



SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC
1944-45



Palmyra
5.15



ISLANDS

SAIPAN

GUAM

TRUK

CAROLINE ISLANDS

GUINEA



AUSTRALIA



A SOUVENIR OF
HISTORIC DAYS
IN THE
SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC
AND
FAR EAST

THE SKY LANCER



417th
BOMB
GROUP

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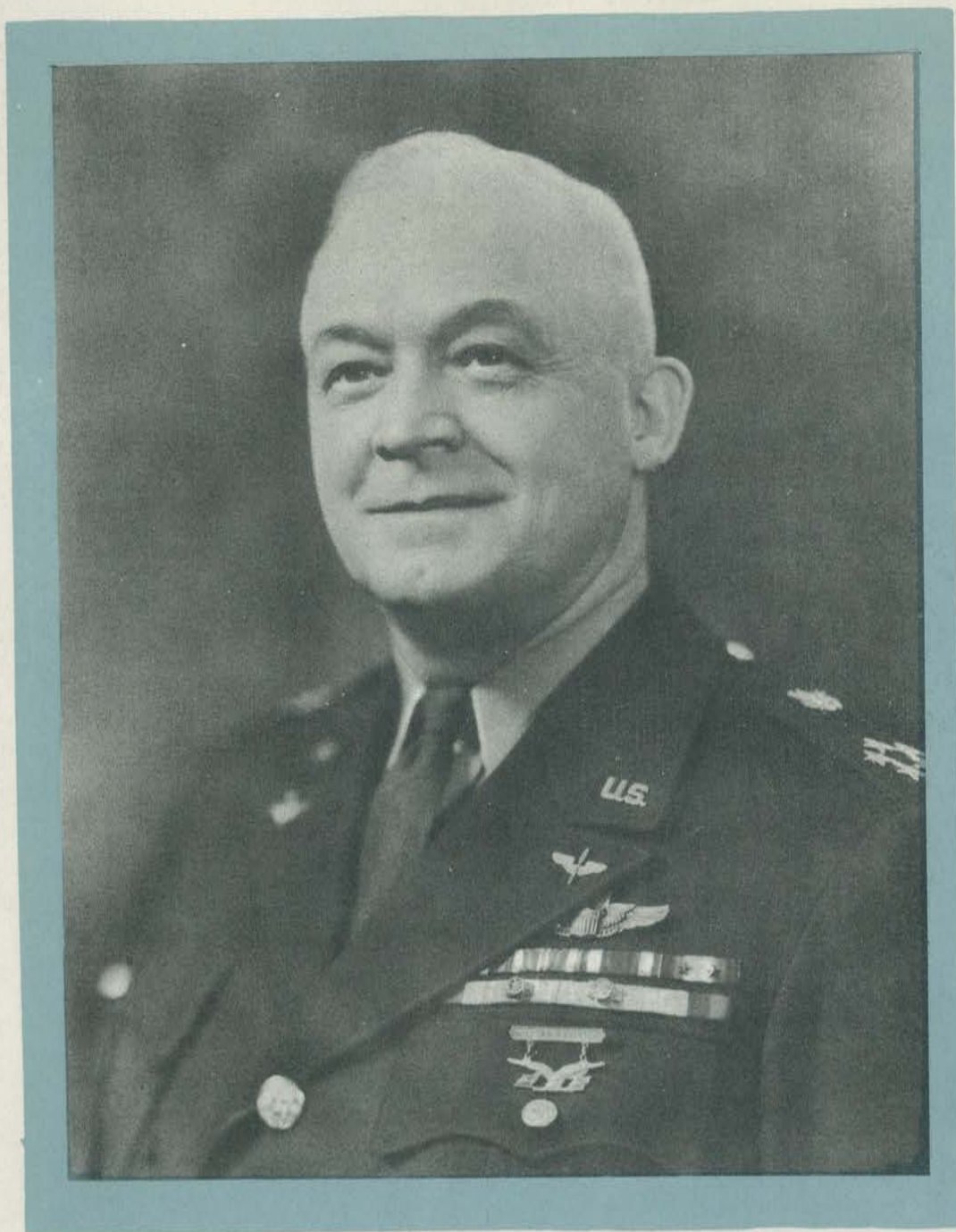
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GENERAL OF THE ARMY
DOUGLAS A. MacARTHUR

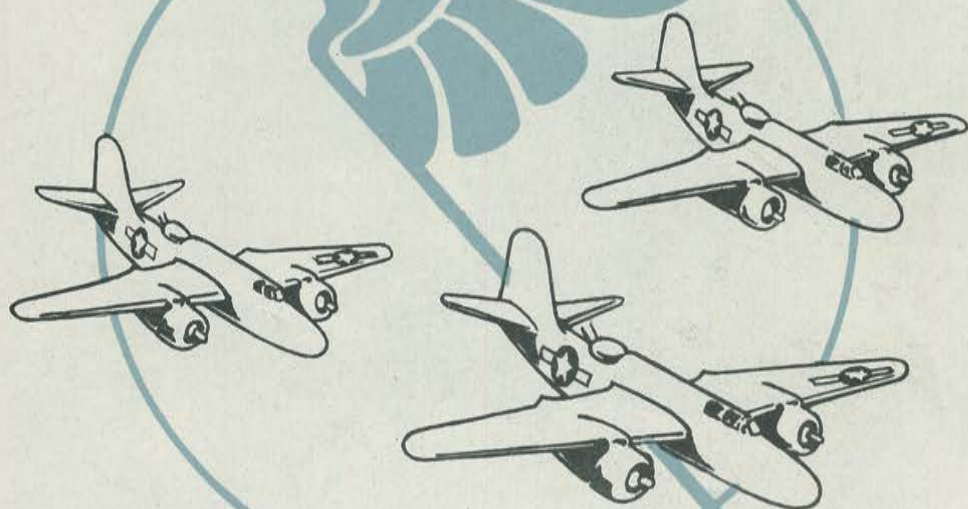




GENERAL OF THE ARMY
HENRY H. ARNOLD



THE SKY LANCER



47TH BOMB GROUP



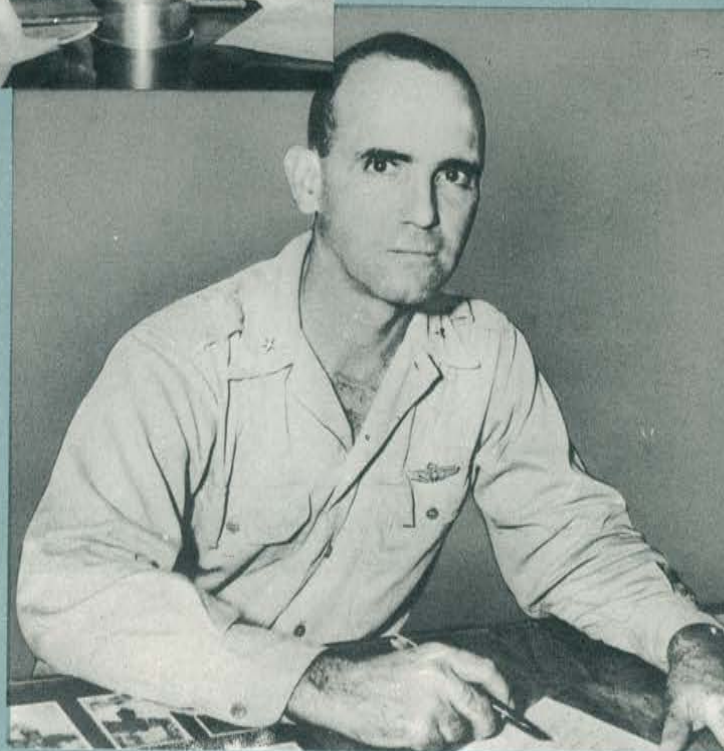


GENERAL GEORGE C. KENNEY
Far East Air Forces





MAJ. GEN. ENNIS C. WHITEHEAD
Fifth Air Force



BRIG. GEN. J. V. CRABB
Fifth Bomber Command





LT. COL. MILTON W. JOHNSON
Commanding Officer,
417th Bombardment Group (L)



DEDICATION

The Sky Lancers have established an enviable record in combat against the Japanese in the Southwest Pacific Theatre of Operations. We have advanced twenty-five hundred miles since debarking at Cape Sudest, New Guinea; we have delivered destruction to the enemy over every mile of it and part of our great task still lies ahead on the road to Tokyo. Our gains have not been made easily and the price has been paid in both men and equipment

It is to our gallant comrades who made their last flight with our organization that The SKY LANCER is dedicated, for it was they who contributed so greatly to our success and to the ultimate peace we are to gain through their courageous efforts.

Milton W. Johnson

MILTON W. JOHNSON,
Lt Col, Air Corps,
Commanding.



COLONEL JACK W. SAUNDERS
Commanding Officer,
417th Bombardment Group (L)



(28 March 1943—4 July 1944)



COL. HOWARD S. ELLMORE
Commanding Officer,
417th Bombardment Group (L)



(5 July 1944—2 January 1945)

Honor

2nd Lt. William C. MacKenzie . . . 24 October 1943
DeRidder, Louisiana

2nd Lt. Ralph W. Nelson, Jr. . . . 30 October 1943
DeRidder, Louisiana

2nd Lt. Francis Duggan 20 November 1943
DeRidder, Louisiana

Pfc. Albert A. Siegel 20 November 1943
DeRidder, Louisiana

2nd Lt. Raymond H. Brock 20 March 1944
Dobodura, New Guinea

Sgt. James M. Fitzwater 10 April 1944
Gona Bay, New Guinea

S/Sgt. Charles S. Littlefield 10 April 1944
Gona Bay, New Guinea

S/Sgt. Andrew Richmond 10 April 1944
Gona Bay, New Guinea

2nd Lt. James W. Wisdom 10 April 1944
Gona Bay, New Guinea

S/Sgt. Roy M. Bowers 15 April 1944
Saidor, New Guinea

S/Sgt. William H. Foster 15 April 1944
Saidor, New Guinea

S/Sgt. Jack T. Barr 16 April 1944
Vitiaz Straits, New Guinea

S/Sgt. Melvin G. Cope 16 April 1944
Vitiaz Straits, New Guinea

Pfc. Paul R. Rast 17 April 1944
Saidor, New Guinea

S/Sgt. Rocco J. Altese 17 April 1944
Missing between Dobodura and Saidor, N.G.

S/Sgt. Elmer R. Bevers 17 April 1944
Missing between Dobodura and Saidor, N.G.

1st Lt. Bernard F. Dotson 17 April 1944
Missing between Dobodura and Saidor, N.G.

Cpl. Ordelle O. Randle 26 April 1944
Saidor, New Guinea

S/Sgt. Jennings A. Musick 21 May 1944
Wewak, New Guinea

1st Lt. Lester E. Zeiders 21 May 1944
Wewak, New Guinea

1st Lt. Robert J. Arndt 22 May 1944
Missing between Nadzab and Saidor, N.G.

1st Lt. Edward V. Atwell, Jr. . . . 22 May 1944
Missing between Nadzab and Saidor, N.G.

2nd Lt. Chester N. Burne 22 May 1944
Missing between Nadzab and Saidor, N.G.

S/Sgt. Samuel F. Carter 22 May 1944
Missing between Nadzab and Saidor, N.G.

Cpl. Paul T. Donahue 22 May 1944
Missing between Nadzab and Saidor, N.G.

Capt. Randall M. Dorton 22 May 1944
Missing between Nadzab and Saidor, N.G.

Cpl. Dillard Harmon 22 May 1944
Missing between Nadzab and Saidor, N.G.

S/Sgt. Haynes C. Jump 22 May 1944
Missing between Nadzab and Saidor, N.G.

S/Sgt. Wilford F. Schappell 22 May 1944
Missing between Nadzab and Saidor, N.G.

Cpl. Norman R. Suhr 22 May 1944
Missing between Nadzab and Saidor, N.G.

S/Sgt. Joseph Perez 24 May 1944
Karkar Island, New Guinea

S/Sgt. Oscar B. Macias 10 June 1944
But, New Guinea

Pvt. Walter R. Caton 22 June 1944
Saidor, New Guinea

1st Lt. Kramer Thomas, Jr. 23 July 1944
Missing between Nadzab and Saidor, N.G.

S/Sgt. George E. Schaefer 1 August 1944
Helmoltz Point, New Guinea

T/Sgt. Warren W. Dishong 9 September 1944
Saidor, New Guinea

1st Lt. Thomas R. Grimes 10 September 1944
Missing, Parang Island, New Guinea

S/Sgt. Frank J. Kramerich 10 September 1944
Missing, Parang Island, New Guinea

S/Sgt. Andrew L. Martin 11 September 1944
Missing Kaeo Bay, Halmahera Islands

1st Lt. Howard E. Saar 11 September 1944
Missing Kaeo Bay, Halmahera Islands

2nd Lt. Samuel L. Joekel, Jr. 8 October 1944
Noemfoor Island

Cpl. Clifford N. Ojala 8 October 1944
Noemfoor Island

S/Sgt. Jerome W. Rosoff 13 October 1944
Amahai, Ceram Island

Capt. Albert C. Brokamp 22 October 1944
Piroe Bay, Ceram Island

S/Sgt. Wade C. Goldston 22 October 1944
Piroe Bay, Ceram Island

S/Sgt. John R. Rounds 22 October 1944
Ambonia Bay, Ambon Island

S/Sgt. Henry A. Christopherson . . 1 November 1944
Ambon Island

1st Lt. Richard A. Fraker 1 November 1944
Ambon Island

Capt. Michael Jovanovitch 23 November 1944
Noemfoor Island

T/Sgt. Peter F. Fizer 30 November 1944
Morotai, Netherlands East Indies

Roll

2nd Lt. Jacob Guikema . . . 30 November 1944 Morotai, Netherlands East Indies	Pvt. George H. Steen . . . 7 January 1945 San Jose, Mindoro, P.I.
S/Sgt. Raymond S. Haynie . . 30 November 1944 Morotai, Netherlands East Indies	Capt John W. Simmons, Jr. . . 8 January 1945 Lupao, Luzon, P.I.
1st Lt. James E. Inglehart . . 30 November 1944 Morotai, Netherlands East Indies	S/Sgt. Stephen F. Hallow . . 9 January 1945 Lupao, Luzon, P.I.
M/Sgt. Robert G. Bartin . . 30 November 1944 Morotai, Netherlands East Indies	Cpl. August F. Kenzora . . . 9 January 1945 Sampaloc Point, Nazasa Bay, Luzon, P.I.
Sgt Robert M. Vasquez . . . 30 November 1944 Morotai, Netherlands East Indies	2nd Lt. Bertrand E. Major . . . 9 January 1945 Sampaloc Point, Nazasa Bay, Luzon, P.I.
S/Sgt William N. Bickerton . . 2 December 1944 Noemfoor Island	Capt. William L. Boodger, Jr. . 10 January 1945 San Jose, Mindoro, P.I.
S/Sgt. Joseph R. Cheek . . . 2 December 1944 Noemfoor Island	Cpl. Ludwig Hanel 10 January 1945 San Jose, Mindoro, P.I.
1st Lt. Jeremiah J. Sullivan . 2 December 1944 Noemfoor Island	Pfc. Harold H. Sherman . . . 10 January 1945 San Jose, Mindoro, P.I.
1st Lt. Paul Lucas 13 December 1944 Haroeke Straits, Ceram Island	2nd Lt. Edward H. Jena . . . 11 January 1945 Baliaug and Plaridel, Luzon, P.I.
S/Sgt. William C. Meeks, Jr. . 13 December 1944 Haroeke Straits, Ceram Island	S/Sgt. George W. Kerr . . . 11 January 1945 Baliaug and Plaridel, Luzon, P.I.
Col. Howard S. Ellmore 2 January 1945 Missing San Fernando Point, Luzon, P.I.	S/Sgt. Robert H. Browning . . 11 January 1945 Bayombong, Luzon, P.I.
S/Sgt. Edward Lopez 2 January 1945 Missing San Fernando Point, Luzon, P.I.	Capt. John W. Nankervis . . . 11 January 1945 Bayombong, Luzon, P.I.
1st Lt. Joseph L. Ronzoni 2 January 1945 Missing San Fernando Point, Luzon, P.I.	1st Lt. Robert F. Hedlin . . . 11 January 1945 Bolog, Luzon, P.I.
S/Sgt. Floyd Valentine 2 January 1945 Missing San Fernando Point, Luzon, P.I.	S/Sgt. Leonard C. Hunt . . . 11 January 1945 Bolog, Luzon, P.I.
2nd Lt. Robert L. Haley 5 January 1945 Mambaged Point, Negros Island, P.I.	Sgt. Robert F. Anderson . . . 27 January 1945 Missing—Montalban, Luzon, P.I.
1st Lt. Rodney D. Beckel 7 January 1945 Clark Field, Luzon, P.I.	2nd Lt. Donald W. Hill 27 January 1945 Missing—Montalban, Luzon, P.I.
Capt. Arthur S. Cadmus 7 January 1945 Clark Field, Luzon, P.I.	Cpl. Ward H. Knable 12 February 1945 Missing on Bataan Peninsula, Luzon, P.I.
S/Sgt. James F. Frady 7 January 1945 Clark Field, Luzon, P.I.	2nd Lt. Melvin E. Taunt . . . 12 February 1945 Missing on Bataan Peninsula, Luzon, P.I.
S/Sgt. Francis L. Malone . . . 7 January 1945 Clark Field, Luzon, P.I.	S/Sgt. Amos L. Berlin 19 February 1945 San Jose, Mindoro, P.I.
Cpl. Peter A. Manger 7 January 1945 Clark Field, Luzon, P.I.	2nd Lt. Harold Cornfeldt . . . 28 February 1945 San Jose, Mindoro, P.I.
2nd Lt. Lawrence H. Woolf . . . 7 January 1945 Clark Field, Luzon, P.I.	Capt. Douglas C. Giles 28 February 1945 San Jose, Mindoro, P.I.
S/Sgt. Fred E. King 7 January 1945 Missing vicinity of Clark Field, Luzon, P.I.	Cpl. Herbert Gleicher 28 February 1945 San Jose, Mindoro, P.I.
1st Lt. Robert L. Quinn 7 January 1945 Missing vicinity of Clark Field, Luzon, P.I.	F/O John L. Miller 12 March 1945 San Jose, Mindoro, P.I.
T/Sgt. William Kizer 7 January 1945 San Jose, Mindoro, P.I.	1st Lt. Ralph M. Jennings . . 19 March 1945 Maniquin Island
Sgt. Frederick W. Landis . . . 7 January 1945 San Jose, Mindoro, P.I.	Capt. Dandridge Robertson . . 21 March 1945 Mabalo, Cebu
	S/Sgt. Harry W. Evans 21 March 1945 Mabalo, Cebu

History

1943 1945



The 417th Bombardment Group (L), with its component squadrons, the 672nd, 673rd, 674th and 675th, came into existence on the 28th of March 1943 at Will Rogers Field, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. A picked cadre from the old 46th Bombardment Group (L) (now a legendary outfit) and the 416th Bombardment Group (L) formed the nucleus around which the organization was built. Many of these men were veterans of years of army training; all of them were selected because of some special aptitude or skill they possessed.

Major Jack W. Saunders was appointed Group Commander and Major William F. Owens named the Deputy Group Commander. The Squadron Commanders were: Captain Robert M. Nelson of the 672nd "Tommyhawkers"; Captain Charles W. Johnson of the 673rd "Flying Cowboys"; Captain Raymond P. Klein of the 674th "Wolf Pack"; Captain Alfred L. Moser of the 675th "Dauntless Demons."

In mid-April the key personnel of the Group entrained for Orlando, Florida, where they attended the Army Air Forces School of Applied Tactics (AAFSAT). For four weeks they were well indoctrinated in the overseas orientation course and gained invaluable experience, under simulated combat conditions.

Shortly after the AAFSAT "students" returned to Will Rogers Field, the Group moved into its group area close to the Sub Depot Hangar where each squadron was set up independently with its own Engineering, Operations and Intelligence shacks. The first A-20's and DB-7's were then assigned to the group and the squadrons began operational training at a fast clip. For recreational purposes the men took advantage of the scenic wonders of Oklahoma, the 3.2 beer joints of Oklahoma City, and the fine base post exchange, where they guzzled cold soft drinks, cold malteds and "after 5 p.m. beer". Those who couldn't get their minds off their work discussed airplane repair and maintenance with the lady "feather merchants," at the Sub-Depot hangar.

SCHOOL DAYS



All "extra-curricular activities" died a horrible death, however, when the 46th Bombardment Group OTU School was opened in the old hangar area across the field. All-day attendance was compulsory and any miscreants who strayed from the straight and narrow were threatened with dire punishments. At the OTU School, the ground crews reviewed the specialized aspects of A-20 maintenance and repair work and

many of the pilots who had never flown an A-20 were instructed in its flight characteristics, radio and electrical systems, reading instruments, etc.

History

Throughout July, personnel, equipment and A-20's continued to trickle in. By the end of the month, the group was close to full strength and all the pilots were "checked out" in the A-20 so somebody decided that the group should proceed with its next training phase, which involved sadly enough, a change of station. All "smart money" was on Ardmore, Oklahoma, with Syracuse, New York, and DeRidder, Louisiana, following in that order. The traitors playing the dark horse, DeRidder, cleaned the board. With many good times and much unfinished business left behind, we set out for the wilds of Louisiana.

Arriving at the DeRidder Army Air Base, the group was welcomed by Colonel Carroll, the base Commanding Officer, the base band and Sub-Depot Civilians who were very glad to see someone from the outside world. Everyone moved into the barnlike, CCC-type barracks, helped set up the buildings on the line, policed-up the area, and then with a rush, went to town on pass. Shortly thereafter, groups of disgruntled GI's began to straggle back to the base. When interviewed, one unfortunate said, "Wotta place! It's overrun with infantry and armored forces, there's no beer, and they're even run out of cokes!" Then Leesville was discovered by an intrepid pioneer. This town is over the parish line and has more GI's per square inch than DeRidder but also has some of that hard stuff. However, the rank and file made the best of the many good base institutions: the PX, movie house, bowling alleys, rec hall, library and the "Civilian Mess," where group personnel could be seen at all hours of the day supplementing their daily GI ration allowance. It could be mentioned here in passing that numerous Sub-Depot lassies also patronized the establishment, which could or could not account for the regular visits of the GI's.

