

43RD BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION, INC. "KEN'S MEN"



NEWSLETTER 111th EDITION JULY 2009

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Jim Cherkauer 2006-2007
James Thompson Jr 2008

*=Deceased

As we plan to assemble, once again in San Antonio, for our reunion of comrades of the war so long ago, we will honor Robert H. Butler, founder of this Association. Bob will always be there in spirit. It was in December 1981 that sixty of our members attended the first reunion in this same host city. The Newsletter of January 1982 reported of that meeting and was signed by Bob Butler and Lloyd "Breezy" Boren.

As quoted in that newsletter—"Everyone seemed to have a good time, despite the short notice and inconvenient time of year, i.e., in a one-minute, railroad-type election, Bob Butler was chosen to be chairman for the 1982 reunion."

That same newsletter featured these comments by Chaplain Thomas F. "Coach" Shea, "Colonel Robert and his capable aides reminded me of Roger Staubach and his teammates executing once again their famous 2 minute drill for a victory. Our reunion indeed was a winner" He added, "whatever we do, whatever service to others we accomplish so as to build community, can be offered in the name of our departed comrades as a trace of them. In building community, we acknowledge that Love, not Enmity created the world and us. Amen"

The "Coaches" analogy of the Dallas Cowboys grabbed my attention, as I had hosted their training camp at Northern Michigan University, in 1962 during the Don Meredith era before Roger. In the contract signing meeting assured EX-AAF Co-pilot Tom Landry that we would do our best to lift his team from last place, where they seemed to have settled. With a little help from a rookie tackle named Bob Lilly, they became a contender. But Seriously, we believe that these words of Father Shea of 28 years ago significantly established the foundation for the goals and purpose of the organization of the 43rd Bomb Group Association.

Now, 2009, we are near the close of our reunion activity, so important to all of us, but those established goals and purpose of this association still exist, and hopefully will continue. In all History of the World, the era of the "Free World" is a tiny segment of that time. An innate danger of freedom, is the attitude of free citizen that it is free. It has become a hackneyed expression that freedom is NOT free, but the struggle for true, universal freedom continues in the world. The history of the world and the role of the 43rd Bomb Group then and since has an important lesson for those who must continue the fight to be free. We believe that this association will continue beyond the years of reunions. This continuation is the legacy of their fight for that freedom, as in again the words of "Coach" Shea in that January 1982 Newsletter, "-----whatever service to others we accomplish so as to build community, can be offered in the name of our departed comrades as a trace to them."

*****EDITOR'S and MEMBER'S REPORTS*****

"And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honour."

Thomas Jefferson

Change of address for **Lester L. and Valerie Moore, 403rd Squadron, Nose Gunner: 23076 Ladder Avenue, Marshall, MO 65340.**

After receiving an E-mail from **Joseph Bass**, I asked Joseph for additional information about his father. This is his reply: "I don't know the exact dates that my dad was drafted. He and his classmates were seniors in high school. He received his GED after he returned. If he was held back like he said, then he would have graduated in 1945. So he must have had time to be trained in gunnery school before he was shipped out to the Philippines. He remembered when the Japanese brass stopped at his forward airfield on an island to switch to a C-47 and continue to the meeting with MacArthur for the surrender.

He was never one to embellish his stories, but he told me a few years ago that their last mission was for weather reconnaissance over Hiroshima. Probably one of many that were flying at that time. He had just turned twenty years old, when he learned that an "atom bomb" was dropped on Japan. He told me no one was really sure what that was.

His squadron (63rd) as you know, flew black B-24 Liberators on night missions. They were called "SEAHAWKS." He said it was terrifying being shot at while being lit up with spotlights. He started as a Ball Turret Gunner, but was moved to the Nose Turret position. He also said he saved his bus money and hitchhiked back to Oklahoma because it was easy to get a ride if you were wearing the uniform.

You might be surprised to learn that my dad was a full-blood Sac and Fox Indian. He was buried with full Military Honors in a traditional ceremony only a couple of miles from where he was born. We will always be proud of our father's service to this county and of all veterans service. I thank all of you."

Sincerely, Joseph Bass

A MYSTERY RESOLVED

Eldon H. Lawson

For 64 years I've searched for an Eldon Lawson of Missouri--no, not me, another Eldon Lawson, and now I've finally located him. Here's how I learned of him. In September 1945 at Ie Shima, the mail Sergeant of the 65th Squadron called out to me after I picked up my mail. He said, "Lieutenant, I'm sure glad that you always use your middle initial E, because we have another Eldon Lawson in this outfit." As I expressed surprise, maybe doubt, the Sergeant produced a letter addressed to Sgt. Eldon D. Lawson postmarked, Kirksville, MO. I began to inquire of Sgt. Lawson, but soon learned he had "shipped out." I was surprised that I had not heard of him before.

Some years since, during genealogical research I exchanged Lawson family history with a man from New York named Gary Lloyd. I recently learned that Lloyd had published a family history and lived in

New York named Gary Lloyd. I recently learned that Lloyd had published a family history and lived in Kirksville, MO. I contacted him in reference to Sgt. Lawson, and learned that he was indeed part of Lloyd's family. His name was Eldon Dee Lawson, born January 8, 1924 near Kirksville, Northern Missouri, just 39 days after I was born in Northern Missouri. His first born was named Karen and so is mine. Sadly, though, Eldon Dee Lawson died April 4, 1973 after a long illness. Unproven, though but probably distant cousins.

*****MEMORIALS*****

In late March, I received messages from both **Irene Dow** and her son **Tom** reporting the death of **George L. Wyatt**, a long time Kensmen Associate Member. Tom Dow's letter:

"It is with the utmost sadness that I report to you that **George Wyatt, GSgt. USMC (ret)**, Associate Member of the 43rd BG Association and world-renowned B-17 historian/researcher, has passed away at the age of 80, on March 19th. George had a military career that stretched into the Korean War and Vietnam following WWII. He then devoted much of his life helping families track down the wartime lives, and many times the fates, of their relatives. George touched many lives. If it were not for him, my family would have never known the details of the loss of our relative lost in 1943 with the 63rd. If not for George, my family and Sandy Smith of Australia would have never crossed paths, and if not for George we would have not stood together at Arlington National Cemetery last fall for the mass burial of the 63rd's B-24 crew of the SWAN, which included Sandy's father, Pvt. Joseph Thompson. George was a tough Marine with a tender heart. He brought people together from across continents. He will be sorely missed, but his good deeds will be forever remembered."

Tom Dow

An e-mail from **Joseph Bass**, informed of the passing of his father **Lee Bass, Jr. 63rd Squadron, Nose Turret Gunner** on April 9, 2009. This correspondence resulted the attached Em-mail to Joseph from **Charles Rauch, 63rd Squadron, Navigator and Past President of our association**. Once again, our web site furnishes the means of providing history of a Kensmen to family members. Thanks Chuck!

Via an E-mail from "**Bud**" **Lawson, Gloria Hill** wrote "A note to let you know that my husband **Dick Hill, 64th Squadron, Pilot** has died. He always enjoyed the newsletter and so did I."

Richard Hughes sent an obituary reporting the death of **Joseph Kent Milton, 403rd Squadron, Armament/Gunner**, who passed on February 19, 2009.

May 31, 2009 I received the following E-mail from Greg Butler: "Our father **Bob (Robert H.) Butler** passed away peacefully this past Wednesday evening (5/27/09). He had 90 wonderful years and as you know he really enjoyed his work wish the 43rd.

Please relay this news to our 43rd friends. Thank you and best wishes. I am not sure when, but I will try to attend another convention",

Later Greg followed with: "We will have a memorial service on Sunday July 12, 2009 at 2pm at the Highland Presbyterian Church in Fayetteville NC. Please relay this information to the 43rd family.

Greg Butler

Robert H. Butler, 63rd Squadron, Bombardier one of the original founders of and the first President of the 43rd Bomb Group Association.

Obituary for Robert Heman Butler

Written by Rob Butler 02 June 2009

Robert Heman ("Bob") Butler died peacefully on May 27, 2009 in Cincinnati, OH, at the age of 90. Mr. Butler was a long-time resident of Fayetteville, NC, where he worked as an attorney and served as mayor. Mr. Butler was preceded in death in 2004 by his beloved wife of 54 years, Doris Grinnells Butler. Mr. Butler's survivors are his sister, Mrs. Anne Marsh Butler Twitty of Pinehurst NC; sons Rob Butler and wife Dawn of Andover MA, Greg Butler and wife Lynn of Charlotte NC, and John Butler and wife Margaret of Cincinnati OH; six grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

Bob Butler was born in St. Pauls, NC on May 3, 1919, the second of five children of John Stewart Butler and Annie Jones Butler. He was educated at Wake Forest College. As for so many of the "Greatest Generation" his world expanded dramatically with World War II, where Mr. Butler flew 41 missions as a B-17 bombardier in the southwest Pacific. For gallantry in action in low-level bombing missions, he was awarded the Silver Star three times, and was also awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with two oak leaf clusters, and the Purple Heart. After the war he continued his education at the UNC School of Law.

