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JUL 11 1988 Sent copies of pages 14- to 36 To Ofc E. Hays SR
Rte #1 Box 464 Pierce City Mo 65743

August 5th, 1940.

THE VIVIAN REPORT FOR

1940

This is a heck of a solution to a letter writing problem, but it has simmered down to this or nothing. When it comes to writing--I'm just a "faller downer".

I suppose that the last you heard about me was when I left my job with the Empire Trust Company to come back to school and get my degree. Well, when I landed at Michigan, (Ann Arbor) I enrolled in the Aeronautical Engineering Department and started tussling with all of those subjects that have always given me a pain, chemistry, physics, mathematics and engineering drawing.

When I was home for Christmas in 1938, I read in the papers about the President's plan to train college students as reserve pilots for the Army and Navy. When I got back to school and inquired about the program, I discovered that Michigan had been selected as one of the ten schools to try an experimental program; I submitted an application and since I had my fingers crossed, I was selected as one of the experimental flight students. Flying and continuing in school was fun, but I soon discovered that I was much more interested in the flying part of my education than I was the academic side,-----so I decided to do something about it.

During the past semester I started overtures with the Navy and went through all of the red tape of examinations, physicals and submission of a million documents. After much stuff and stuff, I was accepted and enlisted as seaman second class (lowest of the low), for a period of four years. The training program runs something like this: a thirty day elimination period at some Naval base and then if successful, some three months later to Pensacola, Florida, for a nine months training program. At the completion of the course at Pensacola we will be designated as Naval pilots and ordered with the fleet. At the end of four years we are free to re-enlist or come back into civilian life.

Day before yesterday I soloed!!! My own instructor took me aloft in the morning for a check flight and after putting me through the paces for a half hour, giving me simulated forced landings and having me spin the plane, he gave me an up-check. Then came the real ordeal--a check flight with the executive officer. If I passed that it meant that I would be sent to Pensacola for a continuation of my training. Well, it was a terrific half hour and I was just dripping with perspiration when we came down. It was more than worth it for he held his hand with his THUMB UP! Then the chief petty officer came out and very ceremoniously tied two red flags to the outer struts warning all other planes in the air that this was a solo-hop and to give me lots of room. I managed to get the plane up and down. After I landed I was hauled out of the ship by my classmates and rushed to the station wagon and taken to the seaplane ramp, where I was tossed in, clothes and all---and had to talk back barefooted.

(SECOND PAGE OF 1940 LOST)

1941

January 1st, 1941, found me with a hangover. My sister and brother-in-law had come to Pensacola to visit me for the holidays. We had a lot of fun. I was a cadet in flight training at the Naval Air Station at Pensacola, Florida. We spent New Years Eve at the Officers' Club. It was fun to see all of the "gold braid" looping.

January found me finishing my training in the Primary Squadron, training in slow biplanes, landings, takeoffs, acrobatics and a taste of formation flying.

Ground school half of the day and flying the other half didn't leave much time for anything else. I did get to Mobile several times and enjoyed seeing an old city of the deep south.

February saw me in Squadron Two. It is the formation squadron. After checking out in service type planes—a real airplane, we started flying three plane section. In this type of flying, the leader flies along paying particular attention to smoothness and constant airspeed. Then the two other planes in the formation attempt to fly "wing" on him. The leader must be the "eyes" for his wingmen, for flying that close demands absolute concentration. After the first feeling of danger wears off it becomes fun. Being able to fly a nice tight formation pays off in good flying grades, and a feeling of confidence. The real thrill of the squadron comes at the end when for the last two days, three of the sections take-off and rendezvous over the field. When all of the planes are in position the leader flies out into the area where section tactics are practiced. The breakup and peeloff is a beautiful sight to behold.

Early April found me in Squadron Three. This is the instrument flying squadron. They give eighteen hours in the link, and sixteen hours of plane time. We learn how to control the ship by instruments alone and later how to use the radio in conjunction with the instruments in order to make an instrument orientation and letdown on a radio range. This is an unpopular squadron, for you spend a great deal of time "under the hood" and it doesn't feel like flying at all. You have yourself to put up with, for often the instruments will be indicating one thing and the seat of your pants will be telling you something else. You must force yourself to believe the instruments. After two weeks of this sort of thing and after flying a check flight with another instructor, who certifies you as being able to fly by instruments—you are checked out.

From here the course at Pensacola differs. Some of the cadets are sent to Miami for further training in fighter type aircraft. Some are sent to Squadron Five located right there at the station for further training as observation pilots to be placed aboard cruisers and battleships. The remaining cadets are sent to Squadron Four where they are given time in the huge patrol planes. This is the duty that I had been given. Late April and early May was spent in this squadron. After learning to fly the ships and being certified as "safe for solo", we spent some time in becoming accustomed to the huge plane, the enormous weight and sitting off of the center line of the ship. Then came gunnery runs and bombing runs.

With the end of the bombing and navigation runs, we were finished with the course---YIPEE!! If you have stayed out of trouble, checked out in radio code, received passing grades in ground school and if your orders had been received from Washington---you were ready to be designated a Naval Aviator.

I was designated on May the 16th. Twelve days leave brought me back to New Rochelle to see my family. My orders for duty were returning me to Pensacola for instructor duty.

June found me back in Pensacola living in the bachelor officers' quarters and enrolled in the instructors' school. The school is run by old time instructors who take you out and give you the benefit of their experience. They encourage us to instruct them in how to make any maneuver and then offer suggestions on how to improve on the instruction.

July found me back in Squadron Three. But this time things were a little different. The officers were grand to me and did what they could to make me feel a part of the Squadron. I was checked out in the front seat and given some good pointers that sure would have helped as a student.

August found me beginning to feel at home both as an instructor and as a pilot. The ships we fly in this squadron are smooth planes. They have retracting gear, constant speed propellers, and a mass of instruments for both flight and control of the engine plant.

In April I splurged and made a part payment on a new 1941 Ford Convertible. It was a swell car and I had lots of fun with it. Nothing much happened during September except a weekend in New Orleans. The French Quarter is all that they claim it to be and more. The food was excellent.

In October my Dad had a very serious accident and was taken to the New Rochelle Hospital. Arranging to be a member of a crew of pilots who were coming to Philadelphia to bring back some new training planes, I managed to be home for a day. Dad was out of danger and very glad to see me. My stay at home was a very pleasant one under the circumstances. Stopped to ring the bell of the Hechts, but they weren't home that evening. We had some fun in bringing back the planes. With all of the legs on the trip short, we spent evenings in Washington, Greensboro and Atlantic. The Navy pays its ferry pilots very well (six dollars per day in addition to regular pay) and someone always knew someone.

Because we were the Instrument Flying Squadron the instructors were prone to take their students out into most any kind of weather. The officer in charge would have the course flag hoisted, which allowed planes to land and takeoff. Then each instructor would decide for himself whether he wanted to fly or not. In November the Squadron had a mid-air crash which killed the Chief Flight Instructor and two students. The other instructor bailed out. Two new planes were totally wrecked. As yet, there have been no instruments devised that would tell you how close you were to another aircraft. Now it is squadron practice to decide for everyone whether there was going to be any flying. What I always did, was to ask one of the old timers; if they flew, I flew.

Due to the huge expansion of all facilities here at Pensacola, our squadron moved to station field. Outside of this big move, nothing of particular importance happened in the month of December.

In late fall we had two hurricane warning conditions. The Navy is equipped to tie everything down. They have everything, storm shutters for all windows, miles of special ropes, tie down rings on all concrete aprons and a complete book of instructions for all squadrons. One of the hurricanes hit Dallas, Texas, and the other dissipated in the Gulf. The weather here in the summer time is hot. It does cool off in the evenings which makes living down here bearable. The nicest seasons are of course the spring and the fall. Winter is mild, but we have seen ice form in the streets in the pools of water. We swim from April to November.

The Navy has recently passed a new regulation which allows a newly designated Naval Aviator to marry. Formerly we had to wait for two years from the time that we started training as Aviation Cadets. Just as soon as I can convince my gal friend to come down here—I'm going to be a married man.

That brings me back to the hangover on the 1st day of January, 1942.

P. S. I'm now driving a '38 Ford.

1942

New Year's Day of the year 1942 did not start with a hangover! It was a cold sober evening that ended at 20 minutes after the hour. Of course it doesn't make sense, but it will when I tell you that Sara (my wife) had been released from the Pensacola Hospital about ten days before. We dressed and arrived at the club about 11:45. The crowd sure was "smashed". We found a drink grow suddenly in our hands as we started to look around. The new officers club had been finished while Sara was in the hospital and this was our first chance to really see it.

Just at midnight we came across the surgeon who operated upon Sara. He was amazed to see her looking so well. We all stood and sang "Auld Lang Syne". We left at 12:20 and came home.

In February just when life seemed to have reached an even keel, we had to go and get married. It was a sort of boring evening for neither Sara nor I were interested. Thursday the 12th of February made it look like we were trying to get "hitched" before Friday the 13th. When I gave the ole Judge a fiver, Sara could see her new hat going out the window- and I wasn't too happy either. No, we hadn't been living in sin for we had been married the previous November with all the "fixings". This was a ceremony to satisfy the Navy.

At the close of last year (November), Sara became very ill and nearly died. An emergency operation at the very last minute saved her. My best friend gave Sara a transfusion, for my own blood type wasn't right. It was a nightmare of airplanes in the day time and hospital corridors at night. It was corridors for me because husbands are superfluous around sick rooms. It all ended on a pleasant note, for she made a rapid and complete recovery.

When June rolled around and we had been commissioned a little over a year, the Navy promoted us to Junior Grade Lieutenants. We were glad to get it for the Army and Marines were mushrooming. A Marine who had been in our class made Captain just about the same time we made Lt. (jg).

In late August our squadron started a new method of instrument flying. We began to use an artificial horizon developed by Sperry Corporation. It is a wonderful instrument and makes instruction very much easier. I was a member of the first class to be indoctrinated in the new method. Going to school again was fun and we sure learned a lot. At the completion of the course we were given an instrument cross country. Made my takeoff on instruments and never saw anything but my instruments until I arrived over the range station at Jacksonville, Florida.

In October the squadron granted me a cross country flight to Corpus Christi, Texas. Several of my classmates had been transferred there to instructor duty. Harold Allen, a fellow I had known at Michigan was taking a refresher course. Corpus is a huge new station. It was amazing to see the swamp lands at the delta of the Mississippi west of New Orleans. Miles and miles of just nothing. Funny how closely you listen to your engine when you get off over stuff like that.

The last half of October brought 15 days leave. Sara had just landed a new job and couldn't get away. I split my leave and dashed home to see the folks. New York was just jammed with uniforms in contrast to my last visit of June '41 when we hadn't entered the war. Very few Naval Aviators for they are all at the bases instructing or out with the fleet. Did a little shopping, saw a few plays and enjoyed being home.

Christmas of '42 was a gala time. We decided to really celebrate for Christmas '41 had Sara in the hospital. Sara prepared a huge turkey with all the trimmings. We asked several bachelor officers to be with us for dinner—and we had an open house in the late afternoon and evening. We even had a huge Christmas tree.

Since New Years Eve fell in the middle of the week, the Club was not going to have a dance. Everyone had to arrange something for himself. We joined some friends going to the Scenic Terrace. Sounds pretty good, but it is just a "joint" on the outskirts of town. Danced with my wife and kissed her at midnight.

1942 wasn't the whirlwind that 1941 was. 1941 was the year of my training as a cadet, my commission as an officer and my marriage. 1942 was a straight year of instructor duty. The student load is always high, no leaves or cross country flights are available, plenty of flying and not much else. My log tops 1600 hours, which is enough for me. I'm looking forward to my orders whenever they arrive. We did however, consolidate our living, paid a bunch of debts, started buying war bonds, bought some stocks and had the old jallopy fixed up.

Lockout 1943 - Here we come!

Sara and Johnnie Vivian

1943

This year started in the same old groove. A flight instructor at the Pensacola Naval Air Station, old Squadron Three, the instrument squadron. Up at the crack of dawn (Seven), to get a first hour flight off the ground by eight. We were putting a lot of Englishmen through the course at about this time. They made just two types of students, either they were "red hot", so that you were just a safety pilot for them as they practiced the maneuvers or they were so dense that you spent the entire period on just a portion of the assignment. Then upon landing it was always a question as to whether I had gotten the message across. We usually stayed right at the squadron area until our flights for the day were over. On occasions, the schedule makers would give you a split day to allow you to catch up on the paper work around the squadron. Normally, all we did was fly and when we were finished, we were free.