LOUISIANA INTERLUDE



Once flight training got under full steam, the men were glad to stay on the base and get some sleep. The squadrons flew well over 1,000 hours during a month so everybody was kept on the ball. The ground crews ironed out maintenance problems not covered by the tech orders and the pilots perfected themselves in formation, instrument and night flying, and also flew numerous cross-country navigational flights.

From August 20th to September 15th, 1943, the group operated under the II Tactical Air Division, giving low-level support to ground units on maneuvers in the Louisiana area. The group made a fine showing and was commended by the Commanding Generals of the ground forces on maneuvers for its well coordinated support missions.

Around the first of October, the first of the four squadrons packed their field equipment and marched out of the squadron area with full field-pack, headed for the Louisiana lowlands to erect a bivouac area from which they would fly combat missions against "enemy" installations nearby. Strangely enough, their destination was only three miles across the field but from general appearances and activity, it

ROUGHING IT



History

could have been in any real combat area. Camouflage discipline was strictly enforced, foxholes were dug, the planes were well dispersed and .50 caliber AA Machine guns were set up in the area to deal with "enemy air raiders" which flew over from time to time. Officers and enlisted men trudged about the area wearing leggings, tin hats and carrying small arms. From dusk to dawn, fighting mosquitoes was the main occupation with sack-time running a poor second. For recreation, there was an occasional night movie and several of the squadrons had beer parties just before returning to civilization.

PROCESSING



The month of November began with hectic preparations for a series of inspections which were to decide our fitness for overseas combat duty. Willing to do anything to get away from DeRidder, the group personnel got their heads together and were "ready, willing and able" when the III Bomb Command inspection party arrived. During the next few days, other inspectors came from the III Air Force and 56th Bombardment Training Wing (L). On one occasion the group banished any doubts as to its combat capabilities by flying perfectly precisioned and coordinated low-level and medium altitude attacks on DeRidder Army Air Base and imaginary enemy installations. Two squadrons buzzed the area silencing A/A positions and cutting communications lines followed two minutes later by the other two squadrons which rendered the three airstrips unserviceable with direct bomb hits from 8,000 feet.

Passing all the preliminary inspections with flying colors, only one last obstacle remained—the final inspection by officials from Washington. Every man in the group from the Commanding Officer down to the lowest yard-bird sweated this one out. All prayers were answered and the group was notified to prepare for overseas assignment.

Leaves and furloughs were cancelled. Overseas equipment was processed and water-proofed. Piles of OD-painted "TAT" crates appeared everywhere. Records were brought up to date. Everyone was given another physical check-up. Then, on December 5, 1943, the group was alerted for movement to a staging area, and everyone was restricted to the base. Communication facilities were barred to all personnel of the group and at 2000 that night, the boys boarded a long pullman train and started their long journey.

PORT OF EMBARKATION



Four monotonous days passed with the train speeding over prairies and desert or twisting slowly through tortuous snow-swept mountain passes. Card-playing, eating, reading and sleeping were the favorite and only pastimes. In true army style, it was in the wee hours of the morn when a bunch of exhausted GIs hit the sack.

During the next three weeks the familiar GI process of "separating the men from the boys" was stressed with sadistic furor. After running the gauntlet of obstacle courses, boat nets, 14 mile mountain hikes with full field-pack, daily calisthenics and infantry drill, nearly everyone in the group was willing to concede that he was in the "boy" category. However, there were roses with the thorns.

Twenty-four hour passes to San Francisco, Oakland or surrounding areas were fairly plentiful and there were many varied activities on the base to help pass the time.

History

Many of the men whose homes were near the base were given thirty-six and forty-eight hour passes over Christmas. The others either spent Christmas in town or on the base. Proposed celebrations for the greeting of the New Year 1944 were cut short by the announcement that the group was alerted for immediate overseas shipment as of 0001 the first day of January, 1944. After two days of nervous anticipation, the group boarded a river steamer on the fourth, arriving at the POE several hours later.

The cold, cloudy weather and damp "liquid air" brought little cheer to anyone as they boarded the transport on which they were to spend their next twenty-three days. The "slightly cramped" quarters aboard ship did little to alleviate the blues that night. The next afternoon, amid such heartening remarks as "Golden Gate in '48," the transport's passengers watched the California coast fade into the horizon. We were on our way!

Trying hard to adjust themselves to the rigors of a long voyage, the men found many discomforts to try their patience. When a strong wind whipped up a high swell several days later, most of the "sailors" found their "sea-legs" were rather wobbly and there was much mal-de-mer aboard. They braved the trials of the ship's mess-hall where the food was fair but the heat was stifling. The blazing sun over head offered a nice choice—parboiling below decks in the holds or baking on the "topside." The black-out restrictions were taken in stride. Just before dawn, the early birds walked about the deck with unlit cigarettes ready, waiting for the nasal, slightly accented, "The black-out is over; the smoking lamp is lit; you may smoke on the open deck," which ushered in the dawn of a new day.

ON OUR WAY



Crossing the Equator, a session of the High Court of the Open Seas was called for the purpose of initiating certain unworthy polywogs into the order of the Trusty Shellback. A naval officer and an ARC Girl, as King Neptune and his Queen, presided over the court. The unfortunate blind-folded polywogs were led out singly, introduced to the Royal Baby, the Royal Barber, and then the pool of briny water on the deck.

After twenty-three dehydrating days at sea, the coastal jungles of New Guinea hove into view and every lubber aboard itched to feel that terra-firma under him once more. After the long nights of complete black-out, it seemed funny to see masses of lights and fires along the shoreline after dark.

The group debarked at Cape Sudest, coming ashore in "ducks" and driving to a temporary staging area. For the first few days ashore, the men of the group were "sucker-bait" to all comers, but once duly initiated, they could tell taller tales than the next fellow.

TROPICAL ISLAND



There was no delay in our introduction to the glories of dehydration, bully beef

History

and "C" rations as they were presented the first day ashore. This trial was partially counteracted by an astonishing discovery—contradicting what we had heard in the States—we were to sleep on cots under 6-man pyramidal tents!

We spent seven months on New Guinea—second largest island in the world. At Dobodura we flew our first mission, and, strangely enough, that marked the beginning and ending of our combat operations from that base. We really went to work, however, when the 417th moved baggage and planes to Saidor. Day after day, week in and week out, we struck at Jap strongholds up and down the New Guinea coast. In some dramatic thirty-day period, the group distinguished itself by establishing an enviable number of Fifth Air Force records for light bombers. Previous records in numbers of sorties flown, tonnage of bombs dropped and rounds of ammunition fired, and maintenance percentages went by the boards as the various squadrons operated on an around-the-clock basis.

New Guinea had its lighter sides. The natural beauty of this magnificent island is described in another section of this book devoted to our New Guinea experiences. There were also movies and stage shows and boxing exhibitions, softball parks galore, and the American Red Cross. Fat-cats, flown to Australia, returned loaded down with fresh food and meat, and once—and this is one of our fondest memories—we even had a cup of fresh milk at lunch!

Leaves and furloughs to Australia repaired shattered nerves and worn bodies. Flying personnel and officers were fortunate enough to be allowed to visit Sydney. Ground personnel went to Mackay, Queensland, a nice city of about 15,000 population. We all returned from the mainland agreeing on several things, i.e., the food was superb, the climate excellent, the people sociable, and the women lovely, but certainly not comparable with the beauties we left behind in the good old States. Australia proved to be a very gracious and practical host, and it goes without saying that the association of so many Yanks with the Australians certainly served to cement the mutual bond linking these two great English-speaking countries.

New Guinea was left behind us—or rather, behind some of us—early in September, as part of the group headed north by C-47, A-20 and B-25 to our next station, Noemfoor, located in the Netherlands East Indies. This advance echelon was composed of combat crews and enough ground personnel to service the planes and keep them flying.

Although now stationed close to numerous Jap strongholds, we were raided only once but the type and nature of our missions and the increasing number of casualties we sustained testified as to the greater danger to which we were now exposed.

From this base our planes ranged northwest, south and southwest, hitting enemy shipping and land targets. While we were in the East Indies, General MacArthur struck at Leyte as he opened his campaign to recover the Philippines. We knew it was only a matter of days until the 417th would follow him, and on the 24th of November,

NETHERLANDS
EAST INDIES



History

most of the personnel at Noemfoor boarded a ship heading north, soon to be joined by another ship carrying the personnel and equipment left behind at Saidor, in New Guinea. Combat crews remained at Noemfoor, ready to fly north and join us as soon as we were situated.

For a while it was 6 to 5 take your choice, in the lingo of the hoss-players, as to whether or not we'd reach the Philippines at all. And even after we did arrive there, it was still nip and tuck, round-and-round-we-go as to whether or not we could retain the meagre foothold we had. The 417th is an Air Corps outfit but for brief periods we were also sailors, naval armed guards, infantrymen and assault troops.

Twice we were attacked while in transit to the Philippines. On 5 December Jap dive and torpedo bombers worked our convoy over from about 0900 to dusk. The first plane came over during the breakfast chow hour, and when the general quarters alarm sounded pancakes, mess-kits and canteen cups flew through the air as sundry GI's forgot everything except the one idea of getting down in that hold but quick. But that show was only the prologue. The curtain went up on the main feature on 21 December, when, for two brutal hours, we engaged Japanese air forces in a running battle which lasted from about 1700 in the evening until dark. No one aboard our two ships will ever forget these two hours. Everything in our lives prior to that was relegated to the inconsequential, everything afterwards will automatically be an anti-climax. Such experiences as those are burned indelibly into one's memory, and refuse to be forgotten. In retrospect it all seems like a terrifying dream, but at that time it was grim reality.

We finally landed permanently on the Philippines on 22 December 1944. Moving inland about three miles, we threw up temporary camp, dug strong perimeter defenses, set up .50 caliber ground-machine guns around the group area, and then proceeded to attend to the laborious business of unloading our heavy equipment from our ships.

After about a week we moved into our permanent areas. The 417th was very fortunate in this respect, for we undoubtedly had the finest living area on the island. It wasn't long until pyramidal and squad tents, prefabricated buildings, mess halls and motor pools covered the area. One bright afternoon we looked up and saw a formation of sleek A-20's droning through the skies. The 417th had finally arrived.

The first ten days in the Philippines were, to coin a phrase, "rough." As regular as clock-work, the Jap raiders came over night after night. P-61 night-fighters and the anti-aircraft boys worked overtime, and to their credit it can be said that many of the Jap pilots never returned to that bowl of rice which was undoubtedly waiting for them back home. Fox-holes, deep and elaborate, offered sanctuary during these raids, and Christmas and New Year's eves were largely spent in these excavations dug with blood, sweat, tears and blisters. But our discomfort didn't last long. The U.S. Army and Navy air arms trip-hammered the Japs into complete submission within a

THE PHILIPPINES



LIFE IN THE PHILIPPINES



History

short time, and life soon assumed the routine, comparatively safe character to which we had become so accustomed in New Guinea and the East Indies.

Group Special Services soon had softball, volleyball and baseball fields in operation. A basketball court, especially lighted for night games, was built. We had the finest theatre on the island, so constructed that it could serve as a theatre for stage shows and an arena for boxing exhibitions. Inter-squadron rivalry reached a new high as the various officer's and enlisted men's teams competed in various sports. The Red Cross built a canteen serving cold drinks and dispensing toilet articles and reading material. An attractive chapel was set up, with regularly scheduled Catholic, Protestant and Jewish Services. Each squadron had an officers' club, built by native labor, where dances, parties and card games offered relaxation and diversion.

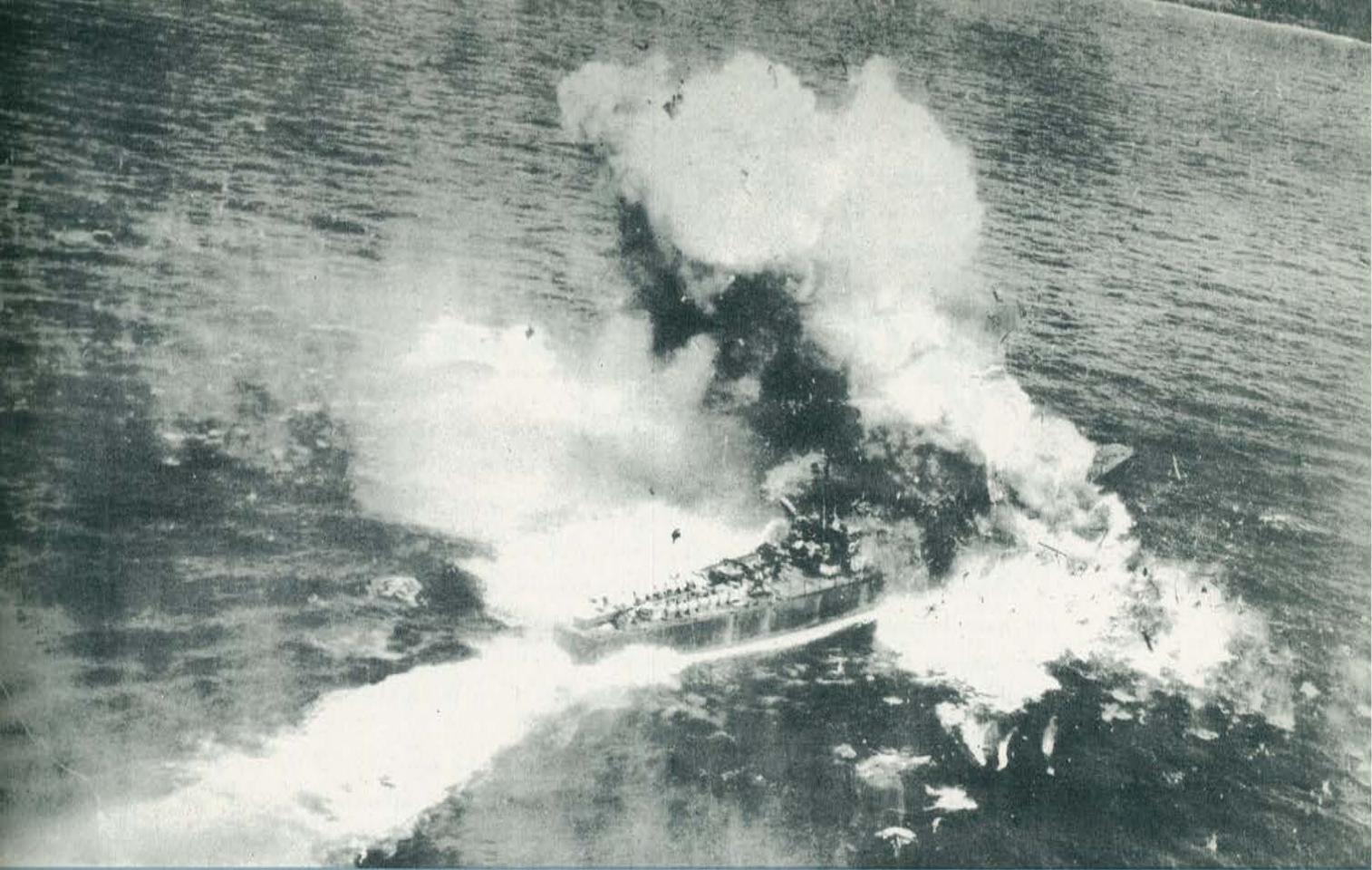
The natives were extremely sociable, generous and cooperative. Impoverished by three years of cruel Jap rule, many of them driven into the hills, they gradually began to rehabilitate themselves with the return of American troops. Supervised by the Philippine Civilian Administrative Unit, native laborers went to work for the American Government in diverse ways. Showing the same spirit and enthusiasm which had characterized free and liberty-loving people for hundreds of years, they are inexorably moving forward as they strive to build a nation patterned after the country which has been their guiding light for more than forty years, the United States.

EPILOGUE

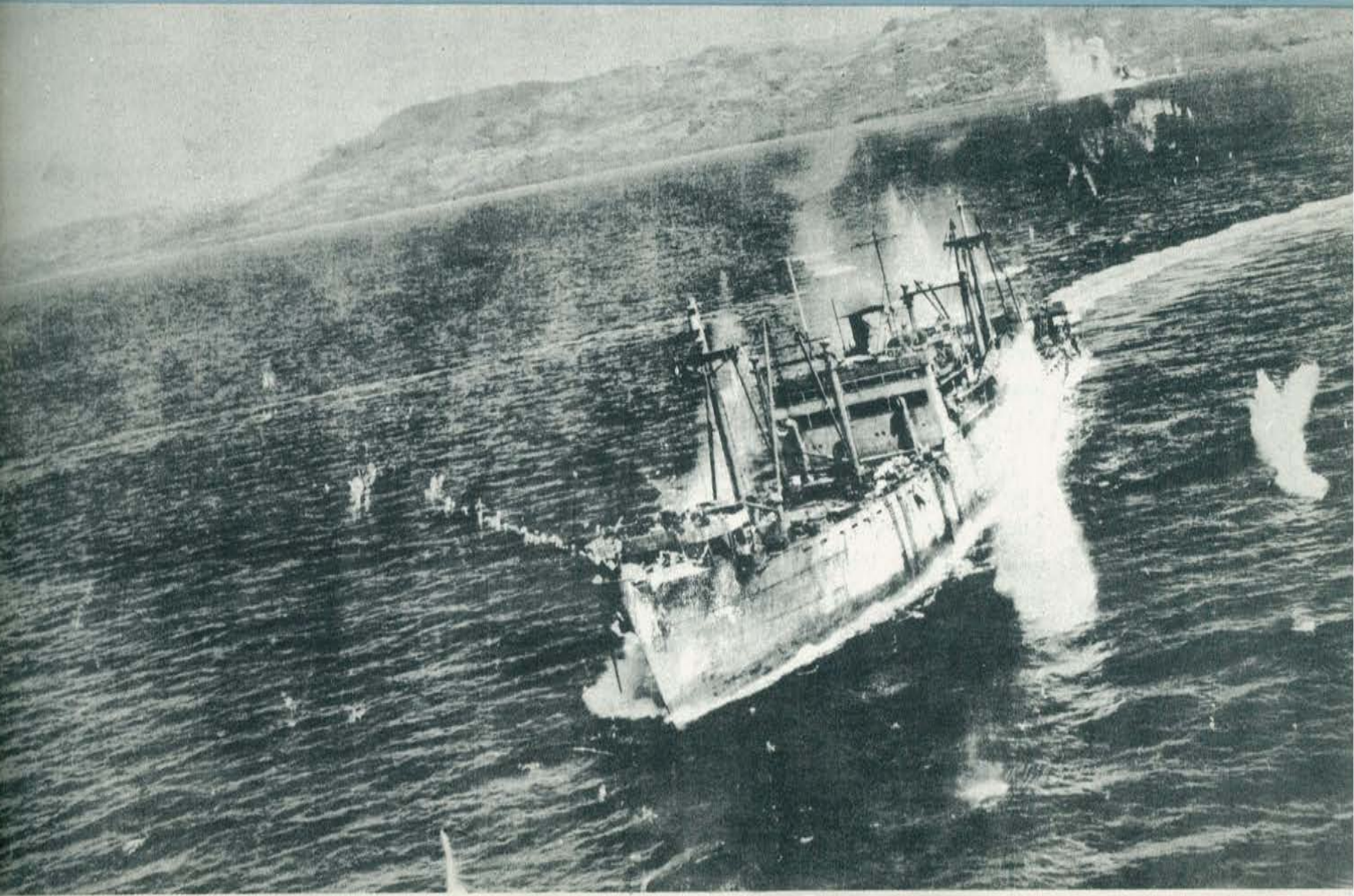


When we reached the Philippines we felt that we were finally doing exactly what the 417th had been destined to do when it was activated more than two years ago. At this writing we are still in the islands, doing our job day in and day out as we play our small part in the defeat of Japan. By the time this book is published we may have moved elsewhere, but no matter what our future, a part of us will always remain in those islands, for it was there that our group finally found and distinguished itself. It was there that we struck the enemy viciously and relentlessly, hitting and hurting him when and where he could least afford it.

Tragedy struck us often. As the missions became increasingly hazardous, our losses increased proportionately. In January 1945 our commanding officer at that time, Lt. Col. Howard S. Ellmore, failed to return after leading formations of A-20's on an important strike against enemy shipping. Many were called upon to make the supreme sacrifice, both in the air and on the ground. To a man they died bravely and courageously, knowing full well that as they died freedom was being born. To their memory we dedicate ourselves. It is our solemn promise to them that we shall hold high the torch which has been thrown to us from their falling hands. It is our duty to continue where they left off, to carry on with determination and confidence, to build out of the ruins of this war a finer, and purer world, a world at eternal peace.



Japanese shipping in Philippine waters under attack by 5th Air Force Bombers



Sky Lancers in Action



IN a year of intensive and far-reaching operations against Japanese bases in the Southwest Pacific Theater, the Sky Lancers of the 417th Bomb Group have contributed a great share in the many Allied offensives against the heart of the enemy and have brought high distinction on themselves in the combat annals of light bombardment aviation. Devastating attacks were relentlessly thrown against Japan's rapidly diminishing Pacific perimeter, all the way from the north-eastern coast of New Guinea to the East Indies and the Philippines.

On the 25th of March 1944, almost one year after the activation of the Group, the first of a continuous series of devastating tree-top level attacks was made at Bunabun Harbor, New Guinea. From that day until the 9th of September practically every enemy strong-hold between Madang and Hollandia was subjected to terrific poundings by our A-20's. The air strips at Hansa Bay, Wewak, But, Dagua, Aitape and Hollandia were kept unserviceable. Huge bomb craters, wrecked Jap airplanes, destroyed towns and villages were mute evidence of our attacks. The Nips were unable to take the offensive either on the ground or in the air, at any time during this period.

On Sunday, the 16th of April, the 417th Sky Lancers, together with many other units of the Fifth Air Force, made a devastating raid against the air strips, aircraft and troop concentrations at Hollandia, Dutch New Guinea. This raid, which resulted in the destruction of 298 Jap planes on the ground and in the air and the annihilation of hundreds of Nip troops, paved the way for the occupation of this strategic base by the Allies.

The Sky Lancers, in support of General MacArthur's strategy of "leap-frogging" the enemy's bases, gave direct ground support to allied troops in their surprise beachhead at Aitape. A perfectly coordinated attack by our A-20's helped immeasurably in gaining control of the air strips.

Early in September, the Group moved to Noemfoor in the Dutch East Indies where it began operations against Jap installations in the Halmaheras, Ceram and Ambon areas. Oil refineries, naval bases, airfields, personnel areas and shipping were hit daily. Here for four months the Group continued to shatter the Jap's air and sea power in this Far Eastern Area and to set back his defenses thousands of miles closer to the homeland of Japan.

