

THE WORLD WAR II TIMES

We salute the POWs

**Bert and the Bear – winners
Shofner and Grashio: bold escape
Adams on the River Kwai**



Paul "Bear" Bryant, Alabama Football Coach



Bert Bank, Bataan Death March Survivor

Inside

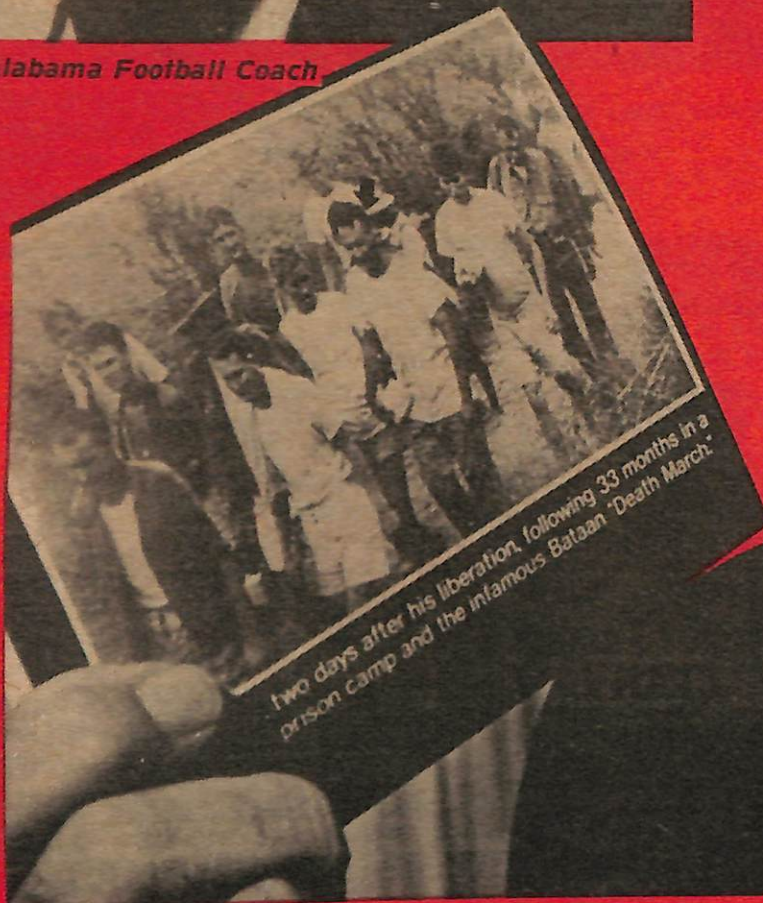
**C.B.I. –
Forgotten
Theatre**

**Flag
Tributes**

More

July, 1989

Vol. 4, No. 4



*Two days after his liberation, following 33 months in a
prison camp and the infamous Bataan "Death March."*



Thoughts from a Royal 440

Elbert Watson

Only a symbol?

Dateline, Iwo Jima, February 26, 1945.

After three days of hard fighting, a patrol of Marines from Co. E, Second Battalion, 28th Marines, struggles up the steep slopes of Mount Surabachi, the primary objective of the fighting.

Laden down with weapons of warfare, the men are bone weary, fatigued in mind and body. They carry a precious burden — the flag of the United States of America.

The apex of the mountain, their destination, offers no protection from random snipers. Death pervades the landscape. But they press on.

Their mission is to raise the flag atop that mountain.

"Only 100 yards to go," the patrol leader calls out.

Looking around, he sees his men pausing 100 yards behind him. What the hell is going on with these guys, he thinks.

"Get off your duff, you guys. We've got work to do."

"Sorry, Sarge," one calls out, "not this time, it's too dangerous up there to raise the flag."

"Are you guys nuts?" Get the hell up here on the double. This flag has got to go up. The Japs need to know we mean business."

"And get shot? Not this time. Maybe on a beachhead. After all, the flag is only a symbol." The Supreme

Court just said so."

Only a symbol back in 1945? Hardly. The flag in those days stood for something. It was something. It was America.

America has many symbols, visible things which stand for that which is indivisible.

The National Capitol is visible. Try throwing black paint on its stately walls as a protest and see what happens.

Take your chisel over to the Lincoln Memorial, start chipping away for souvenirs and prepare to pay the price for your indecent act.

The flag is a special symbol of our nation. Webster's dictionary defines a symbol as an "authoritative summary of faith and doctrine; something that stands for, or suggests something else by reason of relationship."

Respect for our national flag has eroded over the years since World War II, and so have traditional values which brought the country to its finest hour during that heroic period.

In 1945, the Supreme Court never would have considered handing down a ruling favoring abusing the flag as a proper expression of protest.

But times have changed. Today it is the flag; tomorrow it will be the pledge of allegiance; next week will come the Constitution and Bill of Rights — and where will it all end?

We're fighting back

Recently a special guest dropped by my office, Mark Voightman of Channel 8 News Indianapolis. Well, he didn't exactly drop by; he called and within 45 minutes he and his cameraman were interviewing me. We talked about the 50th anniversary of World War II and the role the Times plays in focusing attention on that era.

Mark picked up on one of my statements about the diminishing numbers of Americans with no recollection of World War II — approximately 70% at last count. For a war that touched not only great nations but small islands, that's quite a large number and it will increase.

Apparently these figures impressed Mark, for in his background comments over the air he remarked that "Elbert Watson is fighting back."

That "fighting back" statement got my attention. I never had thought of myself that way but maybe that's what it is all about for those of us committed to preserving World War II's great legacy — when speaking primarily of Americans, of course.

G.I.s during those euphoric days never thought we would be in this position. It was assumed that Americans of succeeding generations would memorialize the people and events which marked a nation's finest hour. How could we ever change?

Most of the problem facing us lies in historical revisionism so rampant today, or the wiping out of the historical record. The trumpets of victory have grown strangely silent at times.

So we, like others, are fighting back on beachheads here and there. Like you, we expect to prevail.



A contrast in symbolism

Looking up and ahead

It is always gratifying to share positive information with our readers. Those of you who have been with us since December 7, 1985, may know we started in a standard two room office. Now we have six rooms which interconnect with each other. They provide office space, work areas, a library/archives, and a conference room. Most importantly, they are beehives of activity, thanks to support provided by the World War II Round Table and Big 5-0 Team.

The Times spawned the above mentioned groups. The Round Table was organized in 1987. Today, it numbers 125 members. With the Sheraton-Washington program under its belt, it is ready to become a national organization. You'll hear a lot about the Big 5-0 Team as we launch the 50th anniversary years of World War II.

Thanks to Ernie Baker, a former B-24 pilot, we are setting up an in-house computer system to handle the Times, Round Table, and Big 5-0 Team. I don't understand computers,

so I am glad someone is on board with that expertise. Within a few months we should be much better organized. In the meantime, I'll continue to punch things out with my fading Royal 440.

Another person whose name you will see more often is Sterling Gossett, an Army veteran of World War II and retired bank executive. Sterling has a solid track record of accomplishments in military and patriotic projects. He'll be in this mode with the Big 5-0 Team.

Also with us is Harry Swanson, a free lance artist of Washington D.C. who will do our editorial cartoons on a regular basis. Harry's first offering appears in this issue. We've seen several flag cartoons recently in response to the Supreme Court decision, and none in our opinion compares with his work.

So things are looking up and we are looking ahead. We thought you would want to know.

Visiting with Bert Bank in his Tuscaloosa, Alabama office, one finds little hint of his World War II experience as a Japanese POW.

A highly successful businessman and community leader, Bert prefers to talk animatedly about Alabama football and the sports greats he has known across the years. His walls are covered with pictures of notable athletes dating from the 1940's.

Since 1952, he has served as both producer and director of the University of Alabama Football network, which includes 73 stations in Alabama and 12 in other parts of the South.

"Football, and particularly Alabama football, has been my great love for as long as I can remember," he remarks with a broad grin. "You know, football is a kind of religion here with Alabama and Auburn. You 'get religion' with either one of these teams and nobody ever backslides from the straight and narrow."

Paramount among the sports luminaries seen on Bert's wall is Paul "Bear" Bryant, who coached the Tide from 1958 to 1982 and became the country's winningest coach with 323 victories to his credit.

Bryant died in 1983 shortly after he resigned his post, but his memory casts a long shadow across the Alabama campus and into Bert's office.

"He'll never be forgotten," Bank reflects. "He was such a dominant figure to the university, his players, and the rest of us who had the privilege of knowing and working with him. He's the Knute Rockne of the South."

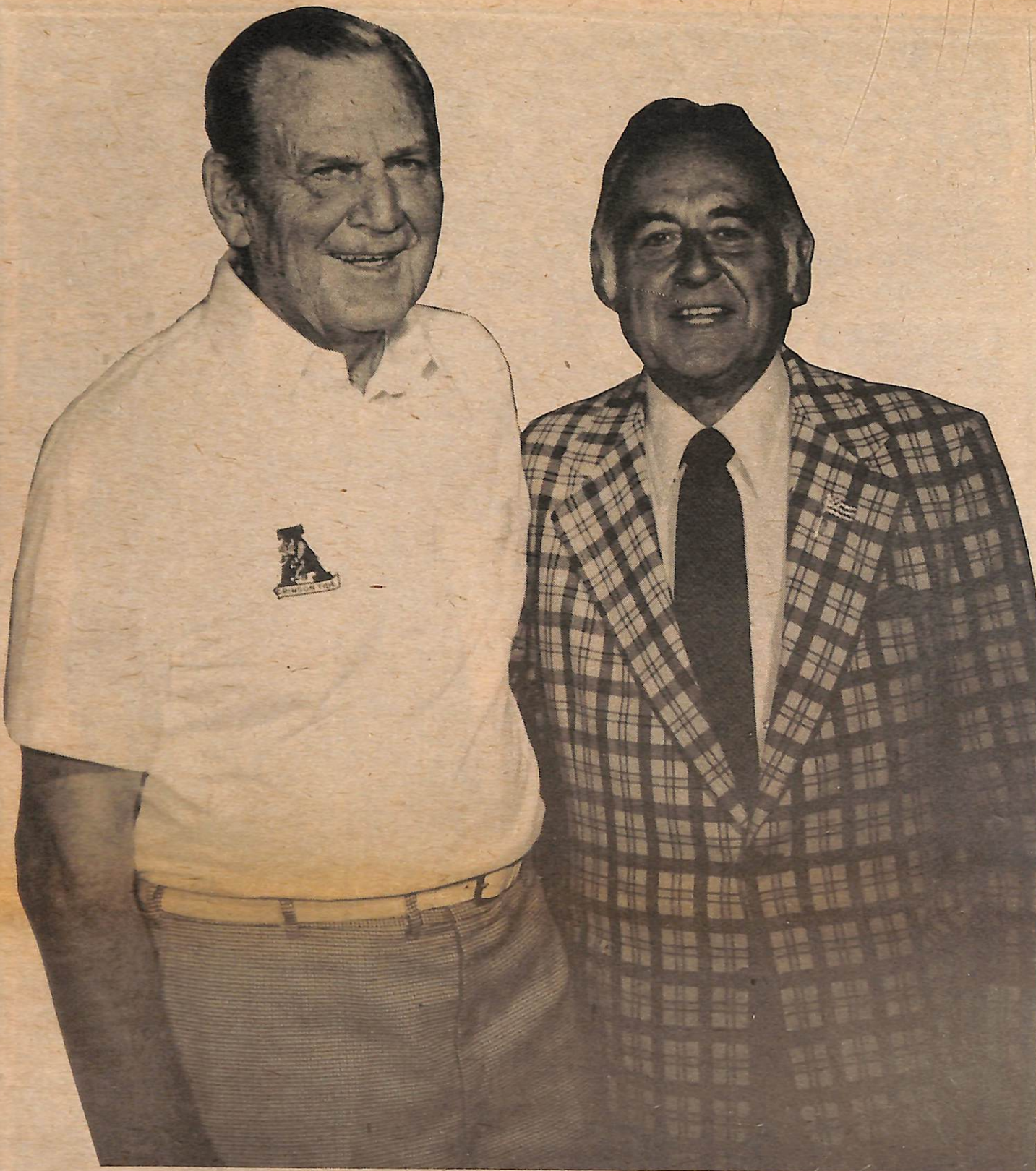
Bert's and Bear's careers became intertwined when Bryant came to Alabama in 1958 to lead the Crimson Tide back to football greatness. The previous three years, 1955-1957, had seen the Red Elephants mired down with a record of 4 wins, 24 losses, and 2 ties.

"Bryant and I were at the university together during the 1930's during the famous Howell (Dixie) to Hutson (Don) era," Bert recalls. "Paul played end. He was one tough hombre, but Hutson was the flashy performer and he had hands that could rope in a pass yards beyond the normal reach of an athlete."

"Bear and I became close friends soon after he came to Alabama, after his great coaching stints at Kentucky and Texas A.&M. We only had about 20 radio stations on the network at that time, but interest blossomed immediately with him in the state."

"I never competed in college football, but it served as a strong motivator to me. Thoughts of it helped get me through my imprisonment by the Japanese — that and the prayers of my Dad and Mom back in Tuscaloosa."

There's no question that football shook Bear Bryant loose from economic poverty in Moro Bottom, Arkansas, a piece of bottom land on Moro Creek. Born there in 1913, he was one of 12 children.



Two winners in life — Bear Bryant (left) escaped from the throes of poverty, and Bert Bank escaped from a Japanese prison camp.

Bert and Bear; Two Winners

Elbert L. Watson

As the youngest son and only boy left at home, it was Bryant's job to drive the wagon for his mother to peddle vegetables in nearby Fordyce. His father was too ill with high blood pressure to do even menial tasks.

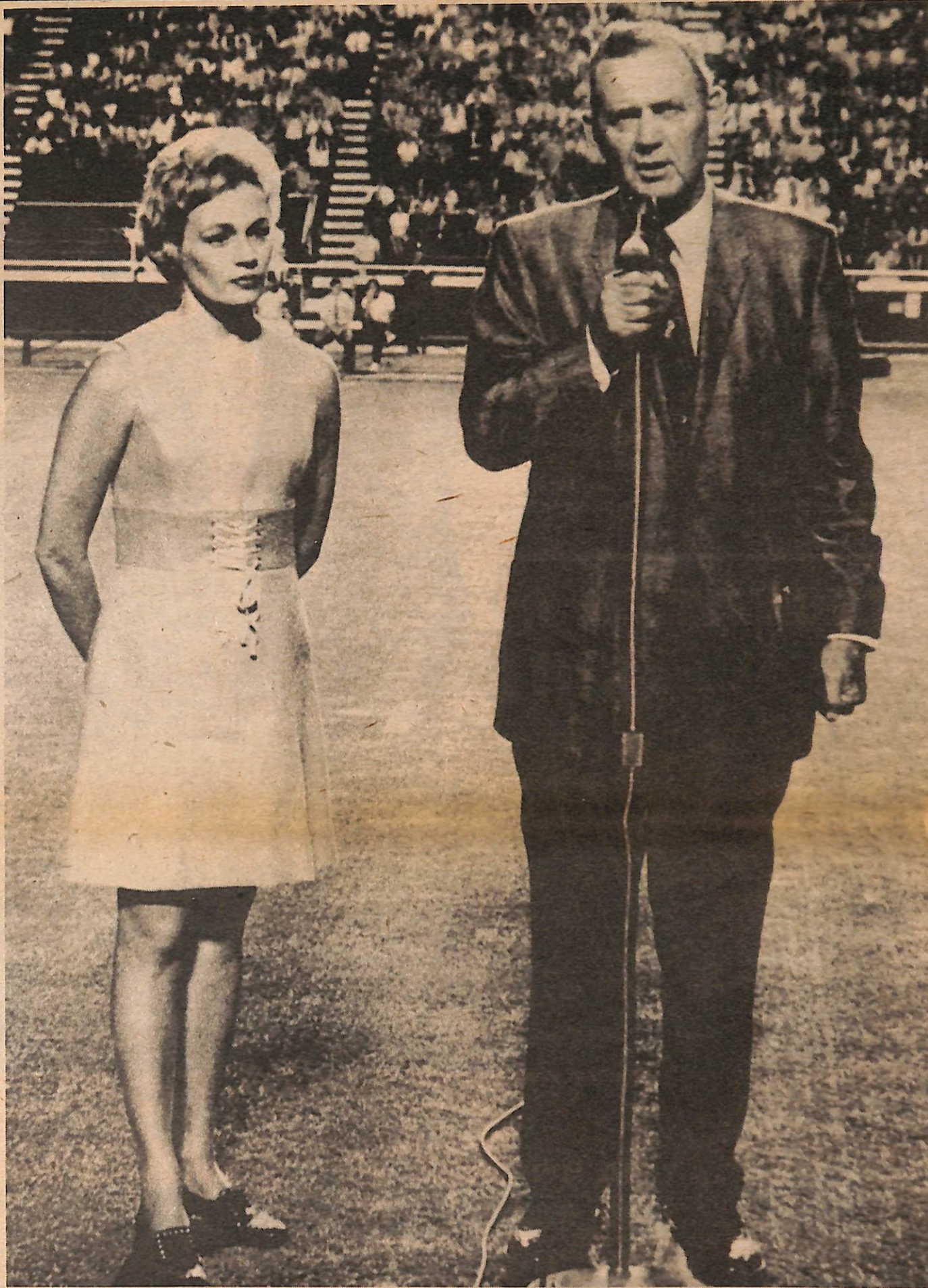
During the winters, Mrs. Bryant

would heat bricks to keep them from freezing to death on the wagon.

