

CDR "Jimmy" Flatley leads his Air Group 5 in his F6F Hellcat #00 during YORKTOWN'S first combat, the strike on Marcus Island, August 30, 1943.

Jim Bryan Collection

## Royal Family of Naval aviation

Clark Reynolds,  
Yorktown historian

**T**he Jimmy Flatley family comprises four generations of Naval aviation. Jimmy Flatley IV, is too young to challenge the heavens yet, but the great tradition of his family almost predestines him to that goal. When that day comes, he, too, will take his place with the "Royal Family of Naval Aviation."

The family tradition dates back to World War II days when Commander James H. "Jimmy" Flatley flew off YORKTOWN, CV-10. A 1929 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, he was already a respected Navy career aviator when war broke out. Hailed as an innovator in basic fighter plane tactics, Flatley became an "ace" by downing five Japanese planes in the carrier battles of 1942.

Jimmy was commanding the "Grim Reapers" fighter squadron on the ENTERPRISE at Guadalcanal, where he ran into an old shipmate, Captain "Jocko" Clark, soon to become the commander of the new carrier YORKTOWN. He wondered if Flatley would join him as commander of the ship's new air group. Flatley accepted without hesitation.

The 446 Air Group Five (fighters, dive bombers, and torpedo bombers) was officially commissioned at the Norfolk, Virginia air station complex on February 15, 1943, even before Flatley returned from the Pacific to



J.H. "Jimmy" Flatley, Jr., makes his landing aboard YORKTOWN, Chesapeake Bay, May 6, 1943.

assume command. When he arrived in late March, he infused his men with his marvelous esprit, telling his squadron commanders they had to be the best — or equal to the best — pilot in their squadrons.

To the pilots he stressed this adage: "There are two kinds of pilots — those who have accidents and those who are going to have them!"

Flatley was impressed with the new 2,000 horsepower F6F with its speeds up to almost 400 mph, and its ability to withstand violent turns to get inside of a Zero during a dogfight. With such maneuverability, the Hellcat pilots could use a defensive "Thach weave," which Flatley developed with Jimmy Thach: two two plane sections scissoring for mutual protection when attacked by larger numbers of Zeros.

But Jimmy stressed the offensive, each pilot should seek deflection shots at an angle rather than stern approaches to the Zero, thus giving the Hellcat maximum effect on the highly inflammable Zero. In particular, he expected every one of his fighter pilots to develop the instinct to kill the enemy. He warned: "The enemy who gets away today may be the one who will shoot you down tomorrow — or one of your comrades."

After weeks of training from their shore bases, each pilot of Air Group Five qualified for carrier landings by making eight landings and takeoffs on one of two escort carriers. All that remained was for the YORKTOWN to operate with her own planes. On May 6, Flatley in his F6F made the very first landing of any plane on the ship, followed by other planes over a period

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**W**hen the first planes of the new post-Pearl Harbor Essex-class carriers roared into battle on August 31, 1943, they were flying from the flattop soon to earn the nickname "The Fighting Lady." The "new" Yorktown, named for the carrier Yorktown (CV-5) sunk at the Battle of Midway in June 1942, had been hurried to completion, rushed to the Pacific, and sped into the attack on Marcus Island that day under the pre-battle cry "Beat the Essex!"

Captain "Jocko" Clark had generated the competition with the Essex (CV-9), commissioned three and a half months before the Yorktown (CV-10), in order to inspire his crew and pilots to be the very best of the new fleet of two dozen fast carriers. The friendly rivalry persisted throughout the war, with the Yorktown clearly recognized as the "pacesetter" of the Fast Carrier Task Force (TF58/38) in innovativeness, number of strikes, speed of launch and recovery, and damage inflicted. Her fame was equalled only by the Enterprise (CV-6), which had been in the fighting since Pearl Harbor.

"Goddammit," Jocko roared to his 120 officers and 2,500 enlistees, "if you can't run, walk. If you can't walk, crawl. But get the job done. And if you can't get the job done, get off my ship!"

Some did, but most stayed with their gruff taskmaster. "I've had three heroes in my life," hangar deck officer Lieutenant Joe Tucker recalled, "Christ, Buddha, and Jocko!" The pilots of Air Group Five shared this loyalty, for they knew he would go to extraordinary lengths to rescue them if they ditched at sea from battle damage.

After smacking Marcus on August 31 and Wake Island on October 5-6, 1943, the Yorktown served as fast carrier flagship during the invasion of the Gilberts in November. While supporting the infantry at Makin and attacking Japanese airfields in the Marshalls, Jocko's ship was nearly lost. A wayward fighter pilot from another carrier came aboard one evening but jumped the wire barrier and crashed into several parked planes. The front end of the flight deck erupted in flames as aviation gas and ammunition went off, but heads-up damage control by fire marshal Barney Lally (a New York City fireman) and his shipmates soon suppressed the flames. Five men perished in the near-calamity.

Heading north into the Marshalls with five other carriers, the York's F6F Hellcat fighters, SBD dive bombers, and TBF torpedo planes struck Kwajalein on December 4. Unfortunately, on the retirement that night, the force was subjected to a seven-and-a-half hour moonlight attack by Japanese torpedo-bombers. The new Lexington took a hit and was nearly lost, but smart anti-aircraft fire by the 5-inch, 40mm, and 20mm guns of the Yorktown and other ships spared her a similar fate.

The ship began to be called the "Lucky Y," but the luck was due largely to the Clark team which included talented Reserve officers he had tapped to supplement his few regulars. One was the assistant gun boss, Lieutenant Commander George Earnshaw, who had thrown similar strikes as ace right-hander for Connie Mack's World Champion Philadelphia A's 12 years before. (Earnshaw's lifetime major league win-loss record was 127-93, with a batting average of .230 for the 6'4" "Moose.")

In February 1944 the Yorktown carried the flag of Vice Admiral Marc A. Mitscher, Commander Task Force 58, for the

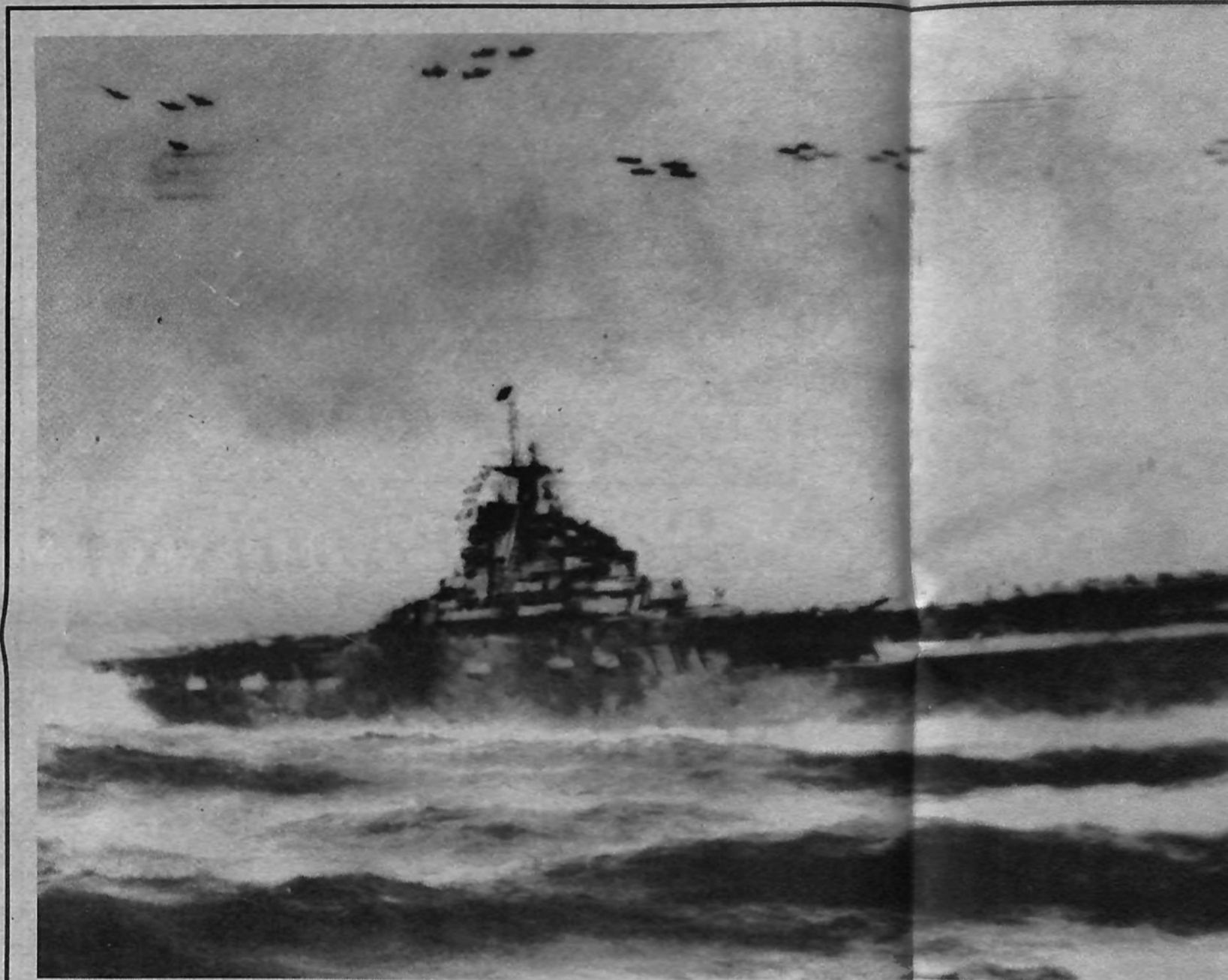


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He serves on the board of the "Fighting Lady."

# She was called "The Fighting Lady"

Clark G. Reynolds



INEXORABLY PLYING HER COURSE ACROSS PACIFIC WATERS, YORKTOWN SENDS ALOFT AN ARMADA OF

invasion of the Marshalls and first raid on the great Japanese fleet base of Truk in the eastern Carolines. During the latter operation, Yorktown's new skipper was Captain Ralph E. Jennings, and Fighting Five had good hunting in the air battle over Truk on the 16th. "It was like flushing quail," said Lieutenant Commander Ed Owen, "I didn't know which one to shoot first! Like duck soup."

York's fighters shot down 29 Japanese fighters, nearly half of TF 58's score for the day. Sadly, though, popular pilot Lieutenant E. T. "Smokey" Stover was hit by flak and forced to bail out over Truk. The Japanese picked him up and executed him and six other pilots the next day.

As the ship continued its battles further westward — movie cameraman Lieutenant Dwight Long filmed shipboard life and combat footage, just as he had since the ship's commissioning in April 1943. The Navy's Bureau of Aeronautics wanted a full-length motion picture to tell the story of the new carriers, and Long was putting it together.

"The Fighting Lady" was completed by Twentieth Century Fox later in 1944 — a spectacular one-hour color documentary that was unprecedented in its portrayal of life at sea. The

script was narrated by Lieutenant Robert Taylor, a leading peacetime actor and a wartime naval aviator, and a superb musical score was provided by Alfred Newman. Fox movie mogul Darryl F. Zanuck got the film released just in time to win the Oscar as the best documentary of 1944.