Late December, saw the 417th stationed in the Philippines. From its new base, the A-20's were within striking range of all the Jap Philippine defensive positions from Mindanao in the south to Aparri in the north. On every mission our planes struck heavily against choice and lucrative targets. Enemy convoys in the China Sea, loaded with troops and supplies for the garrisons in Luzon, railroad marshalling yards, troop and freight trains, heavily defended airfields—all these were targets which were hit without interruption.

On the 2nd of January 1945, the Sky Lancers in their most successful attack since its first mission, sent to Davy Jones' locker 36,000 tons of Nip shipping including a Freighter, Destroyer Escort and several transports. This set a new record for destruction of shipping by A-20's in the Pacific theater.

In January, the 417th performed so superbly that all our previous records were shattered. Highlighted by a series of spectacular strikes against the enemy, this month was by far the most effective period of our combat operations to date. Heavy blows struck against Japanese shipping and supply routes in the South China Sea and along the west coast of Luzon. Group planes destroyed 30 enemy vessels during January, both warships and transports, totalling 72,800 tons, a serious blow to Jap naval power when the enemy could least afford it. Seven other ships (20,250 tons) were probably destroyed and nine others (18,300 tons) damaged. A total of 111,570 tons of enemy shipping was sunk or damaged.

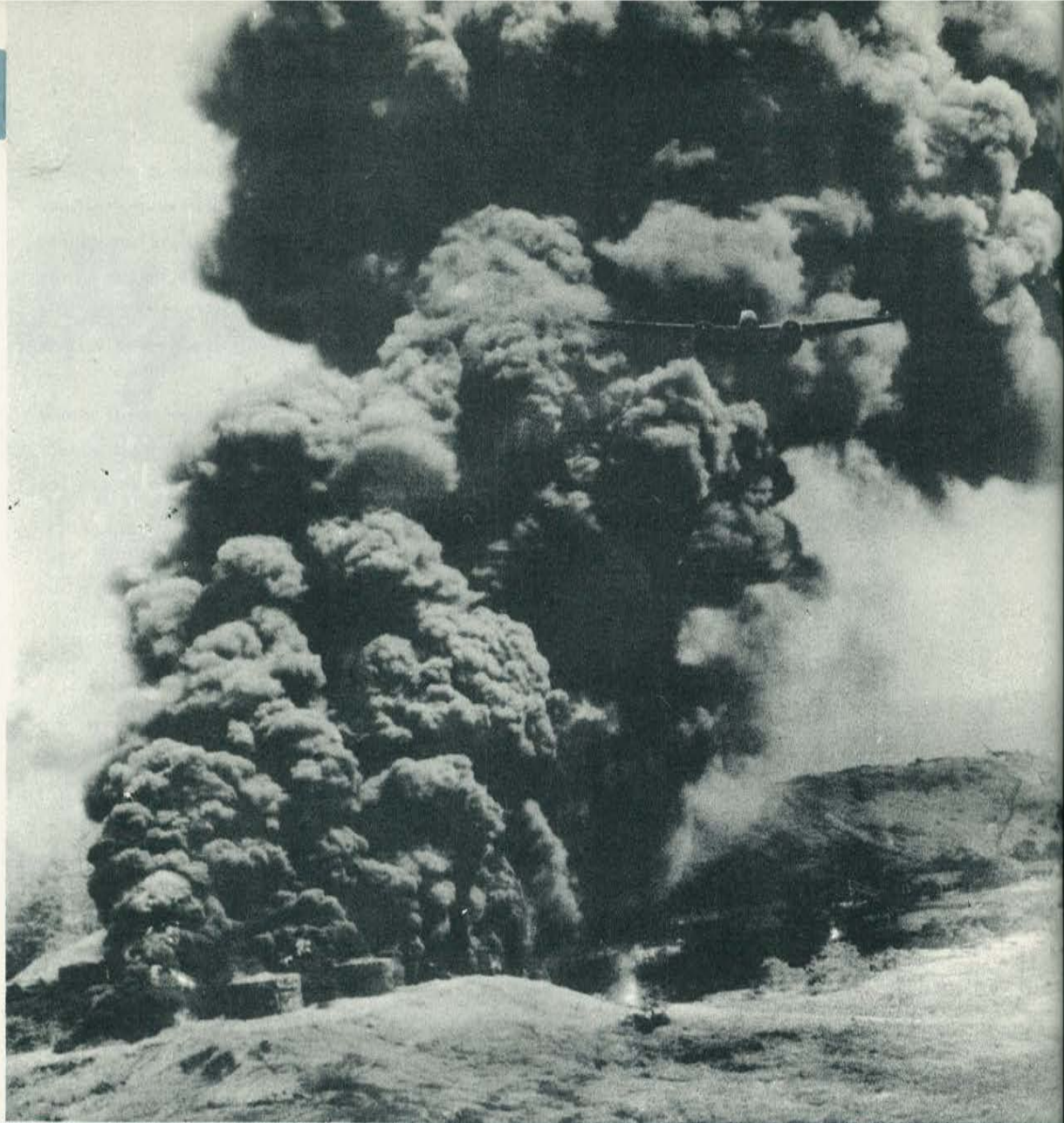
February and March saw the Sky Lancers in the familiar role of air support for ground troops. They struck hard at Clark Field in a mammoth raid, cooperated with ground troops in clearing the path from Lingayen Gulf to Manila, and softened up Bataan and Corregidor for subsequent conquest by the doughboys on the ground. A-20's ranged up and down the coasts of Luzon, seeking out the enemy where ever he was to be found. That we performed our assigned missions to the satisfaction of all concerned is indicated by commendations from higher headquarters, praising the 417th for the manner in which it carried out all assignments.

Statistics tell the story. Through the 20th of March 1945, the Sky Lancers had flown 160 combat missions involving a total of 8,561 sorties. Total combat time for the Group was 29,504 hours. 61,822 bombs were dropped on the enemy, with 59,374 landing within the target areas. The enemy absorbed a grand total of 5,306 tons of bombs and 6,304,006 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition during this time.

These figures are growing daily, and each day finds new destruction wrought upon the enemy. The Sky Lancers are writing their names indelibly among the great Air Force Groups of the Pacific War—and we find in our past achievements inspiration to continue on to new heights.



The Sky Lancers blow
up oil storage tanks,
bridges and buildings



BOELA

LUZON



FABRICA



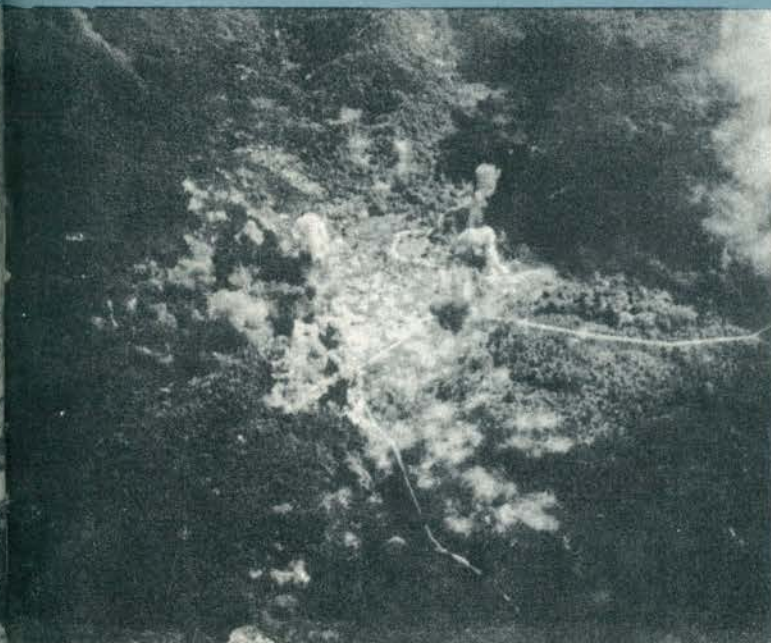
A-20's of the 417th wreck
Jap airfields and
installations by
medium altitude attacks



LAHA

WEWAK VILLAGE

WEWAK POINT





TARLAC

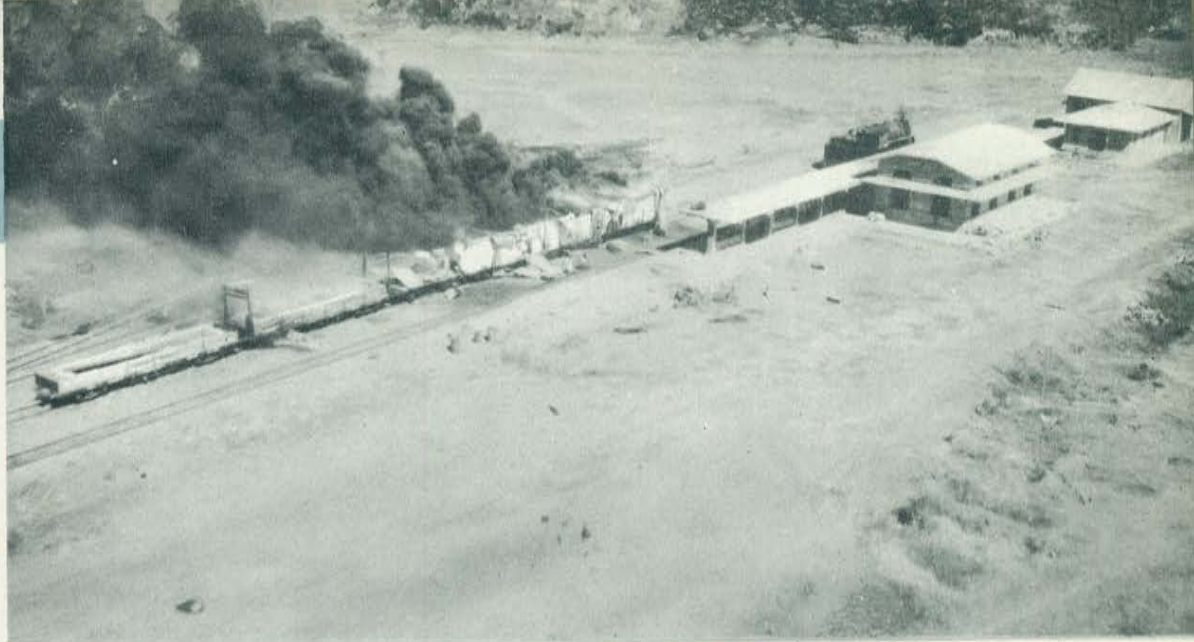
Buildings and freight
trains under attack

PALAWAN



CEBU

LUZON



Jap air power
and communication
facilities destroyed

CLARK FIELD

LINGAYEN





TARLAC



LAOAG

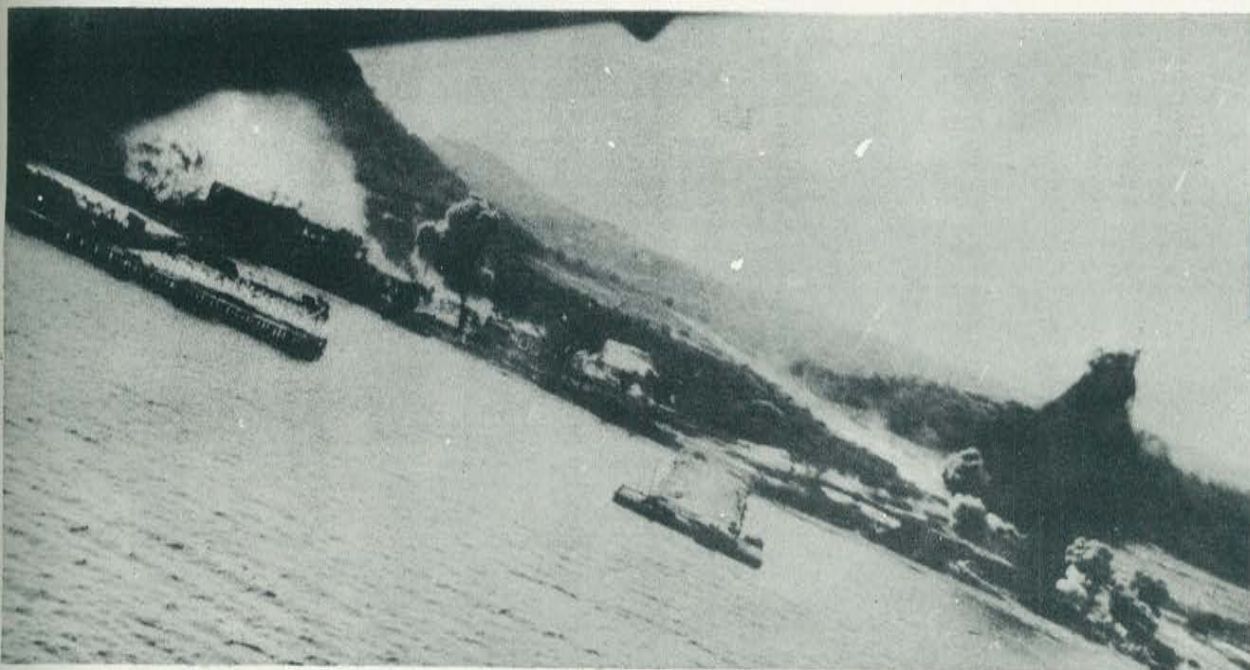


CORREGIDOR

SAN JOSE, LUZON



MARIVELES HARBO



BATAAN



COMMENDATIONS

HEADQUARTERS
V BOMBER COMMAND

2 January 1945

SUBJECT: Letter of Commendation.

TO : All Personnel, 417th Bombardment Group (L).

1. Let me convey my congratulations to all pilots and crews on the destruction of enemy convoy on 29 December 1944. The superb manner in which this mission was carried out by the 417th Bombardment Group (L) under adverse conditions indicates a high degree of training and teamwork.

s J. V. Crabb
t J. V. CRABB,
Brig. General, USA,
Commanding.

12 January 1945.

SUBJECT: Letter of Commendation.

TO : Commanding Officer, 417th Bombardment Group (L).

1. I extend my sincere congratulations to you, your combat crews and all other personnel following, your superb strike against the Nip Air Force on 7 January 1945. By hitting him in the Clark Field Area where he had centralized much of his striking force we were able to reduce his strength to almost nothing. Information obtained since our landing on the shores of Lingayen Gulf proves beyond doubt that greatly because of your brand of effort, the landing proceeded most successfully. All of us at Bomcom Headquarters are particularly proud to belong to an organization composed of such fine courageous men as yours.

s J. V. Crabb
t J. V. CRABB,
Brig. General, USA,
Commanding.

17 February, 1945.

SUBJECT: Letter of Commendation.

TO : Commanding Officer, 417th Bombardment Group.

1. I wish to commend all personnel of your group for the excellent strike against Corregidor and Caballo Islands on the morning of 16 February, 1945.

2. This strike was particularly well coordinated and timed, and shows that a particular effort was made in the planning and execution of this mission. This strike against the enemy was most successful, and this headquarters has received many favourable comments from higher headquarters relative to the manner in which it was carried out. Such splendid coordination between our land, sea, and air forces has resulted in extensive destruction to the enemy in the past, and will assure final and definite victory for our team.

3. Please convey to all personnel my personal appreciation of their excellent work in connection with this highly successful strike.

s J. V. Crabb
t J. V. CRABB,
Brig. General, USA,
Commanding.

the 417th



Sky Lancers



LT. COL. ROBERT M. NELSON
Deputy Group Commander



LT. COL. CHARLES W. JOHNSON
Group Operations Officer



Personnel



LT. COL. BLACKHURST



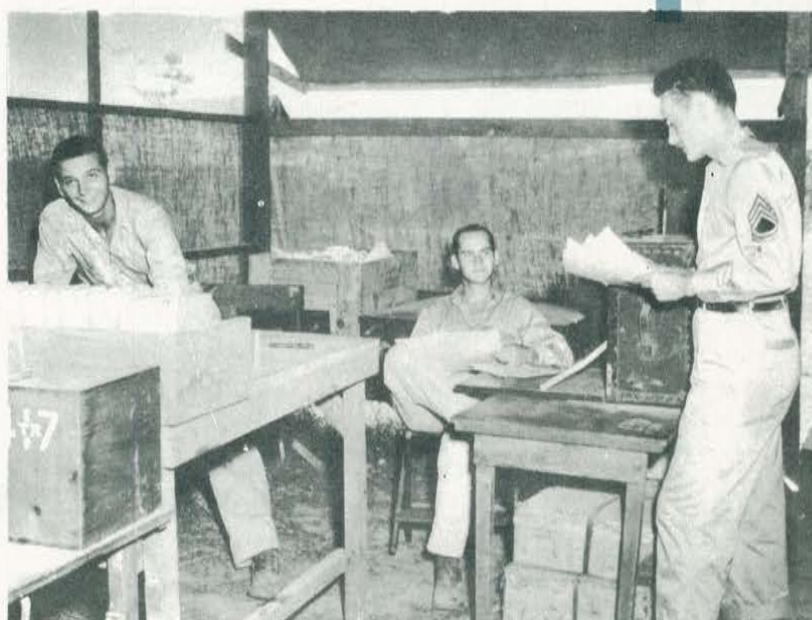
MAJOR EWBANK



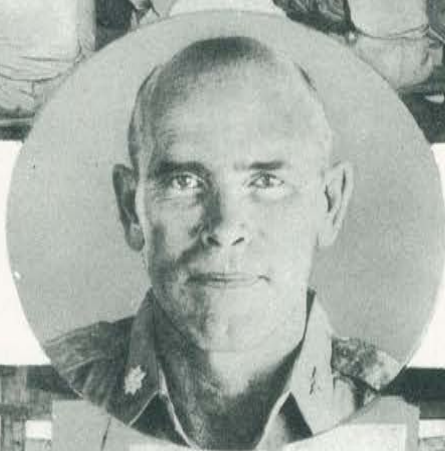
M/SGT. FEINGRESH



M/SGT. DAVIS



Intelligence



MAJOR CLEVES



CAPT. KEANE



LT. CHICKANZEFF



LT. WOODIN



M/SGT. PAYNE

Operations



CAPT. RUSDAHL



LT. LaBARRE



CAPT. LINGO



LT. CRONIN



M/SGT. OPEL

Supply and Statistical



CAPT. BARBER



T/SGT. WICKERSHAM



CAPT. EVANS



T/SGT. LEONARD

Tech Inspectors



CAPT. Di NAPOLI



CAPT. SELLMAN



CAPT. BAUR



T/SGT. WRIGHT



T/SGT. FARIAS

Communications



MAJ. FLATHMANN



M/SGT. HOGGARD



Transportation



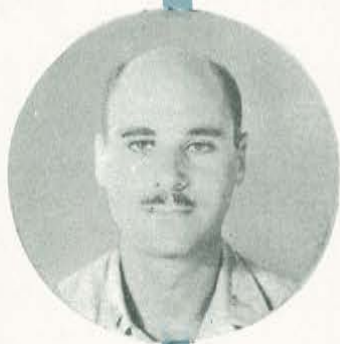
T/SGT. LILES





S/SGT. DRACCA

Medics



CAPT. PRICE



CAPT. BERLINER



T/SGT. BECK



Information and Education



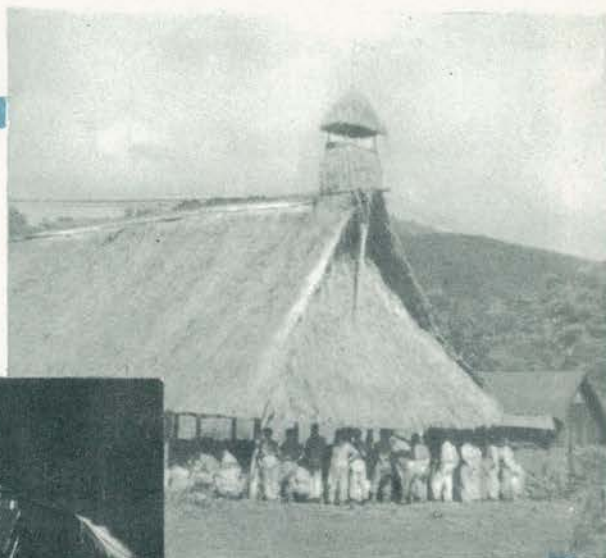
W. O. BRADLEY
P.W.B. Officer



Chaplain



CHAPLAIN ROARK



The Chapel at Saidor



CHAPLAIN JOHNS



Chapel in the Philippines



CAPT. WILLIAMS



S/SGT. BESSETTE

Red Cross



MR. STICKLE

Coffee and . .



Coffee Hour



Coke Time

Stickle's Emporium



Dobodura

After the Mission





At the Ol' Ball Game

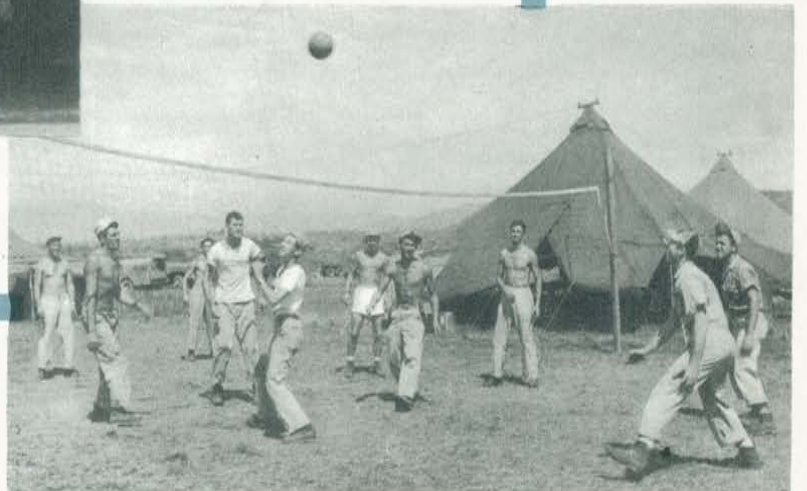


The Band Plays on

LT. TEITELBAUM



Jumpin' Jive



Afternoon Activity

Special Service



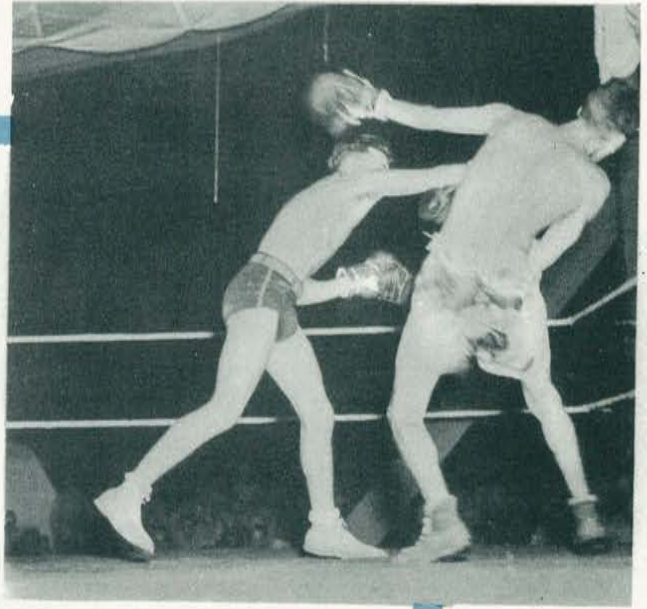
Try this Sometime!

