



PART THIRTEEN. GOING HOME

CHAPTER 69

On September 11, 1945, we moved out to the Saporro airport. We hoped to leave the next day. The old bunch we left in the Shanghai POW camp came in while we were waiting.

I flew on a DC-3 out to Okinawa and the Phillipines as the first leg of our journey home. The trip was uneventful except the Pacific Armada at anchor around Okinawa was a sight to behold. Some of the Wake Island navy people were on my plane and they were totally astounded by the amount of naval power that the USA had put to sea during the war.

Once we reached the Phillipines, we were cleaned up. We were de-loused with the new insecticide (DDT), our clothes burned, and we were issued new uniforms in accordance with our rank. Also we were put through an assembly line for inoculations - five in all. They were hitting us from each side as we went bare-armed down the line.

At the end of the line another Medic said; "How about another shot?" Before we could answer, he handed us a double shot of whiskey. Some of the guys asked if they could go through the line again.

Finally, on September 19, 1945 we boarded the USS Yarmouth which was an old coastal passenger ship that had run between New York and Boston. There must have been 10,000 soldiers on the ship, and I was put up in a cabin with 8 other officers in



three-decker bunks.

The ship had a good mess hall, though my taste was for anything edible. My discrimination level was about zero, even though I had been eating my fill for about five weeks-and more than three times a day.

We were told that the trip to San Francisco would require three weeks. THAT'S THREE WEEKS!! The Air Corps had flown us to combat, but the homeward trip was a slow boat "from" China. Needless to say, we Air Corps flyer types were less than pleased with this arrangement, but there was precious little we could do about it.

A few days out of Manila we ran into the edge of a typhoon which is the Pacific equivalent of an Atlantic hurricane. We spent three days of misery as the ship tossed about like a toy on gigantic waves. By the third day there were so many sea-sick troops that the mess hall was virtually deserted, but a few starving ex-POW's like me continued to eat whatever they put out. I couldn't let the weather deter my quest to die gorged with food after coming so close to death by starvation.

We were scheduled for one refueling stop enroute. We all prayed that it would be Honolulu, Hawaii, and that we could get off the ship for some real R&R. It was not to be, as we put into Einiwetok Atoll for fuel. We were in a great circular harbor surrounded by small islands in a circle. It was obviously an ancient volcano, and an altogether beautiful sight. We would



much rather have seen Honolulu and some real American girls.

At long last, in early October, we came under the Golden Gate Bridge to wild cheers from all hands. A bunch of tug boats met the ship with their fire pumps spraying water high in the air, and finally nudged the ship into the dock. We marched off.

WE WERE HOME AT LAST!!!!

CHAPTER 70

Those of us who had no plans to continue in the military were eager to get back to our lives as civilians. Even though I was a military school graduate, I had no desire to remain in the Army. I had eight years of it, counting school and my POW time, and I had enough to last me the rest of my life. I was fortunate in that I had a college degree and a job to go back to at Procter & Gamble. That is precisely what I planned to do.

As we debarked from the USS Yarmouth at San Francisco, the Red Cross was on the dock with two things we had not seen since leaving home - donuts and fresh American milk. I enjoyed two quarts with plenty of donuts while we stood there. The milk really tasted so much better than that we received in Hokkido.

We were loaded into Army vehicles and taken to the hospital at Fort Ord, California. We were to have general checkups there before being sent nearer home.

For the first time we were allowed to call home. I did talk to my father who was overjoyed to hear that I was back. They had only been notified a few weeks before that I was alive and



well.

Dad had received only the official "Missing in Action" notification from the War Department when I was shot down. In the list of people I left for him to notify in case any thing happened to me was Eleanor Rosley, whom I had dated in Washington. She still worked for the Army, and had gone over to the Air Corps somewhere and was informed that I had been shot down, parachuted safely and was seen to walk away. They knew that I had been turned over to the Japanese, and was last seen entering the prison in Pekin. Eleanor had called my dad with this information.

