

*Two Years*

*c/o Postmaster*

THE JUNGLE AIR FORCE



**13<sup>TH</sup> TROOP CARRIER SQUADRON**

*Two Years*  
*c/o Postmaster*

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# Two Years to Postmaster

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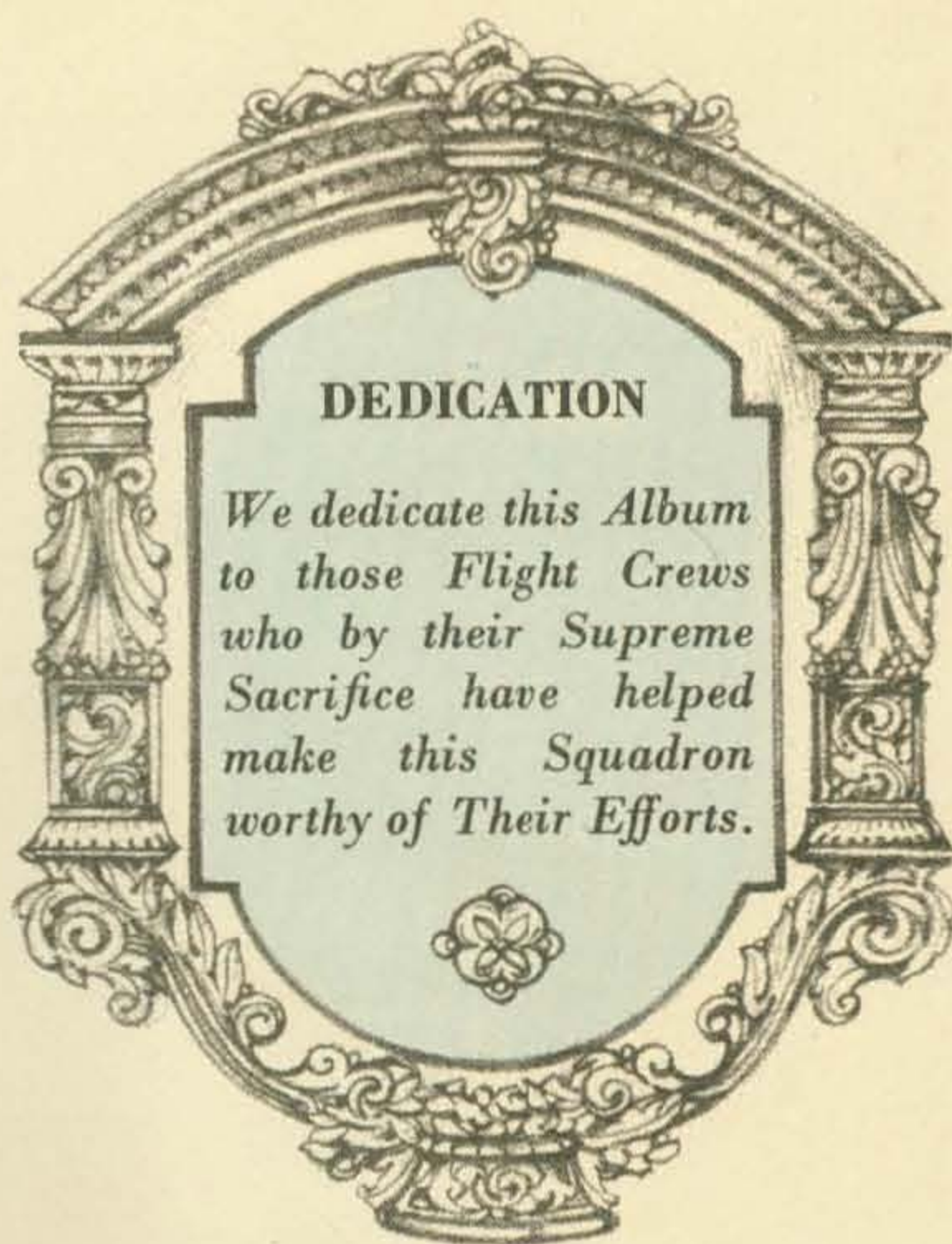
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## A PICTORIAL ESSAY

13th TROOP CARRIER SQUADRON

NEW CALEDONIA TO PHILIPPINES

Lt. Louis Nelson  
Lt. Neal Allen  
Lt. Ralph Saltsman  
Lt. Emerson King  
Lt. Garnet Brown



Lt. William Foote  
Lt. Clarence Thompson  
Lt. Joseph Kolkmeier  
Lt. H. C. Kirk  
Lt. William Tangney

M/Sgt. John Rinaldi

T/Sgt. Samuel Reeves

Sgt. Ezio Mastrantonio

Cpl. Harlon Fister

Cpl. James Stratton




Prepared by and for members of the Thirteenth Troop Carrier Squadron.  
This publication has been cleared for mailing by United States Army  
Censorship Authorities.



#### EDITORIAL STAFF

Captain William C. Yeomans,  
Officer-in-Charge  
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Lt. Robert M. Smith  
S/Sgt. Elmer R. Oehm  
S/Sgt. Charles D. Enfield  
Sgt. Ralph E. Babcock  
Cpl. William B. Bond  
Cpl. Frank R. Gordon

An illustration in the upper right quadrant shows a man from behind, seated at a desk. He is wearing a dark sweater and is writing with a pen on a document. On the desk are several rolled-up papers. In the background, a calendar is pinned to the wall, showing the date '44 DEC 1944'. Other papers and documents are scattered around the desk, some with red markings. The style is a mix of pencil and light washes of color.

# By way of Explanation...

After one long and arduous staff meeting in December of '44, "Two Years c/o Postmaster" was finally decided upon as a fitting and timely title for a publication planned to cover exactly two years' operations in the South and Southwest Pacific. The title fit like a glove.

"The moving finger writes and having writ, moves on," however. Just so, time passed as new material came in for proof reading and selection. New activities demanded emphasis in the book. Flight crews departed Stateside necessitating a renovation of the Operations Section. Athletics and recreation activities on Biak reached a new high early in 1945; we had to make room for the championship basketball team-pride of the "Thirsty Thirteenth." In desperation, a copy and photo deadline was set for 1 May, 1945. So here you have the finished job: "Two Years c/o Postmaster" covering almost **three** years' operations. The title has stayed with us in a manner similar to the legendary "Ol' Boulder," the Thirsty Thirteenth insignia, and O'Leary's Bar. Damned if we'll change it!



# Foreword

This is the story of the Thirteenth Troop Carrier Squadron ; a story of one group of men, thrown together with a single purpose in mind ; a story of one small part of the composite of small parts collectively known as the United States Army Air Forces.

We tell this story with pride. It has a beginning and the end is not yet in sight. Yet in the beginning can be seen the end ; the day when this Squadron becomes a stack of papers in the historical files of Troop Carrier Command and United States Army Air Forces, Washington, D.C. ; when all these men who have faithfully carried out their stringent duties of fighting a war in the tropics will have returned to their own land for the pursuit of that life of freedom, integrity, pride, and individualism rightfully theirs.

We'll venture to say that this Squadron has made us stronger in our love of freedom, integrity, and pride. We also know that every man graduating from the school of the "Thirsty Thirteenth" carries a better understanding of what makes the other fellow "tick." We believe it an impossibility to live, sleep, eat, drink, and fight with the same bunch of "guys" through three major military campaigns without gaining this understanding. That, in itself, is important.



This pictorial essay is but a reflection of the totality of our existence in the march from New Caledonia to the Philippines. It is a synopsis, featuring the highlights and the episodes. The meat is to be filled in by you, so you can point to a photo of a Hebrides road or tent city in the Netherlands East Indies and say, "Now, this reminds me . . . ." It's more fun that way. We could tell of the endless monotony, the mosquitoes at New Cal., the "C" rations, homesickness, "Dear John" letters, boredom, bad flying weather, and the loss of three swell air crews. But we'll let the gripes and complaints filter through our narrative with a faint smile of amusement, in the knowledge that our sense of humour has been a precious and necessary weapon. Our collective ego is strong, as evidenced by our belief that this is "The best damn Troop Carrier Squadron in the Air Forces." But we know, too, there are other squadrons, companies, groups, regiments—all with an organizational pride fully as strong as ours. Such constitutes collective strength. We are the "Thirsty Thirteenth." We are also a thousand other outfits plugging away on the job. We believe ours to be the spirit of the American fighting man; proud, a bit cynical, he is a profane prankster, but a humanitarian who loads the camp with animals and dreams of the idle hours—back home.

The Staff.

May 1, 1945.  
Netherlands East Indies.



# Pacific Leaders

## GENERAL DOUGLAS MACARTHUR

Son of an Army family, West Pointer, distinguished soldier in World War I, General Douglas MacArthur has earned a permanent place among America's great fighting men since 7 December, 1941. Retired, at his own request from the United States Army in 1937, he became a Field Marshal in the Philippine Army. In 1941, as war in the Pacific became imminent, he was recalled to active duty by President Roosevelt, and made commander of the Far East Command. When war came, his epic stand at Bataan and dramatic escape to Australia earned the admiration of a free world suffering defeat after defeat. Immediately after his arrival in Australia, the Pacific war plan, under his direction, changed from passive defence of Australia to an active offensive in New Guinea. Against superior numbers and equipment, the Americans and Australians under MacArthur's command secured New Guinea, and battled their way into the Solomons and the Bismarck Archipelago. The crisis was over, and with the arrival of more troops and equipment the steady northward push accelerated, until the famous promise: "I shall return," was redeemed with landings on Leyte.



## GENERAL GEORGE C. KENNEY

Born at Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, on August 6, 1889, General Kenny enlisted as a private in U.S. air service at the beginning of the last war, where he saw action in France. With the French Eighth Army and the First and Third American Armies, Kenny accumulated 110 hours of combat flying in the Toul and Meuse-Argonne sectors. For extraordinary heroism in action against a superior force he won the Distinguished Service Cross, awarded October 9, 1918, and the Silver Star for bravery.

After years of study of aviation in warfare, Kenny returned from France at the conclusion of the war. He graduated from the Air Corps Tactical School, Langley Field, Virginia, in 1926; from the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1927; and from the Army War College at Washington in 1933.

In 1942, he was placed in command of the Fourth U.S. Air Force on the Pacific Coast, where he was stationed at the time he was elevated to his present command.

General Kenny and his men invented the technique of "skip-bombing," which proved so devastating to Jap communication and supply lines in the Pacific War. Associated with General MacArthur in the very first desperate days for the Allies in the Pacific war, General Kenny has travelled the entire triumphant road in this theatre.



## MAJOR-GENERAL PAUL B. WURTSMITH

Major General Paul B. Wurtsmith, 38 year old commander of the 13th Air Force, is rated a top fighter plane tactician of the Army Air Forces. Early in '42 he trained and brought overseas the 49th Fighter Group, made famous by Ace Richard Bong, and by a total of 627 enemy planes shot down. General Wurtsmith, rated as a command pilot, wears the D.S.M., Silver Star, Distinguished Unit Badge, Air Medal, and has been decorated with the order of Commander of the British Empire. He assumed command of the veteran "Jungle Air Force" in February, 1945, relieving Major General St. Clair Street, who returned to the United States. General Wurtsmith was in command when 13th Air Force warplanes blasted Borneo, swept the China seas and coast, and flew from Okinawa against the enemy in the final phases of the war.



## *"Our Air Force"*

The Thirteenth Troop Carrier Squadron is proud to be a part of the Thirteenth Air Force, long famed as the "Jungle Air Force." Its nickname tells the story of a life led by fliers and ground technicians, so well represented within our own unit.

Never stationed near a city or town, the Thirteenth Air Force's men have fought the war against Japan, and a private war against disease, jungle rot, torrid climate, and boredom brought on by the absence of civilization. It was a monotony of tent life in stagnant islands of coral, palm trees, and mud.

The Thirteenth Air Force was first with land-based bombers over the enemy bastion of Truk, leaping nine hundred miles from the Solomons and Admiralty Islands to hit that Coral Pacific stronghold of past days.

First attacks on Yap, a strategic nest of well-defended Japanese airdromes which threatened the invasions of Guam and Saipan, also were made by Thirteenth Air Force heavies.

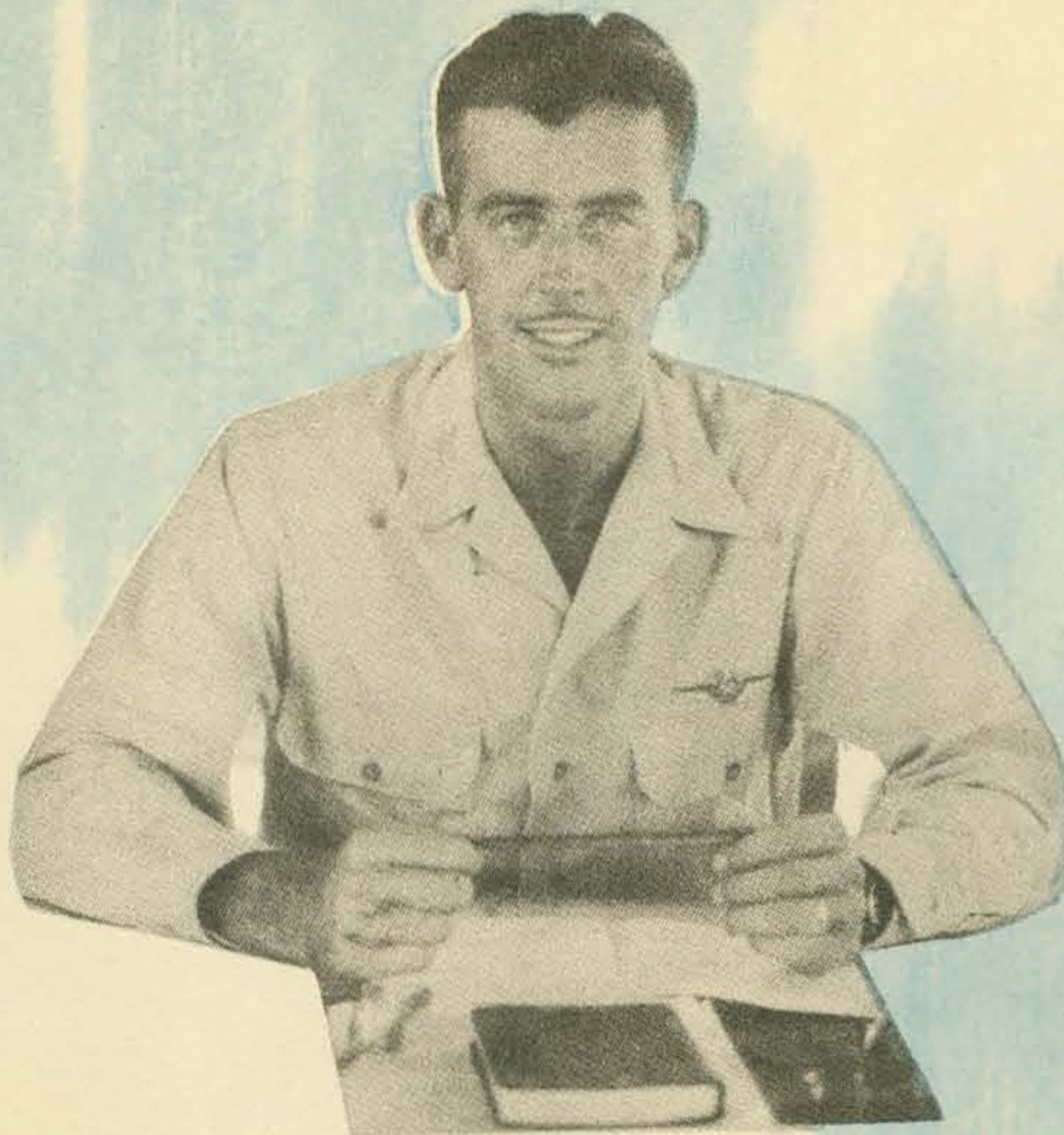
Again it was the Thirteenth Air Force that led the way to Balikpapan, 3,000,000 barrel-per-year source of Japan's wartime fuel. In six 2500 mile raids, the longest ever flown by Liberators in formation, Thirteenth heavies cut Balikpapan's production almost fifteen per cent.

And it was the "Jungle Air Force" which helped to sweep the China seas and coast and participate in the final phases of war by beating down the enemy from Philippine and Okinawa bases.

From Guadalcanal to China, troop carriers have played a hand-in-hand role with the Thirteenth's combat operations. As the combat aircraft moved forward, so did 13th Troop Carrier planes, operating as a unit of the 403rd Troop Carrier "Sandmen." Para-drop, free-drop, and other vital supply missions were accomplished to assure the success of air and ground force operations. With pride we acknowledge those assignments and the jobs well done.

We think the "Fightin' Thirteenth" is a damn good air force.





"It has been my pleasure, as Group Commander, to have observed the Thirteenth Troop Carrier Squadron in 'action' while operating with the 403rd Troop Carrier Group since September, 1943 . . . up the line from New Cal. to the Philippines.

"To each member of your spirited outfit I say, without reservation, that yours has been one of the finest squadrons yet encountered in my tour of duty with the Army Air Forces. Your spirit, willingness, and ambition are outstanding. Your 'esprit de corps' lives in the pages of this book.

"The material included in 'Two Years c/o Postmaster' deals with the lighter aspects of a strenuous tour of duty in a tough overseas theatre. Not shown in detail are the very many hardships and problems that have drawn upon your integrity and loyalty for solution. Perhaps you feel, as I do, that we can chalk these items up to 'experience,' a part of the welding process that makes us better soldiers and men.

"My congratulations to every man in the 'Thirsty Thirteenth' for a fine job done. Those who have returned home will remember their squadron's achievements with pride. Those who are to come will have a record and a legend to live up to."

*H. J. Sands Jr.*

**COLONEL HARRY J. SANDS, Jr.**

Senior Pilot, credited with 3600 total flying hours, Colonel Sands has commanded the 403rd Troop Carrier Group since its arrival overseas in late August, 1943. A mechanical engineer in civil life, he was commissioned in June, 1938, and graduated from Kelly Field Flying School in March of 1940. A smooth pilot and a "square guy," Colonel Sands is well liked by the men of the "Thirsty Thirteenth," the oldest of the five squadrons in his command.

# COMMAND AND STAFF . . . 13<sup>TH</sup> TROOP CARRIER SQUADRON



**CAPTAIN  
ERLING NASSET**

Captain Erling A. Nasset, age 26, assumed command of the Thirteenth Troop Carrier Squadron after eighteen months' service in the pilots' ranks as first pilot, flight leader, and operations officer. A native of the wide open spaces out in North Dakota, "Ling" enlisted in the Air Corps in March, 1942, was graduated from the Roswell, N.M. flying school, March 10, 1943, and arrived overseas with the 403rd Troop Carrier Group in July, 1943. We consider him one of the Old Boulders and a "Thirsty Thirteenth" veteran with a fine record.