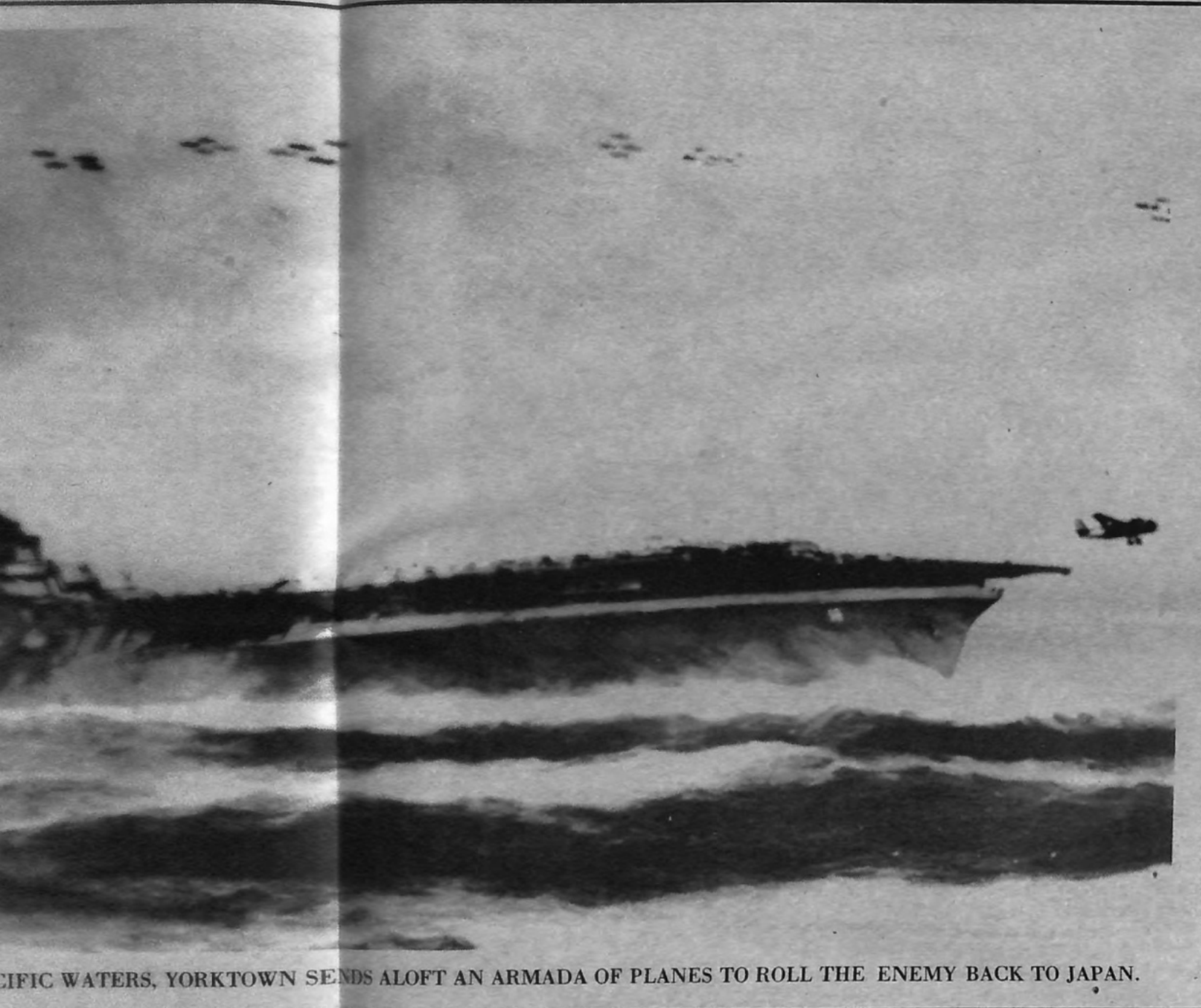
And the new Yorktown got her immortal nickname — "The Fighting Lady" — symbol of all the gracious "ladies" of the new carrier fleet — Lexington, Essex, Enterprise, Franklin, Hancock, et al.

## Marianas Turkey Shoot

In the epic Battle of the Philippine Sea, June 19-20, 1944, the Yorktown comprised Task Group 58.1 with the new Hornet, with Admiral Jocko Clark as task group commander, and two light carriers. The York's new Air Group One was sparked by the Hellcats of Fighting One under Lieutenant Commander B.M. "Smoke" Streen which knocked down 37 Japanese planes plus six probables in the great "Marianas Turkey Shoot"

# led "The Fighting Lady"

Clark G. Reynolds



PACIFIC WATERS, YORKTOWN SENDS ALOFT AN ARMADA OF PLANES TO ROLL THE ENEMY BACK TO JAPAN.

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phase of the Battle.

Streaan led the 216 carrier planes which attacked the Japanese fleet late on the 20th. In the wild, disjointed bombing attack during fading twilight, the Yorktown's pilots flew into the face of murderous flak. One of them "looked down and saw a big carrier below, the biggest damn thing I'd ever seen." Fighters and SB2C Helldiver bombers in near vertical dives released their bombs and probably scored a few hits and near-misses.

The TBM Avenger torpedo-bombers were less fortunate. During their long, low approaches to aim their "fish," they were vulnerable to enemy AA fire. Lieutenant Charlie Nelson of Torpedo One, with his gunner Lyle Young and radioman Conrad Lantron, emerged from a big cloud at 2,500 feet, dropped down to 350 feet for his torpedo run on the light carrier Ryuhō, and cut his air speed to 220 knots. Four other "torpeckers" followed him in.

Charlie braved the flak and held his fish until just 1,000 yards from the carrier, then he released. The torpedo made a straight run, while Nelson pulled up over the ship. The ack ack



Captain Ralph Jennings was YORKTOWN'S C.O. from February 1944 until October 1944.

followed him, hitting the exposed "Turkey" in the belly until it burst into flames, rolled over on its back, and crashed into the sea, killing all three men.

In spite of several hits and near-misses, only one carrier was sunk in the attack, but the Japanese lost over 400 planes in the two-day battle — and the Marianas Islands, soon converted into B-29 bases to begin the bombing of Japan in November. In the meantime the Yorktown hung around supporting the conquest of Saipan, Tinian, and Guam for another six weeks and suffering heavy pilot losses to enemy flak.

After two months' overhaul at Bremerton, the Fighting Lady, now captained by Thomas L. Combs, returned to action supporting General Douglas MacArthur's beachheads in the Philippines. Air Group Three took over as the main battery and soon found itself attacking Japanese troop convoys, dockyards, railroad trains, and airfields around Manila. The airfields were crucial, for the Japanese had begun to launch their kamikaze suicide planes against the carriers — and the flak was intense as ever.

That wasn't all. The fleet was ravaged by a typhoon in mid-December, though the Yorktown escaped serious damage and withstood more heavy weather during the fleet's foray into the South China Sea in January 1945 — blasting Japanese targets at occupied Saigon, French Indochina; British Hong Kong; and Formosa. Tokyo Rose singled out the Yorktown for destruction, but she was never able to make good on her threat.

"Are we right?" chaplain Joseph N. Moody asked in the ship's newspaper. "This seems like an idle question when we consider the evil wrought by our enemies. Their whole philosophy is wrong, and their acts are in keeping with their ideas. It seems safe to say with conviction that America is on the right side in this war."

No doubt, and the Fighting Lady and TF 58 brought America's cause home to the hated foe with attacks on Tokyo itself in mid-February 1945. Excellent enemy fighter pilots resisted, some even throwing out dummies on parachutes to feign their own destruction. The ruse didn't work, as the Hellcats stayed with the twisting and turning Zeros to destroy them. When the attack was over, Yorktown's fighters had splashed 39 "bandits" plus three probables and another 21 shot up on the ground. The Fighting Lady then supported the Marine Corps assault on Iwo Jima.

Okinawa was next, and the siege of TF 58 by the "zoot-suiters" — bright-colored kamikazes nicknamed for the outlandish attire of wartime American teenagers. Air Group

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# Was his meal like home cooking?

Donald H. Ping  
37th Inf. Div.

**I**t was the 2nd or 3rd day after landing at Lingayen Gulf. As a "green" member of the 136rg FA Bn, HQ Btry, 37th Inf. Div., without any combat experience, I had no preconceived notions of what to expect under combat conditions.

I knew my job, which was to compute the surveys that we were to do each time the battalion moved, and feed that information to Fire Direction Center (S-3). They, in turn, would plot the data onto their maps, and from those plots send out the initial commands for direction and range to each of the firing batteries.

The Japs had offered no resistance at this early stage of the invasions — and it was several days before the battalion ever fired a gun — but the problem was getting the battalion across the Calmay River and its tributaries. Everyone was on the move. The available routes and bridges were few compared to the traffic.

On that morning, our S-2 Captain Kashner, loaded our survey team into his Jeep and set out through the rice paddies down narrow dirt roads. He had found a detour for our battalion to follow and we were to be road markers, giving directions for the batteries to follow.



Donald Ping, center, didn't have dinner on his mind while helping with a survey team.

## My assignment

I was spotted at a "T" intersection in a small barrio shortly after noon. This turned out to be quite a treat, not only for me, but for the local Filipinos who soon gathered around me in a group of about 20 women and children.

Jabbering and laughing among themselves, they seemed to be in a festive mood. They had waited a long time for this day. Only one of the group would talk with me, a lad not a whole lot younger than myself. The others feigned ignorance of the English language, though I sensed differently.

Soon there was some excitement among the group caused by the approach of the battalion. It rolled into the village, made a right turn, and headed south. When the dust had settled, I was again left alone with my admirers.

Time passed. Someone gave me two ca-mo-tes (sweet potatoes) and another offered two eggs which I took and held gingerly. The natives came and went, but what happened to the Captain?

The afternoon wore on. I had been standing, carbine hanging on shoulder, not noticing the hot sun or

the passing of time, until suddenly it became evident that it was getting late. I began to be concerned. I hadn't seen another GI and I didn't know where my outfit was. No one else was using this route or had used it since I had been standing there.

## Invitation to dinner

About then, my young Filipino friend, came out to the road from the house in front of which I had been standing, and extended an invitation from the Priest inside to have dinner with him. To do so, meant abandoning my post. But it was almost dusk and it appeared that it was I who had been abandoned.

I hadn't known until then that this house was the rectory for the church next door. It didn't take long to decide what to do. I had water, but no food, so I followed the boy up the path to the house to be greeted by the parish Father whose name I have forgotten.

After making our introductions, he led me upstairs to a sitting room overlooking the street. He asked if I would like to have my eggs with the evening meal. I replied in the affirmative, and when asked how I would like them prepared, I suggested that

they be hard-boiled. (I thought that the safest). He had his houseboy bring me a bottle of beer that he had saved since the beginning of the Japanese invasion, to celebrate just such an occasion.

We talked of the United States, my personal life, and of trivial matters until at some unseen and unheard signal, he stood up and announced that dinner was ready. It was now quite dark. He invited me to stay the night. I hesitated to answer.

