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W. C. MARTIN

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A THANKSGIVING PRAYER

For all the blessings of the year
For friends and homes and loved ones dear
My praise be
And for the increase from our land
Reward for labors of our hand
My thanks to thee

But there is yet another gift
For which my heart to thee I lift
Most gratefully
That within Thy vast creation
Of souls of men in every nation
Thou too made me

To never have existed here
Nor felt the warmth or known the cheer
Of noonday sun
Nor known the peace of eventide
When stars from out their hiding glide
When day is done

To think of all the times I'd miss
The ecstasy of joy and bliss
Had I not been
Nor known the discipline of grief
Or found in prayer a sweet relief
From guilt of sin

If I find life is good on earth
How great to me will be its worth
When heaven I gain
And so on this Thanksgiving day
I lift my voice to thee and say
Thanks, Thanks again.

—Mrs. Mae Martin

AND WE SAT AND LISTENED

The other day we sat in a group discussing some of the things that ought to be done in the post war period and the opinion finally simmered down to the fact that we should fix our streets and build a sewerage disposal plant and call it good. In general the opinion was that there are so many changes being made in the things we contemplate and want, it might be the part of wisdom to wait and see how some of these projects were being handled in other communities. All of which might be sound advice, but we recall there are a few things there has been a crying need for, extending back more than a quarter of a century. We have waited a good while for some of these things other communities got while we waited.

Naturally the post war program ties in with what should we do if anything for the returning soldier after the war. Gene L. Holt writing in the Fairbury, Illinois Blade, probably expresses what the soldiers are now thinking when he says: "I hear a lot of talk of what should be done for the soldier after the war has been brought to a successful close. I am not much of a planner along this line, but from what the boys tell me and from what I read, I would judge that the boys want to come back to the same kind of a world they left when they were taken in the draft. The more they see of other countries and other people the more they realize what a wonderful country they lived in. They want no regulations thrust upon them, or sympathy. All they want is to be given a chance to earn a decent living, have a home and raise their families." The returning servicemen want things as they were, still we feel sure they would want to make the communities they come back to a better place to live and in doing this employment would be provided for those who need it.

Among the things we've waited for and still need is a hospital. Increasing attention is being given medical care for everyone, but until we do have hospital facilities, residents in South Lane county will miss this and we will continue to let outside hospitals get the cream from this section.

Air travel will call for some sort of facilities here, but many fear to go to too much expense until the future picture is a little clearer.

Potash for High-Octane Gas
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19.47.19Time Brings Changes
To Sentinel Force

If time brings changes, war brings them quicker and as a result there have been several changes in the staff at the Sentinel office. The personnel of the front and back shop and office has been completely changed in the last six weeks with the exception of A. W. Shofstall, who is rounding his 19th year in the mechanical department (he ought to have a medal or something on his 20th anniversary). The changes started when Wayne Monroe was called into service. First Mrs. Esther (Cukie) Stratton served as intertype operator for several months, until the call of their farm became too great and she joined her husband George on their farm east of town. Mrs. Albert Adkins (known as Whiz bang to the office force) was shifted from the front as society reporter to the back as intertype operator and Mrs. Murel Joy of Divide was added to the mechanical force. Mrs. F. L. Grannis, replaces Mrs. Adkins as society editor and thus steps into an old position she held for several years under Elbert Bede. Mrs. A. W. Shofstall has also been added to the force as operator.

The women are pretty near running things around here.

Sixth War Bond drive now on. Buy bonds and help win the war.

GOD IS MY
CO-PILOT

Col. Robert L. Scott

WNU RELEASE

CHAPTER VI: Scott solos a Flying Fortress for the first time and makes twenty practice landings. He leaves for India from a Florida point.

CHAPTER VII

Maybe the meal was really good—I've forgotten. But later we were to have some meals which were definitely on the rugged side. Some time just try a breakfast at three a. m. composed of warmed-over, mouldy, then re-warmed toast, with slightly sour canned tomatoes. After this year and more, I can close my eyes and see Col. C. V. Haynes sitting there looking at that delicacy—thinking, no doubt, about Carolina country ham, with brown gravy making a little puddle in the grits.