Though Bryant never heard his mother complain, he hated growing up in a place which offered no hope for the future.

Fortunately, this environment made Bryant a fierce competitor. He got his nickname "Bear" after actually wrestling a bear at a Fordyce movie theater. Eventually the family





Coach Bryant gives a touching salute to Pat Trammell — Baye Trammell in quiet reflection.



Pat Trammell

Trammell ideal leader

In 1959, his second year at Alabama, Bryant was looking for winners. If spirit could win games, Alabama had that coming off its 5-4-1 season the previous year.

But the team was still young and light. One player, a speedy half-back named Marlin Dyess, only weighed 145 pounds.

Bryant found the ideal leader in his sophomore quarterback, Pat Trammell. Pat and teammates Lee Roy Jordan, Billy Neighbors, Richard Williamson, Jimmy Sharpe, Tommy Brooker, to name a few, as freshman set a goal to win a national championship for Alabama.

In later years Bryant said that bunch was the best group he ever had in terms of character and dedication. And for Trammell he had special praise: "As a quarterback he had no ability. He couldn't do anything but win. He was not a great runner, but he scored touchdowns. He didn't pass with great style, but he completed them."

With Trammell at the helm, Alabama won 26 games, lost 3, and tied 4. The team went to three bowls and won the National Championship in 1961. Pat went onto Med School, married a lovely Alabama coed, and appeared set for life. But it was not to be. He was stricken with cancer and died in 1968.

"Pat Trammell was everything known to man," Bryant later recalled. "Everybody loved him. He was 28 years old when he died. I still miss him."

career as a college football coach. He had a brief stint at tiny Union College in Tennessee, then was offered an assistant coach's position at Alabama under his former coach, the great Frank Thomas. After four years he

moved to Fordyce where Bryant became a star football player. He loved the sport. He put cleats on his only pair of shoes and wore them to practice, church, and school.

Football was his key to get away from Moro Bottom. The University of Alabama came calling and gave Bryant a four year scholarship. While at the university he met and wooed a popular, attractive co-ed, Mary Harmon.

After college Bryant began his

A person's character

"Coach Bryant's belief in me was totally responsible for the belief I have in myself today.

"One of his philosophies that has stuck with me over the years is this: 'You don't measure a person's character by how hard he gets knocked down; but how well he gets up.' I will always remember him, not as the greatest football coach that ever lived, but as my friend and encourager."

Marlin Dyess

joined the staff of Red Sanders at Vanderbilt.

Bert and Bear spent a lot of time together during those idyllic days around Tuscaloosa before Pearl Harbor. It was the best of times for two young men on the way up — Bryant on the football turf, Bert a crackerjack advertising solicitor for the Tuscaloosa News.

America's entrance into World War II sent them in opposite directions. The day after Pearl Harbor, Bryant joined the Navy and rose to the rank of lieutenant commander, serving under Commander Tom Hamilton of USS Enterprise fame.

Bryant never saw combat, but while enroute to North Africa his troopship the USS Uruguay almost sank when it was struck by another vessel in the convoy. When he was discharged from service in 1945, he accepted the head coach's slot at the University of Maryland.

Comparatively, Bert's war experience made Moro Bottom look like the Garden of Eden. He joined the Army in 1941, and rose to the rank of captain. Fate dealt him a tough hand when he was captured on Bataan in the spring of 1942.

During the next three years, Bert existed in a virtual hell as he struggled to survive against all odds.

"What happened to me as a Japanese POW is well beyond my ability to describe, even today. It was by the grace of God and an inward determination to live to see Tuscaloosa again, that I came through," he quietly remembers.

Bert's unit was rounded up and sent off to Japanese prisons on the infamous Bataan Death March. Fortunately, he was a little farther north when captured and only spent five days and nights on the march. Other survivors marched up to 10 days and nights.

"We saw atrocities committed by the Japs that we thought could never happen to Americans. They would not let the strong help the weak. If a strong man attempted to help the weak they would shoot both of them. Anyone who fell out on the march was instantly killed."

Bank was incarcerated in prisons at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan. There were no medical supplies or sanitation facilities and disease swept the prisons. During his imprisonment he would suffer 20 bouts with malaria.

In October, Bank was among 2,000 prisoners shipped on box cars to Davao penal colony in Mindanao. The capacity of the cars was 75 but 125 men were herded inside. Many suffocated to death during the trip, and the cars were covered with filth because men were ill with diarrhea and dysentery. Reaching Manila, they were taken from the cars and marched like cattle through the streets.

Bank spent a year and a half in Davao in virtual slave labor. Sadistic Japanese guards inflicted cruel and inhumane punishment on the hapless prisoners. Bert's weight dropped to



Bert, center, with his 1981 Tide Broadcasting Team of Jerry Duncan, Tom Roberts, John Forney (announcer) and Doug Layton.



Bert and his attractive wife Gertrude on the Alabama campus.

102 pounds.

On the morning of June 6, 1944, the day American G.I.s were storming ashore in Normandy, Bert was taken blindfolded to Lysand and thrown

down into the hold of a ship. Packed like sardines, the prisoners were transported back to Cabanatuan.

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AIRBORNE QUARTERLY, A Voice of DUTY, HONOR, COUNTRY is a magazine of the United States airborne world: the spirit, the place in history of a service to a great nation, adventure and saga, the untold stories, hobbies, life styles, outlooks and community services. Read a page of memorable and inspiring history - this page could be yours.

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Bold escape to freedom

**10 brave men lived to
tell a gripping story**

At 12:00 noon May 6, 1942, the bastion fortress Corregidor surrendered to the Japanese, marking America's final defense of the Philippines. A radio operator tapped out the pathetic message:

"We are waiting for God knows what. Damage terrible. Too much for the guys to take. Going off the air now. Goodbye and good luck." Then only silence.

It would be almost two years until Americans would know the fate of the brave men who fought to the end in the Philippines. During that time of dark silence, loved ones back home could only hope and pray.

Finally in 1943, 10 American POWs escaped and told a horrible story of atrocity, starvation, and outright murder of their buddies by Japanese soldiers. Their amazing escape was first recounted by Captain William Dyess. *The Dyess Story: The Eye-Witness Account of the Death March from Bataan*, stunned Americans to find the Japanese capable of carrying out such sadistic torture.

More shocking was the widely circulated story chronicled by *Life* magazine (February 7, 1944), "Death was Part of Our Life," written by two escapees, Commander Melvyn McCoy and Lt. Colonel S.M. Mellnik. Though admitting that the story did not make "pretty reading," *Life* detailed how the prisoners managed to outwit their captors to reach freedom.

Commander McCoy told of Captain A.C. Shofner, USMC, coming to him in March 1943, to report that he and five Army and Marine Corps officers were planning an escape. Included were Dyess, Marine Lieutenants, Jack Hawkins and Michiel Dobervich, and Army Lieutenants Samuel Grashio and L.A. Bolens.

McCoy and Mellnik and two Army sergeants, Paul Marshall and R.B. Spielman, already were toying with the idea of an escape, so Shofner's information brought good news. As the senior officer, McCoy was selected to lead the escape.

McCoy wrote: "We were not too enthusiastic about our chances for a successful escape. On the other hand, neither were we too enthusiastic about our chances for staying alive if

we remained." The decision was made to go forward.

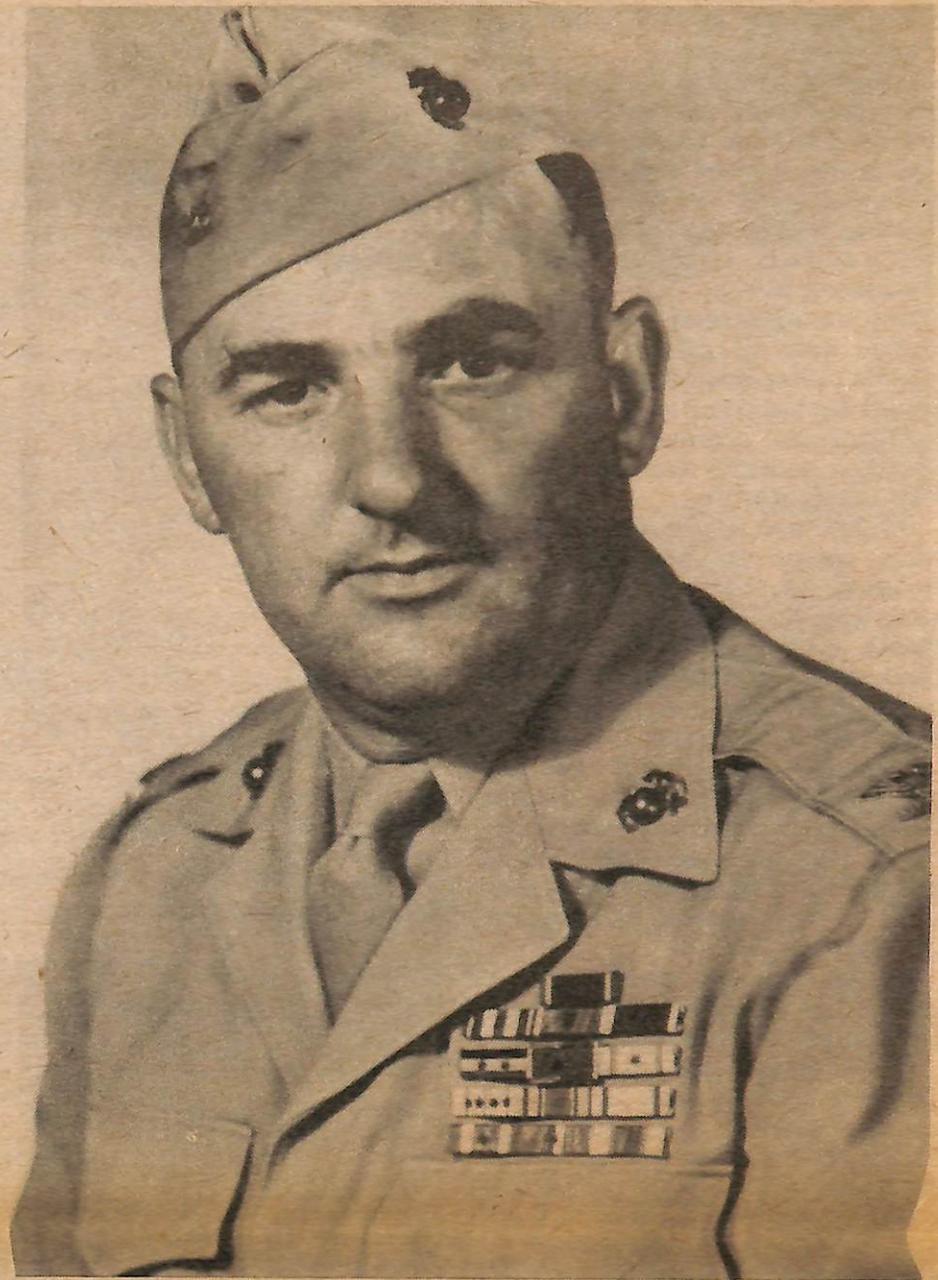
Shofner, a member of the 1936 University of Tennessee football team, recently commented to "The Tennessee Alumnus."

"The mission in the Pacific was not a good one to be on. We were just there to delay the Japanese. It was a sacrifice mission. Our torpedoes didn't work—we had World War I equipment. That was the result of a Pacifist nation."

"In my battalion, only one other officer lived through prison camp. A prisoner interned by the Japanese had a 10 times greater likelihood of dying than those in German prison camps."

"Twice a day we'd get a slim portion of very watery rice. It was unwashed and sometimes it had in it little worms with white bodies and black heads. Then we called it stew."

Sunday, April 4, 1943, was the date set for the daring escape. The men went out the main gate which led from



Ever the Marine, Shofner proudly displayed his service ribbons at war's end.



An artist's depiction of the fate which would befall the 10 escapees had they been captured.

the prison confines to the prison farm. Once out of sight they ducked into a coconut grove and began to crawl Indian-fashion toward the place where they had concealed some equipment.

With the equipment stuffed inside their clothing, the escapees had to cross a road which was always patrolled by a Japanese sentry. They marched boldly into view, gave a sharp salute, and penetrated into the jungle as soon as they were out of sight. The ruse worked.

The men joined up with two Filipino ex-convicts who agreed to serve as guides. In the jungle, they encountered all kinds of obstacles. A huge swamp, severely impeding their progress. Rough terrain through the unexplored jungle limited their progress to only 12 miles away from the Japanese camp after four days.

Not all was bad, however. Along the way the men passed through remote Filipino villages and were given large portions of food.

After 35 days they teamed up with a band of Americans who had not surrendered and had started a guerrilla operation. Shofner was made a judge.

On November 15 an American submarine, the USS Narwhal, tied up at a pier on the northern coast of Mindanao in broad daylight and rescued the men.

After a period of recuperation and military schooling, Shofner was back in the Pacific five months later. He was an assault battalion commander on Peleliu in September 1944; was assigned to the U.S. Army for the landing on Luzon in January 1945; and was with the First Marine Division to help lead the assault on Okinawa April 1, 1945.

For his heroism, Shofner received the Distinguished Service Cross; two Silver Stars; the Legion of Merit; and the Purple Heart. In 1947 he married Kathleen "Koky" King, a 1938 UT beauty queen. They raised five sons, all of whom graduated from college with honors.

Shofner retired from the Marines in 1959. Today, at 73, he lives in Shelbyville, Tennessee and works 12 hours a day.

In war there was LIFE

Once again we are reminded of the outstanding role LIFE magazine played in recording the story of World War II, in picture and word.

War brings destruction and death, and reveals the baser sides of our natures — man's inhumanity to man, we call it.

But through it all, there was LIFE in sad moments and triumphant ones. The record LIFE made for itself makes the magazine an essential part of that era's legacy. It's a record which will never be surpassed.

