January 7th 1945--that was the date which officially changed my status in the army--which was (as was later proven) to carry me close to eight thousand miles from the shores of America, into the Marianna's- to Tokyo and her Empire.

As of that date my transfer from the non combatant 320th troop carrier to the 393rd bomb sqdn. became effective. I was now part of a fighting crew --the radio operator of crew C-15 which comprised

Airplane Comm.....Major C.W. Sweeney
Pilot.....1stLt. C.D. Albury
Co-Pilot.....2ndLt. F. Olivi
Bombardier.....Capt. K. Feehan
Navigator.....Capt. J. Van Pelt Jr.
Flight Engineer....M/Sgt J. Kuharek
Radar Operator.....S/Sgt E. Buckley
Radio Operator.....Sgt. A. Spitzer
A.M. Gunner.....Sgt. R. Gallagher
Tail Gunner.....S/Sgt A. Tehart

We were the team, perhaps the oldest in term of years but young in spirit and the latest addition to the outfit. As is only natural for any crew, we felt that we were THE best.

For some inate reason our entrance into the squadron did not meet with the approval of the rest of the 393rd. Why, I could not say. The resentment was indicative in their approach or rather lack of ~~of~~ approach, I should say. Their talk - their every manner. Runors circulated we were agents sent to note and report the advancements, discipline and ~~xxxx~~ gather ~~other~~ other pertinent information. The feeling was intensified when Sweeney became C.O. of the squadron replacing Lt. Col. Classon, late in May. We were a bastard crew. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~. Ratings were frozen and that only increased the bitter feeling-adding fuel to the already smoldering fire. We hoped to gain the confidence of the rest of the boys, which, could be accomplished, only when they realized that they were wrong in their assumptions... that we were no different than any of the other crews.

Although we had often flown together on test flights and cross countries our work was individual so far as operation went. This we knew was going to be different, individualism was out, we were a team now and we had to adjust ourselves to function as such-- to think together--work together--rely on each man's ability, courage and intelligence. All for one and one for all.

In a few short months we would be heading for the south pacific to join the other 29s in dealing the crusher to Japan. It was imperative that we each knew his job thouroughly before arriving at the theater of operations. There was a lot of work to be done and little time to waste.

January, February, March, April came and went. We had no airplane we could call our own as yet. However, on May 21st, we left for Topeka to be processedand to receive our flying equipment. From there we went to Omaha to get our plane. We left Omaha with #42-7353-- our airplane at last. We felt proud then, like a couple of debutantes on a coming out party. Before this war was over we figured we would spend many an anxious hour in the cabin of this huge sleek looking bird. I named it "My Baby Doll".

Nothing of consequence occurred from the time we brought our ship to Wendover until the 22nd of June, except for a few training missions to culminate the final phase of our training. That date was to be D day for us.(day of departure)

On June 22nd, at 8A.M., fully loaded with an added passenger list of 10men we climbed aboard-- taxied out, gave it the gun circled Wendover and headed west for Mather Field to clear the states. We were on our way.

Sure, we were all glad to be leaving Wendover, where we had spent almost a year envying others who were more fortunate in being stationed closer than 125 miles from the nearest town. Why, there couldn't be any other camp so remote from civilization as the one we were leaving behind with each passing minute, further and further. What were our inate thoughts though? We knew what we left behind but what was awaiting us?--will we think then the same way?--will we wish that we were back at Wendover before very long. Such are thoughts that conjure in a fellow's mind regardless of the forces that attempt to down them. I know because although I too was glad to be leaving, I wondered--where to--for how long-- what was it going to be like?--and so we drifted into Mather.

"Hmm! a swell place to land" we said, "and only 8 miles to Sacremento." Well, we ought to have one big blowout before waving good-bye to the U.S.A. why not Sacramento? Ha! that's what we thought but apparentley the forces behind the whip couldn't see it our way.

Other crews have been stranded for days and maybe for weeks but--this was a hot outfit, remember! A priority! the war is at a standstill waiting for the 393rd to come along to decide the issue.

No sooner did we hit the ground than we were whisked from one building to another with just enough time out to feed our hungry bellys.

For close to 3 years now I have seen the inefficiency and time wasting efforts displayed by the so called gears--their off time delay in expediting matters of importance (as witness my being in grade for two years) doing that only which is convenient at the most convenient time. Now however, it seemed they were out to set a speed record, for in less than 36 hours we were fed primed and dressed, ready for the long jump to the Marianna's.

Everything went off as scheduled. It was like a dream. We went from place to place, answered questions did what they told us to and at 5 A.M. of the 24th of June climbed aboard. In a few minutes we passed over the Golden Gate bridge---the last symbol of America. There was nothing but water for miles and miles ahead.

Hearts were heavy though a poor attempt at filling the air with a false gaiety was noticeable. God knows when we will see that same bridge again! We settled down for the long journey ahead. Our first stop was Honolulu--2500 miles away--10 hours of flying time. It was a smooth and uneventful trip.

We arrived at Honolulu as scheduled in ten hours--tired, hungry and sweaty--stayed over night to rest for the next jump tomorrow. Our next stop was Kwajalein, another 10 hour flight. The trip again was smooth and uneventful. We were getting further and further from home.

There were no regrets in leaving that place I'm sure. Just a dot in the ocean, the camp was none to clean. I doubt whether any one of us escaped the unpleasant company and ravages of the rats who scampered around looking for fresh meat to chew on.

My first encounter with the pests occurred in the early morning around 0200. I felt something at the ball of my foot that reminded me of a hand buzzer. A quick kick shook off that sensation. After numerous occurrences of the same sensation, I awoke with a start to discover a small piece of skin had been chewed off the callous end of my right heel. The thought of rats never entered my mind. I was too exhausted. In the morning, I gathered from the noisy conversation that I wasn't the only victim. Practically all of us had

suffered the same fate. Had we stayed another night I'm sure there would have been a little shooting spree aimed at those pesky things. Fortunately we did not stay but continued our journey--the last lap to what was to be our home for as long as the War Dept deemed it necessary. Six hours after we left Kwajalein we set our wheels down on Tinian. We had crossed in 26 hours flying time. We landed here June 27th (since we lose one day) at 0300, to be greeted by some of the boys who had made their debut by water or plane well in advance and had already assumed the staus of veterans.

We soon lost ourselves in the shuffle of handshakes and calls of "hy'a Chuck, Don Ed Ray Abe--unloading--loading--piling into the trucks to be taken to headquarters--to be assigned to tents and to be indoctrinated to the dos and donts of the island.

Our impression of the place from what we saw while circling, was in accord with what little we saw riding on the trucks. Not a bad looking place! A mid-western farm in June surrounded by ocean. The rolling hills were dotted with bright green foliage, sugar cane stalking the wayside. The roads were good, built by those efficient and hard working CBs, who have done and are still doing a grand job. Too much praise can not be given to these hard hitting fighting construction men. Roads are built overnight, buildings put up in record time, a city built by men who gave freely and willingly of their skill.

Those boys who first planned the design of the island must have come from N. Y. C. The roads were fashioned and layed out similarly to the streets in Manhattan. You rode from south to north along 8th avenue, Riverside drive, West End avenue, 10th avenue and Broadway. Such intersections as 86th, 42nd, 96th and 125th street ran east to west. Even the Bronx was represented because beyond 125th street Boston Road began.

As we approached the tent area, we were amazed at the colorful display surrounding the tents. Bright colored ferns and flowers everywhere adding a touch of gaiety to the scene.

While unloading I could hear someone calling me, a familiar voice. "Why, my old chum, Larry Crossman, you big peckerhead". I hadn't seen the guy since leaving Grand Island to join Col Tibbetts's outfit in Wendover.

"So You have 12 missions chalked up already"!

He then went on to relate some of the incidents

raids over Osaka, Kobe and Ube--moments when he had almost lost hope of ever returning--those night missios caught in the searchlights in a concentrated barrage of flak. He had been broken from S/sgt to a Pvt for going AWOL. That and a lot of ther gossip was covered as I unpacked my junk. I had hoped that I would run into him but never thought it would be that soon. There was work to be done so we postponed our gabfast for some future time.

The following morning we were told our rights as a citizen of Tinian. First our quarters were temporary. Within 10 days we should be moving into quonset huts with plenty of room for everyone. Beer was rationed to 24 bottles a month(if available) cigarettes to 7 pkgs a week(if available) and other miscellaneous articles which were scarce would be rationed. Dress was optional. Anything you cared to wear was permissible. Shirts and shorts were cut to one's satisfaction, comfort and style, not according to Esquire's latest ~~style~~. Me--I cut the sleeves off every shirt, measured six inches from the crotch down and sheared the rest of the pants leg off. It gets mighty hot during the day and I wasn't going to stand short on the bare stuff. For formal attire a T shirt was accepted for enlisted men but officers must wear a shirt at all times, unless engaged in athletics. Imagine walking along Broadway or 8th avenue with nothing but abbreviated pants.

The first week was spent touring the island, visiting old acquiantances, swimming and generally acclimating oneself to the weather. Our chief observation during our sight seeing tour was aroused by the living conditions and the people thenselves, natives of the island.

The "Gooks" as they were called, were a combined mixture of Japanese and Koreans. Short of staure, squat like in appearance, dark skinned, slanty eyes, unkempt dull faced, lived in an area set off by the road with barbed wire, in tin shacks, several families in one or two rooms. Entrance into the zone was restricted but from those who had been inside the area, I've been told that their floors were spotless and waxed to a shiny gloss. In passing, one could readily tell that he was in or near Gook camp. The odor of dung permeated the air for several hundred yards in all directions. A dirty, stinking, filthy place for any human being that call himself civilized. These people were now used by the military for washing laundry. cleaning latrines and other menial labor.

The first week passed quickly--we did no flying. A ground course given by the

We are required to attend the Wing ground school for a period of one week before we can consider ourselves ready for combat missions. That was taken care of in the second week . The primary purpose of this school was to acquaint all newcomers with the problems of succussfully completing the mission and to inform as well as educate us in air sea rescue. The course was concluded with a wet ditching--jumping off of a 20 foot pier, fully clothed, Mae West and harness, getting into a one man and five man raft--capsizing--getting in again. We enjoyed that part of the course most of all. Hours for attendance was from 0730 to 1630 which left very little time for other activities.