It was getting kind of old for I'd been doing it for a year and a half. Sara and I had settled in the slow moving town of Warrington, just outside of the main gate of the Naval Air Station. We were playing lots of bridge and seeing the same people every Saturday night. Even Saturday night at our Officers' Club (Mustin Beach) didn't hold the thrill that it once did. Pensacola is far from being a large place. It was the kind of place where you had friends come to your home of an evening and then returned the visit several weeks later. Of course there was always New Orleans only about 250 miles away. A beautiful place to go, but very rich for ones blood if taken in too concentrated doses. There really wasn't much of a chance of that occurring because of the large inroads made into the financial structure. In early '43 I was still a Lieutenant Junior Grade. March 1st made me a Senior Grade Lieutenant. The work continued the same.

On the 7th of June my orders finally arrived. This was to be my first real move, for upon graduation I stayed right on as an instructor. Almost three years spent on one station. The orders were to Jacksonville, Florida, for training in twin engine patrol planes, Consolidated Catalinas. We had about twenty days before reporting. This meant that Sara and I could dash to New York City to see the folks. They had never met Sara and we were working on our third year of married life. This was due to the difficulty in obtaining leaves. The Pensacola Naval Air Station is a training center and was doing a vital job in the war effort. As an instructor they were loath to give us any time off.

In May, Sara had seen an ad in the paper that she showed to me; it was an offering for sale of a seven weeks old cocker spaniel puppy. We had talked about it, but had reached no decision. "Lets drive over and have a look", I suggested.

There wasn't any doubt about the outcome, once we had seen "Taffy". She had real blonde hair and was just a handfull of fun. It was not very many days until Taffy had a new address.

As soon as possible, I finished checking out and prepared to travel. Sometime around the ninth of June we started for New York. It took about three days. My recollection now is that it isn't any fun to travel with a small dog who is not "house broke".

We arrived home in high spirits, all set to have a wonderful time. We were going to paint the town red. Sara is normally a solid individual and not one to put a damper on any party, but now, queer things began to happen, her feet would swell if she walked several blocks; she would order a sandwich and then leave the counter without even tasting it. For no good reason she was sick in the mornings. Sharp John P., I was putting two and two together and getting six. That was until Sara took me aside one morning and put me on the right track. She thought she was going to have a baby. A BABY!! Why of course. I immediately took a back seat, while Sara and the gals talked it all over. It was indeed a strange thing to approach your Father to tell him the good news. He looked at me for a moment, and then said "Bout time". Although our plans changed slightly in New York, when we left, we were able to say that we had a wonderful time.

On the trip to Jacksonville we were stopped somewhere in Georgia for speeding. I couldn't say that I was hurrying on my orders, for I had ample time. I did mention that I had a pregnant wife and an unbroken dog; that must have been the answer, for he handed me my orders and said "On your way".

On our arrival in Jacksonville, we immediately put plan "a" into effect. It is a device used by all military personnel on arrival at a new station. Start with the tourist court closest to your duty station and work away until you find a vacant cabin. Since this is a very expensive way of living and since all meals must be eaten in restaurants, it means that you must get going. The next step is for you to cover all the agencies on the station designed to help. You trace any rumor that reaches your ear. Your wife is making the rounds of the realtors in town and tracing anything she hears. Dinner at night is a conference on the efforts of the day to find a place to live. Several days of this will normally find you located in some furnished apartment. Our trail led through several furnished rooms to a furnished house. The sweetest little old lady looked right down my throat and said "85.00 a month please and this couple will take it if you don't want it". Believe me the only factor that swung it in our favor was that I followed the same faith as the landlady!

Here is a dig that I wish to publish about the fair city of Jacksonville, Florida. After finding a place to live, I visited the office of the Utility Company to have the services connected in my name. The deposit was ten dollars for servicemen and five dollars for civilians!

The course at the Naval Air Station was a tough one. It was designed for graduates of the training centers who had never stood any permanent duty. Everyone had to live aboard the station and be in his bunk by 10 o'clock for a checkup. They could not use the regular officers club and had to attend rigorous classes of calisthenics. Because my instructor duty at Pensacola was considered "permanent", I missed the above. The training, both flight and ground training was tough, for I had been out of flight school since May, 1941, and had been teaching only a small phase of the flight syllabus.

During the months of July and August, I learned combat operations with the PBY (Catalina). We flew long navigational flights to sea, dropped torpedoes, gave our gunners hours of practice firing at a sleeve towed behind another plane and finished with night operations. One navigation flight lasted three days. The first day took us from Jacksonville out into the Atlantic, then down to the Bahamas and back to Key West for the night. It was a beautiful day. The waters in the Carribean were blue in the deep parts and light green in the shallow. After we had landed and taxied to a bouy, there were flying bodies and loud splashes on both sides of the ship. The crew had stripped down in the time it took to shut down the engines. The water was clear blue green and just the right temperature.

Everyone slept ashore that night except a skeleton crew. Their duties were standby for emergencies, fire or storm. I was a member of the the standby crew. I remember distinctly talking with an officer who was stationed there. I was telling him about our swimming party after landing; his comment was "No one swims down here because of the barra-cuda." Needless to say we passed the "word" and there was no more swimming.

The next morning we were off for Charleston, S. C., on the second leg of our three day jaunt. It was another beautiful day. Many miles of water passed under our wings as the water changed from blue-green around the Keys to a slate-grey as we flew out into the Atlantic. It was more than a training flight, for we carried a depth charge under each wing on the chance of surprising a surfaced enemy submarine. We approached the coast at Charleston without incident. This is a wonderful way to absorb history for we flew over Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor. When I read now about the firing, I can picture the distances and the layout. We landed in the Cooper River and tied up opposite the Naval Air Station. This was my night to sleep ashore. By the time we had downed "several" at the bar and had our dinner, it was too late to attempt to see much of Charleston. So it was off to bed.

The last day took us out into the Atlantic again on several jogging legs and back to Jacksonville. This was our final daylight flight. The course was over. Anytime that the Navy asked the question "What duty would you like?" I had always answered "Atlantic Fleet". We were facing a tougher adversary, but it didn't have malaria and dysentery tied in with the duty. When my orders came you may be sure that they read "San Diego for further transfer."

Sara had definitely improved and was feeling herself again. Neither of us wanted to face a long trip with Taffy again so we placed her in a boarding kennel. Steve and Rachel (Sara's sister and brother-in-law) were at Camp Le Jeune, a Marine Camp at Jacksonville, N. C. He is a Navy doctor with a colored Marine regiment. This was our first stop enroute to the coast. Sara asked them about taking "Taffy", "Sure, just as soon as we find a place to live". So that was taken care of.

I remember that the trip across was pleasant except for my tiffs with the ration boards. They wanted to save everything for the local people and hated like hell to give anything to a transient, even though I was on my way out of the country. It almost came to blows at Prescott,

Arizona because of the downright lack of cooperation. My tires were in sad shape. Gasoline was no problem for the Naval Air Station in Jacksonville, Florida, gave me enough for the trip.

We had a wonderful time at the Grand Canyon. Only Bright Angel Lodge was open with no activity down in the canyon. We enjoyed long walks out along the rim to watch the sun set. The sun had to come up in the mornings without our help. When we left we were ready for people, noise and lights.

We arrived in San Diego about the 24th day of September, with orders to report in on the 29th. We drove right to a War Housing Office to see if we could find a room. There were no listings. We then started on the rounds of hotels, Red Cross and YMCA. A lady at the "Y" managed to find us a room in the home of a friend. This lady conveyed to Sara the impression that she didn't like to have women in her home because of the possibility of their taking over the house. We were very grateful for the room, but determined to find another place as soon as possible. The next day we managed a room and bath in a small hotel--The Ramona.

We drove out to the Naval Air Station on North Island and tried to find out what they were going to do with me. They explained that what I did rested on what units they were forming on the day I checked in. Always fearful that I'll lose my original orders, I asked them to keep them for me until I checked in. I remember the officer laughing as he handed them back to me, "You won't lose them."

Sara and I looked up Sam Tharp, a classmate who was forming in a dive bombing outfit there on North Island. We hit it just right for he had some time off. We decided to drive 18 miles to the Mexican border and see Tia Juana. After a long cross country trip, there is a certain amount of debris that collects. Old magazines, newspapers, etc.; knowing that the car was going to be inspected, Sam reached back and tossed the stuff out along a lonely stretch of road.

Tia Juana was the greyest shade of black market. You could buy anything---at a price. Sara saw some Caron's "Tabac Blonde" that had disappeared from the perfume counters in the States. Safety pins, elastic, metal safety razors, nylon hose, steaks and alarm clocks could be had. The prices were high and each visitor was restricted to \$25.00--I believe. We stayed the day, made several small purchases and came home with a bad taste in our mouths.

The next day I had occasion to look at my orders. I couldn't find them anywhere! The more I hunted, the more that disturbing picture of Sam reaching around to throw the debris from the car came to mind. "I'll bet he threw my orders out of the window", I said to Sara. We started out and drove over the route we had travelled the day before. We found the spot, but not the orders. It was too bad they hadn't kept my orders at North Island; well, I'd have to report in without them.

The next day which was Sunday and the last day of my leave, we drove out to a suburb to see a movie. When we came out the car had been stolen! I was driving a 1938 Ford Sedan, faded maroon color, although the tires now were in good shape. It was my own damn fault, for I never removed the key from the ignition lock. We reported it to the police and took a trolley back to the hotel.

When I checked in the next morning, at least I could tell them that my orders were stolen and not lost. I'd sure sound like a goof reporting in and saying that I'd lost my orders. But off the record, it looked as though I had lost them. I now became a special case. Instead of just being ordered out, they would have to interview me and find out what I could do before they could write me an intelligent set of orders. It was really a blessing in disguise for I enlarged enough on my experience to be offered a spot with a PV squadron. Could have my choice of Alameda, California or Seattle, Washington. Since Hank Bender, an old chum, was in the Naval Hospital in Seattle, I chose that.

PV or Venturas are made by Lockheed. Twin engine, twin tail, very fast and maneuverable, about the best in the medium bomber field. It was a good break. But now what to do? Should I plead for a few days and wait on the chance that the San Diego Police would recover our car or take a train out and hope that some way of getting the car to me would be found after recovery. We finally expressed all our extra gear and boarded a train.

It was a happy reunion with Hank in Seattle. He put himself out to cart us around. Upon reporting in, I was given a bitter pill. My squadron was not forming at Seattle, but 90 miles north on Whidbey Island. Whidbey, I discovered was an island in Puget Sound close to the Canadian border. The principal industry was logging. Hank drove us north. We discovered that we were going back to nature. Since wood was so plentiful, everyone used it for heating and cooking. In pre-war days it was sparsely settled. The Navy had moved in and created a housing problem. We were most fortunate in finding a furnished place that afternoon. Two maiden ladies from Seattle had purchased a clapboard shack on the beach. They had a partition erected across the center of the cabin, making a duplex. There were two bunks against the wall, a wood cook stove, a fireplace, a sink, a table with four chairs and a fairly comfortable sitting chair, that was all. Oh yes, the rent—\$40.00 per month. On our return to Seattle it became apparent that we couldn't operate in that wild country without a car. We looked at the paper that night and selected a Pontiac that sounded good. The next morning we looked at it and I bought it. A 1939 eight cylinder Tudor with 46,000 miles and excellent tires. Now I owned two cars.

We drove to the ferry that would take us across to Whidbey. As we were coming across on the ferry I had the strangest feeling that I had been there a long time ago. Then I remembered that back in 1932 my sister, brother and I had come to Whidbey to visit relatives. That was a very nice feeling to know there were people on the island that would welcome us as home folks.

Reported to the Naval Air Station on October 6, 1943 and was assigned to OTUB. It was a unit for instructing flyers who had never flown the PV. The course was similar in scope to the training at Jacksonville, except it was less rigorous. It is more interesting to note how we lived during October, November and December. Since the fuel was wood for heating and cooking, it was up to me to keep enough on hand for Sara. My first attempt was to haul it from the beach about 100 yards away. The beaches are littered with driftwood due to the long years of floating timber to market. My first observation was that Sara could stuff it into the stove faster than I could haul it from the beach and cut it to size. It was the hauling and cutting that was slowing me up. The solution was to buy a cord of wood cut to stove length where all I had to do was split it. Then I discovered that I could hold my own by splitting in my spare time and a good part of my day off. It was good exercise to keep the waistline under control. It was a good life for awhile, sleeping with the waves breaking only a hundred yards away, good food attacked with good appetites with good hours and interesting work.

Mother's brother was still alive with his children also on the island. We visited quite a bit with Mel and Roy Neil. Because of them we had a wonderful Thanksgiving and Christmas. Allow me to report here that those people on the island know and appreciate good food. They catch fresh salmon and smoke them. They butcher a calf or a hog and put the meat into their frozen food locker. During the spring and summer, they pick fresh berries and quick freeze them and they have cows and chickens. I can still remember that desert on Thanksgiving day was fresh raspberries and cream so thick it had to be spooned.