We proceeded downstairs into the main dining room, a large room with an equally large, wide table in the center capable of seating at least 12 people.

I quickly looked around to assess the arrangements and the dinner. My host followed my glances. He had silverware and a large plate. I had silverware, two large plates, one of which had a generous portion of fried rice.

The houseboy sat at my left and for his service had only a plate. Opposite me sat two young girls whom I had not seen before. They each had one plate. In the center of the table was a large bowl of rice, measuring about 15 inches in diameter.

## An unusual menu

At my place was another bottle of beer, which I politely left untouched, a glass of milk, a saucer with two small thin cakes, and another saucer with a portion of something that measured about 1/2 inch thick by two or three inches and had a light greenish, moist appearance.

And there were my two eggs at the side of the plate.

After the blessing was given by the priest we began our meal. Only he and I engaged in conversation. The priest and his "family" served rice to themselves from the center bowl, which the latter ate by rolling the rice into a ball with their fingers. I don't recall that they had anything else to eat.

I looked at my milk, and my host quickly said that it was carabou milk and had been pastuerized. I served myself some rice from one plate to the other and began to crack one of the eggs, intending to peel it. I discovered just in time that the egg, though warm, had not been cooked even the slightest. I spilled it into my plate and

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# Big E's "Our Benny" remembered

Bradford Williams  
Hillsboro Beach, Florida

During our BIG E reunion at Arlington, Texas last October, I happened to join a group of about two dozen "old timers" i.e., those who had been in her during her greatest travail, 1942, when, in the accurate words of Wild Bill Halsey, "We had only a poor man's Navy." Those men were discussing who, if anyone, really saved BIG E during her two most vicious carrier versus carrier battles just east of Guadalcanal, i.e., the Battle of Eastern Solomons, 24 August 1942, and the Battle off the Santa Cruz Islands, 26 October 1942.

Many, including this writer, agreed that in the Eastern Solomons soiree, Chief Machinist Bill Smith and his assistants saved BIG E when, after more than an hour, they repaired her rudder. We had already received three very bad direct hits — when her rudder jammed hard right. A bomb from a Jap Val had frozen her rudder at 23.5 degrees right, forcing her to keep turning in endless circles — while a large Jap bogey, comprising at least 50 planes, fortunately passed to the west of us. Clouds were "with us!"

But that really started a violent argument. "Sure," some agreed, "Bill Smith and his mates did an excellent job. But well before her rudder jammed at nearly hard right, BIG E would surely have received her death bomb or fish had it not been for her gunners, under (then) Lieutenant Commander Benny Mott!" stated another crew member.

They then agreed unanimously — that it had been "our Benny" and his gunners who had — more than anyone else — saved BIG E from disaster. Though his name was actually Elias Bertram Mott, virtually all crew members invariably referred to him as "our Benny." Once, when I mentioned this to him his response was, "Damn it, Brad, if that's what our people call me, then that's my name — I like it that way!"

Benny Mott well knew what one says over a phone all too



Captain Elias B. Mott  
Enterprise Gunnery Officer



Captain Bradford Williams  
Enterprise Radar Officer

frequently comes out at the other end badly distorted and inaccurate. So at the commencement of the Guadalcanal campaign, Benny made a deal with the Air Officer, then Commander John Crommelin.

"Commander," said Benny, "when battle becomes imminent, and all our planes have been launched, you are obviously not going to use your bullhorn. Sure, I have talkers in Sky Control, but we both know how errors can and do creep into phone conversations. So how about letting me have the mike and your air department bullhorn. I can then give our 5-inch, 1.1, 40mm and 20mm, the bearing and position angle of all Jap bombers and torpedoes attacking us. My gunners can then hear me even above noise they create plus any hits we may take." Commander Crommelin agreed fully.

A "newcomer" then spoke: During 1944 and 1945, the exec used to get on the bullhorn and tell us what was happening. "Oh hell," said the Old Timer, "during those days

BIG E was in far less danger of being sunk than during 1942, while she battled at times against four-to-one odds! Hell, even when the kamikaze hit us and caused our number one elevator to sail 400 feet toward the sky, even then the damage to BIG E was far, far less than even one of the hits we took in those dirty battles off Guadalcanal."

"You gotta remember that, as Admiral Ernie King said, 'Guadalcanal was a separate war within a war, and some of the most vicious naval battles ever fought were fought in waters at or near Guadalcanal.'"

A retired chief machinist's mate spoke. "I was in number one fireroom during those battles off the 'Canal. At times, when one of those damned near misses got us, I was lifted two feet from the floor plates. Scared? Damn right I was. But I knew that topside, 'our Benny' was bellowing orders to his gunners — who could never have got those orders over the friggin' phones! When my relief showed up and told me that

'our Benny' was still shouting curses at the friggin' Japs, well, damn it, I just knew we'd come out of it okay. Us people way down below didn't want a damn 'Cook's Tour' announcer telling us what was happening during battle. Hell, we wanted to know that 'our Benny' was still standing in Sky Control shouting orders to his gunners!"

A Marine joined our group. "I was strapped into a 20mm, just aft the flag bridge. Thanks to Benny, who gave us the bearing and position angle, I shot down a Val dive bomber. He got into his chute and came down near us. But he didn't make the big drink in one piece. My buddy, next to me, clipped the shrouds of the Jap's chute, and he plummeted into the drink. Many of you don't know this but at that time, the Japs had killed nearly a dozen Marine and Navy pilots while they were coming down in their chutes. It made us mad as hell, and we vowed to treat them the same.

"Well, when my buddy shot down the Jap in his chute, some commander on Rear

Admiral Kinkaid's staff leaned over the bridge and shouted to us: 'Knock that off! We fight fairly in the U.S. Navy. We don't shoot down men in chutes!' And do you know what the Marine, my buddy, answered?" "Sorry, Commander, but the son-fabitch pulled a friggin' knife on me!"

"Yeah," said another plankowner, "Our Benny and his gunners never received any credit at all for keeping BIG E afloat during her toughest days — none at all! The fly boys got all the friggin' medals. They did great at Midway, with that one exception. But throughout those dirty friggin' Guadalcanal days, 'our Benny' and his cussin' gunners did the dirty work!"

"Well, here comes 'our Benny.' Let's all give him a big hand, eh. How are you, Captain Mott?"

"I'm fine," said Captain Mott. But I'd feel even finer if you'd call me 'Benny!'"

# Dancing across Europe

Though war itself is hell, there are usually some bright spots behind the lines which add a pleasant touch to one's collective memory of the conflict.

World War II, despite its heartaches, opened the door for many Americans who never had an opportunity to be directly involved in their country's military programs.

The Women's Army Corps (WAC), for instance, gave women the opportunity to serve in almost all wartime military occupational specialties, except those associated with combat responsibilities. Established on May 14, 1942, the Corps one year later changed from an auxiliary into an integral part of the U.S. Army. Its peak wartime strength reached over 99,000 women.

Helen Marketich of New Castle, Pennsylvania was only 19 years old in 1944 when she became imbued with the desire to serve her country in the WAC. (Forget that a young woman back then had to be 21 years old to get into the military). Locked into a secretarial position one year out of high school also gave Helen an incentive to "Join the WAC and see the world."

What she got in the beginning was rugged basic training at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, and more secretarial work at the Second Air Force base, Colorado Springs, Colorado. Fortunately, there was time for dancing—something which was in Helen's feet as well as her blood.

When she shipped off to Europe on the SS LIBERTY later that year, Helen took her "dancing shoes" with her. Dancing was a way for her to communicate. It was a universal language to those who fought as allies against Germany.

Wherever Helen went, she danced. When the music started and her body responded all the



Helen's feet did plenty of talking even during lunch hour if a dancing partner happened to show up.

Helen Oliver Collection

way down to her toes, she danced. And if a dance partner was handy, there were few European rugs which could not be cut with jitterbugging. Too, dancing helped Helen find

humor in life despite seeing personal tragedies which the war had imposed on many people.

Helen's dreams of traveling did come true. Her military ser-

vice took her to France, Germany, Italy, and finally Austria, one of the great cultural centers of old Europe. She had been assigned to General Mark Clark's staff at



Proud and pert, Helen.

*Jitter-bugging for General Mark Clark (not shown,) Helen and her partner put on an energetic show for G.I.'s and guests at the Konzert House, Vienna.*

## Dance Fever!!

*Verona, Italy, and went from there to Vienna to serve on his secretarial staff.*

*Helen remembers General Clark as a commander endowed with great diplomacy to carry out his tasks with the other Allies, Russians included. Aware of Helen's dancing ability, Clark during one social event in Vienna requested that she and a partner dance for him. They did and almost brought the house down.*

*Vienna was important to Helen in another way. It was there she met her future husband, Herbert Oliver. In all, she served two years in the Armed Forces.*

*Since World War II, Helen has kept in close touch with veterans' affairs and activities. During the past year she has served as Adjutant of VFW Post 6788 in Wannamaker, Indiana, where she and Herb make their home. She was recently elected Quartermaster of the Post.*

*"Dancing across Europe" surely is the equivalent to having "Danced all Night." It certainly was for Helen Oliver.*



*While an imposing statue looks on in the background, Helen and her partner cut a rug in Command Headquarters, Vienna.*

# Stout old PBY didn't quit

Conrad Frieze  
VP-11

## Part 2

In the March issue of the Times, author Frieze told of his PBY getting off course and going down in the Pacific. This installment tells of the daring rescue.

I came up from the bunk fumbling for a flashlight clipped to the bulkhead in the galley. Its beam swept the bilges beneath the catwalk and revealed many miniature fountains where sea water spurted upward from holes from which rivets had popped from the force of the two impacts. Fortunately, no seams had opened.

Our first action, after the airplane had been secured, was to start the auxiliary power unit so that we could radio Pearl Harbor that we were safely down. In the middle of our first transmission, the putt-putt coughed and died.

After some minutes of puzzlement and unsuccessful attempts to restart the putt-putt, we realized that the Consolidated Aircraft Company had "improved" us out of business. Whereas our old PBY-1's had a putt-putt that ran on its own little tank of white gasoline, 71-P-7 was a newer PBY-5. The putt-putt had been redesigned to run on 100-octane avgas and was plumbed into the right main fuel tank. When the Pratt & Whitney's ran out of gas so did the putt-putt!

## No worry — yet

Knowing that Pearl had received and acknowledged our position before the engines quit, we surmised that they would know when our transmission broke off suddenly, that we had lost power and gone down. They would send someone to find us in the morning.

Dawn of Monday, January 5, came with clearing skies and considerable abatement of wind. I removed my shoes and socks to ensure good footing and climbed out and up onto the surface of the broad wing. The squall line had passed during the night hours. Now the ocean swells were blue, sun-silvered to the east and reflecting blue sky and white cumulus clouds between the gently pitching PBY and the green-brown slopes of a distant island.

Lt. Clark, Ensign Willis, and the AP were climbing onto the wing from the navigator's hatch forward. Good mornings were exchanged without the for-



Unnamed happy bunch of PBY'ers strike relaxed pose for photographer somewhere in Pacific.

mality of salutes. As I edged past them toward the starboard engine nacelle, Ensign Willis put out a hand to steady me on the rocking surface. "Where to, barefoot boy with cheeks of fuzz?"

