peaks" but rather as a "rolling landscape" with vistas perhaps less spectacular, yet every bit as resonant as those "theatrical Wagnerian dramas with peak after peak."

# This Military Basic Training Is in Art

By Daniel Grant

Fort Meade, Md.

Few military jobs are as dull as barracks duty, where a soldier's main requirement is to stay awake for hours on end, checking IDs and making sure everyone is behaving. To keep herself from falling asleep, Marine Cpl. Annette Kyriakides Spurgeon "doodled." Actually, it was probably a little higher level drawing than that, because "someone saw me sketching, and that person told someone else, and it went up the chain of command." Within weeks, Cpl. Spurgeon was assigned to the military's Defense Information School (known as Dinfos) at Fort Meade, Md., where she received training to be an artist.

The military uses artists in a variety of roles. Most create recruiting posters, maps and diagrams, and animation for interactive military-training software, but some also produce combat art. Those soldiers will go into the field with a platoon, drawing and painting scenes of military life. While "combat art" is the term used, images of actual combat are actually quite rare—the pictures largely show soldiers on patrol, relaxing at base camp, in formation, training, mingling with the population, or the view from a fighter jet or a naval gunboat.

One evocative work, which could be mistaken for a French 19th-century landscape but for the armored military vehicle in the background, is Sgt. Elzie Golden's 2002 "Tracking bin Laden." With mountains in the distance and a cloud-inflected sky above, the vehicle wades through a shallow stream while an Afghan peasant walks on foot leading his pack-laden donkey in the foreground. Both soldiers and peasant—neither looking at each other—go about their seemingly routine business.

Collecting art, and assigning individuals to combat art duty, is not new in the military. The Army's now 15,000-strong art collection dates back to World War I, when the military commissioned a group of eight artists in the Corps of Engineers to record the activities of the American Expeditionary Forces in France. That artwork was stored in the Smithsonian Institution. During the World War II, the Corps of Engineers established a war art unit, consisting of 42 artists (23 on active duty and 19 civilians) to document the military campaign. By the end of the war, the collection had grown to 2,000 works of art, and a museum was eventually established to house it.

All five branches of the military now have their own military art collections. The Marine Corps has an art collection of more than 7,000 drawings, paintings and sculpture; the Air Force, 9,000; the Coast Guard, 2,000; and the Navy, 15,000. The holdings are continually added to by soldiers who got their start at Dinfos, which also provides instruction to selected recruits in communications, journalism, photography and videography. The art students have 66 days to learn what their civilian counterparts at art academies may take four years to acquire but, unlike other art-school graduates, a job is waiting for them the next day. "I'm clearing 50K a year, with full medical benefits and a retirement package," said Marine Staff Sgt. Michael Fay, a full-time combat artist based in Fredericksburg, Va. "The Marine Corps holds art in much higher favor than the civilian world."

Not all art, perhaps, but certainly highly realistic art that tells some part of the story of the U.S. armed forces. Cpl. Spurgeon, 31, was assigned as a combat artist in Iraq from June 2004 to January 2005, producing numerous pencil sketches, two dozen watercolors and

three oils on canvas, which are in the Marine Corps' collection. While in Iraq, she also acted as the sole courtroom artist during the first trials of soldiers accused of abusing prisoners at Abu Ghraib.

There is an application process for the Dinfos art program, but no portfolio is required as it would be in civilian art school. Many of the students have a long pursued art interests (Cpl. Spurgeon was drawing and painting "ever since I was a little girl"), and some have significant formal training. Sgt. Golden, a 1984 Dinfos graduate and the 2002 Military Graphic Artist of the Year, attended the art school at the University of Arizona and worked as a newspaper illustrator before joining the Army at age 28 ("I wanted to do easel painting; that's why I joined the military," he said). Army Master Sgt. Sandra Keough, who heads the graphic arts department at Dinfos, joined the military in 1985 right after receiving a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in painting from Temple University in Philadelphia, "because I had college loans to pay back, and I didn't have a job." After basic training, she was immediately assigned to Dinfos, whose art program was then at Lowry Air Force Base in Denver.

The 66-day program is broken up into three 22-day segments. The first stage is what the military calls "manual art"—drawing and painting by hand, learning color, materials and techniques. The next 22 days are devoted to computer applications for these skills, including digital illustration, animation, layout and design and the programs used in these areas. The last segment requires students to complete one or more projects, such as a Power-Point presentation, building a Web site or creating a battlefield simulation program.

Students are in class by 7:50 a.m., ready to go, and the eight-hour-a-day, five-day-a-week sessions are more concentrated than at civilian schools. A focus on self-expression is absent from the curriculum. Where Dinfos does make concessions to the civilian world, it is in giving its students the weekends off and in treating them more gently than other recruits. "As a Marine, I've had to tone down my personality," Sgt. Robert Cook, 27, a graphics instructor at Dinfos, said. He can't just bark out orders but must maintain "a positive-reinforcement environment. It has forced me to be humane."

All military recruits take a basic vocational test to determine the occupational specialty to which they are most suited. They meet with officers who assign them placements after basic training is completed. In some cases, the placement officers "didn't even know there *are* artists in the military," said Air Force Technical Sgt. Jesse Justice, a Dinfos instructor, and it is even rarer that recruits know. Sgt. Justice,

an Army brat (his father, Nicholas, is an active-duty brigadier general) who attended the University of Maryland, basically "needed a job and wanted to get out of the house," enlisting in the Air Force since "the lifestyle is better than in the other services." His initial plan for active-duty job placement was to be dental technician, but he happened to be carrying a group of his comic book drawings when he met with the placement officer in 1995, and that person recommended him for Dinfos.

The instincts of the placement officers must be good, since more than 95% of the students in the visual communications course complete the program, a percentage that far exceeds art-school graduation rates.

Despite the fact that all five branches of the military collect combat art and a niche market exists of people who buy portraits of famous soldiers and scenes of glorious battles at conventions and online, "military" and "artist" still is not always an easy combination. Sgt. Cook, whose combat scenes earned him the 2006 Military Graphic Artist of the Year award, noted that other Marines have referred to him as a "skater, that's a Marine with a really lax job," or have told him that "you're not a real Marine. Real Marines are out there firing weapons or in support of it." Another Dinfos instructor who has occasionally been razzed as a "pencil pusher," Staff Sgt. Gregory Harrington, answers back that "I was in artillery before this. That, and the fact that I was a drill sergeant before being assigned to Dinfos, usually shuts them up."

Certainly, combat art is not easy, as both Sgt. Harrington and Cpl. Spurgeon found out. He spent three years as a member of the 55th Combat Camera unit, taking battle-scene photographs "while bullets are flying." Cpl. Spurgeon stated that she "had been begging and pleading to go to Iraq as an artist," pitching the idea with the slant that the Marine Corps "don't get a lot of females into actual combat, but they would make a big step by letting a woman go sketch."

Along with her art supplies, Cpl. Spurgeon carried a rifle, which she did fire on occasion. "There was constant small arms fire around," she said, "a lot of craziness. You have to keep your head down." While she was part of a raid in Fallujah, her Humvee was hit by a roadside bomb, which gave her a concussion ("It blocked up my ears pretty good and made me dizzy"), and a fall out of a convoy vehicle on another mission injured her back. "I had people ask me what am I doing here as an artist." Fortunately for her, she needn't choose between soldiering and art. "Artists are a dime a dozen; not everyone can be a Marine."

Mr. Grant is the author of "The Business of Being an Artist" (Allworth).



David Gothard

## OBITUARIES

# Robert Scott, War-Hero Author, Dies at 97

By RICHARD GOLDSTEIN

Brig. Gen. Robert L. Scott Jr., one of America's most celebrated World War II fighter pilots and author of the best-selling wartime memoir "God Is My Co-Pilot," died yesterday at an assisted living center in Warner Robins, Ga., home of Robins Air Force Base, near Macon. He was 97.

His death was announced by Paul Hibbitts, director of the Museum of Aviation at the base. General Scott was the honorary chairman of the museum's foundation.

In the spring of 1942, Robert Scott, then a colonel in the Army Air Forces, was awarded the Silver Star for helping to evacuate thousands of Allied troops and refugees trapped when the Japanese overran Burma. Braving blinding storms and pursued by Japanese fighters, he ferried evacuees to India aboard a C-47 transport plane, flying over 17,000-foot peaks.

Piloting a Curtiss P-40 fighter painted with the single eye and tiger-shark teeth of the Flying Tigers, he also roamed the skies on one-man missions. Operating out of Dinjan, India, he strafed Japanese truck columns on the Burma Road linking Burma to China, dropped 500-pound bombs on bridges across the Salween River and hit barges loaded with Japanese troops.

It was Claire L. Chennault who had given Colonel Scott the P-40 he used to harass the Japanese in Burma and who had allowed him to fly missions with the Flying Tiger pilots in Japanese-occupied China. General Chennault commanded the Flying Tigers, a band of American volunteer pilots who fought against the Japanese under contract to the Nationalist Chinese government. When the Tigers were absorbed by a regular United States Army task force, he sent Colonel Scott out in July 1942 to lead multiple missions against the enemy.

As commander of the 23rd Fighter Group in General Chennault's newly created China Air Task Force, Colonel Scott flew out of Kunming in southwestern China and shot down at least 13 Japanese planes over the next six months.

In early 1943, the Pentagon brought him back to the United States for a nationwide tour exhorting war-plant workers to greater efforts. Near the end of that tour, Colonel Scott was asked by the Scribner publishing house to relate his experiences in a book. But he had only three days to do so before he had to report to Luke Field in Arizona as its new commander, so he simply spoke his recollections — 90,000 words — onto wax cylinder recording devices.

Those recollections became "God Is My Co-Pilot," which provided the American home front a vivid account of aerial combat and received outstanding reviews. In the introduction, Colonel Scott told how he had come to choose the title. He had returned to Kunming after an explosive bullet fired from a Japanese fighter hit the armor behind his cockpit seat, sending five rivet heads into his back. While Dr. Frank Manget, a medical missionary, attended to his wounds in a cave, a Chinese orderly



United States Air Force

Robert L. Scott Jr., then a colonel, in 1943, the year he dictated a memoir that became a best-selling account of aerial combat in World War II.

marveled at how Colonel Scott could fly his plane, drop his bombs and fire his guns with no one to help him.

As Colonel Scott told it: "I heard the old doctor say, 'No, son, you're not up there alone. Not with all the things you came through. You have the greatest co-pilot in the world even if there is just room for one in that fighter ship. No, you're not alone.'"

Colonel Scott said that on hearing those words, he experienced a vision: blazing lights in the cave spelling out "God Is My Co-Pilot."

Warner Brothers bought the movie rights to the book, and Colonel Scott became a technical adviser for the

## *The fighter pilot who wrote 'God Is My Co-Pilot.'*

film. But he was less than thrilled when he attended a studio preview of the movie, released in 1945 and starring Dennis Morgan. As he recalled it in his autobiography, "The Day I Owned the Sky" (Bantam, 1988), "I felt embarrassed as the story flashed across the screen — it was pure 'Hollywood' and I could not help wanting to disappear a few times."

Robert Lee Scott Jr. was born on April 12, 1908, in Macon. He embarked on his flying career as a boy scout, when he built a glider to get a merit badge and took off from the sloping roof of a neighbor's house. Seconds later a wing collapsed, and he wound up in the woman's Cherokee roses. It would be the only time he ever crashed.

After graduating from West Point in 1932 and serving with a fighter squadron in Panama, he was training Army pilots in California when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. He pleaded for combat duty but was told that at age 33, he was too old.

Then, apparently mistaken for an-

other pilot named Scott, and though he had had no experience flying the B-17 Flying Fortress bomber, he was selected to fly with a wave of bombers in an attack on Tokyo hours after James H. Doolittle and his pilots were to stage the first American bombing raid against Japan. He quietly got some pointers on how to fly a bomber from a fellow officer, then took a B-17 to Karachi, a jumping-off point for the Pacific.

General Doolittle carried out his raid on April 18, 1942, but the secondary mission was scrubbed. Instead, Colonel Scott was assigned to carry supplies in Army C-47 transports from India to China over the Himalayan peaks known as the Hump. He was commanding the ferrying operation when he was selected to lead the fighter pilots in General Chennault's China Air Task Force.

After World War II, he served with the Air Force in a variety of stateside and overseas posts and received the star of the brigadier general in 1954. After retiring from military service in 1957, he continued his writing career; he was the author of 14 books, most on aviation. He also worked as an insurance executive.

His wife, Kitty, died in 1972. He is survived by a daughter, Robin, of California.

At age 72, General Scott realized an obsession: a quest to travel along the Great Wall of China. He had been intrigued by a photograph of the wall he saw as a teenager in an issue of National Geographic and had flown over it in World War II. In 1980, he followed the route of the wall in vehicles, on foot and even atop a camel.

When that journey ended, he asked a stonemason to carve a memorial to his old boss from the China of World War II. The marker was placed on a peak overlooking Kunming, facing the spot where the Flying Tigers' airfield, long since converted into a modern airport, had sat.

As General Scott recalled in his autobiography, "Before we went back down the mountain to Kunming, I stood at the memorial and saluted Gen. Claire Lee Chennault just as though he were there."

GT Library

Tail Winds

WACS @ orderly room

current favorite "Pistol Packing Mamma"

Sgt's favorite saying: "Do you hear me?"

Post Exchange [not EX: PX]

pee-lots (pilots)

'static channels (communications section)  
" " Warrant Officer

band plays "Deep Purple"

"You severed out" (crapped out?)

MHS WWII

general notes

- bright soldier who rejected OCS, but the corporal stripes to top of KP.
- soldier shot thru sleeve but unhurt; that night, others heard him cursing those japs; he had a slug in can of cheese.
- strain of combat; 1 man goes bananas, another shoots his hand
- "did not go a spitting distance to north"
- crank generator (for radio)
- "kopped up on giggle juice"
- "Zambo": Zamboanga

UM

John Stapp papers

Series II folder 27-1

John A Stapp Pvt 1st # 39606852  
826th Engr Battalion APO 875 US Army  
(to be temp'y corporal)

26-9 ID card

br Aug. 17, 1905

eyes blue

color in brn

fingerprints

wt 120 ±

ht 5'2"

Oct. 27 - 29 43 pers Yo London

massage center  
nibbled on his butt for some deadline stuff  
leave-downy during (put up)

his rifle a Garand

FORCE HEADQUARTERS  
APO # 913

January 29, 1943

210.5

SUBJECT : Award of Purple Heart.

THROUGH : Commanding Officer, 142nd General Hospital, APO# 913

TO : Private Gordon G. Graves, ASN 19071356, FCompany "D" 161 Infantry,  
United States Army.

1. By direction of the Precedent, under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, War Department, August 8, 1932, you have been awarded the Purple Heart Medal for wounds received in action at Guadalcanal, Solomon Island on January 3, 1943

2. The purple Heart Medal will be forwarded to your Commanding Officer for Presentation to you with suitable ceremony.

3. You will be furnished at a later date with an engraved certificate pertaining to this award.

By command of MAJOR GENERAL THOMPSON:

A.O. ADAMS  
LT. COL. AGD  
Adjutant General

OWNER'S INVENTORY WITH CERTIFICATES, AFFIDAVITS AND CUSTOMS DECLARATION

Name Stark, John A Date 3 Sept 1945  
 Rank & ASN Sgt 37606852 Ship to: Roundup  
 Organization 826 Engr Arm Bn Address Montana  
 Type of Container Duffie Bag P.O. Box 483

Inventory

Item No.	Quantity	Description	Remarks (See reverse side)
1	1. ea	Cap, garrison, OD	
2	1. "	Cap, or hat, HBT	
3	3. pr	Drawers, cotton, shorts	
4	1. "	Drawers, wool	
5	1. "	Gloves, wool, OD with or without leather palm	
6	5. ea	Handkerchief, cotton	
7	1. "	Jacket, field, OD	
8	2. "	Necktie, cotton, khaki	
9	1. "	Raincoat, mtd or dismtd	
10	1. "	Shirt, flannel, OD, coat style	
11	2. pr	Shoes, service, or boots, combat	
12	8. "	Socks, wool, lt or hvy; or cotton, tan	
13	1. ea	Suit, 1 piece, HBT	
14	1. pr	Trousers, wool, OD	
15	4. ea	Undershirt, summer, sleeveless	
16	1. "	Undershirt, wool	
17	1. "	Bag, barrack or duffel	
18	2. "	Blanket, wool, OD	
19	2. "	Towel, bath 2 bath towels	
20	1	Eisenhower jacket	A
21	1	Overcoat, wool O.D.	
22	1	mess gear	
23	1	"Pistol" belt	
24	1	Canteen, cover & cup complete	
25	1	Toilet articles	

Approved

194

RICHARD C. HARRIS  
 Inspecting Officer  
 (Over)

Tag Number

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CERTIFICATES, AFFIDAVITS and CUSTOMS DECLARATION  
(Strike out portions inapplicable)

1. I certify and declare that the above items of Government Property  
 "Remarks" as "A" were purchased by me and are my personal property.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Rank and Arm \_\_\_\_\_

2. As his commanding officer, I certify that the above named \_\_\_\_\_ has

by authority of this Theatre Commander been authorized to retain the above  
 items of captured enemy materiel indicated in "Remarks" as "B".

evidenced to me his ownership and right to possess the above items of  
 British Russian Canadian \_\_\_\_\_ Government materiel indicated in "Remarks" as "C"

had the above items indicated in "Remarks" as "g" disinfested pursuant to  
 Par. 24, g (1), SGO Circular Letter #33, 1943.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
RICHARD C. HARRIS  
1st Lt; A.C.

3. The following Customs Declaration will be accomplished in all cases. In addition, the Customs Declaration tag will be accomplished and affixed to the container.

CUSTOMS DECLARATION

I declare that all items listed herein consist of personal or nousehold effects either taken abroad by me or acquired abroad for my personal use, except the following:

(Here list items  
or write  
"No exceptions",  
as appropriate)

Perfume (2 vials)  
3 fountain pens  
note books  
Books (CEM 907)  
address Book  
stitching folder & stationery  
@ pen leather gloves

flashlight  
Bill folder  
Pocket Knife  
seaman's utility blanket  
lipstick  
orament

Date 11 September 1945

Signature J. G. Stark

Rank & ASN Sgt 37606852

NOTICE\*\*\*\*\*NOTICE\*\*\*\*\*NOTICE\*\*\*\*\*NOTICE\*\*\*\*\*NOTICE\*\*\*\*\*NOTICE

Bull Bd.  
Bull Gp

\*THE LATEST RUMORS\*  
\*AND LATRINE--O--GRAMS\*

\*LATRINE--O--GRAM\*

THIS IS ABSOLUTELY THE LATEST RUMOR TO ARRIVE AT THIS HEADQUARTERS. IT IS DIRECT FROM HOLE # ONE, COMPANY "C" LATRINE. ALL OTHER RUMORS AND LATRINE-O-GRAMS TO THE CONTRARY ARE RESCINDED.

1. IT IS RUMORED THAT WE WILL SHIP OUT TO NEW YORK WITHIN THE NEXT THIRTY DAYS, NOTHING WAS SAID AS TO WHAT PART.
2. IT IS FURTHERED RUMORED THAT THERE WILL BE COURSES IN THE CELTIC, ICELANDIC AND DANISH LANGUAGES FOR ALL OFFICER AND ENLISTED PERSONNEL IN THIS ORGANIZATION. AFTER DUTY HOURS. NO PASSES WILL BE ISSUED UNTIL THE COURSES ARE SUCESSFULLY COMPLETED.
3. THE ALASKA RUMOR IS STILL RUNNING AROUND THOUGH, SINCE THE ISSUING OF THE WOOLEN LINED MITTENS, MAYBE WE ARE GOING THERE VIA SOME OTHER ROUTE THAN THE ONE MENTIONED IN THE FIRST BULLETIN, I.E., LIBYA.
4. THAT IS ALL FOR THE TIME BEING, I'LL BE SEEING YOU IN THE LATRINE FOR SOME RUMORS.

"YE OLE RUMOR MONGER"

DISTRIBUTION: X  
(Less the Old Latrine)

)

BATTALION HEADQUARTERS RUMOR SECTION

RUMOR ORDER:

NO 11:

1. It is supposed (but not confirmed) that we are moving. This is to be a movement of the whole body and not one of the bowels. The destination is unknown to the Commanders but as usual the entire Enlisted Personnel of the 826th Engrs know the entire contents of the orders.

2. Of course we are going South as who wants to go north? All ~~index~~ That is necessary for decoding reliable rumors is a crystal ball and two pinches of salt and a serving of SOS as passed out by H/S Co Mess.