Sara was now beginning to show that she was going to have a baby. She was experiencing shortness of breath, etc. I was becoming more concerned for we lived quite some distance from the nearest 'phone and some 20 miles from the hospital. It became apparent that we should move. The police of San Diego recovered my car sitting about a block from Camp Pendleton. It had apparently been used by a Marine in getting back to camp. Sam was still in San Diego; he claimed the car for me and arranged to have an officer who was being transferred to Seattle, to drive it up for me. Then I received a large manila envelope in the mail containing all my lost orders, etc. A note from Sam enclosed, said that he found the above under the front seat. Just as if someone turned on a light, I could see myself pushing them under the seat because Sara and I were going into a restaurant for lunch.

The car arrived in Seattle on the 23rd of December. I sold it almost immediately to close that chapter.

Dale Nordbye, the gunnery officer of our new squadron and I discovered that the housing development in Anacortes was going to open to Naval personnel. We drove up and placed our applications. These places were quite nice. Some were furnished; coal ranges had coal heating with coal supplied, which was the big attraction. Sara and I closed the year 1943 by moving from our shack on the beach to Anacortes. We welcomed the New Year sitting next door with the Nordbyes drinking some real good bourbon.

1944

This year had more thrills and chills packed into it than any other year I have ever lived. It is good to have it over and done with. 1944 started very quietly with Sam and I sleeping late. Anacortes was a pleasant place to live. There were navy couples all around. We had a big box of coal in front that someone else kept filled. The hospital was close by as were the stores.

Bombing Squadron #135 had been reformed on December 14. We were now flying the syllabus for bombing squadrons. Navigation, bombing, instrument, torpedo drops, etc. My date of rank made me the number three man in the squadron, the flight officer. Soon our new planes began to arrive from Alameda and we began to look like a new squadron. Our skipper was Lt. Comdr. Paul L. Stahl and the executive a Pensacola instructor like myself, Lt. Marion Mason. Eighteen crews and fifteen airplanes. We had a swell bunch of people in the squadron and had several good parties at B.O.Q., before we left the States.

On the night of February 6, 1944, we turned in early because I had an eight o'clock flight the next morning. About four in the morning Sara shook me gently and said, "I think you had better take me to the hospital." So this was it! I jumped and started pulling on some clothes. Rapped on the wall and told Norma Nordbye that Sara was getting ready. She had said that she would go to the hospital with us. By five o'clock Sara was in bed again. This time in the Anacortes General Hospital. I was all for driving back to the base and getting Dr. Evans. The nurse smiled and assured me that Sara wouldn't have her baby until afternoon at the earliest. This was the morning that Dr. Evans visited his patients. She suggested that we just wait. At 10:30 I insisted on putting a call through to the base. "Who? Doctor Evans? No, he isn't here now, he is away on a skiing trip." When the nurse told me of the conversation, I called right back to the base and asked for the Senior Medical Officer. I explained to him that my wife was experiencing labor pains and that we had no doctor. No, he was sorry but he had no one he could send. What did he suggest—Well, I could either drive her to the Naval Hospital in Seattle, ninety miles away or get some civilian doctor in Anacortes. Driving her into Seattle was out of the question, so I inquired about a doctor in town. A Dr. Brooks was suggested. Sara was a peach about the whole affair. All she wanted was to talk to the new doctor to see if she could put her confidence in him. The hospital called and explained the situation. Dr. Brooks said that he would come down and see her. I am happy to relate that they got on like old friends and that we now had a doctor.

If it was a boy, I was to name it; the name I had chosen was Stephan. If a girl, Sara was to name it; the name she selected was Andrea.

Andrea Neil Vivian arrived at nine o'clock in the evening on February 7th, 1944. A perfect baby weighing 6 pounds 8½ ounces. Norma Nordbye was wonderful about giving her time and comfort to Sara.

In early April we finished the flying syllabus and awaited orders. When they arrived we were ordered north to Commander, Northern Pacific

Forces, based in the Aleutians. About April 10th, we gave up our house in Anacortes. I moved to the base and Sara, the baby, and the wife of a fellow officer, started an auto trip back to the east.

The squadron took off for Kodiak in Alaska on April 16, 1944. Our first stop was Yakutat, in the late afternoon. Then on to Kodiak across the Gulf of Alaska. All but two planes reached Kodiak the first day. Two stayed at Yakutat, one because of a flat tail wheel and the other for engine trouble. Jim McNulty and Jim Rumford.

If you are obliged to be away from the United States, Kodiak is as pleasant a place as any to stand your duty. It has permanent buildings, theatres, apartments for married couples, the last Alaska outpost that single women can come to on civil service appointments and a very nice club.

While we were sitting at breakfast the next morning, the skipper received a telegram from Yakutat. It stated that the hangar had burned to the ground and that major damage had crippled one plane, Jim McNulty's. It seemed to have happened when everyone was up at the mess hall for dinner. One of the crewmen had removed the tailwheel and was patching the tube when the word "Fire" was passed. This ship was blocking the exit of all planes and it couldn't be pushed because the tail wheel was off. Someone threw a steel cable around the tail and a tractor hauled the ship to safety. But, not until it had snapped the strut lowering the under gun station onto the deck. The cable bit its way through the soft aluminum doing major damage. All the remaining planes were pushed to safety. The score stood at one plane lost, no crews lost. The second plane was repaired. Jim Rumford joined us in several days. The first plane had to be returned to Seattle.

The weather continued to hold us at Kodiak. The skipper wanted to avoid Dutch Harbor and push on to Adak. Dutch Harbor is cut from the side of a mountain and under conditions of low visibility, could be a troublesome spot. In about four days we had fair weather predicted for almost the entire Aleutian Chain, and we shoved off for Adak. It was a long flight that I will never forget. Not for the dangers involved, but for all of the rugged beauty we saw. Rocky snow covered islands, that were yet to be surveyed. We saw an active volcano on the island of Four Mountains. We landed at Adak without incident with not too much gasoline remaining. All ships made the flight although several landed with just the odor of gasoline in the tanks.

We learned that we would stay on Adak for about two weeks going to Loran School. Were to have a new type of navigational aid installed in our planes that was so secret that the units were put into incoming planes and taken from planes returning to the States.

Now we were out in a combat area. There was mud all over the place. Everyone lived in crowded Quonsets. Steel mat for runways and the roughest kind of roads. We wore our parkas with hood up most of the time. The food continued good although fresh milk had disappeared and all the vegetables were canned. We sat on benches at crude tables.

Jim McNulty finally completed arrangements to get his ship to Seattle and has joined us in Adak. He and his crew came up by Naval Air Transport. We were all getting anxious to get on to Attu. Since Adak was just a stopping point, no one unloaded his ship. We wanted to get settled somewhere.

Near the conclusion of our schooling, each crew took his plane out on a short navigational flight and see how this new gear operated under flight conditions. I was very pleased with the results and the way my navigators, Tom and Paul handled it.

Jim McNulty borrowed Bill Claphams plane for his Loran Flight. He never returned from that flight. We received just one message from him that indicated he was having engine trouble and was coming in on one engine. The entire squadron was immediately alerted. We searched for two days in the area without so much as seeing a floating object. It was the opinion that he was too low and too heavy for just one engine. Each plane still carried all personal gear. For the search however, this gear was removed, for we didn't want to face the same situation. Two planes and one crew lost.

Bombing Squadron #135 landed on Attu on May 1, 1944. This bare rock was to be our home for the next nine months. We were assigned to live in Quonsets on Gehres point. Attu was slightly better than Adak. At least we could spread out and unpack everything. The rocky roads were the same; the Quonsets were the same except that each man had a lot more room. There were boardwalks everywhere connecting mess halls to Quonsets, to heads, to theatres and to the ships service. Everyone wears parkas and galoshes.

Let me stop for just a moment and give you some background. Prior to actual attacks on the Japanese home islands—the Kuriles, only patrols were maintained against the possibility of attack. The slow PBV's would take off near sunrise and search sectors towards Japan. They would return around noon to complete the search. In the early afternoon the PV's would take off for a fast search before sundown. They would search out to a point where an enemy fleet by steaming all night at full speed could not quite reach Attu. This gave us security during the night.

In Bombing Squadron #139, a Lt. MacGregor started figuring fuel consumption, miles and bomb load. He came to the conclusion that the PV could go all the way to the Kuriles with a ton of bombs and get back with about 100 gallons of gasoline. He brought his findings to Commodore Gehres, who gave him a green light on the project. The next step was to set up an equivalent distance in the Aleutians and to fly it. Then if the calculations were correct, permission to fly to the Kuriles would be obtained. This was done and proven correct. Bombing 139 then started night raids over the Kuriles.

Night operations were thought necessary for then the fighters could be avoided. The fighters could force the PV's to use that margin

of gas in running away and then the bombers could not reach home. Because so little was known about the Kuriles, the planes carried a huge camera in the nose that was actuated by an electric eye. Then in the tail, four photo flash bombs were carried to illuminate the ground below. The bombs could be adjusted for altitude. When the bomb fired giving an intense light, which would activate the electric eye taking a picture and moving the next film into place.

Through the early months of 1944, this squadron was developing a fund of information about what the Japs had in the Kuriles. They were discovering new airfields almost every mission. But, let me point out that night orientation was most difficult. Perhaps the radar wasn't up to par, or there was enough precipitation in the air to make the radar readings of doubtful value. Because of this, on occasions, planes would return to base with four exposures of the North Pacific. This was the background. Our job was to continue with armed photo reconnaissance and to develop what new techniques came to mind. It took about a week to have the cameras and bomb racks installed. In the same time the pilots were given short flights around the island for familiarization.

We flew our first mission on the night of May 5th. We took off just at sundown and flew into the setting sun. It sounds funny, but I meant to say that at our altitude of flight, the sun could still be seen. I never knew where I was at any time, just a hazy idea which isn't really good enough in the Aleutians. We flew on course four and one-half hours until the clock said that we should be over the target. The radar however showed no indications of land. We had no idea of what the winds had been doing to us in that time for the Loran just wasn't putting out the clear signals that it did back in the lab at Adak. Then the clock and quantity of gasoline signalled that we were to start for home no matter where we thought we were. I opened the bomb-bay doors and jettisoned the bomb load. Then we came to a heading that would take us home. After two more hours of flying we still were out on a limb with nothing definite to go on. I had not been able to pick up the Attu radio range.

We were flying in continuous rain so that celestial observations were not possible. I had been right down on the deck and up as high as 10,000 feet trying to break out of the stuff. The Loran was useless and the radar showed nothing. What a mess. It wasn't until we were about an hour from our estimated time of arrival that I was able to finally bring in the Attu radio range. That made the picture a little brighter, for although it gave no position, at least I could home on it. Then the Aleutians really pulled an ace on me. We were flying on top of the clouds at about four thousand feet, keeping the homing needle on Attu and listening to the audio signals. The signals faded away in the most perfect null I had ever heard while teaching this same stuff at Pensacola. A null means that your plane is directly over the station.—But the homing needle indicated that Attu was still ahead of us. What to believe? My ears or the needle pointing straight ahead? It gives one a sinking feeling to think that he might be flying away from the base with diminishing quantities of gasoline. Dave Wilson, my co-pilot went aft and got in a huddle over the Loran with Tom. Thanks to the clearing weather, the Loran gave some good

indications, which finally confirmed the needle and not my ears. I had been the victim of a false null. Just about that time old Attu hove into sight and we landed without further incident; 9.3 hours in the air.—So this is operations in the Aleutians! Lt. (jg) Wheat and his crew never returned from that first mission. Three planes, two crews lost.

This is an appropriate moment to describe the good job the ground forces are doing to keep us in the air. As we taxied into the revetment and shut down the engines, a truck swings along side to take us back to the briefing hut. As I step from the plane, I'm given a sheet of paper to note all discrepancies in the plane.

Then off to report the details of the strike to the intelligence officers, to be added to the sum of knowledge. You can see what my first contribution was. Then the Medical Department takes over. At one end of the hut are several saw-horses with boards across to make a bar. Several corpsmen are serving "Sneaky Petes," grapefruit juice and grain alcohol; a good drink. A doctor walks around talking with the crewmen. You know from the above that I'm in need of a drink, and so is almost everyone there. We are a tired bunch of aviators still in our flight gear. Soon a warm glow comes over you and you don't seem as tired as you were. When the doctor decides that enough has been served, but not too much, he nods to his corpsmen and they close up the bar and disappear. In later months one of the doctors told me that he could tell from the sound level of the conversation when it was time to close the bar.

Then a good breakfast with steak, eggs and good steaming coffee. By the time you have finished that you are really ready for the sack. So off we go to the land of dreams—and hope that you don't dream of another mission and wake up really tired. About four or five in the afternoon, you roll out for a refreshing shower and shave. Then up to the messhall for dinner with the regular crowd at six. You feel bushed but relaxed. If you have no duties, you would be off to a movie, play some poker or bridge, or back to the hut to write some letters and read. I had the duty that night of seeing that our planes taxied away from the revetments on schedule.