His joviality brought a grin to my face. Obviously, the officers weren't worried about our predicament. It would be but a matter of time before the search planes came. "Figure I'd better check those engines, sir. Salt water won't do them a bit of good." "Fine, carry on," Lt. Clark said and he turned away to scrutinize the island with his binoculars.

Salt crystals sparkled on the cowl and propeller. I unbuttoned the accessory section cowl and peered inside. There didn't appear to be much salt on the magnesium blower section and I sighed with relief as I replaced the cowl. With all the oil wiping rags I had scrounged in the airplane I stuffed the carburetor air intake to keep out the salt spray that was periodically thrown into the air by the bow plunging into a wave.

I had no more rags for the intake of the port engine, but I had to protect that P&W as best I could in case they sent a tender with gasoline. Scrambling across to the port nacelle, I strip-

ped off my blue dungaree shirt and stuffed it into the intake.

The pilots were standing on the wing center section in conference. As I came off the nacelle Lt. Clark turned to me, "Frieze, take a look and tell me what island you think that is."

"Maui, — isn't it?"

He held out the binoculars. "Take a good look."

Bracing a bare foot against a fuel tank vent and balancing myself against the constant roll and pitch of the airplane, I took the glasses and focused them on the island.

The island mountain, its top shrouded in cumulus clouds, was clearly visible in the morning air as were the lower hills northwesterly of the peak. I started to say, "It's Maui — that's Haleakala," but the words died unspoken. The mountain had a peculiar double appearance.

The truth slowly dawned and my spirits sank. I was looking at a mountain with another beyond and almost in a direct line with it. Only one of the Hawaiian islands has two major peaks.

## Far off course

"Damn, lieutenant," I said slowly, "that can't be Maui — that's the Big

Island, isn't it." It was a statement, not a question.

"We think so — in fact we're sure. The squadron is going to be looking for us 40 miles off Maui and here we are maybe 60 or 80 miles off Hilo."

"How far you reckon from where we said?"

"More than a hundred miles, for damn sure!"

"There'll be ships passing."

The pilot shook his head and ran his fingers through his hair. "Not likely. It's a helluva big ocean. No reason for surface traffic out here. We're well out of shipping lanes into Hilo and probably drifting southwest all the time. We've got to get that damn radio working!"

The generator on the putt-putt suddenly became vital. I climbed back into the airplane, roused Davenport, and conferred with him and Herrin.

"Damn, if we only had one lousy pint of gas," Ernie said. "We could disconnect the putt-putt fuel line and feed the damned thing with a funnel or something."

Something clicked in my head. "Hey! We can get some gas! The main tank sumps!! Hang on — let me get a coffee can from the galley locker."



The sump drains were on the outside of the wing pylon aft of the tower window. With a safety line tied to the belt of my dungarees, I slid along the fuselage under the wing trailing edge and got one foot on the aft wing strut. From that precarious perch I held the coffee can under the drain opening. Davenport opened the valve in the tower. I caught more than a pint of the precious gasoline and passed it in through the tower window.

Herrin had disconnected the putt-putt fuel line, scrounged the rubber tube tourniquet from the first aid kit, fitted the tube end over the fuel inlet, and plugged a funnel into the other end. Paul held the funnel elevated and poured gasoline into it while Ernie cranked the putt-putt.

The jury rig worked. The popping of the exhaust of the little engine was music to our ears — the airplane was alive! Quickly Clark scribbled a position message while Willis propped a very seasick first radioman in his chair at the transmitter.

The radio came to life, tubes glowing behind the black grillwork and meters flicking to normal readings. Gilbert put his fingers on the transmit key — and the set went dead.

"That rips the hell out of it," Clark said disgustedly. "Secure the putt-putt and save that gas just in case. Maybe they'll search to within range of the VHF."

## Adrift at sea

*We drifted helplessly all day on the heaving ocean under the hot tropic sun without sighting ship or airplane.*

*Twice during the long afternoon we thought we heard airplane engines in the distance. Each time and at other intervals, Clark sent out a call on the VHF radio. There was never an answer.*

Late in the day when it became painfully obvious that we would not be found, Clark inventoried our meager emergency supplies and established rations. Each man would be allowed two cups of water a day. Supper was a half cup of water, half can of cold bean soup, and a piece of canned brown bread for each man. Watches were set.

Around midnight, our supply of Very pistol flares was exhausted. Our remaining signalling devices then consisted of four smoke cans and the small signalling mirror from the emergency kit of a life raft.

The morning of Tuesday, January 6, dawned relatively clear except for the omnipresent cumulus clouds drifting over the Pacific. The wind and waves remained reasonably calm but 71-P-7 still pitched and rolled over long heavy swells. The far-off green fringed brown slopes of the island of Hawaii were tantalizing.

Around 0700, we suddenly snapped to attention. There was a far off but distinct drone of airplane engines! Herrin was the first to sight it — a tiny speck against the island and passing six or eight miles to the southwest of our position and heading south-

southeast.

We scramble to the wing and fired two smoke cans in quick succession. The smoke plumes were disappointingly small and dissipated quickly across the swells. When the airplane was abeam of us, we fired the two remaining smoke flares. The airplane flew steadily onward, dwindled in the distance, and the hum of engines faded to silence.

Clark surmised that the aircraft might be a search plane flying the line of bearing taken on our transmission by Pearl Harbor. He set all hands to scrounging for means of signalling in the belief that the airplane would fly out our bearing past Hawaii and then would return. There was no possible destination in that direction.

Davenport was stationed in the cockpit to kick the rudder back and forth in hopes it would catch the morning sunlight. Willis went up on the wing center section with the life raft signalling mirror. The AP and I took station in the waist compartment with a smoke bomb (a small brass-nosed wooden bomblet with a recessed impact fuse used to mark the location of submerged submarines) and a ballpeen hammer. Our idea was to set the bomb off with the hammer and heave it out the hatch.

Rummaging through the airplane Herrin came across a non-standard signalling device in the bilges under a bunk. It was similar to a smoke can with a grenade-type top but was longer and slimmer. It was marked simply "Mark XIV Emergency Signal" with no indication of its nature. Clark directed Herrin to install it in a smoke can handle and stand by on the wing.

An hour and a half of anxious waiting went by, then we heard the airplane coming back from the southeast. This time it would pass closer but still three or four miles to the south and west toward the island. As it neared its point of closest approach, we went into action.

## Shooting ourselves

Clark tracked the airplane with the binoculars and announced that it was a twin-engine Sikorsky amphibian. When it had us nearly abeam, he gave Herrin the word to fire the strange device. Paul pulled the pin. It was not a smoke flare. The fuse flipped over, the can hissed, and then a fireball shot out of the end opposite the fuse — and straight down into the fabric of the wing trailing edge! The fireball lodged within the wing directly behind the empty but fume-filled starboard fuel tank and set the wing on fire!!

Willis reacted first. The passing airplane forgotten, the co-pilot shot down off the wing and came feet first through the open gun blister, not slowing when he bowled me over. He snatched a CO2 fire extinguisher from the bunk compartment and scrambled back out onto the wing.

Kicking a hole in the upper wing fabric, Willis inserted the fire extinguisher nozzle and pulled the trig-

ger. The fact that the mixture of smoke and CO2 made a lovely thick trail downwind across the sunlit blue ocean swells went unnoticed and, in our anxiety about the volatile vapors in the fuel tank that might explode, the distant airplane was momentarily ignored.

The fireball from the flare died in a few seconds and the CO2 extinguished the burning fabric. We had a two-foot hole in the wing fabric trailing edge but the fire was out.

While we scrutinized the still-smoking wing for any remaining flame or smoldering, the sound of airplane engines grew louder. We looked up to see the two-engined Sikorsky coming directly toward us. The pilot had seen the plume of smoke and carbon dioxide from the burning wing.

The Sikorsky banked left into a circle about us. We could read the number 1-J-10 on the side of the nose. An Aldis light started flashing. Clark went off the wing and through the navigator's hatch. He turned on the VHF radio but before he got a reply the batteries finally went dead.

The Aldis light in the Sikorsky repeated its message more slowly and spelled out, A-R-E Y-O-U O-K-A-Y? Willis called out from the wing for our own Aldis light. Gilbert got the portable light out of its case and, still groggy from seasickness, stumbled to the waist compartment. Stepping through the watertight door he tripped, lunged for a handhold, and banged the Aldis light against the port machine gun. The light shattered.

Clark groaned, cursed, and asked if anyone could semaphore. I mentally reviewed the semaphore alphabet, unused since boot camp, and got the signal flags from the emergency kit. Atop the wing, Willis and the AP held my legs to steady me and I managed to send "ALL O.K. ! NEED GAS." The Sikorsky acknowledged and continued circling.

At 20 minutes past nine, a ship appeared on the northeast horizon and steamed toward us. It proved to be the USS HULBERT, a World War I four-stack destroyer converted to seaplane tender. The HULBERT slowed as it came alongside, laid to off our starboard wing, and the skipper called out from the bridge with a loud hailer, "Stand by for a line — we'll take you in tow."

"Roger," Clark shouted through cupped hands, "Have you got any aviation gasoline aboard?"

"We have," came the reply, "But you can't take off in this sea. We'll take you aboard and tow the airplane into Hilo."

Clark eyed the 16-foot swells over which the airplane and the small ship rolled and pitched. He knew that the airplane would never survive the miles into Hilo and would have to be scuttled. He shook his head and called back, "Negative — the airplane won't survive that far in this sea! Let us put off part of the crew and some gear, give us 300 gallons of avgas, and we'll fly it back to Kankeohe. Airplanes are

scarce out here!"

The skipper of the HULBERT agreed reluctantly. "Okay, Lieutenant, but it's your responsibility. I want to go on record that it's against my advice to attempt takeoff in these swells. Stand by for a line."

The leadweighted monkeyfist at the end of the light line scored a perfect hit — dead in the center of our fabric-covered rudder!

Clark collapsed to a sitting position atop the cockpit and pounded his fist while he roared with laughter. "Hoo — Hee," he gasped, "first we set the damn airplane on fire and now they're trying to sink us with a line-throwing gun!! Someone go get that damned line!"

After a conference about who would fly the airplane back, Ensign Douglas, both radiomen, and the third mechanic were put off onto the HULBERT.

When the transfer operations were completed, we cast off and the HULBERT moved off a hundred yards to stand by during the takeoff attempt.

## Airborne again

The big P&W 1830 coughed as the propeller turned over, fired two or three of its 14 cylinders as if clearing its throat, then the propeller became that lovely shining disk in the sunlight as the engine settled into its idling rumble. 71-P-7 was alive!

We taxied slowly in a wide circle over the heaving swells while the oil temperatures came up and Clark assessed wind and wave conditions.

We rode up the backside of the first swell with the manifold pressures of both straining engines going off scale at 52 inches. Pitching over the top of the swell, old 71-P-7 took the second one head-on and shuddered violently as the bow turret buried deep into the water.

That stout and faithful old PBY would not quit. Shaking herself like a wet dog, 71-P-7 burst free of that swell, gained speed on the down slope, knifed heavily into the next swell still throwing spray high into the air, bounced hard off the top of the fourth swell and — suddenly and very improbably — we were airborne literally hanging on the props at 58 knots.