3. The first decoded message is: " Effective as of this day the 826th Engrs are going South. Naturally this is a logical solution as two blankets and netting are issued. The Winter issue of gloves and mittens further indicate the South Seas. (WE are not entirely forgetting about Geiger field as a probable terminus of our journey) ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ When you consider that the ~~the~~ Natives of ~~long~~ Alaska are running short of ice houses on account of priorities on ~~refrigerator~~ Frigidaires and the gases to operate commerial ice machines, the only probable future location of the 826th is Lybia to build sandhuts. (These people of Lybia are of no relation to the famous character of Groucho Marx, Lydia the Tattooed Lady -- Oh, Lydia, Oh, Lydia, Lydia the Tattooed Lady)"

4. This rumor will remain effective until further notice.

By the order of Pvt DOAKES:

I SPREAD RUMORS  
\*Chief- Rumor Division  
Acting Buck Private

\* Brockmier

~~XXXXXXXX~~ Yardbird Superior

RECEIPT

12 April 1945 (Date)

1. I certify that I have personally examined the items of captured enemy military equipment (\*mailed by) (XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX) John A. Stark that the trophy value of such items exceeds any training, service, or salvage value; that they do not include any explosives, and that the (\*mailing) (XXXXXXXXXXXX) thereof is in conformity with the provisions of Sec III, Cir 353, WD, 31 Aug 1944, and the existing regulations of the Theater Commander.

\*2. I further certify that the items mailed do not include any firearms capable of being concealed on the person, or any parts of firearms.

3. The items referred to are:

- 1 German Rifle # 534
- 1 German Bayonet

*Howard J Martin*  
(Signature)

Capt, CE, 826th Engr Avn Bn  
(Rank, Branch, Organisation)

\* Strike out one.

\*\* Not required for items being carried personally to the US.

RECEIPT

12 April 1945 (Date)

1. I certify that I have personally examined the items of captured enemy military equipment (\*mailed by) (XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX) Sgt John A. Stark that the trophy value of such items exceeds any training, service, or salvage value; that they do not include any explosives, and that the (\*mailing) (XXXXXXXXXXXX) thereof is in conformity with the provisions of Sec III, Cir 353, WD, 31 Aug 1944, and the existing regulations of the Theater Commander.

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(Rank, Branch, Organisation)

\* Strike out one.

\*\* Not required for items being carried personally to the US.

Collection Name John A. Stark Papers

Collection Number MSS46

Series Number \_\_\_\_\_

Box Number 24

Folder Number 26-9

K. Ross Toole Archives, Mansfield Library  
The University of Montana - Missoula

MTS

AC 2002-09

Riley Got by papers

England

3 April 45

Dear Betty,

Lack of time is no longer a logical excuse for me not writing. I can never remember having so damn much time at any one period during the past 10 years. The trouble is chiefly that I have nothing to write about. I'm afraid my friends (both of them) may tire on the story of my "operation". The one remaining barrier in this letter writing business is that I have no stamps and no immediate prospects of receiving any. The hospital PX is supposed to stock them but don't seem to have any at present. So the only thing left to do is cash in on my "free" privileges.

Medically speaking - I'm doing well. I can once more get a little movement into my right knee and manage to transfer to an adjoining bed now while mine is being made. That having your bed made while still in it is quite a deal. The incision made under my eye from where the fragment was removed is pretty well healed + I expect they will be taking the stitches out of it any day now. The sore itself is still draining some but I believe it is beginning to show a few healing signs too. The whole leg looks kind of fallen away + harmless but I know that's

just because I haven't been able to exercise it. The food we receive is excellent and I'm beginning to have a return of appetite. The nurses are damn swell people and being shown a little feminine tenderness is quite impressive. Particularly after being in a business such as mine. One forgets that there are such things.

It may be kind of interesting to you to know a little of how the Army Medical Corps operate. I'll run through my case roughly and you can get an idea of their various echelons. Immediately after being hit I was helped to a safe position, an old basement, by a couple of my men. They called the aid man who is always with the platoon. He immediately dressed my wound, checked bleeding and is also equipped to administer morphine. I didn't take the morphine until quite a bit later when the pain got a little rough. Things still being a little hot I couldn't leave this platoon area. Later one of the men went back to the Co. CP (about a half a mile) where he got enough litters to evacuate the wounded. I was then carried to the Co. CP where I waited about 3 ~~of~~ hours before getting out. Vehicles could not get in to us & there weren't enough men to get us out. Finally about 30 prisoners were brought in and they furnished the carrying details for all

② Jus. They carried us about a mile to the rear and across a creek where medic jeeps were waiting to pick us up. A little after dark I was in the battalion aid station (they have one real Doctor there), got another shot of morphine and was loaded on a ambulance bound for the medical clearing Co. There I got a lock jaw shot, was loaded on another ambulance went to another medical Co. transferred to another ambulance + wound up at a Evac. Hospital. There I was assigned to a ward, made comfortable, had X-ray taken and managed a little rest. Evacuation Hospitals are well forward. There emergency operations are performed, blood transfused etc. Nurses + Docs there are really busy. They have about the roughest deal of all. I was operated the next morning then held around for a couple days until my fever had gone down. Loaded on a plane + was soon in Paris. There I went to a sort of a classification place where they decide if you should stay, go to England, or to the US. I drew the in between + the next day was flown over here. The Hospital here is about equivalent to those organized on Army reservations in the states. So now you have an idea of what happens to a wounded S.I. I'm sure our evacuation system is the best there is - particularly when this air transport idea has been added.

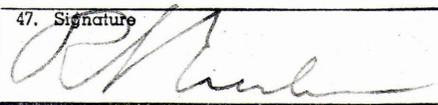
# REPORT OF PHYSICAL EXAMINATION OF ENLISTED PERSONNEL PRIOR TO DISCHARGE, RELEASE FROM ACTIVE DUTY OR RETIREMENT

1. Last name—First name—Middle initial <b>GRAVES, GORDON G.</b>	2. Army Serial Number <b>19071356</b>	3. Grade	4. Regiment, arm or service
5. Permanent mailing address <b>Profile:111-111</b>	<b>RAR</b> <b>24 February 47</b>	6. Color	7. Age in years <b>21</b>
		8. Sex	9. Syphilis Register In S/R? Yes or No Closed in S/R? Yes or No <b>no</b>

## STATEMENT AND MEDICAL HISTORY OF EXAMINEE

10. At the present time do you have any wound, injury or disease which is disabling? If answer is yes, list those conditions first under Item 11.	Yes or No <b>no</b>			
11. List all significant diseases, wounds, and injuries. State circumstances under which wounds or injuries were incurred and date of onset. Answer yes or no in Columns 1 to 4. (Continue on back if necessary)  <b>Denies history of syphilis (over)</b>	1 EPTS 2*	2 AMS 3*	3 IMS 4*	4 PD 5*

## RECORD OF PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

12. Teeth—Indicate restorable carious teeth by O, non-restorable carious teeth by /, missing natural teeth by X, teeth replaced by denture, horizontal line over X, as XXX and teeth replaced by fixed bridge, oval to include abutments, as (4 7 8) <b>class IV</b> <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td colspan="4">RIGHT</td> <td colspan="4">EXAMINEE'S</td> <td colspan="4">LEFT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td><td>7</td><td>6</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>1</td> <td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>X</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> <td>X</td><td>X</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>15</td><td>14</td><td>13</td><td>12</td><td>11</td><td>10</td><td>9</td> <td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td> </tr> </table>	RIGHT				EXAMINEE'S				LEFT				8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	X								X	X							15	14	13	12	11	10	9	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	13. Mouth and gum abnormalities <b>none</b> 14. Dental prosthesis: Serviceability <b>serviceable</b> 17. Venereal diseases <b>none</b> 20. Anus and Rectum <b>normal</b> 23. Abdominal Wall and Viscera <b>normal</b>
RIGHT				EXAMINEE'S				LEFT																																																				
8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8																																													
X								X	X																																																			
15	14	13	12	11	10	9	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16																																														
15. Skin <b>6" scar abdomen</b>	16. Genito-Urinary (And pelvic for women) <b>normal</b>	17. Venereal diseases <b>none</b>																																																										
18. Varicose veins <b>none</b>	19. Hernia <b>none</b>	20. Anus and Rectum <b>normal</b>																																																										
21. Musculoskeletal defects <b>none</b>	22. Feet <b>2° pes planus with marked mild eversion</b>	23. Abdominal Wall and Viscera <b>normal</b>																																																										
24. Cardiovascular system <b>normal</b>	25. Blood pressure Systolic: <b>102</b> Diastolic: <b>60</b>	26. Pulse Sitting: <b>80</b> Immediately after exercise: Two minutes after exercise:																																																										
27. Lungs <b>normal</b>	28. Chest X-ray <b>no significant abnormalities</b>	29. Height (Shoeless) <b>72 3/4</b> In.																																																										
31. Neurological diagnosis <b>normal</b>	32. Psychiatric diagnosis <b>normal</b>	30. Weight (Stripped) <b>210</b> Lbs.																																																										
34. Eye abnormalities <b>none</b>	35. Uncorrected — Vision — Corrected Right eye: <b>20</b> Left eye: <b>20</b> Right eye: <b>20/</b> Left eye: <b>20/</b>	33. Endocrine system <b>normal</b>																																																										
37. Ear, nose, throat, abnormalities <b>none</b>	38. Hearing (Whispered voice) Right ear: <b>15</b> /15 Left ear: <b>15</b> /15	36. Urinalysis Sp. Gr.: <b>none</b> Albumin: <b>none</b> Sugar: <b>none</b> Micro. 6*:																																																										
40. In your opinion will wound, injury or disease result in: Condition: <b>llabc</b> <b>llld</b>	41. In your opinion was wound, injury, or disease incurred in line of duty? Condition: <b>llabc</b> <b>llld</b>	39. Blood serology result <b>Kahn: negative</b>																																																										
43. Remarks, special tests, or other defects (Continue on back)	42. In your opinion does individual meet physical and mental standards for <b>RAR</b> ? <b>yes</b>	47. Signature 																																																										
44. Date of examination <b>24 Feb 47</b>	45. Location <b>Ft Lewis Wn</b>	46. Typed name and grade <b>R L ERICKSON CAPT MC</b>																																																										

- A. Malaria last attack 1943 no hosp no no yes no
- B. WIA-GSW (4) right leg- Jan 1943 Hammond GH- Guadalcanal Mar 43
- C. WIA-bayonet puncture wound, abdomen Hammond, GH, Calif. Mar 43  
no no yes no  
no no yes no
- D. Flat feet for 4 years no sick call-asymptomatic  
yes no no no

Discharged on CDD Jan 29, 1945 Sta hosp Camp Cook, Calif for gun shot wounds right leg and bayonet wound in stomach- drawing 50% disability allowance for above. Had resection of small piece of intestine after bayonet wound-no symptoms since operation, no disability from right leg-wounds. No disabilities noted on examination. Qualified for enlistment.

Purple heart awarded.

**REPORT OF BOARD OF REVIEW**

(See Instruction 2)

From a careful consideration of the case and a critical examination of the enlisted person, we find that:

- |   | Yes or No |
|---|-----------|
| 1. He meets physical and mental standards for discharge.  |           |
| 2. He meets physical and mental standards for discharge except as follows:  |           |
| 3. The defect, wound, injury, or disease is likely to result in untimely death.   |           |
| 4. The defect, wound, injury, or disease is likely to result in permanent disability.   |           |
| 5. In our opinion, the defect, wound, injury, or disease was incurred in line of duty in the military service of the United States. |           |

Location	Typed name	Grade	Signature
		M. C.	
Date	Typed name	Grade	Signature
		M. C.	

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

- This report will be made out for all enlisted personnel immediately preceding separation by discharge and release from active duty, unless discharged on a certificate of disability, or retirement for service.
- If the declaration of the enlisted man under item ten (10) when yes only, and the certificate of the examining surgeon do not agree, the case will be referred to a board of review to consist of not less than two medical officers, convened in accordance with appropriate Army Regulations.
- Report will be prepared in duplicate. Each it provided for will be completed with an appropriate notation. The original will be signed.

UW *Suz Atack*  
D790  
H64  
2000

Zone of the Interior  
A Memoir, 1942-1947  
--Daniel Hoffman

## *Preface*

**I**N this memoir of my experiences between 1942 and 1947, if, as in the ballad of Lillie Mae Hartley, "some's all true and some but partly," any deviations from the factual result from the fraying of memory over more than fifty years. I have tried accurately to reconstruct how the chance of a summer job after my sophomore year in college put me in the vanguard of a profession the military application of which led to my assignment to Headquarters, Materiel Command (later designated Air Technical Service Command) at Wright Field in Dayton, Ohio.

In the military parlance of the Second World War the world was divided into three parts: the European Theater, the Pacific Theater, and the Zone of the Interior. The last of these terms described duty within the continental United States, where, as its designation suggests, military life was considered to be more passive than what was required in theaters of operations.

It is generally accepted that wartime service was the defining experience for those who survived it, as attested by many personal memoirs, novels, and motion pictures. All such documents that come to mind record the testing of character in battle. Yet of the over 11 million persons in the Army, at least half saw no combat; on April 30, 1945, at the war's end, the total Army personnel numbered 8,290,993, of whom 2,307,501 were in the Army Air Forces, and of the total number, 60.4 percent, some 5 million, "were deployed in the principal overseas theaters," though of course not all saw com-

bat. The remaining nearly 40 percent, over 3,283,000, served in the United States in support of the troops at the front, behind the lines—very far behind the lines indeed. (Robert R. Palmer and Bell I. Wiley, *The Organization of Ground Combat Troops [United States Army in World War II: The Army Ground Forces]*, Washington, D.C.: Historical Division, U.S. Army, 1947.)

Nonetheless, for these noncombatants, too, the war was the defining experience of their generation. For many, perhaps for most, stateside service involved the boredom of make-work duty at isolated bases; my lot was different. The experiences recorded here suggest how, even from the lowly perspective of an enlisted man and lieutenant, an Army Air Force Headquarters in the Zone of the Interior was a paradigm of the industrial complex the military was assigned to defend and designed to resemble. The summer job described in the first part of this memoir immerses the young college student in an unexpected niche of that military-industrial complex.

In the event, the tasks I was assigned in both the civilian job I held in 1942–43 and in the Army Air Force, 1943–46, involved the writing, editing, and production, first, of aircraft instruction manuals, and then of a review of scientific and engineering progress unique to that time. These publications have long been dispersed and discarded—an Internet search of the library catalogs at major schools of engineering found none that has preserved them; since, as government publications, they required no copyright, neither were they deposited in the Library of Congress. My inquiry to the library at Wright-Patterson Field elicited no response. So there is no record of the problems of the recording, condensing, and distributing technical information faced by the Army Air Force for which, in those days so long before the present technologies of the Information Age, comparatively primitive measures were offered as solutions. With the thought that what I can describe may interest readers concerned with such developments, I have set down what I can recall.

★ ★ ★

If the term *Zone of the Interior* be borrowed from military jargon and applied to what Whitman called “a single separate person,” it can

designate a psychological delving, an exploration of the inner life of one discovering who he is. That, too, is part of a defining experience. In this case, as the center of that inner life involves the search for emotional and intellectual roots and the need to write poems, the quest for identity in the context of military technology becomes a double life, one in each of what C. P. Snow described as our two cultures.

I kept no diaries but have had recourse to letters sent to my late parents, to copies of several memoranda I prepared while in service, and to a file of the publications discussed in the memoir. These were useful in corroborating details. Should any errors of omission or of fact involve anyone named herein, I can but hope that my good intentions, though flawed, will win forgiveness for unintended inaccuracies.

*Swarthmore, Pennsylvania*

charge of a very attractive girl with green eyes, wavy light brown hair, a fine figure, and a winning smile. She looked more appealing, I thought, than anyone I'd met at the Dayton Service Club. After checking out Vaughan Williams's "Variations on a Theme by Thomas Tallis" and Bach's "Toccatina and Fugue in D Minor," I immersed myself for half an hour in a respite from the boredom and frustrations of my quasi-military duties. Returning the albums to the desk, I struck up a conversation. Turned out the keeper of the Carnegie recordings was herself a musician, a pianist. She'd played in a youth concert with the Cincinnati Symphony under Eugene Goossens, and in the fall would study on a scholarship at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. We were getting on so well, I asked could I see her outside of the museum, say, next Saturday night? Jeannie seemed as pleased to be found by a fellow who could recognize Beethoven and Brahms as I was to have found her. She lived with her mother (a brother was off in the service) in a small house not far from the center of town. Soon I was spending a lot less time off with Fred, Sandy, or Leon, and none in the Service Club.

\* \* \*

After having written several hundred abstracts, all chosen, by guess and by God as to their essentiality to our readers, by me, I had the obvious—why did it take so long to think of it?—notion that a questionnaire to the various laboratories could elicit the very topics on which they desired the latest information. Major Ross agreed and had me prepare for his signature a request addressed to the commanding officer of each lab, and then deliver the request myself. This would give me a chance to see the labs at first hand and get a sense of what went on in them.

I was particularly intrigued by Aero Medicine, the latest laboratory to be established on the Field. It was in the next building to Tech Data—we now had a building of our own—but I'd never been inside. A lieutenant showed me around. I was surprised to hear him say he was working in physical anthropology. What, I asked, was the Air Corps's interest in measuring the skulls and bones of dead Indians?

"No, not that. It all began with the P-39."

"The Aerocobra?" I flashed a mental image of the sleek little fighter with a 75-mm cannon in its nose, mounted between the cylinders of its engine—a shape I knew from perusing aircraft recognition posters.

"Yeah. You know, it was designed for high-altitude interception of enemy bombers, could climb five miles in a matter of minutes. Some of the things we're studying here are the physiological effects of such acceleration—how the body adjusts to the tremendous pressure, the loss of oxygen, and so on. Well, did you ever stop to wonder why the P-39 is so famous now as a Russian artillery weapon against tanks?"

"Oh, I thought they bought the planes from us and needed them in the defense of Stalingrad, using whatever they had to knock out the Nazi tanks."

"There's a good reason they had P-39s. When the plane was designed, you know at the Bell plant they made a mockup before starting production. And the president of Bell Aircraft, Larry Bell, climbed into the cockpit, fingered the controls, looked in the gunsight, and said, 'This is great! Let's get started!' So they went right into production, and a couple of months later delivered the first squadron to the Air Force. But there was a problem. The pilots had a lot of trouble getting into the plane.

"Seems Larry Bell was a little guy, about five foot three, weighed maybe 120 pounds. What felt just fine for him—well, the pilots found their ass too big for the cockpit. Since then we've been taking measurements of every air cadet to make sure they can fit into the new model planes they'll fly. Now our physical measurements determine the dimensions of the cockpit, the arrangement of the controls and instruments."

"But how come the Russians could fly the P-39?"

"Oh, they've got a lot of little Laplanders in the Red Air Force. And aren't they lucky we could send them artillery that chases tanks at 300 miles per hour? Makes you feel good that such a costly mistake turned out so well for our gallant ally."

For all I know this story is pure apocrypha, Larry Bell may have been six feet tall and weighed 195 pounds. According to the official history, *The Army Air Force in World War II*, the P-39,

designed before the war, was a sluggish little number whose "low ceiling, slow rate of climb and relative lack of maneuverability put its pilots at a decided disadvantage whenever they fought" (VI, 212). So a machine not up to our needs was sold off to the Russians. But the tale of how little-assed Larry Bell O.K.'d a plane we couldn't use made a lot of sense and was firmly fixed in oral tradition.

★ ★ ★

At Wright Field there were small contingents of officers from the air forces of our allies—British, Canadian, Australian, and Russian. The Technical Information Branch of course provided copies of *The Technical Data Digest* to these companions and comrades in the struggle, and we expected that they'd reciprocate by providing our office with technical reports from their countries not available in the journals to which we subscribed. The case of the Purchasing Commission of the Red Air Force was annoying, to say the least. While they were eager for anything of ours they could lay their hands on, they in turn provided us with absolutely nothing. Not a scrap of information about Soviet equipment, Soviet science, Soviet advances in the industrial technologies essential to their war effort.

It was with a great feeling of getting some of our own back when, turning the pages of a newly received British journal, I came on an article describing in detail the LAGG-3 Russian fighter plane. In our December 1943 issue we republished the whole thing, charts, illustrations and all, with this appended note:

So little information has come from Russia with regard to the design and production of its aircraft that the accompanying article, translated from the Swedish magazine *Flyg*, and based on data from at least three aircraft captured in Finland, will be read with interest. These are among the first details of any Russian airplane to be revealed and were published in the October '43 issue of the British magazine *Aircraft Engineering*.

The article contains some information on the Russian

rocket-assisted bomb. The LAGG-3 is described as the only operational aircraft in service except the British Mosquito which entirely avoids the use of metal.

The LAGG-3, its fuselage of laminated plywood, "is described from Finnish sources as satisfactory in horizontal flight, but with poor acceleration and there is a tendency to go into spin in sharp turns." Nonetheless, it "appears to possess better combat qualities than the earlier MIG-3 fighter."

The allusion to rocket-powered bombs occupies only one paragraph, under "Bomb Racks," where we learn of 25-kg fragmentation bombs, explosive charge in the nose, propelling charge in the body, guided by four stabilizer vanes. "The propelling charge consists of hollow sticks of some apparently slow-burning explosive electrically fired from the cockpit. . . . A case is known where this weapon was used in aerial combat and it is stated that hits have been registered up to 600 m range." At this time we had no comparable weapon; American research on applications of rocketry, undertaken with limited interest and minging funding, was centered on rocket-assisted takeoffs of overloaded bombers.

It was a great pleasure to publish this scoop on our all too secretive Russian allies.