The third week was the beginning of several training missions. The bombing of some small Jap held islands. Our first was on July 12th, Rota, four hours. The 14th to 18th nothing and on the 18th we bombed Guguan, anothr Jap held island of no importance.

By this time we were getting pretty well pissed off when on the 20th we got word of our first mission. We were joining the rest of the wing on a strike that night 600 ships were going out--a record breaking amount. Our target would be "fuchashima--we were going alone, four hours after the rest of the wing takes off.

At briefing we were told it was a soft touch--no flak no fighters. After briefing chow--report to operations there will be a truck to take us to the plane. Our first mission. What will it be like? Will they be right in their assumptions--no flak, no fighters?--13 hours in the air alone. The mind can certainly cover a lot of territory in a very short time. I tried to keep occupied, not to leave any room for thoughts that kept whirling in my mind.

We were now past Iwo Jima. Soon we would begin our climb to bombing altitude. One hour from the coast of the Japanese Empire. We donned our flak suits over the Cl, Mae West and parachute.

There's a little trouble with number 1 engine, smoke coming out. Number 3 is heating up too.

Eng to Pilot--3 and 1 acting up sir!

Nav. to Radar--"Can you see the coast yet Ed"?

Ed--"Just about coming in now Cap, about 75 miles out

Eng--"We better not take any chances".

Pilot--"What do you think"?

Eng--" May have to feather #1".

Ed--"Coming in good now".

Nav.--"Let's go in and drop the son of a bitch".

Bomb--"What are we going to do Don"?

Eng--"Let's turn back".
Nav--"God damn we are only 10 minutes away now".
Eng--"#1 is smoking, #3 running hot and now #4 is running rough. We had better turn back."
Nav--"Only 30 miles out; 6 minutes."
Bomb--"Well what's it going to be?"
Pilot--"O.K. we are going back. We'll have to abort.
Abort! our first mission and only six minutes away from the coast line--that entire trip in vain--13 hours and the Pacific ocean our target now. There will be others, true, but only 30 miles away--that hurt.

So back we went moaning and cursing our luck. The rest of the crews dropped theirs on the target. We were the only ones to abort. They saw no flak no fighters. Major Sweeney had sat this one out and felt pretty bad over the whole thing.

That night the plane was checked and recheked-- nothing could be found wrong. The following morning we went up and the ship purred as smooth as a top. Just one of those umexplainable situations.

Our next mission was on the 24th. Target "Kobe"--the Imperial Govt Repair Shop--a hot spot--some fighters and flak could be expected. We were informed that the Navy had been there before and so it shouldn't be too rough. Again we were to go alone about 5 hours after the wing left. This time the Major was coming along. We knew then that regardless of conditions we were going into the target to lay our egg--on one enging if need be.

On the way up we passed the naval task force which had been raising hell with the Nips for the past few days, keeping them guessing of their whereabouts by maintaining a strict radio silence.

We began our climb to bombing altitude (as we neared the mainland. This boy was taking no chances or the word of some pencil pusher in intelligence that we would encounter very little flak or fighter opposition and donned my flak suit. Ed's voice came over the interphone--he could see the coastline now on his scope. In a few moments the bomb doors would be opened and the run would be on.

"There it is!"
"Bombay doors open!"

To me those few moments from the time the doors open until bombs away were the longest and most excruciating to sit through. Nothing I could do'.--no radio to monitor--no gun to hold on to --not even a window to peek through:- nothing but to listen to the rest of the boys.

That "Pumkin" sure looked tremendous through the hatch. It felt as though we were crawling--our indicatore showed 190.

Suddenly Pappy's voice came over. "Flak, level about 50 feet at 6 o'clock". The startling information didn't dawn on me for a splitsecond. I was hypnotized by that bomb setting there on the racks. Another exclamation--another burst of flak--I realized we were being shot at. Who said those Japs couldn't shoot. Boy they were right up there with us and too damn close.

One minute away!--the clouds were creeping over the target, it may have to be a radar run. No!. Capt Beehan has it now right square in his sights. What a splash this was going to make.

"Bombs away!" I waited for the jerk of the plane which would indicate the release, none came. I had my eyes glued to the drift meter so as to watch the hit. Fifteen seconds--30 seconds--still no release. God damn that pumkin, it wouldn't go. We will have to make another run. Sandy beach one more time. Hell fellows this isn't a test hop, lets drop the ?/.-&. and get the hell out of here. We turned to try again. By this time the flak was getting heavier--now at the nose, the side and at the rear. Our second approach was much shorter. The Major took some evasive action and we came in again. The clouds were getting thicker over the target--6/10coverage was estimated. All we wanted was enough of an opening to see the target.

The doors were opened.
Bomb to Pilot-"PDI, level
Nav- one degree right.
Bomb- Roger, PDI--Bombs Away!

With that the plane jerked upwards. I knew that this time it was "Bombs away". I tried to follow it's descent but lost it as the clouds obscured my view. Attempts were made to obtain some photographs but as was later shown, nothing but clouds.

We high tailed it for the ocean and safety. Our IAS showed 250. Well, that's a little better!

As we drew away from the Empire, we gradually relaxed. I sent my strike report in and felt good doing it. At last we had laid one on the Empire. All that time of practice and testing was now bearing fruit. Those four engines purred on--we were on our way home now--our job for the day accomplished.

Those two shots of whiskey hit the spot. Right now I craved sleep. I wanted to stretch out and not sleep for a week. At interrogation we estimated some where between 75 to 100 bursts of flak and a good hit on the target. We took off for chow. Although tired and exhausted we felt pretty good this time--far different from our first return. Our time for the flight was 12 hours 50 minutes.

Two raids in four days, that figured that we probably wouldn't go out again for a while but it was not to be because the followingday at 1600 we were going out again--tonight--or rather early morn at o300

The wing was conducting a blitz. We were now attached to the wing so had to abide by their rules and regulations. So that night we went out again.

On the run up of the engines prior to take off one of the engines fouled up--a runaway prop. Could it be repaired in time? We are allowed 2 hours after sbheduled take off to leave the ground. If by that time you weren't ready, you don't go. Fifty minutes after 3 plus H we were ready to go. Not only were we going alone again but would arrive close to an hour late over the target. This wasn't our own plane we were flying. Sweeney was sitting this one out. too.

Operations considered this another milk run--the target was Toyama, located on the northern part of Honshu. No knowledge of flak or fighters was available and taking no chances. "Piss on that" said Ed, "I don't believe that I'm scared of this no flak or fighters stuff and will be right under my flak suit". I agreed with him. True part of this war has to be figured out and fought on paper but it doesn't always add up in balancing the records.

And that goes for the weather man too. On our first mission we were to have about 2/10 coverage, good visibility, so he said--the weather that day was piss poor. Our second would be bad according to his calculations--the weather was good. What was his prediction for Toyama? Clear target, 1/10 coverage. Well so far He's batting 1000--against us. Maybe the law of averages will be in his favor this time, we'll see.

The prelimanaries approaching the mainland are the same. After passing Iwo, 200 miles out we start our climb to bombing altitude, [redacted]. The weather since leaving Iwo started to close in and getting worse. By the time we arrived at our axis of attach, the ground below was completely obscured by thick layer at 8,000 upto about 35000. We were flying in the soup and this would have to be a radar run.

The doors were now open. This was between rdar and navigator. It was up to them to drop it where it would do the most good or rather the most damage. Our visual trget incidentally was the Chemical plant. How ever it was the town itself now, Toyama.

The drop was made, no flak no fighters were encountered--a milk run, intelligence ws correct. But that weather man was still batting 1000--for the enemy.

We returned to the base without any further delay. At interrogation the usual questions were asked. Any enemy opposition?--any unusual goings on in the harbor? --any mechanical defects, suggestions or recommendations etc,etc. We chalked another one on the scorecard and called it a day. We knew now we could expect anything at any time from the wing--three missions in one week.

The following day we didn't do a thing but rest.

On the 27th we flew a test mission a few miles off shore. Several high ranking officials were down on the ground to witness the demonstration. On board we had two naval Captains as passengers and two test operators. That flight deck was so congested you had to push the walls back to fart. If we were going to run test hops they could just have well have left us back in the state

The 28th was another day off.

The 29th another test hop. Fly to Iwo, unload the pumpkin, load back on and return without dropping.

There's a rough place--Iwo, a long narrow island with the hill that characterized the 7th war loan drive protruding like a sore thumb. Practically no vegetaion nothing but sand, hot dusty sand that gets in your eyes your teeth, your hair and in your clothes. The CBs as usual were busy performing miracles. The bloody battle for Iwo has since paid off in saving thousands of lives and hundreds of airplanes that have made emergency landings there,which,otherwise would never have returned. Because of it's strategic location, lying half way between Saipan and Japan, heavier bomb loads can be carried and less gas . The pilots know that they can set down on Iwo and refuel on the way back

We returned about five o'clock.

That night another stike was scheduled. We couldn't go! and a soft one at that. Lewis was flying our ship. Damn the test section. We could have had another one chalked.

By this time we were getting plenty pissed off, but did it do any good? No! We were going up to Iwo again, this time in formation with Col. Tibbets who was carrying a pumpkin and we were to fly on his right wing, Marquadt on his left

We flew to Iwo, circled and came on back to drop, a couple of steep turns were practiced which I presume was to be applied when dropping the Gimmic over the Empire so as to assure a safety of margin from the concussion. Another day gone!

We were compiling enough hours but that wasn't getting 35 missions. The pay off was on missions, not on combat hours. We were two behind now.

Well maybe this was our last test run--we hoped. Wrong again! The following day, up we go again. However this time we were assured that it would be our last if this test was successful. We were to drop 2 miles off shore. For company this time we had the Commander Ashworth. On the ground to witness the demonstration was a 3 star general, a 1 star general, a couple of Admirals and some smaller fry. This had to be good! One dry run and then a live run. The bomb hung up on the live run, necessitating depressurazation so that Beehan could crawl into the tunnel to adjust the release

Something going snafu every time. We futsed around for about an hour but finally accomplished what we had set out to do. Reports from the ground were, "everything worked fine, results satisfactory."