*Erling A. Nasset*



**Captain FREDERICK ROSS**



**Captain HAROLD WILKENING**



**Captain MARVIN NORFLEET**



**Captain EARL DEWEY**



**Captain GEORGE REYNOLDS**



**Captain WILLIAM YEOMANS**

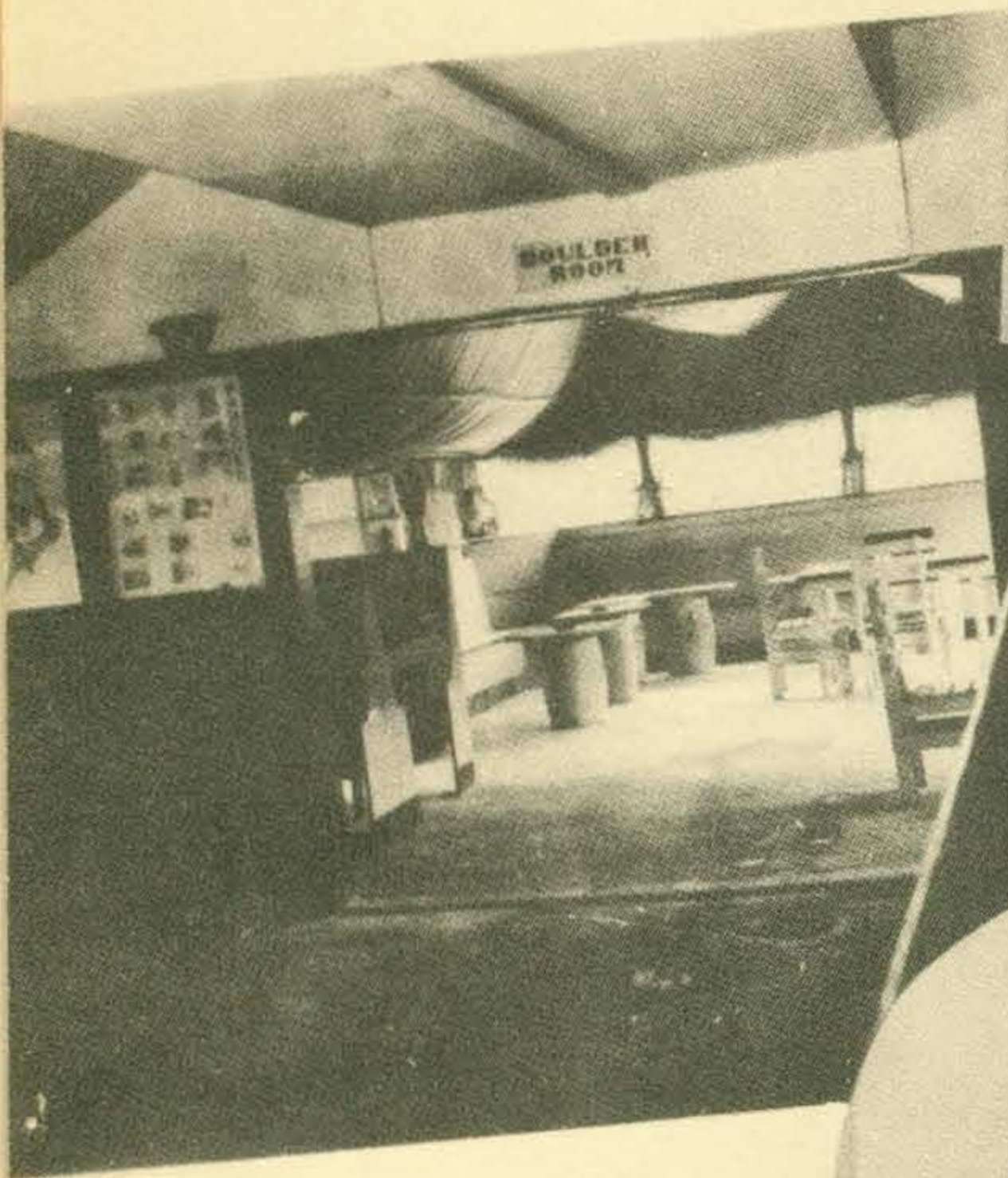


**Lieutenant EUGENE WALSH**



**Captain PAUL WHITAKER**







# O'LEARY'S

*It was a cold winter's evening, the guests were all  
leaving . . .*

*O'Leary was closing the bar,  
When he turned 'round and said to the lady in  
red—*

*“Get out—you can't stay where you are”  
She wept a sad tear in her bucket of beer.  
As she thought of the cold night ahead.  
When a gentleman dapper stepped out of the  
crapper,  
And these are the words that he said—*

*“Her mother never told her  
The things a young girl should know—  
About the ways of Air Corps men  
And how they come and go.  
Age has taken beauty,  
And time has left its scar,  
So remember your mothers and sisters, boys—  
And let-her-sleep-under the bar.”*

**DUFFY'S TAVERN,  
Biak, Netherlands East Indies.**





TONTOUTA VALLEY, NEW CALEDONIA, 1943

Painted by Marvin E. Goessl

# The Early Days...

## CHAPTER 1.

The "Klip's" deck listed heavily that hot day in November as hundreds of land hungry G.I.'s swarmed to the port side for their first glimpse of the "Treasure Isle of the Pacific." Coral reefs broke through the deep waters a mile out. A haze appeared in the distance—and there she was, our destination: Noumea, New Caledonia.

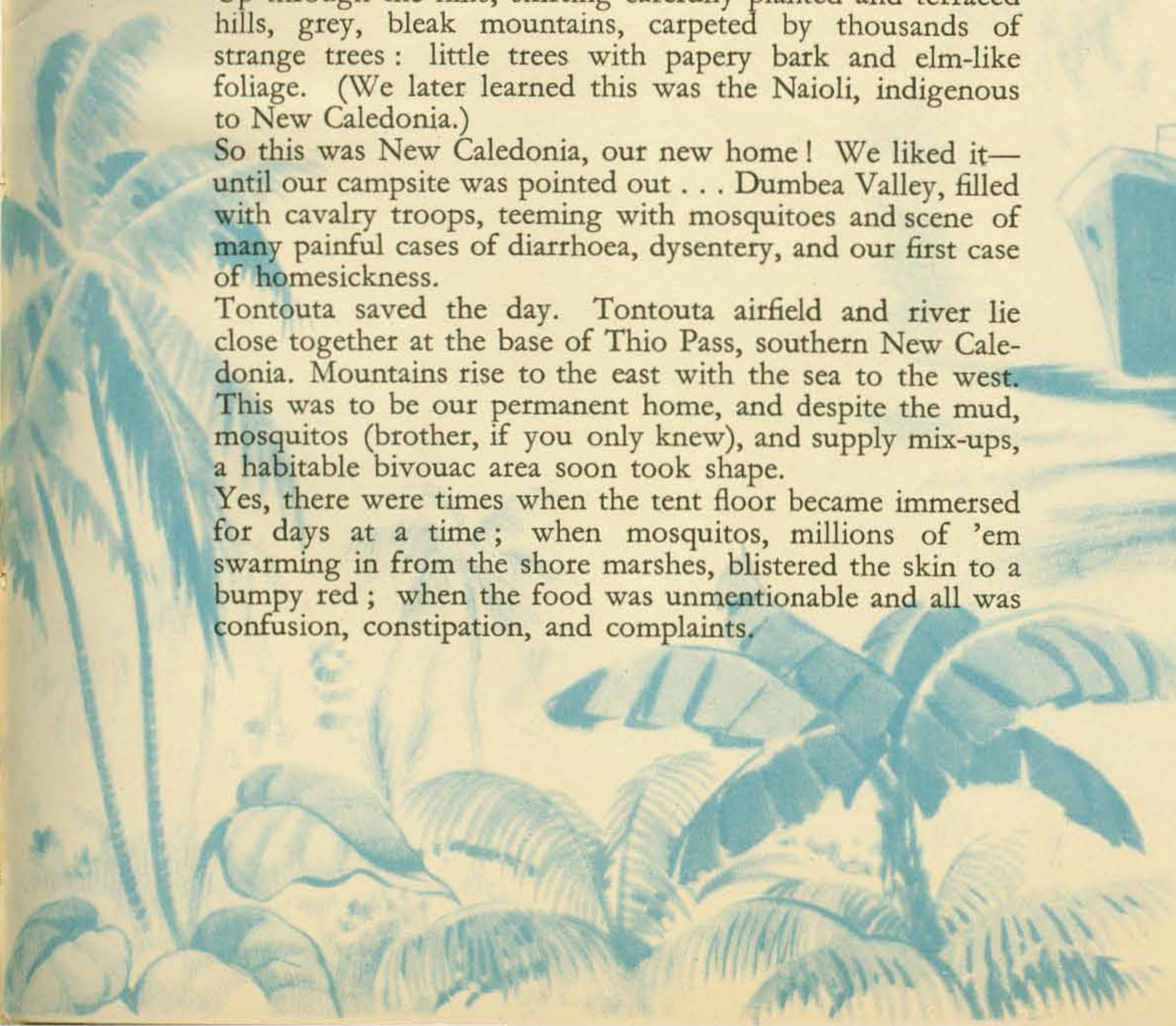
We were eager, anxious, curious. "Noumea," a strange and forgotten name somewhere in our geography books. Japs on the island? Women in town? Where was our ultimate destination? As usual, everyone "knew" the answer. Noumea, debarkation point, lay glistening in the sun, a beautiful harbour protected by barrage balloons, jammed with transports, destroyers and carriers. Off we came, by lighter, on to the dirty dust-filled streets, to be loaded onto a wheezing Eighteenth Century French Railroad train with coal dust to keep us company in our private "drawing room."

Up through the hills, skirting carefully planted and terraced hills, grey, bleak mountains, carpeted by thousands of strange trees: little trees with papery bark and elm-like foliage. (We later learned this was the Naioli, indigenous to New Caledonia.)

So this was New Caledonia, our new home! We liked it—until our campsite was pointed out . . . Dumbea Valley, filled with cavalry troops, teeming with mosquitoes and scene of many painful cases of diarrhoea, dysentery, and our first case of homesickness.

Tontouta saved the day. Tontouta airfield and river lie close together at the base of Thio Pass, southern New Caledonia. Mountains rise to the east with the sea to the west. This was to be our permanent home, and despite the mud, mosquitos (brother, if you only knew), and supply mix-ups, a habitable bivouac area soon took shape.

Yes, there were times when the tent floor became immersed for days at a time; when mosquitos, millions of 'em swarming in from the shore marshes, blistered the skin to a bumpy red; when the food was unmentionable and all was confusion, constipation, and complaints.





This was our first heavy dose of life overseas and we didn't like it.

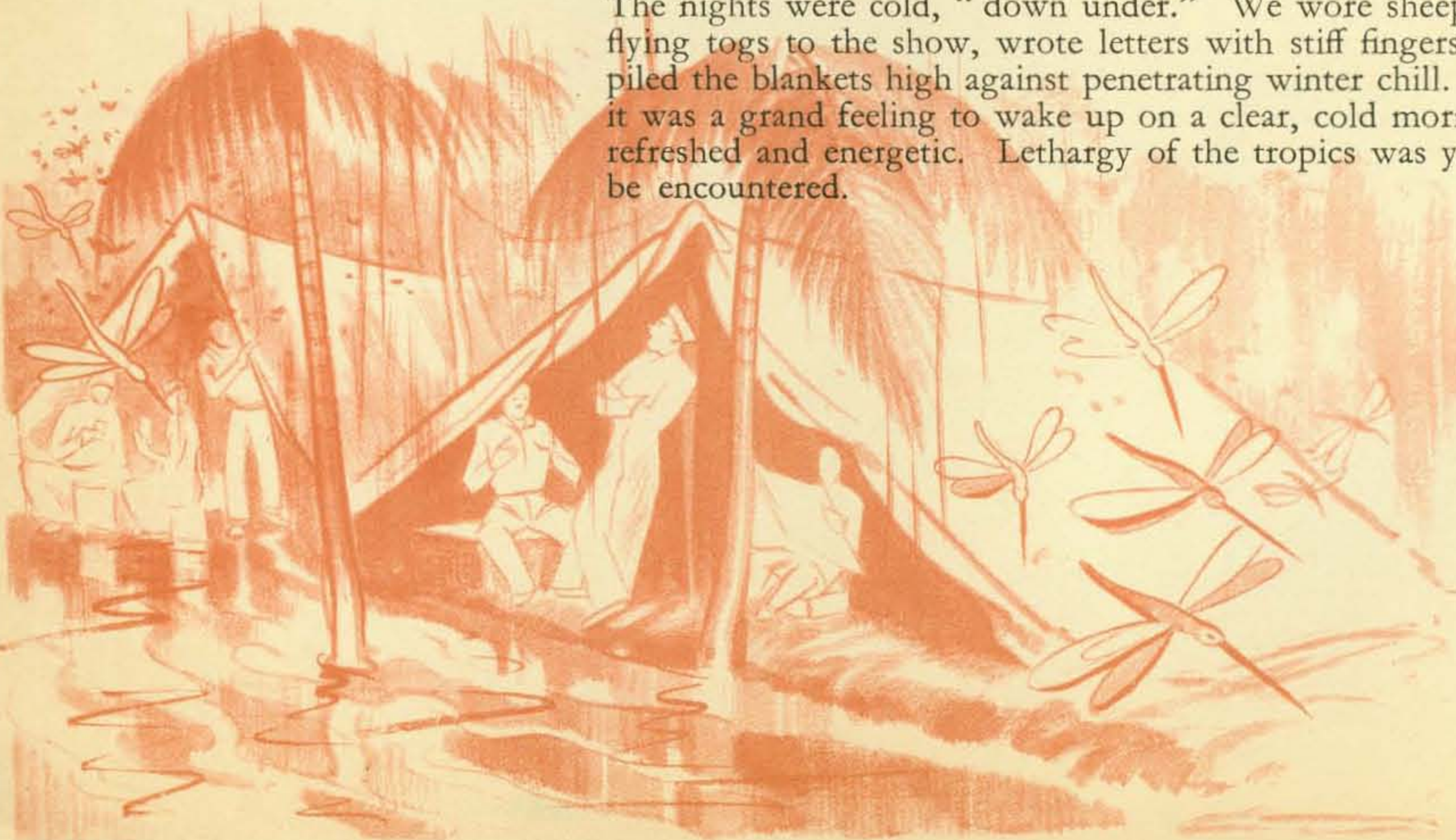
“ Parlez-vous francais, sucker ? ”

Ah, the French, with their generosity, curiosity and eager eye for the Yankee dollar. Thio, Mondu, Boula, Paris, Canale' and a host of other little villages soon came under the sharp eye of the wandering G.I.'s. “ Boula Boys,” the big, good-natured Melanesian natives, soon captured our interest and our hearts . . . unique with their omnipresent smiles, childish laughter, and hasty adoption of G.I. terminology. They worked hard and did an excellent job of wiring huts together. Raw materials consisted of Naioli bark, skinned poles, wire, and brawn. Didn't leak . . much . . but the rats found haven in the roofs.

Time passed. We were getting “ our feet wet,” learning how to fly the weather, how to make camp under the wing of the “ Big A Birds,” how to pull “ Hundreds ” without parts and with rain . . . plenty of it. Tent floors took shape out of the mud . . . lights in the tents, and improvement in the food. We began to relax and carry on the name of this Squadron, the “ Thirsty,” repeat “ THIRSTY ” Thirteenth, with liquid trips to Sydney, 40 York Street; case high apartments in King's Cross jammed with rowdy leave personnel; huge wooden cases of Waitemata Ale brought up from Auckland; Tooth's Ale from Sydney; assorted jungle juices, red wine, annisette culled from Monsieur What's-his-name.

The “ Thirsty ” Thirteenth never again knew such abundance . . . perhaps it's just as well.

The nights were cold, “ down under.” We wore sheepskin flying togs to the show, wrote letters with stiff fingers and piled the blankets high against penetrating winter chill. But it was a grand feeling to wake up on a clear, cold morning, refreshed and energetic. Lethargy of the tropics was yet to be encountered.



Civilization, too, was a commodity we now look back on with nostalgia. We remember one spot in particular, way up in the hills of New Cal. on the outskirts of Thio, miniature nickel-mining town. There we found a company store, supervised by little Antoinette with her hour-glass figure. She sang to us both in English and French, brought in iced beer (40 cents a quart), annisette, sherry, and French cordials "potable divines." And if a G.I. was really "in," a dinner in the pavilion back of the store had his number on it. Service, a la Javanese (the "Javs" with their stern, straight little figures and black teeth). Conversation was somehow made in broken English, New York French, along with a smattering of bastard Melanesian. Difficult, but fun. Week-ends were no problem, if the "old man" OK'd a pass. They were usually spent up island at the restaurant at Mondou with Mama, Papa, and three pretty French mademoiselles . . . Therese, Yvonne, and Antoinette. And don't think they weren't **chaperoned**! Competition was keen, accomplishments lean.