★ ★ ★

Now, in addition to my writing abstracts, Major Ross (he'd been promoted—and got married the next day) gave me a different assignment. He'd supervised production of a training film on helicopters and thought the script, by Thomas M. Wood, could be published as an article. But a film script, with all its directions to the cameraman and its reliance on visuals to bear the weight of the narrative, is not an article. This one needed a lot of work; I was to rewrite it. For one thing, it wanted some historical background. Of this there was much—the *Bibliography of Rotary Wing Aircraft*, compiled by the Wright Field Library, listed 95 pages of citations from 1863 through April 1944, scores of published accounts of abortive experimental designs for helicopters, auto-

the lieutenant didn't know how to navigate. Or had instrument failure. Or panicked. In any case, he was killed, and if I'd gone with him, probably I too would have died.

★ ★ ★

At about this time all enlisted men at Wright Field were interviewed by a panel of officers from another command who were ordered to weed out those not performing essential duties and transfer them to units being trained for combat—that meant the infantry. The Army was preparing for the invasion of Europe. I was duly examined but was passed over. Evidently my duties were considered significant enough for me to remain at Wright Field to do them. But the daily news gave me cause to doubt myself whether my assigned work was indeed significant enough. During the third week of February the Air Force unleashed a series of far-flung bombing raids into Germany itself—pilots of the B-17s and P-47s whose instruction manuals I had helped to prepare were now flying hundreds of missions, attempting to pulverize production of enemy planes. This was the putting to the test Seversky's confident doctrine of strategic bombing, but it was done at great cost. At the time, of course, we were not informed of the rate of losses, but documents reveal them: "American losses were 227 bombers (5.9 percent), British losses 157 bombers (6.7 percent). In addition, U.S. Strategic Air Forces in Europe launched 4,342 fighters, losing 41 (1 percent). More than 5,000 Allied aircrew either died or became prisoners-of-war. More revealing of the intensity of the conflict, however, 1,025 of the 3,823 American bombers credited with sorties against the enemy suffered damage" (McFarland and Newton, *To Command the Sky*, 190).

Even without these appalling numbers as yet in the public domain, it was obvious that mass bombings could not be undertaken without risk. The thought of squadrons of Messerschmitts swooping out of the sun to attack our fighter escorts, and our B-17s having to fly through skies littered with flak, some of our planes hit by enemy fire and exploding in midair or pluming ablaze to the ground, made war in the air as hazardous as the

trench warfare of World War I. Pilots, bombardiers, flight engineers, gunners, all were vulnerable, all were at risk in moving targets from which there was no escape until the lucky survivors returned from hostile skies. While this was happening over Germany, I was still editing a magazine in Dayton, Ohio.

★ ★ ★

The success of the helicopter article led Major Ross to propose that in each issue, along with the abstracts, we publish a feature full-length article "on a current aeronautical development of general interest" by a staff member of one of the laboratories. Major Ross had me draft a letter for Colonel Hayward's signature to the commanding officers of each lab, requesting their cooperation. It wasn't at all a foregone conclusion that those colonels would see the advantage in taking one of their best men off actual research to write an article for Major Ross's magazine. In the meantime, while awaiting their responses, I had come upon something especially interesting.

We received all the available British aeronautical literature. I particularly liked reading those journals, so elegantly printed; *The Aeroplane* made a vivid contrast to the tabloid layout and demotic prose style of the American *Aero Digest*. The English magazine expressed technical truths with concision and editorialized with irony, a sort of writing I would later find, in other contexts, in *The New Statesman* and *Spectator*. Reading the *Journal of the Royal Aeronautical Society* had its surprises; in the personal notes, on members, along with notices of the promotions in the armed forces or civilian job changes of British aerodynamicists, there were similar entries for German members of the Royal Society, and regrets at reports of the illness or deaths of Nazi scientists now designing planes the better to bomb Britain. The pursuit of scientific knowledge, it seemed, was above mere politics or faction; all members of the R.A.S. were linked in a brotherhood not to be diminished by the applications others might make of their discoveries. I found nothing comparable to this point of view in American scientific literature.

The most recent *Journal of the Royal Aeronautical Society*

## III

THIS time I got off the bus at Wright Field not as a green private ignorant of what his duties would be, but as the officer to be in charge of “the official journal of the AAF Research & Development Program.” First I had to report again to the C.O. of the entire Technical Data Laboratory, Colonel J. M. Hayward. Although as an enlisted man I’d had virtually no contact with him, he welcomed me warmly and said, “Lieutenant, I have in my closet a uniform I used to wear when I was as trim as you—as you can see, I haven’t been able to get into it in a long time. I’d like you to have it.” This was a thoughtful and generous gesture, for officers are responsible for their own kit, and a new lieutenant, ordering several changes of shirts and slacks and a jacket and a dress uniform as well, would run up quite a bill at the haberdasher’s before receiving his first officer’s paycheck.

Next I called on Lt. Col. B. A. Davis, Hayward’s deputy, Assistant Chief for Informational Branches, who was directly above Major Ross. Next I was welcomed back by the major and by my co-workers, now my staff. Then I went downstairs to the art unit

to greet Leon. “About two weeks after you left,” he said, “I ran into Jean one evening in Dayton. She told me she’d taken a night job to keep her mind off missing you so much.” That was reassuring, for the frequency of her letters had dwindled in the past month. My reporting for duty completed, I hastened to call her up, savoring how we’d enjoy my taking her for the first time to the Officers’ Club at Patterson Field (there was none at Wright). At last I poured into the phone my hoarded-up relief at being close to her again. She said she’d missed me too, but I could tell she was holding something back. She couldn’t see me until the following evening.

Disappointed and baffled, I occupied that day and the next as I had to, then hurried in to Dayton for the long-awaited reunion. Jeannie looked just as I’d remembered her, but pale and tense. Before I could say anything, she said, “We won’t be able to see each other anymore.” What was she saying? She was telling me she was engaged. Engaged? How was that possible? Engaged to a captain from Patterson Field. And she handed me a parcel: all my letters and the photo she had implored me to give her just before I left for O.C.S. She was impatient, wanted this interview to be over and done with. There was no more to say. Indeed there was no more; a few months later I read about her wedding in the *Dayton Daily News*.

Stunned, I returned to the Bachelor Officer Quarters in a daze and tried to puzzle out what had happened, to her, and to me. In the B.O.Q. such contemplation was impossible. Every night silence was shredded by boisterous laughter, expostulations at poker games, and other disturbances in the adjoining cubicles. Officers were permitted to live off base, but for that I would need transportation. I was relieved to notice an ad in the Dayton paper—a car for sale at a nearby garage. For a hundred dollars I became the owner of a 1928 Model A. This durable vehicle was mechanically simple, the only car I’ve ever owned on which I could change the engine gasket myself.

I now looked around for digs. A dozen miles away was the village of Yellow Springs. Here were brick schoolhouses and churches in Greek Revival architecture—Ohio had been the Western Reserve, settled from Connecticut—and a cluster of

done? I had never heard of *Chemical Abstracts*. In truth I was unaware that the professional society in any of the hard sciences published a review of research. To be fair to my predecessors and superiors, *The Technical Data Digest* was but one of their numerous responsibilities. None was a scientist, nor had they found unsatisfactory the way the *Digest* had limped along; how could they have known that? And besides, they had more important projects to administer.

I wrote Dr. Austin Patterson on Air Force letterhead and soon received his invitation to call at his home in Xenia. He was a tall, slender man who carried his years well and resembled a country doctor. I passed through the glassed-in porch of his frame house and we sat in his parlor. His wife poured tea while he explained how *Chemical Abstracts* covered thousands of articles a year from the world over, with the help of chemists on university and college faculties and on the staffs of industries, who were sent the materials to be summarized. He suggested that I go to Columbus to visit the staff at the headquarters of the American Chemical Society, on the Ohio State University campus.

When I reported all this to Colonel Davis, he immediately agreed. So I was assigned to detached service and spent several days in Columbus, fifty miles away. The editor, Dr. E. S. Crane, and his staff on *Chemical Abstracts* shared their methods, showed me the files identifying potential abstractors and yet other files recording the work done by each, and the in-house editorial procedures after receipt of these contributions. I came back to Dayton with a good grasp of how to organize a more professional staff of abstractors. All that was required was to recruit them—from universities, from industries.

And, Colonel Davis added, to pay them, for the Air Force had to have contractual arrangements with any persons, firms, or institutions that provided services, contracts involving payment. I'd have to initiate a contract for Professor Lafleur, whose work on the two meteorological abstracts would require that he be signed up as a consultant and paid. This entanglement in red tape could wait, however, until we had lined up additional contributors.

Colonel Davis now proposed that he and I go together on a recruitment mission to Pittsburgh, starting with his old firm,

Gulf Oil, in whose subsidiary, Gulf Research and Development Company, were several Ph.D.s working on the development of aviation fuel and other military projects. He must have felt it would be advantageous to turn up with a military project which the firm could provide the assistance of his former colleagues. In fact they were welcoming, and several agreed to come contributing abstractors.

The success of this little mission persuaded Colonel Davis to set me loose on my own, so after preparatory correspondence was launched during April 1945 on detached service, a trip was made to M.I.T., Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Brooklyn Poly, N.Y.U., and Cooper Union to recruit abstractors. Not all of these schools were on my original itinerary, but some *Digest* recruits suggested colleagues at other institutions in their own or adjacent fields. For instance, at M.I.T., Professor Eric Reissner told me that his father, Hans, a mathematician at Brooklyn Polytechnic, would want to help. The elder Reissner, a refugee from Germany, was indeed glad to take on this very slight contribution to defeat Hitler. I also called in at the Society of Automotive Engineers and the American Society of Mechanical Engineers to ensure that preprints of papers to be given at their meetings be sent to the *Digest*.

I kept no notes of these meetings with deans and department heads but well recall that at both M.I.T. and Harvard the deans of the engineering schools, on questioning me about my own background, being well aware of the Columbia humanities requirements, emphasized their hope of reforming engineering education after the war by the inclusion of required study of literature, philosophy, and history. Their premise was that technical training alone was inadequate to prepare for the technological revolution ahead; humanistic study would help their graduates achieve intelligent leadership, dealing with the social consequences of technology, understanding better the full range of culture. This struck me as enlightened policy. Some twenty-five years later I had occasion to reflect on those conversations while reading an eloquently contrarian memoir, *At the Edge of History: Speculations on the Transformation of Culture* (1971), in which William Irwin Thompson condemns M.I.T. (where he had

ing no one would notice the chain, and tried to conceal the manacle under the cuff of my jacket. I was then driven in a jeep to the flight line, where, arriving in an Army sedan, von Karman followed me, climbing the ladder into the plane. We spoke little—he during the flight made further calculations in a notebook which should by all rights have been secured as were those I was carrying. He was a slight, elderly man resembling a befuddled professor who, setting out to the newsstand to buy the latest paper, forgets the point of his errand and returns with a Hershey bar instead. On our day trip I had to make all the practical arrangements. I can't remember any of whatever conversation he had with me, just have kept the impression of a kindly, grandfatherly man utterly without any pretensions.

At the Pentagon the problem was to find the designated office. A captain guided us through endless passages—the building itself seemed the embodiment of bureaucracy, its architectural design red tape made physically manifest in three dimensions. At last we reached the office, where a major general welcomed von Karman and his adjutant looked to me to unlock my manacle and turn over the case of calculations. Mission accomplished, I was flown back to Wright Field.

\* \* \*

Antioch College was filling up with discharged veterans, men who had been in combat in Europe or the Pacific islands. It was inevitable to compare their experiences, and those of my college friends with whom I'd kept in touch, with my own three years in the Zone of the Interior. None of my closest friends would return to Columbia. My roommate Stan had been wounded in the Pacific Theater; recuperating at an Army hospital in California, when discharged he finished college at U.C.L.A. Sid Lamb, from Montreal, had joined the Canadian infantry and gone ashore in Normandy; after the war he went to McGill. Barney de Jarnett had acted on the romantic impulse of his southern background and, as though volunteering in 1861, joined the cavalry. What use men on horseback would have been against the Japanese was hard to imagine; Barney and his mount were

drowned in a training accident, an attempted landing exercise in rough waters off New Zealand.

Many college men had been called from Enlisted Reserve just in time for the Battle of the Bulge. Veterans I knew or met had spent months in foxholes dodging enemy shells; had sweated out tropical diseases and faced rifle fire and bursting shells on Asiatic islands. Others had ridden in tanks through blasted cities in France and Germany; had been dropped behind enemy lines as saboteurs or gatherers of intelligence; had liberated starving Jews from concentration camps; had exchanged fire with enemy warships. Still others had flown through flak and enemy fighters or survived from torpedoed ships. Some had been wounded.

While they were having their mettle and manhood tested in these terrible circumstances, seeing men blown to pieces, luckily surviving the deaths of comrades, I had held a desk job in Ohio. I'd heard of the guilt felt by those who survived battles in which their buddies had died. Inevitably, a portion of guilt attached to my thoughts of how I'd been untested, untoughened, and unscathed. I felt the need to justify, if only to myself, my assignment, convince myself—as had my civilian colleagues at the Jordanoff Company four years before—that what I had done, too, had a part, however slight, in winning the war. Was what I had done as useful as what I might have been ordered and, perhaps, been able to do, had I, like these veterans, been in a combat unit? Perhaps as a rifleman or a fighter pilot I'd have had little or no effect on the outcome of battle. There was of course no way to know. I could not help but feel that my service in the Zone of the Interior had kept me from initiation into a maturity shared by some of my friends and many of my generation. There was a certain spiritual space between those who had been under fire, had seen men killed, had had to kill enemies, had tasted fear and survived, and those who had no such experiences. Not that many talked much about the war—those with bad memories tried to get back into civilian life as best they could; veterans of the Zone of the Interior were not tempted to talk much either.

While my assignment to Wright Field was, to my mind, a rational Army decision to use to best advantage my specialized experience, from another point of view I'd also been a pawn in the

power plays of various superior officers. The colonel who had urged and helped me be assigned to Materiel Command—that made him, posted to New York City, look good to his general at Wright Field. Even my mere presence there could be used to advantage; I received my final promotion from a new lieutenant colonel in charge of our unit—his name has not remained on memory's scroll, but I do recall he was directly commissioned from an advertising career and had brought to the Air Force his great innovation in that business, so the AAF could win the war with Day-Glo. He'd been at his new post only a week, had no idea what I did or how well or ill I did it, when he summoned me to his office and returned my salute with the comment, "I'm putting you in for first lieutenant. I want to command *men*, not shavetails!" Of course he was the one bucking for promotion, sure he could get those eagles on his collar if he had more men in higher ranks under him. My promotion came through, though hardly as recognition for duties well done.

I drew some consolation from the thought that I'd been placed in charge of a journal of knowledge essential to the Air Force's conduct of the war, helping to make possible the development of its planes, weapons, and all their systems. I repeated to myself that while I was in charge, *The Technical Data Digest* had grown into a journal with abstracts written by some forty leading scientists and read by nearly six thousand Air Force technicians and civilian researchers, including those of all our allies. This, I told myself, this must have counted for something.

True, my duties were essentially civilian in nature, harnessed to military needs. Still it was quite unusual for one as young as I was to have so much responsibility, more than I would ever again be given or seek. It was exciting to witness the sudden advances in aircraft design and performance, in materials and fuels, in instrumentation, and the emergence of helicopters and jet propulsion, as month by month the papers and articles to be abstracted predicted and recorded these progressions. And having met and corresponded with dozens of accomplished scientists and engineers, I had a far better comprehension of the way they thought and worked, of their commitments to pure science as well as to its military applications.

All this followed from the accident of my having had a job that summer between semesters at college. I'd been very lucky indeed to have been assigned to such stimulating work. While learning to perform it I'd had to master unanticipated skills, learn to get along with a mixed lot of ingots in the melting pot of the Army, learn to manage other people's work, how better to make our project fill the needs it was intended to serve, and how to thread my way through the AAF's red tape, a crash course in the stupefying inertia of large organizations.

Most of these proficiencies would have little or limited use in whatever civilian life held for me, but one further demand of my wartime duties would, I knew, stay with me. I had had to learn to write jargon-free, perspicuous, and unambiguous prose; this discipline would be a permanent part of my personal armament and would influence my future in ways I could not then foresee or imagine. Another bonus was my familiarity with editing, layout, publication processes, and printing, knowledge which in later years protected my own writings from the rule-book deformations of copy editors and, until the advent of typesetting by computer, gave me an insider's knowledge of book production. And I had had a range of other experiences, by-blows of where I was and whom I'd known, that could not otherwise have come to me.

★ ★ ★

It was time to look ahead. What would I do when out of uniform? I hadn't finished college, true, but perhaps the experience of the past three years could lead to a civilian career in similar work. But where? All the aeronautical magazines but one were filled with puffery for the products of the manufacturers who supplied military aircraft equipment but were even now retooling for the civilian markets. No way to know, then, that this reduction from military to civilian production would bring on a crisis in the aircraft industry. I had no desire, now that the war was won, to become an editorial slavey for commerce. The exceptional publication was the *Journal of Aeronautical Sciences*, published by the American Society of Aeronautical Engineers. If there was

on the show we'd expected to see. She pulled out of her handbag a pair of round horn-rims. Touched, I assured her I enjoyed being with her so much I hoped to see her again and again, with or without her glasses. Well, I was determined not to let *this* one get away.

After bidding her goodnight, I returned to Columbia along Riverside Drive, where the whole night sky gleamed with reflected light, repeating to myself over and over her name. What was the conjunction of the invisible stars, here in New York where there are millions of chance encounters every day, that had brought me last week to the Thalia on the same night and at the same time that Elizabeth McFarland had gone to see the same show? In the excitement of the moment all this was tumbling through my head—could I win and keep this girl who, more than anyone I'd known, filled the portrait I hadn't till then known I carried in my mind?

To put these impressions and feelings into perspective, let me skip ahead some years. Here's an effort to record a more ripened experience of these encounters and some of their consequences, a perspective that still holds true:

As I was going to Saint-Ives  
In stormy, windy, sunny weather  
I meet a man with seven wives  
(The herons stand in the swift water).

One drinks her beer out of his can  
In stormy, windy, and bright weather,  
And who laughs more, she or her man?  
(The herons stand still on the water.)

One knows the room his candle lit  
In stormy, lightning, cloudburst weather,  
That glows again at the thought of it  
(Two herons still the swift water).

His jealous, wild-tongued Wednesday's wife—  
In dreepy, wintry, wind-lashed weather

—What rends him like that ranting strife?  
(Two herons still the roaring water.)

There's one whose mind's so like his mind  
In streaming wind or balmy weather  
All joy, all wisdom seem one kind  
(The herons stand in the swift water.)

And one whose secret mazes he  
In moon-swept, in torrential weather  
Ransacks, and cannot find the key  
(Two herons stand in the white water).

He'll think of none save one's slim thighs  
In heat and sleet and windy weather  
Till death has plucked his dreaming eyes  
(Two herons guard the streaming water).

And the one whose love moves all he's done,  
In windy, warm, and wintry weather,  
—What can he leave but speaks thereon?  
Two herons still the swift water.

From an article by the poet Lewis Turco I learned a lot about my ballad's prosody, and also that many young readers these days may never have heard of the traditional riddle I took for granted as point of departure. I had revelled in the possibilities offered by the opening rhyme of the riddle, and chose the ballad form as, with the riddle, among the most archaic literary forms in the language. The images and feelings in the poem are indeed personal, but I wished to express them not as unique: I'd give them their due in the recurring rhythms of life, as ours in the repertoire of experiences long and widely shared.

In the riddle, each wife had seven cats, each cat had seven kits, etc., till it's asked, How many were going to Saint-Ives? Assuming all were met as they came *from* Saint-Ives, the answer is one. Although in my ballad the encounter is seen differently, the implied riddle's answer is the same. The man met by the traveller—his

shadow-self, his double—is going, as he is, toward Land's End, that is, life's end, helping him, as they go together, recognize and rejoice in the multiple realities of his wife and her relationship to him. The refrain poses against our ever-changeable water and weather a pair of herons, who may, as Lew Turco suggests, represent ourselves, yet are the real, noble birds we'd often seen on the shores of Cape Rosier, Maine. There they were perhaps unaware of their ancient significance as symbols of regeneration and immortality.

These may seem heavy burdens for a mere ballad, but despite the fraying of what was once our common culture, I reach for such allusions to give resonance to actual experiences and thus deepen the expression of real emotions.

\* \* \*

One day I pulled out of my dormitory mailbox a letter forwarded from my aunt and uncle's house in New Rochelle. The return address was Headquarters, Mitchell Field. What was this, a recall to active duty? No, it was an invitation to a ceremony at that base, on October 4. Mitchell Field is in Garden City, and as my parents insisted on coming—only this could bring them together—we went in my father's car, with me in front, my mother and Liz, by now my fiancée, in the back seat.

On arrival we were directed to a large room where a dozen or so other veterans were already waiting. The presence also of their preening parents made them seem as uncomfortable as I was made by mine. At last a colonel strode to the podium between massed flags, welcomed everyone, and began to read the citations for belatedly awarded Purple Hearts, Air Medals, Oak Leaf Clusters, Bronze and Silver Stars. Each honoree came forward, was handed by a captain the leather-covered case containing his medal, then given his citation and a handshake by the colonel. I was called up for a Legion of Merit—the other medalists looked puzzled, nor had I heard of it either. This felt like a summons from an earlier life. At least it indicated that someone up high had noticed what we were doing on the *Digest* and had thought the effort worthwhile.