To-day was Aug 1st. Generally the first day of the month held a great significance to enlisted men. That was the day when ratings were published--the day you look forward to, anticipating that additional stripe. Ray and I were told we were recommended and would make it this time. Well, we'll see! After two years it should--by God.

Walking towards the orderly room with Ray, Pappy and Ed after interrogation, we were greeted with, "Hy'a sarge!" I've got to see it first before I believe it. Yep, there it was on black and white. Ray also made it and Pappy made staff. I finally got over the hump. The war must be over. Ray had been in grade for 26 months and I for 23 months. I'll never make that rocker in this war.

While the 20th bomber command was celebrating "air force day" with a record assault on Japan of 800 or more 29s dropping about 6000 tons of explosives on the Japanese Empire, we were putting on a show for the local wheels.

Aug 2 was a dull monotonous day with nothing of importance except that it marked the 4th day that I had not received any mail. Not important perhaps but highly provoking.

~~Aug 3rd it was about time. I went down to the~~

Aug 3rd. It was about time for me to go down and check my equipment. Wonder why there's an MP at the ship? The answer! a real gimmic was loaded inside the bombay, not a pumpkin but the real McCoy.

A couple days ago the rest of the crews arrived from the states to bring our squadron to its full stren

I wasn't taking any chances blowing up the island by playing around with switches so disregarded my pre-flight.

Nothing to do, so decide to see what my boy Crossman was doing. I thumbed my way to his quarters and found him, as usual, stretched out as though he had done a hard day's work.

"How about a swim, chum?"

"O.K. let's go. Theres a nice spot in back of the theatre not many go there to swim." We tramped our way through some brush, climbed down the rocks about 50 ft. avoiding the sharp coral edges. The water looked very refreshing and inviting but also very rough. The surf pounded against the rocky wall throwing a spray 30 to 40 feet high. "Not for me", Isaid, I'm not anxious to be smashed against those rocks."

We sat there listening to waves breaking, shooting the well known bull till about 4pm and broke it up. I returned in time to attend a meeting of our crew which had been called during my absence.

"What now I queried?" QUERIED

Capt Boucher, our intelligence officer, informed us (although we already knew) that we were one of the few crews selected to carry the "Gimmic". That as soon as we drop our egg on Japan, Washington will release the news--that we may be questioned by reporters from the island. "Holy Cow" as Toni would say, it might even appear in the Bronx Home News. We had our picture taken and also filled out a mimeograph form that will give some history of your life at home and in the service. We were cautioned not to speak about the bomb or anything connected with it.

After the meeting we voted for the name to grace the nose of our ship. The Great Artist was selected by popular vote. To me, however, it was still "My Baby Doll". We were as Sweeney so aptly put it, "in the big league." In the meantime until we drip the Gimmic, we will be required to remain secretive and not to talk about it even among ourselves.

Aug 4th--The fever stil burned. Every stretch of the imagination could not satisfy the curiosity within. The morning started as usual--arising at 0630 to get in line for fried eggs,--this morning's breakfast. To-day being Saturday, we decided to give the shack a bath seeing that there was going to be an inspection.

All that trouble and effort, however was in vain. We received an unsatisfactory report. I suppose our 3 day pass will now be cancelled or we'll probably be confined to the island--tough!

About 1100, news leaked out that we might begoing out tonight. In that case I'm going down the line to check my trnsmitter. An all important meeting ws being held in communications. There might me some truth in the rumor after all. Another was scheduled for selected crews at the lounge at 1500. It was turning out to be a hectic day.

The meeting at communications turned into a drawn out bull session with sour faced Adams getting everyone confused with his numblings. The feelings between us are mutual although I've tried to be pleasant and cooperative.

At 1500, seven crews assembled in the combat room together with several of the important long hairs and two 2 star naval officers. Something was in the wind for sure. We were soon to learn the great secret, the cause of all the elaborated preparation--the Gimmic. Plans were being discussed for the first drop which the old man himself, Colonel Tibbets, was to execute.

The details were explained by Capt Parsons of the Navy. It was unbelievable. It couldn't be possible. Why, this wasn't real, it couldn't be--this was some weird dream conceived by one with a too vivid an imagination. Could man apply his ingenuity to such an extent? to conceive and devise an element of such powerful magnitude to destroy? So this was it!

We snickered here and back in the states when informed that if this development was successful, the war would be shortened by at least six months. We did no snickering now. It was there--in full view of to gape in bewilderment and amazement, at this destructive monster which could destroy a full populace within a three square mile area. A chill went through me as I sat there listening to Capt Parsons giving a description of a test that was held in a remote section somewhere in New Mexico.

The game of make believe was over! Colonel Tibbets was taking the first one. We were flying on his to take recordings of the effects.. Capt Marquadt would fly on his left wing and ~~to~~ rear to take pictures Capt. Eatherly, Wilson and Taylor were to preceed us at least an hour berore our take-off time to observe and relay the weather to us. Lt. Mc Knight would go to Iwo and remain there as a spare in the event one of the strike ships had to abort.

We are on stand-by now--waiting for a good day. Security was stressed and would persist until the news had been released from Washington by Pres. Truman. Sounds big, eh? It is big! And it sure is going to make an awful splash. Every means of percaution was adopted. We had our group idenity on the tail of our ships changed to represent other outfits, in order to confuse the enemy. Our call letters were also changed. The "Black Arrow" was temporarily out of circulation.

Aug. 5th--Little did I realize that before the day would be over, history will be in the making. It would ever remain in the memory of every individual concerned, every one in the 509th as well as with the enemy, only in defferent perspectiveness and purpose.

We started the day with another test hop and had Commander Ashworth and a Washington representative, Major Monyhan, who arrived in the capacity of public relations officer to cover the story of the 509 and the 1st drop of the "Gimmic". Pending release from Washington his story would be published in all newspapers as well as magazines. The flight went off as scheduled without any slips this time.

Late that evening we were gathered together and the news was out. We were going to drop to-night! Our targets were as follows:

Primary--Hiroshima

If either of thoss were open to vusual proceedure all well and good. On the other hand in theevent the targets were obscured by clouds we would return without releasing. That was all!

Take off would be for the weather ships, 0245, Aug 6th. We will follow exactly one hour later. There must be no slip ups this time! That was all!!

We assumed our stations at 0200 to check our equipment to assure all was in readiness. The Col. was surrounded by floodlights and cameramen plus several

scientists who were involved in this flight. Recording machines were installed in the Colonel ship whichhe had named the"Enola Gay", in honor of his mother, as well as in ours, to record the actual run over the target--the feature of the 20th century.

At 0220 we climbed aboard. Three of the scientists were coming along as operators and to observe the [illegible]

Engines were started at 0230! 0235, we taxied out! Exactly 0245 The Enola Gay started to roll down the runway gathering speed and rose into the air. We followed one minute later. The start of another mission. How I wished to be just 10 hours older and on the way back.

Before take-off and during briefing, we were cautioned to keep our eyes away from the flash that would odcur. Also, spedial polarized goggles were given to each crew member and instructed to be sure and have them turned all the way down. Information as to the effects that might be expected, was related by Capt Parsons. "A soldier stationed twenty miles away sitting in a tent was blinded by the flash during a test back in the states

Except for the three passengers, none of us had the slightest idea what to expect. In fact even the minds of those who had conceived this weird monster, had no relative proof of what to expect, inasmuch as the bomb had never been dropped from the air. In a few hours the details would be exposed.

The engines dromed on--Beehan was making comments from time to time into the recording machine. Approximately 1 hour from the target, three weather reports were due, one on each target to inform us which one would be desirable. There was still blenty of time for that.

On the flight deck, Sweeney, Beehan and Van Pelt hit the sack. Sleep was out of the question for me. I had to stand guard. Dawn broke as we passed over Iwo. This was our assembly point for the three strike ships to form a formation towards Japan. Our ETA over the Empire was 0910. At exactly 0820 my ears perked up. I recognized the call sign of the primary weather ship--the report was coming in."target clear, ok bomb. The second and third followed immediately. They held no importance. The target was "Hiroshima". We were 45 minutes away. I hastily donned my flak suit and the rest of my gear, settled down and went on interphone. The colonel's ship was in clear view, directly in front of us, and slightly to the left.

We were on our I.P.--on the axis of attack. That peculiar feeling that crawls around inside began to tickle a little more than usual.

"God", how those minutes dragged!

The ground was spread out below with just a few lazy clouds overhead. [redacted] A beautiful target layed out and clearly visible.

Surely they weren't going to let us go in without any opposition, I thought. Vividly I ~~xxx~~ recalled the information of the air sea rescue facilities that were given to us at briefing--the extra dumbos and super dumbos, submarines and lifeguards strung along and close to the Japanese coast for our protection and assistance--how I wished they were right here next to us in the event we had to ditch or bail out, instead of 200 miles away.

Two minutes out now!--no fighters or flak. Our bomb doors were opened. One minute away! Whew its warm--30 seconds--I've got my fingers crossed--15 seconds--the tone signal comes over the air. The cue that bombs were away would be the breaking of the tone signal, [redacted], make a 60 degree bank and get the hell out of there.

I was all sst, glasses turned down, my head ~~xxx~~ against the hatch, [redacted]

The tone breaks! the bombs away! [redacted] we go into our bank [redacted]. At the same instant, my head still facing the hatch, I noticed a flach coming through the navigator's window, from the corner of my eye. It couldn't have been more than 50 seconds from the time of release- [redacted] up and yet a flash was visible. The time of bomb's away was 0920.

At our left a strange and unbelievable sight held our gaze. Rising upwards with the speed of sound, a huge thick column of smoke, something the like I have never seen was at our level, continuing upwards. The top spreading out resembling the head of a mushroom. The Major decided to circle around and observe the results. From our view, the entire city was covered with thick smoke which had by this time turned to a dark, murky grey. Pappy, in the tail, had a ring side observation and gave the best description. It was fantastic!

"It looked as though the sun had fallen from the heavens and then started to ride up again," he said, "a giant ball of fire shrouded with a thick layer of

clouds. Fantastic!---but real. This was Buck Roger come to this earth. The towering column of smoke could still be seen and we were now 384 miles away.

This was man's creation, Man's monster developed by the keenest scientific minds who had pooled their knowledge. This was the miracle that would shorten the war or possibly end it.