At Ft. Ord, when the dentist looked in my mouth, he said; "Where have you been that you could'nt brush your teeth?"

"POW camp." I replied.

"No wonder your mouth is a mess. You have ten cavities and the early stages of scurvy." he noted.

With that he proceeded to fill all ten cavities at one sitting. My mouth felt like it would never get back to normal.

All was not pain though as we had lots of time after the checkups to roam around San Francisco, which we did both day and night. In one Chinese restaurant we were treated to free drinks by Bing Crosby known as the "Old Groaner" for his singing style called "crooning". We saw him one other night at the Fairmont Hotel in the company of a female we knew not to be his wife. I guess that made him an "old dog" too.



I went to a dance at the Fairmont Hotel one evening and met a young WAVE (female sailor) from Paul's Valley Oklahoma. I was really feeling that I was home at last. We hit it off real good, and I got a date with her the next night. We went to dinner and had a great time, but failed to get proper information about addresses, phone numbers, etc. The next morning we were loaded on a hospital train bound for the Army Hospital at Temple, Texas. I never saw her again.

CHAPTER 70

A long boring ride through Arizona and New Mexico brought us at last to Temple, Texas and some more checkups. The stay was brief as they released us ASAP to go home on 90 days sick leave. There was one interesting ex-POW in the bed next to me. He was a Bataan Death March survivor and had a bad back from being struck in the back with the butt of Japanese rifle. To ease his situation he had a board under his mattress, and spent most of the day in bed moaning and groaning.

As it got dark each day a strange metamorphosis would come over him. He would rise from his bed and go into the town of Temple in search of female companionship. About 2AM or so he would come dragging in and take to his bed again. The performance was repeated every day that I was there.

It was now late October and at long last we were released to go home. A joyous homecoming it was when I arrived in Grapevine.

I just went around seeing everybody. I also went to P & G and



checked in. I was scheduled to go on terminal leave (equivalent to discharge) about March 1, 1946, and hoped to go back to work immediately.

I spoke to civic clubs, church groups and family gatherings. I discovered that my old friend Minnie Ursula Frank had married and already had a baby. Jean Smith of Corsicana, whom I had dated up until transferring to Sarasota, had married long ago. It seems I knew this before I was shot down.

By this time I had received a years back pay, including flight pay. I cashed the War Bond I had bought when I sold my 1941 Buick Sedanette (that sucker would do 107 mph), and like every other returned vetran I wanted a car. I was loaded with money until I bought another 1941 Buick for twice what I had sold my Sedanette for two years before. NOW THAT'S INFLATION.

CHAPTER 71

P & G sent Jim Howell and me (we were Texas A&M grads and had started at P & G together in June of 1940) to Cincinnati in early December to see if we would be candidates to go into research in Cincinnati. We weren't.

Jim Howell and I had planned the trip to drive to Cincinatti. Then we planned to go to Washington for me to see Eleanor Rosley and pick up some dates for Jim. He was newly divorced and tom-cattng all over the place. Then we would drive on to Sarasota so I could see Helen Hereford Beasley.

The trip was generally uneventful, except the girls were



sure glad to see me and the feeling was certainly mutual. Eleanor was from Fargo, North Dakota, and had, among other things, introduced me to ice skating. She was a very nice person but somehow I just could not warm to her. So on to Sarasota.

PART FOURTEEN. CAPTURED AGAIN

CHAPTER 72

At first, no one in the Hereford family appeared to recognize me. I then realized that they had expected to see a starved ex-POW with all of his bones sticking out. I looked more like the Pillsbury Doughboy. Too much gorging after the war was over tended to pack on the lard.

It goes beyond telling the joy I felt at seeing "my" beautiful redhead again. However, it was obvious that she had not sat home very much during my nearly two years away. She had at one point been engaged to another P-51 jockey in the European Theatre named Tom Hickson. She had even gone to visit his parents. But somehow it had not worked out and she had returned his ring.