It would be gratifying to record that old 71-P-7 went gallantly on to fight the war and sink enemy submarines and shipping. Unfortunately, that was not to be the case. The day after the beaching gear clanked into place and our "leaky tiki" was pulled up onto the ramp, a three-man survey team of engineering officers inspected 71-P-7 and red tagged the aircraft.

Watching while the tractor towed 71-P-7 away to the salvage dump, the squadron leading chief shook his head and muttered, "Boy — that old bird was fouled up like Hogan's goat!"

Lt. Clark was standing nearby. He looked at the chief petty officer. "No, Chief," he said softly, "not her — just us." He turned on his heel and walked quickly away.

# Indy's "Beetle" Smith rose to top

**T**hanks to a reader (God Bless 'em) this column is about Army General Walter Bedell Smith, a native of Indianapolis. As the reader, Bradford Williams, of Hillsborough Beach, Florida, pointed out, Smith was aptly named "Beetle." I, too, have read about and admired General Smith from afar these many years.

Strangely enough, the first I ever heard of the general was from his uncle, Mr. Bedell, a dapper salesman in the man's store of L. Strauss in downtown Indy on Washington Street. He stood tall, slim and erect and got a twinkle in his eye as he would drop the name of this rising star on the American military scene. He waited on my family for a long time, including my maternal grandfather.

Needless to say, the family ventures into Strauss were not frequent during the depression years but one thing was sure, Mr. Bedell had an eye for bargains and a salesman's way of convincing one how long a good piece of material would last. His nephew, obviously, was a good military salesman.

## Early military service

General Smith joined the Indiana National Guard at 15. His mother thought it was some sort of a social organization -- the old Indianapolis



## A General Look

### Wendell Phillippi

Light Infantry, a social as well as military outfit. He was so busy with Guard duty that he missed graduation from Manual High School, and did not receive his diploma until 36 years later when it was found in the files and mailed to him. He received a Hoosier welcome in 1945 when Butler University gave him an honorary doctor of laws degree. He once enrolled at Butler but left because of his father's illness.

General Smith entered an Army Reserve officers training course of the Guard in 1917. He served in France from April until August 1918, and was wounded. He was then attached to the Bureau of Intelligence in Washington, and as we know, he ended his career as head of the newly created Central Intelligence Agency, (the second head man) after serving

as ambassador to Russia following a brilliant career as General Eisenhower's chief of staff.

Struggling through the ranks slowly, Smith, as most officers did between the wars, had a variety of assignments and schooling. He ended up with the General Staff and then into combined Allied operations after the U.S. entered World War II. He was chief of staff to Ike for the invasion in North Africa, and from then on was the old man's right hand for all future operations.

A chief of staff is largely responsible for administration and making his boss look good. He is the buffer between the General and troop commanders. Some chiefs are strictly administrative but most have operations responsibilities. He is generally known as an SOB by those below and often with those on comparable staff levels. He is a moderator and arbitrator. This is a thankless job because he never gets the headlines, or credit, for much except the private thanks of his boss for running a good headquarters. Smith certainly accomplished these missions.

## Marshall on Smith

General George Marshall called Smith the best monographer he ever knew -- having the ability to effectively write or state a special treatise on a particular subject. Hard nosed

and tough, Smith developed an ulcer and had to retire to bed at times to overcome his fatigue and weakened physical condition. When General Omar Bradley went to the Second Corps front in North Africa, Smith went along just to escape the desk in Algiers for awhile.

Bradley wrote after the Italian surrender negotiations: "Smith looked dour and rumpled after the weary weeks of negotiations. I found Bedell Smith tense, tired and worried while waiting for the surrender."

He added: "Smith could be blunt and curt. Yet he was articulate and expressive, sophisticated, and discreet during those diplomatic crises that occasionally erupted at SHAEF. He could tell a person to go to hell, but put it so the person would not be offended."

Bradley probably never forgave Smith for agreeing with Ike that part of his Army group had to be given to British General Montgomery during the Battle of the Bulge.

When Winston Churchill wanted Smith to stay in North Africa after Eisenhower went to England to take command of the Normandy operations, Ike refused saying, "Smith suited me completely." He refused to break up the intimate and important relationship he had established between commanding general and chief of staff.

Ike added: "Smith was a Godsend -- a master of detail with clear comprehension of main issues. Serious hard-working and loyal, he proved equally as capable in difficult conferences as he was in professional activity.

David Irving in his book, *The War Between the Generals* sums up Smith: "Smith was the kind of manager and hatchet man who had to be able to fire without compunction an old friend who had failed. Personal heroism under actual fire was not a pre-requisite for the position, however, which was just as well ... he was an officious person who made enemies faster than friends, but did not care."

So the Indy native who was "cold blooded, stiff-faced" made it big, and has never gotten his just reward for his leadership in the greatest and costliest war in mankind's history. He wrote two books, *My Three Years in Moscow* and *Eisenhower's Six Great Decisions*.

Smith died in Walter Reed Hospital at 65 in 1961. He made it the hard way -- from buck private to a four-star general.

Phillippi, a retired Army major general, is former managing editor of the *Indianapolis News*.

# The "Conquerors" of Hawaii

When you travel to a strange and beautiful place there is always the temptation to compose another travel piece about beaches, sunsets and architecture.

I have resisted this urge in reporting on a trip to Hawaii, trying to relay some enlightenment gained from an assembly of journalists. Before leaving the Hawaii trip, however, I have a few miscellaneous reflections.

First, the memorial erected over the U.S.S. ARIZONA in Pearl Harbor. Before leaving the mainland to take the launch out to the memorial, you view a film depicting that infamous Japanese attack on a sleeping American giant December 7, 1941. I saw the film a few years ago, but it has now been updated with Japanese footage.

Thank goodness young persons who hardly know anything about World War II are seeing the film.

After seeing it this time, I overheard comments I would guess



## Harvey Jacobs

### Executive Editor Indianapolis News

are typical of what is said there every day.

"I can't forgive the Japanese for what they did," said one man. "Not just for what they did, but how they did it."

Another man said, "But they didn't lose the war at all, Charlie. They won it by dumping their goods on us. And they got Hawaii, too. You know they just about own this whole island today."

It's true, I was told. The night before, we had gone to a party at one of the most luxurious condominium-type apartments in Honolulu. The American hostess said their next-door

neighbor would soon be a Japanese business man who had just bought the apartment for \$1.2 million.

I should mention that our American host had come to Hawaii in the 1960's, when such housing was reasonably priced. It is a fact that not only in Hawaii but around the world the dynamism of the Japanese is being thrust into all types of international enterprise. In the United States, if the Japanese stopped buying American stocks and bonds our economic system would be in grave danger. They may have lost the war, but they have now vanquished America in many ways.

To be brutally honest, I must say that the Japanese are replacing Americans as the "ugly" ones. They are resented by other nationals in Hawaii because of their pushy manners. They break out of orderly lines to get ahead of their rightful places. Solid phalanxes of Japanese tourists will brush you off the sidewalk if you let them. I tested them several times.

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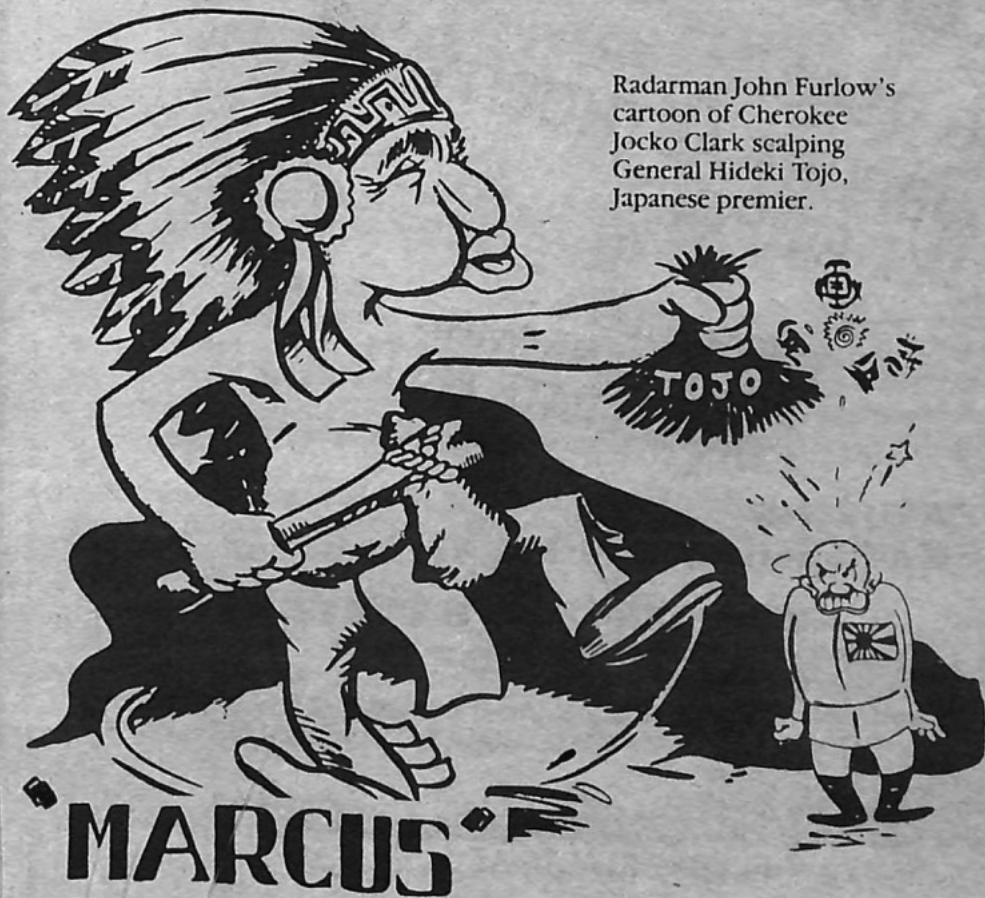
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# Pictorial pot-pourri



Captain John Crommerlin goes over latest intelligence with YORKTOWN'S fighter pilots, July 1944.



Radarman John Furlow's cartoon of Cherokee Jocko Clark scalping General Hideki Tojo, Japanese premier.