This was mission number two for Bombing 135. The only thing that stands out in my memory now about that mission, was that Hardy Logan failed to return the next morning. Four planes and three crews lost.

Now the morale was getting pretty low, for it didn't even take all fingers and toes to figure how long the squadron was going to last. Then on the third mission, everyone returned and the old morale went back up. We started a long stretch of operations with no losses. This run was cut in early June by the loss of our gunnery officer, Lt. Clark. His plane crashed on a night takeoff. Five planes and four crews.

Our forces in the southwest Pacific had captured enemy data which indicated that there was an airfield in the Kuriles on the island

of Shimushu that we knew nothing about. The assignment was given our squadron to find and photograph that airstrip. From information given and from plots sent to us, it indicated that this new field was in the northern part of the island. We went after that assignment; we made careful radar approaches to make sure that we were above the northern part of the island. We dropped flares hoping to see it and even flew in bad weather out of Attu, when we knew there was a full moon at the target. All to no avail, all we were able to find was an old road that ran from one side of the island to the other.

It was the practice to send a PV out in the daytime to fly towards the target with a turning point about 100 miles short of the target. In this way we would have a real late weather report for the strike that night. We had orders not to go in any closer because of the fighters. This brings us to June 10, 1944, a day that my crew and I flew the weather flight. We got into the air about noon and headed out toward the target. We had been told that the weather at Attu was getting progressively worse and to keep our radioman (Frank Virant) on the circuit for a recall.

The further we flew from base the better the weather became. About two hundred miles from the target with my turning point still a hundred miles ahead, I found this going through my head, "Why not dash in and get a picture of that new airfield? One plane could probably get in and out before the fighter could be alerted and up to altitude." I voiced this to the crew and found them willing to a man. Even the Aeroographer who had come along to observe the weather, was for a little excitement.

I put my request on the circuit and received a flat "No" from the base. I re-worded the request, stating that I had a camera aboard and wished to continue to the target. Frank put that on the circuit and we all waited to hear. Before we received our answer we had arrived at our turning point. We elected to continue and wait for an answer. At 70 miles, Dave spotted land and we started climbing. We leveled at 13,000 and continued. Frank touched me on the shoulder and told me that the base was calling. It would decrease our chances of success if we keyed our transmitter at such close range. We kept silent, hoping that it would be an O.K. The base continued to call.

^{NOISE}
We noised down slightly and came screaming over the northern part of the island. Even in brilliant sunshine, all we could see was that damn road. But Tom happened to look toward the south and saw this new field near the southern part of the island. We were at 10,000 slowly converting altitude into excess speed. I figured that we would pass over the new field at about 7,000; high enough for several good pictures and high enough to stay out of small gunfire; "Look at that concrete!" someone said into the interphone. We were operating from steel mat runways.

We flew right over the strip, got some good shots with the camera and out to sea without being intercepted. I nodded to Frank to

open up on the air and find out if we had permission to continue with a job already completed. We yelled for Anderson to come forward. We quizzed him at length about the settings he used on the camera, how he held it, the shutter openings and every other question we could think of. We agreed that we should have some good shots. Everyone felt extremely good if the banter on the interphone was an indication.

Frank handed me the message- Yes, we had permission to continue, but the message urged that we do not delay in returning, for the ceiling was already down to 400' and visibility one-half mile. It sobered us quickly, for pictures are of no value until delivered to the photo lab. The weather grew worse as we approached the base, until we were just over the water and just under the ceiling. We managed to sneak in by following the shore line around to the field.

We did have the pictures! Something the pictures showed that had escaped my attention as we flew over was, 29 heavy bombers sitting along the strip. The next strike after several days of bad weather was in daylight on June 15, 1944, to attack that row of Bettys and to cover the task force that was on its way over to bombard the islands. This time we didn't catch them napping; the bombers were not on the field, but the air was filled with fighters. Almost everyone carried home marks of that flight. Schuette had an engine shot so badly that he had to limp into Russia. That means internment, for Russia is not at war with Japan. The peninsula of Kamchatka comes down to within 7 miles of Shimushu. This was a break for Schuette to have some place to go. Schuette opened on his radio and we talked as he limped up the coast. I said that I would write to his wife and tell her all that I could. He explained that not a member of his crew was scratched. It was just his engine that was hit.

When we returned to base we discovered that Lt. Bone had not been heard from. None of us remembered seeing him out there. Seven planes and six crews lost. This figure now becomes inaccurate, for I know that Schuette is O.K. I will continue to list them like that for even if Bone did reach Russia, his services are lost to the squadron and to the U. S. in this war.

On June 18 we lost our first replacement crew to Russia. We had gone back to night strikes because of the party on the 15th. George Mahrt took off at sundown as a member of a five plane strike. He sent a message that his rear main tanks had siphoned dry and that he hadn't noticed it until he was too far along to get back to base. He said he would try for Russia. Eight planes and seven crews. We didn't lose anyone else until July 23, when Jackson Clark was jumped by fighters in a dawn strike and forced into Russia. He sent us a complete report, no personal injuries, but engines shot up badly. Nine planes and eight crews.

Now what the Japs were doing was putting "Picket Boats" out 100 miles from the Kuriles right on our track to the islands. They would fish and fill their holds, keeping a sharp lookout for our planes.

as we piled out. An officer came along and made signs to indicate that he wanted us to remove our shoulder holsters and hunting knives. We made a small pile on the grass; a soldier carted them off. The officer then motioned that he wanted us to sit down where we stood. A soldier brought our flight luncheon box that had somehow missed being thrown overboard, and set it down among us and indicated that we were to go ahead and eat. Soon a model A Ford panel truck came bouncing across the field with a Russian Wac at the wheel. It was the field ambulance that was to be pressed into service as a bus. Looking across the field we could see three PV's parked in a line. We were to learn later that they had been flown in by Schuette, Bone and Jackson Clark. We learned too, that Mahrt was also safe in a crash landing on the beach. It meant that Logan and Wheat didn't get into Russia, but were lost at sea in operations against the Japs.

Dave and I were put through several long interrogations about where we were going and why we didn't return to our base. I wasn't returned to my crew until 11 o'clock that night when I met all the men. It was good to see Bone, for we hadn't heard a thing from him, although he claimed that he had sent a message.

Kamchatka is indeed a strange place. It is at the same latitude as the Aleutians, but has trees, grass and a crop a year. The Japanese current must have something to do with this. We are living in a clap-board building in two small rooms. Our mattresses and pillows are filled with dry grass. The sheets are yellow and have about the same texture as our mattress covers. The blankets are very coarse, but warm.

The food is coarse and not much of it. We are getting cream of wheat in the morning with sugar and black bread. Each of us get a glass of warm stuff called "Koffee," in the morning, but the similarity of the words didn't mean a thing. It was far from coffee as we know it. Luncheon was a soup made from canned pork, tomato paste and potatoes. Then two fried slices of pork with black bread and hot tea in glasses. At this meal we had a small dish of butter at each table. Supper went back to either cream of wheat or rice, black bread and tea. Lunch was the only time that we were given butter and sugar varied from no times a day to three times a day. Let me set everyone straight on this butter and sugar that we were getting; the containers informed us that the butter came from Wisconsin and the sugar was "Domino".

Sleep and eat was all that there was to do. When we inquired when we were being sent home, they informed us that Moscow would make all the decisions. This we found to be true in all our later travels in Russia. No one dares to move or make a decision without referring it to Moscow.

The first week wasn't too bad for sleep came so easily that any time I lay down I fell asleep. This I attributed to the strain of the preceding months. But after I was slept out, then utter boredom settled on me. There was so little to do. We were restricted to about 50 yards around the building, we couldn't read any newspapers or books because we

couldn't understand the language, we had only ourselves to talk to for the few soldiers that waited table and cooked for us were young and had little schooling.

Our interpreter was a surly individual who should have been in a sanitarium. He suffered with palsy and continual headaches. But he was the only soldier who could speak english.

I decided my job would be learning to speak and read the Russian language. It would give me something to do with my idle time. I started a word list and copied the Russian equivalent from the English-Russian dictionary. Then when a Russian showed an inclination to talk, I would make up the words from my list.

We weren't flown out of Kamchatka until the 23rd of August. Just a month for me, but over two months for Bone and Schuette. We were flown across the Sea of Okhotsk in an old Martin Clipper that the Russians had purchased in 1935. It normally carried 45 people, but due to its age, was restricted to 35. We had to leave Carl Lindel and his crew behind because they were the last crew to land and brought the number to 40 American airmen on Kamchatka.

Our first stop was on the Northern tip of Sakhalin Island. The Mayor of the town made elaborate preparations for feeding us, fresh tomatoes, vegetables and fresh meat. It was a wonderful meal, made more so by the menu on Kamchatka.

The building that was to be home for the night looked like a school building. We were taken to the second deck and assigned to rooms opening on the long hall. The first peculiar thing I noticed was that the beds all stood about a foot from the walls. Someone else noticed that the lights could not be turned off for the wires had been soldered. We asked about this; the Mayor laughed and said something about "Gloopie"—which meant exactly nothing to me. Our interpreter took over at that point and gave us the following facts:

Back in 1905 when the Japanese and Russians had gone to war, the war had not gone so well for the Russians. In writing the peace the Japs had wrung an oil concession from the Russians in that very town. There is oil all over the place; even the plane had to be anchored away out in the bay to keep in the clear. The launch that came out to get us was covered with an oil sludge. The Japs agreed to develop Okha, putting in all permanent equipment, schools, roads, etc. In return they were to have the oil until about 1950. It actually worked out differently; the Japs imparted the cheapest kind of coolie help, threw up wooden barracks for them to live in and started taking out the oil as rapidly as possible.

The Russians watched this with alarm, but never felt quite strong enough to force them out. Then in 1943 with Japan up to her ears in war with us and the war beginning to go for us with the Germans—The Russians ordered the Japs out of Okha. The interpreter went on to say that the town was lousy, but that they were trying to clean it up.

We were told that if the lights remained on in each room that we could sleep without being bitten; we discovered that although what was said was not actually the truth, yet it was better with the lights on.

We were a tired crew that formed on the deck to be taken out to the plane the next morning. All of us had been bitten, some more than others. That morning I had discovered that sometime during the night a bug had tanked up on my blood and in trying to get away from me had moved right under me as I rolled in my half sleep.

The next leg of our journey took us to Khabarovsk. This city was the headquarters of the far eastern army. Joe Stalin kept one million men stationed here just so the Japs wouldn't start thinking of any fancy maneuvers. They told us this quite frankly. When asked the direct question, "Will Russia join us against the Japs?", the Russian officer would always smile and say "When the time comes, you will see".

It was here in Khabarovsk that we were told that we were not on our way home, but rather to a city in central Asia called Tashkent. There we were to be interned for the duration. This was quite a blow. We were broken into two groups, for we would be flown the remaining distances in American DC-3s. We rested several days while the preparations were being made. I stayed with the second group, for I had gotten some unboiled water and had a very bad case of the GI's.

Two days after the first group, we took off on the first leg of the trip to Irkutsk. I spent a good part of the time in the tail, on my tail. We stayed that night at a large building right at the airport. The food was good and the beds were clean. We were dog tired and ready for the sack.

The next day took us to Novosibirsk where we landed in the late afternoon. Here we were faced once again with too much to eat and too much vodka. The Russians would never sit down of an evening, sit around, talk and consume a quart. All of their drinking is done in conjunction with a good meal. Vodka isn't mixed with ice and gingerale; it is straight and strong. Most of the men that we have observed would down a glass of vodka and chew a piece of black bread. It does take that fire out of your mouth. There is no sipping allowed either, for most drinking is done with a toast to someone. If you don't agree with the proposed toast, then you show it by sipping your drink. But this is the kind of toast we were always running into—"To our great leaders, Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin", "To the great Red Army", and "To the Americanski Airforce". It is fairly difficult to sip your drink on any of the above. I tried without any success, to get my glass out from under the bottle when it was only half full, but that doesn't work either, for they pour it through your fingers, or wait until you have gone back to eating. When the next toast came along and you reached for your glass, you always found it full. Since there was no refusing it and since it was impossible to get out of drinking it and since my stomach wasn't designed for such hi-octane fuel, I excused myself and withdrawing to the head, threw it all up.

It was at dinner in Novosibirsk that Sam Gelber and a friend tried to drink a Russian officer under the table. I can remember Sam saying quite loudly, "We have him on the run, look at his glassy eyes". The Russian of course didn't know of the plot and didn't understand the language. When I looked back at the table some time later, the Rusky was still sitting there, but Sam and his chum had disappeared; I inquired for them and was told that they had turned in.