As it had seemed to everyone at Wright Field, if not at the Pentagon, *The Technical Data Digest*—or at any rate the survey of technological progress it offered—would soon enough be needed, as much for the cold war as for the war just won. What no one in Technical Information could have foreseen was that our *Digest* would be superseded by the fruits of a technological advance it had not been in our purview to follow. While we were typing thousands of abstracts on scores of aeronautical subjects, a couple of engineers at the University of Pennsylvania—John W. Mauchly and J. Prosper Eckert, Jr.—were at work on a completely different problem: devising a mechanism to perform instantaneous calculations for artillery trajectories. They hooked up thousands of vacuum tubes, resistors, capacitors, and switches in a huge, ungainly contraption called the Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer. It occupied a whole 30-by-50-foot room. (This was in the building adjacent to Bennett Hall, site of the English department, where I held seminars and had an office for twenty-six years.) ENIAC was the first successful anticipation of the digital computer. Within a few years it would be miniaturized, made thousands of times more powerful, and spread its new technology across all fields of research. When the postwar Air Force realized that it again needed a comprehensive survey of current research—doubtless no one involved in that decision had any memory, or had even heard, of *The Technical Data Digest*—the task would be done on computers.

The very method of our magazine was history. A printed compendium of technical abstracts would now be as obsolete as clay tablets incised in cuneiform.

\* \* \*

Toward the end of my senior year, the Boar's Head Society, our club of student poets, invited W. H. Auden to read to us. In those days colleges didn't invite living poets to do anything, so we took this initiative (and provided the hundred-dollar fee) independently of the English department. One evening about fifteen of us gathered in Earl Hall to hear Auden. Liz was eager to see the great man herself. One of the talented high school kids who cor-

responded with her at *Scholastic Magazine*—she was now its poetry editor—had excitedly called on her to tell of his meeting with Auden in the poet's flat on St. Mark's Place. Why, we had to wonder, would Auden invite a visit from a mere high school boy? Whatever the answer to that, on his asking Mr. Auden how do poems get written, Robert Thom told her, the great poet had furrowed his brow, leaned back, then, after a pause, said, "The language is the mother . . . the poet is the father . . . and from their union comes the poem."

Since the Boar's Head Society members were all male—not for another thirty years would Columbia go coed—Lizzie put her hair up under a cap and wore trousers and, although the evening was warm, a trench coat. Deceiving none of the student-poets attending, I smuggled her into the meeting. We sat around waiting nervously until, nearly an hour after the expected time, Auden arrived, looking ruffled, his face already as lined as the map of Iceland. He settled into a high-backed chair, extracted from a battered manila envelope some frayed and crumpled sheets of paper, and read a number of poems we'd recently seen in *The New Yorker*.

When he fell silent after our applause, one of the young hopefuls asked the inevitable question: "Mr. Auden, where do poems come from?" To this query our guest paused, looked pensive, furrowed his brow, leaned back, and, putting his pencil to his lips, said, as though conceiving it for the first time, "You must think of the language as the mother . . . the poet as the father . . . and it is their creative union that brings forth the poem."

Neither he nor we knew that among his auditors that night were two he would within the decade choose for the Yale Series of Younger Poets. The other was John Hollander.

★ ★ ★

I'd registered again with the campus employment office, in hopes of supplementing my G.I. Bill allowance with part-time work, and was invited for an interview by the Columbia University Press. They'd seen my résumé and had on offer a job as assistant editor in charge of their King's Crown Press, a subsidiary devised

to produce books from doctoral dissertations at the authors' cost (publication was then required for the degree). As such studies had no market other than a few university libraries, they were produced without subjecting the manuscripts to the usual painstaking editorial revision given to maturer works of scholarship.

The Press seemed eager to have me take on this burden, although, as Henry Wiggins, the director, told me, I'd have to give up thought of doing graduate work myself. Fortunately I declined this opportunity, for soon the state universities of Michigan and Wisconsin, finding their doctoral candidates unable to subvene publication, decreed that microfilming would serve equally well. This was a saving for the student of a couple of thousand dollars. All other universities soon followed suit, and Columbia closed its King's Crown imprint.

In the event, my dissertation, *The Poetry of Stephen Crane*, was published by Columbia in 1957. It evidently qualified as mature scholarship enough; my master's essay, on the folklore, popularizations, and literary treatments of Paul Bunyan, had been published in 1952. I'd undertaken these compositional requirements not as cobbling footnoted essays to please a committee, but conceived as books in the making.

Organizing and writing expository prose came easily enough, but every time I tried to write poems there was the struggle to discover my own voice. While learning how other poets used the language, imagery, metaphor, sound pattern, form, syntax—all the constituent elements of poems—there was still the need to reconstitute these lessons in a manner not derivative of theirs. I had a drawer filled with a hundred poems I'd thought complete but had come to realize were false starts. At last, though, I was writing a couple of the poems I'd be confident enough to include in my first book. Cultural contexts, verse techniques, the resonances of diction—all these could be learned. My humanistic education at Columbia primed my mind with possibilities. What remained to be discovered were the ways inner necessity would compel expression.

The earliest theme I found means to speak with some distinctiveness was cited by Auden in his foreword to my first book, *An*



**FIELD ORDER #13**  
**George Marquardt**

CASUAL: 406-367-9385  
Summer  
(~ April - Oct)

Glen Mahugh  
(Mā hū)  
PO Box 1234  
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## Field Order #13

Special Bombing Mission #13  
Hiroshima August 6, 1945

“There are those who considered that the atomic bomb should never have been used at all .... that rather than throw this bomb we should have sacrificed a million Americans and a quarter of a million British in the desperate battles and massacres of an invasion of Japan.

The bomb brought peace, but man alone can keep that peace.”

— Winston Churchill, August 16, 1945

In the early morning hours of August 6, 1945, members of the 509th Composite Group culminated a year of top secret training as the Enola Gay took off from Tinian under the command of Col. Paul W. Tibbets Jr. At 8:16 a.m., the crew carried out their top-secret mission by dropping an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, the seventh largest city in Japan. Sixty percent of the city was destroyed, with an estimated 80,000 casualties. The Japanese government had already ignored the inevitable by refusing to heed the Potsdam Ultimatum, and conflict within the government continued to delay surrender. With American casualties in the Pacific Theater numbering 900 per day and faced with an estimated 500,000 casualties in a proposed invasion of Japan, U.S. leaders decided the Japanese surrender must be hastened. Members of the 509th were called upon to fly a second mission, this one on August 9, 1945, under the command of Major Charles Sweeney. With the primary target, Kokura Arsenal, obscured by smoke, the crew of Bockscar dropped a second atomic bomb on the secondary target, the industrial city of Nagasaki. More than 40,000 people were killed. The Japanese surrendered on August 11.

As a member of the 509th, I was a participant in this history-changing mission. In fact, I had a front

row seat for the first mission as commander of the Necessary Evil, an observation plane. It was a long way from a peaceful college classroom in Illinois to this extraordinary vantage point as a participant in the most important mission in the Pacific Theater during World War II.

I spent my boyhood days in Golconda, IL. When I graduated from Golconda High, I had several scholarships. I chose Illinois Wesleyan University, where I had baseball and basketball scholarships. My sister Vera had a teaching job there. I attended college 3 1/2 years, but in 1940 during the last semester of my senior year, I decided to join the Air Corps. I had my pilot's license, and I signed a contract with the Air Corps that would earn me \$500 for every year I stayed in.

As a cadet in the Air Corps, I attended Brooks Air College in Tulsa, OK, for six months. I received basic training at Randolph Field and advanced training at Kelly Field in San Antonio, TX. During my training at Kelly Field, I had an instructor named Lt. John “Jack” Ryan. He later became a four-star general commanding the Air Force in 1968-69.

One night at Kelly Field, Harold Shull and I had just returned from flying about 1:00 A.M. when we received a call on the radio: “Marquardt and Shull report to Jack Ryan.” He “wracked us back” (made us stand at attention) because we hadn't parked our plane correctly. He gave each of us a gunnysack and ordered us to fill them with unbroken clay pigeons from the Kelly Field skeet range. When we returned at 4:00 A.M., Jack was still waiting for us. “So next time I tell you to do something, you'd better do it right,” he said.

I received my wings at Kelly Field after four months. As a 2nd Lieutenant, I was assigned to an engineering school at Rice University in Houston, TX. I took aerodynamics classes, worked on airplanes and graduated in six months. I was

assigned to Midland, TX, in charge of 30 airplanes at a bombardiering school for AT-11 (a twin engine aircraft with a bomb bay). We had to keep as many planes in the air as we could. Harold Shull was also in charge of 30 planes. We got so sick of the job that we would purposely make mistakes on our report. General Davies called us into his office and asked us what was wrong. Later, when we got to know him better, we told him that we made mistakes on purpose — “so we could get out of this damned place. We want to go to war!”

Finally I was re-assigned to Del Rio, TX, where I was an instructor for one year for pilots scheduled to fly B-26 for missions in England. We had an obstacle course where a bunch of officers crawled under the steel angles and beams of a bridge 100 feet over the Rio Grande River. The incentive was “free drinks” once we got to Mexico on the other side. Jim Roberts, our commanding officer, wanted to join us on the obstacle course. He missed the beam with one of his hands and fell 100 feet into the shallow water of the Rio Grande, breaking his back. That ended the obstacle course.

Next I was stationed in the Caribbean for eight months for submarine patrol, flying B-25's. I was stationed in Puerto Rico, St. Thomas and St. Lucia Islands and then returned to the States. The B-25 was a pile of junk compared to the B-26, which I enjoyed flying. I checked out in B-24's, B-17's and B-29's. In November 1943, we were assigned to the 393rd squadron of the 504th Group in Fairmont, NE, flying B-29's. We completed Air Corps requirements for a 2nd Air Force assignment to go overseas. The 393rd Squadron was pulled out of the 504th Bomb Group and went to Wendover, Utah, in September 1944.

In Wendover, I found out I was assigned to the 509th Composite Group under the command of Col. Paul W. Tibbets. At a meeting, Col. Tibbets told us

that what we were doing could shorten the war. We were all given a ten-day leave and told to be ready to go to work when we returned.

It was at this time I met my future wife, Bernece. She was private secretary to the owner of the Newhouse Hotel in Salt Lake City. Some of us stayed there on weekends and I had noticed her in her office which was located in the lobby. Buck and I asked her to type some orders for us to go on leave. She referred us to the public stenographer in the lobby. After finding her busy, we persuaded Bernece to type them for us. After my leave and my return to Wendover, we began to date.

While stationed in Wendover, we were sent to Cuba for additional training in January and February of 1945. We made dry runs over New York and Boston. One night John Wilson, Buck Eatherly and I went into Havana to gamble. Buck was losing heavily. The casino would not accept his check, so he told them to call his banker in Texas. Unbeknownst to them, he had a friend in Texas pose as his banker and OK the check. We had returned to the States when the check bounced. The base commander in Cuba notified Col. Tibbets, and he took care of it to avoid any adverse publicity about the squadron. We didn't find out about this until our Philadelphia reunion in 1986. While in Wendover, we did some night bombing. Charles McKnight did a dry run over San Francisco. When he got to 30,000 feet, he began his bombing run. We had replaced the gun turrets with blisters, and the blister blew out. Luckily, the crew had their seat belts on. Everything loose came out of the hold. He immediately went to a lower altitude.

“After the 393rd Bombing Squadron returned to Wendover from the Caribbean, its training continued. The fliers gained much valuable experience in ballistic testing of dummy bombs called “pumpkins” similar in dimensions and weight to the atomic

bombs that were eventually used. They were never, of course, loaded with fissionable material. Most of our ballistic testing was conducted in a range in the Salton Sea area. Out of these tests came the information we needed to aim the final bombs accurately.

At the same time, a long series of tests on the three bomb models were being conducted at Los Alamos under the supervision of Commander F.L. Ashworth, Parsons' assistant. These tests were designed to obtain ballistic data to determine the best procedures for dropping the bomb. They also provided valuable experience in designing and assembling some of the weapons' subunits.

The Ballistics Group of the Los Alamos Ordnance Division did the research on the problem of aircraft safety in delivery. This group was concerned with such matters as the shock pressure that the B-29 could safely withstand, the flight maneuver that would carry the plane the greatest distance away from the burst in the least time, and special shock-bracing for the crew. Throughout the fall and winter of 1944-45, the Delivery Group at Los Alamos, which later would bear the primary responsibility for developing facilities and equipment for assembling the atomic bomb at the overseas base, continued its program of design and production of mock bombs."<sup>1</sup>

I had dropped many dummy bombs over the Salton Sea, but one day I had an assignment to drop 10,000 lb. dummy bombs. I assigned Jim Price's crew to make the drop. We had to make our own ballistic tests for dropping 10,000 lbs. bombs (pumpkins). The Air Force had no tests for bombs that big. Jim Price reported back that his co-pilot was on leave, so I piloted the plane with Jim as co-pilot. His bombardier was on leave, so Tom Ferebee took his place. We took off from Wendover to Southern California and dropped the 10,000 lb. bomb in the Salton Sea. Everything went off all right.

On our return to Wendover, the #2 engine was running too hot. As we got close to Wendover, it was still overheating. After requesting landing information, we put the wheels down. The green light would not come on. We flew around to check it, and we found that the light had burned out. We put power back up on the engines and the control tower advised us that the #2 engine was on fire. We made a tight turn, and I hollered at Jim Price, "Feather the #2 engine. Hope the engine doesn't blow". My whole life went in front of me. I was praying to myself that the engine would not blow. We also hoped that the engine would not fall off. We successfully landed the plane, and I immediately turned on the alarm and told everybody on the intercom to get ready to get out.

There's a four-foot hole behind the pilot's seat, and everyone used that exit. The plane was still in motion when we got the door open. Everyone got out, and the plane, on fire, proceeded down the runway. Some of the crew were skinned up. The fire truck was there as soon as the plane stopped. A large crowd gathered, with Paul Tibbets among them. I told him, "Colonel, I'm sorry I burned up one of your airplanes." He replied, "Glad you're all out safe and no one hurt. Don't worry about the plane. New ones are coming in next month."

Because B-29's were in very short supply, the AAF's lower echelons displayed some reluctance to satisfy the Manhattan Project (code name for the secret atomic bomb project) request for replacement of the inadequate planes. In December, shortly after the 393rd Squadron was detailed to Batista Field, Cuba, for two months of special navigational training, Groves decided to appeal directly to General Arnold about the B-29 problem. Without hesitation, the AAF chief responded emphatically that the 509th Composite Group would get as many new planes as it required. "In view of the vast national effort that had gone into the Manhattan Project," as Groves later recalled Arnold's words,

<sup>1</sup> Groves, "Now It Can Be Told" p. 61

"no slip-up on the part of the Air Force was going to be responsible for a failure." After the 393rd returned to Wendover, the fliers continued to gain experience during tests with dummy bombs of various types. Finally, in the spring of 1945, the second lot of fifteen greatly improved versions of the B-29 reached the air base. They were specially modified Martin-built B-29's with fuel injection engines and reversible pitch propellers. After the new planes arrived, training and ballistic tests intensified.

Deak Parsons, a commander in the Navy, came to Wendover. I received a call to meet someone at the tower at 11:00. When I arrived there, it was Parsons. He wanted to run checks on fuses. I later found out these were proximity fuses that armed the bomb and would explode at certain altitudes. Parsons and two other engineers got in the airplane with me. He said, "We are going to bomb Wendover." They gave me instructions how they wanted me to fly. We made several runs over Wendover. When I hit about 6,000 feet, these fuses would go off, a few at the same time. They sounded like a cap gun. I would fly at different altitudes with the same results. Parsons, a very unassuming man, was the only one who knew and could arm the bomb. General Groves, in his book, said: "Don't let Parsons get killed. We need him."

When Major Hopkins was advanced to group operations officer, Col. Thomas Classen, CO of the 393rd, called me in and asked if I could handle the job of squadron operations officer. I assured him I could. After our meeting, Buck Eatherly came to me and said he was supposed to get the job. He accused me of sucking up to Col. Classen and said I couldn't handle the job. I told Buck he hadn't had any experience. We had been close friends — but that dampened it a bit.

Capt. Cecil King was in charge of all maintenance of the B-29's. Each plane had five mainte-

nance men. Cecil made all the assignments. My crew chief's name was Gulick, and he did not like to fly. He could fix anything on the airplane, however. When he did the repairs, I would make him get in the airplane and fly with me just to make sure things were OK. He would protest, "But, captain, I'm sure everything is OK." But I would make him fly with me anyway.

I had the utmost respect for Classen and Tibbets. I, in turn, was respected by my crew. The airplane commanders cared about each other. At the end of the war, the men of the 393rd had been flying together for two years with no fatalities. I attribute this to good pilots, good crews, good training, excellent maintenance, and double checking!

In May of 1945, we received our orders to go to the island of Tinian. Tinian is part of the Northern Marianas Island chain north of Guam and next to the island of Saipan. Knowing that I would be leaving soon, Bernece and I were married May 31st, 1945 in the Presidential Suite of the Newhouse Hotel. We spent a couple of days in Salt Lake and then went to Wendover to await my departure. I couldn't tell her anything about our mission except that I knew it would help to make the war with Japan end soon and that I could return home quickly. Our plane left Wendover for Tinian on June 6, 1945.

The code name for the 509th Composite Group was "Silverplate". Col. Tibbets used this name to get anything he needed for the group. He writes about this in his book "The Enola Gay". The 509th had five C-54's, four engine transports, which made up the 320th Troop Carrier Squadron.

Jim Roberts, who had been my CO in Del Rio, TX two years before, called me while I was on Tinian. He was now a Brigadier General, and he invited me to dinner and sent a car to pick me up. His headquarters were about three miles from ours to the south on Tinian. He had a house, very small and

neatly kept. A brigadier general has a right-hand man with him all the time. I knew him and his wife very well, having been in Dallas with him for two months to check out B-25-26's. He was also my flight instructor at Randolph field four years earlier. He said, "George, I want to talk to you. I want you to be the Operations Officer of my wing." I said, "Jim, there's no way you'll get me." When he asked why, I replied, "I can't tell you why." That was pretty much the conversation. I could not tell him why I was on Tinian because it was top secret. The dinner was excellent! His driver returned me to my quonset hut. After the war, Jim used to stop by and see us once a year, but I haven't seen him for ten years now.

"In July, General Farrell arrived to take charge. On his way to Tinian, he stopped off at Guam, where he conferred on the details of the operation with General Curtis E. LeMay, then in command of the 20th Air Force and about to become the Chief of Staff of the Strategic Forces. He then called on Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, whose headquarters were also at Guam, and arranged with him for assistance from the Navy. This included placing submarines in Japanese waters along the route the atomic bomb fliers were to take, to rescue us in case we were forced to bail out or ditch. The Navy would also have a number of Navy flying boats in readiness at nearby bases.

At the end of the conference, Admiral Nimitz called General Farrell over to the window and pointed at an island a short distance from Guam. "That island over there," Admiral Nimitz said, "is Rota. There are about three thousand Japanese on it. They bother us a great deal. They have radios. They know what we are doing. They are sending out information." (We were aware of this. Tokyo Rose welcomed the 509th to Tinian. Little did she know this was the beginning of the end.)

"Haven't you got a small bomb you can drop on Rota?" Nimitz asked Farrell. "I don't feel it warrants an amphibious invasion at this time, but they do bother us."

"Unfortunately, Admiral," General Farrell replied, "all our bombs are big ones."

Early on the morning of Sunday, August 5, 1945, Marianas time (Saturday, August 4, in the United States), word came that the weather would be favorable for a takeoff early the next morning. Preparations were at once speeded up to get the bomb ready for immediate loading. But Captain (now Rear Admiral) William S. Parsons, Navy Ordnance expert, who was completely responsible for the technical control of the bomb and for decisions as to its use, was worried. The night before he had seen four B-29's in a row crash and burn at the end of the runway.

"You know," he said to General Farrell, "if we crack up at the end of the runway tomorrow morning and the plane gets on fire, there is the danger of an atomic explosion, and we may lose this end of the island, if not the whole of Tinian, with every blessed thing and person on it."

"We will just have to pray that it doesn't happen," General Farrell replied.

"Well," said Captain Parsons, "if I made the final assembly of that bomb after we left the island, that couldn't happen."<sup>2</sup>

General Farrell, deputy to General Groves, called a meeting of all airplane commanders in our squadron. He, along with Col. Tibbets, called each of us to a room individually. He asked each of us, "What do you know about the bomb?" After the

<sup>2</sup> "Dawn Over Zero: Story of the Atom Bomb" p. 204

meeting we were shown the blast at Trinity in New Mexico on July 19. He went on to say, "You will not be court marshaled for anything you say. We just want to know what you know about the bomb." Ralph Taylor, John Wilson, Norm Ray, Claude Eatherly, Ralph DeVore and I talked together afterwards. We had discussed our secret only on a one-to-one basis, but never in a group. Norm had gone to college in South Dakota, where they had an atom smasher which had been kept secret. I told this to Gen. Farrell when he questioned me.

We had to drop four or five "pumpkins" filled with TNT on the Japanese Empire before we could go on a special raid. We found out later this special raid was the dropping of the atom bomb. On the third block buster raid, my bombardier, Strudwick, took over the airplane to make the run, but the bomb didn't release from the shackle. On the second release, it still didn't release. I got upset with him and chewed him out. I told him if he didn't get it off this time, he would have to get in the bomb bay and release it manually. He got my message, and the third run was successful!