Another guy named Jack Crawford from Vicksburg, Miss had dated her, but he was some kind of kook. In years after when we had to go through Vicksburg to get to Sarasota from Dallas, Helen would duck down in the car.

One thing led to another and we got an invitation from Paul Swetland and his new wife Jane (who he married in October) to visit Miami for New Years 1946. Helen and I could stay with his



parents who had that estate on Biscayne Bay, while he and Jane had their own apartment.

The first time we went there I discovered my red striped pajamas hanging on the back of a closet door. I said, "What the hell are you doing with my pajamas."

Paul said; "When you didn't come back we just split up all your stuff between us."

All that stuff, included some of my engineering books my father had sent to me so I could study during the long periods of waiting between missions. Now I knew why the Quartermaster Depot could not find any of my personal belongings which were supposed to be shipped there when a soldier was missing.

We had a lot of fun together sailing on Biscayne Bay during the day and partying at night. On New Years Eve we went to a popular Miami night club called "Kitty Davis". They had a drink called THE B-29. It was about 8" tall and was filled with ice and 3 kinds of rum and nothing else. It was advertised as "ONLY TWO TO A CUSTOMER!"

I don't know how many we had, but we passed the limit pretty early. We danced a lot, sang, and had a great old time until we rang in the New Year. We went back to Paul and Jane's apartment and were all kissy-huggy for a bit when Paul and I went outside for a good reason. I needed to lift the bumper on a car.

I said to him: "I sure do love Helen, but I really am not quite ready to take the final step. I have a lot of looking



around to do."

He said; "Man, you need somebody to talk to on a cold winter night."

"By God I'll ask if she'll have me.'

We went back in and in front of witnesses - drunk though they were, I said: "Helen let's get married."

She replied; "It takes three days to get married in Florida."

So much for spontaneity.

Early next morning we went to a nearby Episcopal Church to see the Rector about doing the deed. To my great and pleasant surprise, he was an A&M classmate named Roy Gaskill.

By this time we had called Mrs. Hereford, and she would have none of it. She insisted that we return to Sarasota so that their closest friends could attend the wedding.

We did the blood test stuff in Miami and returned to Sarasota. They scheduled the wedding for January 5, 1946. Paul and Jane Swetland came to "stand up" with us.

Helen wore a beautiful powder blue Bonwit Teller suit, and I (all 175 pounds of me) of course was in uniform. The ceremony was in the living room of the Hereford family house at 1719 Floyd Street.

Somehow we got through it, drank some champagne, and took off for our honeymoon in Ft. Meyers (about 75 miles away). With us there had been no marital previews so we only stayed at the



party for the single toast.

Helen's brother, Bill Hereford and Paul Swetland wanted to paint "Just Married" on the trunk of the car. All they could find was some Bon Ami. As an abrasive it scratched the paint surface. A year later, with one month old Peggy riding in the car, "Just Married" was still emblazoned on the trunk.

AS IT IS WRITTEN "THE REST IS HISTORY".

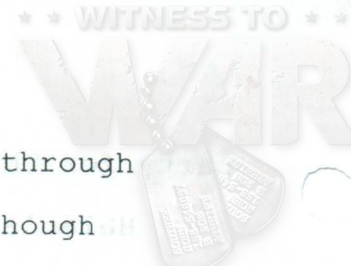
APPENDIX A

STUNT FLYING

The way this went was as follows: cut power, pull the nose up until you are about to stall, then shove the stick forward as hard as you can and hold it until you are at the bottom of this "loop" upside down, keep going until you lose speed going back up upside down, then "roll out" back to normal level flight.

During the bottom of this maneuver you are hanging by your safety belt and your eyes are about to pop out of your head. There is a sensation called "redout" such that you literally see red from negative G forces.

After a couple of these, he did an outside spin. A so-called normal spin originates from a regular right-side up stall and the



plane falls in a rotation pattern about a vertical axis through the middle of the wing. The pilot is sitting upright (though pointing downward) as the plane falls uncontrollably.