The next morning we took off on the last leg of our journey to Tashkent. We stopped at Alma Ata for refueling and lunch. Every one to a man felt so "hung up" from the dinner the preceding night, that we refused to touch vodka to a man. Alma Ata is in the desert, north of India. We later learned that it is the Hollywood of Russia. It was at lunch here that we had our first taste of watermelon. The approach of our plane passed right over a field where women working in bra and panties were picking them. The only men around were the soldiers who drove the horse and wagons that carted the melons away. We saw this same sight back on Kamchatka, only the crop was potatoes. I guess that one becomes immune to conditions after a length of time. The Russians were mildly surprised that we talked about it at such length.

The last leg of our journey was flown in the afternoon to Tashkent. We remained in the desert all the way, seeing some weird and beautiful scenery. Tashkent is a green spot in a brown desert, created by irrigation. There is a range of mountains to the southeast that run to perhaps 12,000 feet. The melting snow supplies continual water for the streams. The water is fed down through dams and irrigation canals, until every acre has a supply of water. Along these canals, the Russians grow some very beautiful trees for shade. I never did learn the name. They grow to about 150 feet high and yet the greatest spread of the leaves are about 20 feet. They are planted quite close along an irrigation ditch. They give huge areas of shade all day.

A Captain in the Russian Foreign Service met our plane and saw us safely trucked through the city to an army camp on the other side. He had been sent from Moscow to make all arrangements and see us settled in this camp that was to be home until the end of the war. Our camp was a rectangle about 2,000 feet long and about 1,000 feet wide. The barracks building was in the form of a square U, the dining room and kitchen were in a separate building. There was also a laundry and back building, a pig pen and blacksmith shop, garage and woodshed and a row of three rooms to house the kitchen help. There was a small baseball diamond, underground food storage tunnel and a four hole outhouse. Our camp was enclosed on two sides by mud walls and on two sides by irrigation ditches. One of these ditches was deep enough to swim in. The walls of all buildings are made of mud and straw, which indicate how much it rains in these parts.

On our arrival at camp we rejoined the group that had preceded us from Khabarovsk. I was taken around the camp and introduced to most of the help. Our interpreter was a woman; she was about forty, with bleached blonde hair---that is, the color was artificial. She had had several husbands and was currently unattached. She spoke very good

English, but had no knowledge of slang. This was cleared up by the time we left; it looked like a setup for somebody. I am happy to report that nothing of the kind ever happened, and that she was the best friend that all of us had during our enforced stay.

The cook was a hefty gal of 27, with a husband at the front. She spoke no English at all. She developed into a very good friend of mine due to the hours of conversational practice. It was very easy to spend hours in the kitchen. Toica would be working at the big table cutting meat, peeling vegetables, or rolling dough. I would sit in the window, either describing America or asking questions about life in Russia. Nooná, our interpreter, would always be barging off somewhere to look after this or that, the soldiers were always walking their posts, so that the kitchen was a natural hangout.

Our houselady was a woman in her early fifties, who supervised our living quarters. It was she who saw to it that our beds were changed once a week and that we received clean towels and issues of underwear. She oversaw all the cleaning women and the women who worked in the laundry. The size of the camp and the help employed there indicated that more Americans could be added at will from whatever part of Russia they entered. This was borne out several weeks later when the first of the Army joined us. They had come from Vladivostok and had landed a B-29 that had come out of China on a strike at Japan. The Army airmen pointed out that if an engine was shot out over the target, that it was impossible to get back home. But Russia was located just up the Sea of Japan and could be reached easily on three engines.

Living conditions were very much better at Tashkent than on Kamchatka. Our beds had real feather pillows and mattresses of cotton padding. Even the sheets and blankets were less rough. The food was also very much better with fresh meat, carrots, cabbage, beets, potatoes and for a short while, fruit.

The outlook was most dreary because of the lack of things to do; breakfast was served at nine o'clock with most of us sleeping until about 8:30. After breakfast, for about an hour, I walked around the enclosure, stopping to pass the time of day with the sentries. Since my wanderings took me past the kitchen, I always stopped in to see how the potato peelers were coming along. About noon, I'd strip down to just a pair of shorts and go out and lie in the sun. This was a good chance to study my word list. The sun was fierce; it would make the perspiration stand out on your skin several minutes after exposure. But somehow it didn't give those very bad burns that we would get at home at a seaside resort. Then a shallow dive into the irrigation ditch to thrash around for awhile. Then out to get ready for lunch at three.

The afternoon meal was always the heaviest of the day, so that everyone really felt "loggy" all afternoon. I took this opportunity to go back to my room, bring my diary up to date, if there was anything to report, or lie down to read some old battered copies of Readers Digest that we had in the planes. When I tired of reading it was a simple matter to close ones eyes and sleep for an hour.

Bridge is a great game to kill time. We played every evening from around six until dinner was ready at nine. Then if there wasn't a movie I'd shove off to bed by about 10:30. The Russian Government will buy only those American films that they consider politically innocuous. Such a film was "Sun Valley Serenade". We saw it about five times in all from Kamchatka, Khabarovsk to Tashkent. It was a good picture with music by Glenn Miller and skating by Sonia Henie. The only competition were the Rusky films themselves, and we couldn't understand the dialogue and it isn't always evident from the action what is happening. When we saw a Ruski film, Noona would stand and tell us about the development of the plot, while the operator was changing the reel. Not too satisfactory, but not a bad way to pass the time, which was our real problem. There, isn't that a way to live? If I ever got back to the States, I was going to tear into any job given me and work long and hard at it. There is a certain pleasure at the end of a day's work. It was here that I learned that time on your hands is really a curse. This is what must kill men who sell out their businesses at advanced ages, thinking that they want to take it easy the rest of their lives.

But what about our own government? We had heard exactly nothing from them since our arrival in Russia. Some of the men were beginning to grumble that they didn't care about us since we were no further use to them. I knew that this was far from the truth, but I did wonder why we hadn't received even a letter from the Military Mission in Moscow. Then on the fifth of October it happened. An American Naval Captain stepped into our camp with a Lieutenant Colonel Army doctor and an Army Major as interpreter. A real roar came from the men as they saw them, pumping their arms until I thought they would drop off.

After the excitement had died down they had us together for a conference. Then we received the answers to all our questions. The first was, of course, "When do we go home?" They didn't know the answer to that, for it depended on the international situation and would be decided by the staffs in Moscow. The purpose of this visit was to find out who was here, to get correct spelling of names and correct serial numbers so that next of kin could be notified that we were safe and not missing as reported by the Navy soon after our failure to return to base.

Let me interrupt this narrative to answer two questions that have always been asked. "Why did the Soviet Government hold you when we were allies in the West and they admitted hating the Japanese in the East?" The other was, "Why did the Navy send a telegram to your folks saying that you were missing in action, when in many of the cases, messages were received from the crews saying that they were heading for Russia. That they could not return home due to battle damage?"

Remember that in many of the cases Jap fighters often followed disabled planes up to the Russian coast, hoping to finish them off. They watched us cross the border and land. There isn't any question but the Japs knew that American bombers had landed in Russia and that they should be interned. Remember too that at Khabarovsk, Stalin had a million men stationed against possible Japanese treachery. We can surmise that

the Japs had a few men stationed in those parts too. Then after "D" Day came and things began to come our way, the Russians became even more careful about us. I don't doubt that the Japs knew of the Russian plans to join with the Allies against them when the time was right. Since things were going badly for Germany in the West, why wait for Russia to attack? Since this calls for desperate measures, the Russians were afraid of an attack. If Japan needed an excuse to attack---we were prime material, if we had been repatriated.

The second answer shows how careful the Navy and Army were about reporting their casualties. The Navy takes the attitude that it is true that we received a message from Vivian that he had received battle damage and was heading for Russia. Remember that he had some distance to go before he could land. Couldn't something happen to him at the instant he closed his transmitter? We think it better to report him missing and after we get confirmation from our State Department that he completed his landing, then we can notify his wife that he is safe. That is why Sara had to go from July 25 to October 23 until she was sure that I was safe and alive.

The officers from Moscow came loaded with a lot of gear. There was first, a 6 band radio set, 72 decks of playing cards that actually slid against each other, softball equipment, a huge paper backed Army library, medicine, clothing, shoes and just a raft of other stuff. The Mission in Moscow had been working constantly to get permission to come and see us. Each time they were told that we were being given very good care and were on rations ordered only for sanitarium patients. They started this agitation soon after Schuette landed on June 15, and permission was finally granted in early October. They brought no mail and there wouldn't be any until they returned to Moscow and had cables sent to our folks that we were safe and giving them an address.

They let ^xTashkent for Moscow on the 11th of October. Now the time was easier to pass. We could draw books from the library, listen to the radio (British Broadcasting Company), or play softball. Most important were three cases of tobacco components and these contained all the leading brands, pipe tobacco, and some chewing tobacco. Three packages a week was the ration, later to be cut if we didn't receive more from Moscow. A good old American doctor looked us all over and gave booster shots to everyone. Major Hall who was the interpreter, gave us the inside on diplomative night life in Moscow. New crews kept joining us all the time either from Vladivostok or Kamchatka. Army B-29's, B-24's, B-25's, or Navy PV's, we couldn't be sure until they actually arrived in camp and told their story.

Major McGlinn has a real story to tell. You may yet see it in some leading magazine. He never indicated whether he would write it or not. Here it is in a nutshell- On the night strike against some target in Japan, Major McGlinn's B-29 had an engine damaged so that return to base could not be accomplished. They headed toward Russia. They had no information on facilities or landing fields. Their gas would run out about 2:30 in the morning, long before daybreak. The Major decided that all he could do would be to head right into Russia and just before the gas ran out, to

have everyone bail out. In that way they could be sure of a landing in Russia and not falling into Japanese hands. Sometime about 2:15 Major McGlinn and his crew stepped into the blackness. The Major mentioned how he could hear the plane disappearing in the distance as he swung in his harness. The jump altitude had been 11,000 feet. Several minutes later he drifted into a lower layer of clouds and into a light rainstorm. He felt leaves brush his face and raised his arms to protect his face. His downward motion had been arrested and all he could hear was the rain. Moving his legs around experimentally, he discovered that he could not touch the earth. He concluded that the canopy was being held by the upper branches of a tree. By alternately pulling on the risers, he was able to swing in and grab the trunk. From the size, he decided that the tree was similar to those that line the streets at home. He broke off a twig and let it drop, but strain as he would, he didn't hear it hit.

In three hours it would be light enough to see. No sense in dropping out of the harness if you didn't know where the ground was. He alternately dozed and blew his whistle during the remaining hours of darkness. When it was light enough to see, there it was, some sixty feet below! He was in a giant tree; he swung back into the trunk and with his knife, fashioned a crude climbing belt from the shroud lines. The going was slow with the diameter of the trunk increasing at a faster rate than he had anticipated. He had to drop the last eight feet because his belt was extended to its limit. On the ground at long last, not knowing where he was or how the ten other members of his crew had fared, he was stiff and cold from the hours of enforced sitting soaked to the skin. Here was his inventory; no bones broken, just slightly hungry and thirsty.

When the Major jumped he had two emergency kits. One was a vest covered with pockets, and the other was the cushion on his seat-type parachute. He now had a canteen rations for about two days, knife, signaling whistle, fishing equipment, extra pair of socks and some medical supplies.

The forest looked indeed like the forest primeval. There was no evidence of logging, roads or habitation. He whistled loud and long and finally heard an answering note. It turned out to be the tail gunner. Together they continued the blowing, but to no avail, for they never heard another sound that was foreign to the woods. Not knowing where they were, the choice of a direction was the next very important decision. They decided to find a stream of water and follow it downstream until they found some evidence of life and then to follow where that led. They chose a direction and after several hours of walking found a stream.

The rest of the story is indeed one of hardship. They took thirty days in walking out. They each lost about 30 pounds. It is a story of grubbing for food; anything that crawled or flew that they could catch, moss and an occasional frog was their food. It was a story of walking miles up a tributary in order to cross. Bursting into tears when they missed a nice big frog.

About the twenty-fifth day they sighted an airplane and were able to signal it with their mirror. It circled for several minutes

and then released a sack that fell into the water just off shore. They were able to retrieve it. Inside was a note written in English, several cans of meat and some bread. The note told them that their comrades were safe and for them to continue downstream, if they felt able. The next day it was planes again with more food, of which they ate very sparingly. The instructions of this day were not to attempt to move any further, that a canoe was coming for them.

The canoe came the next day and they were paddled down the stream for two days past several villages, until they were met by a small power launch. "Welcome to Russia, gentlemen", were the first words they heard from an interpreter aboard the launch.

They were taken to a hospital to join the other members of the crew. All eleven had come out of the woods alive. The first section of the crew had fallen on one side of a large hill and the Major and gunner had fallen on the other. This hospital was located at Komsomolsk. If you care to look at a map, you can get an idea how far they flew that night. As far as they knew, the plane had never been found.