In 1950, Mr. Butler served as Fayetteville's first city solicitor, and later judge, in the new City Records Court. One day he noticed an attractive newspaper photo of Doris Grinnells, Cumberland County's new home-demonstration agent, and arranged to get a date with her. They soon married and proceeded to raise three sons, who all learned to play tennis from their patient father. From 1961 to 1963 Mr. Butler served as Mayor of Fayetteville. He was a successful attorney with Butler, High, and Baer for 35 years, retiring in 1984. From 1970 to 1987 he was on the board of the Public Works Commission, serving 6 years as chairman. His PWC service was honored with the dedication of the Butler-Warner Electrical Generation Plant in 1989. Mr. Butler also served as chairman of the Cumberland County library board, as member and president of the Rotary Club, and in the Judge Advocate Corps and Air Force Reserves, reaching the rank of Colonel.

Bob Butler remained active in retirement, leading the startup of a newsletter and annual reunions around the country for the living members of the Air Force 43rd Bomb Group. Bob and Doris traveled extensively and spent time with family and friends. After Doris' death in 2004, Bob lived near his son John in Cincinnati OH, where he continued to make new friends, correspond with old ones, follow current events, read, and often sing, to the delight of others. Throughout his life Mr. Butler was a frequent public speaker and avid raconteur, especially of war stories and family history. He was passionate about classical music, opera, literature and biography, politics, sports, education, international travel, public service, North Carolina, and Fayetteville. Most deeply he loved his wife Doris and their family and home. He was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, brother, and uncle, and a gentleman to everyone he met. In early May of this year, joined by his immediate family, Bob happily celebrated his 90th birthday.

A memorial service celebrating Bob's life will be held at 2PM on Sunday, July 12th at Highland Presbyterian Church with Dr. J. Ernest Johnson officiating and the family receiving afterwards in the church Fellowship Hall. A private burial will precede the memorial service.

In lieu of flowers, anyone wishing to make a charitable donation in Mr. Butler's memory is encouraged to donate to the Cumberland County Public Library. Checks can be made payable to: "Library Endowment Trust—CCF", P.O. Box 2345, Fayetteville, NC 28302-2345 (or donate online at <http://www.cumberland.lib.nc.us/aboutus/endowments.htm>).

Bob Butler's flight plan: Bounce back, keep at it

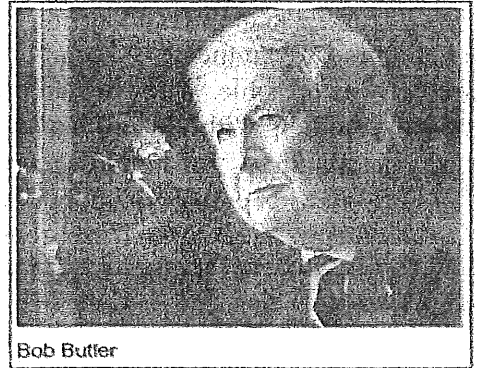
Charles Broadwell

Bob Butler will be remembered for his service as a longtime leader with the Public Works Commission, his tenure as mayor of Fayetteville in the early 1960s and his involvement in any number of civic causes.

We reported Friday that Mr. Butler had died at age 90 in Cincinnati, where he had moved to be with family.

But Fayetteville was his home. Robert H. Butler left a record here as solid and reliable as the Butler-Warner Electrical Generation Plant, which was named for him and PWC board colleague Jim Warner.

I have good memories from an interview with Mr. Butler 10 years ago at his house on Forest Lake Road.



Bob Butler

He talked about growing up in St. Pauls. He talked about working with my grandmother and others in the city's successful efforts to buy and preserve the Kyle House and establish Cross Creek Park on Green Street. He talked about his own family connections with E.J. Hale, who ran The Fayetteville Observer for 40 years through the Civil War.

Bob Butler also talked about his experiences in World War II. "Well, that was a great war," as he put it, "if you survived."

He didn't glorify the war. Instead, he recalled a heartbreaking setback when he "washed out" in his training to become an Army Air Corps pilot.

He was devastated, but he managed to pick himself back up. He went on to serve as a B-17 bombardier in the Pacific and eventually as a colonel in the Air Force Reserve.

"You can sit back," he told me, "and you can bounce back, if you're lucky. And a lot of times it's what the French call the 'main chance': Grab it."

Love story

He apparently followed that go-for-it advice in pursuing his future bride. He was a young lawyer, selected to the new post of solicitor for the City Records Court in 1950 for \$300 a month.

A reporter from the Observer, Marjorie Jordan, called to interview him. He agreed, knowing that she was the roommate of the county's new home-demonstration agent, Doris Grinnell, whose photograph he had seen in the paper.

"She came by my little office and got all the facts, and I said, 'Now, listen, I'm not going to give you this interview unless you get me a date with your roommate,'" he recalled. "So that's how I arranged to meet the girl I later married."

Bob and Doris had three sons. She was his steady co-pilot for so many years in Fayetteville.

Publisher Charles Broadwell can be reached at cbwell@fayobserver.com or 486-3501.

"He Only Takes the Best"

God saw he was getting tired,
And a cure was not to be.
So, he put his arms around him,
And whispered, "Come with me".

With tearful eyes, we watched him suffer,
And saw him fade away.
Although we loved him deeply,
we couldn't make him stay.

A golden heart stopped beating.
Hard working hands are at rest.
God broke our hearts to prove to us,
He only takes the best.

*****43rd HUMOR*****

For All Airmen

During a commercial airline flight, an Air Force Airman was seated next to a young mother with a baby in her arms. When the baby began crying during the descent for landing, the mother began nursing her infant as discreetly as possible. The Airman pretended not to notice and upon debarking, he gallantly offered his assistance to help with the various baby-related articles. When the young mother expressed her gratitude, the Airman responded, "Gosh, that's a good looking baby----and he sure was hungry!"

Somewhat embarrassed, the mother explained that her pediatrician said breast feeding would help alleviate the pressure in the baby's ears. The Airman sadly shook his head and in true Airman fashion exclaimed-----"And all these years I've been chewing gum."

Aviation Axioms

It's better to be down here wishing you were up there, than up there and wishing you were down there. A check ride ought to be like a skirt, short enough to be interesting, but still be long enough to cover everything.

Speed is life, altitude is life insurance. No one has ever collided with the sky!

"Unskilled" pilots are always found in the wreckage with their hand around the microphone.

Always remember you fly an airplane with your head, not your hands.

From the Church

A woman had just returned to her home from an evening of church services, when she was startled by an intruder. She caught the man in the act of robbing her home of its valuables and she yelled: "Stop! Acts 2:38! (Repent and be Baptized, in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins may be forgiven.)"

The burglar stopped in his tracks. The woman calmly called the police and explained what she had done. As the officer cuffed the man to take him in, he asked the burglar: "Why did you just stand there? All the old lady did was yell a scripture to you."

"Scripture?" replied the burglar—"She said she had an Ax and Two 38s!"

Age of the Innocent

Driving with her three young children one warm summer evening when a woman in the convertible ahead of us stood up and waved. She was stark naked! /as I was reeling from the shock, I heard my 5-year-old shout from the back seat. "Mom, that lady isn't wearing her seat belt!"

One the first day of school, a first-grader handed his teacher a note from his mother. The note read "The opinions expressed by this child are not necessarily those of his parents"

A little boy became lost at the YMCA and found himself in te women's locker room. When he was spotted, the room burs into shrieks, with ladies grabbing towels and running for cover. The little boy watched in amazement and then Asked, "What's the matter, haven't you ever seen a little boy before?"

Advice

1-We are born naked, wet and hungry. Then things become worse! 2-If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is not for you. 3-Don't Drink and Drive. You may hit a bump and spill something. 4-A fool and his money can throw one hell of a party.

*****INFORMATION*****

This newsletter is published four times a year - **January, April, July and October**. Please send **membership applications and dues payments** to **Elain Pierce, P.O. Box 84, Snyder, TX 79550**. Please keep in mind that annual dues are **\$20.00 per year** and life membership is **\$100.00**. Please make the check to the **43rd Bomb Group Association**.

Send items for the Newsletter to **Ed Gammill at 5415 E. Osborn Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85018-6106** or via e-mail to **Edgammill@aol.com**. Any material receive after the 15th of the month prior to a publication month probably will not appear in that publication.

The Postal Service **will not forward** this newsletter. If you change your address **please notify Ed Gammill** at the address shown above. Send all changes of phone numbers, etc. also.

*****REUNION INFORMATION*****

Max Axelsen has established September 23 through 27, 2009 as the date for our next reunion in San Antonio, TX. The data concerning cost, entertainment, speakers, programs and the deadline for making your reservations has been completed. This data is included in the Attachments.

- 1-Hotel reservation form----take care of this prior to the August 24 cut off date**
- 2-Reunion Registration form----send it to Max ASAP**
- 3-43rd BOMB GP. REUNION SCHEDULE and THE TOURS**
- 4-Chuck Rauch e-mail to Joe Bass and Family**
- 5-Arte Byrne's History (Pages 10-29)**

The Holiday Inn in Antonio Riverwalk is pleased to welcome

43rd Bomb Group Reunion
September 23 - 26, 2009

Cut Off Date: August 24, 2009

Convention Guestroom Rate:
\$109
single/double

Reservations received after the cut-off date will be accepted on a space available basis at prevailing rack rates.