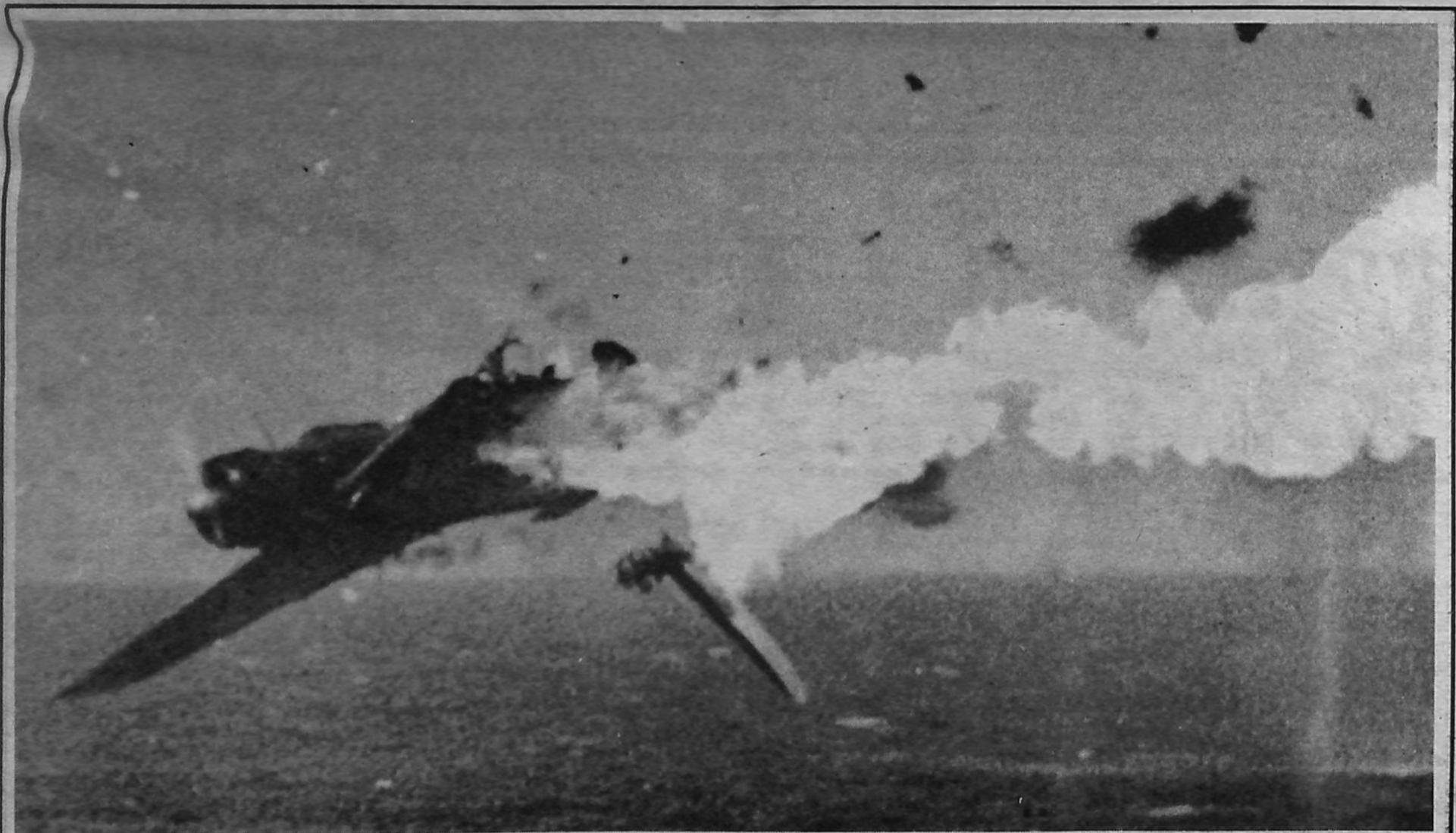
Landing Signal Officer Dick Tripp (Lt. JG) brings in a plane

# of "Yorktown"



*YORKTOWN'S banner follows Frank Borman (center in car), James Lovell, and William Anders, the three lunar astronauts, who were given a ticker tape parade up Broadway, January 10, 1969. "Fighting Lady" was the recovery ship for Apollo 8.*

Jim Bryan Collection



Famous "Flaming Kate" photograph taken from aft end of YORKTOWN'S flight deck, late 1943. LIFE Magazine featured this picture in full page color.

Jim Bryan Collection



The Jimmy Flatleys, America's Royal Family of Naval Aviation gather at a recent YORKTOWN Reunion. L to R: Lt. J.H. "Shamis" Flatley, III (now an F-14 pilot on USS SARATOGA); Mrs. J.H. "Dottie" Flatley (widow of Jimmy Flatley); J.H. Flatley, IV; and RADM J.H. Flatley, II.

## Patriarch "Jimmy" Flatley flew off "Fighting Lady"

FROM PAGE 17

of 11 days, all within the confines of the Chesapeake Bay.

Once the YORKTOWN was on the high seas heading for war, Flatley drilled the air group night and day. By August 31 the men were ready for their first clash with the enemy, a strike against Marcus Island. The evening before, the pilots gathered in the wardroom where Flatley reviewed the attack plan. Teamwork would be essential, he said, to maximize effectiveness and minimize losses. Closing, he added solemnly: "Say your prayers tonight. We're out here fighting for Christian ideals established by our God. Ask him for strength and courage to do your job well."

Flatley's role in the Marcus strike was that of air coordinator. Thus his F6 was equipped with three extra gas tanks to enable him to stay aloft longer. Shortly after the mission, he was ordered stateside to rest and assume an even more important position later in the Pacific offensive.

Flatley, who died in 1958, has an abiding presence aboard the YORKTOWN as she rests quietly from her labors at Patriots Point, South Carolina. In 1982 he was elected to the Carrier Aviation Hall of Fame and a bronze plaque was placed on the flight deck where he once went aloft.

Though he once told his men,

"There is no chivalry in this war and there is no place for it," many comrades who knew him would state, to the contrary, that Jimmy Flatley was the exception.

## Unexpected dinner

FROM PAGE 20

proceeded to do something I would never have done anywhere else. I ate the raw egg along with a considerable amount of rice. The other egg I left beside my plate.

The milk was good, but if it was pastuerized as well as the eggs were cooked, then I had my doubts. The rice was excellent and did a good job of camouflaging the egg. The small cakes were rice cakes for dessert. They were the best part of the meal. When I had finished, the good Father noted that I had not eaten the greenish stuff which he said was my "bread." I thanked him by saying that I was quite full and could eat no more.

Well, the meal was finished and I had finally determined that I would accept the invitation to spend the night, having for awhile completely forgotten about the captain, the war, and the Japs.

Suddenly, there was a flurry of steps running toward the house, and someone yelling about "el Capitan." The door burst open with shouts and chatter. I reached for my gun and helmet, shook hands with my host, thanking him, and rushed out into the dark toward the jeep that I could see was there.

The captain apologized for having forgotten me. I was not in the least miffed but informed my superior that I had found a good "bed and breakfast" and was just hoping that he never came back.

Ah, well, back to the war!

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# New book shows war through eyes of G.I.'s

Lee Kennett, *G.I., The American Soldier in World War II*, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988.

Each day there are fewer of us to answer the question, "Do you remember where you were and what you were doing when Pearl Harbor was attacked?" While we may have that answer down pat, we may be a bit more fuzzy about many aspects of our lives before and after 7 December 1941. It was a day of infamy that President Roosevelt called it, but it was also the day that changed our futures even if we didn't realize it at the time.

Recently a remarkable book was published by Scribners entitled "G.I. The American Soldier in World War II." I use the word "remarkable" for several reasons but mostly because this is not one of those "I Was There" or "I Was Hitler's Moustache" books. It was written by a person who was 10 years old in 1941. Lee Kennett, a professor at the University of Georgia,

## Book shelf

has expertly and interestingly captured the story of World War II, not in terms of the battles and the like but rather as experienced primarily by the more than seven million men inducted through the Selective Service System; the men who in time became known as GI's.

Professor Kennett begins his account in 1940 with the peacetime draft, and recounts the tribulations and reactions of those selected for a year of training; a year that extended into "for the duration." He covers the nation's struggles with mobilizing for war after Pearl Harbor. He takes us into the reception stations, training centers, ports of embarkation, and

replacement depots. He conducts us into both the Atlantic and Pacific battle areas and in time into the occupational forces.

We see these events through the eyes of the GI's; not to the extent that this becomes an oral history per se but certainly the war as seen by those who fought it. Professor Kennett concludes his masterful, highly readable survey by visiting with members of the 84th Infantry division at their 1985 reunion.

As I read this book I was amazed by how much the author was able to compress into some 240 pages of text and how skillfully he evoked the way it was. Time and again I'd be reminded

of something he had apparently overlooked only to find it would appear on the next page or in the next chapter. In his review of this book (ARMY, Sep 87) Charles B. MacDonald, the eminent historian and author of the magnificent "A Time for Trumpets," had naught but praise for "GI" and added "I challenge any of my generation to find an error."

Hitch-hiking on MacDonald, I challenge anyone to read this book and not enjoy it. It is certainly most compatible with the aims and concerns of the *World War II Times*.

In a letter to me Professor Kennett wrote "I confess I enjoyed living the GI's existence even if vicariously while I worked on the book. Your generation had a unique collective experience that we who came along afterward frankly envy." Our generation may not have considered it a unique collective experience at the time but we didn't know then we'd be around to read and enjoy this book in 1988.

## Book details St. Louis' patriotism during World War II

*St. Louis at War*, Betty Burnett with a Foreword by Stuart Symington, The Patrice Press, St. Louis, Missouri, 1987.

December 7, 1941. It all happened so suddenly. St. Louisans were aware, of course, of the problems in Europe and of the growing hostility of the Japanese empire. But the attack on Pearl Harbor bombed everyone's lassitude into a state of reality.

The young men of the city were the first to respond. They jammed the recruiting offices the day after the Day of Infamy. Meanwhile, the city police and Missouri State Guard began protecting St. Louis' essential points.

The confusion of that first week somehow got sorted out and St. Louis

began at once to convert to war production. Tanks, planes, landing craft, bombs, cartridges, helmets, combat boots, uniforms, and K-rations rolled off assembly lines. Cost-plus contracts brought healthy new profits to St. Louis entrepreneurs. Department store sales soared.

With increased production, came the need for more workers. A labor pool sapped by the military meant that St. Louis women had to lay aside brooms and aprons and don welder's goggles. They quickly proved that they could do "men's" work, producing with the same efficiency (but with less pay) as any man. Blacks streamed into the city from the south and began their long climb into industrialized society.

The early years of the war brought

forth a naive patriotism. Young men asserted that they would be proud to die for their country and they were — right up to the moment the bullets ripped into them. Parents displayed gold stars in their windows with a bittersweet sense of pride and sorrow. Teenagers, the handicapped, suburban matrons, and business leaders all wanted to "do their part." The Red Cross, USO, War Dads, and other service organizations gave them the chance.

There were problems, of course. Shortages of rubber, sugar, tin, meat, gasoline, shoes, beer, and seats on passenger trains. The scarcity of all that was abundant before the war taxed the patience and good humor of St. Louisans. Wildcat strikes besieged the city and hampered war produc-

tion. Racial tension threatened to flare into violence.

And when it was over, after the hysterically joyful street dancing and after Johnny came marching home, there was a lingering aftershock. Some Johnnys were permanently disabled. Others came home to find their sleep haunted by terrifying nightmares of Bataan or Bastogne. And some came home in wood boxes, met for one last time by their agonized loved ones.

Author Burnett scavenged libraries not only for data, but also for illustrations. Some photographs came from private collections, some were copied from old newspapers. They are here, ready to transport the reader back to the heady days of 1941-45 in St. Louis.

## Big E's "night birds" roamed heavens

FROM PAGE 16

South China Sea, Formosa, Honshu (including Tokyo), Kyushu, Shikoku, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa.