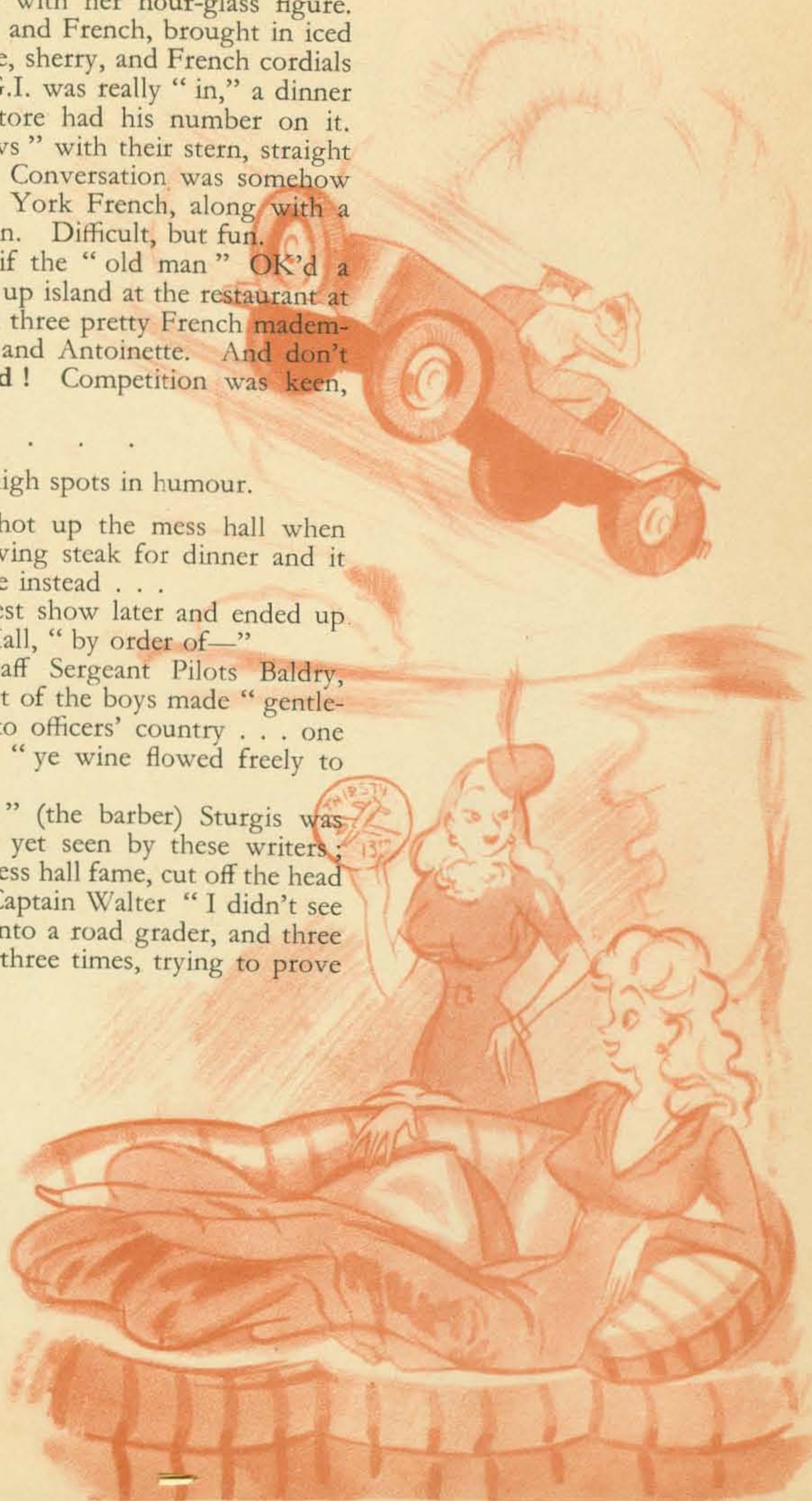
. . . . .  
And now for a few high spots in humour.

We recall the time Thweatt shot up the mess hall when someone told him we were having steak for dinner and it turned out to be Vienna sausage instead . . .

Jim Hartline staged a Wild West show later and ended up by splitting logs for the Mess Hall, "by order of—"

The formation held when Staff Sergeant Pilots Baldry, Blankenship, Crunc, and the rest of the boys made "gentlemen," and moved up the hill to officers' country . . . one formation we didn't mind and "ye wine flowed freely to ye lip."

In that same week, "Brownie" (the barber) Sturgis was treed by the biggest wild bull yet seen by these writers; "Pistol Packin'" Thweatt, of mess hall fame, cut off the head of Joe Lowery's pet chicken; Captain Walter "I didn't see the damn thing" White ran into a road grader, and three of the boys turned a jeep over three times, trying to prove something.





We couldn't pass without mentioning the steak joints by the road—Mickey's, for instance. A joint perched on the summit of the last hill en route to Noumea . . . "eggs and steak only one dolla-r-r-r, boys." Good thing the Board of Health didn't get too tough with Mickey, what with the big, blue flies fighting for table space with a number of ravenous cats, a seedy chicken often pushing a close third. But the Javs knew how to cook steak and the appetite was sated (which is more than we can say for Uncle Sam's chow at the time.)

. . . . .

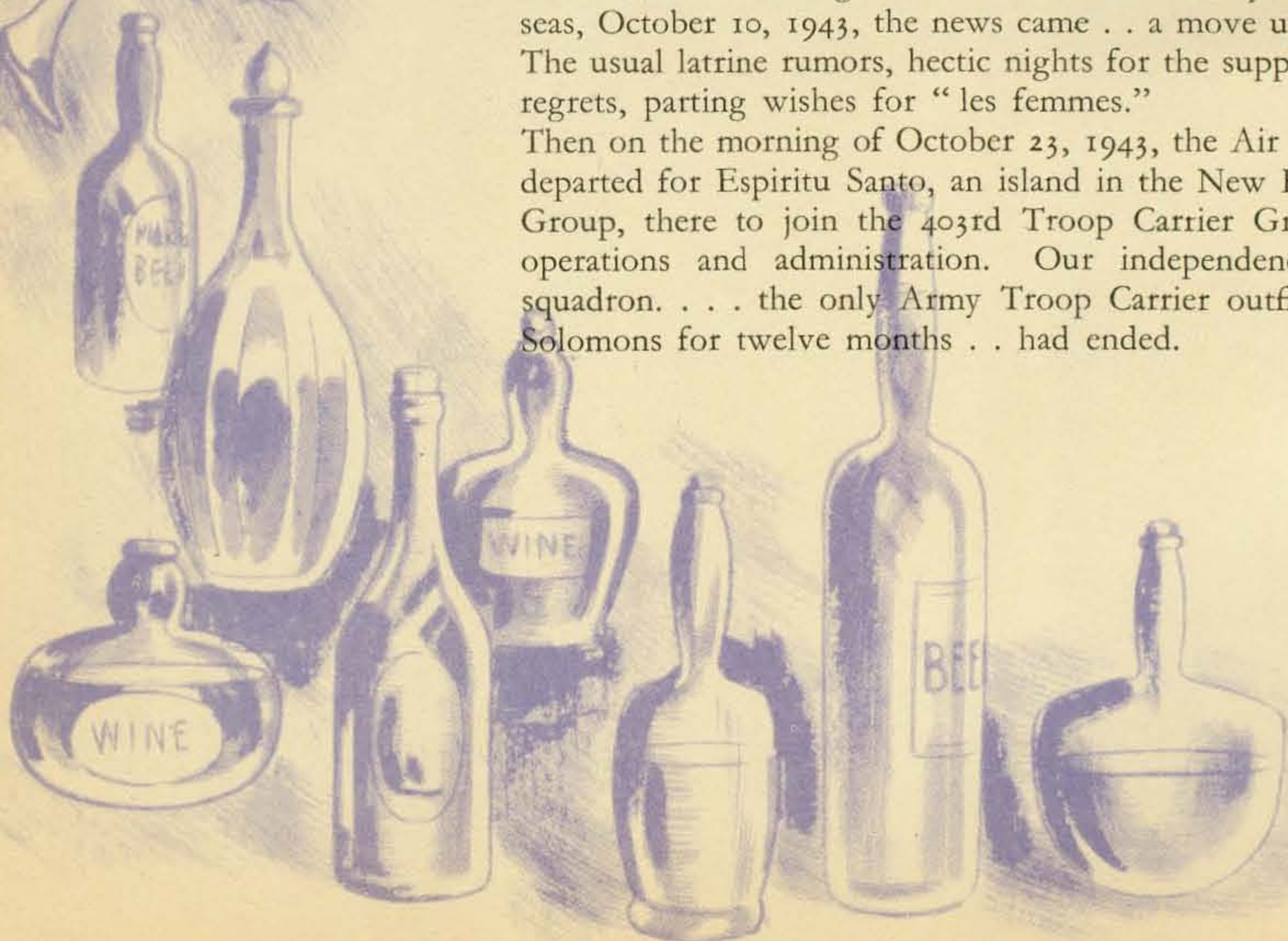
It wasn't all fun. For instance, it's painful to recall that April march ten miles over hill and dale, burdened with helmet, gas mask, side arms, and canine companions too tired to carry on. The hike was justified, of course, as a gentle reminder that **we were still at war**. Soon after this a bunch of the boys threw a binge on a plane load of Victoria Cross Whiskey and couldn't sit up for two days. Oh, my head.

. . . . .

October, 1943.

Soon after celebrating the Air Echelon's first year overseas, October 10, 1943, the news came . . . a move up north. The usual latrine rumors, hectic nights for the supply gang, regrets, parting wishes for "les femmes."

Then on the morning of October 23, 1943, the Air Echelon departed for Espiritu Santo, an island in the New Hebrides Group, there to join the 403rd Troop Carrier Group for operations and administration. Our independence as a squadron . . . the only Army Troop Carrier outfit in the Solomons for twelve months . . . had ended.



# MILITARY HIGHLIGHTS

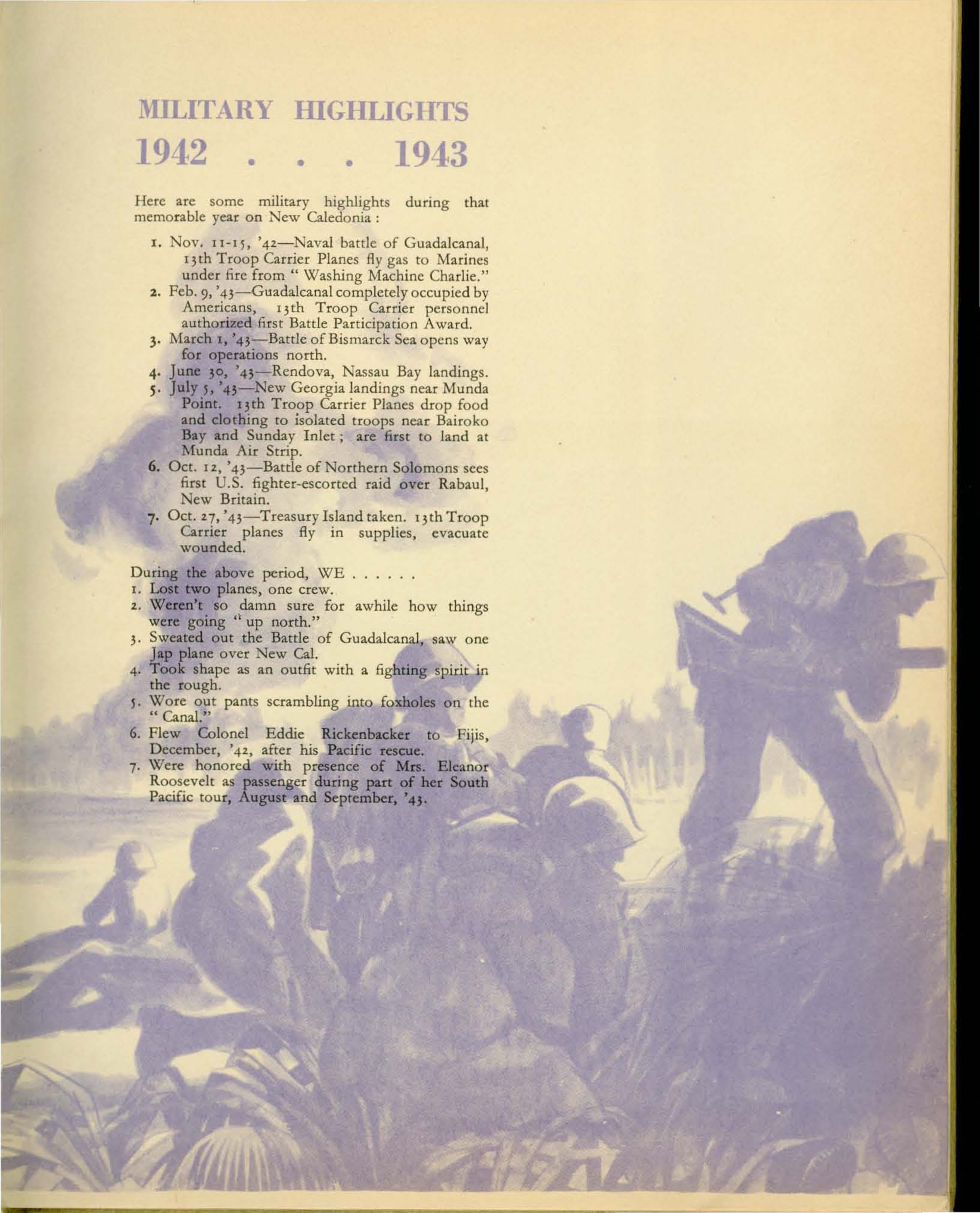
## 1942 . . . 1943

Here are some military highlights during that memorable year on New Caledonia :

1. Nov. 11-15, '42—Naval battle of Guadalcanal, 13th Troop Carrier Planes fly gas to Marines under fire from "Washing Machine Charlie."
2. Feb. 9, '43—Guadalcanal completely occupied by Americans, 13th Troop Carrier personnel authorized first Battle Participation Award.
3. March 1, '43—Battle of Bismarck Sea opens way for operations north.
4. June 30, '43—Rendova, Nassau Bay landings.
5. July 5, '43—New Georgia landings near Munda Point. 13th Troop Carrier Planes drop food and clothing to isolated troops near Bairoko Bay and Sunday Inlet; are first to land at Munda Air Strip.
6. Oct. 12, '43—Battle of Northern Solomons sees first U.S. fighter-escorted raid over Rabaul, New Britain.
7. Oct. 27, '43—Treasury Island taken. 13th Troop Carrier planes fly in supplies, evacuate wounded.

During the above period, WE . . . . .

1. Lost two planes, one crew.
2. Weren't so damn sure for awhile how things were going "up north."
3. Sweated out the Battle of Guadalcanal, saw one Jap plane over New Cal.
4. Took shape as an outfit with a fighting spirit in the rough.
5. Wore out pants scrambling into foxholes on the "Canal."
6. Flew Colonel Eddie Rickenbacker to Fijis, December, '42, after his Pacific rescue.
7. Were honored with presence of Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt as passenger during part of her South Pacific tour, August and September, '43.





# Evolution of the "Old Boulder"



## CHAPTER 2.

We don't know exactly who started the legend of the "Old Boulder."

It really doesn't matter. The legend is here with us, a moral conviction that no doubt will give Paul Bunyan historical competition. Everyone, of course, wants to be an Old Boulder, but it's not easy. You have to serve time. Time in which to get raunchy, rough, and rebellious.

An Old Boulder gets mossier with time. Some of us old Old Boulders have 31 months to our credit. We're practically "out of this world." We plan to shock Mom and Junior with heroic yarns—"There I was, on my back at 30,000 feet."

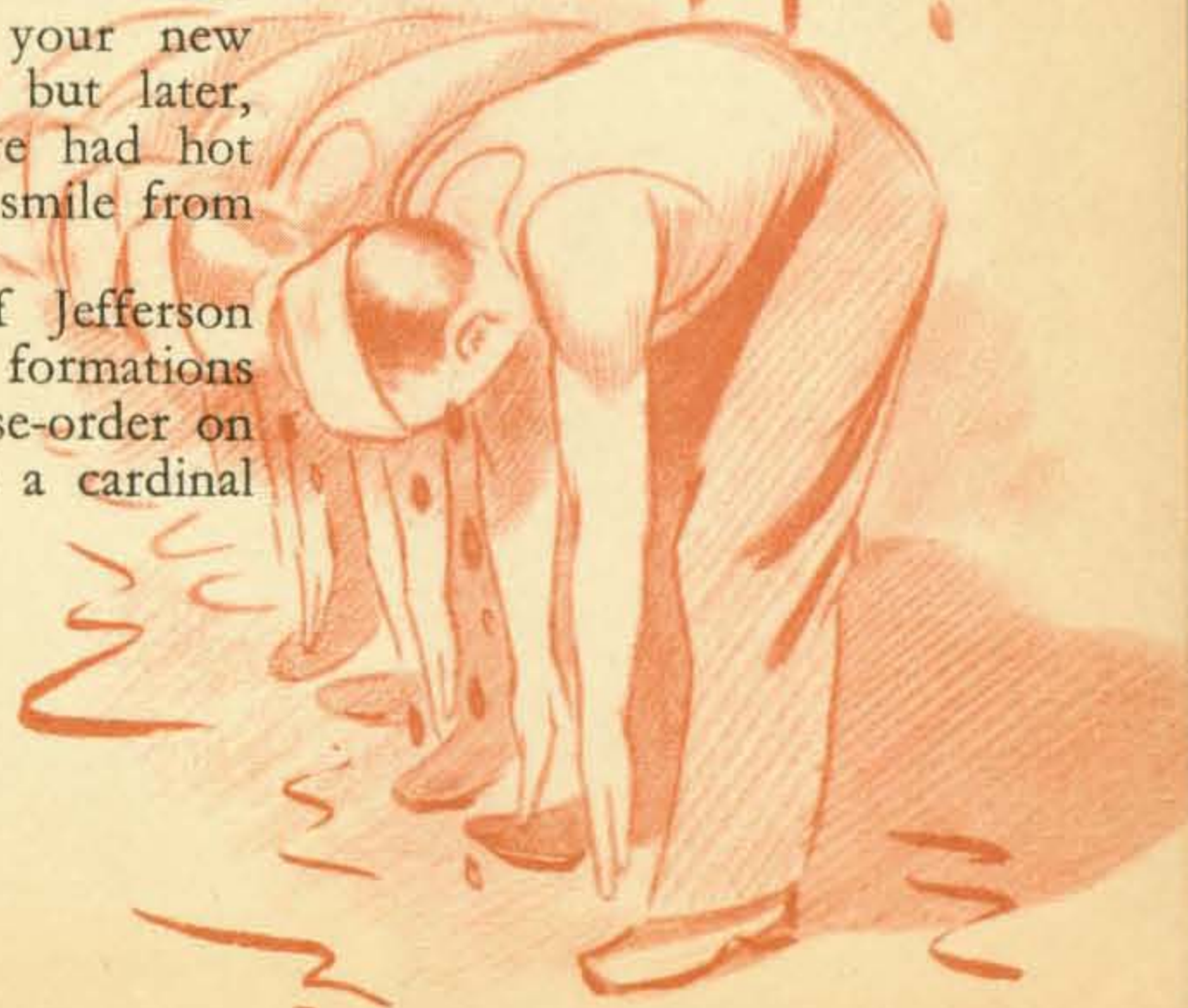
Junior Commandos are the neophytes. They aspire to be Old Boulders. A senior J. C.'s time runs close to a year, at which point he graduates into the "pebble" class. His stature and stoicism grow with the passing months. He becomes an Old Boulder.

And so much for the Old Boulder, honored in cartoons through this pictorial essay. What more could he expect, raunchy, old seedy reprobate, and chaser-of-women that he has become?

So here we were, getting used to the Horrible Hebridies, a come-down, in some ways, from New Cal. Hotter, more malaria, not much to see, jammed a little closer together. About this time, Major (How we lo-o-ved dat man) Remaklus departed stateside along with five other Old Boulder crews, and Major Harold F. Wilson took over.

We remember Major Wilson's first speech in the Mess Hall. "Can you hear me in the back? I'm your new Commanding Officer." Disconcerting as hell, but later, when our single stripes became two, when we had hot showers installed, roads built, and many a big smile from the "Old Man" . . . well, we liked him.

Pekoa soon became a frightening reminder of Jefferson Barracks, USA, what with Saturday inspections, formations for awards, stand-by's, gas mask drills, and close-order on the steaming plane aprons; sack time became a cardinal



sin. And those damned athletics; you know . . . full knee bends, touch your toes, and other such impossibilities. "You will exercise, or else."