SAN ANTONIO - RIVERWALK
217 N. St. Mary's Street
San Antonio, Texas 78205
210-224-2500
888-615-0726

Check-in time: 3:00 P.M. - Check-out time: 12:00 Noon



Special Requests:

- ☐ Wheelchair accessible guestroom
- ☐ Hearing impaired equipped guestroom
- ☐ Visually impaired equipped guestroom
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Name(s) _____

Company _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Work Phone (____) _____

Home Phone (____) _____

Accommodations

Number	Single	Double	Triple	Quad
Of Rooms				

Special Request _____
(room type based on availability)

Check-In: _____ Check-Out: _____
date date

Guarantee:

All reservations must be guaranteed with a credit card or an advanced deposit equal to one night's room/tax.

Advanced Deposit:

Enclose one night's room/tax (\$127.26) as deposit.

deposit is refundable if reservation is cancelled a minimum of 48 hours prior to arrival.

Guarantee By Credit Card:

Please fill in Visa, American Express, Carte Blanche, Diners Club, Mastercard or Discover below.

Cardholder Name: _____

Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____
month/year

If reservation is not cancelled 48+ hours prior to arrival a charge of one night's room/tax will be charged to the above credit card or the advanced deposit forfeited.

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission prohibits outside alcohol in any public meeting facility within the hotel. Please contact your catering representative to arrange alcoholic beverage service for hospitality or other functions in any public meeting facility within the hotel. For arrangements for hospitalities in private guest accommodations please contact the hotel's in-room dining department.

43rd bomb Group Reunion Registration

NAME.....SQUADRON.....

ADDRESS.....

PHONE.....EMAIL ADDRESS.....

BANQUET MEAL:BEEF.....CHICKEN.....VEGETARIAN.....

REGISTRATION FEES:

NUMBER OF PERSONS.....X..\$175.00 EACH.....

Note: The registration fee includes all costs other than the tours.

COST FOR GUESTS: MEXICAN FIESTA –SAT. BANQUET. \$40.00 EA.....

Note: Guests are other than members. Some members bring guests for one or two events. i.e. Mexican Fiesta, or Sat. Banquet. Each at \$40.00.

Guests for all events: Same cost as members.....\$175.00 each.....

TOUR: THURS..24 SEPT. MUSEUM..RIVER..MARKET...\$33.00 EACH.....

TOUR: FRIDAY..25 SEPT. AIR FORCE..MISSION..MARKET ..\$33.00 EA.....

Note: Air Force requires your full name, date of birth, and drivers license #.

Number for entry to Lackland AFB. Please submit on this form.

Full Name.....D.O.B.....D.L.#.....

TOTAL COST: \$.....

(OVER)

Check to: 43rd Bomb Group Association.

Mail to: Max M. Axelsen

8406 Dorestshire St.

San Antonio, TX 78254

Cancellations prior to ten days or less prior to the reunion will not be refundable.

Subj: **Lee Bass Jr.**
 Date: 4/19/2009 9:57:42 AM US Mountain Standard Time
 From: crauch5@comcast.net
 To: ke_ti_wa@hotmail.com, chblack100@comcast.net, seahawk63@comcast.net, rialtos@worldnet.att.net,
edgammill@aol.com
Sent from the Internet (Details)

4/18/09

Joe Bass and Family.

I am so sorry to hear that your father Lee Jr. passed away. He was on our crew and was one fine member serving as Nose Gunner. I visited Lee several times on the reservation on some of our trips west and may have met you during one of these trips. He was in Cushing, however I talked with one of his sons which may have been you and then drove into Cushing and my wife I had lunch with Lee. He sent us a recent picture of his grand daughters now high school age who we had taken pictures of when they were knee high.

Now about your dad and the Croft Crew:

Pilot: Lt. William F. Croft (diseased)
 Copilot: Lt. Marcus J. Brockman (diseased)
 Navigator: Lt. Charles J. Rauch
 Bombardier: Lt. Clair H. Black
 Flight Engineer: Sgt. Roy L. Perry
 Top Turret Gunner: Louis Steinfeld
 Nose Turret Gunner: Sgt. Lee Bass Jr. (diseased)
 Radio Operator: Sgt. Edwin Z. Snyder (diseased)
 Waste Gunner: Sgt. Clarence Brokke (diseased)
 Waste Gunner: Sgt. Felt E. Lair

The crew was made up at Tonopah Nevada (RTU) Replacement Training Unit starting in June 1946 and proceeded to Hamilton Field Calif. and then to Eglin Field Florida where we were assigned to a special project referred to as a Ferret Plane. This plane had rear bomb bays converted to electronics with two operators and the front bomb bays had two extra fuel tanks. This provided the plane 076 with 3500 gal fuel capacity for long missions. The crew and plane flew to Nadzab New Guinea and we were assigned to the Fifth Air Force 43rd BG 63 SQ.

We flew only four missions with the Ferret Plane and the rest of the missions were flown in the black painted B-24's some times referred to as snoopers. These planes were for night missions and most all the flights we flew were provided with a total fuel load 3500 Gal.. The night missions when we had the planes and crews available each crew flew every third or fourth day. We usually didn't have the planes or the crews available to put four planes in the air every night. These missions were assigned different blind bombing zones and normally we would take off one hour apart in order not to run in to each. We would bomb and search with night radar that was very crude by today's standards and would bomb from an altitude of plus or minus 1200 feet.

The Crew flew close to 100 percent of our missions together and this consisted of a total of 437 hours flying time, 29 missions averaging 16 hours 21 minutes per mission, the longest mission was 19 hours 30 minutes We would take off in the late morning and return the next morning around noon.

I will enclose a couple of pictures of the Croft Crew by snail mail rather than copy them into this email.

Lt. Black was given a letter by Major Earl A. Butts Squadron Commander for this time period establishing his bombing record as sinking and damaging 10 ships for a gross tonnage of 39,000 tons as an all-time record for any single Bombardier of this Sqdn.

C. J. Rauch, Navigator on the Croft Crew

done so already. Most of them are new at the work, too. We took off at 0830 and landed there about five minutes later, but had to wait 25 minutes for a jeep and were ten minutes late for the scheduled meeting. We met with Lt. Pollard whom I had previously met while temporarily assigned to Bomber Command in April (while there one morning at breakfast the news coming over the radio suddenly made reference to President Truman, our first knowledge of the death of Roosevelt).

After meeting with Lt. Pollard, we went to see the Citations, Historical, S-2 and Legal Officers about various 43rd Group problems. We got back to the B24 and took off about 1100. General Crabbe was to arrive on Ie at 1445 to present medals to some 200 of our men, so, as Citations Officer, I had to make a few arrangements. We trucked the recipients down at 1330 to the end of the strip and lined them up properly, set up an amplifier and waited for the B25 bringing Brigadier General Crabbe, CO of Bom Com. It landed at 1445 and taxied by us. Hansen and I hopped in two jeeps and followed him to the revetment where Hansen took charge of the General and I grabbed a Captain and First Lieutenant and a Sergeant who were to help with the chores. After another twenty minutes we were all set and the ceremony began. All the men were lined up with Crabbe, Hansen, and me facing them at the mike and the table piled with Air Medals, Purple Hearts, DFC's, Silver Stars, and so forth. I got hoarse calling out all those names, but got along O.K. It was over by 1540 and then back to some history work. We have layouts and some photo stuff ready with the narrative still to be done. It's fun but means working at night, so, with all my other jobs, Intelligence, Courts Martial, etc., I am pretty well occupied.

5 October: I tried to mail a large envelope with a little bit of something to commemorate our third anniversary, but the P.O. put a quietus on me by telling me I needed about six more stamps than I had. It gets busier all the time around here. My six jobs still go on with constantly diminishing staff to do the actual work and now they threaten to make me several other things when some of the crews pull out and take some of the older administrative heads with them. We still haven't got those battle stars that we should have by now. It seems that somebody doesn't want us all to take off at once. . . . We had a beer issue yesterday and I've got to pick mine up here at the office and take it to the shack. I moved into a new home here at Group. Later I will have to go to a 1300 Staff meeting and see what the latest info is or is rumored to be. What a bull session those things blossom into every day!

10 October: It's a windy night, almost cold, and I'm sitting here in the tent at 2200 hours, settled in a field jacket. Last night was unmitigated hell. There was a storm warning early in the day, so we were on the lookout for high winds; but there's little you can do actually after tying the ropes tighter, driving the stakes deeper and maybe saying an incantation or so. By mid afternoon the wind was up to 30 mile gusts, but that's not unusual. Neither was the rain that came with it. We're more or less used to both. The storm center was

expected to arrive by 1800. Well, at 1630 things were getting rough. Our big squad tent, intended for ten to twelve men, was heaving and flapping like a handkerchief caught in a fan. We nailed two by sixes against the windward wall and planted the other end against chock blocks nailed to the floor and likewise on the lee side with the ends nailed to heavy stakes driven into the mud. Extra tin was nailed up to keep out the rain and spray. The gusts were beginning to hit 40 and 50 at times, not alarming yet. One could still walk the 100 yards to the mess hall without danger and we did. There was soup and beans and it was pretty good and we knew we'd need it before we licked the storm.