Now back to Tashkent. In early December another party arrived from Moscow. Only one American officer this time, a Lt. Col. McCabe and two officers from the Moscow Foreign Office. The first was the officer that had met our plane when we first arrived at Tashkent. Col. McCabe brought only mail with him. The reason became obvious when we were told that we would travel under a set of secret orders to Tiflis across the Caspian Sea. We would assist in the delivery of lease lend equipment to Russia. This was quite a blow, for we were counting on going home and this was just another move inside of Russia.

Our camp grapevine told quite a different story. It told us that this was just a front and that while we were being moved, that we would be given the opportunity to escape. It further elaborated that when the train approached Ashkhabad, that the train would stop; the trainmen would inspect one of the trucks and call it defective, ordering that car and all cars that followed be cut off at the next siding. This was to be the beginning of the escape plan.

The next few days were busy ones for the Russian Supply Officer. We would carry all our food, and it was up to him to get it ready. It was estimated that any man in the camp could get ready to travel in 23 seconds. I had received four letters from home. All indicated that things at home were fine and that they were very happy that "Missing in Action" had changed to "Safe in a Neutral Country".

On the night of December 4, we departed our internment camp in a convoy of canopied Studebaker trucks. Our instructions were that the rear canopy was to remain down and that if the truck stopped that absolute quiet must be maintained. There would be no smoking. The trucks took us to the freight yards, where three railroad cars awaited us. We were immediately embarked. Since the train wasn't made up until midnight, it was suggested that we turn in.

Russian railroad cars are not like ours. The car to which I was assigned had a corridor the entire length of one side. From this corridor the compartments were arranged at right angles. Each compartment had a door which slid fore and aft. Inside there were two seats facing. The back rest would slide up to form an "upper" for sleeping. These compartments would sleep four people. There was a lavatory at each end of the car. When we boarded the car it was illuminated by candles in glass cages in the corridor. Later when we were connected to the train, we had electric lights. The car was heated by coal heater at one end of the car that circulated hot water strung in pipes in the corridor. The other two cars were the "hard class". There were no compartments and the bunks were three deep. The seats were not upholstered, but were bare board. During the night they were covered with a thin pallet. These two cars turned out to be lousy, but thanks to the first group that came from Moscow, we had some very effective DDT sprays.

The next morning found our train approaching Bukhara. We were on the Tashkent-Krasnovodsk section of the Trans-Siberia railroad. At each stop the men were permitted to stand on the ground opposite the doors. They were amazed to see people hanging all over the train, with some standing and sitting on top. We discovered that the only time that you bought a ticket was when you wanted to sit inside. We discovered too that it was common practice for Uzbek men to cross the tracks and squat in full sight of the train. We made a mistake of placing some of our food in the windows. This gave the Russians who were placed in our cars a lot of work pushing the beggars and seeing that no one hitched a ride on our cars. At each major station at which we stopped, there was a hot water station. The porters would scurry with their pails and queue for water. This was later to be placed in the samovars to make tea for us. The trip was uneventful until the afternoon of the second day. The train stopped out in the middle of nowhere. We noticed several men examining the forward truck of our first car. They talked among themselves with one of them shaking his head gravely. They climbed aboard and the train started. Several minutes later we saw these same men in conference with Lt. Col. McCabe and the Russian officers. I was called to pass the word to everyone through the cars. The forward truck was defective and we would be separated from the train at the next siding. The only cars behind the car with the defective truck were two cars containing Americans. The plan was for Col. McCabe and the Russians to proceed into Ashkhabad and procure truck transportation in order to continue the trip to Tiflis. We now knew that this was just so much baloney for the "grapevine" story that we had heard back in Tashkent was indeed working out. Here we were, December 7, 1944, all set to pull a sneak on the Japs. It began to get dark; this put us back on candles once again. We ate a cold supper of sandwiches and water and attempted to play some bridge by candlelight. This was slightly eyestraining for those sitting on the far side and that was soon abandoned. Soon almost everyone had turned in. About midnight we were awakened by the return of Col. McCabe and the officers. It seemed that something had gone wrong with the plans. Moscow had ordered that we stay where we were until further word. This further confirmed our belief that something more than just a trip to Tiflis had been planned, but we couldn't get the Colonel to budge from his story.

The next morning a truck came from Ashkhabad with a hot breakfast for us. The city was only sixteen kilometers down the tracks. We were allowed to walk down the tracks to a signal about a quarter of a mile away. More boredom, more bridge playing and more speculating about what had gone wrong. When the Colonel came back later that afternoon, he had heard nothing new from Moscow. As we walked down the track I mentioned to the Colonel that I hoped that things would straighten out so that we could go forward, but if we had to go back, don't make a public announcement of it, but just hook up the cars and haul us away. I had lived with the men a long enough time to know their temper. I might mention at this point that up to a week before we left Tashkent, I was the officer in charge. At that time, Lt. Commander Wayne and Major McGlinn joined us. I turned over my command to Lt. Commander Wayne and took the number three position in the administration. It was this proximity that gave me the chance to get all the hot dope. The next day was a repetition of the preceding, with the exception that when the Colonel arrived, he had heard from Moscow. We were to return to Tashkent.

He ordered all the men to meet at the junction of the first and second cars. He stood on the platform and told the men of Moscow's decision. It was his own opinion that something adverse had appeared in the papers back in the States. What it was he couldn't say because he didn't know. The morale hit the deck at this announcement. He couldn't have done as much damage if he had hit them with a baseball bat. I could feel that the men would not take this lying down. Their next questions indicated to me what was going through the minds of the men. They wanted to know what would be done if they escaped Russian custody. Whether our Government would take any action against them if they tried. Col. McCabe didn't get the import of the questions, for he gave some hurried answers and left. Soon the exodus started. Groups of men drifted away from the cars, wearing all the clothing that they could, with the pockets jammed with food. Every five or ten minutes we heard that a new group had pulled up stakes. Commander Wayne did everything in his power to stop them. He went as far as to accost a new group just leaving. They made it quite clear that they did not intend to go back to Tashkent and that if he didn't get out of the way that someone would flatten him. The men were of the impression that if they managed to get to the border some 30 kilometers away, that then they would be in friendly Iran. Just hitch a ride on some truck to Teheran, join the American forces known to be there, and it was over--Simple. Later we were to learn what a laugh this was. The question I was trying to answer in my own mind--was this the opportunity to escape that our camp grapevine mentioned? I decided that something had actually gone wrong with the escape plans and that we had better sit tight and wait to see what would develop. Soon a count was taken. Thirty-six men had "gone over the hill". Something had to be done. We had to get word to the Colonel some way. One of the enlisted men who spoke fair Russian and myself walked to the signal hut and finally got across to the operator that we wanted to get word to the Americanski Colonel in town. We wanted him to come right out here. The operator nodded that he understood and would get the message into town for us. It was a cold black night, with a fine drizzle hitting you in the face as you walked. It felt good to climb back into the cars. Those people were going to have a tough time of it even if they did manage to get away. Conditions remained about the same until just before midnight. Several crews of men had returned of their own accord. Their desire to whip the world had cooled after several hours of walking in that cold drizzle.

Then the Russian General in charge of the whole area comes stopping into our car. He called loudly for the "Americanski Komendeer". Commander Wayne responded and then called for me. With my slight knowledge of the language, this is what I pieced together:

Russia being at war was protecting itself by having sentries along the railroad tracks, in town around all the large warehouses and at roadblocks on the road that led to the border. Perhaps it is safe to say that no one outside of the general and his staff knew that three railroad cars of American flyers were on a siding 16 kilometers outside of town. Sentries began to report that they had captured small groups of men who understood no Russian and were dressed in foreign clothes. Soon several trucks were rushing around picking up these groups and bringing them to a central depot in town. The word went out immediately to all sentries not to shoot at anyone who refused to stop upon orders. They were to attempt to capture and not to harm these men. The General knew when he saw the first group that these men had in some way escaped from the railroad cars. Now the General wanted to know where all our men were and why they had fled from the cars? I tried to explain that the Commander had attempted to stop these men, but was threatened with physical violence. The General held the position that we should have used the remaining men to physically restrain the men if necessary. Commander Wayne's position was that the men did not obey his orders that they would be brought to trial when returned to our own forces. At this point the Colonel arrived in response to our earlier message. He took over in that he was the senior American officer present. The General presented us with an angle that no one had thought of. If these Americans struck out across the desert and into the hills, they would be observed by the native Turkmen, a very poor and hungry people. When they noticed that these well dressed foreigners with heavy packs were unarmed--The General didn't finish, just raised his eyebrows and said, "We must get to them first".

The next morning several trucks came from town with our food and the escapees of the night before. That afternoon our three cars were hooked onto eastbound train that would take us back to Tashkent. All but seven of the men had been retaken. They would follow on another train when they were captured. We were a mighty blue bunch of Americans that returned to the camp on the 13th of December. What a sneak we had pulled on the Japs. It would take months for the Colonel to return to Moscow, find out what had gone wrong, get permission to try again and then return to take us out. It looked like we were stuck until early February at the earliest. Since we were going to be in camp for Christmas, we started the ball rolling to make it as enjoyable as possible. Ensign Johnson was to take care of all the choral work and Lt. Golden with the skits for after our dinner.

The big event of Christmas Day was the banquet at 2100 in the evening. We had invited the commanding general of the area to join with us in the celebration. Normally the Russians do not celebrate Christmas, but do celebrate the New Year. Word came from the mess hall just as darkness came, that they were ready for us. All of the Americans had congregated at the mess hall awaiting the arrival of the General. He was in camp, but was talking to Noona and several of us. The party started for

the mess hall, Noonan, the General and several of his staff, Commander Wayne, Major McGlimm and myself. Everyone was seated at a table waiting. When the General stepped into the room, at the command "Attention", everyone came to his feet and stood at attention until the General and his party had been seated. It was a very nice gesture for the General, and made every man feel that he was a member of the armed forces of the United States. As I came through the door, a huge drawing hung on the opposite wall which caught my eye. It was an American doughboy sitting on the edge of a foxhole looking at the star of Bethlehem that was rising in the East. A flashlight had been concealed across the room, throwing a beam of strong light on the star. It was very effective. Then the word was passed for each table to extinguish its candle. When the room was in complete darkness, one could hear people moving around until there was silence again. Then a single candle was lit at the far end of the room. It revealed the carolers standing in a line ready to sing, and sing they did, "Holy Night", "Little Star of Bethlehem", and several others. This was the closest any of us came to letting our hair down. Then the candles were re-lit. Major McGlimm asked the Lord to bless the food we were about to eat and also spoke at some length of the folks at home. It was very well done.

Then we really started on the food. I remember that the main course was a small piece of beef with a fried egg on top—and it was delicious. Each man had a small bottle of vodka and a bottle of wine at his place. More than enough to give one a good "bun". Then started the long list of toasts, "To the folks at home", "To the Red Army", and the old favorite, "Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill". Then the General called for the cook and her helpers, making them stand out in the middle of the floor, while everyone drank a toast to their good cooking. This is a very nice gesture that the Russians never forget.

After dinner Golden and his crew took over and furnished us with some good skits. It was the first time that we had all laughed in some time. You can imagine what the morale was from what I have related above. Take a quantity of vodka and mix it with Christmas away from home and you have a material that will take the shell away from anybody. There was lots of reminiscing that evening with many a damp eye. New Years Eve didn't have any appeal for anyone where Christmas did. Efforts were made to get some entertainment going, but with no success. No one was in the mood. All that we had that evening was a good meal with some more vodka and wine. We did hang around the mess hall and sing songs until the arrival of the New Year.

So one of the most hectic years of my life comes to an end in a vodka daze. I sincerely hope that the next one will be spent with my family.

1945

Early January took us back to the same old routine of bridge playing and reading. Our three squares a day were put before us without any effort on our parts. This sort of treatment if prolonged will give us all a screwy outlook on life. We may get the idea that this is our due, that only suckers get out and work hard all day. Lets get out of here and back to a normal mode of living.

Now for some good news for a change. On January 17th Major Hall and the same two Russian Officers of our last trip reappeared at Tashkent. This was two weeks before even the most optimistic of the men would have started looking for them. The Major had been sent this time to take us out. There wasn't any beating around the bush, no "secret orders" to take us to Tiflis. The Major told us from the start that he was there to take us out of the country. The details would be revealed to us as we went along. In return for this confidence from him, he wanted to know that the men were behind him one hundred percent and would not try any funny business like the trip before. This was wonderful, we were being taken in on the plan—and to a man we pledged our cooperation. He did bring word that if anything went wrong on this trip that no further efforts would be made to get us home. All the Major brought with him this time was sacks of mail. In the great "Mail Call" I stood up and received about 45 letters, about 38 of them from Sara. How I loved that gal! First I had to sort them by the post date so that in reading them I wouldn't get ahead of myself. All afternoon over the camp came shouts of joy and relief. Expectant fathers discovered that their wives had given birth to boys or girls, that a wife had saved so much, or that a wife had spent so much. It was indeed a wild afternoon. Everything was fine at my home. Sara and the baby were living in Sarasota, Florida with her sister. She had received the allotment checks regularly and everything seemed to be fine. In a short while I ran across the clipping that rocked me back on my heels and started me shouting for everyone in the room to gather round.