Their Air Group Commander was CDR. W.I. Martin. With this assignment he had finally achieved the objective which he had sought since October 1942.

It was a big day for *Enterprise* on February 16, 1945 when her aircraft from NAG 90 joined hundreds of aircraft from other 5th Fleet carriers on the first strike by the Navy against targets in the Tokyo area. *Enterprise*

had made it all the way through 18 battles, and had two to go — Iwo Jima, and Okinawa.

NAG 90 had 175 hours of continuous flight operations (a record in WW II) at Iwo Jima. TBM's made successful night attacks on Japanese fleet units in the Inland Sea, and in company with Hellcats made repeated night raids on Kyushu and Shikoku airfields, which neutralized much Japanese kamikazi capability from those installations.

Kamikazi attacks caused damage

to *Enterprise* on three separate occasions during the Battle of Okinawa, and the last one on May 16, 1945, severely damaged the great ship.

Major repairs were needed, so *Enterprise* returned to Puget Sound Navy Yard via Pearl Harbor. Her combat career had ended, but she had left a legacy in night carrier operations, as well as a combat record in 20 major battles unsurpassed by any other ship in World War II.

W.I. "Bill" Martin is accredited with the initial introduction and develop-

ment of night carrier tactics during the war. Later he became a test pilot; Commanding Officer of the carrier *Saipan* (CV-48); and Executive Assistant and Senior Aide to the Chief of Naval Operations.

He was promoted to Rear Admiral in 1958, and to Vice Admiral in 1967. He was Commander of the U.S. Sixth Fleet, and Deputy Commander of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet. VADM Martin retired after nearly 37 years of service on February 1, 1971.



YORKTOWN'S "Flying Circus" shot down 50 Japanese planes without getting so much as a bullet hole in their own planes. L to R: Lt. Eugene Valencia, division leader (23 planes); Lt. JG Harris Mitchell (10 planes); Lt. Clinton L. Smith, (6 planes); and Lt. J.G. James French (11 planes).

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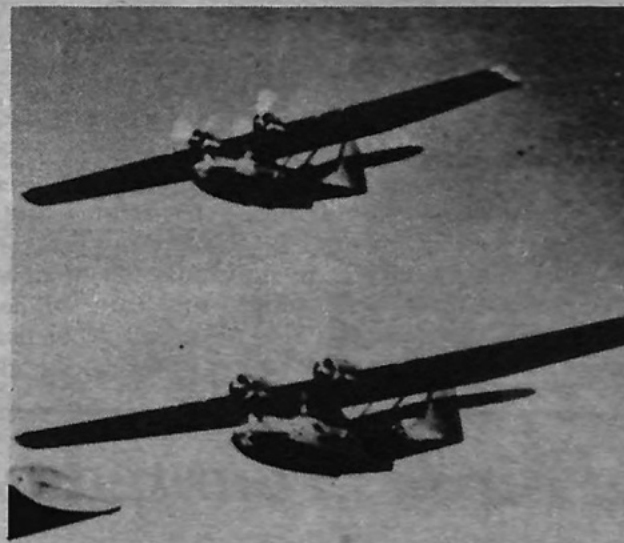
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## Reunions

U.S.S. HEYWOOD (APA 6), October 13-16, 1988, Arlington, TX. Contact Lee Hazel, 39220 N. Cedarcrest Dr., Lake Villa, IL 60046 (312) 356-7526.

VP/VB11 (NAVY), October 1988, San Diego, CA. Contact George Poulos, 3328 Canonita Dr., Fallbrook, CA 92028 (619) 728-5153.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY Midshipmen's School, 1940-1945, proposed first reunion. Contact Ralph Wayne Miller, 6023 E. 52nd Place, Indianapolis, IN 46226 (317) 542-7090.

72nd TROOP CARRIER SQUADRON, 434th TROOP CARRIER GROUP, in Buffalo, N.Y., Aug. 11-14, 1988. Contact Edward F. Ginal, 246 DuPont Ave., Tonawanda, N.Y., 14150. (716) 877-6199.

854th ENGINEER AVIATION BATTALION, US ARMY, October 7-9, 1988, Holiday Inn-Louisville Downtown, Louisville, KY. Contact James E. Bethell, 6805 Galax Ct., Springfield, VA 22151 (703) 256-2988.

135th NCB "SEABEES," Reunion in 1988. Contact J.S. Pilkington, P.O. Box 176, Riverside, AL, 13135, (205) 884-4867.

HEADQUARTERS 50th TROOP CARRIER WING, September 15-18, 1988, St. Louis, MO. Contact Frank Ehrman, 840 Station Place West Drive, Indianapolis, IN, 46234.

76th TROOP CARRIER SQUADRON, October 14-16, 1988, Airport Hilton Hotel, El Paso, TX. Contact Bill Wehr, R.D. #1, Box 193, River Road, Watsontown, PA., (717) 538-1501.

EIGHTH ANNUAL REUNION P-51 MUSTANG PILOTS ASSOCIATION, October 13-16, 1988 at the Red Lion Inn, 222 N. Vineyard, Ontario, California 91764, (714) 983-0909. Contact Col. Harvey W. Gipple, USAF (Ret), 7927 Borson St., Downey, CA 90242—Tel. (213) 869-6512.

SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL REUNION P-40 WARHAWK PILOTS ASSOCIATION, September 21-25, 1988. (Command Headquarters), Galt House, Fourth Street at River, Louisville, KY 40202, (502) 589-5200. Contact L.C. Clifford Sachleben USAF (Res), 1138 Standiford Lane, Louisville, KY 40243, Tel. (502) 368-6253.

709th TANK BATTALION (WWI), October 13-16, 1988, Louisville, KY. Contact Paul E. Claster, 19 Towne Terrace Apts., Middletown, NY 10940 (914) 343-4879.

24th INFANTRY DIVISION, the 5th RCT, the 555 FA Bn. and the 6th Tank Bn., Sept. 28—Oct. 2, 1988, Sheraton—Savannah, GA. Contact Kenwood Ross, 120 Maple St., Springfield, MA 01103-2278 (413) 733-3194.

27th GROUP CARRIER SQUADRON (CBI) REUNION, Aug. 26-28, 1988, Sheraton—Springfield, IL. Contact Lester J. (Rip) Van Winkle, 126 Riojas Dr., Kerrville, TX 78028 (512) 995-2558.

103rd OBSERVATION SQUADRON (ANG) Nov. 11-13, 1988, Warrington Motor Lodge near Willow Grove NAS, PA. Special programs for ladies. Contact Norm Pinney, 435 Honeysuckle Ct., Montgomery, AL 36109, (205) 272-0274.

102nd INFANTRY DIVISION, July 24-31, 1988, Cincinnati, OH. Contact Frank Alfiero, 211 Reynard Rd., Bridgewater, NJ 08807.

USS LACKAWANNA (AO-40), Oct. 16-19, 1988, Palace Station Hotel, 2411 W. Sahara Ave., Las Vegas, NV. Contact Newman S. Cryer, Jr., 5323 N. Kenyon Dr., Indianapolis, IN 46226.

CBI VA REUNION, July 26-31, 1988, Center City Marriott Hotel, Denver, CO. Contact Cleve Peterson, 865 So. Peterson Way, Denver, CO 80223.

USS ST. LO (CVE 63) AND AIR SQUADRON VC-65, Oct. 23-26, 1988, San Mateo, CA. Contact E.H. "Holly" Crawford, 1510 Winsor Way, Reno, NV 89503 (702) 747-0884.

40th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION REUNION, Sept. 8-11, 1988, Hershey Hotel, Philadelphia, PA. Puerto Rico, Panama, Pratt, CBI and Tinian vets contact Flo Mallory, P.O. Box 9252, Treasure Island, FL 33740 (813) 360-3613.

NAVY, MARINE, COAST GUARD (NAP'S) NAVAL ENLISTED PILOTS, Sept. 21-25, 1988, install pilots into history at the air museum Pensacola, FL. Contact William "Bill" Williams, Rt. 11, Box 287, Milton, FL 32570 (904) 623-5740.



# World War II Times

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## News Briefs

**ATOMIC VETERANS GET BENEFITS** — President Reagan recently signed legislation granting benefits to over 300,000 veterans for exposure to radiation from World War II atomic blasts or from nuclear test explosions. Veterans claiming disability benefits ordinarily must prove the disability was connected with their military service. The bill bypasses this requirement for many veterans suffering from cancer.

Eligible veterans include those who served during the occupation of Japan, prisoners of war in Japan, and those exposed to atmospheric detonation of tests of nuclear devices.

The bill passed the House, 326 - 2 and the Senate, 48-30. The Veterans Administration had argued there was no direct evidence of a scientific link between the veterans' service and their current health problems.

**MAYOR WANTS NO PART OF JAPANESE** — Mayor William V. Lietz of Wapakoneta, Ohio, resigned from his office April 15 to avoid dealing with Japanese trying to invest in his city.

In his statement of resignation, Lietz noted: "I was on a destroyer (South Pacific) that was sunk...and I was in the hospital...I'm an American and I love my country. I am just going out because I figure it's best for the town. I don't hate the Japanese at all, but I just don't want to have anything to do with them personally."

Lietz, 64, served as mayor of Wapakoneta 13 years.

The huge Japanese battleship YAMATO blows up after six torpedo hits by YORKTOWN planes, April 6, 1945.

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"Jimmy" Flatley presents plaque honoring Smokey to Mr. and Mrs. J.B. Stover at the 5th YORKTOWN Reunion, 1952. Also seen, "Pop" Condit, left, and James Bryan, rear.

Jim Bryan Collection

## Smokey Stover was one of "Yorktown's" best

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

namesake for YORKTOWN, CV-5 which went down at Midway. His first assignment prior to the launching of the ship was in the radar plotting room, a task he abhorred since this meant taking him out of the skies.

This was what Smokey was doing when the ship arrived in Hawaii in late July. However, he found other ways to take to the air. At sea he got flight time by taking hops in the rear seat of a dive bomber.

Whenever YORKTOWN docked at Pearl Harbor, he took a Navy SNJ training plane aloft to keep his flying skills honed as sharp as possible.

Smokey's new comrades appreciated his many fine qualities. His reputation as a

Guadalcanal veteran brought certain acclaim. But he also loved classical music, avidly read history and poetry, and never missed a Protestant church service.

The Gilbert and Marshall Islands operations which began in late 1943 brought Smokey back into the fray. He spent his last Christmas in Hawaii and received a belated present the next day, when orders came detaching him from ship's company and assigning him to "Fighting Five."

On February 15, 1944, at sunrise, Smokey and 11 other Hellcat pilots roared off the YORKTOWN's deck. They rendezvoused with 12 other fighters from ENTERPRISE to form a low-altitude attack

group. Fighters from other carriers came together as intermediate and high cover groups, a total sweep of 72 planes.

Smokey's Group caught the heaviest flak. He pressed on followed by Den Merrill and D.O. Kenney. Then a burst of flak hit Smokey's plane. He pulled up to gain altitude and get away from the target, but Merrill, flying alongside him, radioed, "You're hit badly!"