After supper came the darkness and the vigil. You stand and watch the flapping tent, listen to the creak of straining joints and hope. The wind draws back in sudden hush, then comes rushing like a mad-dened animal pawing and tearing. You tighten up, waiting for timbers to snap, canvas to rip. Somewhere there is an angry shout, the rumble of sheet tin being torn and tossed and sound of a crash. Somebody's got it already! Who's next? Every minute the thing gains momentum. The planks at the top bend and leap, changing position by twelve inches, then snapping taut again. There is a loud snapping sound. A plank broke. A rush for hammer and nails and braces, relief when it is shored up. Anxiety when the next blow comes. Fortunately there are enough of us in the tent for three or four to hold while the others do the extra bracing with hammer and nails.

When the next blow comes, there begin to be little rips in the tent, then big rips, spray everywhere. Ponchos and extra blankets are thrown over beds with clothes crammed with books and papers into bags or boxes and stuffed under a shelter half. All this goes on for hours, with, first, resignation, then hope, changing places several times per minute. Finally exhaustion. You say to hell with the tent and rummage in the corner for a can of sardines. Parked in a wet chair, wrapped in a damp blanket and close enough to the door to escape suddenly falling timbers, you spear sardines with a knife. There are no lights and the flash light batteries are too precious to waste on sardines, so it's all done in the dark. Still the wind and noise and the fear of a cracked skull. Concern for the skull has taken place of concern for the tent. Winds are now around 70 to 80 miles per hour. Airplanes out there are certainly catching the devil, lashed down or not. Tin is flying overhead. The Orderly Room is breaking up. Lots of stuff is ruined. Big joke! People eating sardines in a typhoon are likely to laugh at anything. "Anything for a laugh," shouts James Wong out of his dark and wet bed. He has the blanket over his head. Another shack next door just went. There's the banging of the hammers on tin down at Hanson's place. Somebody will get his fool neck busted up on that roof.

It's 2200 now and our braces have held. The wind seems to be about the same and I'm getting sleepy. Into a damp sack, under poncho and blanket, fully clothed, I stretch out and my bare feet hit a cold puddle. Puddle gets warmer. When I'm almost asleep, a ring tailed tooter of a wrenching gust causes the tent to lean another foot to

one side. Out of bed, ready to jump out and under the floor, but it holds. Back into the sack. In and out all night, rain and puddles, creak and groan, and finally morning. Bones ache, eyes ache, back aches, tent droops and drips. But the wind is down to 25 and we have made it. We slosh to breakfast, listen to storm orphans tell of the one that got their places, how the tin whizzed over and just missed them. Everywhere there is wreckage--S-2, S-3, S-4 all flat. The photo lab is a mess of soaked kindling wood except for steel trailer units. The coffee tastes good though. This has happened before anyway. Ie Shima, may it sink under the waves and be eaten slowly by little fishes! After we get taken off of it. When will that be? And now to the salvage and the rebuilding--again.

Well, that's how it was. Tonight there is wind around 25 miles per hour, but that seems almost calm. We now have lights and the radio is working and bacon is frying on the alcohol stove and a game of hearts is in progress. As a result of the storm, I now have two new tent mates. I'm afraid they are going to be better hearts players.

During October there is still some thought of the 43rd becoming an active part of the occupation in Japan. With that thought in mind there have been some brief flights to the Tachikawa area. Some of those flights have been by Col. Pettus and Major Hansen. Exploratory missions include Capt. Herb Agard, now Group CO, Capt. Milton Bud Gusack, Flight Surgeon, Lt. Lindon Toepperwein and Capt. Glenn Bales, now Group S-4.

Top (Lt. Toepperwein) in a letter dated 21 October wrote, "I have just written a letter and sent it with Major Hansen's crew. I got up at 2:30 this morning and after having the crews briefed, I have a little time to think; and I am thinking how nice it would be if I could catch one of the planes home. The latest rumor that I have is that I will probably be assigned to the 13th Air Force and fly in B29s. This will mean that I will probably go to Saipan or Guam. According to Lt. Skonjis that is not a bad move, he and Lt. Clinch say." (Of course it didn't work out that way.)

The letter adds this postscript: "Major Hansen's ship is called the Dragon and His Tale and shows a girl in the clutches of a dragon; probably will be in some of the newspapers (California) more than likely."

By this time, with Herb Agard being Group CO after Hansen's departure, he has moved into the shack formerly occupied by Col. Pettus and then by Hansen. I am now one of six or seven living there, together with Capt. John H. Huston, Chaplain, Lt. Felix Kaufman, Radar Officer, Lt. Robert W. Blackburn, (Blackie), Group Adjutant.

Top has just been appointed Recruiting Officer in addition to his other duties. Group Gunnery Officer (primary duty). Plans and Training Officer, Recognition Officer, Group Assistant Air Inspector, Summary Court Officer. He adds in a letter of 21 October: "I may also become Detachment Commander; that is the Commanding Officer of

the Headquarters squadron. Don't get this confused with being the CO of the Group. I am not that much of a wheel as yet, but some do call me 'The Hub'."

On 25 October Capt. Agard appointed a detail for the special Courts Martial Court "for trial of such persons as may properly be brought before it." These were Capt. Richard L. Thorne, Adjutant; 1st Lt. Arthur D. Byrne, Trial Judge Advocate; 2nd Lt. Cloyd W. Monser, Jr., 2nd Lt. Clarence B. Russell and 2nd Lt. Robert E. Stoneburg, Defense Counsel. This same special order also appointed Capt. Richard L. Thorne Commanding Officer of the 403rd Squadron, replacing Major Leonard R. Ledbetter "relieved effective this date."

See copy of order. Exhibit ~~25~~ 6

17 October: Tonight for the first time in what seems like months there's not a stir in the pine trees hereabouts. Not a gale nor even a zephyr. It's wonderful. The moon is shining big as can be about in the second quarter and very bright. I've had less work to do and some time to read, organize a volley ball team, mostly from personnel in our quarters, and to see some movies the past four days, G.I. Joe, The Life of Pasteur, Duffy's Tavern, and A Bell for Adano. I have even read a book this week, Col. Scott's God is my Co-Pilot, and I have started Irving Stone's Immortal Wife. The most lasting of these movies in its impression was G.I. Joe, of course. The vivid picture of foot soldiers' misery makes all of our bitching about continued overseas duty after the cessation of hostilities seem pretty petty in my opinion. There is a lot to be said for the feeling that we who are still alive owe to those who aren't the duty of preserving what they died for, or, more practically, we owe it to their kids to see that our own selfish desire to be done with it all doesn't pave the way for a renewal of the thing just ended. There is great opportunity these days to contribute to that principle or to help destroy it. Unfortunately there seem to be more who tend to the latter course these days, either by positive action or by apathy. There must be a right way to go about what has to be done. I wish I could decide for myself at least just what that is.

Sunday, 21 October. Heard the radio rebroadcast of the Tennessee-Alabama game and the Purdue-Ohio State game yesterday rebroadcast from Frisco. It's cool enough today to wear B10 flying jacket, cloudy, looks like rain again. That either happens or threatens almost every day. Need about one more days work on the Group history and then it will be on its way to Washington. It is really a monumental work, at least two inches thick, and hard to bind together; but in my own and Sgt. Hoover Cott's opinion, it is a good job. When it is finally done, there will be little to do but serve merely by waiting. And perhaps reading a bit more than I have done in the past year.

Sunday, 28 October. Can it be true that they also serve who stand and wait? If so, then we on Ie Shima are owed a lasting debt for

services rendered. The monotony is varied now only by sometimes sitting and waiting or walking and waiting. It's always waiting regardless of the posture assumed. There are books and meals and certain hours for sleep, but the time between drags terribly. Soon now all our planes will have been flown out by crews returning to the States by air, and then we will even be isolated from Okinawa. Theoretically there is a regular ferry service across the bay, but theory runs afoul of reality there. Very often the ferry misses a day or two days. When that happens there is no mail and morale takes a new drop which it can ill afford. Some relief from the monotony was afforded yesterday when a court martial case was tried.

The situation with regard to the point system is now as follows:

1. New Guinea campaign: Combat Zone: Southwest Pacific Area less the Philippine Islands. Time: 24 January 43 to 31 December 44. I was stationed in this area while at Finschhafen and also at Owí, and am thus entitled to a bronze battle star worn on the Asiatic-Pacific theater ribbon. Didn't even see an air raid during this time. But five points is five points.

2. Bismarck Archipelago: Combat zone: Bismarck Arch. (New Britain, New Ireland, etc.) and adjacent waters. Time: 15 December 43 to 27 November 44. (But the time ended for the 43rd on June 12, since our last strike in the area was flown on that date. Thus I missed it, but it happens to be on my record at the present. Probably will be corrected unless my eligibility is established in some other manner; for example, if it were decided that Finsch was in the area, then I would be entitled for that reason. You can be eligible either for being physically located in the combat zone or for flying bombing missions over said zone.

3. Southern Philippines: Combat zone: All the PI and adjacent waters except Luzon. Date: 17 October 44 to 4 July 45. We landed on Leyte on 15 November 44; another 5 points.

4. Luzon: Combat zone: The island and adjacent waters. Time: 9 January to 4 July 45. I flew into Clark field on 17 March 45, from Tacloban, Leyte.

5. Western Pacific: Air offensive against Formosa. We banged them with B24's for the first six months of 45. I flew on none of these, but still was eligible as a member of a combat unit, of course.