A law of force tells us, "To every action there is an equal and opposite reaction." It didn't work out that way for us; this enforced conditioning came, bringing a new interest in organized athletics that has stayed with us ever since, making us leaders in all group athletic events. Even the pencil pushers, traditional softies, contribute to the brawn when the Group now says, "Aw, we can beat you guys . . . ."

Time passed. November, the Ground Echelon celebrated one year overseas. December, our second Christmas overseas, complete with the splendor of chicken, cranberry sauce, spuds, dressing, and all the trimmings. January, '44 (when the hell are we going home?), February, March, and April . . . monthly parties in the mess hall with orchestra, beer, good chow and no gals . . . power boat excursions out over the bay for a day's fishing . . . a visit to an obscure native village for dime store trinkets and highly prized photos of the native belles "with or without."

The men built boats and sailed them, big boats, little boats, salvaged boats, punts, rafts, canoes, and barges.

Someone discovered NAB, storehouse of Navy ice cream and assorted goodies. Someone else spotted all the island shows—and no one ever spent a night at home.

May, June, July were hey-day months for the connoisseurs of good eats. First, "Charlie's Place" of Satevepost fame. "George's" joint specialised in steak with French fries, French watercress, and wine . . . all for three bucks . . . all, if you were lucky enough to make a reservation.

We often made a day of it down at the beach, a stretch of sun baked coral down by the bay, poking about the coral reefs for starfish, crabs, snakes, hermit crabs, and bright, little multicolored coral fish one reads about in the National Geographic. Some of us had lunch down by the sea with wild horses for company. A cold bottle of beer or two helped to cool the fevered brow as we watched the natives paddle slowly by in their outriggers or French luggers plying the island trade. Life wasn't so bad. We had something to write home about. The evolution of the Old Boulders was in full tilt.



With much amusement, we recall the laundries . . . every man for himself. There was one about half a mile from camp where clothes mysteriously disappeared ; without too much complaint, however, since those three little half-caste daughters had such " lovely eyes." Or you could go to the "Chinee" joint by the bay where the old man always got mixed up on his accounts and tied Chinese laundry marks in button holes and sock tops.

The "Royal Beer Drinkers Of America" held sway in Barracks 11 about this time . . a motley crowd of characters, restricted to those who consented to initiation via bottle of beer poured over the noggin. The "Puttyball", "Meatloaf", "Snake" Hogan, and other toughs officiated—(you bring the beer). The nights were filled with ribald verse, with "O'Leary's", squadron theme song, heading the list.

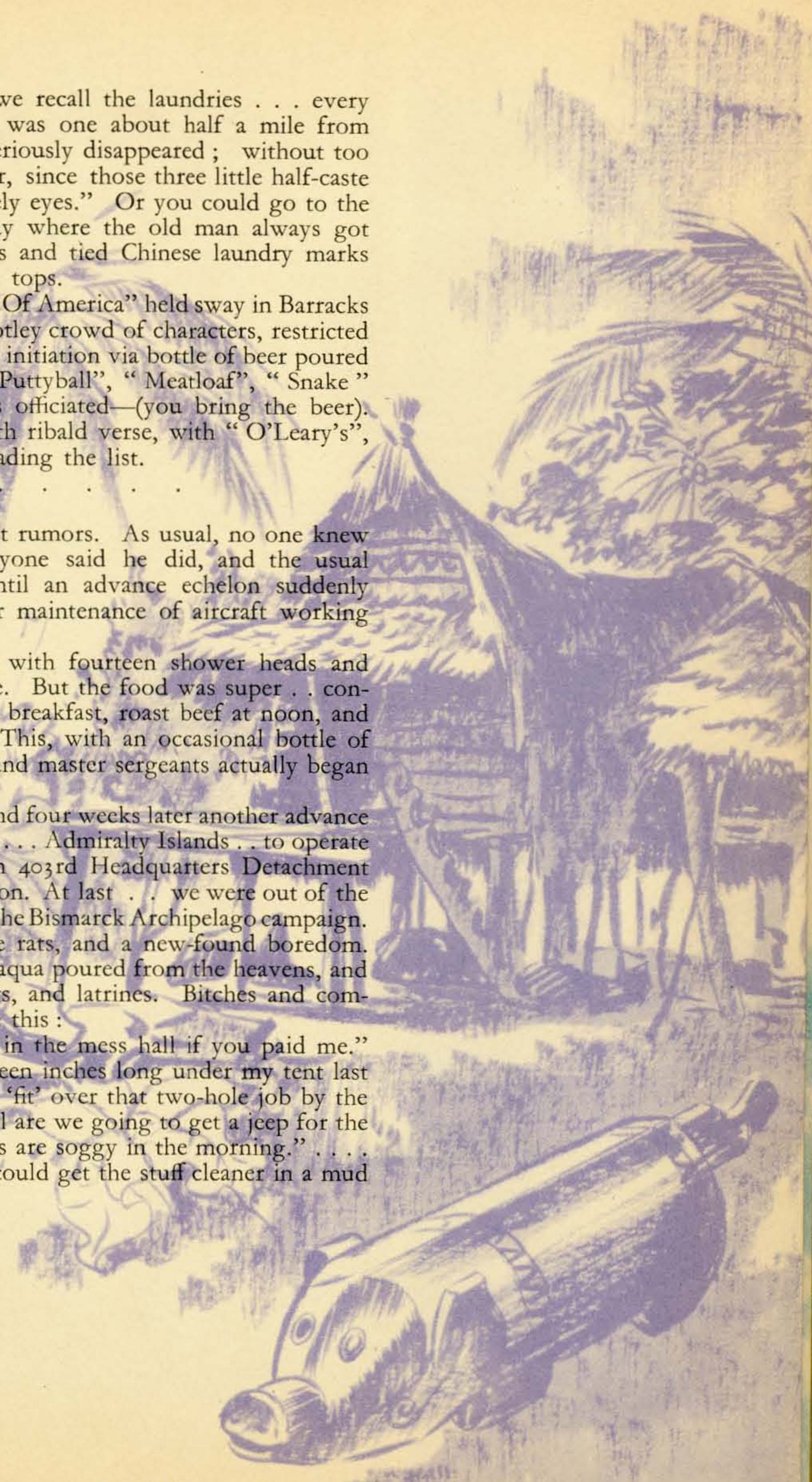
. . . . .

August, 1944, brought hot rumors. As usual, no one knew a damn thing, and everyone said he did, and the usual confusion bubbled up until an advance echelon suddenly flew up to the 'Canal for maintenance of aircraft working further up the line.


They found a dirty area with fourteen shower heads and no water most of the time. But the food was super . . consisting mainly of eggs for breakfast, roast beef at noon, and . . . . steak for supper. This, with an occasional bottle of beer, made life bearable, and master sergeants actually began to volunteer for C.Q.

Movements materialized and four weeks later another advance echelon moved up the line . . . Admiralty Islands . . to operate as a combined camp with 403rd Headquarters Detachment and a 63rd Squadron echelon. At last . . we were out of the Solomons, participating in the Bismarck Archipelago campaign. And fighting the rain, the rats, and a new-found boredom. For 48 hours at a stretch, aqua poured from the heavens, and filled pot holes, tent floors, and latrines. Bitches and complaints ran something like this :

"I couldn't eat that slop in the mess hall if you paid me."  
. . . . . "I saw a rat fourteen inches long under my tent last night."  
. . . . . "I just don't 'fit' over that two-hole job by the beach."  
. . . . . "How in hell are we going to get a jeep for the line?"  
. . . . . "My smokes are soggy in the morning."  
. . . . . "That Q.M. laundry ; I could get the stuff cleaner in a mud







bath." . . . . "Where in hell is the mail?????" . . . . "I only gotta couple of candles, but you can have one." . . . . and the everlasting cry . . . "I wanna go home."

And so it went. Life was dull, soggy, and tough to take. It was part of the game and a job that had to be done, but we longed for a permanent camp where we could build ourselves a few decent shacks and **get away from those damned rats.**

About this time, advance echelons were all over the place. In early September, one from the Thirteenth came through the Admiralties heavily caparisoned with duffel, axes, shovels, guns, and impregnated clothing. They looked like a company of battle-wise infantry. Destination: Netherlands East Indies. They were an envied bunch.

Not long after, the Admiralty echelon set up camp at Wakde . . . . a spot of land off Maffin Bay with an airstrip and a dozen or so shot-up palm trees—that's all, brother. Morale dropped to a new low. The boys were missing "That old gang of mine." Off duty hours were empty with the memories of past good times in New Cal. and the Hebrides. The food. . . well, it just wasn't. The less said the better, O mother o' mine.

Then came the dawn . . September 20, 1944.

Our camp on Biak, Netherlands East Indies, had been readied for occupation and the entire squadron was to move up, stake a claim, and settle down for some intense flight operations up through Morotai and the Philippines.

That brings us up to September 30, 1944. Another page had been written in the history of the "Thirsty" Thirteenth. Eleven months of island-hopping from the Hebrides to the Dutch East Indies. And now let's take a look at what happened on the front lines while we served as the men behind the men; who fought an airborne battle of supplies: Troop Carrier.

## MILITARY HIGHLIGHTS

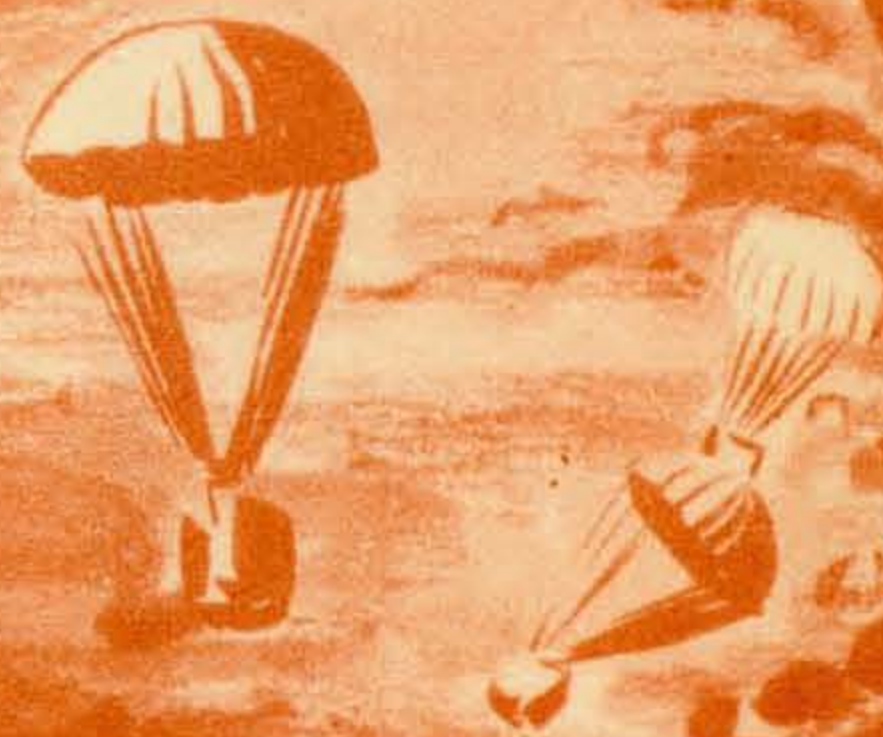
1943 . . . 1944

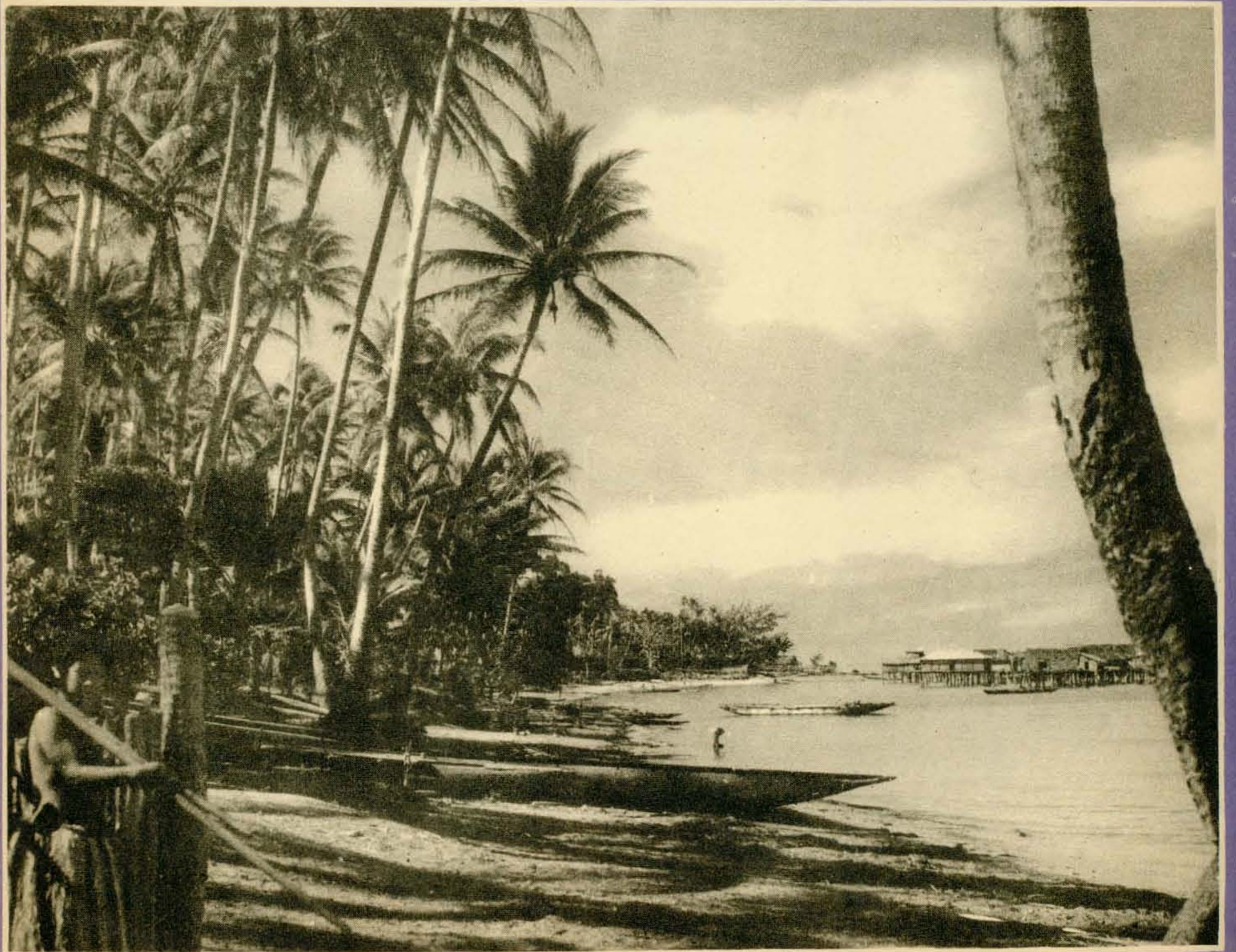
- Nov. 1, '43—Allies land at Empress Augusta Bay, Bougainville; the 13th gets second plane in on new field. Wounded are flown out by the hundreds.
- Dec. 15-26, '43—Allies land at Arawe, Cape Gloucester and New Britain. Rabaul cut off from the south.
- Feb. 29, '44—Admiralty Islands invaded by First Cavalry.
- March 21, '44—Allies land at Emirau and Green Islands; 13th planes operate on new fields immediately.
- May 17-18, '44—U.S. forces seize Wakde Island.
- May 27, '44—Americans storm Biak in the Schoutens in one of the bloodier campaigns.
- June 19-20, '44—Naval battle of the Eastern Philippines breaks Jap naval power in the islands.
- July 2, '44—Paratroopers take Noemfoor Island, southwest of Biak.
- July 31, '44—Sansapor taken by American troops.
- Sep. 15, '44—Pitoe Airdrome, Morotai Island, captured by Allies. Palau invaded.

NOTE: New Guinea and Central Pacific battles not listed.

In that time WE . . . . .

1. Lost one flight crew (attached for operations to another organization.)
2. Fought in the Battle of the Northern Solomons, adding another star to our theatre ribbon.
3. Saw what the Japs had done at Guadalcanal, Munda, the Admiralties . . didn't like it.
4. Found out how the infantry lived.
5. Wondered if, when, and how rotation (the myth) would come.
6. Got homesick and discouraged.







# Home alive in '45???

## CHAPTER 3.

So this was the Dutch East Indies! And what in the name of—we wanted to know, could the Dutch—or anyone else, for that matter—do with those blots of coral and caves lying like discarded carpets off the coast of New Guinea?

Beautiful, beautiful islands . . . No mud, no mosquitos, just brush and coral and a horrible bird that goes by the name of "Wampus"—a degenerate disturber of early morning sleep! Our campsite was a mess of torn-up foxholes, brush and jungle—a challenge to our long dormant pioneering spirit. But the challenge was enough and we dug in for the job.

A test of our ingenuity, enthusiasm, and capacity for work followed since a deadline had been set for completion of the site; shovels and picks soon were at a premium. Bulldozers, road scrapers, ditch diggers, and cement mixers rumbled in from other outfits and worked far into the night, and three weeks of back-breaking work followed.