LIFE

Vol. 19, No. 8

February 7, 1944

PRISONERS OF JAPAN

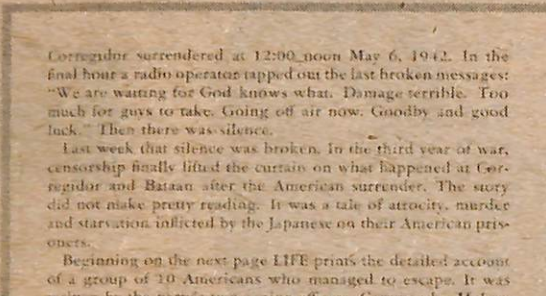
TEN AMERICANS WHO ESCAPED RECENTLY FROM THE PHILIPPINES REPORT ON THE ATROCITIES COMMITTED BY THE JAPANESE IN THEIR PRISONER-OF-WAR CAMPS



LT. COL. L. M. MEALAND



LT. COL. WILLIAM BYERS



Corregidor surrendered at 12:00 noon May 6, 1942. In the final hour a radio operator tapped out the last broken message: "We are waiting for God knows what. Damage terrible. Too much for guys to take. Going off air now. Goodby and good luck." Then there was silence.

Last week that silence was broken. In the third year of war, censorship finally lifted the curtain on what happened at Corregidor and Batan after the American surrender. The story did not make pretty reading. It was a tale of atrocity, murder and starvation inflicted by the Japanese on their American prisoners.

Beginning on the next page LIFE prints the detailed account of a group of 10 Americans who managed to escape. It was written by the party's two senior officers, Commander Melvin H. McCoy, a graduate of Annapolis, and Lieut. Col. S. M. Mellnik, a graduate of West Point. Some of the notes for it were dictated by Colonel Mellnik from a bed in Washington's Walter Reed Hospital. When it was finished, it was submitted to Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox, who took it to President Roosevelt. The decision to release to the press last week a preliminary summary was made by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and represents a major change in information policy for the British and American Governments. The statements in LIFE's article, however, are made on the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or policy of the War or Navy Departments or the U. S. Government. The proceeds from LIFE's purchase of this story, together with all future book or movie rights, will be divided among members of the party.



COMMANDER MELVIN H. MCCOY



MAJOR AUSTIN E. SHOFNER



CAPTAIN L. A. BOLEYN



SGT. B. W. SPITZMAN



MAJOR JACK HAWKINS



CAPTAIN SAMUEL GRASHID



MAJOR MICHEL DUERFWIN

LIFE magazine on February 7, 1944, chronicled the amazing escape of 10 Americans from a Japanese P.O.W. camp.

Mad Americans

Life was flooded with letters from incensed Americans who had learned for the first time the magnitude of Japanese atrocities against helpless P.O.W.s. A sampling follows from the magazine's February 28, 1944 edition:

Congratulations on the story. It is, to my mind, the final clincher in any argument against the "humanitarians" who still persist in claiming that the best way to handle the enemy after the war is with kid gloves. It should be obvious that a nation which can produce such an infinitely brutal man as the Japanese soldier can never comprehend the American way of life.

CPL. R.A. Cavalli
Lincoln, Neb.

I hope that 20 or 30 years after this war we shall remember the Jap atrocities as well as we do now and that you and the rest of the press will not engage in an atrocity debunking campaign such as occurred after the last war.

Jane Mallett
Toronto, Canada

To think the Japanese were once our respected allies! It only dawns on us now how terribly we blundered after the first World War in permitting and actually helping Japan to establish herself in the Pacific. Blunders which will take rivers of precious American blood to wipe out.

H.E. Soltau
Hoboken, N.J.

When the end draws near, I'm afraid all the Nips will hara-kiri themselves into the beyond. I hope our men in the Pacific get their revenge during the war and I think they will.

Josephine C. Lee
Glen Head, N.Y.



A standout player on Tennessee's 1936 football team, Austin Shofner needed all the skill at his command to escape the Japanese prison.



She's in focus

Sheraton Washington Hotel



Elizabeth is outflanked by some of her vet "boyfriends." Left to right Col. Thomas P. Garigan, Battle of Normandy Committee; Earl C. Hedland, Lt. Gen., USAF Ret.; and Chuck C. Morelli.

Max Desfor, noted combat photographer during World War II, had nothing on Elizabeth Lawder at the Sheraton Washington's "Stage Door Canteen" bash last June. While Max was working his way through the crowd and cutting a rug now and then on the dance floor, Elizabeth was handling the camera end of the occasion.

Elizabeth watched the festivities while making her way around the room in search of photo opportunities. This gave her the chance to meet briefly with many veterans, who, true to their World War II style, never turned down an opportunity to talk with an attractive young woman.

"I had a great time," Elizabeth recently recalled in her public relations office at the Sheraton

Washington Hotel. "Though I was working, I got the chance to whirl around the dance floor a bit between shots. I'm not a bad dancer, but those veterans knew steps that boggled my mind. The Big Band music was terrific. I almost wish I'd been around when that type of music was the rage."

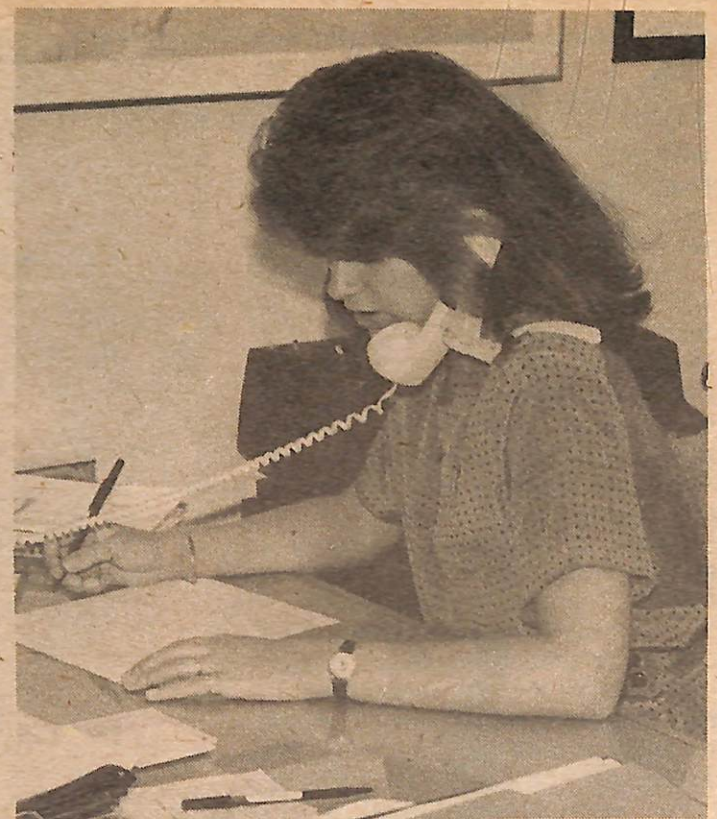
At 23 years of age, Elizabeth is definitely an up and coming young

professional. She grew up in Garden City, New York and attended Lafayette College where she majored in English and psychology. Following a summer internship at the Sheraton Washington, she decided to pursue a career in public relations.

"I have a genuine interest in people and am outgoing by nature," she says. "My position with Sheraton gives me a new challenge every day."



Elizabeth works with Brian Howie, sales account manager responsible for World War II reunions.



Hard at work in the public relations office.

Have an idea???

We're looking for stories and photos of people and events connected with World War II. Though our veterans get special attention, there's room in the Times for much more than the military side of the era. Social history is a vital part of the total picture.

Too, we try to focus attention on the contemporary scene to encourage modern Americans to take a serious interest in World War II. Sometimes we meet folks like Pat Trammell, who came under the influence of a veteran when facing a severe test.

So, look around, there may be a story down the street, or a faded photograph in an old trunk.



The Iwo Jima Memorial is one of Elizabeth's preferred subjects.



"I'm exhausted!"

Many different groups use our facilities, ranging from the IMF/World Bank to an annual square dancers convention. This diversity of interests changes the atmosphere of the hotel on a weekly basis. By working with many of these groups, I learn a lot about our country and this world."

Elizabeth gained a sense of World War II history in 1986 when she travelled abroad during her junior college year to study journalism. She spent time in London, Paris, and Rome.

In her spare time, Elizabeth enjoys taking pictures in and around the nation's capital. "Washington has so many monuments, memorials, and attractions, there are always interesting subjects to shoot."

The Iwo Jima Memorial, for example, is just a short jog or bike ride from Elizabeth's northern Virginia home. "Iwo Jima is always crowded with visitors, whether veterans, foreign travelers or local residents. I especially like this memorial at sunset when the lighting casts dramatic shadows."

Elizabeth is looking forward to the 50th anniversary years of World War II. "I've always thought World War II veterans were special people, but now I'm taking them much more seriously. The ones I met are very outgoing, lead interesting lives, and tell fascinating stories.

"I'm beginning to understand why many people call the World War II era a special time in our nation's history."

Sitting on the balcony of the restaurant on the bank of the River Kwae-Yai, enjoying an ice-cold beer, anticipating a grilled fish fresh from the river, it is easy to have one's memory recall the past, whilst surveying the present.

The distant Bilak Taung mountains, with their jagged peaks, mark the foothills of the area of the valley of the River Kwae-Noi ("the little Kwai"), the scene of past sufferings and endeavors of a quarter of a million men British, Australian, Dutch and American POWs, Asiatic labourers, and 15,000 Japanese soldiers.

These men, Japanese excepted, slaved unwillingly, to create the infamous Thailand-Burma Railway — The Railway of Death — for Imperial Japan. In sixteen months, 4 million cubic metres of earth were moved, 10 miles of bridges constructed, 30,000 tons of rail track laid — by hand, and 400,000 tons of ballast laid — by hand.

The 415 kilometres (260 miles) railway linking the Gulf of Siam to the Indian Ocean was completed on 17 October 1943, at a cost of over 100,000 lives. It was an engineering triumph, and a monument to man's inhumanity to man.

Before me stood the great steel bridge, on which I had worked in 1943, to forge the vital link over the Kwae-Yai ("the big Kwai") shown on some maps as the River Mae Kheuang. Bombed in 1944-45, it had been repaired, postwar, by Japan, and today it carries its daily trains for commerce and tourists.

It was not destroyed by commandoes as was depicted on that famous film "Bridge on River Kwai" now was it designed by POW!

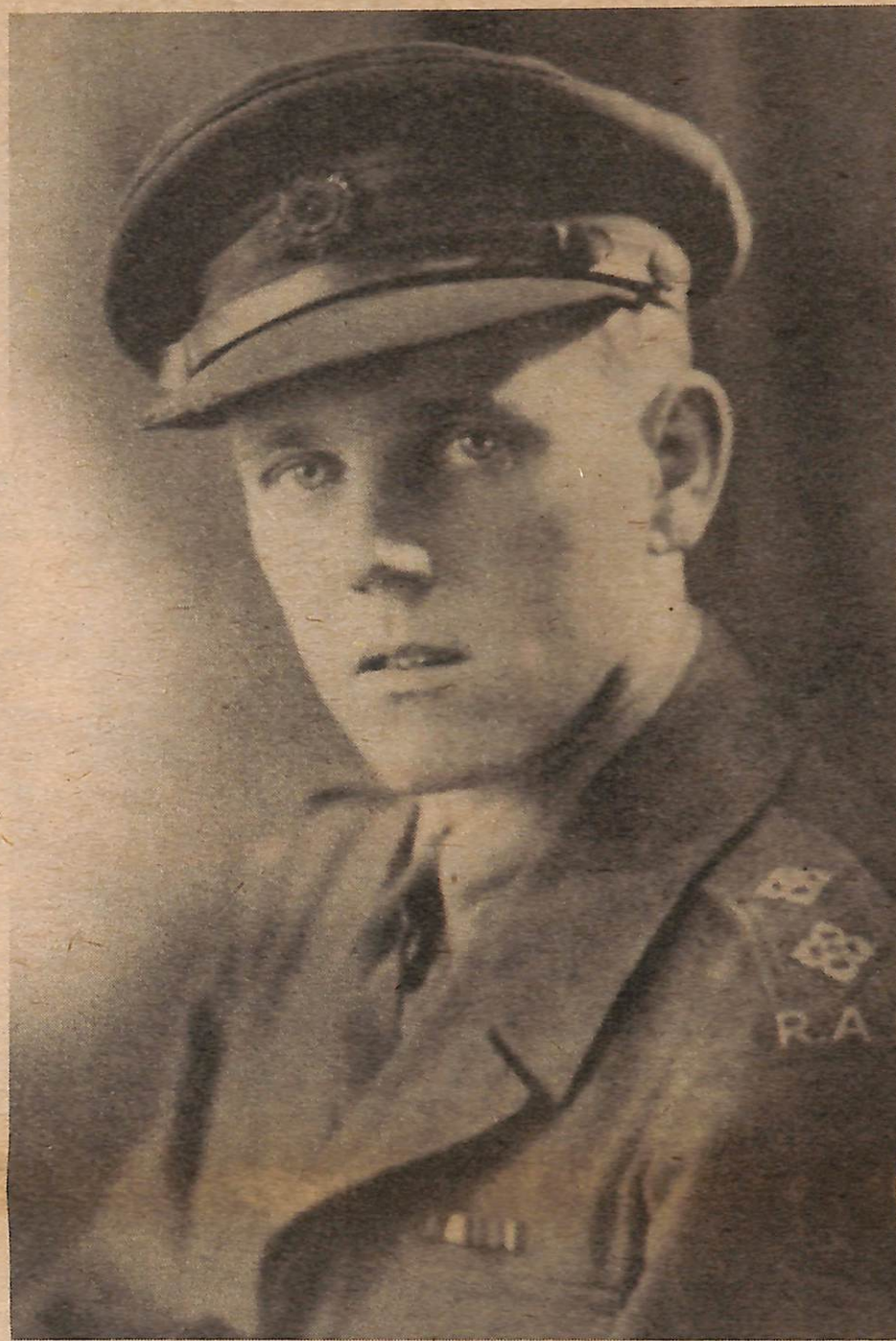
The wartime sufferings have not been in vain. One hundred twenty-four kms of the railway, from Ban Pong to Nam Tok (Tha Soe to POW), are still in use. The last World War II steam train ran in 1975. Now diesel locos pull the freight trains, with one or two old passenger coaches attached, and, with the nearby postwar roads, they have opened up the once remote interior of the benefit of Thailand.

Gone are the old tracks with their rickety bridges. POWs would marvel at the steel and concrete road bridge near Lat Ya, which they called Rajah, where they walked on a wooden bridge in 1942.

Two of the historic steam locos, C5631 and C5644, have been repatriated to Japan — one to Japan's "Cenotaph" Yasukuni Shrine, the other to operate a service into Japan's "Southern Alps" in Shizuoka, on the Oigawa Railway.

Whilst the rails now end at Nam Tok, the road continues up to the Thai-Burma border at Three Pagodas Pass (300 kms point).

In 1943, one group of 7,000 POWs, half-starved, sick, ill-shod, scantily-clad, carrying all their worldly possessions, were force-marched these 300 kms, by night in the rain, to work on the railway — 3,000 of them



Geoffrey Adams prior to his capture by the Japanese.

River Kwai's sad memories

Geoffrey Adams

were to die within the year.

Today they might be said to have 'yomped', but that implies full logistical support, and being men in perfect physical condition.

What the POWs took 20 or more days to cover, in tropical heat and monsoon rains, today can be done in a few hours in a Land Rover, or, more likely, its Japanese copy, or alternatively, by speedboat or helicopter.

Now, as one travels, many fascinating scenes unfold, made

possible by the trials and tribulations of World War II.