Now let me go back for just a moment. At the time of the Tokyo strike from the aircraft carrier Hornet, a certain B-25 managed to land on Russian soil for interment. This article that I held in my hand was a description of how this crew had been spirited around Russia to confuse anyone that might be trying to keep tabs on them. How they had a very good looking interpreter. "BUT IT WENT ON TO DESCRIBE THE ESCAPE ROUTE! It was released in the States under a December 2 dateline, so you can see how nicely the Russian Embassy had picked it up and flashed it to Moscow. Moscow referred it to the proper division of the Foreign Department. I could just hear some one exploding when they heard about the release-- "Why we have over 100 American flyers on that same route right now!" Moscow did the only thing it could do under the circumstances. It held us where it found us. If anyone wants to know who this son-of-a-***columnist is, drop me a line and I'll tell you. How Moscow must have gloated over this—"Your freedom of the press, see how you have tied yourselves in knots?". We are trying to help you. We have allowed no one not connected with this movement know of its existence. Yet your writers comment freely on military matters". Sara wrote in the letter which contained the clipping, "Does Ashkhabad mean anything to you?". If I could only tell her.

The preparations were the same. Each man was issued enough food to last about five days. The same goodbyes, the same late night departure from the camp and from the railroad station at Tashkent. When we approached Ashkhabad this time the train did not stop to inspect that defective truck. I forget to mention that on our return to Tashkent on the first trip, that no work had been done on the truck. It was just part of the story. This time the train continued right through Ashkhabad and continued into the night. The Russians were changing the formula. The Major assured us that the plan was a good one and that we would learn it in time. We rode until about an hour before dawn when we were shuttled onto a siding. The word was passed for every man to stand by to disembark and to load into the assigned truck. It was a wonderful sight to see eleven canopied trucks pull around and back up to our cars. The trucks were Studebaker six by sixes. We had been broken into groups and loaded into nine of the eleven trucks. The last two trucks were to carry gas and oil for the trip. Our orders were the same, the back canopy was to be down on the order and could be raised when the raise order was given. If the convoy stopped, there was to be no talking and no smoking. The attempt would be made to pass the cargo of the trucks off as canned goods.

We drove all that day, stopping only for rest stops of five minutes and for refueling of the stomach and the gas tank. It was indeed rugged country. I would compare it to "off the main road driving in New Mexico". I could see now why our caravan had to be self sufficient. The country was barren and we never did see a service station. We continued through the night without stopping. Dawn found us approaching the Caspian Sea and with the growing notion that this jaunt was going to have its hardship side too. We were stiff and cold—and hungry. Cold canned fish on cold bread somehow didn't seem to excite me. The water that we could get was from streams and ponds. We couldn't be sure of the water, so we dropped some vile pills that the Army issues to be placed in suspicious water. It makes the water smell and taste terrible. So much so that some men drank the water plain for they couldn't stand those pills.

We traveled all that day, making only the necessary stops. That night about midnight a stop was made to give the drivers two hours of shut-eye. Our driver fell asleep right in his seat without so much as moving. The driver of the truck behind sprawled on the mudguard. None of them took more than 30 seconds to fall asleep. It was so darned cold that those who couldn't get a space on the straw in the body of the truck, had to get out and walk up and down the road. You walk until you tire and then sit down—but the cold begins to penetrate so quickly that soon you are on your feet walking again. None of us had any real sleep since that last night on the train. It was only two hours, but it seemed like two years that the convoy leader sent the word back for the drivers to man their trucks and start again.

About five in the morning our driver told us that we were about 30 miles from Tehran. We had stopped to allow several of the trucks to catch up with us. About every two or three hours our convoy would stop at a Russian guardhouse. Our convoy leader would get out of the lead

truck and disappear into the hut. After several minutes he would reappear still stuffing his papers into his jacket. Then a soldier would raise the barrier and our convoy would proceed. A smile cracked my tired face as I thought of the men and officers who had made a break for it away back two days and two nights of truck travel at Ashkhabad. With this conducted tour right into American hands, I felt so stiff and sore that I didn't care much what happened. About ten miles from Tehran all Americans that had been riding up front in the cabs were transferred into the back and the rear flap lowered.

This was it at long last. Soon we would be in an American camp; as the trucks came to a stop at the gate, one of the men up forward very cautiously raised the canopy and reported the action for us. "It's an American camp sure enough, fellows. That Marine at the gate sure looks good". A chill went up and down my spine as I listened to his whispered chatter. In a matter of minutes we would be free people once again. The trucks backed up one after another discharging their load into an empty wing of the hospital. The first American I saw greeted me with, "Loosen your collar and shirt-sleeves please". He placed the business end of his sprayer into my shirt-sleeves and pulled the trigger. The air pressure released, drove delousing powder up my arms and around in my shirt. The same for my trousers and hair. Next.

Soon the showers were running full blast and the Army corpsmen were issuing clean sets of underwear to everyone. All our clothing was taken from us, and new gear issued in its place. We were allowed to keep our souvenirs. Then came the chow wagon pushed down the aisle. The men crowded around to see what was "cooking". The heaviest drain was on the white bread and butter and coffee. That was all I wanted. Then each of us had a beautiful white, clean bed to sink into.

The next afternoon we were trucked to the airport and flown out in C-46's. We were headed for Cairo. I discovered that we were not free but continued prisoners in the hands of our own people. Not really hard to take, don't get me wrong, we had every consideration. But no letters or telegrams could yet be sent. At our first stop for gas, our pilots learned that Cairo was closed because of weather. We ended up that night at the head of the Persian Gulf at Abadan. This was one of the stations that we used for the transfer of Lend Lease equipment to Russia. We were bunked in buildings apart and our trips to the mess hall were on off hours. Still a conducted tour in every sense of the word. As we passed through the chow line, we had the men serving us, really confused. In my case, for instance, I was wearing GI clothing with a Navy flight jacket and Navy insignia on my overseas cap. The high spot of the meal at this camp was a wonderful naval orange from Palestine. The camp's decision on us was that a carrier had gone down on the Persian Gulf and that we were survivors.

The next afternoon we were on our way again. We landed at Cairo about midnight. Our planes taxied to the far side of the field and deplaned us in a revetment area. What do you think our next mode of transportation was? You are right--Canopied Studebaker 6x6's with an

M. P. sitting on the rear seat of each truck with the meanest looking carbine. If the trucks stopped, our instructions were to remain quiet and no smoking. Old stuff to us.

That night they trucked us back one hundred miles to the Red Sea to an Army camp at Suez. Here we had our first taste of Army life. We slept that night in tents and had our supper from mess kits. We learned the next morning that the War Department had decided that we would ride home by boat and that we would stay at this camp until transportation was available. Nine more days of doing nothing. It was getting easier to do nothing all the time. At this camp they had a wonderful collection of records prepared by Army Special Services Command and hot coffee at all times. Then the same old diversion of card playing and reading was still available.

At midnight of the 8th of February, the trucks carried us back to Cairo and the far off revetment area for loading. Our takeoff was about four o'clock in the morning. So you see that I can truthfully say that I have been to Cairo. But when people asked me about Sheppards Hotel and the Pyramids—you can see that I didn't have too much to say.

Dawn found us flying west along the shore of the Mediterranean. As the sun climbed higher, we could see the scars of battle on the desert floor. Tank traps and slit trenches all over the place. As we circled Begasi for a landing, there were several freighters lying on their sides in the harbor and many of the buildings in the town were gutted. We refueled at this British airfield. We were not permitted to disembark or smoke while on the ground. We didn't even know where we were going on the next leg of our journey. The Americans were just as mysterious as the Russians had been. Soon the first plane started up, taxied out and took off. We were the second plane to taxi out. The pilot tailed around in the taxiway to keep the dust from blowing into the planes behind us. He ran up the port engine, tested the "mags" and throttled back. Then the starboard engine; but when the engine reached testing speed it didn't sound right, even to us sitting in the rear. The pilot throttled back and ran it up again with the same result. Then on up to full power and back to testing speed with that same funny "spitting" noise very much in evidence. He throttled back once again and released the brakes. I thought to myself, "I guess he has decided to go back into the line and see what is wrong with that starboard engine". But instead we swung around into the takeoff area and started down the runway. The plane became airborne and started climbing out over the water. "This is a fine kettle of fish", I thought, "The pilot didn't like the sound of one of the engines and here we are heading for Italy". Sure enough in a little while, one of the enlisted crewmen came back and issued a Mae West life jacket to each passenger. Oh for a PBX.

We landed that afternoon at Naples, Italy, after getting a good close look at Vesuvius. The good old Studebakers were waiting for us once again—But this time there were no canopies! Our "secret" movements had piqued the curiosity of the brass hats at Naples. There was a Two Star General and an Admiral on the field to see us. Our convoy consisted of seven official cars, two motorcycle M.P.'s and trucks enough

to carry the men. Later I learned that the Admiral had asked Commander Wayne where we were from and that the Commander had explained that he was under orders to keep his mouth closed.

We had a wonderful look at the city. The trucks drove at a slow speed right down into the heart of the city and drove onto the dock area. Bombing of Naples had really been strategic. No bombs had been wasted on the housing areas. A power plant near the airport has been demolished, but buildings close by were still standing. Everything a block back of the water front had been demolished. My conclusion was that this was due to slight errors of the bombardiers trying to hit the ships in the harbor.

The liberty ship "John Sullivan" was to take us back to the States. We boarded her and were assigned our quarters in a jiffy. I had an upper in a room with four other officers. One hundred and thirty men in a liberty ship still look like an empty ship. There was lots of room for everyone. I neglected to mention away back, that on our first trip out of Tashkent, we left one man behind who had been operated on for appendicitis and was still unable to travel, and that 29 more men joined us before we left the second time. This second group was really lucky to get out of Russia so quickly.

The next morning a tug pushed us out into the bay past an undamaged Italian cruiser. We were surprised to see that no other ships were joining us and that there was to be no convoy.

On the evening of the third day we dropped anchor just off from Oran. We learned that this was a convoy forming point, and that we would leave as soon as enough ships had arrived. All communications from ship to shore were by blinker and since we had several good radio men in our group, we were able to keep up with all the hot dope. We lay at anchor all the next day as ships appeared on the horizon, grew bigger, and finally dropped anchor in the growing armada of ships. The next morning we were under way with about 36 ships in the convoy. This was my first experience of riding in convoy. It is a magnificent sight. Out in front rode two destroyer escorts, one on each side and two in the rear. After watching for awhile, I discovered that it was very similar to flying in formation. Similar in that the ships were slowly opening and closing on their position and that the convoy leader was exhorting the ships to keep closed up. That night we rode "blacked out". The only way that position was maintained was by keeping watches posted fore and aft.

Then the next morning we approached Gibraltar. I was surprised to see that the "Rock" was well back in the mouth of the Mediterranean and not at the narrowest point. I was surprised to see how promptly two of the lead ships were torpedoed. Our escorts left their positions and really went after that sub. They had apparently had it spotted by their sounding gear, for they all congregated on the southern side of the convoy immediately. Planes appeared overhead in a short time to assist in the circle, then one would dash across the circle and about in the center would drop several depth charges. It if weren't such a deadly game,

one could say that the geyser of water from a depth charge is a beautiful sight. The torpedoed ships were able to get into Gibraltar, one under its own power and the other by sea-going tug.

Then began 25 days of steady sailing. We saw the Atlantic in all its forms, from so smooth that a plane could land upon it, to so rough, that the tablecloths had to be wrung out in water before dinner so that dishes would not slide. We played more bridge and read more books. In desperation, I asked for permission for some old clothes and permission to join the ship's crew in painting the ship on sunny days. I spent several days with the crew and got to know several of them quite well. The assistant gunnery officer and myself discovered that he had identical interests---the Stock Market. In the evenings we would sit and talk by the hour about the relative merits of groups of stocks.

Soon after sundown on March 5th, the lights of Sandy Hook were sighted. At long last we were almost home. To a man, we stayed on deck until we dropped anchor near Staten Island. We would see that Statue of Liberty to-morrow morning when we moved up to the piers. You can imagine how eager we were to get off that ship and to a telephone. Well, Mr. Weatherman had his little joke ready for us the next morning when we climbed up on deck after bolting our breakfasts. Fog so thick that we couldn't see the shore! And what is more, the decision was not to move the ship until it lifted some. What a blow.

About eleven o'clock we eased into the Brooklyn Port of Embarkation---without seeing the Statue of Liberty and with the Army band playing anything we shouted for.