Golden Gloves Stuff





R-R-Roosha



K. O. Punch



The Producers



Shades of "The Voice"

Special Service

Barber Shop Quartet



Andrews Sisters



Concerto!



Tommy Dorsey Stuff



Special Service



Whatta Game!



Capacity House



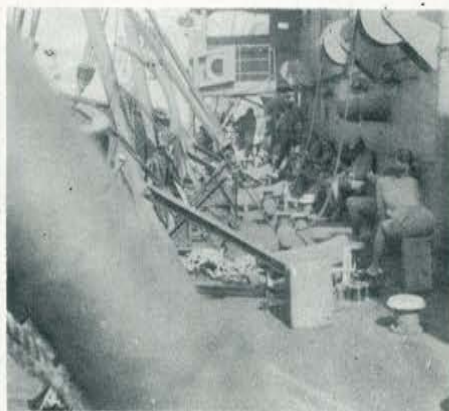
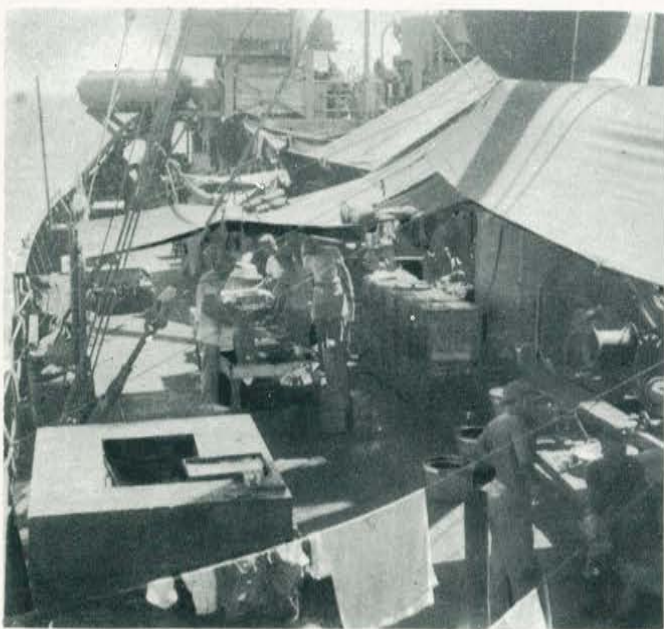
Sockol



A Homer!

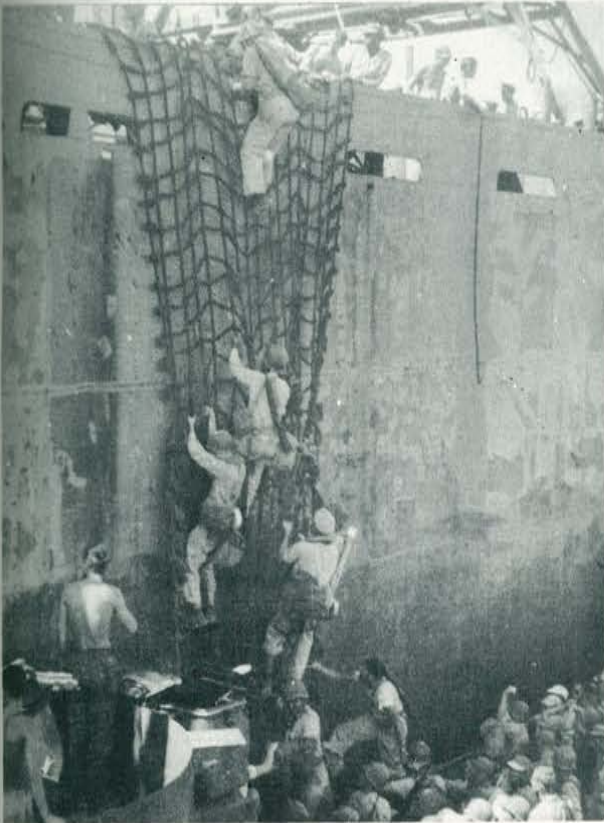
Informal

.. Before the Fireworks Began!



Informal

Also before!



Informal



Capt. Dorton—Colonel Lee—Colonel Saunders



"When good fellows get together."



Tonsorial ingenuity?



This ain't the Army!



Col. Lindbergh—Major Jackson—Col. Ellmore



More Mailmen!





Headquarters Roster

- Allen, Willis L.**, T/Sgt, Allentown, Georgia
Autuori, Louis, Sgt, 6707-17th Avenue, Brooklyn, New York
Baker, Cecil N., Sgt, 1539 Monroe Street, Omaha, 7, Nebraska
Barber, Louis E., Cpt, 103 North Osceola Avenue, Clearwater, Florida
Barnhill, David C., M/Sgt, East Wabash Avenue, Crawfordsville, Indiana
Battista, Anthony R., S/Sgt, 442 17th Street, Niagara Falls, New York
Baur, Willim F., Capt, 135 South 19th Avenue, Maywood, Illinois
Beck, Gilbert L., T/Sgt, 927 North Park Street, Fairmont, Minnesota
Berger, Charles C., Cpl, Olive, California
Berliner, Sidney S., Capt, 856 Highland Avenue, Benton Harbor, Michigan
Bessette, Lionel J., T/Sgt, South Wood Street, Chicago, Illinois
Blackhurst, James W., Lt Col, 3406 Bate-man Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland
Blanda, Joseph J., Pic, 14 Vicksburg Street, South Boston, Massachusetts
Booth, Howard T., Cpl, 33 Allview Avenue, South Norwalk, Connecticut
Born, Paul S., M/Sgt, 501 Oliver Street, Covington, Kentucky
Bowers, Charles H., Sgt, 1127 Forrest Avenue, Gadsden, Alabama
Brown, Clyde R., Cpl, 5427½ Atlantic Avenue, Long Beach, California
Buhl, Francis M., S/Sgt, 2510 East Francis Avenue, Spokane, Washington
Cameron, James D., Sgt, 906 Agricola Avenue, East Gadsden, Alabama
Campbell, Frank L., T/Sgt, 714 Depot Street, Youngwood, Pennsylvania
Carrier, Vergil, M/Sgt, Amite, Louisiana
Chickanzeff, John L., 1st Lt, 972 Manzanita Street, Los Angeles, California
Cicmil, Mike, Cpl, Box 321, Carson Lake, Minnesota
Cleves, William B., Maj, 2253 Hollister Terrace, Glendale, California
Couch, Willie L., Pfc, 501 Ray Street, Coalgate, Oklahoma
Cronin, Thomas A., 1st Lt, 137 East 33rd Street, New York, New York
Crowley, Austin J., Pfc, 17157 Vaughan, Detroit, Michigan
Crummer, Robert J., Sgt, Sunshine Star Route, Kellogg, Idaho
Davis, James G., F/Sgt, 2914 S.E. McCockle Avenue, Charleston, W. Va.
DiNapoli, Tony, Capt, Grandview Ave., Tiltonville, Ohio
Dolham, Robert E., Cpl, 2 Main Street, Thomaston, Maine
Dorton, Randall M., Jr., Capt, 34 25th Avenue, San Francisco, California
Dracca, Michael A., S/Sgt, 522 West MacDonald Street, Joliet, Illinois
Drayton, Henry H., Sgt, 920 East Adams Street, Jacksonville, Florida
Eggersgluss, Ralph H., Cpl, Box 506, Buffalo, Minnesota
Ellmore, Howard S., Col, 4318 Shore Drive, Sreveport, Louisiana
Emerson, Homer D., Cpl, 1512 Jones Street, Fortworth, Texas
Erickson, Elmer S., S/Sgt, Rt 1, Lake Odessa, Michigan
Evans, Eldred W., Capt, 5806 Anita Street, Dallas, Texas
Ewbank, William L., Maj, 814 Merchant Street, Emporia, Kansas
Fairfield, Randall W., S/Sgt, 707 Center Avenue, Janesville, Wisconsin
Farias, Jesse E., T/Sgt, 222 Kendrick, San Antonio, Texas
Feingersh, Harry, M/Sgt, 2010 Polk Street, Houston, Texas
Fernandez, Lloyd V., Pic, 220 South Mill Street, Santa Paula, California
Ferrell, Oscar B., Pfc, Route 1, Cunningham, Tennessee
Fidel, Jack, Cpl, 2511 Surf Avenue, Brooklyn, New York
Flathamm, Harry O., Maj, 405 Enston Avenue, Charleston, South Carolina
Frease, Sylvester M., Cpl, Rt 5, Box 491, Evansville, Indiana
Fritz, Theodore E., S/Sgt, Pelican Rapids, Minnesota
Glogower, Sol, Sgt, 2137 Clinton Avenue, Bronx, New York

Headquarters Roster

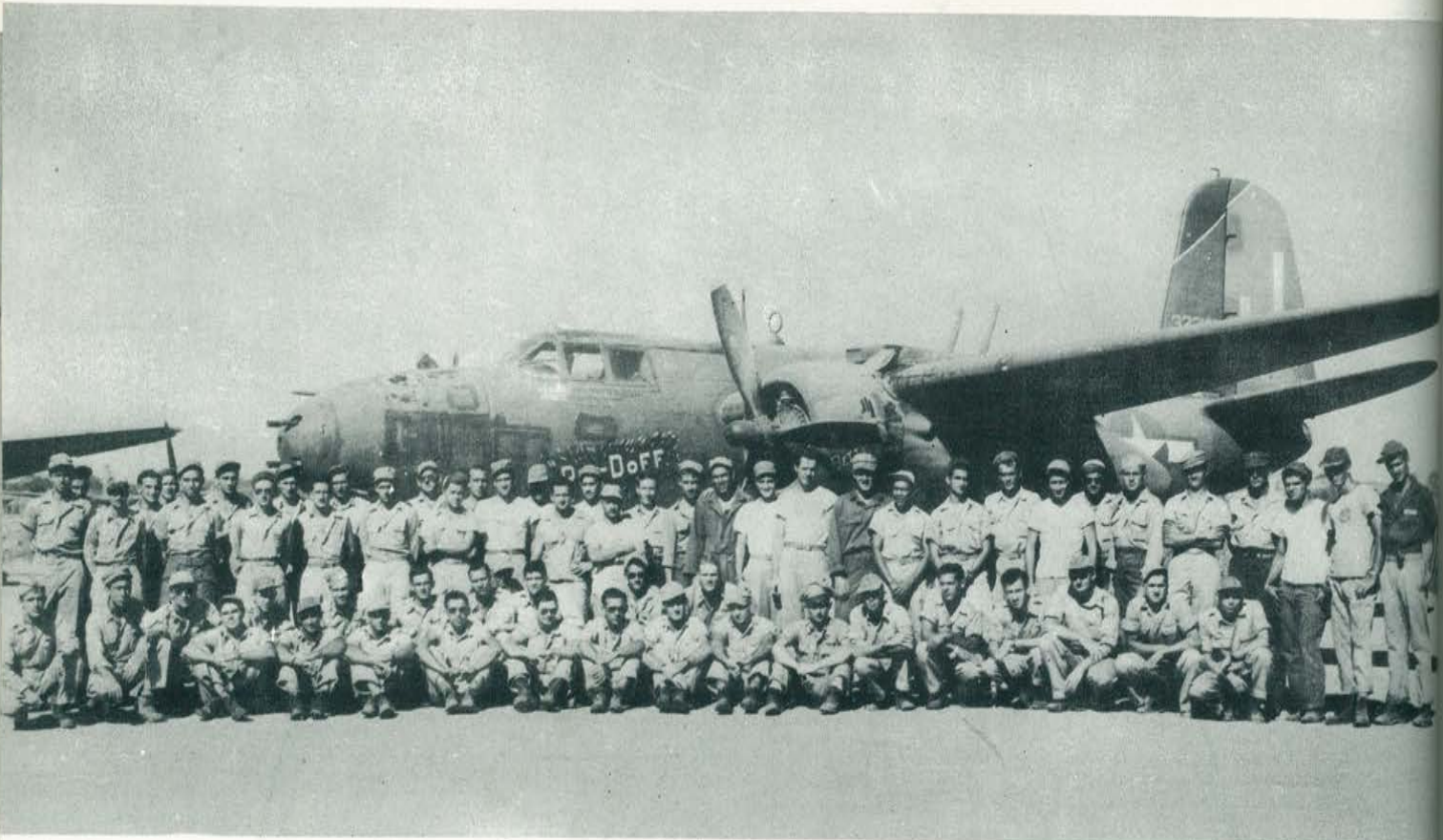
- Graham, Malcolm J., Capt, 2204 N. W. 4th Avenue, Mineral Wells, Texas
- Green, Lawrence, Pfc, 607 East Woodin, Dallas, Texas
- Greene, Warren A., T/Sgt, 88 Hartford Avenue, Wethersfield, Connecticut
- Grieco, Joseph R., Sgt, 2958 Harrison Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio
- Griffin, Clyde M., Sgt, Route 1, Clyde, Texas
- Griffin, Jessie F., Pfc, Box 487, Bay Harbor, Florida
- Haley, Oscar C., Pfc, 5 N. 7th Street, Millville, New Jersey
- Harder, Raymond, Pfc, 624 28th Street, San Bernardino, California
- Harmon, Charles W., Sgt, 511 Crawford Street, Arkadelphia, Arkansas
- Heise, Robert S., S/Sgt, 15 Dean Street, Annapolis, Maryland
- Hendrix, Henry L., Pfc, Rt 1, Box 807, East Moline, Illinois
- Henson, Andrew T., Cpl, Broadlands, Illinois
- Hill, George A., Pfc, 107 W. Harvey Street, Ely, Minnesota
- Hoggard, Floyd, M/Sgt, New Castle, Texas
- Howson, Virgel A., Pfc, 502 Townsend Street, Midland, Michigan
- James, Lennie T., Cpl, 603 Arcadia Avenue, Winston Salem, N. C.
- Johns, Earl F., Capt, 3215 Mitchell Avenue, St. Joseph, Missouri
- Johnson, Charles W., Lt Col, Roff, Oklahoma
- Johnson, Milton W., Lt Col, Roff, Oklahoma
- Johnson, George A., S/Sgt, 2453 Main Street, Lawrenceville, New Jersey
- Kane, Theodore W., Sgt, 142 Hillcrest Avenue, Geneva, New York
- Keane, Paul A., Capt, 12 Thetford Avenue, Dorchester, Massachusetts
- Kelter, Walter J., S/Sgt, 49 Robinson Street, W. Lynn, Massachusetts
- Kerrigan, Thomas F., T/Sgt, 11-19 Seaman Avenue, New York City, N.Y.
- King, Clement E., S/Sgt, Box 334, Gambier, Ohio
- LaBarre, Kenneth A., 1st Lt, 35-31 221 Street, Bayside, Long Island, N.Y.
- LaBrie, Jack V., Pvt, 1327 Dwight Way, Berkeley, California
- Lang, William B., S/Sgt, 307 Forest Avenue, Jamestown, New York
- Larson, Jack E., 1st Lt, 2161 S. Owasso, Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Lawrence Clifford E., Pfc, Hay Springs, Nebraska
- Lazenby, James E., Maj, 2811 Adams Avenue, Ogden, Utah
- Leonard, Leo P., T/Sgt, 212 Western Avenue, Findlay, Ohio
- Madden, James D., Sgt, Rt 1, Walnut Grove, Mississippi
- Magee, Jefferson D., Jr., Maj, 619 N. Jackson, Glendale, California
- Mango, Howard T., Cpl, 1223 Elm Avenue, Brooklyn, New York
- Markham, J. B., Pfc, Box 39, Kilgore, Texas
- McMurtry, Cecil A., Pfc, Rt 1, Naylor, Missouri
- Meadors, Boyd Q., Cpl, Hally Hill, Kentucky
- Mendoza, Ernest R., Pfc, Sasp Amco, Texas
- Meyer, Charles J., Sgt, 2408 Windsor Avenue, Dubuque, Iowa
- Miller, Stanley R., Pfc, Rt 1, Bridgeton, Pennsylvania
- Mount, Ira C., Jr., T/Sgt, 8044 233rd Street, Bellerose, New York
- Nelson, Robert M., Lt Col, 237 N. Garfield Avenue, Peoria, Illinois
- Opel, Edward H., M/Sgt, 4242 -Flora Avenue, Kansas City, Missouri
- Owen, William F., Lt Col, 1559 Crest Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio
- Payne, Edwin B., M/Sgt, 804 Elmwood, Kansas City, Missouri
- Pereira, Leonard, Sgt, 26 Blake Street, Buffalo, New York
- Peterson, George K., S/Sgt, 909 E. Sheridan Street, Warsaw, Indiana
- Petran, Lawrence W., Sgt, 509 S. 4th Street, Aberdeen, South Dakota
- Porter, Robert T., Cpl, 2710 Dartmouth Avenue, St. Petersburg, Florida
- Price, Leonard, Capt, 1282 Arthur Street, Muskegon, Michigan
- Prothro, William B., Pvt, 423 East 7th, Holdenville, Oklahoma
- Ramey, Lee O., S/Sgt, Beaver, Ohio
- Reber, Robert D., T/Sgt, 1127 Queen Street, Pottstown, Pennsylvania
- Regdon, Alexander A., 1st Lt, Box 338, Terrace, Pennsylvania
- Rini, August T., Capt, 3618 Yoakum, Houston, Texas
- Roark, Harry M., Capt, 1213 Beech Street, Duncan, Oklahoma
- Rockfield, Max, Pfc, 183 Jaret Street, Brooklyn, New York
- Rusdahl, Kenneth L., Capt, 505 N. 26th Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- Salemi, Anthony A., Pfc, 1836-59th Street, Brooklyn, New York
- Santaiti, Charles W., Cpl, 1234 Rhode Island Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C.
- Scott, James L., Pfc, 814 Church Lane, Yeadon, Pennsylvania
- Sedivy, Benjamin P., Cpl, 4694 Hartell Street, Baumont, Texas
- Sellman, Robert A., Capt, 1541 N.W. 34th, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
- Shobe, Russell J., Pfc, 811½ West Douglas, Wichita, Kansas
- Short, Ray D., Pfc, Rt 1, Thalia, Texas
- Silverstein, Jack, S/Sgt, 8636 23rd Ave., Brooklyn, New York
- Staege, Leroy E., Pfc, 1525 S. 21st Lt., Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- Stephenson, Basil H., Cpl, Parnell, Kentucky
- Stoumbaugh, Andrew F., T/Sgt, (Crocker, Missouri
- Tanguay, Robert M., Cpl, 63 Forest Street, River Rouge, Michigan
- Taylor, Ralph E., S/Sgt 907 S. Virginia Avenue, Marion, Illinois
- Teitelbaum, Abraham L., 1st Lt, 177 Chiswick Road, Brighton, Mass.
- Thornton, Richard T., Cpl, Harvey Street, Fountain City, Tennessee
- Tilton, Robert H., S/Sgt, 488-8th Avenue, Troy, New York
- Tome, Frank, Sgt, 662 S. 62nd Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- Trainor, Donald R., Sgt, 247 11th Street, S.E., Washington, D.C.
- Tromey, Carlos G., S/Sgt, 3339 Werk Road, Cincinnati, Ohio
- Trotta, John J., S/Sgt, 1707 Race Street, Cincinnati, Ohio
- Vetrano, Henry G., Pfc, 1222 Sunset Avenue, Asbury Park, New Jersey
- Vick, Joe, Sgt, Route 4, Muldrow, Oklahoma
- Wald, Leslie H., S/Sgt, 207½ N. Dirch Street, Santa Ana, California
- Waller, Gwyn L., Pfc, Wentzville, Missouri
- Watkins, Jess A., S/Sgt, 1010 N. Walnut Street, Litchfield, Illinois
- Watson, Aubrey J., Pvt, Rt 2, Mt. Orab, Ohio
- Welser, Richard L., Sgt, 895 Ada Street, Akron, Ohio
- Wickersham, Jesse L., T/Sgt, 225½ N.E. 7th Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
- Wilk, Harry W., S/Sgt, 2629 Pemberton Dr., Houston, Texas
- Williams, Cloyd A., Pfc, Rt 1, Depay, Kentucky
- Williams, Joseph A., 1st Lt, 415 W. Maple Street, Johnson City, Tennessee
- Wilshusen, Harry, Sgt, Georgia and Suburban Avenue, Ferguson, Missouri
- Wilson, Harry A., Jr., S/Sgt, 819 Third Street, Ann Harbor, Michigan
- Woodin, Kenneth J., 2nd Lt, 77-12 35th Avenue, Jackson Heights, New York
- Wright, Joseph G., T/Sgt, 746 Linnard Street, Baltimore, Maryland
- Liles, William L., T/Sgt, 2717 N. "J" Street, Ft. Smith, Arkansas
- Lingo, Jack W., Capt, Box 396, Rt 2, Bothell, Washington