Nelson, the Colonel's radio operator sent in his strike report which would electrify the world.

We returned to a gay jubilant mob. A party was in progress to celebrate the the great event and the beginning of the end of the war. Japan now had one choice ; unconditional surrender or he annihilated.

That night liquor flowed freely. Most of us got pretty well heeled. It was a new 509th. We would now receive the respect so vaily sought for from the other outfis who had been calling us the "Victory Boys" and dishing out plenty of bronx cheers. It was our turn to howl. The shoe was on the right foot now, we could and would live up to the statements that we had made.

Our passengers, three of the scientests instrumental in the development informed us of the deadly effects of the bomb--what the inhabitants of Hiroshima had received.

Heat several times greater than that of the sun was thus released so that anything within a two mile range was immediately destroyed completly vaporized--disintegrated. An entire city destroyed by one bomb. A single aircraft had done the work equivalent to a 2000 29 strike. The Colonel very appropriately remarked, "saw city destroyed same."

We were bound by security and could not reveal the results or write home that we had taken part in this historic demonstration of the new weapon, until such time when the news had been released from Washington by the President himself.

Colonel Tibbets had been greeted by General Spaatz upon landing and presented with the DSC. The rest of his crew were given the DFC.

The following morning we learnt from the news broadcast some of the facts of the raid and alittle about the bomb itself. It was called "The Atomic Bomb" a succussful accomplishment which had baffled science for years and years--the splitting of an atom.

The project, originally called the Manhattan project and the brainchild of the late President Roosevelt

had been in the experimental stage for close to three years--had cost upwards to 2 billion dollars had employed something like 125,000 men and women who up until to-day had no knowledge of what they were doing or what ultimate effects their labor would produce.

Little was revealed of the Atomic bomb itself, except that it contains uranium, which can be found in Canada, the Belgium Congo, Germany a a little in the U.S. The contents and composition is still top secret and will remain so.

Actual research on this deadly monster had begun way back in 1930, with most of the nations vieing to arrive at the means of splitting the atom. Germany at the close of the war , had been working feverishly to perfect a weapon of similar designs and had been just six months short of attaing her results. Had Germany been succussful--well need I say any more.

The destructive components of the bomb itself is of small dimensions and rather light in weight.

It certainlymakes me feel proud to know that in some small way I had been of assistance in aiding the development. Those tests back in Wendover were part of the program. It was necessary to fly those tests to determine and to iron out any bugs that hindered its progress--to prove that science had once again conquered--to prove that the paper work was finished --that we were now ready.

I'm equally glad that I was mixed up in the project and also that I was given the opportunity to assist and witness the first drop.

It was pointed out, that not only is this the biggest thing to develope during world war 2--the most destructive weapon ever devised but that from a scientific point of view the biggest thing to come out in the 20th century. There were no limitations to the use of this new discovery, it's potentialities infinite.

Aug. 8th--Excitement still ran high. Radio broadcasts continued to exclaim over the effects of the Atomic bomb. This was news and was being given top billing. The latest was that 60% of the city had been destroyed covering a radius of 4and 1/10 miles. All sorts of explanations were rendered as to what the bomb looked like, how big or small. The Japs claimed it was dropped by parachute. Guess, Guess guess but no one seemed to know.

This morning we were again scheduled to fly another test mission. If suddussful, it would replace

we refuse to drop another test bomb a few miles offshore — not to far away so that the scientists below could record the effects + determine whether the test was a success. If it was, it would replace the first bomb + become the future atom bomb — if more would be necessary

the first one and cause it to become obsolete. It was a very succussful test. This was the real Atomic Bomb, and would be used on all future raids, and there was going to be one to-night--we were going to be the carriers of this one. That is there will be one to-night, weather permitting. In the meantime I'll just sit down and write my Angel and sweat the rest of the night out.

At 1600we received the news. Yes, we were going out! Our primary target, [redacted] Our secondary would be Nagasaki--there was no third or optional target. Capt Bock would be our right wing and instrument ship. Major Hopkins, left wing and photo--take-off 0345. The weather ships will leave one hour earlier and send in their report approximately one hour befor estimated time for "Bomb's away."

I tried to get some sleep. This was one time I would have to remain awake. For us, it was to be the most important event in our army career. For that matter, I'd say "this might be the one straw that will break Japan's spirit as well as her back. However, sleep was out of the question. My thoughts were running wild.

Regular breifing was scheduled for 0030. Specialized briefing for 2230.

At our briefing at communications were representatives of two super dumbos who were assigned as special facilities to aid us in the event we ran into trouble. There would be one strike report as in the other mission and to be sent by me. Air sea rescue was stressed. We were to take no chances. We went to chow and then returned to the barracks until it was time to leave for the line.

Ray was quite and appeared depressed. He wasn't the only one. Conversation was at a minimum--a heavy pall hung over room. What the hell's the matter? This is just another mission; so what if the stuff is hot? Weren't we the hottest crew and the god damn best? Why worry! Yeah! why worry, whom am I kidding? me?

"Time and tide waits for no man"they say. Right! it was 0030--time for regular briefing.

First came intelligence to inform us of the target, axis of approach, route in, route out, air aea rescue, what the enemy might have in store for us and other perfinent information which might be of value to us. This was given to us by Lt. Col. Payette of S2.

Following him was Capt Lucke of Communication---Weather came next--and not very good. It would be rough all the way up. We would have to depend on the weather ships who would relay conditions over the target. Last was Major Hopkins, operational officer and our left wing on this mission. Take-off to be as scheduled, 0345--our rendezvous point was Yakushima, approximately at 0915. From there we will proceed to the target in formation. The Chaplains blessing came next and the meeting was over. The trucks would be ready for us at 0115 to take us out to the ships.

Back to the barracks to collect the necessary gear. Tension still hung heavy but I knew that once we hit the line, absorbed in stowing away the equipment and making those last few minute checks , would lift the heavy atmosphere.

We were greeted at the airplane by several of the other boys who were there to wigh us well and to see us off. Pictures were taken of the crew, the ship, the people who made this bomb and of several other high ranking officials. I glanced at my watch, it was 0300--45 minutes left before take-off. Everything was set! we were ready! At 0330 the props were turned, we climbed aboard. In the rear, Pappy, Ray, Ed and Lt Beser who was going as RCMoperator and incidentally had also participated on the first raid. On the forward deck there would be nine of us. The line-up was as follows: Airplane commander, Sweeney; Co-pilot Albury; Bombardier,Beehan; Navigtor, Van Pelt; Flight engineer, M/sgt Kuharek; Radio operator, myself; 2nd Lt. Olivi, 3rd pilot; Commander Ashworth, technical operator; Barnes; assistant to Ashworth;

"OK on #1 Major" yelled John. Now it was #2 now #3 then #4. It was 0335. John's sharp eyes detected a discrepancy in one of the instruments. It showed that we couldn't get the gas from the bombay tanks. A hasty conference was held between Col Tibbets and Major Sweeney. We were going! We began to taxi out. In another five minutes we would be on out way. The clock showed 0345--the brakes were released, the throttles advanded--the runway was flashing by. On and on! it seemed as xx though we would never leave the ground. The speedometer registered 110--120--we were still on the ground--135--145--slowly the ship began to reach for the sky. There was no more runway! We were off! The wheels were retracted--we began to climb steadily. We could wipe the sweat from our faces, the first phase pf the sweating period was over. We could relax until we reached the Japanese mainlad.

Out cmae a dry handgerchief, back it went, wet. I settled to down to the trip ahead and though of the boys in the back--wondering what they were thinking about at the moment. Well, this is as good a time to fing out as any.

Radio to left blister--"What's on your mind Ray?

LB-"That was pretty close. Right now I'm thinking of that it would be much more to my liking if we were headed in the other diredtion. Boy, I'm a little scared of this one." I just saw the Angels waving.

Radio--Hell, there's nothing to worry about--yet. In 24 hours this will be a memory. Hey Ed how about you?"

Ed--That goes for me too. I'LL be a happy son-of--a -bitch if we get through this one and will believe in Angels and Santa Claus."

Radio--"Me too!" Hey Pappy, Why are you so quiet how do you feel?"

Pappy--"Its rough! sometimes it doesn't pay to get out of bed and when we get back from this one that's just where I'm going to stay--in bed."

Radio--Okay boy, see you to-morrow."

Up at the forward compartment, Van Pelt was absorbed checking his maps and charts. Beehan was fixing up a nice comfortable bed to sack it as usual. Sweeney and Albury were talking to each other setting the controls for the flight. John was fussing with the switches making a final check before getting to comfortable. Ashworth and Barnes were going over the electrical units . Olivi spread his fat ass on the floor, there was nothing for him to do at the moment. I shifted my gaze to the log in front of me and began to record the beginning of the flight.

Because of the stormy weather in our path, we changed direction to avoid the turbulence. We bounced around quite a bit flying ~~the~~ in the soup.

The hours went by silently, each absorbed with his own thoyghts. Very little was said on the flight outfor the first few hours. My thoughts were many miles away. I'd look at your picture Honey, and ~~think~~ think of home, back in our little kitchen, a cup of coffeewith some cheese and crackers, our little night cap before going to be.

I thought of our most recent mission, the drop over Hiroshima--the way it looked. Would this be a duplicate--would it react the same way?--would there be any fighters or flak?--will we get away in time from the dangers of the bomb itself? Those and

a million others whirled round and round. I closed my eyes to block them out and silently prayed to God. "Bring us back safely and let this be the end of the war--that peace be restored--that we may all return to our loved ones.

It was daylight now, the time 0700. The other two planes were no where in sight. We will meet them at Yakushima. In an other hour or so we should hear from our weather ships. Sweeney cautioned me to be on the alert for the transmission. The Nips were doing a good job of jamming our frequencies. I could not afford to miss the report because that would tell us whcih target we were to bomb.

The engines purred on, we were flying at [redacted] feet. Our IAS,200, the sun was shining . Everythin looked so peaceful and serend. At 0834 we started our climb to bombing altitude. Still no weather report! The jamming was bereming worse as we were approaching the mainland. Gosh, I hope I didn't miss the damn thing--no, I couldn't have, I would have heard and gotten some of it, I'm sure. In the distance we saw an unidentified plane. The Major cautioned the boys in the rear to keep their eyes peeled. We learned later that it was Bock, our right wing man.