An outside spin by contrast, originates from an upside down stall, falls in the same manner, but the pilot and, in this case the passenger as well, is hanging from the safety belt head down; and is being banged against the sides of the cockpit. With this plane (PT-19), it was necessary to hold the plane in this attitude, and releasing the controls allowed the plane to turn over into a normal spin which then could be broken before the ground arrived in your face.

APPENDIX B

MISSION REPORT

Excerpts of the official accounts of several Burma mission are copied here:

530TH FIGHTER BOMBER SQUADRON ARMY AIR FORCES
HISTORY FOR MONTH OF MAY, 1944

4. STATIONS

a. On May 8th, an Air Echelon consisting 45 officers and 145 enlisted men departed from the home station of Mohanbari, India for a period of Detached Service at Dohazari, India, a small field about 13 miles SE of Chittagong. After completing a series of missions at this base, the Air Echelon moved to Tezagon, India where it was based for three days.



5. MARCHES-None

6. CAMPAIGNS-None

7. BATTLES

- a. Bombing and Strafing Sorties----- 28
- b. Fighter Sweep Sorties-----142
- c. Escort Sorties----- 77
- d. Tons of Bombs Dropped----- 14 tons
- e. Rounds of .50 caliber ammo fired----- 21,754 rounds

In May 11, the Air Echelon flew its first mission from the base at Dohazari. On this fighter sweep over the airdromes at Meiktela, our formation consisting of 22 planes encountered 28 plus Oscars, Zekes, and Tojos that were airborne and waiting. In the engagement that followed, our pilots accounted for 13 enemy aircraft destroyed, 2 probably destroyed, and 6 damaged. All our planes returned to base with no damage.

On May 12, our formation of 24 aircraft took off on a similar fighter sweep over Meiktela. 25 enemy aircraft were encountered on this mission. Again the enemy planes were airborne and waiting for our attack. This mission was equally successful as the mission of the preceding day; our pilots accounted for 8 enemy fighters destroyed, 3 probably destroyed, and 6 damaged, with no damage to our planes.

May 14th saw our third successful fighter sweep, once again over enemy fields near Meiktela. 22 of our planes encountered 20-plus enemy aircraft. We destroyed 4, probably destroyed 3,



and damaged 2. These fighters mostly Tojos were cagier, harder to get in our sights, and they inflicted slight damage to three of our aircraft.

END OF REPORT

APPENDIX C

POLITICS

As a point in fact, these embargoes did put Japan in the position of needing Southeast Asia's raw materials to carry out their Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere with Japan as the dominating power.

It is interesting to note at this point in time (1992), Japan does dominate Southeast Asia from an economic point of view. Moreover they are buying a lot of America - particularly Hawaii. It is believed that this is an acceptable method to the West as opposed to military means of domination they were attempting from 1930 onward.

APPENDIX D

We called ourselves the "Diddled Dozen" when there were only 12 of us left together toward the end of World War II. Actually there were 17 of us in total, 12 officers, and 5 sergeants who were also diddled.

What we had in common was as follows:



1. We were all airmen, either pilots or air-crew.
2. We had all been downed and captured in China. The fact was that most air-crew going down in China were rescued and returned to Allied control by Chinese guerillas either from the Nationalist side or the Communist side. It is interesting to note that among pilots, it was known that the Communists were much more aggressive about getting you out.

We constituted the unfortunates who did not enjoy a favorable outcome-thus the appellation "Diddled".

3. The date of our capture was after June of 1944.

4. We were kept isolated from all other POW's within the compound at the POW camp in Shanghai and later at Pekin. This camp had a few airmen captured in China in 1942 and 1943. They were not isolated.

5. Finally, the pilots were kept confined separately from all other POW's on an army post outside Sapporo, Hokkaido, Japan during the last months of the war, and the Sergeants were kept isolated from the other prisoners at Sendai #11 near Aomori, Honshu, Japan.