On one of the raids, I was OD (Officer of the Day) running around in a Jeep, getting everybody off for the bombing. I was headed toward Hopkins' plane and was about 200 feet away when the bomb dropped out. I heard a noise and thought it was going to explode — all 10,000 lbs. of TNT! I slowed the Jeep down and thought to myself, "If it doesn't explode now, it never will." We got the bomb reloaded, Hopkins flew off and dropped it on the Japanese Empire.

We had a briefing the night before the bomb drop at approximately 11 P.M. We took off at about 2:30 A.M. from the north runway at Tinian. I formed up with Tibbets and Sweeney about 45 minutes after takeoff. Col. Paul Tibbets, flying the "Enola Gay", carried the atomic bomb, "Little Boy". Maj. Charles Sweeney, the pilot of the "Great Artiste", flew the

No. 2 position on Tibbets' right wing and carried blast gauge instruments. These instruments had little parachutes on them and were dropped when the bomb was dropped. They measured the heat of the blast. Capt. George Marquardt, in the No. 3 position off Tibbets left wing, flew "Necessary Evil" which carried photographic equipment and the scientist Dr. Bernard Waldman. He told my crew, "You boys are making history today." He showed us his hands which had been burned from radiation. He talked about the bomb, saying "I don't have to be quiet any longer."

We were talking to each other over the radio when all of a sudden Col. Blanchard came over the air and said, "Hey, you guys! How about some radio silence?" He was on Iwo Jima with Charles McKnight and was monitoring our radios.

Admiral Parsons was in the bomb bay on the Enola Gay. Before the plane started to climb, he armed the bomb so it would detonate at 1800 feet after it was released, and then they climbed to 30,000 feet.

We got to within approximately 300 miles of Hiroshima, the primary target, and Major Eatherly, who was flying the weather plane 45 minutes ahead of us, told us the weather was clear over Hiroshima. This was necessary because the bomb had to be dropped visually. We could have dropped the bomb on Hiroshima by radar, but the Air Force wouldn't allow it. When Eatherly flew over Hiroshima, the Japanese were alerted to take cover in the air raid shelters. When we came over 45 minutes later, the Japanese were not alerted and had come out of the shelters. This is why so many people were killed.

Dr. Bernard Waldman, Ph.D., was assigned to my plane as an observer and was supposed to take photographs of the blast with a movie camera. Dr. Waldman received his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago, where he made friends with a physicist

from Japan who had come to America to study. Dr. Waldman wrote a note to his friend telling him of the bomb and asking him to urge the Japanese to surrender. This note was put in a blast gauge and dropped from Sweeney's plane. We proceeded to the I.P. (Initial Point), where I initiated a 360 degree turn to the left and Sweeney remained in formation with Tibbets. There was a tone control coming from Tibbets' plane that stopped when the bomb was released from the Enola Gay. It detonated by proximity fuse (electronic fuse) 1800 feet above the target. Hopkins and I had calculated that it would take approximately 40 seconds for the bomb to drop from the Enola Gay to the point where it would detonate above the target. It actually took 42 seconds. Waldman had only six seconds of film in the camera, and we lost two seconds of film there. At the 1990 reunion of the 509th, Adolph Gasser told me that Waldman had forgotten to open the shutter on the camera, so we never got any photographs of the blast with that camera.

George Caron, the tail gunner on the Enola Gay, had his own camera and took some pictures of the mushroom, one of which was published. Russ Gackenbach, my navigator, also had a camera and took one picture. We had been cautioned not to take personal cameras on this mission, but Russ and I decided he should take one in case Dr. Waldman's camera or pictures failed.

I had one minute to make my turn toward the target. The crew of No. 91 had a front row seat. Capt. Strudwick and Dr. Waldman were in the bombardier's seat, I was in the pilot's seat with Gackenbach standing behind me and Jim Corliss was behind Jim Anderson, my co-pilot. Mel Bierman, assistant flight engineer; Joe DiJulio, radar operator; and Tony Capua, tail gunner were in the rear of the plane.

When the bomb detonated, there was a brilliant flash which was partially obscured by the special goggles we had been issued for the mission. When I saw the flash, I had to take the goggles off because I couldn't see my co-pilot, Jim Anderson. It seemed as if the sun had come out of the earth and exploded. Smoke boiled around the flash as it rose. The thin layer of clouds, about 4,000 feet below us, rippled like water when a stone is thrown into it. You could see this for miles. This is the thing I remember most vividly. The shock wave from the blast reached my plane and it felt and sounded as if a monster hand had slapped the side of the plane. This occurred about 15 miles away from ground zero as I was flying towards the mushroom cloud which had already reached our altitude and continued to climb above us. I flew around the perimeter of the mushroom cloud three times. We had been instructed not to fly into the cloud as it might make us "sterile". I made my last turn and began my journey back to Tinian.

Parsons ordered Dick Nelson, radio operator on the Enola Gay, to radio back to General Farrell on Tinian the following: "Results clear cut, successful in all respects. Visible results greater than Trinity. Conditions normal in airplane following delivery. Proceeding to Tinian." This message was monitored by my radio operator, Warren Coble. Tibbets returned to Tinian. To show him the respect he deserved, Sweeney and I throttled back so Tibbets could arrive back at Tinian alone.

Dutch Van Kirk, the navigator on the Enola Gay, navigated the plane perfectly. Tom Ferebee, the bombardier on the Enola Gay, hit a bull's-eye.

After the bomb was dropped, all commanders were promoted to Major. One of them, Ralph Taylor, had kept a very detailed daily diary and sent them to an aunt who was a school teacher in the states. He told me, "Major Marquardt, I wrote about you today."

The following is a summary of the Hiroshima Mission:

### Mission Planning Summary

Field Order: #13

Special Bombing Mission: #13

Mission Executed: 6 August 1945

#### 1. PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE 509TH COMPOSITE GROUP

Early in June, 1945, this headquarters was informed one Atomic bomb would be available for use against the enemy on 6 August 1945. The primary limiting factor was production. By 5 August 1945, all was in readiness to initiate the first Atomic Bomb attack in the history of the world. The bomb was ready, weather was satisfactory, and the carefully selected crew was all trained. (See report Number 1, 509th Composite Group, Page 1, paragraph 1)

#### 2. TARGETS SELECTED FOR ATTACK

- A. Primary Target: 90.30-Hiroshima Urban Industrial Area. AP 063096, AP Reference: XXI BomCom Litho Mosaic Hiroshima Area, No. 90.30-Urban.
- B. Secondary Target: 90.34-168 Kokura Arsenal and City. AP 104082, AP reference: XXI BomCom Litho Mosaic Kokura Arsenal, No 90.34-168
- C. Tertiary Target: 90.36-Nagasaki Urban Area. AP 114061 AP Reference: XXI BomCom Litho Mosaic Nagasaki Area, Mitsubishi Steel and Arms Works, No. 90.36-546.

Weather aircraft were dispatched to all three targets to relay strike-time weather forecast back to the strike force. However, since it was so desirable that the primary be hit if possible, rather than the other two assigned targets, instructions were given to the strike aircraft to pass close enough themselves to the primary target, regardless of the weather aircraft's broadcasts, to insure that a visual bombing

opportunity on the primary was not missed. However, after that check, the strike aircraft were to proceed to either the secondary or tertiary, depending on the weather aircraft.

Although the bomb had a very extensive MEA, because it was so expensive and because the important areas of the urban targets were so concentrated, it was essential that visual bombing be accomplished to make the attack efficient. Radar was to be used as an aid, but if a visual check on the target-sighting operation could not be made with the Norden bombsight, the crew was to bring the bomb back to base. To permit the crew additional chance of obtaining a visual sighting operation, two targets, in addition to the primary, were assigned.

#### 3. REASONS FOR TARGET SELECTION

Of the four cities set aside for Atomic Bomb attack, Niigata was discarded because it was so poorly laid out for this sort of an attack - the industrial concentration and the residential-small factory areas were relatively widely separated. Of the other three, Nagasaki was the poorest of the layouts, and it had a prisoner of war camp nearby; so, it was made tertiary. The other two-Hiroshima and Kokura- were well laid out and relatively important, but Kokura had a prisoner of war camp and Hiroshima had none to our knowledge; so Hiroshima was made the primary.

As for the target itself, Hiroshima was highly important as an industrial target. Prior to this attack, Hiroshima ranked as the largest city in the Japanese homeland (except Kyoto) which remained undamaged following a wave of B-29 incendiary strikes. The city had a population of 344,000 in 1940.

It is an army city - headquarters of the 5th division and a primary port of embarkation. The entire northeastern and eastern sides of the city are military zones. Prominent in the north-central part of the city are the Army Division Headquarters marked by the Hiroshima Castle, numerous barracks,

administration buildings and ordnance store houses. In addition, there are the following important military targets:

- A. Army Reception Center
- B. Large Military Airport
- C. Army Ordnance Depot
- D. Army Clothing Depot
- E. Army Food Depot
- F. Large Port and Dock Area
- G. Several Ship Yards and Ship Building Companies
- H. Japan Steel Company
- I. Railroad Marshalling Yards
- J. Numerous Aircraft Component Parts Factories

The fact that Hiroshima was undamaged made it an ideal target. This was deemed necessary to assess correctly the damage which could be inflicted by the Atomic Bomb. The size of Hiroshima was another important factor in the selection. According to preliminary data, it was believed that the radius of damage which could be inflicted by the Atomic Bomb was 7,500 feet. By placing the aiming point in the center of the city, the circle of prospective damage covered almost the entire area of Hiroshima with the explosion of the dock area to the south.

#### 4. MUNITIONS

One (1) Atomic Bomb.

#### 5. NAVIGATORS PLAN

(See Report Number 1, 509th Composite Group, page 6, paragraph 1.)

#### 6. BOMBARDIERS PLAN

(See Report Number 1, 509th Composite Group, Page 6, paragraph 2.)

#### 7. RADAR PLAN

(See Report Number 1, 509th Composite Group, page 7, paragraph 2.)

#### 8. FLIGHT ENGINEERS PLAN

(See Report Number 1, 509th Composite Group, page 7, paragraph 4.)

#### 9. R.C.N.

None

#### 10. FIGHTER ESCORT

None

#### 11. AIR SEA RESCUE

Normally this function is arranged by Wing Headquarters, but due to the importance of this operation, 20th Air Force Headquarters made arrangements for this mission. Every precaution was taken to provide complete air sea rescue facilities so that any untoward incident would not jeopardize the safe return of all witnesses.

#### 12. STRIKING FORCE

3 A/C - one bombing, 2 observing

#### 13. SPECIAL PLANNING OPERATIONS

A. In order to prevent interference with the attack all friendly aircraft were instructed to stay at least 50 miles away from target areas for four hours prior to strike time. And in order to protect friendly aircraft from the almost infinite amount of radio activity in the immediate area above the explosion, they were restricted from entering the 50-mile area for six hours after the attack. The post-strike photo aircraft were permitted in the area four hours after the attack, because they had had special briefing.

B. In order to have the attack go off on the day planned in spite of possible abort of the bombing airplane, a spare ship was stationed at Iwo Jima, where there was also a pit for unloading and reloading the Atomic Bomb.

C. Weather: Three aircraft which will be dispatched one to each target at such a time as to be able to

relay, from their assigned target, the target weather forecast for strike time, broadcasting the message between 060845K and 060915K. This will enable strike force to select either the secondary or tertiary target in the event the primary is found to be covered by clouds. Each weather aircraft will have aboard a weather observer furnished by the 313th Wing.

D. Post Strike Photography: C.O., 509th Group, will be responsible for briefing and dispatching two F-13 A/C. These aircraft will not enter target area until four hours after bombs away. To insure this schedule is maintained regardless of whether the strike force has to make use of the spare aircraft at Iwo Jima or not, the photo aircraft will be required to check in with the ground stations at both Tinian and Iwo Jima to obtain clearance to proceed past Iwo Jima. If these photo aircraft do not receive notification of which target has been bombed, they will photograph all three targets.

On August 9, 1945, the second bomb, "Fat Boy", was dropped over Nagasaki. I was assigned to check the principal target, Kokura, for weather. Sweeney piloted "Bock's Car" for this mission. I had reported that the target was clear but by the time Sweeney got there clouds had formed and he diverted to Nagasaki. At the moment the bomb was dropped over Nagasaki, I was landing on Iwo Jima. After the bombing of Nagasaki, we heard that the war would end soon. For a show of force, there would be one more raid on Japan, "Maximum Effort." All planes that could fly were ordered into the air. I felt I could not go on that raid. I knew if I did I would not return. I had seen this in a dream where I was told to be careful. I did not go on that mission.

Most of the airplane commanders lived together in one quonset. We'd been together in the same squadron for two years, and no one had been injured or killed. This was unheard of. While I was an instructor in B-26's, we lost a crew every other month.

After the war ended, we came back to Roswell, New Mexico. Col. Blanchard was made CO of the 509th group, replacing Col. Paul Tibbets. I was operations officer for Blanchard, running the Bikini tests in the Pacific. They dropped bombs on battle ships for experimental tests. During these tests, Blanchard asked me, "Marquardt, how well do you know this S.O.B. Tibbets? I'm after his ass, and I'm going to get him!" Tibbets was in the Army Reserve, and Blanchard was a West Point graduate who believed the Army Reserve Officers couldn't do the job. That's when I realized the politics in the Air Force. There I was a Major, wondering what I was doing in the Air Force with all this fighting going on among the "Top Brass." That's when I decided to quit the Air Force, although I loved it! I had wonderful training. In fact, the training I received I couldn't get anywhere else. In the end, I got out of the Air Force because of the politics.

I have never for one moment regretted my participation in the dropping of the A-Bomb. I knew that this was the only way to end this terrible war and as a result, thousands perhaps millions of lives were saved.

"The United States used the atomic bomb against those who attacked us without warning at Pearl Harbor, against those who have starved and beaten and executed American prisoners of war, against those who have abandoned all pretense of obeying international laws of warfare. We have used it to shorten the agony of war, in order to save the lives of thousands and thousands of young Americans."

— President Harry S. Truman, radio address,  
August 9, 1945

# The Atom Bombers

Colonel Paul Tibbets' 509th Composite Group had a brief but momentous combat career. Flying specially modified Martin-built B-29s, with fuel injection engines and Curtiss reversible pitch propellers, and stripped of all but the tail armament, they dropped the atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The group's fifteen B-29s were in the 393rd Squadron, and when they arrived on Tinian they carried the unit's distinctive marking, a black arrowhead in a circle. This was soon replaced by spurious markings - 497th Group insignia, a large "A", was applied to aircraft 71, 72, 73 and 84. Airplanes 77, 85, 86 and

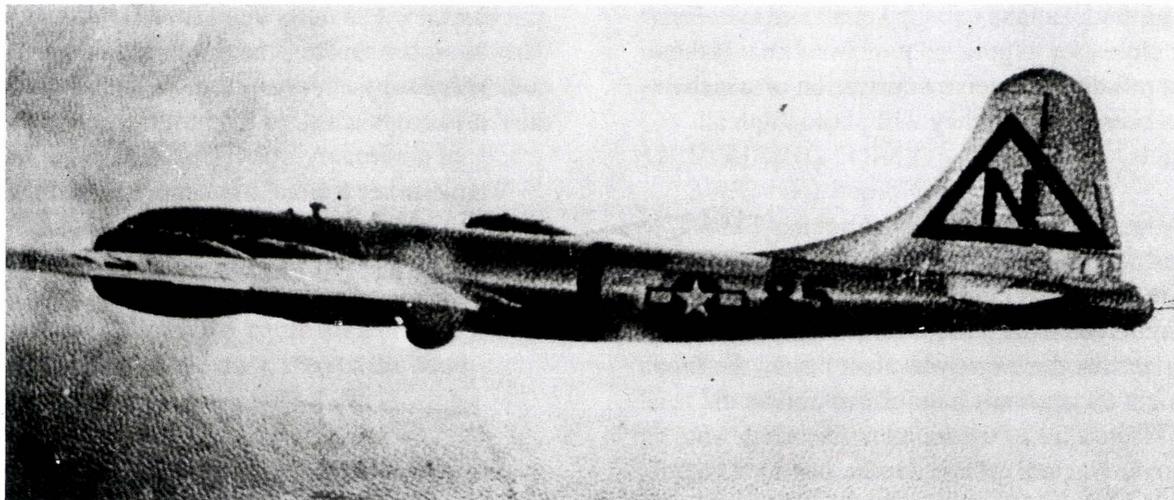
88 carried 444th Group markings, including the colored belly band; numbers 82, 89, 90 and 91 carried 6th Group tail insignia; and the final three aircraft, 83, 94 and 95 bore the 39th Group's tail marking.

The aircraft were still easily identifiable - the phony 497th and 444th markings were applied in a rather less exact way than in the actual groups, and the stripped B-29s carried individual airplane numbers in a far higher range than normal bomber units.

The 393rd Squadron B-29s were:

No.	Serial	Name	Nominal Aircraft Commander
71	44-27303	<b>Jabbitt III</b>	Capt. John Wilson
72	44-27302	<b>Top Secret</b>	Lt. Charles McKnight
73	44-27300	<b>Strange Cargo</b>	Lt. Joseph Westover
77	44-27297	<b>Bockscar</b>	Capt. Frederick Bock
82	44-86292	<b>Enola Gay</b>	Capt. Robert Lewis/Col. Paul Tibbets
83	44-27298	<b>Full House</b>	Capt. Ralph Taylor
84	44-27296*	<b>Some Punkins</b>	Capt. James Price
85	44-27301	<b>Straight Flush</b>	Capt. Claude Eatherly
86	44-27299	<b>Next Objective</b>	Lt. Ralph DeVore
88	44-27304*	<b>Up an' Atom</b>	Capt. George Marquardt
89	44-27353	<b>The Great Artist</b>	Lt. Charles Albury/Maj. Charles Sweeney
90	44-27354*	<b>Big Stink</b>	Herman Zahn
91	44-27291	<b>Necessary Evil</b>	Lt. Norman Ray
94	44-27346*	<b>Spook</b>	Lt. Col. Tom Classen
95	44-86347	<b>Laggin' Dragon</b>	Capt. Edward Costello

*Note: Some of the aircraft nicknames in the 93rd Squadron were not applied until after the atomic bombing missions.\**



Major Claude Eatherly's Straight Flush, 44-27301, stripped of all but the tail armament and bearing false 444th Group markings. (via John Dulin)



The 509th Group's special B-29s were fitted with Curtiss reversible-pitch propellers, with cuffs to assist cooling. Here the ground crew is pulling the props. This was done to drain out oil that collected in the lower cylinders, thereby preventing damage to the engines when they were started. (Dulin)

\$3.00

I quickly change to street clothes during the brief intermission. The girls dress for *Document*; Merce pulls on the Interlocuter costume. Soon, we're all back on stage. The girls surround me and I lean toward them to receive their good-bye kisses and touch their fluttering fingers. A long white silk "aviator's" scarf is draped around my neck. Merce grips my hand; Louis Horst throws me a mock salute. Martha walks with me to the stage door. She holds my hand to her cheek.

The opening chords of Ray Green's score for *Document* ring in my ears as I walk out into the night. I hurry crosstown through the deserted, darkened streets to Penn Station. I board the nearly empty coach of the overnight train to Pittsburgh where I'll say my last good-bye.

*Pittsburgh, October 18*—My train arrives fifteen minutes before her's from Chicago. We find a room in a small hotel across from the station. Her throat is still sore from yesterday's tonsilectomy, and talking is so painful she writes notes:

"Did Benoit-Lévy like *Letter? Document?*"

"Don't know. Left during intermission to catch the train."

"When does the Air Force take you?"

"Tomorrow afternoon."

"Where will you go?"

"Nashville."

"When will I see you again?"

"I really don't know . . ."

I leave when the room begins to darken. Our good-byes are silent and wounding. I hurry to catch the next train back to New York. Her train to Chicago leaves in the morning.

*Nashville, October 20*—The train arrives here long after dinner time but we're nevertheless marched a mile across the Classification Center grounds to a prophylactic station and short-armed for VD. The sinless among us are then, at long last, escorted to a mess hall for a 10:30 PM meal of hot dogs, beans and corn bread.

Hank and Scotty, my seatmates for the 30-hour train ride from Jersey City, and I are fortuitously assigned to the same barracks. We're already friends despite our disparate backgrounds. I tell them I was involved in

--David Zellmer

theatre work but do not volunteer specifics. Hank worked for an advertising firm, is knowledgeable about the New York business world. Scotty was a statistician for the British Aircraft Commission and is well informed on British military affairs. He claims to know with certainty that U.S. Air Force pilots, like RAF officers, are assigned a personal batman upon being commissioned. Hank and I do not think so but do not argue with 5'4"-tall Scotty.

We're agreed that this is a momentous day for us. Our one-size-fits-all coveralls do not enhance our perceived self-image of fearless fighter pilots, but we're determined to somehow acknowledge the occasion. We find a shovel behind the barracks and proceed to dig a large hole in the red powdery soil and bury our civilian clothes.

City, but has never heard of Greenwich Village, in the City, where I lived. I did not tell him I was a dancer. He did not tell me what he did in civilian life.