Well fed but on the tired side, we left the base at 13:35, for our next destination farther down the coast. For more than two hundred miles we were over friendly territory as we hugged the beaches, but later, along the Ivory Coast, we had to fly out to sea to avoid the prying eyes that were Vichy French. I must have sworn deeply that afternoon, for in my diary I note now that I wrote this line: "Damn, we have to dodge those b— all the time."

We passed a fighter base at 17:00 G.M.T., and one hour later we landed at another West Coast base. The sun was setting back to the West in the Atlantic—towards home. Easter Sunday was fast coming to a close. I remembered then, from "hearsay evidence," that I had been born exactly thirty-four years before. From personal experience I would be able to recall this Easter as a memorable one.

Back through a great part of my hectic life, I had been the "time-hog" when it came to chiselling airplanes from every station in the U.S.A. I had often stated that I never had, and never would have, enough flying time. Right now, the way my head and eyes ached and the way my body fairly yearned for a place to stretch out, I almost resolved to eat those statements of the past. For during the last twenty-eight hours we had been in the air, for twenty-five of them under terrific tension. In that one day we had not only been lost in the South Atlantic, but we had covered nearly four thousand miles, from Belem to Natal to our stop near Fisher's Lake, and on to destination. I remember looking over at Doug and saying rather sadly that for once in my life I had had enough flying for one day.

As we rode out to our billets in a British lorry with a barefoot bush-boy chauffeur, I contemplated the completed trip. I firmly believe that had I been a confirmed ground soldier, wholly unconverted to air power, I would have realized that the airplane had grown up and was definitely here to stay.

Next day, while the crew worked on the tired airplane, some of us drove into the bush country. With a guide we made about a ten-hour trip into the interior, to Togoland. Entering a typical dirty village we heard jazz music and picked our way towards the source. I imagine all of us were expecting to find a radio or a victrola; instead we found that we were really in the land that had "birthed" jazz. Grouped about an earthen crock of palm wine was the population of the village, and the more they dipped the gourd cups into the stagnant-looking liquor, the hotter the music became and the more the sweating black bodies swayed to the beat of the drums. Their bare feet were moving to the rhythm in the dust, and their naturally musical voices, added to the syncopated rumble that came from black hands thumping many kinds of drums, made us wonder whether some orchestra like Cab Calloway's hadn't come to Africa with us on a USO project.

On April 7 we left the Gold Coast for Kano, in Nigeria. Off at 08:00 G.M.T., we flew a course of 90 degrees to miss more of Vichy France. Over Lagos, in the clammy heat of the equatorial jungle, we turned into the continent to a course of 53 degrees and continued over very thick country until we crossed the Niger. From there on East, the land that was Africa seemed to dry up, and my boyhood conception of how the Dark Continent should look faded away. Instead of constant jungle we now saw dry desert, like the lower hump of Brazil near Natal, or places in our own West.

We landed at the old walled city of Kano that afternoon. Our next take-off, for Khartoum, would best be made at nightfall, in order that we might land in the Sudan early in the morning before the dust storms had impaired the visibility. To waste time we walked into town to see the ancient city of Biblical days. Soon we found ourselves dodging camels, lepers, and Ali Baba—with his more than forty thieves.

None of us ever determined whether or not this Ali Baba was a descendant of the Arabian Nights original. But we did learn of a great decision that he had lost in a financial battle with some ferry pilots from the AVG. These men were mem-

bers of the famous First American Volunteer Group under General Chennault, who were fighting the Japs in Burma.

General Chennault's AVG was composed of three squadrons, functioning under the supreme command of China's Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. About seventy pilots and three hundred ground crew personnel made up this organization, which for nearly four months had been in combat against the Japanese Air Force from Rangoon up to Lashio, Burma. These American boys had come from the air services of the American Army, Navy and Marine Corps.