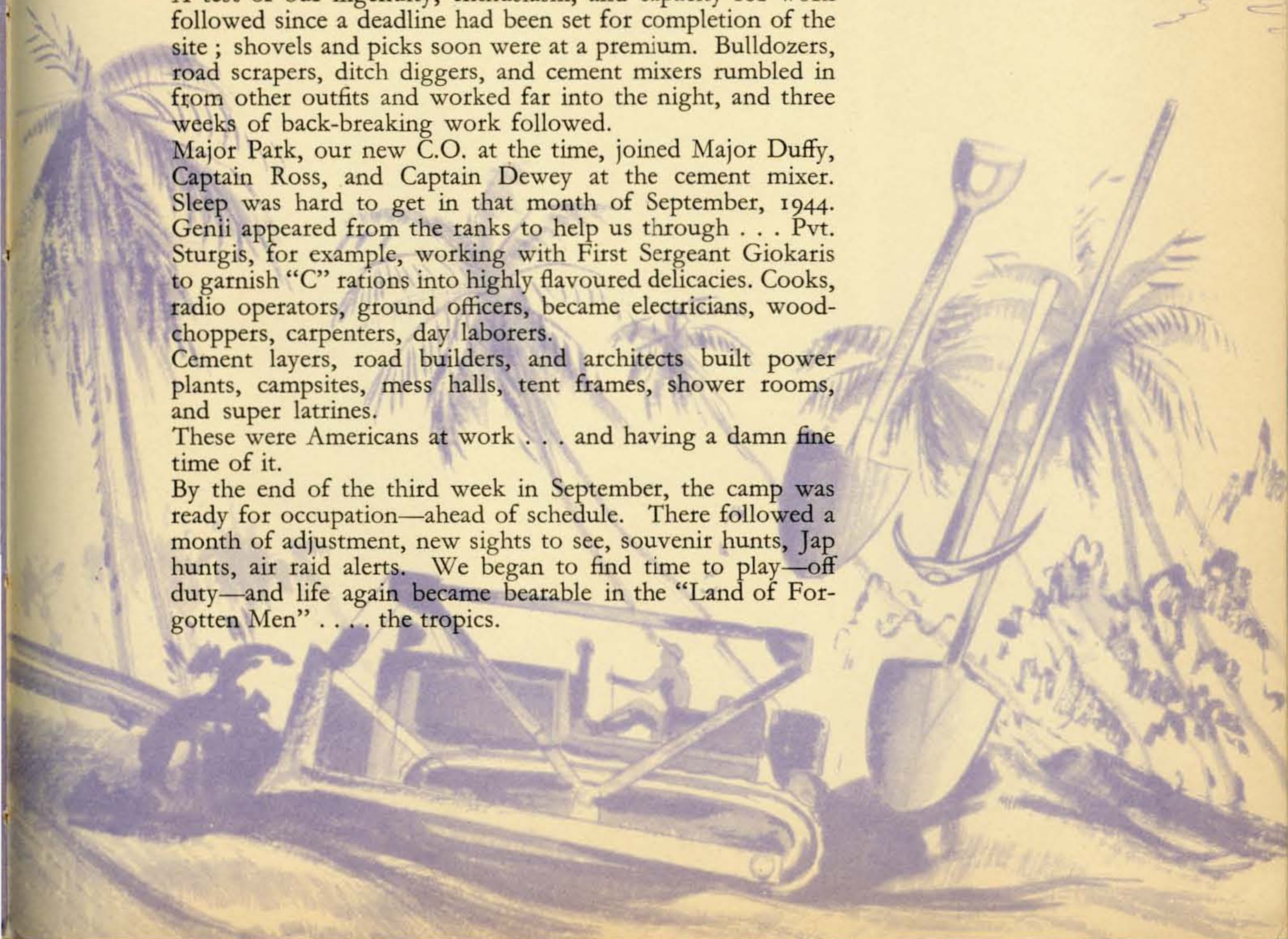
Major Park, our new C.O. at the time, joined Major Duffy, Captain Ross, and Captain Dewey at the cement mixer. Sleep was hard to get in that month of September, 1944. Genii appeared from the ranks to help us through . . . Pvt. Sturgis, for example, working with First Sergeant Giokaris to garnish "C" rations into highly flavoured delicacies. Cooks, radio operators, ground officers, became electricians, wood-choppers, carpenters, day laborers.

Cement layers, road builders, and architects built power plants, campsites, mess halls, tent frames, shower rooms, and super latrines.

These were Americans at work . . . and having a damn fine time of it.

By the end of the third week in September, the camp was ready for occupation—ahead of schedule. There followed a month of adjustment, new sights to see, souvenir hunts, Jap hunts, air raid alerts. We began to find time to play—off duty—and life again became bearable in the "Land of Forgotten Men" . . . the tropics.

BURP

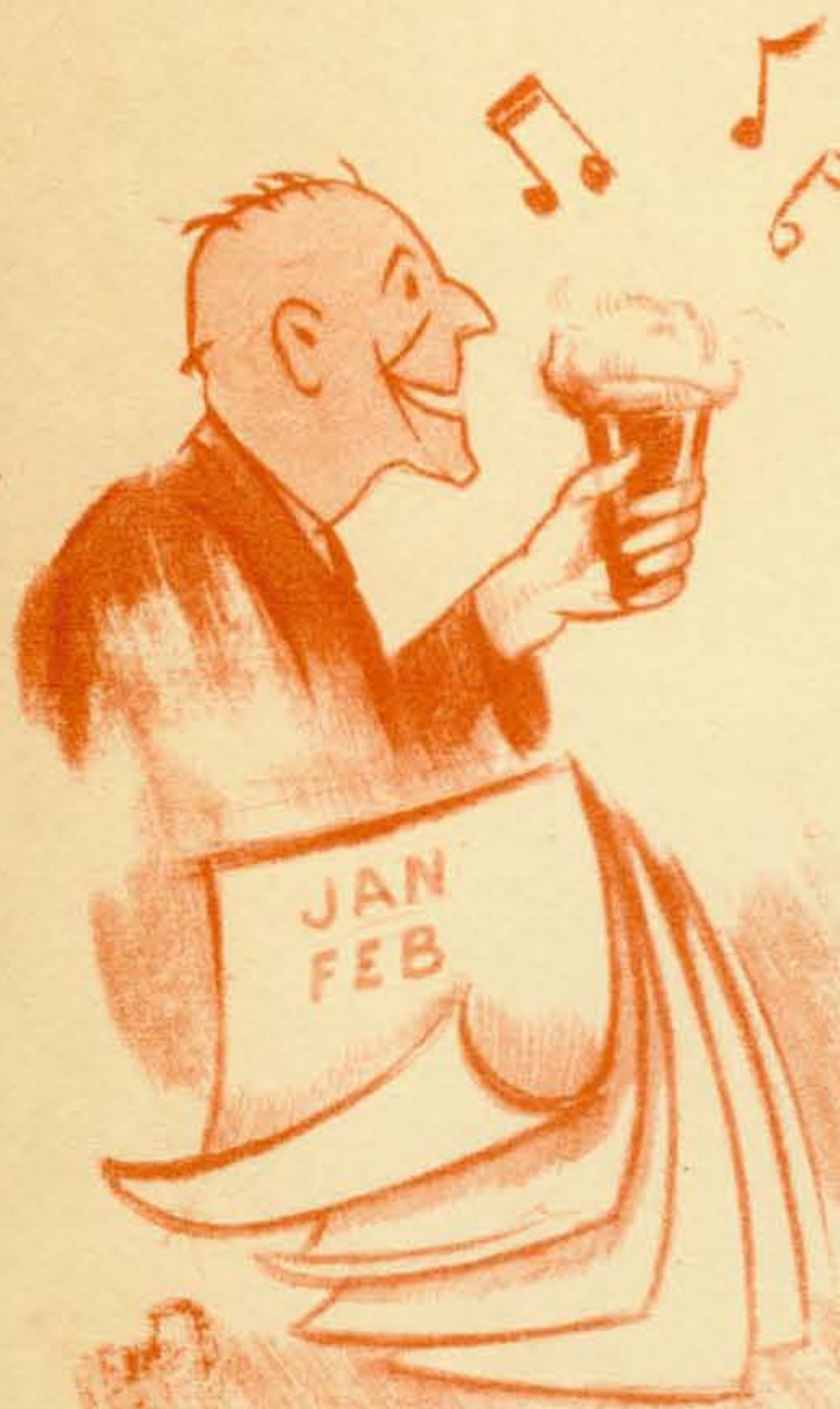


November, 1944, marked the completion of two years continuous operations overseas. The usual celebration came off at Duffy's Tavern, a self-styled brawl of great proportions. We were observing another marker in that long road home, and the songs drifted late into the night: sentimental favorites such as "My Old Kentucky Home", "Carry Me Back", and, yes, "Deep in the Heart of Texas." It was our night to be homesick and we did a damn good job of it. We figured twenty four months overseas was a hell of a long time to be away from the wife, the boy, and a hot shower after work.

We come now to December 12, Group Activation Day for the 403rd Troop Carrier Group, and a clean-up for the Thirsty Thirteenth athletic teams. We recall taking a first in touch football, horseshoes, and beer drinking, a second in volleyball and softball and our Achilles heel—tug o' war—found us drawing a poor third. The beer drinking contest was a cinch with Sgt. Hartline at the helm, the 'Thirstiest Thirteenth' man we have ever seen. In retrospect, we recall the day with pleasure; it was a hell of a lot of fun, and a chance to get acquainted with the 63rd and 64th and Group Headquarters boys. This is the sort of thing that goes toward the making of an excellent group spirit. We recommend frequent repetition.

Biak, December 25, 1944, saw a coming out of squadron talent in one of the whackiest shows this side of Frisco. A take-off on Olson and Johnson's great moneymaker, "Hellzapoppin", the Thirsty Thirteenth's "Bellzapoppin" packed 'em in left and right for a grand opening on Christmas night, with lyrics by Sergeants McAllister and Brouse, dialogue by Captain Yeomans, Lt. Eddie White, Staff Sergeant Charles Enfield. Copious suggestions and corrections were offered by the audience. The Biak Blisters, under the able direction of George "Hot Lips" Thear (spare time radio operator), furnished the musical background.

January, 1945, brought in the first rumours of a WAC detachment being in the immediate vicinity. Civvy shoes came out of mouldy closets, stock was taken on insignia, clean shirts, cig supply and the "beverage situation." The rumors materialized and Duffy's Tavern rang with the pleasant

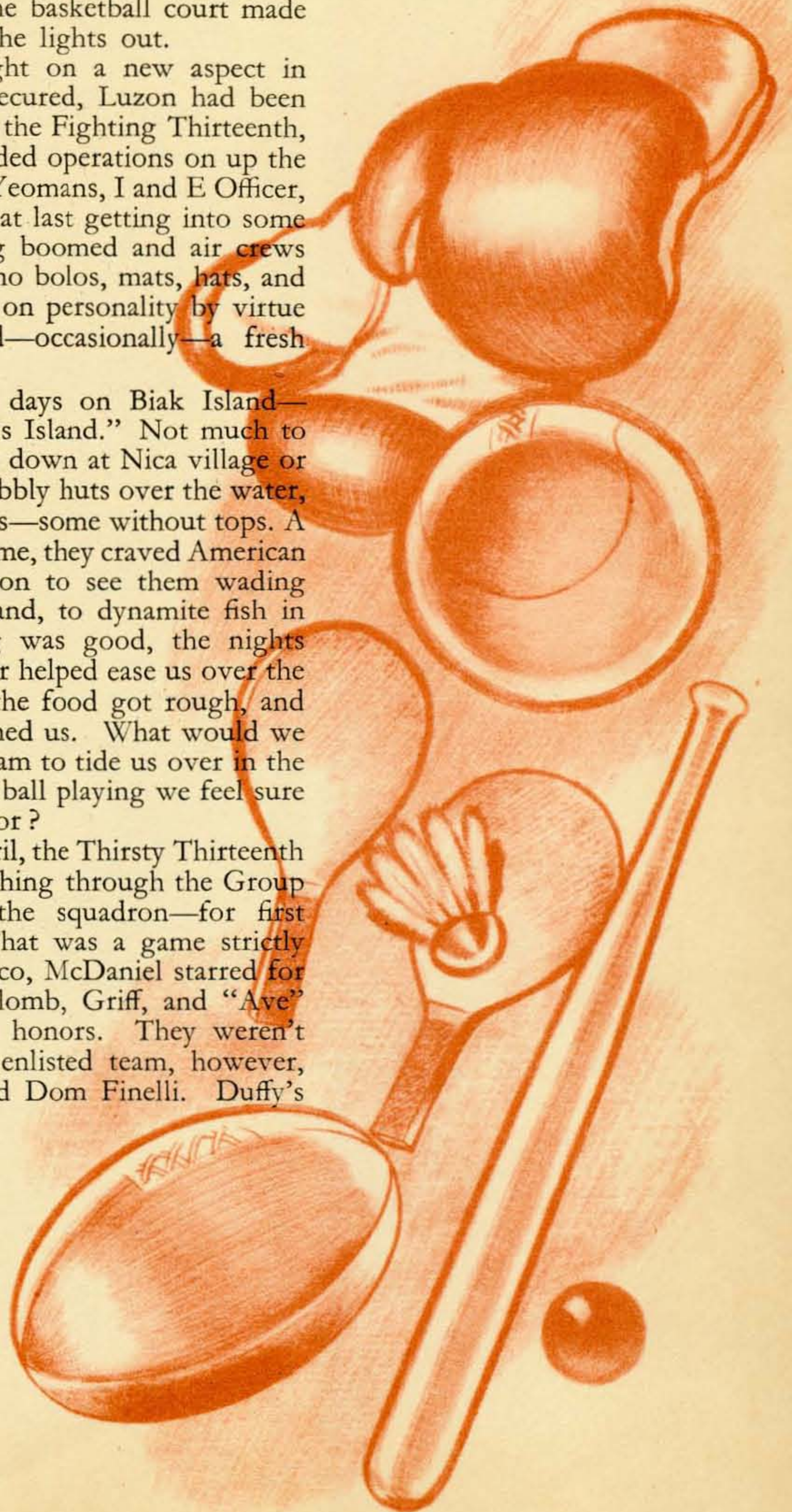


tinkle of feminine voices. Casanovas emerged from the rubble of fatigues and coveralls. Thanks to First Sergeant Giokaris, Dom Finelli, and Sgt. Geier, an active social life materialized and weekly dances brightened the tropical night with songs and laughter. The basketball court made an excellent patio—more so with the lights out.

February, March, and April brought on a new aspect in Squadron operations. Leyte was secured, Luzon had been invaded and the Jungle Air Force, the Fighting Thirteenth, called on the 403rd for some extended operations on up the line. Followed lectures by Captain Yeomans, I and E Officer, on life in the Philippines. We were at last getting into some "civilization," as it were. Trading boomed and air crews soon filled the S-2 office with Filipino bolos, mats, hats, and fierce Moro knives. Iceboxes took on personality by virtue of fresh bananas, pineapples, and—occasionally—a fresh chicken.

We recall many long, hot, sultry days on Biak Island—now termed "the Rock" or "Devil's Island." Not much to do. Not much to see. The natives down at Nica village or up at Sorido, perhaps, with their wobbly huts over the water, bundled women in Mother Hubbards—some without tops. A happy, laughing people most of the time, they craved American cigarettes, and it was not uncommon to see them wading out over the shoals, cigarette in hand, to dynamite fish in modern style. But the swimming was good, the nights cool, and an occasional ration of beer helped ease us over the rough spots when mail slackened, the food got rough, and a longing for civilization overwhelmed us. What would we have done without our basketball team to tide us over in the evenings with a quality and style of ball playing we feel sure equals anything north of the equator?

During the months of March and April, the Thirsty Thirteenth hoopsters were in their glory, smashing through the Group basketball league to tie—within the squadron—for first place, officers vs. enlisted men. That was a game strictly "out of this world." Senta, Carrasco, McDaniel starred for the enlisted men, while Foote, Golomb, Griff, and "Ave" Lorio carried most of the officer's honors. They weren't good enough to cope with a hot enlisted team, however, as coached by Sergeants "Gio" and Dom Finelli. Duffy's

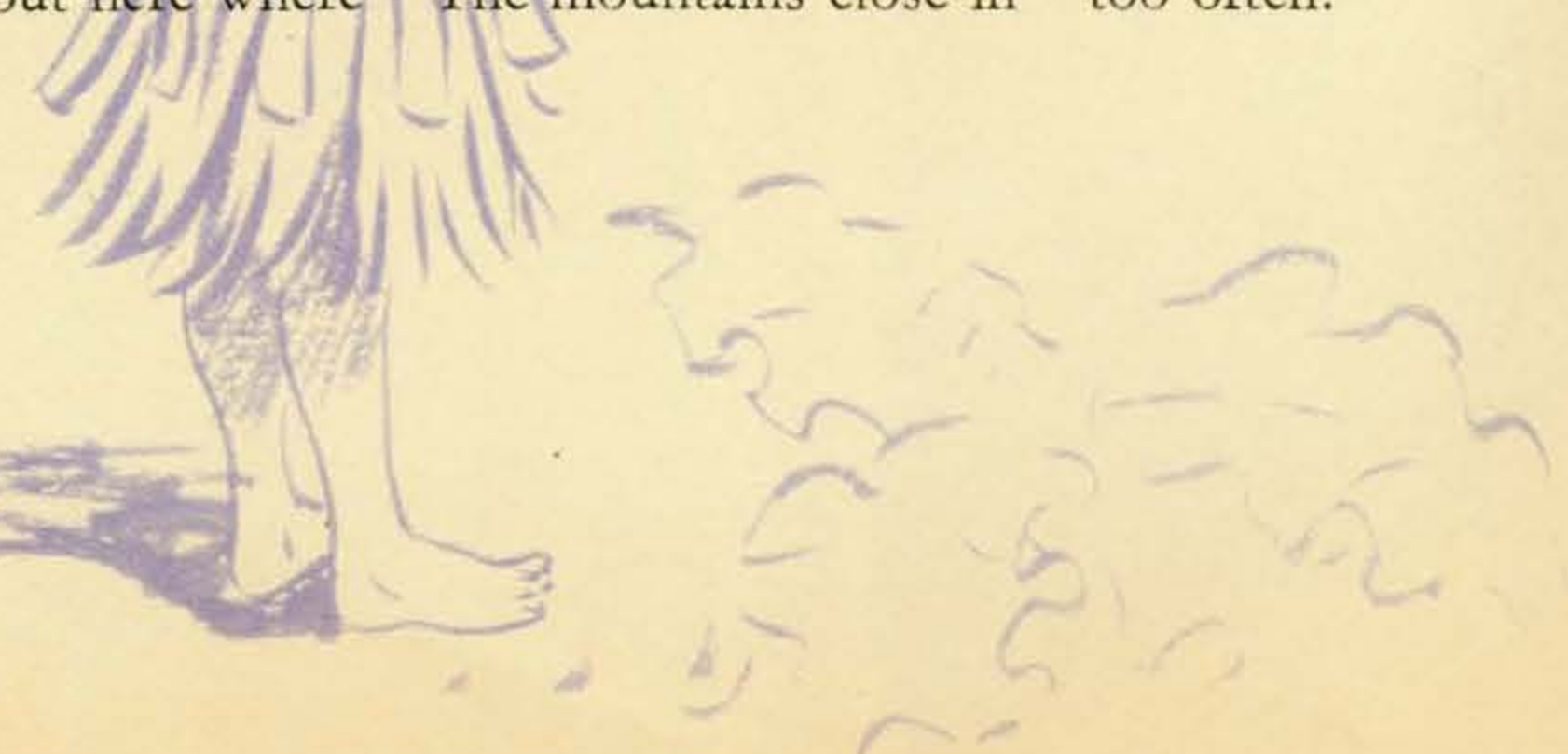


Tavern echoed far into the night with a victory celebration for the enlisted men—Group Champs! Soon after that, an all star squad composed of 13th officers and enlisted men set out to take the island championship. We would have, too, if the 64th Troop Carrier boys hadn't played such a sterling game of ball. Nice going, boys, but it was tough to take—and thanks for the memories.