The "why" of this isolation was never known for sure. It seems that the most plausible explanation was that we were all captured after the date of the first B-29 raid on Japan from air bases deep in China. This first raid from these bases near



Chengdu was on Yawata steel works on the island of Kyushu on June 14, 1944. This mission was flown by the 58th VHB Wing, and Prisoners Lankford, Reiger, and Carlton (listed below) were assigned to that Wing.

Those raids continued, but on November 24, 1944 the first raid on Tokyo was carried out from the newly secured island of Saipan. Thereafter, the operations from China were phased out.

The isolation of our groups could be interpreted as punishment. Another possible reason was to keep information from all other prisoners just how badly the war was going for Japan. It is also possible that the Japanese were fearful that these new prisoners had escape information or plans.

All but the last three (Klota, Chambliss, and I) were originally transferred to the POW camp at Shanghai known as Kiangwan which had been established in 1942 to imprison the civilians, sailors, and marines captured on Wake Island plus the Pekin US Embassy guards, some Italians from a ship scuttled in the Whangpoo River, and eight Air Force men captured in China before 1944. This camp was moved in toto to an area outside Pekin May 9-14, 1945.

The seventeen referred to above are listed below, giving the date of their being put in the POW camp. Also the particulars of their downing and capture, plus their age at entry into POW camp along with current status and addresses as appropriate is shown.



Donald J. Burch (age 26)
O-667034, Capt.,
4423 Montgomery Ave.
Tampa, FL 33616

Pilot of a P40, 7th Sqd, 3rd Grp, CACW, Zero/groundfire, caught Loyang Sep 21, 1944, jailed Pekin/Hankow, encamped Shanghai Dec 31, 1944.

Burch looked much younger than his years, was curly-headed and seemed to be eternally laughing. He was a typical Air Force extrovert. Captain Burch did not know exactly what happened to him except that while escorting some B-25's on a mission to bomb the Yellow River bridge they got into a big hassle with some Zeroes. Burch was set on fire and had to bail out at high speed. He swore at the time that he saw himself whizzing past the tail of the plane after he had already passed it. He got to spend a bit of time in the same jail cell in Pekin that I later occupied.

Donald L. Quigley (age 25)
O-432207 Maj
488 Susan Circle
Marion, OH 43302

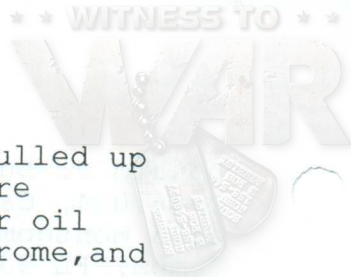
Pilot of a P40, Squadron Commander 75th Sqd, 23rd Grp, groundfire, caught Changsha August 10, 1944, jailed Hankow, encamped Shanghai Dec 31, 1944.

Quig was like most of us fighter pilot types, short with a sturdy build, with a mustache and just beginning to bald. He had an air of controlled ebullience about him and it was obvious that he was a commander. Major Quigley flew 137 1/2 combat missions in China. He was shot down at Changsha while having one last shot. He had long since completed more missions than required and his orders were already being cut to send him home even as he went on this last flight.

James M. Taylor, Jr. (age 22)
O-817130 2nd Lt.
Box 7
Grand Junction, TN 38039

Pilot of a P51, 75th Sqd, 23rd Grp, groundfire, caught Hengyang Nov 11, 1944, encamped Shanghai Dec 31, 1944.

Jim had many characteristics one would have expected Senator Claghorn to have had at age 22. He was a full-blown extrovert and pitchman. Jim was on a mission with eight planes strafing the Hengyang airdrome, and generally playing hell with aircraft on



the ground. Right over the field Jim's engine quit. He pulled up to about 1200 feet noticing that all his engine gages were "red-lining" or overheated. Apparently the coolant and/or oil lines had been severed. He bailed out very near the airdrome, and was promptly captured.