The General was an old pilot, and through many years of single-seater flying in the noise of open cockpits had become moderately deaf, a circumstance that had helped to bring about his retirement. Knowing that war with Japan was more than probable, after his retirement he had gone to China, and there he had not only persuaded the Generalissimo to build the air-warning net within China, but had worked to train China's Air Force as well. Growing out of this, when the brave Chinese Air Force was virtually destroyed by the overwhelming odds of the Japanese juggernaut, Chennault had long cherished a volunteer force of American airmen, flying American equipment in China against the Japs.

The purpose was fourfold: to test American equipment, to train a nucleus of American pilots in actual combat, to furnish air support for the Chinese land forces, and to fight a delaying action against the Japanese until the Chinese armies could be equipped with modern sinews of war for offensive action against the stranglehold of Japan.

Finally, in the late summer of 1941, the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps permitted a few reserve officer pilots to resign their commissions and accept jobs as instructors with Central Aircraft Manufacturing Company, or Camco, as it was called. These seventy-odd pilots and some three hundred ground-crewmembers proceeded in small numbers on ships of various nations—Dutch, British, Indian, American, and some unregistered—West from San Francisco to Java, then Singapore, and thence to Rangoon, Burma.

These "instructors" for Camco were carried on the passenger lists as acrobats, doctors, lawyers, and probably even Indian chiefs. I imagine that after they made their great record—with never more than fifty-



General Chennault's AVG was composed of three squadrons, functioning under the supreme command of China's Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, shown above. About seventy pilots and three hundred ground crew personnel made up this organization, which for nearly four months had been in combat against the Japanese Air Force from Rangoon up to Lashio, Burma.

five airplanes they shot down two hundred and eighty-six Japanese planes, losing only eight in combat—the complaining Japanese would have been disposed to add the remainder of the nursery rhyme, "Rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief."

Many times I had heard Radio Tokyo complain of the "cruelty" of these American guerrilla pilots. Under General Chennault's clever leadership and tactical genius they had virtually driven the Imperial Japanese Air Force from the skies of Burma, and held the Burma Road for months after it should have fallen. Against odds of more than twenty to one, they had "saved face" for America and the white race, in this battle against a much-bellied enemy.

When one considers that the AVG fought in what the British called obsolete tactical combat aircraft—the P-40B's and P-40C's—their deeds and scores become truly legendary. Throughout China today, General Chennault's AVG are regarded as "Saviors of Free China Skies." The Chinese sentry on the gate to the "Fijiehan" or airfield may shake his head when you show him your pass; he may not understand your hard-won Chinese; but when you smile and call, "A-V-G," his face lights up in turn, and he calls, "Ding-hao—you are number one."

(Continued on back page)

Church Activities

CHURCH ACTIVITIES
The Sunday morning topic for the Christian Science church service will be "Ancient and Modern Necromancy" Alias "Mesmerism and Hypnotism Denounced."

The Christian Science church will have a Thanksgiving service at 11 o'clock this forenoon.

Frank E. Brown, pastor of the Methodist church, announces the sermon topic, "Reconstruction or Rebirth" for next Sunday morning. There will be special music as well as an old fashioned sing at the Vesper services. You are cordially invited to these services next Sunday.

Continuation of the topic "Relations" will be sermon material for the Sunday morning service at the Church of Christ. Following the morning worship baptismal services will be held. In the evening Wendell Small and Rodney Northrup will bring messages to the congregation.

At the morning worship hour in the First Baptist church the pastor will preach on "Living in Harmony." Following the happy song service in the evening the pastor will bring a message on "Christian Socialism."

WALFORD LEGION POST
ORGANIZED

Ed Gotch, district manager of the American Legion reports that the newest legion post in the state has been organized at Walport. Details were arranged by

Commander Gotch for the organization of a post at Walport when he was enroute to Ocean lake where he was guest of honor at an Armistice meeting Gotch reports an interesting meeting there. While there he was guest of Commander Carroll Starr and Mrs. Starr.

Sixth War Bond drive now on. Buy bonds today.

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