The following are campaigns for which the Group is eligible for the same reasons as mentioned above, but which have not been officially awarded to us on orders as yet. They are long overdue, and when they come through I'll have the necessary 75 points.

6. China: Air offensive against Jap airfields and shipping at Hong Kong, Hainan Island and other points on and off the southeast

coast. We hit these between Formosa strikes. Show you the pictures when I get home.

7. Ryukyus: Same idea. Our claim to this one is shaky. Maybe one or two honest to goodness bombs fell on the islands from one of our squadrons. We were stationed here just about two weeks too late to get credit for being in the zone during combat. The last Jap was already beginning to moulder when I got here on 6 August. They still had a few Japs holed up in Northern Okie, but that was routine mopping up.

8. Air offensive Japan: self explanatory. We were the only heavy bomb group in the world (I exclude the very heavy B29, naturally) to bomb Japan's home islands. Well, anyway, we were together with a couple of 7th Air Force outfits.

3 November. All the 60 and 70 point enlisted men and the 75 point officers are transferring to another group today in order to leave with them for the States. They will still be on Ie Shima but will no longer perform duties here or live in the 43rd area. Consequently we are left high and dry with no cooks, no barber, no clerks, nobody except eleven officers and three enlisted men left in Headquarters Detachment. The Squadrons are little better off, but still we are classed as an active group and subject to periodic inspections and supposed to forward routine reports and carry on normal business. At least the absence of contrary orders indicates as much. It's not an uncomfortable life in the sense that there is everything we need in abundance except barbers and medics and that can be had elsewhere on the island. We can now draw far more rations than we need and pretty much pick out the choicest parts and ignore the rest. The decreased personnel also results in better housing, ample left-behind articles and freedom for the remainees.

Capt. Agard, Group CO, Lt. Blackburn, Group Adjutant, and Capt. Huston, Chaplain and Lt. Kaufmann, Radar Officer, and I have been spending the nights playing hearts for twenty yen a game (100 points). If there is a good show we go to that, then return to the game, pausing for a large dish of ice cream made from G.I. mix and frozen on the electrolux refrigerator. Not bad at all. Just a lonely left out feeling when people with a few more points are leaving. No complaint about the point system; they'll get to us in good time. Several of us have written home to say that Christmas packages probably should be held for the time being since they may pile up some place where we are not.

10 November. Looks like Japan very shortly. The Group is definitely decadent. We still eat and well, have a show nearly every night and carry on a function or two, but the organization and the man power is gone. We just eat, drink and play cards, take pictures, pack boxes and shoot rats. The Chaplain is the number one big game hunter. Last night after we went to bed there was a sudden clatter followed by the patter of little feet--rat's feet. Chaplain snapped on a light, grabbed a 45 and banged away. The animal fell sore wounded

and screeched, whereupon the good dominie dragged him outside and administered the coup de gras. This is a nightly occurrence--or rather a morningly occurrence--since we never retire before the wee hours. The pistol is kept loaded with buck shot (the pellets provided combat fliers to aid them at procuring a meal if forced down in the jungle.), and when a noise indicates presence of the victim at the piece of cheese left on the floor, wham! We then remain awake and hope the rats run out or the Chaplain's aim will belie his peaceful calling and no human casualties will result. So far only the rugs and chairs have shared the fate of the few animals he has hit. Chaplain Huston is also a good card player, winning frequently at our nightly games of hearts, but he doesn't play poker. I am looking forward to teaching him just enough of poker to allow me to recoup my losings, now amounting to several yen.

All the boys from the Photo Lab have moved out, and the lab and trailer is set up by our shack as a sort of private enterprise. Lt. Blackburn takes a few shots and does the processing in his spare time. He's also the Adjutant and has his hands full trying to contact and make arrangements with higher echelons to get us rescued. I have moved out of the Squad tent and into the tin house with him and Capt. Agard and Chaplain Huston. We have a very good arrangement, lots of room, all sorts of modern conveniences, except a furnace and a bathroom; and now comes the sudden news that we will all probably be transferred to Bomber Command since this outfit is busting up. Only one officer and enlisted man will stay behind with the crated organizational records while the others take off to Japan. That will likely be within the next two weeks, maybe sooner (it didn't turn out that way). They tell us that Bom Com. needs an S-2, for what I don't know.

19 November. Went over to the cemetery a day or so ago and made a picture of the Ernie Pyle cross and also one of the grave of Lt. Ailor, who was in Law School with me at the University of Tennessee. I thought his family might want a picture of the place. The dates on the two crosses were only one day apart.

There is almost a full moon tonight, bright as day. Can't see the water from our camp, but it must be beautiful in the moonlight. The pine trees are making quite a picture in silhouette against the bright sky. It's cold and some of the outfits are issuing winter clothes; but since we are moving to Japan this week, (we didn't) none for us. We'll get them later--long drawers and O.D. pants no doubt. We have plenty jackets and sweaters now. We have composed our volleyball team at the shack here consisting of Agard, Toepperwein, Routson, me and usually one or two others. Picture of that team, happily clad in the green Marine turtle neck sweaters, that we drew recently will be in the mail headed home.

See photo, Exhibit ~~20~~ 7

These khaki pants are pretty cool when the wind bites. We sat through a class B movie tonight and froze, but it beats boredom.

Played a game of checkers with Agard. No good. He's a checker player. I'm not. Then did some packing of history and public relations files. Now packing a foot locker to be sent by the Navy to the U.S. The foot locker contains clothes, two damaged silk parachutes and some papers of souvenir interest, including the propaganda leaflets in Japanese language. I came across a stack of the stationery of the 403rd with their insignia at the top enlarged and in color with "Mareeba Butchers" in bright red. Recall that the Squadron was stationed at Mareeba on the northeast Australian coast, from which point they flew missions against the Japs in the Bismarck Sea area and in New Guinea, and that sometime in late '42 they were part of a Group raid against well defended Rabaul Township on New Britain Island. As a result of the bombing a number of the city's geisha girls, specially imported for morale purposes, met a bloody fate, at least so reported Tokyo Rose in a subsequent bitter broadcast, a tirade directed at the "brutal butchers of Mareeba."

Colorful, but it lacks the numerical wizardry of the creator of the 65th dice insignia. Lt. James K. Wong left us a few days ago, leaving with us a very useful wardrobe with lovely nude photos stuck to the doors.

On Thanksgiving the Chaplain got us up at 0900 and took us to the exercises at Island Command Chapel. This is a white steepled quonset hut at the foot of our one hill. The service was conducted jointly by a Protestant and a Jewish chaplain. The program is enclosed. We were back at 1100 and went to dinner consisting of roast turkey (with real bones, not canned), dressing, fresh potatoes, peas, cranberry sauce, bread and butter, coffee, fruit salad, stuffed celery, punkin pie, apples, oranges, candy and cigarettes. Back to the sack and later a game of volleyball. For supper, Spam!

See Ex B Program of "Thanksgiving at the Chapel" + Mammill

Last night we had impromptu guests. At about 11 o'clock there was a sound of voices outside the shack raised in alcoholic glee. The Chaplain went out to investigate. The sound of slightly lower tones, then high ones, interspersed with adjectives Tobacco Roadian in flavor. Finally we heard "I've been in the ----- Marines for 29 - ----- months and overseas 16 ----- months by God; how long have you?" And the Chaplain's quiet answer. More of the same, 'til we learned there were two Marines, 19 years old and Pfc, outside the door. The loud voice again: "What are you anyway? A ----- mechanic?" "No, I'm a chaplain." Shocked, aching silence. Finally unintelligible words apologetic in tone. Our own ribald laughter. We know this particular chaplain can turn a ruddy phrase to his own use on occasion. After long minutes of this the door opens and Chappie enters with the young unsteady Marine who seats himself after peering in turn into our faces and asking our names. It develops, to the surprise of no one who has been listening, that he is from East Boston. By the end of an hour he is firmly launched on an offensive intended to convince the chaplain of the unimpeachability of the true faith. At 0130 he gave up. "I don't think you are too sharp," he said as he rose to go. "A priest could really snow you under." His pal stuck his head in the door. "Let's get some chow and hit the

copy w/ change of "last" note to "one night"

sack," he urged for the tenth time. We turned out the lights and relaxed, still more or less staunch Protestants except Kaufman, still Hebrew of an unorthodox variety. His favorite joke is one about Hitler and a guy named Finklestein.

To here → 27 November: Today we burned the Headquarters Building and moved the offices into the old and now unused mess hall. It's a better place and leaves less to be done at the last minute when we hop on a plane to go to Japan. That should be sometime in the next two weeks. (It sn't.) Picked up some pictures in the photo lab showing what our planes did to a Formosa refinery ~~some time back~~ & other recent targets.

See photos, Exhibit 9

/ On 5 December Lt. Toepperwein wrote: "My room mates returned to our shack early this morning; in fact, it was 0730 when they woke me up while getting ready to retire. They have just gone down to the CO's shack again tonight to try to redeem themselves. Only one player won anything to speak of, and he won a little over 3000 yen. The others lost a little or broke even except for one officer who lost about 2000 yen. 15 yen equals \$1.00; therefore, the winner received a little over \$200.00 as his reward for staying awake all night.

✓ *h* When we took our short trip up to Japan recently, I flew over Hiroshima and there is practically nothing left of it. The picture on page 4 of the Brief gives a good idea of how the entire place looks."

