

Riska Bombing Trip Gave Correspondent Wheeler Plenty of Excitement

(Editor's Note: This is the second half of the sixth story in a series by Staff Correspondent Keith Wheeler of the Chicago Times on action in the Aleutian Islands. The first half of the story appeared in the Tuesday edition of the Herald and News.)
By KEITH WHEELER
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There he is again, higher than us and closer than before. We're still climbing and the altimeter beside the chart table says 9300 feet, nearly two miles.

2:55—He vanished again in the murk but now he is out and he's gone into another of his silly aerial dances. He's still half a mile off but you feel as big as a house and twice as visible out here in the glass nose. You wish you had something to crawl behind.

2:56—You wonder how the bombardier and pilot will contrive to bomb this place through the soup. The volcano is visible all right but the Japs aren't in the volcano. They're in the valley and the valley's full of fog.

3:00—The top turret is firing over our heads, a hammering stunner sharp and clear above the "aw-wa-wa" of the engines. We can't see what the gunner's shooting at but it must be our playfellow in the fighter. The firing stops suddenly and the plane crosses in front of us sliding into the soup. He must have attacked but we seem to be all right. We had a good look at his plane, a Nakajima biplane fighter on a seaplane float. From the way he whips it around it's both fast and maneuverable. He passes us whenever he wants to.

3:02—He's coming in again, from the front this time. He's diving dead toward us and there's smoke spurting from the front of his machine. You realize suddenly, with an odd feeling of shock, that he's shooting at us. Your stomach sucks itself in and tries to get behind your backbone.

The navigator is scrunched over his gun firing back and the pilot lifts the nose a little so the atom turret can get at him too. There's a hellish racket in your ears. The fighter breaks his run suddenly and dives, fliriting out of sight into a cloud. The young navigator turns and grins, loftily. "Missed him, dammit," he says.

"I never even got a shot," means the navy ensign, equally young and more disappointed.

3:05—We've been circling steadily and our playmate is out of sight for the moment. Now the skipper calls the bombardier on the interphone. We're going down to look, he says, before we drop our bombs. Big bombers are built for high level work but circumstances alter cases. We've got to see what's under that fog. We dip into the soup and out again. This isn't the solid stuff we flew through coming out. This lies over the island in overlapping layers, like an out-of-olub sandwich. We head for the next hole and go rocketing down in a spiral dive. One of our bombers is still on our flank. What has become of the others we do not know.

3:06—The upper turret fires a quick burst, so he must be back. But we can't see him. Your spine creeps a little and you look back apprehensively, half expecting bullets to be coming through the side.

3:08—We're still doing down, in and out of the clouds, and the top turret fires again, a short burst. He must be attacking each time we come in the clear but we can't see him from here.

3:12—He appears ahead, momentarily, diving into a cloud and the navigator fires quickly. The Jap rolls over and vanishes, his wings flashing in the sun.

3:15—Our long glide has car-

ried us down to the solid soup and we're diving through. We're out now and below us are broken clouds over Riska bay and a solid mass of mist backed up over the land. We're below the mountain now.

3:17—He's here again. He came from the left and the upper turret opened on him and now he's in front coming head on. The navigator is firing and the naval observer, fourth man in our tiny glass house, is trying to bring his side-mounted machinegun to bear. He's closer now and the smoke puffing from his plane is laced with white streaks of tracer coming our way.

My stomach sucks in and my breath comes fast. I wonder if I'll see the glass break in front before the bullets stitch a seam across my middle.

3:22—He began an attack up through a cloud but he didn't press it home. We're down to 3200 feet and except for bits of fluff we have a clear view of the harbor.

We cruise back and forth in figure eights across the harbor and along the mountain flank. The anti-aircraft should be coming up but it doesn't come and after a while we begin to think it won't come at all. Occasionally we see our playmate skipping out of one cloud or rolling into another. The drifting clouds won't let us get a good look at our work but we can see the up-ended hulk of the transport bombed and sunk by this plane three days ago.

Glimpse
There's another ship in there. We had a glimpse of it, anchored near the lagoon but we can't get at it this low and we won't be able to see it if we go higher. We can't see the tent village but we know it's there and probably, the navigator says, we'll bomb that on a bearing from the peak.

3:34—We've started up again through the murk. The navigator says we're going to bomb and the bombardier is fiddling with the bombsight and checking his ballistic tables. Whatever destruction we are going to accomplish will be starting soon now. Our friend has vanished and we cling to an illogical hope that one of those bursts got him.