I started to say something to Barnes but stopped short, my head jerked up--I grabbed at my pencil--the familiar call sign of the first weather ship was coming in. The weather was godd, target recommended for bombing. This was followed by the second ship--a similar report. They were both open!

Primary [redacted] it is men,"said Sweeney.

By this time we had reached our complete altitude and redezvous point. Capt Bock joined us soon afterwards. Where was Hopkins? We circled Yakushima for twenty minutes still no sign of Major Hopkins. We were using up a lot of predious gasoline. finally it was decided to go on without him. We headed for [redacted] the target

We were all keyed up now, alert . The air seemed to be charged with electricty. The rear compartment was silent except for an occasional reassuring word from Pappy or Ray that all was well.

Ed and Van Pelt were busy lining up the target through the radar scope. I switched to interphone so as to be aware of what was going on. John sat gazing at the instrument panel another spectator,like myself. Our job was to watch and listen.

Navto Pilot--2 degrees right--1 degree left.

Radar--That's [redacted]. I have it in range. What is our true altitude?

Nav-[redacted]. Give me 1 degree left Chuck. Fine we are right on course.

Pilot--Roger! All you men make damn sure you have your goggles on.

It was too crowded on deck to bother with flak suits.

Another few minutes and we were on our axis of attack. I had my fingers crossed, praying that we wouldn't have to make more than one run.

The clouds were scattered below at lazy intervals obscuring the ground. Our radar approach was right on the button, bringing right in to the targer, [redacted].

It was Beehan's turn now. Would he be able to see his objective. At first glance it appeared that he could. Three minutes out now!

Ed--20 miles out now Cap!--mark!

Nav--Roger. give me twoo degrees left, Chuck.

Pilot--You got it, boy!

Tow minutes out! I was getting fidgity. My heart beat increassd it's tempo. The others were all busy.

Bomb--"Can't see the target--no drop--big cloud over it."

Damn! There was a shaking of heads--we'll have to make another pass. Our path lay over Ywata, the heavily fortified city, considered one of the hottest spots of the Japanese Empire. Any moment we could expect flak or fighters now.

Pappy reported that Bock was still with us and on our tail. Well, here we go again. The second run turned out as the first--target obscured by clouds. I began to swear.

Pappy--"A few bursts of flak, Major, about five o'clock."

Pilot--"Roger, keep your eyes open Pappy."

So we were going to get it now!

We turned for the third time to make another run. Each time the radar team, Ed and Van Pelt were getting excellent results but the orders were to drop visually.

This time we came in from a different direction. It was no use, the clouds were still pressnt and increasing rather than diminishing.

A confrence was held between Pilot, Bombardier, Ashworth. The decision was to leave [redacted] and try Nagasaki. At the same instant four fighter were seen climbing up fast. That did it! We high tailed it away from there. We had been over the area close

to an hour--much to long. We were very disappointed as we turned toward Nagasaki. Therewas no other alternative, however.

Pilot--"John, check our fuel."

Eng--"Yes sir,1500 gallons left."

Pilot--Hm!--Abe, send Commander Ashworth up here.

I told the Commander that the Major wished to talk with him.

1500 gallons--we didn't have enough to make Iwo. Something will have to be done and quickly. The question was, what to do with the bomb and whether we could make Okinawa, which was about 350 miles from Nagasaki. Suppose the target at Nagasaki was also covered, than what? Our orders were to drop visually but---? The Major and Comdr were in a huddle.

Major--"Here's the situatuin Dick. We have just about enough fuel to make one pass over the target. If we do not drop at Nagasaki, we may have to let it go in the ocean. There's a very slim chance that we would be able to make Okinawa with the bomb but the odds are very slim. Will you accept a radar run if necessary and we can't see the targer?

Comdr--"Let me think it over Chuck."

Major--"Mind you Dick, I don't say for sure that we will have to get rid of the bomb, in the ocean if necessary.

The Comdr was in a tough spot. He had his orders but we hadn't anticipated running into complications such as these. A decision had to be made--we were nearing the objective. We had to reduce our air speed to conserve fuel.

After a few minutes deliberation, the Comdr decided. We will have to risk returning to Okinawa with the bomb, a radar drop was not to be made. None of us said anything to that. Ed and Van Pelt meanwhile were bringing us in on the target and doing a swell job.

We were 5 minutes away now! I could see that the Comdr was struggling within. He seemed perplexed--what to do--diregard orders --risk a return to Okinawa and the lives of the men aboard--perhaps the loss of the bomb in the ocean to save our own necks--all that weighed heavily on his mind. Desperatly he made up his mind. Casting aside all consideration he informed the Major that he had reversed his decision--t was Nagasaki, radar or visually but drop we will.

We cheered! Nagasaki here we come--only three minutes out.

Ed's voice came over "mark 10

Nav--Right! one degree correction to the left--good.

Ed--5 mark.

Ed--We're coming in righton course--5--mark.
Two minutes away.
Bomb--I still can't seeit.
Pilot--OK Honeybee but check all your switches and make damn sure that everything is ready, we can't affords anymore dry runs.
Lord, no hang up, not this time. One minute to go. The doors opened--I 45 seconds away. Nav and Radar were working feverishly to make last minute corrections--a shout from the bombardier "I'll take it, I can see the target, there's a hole in the clouds. Thirty seconds away! I flipped the tone on--pibled the goggles over my eyes and waited.
The ship jerked upwards--the tone cut off--the bomb was away. Yeeow! The doors clossd, we banked sharply! A flash! the bomb had hit. I jerked the goggles off and glanced out the navigators window. A huge column of smoke was at our left rising with tremendous speed--higher and higher.
Ray--"Pappy can you see it?"
Pappy--"No!"
Ray--"No!, hell it must be right under us than. We better get out of here."
There were four of us staring out of the window hypnotized by the cloud of white tower of smoke rolling towards us. I shouted to Olivi to get the camera and take some pictures.
[redacted] release--the smoke was at our level. Just then we felt three individual concussions. Bewildered we lobked at each other questioning.
"What's that? flak?, someone quired. Feels like it."
We circled the area. Our speedometer registered 200 and yet it seemed as though we were caught in a magnet which was drawing closer and closer to that ever dangerous column of smoke.
Harnes, at my right exclaimed in a harrassed tone of voice. "Gee we better get out of here, that stuff is dangerous." The throttles were advanced and slowly we drew away heading for Okinawa. Could we make it? A quick checkup showed that we barely had enough to get there.
From then on, I became as busy as the proverbial bee. It was my turn to do some work now.
The first thing I had to do was send the strike report--to inform the waiting public that the second atomic bomb had been releasee on the enemy. What a thrill! It was the greatest moment of my army career.

At 1215 the report went out to the wing.

Sweeney called me and told me to inform air sea rescue that we were leaving the area and also give our position, just in case--also to notify the wing that we were heading to Okinawa because of lack of fuel.

For an hour and a half I sweated--sending messages, encoding, decoding, copying messages that were being sent from our own planes. I was so engrossed, I failed to ralize that the time had fled by and that we were circling Okinawa. I switched to VHF and heard the Major call the tower for landing instructions--no answer! He called again! "Tower, any tower, this is Dimples 77 emergancy--come in." No reply! Again and again he called, still no reply from any of the towers. I tried calling on my set. The same results--no answer! Our gas situation was critical--our gas practically exhausted. We have been circling for twenty minutes. The distress call "May Day" was used but with no better success.

What to do now? Planes were all over the sky, taking off--shooting landings. We had to do something and quickly. We did! In desparation the Major decided to go in, tower or no tower--we had to. He told Olivi to get the flares out and to start shooting when given the signal. We made one final appeal to the tower and started our approach. At the same time Olivi start-shooting off the flares--red green, white, any one that was available was shot into the sky. For five minutes we were having a fourth of July celebration up in the cockpit as one after the other as fast we could load and fire, Olivi kept sending off those flares. The boys in the rear could smell the fumes and thought we were on fire. They couldn't imagine what was going on.

The runway was below us and directly in front. We were coming very fast and plenty hot. Waiting alongside the runway we could observe the fire engines and the meat wagon. The wheels hit the ground--we were travelling too fast--the props were reversed. Ah! that's better, as we slowed down. "Bless those reversible props and BLESS BLESS, that ground. It never looked so good, or felt better as we climbed from the ship. Ray stuck the tanks to measure our remainding fuel--5 minutes gas left. Close? Well!----The time was 1400. Hopkins and Bock followed us in.

We were greeted with the news that Russia had entered the war against Japan and that two hours ago another atomic bomb had been dropped over Nagaski. Can you beat that--so Russia was in on the kill now--and another atomic bomb had been dropped, well, well, well.

It was a cinch the war couldn't last much longer.

We went to the mess hall for some chow while the ship was being serviced. There one of the GIs informed us that a new secret bomb was being used against Japan, carried by P38s and dropped by parachute. So now fighter were carrying [redacted]. Isn't that nice! Why disillusion the poor guy--let him glory in his knowledge. After all the Nips were sure that that's the way it was being done. They said so over the radio after the raid over Hiroshima.

We took off for Tinian at 1705 and arrived at 2300, tired, hungry and worn out. The cameramen were waiting for us and took some more pictures. That night we all got looped. Exhausted as we were we stayed awake drinking until 0330. What a day!--one never to be forgotten. The excitement before take-off, the tension, strain and pressure--the long hours, the problems encountered--the fear that we might have to ditch--the trouble getting into Okinawaa--running out of gas--shooting flares--no sir, that's one day I'll never forget. Bless that Angel who watched over us, She did an excellent job.

Aug.10--"Ouch! Ouch! my head, what time is it Ray?" "1000 o'clock! time to get up. We have a meeting at 1300 at the 6th bomb group." "Also Col. Tibbets' crew had received the DFC, for dropping the first atomic bomb." Well that's nice!

At 1300, we went to the meeting and listened to a two hour disertation on air sea rescue. Inasmuch as I was in the vicinity, I looked in on my shum, Crossman and didn't return to my barracks until 1600--in time to get dressed and don a class A uniform. We were going down to wing headquarters to be awarded the air medal for flying right wing on the Hiroshima raid. Rush, rush, rush!