Gino was not known by either of us until he moved into our barracks yesterday. He's from Brooklyn, and his last name—Italian—is very similar to that of a well-known mobster family. Sam and I do not pursue the matter.

*En Route to Hawaii, November 10*—I'm aboard a C-87 bound for Hickam Field and points beyond. There are 19 of us aboard, nearly all newly graduated B-24 pilots. The plane is a transport version of that same bomber we all know so well. The plane's unlike any I've ever flown: red leather padded seats; sound-proof cabin with indirect lighting; and a GI attendant who serves coffee and fruit drinks and sandwiches on request. He tells us we lucked into getting the same plane, No. 558, that Eleanor Roosevelt used last August to visit US troops in Australia

It's not until the Golden Gate Bridge fades from sight that we're permitted to open our sealed travel orders: they say our ultimate destination is a place called "Espiritu Santo," where the 13th Air Force is headquartered. None of us have ever heard of "Espiritu Santo"—or the 13th Air Force.

I have a copy of *Time* magazine, a current issue. I read the war news first: Naples has been taken by the US 5th Army; allied forces have invaded an island in the Solomons called Bougainville. There's a War Map of the South Pacific Theatre, and I quickly find Bougainville. Then I see, to the south of it, the place we all know, Guadalcanal. And there, an inch below Guadalcanal, is our new base, Espiritu Santo, in the New Hebrides Islands. No mention of a 13th Air Force.

I find another story of interest in *Time*. It concerns the trial in Nassau of Count Alfred de Marigny, who's charged with murdering his wealthy father-in-law, Sir Harry Oakes. De Marigny is the husband of Nancy Oakes whom I remember as an occasional student at the Martha Graham Dance Studio. Before she married de Marigny.

And there's a sobering story of a protest demonstration by Japanese-American internees at Tule Lake, California. I think of the Japanese-Americans I know, whose parents and relatives may be at Tule Lake. Will we still be friends when all this is over?

Gino is in the seat next to me. We trade titillating San Francisco memories. Sam is across the aisle, asleep. The three of us have been inseparable since leaving Tucson. We were given a short leave before reporting to the Embarkation Base outside San Francisco. We begin it in Los Angeles,

determined to finally see Hollywood before heading out to that "semi-tropical" overseas base: have our pictures snapped at Hollywood and Vine; lunch at the Brown Derby; have a soda at Schwabs Pharmacy; and trace Betty Grable's handprint in the sidewalk in front of Graumans. Sleep somewhat guiltily in a luxurious suite at the palatial Ambassador Hotel, rented to us at a special rate of \$14 a night.

When we move on to San Francisco, the even more elegant Palace Hotel also forgives us our awkwardness and antics, undoubtedly in deference to our uniforms and pilot wings, and knowing that these are the remaining days and nights of a reluctant farewell visit.

The final days were spent at Hamilton Field, the Airport of Embarkation, too tantalizingly near the paradise of downtown San Francisco to be executing final wills, assigning pay allotments and submitting to shots for small pox, tetanus, typhoid, typhus and cholera—wasn't time for yellow fever. Most of the equipment I was issued—a glove-leather tight fitting flying helmet, a rubber oxygen mask molded to the contours of my face, a parachute harness, jungle survival kit, blanket roll, pup-tent—went into a footlocker to be shipped by boat. I got to wear the new wristwatch, the .45 pistol in its shoulder holster, and a sheathed 5-inch bladed hunting knife.

\* \* \*

The flight seems endless: ten hours to Hawaii. I stare at the water below: glistening, seamless, an undulating bluegreen seascape spreading to the horizon in all directions. Gino, rather uncharacteristically, is now silent, and closes his eyes. Sam sleeps on. I watch the plane's shadow moving crablike slightly ahead of us. I think of where I'm going, the inevitability of combat, the loom of a tragic ending. And of those I've left behind at places I called "home." I redraw all the faces. Then, unexplainably, I'm dreaming back to Camden, in South Carolina, where I learned to fly, remembering the small resort-like flying school, its cluster of green-roofed, white-shingled buildings in a grove of tall pines, the landing strip just 50 yards from the barracks where I slept and dreamt only of flying: of doing gliding turns, the plane losing altitude, falling, fluttering down like a leaf, finally halted in its descent perilously close to the field below; of then soaring back up to another, even higher cloud, to perch again; and now hearing Johnston shout into the tube: "Spin her down! Two turns to the right!" I cower lower in the wind-raked cockpit; cut the throttle; thrust the stick all the way forward; hold it there until the plane's aimed straight down at the same cotton field. I kick right-rudder, hold it there. We begin turning ever so slowly. I peer out over the rim of the cockpit, through the

wing struts, the slowly turning propeller. I count the turns of our spin by spotting on a barn in a corner of the field—and remember how I once spotted on a doorknob in Martha's studio while attempting a pirouette. A lifetime ago. . . .

My reverie is interrupted by members of the plane's flight crew entering the cabin to induct all 19 of us into the "Short Snorter Club." We're told it's an honorary society for anyone who has flown over the equator or the international date line. Of course, we've done neither, nor will we until tomorrow, with a different crew. It's soon apparent that this crew means to collect the dollar each of us must pay to join the club. We surrender a second dollar they sign and inscribe with the date and our position: "11/10/43 Lat. 34'E & Long. 130'W" We're about 400 miles southwest of San Francisco.

*Hickam Field, 9:00 PM*—The imagined forbidden pleasures of Honolulu are not to be savored by me this night. Immediately upon landing I learn we are restricted to the base. I'm compelled to watch the city's lights across the bay surreptitiously wink in defiance of the blackout. I bemoan my fate.

The stairwell of the barracks is still scarred by strafing inflicted during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor nearly two years ago. I'm sobered by this unexpected reminder of why I'm here.

*En Route to Canton Island, November 11*—The plane lifts off Hickam's runway shortly after dawn, banks slightly right to avoid entering forbidden air space over Pearl Harbor. Below, Honolulu is slowly emerging from the shadows of the dusk-to-dawn blackout. Punchbowl Crater, soon to become a memorial cemetery for Pacific casualties, is now under the right wing. I nudge Gino and point to it, telling him a gravesite will be reserved there for each of us, just in case. . . . Gino shakes his head slowly, then closes his eyes.

The plane continues to climb, slowly turning to find the direction of Canton Island, 2000 miles to the southwest. It's our only fuel stop between here and Fiji: the point of no return. . . . I watch a ribbon of surf off Barber's Point catch fire from sparks of the emerging sun.

I close my eyes and dream back to yesterday: the Golden Gate Bridge slowly slipping beneath the shadow of our plane; San Francisco's skyline blurring in the distance. Feeling all ties to that world breaking, one by one. . . .

A lone, towering cumulus cloud, glowing in the late afternoon sun, hovers over the tiny speck on the horizon that is our destination, the sea

level atoll called Canton. Even as we approach, slowly decreasing our altitude, the island grows to become a giant coral and sand "scimitar." Our plane aims for a slender landing strip running the length of the scimitar's "handle." On the final approach, still a thousand feet above outlying reefs, I see a narrow surf-washed beach immediately to the left of the runway; a large, shimmering lagoon on the other side.

Our steep, powered glide down from the sky abruptly ends with a lurch and squeal of tires and the ker-thump of the nosewheel. There follows a brief 100-mile-an-hour hurtle onward, abruptly slowed, then stopped, with full flaps and stomped brakes.

Someone pushes open the cabin door even before the propellers stop turning. Warm, humid tropical air, tinged with the fetid scent of the sea, pours inside. I step down to the tarmac. My cheeks are stung by salt spray and spun sand swirling towards the lagoon. Petulant gulls circle overhead, screeching their disapproval of our presence. The omnipresent deep-throated roar of airplane engines being revved up is familiar; not the constant thunderous crash of the surf against this tiny atoll.

Refueling completed, I reluctantly climb back aboard. Fiji is 1,200 miles farther on. I've learned during this brief interlude that Canton has no Chinese heritage, that it was named for a New Bedford, Massachusetts, whaling ship wrecked here in the 1800s. I'm persuaded no one has ever called this lost, treeless refuge "home." Certainly no natives live here now.

We're in the air again in time to follow the reluctant descent of the sun, and watch it, under the right wing, slowly slip out of sight at the horizon. There, the red-orange stains of the dying day are briefly reflected, then swallowed.

*Nandi Air Base, Vita Luva, Fiji, November 13*—This day should be the 12th, but shortly before arriving at this New Zealand Air Base last night, we crossed the international date line and lost a day. We'll get it back on the way home. . . . if and when, as they say.

I'm of course now legally eligible to be a member of the Short Snorter Club—doubly so, since we also crossed the Equator yesterday, a couple of hours before landing on Canton Island.

There's a 24-hour layover here for routine maintenance on the plane, but I'll see nothing of Fiji: we're restricted to the base, meaning the Officers Club, which, alas, is closed for bar business and quite deserted during daytime hours. The only native Fijians I've seen, or am likely to encounter, are the waiters and the non-serving bartender. The bartender is a huge, no-nonsense type, jet black, frizzy-haired, white-coated and barefoot. He

shelters have equally corny names: "Malaria Manor," "Fools Rush Inn," and so on, ad nauseam. It all reminds me of a Boy Scout camp I once attended at age 12.

Two of my tentmates were in the group I flew with from San Francisco, Bernard Lind and Arthur Cole. Dick Gilbert, a lanky, mustached, gravel-voiced, take-charge type came with another group. All of us bear the stigmata of "co-pilot replacement" despite our First Pilot credentials.

The food in this mess hall is no improvement over what we have been eating since leaving the States: everything is canned or dehydrated and tasteless. We spike it with three pills at each meal: vitamin, salt, and Atabrine. They do not improve the flavor. The Atabrine gives everyone a yellow complexion. Dick Gilbert says it will eventually render us impotent. Will it?

Our big concern aside from the food and not knowing whether malaria would be worse than impotency is the lack of flying time. I've not been at the controls of an airplane for more than three weeks, the longest hiatus ever. If I've forgotten how to do something, will I find out on my first combat mission?

I spend the empty hours lying on the glistening white sand of Lunga Point imagining I'm at Jones Beach on New York's Long Island, but at some remote section with palm trees and an occasional lumbering bomber or P-38 fighter skimming the blue-green waters of the bay.

The surf is familiar: small waves rolling in, unfurling like bolts of spun glass which dissolve into quivering pools of froth at my feet.

I spend guarded moments swimming to the rusting hulk of a Japanese barge mired on a sandbar, ever watchful for a prowling shark. This is a "white" beach, and shark are thought to prefer "black" sand beaches. Nevertheless I worry. I return to the beach by swimming on my back, moving my arms slowly up and down, stiffening my legs and pointing my toes, doing *battements*, and thinking of other places, other times . . .

I stop at the communal showers before returning to the tent, hang my T-shirt and shorts on the railing, stand under one of the punctured beer can nozzles. A pull of the chain releases a deluge of sun-warmed fresh water. I pull the chain a second time and close my eyes to enhance the sensation of remembered delights awakened by the water streaming down my naked body. Then I lean against the platform railing to let the sun dry my skin—and erase the memories.

*Koli, Guadalcanal, November 26*—The turkey was canned but I made believe it was really Thanksgiving Day, sitting there, sweltering, in a damp T-shirt and shorts, in an open-sided, thatched roof mess hall erected on

an abandoned Lever Brothers coconut plantation. The table conversation was unusually desultory. I was preoccupied with thoughts of remembered faces and pleasures of another life and did not join in.

At my first-ever briefing tonight I learned, among other things, that it is a "strike," not a "mission," if bombs are dropped. It is a "sortie" if one flies into enemy territory for some other purpose—to search for a missing plane, for example, or merely to snoop around. Strikes and sorties are "counted," the total of which, plus the number of months served overseas, and hours of combat flying, give us a personal "score" used to determine when we are eligible for rest leave—or home leave.

Tomorrow at 4:30 AM the squadron will drop bombs on a small airstrip at the northern tip of Bougainville. The enemy has been observed flying in additional planes and adding anti-aircraft guns to the revetment areas. We are to discourage such efforts. I found my name on one of the crew lists designated an "Observer." A routine mission, I'm assured. Not "routine" for me: for the first time in my life, someone will be trying to kill me.

*Koli, Guadalcanal, November 27*—I'm to fly on Ott's plane. Never met him, nor any member of his crew. I caress the little jade goddess Martha gave me to pin on my flying suit. Once I'm aboard, Ott tells me to stay on the flight deck for the take-off. I'm to ride down below with Hill, the bombardier, the rest of the trip. The only extra oxygen hookup is in the bombardier's compartment.

I kneel behind the co-pilot's seat when we start down the runway. I see splashes of first light creep along the bottom of the eastern sky as Ott climbs the plane slowly out over the bay. He then turns us a degree or two to the left, to put us on a course over the Slot that will take us to Bougainville, three hours northwest of here.

The bombardier's compartment is a cramped, noisy, windowless space below the flight deck and directly beneath the nose gun turret. Its ceiling is too low for standing. Switches and indicator lights and instruments cover the bulkhead on the left. The bombsight fits into a floor opening at the forward end of the compartment. Hill must lie flat on his stomach to use it.

I can look down on the sea through the clear Plexiglas floor directly in front of the Sight. Hill identifies the islands as they come into view through the rising mists: Santa Isabel . . . New Georgia . . . Choiseul . . .

We're less than half an hour out from the target. Hill reminds me it's time to put on oxygen masks. We begin circling to find our place in the formation. My feet are freezing. Now we're flying due east, towards Bou-

gainville. I see smoke slowly rising from a mountain peak far to the south. A volcano?

The formation slowly turns as one giant plane to begin the bomb run. From my catbird seat, I look down on Buka Passage, the narrow, glistening strait of rushing water separating Bougainville from Buka island on the north. Hill tugs at my arm and points to a tiny white slash in the mottled green-black landscape: Bonis Airfield, our target.

Hill is now lying full-length, peering into the bombsight. The plane shudders as the bomb bay doors slide open. Hill turns knobs and flicks switches. I see lights flashing on a panel to his left. Then I hear him on the Intercom: "Bombs away!" I cannot see them fall. I look straight down at the Bonis runway and see a scattering of explosions. Several planes are on the tarmac, but none appear to be moving or attempting to take off. Puffs of black smoke brush the Plexiglas windscreen. I feel the plane jolt. Anti-aircraft shells are exploding all around us! Ott does not take evasive action. I hold my breath. The propellers scream as they claw at the thin air.

Then, abruptly, the formation begins to break up. Each plane is on its own, all descending swiftly towards the other side of Bougainville and down over the waters of the Pacific. Ott aims us directly at the white-hot mirror of the rising sun. When we are only a few hundred feet from the ocean, he levels us off, then reverses direction in a great sweeping turn, holding the left wing nearly vertical. We head back towards Bougainville only slightly above the cresting waves.

The instructions given at last night's briefing called for us to return from Bonis along Bougainville's eastern coast, to fly single file at treetop height, and to shoot up all native structures we see; but no natives, no animals. We are meant to show the natives that allied forces, not Japanese, are still the boss on Bougainville.

We head south, following the palm-shaded strip of white sand, flying so low I can easily see the gunners' 50mm tracer shells streaming into the little leaf huts, setting fire to the thatched roofs, kicking dust after fleeing pigs.

I stare straight down through the Plexiglas floor and watch small naked black men stiffly standing, legs apart, shaking their fists up at us. One of the warriors lofts his spear. Another throws a stone.

*Koli, Guadalcanal, November 29*—Long talk tonight with Dick Gilbert, most senior among the four of us sharing this tent, certainly wisest in the ways of the military, and unique in having piloted an airplane before join-

ing the Air Force. More intriguing still, to my mind, is learning that this lanky, unsmiling, mustached former airplane mechanic is, in fact, a musician at heart, a jazz pianist by night, and one-time accompanist of silent films at old-time movie houses in San Francisco.

Dick is astonishingly like Ralph G., Martha's rehearsal and class accompanist: same deep, raspy voice; small dark sunken eyes; hollow cheeks; lantern jaw. Cigarette always dangling from the corner of the mouth.

Even their music resumés are similar: Ralph also improvised accompaniments for silent films and played piano at jazz bars, but his legacy was the Cornish School in Seattle, where he began a career playing for dance classes. It was at the Martha Graham Dance Studio, on lower Fifth Avenue in New York, where I got to know Ralph—and Merce Cunningham, one among several dancers who came from the Cornish School:

*It is 4:30 on the afternoon of a late October day in 1941, and I am sitting on the cold linoleum Studio floor, at the back of the room, screened from Martha's eyes—I hope—by the other members of the class, all more technically proficient than I. We await the arrival of Ralph, the accompanist, hoping Martha will not lose patience and begin without him. It feels more like a performance than a class with Ralph's music.*

*At 4:32, Ralph sidles into the hushed room, sits immediately at the battered old grand and raises his hands high above the keyboard. A few of us dare to applaud. Ralph's tentative smile instantly dissolves with Martha's flung command: "Bounces!" We poise ourselves as if preparing for a levitational flight: back stiffened and straight to the top of the head; soles of the feet pressed together and pulled back to our crotch; heels off the floor; knees and thighs lifted; arms to the side; hands on the floor. ("The tension in one's body must give the impression of a vibration.")*

*"... And!" Martha warns, turning to Ralph. His hands crash down on the keys. A shattering, dissonant chord propels our first "bounce." The chord is repeated and we attempt to "bounce" our rigid torsos forward and back, forward and back. The beat is just a bit faster than we can "bounce," the chord now pianissimo and staccato. A slight melody soon becomes apparent and is repeated, slightly altered, as we extend our legs forward on Martha's cue, lean over our knees, still "bouncing," and touching our toes with the heels of our hands. The melody Ralph has devised becomes today's theme, and the variations accompany our movements for the next 90 minutes.*

*Without prompting, the class as one begins the next in Martha's litany of Floor Exercises: Sit to the Side; Exercise on Six; the Pleadings. Ralph's strident, insistent music masks my groans. Martha walks among us, correcting arm positions, leg angles, hip turn-out, sometimes with flick of her fingers; or in a stage*

*I'll be working, probably at the cheese curing plant, where I was last summer. John says his grandmother sent him a \$250 check and invited him to drive out to California to visit her. But his brother, who's at Harvard, suggested the two of them do a bicycle tour of the British Isles. John says he's decided to do that; his grandmother won't mind so long as they take in all the music festivals. Music is her main interest in life, he says; she's always giving money to composers and orchestras. He wondered if I had heard of her: Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge? I had not.*

*Munda, New Georgia, February 18*—Today's strike was to Vunakanau Air-drome, only seven miles from Rabaul Town, an Australian Air Force field before the war. Concrete runways, like Rapopo. We made our landfall over Ralvana Point on Blanche Bay. The gunners swiveled their turrets side to side, then slowly up and down, firing off a few test rounds at drifting clouds. Our fighter cover, Marine Corsairs, appeared as if by magic and began doing little sashays off our wingtips to get our attention and let us know they were ready. When the black smoke-puffs began to appear up ahead, I knew we were expected. I instinctively sucked in my breath, tightened my buttocks, began to sweat. Then the bombardier took control of the plane, held it straight and level for the bomb run. I felt "Frenisi" shudder when the bomb-bay doors slid open. "Bombs away!" the bombardier shouted over the intercom, then, more quietly, said, "Your plane," to Midthun and me.

It was just then I saw the Zeke. He was at 11 o'clock, high, and streaking down towards the formation. Two Corsairs came charging in from the rear. The Zeke broke his dive and climbed back up into the sun. I maneuvered "Frenisi" in closer to the formation. We were out over Blanche Bay and heading south. The Zeke was back, now below us, at 4 o'clock, and closing in. All our guns were firing at him. Then a Corsair pounced, animal-like, from above and behind. The Zeke kept coming but he was now trailing smoke. Who hit him? The Zeke was trying to climb, still smoking. A Corsair was closing in. The Zeke's upward spiral slowed; then he stalled, a wing dropped and the inevitable uncontrolled cartwheel began: wing over wing, down and down, ending, I knew, in an unseen, unheard, slow-motion splash into the Bay far below.

The Corsairs streaked back to our right flank, waggled their wings and departed, perhaps to go hunting the little black barges that sometimes skim across Rabaul's Simpson Harbor and scatter like waterbugs at the sound of our planes, tracing graceful loops and "S's" on the glassy, dark surface.

\* \* \*

This was only my ninth strike but I am now able to shift my mind during missions into a virtual non-involvement mode. I fly as if by rote, function like an automaton. I am aware of everything happening, but I am no longer a participant: I am an Observer, a Spectator.

I attempted to explain this to Martha. She understood:

"You describe the sensation of stage when you speak of yourself as a Spectator . . . it is the state of non-feeling that in some way is the highest condition of feeling . . . when people ask me what I feel on the stage I can only truthfully answer—I think I feel nothing."

*Munda, New Georgia, February 20*—I'm spending the morning on my cot, happy to feel irrelevant for a change. Those less content are strolling, in pairs or small groups, along the winding, white coral paths. Their boots make a crunching sound on the coral. They're on their way to the chapel tent. It's Sunday. I like its quietness and purposeless rhythm.