Still 5 December: On Ie Shima it's 2120 and the radio is turned to Radio Okinawa (what else?) and the program, "Remembering," a recorded collection of tunes with ad lib about the times they recall. For example, the announcer asks, "Remember the days in 1940 when everyone was wondering will it be Wilkie or Roosevelt, and Jack Whoozit knocked out Johnny Bohunk in the third round at the Garden? Well, you will certainly recall this tune that was heard on all the juke boxes in those days. Here it is: "~~Bah~~" as made popular by Artie Shaw." Ah, memories! Over in the center of the room the Wednesday morning poker club is in executive session. They are a bit tired; they played from 7:00 last night to 7:00 this morning and slept all morning. Now it's started again. Felix won 3000 yen last night and they're baying on his heels tonight. Blackie is already moaning low about his luck and Herb occasionally mutters his trade mark exclamation, "Mah achin' ankles!" Chaplain and I either read or kibitz. I'm broke and he's still maintaining a show of resistance to the world of material things. I still haven't been paid since July.

We've decided to stay on Ie til 12 December. Reason: Blackie won't have the required six months in grade as 1st Lt. til 10 December. Then he can put in his recommendation for Captain before we leave; otherwise he'd never have a chance. There'll be no 43rd Group to forward any official papers after we tear down the latrine and board the C46'es for Tachikawa, Honshu. Likewise, others that have gone in previously will be sans luck if theirs bounce after we leave.

Late item re battle stars: FEAF (Far East Air Forces) a few days ago made a call for our statement of claims or stars in the China Offensive, China Defensive, Ryukyus, and Japan Air Offensive campaigns. That means they never received our previously submitted letters on the subject, and now we begin the sweat all over again. This time Blackie sent it by radio, but still it can be any length of time before we get orders back. Hope springs eternal! Hundreds of G.I.s formerly in the Group are waiting for those five point stars all over the world (and in these islands), and when they don't get them I can hear their anguished cries, "Group has fouled up again. Byrne has been in the sack all day instead of sending in tracer letters!" All our records are packed and our personnel departed, but still this stuff has to be done. Down-hearted? No, not a bit.

Had a thick steak with French fries and a hunk of chilled raw cabbage a couple of hours ago and feel fine. Now that no mess hall has been operating for ten days, we draw our own rations from Island Command and keep it in the shack to be cooked by our own discriminating chefs, men who may never have graced the kitchens of royalty but who know what they, by gad, like and can fix it. We have the frigidaire full of pork loin, steak, eggs, butter, cabbage and fruit juices. There's a two unit electric grill and a two burner gasoline stove and a frying pan. We cook twice a day or when the mood hits. Today no one got up until about 1300, so breakfast was a bit late. I cooked myself two eggs and two chops. Then at 1700 we cooked thick steaks, rare, and tossed slices of fresh potatoes into the pan when the steak came out. "Larrupin'," as Papa Byrne used to say.

6 December: Outside it's water all over and it still rains. It doesn't leak much in here, but helmets in strategic spots have collected a considerable amount. The boys played poker until 0100 this morning. Then, after they quit, they were hungry and had to fry some pork chops. Later on Herb decided he couldn't sleep, so out he clambers and stirs up a potent concoction of dugout juice (pure alcohol) and fruit juice. Two of these put him to bed again, but by this time it is near 0500 and I'm still reading "Brainstorm," Carlton Brown's account of a friend's venture into temporary madness with a stay in a New York nut house and the subsequent nightmare of slow recovery and remembrance. Another book I read this week was Robert Nathan's "Portrait of Jenny," the story of a young, down-at-heels painter who, while wandering dejected in a city park, meets a lone little girl who is strange, apparently a complete anomaly, something from the past.

11 December: With no more than fifteen men here now we receive every day the packages intended for nearer 1500. Most of them are on their way back to the States now, and to return all the flimsy boxes of food is a job not easily undertaken. Each afternoon we gather at Headquarters and dig through the pile, trying to read the names on wet, frayed and battered packages. Once deciphered they are matched to the forwarding addresses in the card file, that is, those who are still in the Pacific. The remainder are tossed in another corner to await the locusts. When the sorting is done, we fall to and open the

stack. If it's food, we add it to the larder. If it's of lasting or obviously sentimental value, we repack it and remail to the U.S. About 90% of the haul is fruit cake, candy, cookies, sardines, tuna, lobster, chicken and so forth, with a sprinkling of books, games, underwear, socks and hankies. The only really valuable receipt so far is a camera. It was lying bare at the top of the mail bag, but when the entire contents was dumped, the shattered box was on the bottom, together with odd accessories. It will be returned, as will be leather toilet cases and bill folds.

unpacked
The stack looks like contents of an A&P grocery. All sorts of canned delicacies and we still have our Quartermaster issue of pork, steak, eggs, bread and butter. So the Holiday Season is come with exceeding joy and much eating of indigestibles. Supper last night was shrimp cocktail, canned shrimp in catchup with a dash of canned lemon juice. Blackie even has a couple of cans of caviar. I tried it and find I prefer pretzels. The biggest treat of all, though, was the package of cheese from Swiss Colony. When it came, I opened it on the center table and Herb and Felix promptly passed out. What a splendid and decayish aroma! It was wonderful! That ~~(???) cheese!~~ Blackie and the Chaplain helped me with it, but no one else would enter the area when it was out. I put it in the refrigerator, but that precipitated civil war, so I put it in an ammo case where it kept very well.

December 12: No, we aren't on our way to Japan yet. A hitch in transportation holds us another few days. Anyway it's only a five or six hour hop.

Still waiting for a plane to take us to Japan. Liaison between Echelons is atrocious. No one knows what goes on anywhere else and this is just another off-jumping spot left behind when the last shot was fired.

Christmas Day on Ie Shima. It's different this time from 1944 in that there was no war, no Philippine musicians and no fox holes. Different from other past seasons in so many ways. We were on Leyte, and there was a party at the Officers' Club; no air raid til the early morning hours, as I recall. Today we had a fine turkey dinner at the nearby Marine Officers' Mess. We also drew our own rations, kept the apples, oranges and a few vegetables; turned the rest over to the Marines. We still eat one or two meals at the shack, usually steak and eggs at 1300 or 1500, then into the jeep and off to supper at 1700. Today we slept til noon since the boys played poker into the early morning.

See Ex.10 - Drawing of Xmas Chapel Service, 1944

I went into my new ODs for the first time. We drew pants, shirt, battle jacket and green cotton clothes a few days ago. Listened to music from Radio Okinawa. It's generally tremendously superior to the programs at home. In the first place, it's known that the average age of soldiers and sailors is above 14; that eliminates a large percentage of domestic broadcasts aimed at that mental level. Among the most enjoyable little factors on the Okie radio is the versatility of some of the announcers who take off on U.S. broadcast weakness-

es with a vengeance. You should hear the lugubrious drawl of the T-5 who introduces Mystery Playhouse (modelled after and taking a sly poke at Inner Sanctum) or the Morning Musical between whose recorded melodies the announcer sandwiches in dummy commercials. Example (After the 10 October typhoon when the housing of most people consisted of the sky and a pair of water wings): "Good morning, friends. Does your roof leak? Joe's Roofing Company in downtown Naha can solve your problem. Call Water-log 6431. And now, to take your mind off your troubles, here's Frances Langford singing Stormy Weather. Done with the typical Lucky Strike simper, it's funny. Hope some of the people at home hear some of it. Might give them to think.

Well, that's today's sermon.

Blackie has been in Japan four days and is presumably lobbying and snooping for us. He took up a borrowed B25 and is to send back a C46 for us, meanwhile trying to see what will be done with us, looking for good housing, battle stars, and so forth. Here's hoping.

Okinawa, 29 December 45: For the first time since August I'm spending a night off the isle of Ie. When our scheduled C46 failed to show up today, Felix and I decided to take a jeep across on the ferry and check with the VBC rear echelon on Okie. No phone or radio connection, no planes, so that was the only way. We got here at 3 o'clock, got a modicum of information and prepared, unwillingly, to spend the night because the ferry was loaded on the return trip by prior commitments. It's pretty cold and we brought no blankets, but they are taking care of us. I'm bundled in a sweater, two heavy jackets, khaki pants with fur-lined flying pants over them.

Before supper we drove to Nago ten miles away to phone Herb and tell him of our exile for the night. The road was narrow and steep in places, winding along the edge of the island, separated from the water by gray cliffs and ledges from ten to 30 feet high. It was a perfect time of day just at dusk with the southern islands purple in the evening haze, the dark blue water on the right, the steep green hills rolling and terraced on the left. I enjoyed the trip, wishing all the time it could be one of our trips. It was dark, no moon, rain threatening as we came back.

I am all packed and ready to be off at a moment's notice. We even burned the latrine and then that durned 46th stood us up. The misery and privations of war and peace! And our mail now goes north. Hope there's a stack waiting for us there.

Ie (everlasting) Shima, 4 January 46. We are well into another year on this forsaken isle and winter is whistling and moaning all around. Twice this past week we've almost gotten away, but each time some unnecessary ----- Army foul-up occurred and ph-ff-f-t went our chances. The weather has been very pleasant til yesterday, but now it's windy, wet, and cold and that may mean more delay. At least, Island Command is now aware of our Robinson Crusoe status. Col.