Amid hand shaking and picture taking we received the medal and congratulated by Gen. Davies, the C.O of the 313th wing.

News was running hot to-day. Russia's entry and the deadly weapon which had been dropped on her Empire had resulted in Japan calling a hasty conference of her cabinet and industrial leaders. It was ramored that She was willing to accept the terms of the Potsdam treaty--with one condition--that She be permitted to retain the emporer as the ruler of Japan. It was now up to the United States to decide. We were awaiting official confirmation.

That night I went to bed early. I was awakened by Ray. "Hey get up, the war is over." What! the war's over! Wow! Yeah! Hurrah!

But wait! What's that? the radio was on, giving

the latest developments, We were willing to accept Japan's capitulation but under the circumstances that the Emporer remain as the ruler but take orders ~~xxxxx~~ from the Allies. ~~Xxxxxxxx~~

Now it was Japan's ball! What would She do?

Disappointed I went back to bed--to be awakened again at 0030. This time by Crossman who had come over from the 6th bomb group. "Hey you victory boys--you heroes--you guys that won the war, wake up, the war is over, get up."

Nuts! the same rumor, Sleep was out now--we went to midnight chow and shot the bull until 0230.

Aug.11--Big time stuff--we were scheduled to attend a press conference. We and the Colnel's crew are to be interviewd by newspapermen who had come up from Guam to learn the story of the atomic bomb. Two broadcasts were made with some of the boys relating their version of what they observed and how they felt. This continue for three hours. More pictures were taken. The rest of the day we were free.

Aug.12--Nothing except the war news and the pending reply from Japan. The 21st bomber command had grounded all planes. However, we were cautioned to be on the alert for a sneak attack.

Aug. 13th--We are to report at operations to be taken to wing headquarters again to receive our award for dropping the second atomic bomb. Lt. General Twining was to be pressnt to hand us the award. At 1030, he arrived. We lined up on the stage. ~~xxxxxxx

The hours passed but still no news of Japan's surrender. By 2300, no announcement.- Nothing else to do but wait until to-morrow.

Aug.14th--Someone was shaking my shoulder. It was still dark. I glanced at my watch--0530--what the hell!

"Wake up Spitz, there's a strike going out, briefing at 0600."

God damn those yellow bastards; so we'll have to do it again.

The mightiest force of all time, combined air, ~~xxx~~ and sea power were operating to-day, united in thisxxx all out effort.

Our target this time was an assembly plant in the town of Koromo, located off the city of Nagoya. We were carrying the pumpkin. Take-off was at 0935--the weather fair. Enemy opposition unknown--fighter and flak might be present.--the Chaplains blessing and we ~~x~~ were off. We prayed then that upon return the news of japan's surrender would greet us. We were cautioned to stand by for the word "Utah" which meant, "return to base." If we received the message, we were to abort dropping the bomb somewhere in the Pacific.

The preliminaries before take-off were now routine. Engines started at 0919--taxi out1927--airborne 0935. The beginning of our 6th trip to the Empire bout our 5th mission. We were flying Capt Eatherly's ship to-day "The Straight Flush"--primary, visual,--Koromo. Secondary, Omya, also visual. In the event that neither was clear, a radar run was to be made on Tokyo.

I for one kept my fingers crossed and hoped that the weather would be in our favor over Koromo. At this stage of the game, with the war in its final chapter, there is no sense in asking for it and going over a hot spot where the area would be heavily fortified.

We reached our target at 1545. The coverage about 4/10. The radar equipment very poorly. It was up to Beehan to lay it in and the first time. At 1550, he had it in sight, it looked good. The doors were now opened. Pappy reported a few bursts of flak but out of range although level. 1553 and "Bomb away!" I looked at Beehan, he had a sad a disapponted expression. The results were poor. We headed for home and arrived in the fast time of 11hours and 50 minutes. Still no news of Japan's surrender.

As we filed into the Briefing room for interrogation my eyes ipened wide. Well, what do you know! I can't believe it! Women! There on the platform of the stage were two red cross girls , American gals, ~~white~~, servim coffee and doughnuts. ~~xxxx~~ Chee!

That guy Bohin is there again pouring the drinks, and how he can pour! He must derive a great deal of pleasure in performing his services as bartender. He considers it an insult to his altruistic character, if you walk away and not stagger away. Again I became plastered and barely made it back to the hut without any mishap. I showered and hit the sack.

Aug.15th--The world was electried by the announcement, "Japan surrenders!" An official proclamation by President Truman reached my ears at 0908 while I was engaged in hanging my laundry that I had just finished. A shiver went through me as I listened to the news. "Thank God it is over, Darling. Now we'll be together soon." Those were my immediate thoughts and reaction to the statement given out by the President.

The bloodiest battle in the history of mankind was at an end.

Shouts of joy could be heard--the siren was wailing it's answer--whistles blew--trucks and jeeps sped along the road with hands glued to the horn--greetings and shouts of joy were exchanged. It was now Mr. soandso, no longer sargent, corporal or sir. The radio kept up a continuous narration of the events as they transpired. V-J day however, would not be declared until peace terms were officially signed.

That evening the Colonel announced that he intended to leave for Washington in the near future. His desires was to return the entire group, intact, to the United States immediately and that would be his requests. He continued with the warning that we over optimistic of getting out of the army, since there was a motive to his desire--to train a post-war organization capable of handling the atomic project.

So, that was it! Well, once I was back in the States, this little boy had other plans. It doesn't require a genuis to flip a switch up or down. Besides I'm no genuis. All I crave now is to return to the status of a civilian again. For three years I've been married to the army, listening to it's nagging, taking orders. Now I want a divorce and return to my home and to the nagging of my wife.

Aug.16th--Still no news! Rumors were flying around like golf balls on a city course early Sunday morning. We were going to the Phillipines, shuttle troops, fly to the Empire, carry supplies, return prisoners of war to the states. Rumors, but it gave us something to talk about. Anything would be welcome to sitting around doing nothing.

The Colonel was slated to leave tonite but for unknown reasons cancelled the trip.. He's leaving for Guam early to-morrow. Perhaps he will have some good news for us when he returns from his interview with General Twining. To-morrow is the day set for the meeting between Japanese emisseries and American representatives, to sign, seal and deliver the signatures that would declare the official end of hostilities.

Aug.17th--It appears as though Japan is stalling. The latest news say that shw regrets that the appointment cannot be kept--embarrasing but unavoidable. She will endeavor to hasten her emmisaries as soon as can be arranged. "~~Bull~~!"

The trip to Washington has definetely been postponed now and the Colonel has gone to Guam. The details of his visit are unknown. His departure for the states will apparantly be delayed until V-J day had been declared. In the meantime our own departure was being affected.

Aug.18th--The day started with a local two hour flight. Operations requires that we put in four hours a week. We are to fly in a 3 plane close formation. This outfit has never trained or flown formation. Why start now and take unnecessary risks. We have nothing to say about the matter. Since Tuesday, three planes have cracked up on these local flights.

Mac Arthur made a stron retort to Japan's statement and demanded that She have her delegation at Manila tomorrow the 19th--or else. We'll see what the morrow will bring.

Aug.19th--Reports coming in over the air, state that the Japanese envoy have left for Manila. The news from Manila will not be available until the next day.

The Island was conducting a "New York Day"to-day. ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ Each Sunday was a day set aside to honor a different state in the Union, where friendsof that state could congregate and possibly meet some of their home town neighbors. It was just a jam session flavored with lemonade and doughnuts. I ran across no one that I knew

Aug.20th--Another day of waiting--the Colonel was still around--Japanese envoys were in Manila now confering with MacArthur. It would take another few days before any definite information would be forthcoming.

Flew another local flight--played black jack for four hours and wound up three bucks behind. However, I later made that up in a poker game and came out winners seven dollars.

Aug21,22,23--Blanks!

Aug.24th--Flew another local mission for 2 hours. The trip to Manila was called off. Th-morrow a parade woild be held and reviewed by Gen. Spaatz.

Aug. 25th--We were awakened by the booming voice of our first sergeaht, Seay with "everyone on the ball diamond at 1300 in class A uniforms. The parade will be held at 1530."

For 3 hours we sweated under a blistering sun to await the arrival of Gen Spaatz, who failed to show up. At 1530, the voice of Gen Davies was heard on the loudspeaker. "I'm proud of you men but above all you should be proud of yourselves." A few awards were distributed and the parade started. The entire proceedure, including the time to march clear around the strip, consumed 30 minutes. "This is the army Mr Jones." "Well you can have it Mr. Jones, I don't want it."

There was a surprise waiting for me when we returned from the parade. Aletter from my brother, Sam. He had arrived at Saipan a few days ago. I scouted around for Major Sweeney and received a 36 hour pass to visit him. Ray also had a pass to visit his brother-in-law. We will leave to-morrow morning and try to get the shuttle plane across.

Aug.26th--In 6 minutes we were on the island of Saipan. It was a much rougher looking place than Tinian, and larger too. In contrast to the flat terrain of Tinian, Saipan was mountainous, with thick tangled shrubbery and gullys constituting a large portion of the ground.

Chip picked us up and than we went looking for my brother's organization. I found him seated waitng for me. The kid looked good--tanned and healthy and in good spirits. We spent the entire day together. We were put up for the night in Chip's hut and left the following morning on the ferry. The return trip took three hours.

Aug.28,29,30--Blanks! Sheerman tanks were making landings on Tokyo + other areas.

Aug.31st--Pay Day!

Sept.1st--Good news to-day. We were told that it was practically a certainty that we would all be back in the states by November 15th. We were also informed that new uniform regulations would be in effect--class As will be worn after 1845 beginning Sept. 3rd.

Sept 2 - V.J. Day - The curtain falls on the final scene of the worlds most historical drama - a drama that ran for 3 years, 8 months and 26 days. - the actors, the peoples of some 50 nations.

V.J. day, the cessation of mass murder; no more howitzers; no more foxholes; no more crawling through sand and slime and the hidden dangers of the jungle.

"Peace", that word we have been waiting to hear for these long years, has become an actuality.

On the island there were no outward signs of rejoicing but there wasn't a one, sick or well who didn't offer a silent "Thank God it's over," - as the news reached their ears.

Sept 3 - From now on, it looks as though each day will be a repetition of yesterday. With nothing to actually keep us occupied, it will be up to the individual himself to see that he does not become "crack happy."