James E. Thomas (age 24)
O-812174 2nd Lt.
Deceased

Pilot of a P40 26th Sqd, 51st Grp, groundfire, caught Lingling Sep 4, 1944, jailed Hankow, encamped Shanghai Dec 31, 1944.

Tommy was essentially a gentle-souled small-town boy, but he harbored a deep and bitter hatred of the Japanese. These feelings arose from his experiences on capture, but they were healing slowly. Tommy was hit while strafing front line troops, and was aware of no trouble until his engine quit. He thought he had merely pulled his belly tank empty; so he changed the fuel selector and tried to get the engine started to no avail. He started to bailout but had no altitude, so had to sit down and belly land without his seat belt/shoulder harness fastened. He landed in the midst of the Nip troops. He was whanged with a rifle butt and knocked out. He remained with these troops for a month, generally tied up in a farmhouse. Tommy was in terrible shape when he reached Shanghai, with facial scars and that terrible bitterness toward the Japanese. Tommy died of a heart attack in 1964 at the age of 43. His experiences may have contributed to his early death.

Walter A. Ferris (age 24)
O-702524 1st Lt.
21305 Interlachen Lane
Troutdale, OR 97060

Pilot of a P40, 16th Sqd, 51st Grp, groundfire, caught Soochow Jan 16, 1945, jailed Nanking, encamped Shanghai Feb 18, 1945.

"Deadeye" we called him for no reason anyone could figure out except that he was squinty eyed, tough, and aggressive and knew it. Deadeye violated the cardinal rule for ground strafing a heavily protected target-one pass and get the hell out. He made nine passes at locomotives in the Soochow rail yard which was a junction of Pekin-Nanking-Shanghai railroad. Deadeye got a few miles away and an old Chinese man and a boy met him, buried his chute, put him in Chinese clothes (over his uniform), and started down the road on a donkey-passing Jap troops all the way. They finally stopped him jerked off his hat and saw he was American. They immediately shot the old man and boy and dumped them in a



ditch. They spotted him because his eyebrows were very heavy and grew across the bridge of his nose.

Freeland K. Mathews (age 25)
O-795603 1st Lt.
Deceased

Pilot of a P40, 7th Sqd, 3rd Grp CACW, groundfire, caught/jailed Jan 14, 1945 Hankow/Nanking, encamped Shanghai Feb 18, 1945.

Matie (one t, please) was slim, mustachioed, and an irrepressible, irresponsible comic. Matie was an instructor at the St Petersburg/Pinellas, Fla. Air Base, who kept volunteering to go overseas. Finally they let him go to China into the CACW. Less than two weeks after arriving he found himself in a water-filled ditch a half mile from the Jap-held Hankow airport after bailing out of a flamer. He was of course captured within minutes.

Vernon D. Schaefer (age 25)
O-750858 1st Lt.
10202 County Rd "B"
Kimball, MN 55353

Copilot on a B-29, 770th Sqd, 442 Grp, Zero fighter, crash-landed.

His crew left him for dead because of a bloody, crease-type of head wound, but he survived and Japanese caught him and jailed him in Hankow Nov 24, 1944, encamped Shanghai Feb 18, 1945. Schaefer's plane crash-landed in China, and he remembered nothing until he came to and found himself surrounded by Japanese. His crew left him for dead. He learned after the war that the Japanese had executed some or all the rest of his crew.

Lauren A. Howard (age 22)
O-800542 1st Lt.
Sugar Hill Box 157
Franconia, NH 03580

Pilot of a P40, 8th Sqd, 3rd Grp, CACW, groundfire, caught/jailed Hankow Feb 11, 1945, encamped Shanghai April 15, 1945.

"Bear" possessed a large portion of New England tactiturnity, but a pixey-like disposition would occasionally break through. Bear also ran afoul of the Hankow airport which was very heavily gunned and was particularly hard on liquid cooled engines such as the P40 and the P-51. He landed virtually in the middle of the Japanese.