Smith, Island CO, came by to see if we are adequately protected from winter and hunger (we were and are) and told us if no planes come from VBC in a day or so he'll raise a bit of hell by radio. Meantime we eat, gripe, sleep, bitch, listen to WXLH, gripe, eat, gripe, and eat.

The New Year has come in very quietly, to be sure. The only thing out of the ordinary was a very elegant turkey dinner at the MARINES'. Later in the evening three of the inmates dipped their sorrows into a bottle of G.I. alcohol for pickling purposes. The result was predictable, especially after I gave them a bottle of Aussie gin I had picked up somewhere gratis. By midnight two of them were very, very quiet, but the third had thrown confusion into a high toned Island Command party and had engaged a major in words and blows and had roared home in triumph.

9 January 46: Hamasaki, Okinawa. We are at VBC today, living in General Crabbe's former quarters, a quonset hut on a hill overlooking the bay. Ie Shima shimmering in the distance. Came over yesterday on the ferry and we are to go to Japan at 0830 tomorrow. At last!

Three of us went on a Cook's Tour of Okie today. Saw Naha (three hours jeepage south of here), Yontan, Kadena, etc. The C46 is due to arrive here tomorrow morning, and we should land at Tachikawa sometime in the afternoon.

10 January 46: From somewhere. We did it. The 43rd Group is once more and at last airborne. There are seven of us 43rd leftovers and two from VBC as well as a black mama dog with two pups. As this is written we're midway between Okinawa and Tokyo at about 8000 feet over the China Sea. It is cold and I am wrapped in all the Air Corps provides by way of insulation. The gloves account for the cramped writing, not the turbulence.

It's been a very smooth and pleasant ride after a strained beginning. We loaded the C46 this morning, and I mean loaded. The young Warrant Officer pilot watched and occasionally commented as we stacked all of the foot lockers, bags and assorted junk along the center of the plane, leaving space for us passengers to squeeze in along the sides. He looked a little askance as we were trying to stabilize this by roping it together. We were looking at him in about the same way, being more used to flying with pilots with more rank and somewhat more aplomb.

As we started down the coral strip on take off, there seemed to be a bit of a cross wind, and just before we attained air speed, the plane sheered a bit to the left and appeared to come within three or four feet of the edge of the runway which was bordered by some pretty rough looking geography. The high stacked luggage began to tip over and everybody jumped up and grabbed hold. We did get airborne, after which we had fine weather and smooth flying. The other part of the strained beginning was that we had to leave Herb Agard's beautiful big blue stuffed chairs. Our pilot said we were over loaded and our

protests got us nowhere. It was beginning to rain on Okie, but we were off into better weather at 0953.

Although we were flying over a solid bank of cumulus for awhile, it gradually broke, and we could see off to the left the southern islands as we continued on course to Tachikawa. Seems too good to be true after so many weeks of waiting. At 1400 hours Fujiyama appeared just off the left wing, showing snow half way down its sides. We are now low going along the coast of Honshu and the air is now rough.

11 January 46: We landed at 1527 yesterday and got settled in barracks, huddled around a stove. Equipment other than stove and some basic furniture: several shy but energetic young house maids!

13 January 46: Four of us did go into Tokyo today. Felix, who has just been assigned to a new outfit, got hold of a jeep and picked up Herb and Topper and me at the casual barracks at 0930, and we took off to the East, being told that Tokyo lay in that direction. It was a 22 mile ride and cold as the devil. We put on all the clothes we had and took four blankets along. It was 11:15 when we finally hit town. It's a sight. The out lying district is leveled, full of rubble, out of which is arising a shanty town of tin and rocks and scrap. Further into the city the ruin is less apparent. The Palace grounds and the nearby Ginza, the main business district, seem almost untouched, and the picture is one of a modern, rather an impressive modern city. The Imperial Hotel and the various high office buildings occupied by the Army are as nice in appearance as anything in our own cities.

We went into the Tokyo Electric Building yesterday to see Weinbach, who was assigned to Headquarters VAF, yesterday and ate lunch at the Officers' Mess there. It was a large banquet hall with all the trimmings, including little kimono-clad Japanese waitresses and white jacketed mess boys. The food, though, was G.I. Can't change that. Stew beef, carrots, beets, bread and butter, coffee.

After lunch we went out to walk over to the center of town. Over in the outer Palace Grounds G.I.s and Japs were playing baseball, watched by a large crowd of civilians. The streets were full of Sunday strollers, shops were open, and the sidewalks along the Ginza were cluttered by squatting peddlers and their cheap wares of straw and silk and wood, toys, scarfs, baskets and trivia of more or less sales appeal for both Jap and Yank. In the more pretentious shops, western clothes, Nipponese clerks politely watched as milling soldiers finger silks and china and haggled over prices. Those prices are high despite recent enforced lowering by order of Army authorities. The universally sought kimono varies from 300 to 2500 yen (one yen equals 6 and 2/3 cents, or 15 yen equals \$1.00.) There are saucers, plates, portraits, statuettes and the usual assortment of letter openers and photo post cards.

✓ In the Imperial Hotel shops (only in the basement, ^{are} those of rank below Col. allowed to enter) are some of the nicer items and the prettier

clerks. I saw some very beautiful embroidered obis there (the obi is a garment so constructed that the folds at the small of the back allow the wearer to carry her impedimenta such as rouge, lipstick, powder or off-spring). Speaking of the latter, they are usually carried by the next oldest sister or occasionally a brother who carries on with his street play as though unencumbered. It's rather strange to see a kid swinging a bat at a ball or a shuttle cock while a little slant eyed ragamuffin lolls with limp neck in a sling at bigger sibling's back. It seems that 60% of the kids over six years old carry an infant (on the back, I mean).

We started back at about 1545 and had much less trouble finding the way. We made good time inside the city despite the speed limits. The streets are wide and smooth, black top or concrete. The street cars are still fairly scarce and new autos are pretty rare too. Most of the traffic is by bike or motorcycle or some ingenious addition thereto.

Most of the pedestrians appear to be ex-soldiers since the only available clothing in recent years has been army clothing. Occasionally a well dressed male Japanese will walk by in conventional western attire, sometimes varied by the addition of brown Jap air corps boots or infantry leggings. The women almost invariably conform to the familiar picture book conception, small, ruddy, shapeless, wrapped in kimono or smock and slacks. The prosperous matron wears high piled and flower bedecked hair, colorful silk kimono which falls tightly about the ankles, wooden sandals, a light wrap about the shoulders. The poorer ones, including the girls who work on the post, wear trousers that flare at the hips and wrap tight about the ankles. Some add a coat or jacket of American type, but more wear a loose top that looks like the upper half of a man's pajamas. The girl dressed in silk stockings still gets stares when she appears on the Ginza. At least she does from the G.I.s. I'll sketch some of the standard types on the next page. Maybe they, together with photos, will give you some idea of what I see every day now.

See sketch, Exhibit 11. Photo Exhibit 12

15 January 46: APO 704, Tachikawa. Today is a gala occasion. VBC is moving and all the little house girls that work in the barracks are either unhappy at the severance of pleasant relations or are overjoyed in their ill founded hope of moving with us to the new base. Our Marahashe and her half pint cohorts were on the scene with the usual clatter of hoof beats this morning, all resplendent in bright colored silk obis and half kimonos instead of the usual drab jacket and pants. The four of them are busy as bees now collecting "presentos", anything the boys leave them in the way of food or clothing. They are full of giggles and chatter because they think they will ride to Irumagawa with Toepperwein and me this afternoon. The idea is something like this, as Marahashe puts it, complete with gestures and much twisting about: "Me, hubba hubba today trucko Irumagawa you. Tomorrow hippity hoppity Tachikawa jeepo M.P. O.K.

MP? O.K. you?" I said, "Maybe," but I'm afraid they thought I said they could have a B29. The clatter was terrific and they are painting and rouging to a fare ye well, all the time singing Old Lang Syne out the second floor windows to the G.I.s loading trucks below. It's their other American tune. It usually follows immediately after Coming Through the Rye.

See Exhibit 13 -where these kids wrote their names
for "chuee (Lt.) Byrne"

Last night I had quite an experience. Earlier in the afternoon Toepperwine and I were making the rounds of the shops in Tachikawa. While we were looking at some embroidery, a well dressed Japanese male of about forty spoke to us in English, making suggestions about the comparative values and prices of goods we were looking at. We left a few minutes later and he walked out to the street with us where he explained that he has a large shop in Tokyo dealing in fine silk products and inviting us to come see him later in the evening. We were disgusted with the cheap junk in Tachikawa, so, when we returned to the base, we called Felix and asked him to come over to the barracks and bring a jeep. He did so with fairly good grace, and we took off at 1830 bundled to the ears.