672nd Squadron

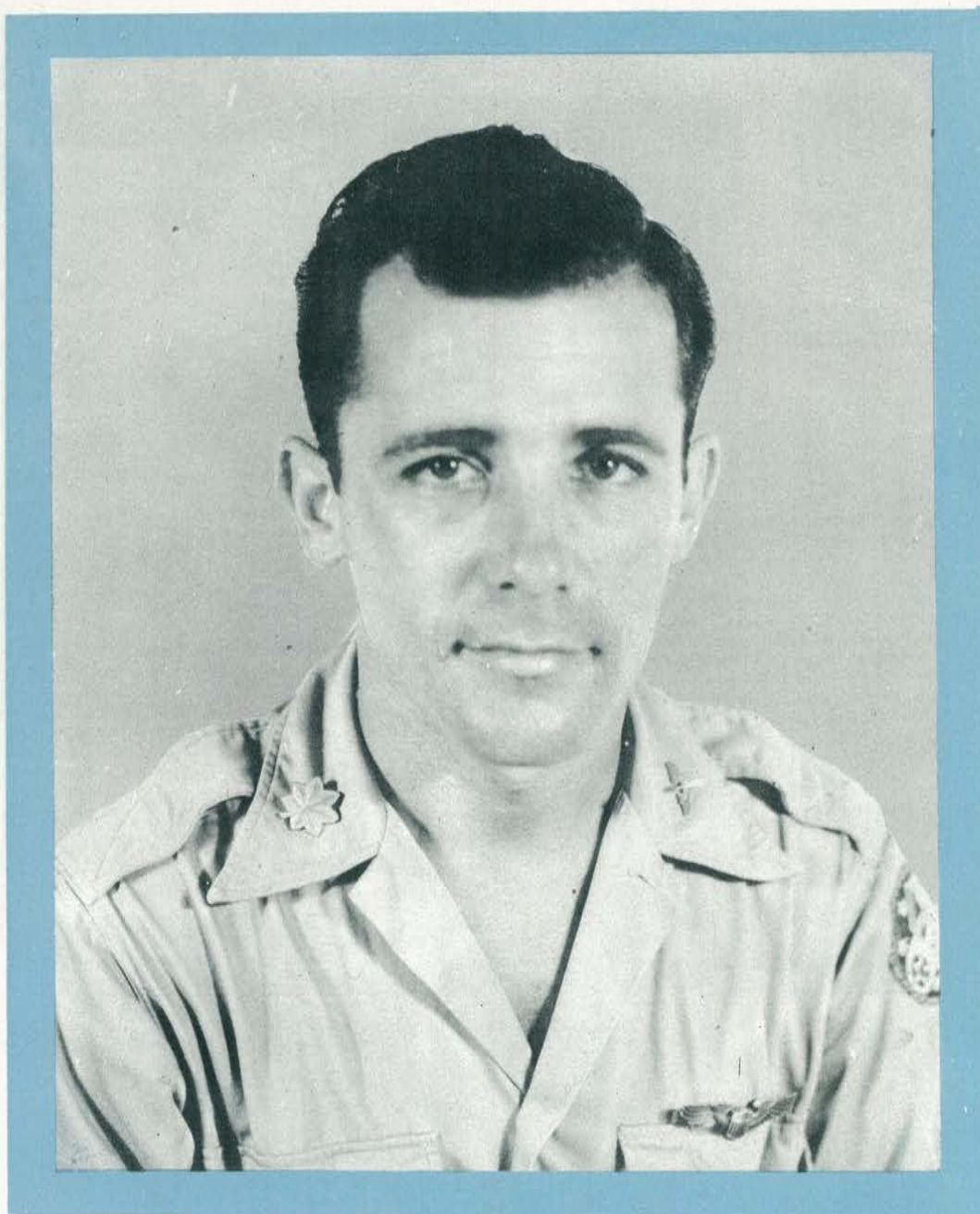


"Tomahawks"



672nd COMBAT PERSONNEL





MAJOR ROBERT H. KRUMLAUF
Commanding Officer



Personnel



CAPT. ELLIS



F/SGT. ASHMORE



CAPT. LINDBLAD



CAPT. BRIED



S/SGT. FOSTER

Operations



CAPT. LUND



S/SGT. KRAMER



CAPT. STUART



Transportation and Supply



L.T. MERCER



S/SGT. BENNETT



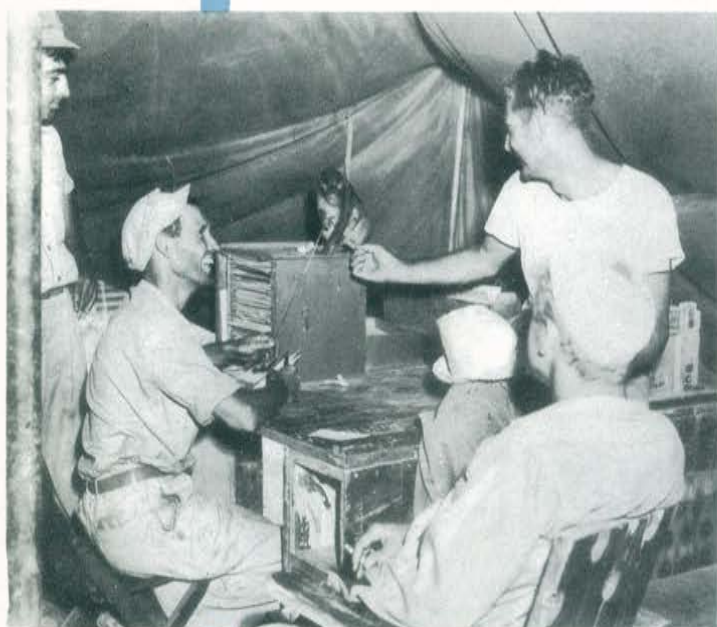
S/SGT. HARPER



Engineering



CAPT. FINLON



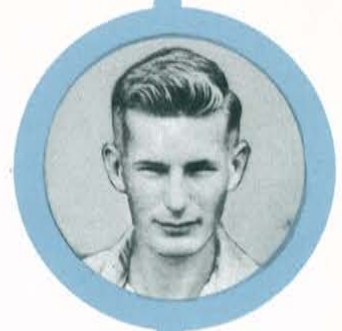
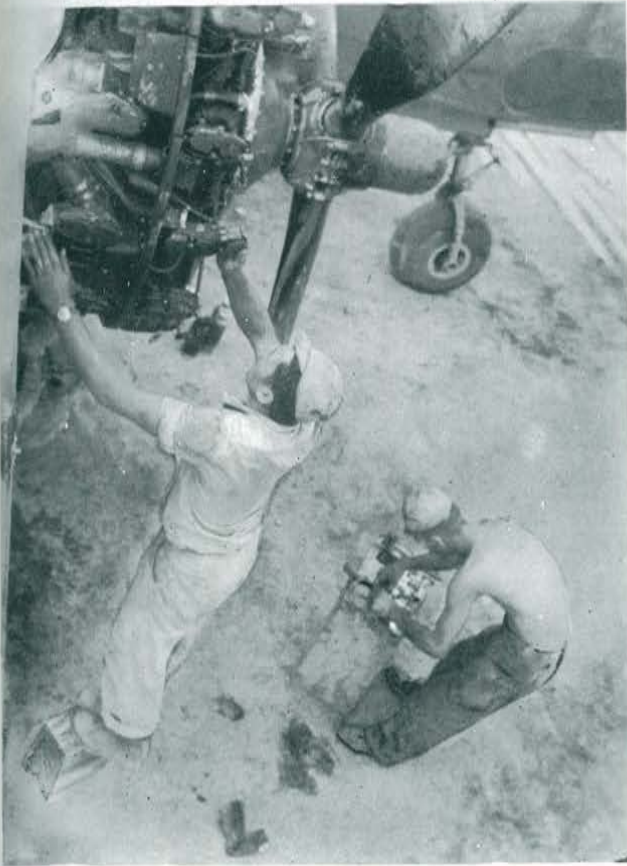
LT. McKENNA



Engineering



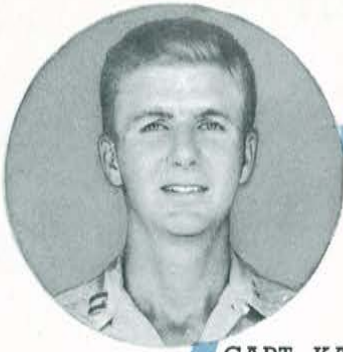
M/SGT. MATULA



S/SGT. JACKSON



Armament

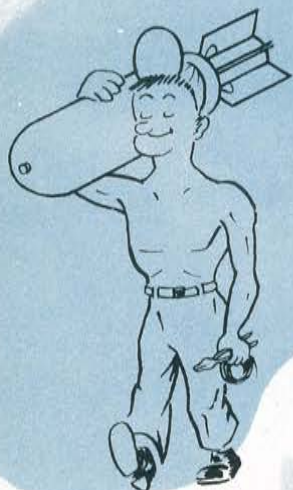


CAPT. KAISER



M/SGT. CUTLER





LT. DAVIES

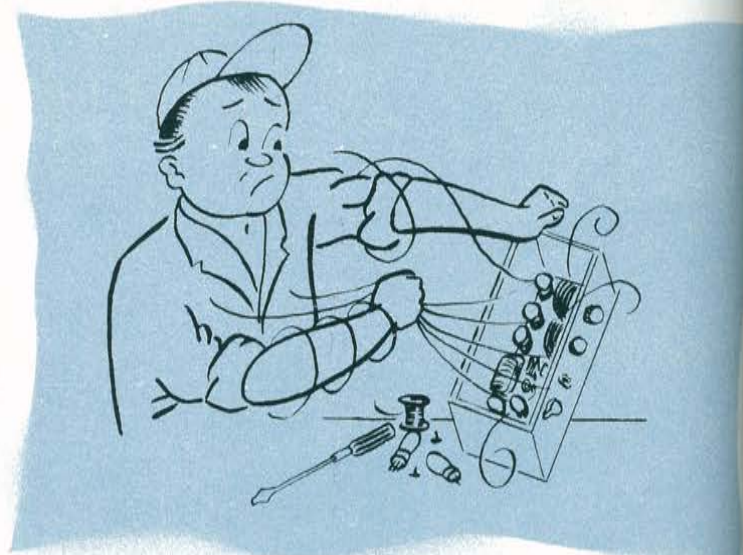


T/SGT. ANTONETTE

Communications



CAPT. BLISS



T/SGT. LUKER





S/SGT. FRIER



Medics



CAPT. HEALY



S/SGT. NEWELL



The Lady Beautiful



Poultry Producers



Three Yanks and a Yank!



Housing Project



Jap Souvenirs

Combat Crews



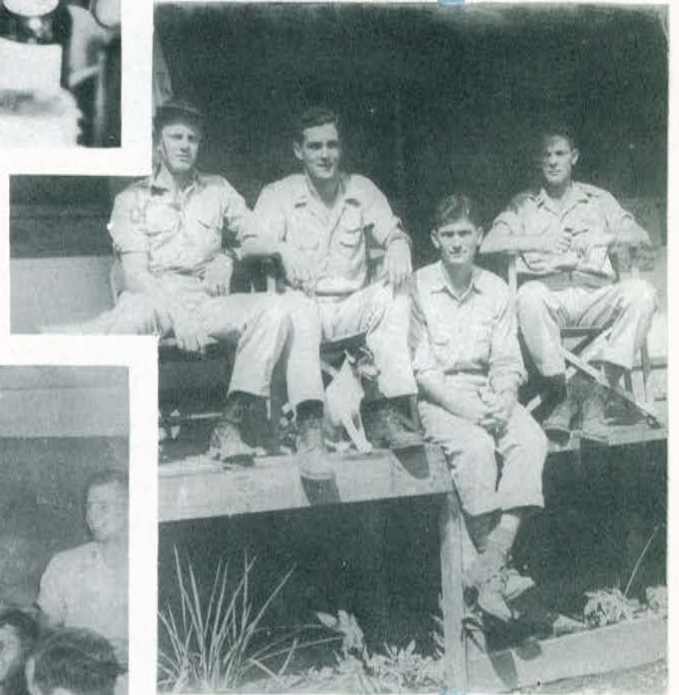
Combat Crews



Officers' Club



Officers' Club









Country Gentlemen



Another Mission Completed



If You Could Only Cook . . .



It's a Rough War!



Surf Sailors



Mail Call



Fore!



Portrait of a Problem in Pinochle



Boys will be Girls!



Cock Fight



672nd Squadron Roster

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673rd Squadron



"Flyin' Cowboys"



673rd COMBAT PERSONNEL





MAJOR WILLIAM T. DOUTHWAITE, JR.
Commanding Officer



Personnel

CAPT. CRAWFORD



F/SGT. WHEATLEY



CAPT. ANDERSON





CAPT. ADAMS



S/SGT. RADOMSKI



LT. LARSON



Operations



LT. JENNINGS



S/SGT. HICKMAN

CAPT. WORSHAM



Transportation and Supply



LT. HOLBERT



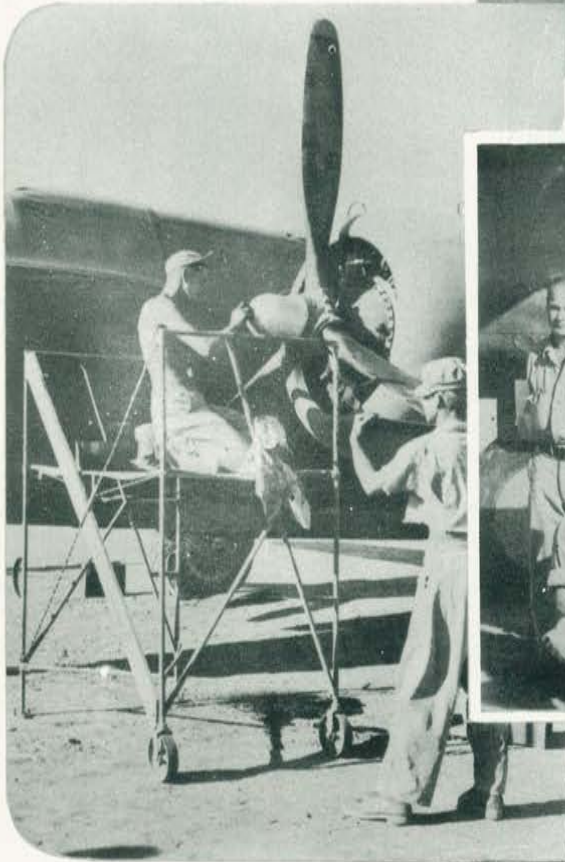
S/SGT. FRANCE



Engineering



M/SGT. LLOYD



SGT. BRIC



Engineering



CAPT. KLOPP



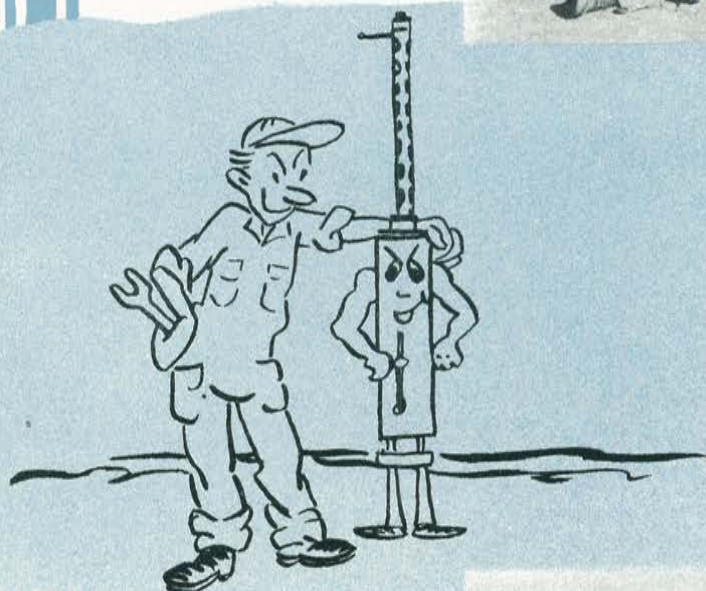
M/SGT. MORRISON



Armament



CAPT. WOLFF



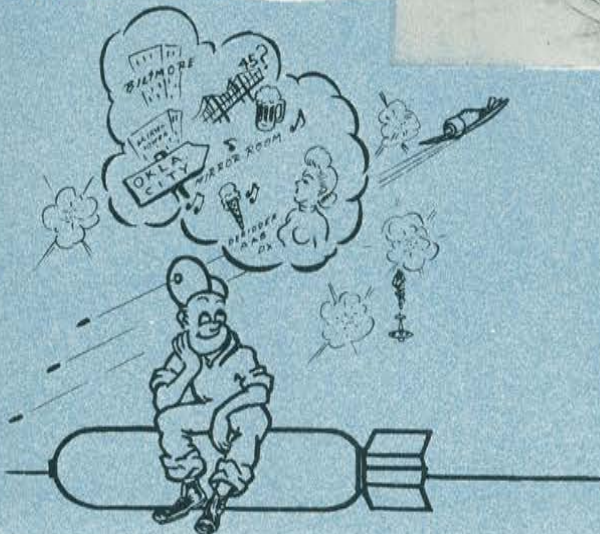
M/SGT. WOLFE



Ordnance



LT. WALKER



T/SGT. PALKA



Communications



LT. DUDENHOFFER



M/SGT. HUTCHISON





S/SGT. BLACKBURN



Medics



CAPT. OLECHOWSKI



S/SGT. SPIEGEL





The Smith Brothers—sans beard—No?



Bull Session!



Now this is the way we did it . . .



"B & G" Fancy Laundry



Combat Crews



Combat Crews







Officers' Club



Officers' Club



Informal

The "Ole Man!"



Beer Call!



Men at Work

All Clear!



"Waldorf Grill"—P. I. Style



Steady now . . . hold that pose!



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674th Squadron

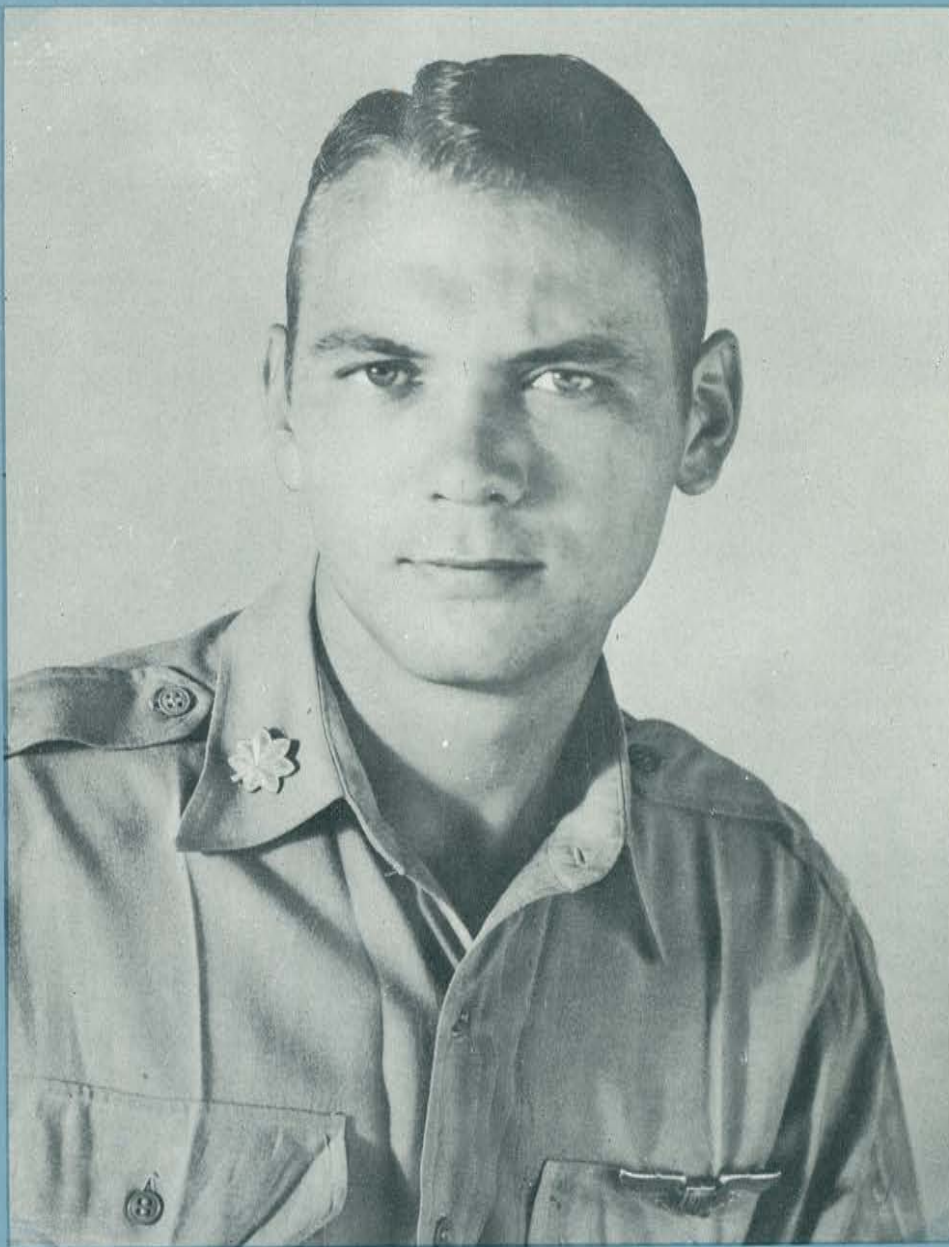


"Wolf Pack"