JJG

Albury

Capt. Albury christened Charles Rowland was born Oct 12, 1920, the last arrival in a family already ~~consisting~~ containing three boys and a girl.

Who would predict then, that 24 years and 10 months later this kicking screaming pink skinned infant would become world famous - his name and exploits gracing every newspaper and magazine in the country as one of the pilots at the controls of the "Great Artist", the airplane that made the now historical atomic raid on Nagasaki.

Although I had heard his name mentioned in connection with our crew, while I was still in the test section, I had never come in personal contact with him until he was introduced as our airplane commander and had been transferred into the 393rd.

A well built stocky lad weighing 180 lbs standing 5'9" - grey blue eyes that revealed a cool, amiable and pleasant disposition. Called Don by his friends he was affectionately nicknamed "Donald Duck" by his fellow officers. ~~and~~ I immediately took a liking to him and knew that we would get along nicely. This was later verified during several cross country flights when we became better acquainted. It was during these trips that I really got to know him - to have complete confidence in his ability.

Although born, educated and raised in the south,

Miami, Fla. He speaks with no southern accent. Studying engineering at the University of Miami, his education was interrupted by the outbreak of the war.

His flying career dates back to March of 1938. Lacking the funds to enjoy this expensive hobby, he took a job with the telephone company so that he could earn enough to continue his flying and pay for his tuition at the University.

In Oct. of 1942, he enlisted in the cadets and won his wings on July 28, 1943. ~~and~~ commissioned a 2nd Lt. He became a 1st Lt. a year later and promoted to Capt. Aug 1945 while serving in the Marianas.

There was one other pilot in the family an older brother who was shot down in a B26 on a raid over Toulon, France. on Aug 20. 1944.

Although a B26 pilot himself before joining Col Tibbetts at Eglin Field, Fla Jan 1944, he has been checked out on every four engine plane plus many twin engine jobs employed by the army air forces. A cool level headed pilot who knows his airplane as well as fly them, he has an excellent record and approximately 1500 hours to his credit.

Airminded since his early childhood, his post war plans are limited around airplanes. The proud daddy of a ~~[illegible]~~ 6 months old girl. His wife has no objection to his flying.

Although still undecided whether

to remain in the army if given a regular commission, he has been giving it consideration. Also, the thought of operating his own flying school or connecting with one of the leading airlines, has been ~~nothing~~ included in his future plans. Whichever the case may be, he intends to remain with aviation.

As a crew member, I can register nothing but praise to his ability as a pilot. As an enlisted man regarding the opinion towards an officer, I have never heard or known him to tolerate or punish an individual - and there must have been occasions that called for admonishment. As one man's opinion, he is one hell-uva swell guy, whose friendship I hope to maintain long after I have shed the uniform of a soldier.

Van Pelt Jr

Our navigator was Capt. James F. Van Pelt Jr. a handsome chap, standing 5' 9½" (he insists on the ½ inch) and weighing about 155 lbs — has dark hair, a heavy black beard and the darkest brown eyes (almost black) that I have ever seen. He hails from Huntington W. Va.

Born July 7, 1918, he and a younger sister are the only children — is married and has two lovely children, a little girl of 2 yrs and a 9 mos. baby boy.

His affiliation with the Col. Tibbetts began at Wendover where he reported Sept 29, 1944 upon request from the Col. who had heard of him through Maj. Terrabee the Col's nephew in the C.T.D. Fortunately for us he was assigned as our navigator. I quote "fortunately for us" and I express the sentiments of the rest of the fellows.

An experienced navigator with over 1000 hours — a person with an affable and friendly personality, he typified the legendary southern gentleman. One could not help but like him — he fitted right in with the rest of us.

A pre-med student with four years of ROTC at V.P.I., he enlisted in the coast artillery as a 2nd Lt. on July 1, 1940 — remained in the C.A. for 18 months during which time he applied for student pilot training. On 21, 1941 his application was accepted. Nine months later he graduated — a navigator. Told to report to Washington for assignment, he was sent to Chanute Fld for link training.

About that time the army air forces

had just adopted a new means of navigational training facilities - celestial navigational trainers. Someone was needed to establish these C.N.T's. someone with ability and leadership to indoctrinate others who in turn would become instructors. Van Peet became that man - a tribute to his ability and leadership.

From Chanute he went to Geiger Fld - thence to Walla Walla, to Gowen, to Dyersburg to Ardmore and finally came to Wendover. His initial desire to become an active crew member in a B29 unit had at last borne fruit.

For twelve months I have observed his operations during flight - (his position is directly across aisle at arms length) marvelling at his tireless efforts and unerring proficiency - his mastery of every navigational instrument (there are enough of them). For twelve months I have sat there watching him work - hour upon hour, plotting fixes, taking bearings, shooting the sun during the day and the stars at night, correcting drift - always with a thoroughness that earned the respect and admiration of every one of us. The responsibility of arriving at our destination on the scheduled time, rested on him. We were always there - and at the right time.

I could go on and on enumerating - ~~his [illegible]~~

his collective resources his calm and efficient demeanor on a bomb run or during heavy weather, which acted as a sedative to my sometimes jumpy nerves.

There was the time with our fuel running low after the raid over Nagasaki. We were making for Okinawa. Every gallon of gas was precious, every second counted. The pressure lay heavily on his judgement - it meant the difference of making it safely or having to ditch. We landed with 15 minutes fuel left. A beautiful job of navigation.

Unless he can retain his present rank upon his return to the states, he will resume his studies and specialize in ~~obstetrics~~. Obstetrics.

Beahan

Capt Kermit K. Beahan - Bombardier.
Born Aug 9, 1918 in St Louis Mo. - moved as youngster to Houston Texas which he calls his home. A solidly built chap of 6 feet - 200 lbs, brown hair hazel eyes, majored in physical education at Rice Inst where he played football.

Entered Cadets in Aug 1940, commissioned Dec 1941 a bombardier - rose to 1st Lt Sept 1942 and Capt in Aug 1943. Received training at Barksdale, La - became instructor at Midland field Texas & then shipped to Kirtland fld in Albuquerque New Mex. - thence to Boise Idaho to join an O.T.U. where he joined the famous 97th - the first heavy bomb outfit (B17s) to bomb Germany. Left for overseas duty in June 1942.

Flew 12 missions over European theatre & went to Africa where he flew another 19.

Has been shot down twice and holds the D.F.C. with 2 clusters - air medal with 7 clusters - purple heart - European theatre ribbon - 3 stars - asiatic pacific 2 stars - American defense & pre Pearl Harbor ribbons.

Crash landed on Dec 18, 1942 & Jan 29. Considers the mission of Bizerte as his most harrowing. The plane had been shot & damaged by flak and continuous attack by enemy fighters. Had wounded both pilot & co-pilot causing a

crash landing in very front dessain near the enemy lines.

His 30 missions completed, he was returned to the U.S., relieved of further combat duty. Was sent to Bombardiering Team, transferred to Galveston + then to Lindmore Field in the capacity of instructor.

In the meantime Colo Tibbetts, who had been his squadron commander in Europe had begun to form the 509th at Wendover, Utah and brought him up there in Sept 1944.

His modesty and pleasant disposition plus ~~towards~~ those with whom he comes in contact with have earned him the respect and admiration that he so richly deserves. and that goes for enlisted personnel as well as officers.

~~His ability as a bombardier earned resulted in the nickname of the "Great "Artiste"~~. His skill and ability as a bombardier plus that certain way that he had with the fair sex resulted in the nickname of the Great Artiste. By unanimous agreement one of the crew also called our ship the Great Artiste as a tribute to him.

I have yet to meet anyone who has nothing but praise for this fellow who has done such a wonderful job. The war department came to that realization and recently came forth with a citation naming Beahan as the outstanding bombardier.

Of all his missions, when asked which to him was the most strenuous, he said "Nagasaki". The strain and responsibility which rested so heavily upon his shoulders was enough to try the mental and physical make up of the strongest kind. He came through with flying colors.

"My duty to my country comes first," he said & so has decided to remain in service until such time when he feels that he is no longer needed.

Note: celebrated his 17th birthday looking for a hole in the clouds over Nagasaki to drop the bomb at their bomb.

Was constantly looking after the comfort of the rest of the crew.

Sweeney

(Chuck)

Major Chas. W. Sweeney - Born Mass, 1919
180 lbs - 6 ft. brown hair, grey green eyes
Employed by Solomon & Phillips, leather
dealers of Boston New York before
entering cadets Apr. 1941. - Commissioned
Dec. 1941. became 1st Lt Mar. 1942.
Capt Feb 43, 1943 - Major Sept 21 1944.
Has close to 3000 hours as pilot
and flown in almost every type of
single engine twin engine & four
engine planes of the Army.

Was operations Officer at Colmitted
where he met Col Tibbetts who
was then experimenting with the
first B29's developed ~~by Boeing~~. His
keen interest in the latest airplane
produced by the army caused him
to request a transfer so that he could
join Col Tibbetts with his experiments,
and it was granted in Dec. 1943.
~~from then on wholeheart~~. Left Eglin
in July 1944 & went to Grand Island
to become the check pilot on the
standardization board. Left Grand
Island in Sept 1944 to join the Col at
Wendover & to assume complete charge
in testing the latter - which later
proved the outstanding project of the
war. His ~~action~~ outstanding skill
~~at~~ ability to handle the B29 was here
been as the man for the job & he was
later rewarded by becoming the
commanding officer of the 393 bomb

squadron - the only squadron in the army air forces that was given the responsibility of delivering the atom bomb to Japan.

In his 3000 hours of flying he has never come close to any serious accidents which is an fine indication of his ability in the complex problems that confront the pilot. The fact that he had been given the job to lead the parade is a tribute to his understanding of men + his qualities as a leader.

~~If things don't turn out he had~~

"Sit tight boys, we'll try it once again". ~~a phrase~~ that those of us during a moment of danger, is a phrase that those of us who were on the crew will always remember.

Yes, a great guy and a regular guy - and a real flyer!

note: Received the silver star for his wonderful job over Nagasaki.

Has resigned

Kubarek Ch
"Nuts"

M/Sgt John D. Kubarek - born Apr. 3, 1917 in Pittsburgh - 5'8" - 135 lbs - brown eyes - black hair. - 3 sisters - 3 brothers.