We had been told by our Mr. Turuya that he lived in Asagaya, about half way to Tokyo on the railroad, which he advised us to take. We started by asking everyone we saw on the post where to find Asagaya. They never heard of it. We asked the MPs at the gate. They never heard of it either, but they had a map showing everything of importance in the Greater Tokyo area. It wasn't on the map. The Jap boys in the civilian Labor Office told us in a few thousand precise phrases that they didn't know about it either. We decided to ask at the railway station in Tachikawa. The interpreter was out. There was a consultation resembling that which must have preceded the bombing of Pearl Harbor. It resulted in a rough map drawn upside down, as regards compass directions, and accompanied by the explanation that Asagaya is easy to find by train, but by jeepo, well, ha ha, shrug, grin, no so easy. We muttered the usual "sank you" and left in a cloud of dust. By this time it was 20 minutes to 8, in other words 1940. Finally, after twisting and turning and bypassing bombed bridges, we got to Route 2, a wide, black topped highway into Tokyo. After two miles we stopped at a little road-side 2 x 4 police station. The blue uniformed Nip cop, smiled, nodded, consulted and emerged with chalk with which he and his colleague sketched a map near actual size on the pavement in the moon light. They put in circles for towns, 9 kilometers to Shofu, etc., drew a bridge, a side road to the left and then, with a triumphant flourish of chalk, Asagaya itself. We "sanked" them and sped away for the prescribed number of kilos, stopping occasionally for confirmation from civilians still abroad at this late hour. Some of them understood us but didn't know; others understood but didn't give a damn if we went to Asagaya or to Hades.

We began to be discouraged, but the roadside cops kept us going by giving halting, courteous directions, more kilos, more bitter cold winds. Finally we found the bridge, another cop, another consultation, a left turn to a gravel road, another cop aided by an ancient saki sodd~~ed~~ civilian who lectured to us for ten minutes in what must have been excellent Japanese. Enchanted we found it hard to break away, but we were on the wrong road and we were frost bitten. We turned back to Route 2, proceeded a mile, saw another cop, turned left again, saw another cop, hit route 7 parallel to 2, saw a cop, turned left for a mile, saw a cop, another mile, another cop and two elegant civilians. Turned into a very narrow alley with definite misgivings. This was not G.I. territory, just three of us among all these staring Nips. Another drunk who looked like a picture of Yamashita tried to come aboard but we shook him off, went on, and there, before us, was Asagaya station.

✓ Topper got out, took the paper bearing our friend's name and address in Jap characters and waved it around. Top is one of the biggest men who ever came out of Texas, although certainly one of the gentlest. To add to his dimensions he was wrapped in a complete Eskimo flying outfit. Also, Americans were obviously a complete novelty in these parts, and a crowd gathered at once with a small sword-dragging cop trying frantically ~~trying~~ to bore into the center of things to satisfy his own curiosity. Imagine the humor of the picture. Six-foot four-inch Topper surrounded by a milling mass of four-foot sixers, and after a few minutes we hustled the cop into the jeep to act as a guide, since he seemed so interested and so willing to be helpful. His sword caught in the rigging, but we cleared him and turned back into the alley. It seems we had passed the place we were looking for. He directed us to it and we pulled up at about 9 o'clock after a two and one half hour hunt.

It was a small, modern, shiny, clean shop. Mr. Turuya came out to greet us in polite Nipponese manner and led us into the outer shop. A door opened in the back revealing a raised floor covered with a spotless matting in the center of which Mrs. Turuya stood smiling beside a square mound of cushions and robes. On the sides beautiful tiger skin rugs covered the floor. The center arrangement turned out to be a low table set over an electric grill and covered with a soft, thick comforter and surrounded on four sides by cushions. We removed our shoes, stepped up 14 inches to the upper level and, at Mr. Turuya's gesture, we sat around the heater, spraddle-legged, with hands and feet under the cover near the stove with the edges of the comforter over our feet and knees. It was very comfortable and we found we weren't frost bitten after all.

✓ Wine was brought by Mrs. T. and served in tiny glasses on a small lacquered tray. Meanwhile we explained our delay to our host who was amused and sympathetic. Then his two little boys came in and sat quietly by the door. They were little burr heads dressed in army style clothes. I gave them two bars of Baker's chocolate. They beamed, said "sank you," and departed. I suppose they are not allowed to smack their lips before company. All this time Mrs. T.

was sitting or kneeling, I couldn't tell which because of the long kimono she wore and the low cushions. Mr. T. turned and spoke to her, she definitely kneeled, smiled, and then left the room. We engaged in more small talk of this and that, of anything but the recent hostilities, and presently she was back with piles of silks, brocades and embroidery, kimonos, obis, scarfs. They were passed to Topper and Felix and me, and we ogled, murmured and exclaimed and were pretty generally bewildered by the richness of it all. I began to fidget and finally managed a vague question about prices, which I felt was a breach of etiquette at that stage of the game. Mr. T. smiled indulgently and reassured me, "You select what you want. Do not worry about price." So I did, recklessly--seven or eight brocades, a kimono and two small embroidered pieces, plus a dazzling four foot length of irresistible something or other. Then Felix and Topper finished their selections, and after more talk over cups of cocoa (we were promised green tea next time), we suddenly discovered it was growing late. Then came the question of price. This occasioned surprisingly little disagreement and the goods were wrapped and handed to us. At 11:20 we were bowed out with good nights and best wishes, further invitations and much smiling.

Half way back to camp we had a flat, but, strangely, we had both spare tire and tools, a definite oversight on the part of someone. We fixed it in twenty minutes and got to the Field about 12:20. So now I've been in a Japanese home and have experienced the traditional Jap courtesy. Whether it's real or false, I still haven't the faintest idea. It looked genuine.

And now back to the present, 16 January 46. Two days ago the point requirement dropped to 68. On paper at least I have 69. I feel pretty sure of being on a boat some time in February. Other than that I still don't know.

21 January 46: Irumagawa. Still no mail since mid December. When we were on Ie Shima waiting for a plane, we had all 43rd mail sent from the Okinawa base PO to VBC in Japan, the reason being that most of it was for men no longer on Ie Shima, who had been transferred to VBC in Japan. We gave our own names with instructions to hold our mail til we got here. When we finally arrived at VBC, we found that all 43rd mail arriving here had been reshipped to Okinawa. The result will be that it will be sent from there to the last known station of the addressee. In our case it will go to Ie Shima where it will again start a vicious circle since there is now no 43rd there. If it ever does get back here, I'll probably be in the States already. I hope. My expectation now is to be on a boat by about February 10.

Saturday night was a rare, gay occasion. There was a Japanese show at the Officers' Club. A Japanese dance band played U.S. tunes in U.S. style with a high school accent. Surprisingly they were not bad. As expected, they were not good. There were other interim acts, waltzes by the Imperial Hotel trio, violin, cello, piano, two kimono clad jugglers who tossed things around to the weird rhythm of

a gourd-like ukelele, played by a young lady, painted to resemble the phantom of the opera. She was a scream, seated very prim and straight on an American chair, legs a-dangle, wrapped in a kimono, her face completely calcimined and dead pan, beating an utter monotone on that loud, strange instrument, only her eyes and one hand moved. Once a string loosened and the monotone changed, but she hastily repaired the damage and continued, still without expression. More in the mood of the club were the routines and the dancing girls. One did a Balinese jitter bug with bells on her feet (and little else). She was about 150 pounds, practically all of it below the waist. Then an exceedingly cute and cherubic little lady did a ballet and followed with a Hungarian costume dance with another female partner. Then there was a trio who sang Hawaiian songs, after apologizing that the guitar "is busted and our music will be very poor, please excuse us." They are known hereabouts as the Andrews Sisters. One of them can sing, but the PA system didn't work and we never really heard her. The band didn't suffer from that. According to Col. Dick, Base CO, they have improved 100% since last time. They now play twice as loud.

More importantly, about two dozen nurses, some of them the young and fresh variety, had just arrived here, and there was dancing after the show. Seeing there were enough field grade officers on hand to entertain them, I left before this got under way.

Yesterday morning, Sunday, Felix and Herb came up from Tachikawa, fifteen miles to the south, and hauled me to Tokyo. We had lunch at VAF with Winnie Weinbach, took pictures in the palace grounds, introduced Winnie to Turuyu and company and came home by dark.

I suppose I may have some assignment to some kind of work soon, but that hasn't happened so far. Anyway it's more fun to buzz around shooting pictures, seeing things and doing nothing in general.

Irumagawa, 29 January 46: Still no mail. Nothing much has happened here this past week. I have not been assigned to any useful occupation and have been to Tokyo twice with Felix and Herb. We picked up some coins and a fancy comb to be worn with the kimono. Nagato also promised to mail me a complete set of Japanese stamps. Hope he doesn't forget. A phone call from Felix Kaufman says that the Re-deployment Depot has refused to honor ten months of his service time toward return to the U.S. because it was spent in Enlisted Reserve, so he is stuck indefinitely. He had been anxious about it, now he knows.

Tonight one of the fellows here in the barracks, Lt. Smith, gave me a pair of Jap Air Corps boots. He was showing them to me and while admiring them I mentioned that I would like to get a pair for my wife to use as riding boots and he insisted I take them.

Irumgawa, 29 January 46. Still no mail, so I guess I'll be without letters for the remainder of my stay overseas. I'm still not sure how long that will be, probably another ten days at least.

After a brief hospital stay and a few days of temporary duty attached to an Engineer outfit, my orders finally came through on 13 February, and I was transported south to Yokahama, past most complete and total destruction along both sides of the road.

See copy of order, Exhibit 164

There, on 20~~th~~ February, I shipped out on the U.S.S. Admiral Hugh Rodman.

See drawing ~~of path of this ship~~

from Yokahama to Seattle, where we landed 3 March 1946.