My tentmates, like me, are not tempted by the chapel, but I don't know why. Such matters are never discussed. In fact, nothing very personal is ever discussed in this tent. The four of us have lived within touching distance of one another—on the plane as well as here in the tent—for nearly three months, but I'm still not sure whether Midthun is married or single; if Pete has brothers and sisters—or even a girlfriend. As for Rumsey, I'm not sure he had a life before leaving Massachusetts and joining the Air Corps.

I think of Rumsey as our "reluctant" bombardier, this sullen, overweight six-footer whose baby-smooth face always looks unwashed, his clothes a size too small and eternally soiled. One avoids facing him directly to escape his foul breath. He's a good enough bombardier but takes no pride in being one.

What Pete and I know, but Rumsey never acknowledges, is that he flunked pilot training, refused to try for navigators' school, requested bombardier training as the easiest way to get a commission. Pete knows this because he was at the same primary flying school. According to a rumor at the time, a week before Rumsey was scheduled to solo he began to have an orgasm every time he gunned the ship down the runway for a takeoff. Pete himself washed-out, but for a more likely reason: he simply didn't solo when the schedule said he should.

was to have been their first mission. Pete and I had gone to O'Toole's tent last night with a little whiskey to wish them luck.

The way I heard the story, the crew members jumped clear of the plane the moment it came to rest after hitting the truck. Smoke and flames could already be seen rising from a section of the right wing. O'Toole counted heads: the flight engineer was missing. O'Toole ran back to the plane to look for him. He found him on the catwalk in the bomb bay, where he always stood during takeoff. He was wedged in between two metal stanchions which had been twisted out of place by the collision with the truck. The six one-thousand pound bombs the plane was carrying were on racks behind the twisted stanchions. O'Toole could not get the engineer loose. The engineer begged O'Toole to shoot him. O'Toole could not do that. He said he'd go back outside for help. They both knew there wasn't time for that. The fire would get to the gas tanks any second.

O'Toole crawled back up to the top escape hatch and jumped to the ground. Broke his ankle. The crew members rushed to pull him back from the burning plane. They asked if he had found the engineer. He said he had but that it was too late.

The crew sat there just off the tarmac staring at the burning plane. Then a gas tank blew. Flames quickly enveloped the entire plane. Moments later, one of the bombs exploded. Then, one by one, the other five went off.

*Munda, New Georgia, March 1*—Eleven missions are by now embedded in my memory: unending journeys through barren skies in search of islands beyond the horizon. I am always high over a wasteland of seas, forever tracing the edge of a threatening storm. The target I seek is hidden beneath the mottled green-brown jungle mat far below—until it is betrayed by staccato flashes of fire triggered by the shadows of my plane's wings. Wisps of smoke from exploding aerial shells now brush the windscreen.

The roar of the straining engines fills the cabin; unintelligible radio signals crackle in my headphones. I feel I'm becoming a part of the plane; I depend upon it for life.

I breathe only when attached to the plane's oxygen system. My heart beats only if the propellers are turning. I hear only when the radio is turned on. The plane's wings are my arms; the Automatic Pilot is my brain.

But who am I? A skin-tight leather helmet hides my hair and forehead. Dark-paned sunglasses conceal the color and shape of my eyes. The rubber oxygen mask, moulded to the contours of my nose and mouth, disguises my face. The color of my skin, my race, my sex are not discernable.

I wear a large steel "flak helmet." It is my "Perseus Cap." It renders me invisible to Zekes and Zeros.

*Munda, New Georgia, March 2*—The Officers Club was not open for business when I walked by this afternoon but Russ, the GI bartender, was inside taking inventory or something, and I talked him into selling me a beer. Said it might get me in the mood for the fried Spam, or whatever we'll get for dinner, always served promptly at 4:30. I asked if he knew why we eat so early? He didn't, but said not everyone out here eats at 4:30, or eats Spam every day.

I knew this was my cue to ask who he was talking about. I chat often enough with Russ to know when I'm supposed to ask questions. Our little talks at the bar are mostly about New York—more specifically, Greenwich Village. He lived on 14th Street, west of 8th Avenue—the Village suburbs, I tell him. My \$5 a week hall bedroom was at 65 Charles Street, a more legitimate Village address.

I asked the question: Who out here doesn't eat Spam for dinner at 4:30? Guys like the ones I bartended for at a party last Friday, he answered. Said the job was arranged by the Mess Sergeant; paid 25 bucks minus five for the Sergeant. Russ promised not to talk about it or who he saw there.

Russ seemed eager to break his promise and I did not discourage him. Said he found the tent in the Group Officers area. Had a ship's bell hanging on a post outside. He clanged the bell and a GI wearing a white waiter's jacket opened the door flaps. Wanted to know if Russ was a guest or the bartender. Bartender, Russ said, and was invited inside.

The waiter pointed to a portable bar but said nothing, then resumed setting the long, cloth-covered table that took up most of the floor space. Russ said it was only then he realized that the inside of the tent was completely lined with what looked like white silk. None of the canvas was showing. The place looked like a boudoir, Russ said. Long, overlapping panels of the silk were hung from the peak and somehow fastened to the sides of the tent to form pleated sidewalls. He figured the material was parachute silk.

An oriental-type rug hid the floor; two cots, covered with batik spreads and piled with colorful, overstuffed pillows, were pushed up against the white silk sidewalls. Several footlockers, disguised with fabrics and woven-grass mats, served as coffee tables. A wooden wheel-type candelabra hung over the dining table. There were cloth napkins, silverware and a wine glass at each place setting.

Russ said the little portable bar had everything he needed—ice, plain

Midthun eased off on the throttles. When we were down to 15,000 I told the crew they could take off their oxygen masks. And got a damage report: "Holes in left rudder." "Piece of cowling off #2 engine." "#4 spilling oil. Hit by flak?" "Any coffee left?"

Midthun said to take us home. I grabbed the wheel. Before I could light a cigarette, Midthun was asleep. Pete came forward and squatted beside my seat. "Keep her at 160 degrees," he said. Just as we were leaving Cape Gazelle, he pointed down to the water. "Where Pappy Boyington got it," he said. "Made a water-landing O.K. but a Jap sub was right there. Pulled him aboard."

Oil pressure on No. 4 kept dropping so I feathered it and we went home on three.

*Munda, New Georgia, March 10*—I attended the movie *My Sister Eileen* tonight for the third time since coming to the South Pacific. I keep going back to savor the few glimpses of New York's Greenwich Village I miss so much: the crown of roof gardens high above Gay Street; the brightly painted fire escapes scaling brownstones on West 11th Street; the de Chirico-like stillness of Waverly Place.

Those scenes remain in the back of my eyes as I look out at the lights of other tents in the camp, dim and flickering through the webs of hanging vines. Night mists rise like twisting tentacles. And I hear the now-familiar, queer little chirps and squeals, the sad, brief, three-note songs of sleepy birds; and the insistent drones of unknown insects. Occasionally the darkness is pierced by a human-like scream which instantly quiets all other creatures.

But tonight the sudden, unexpected intrusion that hushed the jungle sounds was the clear, liquid trill of a flute signalling for attention. After a brief pause, a simple two-bar melody echoed through the stilled night. The flute repeated the phrase, then played it a third time an octave higher, now accompanied by a harmonica chromatically sliding up and down the scale. A heavily strummed guitar joined in from another tent, soon to be followed by the sweet, constricted moan of a saxophone. Hand-claps and foot-stomps provided a beat. A chorus of male voices, coming from all sections of the camp, gave words to the familiar tune. All the tents were now lighted.

When the song ended, the guitar introduced another. The flute and harmonica and saxophone quickly joined in. An even greater number of voices sang the words or simply hummed the tune.

Song followed song. In less than half an hour, the impromptu concert

ended as if on cue. There were a few tentative strums on the guitar, a quiet arpeggio from the flute; then silence. One by one, the tent lights blinked off. Once again I heard only the chirps and squeals, the brief songs of sleepy birds. I had returned to the island of New Georgia. Waverly Place would be re-visited in dreams.

*Munda, New Georgia, March 13*—The footlocker I so carefully packed at Hamilton Field last November caught up with me today. It holds all the personal flying gear I could not bring with me on the flight over because of weight limitations: an oxygen mask specially molded to fit the contours of my face; a hand-stitched, skin-tight leather flying helmet; fleece-lined boots and jacket; and the wool dress uniforms left behind at a cleaners in Tucson.

The stuff all seems so irrelevant now. I've been using an oxygen mask tossed to me by a supply clerk and it has worked fine on 14 missions to date. Instead of a fancy leather helmet, I wear a long-visored cap of much-washed khaki, stitched up for me by a parachute rigger. And the flight deck heaters make fleece-lined clothes unnecessary.

Another trunk, holding a bed roll, full field equipment, my personal parachute, a jungle survival kit, also packed by me that November day at Hamilton, is presumably still on the high seas.

\* \* \*

I was promoted today to 1st Lieutenant which entitles me to a monthly salary of \$296. After deductions for rations, insurance, a \$25 war bond, and \$100 to a savings account, I'll have \$145 in "walking around" money—and no place to spend it. Only PX supplies and beer can be purchased with dollars. Liquor is the preferred currency for anything of value. We get paid in cash, and I keep my bills in a cigar box, for use, hopefully, on the next trip to Auckland.

Air medals were handed out to one and all the other day. The "price" is surviving five missions. I have 14 so I got a medal and a cluster. One more mission and I get another cluster. ("Frenisi" has 63 missions to date.)

*Munda, New Georgia, March 14*—Midthun and Rumsey have gone home. The orders came suddenly, unexpectedly, while everyone was at breakfast this morning. By noon, they were on a flight to Guadalcanal to connect with the plane that will take them to San Francisco. No time for a proper send-off. But, of course, most of their friends—except for Pete—have long since gone back. Or down.

Murphy grabbed my arm. As we stared, the plane's ball turret suddenly came loose from the ring that held it to the plane. The stainless steel sphere slowly fell away, rotating, then spinning, falling, faster and faster . . . I thought of the man inside in his crouched position, jammed against the sides of the twirling steel coffin. Was he screaming?

"When Kahili was rough . . . when Kahili was rough . . ."

\* \* \*

The Mess Hall bulletin board carries an announcement of Marines landing on tiny Emirau island, 90 miles northwest of Kavieng. Needed as an emergency landing option when and if we begin flying missions to Truk—700 miles farther on—says Ben. The only opposition to the landing came from a handful of natives proclaiming themselves Seventh Day Adventists.

\* \* \*

While standing in the communal open-air shower this afternoon, I watched a large, silver transport plane slowly descend from the sky and majestically glide above our tents for a landing at Koli. I recognized it as one of the C-54s we've heard so much about—the newest, largest, fastest transport plane ever built. We're told it flies from San Francisco to Guadalcanal in 38 hours with only two fuel stops en route. And returns to San Francisco the next day with men who have finished flying their missions. My heart aches at the thought of this beautiful plane leaving tomorrow without me!

During dinner, later, several bags of mail from that same plane were brought to the Mess Hall. There were five letters for me. And D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*, sent by Franny Benn Hall.

*Koli, Guadalcanal, March 24*—Another piece of mail for me arriving on that C-54 was the November 1943 issue of the University of Wisconsin's *Alumnus* magazine. I found only two names I recognized as members of my 1940 Class: Edwin Newman, now a Naval Ensign in Communications, stationed at Trinidad; and Farrington Daniels, Jr., currently a fourth year medical student at Harvard. The three of us lived in Siebecker House at the Mens Dorms on the shores of Lake Mendota in Madison.

Newman was in charge of producing the editorial page of the student newspaper, *Daily Cardinal*, and from time to time gave me books to review for the paper. Knowing I was anxious to increase my writing experience, he also agreed to let me write the weekly Dance News column and review

performances—if the head of the Dance Department, Margaret H'Doubler, approved. She did, but only after I agreed to take dance classes. This opportunity, and the experience gained, led to my winning a scholarship to the annual Summer School of the Dance at Bennington College in the summer of 1940, where I met Martha Graham and joined her Company. Writing about dance, I quickly learned, was not nearly as exciting as the dancing itself, and I decided to postpone the writing career.

Daniels' parents lived in Madison—his father was a professor in the Chemistry department—but they wanted Farrington to have the experience of living on campus. Ed, Farrington, and I were good friends.

*It is a Sunday night in 1936 and the late October moon shadows the sidewalk with traceries of elm leaves. Farrington knows the neighborhood and quickly finds the small Unitarian church where Norman Thomas will speak.*

*Inside, most of the front pews are empty and we take seats in the center, close to the lectern. I stare at the tall, white-haired man who seems to be staring back at each of us, one at a time. Suddenly he begins speaking, at the same time striding back and forth, the heels of his high-top black shoes hammering the wooden floor. His deep, gravelly, bass voice booms, thunders, echoes in the half-filled nave; his fist strikes the open palm of his left hand at the end of each shouted sentence.*

*I cringe as if the words themselves are striking me, watching his long finger jabbing and pointing and shaking in my direction. I press back against the pew to escape the pronouncements he hurls like epithets: "This war in Europe—we'll soon be in it! You'll be in it! Soon enough! And do you know where it'll end? I'll tell you: on some godforsaken island in the Pacific, that's where! And you men—you students—you'll be there, on that godforsaken island! Fighting for your life! Wondering how you got there. And why!"*

*Farrington and I do not leave immediately after the lecture. We are reluctant to approach Thomas for fear he might question us. We leaf through the pamphlets displayed on a table near the door. We each put a few coins in a Contributions Box, then leave the church wearing lapel pins reading Socialists for Peace.*

I showed Pete the *Alumnus* magazine and told him about the Thomas lecture. "Damn!" he said. "That old bastard! Said we'd end up out here!" Then we headed for the Club to help celebrate a 23-year-old "Old Boy's" promotion to captain. I attempted a few Graham "sits," as befitted the occasion. My "sit" was more a "fall," but no one seemed to notice.

*Koli, Guadalcanal, March 29*—Franny writes to tell me that MacMillian is sponsoring a novel writing contest for servicemen. Deadline is December 31. First prize, \$2,500. And instant fame.

I don't really have a novel in mind but hope one of these days to get started on the story of Gwicky and his three tentmates, the guys who briefly lived in the tent across from ours, who kept us awake the night before what turned out to be their last mission, only their fourth. Shot down, all killed, off Poporang.

Wonder what they were celebrating that last night?

I learned from Ben the next day that their plane, the "Mary-Jane," was named by Gwicky for his wife Mary, *and* girlfriend, Jane. He no doubt learned many things about Gwicky and his tentmates. Ben was assigned to collect and send home the personal effects of all four officers. He had to read all their letters and diaries and so on to make sure the "wrong" pieces of paper were not sent home. He has told me much of what he learned.

In my story, I would make Ben the Narrator. First person? Third person? Haven't decided. I'd have him spend an entire night in the empty tent, sorting through all the personal stuff. He'd make little piles on each man's cot: one pile for the things it would be safe to send home to a mother, a wife, a girlfriend. A father. Another pile for "burning," as Ben would say. The man's family would not know the person this pile represented. The man's Air Force buddies would possibly not recognize the man from either pile.

As Ben continued his probing of the dreams and fears and hopes of these four unfinished lives, one by one the other tent lights switched off, and the darkness became filled with sounds of night: a screech, a flutter of large wings, a clucking that accelerates into a whine, drone-songs of insects, the nervous yelping of some animal in distress. Later, when the moon was higher overhead and the shadows sharper, there were voices of men talking while they slept—short cries for help, a gasp, a swallowed "No!" from a nightmare.

Shortly before dawn, Ben would hear the shriek of the wake-up whistle in the doorways of those who would be flying today, and later watch the silent file of men slowly moving along the crushed gravel paths to the mess hall. He would then lie down on one of the cots in the empty tent, pushing aside the little pile of secrets he was guarding, but not close his eyes to sleep until he heard the first planes take off.

\* \* \*

I have not yet made notes or even written a line of the story. Nor have I been able to work on the project Martha suggested, a script for a possible collaboration with Sam Barber on a new dance. She said to "... talk to

someone across a distance about anything, everything . . ." This I do, in many of my letters, but the words are not yet my "deaths and entrances" that they must be to please her.

*Munda, New Georgia, April 5*—Rest Leave ended abruptly yesterday morning—along with any hope of re-visiting Auckland—by an order sending us back here to Munda to attend an urgent "special" briefing. The unsettling first announcement is that tomorrow we will be taking off on a 1600 mile roundtrip night bombing mission to Truk, legendary headquarters of the Japanese Imperial Combined Fleet.

We are told that daylight raids on Truk by other 13th Air Force squadrons last month resulted in losses so great that night missions were ordered. The one scheduled for tomorrow will be the first, and "Frenisi" and its crew are on the list to go. We will stage from tiny Nissan, 400 miles closer to Truk, in the Green Islands group.

As the Briefers explained, Truk is actually a cluster of small islands inside a coral reef which forms a lagoon 140 miles in circumference. Our targets tomorrow night will be on Dublon Island, in the eastern part of the lagoon. There's a seaplane base there, a submarine base, as well as military warehouses, docks, tank farms and barracks. No airfield, but defending aircraft by the hundreds, including night fighters, are close by, on aircraft carriers and neighboring islands.

We fly to Nissan in the morning.

*Nissan Island, April 7*—I am awakened by an early morning shower. It drums a muted tattoo on the canvas roof. An onshore breeze carries faint scents of the sea through the open-sided tent. The doorway fills with glints of the rising sun made less harsh by the mosquito net draped over my cot.

The others sleep on. My eyes are open but I remain in the thrall of last night's mission to Truk.

\* \* \*

It begins at dusk, the lift-off through all the spilled colors of the dying day. Pete has aimed us at a tiny cluster of specks 800 miles to the north-northwest. He says we should find it about midnight, with or without the help of the radar-equipped "Snooper" planes assigned to lead our formation. (Pete questions their necessity. "All I need are a few stars and an horizon," he grumbles.)

We flew up from Munda in the morning. The final briefing is attended by reporters as well as Air Force brass. And the 23 crews. We are told the

strike is “newsworthy” because it is the first ever on Truk at night; and is so long—10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> hours roundtrip. The General adds that the mission is of “immense strategic value—despite its great risks.” A wire service reporter stops me on the way out, asks where I’m from, the name of the local newspaper. “*Wisconsin Rapids Tribune*,” I say. Wonders how I “feel” about going to Truk? Scared, of course, I tell him, and walk away.

Murphy and I go down to the line to check on “Frenisi.” Have the crews topped the gas tanks? Checked the oxygen supply? Hunter is there to supervise the loading of the bombs; Tex, to count the boxes of ammunition at each gun station.

The reporters join us at our late—one cannot help thinking “last”—afternoon dinner of fresh New Zealand lamb and fresh potatoes, and we quickly assure them this is not a typical menu.

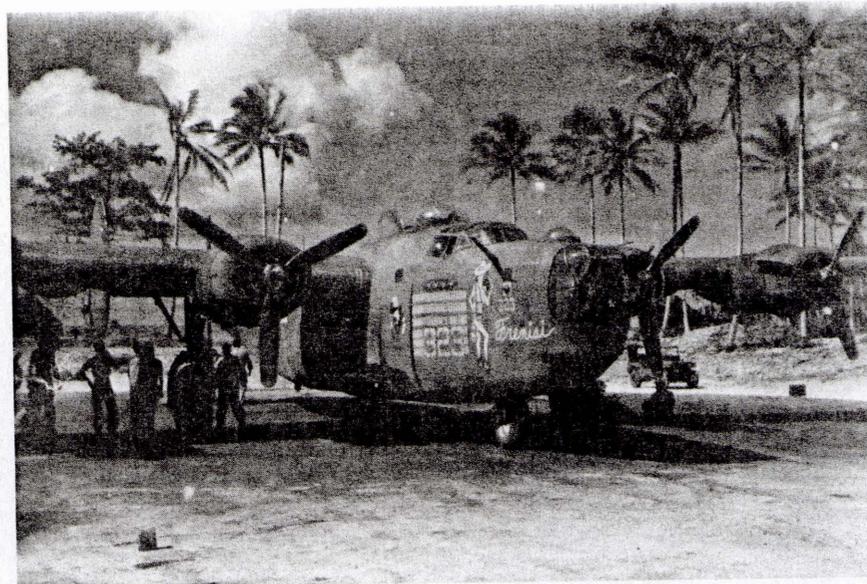
Within an hour after takeoff, we’re alone in the darkening sky, each plane proceeding on its own, hopefully to rendezvous five hours from now and be in formation before the night fighters come looking for us. Thankfully, there’s no weather to contend with, only the darkness to conquer—and those strange, unexplainable distractions which invade the night and must be subdued. (I think of Djuna Barnes’ *Nightwood* and her Dr. Matthew-Mighty-grain-of-salt-Dante-O’Connor.)

Murphy and I take turns napping while the other attends to keeping “Frenisi” in the air: checking the Automatic Pilot, the fuel supply, oil pressure and cylinder head temperature of each engine; keeping the props synchronized—by their sound, when one can no longer watch the shadow pattern; scanning the night sky continuously for a flash of light that could portend danger. The sudden moistening of the windscreen is unsettling until I realize we have passed through a cloud.

The intercom is silent—is everyone but me asleep? All planes are observing radio silence, but I switch on the short wave band, hoping to catch some music being beamed from Australia—or even the taunting, giggling voice of “Tokyo Rose” from Japan. Only echoing silence . . .