Smokey jumped out of his mortally wounded plane, opened his parachute and drifted down to the water, hitting it approximately three miles of the barrier reef. Opening his rubber life raft, he climbed in and gave a "thumbs up" to Merrill as the latter buzzed him.

Unfortunately, Smokey was in a highly dangerous position. Prevailing winds were blowing him toward the North Pass through the reef and a collision course with the Japanese fleet heading there. Smokey was never seen again. Though no one knows his ultimate fate, very likely he was captured, beaten, and summarily executed with six other American pilots on Dublon Island.

One of Smokey Stover's favorite poems was John Magee's "High Flight," which includes these words: "Oh! I have slipped the surely bonds of Earth...and touched the face of God."

To touch the face of God was much better than to reach the stars.

# How we broke the Japanese four digit code

In March 1944, the War Department Intelligence Staff from information supplied by a Japanese POW, found out how the XIV Corps with the 37th Division and Americal Division were able to achieve a resounding and overwhelming victory that month over famed Japanese 6th Division from Kumamoto and the 4th South Seas Naval Garrison Unit in the Second Battle of Bougainville.

The War Department sent a team of photographers to record how the XIV Corps Military Intelligence Service Language Team (165th Language Detachment) was conducting interrogation to determine, if possible, the secret of extracting valuable tactical information from Japanese POWs.

It should be noted that the 165th Language Detachment, commanded by Captain William H. Fisher, had a complement of six Nisei enlisted linguists.

The War Department observed that in the Second Battle of Bougainville, the ratio of enemy casualties to U.S. casualties was more than 20 to one. Few battles in the entire history of the United States Army show such favorable casualty ratios.

The photographers spent hours recording the methods and techniques that we employed in conducting interrogations at the XIV Corps POW compound.

Technical Sergeant Hiroshi Mat-



Roy T. Uyehata,  
LTC AUS, (Retired)

suda and Technician 3rd Grade Tatsuo Matsuda were the key players in the mock interrogations because of their superior fluency of the Japanese language. The Japanese NHK film, "Nisei Soldier" shown in 1980 and 1981, and the recently released Loni Ding's, "A Color of Honor," used scenes from the film which were taken by the War Department in April or May 1944.

At approximately the same time, the War Department Signal Corps Intelligence Unit also sent a Signal Corps captain to the XIV Corps MIS Language Team, in an effort to extract and elicit signal intelligence information from captured POWs.

By coincidence, there was a POW who had been a Battalion Signal Unit cryptographer. For the technical

phase of the interrogation, Captain Fisher asked me to serve as interpreter for the captain who was conducting the interrogation for the Signal Corps. Even though he was trying to unlock the secret of the four digit code, his questions were veiled so that the POW could not detect the true purpose of the interrogation.

One of the reasons why the Japanese four digit code was difficult to decipher was because the four digit code numbers assigned to units and unit commanders were not identified in the captured codebooks. The four digit code numbers that were assigned to units and unit commanders were committed to memory by Japanese Signal Unit cryptographers making it virtually impossible to identify the four digit code numbers to units.

When the captain asked, "What does 9013 stand for?", the POW replied, "9013 is the code number for the Eighth Area Army Headquarters Commander at Rabaul." General Histoshi Imamura was the commander of the Eighth Area Army Headquarters at Rabaul.

In rapid succession, the POW identified code numbers, 9014, 9015 and 9016. These code numbers were assigned to the staff members of Eighth Area Army Headquarters.

The Signal Intelligence Unit captain was amazed to find that a Japanese Signal Unit cryptographer would offer to give such important informa-

tion so freely to the Americans. The gist of the dialogue between the Corps captain and the POW cryptographer is recorded on page 587 of the Codebreakers by David Kahn.

One month after the Signal Corps captain returned to his War Department Signal Corps Intelligence Unit in Washington, D.C., with the information which broke the Japanese four digit code, Captain Fisher informed me that the above mentioned captain had received the Legion of Merit Decoration for breaking the four digit code.

This is another untold story of World War II in which Nisei soldiers played an important part in obtaining valuable tactical strategic military information, but received very little or no credit in accomplishing our military intelligence service



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In the closing days of Guadalcanal we were firing from Point Cruz in support of the drive to Cape Esperance. Our unit, the 221st FA Bn of the American Division had been firing daily since landing some weeks before, and therefore, the need for cleaning the piece had been eliminated. We would simply wait until the next fire mission and the shells



Bill McLaughlin,  
Americal Division

would clean it out in great style.

Suddenly, all was quiet. No fire missions. The guns stood silent while we turned to cleaning up the area, which, God knows, could stand it. Partly buried bodies of both Japanese and Americans were all over the place. Here was a foot encased in a GI combat boot sticking up out of the sand ready to trip the unwary man walking around at night. There beside the guns, sited almost hub to hub in the

cramped space of the peninsular, were blown in foxholes with grossly fattened maggots covering the bodies like a white moving coat. At noon time when the thermometer reached 120°, as high as it registered, the place smelled like a cheap butcher shop.

After two or three days had passed with no fire missions, we began to sweat. What about the guns? Looking down the tubes, we saw the blackened rifling covered with hardened layers of powder fouling. There was nothing for us to do but get to work. Buckets of water were heated, using extra powder charges to set them boiling in seconds. Salsoda and burlap ready, then scrub, scrub, scrub.

Time went by but the tube showed little improvement. That fouling seemed in there to stay.

Suddenly, Lew Greenman on Number 3 hollered, "Hey, Mac, come here." I went over and he said, "Look in there," pointing at his gun. "Wow," I said, "How did you do it?" The piece gleamed. "The burlap fell into the sand," he said, "and we wiped it off as best we could and used it anyway. One or two passes through and it looked

like this."

That was enough for me. Back I went to my Number 4 and dropped the burlap in the fine white coral sand that covered the place. Running it through made the tube look brand new.

A day or so later, an officer from Battalion Headquarters came to inspect our pieces. As he went from gun to gun, his voice became almost reverent. "Battery A has the finest looking guns in the battalion," he said. "Sergeant, how do your section chiefs manage to keep them so clean?"

"Well, sir," I said, watching his face, "you take salsoda and hot water and burlap..." "Yes, yes," he said eagerly waiting for the secret. "And then you throw the wet burlap down onto the sand..."

His face turned red, then pale as he thought that over, and then without further conversation, he turned on his heel and left. I don't know if he believed me or not but I doubt it ever was mentioned in a revised artillery manual as the way to clean a really fouled gun.

# “Fighting Lady”

FROM PAGE 19

Nine now replaced an exhausted Three and began with strikes on the Japanese homeland. For three months the antagonists traded blows as the Army and Marines struggled to overcome fierce resistance on “Okie” and the zootsuiters smacked into one carrier after another.

But not the York. On March 18, however, things looked bad for a time. In mid-afternoon Marine Lieutenant Barney Favaro was with his Marine AA gunners on the starboard side when “I heard the 40mms open fire from the island (superstructure) batteries. I looked up and saw this big black bomb hurling out of the overcast.”

It struck the side of the signal bridge, but did not detonate — yet. It passed through the deck there, ricocheted off the incinerator smoke stack, punched through a 20mm gun’s splinter shield, cut the torosoes of the two gunners nearly in half, then exploded about 15 feet above the water and 30 feet from the ship.

The blast tore a hole in the side, starting fires, and killing and wounding men. Heroic damage control and emergency first aid kept the ship in action and minimized casualties at five dead and 18 wounded. Earnshaw’s gunners even brought down the attacker, though the pilot parachuted, was picked up and transferred to the Yorktown’s brig.

That was the closest the zootsuiters ever got to fulfilling the promise of Tokyo Rose. But the men of the Yorktown could not relax, particularly after witnessing the Franklin getting clobbered the very next day.

## Down goes the Yamato

Then the Fighting Lady got a chance for a last crack at the Imperial Japanese Navy. And what a target it was — the superbattleship Yamato, at 72,000 tons the largest warship in the world. Reported heading for Okinawa on April 6, the Yamato was attacked by TF 58 planes in repeated bombing runs. The Yorktown launched its planes last, to make certain the pilots had enough fuel to find their prey.

Six Torpedo Nine Avengers led by Lieutenant Thomas Stetson lined up for a classic torpedo drop abreast of the turning behemoth. Harvey Ewing, gunner in one of the planes, was “scared out of my wits as we flew at a breathtaking 300 miles an hour toward the starboard side of the ship. I threw window (foil strips) into the slipstream as fast as I could” to foul any radar-directed guns. “In quick glances out the side windows, I could see bursts of AA shells as they exploded closer and closer to our plane.”

The first four planes released their fish simultaneously. All four struck together, followed by two others. The Yamato suddenly listed to one side, rolled over, and erupted in a huge explosion that sent a mushroom cloud 3000 feet into the sky. The Japanese navy was dead. Better yet, all the torpeckers made it back to the ship, though several were damaged.

But the kamikazes came on for weeks, forcing the fast carriers to keep up almost constant combat air patrols of defensive fighters. The most dramatic intercept occurred on April 17 when Lieutenant Gene Valencia’s “Flying Circus” of four Hellcats waded into some 50 bomb-laden zootsuiters. By the time the four men and their squadronmates had spent their ammunition, they had scored 22 kills and turned back the survivors. When their tour ended, Valencia alone had 23 Japanese planes under his belt, the “Circus” a grand total of 50!

Early in June 1945 the Japanese gave up trying to save Okinawa, enabling the carriers to begin pre-invasion strikes on the Japanese homeland. The Yorktown got a new skipper, Captain W. Fred Boone and — after braving another typhoon — a new air group, 88. From mid-July to mid-August Air Group 88 contributed to the general destruction of Japanese targets in Japan.

## York’s post-war service

The Fighting Lady, a major element in the victory over Japan, remained on patrol until returning home in October. The ship was then awarded the prestigious Presidential Unit Citation. She seafighted troops home on “Magic Carpet”



Lt. H. Rowland, whose plane was hit over Tokyo, managed to land on YORKTOWN.

voyages until early 1946 when she was placed in mothballs, waiting for another war. That came in Korea.

The Yorktown patrolled Far Eastern waters as an attack carrier (CVA) until 1957 when she was converted into an antisubmarine carrier (CVS) and returned to her old stomping grounds. Her service continued through most of the Vietnam War in the 1960s, and she recovered the astronauts of Apollo 8 returning from the first mission to circle the Moon. After being redeployed to the Atlantic, she was finally decommissioned in 1970.

Appropriately, it was the Fighting Lady that was enshrined as a museum ship at Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum in Charleston Harbor in 1975 to become the nation’s memorial to its fallen carriermen — and to host the annual reunions of those who survived the greatest naval war in history. There she rests today, proudly maintained by the State of South Carolina.

She was a great ship, molded by the men who had manned her. “The Navy is now behind me,” wrote signal officer Lieutenant (jg) George Wille in his diary as he left the Yorktown in 1946. “Although there were many times when things looked pretty rough, seemingly endless days and nights at sea ..., the spirit of every man — along with that spirit which helped to keep the Yorktown out front — was founded on and bolstered up by companionship, loyalty to each other, and a willingness to give and take when necessary.”

Of such stuff were all of America’s fighting forces made in World War II.



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