At Kanchanaburi (50 kms), a provincial capital, once a railway base camp, is a good and air-conditioned hotel "Rama of the River Kwai."

At Tha Makham, and the steel bridge, is the large restaurant and souvenir shop, run by a lady born within sight of the POW camp and AA gun sites.

Moving on, one passes Bankao (88 kms), where two Dutch POWs in 1943,

discovered traces of early Neolithic peoples, circa 2,000 BC; a small museum now shelters the findings. Near Tha Kilen, in an area opened up by the railway, are the more recent, 1955, excavations of another civilization of 2,000 years ago, circa 55 BC.

At little railway stations, or at villages along the road, it is possible to purchase fruit and vegetables — and even Coca-Cola! The ever-friendly Thai peoples are there, smiling as ever.

Large tracts of land along the river valley have been opened up for cultivation of many crops; vegetables, fruit, kapok, tapioca, sugar, peanuts. There is an experimental cattle farm where efforts are made to improve the stock.

Travelling northwards, one passes waterfalls, bat-caves and groves of bamboo, whilst new teak forests flourish to replace the 500,000 cubic feet of timber used between 1942 and 1945.

Road and rail meet for the last time at the present rail terminus, Nam Tok. This "town" sprouts a few TV aerials, but otherwise is pure "Somerset Maugham" and sits on the banks of the muddy-brown River Kwae-Noi.

It has electricity and a telephone service, and a bus service to Kanchanaburi; the elderly buses might fail a British MOT test however, though the fares are ridiculously low, and they are driven by "Grand Prix" enthusiasts.

Past Nam Tok lies on the very rugged terrain where POW sufferings increased by the kilometre, as the railway track entered higher, more remote mountains. Not a single tunnel was built, but incredible hair-pin bends, cuttings and gradients were necessary.

Soon one reaches by road, or by river, "River Kwai Village," a modern 168-bed motel-boatel, air-conditioned, H & C, European or Thai food, bars, even a swimming pool. It stands near to the side of the infamous Tonchan POW camp (130 kms), of which no trace remains, except the spring that gave pure water.

From here the traveller may take excursions by fast, noisy, 'long-tailed' river craft (powered by Japanese engines) to Sai Yok to see more waterfalls, caves and a floating bamboo bar-cafe.

The scenery is quite splendid. The fauna, driven away by man and his explosives 40 years ago, have returned to their habitat. It is possible to catch a glimpse of deer, monkeys, egrets; the black panther is there, unseen. Orchids and other flora

The writer

Geoffrey Adams of Great Britain was a Japanese P.O.W. during World War II, assigned to constructing the famous bridge over the River Kwai. He writes extensively on subjects about the Far East during the war.

proliferate.

Should one wander, on foot, from the road, it is possible to find sections of the railway of World War II; remains of a small bridge, rotting sleepers, ballast and rail spikes, though all is long over-grown as nature has reclaimed its own.

The greatest postwar achievement is seen at Khao Laem (220 kms) near the POWs' Takunun (218 kms). Here rises a mighty dam, 1,000 metres wide, 90 metres high.

Proceeding further up-country, one reaches Three Pagodas Pass, where Thailand meets Burma. The ancient pagodas, familiar to some POWs stood only feet from the railway tracks. Now a school there uses an empty wartime bombcase as a school bell.

We have reached the limits of travel, for Burma does not encourage visitors to this remote area.

There are three "monuments" to the POWs. One in Burma, at Than-byuzayat, 40 miles south of Moulmein, with the graves of 3,035 men. In Thailand are two cemeteries, Kanchanaburi, with 6,957 POW graves and memorials, and Chungai, with 1,740.

There is no cemetery for the estimated 100,000 Asiatics who died in the railway construction. The luxuriant tropical undergrowth hides thousands of 'unknowns', whilst many POWs died in Singapore after returning from the railway, and are buried in Kranji war cemetery, where the "Memorial to the Missing," with 24,000 names, remembers those who worked on the railway, and were subsequently lost in ships taking them to Japan, to work, in 1944.

These POW cemeteries are beautifully maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Those in Thailand and in Singapore, Malaya, Hong Kong and Japan, and elsewhere, are easily accessible by scheduled air, road and rail services.

Will the Khao Laem dam and the steel bridge at Tha Makham be the great modern monuments to the sufferings and sacrifices of POW of World War II on the Thailand-Burma Railway?



THE BIG 5-0 TEAM: Seated — Lisa Judd, and Jan Cotton. Standing — Elbert Watson, chairman; Ernie Baker, vice-chairman; Sterling Gossett, vice-chairman; Bob Palmer, and Jerry Sargent. Not shown Bob Currie and Jim Shelton.

We're getting organized to launch a 50th anniversary program of World War II in Indianapolis this November. We'll talk history during the daytime, then let our hair down with a "Stage Door Canteen" — Big Band and all — that evening. Seventy-five people have signed up for "Beachhead '90" so far. Fill out the form below and come aboard.

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Ahead in the Times



A DAUGHTER'S SEARCH

Sally Davis was nine months old when here father died in a B-29 raid over Japan. She's looking for facts.

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Veteran tells the remarkable story of aircraft locked in ice for 45 years.



I WAS A GERMAN P.O.W.

Gordon Allen bailed out of his bomber and sat out the war. Amazing pictorial record.



A modern Betsy Ross



Pat Roeller

Patricia Roeller of Indianapolis recently kicked off a spirited campaign to return pride to the Flag.

She's enlisted hundreds of truckers who gather at area truckstops to fly flags on their rigs.

Why truck drivers?

"Like circus elephants, those rigs are noticeable. We don't overlook trucks like we overlook cars," she says.

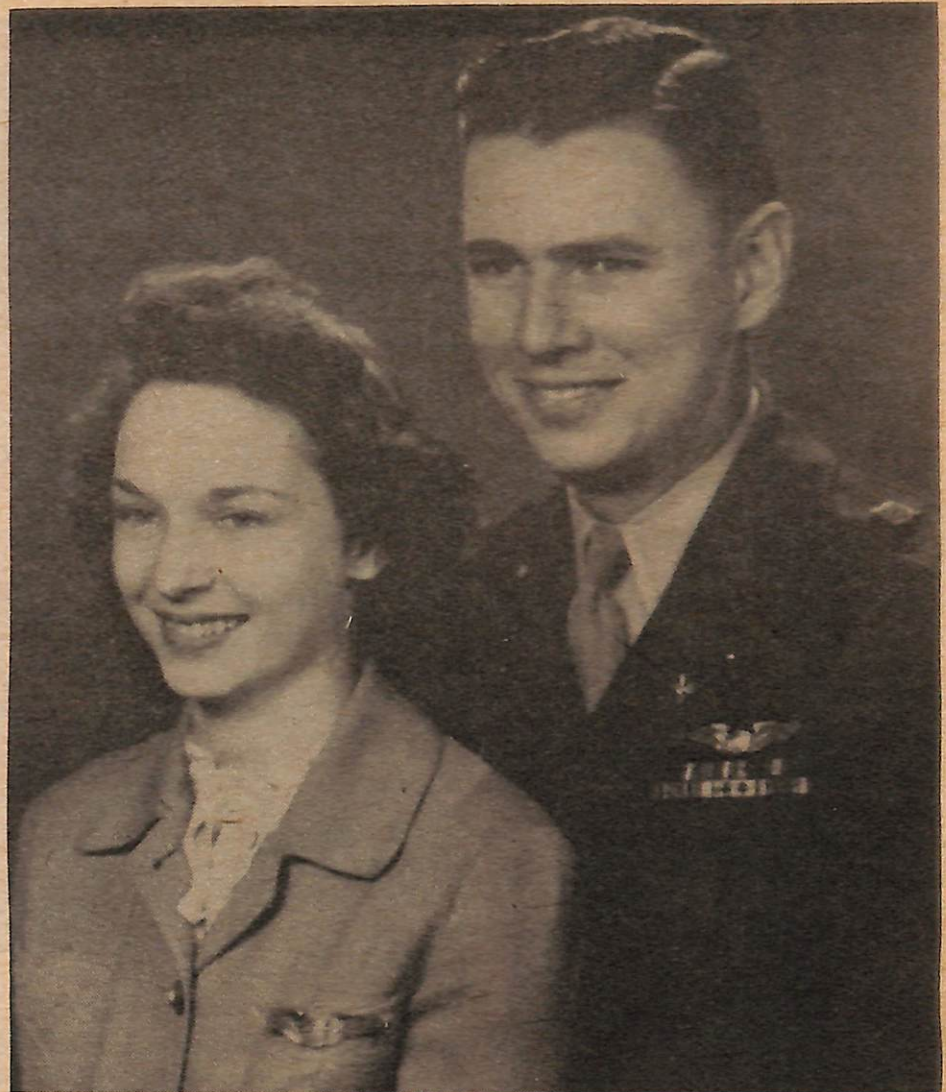
"I'm proud of my Flag and mad at the Supreme Court for its decision. When a "Good Morning America" touched the subject, I got the idea to distribute flags (5 by 7 inch) to America's truck drivers."

Pat needed to purchase 25,000 flags at a cost of \$3,500. Local radio stations and newspapers drummed up support and the cash arrived from Valvoline Oil, Don Schneider of Schneider Trucking, and Ron and David Whiteford of Whiteford Trucking. The American Legion donated 6,000 flags.

The flags arrived in time for mass distribution over the July 4 weekend. Volunteers handed them out at five Indianapolis truckstops.

Truckers enthuse Pat. "Next to cowboys, they are about as American as you can get. They're enthusiastic and patriotic, almost to a man.

"I want them to show America that Indianapolis loves its flag. It is time we start fighting for this country, or we can end up without having it."



Breedlove and pretty bride, Alma

One down, 49 to go

Paul Breedlove

During May 1944, 14 B-24 crews arrived in Pandavaswar, India, 120 miles northwest of Calcutta. We were assigned to the 482nd Bomb Squadron (H).

The following week we were briefed on procedures, intelligence, and mission.

The evening of June 6, operations advised me to fly co-pilot on my first combat mission. I was awakened at 0500, ate breakfast at 0530. The briefing began at 0615.

All the crews (six from our squadron) were seated in the briefing room waiting for the curtain to open and reveal our target. This was my first mission so my adrenaline was flowing.

The operations officer announced firmly: "Your target for today is Bhamo in northern Burma on the China border. This is a Jap supply base, so anti-aircraft fire is expected, however, it is not radar directed. Fighter opposition is doubtful!"

The squadron navigator briefed the route to and from the target. The weatherman stated that the area should be clear, but some cloud buildup might occur enroute to our target.

The weather was cool and I was wishing I had worn my light jacket.

But the pilot stood there sweating in a short sleeve shirt — I wondered why.

We boarded the aircraft, buckled ourselves in the seats and revved the engines. Other aircraft taxied by. Finally, it was our turn to join the line.

At 0800, the lead aircraft began its run down the runway. Thirty seconds later, the second aircraft started down the runway, followed by the rest of us at 30 second intervals. Shortly we were all airborne.

Our IP (initial point) was east of Bhamo. When we turned to cross the IP, we would be on a course toward home. Since anti-aircraft guns were positioned around the target, our mission was to pass the town far enough away to confuse ground gunners about our intention. If the ruse worked, we might not be fired on.

We held tight formation and headed for the drop point. Half way there, puffs of black smoke began to appear below the formation. Bombs away and we were shortly out of the range of the ground fire.

Eight hours and 30 minutes after we departed that morning, we touched down.

One mission down and 49 to go for me.

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Air Force Sgt. Sare was an adventurous C.B.I. er

Lighter side of C.B.I.

Bill Sare

My duty in CBI, while stationed at Barrackpore Air Base, India, was that of teletype operator and message router, until I volunteered to run the movie projector at a small living area. As you can see, the operation would have failed without me.

Time off was spent in Calcutta where I met a Chinese-Australian girl who needed to get married before she could head for the United States. Since I was always volunteering for various jobs, I became her proxy husband.

One night at the Calcutta Hospital, two nurses were leaving work and I offered transportation. One nurse had an American father and a Burmese mother. One night I took her to dinner at the Czechoslovakian Village and there she met her future husband. So I was part of a "second marriage."

One of my best buddies put my name in the box for the P.X. monthly prizes while I was at Colombo, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and I won the chance

to buy a 35mm Kodak camera. Arriving on base the same day of the draw required me to borrow \$33.00 from my buddies to purchase the camera. In 1949, I sold it for \$78.00 that's capitalism at its best.

The Burmese WAC detachment down the road once invited us to share an evening meal with them. What would have been my third date with a WAC was spoiled by an M.P. While I was in the dining hall at breakfast an M.P. came in and called my name. My shipping orders were a week old and I had previously missed a flight. He and I spent the rest of the day together to make sure I was on the next flight — and I was!

My military life as a 19 and 20 year old in India may seem insignificant, but it was a job that had to be done by thousands of G.I.s like me. Today I am proud to be a member of the C.B.I.V.A. and also the Army Airways Communications Systems (AACS).

ON VIDEOCASSETTE THE EAGLE'S NEST



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PART I. THE EARLY YEARS: A review of Hitler's early manhood, his 14-year struggle for political control of Germany, and the first years of his rule includes unusual scenes of the construction of his imposing Alpine chalet at Berchtesgaden. Nazi deputies Joseph Goebbels and Martin Bormann are also featured, as well as the Hitler Youth organization. B&W/Color, 60 minutes, #R235, \$29.95



PART II. EUROPE FACES THE REICH: Home movies of the Hermann Göring family round out the story of daily life at Hitler's mountain headquarters, the Berghof, during the last pre-war years of tense diplomatic maneuvering. Interviews with surviving members of the Führer's inner circle illuminate the lives of SS leader Heinrich Himmler and Hitler's mistress Eva Braun. B&W/Color, 60 minutes, #R236, \$29.95.

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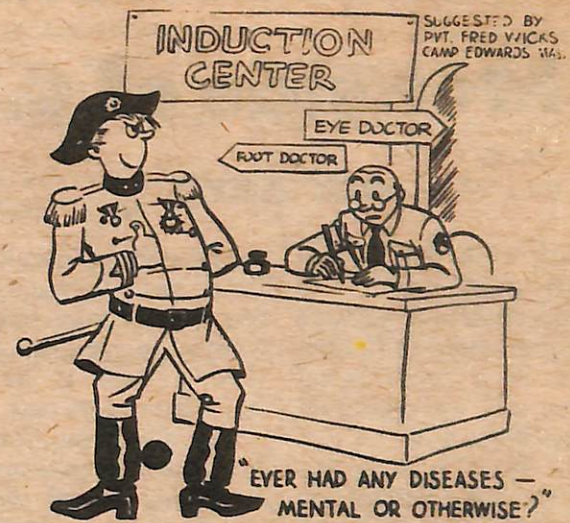
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Little did Florence Maliszewski suspect that her nursing career in Winona, Minnesota would take her to some of the great battlefields of World War II.

After receiving her B.S.N. from the College of St. Theresa in Winona, Florence moved to Great Falls, Montana, where she taught in a school of nursing.

In July, 1943, duty called and she enlisted in the Army Nurse Corps as a second lieutenant and did basic military training at Camp White, Oregon. This training consisted of classes, drilling, and infiltration. She explains infiltration as "crawling up a hill wearing a full pack under live fire."

Completing basic training, Florence was assigned to hospitals at Camp Groat, Illinois, and Camp Kilmer, New Jersey. In October, 1944, her unit arrived in Liverpool, England, after surviving Atlantic storms and zigzagging to avoid Nazi U Boats.

Her unit was trucked to South Hampton and loaded into boats to cross the English Channel. They passed through Omaha Beach to Cherbourg, France and finally to Le Mans. There they set up camp and opened a nursing station in a cow pasture to care for wounded men exposed to wet, dank weather.