You yell at the navigator, asking how high we'll go to drop. He holds up one hand, the fingers spread. Five thousand feet. We're almost there now between two layers of cloud.

3:40—We're up in the clear again and the other fortress is still on our flank. We've come over the mountain and have begun our bombing run, an exercise in delicacy and calm for the skipper.

Artist at Work
We must fly this course, speed, exact level without the slightest deviation until the bombs are gone. Three little red lights

Army Influence at Premier



No searchlights stabbed the sky and most of the accountants that go with the usual Hollywood premier were missing as the film capital turned out to see "Mrs. Miniver." Private First Class George Shane stood guard as Lana Turner and her new husband, Stephen Crane, arrived.

in the cockpit will warn him when he starts to waver but he must fly the plane himself. The bombardier bends over his work, consulting the laws of falling bodies and checking the odds on this blind shot. He wears the intent look of an artist at work, odd on his rocky unshaven face.

3:44—The bomb doors are open behind us. We're coming on the target and I'm breathing quickly, thinking quickly, thinking what terror and death are about to turn loose and wonder if such merciless destruction can be dealt without something like terror in the dealer.

3:44—The bombardier's fingers move slightly on the switch. We hear a series of faint clicks. "Bombs on the way," the navigator says and grins. I haven't felt anything and I try to look below and back, wondering if I can see them fall. I can't. It's as

simple as that. From this height we can't even hear them hit above the motor's constant yell. Nor can we see what they accomplish.

Almost Over
3:46—We're in a circling dive, leaving down under the blanket for the long run home. It's almost over, but not quite. The fighter breaks out of a cloud at the right and swings in front of us for one more try. Our guns open up momentarily and we see the darting white streaks of his tracer again and then he's gone.

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Langell Valley

Mrs. Merle Brewster and Mrs. Cecil Conley will entertain with a layette shower at the Conley home on July 30, in honor of Mrs. Ella Shelley Minnick. Everyone is cordially invited.

Mrs. Ruby Brown spent several days last week with her son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Brown.

Mrs. Evelyn Hoyt and Miss Helen Czinowski of Klamath Falls spent from Friday until Monday with Mrs. Hoyt's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Campbell.

Friends will be sorry to hear of the illness of Private Paul Mossburg. He has been in the hospital at San Francisco for several months with rheumatic fever, but was moved recently to the hospital at Springfield, Mo. Paul attended Bonanza high school before joining the army.

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Cox and daughter spent Sunday with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Conley.

Mr. and Mrs. Barney Brown were dinner guests at the Dale Brown home on Tuesday evening.

Mrs. Mary Dearborn and Catherine Dearborn spent Friday with the Al Dearborn family.

David Pepple had his tonsils and adenoids taken out last Monday.

Now is the time to have all your front teeth tightened—corn-on-the-cob season.

"Pearl of the Orient" Reduced to Ghost Town

By VAUGHN MEISLING

LOURENCO MARGUES, Portuguese East Africa, July 25 (Delayed)—(P)—Hongkong, once the "opulent pearl of the orient" has been reduced to a ghost town in the months since the Pacific explosion of last December.

Some 1,000,000 Chinese have been starved to such a point that the whole town has a wraithlike appearance.

The four horsemen have ridden roughshod over the once-smiling Riviera of the far east, and now famine, pestilence and destruction of physical and moral values stalk the former British crown colony.

The Japanese conquerors, realizing the increasing gravity of the internal situation, are doing their utmost to evacuate poorer Chinese residents to country districts of Kwangtung, Kwangsi and Fukien province, but are unable to remove sufficiently large numbers in time to cheat death.

It is estimated that thus far 500,000 have left of their own volition or by compulsion, but 1,000,000 who remain face an increasingly bitter struggle for life.

Isolation of Hongkong island through rupture of all former trade routes, including those supplying fruits and vegetables

from the mainland, has caused famine-like conditions. Rice costs eight times the former price, and many other commodities are ten or 20 times as costly as they were.

Owing to the virtual cessation of business, Chinese are flocking to the public rice queues in mounting numbers, although the cheap stocks distributed are utterly inadequate.

Mt. Laki

Employees of the California-Oregon Power company helped with haying at the Sam Dehlinger ranch last week.

Other farmers have had help from the mills and postoffice crews and the haying is near completion.

Mrs. Estella Hill returned to

her home Wednesday. Mrs. Maude McDonald is staying with her.

Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Thompson moved into their new home at the Henry Semon ranch this past week.

The community extends its heartiest congratulations to Lieutenant and Mrs. Don West on their recent marriage. West is the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. L. A. West and is stationed at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

Dorothy Dixon accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Burrell Short and daughter Patricia, to Ashland Saturday. Mr. and Mrs. Short will spend some time at Ashland. Miss Short and Miss Dixon returned Sunday.

The Mt. Laki Sunday school had a picnic dinner at the church Sunday afternoon. All reported an enjoyable time.

It's a good idea to play poker with the boss. He isn't likely to raise you.

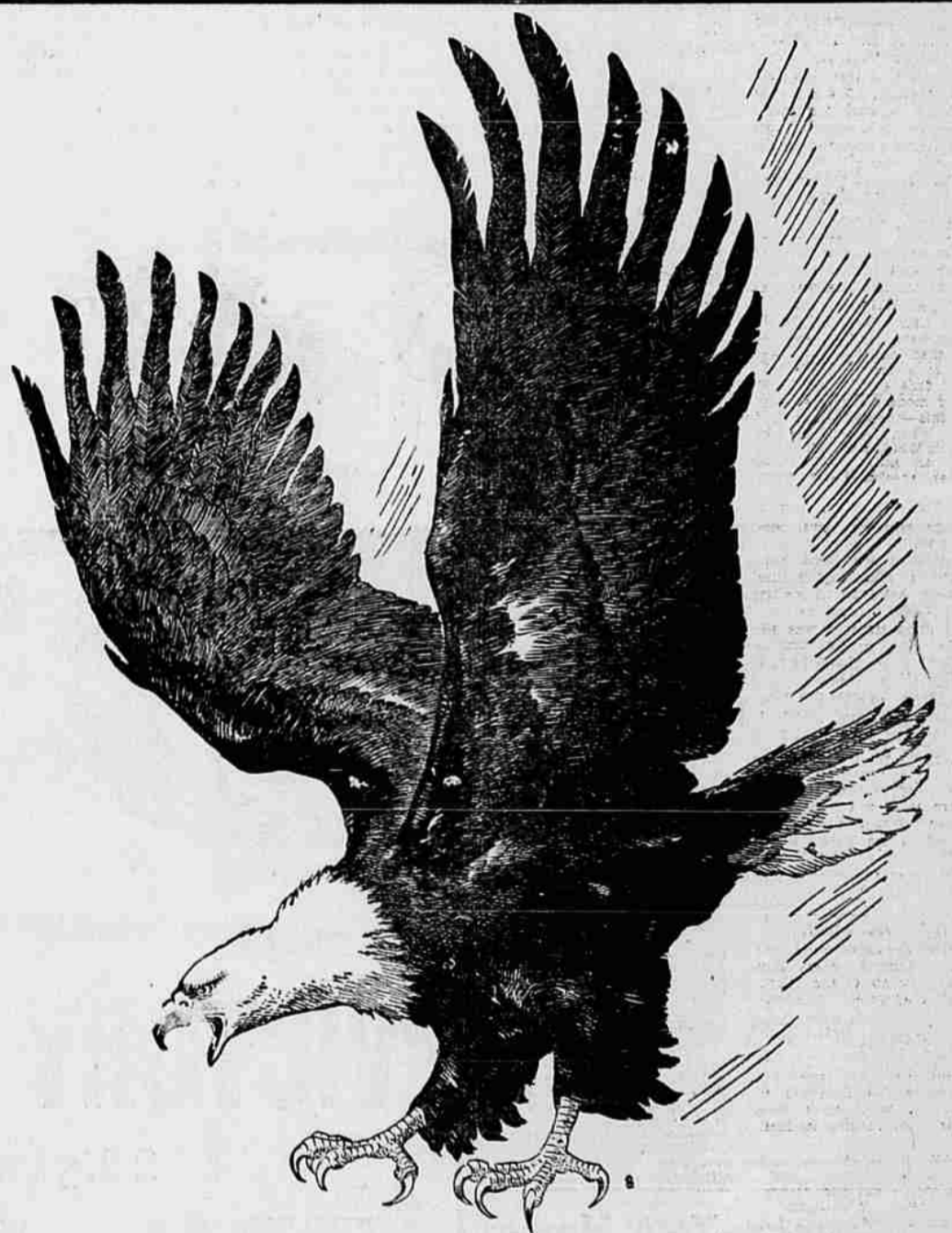
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