Speaking of basketball reminds us of that game one night between the cooks all in white and the ground officers—"paddlefeet." A puckish fray of short duration with apologies again to Olson and Johnson, it was garnished by beer served on the court, cigars and cigarettes between quarters, and a ref (Doc Whitaker) who refused to watch while Captain "Snow Shoes" Norfleet climbed the ladder to drop one in for the officers. We think the cooks were beaten in that one, but it doesn't really matter, judging from the laughs on the sidelines. One of those things you can try only once. We could tell a hundred more tales about the boys who kept us laughing out here where we make our own world and have to like it. But time and space direct that we leave the unwritten stories for you to hash over in that stateside bar in Frisco some sweet day when all this mess is over. Our story is brought up to 1 May, 1945. If we've left a few gaps, omitted a few important names in the story of the Thirteenth Troop Carrier Squadron, we hope the photo section to follow will fill in with its own story.

Our story—your story—is by no means finished. Someone must take it up from here and capture the anecdotes in print; must preserve our spirit in writing for the crews yet to join our ranks. We had to stop somewhere and, since May marked the end of the war in Europe, and the beginning of a new hope for a quick victory on this side, we decided to get this out while the old boys yet remained with us. Who knows, we may be home alive in forty-five.

"Two years c/o Postmaster" has been written and compiled by and for members of the Thirteenth Troop Carrier Squadron, 403rd Troop Carrier Group. To the Old Boulders who have carried out their duties so diligently for the past three years, we say "We're damn proud of what you've done for this squadron." To those new in our ranks, we wish to offer this album as a living record of what makes a squadron tick, out here where "The mountains close in" too often.



## MILITARY HIGHLIGHTS

### 1944 . . . 1945

Oct. 20, '44—Americans return to the Philippines with landings on Leyte.

Oct. 22-27, '44—Second Battle of Philippine Sea ends Japanese naval strength in Pacific War.

Nov. 24, '44—Superforts make first Tokyo Raid from Saipan.

Dec. 25, '44—General MacArthur announces end of Leyte campaign.

Jan. 9, '45—Americans land on Luzon.

Feb. 4, '45—First American troops enter Manila.

Feb. 19, '45—U.S. Marines land on Iwo Jima, 750 miles from Tokyo.

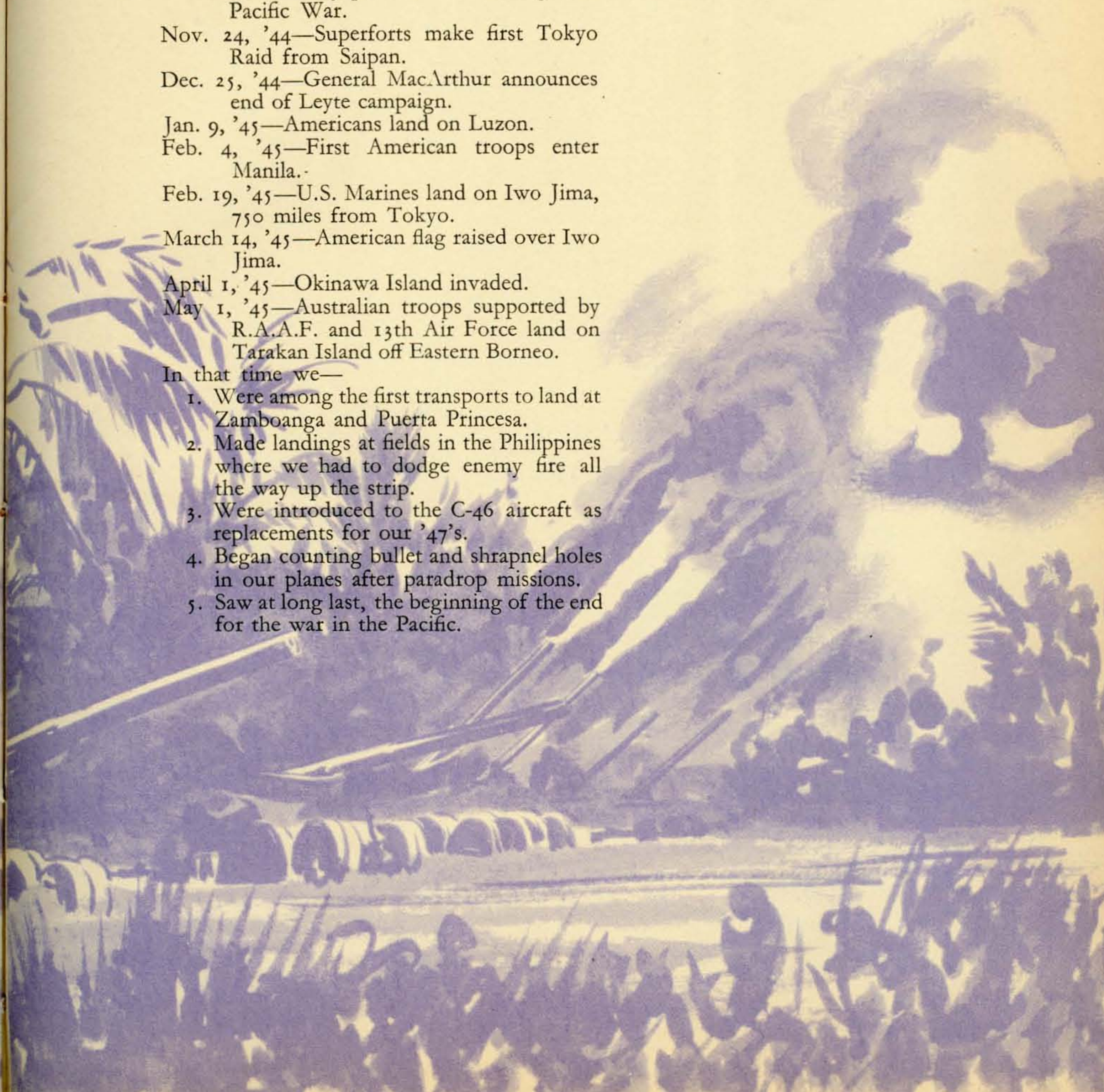
March 14, '45—American flag raised over Iwo Jima.

April 1, '45—Okinawa Island invaded.

May 1, '45—Australian troops supported by R.A.A.F. and 13th Air Force land on Tarakan Island off Eastern Borneo.

In that time we—

1. Were among the first transports to land at Zamboanga and Puerto Princesa.
2. Made landings at fields in the Philippines where we had to dodge enemy fire all the way up the strip.
3. Were introduced to the C-46 aircraft as replacements for our '47's.
4. Began counting bullet and shrapnel holes in our planes after paradrop missions.
5. Saw at long last, the beginning of the end for the war in the Pacific.



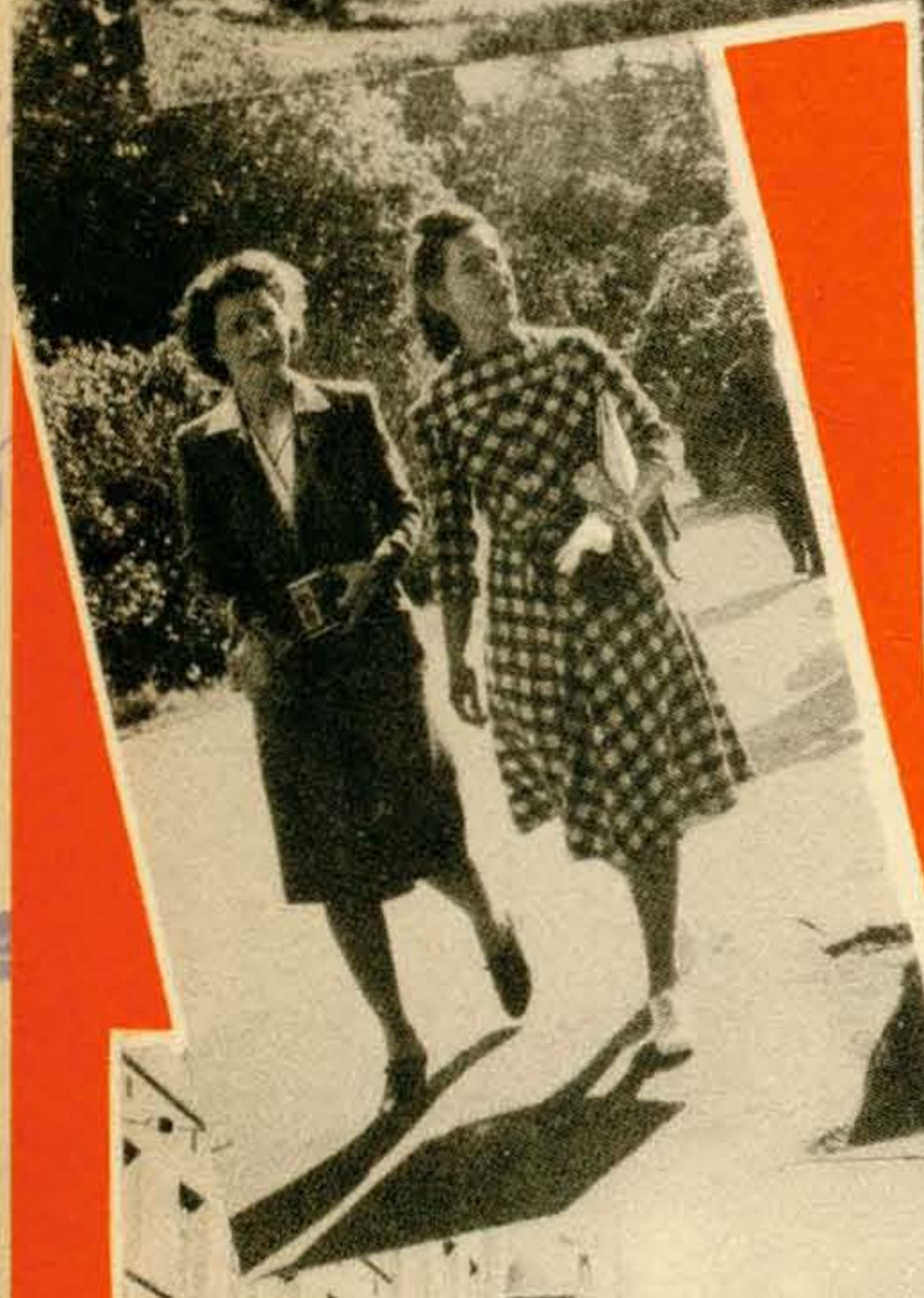
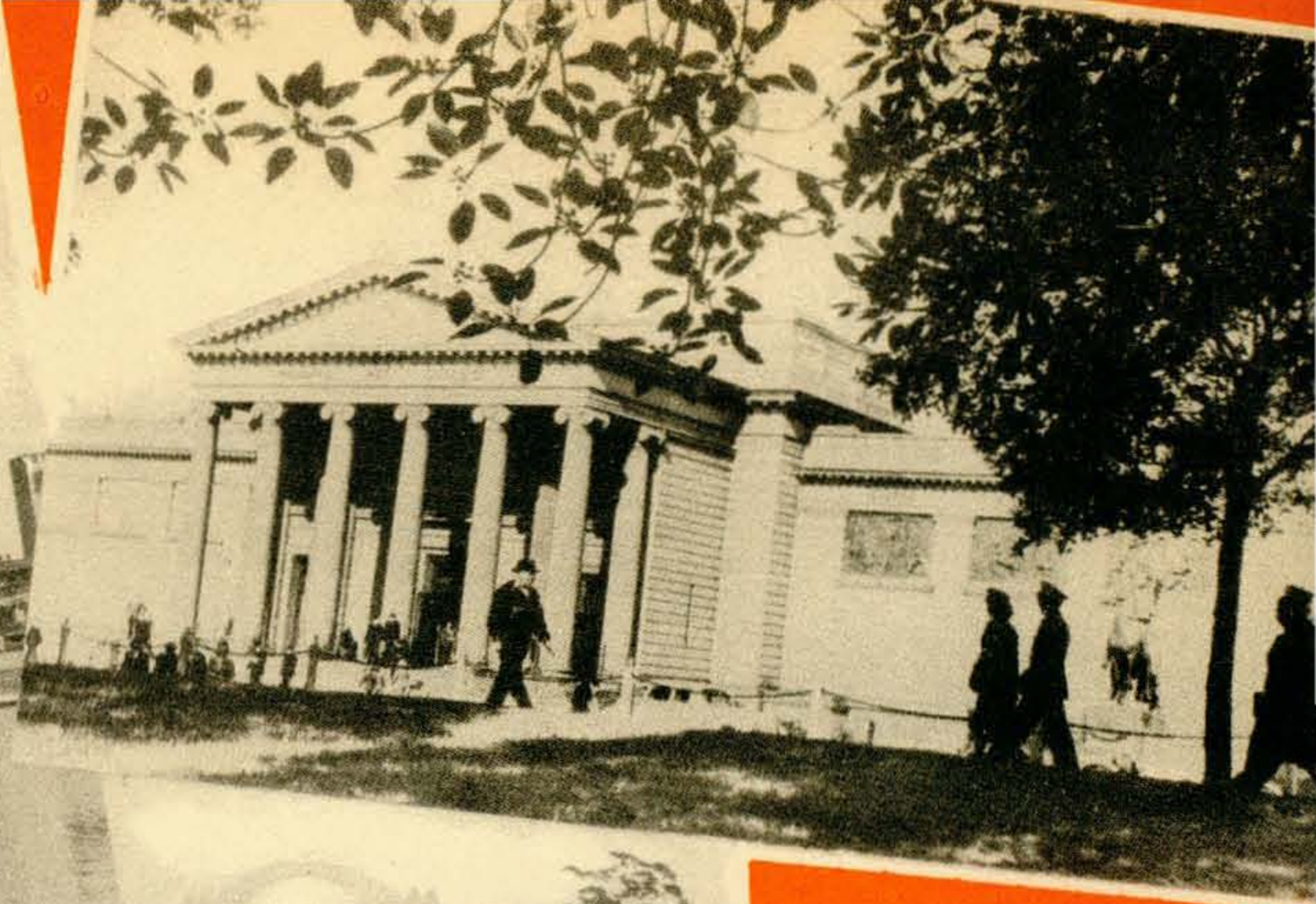




**SECTION 2.**



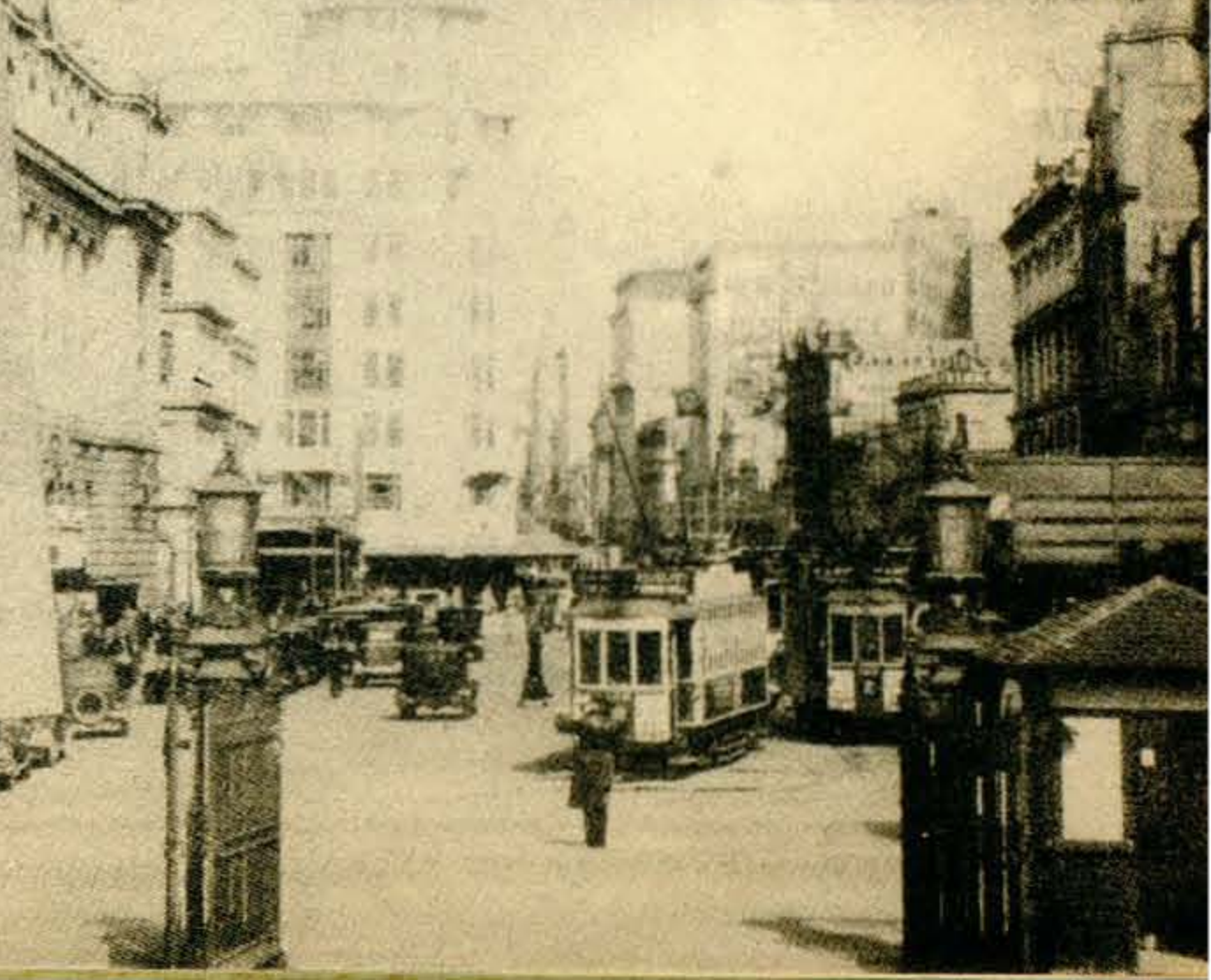
*Photos*



*Leave Spots..* AUSTRALIA  
NEW ZEALAND

Although the days have passed since the Thirsty Thirteenth insignia was a familiar sight on the streets of Auckland and Sydney, memories of frivolous rest leaves linger with those Old Boulders who knew, back in '43, the friendliness and hospitality of New Zealand, land of scenic beauty, fresh milk, and the one and only Kia Ora. Sydney, too, was a haven of hospitality and hilarity for air crews in 1944 and early '45. Ah, memories and broken hearts!