Florence's duties also included caring for German P.O.W.'s, who lived behind a barbed wire fence in pup tents in the U.S. camp. They cooked, laundered, and helped construct camp buildings. She also worked in the chief nurse's office, preparing a procedure book and instructing non-commissioned officers about nursing care.

Florence vividly recalls a group of captured German women who helped care for the wounded. "Their clothes were from the bodies of dead German soldiers," she remembers.

Near the camp lived a French countess in a 13th century castle complete with moat and drawbridge. Her husband was one of the first German aviators in World War I, and was killed in action. The countess was frequently a subject of discussion among the nurses.

At war's end, Florence was a chief nurse assigned to the 91st General Hospital, which returned wounded soldiers home on the John J. Meany. She was discharged from the Nursing Corps as a Captain at Camp Groat, Illinois, in January, 1946.

Forty-five years later, her impression of the American G.I. is as sharp and distinct as a contemporary photo. "I admired our American soldiers for the fearlessness, mobility, zest for life, warmth, friendliness, humor and appreciation. The G.I.'s had to muster faith and trust in us. They were patient, uncomplaining and always grateful."

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Florence Maliezewski and G.I. friends in Le Mans, France.

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Florence earned her Masters Degree in Nursing Science at the University of Chicago. She taught administration and nursing at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and pioneered in gerontological nursing. Some of her courses included "Health Care of the Aged," and "Teaching Health Care of the Aged."

Today Florence is "fully as busy now," as she was when she taught. She works with older parishioners at St. Phillip Neri Church and is a member of the Marquette University Retired Faculty Association. She is a 17 year member of Jane Delano Nurses Post and serves as Post Chaplain.

Florence sums up her army experience with a smile: "Being in the army made me come back home very service oriented and with a legion of firm friendships, both G.I.'s and nurses. I'm glad I was part of that era."

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General Stilwell and Chinese General L.J. Sun.

Elbert L. Watson

CHINA, BURMA, INDIA

Take any of those three countries and you have a huge expanse of real estate to defend. Group them all together and you have C.B.I., the largest theatre of operations for the Allies during World War II.

And also the most forgotten one.

David Dale, editor of "Sound-off," says C.B.I. is more than forgotten, "it's largely unknown." He has found many veterans unaware that U.S. forces were even on the Asian continent during World War II.

Yet, the highest battle of the war, the Salween Campaign, was fought in C.B.I. And the largest body of Japanese troops engaged in one battle fought at Imphal and Kohiman.

This "forgotten theatre" claimed among its American military leaders such well known generals as "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell, Clair Chennault, and Albert Wedemeyer.

Notable sports figures served there — Hank Greenberg of the Detroit Tigers, and General Robert Neyland, football coach at the University of Tennessee.

Pin-up queens like Paulette Goddard and Ann Sheridan entertained the troops. Comedian Joe E. Brown was there only five months after his own son lost his life as a combat pilot.



Flying high

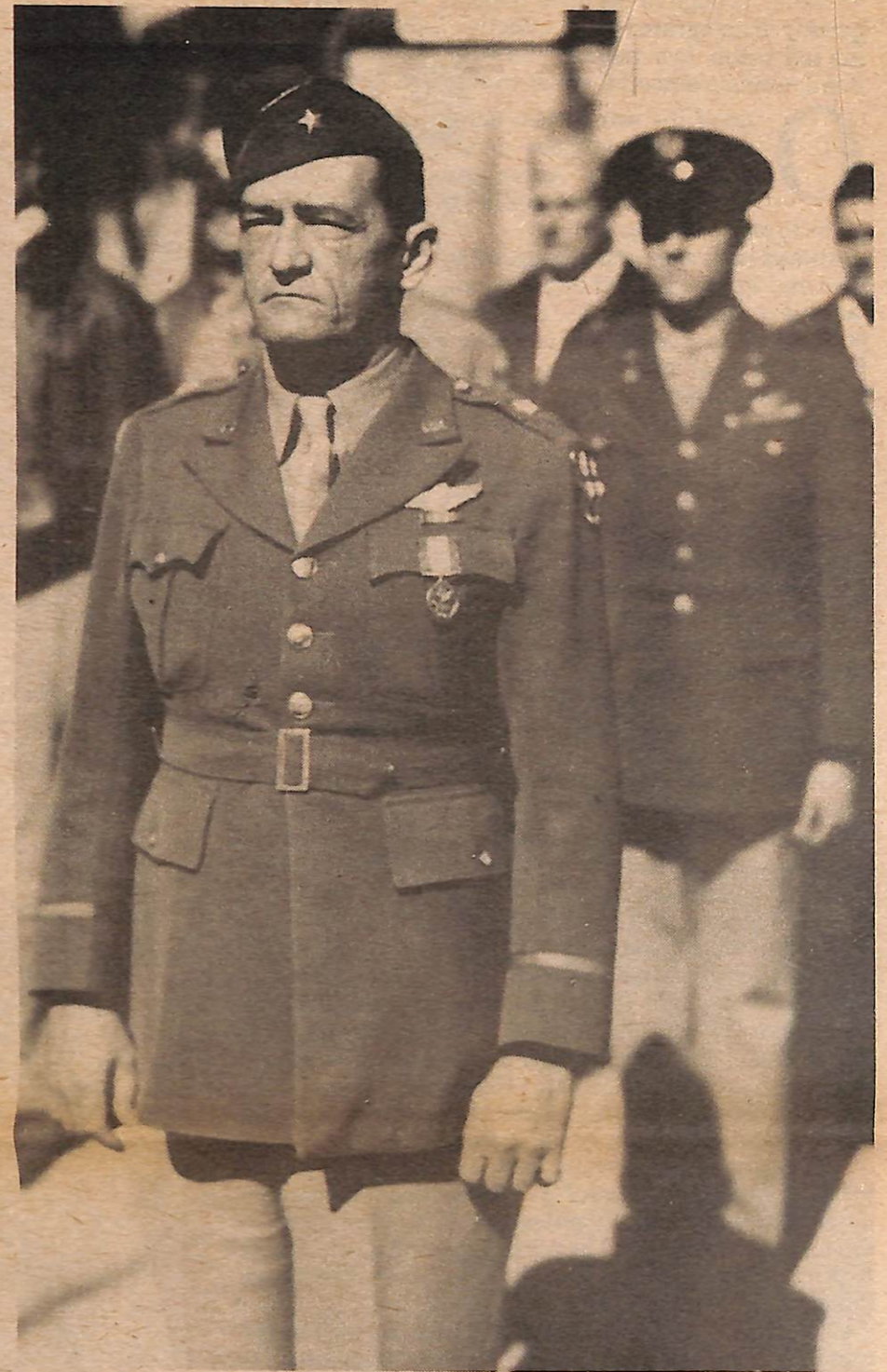
Yet, C.B.I. remains overlooked, if not forgotten, in the history of World War II.

America's military role in China began in 1937, shortly after Japanese troops on July 7 occupied an area near Peiping in what has been called the "Lukouchiao Incident." Japanese intrusions had gone on for years, but this incident galvanized China to collective action.

Colonel Clair Lee Chennault had recently retired from the United States Army Air Corps. An outspoken specialist in fighter tactics, he was named head of China's advanced pursuit training program at a salary of \$12,000 per year.

As advisor to Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek, Chennault soon found that China lacked the human and





General Claire Chennault at a ceremony in China



in the C.B.I.

material resources with which to effectively compete against the invading Japanese.

In 1941, he came back to the United State to recruit pilots trained by American military services. By then Washington was sufficiently concerned about Japan's unchecked movements across Asia, and wanted to assist despite a strong isolationist sentiment through the country.

Providing U.S. personnel to serve in the armed services of a foreign country during war was a nutty problem facing the War Department. Even Chennault's role under such an arrangement was brought into question. The issue was finally resolved by quietly placing Chennault and his pilots under a private organization, the

Bank of China, instead of the Chinese Government.

The First American Volunteer Group was only a mercenary air force. Obsolete P-40s were usually flown, and became famous for the shark's mouth which was boldly painted on their fuselage. The unit eventually was named the "Flying Tigers."

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor made China an important U.S. ally.

In March 1942, Lt. General Joseph W. Stilwell was sent to China to serve in the dual role of commander of U.S. forces and Chief of Staff to Chiang Kai Shek. Stilwell, with two tours of duty in China under his belt, wasted no time trying to expel the Japanese from Burma.

Burma, an unlikely site of operations by the Allies when the war began, became a battleground when Singapore and Malaya fell in early 1942. By February 22 British General Sir Archibald Wavell, commander of all Allied forces in Southeast Asia, had moved Burmese operational forces to New Delhi, India.

As the British retreated northward, Stilwell and a Chinese force entered Burma in mid-March in an effort to stem the Japanese onslaught. Fighting well at first, they suffered reversals because of poor intelligence assistance given by the British, and hoards of refugees who severely handicapped Stilwell's movements.

With the British in full retreat and Japanese troops



breaking through to the Shan plateau, the Chinese army quickly disintegrated as an effective fighting force. Burma fell within four months and with it went the Burma Road, China's essential outlet to supplies.

One of the war's most heroic stories came out of this ignominious defeat. Stilwell and his staff of 103 Americans, British, and Chinese covered 140 miles in 20 days, most of it by foot, to get back to India.

Always in danger of being cut off by the Japanese, the men and women pushed through jungles, crossed mountains, and waded streams. Stilwell, 59, was the oldest person in the party but held up better than some soldiers. Finally safe at New Delhi, "Vinegar Joe" mixed no words about what happened: "I claim we got a hell of a beating. We got run out of Burma and it is humiliating as hell."

All parties involved in Burma felt betrayed and bitter. U.S. observers faulted the British for a defeatist attitude. Chinese officials, not to be out done, blamed Stilwell for thrusting them into a military campaign for which they were incapable of handling. Stilwell, in turn, criticized Chiang for meddling in the operation.

Thereafter, Stilwell rarely had a kind word for the Chinese leader, referring to him in his personal writings as "The Peanut." Other terms such as "gutless" and "stupid" were hardly designed to endear him to Chiang and his followers.

Stilwell had good reason to question Chiang Kai-Shek, who was already looking ahead to the post-war period and his inevitable power struggles with the Communists. Too, no major Chinese force had confronted the Japanese since 1938. Knowing this, Stilwell correctly concluded that Chiang preferred to sit out the war and leave the real fighting to the Americans.

Then, there were the British to contend with. Concerned about his own problems in the colonies of India and occupied Burma, Winston Churchill saw America's preoccupation with China "strangely out of proportion" to the overall prosecution of the war. Along with American admirals Ernest King and Chester Nimitz, he argued for more sea power instead of land operations.

Chiang, however, insisted that Burma should be the place for the initial mainland operation against the Japanese. However, he opposed military operations in the north where it would be necessary for his own forces to provide manpower. Burma, he argued, was the key to the whole operation in Asia.

This tenuous situation was further compounded by the fact that Britain and India both placed their priorities in Europe and the Middle East rather than China, the "back door" of the war. Too, the spread of nationalism across India under Ghandi was a major problem for the British. Huge demonstrations, riots, and acts of sabotage spread across India during August, tying down 60 battalions of the British and Indian armies.

Thus the China, Burma, India Theatre was born. To Stilwell and many G.I.s down the line, the designation meant "Confused Bastards in India." Many were convinced that neither the British or the Indians had much heart to fight America's main enemy, the Japanese. The Chinese had heart of sorts — if the Americans would do the work.

Thus, Stilwell was faced with an impossible task in carrying out his assignment. He urged wholesale reform and reorganization of the Chinese army, the purging of inefficient high commanders, and unifying the command system. Chiang, quite naturally, objected since such massive reform would severely undermine his power base.

What he really wanted was military hardware to enhance his own prestige.

A major showdown occurred in June 1942 between the two men. British reversals in North Africa forced the U.S. to divert all aircraft heading to China to the Middle East. Heavy bombers of the 10th Air Force were included, a decision which was made in Washington without Chiang's knowledge.

Furious, the Generallissimo handed Stilwell an ultimatum setting forth three requirements for



Lt. General Albert C. Wedemeyer, right, chats with Colonel Mose Kent, Commandant of Infantry Training Center, and Major General Douglas L. Wear, Commander Rear Echelon.

maintenance in China: (1) three U.S. divisions for the Burma campaign; (2) 500 airplanes for the theatre; and (3) monthly deliveries of 5,000 tons of supplies over the "Hump." A deadline of two months was given for this to be accomplished.

In the end, compromises were worked out. Chiang dropped his demand for American troops, and committed Chinese troops to a Burma Campaign with the condition that British naval forces would control the Bay of Bengal, and Allied air superiority would prevail over Burma. Washington also agreed to build up its air strength in China and provide 100 Hump transport aircraft.

Flying the "Hump" began shortly after the Japanese captured Rangoon in March 1942 and cut off the Burma Road. A hastily drawn plan called for C-47 transport planes to takeoff from airfields in the Brahmaputra Valley, and cross the towering Himalayas to Kunming on Yunnan Province, a distance of approximately 550 miles.

This scenic but dangerous route led across the 10,000

Thanks to Bob Kadel for providing photographs and materials used in our C.B.I. salute.

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foot Patkai Range. It stretched from Assam Province in northeastern India across Burma to Kunming, China, and the Chindwin River Valley. On the route was a series of 14,000 to 16,000 foot ridges separated by several river valleys, Mekong, East Irrawaddy, and Salween. The "Hump" was the 15,000 foot Satsung Range between the Mekong and Salween Rivers.

The responsibility for keeping the Hump open fell to the 10th Army Air Force. Headed by Major General Lewis H. Brereton, the unit flew its first mission on April 3, 1942, against the Andaman Islands. Heavy bombing strikes against Japanese-held Burma destroyed shipping, convoys, supply dumps and oil refineries.

Meanwhile, the personal conflicts between Stilwell and Chiang expanded to include Chennault. Stilwell was infantry; Chennault was air power. Stilwell favored ground assaults to retake Burma; Chennault supported air strikes to pin down the Japanese. Understandably, a close relationship developed between Chiang and Chennault.

In time the fierce argument over air power vs. infantry swung in favor of Chennault. Roosevelt viewed its use as the best way to keep Japanese ground forces out of the Pacific Theatre.

In April 1943, both Stilwell and Chennault were summoned to Washington for a perfunctory meeting with Roosevelt and his advisors. By then, the president and Churchill had decided that Burma's jungles were no place to fight the Japanese. Allied plans included only an abbreviated campaign into northern Burma to open a land route to China, thus reducing the number of flights across the Hump.

At Roosevelt's order, Chennault was given an independent command, the 14th Air Force, to free him of any constraints by the 10th Air Force under General Clayton Bissell an old enemy. Still the bickering went on between Chennault and Stilwell.

Things never completely worked for any of the major players in C.B.I. Chennault, as predicted, struck Japanese bases with heavy assaults. The Japanese, in turn, hit Chinese bases with a vengeance. Stilwell could never quite get his modified Burma campaign on track. And Chiang Kai Shek continued his woeful complaint for more American supplies.

Finally, the British came forward with yet another solution to what had become "one hell of a mess." At the Quebec Conference in May 1944, Churchill and Roosevelt created the Southeast Asia Command and Lord Lewis Mountbatten was appointed Supreme Allied Commander. Stilwell was named his deputy and retained his position with Chiang. He was not happy in either position. C.B.I. was now divided into two theatres: China Theatre (C.T.) and India-Burma (I.B.).

Chiang could clearly see the handwriting on the wall. With fast carriers and the ultimate strategic bomber, the B-29, America had come leap-frogging across the Pacific to within striking distance of Japan. Thus, China's strategic importance was greatly reduced. Nor was China included within SEAC's responsibilities.