As soon as a few stars appear, Pete gets his sextant and looks for the North Star. He thinks he can distinguish an horizon. I cannot. A pinhead of light I saw a moment ago—a star, I presumed—now appears below us! But fades from sight as I stare. I’m reminded of a night formation exercise in flight school when I followed an automobile’s tail light for several minutes, thinking it was the wing light of the plane leading us.

It is 10:30 when Tex brings coffee and cheese sandwiches to the flight deck. Pete says he knows where we are; that we’ll be at the rendezvous in an hour. It’s over one of the atolls in the Mortlock group, a hundred miles



The “Frenisi.” Photo courtesy of Kurt Patzlaff. Used with permission.



The “Frenisi” crew. The author is standing third from the right. Photo courtesy of Kurt Patzlaff. Used with permission.



"Punch and the Judy" photo of David Zellmer and Martha Graham. *Photo courtesy of Arnold Eagle.*

from Truk lagoon. I call all the crew members on the intercom and give them the ETA. And tell them to watch for night fighters. The Japs now have a twin engine plane called "Irving" that lobs air-burst phosphorus bombs in the midst of B-24 formations. On one of the last daylight missions to Truk, a '24 trailing gas from a damaged engine was set afire by one of them. Blew up in mid-air. Everyone killed.

When the other planes begin appearing, one by one, they are like shadowy behemoths, reluctantly revealing themselves. And, as if by some primordial herding instinct, they begin closing in and maneuvering for their assigned slots in the bombing formation. I cannot see the Mortlock Islands below but Pete assures me they are there.

"Frenisi" mashes in this thin air at 23,000 feet. I need more and more throttle to keep up with the others. If I back the throttles off, even a little, we lose altitude. I must move the ailerons and rudders twice as far, and hold them twice as long, to change our attitude. We seem balanced on a wire strung between two unseen stars. I feel that if I lean too far to one side, the plane might roll over to its side.

When at last we find our place in the formation—just slightly below and off the right wing of the squadron leader—I feel I have taken a reluctant old race horse into the starting gate one last time. This is "Frenisi's" 69th mission. (My 20th.)

Then we see the stiletto-like searchlight beams piercing our cover of darkness, fingering for us in the sky as if intent on impaling us like butterflies on pins. Tracer-stained anti-aircraft shells stream upward but, miraculously, never find us. The searchlights flood the flight deck with a blinding blue-white light.

We fly on, all 23 planes as one, awaiting Hunter's shout of "bombs away!" We all know there's only 15-minutes allotted to find Dublon, just inside the lagoon, and bomb our targets on the tiny island—the seaplane base, warehouses, docks, hopefully some anti-aircraft guns and searchlights.

I see fires on Dublon, set by the planes up ahead. They reveal the outline of tiny Etan Island, just opposite Dublon Town, whose airfield is the largest of any at Truk. Finally, Hunter shouts "Bombs away!" Murphy begins the steep, banking turn to the right that takes us out of the lagoon.

I stare out my window, searching for night fighters. Our turn is so tight, the plane seems to be pivoting on its right wing. I hear a scream on the intercom: "Bogie! Three o'clock—high!" I see the glow of a night fighter's twin exhausts streak by, then recede into the distance. An Irving, I'm sure. He'll be back.

Murphy rolls us out of the turn and levels off. "Take over!" he tells me. I grab the wheel with both hands, place my boots on the rudder pedals. Pete kneels beside my seat, reaches up to the compass with his pencil and points to 170 degrees. "Keep her right there," he says. I nod as I continue the turn to the new heading.

I can no longer see stars. Clouds must have moved in. No horizon, either. I check the Artificial Horizon when I'm at 170 degrees and leveled off. Looks fine, but I feel we are still in the turn. Artificial Horizon must be wrong; malfunctioning, I'm sure. I *feel* us turning. I rotate the wheel to the left to counter the turn. Murphy immediately leans over, taps the Artificial Horizon case. He grabs the wheel, abruptly rotates it back to the right until the instrument says we're level. He nods to me to take over again.

But a moment later, I feel we are climbing. I'm convinced of it. I push the control column forward and wait. But now the altimeter shows us losing altitude. I no longer know what to do. I feel panicky, sick to my stomach, hot and sweaty. I grab Murphy's arm and tell him to take over. I slide down in my seat until my head is below the window. I cover my eyes with my cap.

Now I feel myself being shaken. Had I fallen asleep? Murphy is yelling for me to look out the window. I sit upright and see a blinding flash . . . an explosion . . . a swirling fireball. It's one of our planes, I know, and it disintegrates as I watch. Burning chunks of fuselage are hurtling in all directions, then slowly tumbling into the darkness below. Tracer shells from our guns streak upwards towards a tiny speck of light moving overhead. It's beyond their range, alas, and soon disappears. The sky is once again empty and dark.

Murphy says he grabbed my arm when he saw the exhaust of the Irving streak into view just above us; knew it was about to lob a bomb.

My vertigo is gone. I tell Murphy I think I can now keep "Frenisi" rightside up. Then take her, he says.

Within minutes, we are again alone in the sky. Each plane is to find its own way back to Nissan. I switch on the radio. This time I hear voices: one of the Snooper planes is calling for a Dumbo to search for possible survivors of the plane we saw blowing up.

Some hours later, the moon makes one final brief, but tantalizing, appearance, then disappears behind a tumble of roiling black clouds. Sheets of rain begin to rake the windscreen. "Frenisi" struggles on, head down, engines whining.

About two hours from when Pete said we'll reach Nissan, the rain stops,

clouds thin, and there off the left wing is a huge red-orange sun emerging from the black, white-capped sea. I quickly dip the wing and alert everyone over the intercom to take a look. And sigh.

We do not see the sun, the sky or the sea again until we reach Nissan.

Pete spends the last half hour on his haunches beside my seat, checking his watch, the compass, the airspeed indicator. Then, suddenly, he rises and leans closer to the windscreen, pointing into the wind and rain. "Nissan dead ahead," he pronounces. "Begin your let down." I see only rain and swirling clouds, but ease the throttles back a little.

Minutes later, we see the face of a massive cliff looming through the half-light of the storm—and realize we are too low! Murphy and I frantically pull back on the control column and at the same time jam the throttles full forward. It's as if we're reining "Frenisi" back and kicking her loins to make her leap to the top of the cliff.

She makes it to the top, but clips a perimeter light during the very brief, very shallow glide to the runway. We have to stomp the brakes to get off at the taxiway.

End of first night mission to Truk.

*Munda, New Georgia, April 11*—O'Toole, who broke a leg jumping from his plane after it blew a tire on takeoff and crashed into a gas truck, is still grounded and wearing a plaster cast. This did not prevent him from taking a P-38 up on a test-hop yesterday. Without permission, of course. The P-38 had been left behind for repairs, now completed, and the crew chief wanted the plane test-flown. O'Toole learned this and volunteered his services, claiming he knew all about P-38s. The crew chief ran him through the cockpit procedure and wished him luck, knowing perfectly well O'Toole was lying. It would have been their own little secret except that O'Toole had to buzz the camp area, and the Major's tent. Kind of low. That ended O'Toole's brief career as a P-38 pilot.

*Munda, New Georgia, April 14*—Today's scheduled return to Truk was unceremoniously scrubbed by a surprise Jap mortar attack that threatened our airstrips on Bougainville. The squadron had flown to one of the fields, Torokina's Piva Uncle, early yesterday, intending to spend the afternoon there at the Marine base before taking off for our second nighttime visit to that most feared of all our targets.

Some of us were in the Officers Club, waiting for the sun to sink another degree or two before going to dinner, when the screech of a Klaxon horn sent everyone running for cover. We could hear the "thunk" of mortars

The southern end of the runway terminates at the edge of a cliff. We park on the beach below and watch a night-flying Snooper plane vault into the air between sea and sky to begin its dusk-to-dawn patrol.

We tarry to marvel as feathered clouds, drifting past the descending sun, become multi-colored flaming quills. Streaks of lightning knife unheard through massive cloud-mountains of billowing grays and blues.

We resume our perambulation, now at water's edge, on hard-packed moist beach sand, scattering ribbons of spun foam abandoned by the re-treating surf. The twilight colors are suffused by the descending darkness. We pass near our tethered planes in their lonely revetments, now guarded only by a scattering of forlorn, tattered palm trees.

The stars alone light our way back across the island's moonscape. I must count the tents to find my own in the shadowy row. Just beyond, in a small cove, three abandoned LST's languish in the shallow water like giant beached whales.

Inside the tent, I find my cot in a corner of the flickering splash of candlelight and prepare to confront the night.

40 missions. Still counting.

*Wakde, September 1*—The "Going Home" list is posted today. I'm ranked 2nd among all pilots in the squadron for total points earned by the end of August.

I'm now credited with 40 strikes, 500 combat hours, and ten months overseas.

I'm only .6 of a point behind the No. 1 man. But the No. 3 pilot on the list is only .1 of a point behind me!

\* \* \*

Continue reading Proust to keep my mind off "points." Finished *The Captive* last night; am now beginning *The Fugitive*. But with Pete back in the States, there's no one to talk to about Proust . . .

*Wakde, September 2*—The Palau Islands, 750 miles to the northwest, are now our primary targets. They guard the approaches to the Philippines. Peleliu in particular. Koror island, also heavily fortified, is headquarters for all military forces in the area.

The Briefing Officer, old friend Ben, told us that before the war Koror was a major tourist site for the Japanese, their Pacific "Riviera," where they would luxuriate on dazzling white sand beaches and cruise among the so-called Rock Islands, hundreds of tiny, jungle-covered, green, knob-like

formations appearing to float on the water. "Emerald mushrooms popping up above a calm blue sea," was the translated description Ben read to us from an old Japanese tourist guide.

Today's mission was to Koror to bomb its military installations—storage facilities and anti-aircraft batteries in and near Koror town.

Just as I turned the plane for the bomb run, I saw the sun begin its rise from the sea—and would have halted us in mid-flight if that had been possible, to watch the sun's majestic ascension. Iridescent dew bathed the pale blue island we were crossing, Babelthuap, and night mists were lifting, revealing trees and streams and soft, meadow-like fields. Then, as I stared in wonderment, a giant rainbow began to form. I guided the plane towards its arch and held my breath.

Bombs were soon falling from our planes, mortally wounding the green, moist, sleepy little island of Koror below, staining it with blood-red tears of fire. I could see, just beyond the town, the strings of "emerald mushrooms" floating on the calm blue sea.

\* \* \*

I have written my "good-night" letter—as one would tell his beads. A piece of the moon is overhead, a slice of just-peeled orange, Proust would say. Fluffy, white clouds hold it against the blue-black sky. All this quieting beauty to mask the reason I am here.

*Wakde, September 3*—I awake mid-morning to the chime-like tinkle of a hanging Japanese brake drum being struck. It quickly stills the laughter-tinged chatter in the chapel tent across the way. The chanted monotone of a prayer holds the voices quiet. I can see rows of bowed heads from where I lie on my cot. The muted tone of a pitchpipe offers the first note of a hymn. I hear the young men singing, quietly, hesitantly—as if expecting, hoping, to hear a soprano or a contralto joining them . . .

I miss the sopranos and contraltos, too.

\* \* \*

This is the beginning of a glistening, airless day. I walk the unshaded, sand-clogged path to Ben's tent to share my loneliness. He's not there.

I return to my tent and the solace of my mosquito net-shrouded cot. The remains of the chapel service drones on as I cherish the memory of sopranos and contraltos I have known. And loved.

\* \* \*

Pete writes that he got married on the 20th. Still plans to meet me in New York.

*Noemfoor, September 30*—I was at Konasoran Field by 3:30 this morning to watch the takeoff for Balikpapan. The usual sounds of dawn here—screeching gulls, breakers crashing on nearby reefs—could not be heard above the roar and whine and splutter of hundreds of airplane engines being started and revved up and idled. The scene, viewed from my perch on the roof of a truck cab, was of shadowy behemoths, wingtip lights slowly blinking, lurching towards the beginning of the runway.

At the other end of the mile-long airstrip, two huge searchlights were positioned on opposite sides of the runway, their light beams aimed directly at one another, forming a luminous bar some 25 feet off the ground. Pilots were warned they must vault their planes over this light bar on takeoff to be sufficiently airborne in time to avoid plunging into the sea a few hundred feet farther on. Bulldozers with engines snarling waited at the edge of the tarmac, should a plane falter and fall and have to be pushed off the runway.

When they finally came, at 1½-minute intervals, all 72 planes made it over the light bar into the air. One scraped its bomb-bay doors on the runway's packed coral surface but managed to maintain sufficient forward thrust to continue on up into the still-darkened sky.

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Sixteen hours later, I was back at Kornasoren, now quiet and deserted except for small clusters of crew chiefs and mechanics at the empty hardstands. Some stared at the empty, darkening sky, as I did, for the sight of a returning plane; others, sitting on empty bomb crates, heads down, appeared to be listening for the sound of a B-24.

I parked my borrowed jeep at the Operations shack where a loudspeaker was spluttering with static and, occasionally, with voices so garbled and distorted as to be unintelligible. Then there were long silent pauses during which the Operations radioman would repeat his call: "Bravo! Bravo! Do you hear me? Come in, Bravo!" There was never an answer, only the static and scrambled voices.

I went outside to again search the sky, now stained with the vermilion wash of the dying sunset. I felt suffocated by a feeling of guilt, being here,

safe on the ground, not out there, somewhere, with "them," sharing their fears and pain.

An hour or so later, sometime after 9:00, an officer at one of the desks put down his phone and looked at those of us waiting. He said no planes would be returning to Noemfoor tonight. Those which had not already landed at Morotai or Sansapor would be out of gas. And down, ditched or crashed. The Dumbos would be out looking for them at dawn. The officer said he had no numbers but he did know that many of the planes now at Morotai and Sansapor had come in with empty gas tanks, feathered props, shattered tails, and, I knew, bleeding dead and wounded crewmen. He said a list of those planes and men unaccounted for and presumed "missing" would be posted in the morning.

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My tent was one of the few in camp still lighted. My tentmates, whom I had met only a few days ago, put down their cards and stared at me, unbelieving, as I talked, and asked, again and again, "Not even *one* plane got back?" Not one, I said, knowing these three newly arrived flyers were scheduled to fly the next Balikpapan strike. Someone switched off the light and I slipped under the mosquito net to lie stretched out on top of the blankets. For the remainder of the night I endured dreams of lost, pilotless airplanes circling in a black, empty sky; endlessly, silently circling.

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The unofficial report on yesterday's strike: Only 46 of the 72 planes got to Balikpapan. Four of those were shot down over the target. The remaining 42, most of them badly shot-up, limped back to either Morotai or Sansapor with their wounded, dying or dead crew members. The 26 planes that never made it to Balikpapan all had mechanical problems and landed at emergency fields en route to the target.

*Noemfoor, October 5*—The second Balikpapan strike, day before yesterday, was more disastrous than the first. Our Group lost seven of the 20 planes we sent along. All the other planes were damaged in some way. 63 men are still listed as missing. Ten others were pulled from the water by PBV "Dumbo" planes. One of the 28 injured men died of his wounds.

O'Toole led the mission. He volunteered—as did his crew—to fly even though they all were officially grounded and awaiting orders to go home. Only Shedd, their regular co-pilot, was not along. The hand he shot celebrating the false rumor of Germany's surrender was still not healed.

My newly-met tentmates were flying in planes of the second flight. It was their first combat mission. They told of seeing O'Toole's plane begin the bomb run, then, seconds later, burst into flames. It was hit by the first round of anti-aircraft fire. They said O'Toole kept his plane right on course for the bomb drop until it fell from the sky.

The planes my tentmates were in also got hit but no one was injured, and they managed to limp back as far as Middleburg for emergency repairs before returning, many hours later, to Noemfoor.

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No detailed assessment yet of damage inflicted on the Balikpapan refineries. The unofficial word is: "Minimal."

*Noemfoor, October 8*—I fly very occasionally these days and then only to ferry war-weary B-24s to a deserted airstrip 850 miles southeast of here, at Nadzab. Planes only land there, never take off. We park the relics wingtip over wingtip, in endless rows, where they suffer the indignity of being stripped of reusable parts. The flightless carcasses remaining will soon be ravaged by the encroaching jungle still wearing gaudy, painted noses emblazoned with racy portraits and saucy names, still proudly displaying neat rows of tiny painted bombs, one for each mission flown, *momento mori* for the crews who flew them.

I had no need today to look for "Frenisi," as I do each time I visit this depressing place. I had seen her earlier on Wakde during our refueling stop. She was grounded for want of a missing engine. I saluted her for having evaded that final flight to Nadzab one more time.

The plane we delivered to Nadzab today was being shorn of her equipment even before we disembarked. I watched a technician pry off the little metal cap from the hub of a control column wheel, thinking he wanted the wheel. What he did want—and found—was the name and phone number a Detroit assembly line girl had written inside the cap.

We delivered a new B-24-J to Wakde on the trip back, but missed the shuttle to Noemfoor and had to spend the night in one of those floorless, unscreened, candle-lit tents, fighting off sand flies. I hoped to share the misery with Ben, who had not moved with the rest of us to Noemfoor. However, as I soon learned, he had finally received his orders to go home and had left the island just two days before.

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The memory of spending one last miserable night on Wakde, and the dread of an indefinite stay on the equally foreboding Noemfoor, is immediately dispelled on my return to Kornasoren Field the next morning. My name is on the list of those who will go home sometime *this* month.

*Noemfoor, October 11*—Les Bloom, bombardier on my last crew, also waiting to go home, today returned from a round-trip "whiskey-run" flight to Sydney. Somehow talked his way aboard. Brought back a stack of records including Shostakovich's *1st Symphony*. We borrowed a wind-up phonograph from Special Services and proceeded to introduce Shostakovich to the troops. More popular with the troops was an album of tantalizing songs sung by a Peggy Lee, an American singer unknown to most of us.

There is not much to occupy those of us grounded and awaiting orders to go home. No Officers Club, no Library, no volley ball courts. Worst of all, I have not received any mail since arriving here. I write answers to letters I only imagine I've received, then tear those up. I read and re-read the letters I have kept, especially those from Martha. I've tried and tried to begin writing the Gwicky story but never finish even a page. I *think* a lot about doing the piece Martha suggested, but now that I'm not flying I seem to have lost my voice—even the desire to write it.

*Noemfoor, October 18*—Flew back to Wakde last Friday, again with a war-weary B-24 for delivery to Nadzab. Also carried a load of spare engine parts Wakde had requisitioned. While waiting for the stuff to be unloaded, Operations suggested we two pilots arrange to stay on Wakde an extra day and get checked out in a C-47. We liked the idea and radioed Noemfoor for permission which was quickly granted.

As a consequence, Saturday was spent riding around with an Operations guy in an old, beat-up C-47, bouncing through uncounted landings and takeoffs. After passing a simple, no-fail, multiple-choice test, we were declared C-47 pilots. Operations said our names would be forwarded to Air Transport Command should it need more transport pilots during the Philippines invasion. I said I planned to watch the invasion from the Top of the Mark in San Francisco.

Sunday was spent delivering the old B-24 and gawking at a couple of pretty (I thought) WACs at the Nadzab PX, the first of their species seen in these parts. Thought about them Monday as we flew a silver B-24-J to Los Negros.

Alas, there was no time to visit old haunts on this most memorable of our island homes. I had especially wanted to take a last look at the "Tree

*Nadzab, October 23*—The invasion of Leyte, three days ago, is preventing my departure for San Francisco. Learned as soon as I arrived earlier today that all transport planes, large and small, are on standby for possible use in the Philippines operation. No one knows when a C-54 can be made available to the hundreds of us waiting to go home.

Meantime, must contend with conditions typical of every transient camp I have ever seen: floorless tents erected side by side on an open, dusty field miles from the airfield and other so-called “permanent” installations. It is as if we have been consigned to a large prisoner-of-war camp.

Worst of all, there are even rumors we will all be put aboard a troop ship as soon as one docks at Lae, twenty miles from here on the Huan Gulf.

Am told there is a movie only three times a week, no library or even a place to buy newspapers or magazines. In any event, the tents are not lighted.

*Nadzab, October 25*—A co-pilot I knew slightly while on Wakde and Noemfoor showed up at the mess hall today. Just in from Noemfoor. Said Balikpapan refinery strikes are on hold for the moment, all missions now concentrating on shipping in the Makassar Straits. Said hunting has been good; only one plane had been lost up to the time he left. That one simply vanished, he said. No one saw it go down. Searched and searched but found nothing. Said the crew was made up of volunteers, some already grounded and awaiting orders to go home. Only name he could remember, because he had flown with the guy a couple of times, was Bloom, the bombardier.

Of course. It had to be Bloom, the guy who introduced Shostakovitch *and* Peggy Lee to the troops on Noemfoor. He said he knew he had used up all his luck on that disastrous New Year’s Day mission over Rabaul, when every member of the crew was either wounded or killed. His wounds in an arm, shoulder and leg had entitled him to a ground job. He refused to take one, explaining to me that regardless of where he was or what he was doing, he knew he would be found when the time came.

As apparently he was, off the coast of Borneo, on an October day in 1944 . . .

*Nadzab, October 30*—Day Seven. Still no planes leaving for the States except those carrying the wounded and dead from Leyte. The only rumor we hear is that we’ll end up on a troopship.

The food is so bad everyone suffers from either diarrhea or constipation.