Samuel McMillan, Jr. (age 22)
O-815739 2nd Lt.
2 Valley View Dr.
Bloomfield, CT 06002

Pilot of a P51, 26th Sqd, 51st Grp, engine trouble, captured north of Hankow Jan 18, 1945, jailed Hankow/Nanking/Hankow/Nanking, encamped Shanghai April 15, 1945.

Sam was a little on the morose side and had an air of subdued superciliousness about him that indicated an aristocratic New England background. The railyard at Soochow was also Sam's undoing, though he did not have the experience that "Deadeye" had.

Samuel E. Chambliss, Jr. (age 21)
O-827385 2nd Lt.
12018 Auth Lane
Silver Springs, MD 20902

Pilot of a P51, 529th Sqd, 311th Grp, groundfire, caught Hsiang-cheng (between Hsian and Nanyang) April 14, 1945, encamped Pekin May 23, 1945.

"Junior" was the youngest member of the group not even being able to vote. He was possessed of a non-deflatable ego. Junior was also shot down while strafing an airdrome. His plane was a "flamer" and Sam showed scars about the face, neck and ankles. All his burns were shallow and no muscle damage or disfigurement had resulted.

Harold J. Klota (age 27)
O-756616 1st Lt.
Deceased

Pilot of a P51, 8th Sqd, 3rd Grp, CACW, groundfire, caught Chiu-Matan April 2, 1945, jailed Pekin Eso (a true jail for solitary confinement not a POW camp), encamped Pekin June 12, 1945.

"Jerry" was older than the rest of us and had experienced a tragic marriage that gave him a sub-surface bitterness. His Polish ancestry and experience on the Detroit police force (vice squad) had made Jerry a very tough individual in many ways. Jerry died from too much alcohol before he was 50 years of age. Jerry strafed what appeared to be a locomotive, but was in reality a trap with a fake, cleverly built "paper" locomotive containing a bunch of machine guns. The hail of bullets set him on fire, and



he bailed out at low altitude suffering a compound fracture of his left leg. Obviously he landed in the midst of the Jap troops who proceeded to amputate his leg on the spot without benefit of anesthetic.

James E. Wall (age 25)
O-422740 1st Lt.
2007 Colwyn Place
Charlotte, NC 28211

Pilot of a P51, 530th Sqd, 311th Grp, Wingman hit him with ricochets while strafing a locomotive, caught Kaifeng Dec 6, 1944, jailed Pekin Eso, encamped Pekin June 12, 1945.

After six months in solitary confinement in the same clothes I was shot down in, I was surely a very sorry sight. I was very uncommunicative and must have smelled to high heaven, because "Junior" dubbed me "Lonesome Polecat" after a skunk factory worker in the comic strip "Lil Abner".

Fred S. Carlton (age 28)
19100930 Sgt.
3917 Scott River Rd.
Ft. Jones, CA 96032

Central Fire Control on a B-29, 25th Sq 40th Grp, bombs exploded prematurely under aircraft. Caught Nanking Nov 11, 1944, jailed Hankow, encamped Shanghai Dec 30, 1944.

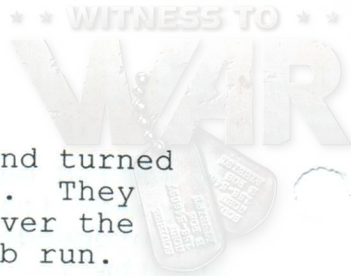
W. R. Lankford (age 25)
3444608 Sgt.
218 No. Barnard Ave.
La Grange, GA 30240

Waist gunner on B-29 with Carlton, same history.

Carl R. Reiger (age 23)
37408023 Sgt.
Rte #1 Box 200-A1
Jonesburg, MO 63351

Waist gunner on B-29 with Carlton and Lankford, same history.