Though Mountbatten, was a man of immense personal charm, was greatly admired by many U.S. leaders, he did not have an easy assignment to retake Burma and break the blockade of China.

Life, which in 1941 had carried Mountbatten's picture on its cover, questioned the reason for his appointment: "One thing we are sure we are not fighting for is to hold the British Empire together." Some American officers said SEAC meant "Save England's Asiatic Colonies." Stilwell shared this general feeling and was often tactless and rude to Mountbatten.

Nevertheless, "Vinegar Joe" finally got his Burma campaign underway in early 1944, taking personal command of his Chinese troops. Operating with him behind Japanese lines was an American unit (Merrill's Marauders) trained in Chindit fashion.

Stilwell's offensive bore success with the capture of Myitkyina, a Japanese stronghold since May 1942. Simultaneous with the ground assaults, Chennault launched heavy air strikes against enemy bases in China, provoking the Japanese to blast Chinese forward bases



Lord Louis Mountbatten posed regally during a tour of the Arakan Front.

and literally cut free China in two.

Stilwell, not surprisingly, was made the scape goat and removed from command on October 27, 1944. He was replaced by Lt. General Albert C. Wedemeyer who had served with Mountbatten. By then Washington regarded China's contributions to the war effort as minimal, and instructed Wedemeyer to provide only advice to the Chinese in their conduct of military operations.

This he did with great tact and diplomacy in dealing with both Chiang and Chennault. Under his direction, the Chinese prepared a strong defense of Kunming and thwarted a Japanese expeditionary force against Chindit late in the war.

So what was accomplished by C.B.I. as to the ultimate outcome of the war, aside from a morass of international politics, military confusion, and sometimes comic antics? It is difficult to tell. Some military units stationed there experienced heavy combat, while others generally sat out the war in exotic places waiting for something to happen. Certainly no one can fault those who served at their country's behest. And flying the Hump was no job

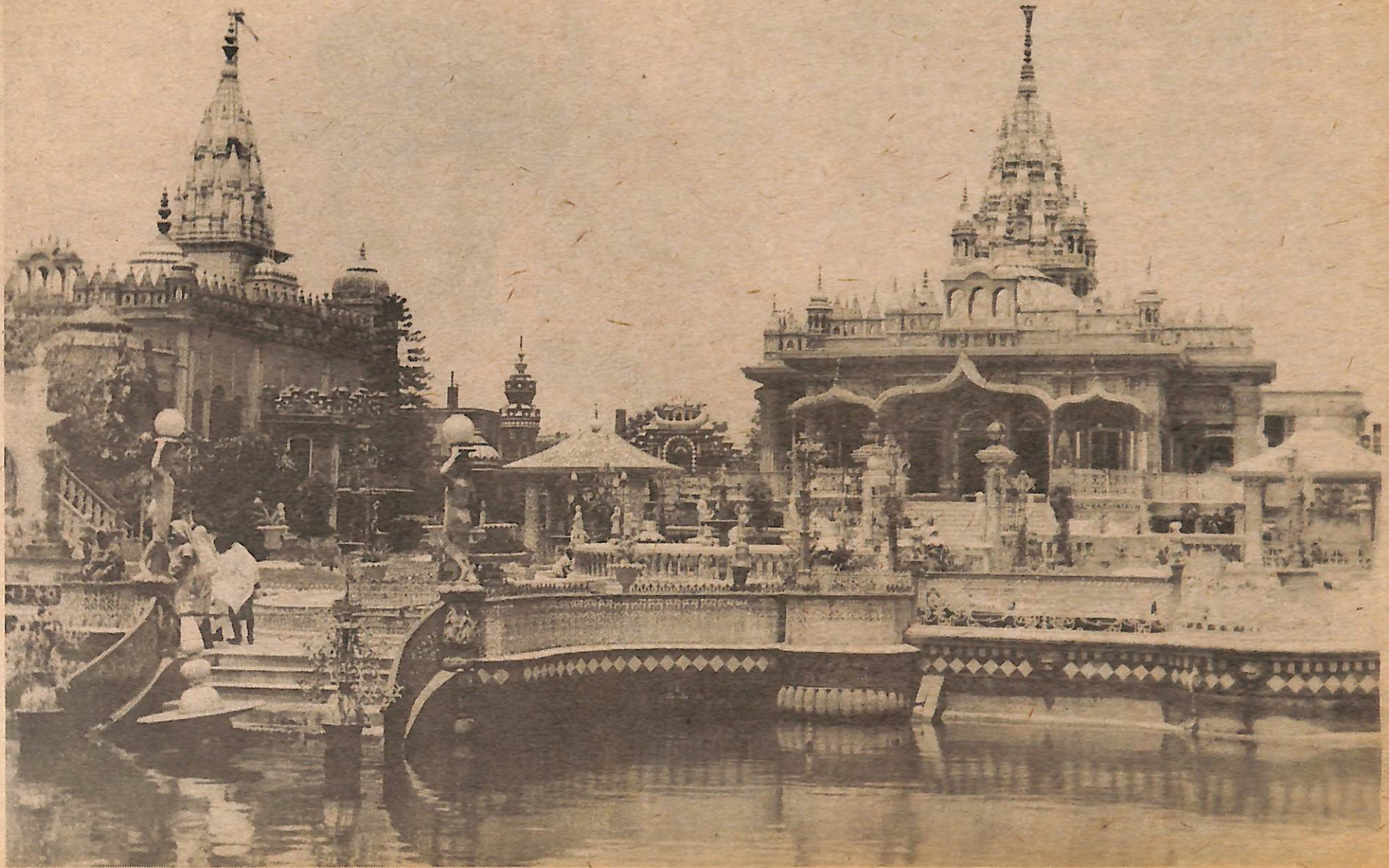
Merrill's Marauders

Brig. General Frank D. Merrill commanded the 5307 Composite Group, the first American infantry unit to fight in Asia. Known as Merrill's Marauders, the unit was trained in guerilla warfare and penetrated deep behind Japanese lines in Burma in Operation Galahad.

Trained in the doctrine of Orde C. Wingate, Merrill's Marauders became Stilwell's most dependable combat unit in the drive to recapture northern Burma. Serious illness forced Merrill's evacuation on March 31, 1944, but not before Galahad had captured Walawbum and Inkangahtawng and begun an assault on Nhpum Ga.

Merrill died in 1955 at age 52. A movie "Merrill's Marauders" in 1962 depicted his exploits.





The haunting beauty of Burma — the gatehouse to the "Jain Temple" in Rangoon.

for mere boys.

Perhaps General Wedemeyer, in a recent letter to C.B.I. veterans, summed things up best:

"The decisive campaigns through which the Allies eventually triumphed over their enemies in World War II were conducted largely in other climes. The CBI thus remained a theater of secondary, although undeniably vital, importance in the broader scheme of global strategy.

"This status inevitably imposed limitations and difficulties on all ranks. Being at the very end of the global pipeline, and enjoying priority on little more than what could be spared elsewhere, we were obliged to tighten our belts and 'make do' with what we had.

"In enduring the discomforts of an especially enervating and often unhealthful climate, in waging war in some of the world's most difficult surface and air environments, in facing everywhere the challenges of a resourceful and aggressive enemy, we were forced at all times to 'try harder'. Yet little of the excitement of great battles touched our lives, and much of the glory went elsewhere.

"I can testify, however, that you met all challenges magnificently. You selflessly did your duty. You stood by your country in her hour of need. You were guided throughout by dedication to higher ideals of freedom, justice, and decency in human affairs that alone can justify so great and costly a struggle. You never lost faith that the world could be made better. You never doubted that the cause was worth the effort.

"Many of our companions of those years are gone. The shadows are lengthening for those who remain. I wish you all well. I know that you are carrying on, and will continue to carry on in this turbulent world, as the good soldiers and responsible human beings you so splendidly proved yourselves to be in the CBI."



Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek and Colonel Clifton I. McClure



Bob Kadel was all smiles this day in C.B.I.



Bill Evans takes aim

"Shooting" C.B.I.

Bob Kadel

Prior to World War II many Americans were involved in still and motion picture photography as a way to preserve history. Many will remember the excellent photos of the Civil War battlefields taken by Mathew Brady. And there were many

books full of stories and pictures of European and American fighting men during World War I.

During World War II, military services had their own photographic units within their own squadrons, battalions, or other units. Utilizing the

most modern photographic equipment at the time, these units recorded their group's activities in camp and combat. Their work was used for educational, information, and documentation purposes.

Film was screened first for informa-

tion in the field and then in Washington. If Washington saw no classified problems with the photography, the public relations officers would release either motion picture film or photographic prints to the news media. In short order, the press around the world could see what military forces were doing.

These photographic results were then screened for intelligence with the findings passed on to the proper organization for review. Aerial photography saved many lives behind the lines in the China-Burma-India Theatre. The 10th USAAC Combat Camera Unit, in fact, spent as much time behind the Japanese lines as in front.

Cameramen of the 10th CCU covered the building of the Burma Road; aerial missions to bomb Rangoon; rescue missions in the dense jungles of the Naga headhunters; the intense fighting of Merrill's Marauders and the Mars Task Force; the Gurkha soldier from Nepal; the British and Chinese troops training and fighting; and just about anything else that took place between 1942 - 1945.

Anyone writing a book or putting together a film today of the war can visit the Archives of the US Air Force at Maxwell AFB, Montgomery, Alabama, or the Imperial War Museum in London for copies of all films and photos made by our photo unit.

Civilian war photographers working for newspapers and magazines, as well as movie news reels, covered a great part of the military action world-wide alongside military cameramen. In the C.B.I. snakes, mosquitoes and humid weather kept all but the most physically fit persons out of the jungles. But some of the greatest photography of the World War II era came out of our theatre, and has been displayed in a fashion to preserve history as it was made.



Movie Queen Ann Sheridan and fellow entertainers blended in with the troops while in the C.B.I. for a show.

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Wingate and his Chindits

General Orde Wingate, a British Army officer, in the summer of 1942 formed the 77th Indian Infantry Brigade from British, Gurkha, and Burmese battalions. Known as Chindits, after a mythical Hindu personality, these troops were trained to operate as guerrillas and raiders.

In February 1943, Wingate led 3,000 of his men across the Chindwin River into north Burma. Six weeks later 2,000 survivors infiltrated into India and China.

At the Quebec Conference in the fall of 1943, Wingate convinced both Roosevelt and Churchill that light infantry brigades could successfully perform long-range penetration raids, and paralyze the enemy's rear if they were supported and supplied by air.

On March 16, 1944, 9,000 troops and 1,000 mules were landed by gliders behind Japanese lines. Although Wingate was killed 18 days later in an aircraft accident, his tactics were successfully employed by his successor General Walter Lentaigne.

In early March 1942, the touristic instincts of the newly-landed American Army troops in New Caledonia had free play. It was the delightful era before Washington had fully organized its red tape, or had issued instructions on the conduct of soldiers in foreign countries.

This made the work of Henri, the concierge of the big French Colonial Hospital at Noumea, particularly difficult but enjoyable. As an old soldier, wounded in 1918, he sympathized with the young American G.I.s who wanted to see everything.

He saluted officers smartly, and murmured respectfully in French to all non-coms over the grade of corporal.

Frustrated in what he considered his great natural ability as a guide and lecturer, Henri's only compensation was the opportunity to discuss with me France, America, the war, and the moral decadence of the times.

I spoke some French, and as a liaison officer with the French Service de Sante', I had a billet in the hospital. In the year I lived there, we got to be good friends. My cigarettes made up for the weird hours I kept, and he, in turn, told me a great deal of local history.

New Caledonia was a primary objective in the unchecked southward march of the Japanese. Henri pointed out, with less completeness and accuracy, but far more pungency than the G-2 reports, that the entire 250 miles of island had been defended until then by a battalion of native militia, a few Australians, and four World War I rejected 75 millimeter guns.

A thousand of their best men were present in Africa fighting for France, and what had France sent them in return, he questioned. "Le Chevreuil and Le Mission!"

Le Chevreuil, a gunboat, slightly larger than old sub-chasers of 1917, constituted the entire French Navy in South Pacific waters. The "Mission" was a large group of officers, some with their wives, headed by Admiral Georges Thierry d'Argenlieu.

The evening of March 20, I escaped the usual lecture by explaining I was on my way to the reception of Governor Sautot for General Alexander Patch and his staff. But like the Ancient Mariner, Henri fixed his glittering eye on me and promised to tell the true story of that affair.

It was a joint reception, with the American staff being presented first to Governor Sautot and then to Admiral d'Argenlieu. Though it was hoped that General Patch, our commander, might reconcile these two men, it was apparent that the friction between the popular, amiable, expansive Sautot and the rigidly correct d'Argenlieu required more than soft soap diplomacy.

Henri, that night, dilated on the virtues of Sautot, explaining how he had been selected by the people and confirmed by DeGaulle, after they had run Governor Denis out for staying



Lt. Colonel Arthur G. King outside his billet at Noumea, 1942.

Modern French Revolution

Arthur King, M.D.

with the Vichy government.

"But then came Le Mission", he roared. Twenty-one naval officers to stay comfortably ashore and direct one canoe that never leaves the harbor (undoubtedly the Chevreuil). Because of the military urgency they have requisitioned our best houses and our automobiles, is it not so, that we have contributed to DeGaulle."

The catalogue of sins included tak-

ing over the best beaches for their exclusive use. Worst of all, the defense of the island was left to the Americans while French infantrymen were used to having a beach club and bath-houses. He muttered "You will see, the Governor will disembarass us of him...he has already made the Admiral give us more gasoline."

Henri's resentment came honestly. As a colon, or colonist, he objected to

the Metropoles, that is, the managers of the large, absentee-owned estates, mines, mercantile interests and shipping, as well as the civil servants sent over from France as administrators.

The colons were primarily descendents of liberal exiles from France and Germany following the revolutions of 1848 and 1872. Henri probably traced his blood line back to the released inmates of the old penal colony near the town of Brourrail. Certainly he was connected to the Broussards, the hardy mountaineers who lived in the "bush" or back country.

The morning of May 1, Henri called dramatically: "Tiens, the war has begun." This was hardly news since the events of December 7, but as G-2 had indicated little change in the situation, it was obviously another war. "He has called the Governor a Vichyiste and the Conseil has required an explanation from General DeGaulle. It is now Sautot or the Admiral, but never the two in New Caledonia," he went on.

The Conseil was the locally elected advisory council, which held a stormy session to decide whether to join DeGaulle, remain with the Vichy government, or declare independence from France. Although the Separatists were intensely loyal to the Allied cause, they were vulnerable to criticism because they had voted against DeGaulle in favor of complete independence.

Sautot's strongest support lay with the Separatists among the colons. Henri had often inveighed against the Paris-made laws which protected produce of other French colonies but forbade New Caledonia to raise tobacco or sell its excellent rum.

The trade restrictions and tax situation presented an unbelievably modern version of Great Britain and the American colonies in 1775. Although a Separatist, Henri had faith that DeGaulle would support Sautot and recall the Admiral.

The night of May 4, Henri was trembling with rage as he opened one gate and approached my jeep. "Do you know what has happened, mon Colonel?" he asked. I did, having come from a dinner party.

"The Admiral invited the Governor aboard the Chevreuil for a conference, the governor and four members of the Conseil...a peaceful conference concerning the word from DeGaulle...and he has arrested them by force of arms, our governor, because he took our part."

The following morning the hospital gates were wide open, but Henri was nowhere to be seen. The Chevreuil had left the harbor, with Sautot aboard, and the streets were crowded with new Caledonians.