A regular army man, the engineer of the crew has 14 years service in army.

Joined Aug 1931 at the age of 17. to seek adventure and requested immediate overseas duty. Has spent half of his 14 years overseas and says he has had enough.

He was with an experimental tank outfit but preferred the air corps, started flying 1937 on sub patrol.

Went to Eglin Sept 1943 & joined Col Tibbetts as his engineer.

Has close to 3000 without any serious mishaps.

~~Through adventure~~

His urge to get into the air & seek adventure was the result of an incident which occurred during his early teens while a sophomore at high school.

One day while sitting on the back porch his gaze was attracted to a flock of geese flying overhead. From then on the spirit urged him upward and onward so at the age of 17 he enlisted to satisfy that urge.

His lack of education however did not deter him from becoming one of the first ~~engineers~~ enlisted men to engineer a B29 & to compile a safety record that is

From now on our thoughts were homeward bound. When are we going? Rumors were constantly buoying our hopes ~~that~~ in a few days - next week - June would be going on a home tour. This continued until the weeks stretched into months. Then word came that we would remain to drop an ~~atom~~ another bomb on the bunch of Japanese workings to see what effect the "A" bomb would have, ~~if~~ ~~on the~~ ~~on the~~ on the vessels. It looked as though we were due for a long and indefinite stay.

Col. Tibbets had gone to Washington to see if it were possible to have the entire outfit return intact as a unit. We hadn't heard from him.

At last word arrived - ~~the~~ ~~ground bubbles would have~~ ~~out~~ we were to prepare to return home. The ground

Waver

Sgt Raymond C Gallagher.

C. stands for Clarence A M. Gunner and electrical specialist was born Oct 19, 1921, chief of Scotch handsome lad of stocky build 5'8" weighing 165. ~~Catholic~~ Irish descent and ~~[illegible]~~ ~~Catholic~~ youngest of 6 boys and 2 girls.

Although he has been in the service for three years ~~not this time~~ in my association with him which is more than a year, I have never heard him utter an obscene epithet or ~~[illegible]~~ cross beyond the word damn.

His unspoiled disposition and good nature is a tribute to his sister Christina who mothered him since childhood. ~~when his mother died~~

The youngest in the family of 6 boys brothers and 4 ~~[illegible]~~ girls.

He is devoted to his fiancee and intends to marry soon after his release. His abundant fan mail from the females is indicative of his popularity among the opposite sex.

An aspiring musician before the war he has no plans for the future although he would like to enter some kind of business.

An all around athlete, good sport, a conscientious worker, reliable, resourceful - a fellow that is an ideal teammate and an excellent co-worker - that is Ray Gallagher.

He is very fond of children and therein lies a story of Ray & his little doll Mary Ann who has been on every flight with him since June ene 1944 earning the D.F.C. the air medal & cluster, the pacific ribbon with 5 stars and the good conduct medal.

~~Outlast night, Ruth~~ Before entering the service as a farewell present his little niece Marguerite Mary gave him at the age of 5 then to replace her lone for her rebale Raymond offered all her dolls to him. She would have been rather embarrassing for him to report for inspection with dolls in his possession so he persuaded little Marguerite to keep the dolls till his return.

On this particular trip during the exchange of gifts Marguerite Mary who had grown into a blushing little miss of 15 presented him with her favorite doll - a blue eyed blond hair junior miss named Mary Ann. This time he gratefully accepted her gift and Mary Ann has been on every flight with him adopted by the crew as its lucky omen - a veteran of the war.

Besides Ray, the Gallaghers are represented in the armed forces by Bob a marine, Bill & Jack in the Army and a brother in law Chap. in the navy.

Sent from Indiana Kansas to Cuba for an electron specialist to work with Col Tillinghast on Dec 13 1943

Area albinism
Hughes

= Burks

S/Sgt Edward Kenneth Buckley
Julian Okla.

Ed sometimes called "Miracles" because his splendid frame was our radar man. Born Aug 16 1913
Enlisted June 1941
Married - Boy ~~[illegible]~~ 1944.
~~Farmed~~ Operator of grocery store + farm.
Raced greyhounds + bamboo horses as hobby.
Studied Veterinarian
Ohio State + Pitt. Univ.
Older sister
Always interested in animals — breeding. Father trader in horses (hobby)
Served Arlie service + went to summer school.
Joined B29 outfit in July 1944 learned radar at Fairmont.
Joined our crew on Nov. 1944 as radar operator.
At 19 wanted to see the country + hitchhiked to Calif. to see Olympic games & since then covered most of the 48 states. Has noted greyhounds on most of the popular tracks north + south.
5' 10½", 145 lbs. Blonde hair brown eyes
In 1939 - Kidney infection. was given up.

By Pres. of class no H.S
Played basketball track polo.
Post war - undecided but well
maintain Farm - Muskegon Wisc
Reds school - to summering at
Tyndall Field

War just declared 4F but requested
1A classification.

Page 1

Albert Francis Belcourt

Texan - of French Irish descent 5'9½ 160 lbs
next to the oldest of 2 boys - 2 girls.
married 5 times & children. boy 3. girl 2
Joined Jan 1943
C. F. C. Gunner also armorer.
tail gunner.
Left for Eglin Jan 1944 to join Col Tillinghast.

Farmed as a youngster, ~~bit~~ construction & steel worker
Post war undecided. would like to go into ranching raising cattle.
Lost hair (pneumonia) at the age of 20.
Played ~~basketball~~ on basketball team for Meadowhead H.S.
Born in Jacksonville Texas moved to Mansfield, attended school
Makes his home now in Plainview

Glassell Taylor Const Co. Construction foreman.

Born Aug 8 1915 - 30 Birthday celebrated on flight over Iraq.

Quiet wife - rough young - made several attempts to be discharged on dependency claim - negative - essential.

Paddy - climbing into tail with flak suit - sweating cursing - all alone for hours.

-4-

behalf to leave on or about Oct 15. The air echelon to follow soon after.

~~On Nov 1 - the~~

On Oct 17 - the boat sailed for home carrying the entire personel of the 309th except the combat crews who were to return with their indivi dual airplanes & a few officers & men to maintain the clean house. Even on

~~the Nov 1st.~~

mess hall was closed & we were ~~fed at the~~ ~~with~~ rome ~~on different~~ of the other outfits

On Nov 3rd the first flight left for the states. We were

in the second flight & took off from Tinian on Nov 5 - 2255 with no men aboard. - the regular crew of 10 plus 10 paratroopers which also included our ground crew.

Our first stop was Iwo Jima and we arrived 0600 - 6 hours & 5 minutes. The weather was good & although we were rather crowded and uncomfortable, the ~~were~~ thought that we were homeward bound overshadowed the inconvenience.

We left Iwo Jima that same day at 1725 after refueling with & a couple of meals and arrived at

John Rogers field on Oahu, Hawaii on
Nov 7, 0325
It had been a ~~a~~ gruelling
trip for Van Pelt (who was being cramped
~~on the flight deck~~ + I had to
send on a

It was a gruelling trip for
Van Pelt ~~Bus~~ navigator + myself.
It was his job to bring us to
our destination + keep us from
getting lost + ~~Stars~~ of the
Give me a position every 90
minutes so that I could
send the report to the ground
station. The rest of the boys
could take turns getting a few
weeks of shut eye but me,
~~had to fly~~ Van Pelt +
I had to stay awake

visible — started descent
came out of clouds ~~at~~ 5000
+ there she was —
shouts of joy — slapping of
backs — etc etc.

Rear Adm. PARNELL
Brig Gen. FARRELL
CAPT. PARSONS U.S.N.-
COL. KIRKPATRICK. - Set up operational.
Facilities in Tinian.
DR. N. RAMSAY
MR. R. WARNER -charge of Bomb
assembly
MR. G. DOLL Elect. Eng.
DR. Penney - Prof. higher math
Columbia Univ. - British scientist.
DR. P. Morrison - Physist
DR. C. E. BAKER - Research
DR. ALVAREZ
MR. AGNEW - Physist
DR. B. WIECHMAN - Prof. of Physics
Notre Dame.
MR. L. Johnston - Univ of Ch.
LT. Comm Dr. F. ASHWORTH U.S.N.
DR. NOLAN - MEDICINE
CAPT BEGG. - Charge of Ord.
LT. COL. Peer. De SILVA. - Head of security

Largest manufacturing plant in the world built in Oak Ridge Tenn. Twice as large as Willow Run plant.

Sept. 21 - 2 40 Bolm
24 - 2 15 Marquardt.
27 - 4 00 Sweeney
29 - 4 00
12 55

OCT 2 - 2 00
9 - 5 00
18 - 2 00
25 - 2 45
11 45

~~Left Fairview~~

~~NOV 5 - T.O. 10 hrs R 2 2 5-5- tonie 7 hrs~~
~~NOV 6 - 10 hrs~~
~~NOV 7 - 10 hrs~~
~~NOV 8 - 3 1/2~~

NOV 5 - LEFT TINIAN 2255
ARR KWJ 0600 NOV 6
NOV 6 LEFT KWJ 1725
ARR HONOL. 0325 NOV 7
NOV 7 LEFT HONOL.
NOV 8 ARR. MATHER. 10 hrs.
NOV. 8 - LEFT MATHER
ARR ROSWELL 3 1/2

MATHER - HON. } 9 50
HON - KWJLN } 10 11
KWJLN - TINIAN } 6

July.

9/	LOCAL	4 HRS	
11/	"	2	
12	ROTA	4	
14	"	4	
18	GUGUAN	3 30	
20	FUCHASHIMA	12 45	
21	LOCAL	2 05	76 35
24	KOBE	12 50	
26	TOYAMA	12 50	
27	LOCAL	4	
29	IWO	7 45	
31	ROUND ROBIN	6 50	
		76	

AUG.

1-	LOCAL	3 45	
3-	"	2 10	
5-	"HIROSHIMA"	12 50	
8-	LOCAL	3	
9-	NAGASAKI	16 15	
14-	KOROMO	11 50	
18-	LOCAL	1 40	
20	"	2 05	
24	"	2 00	
29	"	2 00	
31	"	2 00	
		59 35	