The experience of all three began with an 0145 CST takeoff from A-1 near Chengdu as part of a 96-plane mission to Japan. A weather report was received about very bad weather over Japan and Shanghai. A radio message re-directed the mission to LRT at Nanking. Carlton, Lankford, and Reiger were aboard #237 "TROFREPUS" (Superfort spelled backward) commanded by 1st Lt.



Richard Vickery. This ship had problems after takeoff, and turned back, but the problem cleared up so they proceeded alone. They received the message to divert to Nanking as they flew over the Yellow Sea. Finally they saw Nanking and started the bomb run.

No fighters or flak were seen, but seconds after release of the bombs, they exploded, setting the right wing on fire. A fire was also burning in the bomb bay. Carlton, Lankford, and Reiger, being behind the fire had to bail out quickly while those in the forward part of the plane stayed with it for some moments. Five managed to bail out, were rescued by Chinese Communists, and made their way back to the USA. The A/C, Lt. Vickery, and three others died when the plane exploded.

Lankford and Reiger were paraded through the streets of Nanking, then suffered the brutal questioning for about two weeks, similar to what we all endured. After six weeks in "solitary", they were joined by Carlton on December 30 and taken to Shanghai.

James P. Meehan (age 32)
35309815 SSgt.
Deceased

Waist gunner on a B-29, 792 Sqd, 444 Grp, engine trouble, caught Nanking August 20, 1944, jailed Hankow, encamped Shanghai Dec 31, 1944.

Donald Ray Watts (age 22)
15081482 SSgt.
202 Osage Dr.
Indian Harbor Beach, FL 32937

Watts was a Crew Chief on a C-47, was snagged and pulled out of plane by the cargo he was dumping out to ground troops. He managed to get free of the cargo and open his chute, but it dropped him behind Japanese lines. He literally landed among the anti-aircraft guns firing at the plane he had just left. He stayed hidden for the night, but about dawn the Japs caught up with him, and he had three bayonet wounds to show for it. They kept him in the field with the troops for about a month with rough and brutal treatment. He was then moved into Hankow.

Watts and Quigley were confined in Hankow in separate cells and were not allowed to communicate. Taylor, Thomas, Burch and Meehan were kept in solitary under more strenuous conditions. They all met at the dock where a boat took them on the first part of their journey to Shanghai.



APPENDIX E

NEW POWS

The new additions to our group were as follows:

Survivors of a B25 flown on a mission to the Kuriles from the Aleutians that went down at sea. The pilot, co-pilot and radioman drowned when their raft was sunk by Jap submarine. Surviving were:

M.E. Zack	2nd Lt.	Navigator
R.L. Trant	Cpl.	Gunner
W. Bailey	Cpl	Gunner

The US Navy's leader in the Pacific was Admiral Bull Halsey who took Task Force 38 very close into the East coast of Japan in early August. We were able to see TBM's on strafing runs to the south of the camp under low clouds. One of these planes was forced to ditch, with the ventral ball turret gunner being trapped and drowned. The two survivors brought to our rooms were:

Clifford S. Mehelich 122 West Stewart Ave Sioux City Iowa	Ensign	Pilot
E.G. Davis c/o Postmaster Claude Sourwine Plymouth, Ohio		Gunner

Two USN seamen captured at Wake Island and brought with us to Japan from China escaped from the main camp on Hokkaido, made their way laboriously to the coast, stole a sailboat, and set sail in search of the US fleet which they knew was somewhere out there.

They were becalmed and were picked up by a Japanese fishing boat. They were also flabbergasted that the Japanese treated them so well; but couldn't communicate with them. The date they were picked up happened to be August 20, 1945 and the war was over. They were brought to our place.

They were:

Kirby Ludwick
726 Galt St.
Ann Arbor, Michigan



C.E. Wolf
712-A Kentucky St.
Vallejo, CA

APPENDIX F

The men were:

H.E. Turnoy
9 Chatsworth Place
Manningham, Bradford;
Yorkshire, England

C. Hatrick
Bron Gyndy; Trawsfynydd
Merionethshire
North Wales