Henri was too old to march in the numerous parades which formed. The marchers went up and down the streets, carrying placards and French and American flags. They sang the "Marseillaise" and what

passed for the "Star Spangled Banner." American jeeps and trucks made wide detours through the city, but occasionally were routed by M.P.s to form a solid, slow-moving blockade between the crowds and the American headquarters.

Several times the marchers grouped in an orderly circle around the front entrance and demanded to hear General Patch. He finally appeared on the balcony for a brief speech, saying this was no time for political quarrels. Instead, local problems should be subordinated to the defense against the common enemy. Cheers and applause greeted his words.

On Wednesday, May 6, the crowds were still seen, but the bistros were closed and speech-making was sporadic and less violent. Henri was back on duty, pleased that the Admiral had "Fontu le camp"...had "scrammed."

The excitement had died down on May 7. Henri was subdued, gracious, and very secretive. "Knowing too much is indiscreet," he remarked, "and, also illegal!" French censorship had cast its spell! Other Caledoniens indicated only that something important was happening.

By the next day, Henri was expansive and jubilant. His salute was as proud as the crowing of the Gallic cock.

"Now it is our turn! You will soon hear, mon Colonel, how the Broussards arrested the Admiral and four of his staff to wipe out the shame of the treatment of our governor. It is too late for us to have him back, but now the Admiral will also go.

"You have seen the paper? I asked.

"No, but Banuelos has it, that fox"...and then his face clouded. "It's a pity that such a species of smuggler should lead us to victory. And it is not chic that they molested Cabanier, a real battle-hero. But you will see; the Admiral and the Mission will soon leave us in peace."

"Where is the Admiral?"

"Aha! the Americans ask! He is well hidden in a cabin in the bush, and comfortable, I am told, and he will be released when it is assured that he will depart from the island as he has promised in writing."

The Americans suddenly became too busy even to think about revolution. The Coral Sea battle had taken place, and the U.S. Navy had paid a terrible price to turn back the Japanese fleet on its way to attack New Caledonia.

Our fleet was supposed to be limping home; the Lexington was sunk; a Japanese carrier, known to be loose, was perhaps at liberty to bomb the island. Precautions were taken to alert Noumea to the impending danger.

The French militia was withdrawn from the highway and assigned to help evacuate civilians. The Broussards, not knowing where Japanese bombs might fall, returned to their homes. In the city, all thought of revolution was over.



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Japanese erase their history

Now almost 50 years later we sometimes joke about Japan and Germany really winning World War II. How close to the truth is such talk and hindsight?

Certainly the industrial growth and world wide influence of those two nations give the thought some credence.

Hirohito's passing was the last public reminder of that greatest of all humiliations — surrender, a Japanese watcher says. Prior to his death, my observer began hearing and reading — for the first time — that Japan ought to junk the U.S. dictated constitution (and especially that clause about not making war), look into nuclear weapons, reassert that the "emperor damned sure is divine and always has been (he only renounced divinity because MacArthur was holding a pistol to his head)."

Now that Hirohito is gone, my observer goes on to say that the emperor's son is held in great respect and Shintoism is on the rise. This resident of Tokyo for several years expects a new nationalism and a military force of some sort in the near future. He, like a lot of us would love to see Japan take on some of its military burden, and spend some of its vast wealth to aid the Pacific defense forces and bolster the U.S. economy.

He sees no improvement of the unfair import-export balance with our World War II enemy, now an ally so important that President George Bush felt he had no alternative to attending Hirohito's funeral. My observer was proud of the fact that Great Britain and Australia strongly protested the heel clicking of the many nations who paid tribute to Hirohito, and virtually ignored the elaborate funeral ceremony.

But even worse, my watcher adds, is the fact that this new generation of Japanese (and he loves his assignment there) is totally unaware of what happened in World War II. The people he associates with know nothing about the Bataan Death March, or the wonton destruction of human life in China. They are only vaguely aware that Pearl Harbor did take place but no feeling of guilt is expressed.

Your columnist had a similar ex-



A General Look

Wendell Phillippi

perience in Germany in 1983. The young, handsome blond tour director knew nothing about World War II or the holocaust. As my observer and I agree, people of both nations knew what happened but few feel or will ever express any regret. Let us pray their future generations do not again try to gain military superiority as their forefathers did so often. Their economic and industrial domination is enough for us to put up with for a long time.

All of which reminds this columnist that at least Kurt Vonnegut, the famous Hoosier author, compared Hirohito with Hitler and Mussolini on a recent Phil Donahue show and received a good round of applause for the remark from the audience. At least some have not forgotten why so many Americans boys fought and died because of the three dictators who brought on World War II.

AH. EDITING

A recent column had an omission due to an editing foulup which is not new to us in the publishing business.

The column was also on Japan — lamenting all the bowing toward the emperor of Japan at the time of his death.

The column pointed out that in effect Hirohito never got the message that he should have surrendered after we made our biggest aerial bombing attack in mid-March 1945, months before we were ready to go with the atomic bombs.

After four years of fighting the yellow peril, we dropped our biggest load on Tokyo and the toll was 97,000

killed, 125,000 wounded, and 1,200,000 homeless. We flattened 32 square miles. Then the Japanese made us pay a high price for capturing Okinawa for home bases preparatory to the final assault on the enemy. Still no answer to our requests for surrender.

So was it any wonder we finally had to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki? The March raid had been more destructive with so-called conventional weapons than either of the two atomic bomb raids. Look for that information in either an American or Japanese textbook or history and I doubt if you will find it. Or try and explain that to peace marchers or protestors of our use of "Nukes" in World War II.

RETURN TO FREJUS

This columnist will return to one of his battlefields in August for the 45th anniversary celebration of the landing and liberation of Frejus, France, on the French Riviera.

He will join his former commanding officer, Brig. General Theodore Andrews, of Austin, Texas, who retired from the regular army after a

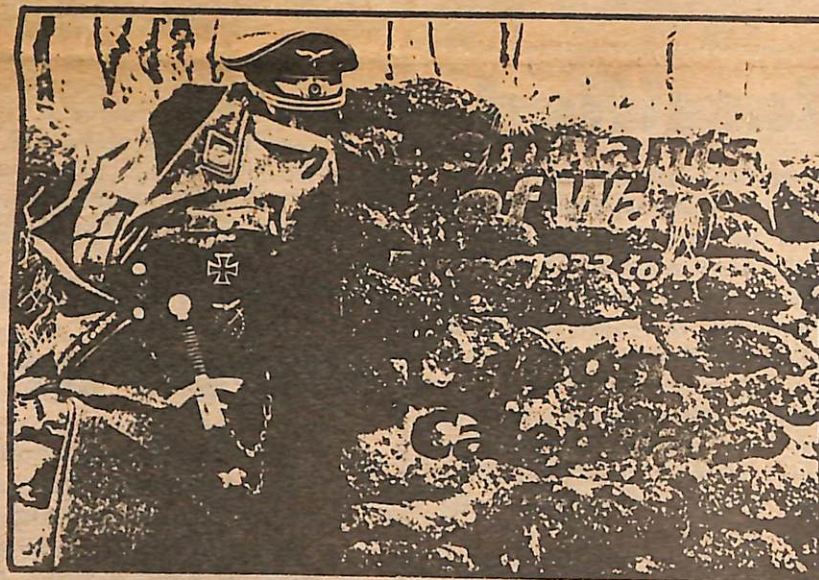
brilliant military career to represent their regiment, the 143rd 36th Texas National Guard Division, which landed on D-day at San Raphael near Frejus.

It will be my second return to the landing site. Having been out of uniform for years, I will appear in a new white uniform for the occasion as guest of the city of Frejus.

The invasion was opposed by Churchill but General Eisenhower wanted it (Operation Dragoon) so President Roosevelt told Winnie to let Ike do what he had to do to win the war. The invasion was more successful than imagined (300 miles in 130 days) and provided vital ports necessary to supply and reinforce U.S. troops after they broke out of Normandy and joined the southern thrust.

Correction

In the May issue we incorrectly identified the writer of "Home to my girl" as Tom Banks. The correct name of the writer is Ted Banks of Stone Mountain, Georgia.



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Making light of their sacrifice

Around this time of year we are a nation awash in flags — summer's annual outpouring of festive patriotism.

But beer and barbecues are not always the best instruments for serious patriotic reflection. And often the American flag's unique power to move and inspire is only evident when displayed in time of crisis. Like on the day that it was draped over the caskets of those who died on the battleship Iowa. Or on the day it was burned by chanting Iranian fanatics during the hostage crisis.

These unforgettable images provoke a kind of pride and anger that is easier felt than explained. These emotions don't need to be syrupy or sentimental. But they are rooted in one solid and extraordinary fact — that the flag somehow embodies the selflessness of thousands of men and women who died to preserve an American experiment in freedom.

But last week the Supreme Court discovered a curious and disturbing new constitutional right. Ironically, as a flag flew over its white-marbled building, the Court determined it was perfectly legal to burn the American flag as a form of political speech.

The case they decided began with a protest at the Republican National



Senator Dan Coats

Convention in 1984. In front of City Hall, a protester doused the American flag with kerosene and set it aflame while several dozen others chanted, "American, the red, white, and blue, we spit on you."

This kind of desecration provokes in most Americans, including myself, the sort of barely restrained outrage that keeps you from sleeping at night.

It is not that Americans are insecure. We do not blindly follow traditions. But we do care deeply about symbols — particularly that one sym-

The flag bears our pride in times of celebration. It bears our grief at half-staff. But it should not be forced to bear the insults of a calloused and deformed conscience.

bol of ideas and values for which men and women have sacrificed and died in every generation. To desecrate the flag, I believe, is to desecrate their memory and make light of their sacrifice.

There is a type of patriotism that is held so deeply that it finds expression in concrete things like a patriot's crippled body — or in bits of colored cloth. For men who have risked death in service of a flag it is more than just a symbol, it is sacrifice you can hold in your hand — or trample underfoot in contempt.

The flag bears our pride in times of celebration. It bears our grief at half-staff. But it should not be forced to bear the insults of a calloused and deformed conscience.

Men and women who we ask to die for a flag have a right to expect deference for that flag by those who benefit from their sacrifice. It is part of the compact we make with those who will serve. And, until this decision, it was the law in 48 states.

Tolerance is an important thing in a free and diverse society. Agreement must never be a prerequisite for civility. But tolerance can never be rooted in the view that nothing is worth our outrage because nothing is

worth our sacrifice.

Chief Justice Rehnquist authored a stinging dissent to this misguided decision, arguing, "Surely one of the high purposes of a democratic society is to legislate against conduct that is regarded as evil and profoundly offensive to the majority of people — whether it be murder, embezzlement, pollution or flag burning."

Justice John Paul Stevens added, referring to the ideals of American Patriotism, "If those ideas are worth fighting for — and our history demonstrates that they are — it cannot be true that the flag that uniquely symbolizes their power is not itself worthy of protection from unnecessary desecration."

Yes, we must be tolerant. But we must never adopt an enervating and cowardly disdain that strips us of patriotic conviction and dulls our ability to be offended by the desecration of vital symbols. "In the world it is called tolerance," wrote author Dorothy Sayers, "but in hell it is called Despair... the sin that believes in nothing, cares for nothing, enjoys nothing, finds purpose in nothing, lives for nothing, and remains alive because there is nothing for which it will die."

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You don't have to be a veteran to understand what the American flag means, nor do you have to be a "super patriot" to understand that the symbols of our freedom deserve to be protected. Tens of thousands of brave, selfless American men and women have died to protect our flag from desecration at the hand of our enemies.

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H.F. GIERKE
National Commander
The American Legion



David Dale and General Jimmy Doolittle



John Lawler, and Bob Kadel at a recent C.B.I. reunion.

C.B.I.ers are an active group

CBI veterans who today still cherish the memories of those never-to-be-forgotten days in the Far East, have found CBIVA the veterans organization they have been seeking.

This group of CBI'ers is a mosaic designed of unique military experiences, united under a common bond of fraternalism and dedicated to honor our dead through the serving of those who survived the war.

The China-Burma-India Veterans Association is a non-profit group, with membership open to all personnel who served in or with the Armed Forces of the United States in China, Burma or India during World War II.

Honorable service during the period of issuance of the Asiatic-Pacific theatre ribbon is an additional requisite. Also, the "China War Memorial" medal may be applied for if one served in China during the same period.

By heritage, CBIVA was Wisconsin born and nourished. The original group got together in Calcutta, Bengal late in the war but was started in earnest August 28, 1948 during a reunion held in Milwaukee.

There, war veterans from 15 states enthusiastically endorsed the formation of an organization for former CBI'ers. It was named China-Burma-India Veterans Association and Lester J. Dencker served as its first

commander.

Since its formation, CBI Family reunions have become a tradition. Few who have attended one of these gatherings have not become enchanted by its friendly atmosphere.

Re-unions have been held in most every state of the country. This year, Albany, New York will play host to the more than 1,000 CBI'ers and their families. Commander William S. Dorman of Tulsa, Oklahoma, will direct proceedings at the headquarters in the Holiday Inn.

New officers are elected annually to

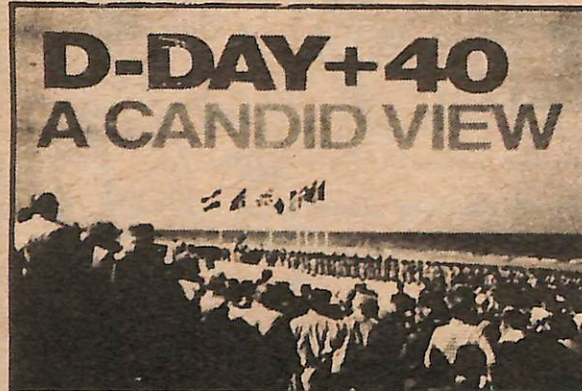
serve for a one year period on the national level. Local groups, or "Bashas," as they are called, serve the great number of veterans who cannot attend national re-unions.

Americanism Awards are presented annually to outstanding Americans of our times. Among those having received this award are General Albert Wedemeyer, Lt. General Jimmy Doolittle, Maj. General John Allison and many other distinguished men and women. CBIVA honors its own members each year with an award for outstanding

service to the organization.

Any veteran of the C-B-I conflict who is interested in meeting old buddies from years past are invited to attend the re-unions or write to the address below. Each year more and more men and women are finding out about this unique group which is the only World War II Veterans Organization that meets as a whole theatre.

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Bert and Bear

FROM PAGE 5

Hope began to surge in Bert's breast on September 21, 1944 when hundreds of U.S. airplanes suddenly appeared on the horizon and shot up several Japanese aircraft on the airstrip.

Freedom for Bert came with striking suddenness. On the night of January 30, 1945, 100 men of the Sixth Army Ranger Infantry Battalion, assisted by 200 Filipino guerrillas, infiltrated 28 miles behind Japanese lines to rescue the 511 surviving POWs.

The Rangers' fire power lasted approximately 13 minutes. The prisoners lay flat on the ground, not knowing what was going on.

One Ranger spotted Bert in a ditch and shouted, "What the hell is the matter with you people, don't you want to be free?" Hesitantly, Bert asked if he was a Yank, to which he replied, "I'm from Oklahoma." "That is good enough for me," Bert shouted, and ran "like hell" for the main gate.

The liberated men were loaded on trucks the next day and sped to safety. On the way, they saw for the first time in three years an American flag on a make shift stand alongside the dusty road.

"Every man in those 40 or 50 trucks stood at attention and saluted with large tears rolling down their cheeks," Bert vividly recalls. "It was an emotional moment I've never gotten over. Seeing that flag made me feel that my suffering had been worth something."

Bert came home and never looked back. When he showed up at the Tuscaloosa News he breezed in with a hearty laugh and healthy handshake, just as he had done when he bade farewell to his friends four years



Two buddies from Bataan were reunited shortly after the war, when Bert Bank (left) and Sam Grashio got together in San Francisco.

earlier.