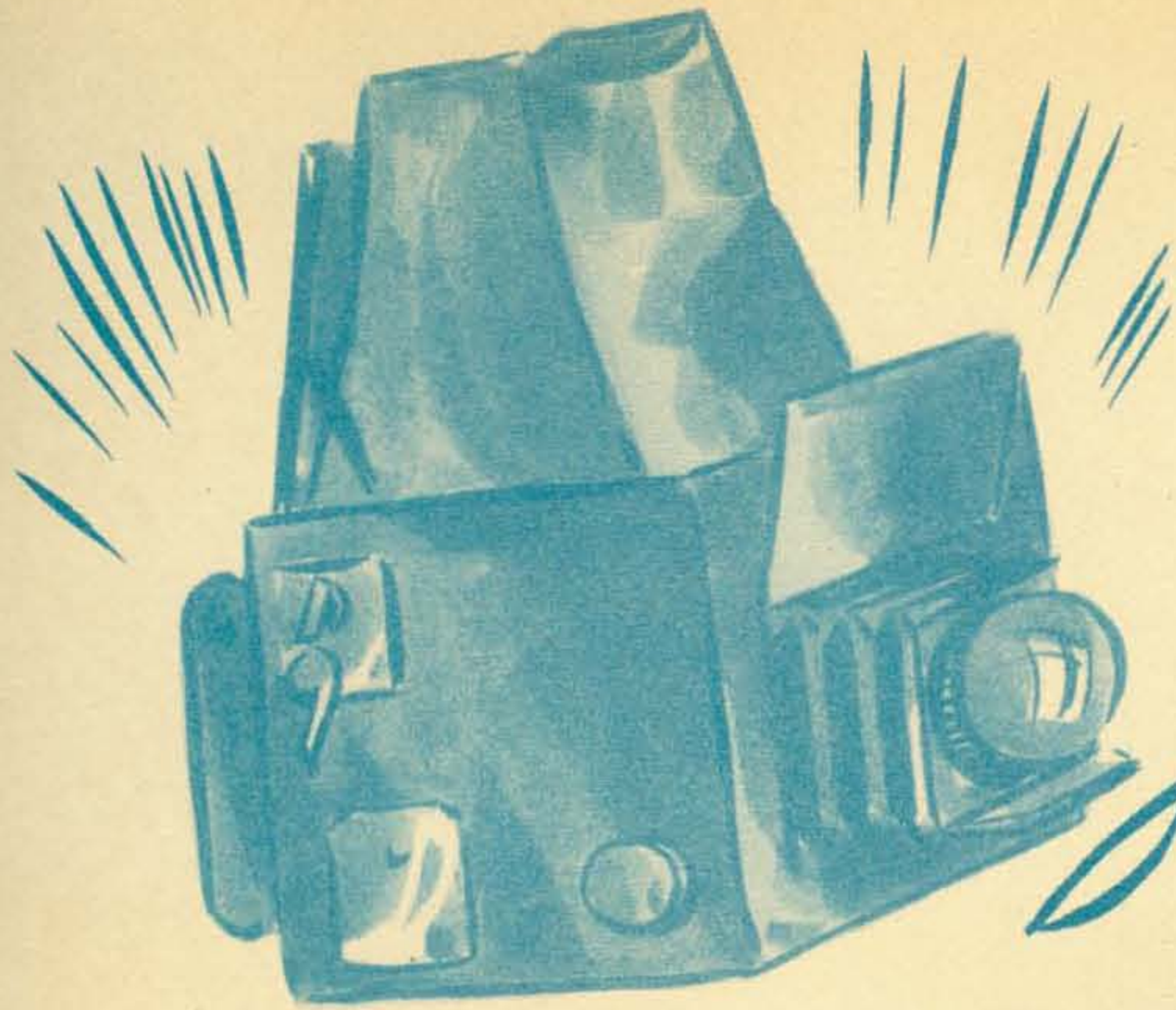






*Film Pre-view*

**TWO YEARS c/o POSTMASTER**



# Looking through the Lens

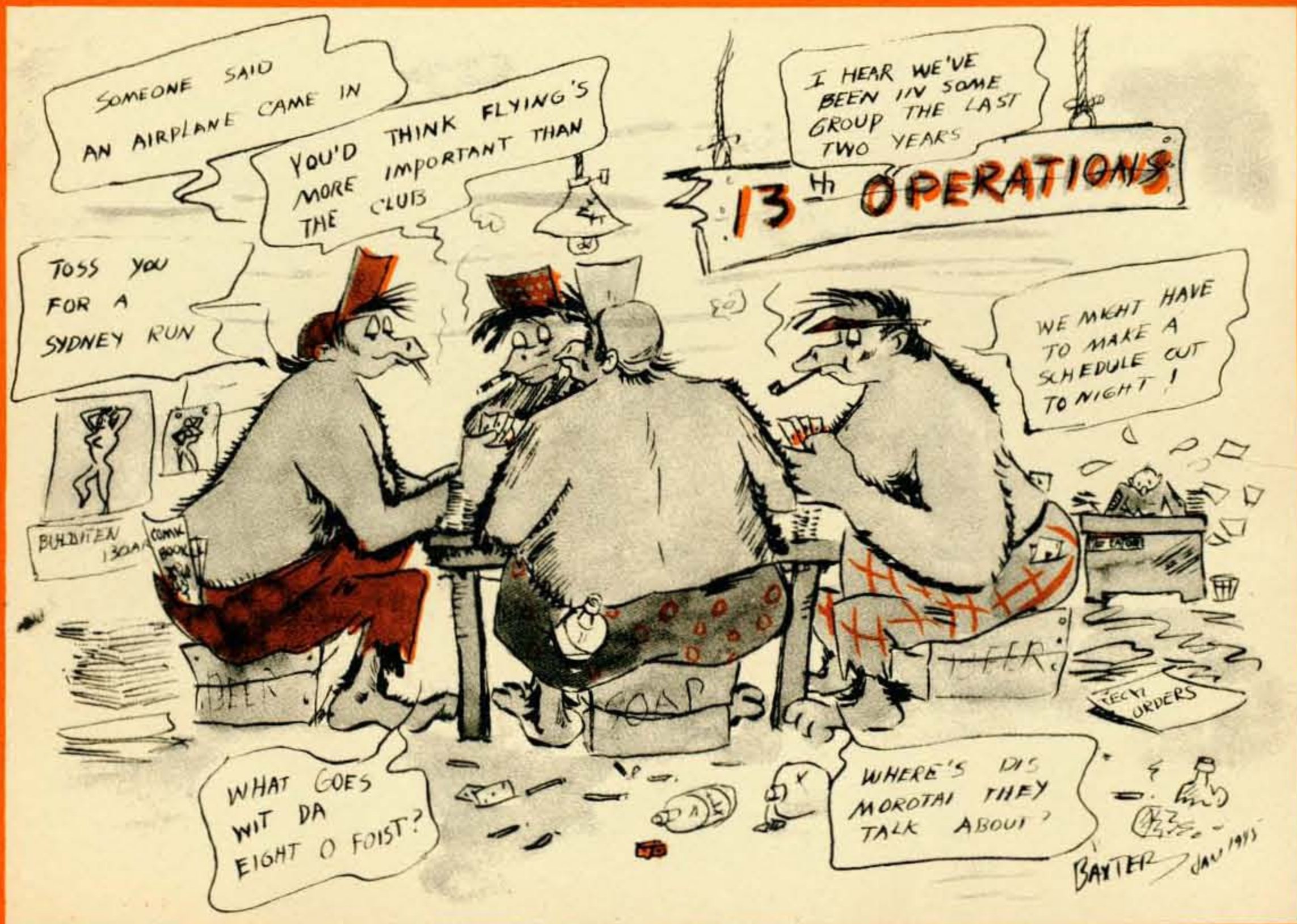
In the pages to follow the staff of "Two Years c/o Postmaster" has sought to bring its readers an accurate bird's eye view of squadron life as seen through the camera eye. The division of squadron activities by departments has been arbitrary and arranged for convenience and clarity. If all personnel are not included somewhere in the photo section, they are requested to remember that this is a cross section, not a roster, of what we believe to be the heart of our life in the tropics. Looking through the lens, then, we shall see how the Thirteenth Troop Carrier Squadron works, plays, and plans during "the long hours."



Cpl. Bill Bond, Squadron Photographer



"The Lab"





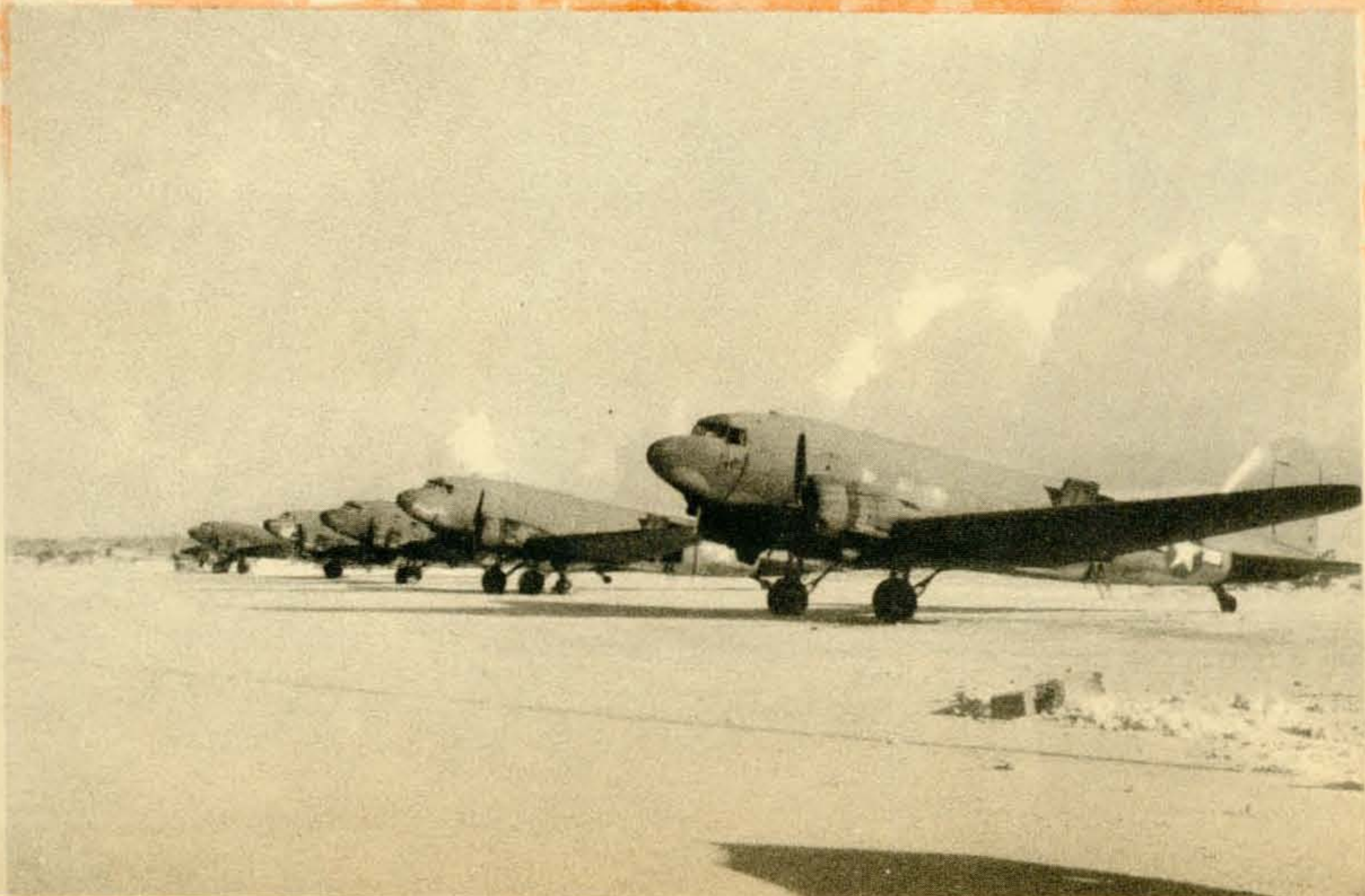
# Photo Section

## PART I. OPERATIONS



### *Our Ultimate Goal*

To keep as many  
planes flying as  
often as possible  
with the greatest  
degree of safety  
to all.



13  
  
**OPERATIONS**

These are the boys who burn the midnight oil. Theirs is a responsibility known and appreciated by all pilots past and present who have depended upon the operations gang for flight schedules, posting of monthly time, awards and decorations, training schedules, and maintenance of flight records. Congrat's, boys, for a job well done "behind the scenes."

*OPERATIONS*  
**Gang**

S./Sgt. Robert Weekley  
 Cpl. Alvin Markowitz  
 Cpl. Jack Taylor

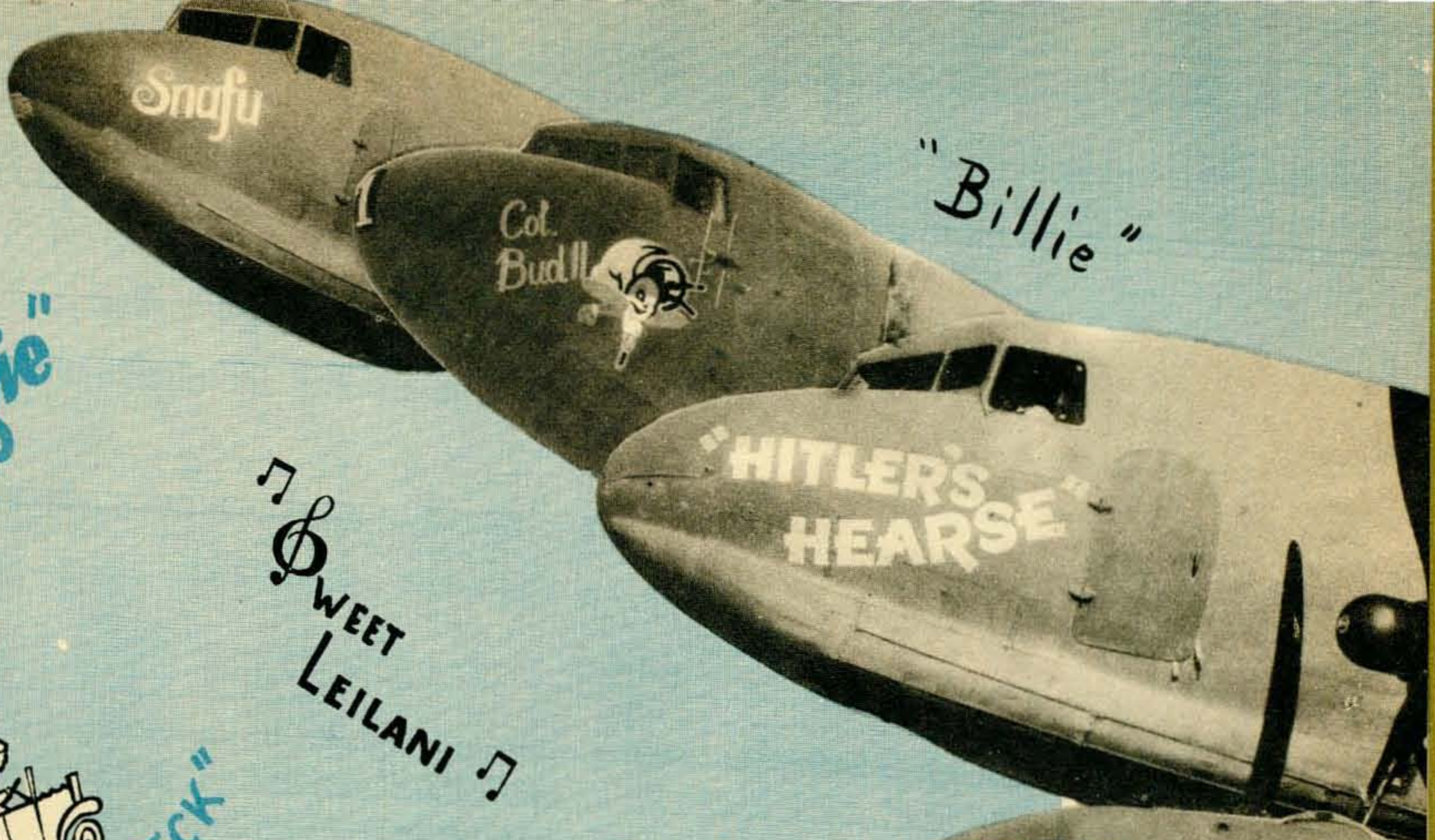


Cpl. Taylor and T./Sgt. Bill Eaton, N.C.O., in charge, post flight schedule in New Hebrides.

**OPERATIONS STAFF AT BIAK**  
 Left to right : S/Sgt. Weekley, Cpl. Markowitz, Capt. Harold Wilkening, M/Sgt. Alva Ayres and T/Sgt. Eaton.







"Pudgie"

Col. Budll

"Billie"

"HITLER'S HEARSE"

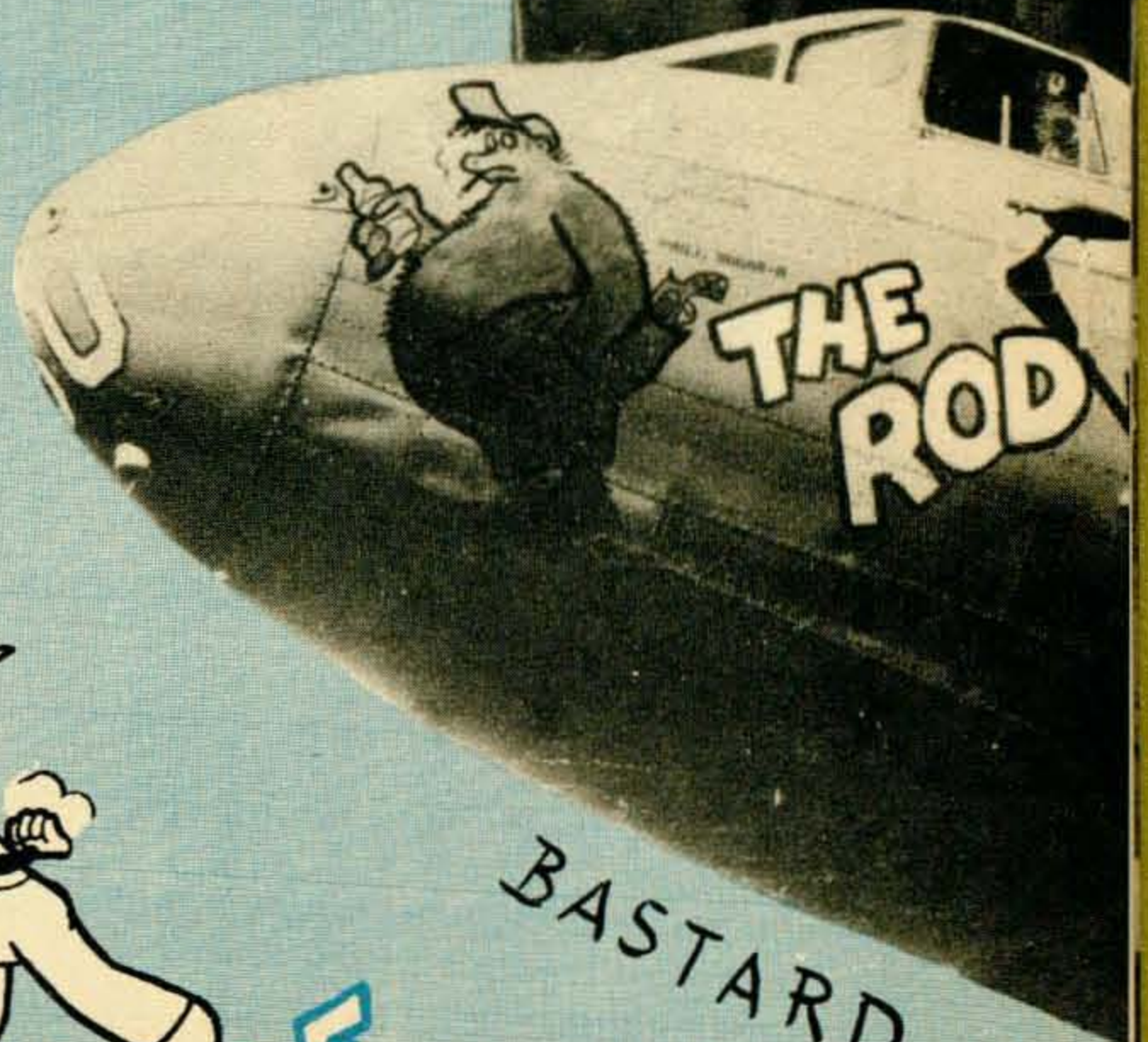
♪ WEET LEILANI ♪

"RAMBLING WRECK"



THE WOLF

# The Dependables

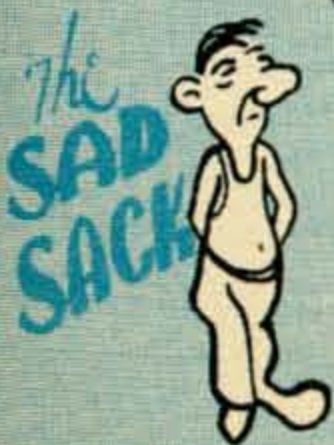


THE ROD

BASTARD



GREEN GOBOLED GHOST



The SAD SACK



THE WOLF



# Flight "A"

Captain Carl L. Sackett, Flight Leader



Top Row, L. to R.