674th COMBAT PERSONNEL





MAJOR WILLIAM A. STELLENWERF
Commanding Officer



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F/SGT. BYRNE



CAPT. MACON



S/SGT. C. BYRNE

Intelligence



CAPT. LEWIS



LT. FETSCHAN



S/SGT. GREEN

Operations



CAPT. DeLATTE



S/SGT. ROACH

LT. ARNETT



Transportation and Supply



LT. MOORE



S/SGT. BROWN



S/SGT. BLOOMSTROM

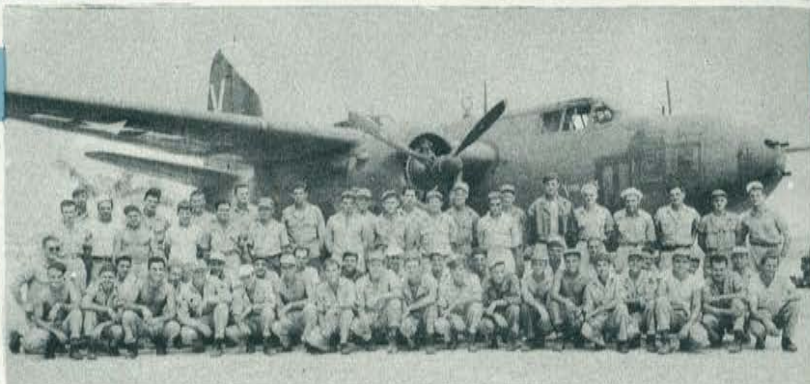
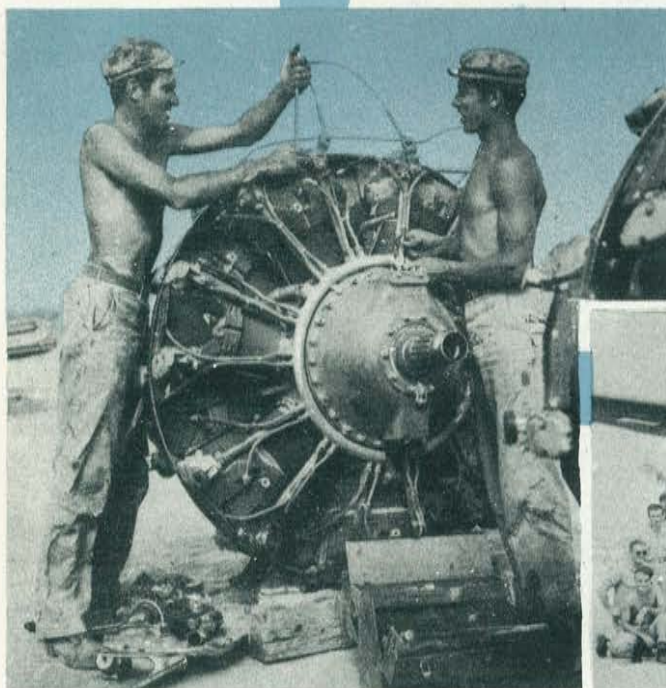
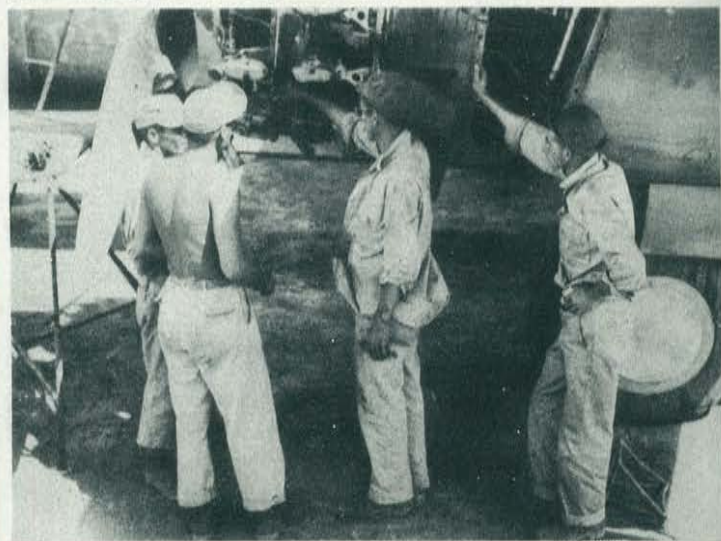
Engineering



CAPT. NAERT



M/SGT. TROUTMAN



Engineering



LT. CIESIELSKI



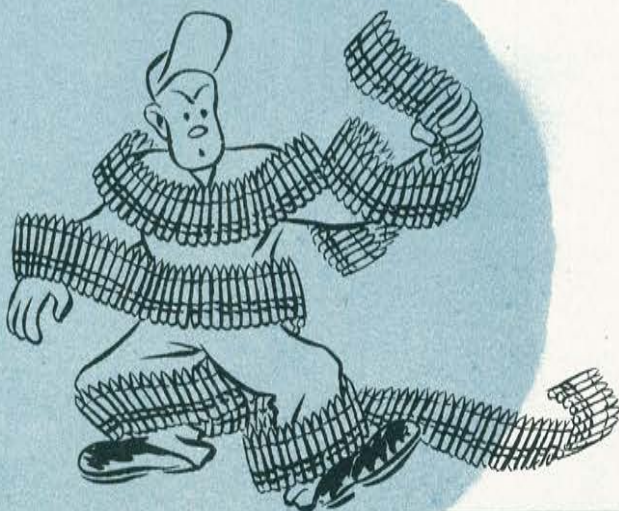
S/SGT. DALEY



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CAPT. EVANS



M/SGT. DODD



Ordnance



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T/SGT. GRITZEN

Communications



CAPT. LONG



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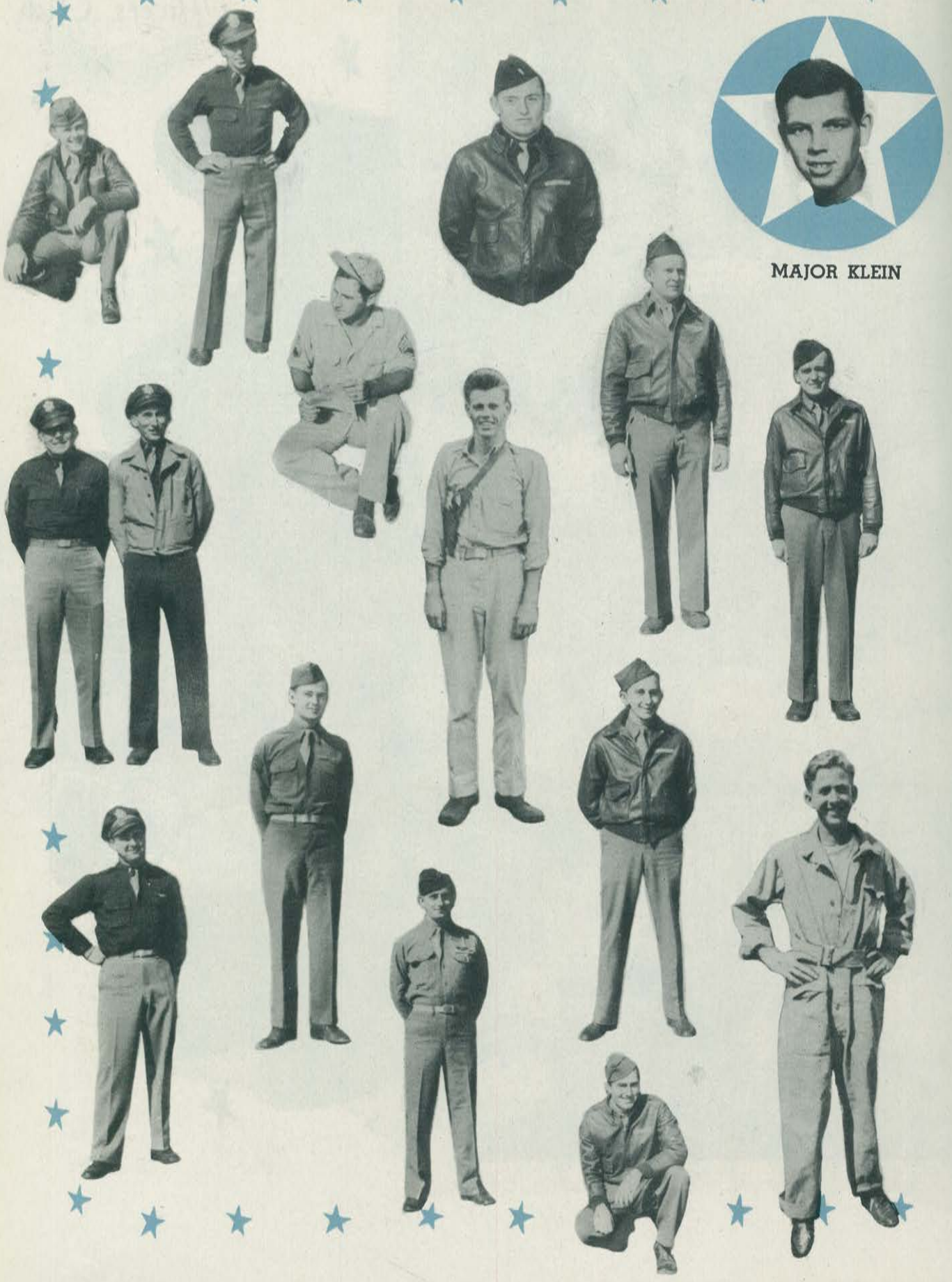


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675th Squadron



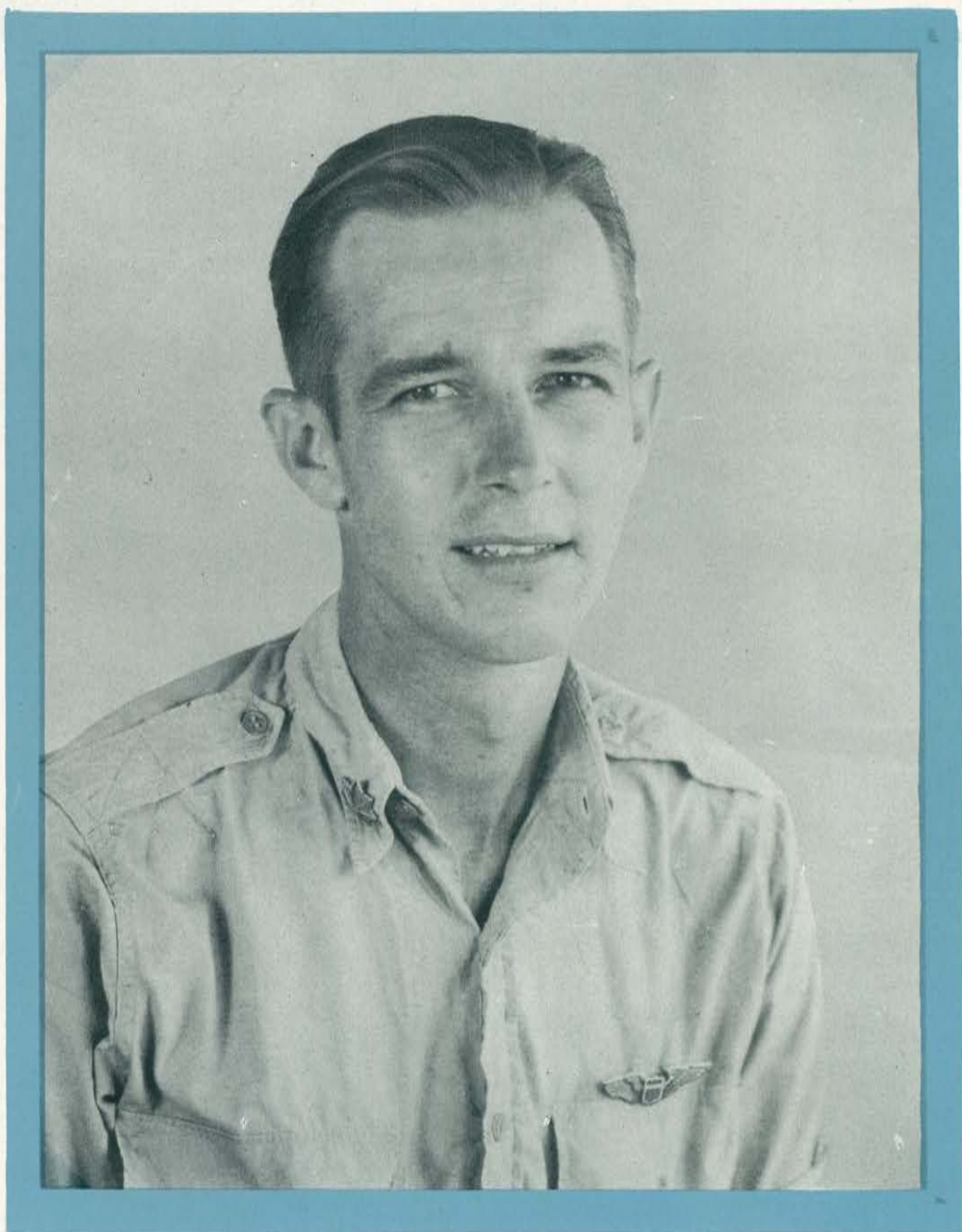
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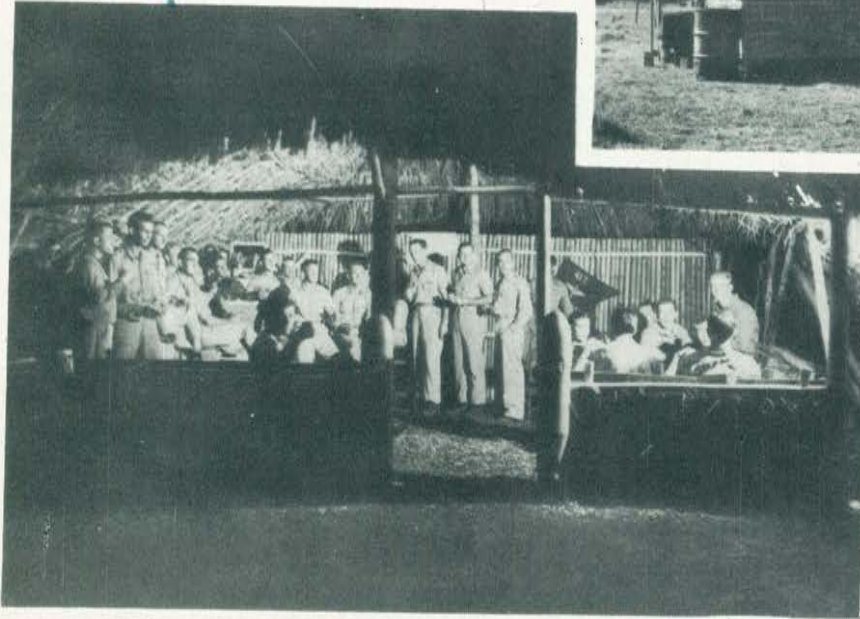
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Combat Crews



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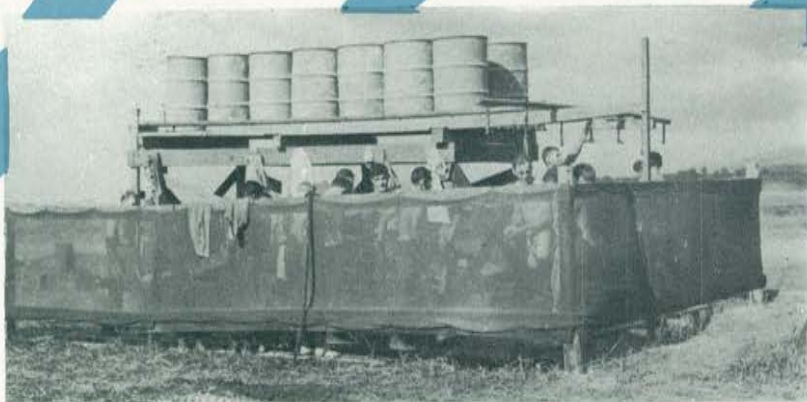




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852nd Chemical



"Fighting Cocks"





CAPTAIN JAMES M. WILKINS
Commanding Officer



ACTIVATION

The 852nd Chemical Company was activated on the 1st of May 1942 at Grenier Field, New Hampshire, with Major Swackhammar as the first Commanding Officer. Eight men were picked from the Second Chemical Detachment at Edgewood Arsenal, Maryland, forming the nucleus around which the Company was built. The first four months of activities for this small group of men included instructions in use of chemical warfare, individual and collective protective equipment, etc. Among those units, which were trained were regular Army Personnel, members of Police and Fire Departments and Army Nurses.

During the first part of October 1942, the cadre was transferred to Herbert Smart Airport at Macon, Georgia, where the Company was brought up to full strength. Most of the new men were raw recruits with only a few days' service.

BASIC TRAINING

Here at Macon began thirteen weeks of indoctrination. These tortuous days passed somehow and it was a greatly relieved group of men that left Macon for Camp Sibert, Alabama, to take advanced training. The program there called for more basic training in addition to practice bivouacs, etc.

Fourteen weeks later the company moved back to Macon, Georgia, where we were subjected to four more weeks of training in Tactics and Techniques of Chemical Spray. Then off to maneuvers at Waycross, Georgia, where we filled practice missions for a P-51 Fighter Group.

In June 1943, we were sent back to Macon, Georgia, where our present Commanding Officer, Captain James M. Wilkins, joined us. After three weeks of getting over the "hangover" of maneuvers we were sent to Greenville, South Carolina, for more maneuvers and training.

P. OF. E!

Suddenly it came! GI grapevine was buzzing with rumors that we were committed to overseas. So back to Macon for final exams. A week of feverish bustle to get records up, physical check-ups, impedimenta packed, and of course those last few hours with loved ones. And then came that last long train ride that ended all sprees in town over week-ends and hopes of that last furlough.

Then a few days at POE. More inspections and check-ups, daily hikes, obstacle courses and lectures. And finally late one Sunday night the order came to pack up

our bags and say good bye to the good old U.S.A. Late at night the company boarded a big transport which soon left the coastline of California in the dark past.

EN ROUTE

There were a few hazy days then curiosity gradually overcame shaky legs and we stumbled up to a rolling deck, held on to the rail for dear life, and stared at sea, sea and more sea. Sight-seeing immediately proved a monotonous pastime. We tried cards, dice, checkers and pocket editions until each in turn became the essence of boredom.

Land Ho! After endless days and nights on an expanse of ocean, there is nothing more glorious than that first shadow taking shape on the horizon. Lone islands grew into groups and then finally the mainland of Australia. Two days were spent aboard ship in the harbor but the order did not come to debark. And then, suddenly we were under way again.

A few more days of salt water, wild rumors and then New Guinea. From the rail it looked as though Hollywood might be right there, but after negotiating the hazardous trip down the gang plank under full field equipment and barracks bags, A and B, we waddled ashore and were completely disillusioned. No Dorothy Lamour, no grass skirts, just mud, mud, and more mud. But it was good old Terra Firma again.

DESTINATION TOKYO

Our first few months in New Guinea were dull and uneventful. Eventually we were attached to the 417th Sky Lancers and later moved to the Philippines, where we performed our first tactical mission. The results gave us a feeling of satisfaction and pride. At last we have begun to justify our long months of training, preparation, and waiting—and being over here! We also had our baptism under fire.

Our motto, "PER ASPERA AD ASTRA," "Through difficulties to the Stars," is our guiding light and aspiration. No matter how rough the going is or how little we have, we use every trick of Yankee ingenuity to make things the best. Our campsites and mess are second to none. It has been a great source of pride to us to live as comfortably as possible under the circumstances and carry on our assigned task with maximum efficiency. Our motto will continue to guide through to the end and when it is all over, we will feel that we have contributed our share towards making this and future worlds, a better place in which to live.

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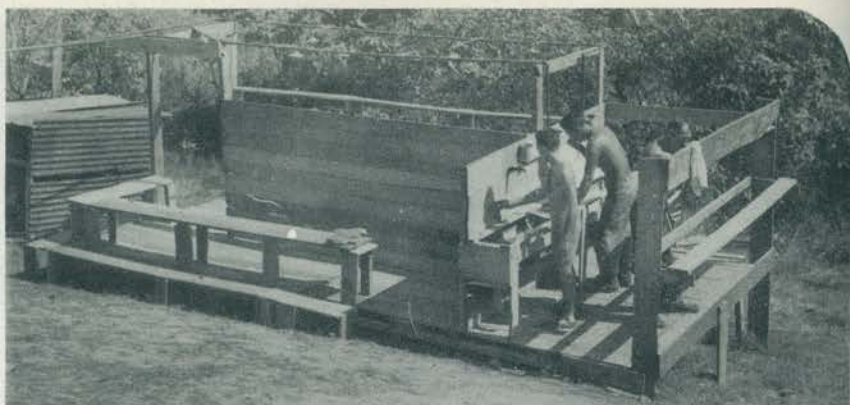


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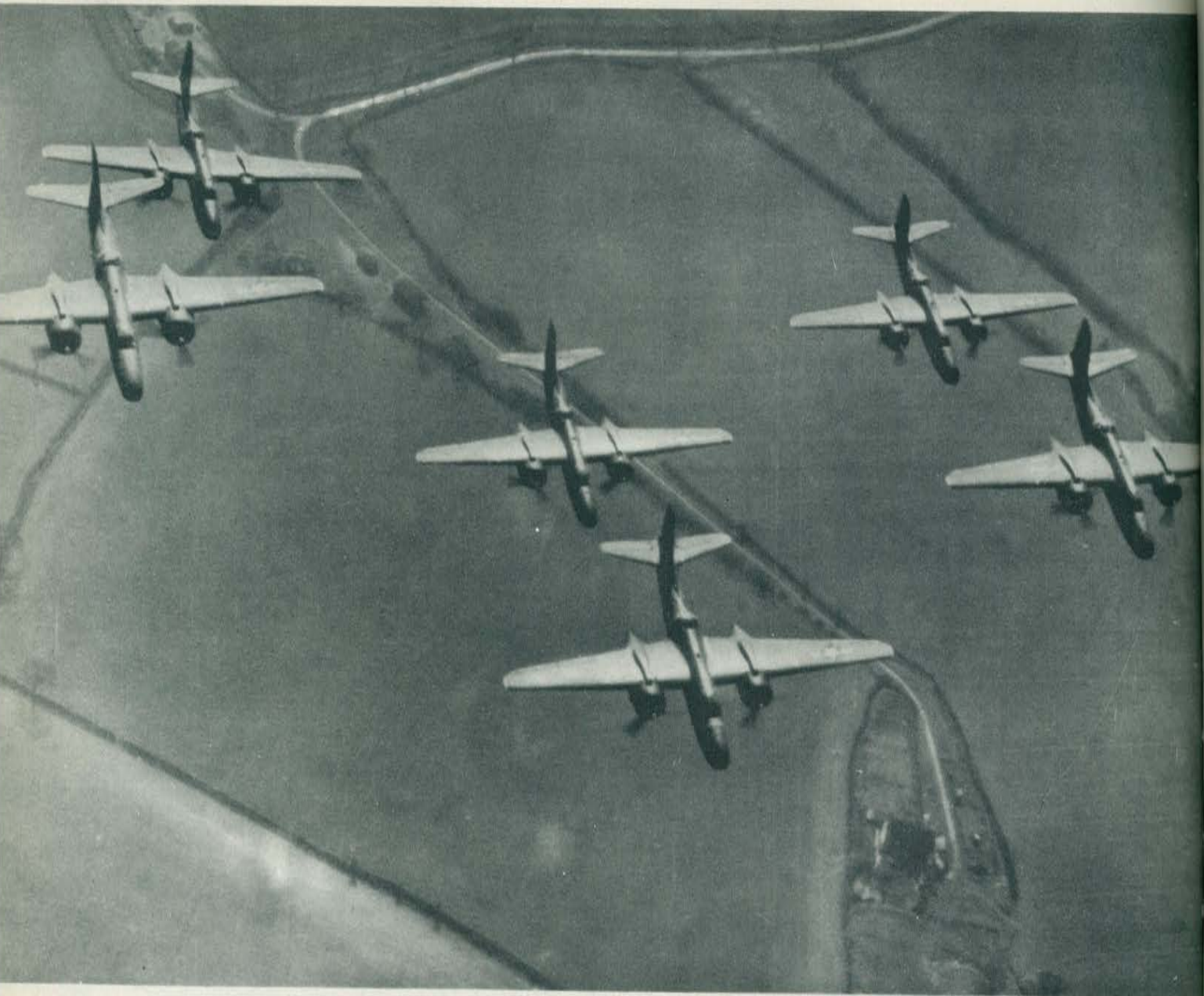


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Zuck, William C., Cpl, 699 River Road, Teaneck, New Jersey





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and Decorations*

Presentation of Awards



Presentation of Awards



Awards and Decorations

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Col. Jack W. Saunders

Col. Howard S. Ellmore



SILVER STAR:



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Lt. Col. Milton W. Johnson*

Major Alfred L. Moser

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* Oak Leaf Cluster



Awards and Decorations

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S/Sgt. Robert F. Evans
Major Charles W. Johnson

Lt. Col. Milton W. Johnson
Major Raymond P. Klein
Capt. Robert T. Mitchell
Lt. Erving H. Morley

BRONZE STAR MEDAL:



for heroic or meritorious achievement or service not involving participation in aerial flight, in connection with military operations against the enemy.