He wrote a small paperback book *Back from the Living Dead*, and dedicated it to his parents and friends whose prayers were responsible for his deliverance. Physical recovery, however, did not come overnight. Malnutrition had seriously affected his vision and he was in and out of hospitals for three years.

The years since World War II have been good to Bert. In addition to his successful business interests, he served in the Alabama House of Representatives eight years, and the State Senate two years. He garnered 47% of the vote in a statewide race for lieutenant governor in 1978. He was the principal architect of legislation which established the Alabama Educational Commission.

Today Bert has time to serve on several boards, frequent the golf course, and promote civic activities. Traveling with Alabama's football team during the season brings him special satisfaction — "They are still 'Bama, part of a rich tradition, of which I am fortunate to have a part."

Bert was one of the last persons to visit Bear Bryant when the coach was hospitalized in early 1983. But he didn't disturb his rest. Instead, he left a humorous paperback book "What I Know About Football" to cheer up the coach.

Hours later, Bert and the sports world were stunned to hear that Bryant had joined other football greats beyond the "Final Goalpost." "If I can be a bit sentimental," he reflects, "he left us a lasting example — to be a success — no something much stronger, a winner, a true winner in life. I never knew anyone who strove harder for that goal."

Perhaps Bert, like most Ex-P.O.W.s, is too modest. How does one define "winner?" "Victor?" And who is a victor? Webster: "one who defeats an enemy," (Even in a prison camp, the Times adds).

Bert's membership in the "American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor" is an emblem which he wears with special pride. Regularly he is found on the speaker's circuit with an intensely patriotic speech "What America Means to Me."

And when he talks about America, he's not just talking about symbols.

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Thank you,
 Jack Harrison,
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Ask the Colonel

Colonel Jim Shelton, Indiana Wing, Confederate Air Force



Q. It is reported the most destructive bombing mission in World War II was not Regensburg or Hiroshima or Nagasaki. What was it?

A. The great B-29 raid on March 9, 1945 on Japan, leaving more than one and a quarter million people homeless.

Q. Two other well known movie stars who gave a good account of themselves in World War II were handicapped by only having one eye. Who were they?

A. Peter Falk and Rex Harrison.

Q. Germany at one time considered sending Jews to an island instead of concentration camps in Europe. What was this island?

A. Madagascar — transportation problems made the idea undesirable.

Q. Believe it or not a weapon named "Mousetrap" was used by our great Navy. What was it?

A. It was a rocket launcher.

Q. What was the code name given to the Navy portion of the operation on D-Day, June 6, 1944?

A. Neptune.

Q. The last Marine to leave Wake Island in 1941 was also the first person to return in 1945. Who was he?

A. Colonel Walter Bayler.

Q. What U.S. General ordered a chaplain to write a prayer for better weather?

A. George Patton did so during the Battle of the Bulge. James O'Neill at first objected but after writing the prayer, the weather did improve. Patton awarded O'Neill the Bronze Star.

Q. Audie Murphy was the most decorated service man in World War II. He later went on to become a well known movie star. The second most decorated service man was also a movie star. Who was this brave man?

A. Neville Brand, who usually played the heavy roles.

Q. Two dogs played roles in World War II with names of "Hitler" and "Willie." What famous generals owned them?

A. Montgomery had the dog "Hitler" and "Willie" was Patton's.

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3rd Bn. 5th Marines Transplacement Bn. (Okinawa 1960) reunion Las Vegas, NV, Feb. 1990. Contact: Sgt. Maj. Richard Goucher (Ret) 13431 Acton Ave. Poway, CA 92064.

N.A.T.T.C. & N.A.S. reunion Norman OK, Sheraton Hotel Sept. 29 - Oct. 1. Contact: Francis Brandt, 1067 S.E. 42nd St., Loveland, CO 80537, (303) 669-6083.

U.S. Marine Corps Drill Instructor Assoc. reunion Aug. 17-21, San Diego, CA. Contact: GYSGT F. Michael Cline (619) 524-5041 or 224-2579. USMC DI Assoc. Bldg. 28, RTR, MCRD, San Diego, CA 92140.

101st Airborne Div. Assoc. 44th reunion, Marc Plaza Hotel, Aug. 10-13, Milwaukee, WI. Contact: 101st Airborne Div. Assoc. P.O. Box 586 Sweetwater, TN 37874 (615) 337-4103.

Navy "Sun Downer" Sqd. from VF-11 and VF-111, reunion Pensacola, FL., Nov 16-18. Contact: K.H. Enander, 419 Maple St. Fort Townsend, WA 98368 (206) 385-7786.

100th Air Service Squadron 5th AF reunion Sherman, TX. Aug. 18-20. Contact: Chuck Blumenthal, 8046 Via Del Desierto, Scottsdale, AZ 85258.

Marine Corps League & Auxiliary reunion, Dallas TX Aug. 6-12, Dallas Hilton Inn, Mockingbird and Central Expressway. Contact: D.C. (Ducky) Wilkinson, 3039 Sharpview Ln., Dallas, TX 75228.

Second Marine Div. Assoc. looking for former Marines (2nd Div) Contact: Bill Smith, 21500 Lassen St. #168, Chatsworth, CA 91311 (818) 341-0504.

Iwo Jima Vet. Assoc. reunion Feb. 15-18, 1990, Baton Rouge, LA, Baton Rouge Hilton Hotel. Contact: James R. (Jim) Westbrook, Rt. 10 Box 382, Vicksburg, MS 39180.

789th Engr. Pet. Dist. Co. WWII, reunion Sept. 22-24, Ft. Wayne, IN. Contact: Thomas R. Foltz, 4332 Sanford Ln., Ft. Wayne, IN 46816 (219) 447-2690.

Third Battalion Fifth Marines on Okinawa - 1960. Reunion Feb. 2-4, 1990 Hacienda Hotel, Las Vegas, NV. Contact: 3/5 "Sixty" Assoc. P.O. Box 1724, Oceanside, CA 92054.

Guadalcanal campaign veterans (all branches of the service) reunion Oct. 12-15, San Antonio, TX. Contact: Gene Keller, 4043 Standish, Kalamazoo, MI, 49008 (616) 344-0265.

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78th Seabee WWII, Oct. 19-22, 1989, Davisville, RI. Contact: Ken Kelly, P.O. Box 194, Grand Haven, MI 49417 (616) 798-4311.

U.S.S. Rogers (DD/DDR 876) 1st reunion, all hands. Harley Hotel, Cleveland, Ohio, Oct. 6-8, 1989. Contact: George Eichenberg, 1157 E. Miner, Mayfield Hts., Ohio 44124, (216) 442-5155.

USS Lackawanna (AO-40) Reunion May 1990, Indianapolis, IN. Contact: Newman Cryer, 5323 N. Kenyon Dr., Indianapolis, IN 46226 (317) 547-5187.

Co. L, 13th INF, 8th Div. World War II reunion Oct. 5-7, 1989, Belvedere Motor Inn, Lexington Park, MD. Contact: Col. Earle L. Lurette, Rt. 3, 318 Port Place, Leonardtown, MD 20650.

60th Combat Engineers Assoc. 35th INF Div. reunion Oct. 12-14. Contact: Peter Ziccardi, 225 Gailmor Dr. Yonkers, NY. 10710 (914) 337-7954 or Irby Fleming, 5721 S. 5th St., Arlington VA 22204.

854th ENGINEER AVIATION BATTALION, WWII, Oct. 6-8, 1989, Holiday Inn, New Orleans West Bank, Gretna, LA. Contact: James E. Bethell, 854th Spearheaders, 6805 Galax Ct., Springfield, VA 22151. (703) 256-2988.



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40th BOMBARDMENT GROUP (B-29) & 28th SERVICE OUTFIT REUNION, Omaha, NE, Sept. 14-17, 1989, Marriott Hotel. Contact: Richard A. Veach, 1030 Palimino Rd., Omaha, NE 68154. (402) 333-4124.

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Book gives behind scene of Tibbets

Paul W. Tibbets, *The Flight Of The ENOLA GAY*, Buckeye Aviation Book Co., 1989. (310 pages with index and pictures.)

Anyone who has enjoyed even the slightest association with Paul Tibbets is taken by the precision with which he speaks. Sentences are measured for their accuracy before being spoken. It is as if his later life has been beset with the need for some inner editing to take place to make sure nothing spoken can be misquoted or distorted.

It is quite possible that this is what has taken up a large measure of his public life, having suffered through countless interviews by talk show hosts and media people bent on getting a controversial quote even if they have to distort it to do so.

But there was a life for Tibbets before August 6, 1945 and a very substantial life after that cosmic date. In this autobiography, Tibbets tells about his life with the same economy of words and with the weighing of words for accuracy that forecloses distortion. There is no jumping around in his story of his life experience. He tells it substantially in a straight line.

Born in Quincy, Illinois, Tibbets spent his early years in Illinois and Iowa. His first taste of flying came when he flew with a promotion pilot dropping Baby Ruth candy bars over crowds at race tracks and beaches.

Tibbets had discipline pressed upon him when he was sent to Western Military Academy at North Alton, Illinois. There is a breed of man that is infused with the desire for and pleasure of flight and Tibbets is one of these. He took flying lessons but dutifully followed his father's wishes, initially, by studying medicine.

Book Shelf

William Rooney,
Review Editor



Senior readers of this review could be surveyed with the question, "How many times has a son disappointed his father by pursuing a career other than the one the father had ordained for him?" Such was the case with Tibbets and his father. Only his mother, Enola Gay Tibbets, encouraged him when he decided to drop medicine as a career and go for one as a pilot in the Air Corps.

The war turned Tibbets' career one of a casual peace-time flying to combat, which began with flying a B-17 to England while mothering some P-38's across the Atlantic to England. Next came the leadership of the first daylight combat mission of the Eighth Air Force when 12 B-17's bombed Rouen, France, on August 17, 1942. More combat followed on missions from both England and North Africa.

It was in North Africa where a confrontation occurred that was to warp Tibbets' career. It happened when the slick Lauris Norstad, then a colonel, interposed his clout to forestall Tibbets being made a bird colonel. Tibbets' Group had delivered such an outstanding performance in Africa, President Roosevelt ordered that the

CO be promoted one grade. The CO, a colonel, was upped to star rank. All the while the Group had been performing in such manner as to earn their CO a brigadier's star, the CO had been too ill to command. Tibbets covered for him lest the CO be relieved from duty. He told Tibbets, "Since I can't change this order, the rank that goes with it gives me the authority to give you a battle field promotion" and he handed Tibbets a pair of his eagles.

Almost immediately, General Doolittle ordered Tibbets to 12th Air Force headquarters and a staff assignment under Norstad. Norstad announced that there was going to be only one bird colonel in his section and he was going to be it, thus killing Tibbets' promotion.

Later Tibbets and Norstad confronted one another when Norstad ordered a combat mission to be flown at 6,000 feet and Tibbets told him he was nuts. There was a face off and it was resolved by having the mission flown at a more normal 20,000 ft. Tibbets won the face off but was haunted throughout the rest of his military career by a notation in his personnel file placed there by Norstad.

Tibbets' distinguished military career — combat missions in Europe and Africa, flying Eisenhower to Gibraltar (preceding the invasion of North Africa) were never to override the Norstad undercut.

Tibbets was "rescued" from further travail in North Africa when he was ordered to the ZI to head the service testing of the B-29. Not noted here but stated elsewhere (and it is probably an apocryphal story), it is said that when General Groves told General Arnold that he wanted the best pilot in the Air Force to drop the first A-bomb on Japan, Arnold unhesitatingly designated Tibbets.

Out of the B-29 service testing, Tibbets was picked to head the 509th Composite Group. Tibbets gathered 40 combat crews to train in the technique of dropping the atomic bomb, with a level of accuracy not heretofore thought possible, and to make the getaway necessary to survive the drop.

And, as we frequently say, the rest is history.

"Sweet" thoughts

Your special issue of the Times brought back a lot of memories.

I especially enjoyed Don Sandstrom's article, "America's Sweetheart," about American Red Cross workers and their activities on behalf of American servicemen and women.

I'd like to assure you that many decades later, the American Red Cross continues to provide emergency and other services for U.S. military personnel, their families, and veterans.

George Hutchens
Vice-president
American Red Cross

Essay places A-Bomb drop in favorable light

Paul Fussell, *Thank God for the Atomic Bomb and Other Essays*, Oxford University Press.

My review of this book, at least of the eponymous essay, can be summed up in two words: READ IT! That essay, and several others, has special and pertinent interest to the participant in and the student of World War II.

One of the most revealing essays concerns the 1941 best-selling book, "My Sister and I," ostensibly written by a 12-year old Dutch boy who witnesses the Nazi blitzkrieg and subjugation of Holland. He escaped to England and later came to the U.S.

He told how bad the Nazi invaders were and how wonderful the British treated him.

Those of us who were teen-aged, or more, in 1941 can still recall the haunting refrain and saddening lyrics of the popular song based on the book:

My sister and I recall the day
We said, 'Goodbye' and we sailed away

And we think of the friends who had to stay

But we don't talk about that."

Fussell reveals how he uncovered the hoax: that the book had been conceived and written by Stanley Young, an Anglophile working as a Harbour, Brace editor, with the hoped-for objective of marshalling American

support for the British plight and cause.

I am hesitant to discuss the main essay. Fussell's position is so eloquently and logically set forth that I feel inadequate to sum up his masterful presentation. His premise, however, is one I can personally identify with because we were both combat infantrymen in Europe in the summer of 1945. He had fought in Italy; I in Holland and Germany.

We were both awaiting with no glee the rotation of our respective divisions to the Pacific Theater and our subsequent invasion of the Japanese mainland. Doctor Fussell believes that only infantrymen and combat-experienced Marines knew first-hand

the real horrors of war and the absence of rules.

He reasons: "Soldiers have every motive for wanting a war stopped, by any means." Naturally, I cannot speak for all of my division or the others, but I know of no man in my infantry company who thought the atom bomb was a bad thing. We felt disbelief and relief.

The follow-up essay is a two-parter. The first half is an attempt by a Michael Walker to rebut, or rather scuttle Fussell's position. The second half is Fussell's response in which Walker is shot down in flames.

Which brings me to the words I began with: Read it! You'll like it!

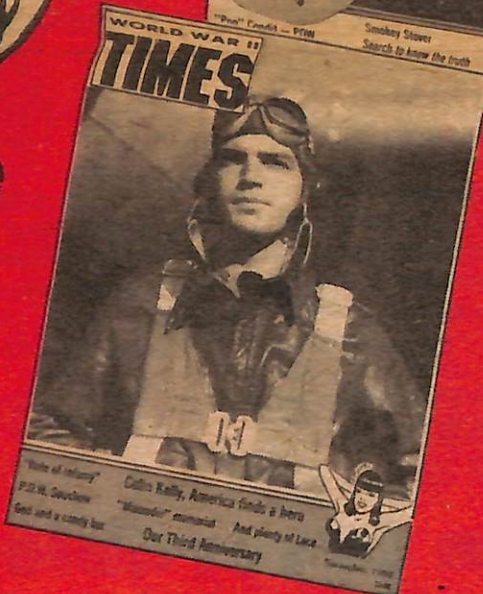
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Comedian Joe E. Brown joked with C.B.I.ers only five months after his son was killed in action.

Thanks, Alabama

Thanks to Bert Bank for a pleasant afternoon visit and use of his extensive photo collection. Also to the Taylor Publishing Co. for use of photos appearing in Coach Bryant's Football Family.

And especially to Baye Trammell for recollections of Bryant's special relationship to her husband, Pat Trammell.



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