Lt. Richard Jenkins, Lt. Allen Alexander, Lt. Albert Fitzpatrick, Lt. Henry Zarek, Lt. Gray Lange.

Second Row, L. to R.:

Lt. Elwood Anderson Lt. Otto Finkbeiner, Lt. Marco Cirincion, Lt. Robert Smith, Lt. Harry Gannon.

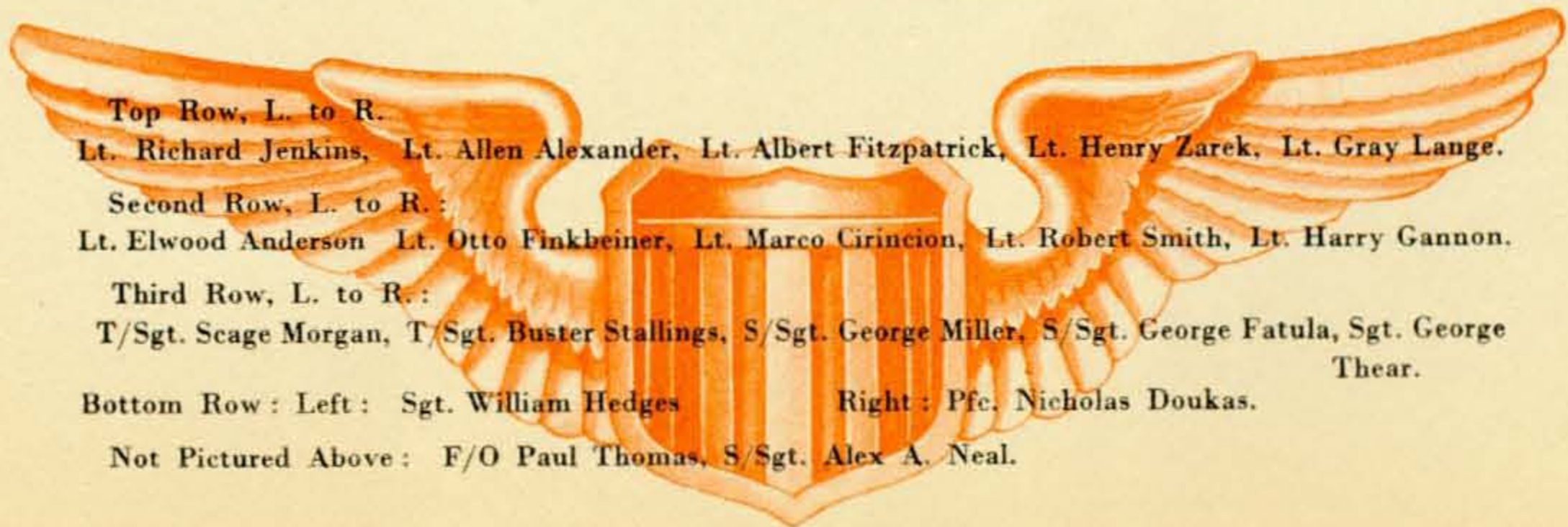
Third Row, L. to R.:

T/Sgt. Scage Morgan, T/Sgt. Buster Stallings, S/Sgt. George Miller, S/Sgt. George Fatula, Sgt. George Thear.

Bottom Row : Left : Sgt. William Hedges

Right : Pfc. Nicholas Doukas.

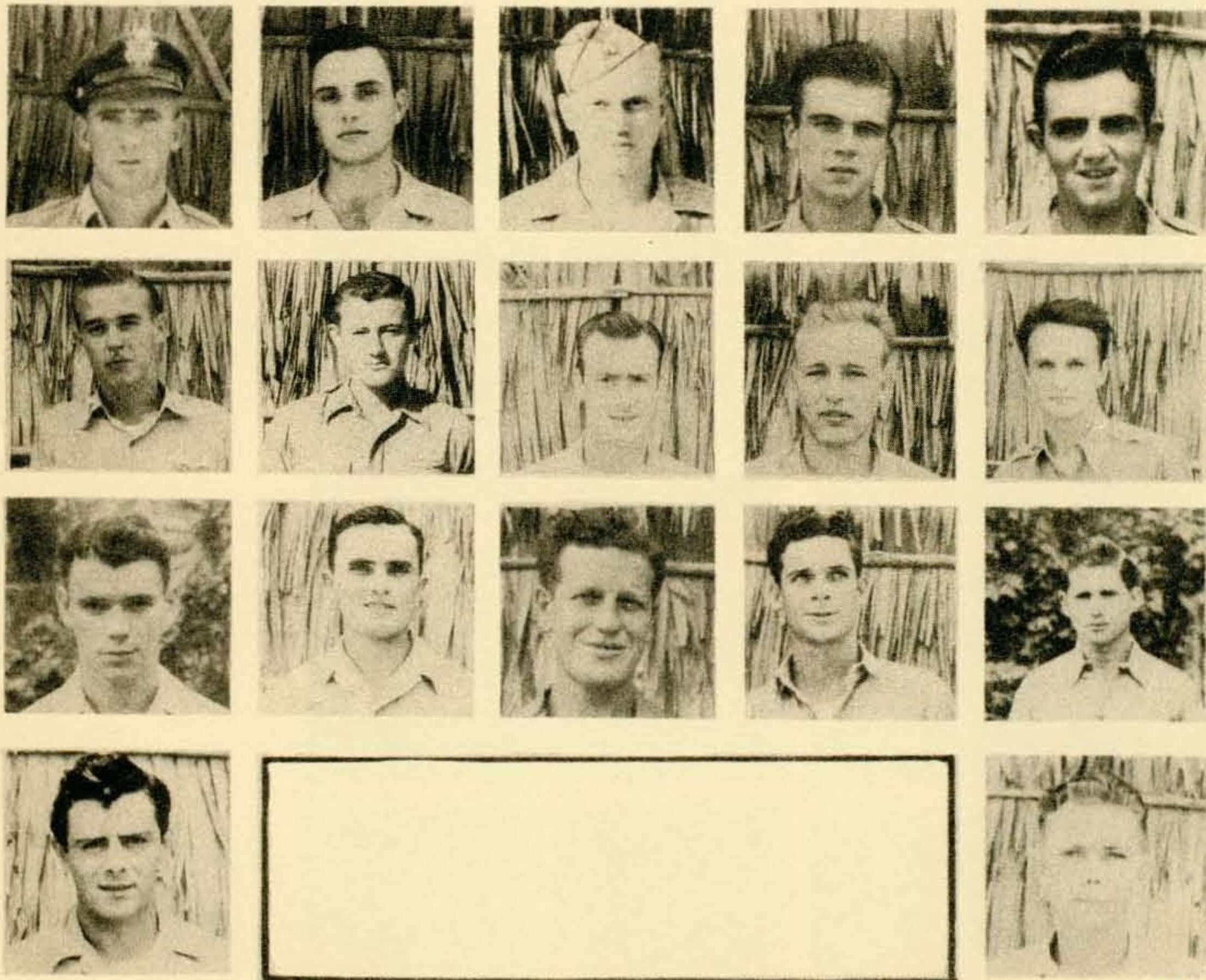
Not Pictured Above : F/O Paul Thomas, S/Sgt. Alex A. Neal.



# Flight "B"



Captain Paul B. DeCoursey, Flight Leader



Top Row, L. to R.:  
 Lt. Clarence Thompson, Lt. Walter Bridges, Lt. Dale Lindberg, Lt. Ralsey Scofield, Lt. Charles Byers.  
 (Deceased),

Second Row, L. to R.:  
 F/O Rufus Hughes, F/O Gary Baker, Lt. Thomas Keltz, Lt. Merle Martin, Lt. Harvey Willman.

Third Row, L. to R.:  
 T/Sgt. Keith Boss, Sgt. John Payne, Sgt. Milton Elfman, S/Sgt. James Bradford, S/Sgt. Alex Hershberg.

Bottom Row, Left: S/Sgt. Alphonso Viscusi. Right: Sgt. Leroy Sunderman.

Not Pictured Above: Capt. Hans Mehn, F/O John G. Domarsky, F/O Carl V. Casdia.





Lt. Harry C. Molvar,  
Flight Leader



# Flight "C"



Top Row, L. to R. :  
Lt. Wilbur Creelman,  
Lt. John Jacklin,  
Lt. John Buchen,  
Lt. James Buchen.



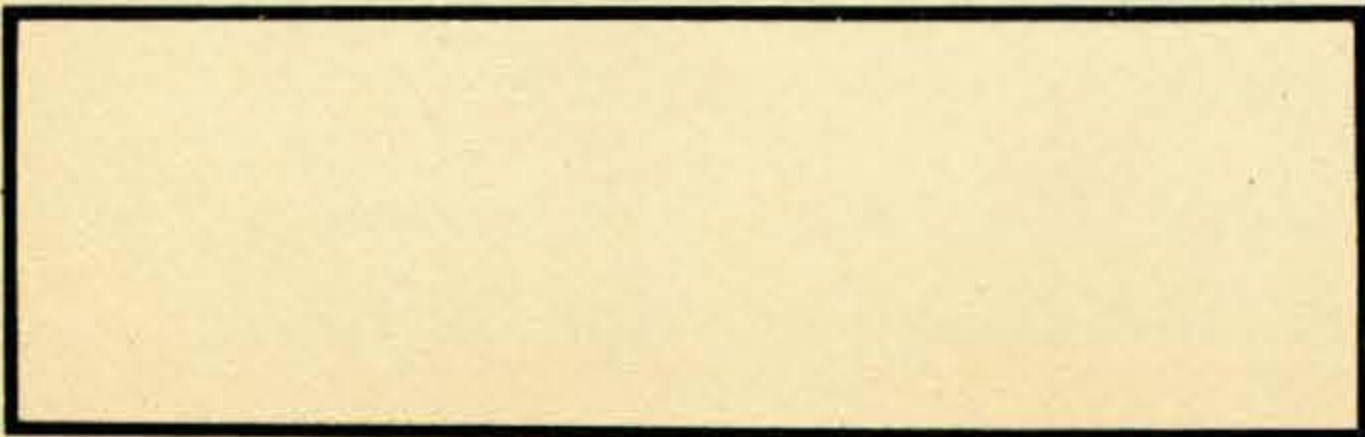
Second Row, L. to R. :  
Lt. William Goodman,  
Lt. Darrel Huston,  
F/O George Laycock,  
Lt. Paul Epstein.



Third Row, L. to R. :  
Lt. George Goudy,  
Lt. Mervin Hirsch,  
T/Sgt. Eugene Venezia  
S/Sgt. Ernest Belto.



Fourth Row, L. to R. :  
S/Sgt. Francis Friel,  
S/Sgt. Remi DeClerck,  
Sgt. Paul Reberry,  
Sgt. Luther Brady.



Bottom :  
Cpl. William Blackwell  
Not Pictured Above :  
Lt. Ronald Begg,  
Lt. Herschel Blakeney,  
Lt. Samuel Prather.



# Flight "D"



Lt. Anthony A. Drago,  
Flight Leader

Top Row, L. to R. :  
Lt. William Hackney,  
Lt. Gene Cowles,  
Lt. Albert Ford,  
Lt.  
Edward Freudenthal



Second Row, L. to R. :  
Lt. Wallace Hager,  
Lt. Roland Mariani,  
F/O Heyward Trout,  
Lt. Robert Sennholtz.



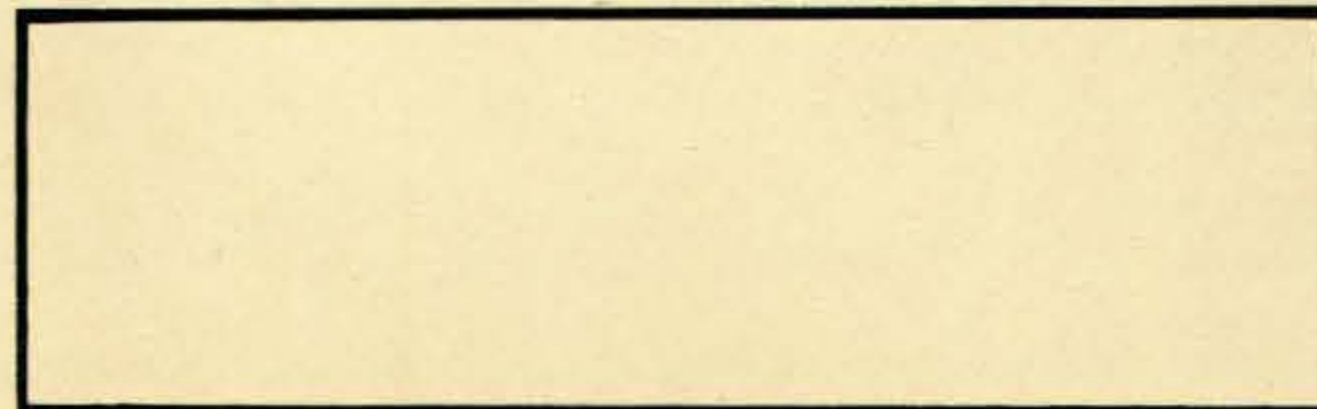
Third Row, L. to R. :  
Lt. Charles Weisner,  
Lt. Richard Maginot,  
T/Sgt. Homer Bowen,  
T/Sgt. Reg Prichard.



Fourth Row, L. to R. :  
Sgt. Ernest Sodergren,  
Pfc.  
Harrington MacDonald  
S/Sgt. John Voorhees,  
Cpl. Robert Osman.



Bottom :  
Pvt. Lewis Amelang.  
Not Pictured Above :  
Lt. Alvin Steverson.





# Flight "E"

Lt. William G. McDowell, Flight Leader



Top Row, L. to R. :  
 Lt. Charlie Clark, Lt. Rodney Allard, Lt. Graham Rice, Lt. Martin Hamasian, Lt. William Foote.  
 (Deceased)

Second Row, L. to R. :  
 Lt. John Harpster, Lt. Wilbert McGee, F/O John Domarsky, F/O James Kane, Lt. Adolph Lorio.

Third Row, L. to R. :  
 T/Sgt. Anthony DeLoss, T/Sgt. John Holbrook, S/Sgt. William Goodwin, S/Sgt. Aubin Lamb, S/Sgt. Arvin Edwards.

Bottom Row, Left: Sgt. Slavko Kosovick. Right: Sgt. William Caldwell.

# Flight "F"



Lt. Allen Stoltzmann, Flight Leader



Top Row, L. to R. :  
 Lt. Edward White, Lt. George Curyea, Lt. John Weaver, Lt. Rufus Wysong, Lt. Charles Lucas.  
 Second Row, L. to R. :  
 Lt. Ernest Howard, Lt. John Smith, Lt. Edward Beckman, F/O Jack Roberts, Lt. Frank Stanton.  
 Third Row, L. to R. :  
 T/Sgt. James Hartline, S/Sgt. William Tustin, S/Sgt. Wesley Holland, Cpl. Aubrey Angelette, S/Sgt. Mitchell Bravos.  
 Bottom Row,  
 Left : S/Sgt. William Tharp. Right : Sgt. Carl Cook.  
 Not Pictured Above : Lt. George Griffith, Lt. Charles Sutton, T/Sgt. Joseph Zerovich, Sgt. Harry Clark.



Lt. Thomas Nitrauer,  
Flight Leader



# Flight "G"



Top Row, L. to R. :  
Lt. Edward Miller,  
Lt. Vilas Burgess,  
Lt. Harold Johnson.  
Lt. Edward Colburn



Second Row, L. to R. :  
Lt. Willie Waldrip,  
Lt. Robert Smalldridge  
Lt. Kenneth Soderland  
Lt. James Taylor.



Third Row, L. to R. :  
Lt. Harry Levine,  
T/Sgt. Thomas Locke,  
T/Sgt. Walter Geuther  
T/Sgt. Oscar E. Smith.



Fourth Row, L. to R. :  
S/Sgt. Ernest Franklin  
S/Sgt. Kurt Kovek,  
S/Sgt. Leonard Davis,  
S/Sgt. Benedict Gold.

Not Pictured Above :  
Lt. Raymond Forste,  
S/Sgt.  
Kenneth S. Ruhl.





# Flight "H"



Lt. Richard Strand,  
Flight Leader

Top Row, L. to R. :  
Lt. Arthur Golomb,  
Lt. Bernard Sand,  
Lt. Guy Davenport,  
Lt. Earl Snook.



Second Row, L. to R.  
Lt. Wellington Goddin  
Lt. Carlisle Higgins,  
Lt. Richard Trueba,  
F/O William Kulikoff.



Third Row, L. to R. :  
Capt. Arnold Bowman,  
T/Sgt. Kenneth Marks  
S/Sgt.  
Caspar Biedenbach,  
S/Sgt. Bernard Vallely



Fourth Row, L. to R.  
Cpl. Ivio Tozzini,  
S/Sgt.  
Joseph Petricola,  
S/Sgt. Arthur Driedger  
Sgt. Harry Clark.



Bottom :  
Cpl. David Hampton.  
Not Pictured Above :  
F/O James Davis.