Capt. William F. Baur
Sgt. Frederick W. Landis

S/Sgt. Harry J. Wahlen
Sgt. Lowell E. Westfield

SOLDIER'S MEDAL:



for heroism not involving actual conflict with an enemy.

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T/Sgt. Gilbert L. Beck*

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Awards and Decorations

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for meritorious achievement
while participating in an aerial
flight.

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S/Sgt. Verner M. Beck
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Lt. William H. Lyle, Jr.
Capt. William F. Magee**
Lt. Richard A. Mahoney*
S/Sgt. Alfred L. Mailhot
S/Sgt. Francis L. Malone
S/Sgt. Nicholas J. Manni
S/Sgt. William L. Maness
Sgt. Leo Manousos
S/Sgt. Carl C. Mangles
S/Sgt. Andrew L. Martin
S/Sgt. Alpheus A. McCord
Lt. Samuel W. McDonnell*

Awards and Decorations

Capt. Richard V. McGaughey
S/Sgt. George B. McFerran
S/Sgt. William C. Meeks, Jr.
Capt. Robert F. Meeker*
S/Sgt. George I. Middleton
F/O John L. Miller
S/Sgt. Wade H. Miller
S/Sgt. William Q. Miller
S/Sgt. George Minichino*
Capt. Robert T. Mitchell*
Lt. Matthew P. Montee
Lt. William B. Morrow
Lt. Ervin H. Morely
S/Sgt. Raymond J. Morocco
Major Alfred L. Moser**
S/Sgt. John L. Moulton
S/Sgt. Benny J. Mukonis
S/Sgt. Edward J. Murphy*
S/Sgt. Francis E. Murphy
Capt. John W. Nankervis*
Lt. Col. Robert M. Nelson*
Lt. Edward P. Nicolay*
Lt. Paul Noel
S/Sgt. R. A. Nowaczewski*
Lt. Norman L. Olson
Lt. McCoy E. Palmer*
Sgt. Napoleon J. Pardo
Lt. Victor Paschild
Capt. Norman G. Patterson
Capt. George W. Patton
T/Sgt. Steve J. Pavolvsky
S/Sgt. Clarence L. Peterson

Capt. Harold E. Peterson*
Lt. Raymond C. Pharis
Capt. James A. Pittman
S/Sgt. Lawrence Polacek*
Capt. Raymond N. Pollitt*
Capt. Hugh J. Posner*
Lt. William T. Powell
Captain John E. Pryor
Lt. Robert L. Quinn*
S/Sgt. Anthony J. Reuland
Lt. Richard E. Rhodes
Lt. Loyd G. Rogers*
S/Sgt. Jerome W. Rosoff
S/Sgt. John R. Rounds
Lt. Howard E. Saar
Lt. Arthur G. Schenck
S/Sgt. Glenn J. Scott*
S/Sgt. James D. Sellens
S/Sgt. James W. Sharp
Capt. John W. Simmons, Jr.
Lt. Donald L. Skeels
Lt. Junior H. Smeltzer
S/Sgt. John A. Snee*
S/Sgt. Walter M. Southern
S/Sgt. George D. Stapleton*
S/Sgt. Joseph J. Steen*
Major William A. Stellenwerf
S/Sgt. Charles L. Stewart
T/Sgt. Alvin W. Stookey
Capt. William A. Stuart*
Lt. Jeremiah J. Sullivan

Capt. William C. Sullivan*
Lt. Norman J. Summers
Lt. Arnold P. Teague
S/Sgt. Harold A. Terry
Capt. Robert C. Tesar*
Lt. Kramer Thomas, Jr.
S/Sgt. Joseph E. Thompson
S/Sgt. Burton Tobor
S/Sgt. George Tomchick
S/Sgt. William R. Trinkle
Lt. Norman R. Tucker
Capt. Frank D. Upchurch, Jr.
S/Sgt. Maurice F. Upperman
S/Sgt. Floyd Valentine
Sgt. Robert M. Vasquez
Capt. Robert B. Wallace
S/Sgt. Carl F. Ward
S/Sgt. Lewis D. Warga
Lt. Duane W. Waters
S/Sgt. James P. Wedel
Lt. Charles D. Weir*
S/Sgt. Mark F. Wertman*
Capt. William H. Wescott
Lt. William B. Whitbeck*
S/Sgt. Raymond J. Winchell
S/Sgt. John B. Wight
Lt. Edward W. Winslow
S/Sgt. Billie S. Workman
Capt. George E. Worsham, Jr.
Capt. George W. Young*
S/Sgt. Louis J. Yargo
S/Sgt. Woodrow F. Zachariah

PURPLE HEART:



Wounds received in action
against an enemy of the United
States.

S/Sgt. Gerald T. Adams
Lt. Rodney D. Beckel
Lt. John Bedingfield
S/Sgt. Carl D. Brower
S/Sgt. Robert H. Browning
S/Sgt. Roger W. Cook
Lt. Floyd F. Dammon
Lt. Clarence H. Dollmeyer
Cpl. Ernest P. Dube
S/Sgt. Gordon P. Duffy
S/Sgt. Robert F. Evans
S/Sgt. James F. Frady

Lt. Morris G. Frederickson
S/Sgt. Frederick Jansohn
Lt. Col. Milton W. Johnson
S/Sgt. Keith K. Kaeser
S/Sgt. Robert A. Laird
S/Sgt. Clarence O. Leonard
Cpl. Robert E. Lucas
Capt. Homer L. Lund
Capt. William F. Magee
S/Sgt. Alfred L. Mailhot
Capt. Richard V. McGaughey
Major Alfred L. Moser
S/Sgt. Michael E. O'Neill

F/O William F. Poweil
Capt. Kenneth I. Rusdahl
S/Sgt. James D. Sharp
Cpl. William Smith
Major William A. Stellenwerf
Lt. Norman J. Summers
S/Sgt. Joseph E. Thompson
S/Sgt. Burton Tobor
S/Sgt. William R. Trinkle
S/Sgt. Frank W. Tupper
S/Sgt. Harry J. Wahlen
S/Sgt. William H. Wilkins

* Oak Leaf Cluster







LT. COL. HOWARD S. ELLMORE

ON 2 January 1945, Lt. Col. Howard S. Ellmore, then commanding Officer of the 417th Bomb Group, failed to return from a mission which struck at Japanese shipping in the China Sea. He was last seen crashing into the water, after completing his bombing and strafing run, which resulted in the destruction of a destroyer escort and a freighter transport.

Long an ardent champion of minimum altitude bombing, Col. Ellmore worked incessantly to perfect low level attack techniques. He seized every opportunity to promote the adoption of this type of tactics. Long after hostilities are ended he will be remembered by his associates as a brilliant collaborator in the initial development of the A-20 as the most effective attack aircraft thus far used in the war.

He will be remembered by the airmen of the Southwest Pacific for his ingenuity, perseverance and energy in the development of multi-gun turrets for medium bombers and for his pioneer activities in initiating and establishing the use of rockets by attack aircraft.

He will be remembered by his fellow pilots for his extraordinary flying skill, technical knowledge and courageous leadership in combat.

The rest of us will remember him with deep respect for his ability of command and administration—with affection for his warm-hearted sincerity, his capacity for friendship and his deep sense of justice and fair play.

Coconut Bombing



By Lt. Col. HOWARD S. ELLMORE
CO of a Light Bombardment Group
in the Southwest Pacific

WHAT is coconut bombing, you'd like to know? Well, just strap yourself to a fast-moving A-20 and we'll see if you get the idea. All set? Let's go.

We take off and proceed to the target—anywhere from zero to 500 feet. Five hundred feet is just about the beginning of the stratosphere as far as attack bombing is concerned. We buzz toward the enemy at speeds varying from 250 to 300 miles per hour. The objective in this case is an area target on Awar Point. We come in, three or six planes abreast, and at a thousand yards we cut loose with our .50 caliber guns. As we go across the target, a two-ton bomb load drops from the bomb bay. Seconds later we are speeding away from the target, closing bomb bay doors and looking back to see smoke and debris mushrooming into the air. That's all there is to it. The whole attack lasted perhaps half a minute.

What did you see? Well, you saw exactly what you might expect to see while moving at a speed of 300 miles an hour right on the deck. You saw the tops of a lot of coconut trees. That's all. Hence the term "coconut knocking."

Did we do any real damage? Photographs taken from the airplane at split-second shutter speeds reveal much the human eye cannot see. They show overturned vehicles, scattered supplies, an occasional three-inch gun, here and there a smashed Jap hutment. However, the wily Japs are past masters at concealing supplies under the trees, and even the camera misses a large part of the damage done.

Coconut bombing is a type of attack which has not been particularly popular with combat crews because they cannot see what they are shooting and bombing. The question naturally came up as to how much damage this type of bombing was actually doing. Finally the chance came to settle the matter once and for all. Ground troops had occupied the area around Hansa Bay, where our Bomb Group had flown about a thousand sorties, expend-

ing a million and a half rounds of ammunition, dropping a thousand tons of bombs. This was the chance we had been waiting for. A picked staff of intelligence officers, consisting of Capt. Jerome A. Adams, George M. Green, Felix D. Lewis and 1st Lt. Roy R. Woods, were dispatched to the Hansa Bay area by PT boat the day after it had been occupied. Their mission was to assess the actual damage done in this area. Let Captain Adams, who headed the intelligence officers, tell you the story.

"We left our base at noon and headed for Hansa Bay and a new phase of air force intelligence. During the trip up the coast, the skipper of the PT was very congenial, and in no time at all we were swapping tales of recent exploits. He even permitted each of us to take a turn at the wheel, which was pretty broad-minded of him.

"We landed just before dark near a bombed jetty in Hansa Bay. As we stepped ashore, we were aware of a putrefying odor which is difficult to describe. The stench of decomposed flesh, decayed food, and rotten supplies permeated the entire area. Shoes, sneakers, clothes, and medical supplies were strewn all over the place. We contacted an Australian intelligence officer, and he informed us that the American Naval intelligence officer, who had been one of the first intelligence officers on the scene, was camped about one mile inland.

"It was getting dark fast, and we were worried about a place to sleep. The Naval I.O. said that he could give us a shack, and suggested that we hunt through some of the Jap huts down the road for a mosquito net, as the insects were unbearable. With the aid of a flashlight, we crawled through filthy huts littered with debris until we found a net that wasn't torn. I might add that a Jap mosquito net is a huge square, capable of sheltering eight to ten men. We headed back for camp, but on the way someone remarked that there would be no sleeping under such a dirty thing, and without further ado,

we threw the net away.

"We found the Naval I.O. and six men getting ready to turn in for the night, and they suggested that we set up some Jap stretchers that were lying around to use as beds. Setting up a Jap stretcher is a feat in itself, and I imagine that the most wounded Japs 'kick the bucket' before they ever arrive at a first aid station. That night we slept on the stretchers raised about three inches above the floor and fought bugs all night, to say nothing of the rats, which had grown fat eating unburied Jap corpses.

"The next morning we rose early and headed for Condor Strip, where we saw tons of food which had been shot up by the strafing. Boxes of medical supplies of every description and huge stacks of rice were strewn throughout the area. Every hut presented the same sight. Debris scattered in every direction. As for food, there were case after case of canned fish, tubs of dried fruit (similar to our dried apricots), mountainous tins of tea, cocoa and biscuits, which looked very much like dog biscuits. These piles were shattered by bomb bursts and holed by machine gun fire to such a degree that they were entirely unusable. Not a case—not a tin can could be found without one or more .50 caliber bullet holes in it. In front of one shack we found the strut and tire of a B-24 and an American parachute that had been perforated by machine gun fire.

"Everywhere was desolation and destruction. Around the edge of the strip and in revetments we found one Tony, two Helens, one Oscar and five unidentified planes, all of which were literally bombed and shot to pieces.

"Throughout the area we inspected many underground shelters that were extremely well built. Some had as many as five logs piled one on the other and covered by vines that made observation from the air virtually impossible.

"Cutting back to Awar Plantation, we saw bomb craters filled with equipment and supplies. The Japs use this method of destroying much of their equipment when they are forced to vacate an area. The bomb craters usually have stagnant water and filth in the bottom of them. When forced to retreat the Japs throw equipment, which cannot be taken with them, into the bomb craters to prevent use by the Allies. One crater in particular held at least 100 balls of thick rope, bales of barbed wire and at least fifty kegs of nails. This sight was prevalent throughout the entire inspection. Being a native of the Hoosier State, I was surprised to find not a few lawnmowers stamped 'Made in Indiana.'

"Making our way back to our base, we met five natives, four of them youngsters in their early teens. Captain Evanson, who spoke Pidgin very well and had spent the last 15 years on the island, asked them a few questions. What they told him confirmed pre-

vious estimates of the Japs' condition prior to their withdrawal. They had been bombed and strafed until they could no longer eat, although apparently plenty of food was in the area. They couldn't bury their dead; they dared not come out of their holes.

"One little native boy in his very best Pidgin gave a description of the strafing and bombing attacks. 'Pella b'long bird he come along now. Rat-tat-tat-tat! Boom-boom-boom!' Then in pantomime he illustrated how he lost no time crawling for the bush.

"Nothing in the entire area escaped destruction. Even two Geisha girls—one middle-aged, one young—had been victims of the relentless attacks. One had a leg blown off and the other had been killed by a .50 caliber bullet. They had been given a decent burial by Allied troops.

"Of more than 100 trucks found, only two appeared serviceable. In addition to many unburied Japs, a graveyard of over 400 was found, their deaths undoubtedly caused by our strafing attacks.

"We were glad to learn that the propaganda leaflets we had dropped had served their purpose. Very few of the natives in the area had aided the Japs and most of them had moved out of the coastal area and back into the hills.

"It is difficult to estimate with pencil and paper the damage done by the coconut attacks we carried out against the enemy. His nerves shattered by constant bombing and strafing, unable to eat, sleep, work or cope with our repeated raids, he had to give up his Hansa Bay position.

"He was forced to do this without pressure from the ground forces, which made it truly an air force show. This damage was wrought with a loss of very few airplanes and combat crewmen."

It all adds up to one inescapable conclusion. Coconut knockers pay off well and will continue to pay off well in the Pacific theater.



Hansa Bay, New Guinea

DESTRUCTION BY COCONUT BOMBING



Hansa Bay, New Guinea

DESTRUCTION BY COCONUT BOMBING





THE CATALINA

Probably the least known and least publicized aircraft of the Army Air Forces is the PBY, commonly known in Air Corps lingo as the "Cat." These planes and the crews who fly them have performed some of the most remarkable and heroic feats of this war, and have established an enviable record in the field of rescue. Operating in enemy territory for long tedious hours, these planes have made daring rescues under the most hazardous conditions.

The accompanying photographs indicate to some degree the type of rescues which the "Cat" accomplishes and are examples of many rescues which have been made of combat crews of the 417th in their operations against the Nip. The photos show the rescue of Lt. William R. Boyle, pilot, and Cpl. William Smith, gunner, who were forced to ditch their A-20 off the Bataan Peninsula, following an attack on Jap installations. Some of the other crews who owe their safe return to the "Cat" are Capt. E. L. Davidson, who ditched in Ambon Bay and was rescued while being subjected to gun fire from shore batteries and strafing attacks by an enemy fighter. Lt. Richard E. Rhodes and S/Sgt. Gordon P. Duffy were picked up after ditching two miles off the coast of Wewak Point and a short time later Lt. Rhodes, with S/Sgt. Alfred L. Mailhot, was again rescued near Mios Waar under extremely hazardous sea conditions. Lt. Norman J. Summers and S/Sgt. Robert F. Evans were returned from the Vogelkop area after a rescue which required the "Cat" to land and take off at dusk in a heavy and treacherous sea. Others in this organization who have been rescued by Catalinas are Major Alfred L. Moser and S/Sgt. Harry J. Wahler of the 675th, Lt. Morris G. Frederickson of the 673rd, Capt. Richard V. McCaughey, Lt. Floyd Damman and S/Sgt. Roger W. Cook of the 674th Squadron.

The entire 417th Bomb Group joins these crews in offering their gratitude and thanks for the tireless and unheralded efforts of the Third Emergency Rescue Squadron, the aircraft and vessels of the United States Navy and all other rescue units which have performed searches and rescues for the men of the Army Air Forces. To these combat crews there is no sight more welcome or comforting than the "Cat" orbiting in the target area.





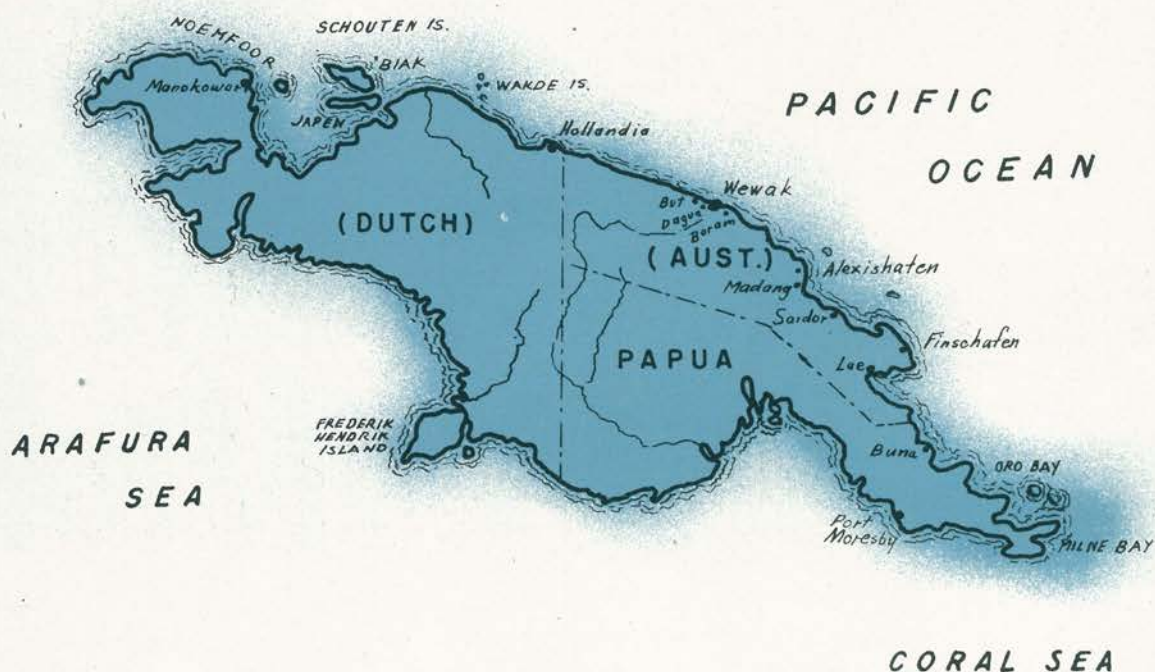
"A PILOT'S THOUGHTS DURING AND AFTER"

By Lt. Robert Quinn. Missing in Action. 673rd Squadron.

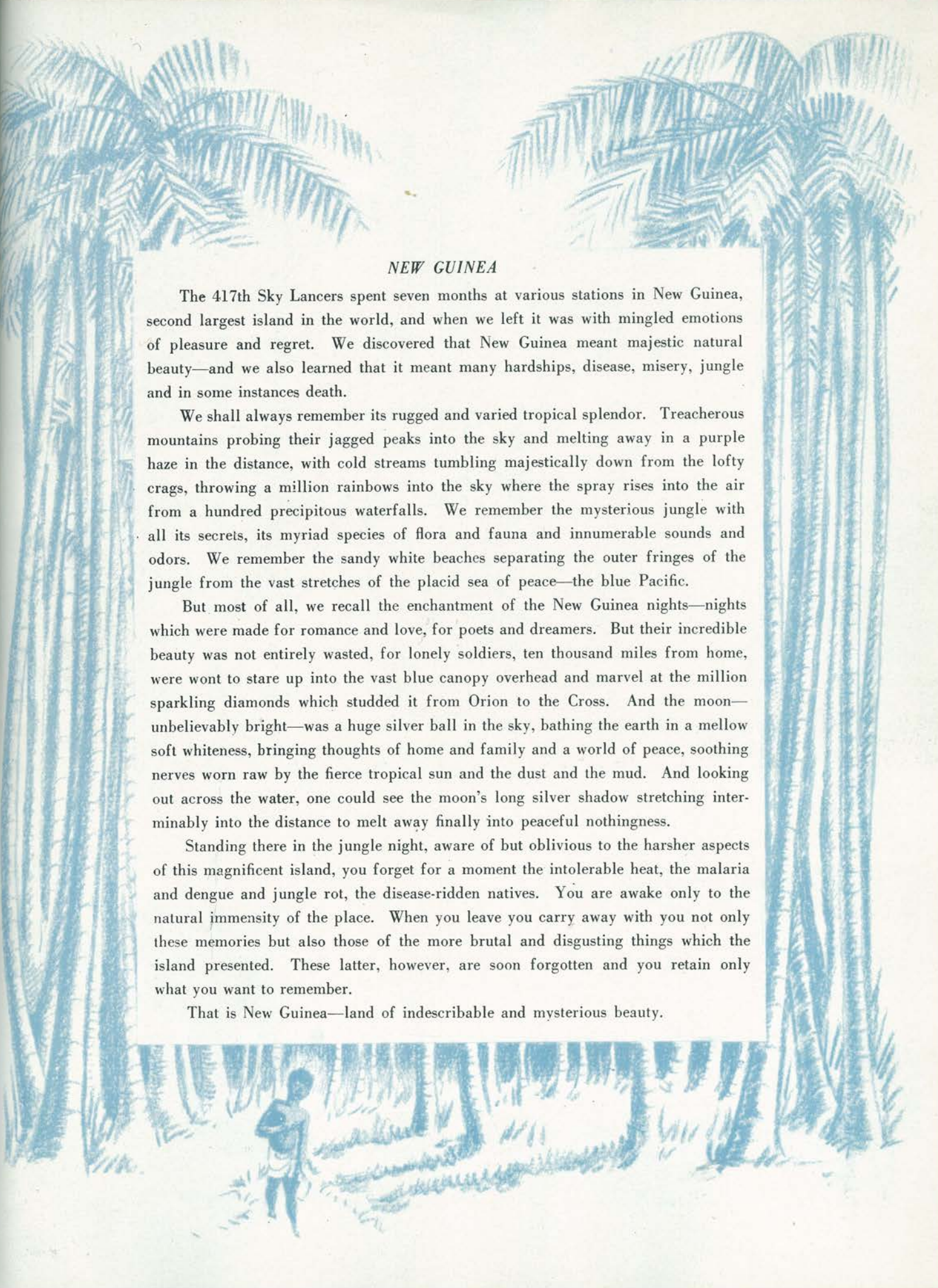
But the missions really are the fun, it's hard to describe them, but you who have flown know what the takeoffs and landings are like; the earth rushes by at a terrific speed when you are so low, but in a transport you are only doing about 90 to 100 miles an hour, but still it seems so fast. Well, imagine flying over the tree tops, just above them, about ten or twelve feet, at speeds of better than 350, and even up to 400 mph at times.

You approach the target . . . Your bomb bay doors open with a swoosh! . . . You flick on your gun switches, and now you are all set . . . Waiting now . . . Then suddenly there it is, your target! . . . Those houses in the clearing, with all those tiny figures running about like rats caught in a trap . . . You feel an immense satisfaction and grit your teeth . . . You squeeze the trigger, and out go six streams of copper-clad steel "fifties" . . . Your cockpit fills with smoke, but you don't mind, it even smells good . . . you see a shack in your sights, and poof! It disappears before your spluttering guns . . . You spot a big shack and kick rudder to get over it . . . Now! . . . you press the little black button and a 500 lb bomb drops; you don't know if you hit it or not, but photos will tell later on . . . See that fellow up there to the left, he just dropped a bomb into that mess hall. Now look at it, nothing but shambles; a huge smoking hole in the ground with bits of wood, wreckage, and maybe even Japs flying through the air . . . You pass through the dirt and wreckage in a flash, and are almost to the end of the target . . . what are those red balls hanging there in the air . . . Ack! Ack! . . . With that they begin screaming past your wings . . . You instinctively crouch closer to that bullet-proof glass, then you kick one rudder, then the other rudder . . . You slip, you skid . . . Be careful those trees are close . . . You keep low and fast . . . Up the hill, and behind the safety of those rugged mountains . . . You breathe easy now . . . Turn off those switches . . . Call the gunners, "You all OK? The ship OK?" . . . You look around at all your gauges, OK? Fuel pressure, Oil Pressure, Cylinder head temperature . . . Yep! . . . Well it's almost over now, so you settle back and run for home . . . You land . . . Go to Intelligence for your interrogation . . . After that maybe a good stiff drink of whiskey, you need it . . . Then you realize how tired you are. Dirty, hungry, and needing a shave you climb wearily into a jeep and go bouncing back to your tent . . . You slowly undress and walk to the shower . . . Shave and shower . . . You sit down at the table . . . You're not thinking of the mission now . . . Rather of your home . . . The girl you left behind you, your folks. Gee, how good some hot apple pie would taste right now . . . You slowly munch your food . . . Talk drifts around the table, "Did you see that big . . . Then I hit him with all six and he seemed to disappear" . . . Laughter floats around the table and the talk gradually subsides, and the fellows begin to drift out in groups of two and three. "Want to play some poker to-night?" . . . "No, thanks just the same . . . tired?" . . . You walk back to your tent . . . Sit down . . . Reread that last letter . . . Gaze at those snapshots for a while . . . Your heart is all full and your mind thinking . . . You should write a letter tonight, but what to say? You can't mention the mission, besides the folks would worry if they knew . . . You're so tired . . . exhausted . . . You drop your clothes where they fall, and climb into your cot . . . You relax and for a moment you are still awake . . . You breathe a silent prayer of thankfulness for your safe return . . . You've done your job today. Tomorrow? . . . Well, that's tomorrow.

NEW GUINEA







NEW GUINEA

The 417th Sky Lancers spent seven months at various stations in New Guinea, second largest island in the world, and when we left it was with mingled emotions of pleasure and regret. We discovered that New Guinea meant majestic natural beauty—and we also learned that it meant many hardships, disease, misery, jungle and in some instances death.

We shall always remember its rugged and varied tropical splendor. Treacherous mountains probing their jagged peaks into the sky and melting away in a purple haze in the distance, with cold streams tumbling majestically down from the lofty crags, throwing a million rainbows into the sky where the spray rises into the air from a hundred precipitous waterfalls. We remember the mysterious jungle with all its secrets, its myriad species of flora and fauna and innumerable sounds and odors. We remember the sandy white beaches separating the outer fringes of the jungle from the vast stretches of the placid sea of peace—the blue Pacific.

But most of all, we recall the enchantment of the New Guinea nights—nights which were made for romance and love, for poets and dreamers. But their incredible beauty was not entirely wasted, for lonely soldiers, ten thousand miles from home, were wont to stare up into the vast blue canopy overhead and marvel at the million sparkling diamonds which studded it from Orion to the Cross. And the moon—unbelievably bright—was a huge silver ball in the sky, bathing the earth in a mellow soft whiteness, bringing thoughts of home and family and a world of peace, soothing nerves worn raw by the fierce tropical sun and the dust and the mud. And looking out across the water, one could see the moon's long silver shadow stretching interminably into the distance to melt away finally into peaceful nothingness.

Standing there in the jungle night, aware of but oblivious to the harsher aspects of this magnificent island, you forget for a moment the intolerable heat, the malaria and dengue and jungle rot, the disease-ridden natives. You are awake only to the natural immensity of the place. When you leave you carry away with you not only these memories but also those of the more brutal and disgusting things which the island presented. These latter, however, are soon forgotten and you retain only what you want to remember.

That is New Guinea—land of indescribable and mysterious beauty.

New Guinea



New Guinea



New Guinea



New Guinea





NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES





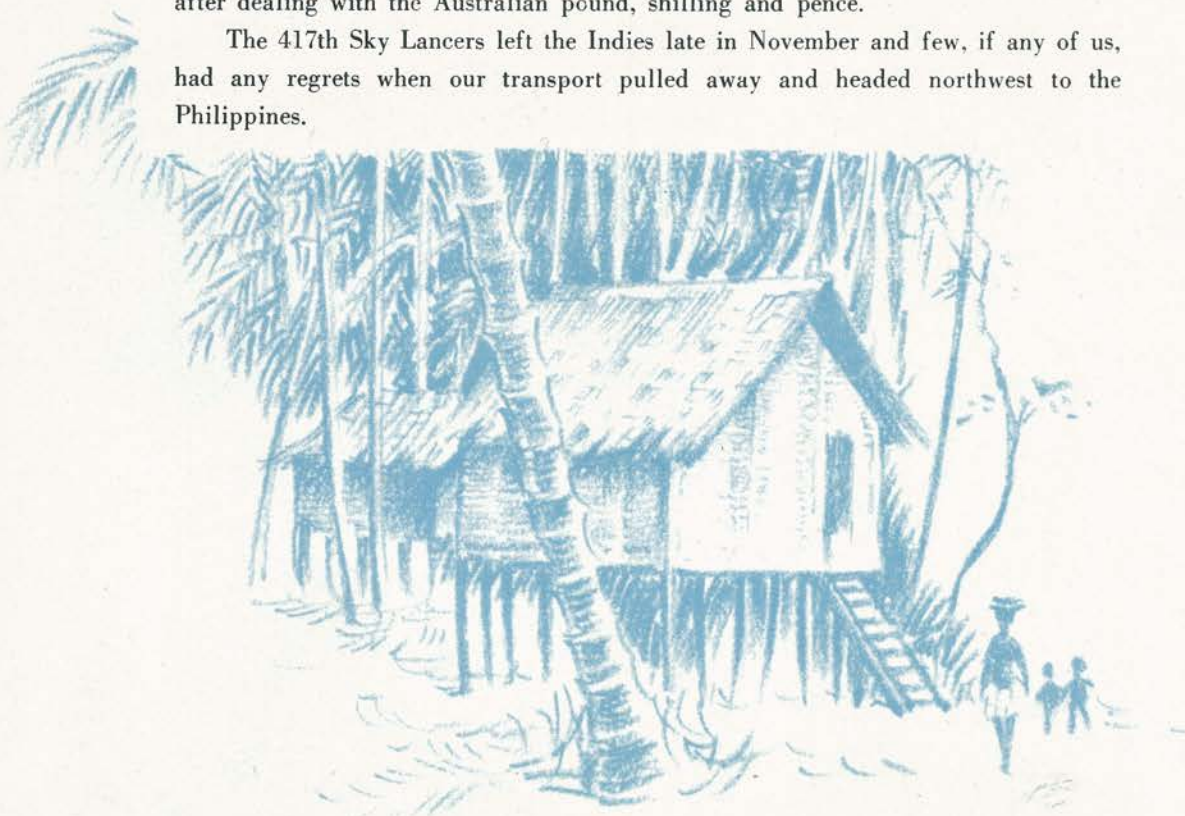


THE DUTCH EAST INDIES

The East Indies—*islands of wealth and mystery and adventure—basis of the great Netherlands Empire—rich in all natural resources: rubber and tin and oil and gold. The Japs fully realized the tremendous significance of this entire area to their hopes of Far Eastern supremacy, and lost little time in seizing full military control of all these islands.*

The East Indies closely resembled New Guinea in many aspects. The coral formations were breath-takingly beautiful and the magnificent sunrises and sunsets defied description. But the searing tropical sun, the omni-present dust and mud, the disease and the dirt—all these were there too. The natives appeared more friendly and civilized, showing evidence of the work of the missionaries which influenced their lives. We came into contact with the Dutch Gulden, which at first was confusing after dealing with the Australian pound, shilling and pence.

The 417th Sky Lancers left the Indies late in November and few, if any of us, had any regrets when our transport pulled away and headed northwest to the Philippines.

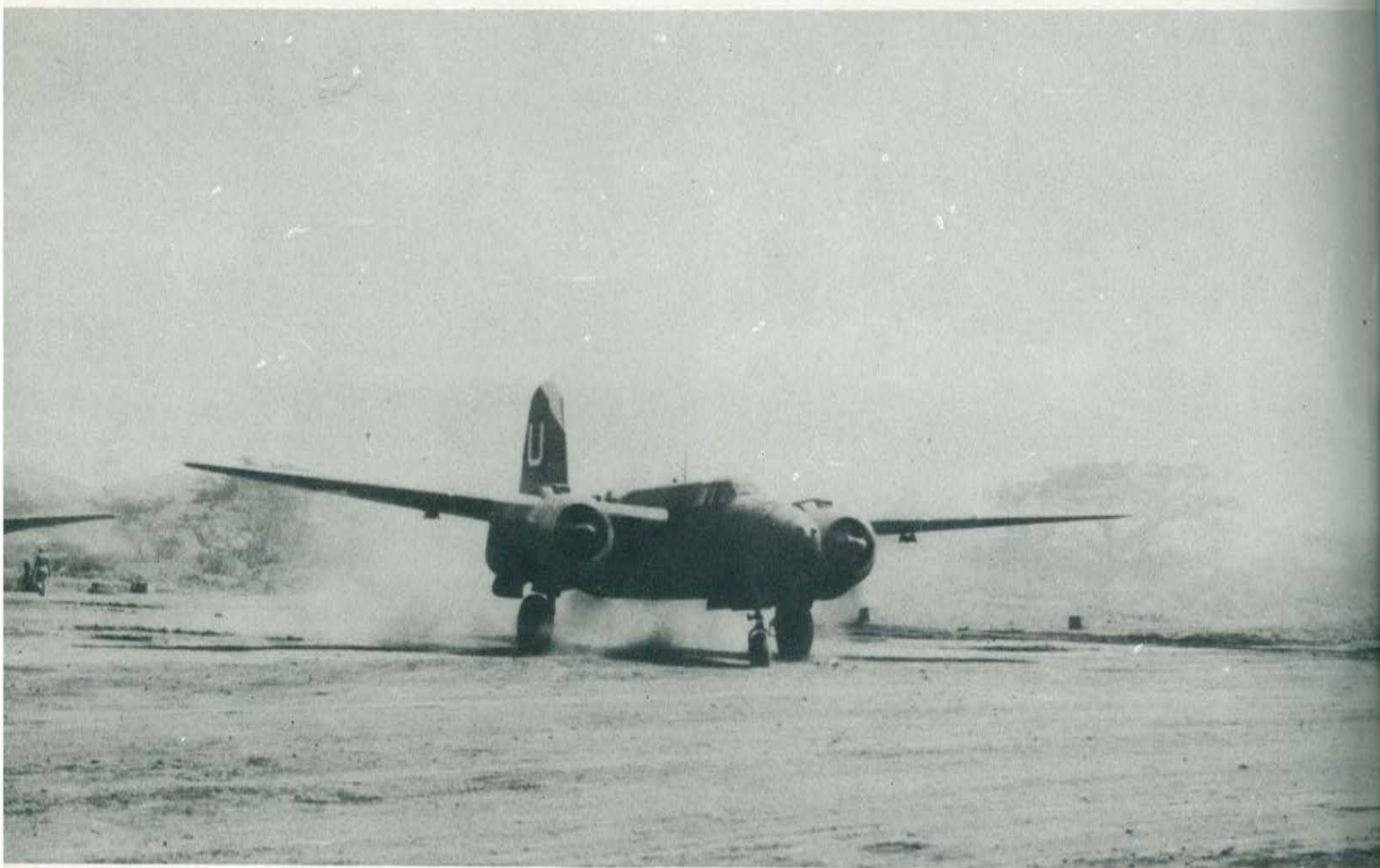


Netherlands East Indies



Netherlands East Indies





PHILIPPINES

SOUTH

CHINA

SEA

MINDORO

PALAWAN

NEGROS

MINDANAO

PACIFIC

OCEAN

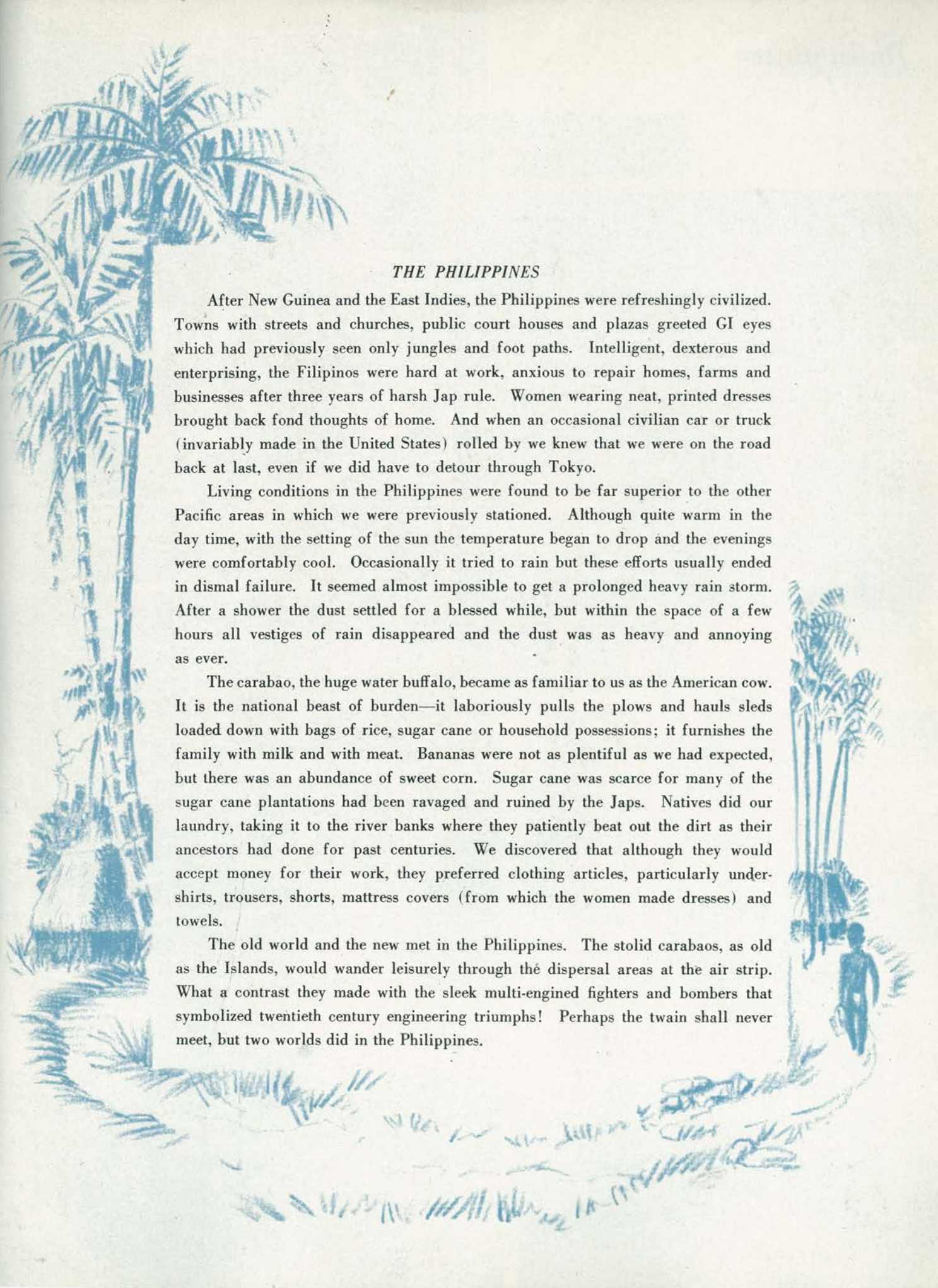
SAMAR

PANAY

LEYTE







THE PHILIPPINES

After New Guinea and the East Indies, the Philippines were refreshingly civilized. Towns with streets and churches, public court houses and plazas greeted GI eyes which had previously seen only jungles and foot paths. Intelligent, dexterous and enterprising, the Filipinos were hard at work, anxious to repair homes, farms and businesses after three years of harsh Jap rule. Women wearing neat, printed dresses brought back fond thoughts of home. And when an occasional civilian car or truck (invariably made in the United States) rolled by we knew that we were on the road back at last, even if we did have to detour through Tokyo.

Living conditions in the Philippines were found to be far superior to the other Pacific areas in which we were previously stationed. Although quite warm in the day time, with the setting of the sun the temperature began to drop and the evenings were comfortably cool. Occasionally it tried to rain but these efforts usually ended in dismal failure. It seemed almost impossible to get a prolonged heavy rain storm. After a shower the dust settled for a blessed while, but within the space of a few hours all vestiges of rain disappeared and the dust was as heavy and annoying as ever.

The carabao, the huge water buffalo, became as familiar to us as the American cow. It is the national beast of burden—it laboriously pulls the plows and hauls sleds loaded down with bags of rice, sugar cane or household possessions; it furnishes the family with milk and with meat. Bananas were not as plentiful as we had expected, but there was an abundance of sweet corn. Sugar cane was scarce for many of the sugar cane plantations had been ravaged and ruined by the Japs. Natives did our laundry, taking it to the river banks where they patiently beat out the dirt as their ancestors had done for past centuries. We discovered that although they would accept money for their work, they preferred clothing articles, particularly undershirts, trousers, shorts, mattress covers (from which the women made dresses) and towels.

The old world and the new met in the Philippines. The stolid carabaos, as old as the Islands, would wander leisurely through the dispersal areas at the air strip. What a contrast they made with the sleek multi-engined fighters and bombers that symbolized twentieth century engineering triumphs! Perhaps the twain shall never meet, but two worlds did in the Philippines.

Philippines



Philippines



Philippines



Philippines



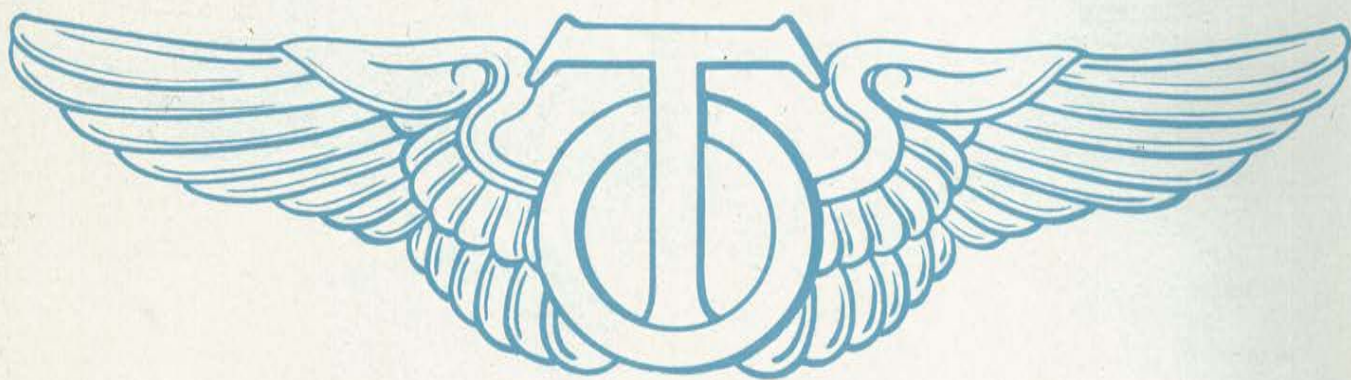




Autographs



Autographs



Autographs

Green, Eugene L.
"men"



Autographs



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PHOTOGRAPHER

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ISLANDS
SAIPAN
GUAM

TRUK

CAROLINE ISLANDS



A SOUVENIR OF
HISTORIC DAYS
IN THE
SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC
AND
FAR EAST