Army and Navy officers came up the gangway as soon as it was lowered. The Navy men told us that we would be taken to Floyd Bennett Field close-by to be broken up. We were to be started on 60 day leave, thirty days survivors and thirty days regular. Everyone had the chance to name his next duty station. It was a swell break and the first time that I had ever seen the Navy throw the book out of the window. The Army got a similar deal. Also every enlisted man was raised one rate, if he were under chief. He did have to work on the requirements of his new rate when he arrived at his new duty station.

At Floyd Bennett Field there were sacks of mail for everyone. It broke my heart to see about seven packages from Sara that she had packed for her interned husband in Russia. Packed I'm sure with loving care. Hell, what could I do with it all, food, candy and cookies. I did make the enlisted men stationed at the barracks where we were received, happy, by giving most of it away.

They told me that I was selected to be one of a group that would go to Washington for further interrogation. All of us were told to make no long distance calls, because telegrams had gone out that we were back in the States, and would call soon. The Authorities wanted us to wait until those telegrams were delivered. That night we had a

wonderful time at the bar buying each other highballs. Everything had to be "double". And in our Army clothes with Navy insignia, we had the regulars confused. That afternoon we had hit the cash jack-pot, for we were paid off in full. It was quite a bit, for we were paid flight pay for all the months that we sat on our collective back-sides.

As I started back to my room from the bar, feeling very, very good, I decided that a nickel call across the river to my sister would not be violating the regulation. Peggy did verbal fip-ups when she heard my voice and we started talking madly. We were in high gear, with the throttle wide open, when the operator in the hotel lobby interrupted on my sister's section of the line. She informed her that Sarasota was calling. SARASOTA! That could only be Sara! Now how to get the call transferred to my line out there in Brooklyn? The regular operator said that it couldn't be done—but the Chief Operator said that she would try. The next voice I heard was Sara's. Thanks to the load of good bourbon I was carrying, I didn't cry. But I don't mind saying that it was good to talk to my very own wife.

The next morning I called Dad and he brought one of my uniforms over from New Rochelle. I had an evening at home before I had to leave for Washington. The train seemed to go slower and slower as it approached Washington. If the engineer had known that I was going to meet my wife, then I'm sure he would have been more co-operative. I rushed into Union Station and to the booth of the Traveler's Aid for a message. I learned that she had arrived that morning and was at Commander Conlon's house in Silver Springs. I hurried over to the Navy Department and checked in with the Officer of the Day. Then I called Sara. She had been in bed all day, after a hectic trip up on the train. We decided that I should find a hotel room and that she would take a cab and meet me. The Officer of the Day was very helpful. I used his 'phone and called several hotels, with no success. "Why man, you have to put the pressure on if you want a room. Tell them that you have just returned from overseas and are meeting your wife for the first time. It's nothing but the truth". The next hotel I tried just that—and it worked. Then I called Sara.

I reached the hotel first and sent my bags up to the room. I asked the clerk to send Mrs. Vivian into the cocktail lounge when she came in. I chose a small table facing the door. Then Sara came to the entrance, and I stood up. As I did she saw me. What a wonderful thrill to hold her in my arms, to kiss her. How did she get across to the table? I don't remember. Christmas Eve I managed to keep the tears back and in the 'phone booth I did too, but this time I'm afraid that just a few sneaked by.

In a week the Navy Intelligence Department had pumped me dry of information and I was a free man with sixty days on my hands. A short trip back to New York City to see the folks and then back on the train for Sarasota to see that daughter of ours.

Rachel, Sara's sister met us at Tampa. We were brought up to date on our daughter, Andrea, as we drove south to Sarasota. Sara's Mother and the baby were about a block from the house when we came along.

Sure enough, she looked just like her pictures. She didn't look like the two month old baby that I had kissed goodbye in Washington state, just about a year before.

I had selected Pensacola, Florida as my next duty station. It would be good to get back. I made a trip over and managed to find a place to live. Rachel and Mother flew north to Chicago. Sara and the baby flew over to Pensacola. I slid under the wheel of our 1939 Pontiac, loaded with stuff and started out for Pensacola.

I reported aboard about the 18th of May and was assigned to Squadron 8-C, the twin engine training squadron. I went through a refresher course and learned to fly all over again. It had been almost a year ago. Then I was assigned to be Assistant Maintenance Officer of the Squadron.

I was just getting into the swing of Navy life once again when V-J Day happened. Things happened kind of fast. The point system came along and I was eligible for release. Since I had never been eligible for regular Navy under any program so far announced, I felt that I should get out while the getting was the best.

I was separated from the service on the sixth of September, with my terminal leave ending on the 28th of October. Sara, Andrea and I drove to Ann Arbor, Michigan. Leaving them with her sister Lois, I headed for New York to land a big job with the airlines.

To my dismay, I discovered that the airlines had not received their old planes back from the Army, and that CAB had not yet approved the new routes applied for by most of the airlines. Then too, most of the airlines had pilots in the services that they were obligated to place before hiring any new help.

Civil Aeronautics Authority was in a predicament all its own. They were faced with possible huge expansion in civil aeronautics. Before they could do any expanding, they had to appear before Congress and show cause for an increased budget. They too had a long list of inspectors in the service who would be placed before new people would be hired.

The only airline that I could find that was doing any active hiring was China National Airlines Corporation, C.N.A.C. They were not only interested, but wanted me immediately. It sounded like a good proposition and appealed to Sara as well as myself. I went and took the physical examination and passed that easily. Then the home office received a telegram holding all new personnel hiring until further notice. They assured me that it was just a temporary situation and that soon the hiring would continue. I found that I was number five on a list of some three thousand applicants.

It became obvious to me that I had to find something interesting to do. Using this job as a waiting station until C.N.A.C. called, or until civil aeronautics came back fast enough to give me employment here at home.

I returned to Ann Arbor and found a job with a firm of litho-
printers. The pay was \$50.00 per week and sounded good. The management
said that as soon as they stopped turning work away at the door and
began to look for jobs, that they would put me out on the road as an
apprentice salesman.

I soon discovered that housing in Ann Arbor was impossible.
I spent six evenings and a Sunday afternoon on the telephone, without
finding a place to live. We continued living with Lois and her husband.

We spent a wonderful Christmas in Ann Arbor with just family.
Andrea had so many toys to play with that she didn't know whether she
was going or coming for several days thereafter.

New Years Eve found us with no plans and with a touch of the
"flu", so we both got to bed early and slept out into 1946.

If our paths had crossed from March to October of 1945, all
that I could have told you was that I was interned in a neutral
country. In October we received releases for our stories and our
souvenirs. The releasing statement stated specifically that nothing
was to appear in print without prior authorization of the Navy Dept.

This effort then, is just a letter from me to you.

On February 19, 1946, I received a telegram from the New York
offices of China National Airlines offering me a pilot's position.
I accepted and am now waiting for instructions. Sara and the baby
will follow me in six months. But you will hear all about this in my
letter of '46.

My home address is:

Number 9 The Circle
New Rochelle,
New York.

John P. Vivian

1946

January 2, 1946.

Hello once again---Here is the Vivian report for 1946. Nineteen hundred forty-six opened on a flat note. I had just resigned my job in Ann Arbor, Michigan, because it didn't give me any flight time, and I couldn't seem to hold the line financially. Housing was impossible. We finally found a small apartment out in the country, about half way to Ypsilanti, Michigan. Sara was isolated and I was doing too much traveling. The decision was to move to Michigan City, Indiana. There I hoped to find temporary work until China National Aviation Corp got around to my name on their employment list. It sounded like a good proposition, with enough money and a chance to travel. The airlines in the States were hiring a few pilots out of service. The pay started somewhere around \$200.00 per month and moved up very slowly. It wasn't for me, for I had already demonstrated my inability to support my family on that amount.

We made the move into the unhappiest time of our married life. I couldn't find a thing to do and finally registered with the 52-20 club. On weekends I worked at the same trade that helped me while attending the University of Michigan, the meat department of the local A&P. We lived with relatives.

Finally the telegram arrived from C.N.A.C., offering me a job as pilot. I went off to New York and saw the personnel manager at the Chrysler Building. On the 13th of April I started for the west coast. The company said that six months after I arrived in China that it would start my family on its way. I was to leave San Francisco in early May by Constellation for Shanghai, to fly U.N.R.A. supplies around China. Sara joined me in Oakland and we had a wonderful week together.

Our first day took us to Honolulu. Got a glimpse of Pearl Harbor on final approach into John Rogers Airport. We stayed at the Moana Hotel during our stay. We were scheduled to depart Honolulu on an U.N.R.R.A. chartered flight that didn't arrive from the mainland for three days. It was my first trip to Honolulu and I enjoyed being there. We hired a car and drove around the Island. Saw the Pali and the Naval Air Station. Our hotel was on Waikiki Beach.

On the 13th day of May we departed Honolulu by Constellation for Wake Island. Nine hours of reading, sleeping and eating, put us on Wake Island in the middle of a lot of water. We stayed just long enough to give the crew some sleep and departed again at 11 o'clock that night for Tokyo. Saw very little of Tokyo because the weather was bad and the pilot had to make an instrument let-down. We landed at Atsugi Airport. The U. S. Army took us several miles away for breakfast in a beautiful new bus made by the Mack Truck Company. We travelled on dirt roads, the land looked green and fertile. The buildings were camouflaged and of poor workmanship. Fujiyama is a beautiful mountain.

We arrived over Shanghai in the late afternoon of May 14. Sitting low, almost in the water, the city is on the Whangpoo River, close to where the Yangtze flows into the Yellow Sea. Swampland for miles in all directions similar to Louisiana. Our company representative met us and

flew us across the city to our own airport—Lunghwa. That night I slept in the ballroom of the Metropole Hotel.

Then started those dreary days that we all dislike, getting started in a new city. I joined forces with another pilot to live at the Pacific Hotel and later at the American Club. Housing was just impossible. We kept hearing about apartments being sold for ten thousand U. S. dollars and sums in that vicinity—which was "out of this world" for us.

My pilot friend was invited to "Tiffin" by a friend to whom he had a letter of introduction and I was asked also. We made our appearance the next day at the appointed hour and were served a very delicious luncheon. The host, a Frenchman, a French lady, Stan and myself made the party. After tiffin we adjoined to a drawing room. In addition to several comfortable chairs, the room contained two Japanese style rattan couches. The host brought a large tray from a cabinet. It contained a long pipe, several bunsen burners and what looked like several dental tools—Opium smoking paraphernalia! Stan and I settled for whiskey and water and sat around and watched the fun. A small globule of opium is lifted from the can with one of the tools. Then it is softened and cooked over the burner. When it reaches the right consistency, it is put into the small opening of the pipe. The pipe is then inverted and held over the burner and smoked with great sucking movements of the diaphragm. I half expected them to pass out after each had smoked one globule. As a matter of fact, nothing happened. We sat around and talked for another hour. The host excused himself finally, saying that he had to go back to his business. I could see no difference from the time I met him until he left us. This was the first and only time that I saw opium smoked in Shanghai.

In late May, all the Chinese employees of our company went on strike for higher wages. It was poorly organized and the company continued to operate with the assistance of the Chinese Air Force. It delayed me a full month in starting my checkout. In early July I started my transition training in C-45's and 47's and flying the line as co-pilot. We operate routes all over China. We fly North to Tsingtao, tiensin and Peiping. We fly West to Nanking, Hankow, Sian, Lanchow, Suchow, Hami, Chungking, Chengtu, Kunming, Bhamo (Burma) and Calcutta in India. We fly South to Canton, Hongkong and Manila. We have recently received six DC-4's and will soon start operations to the States. Generally speaking, the eastern part of China is low flat land, good for farming. The western part has high mountains that force our flight altitudes up to fifteen and sixteen thousand feet. We navigate on radio beacons that are located all over the country. We hold over them when a field becomes busy, making instrument let-downs to get under four hundred foot ceilings. On paper our operations look suspiciously like "Bush flying". But on the contrary our equipment is good as is our maintenance. In August we were an hour out of Hankow for Kunming at eleven thousand, when our right engine quit. We were grossing 48,000 pounds with cargo in a C-46. We were able to return to Hankow with all our cargo never pulling more than 35 inches. Immediately after takeoff from Tsingtao with a load of passengers, our left engine quit.

We were able to completely circle the field, even spurning a chance at the cross wind runway, because we were holding our altitude so well. I'm sold on the C-46 and other pilots tell me that the C-47 will do as well. In September I had an interesting two weeks. We were dropping rice to Nationalist troops that had been surrounded. All went well until the Communists managed to fill us with holes one day. No personnel injuries, although they just missed the tanks and the left wing had to be changed upon our return to Shanghai.

On my first trip to Calcutta I had to spend the entire first day in the hotel because they were rioting in the streets. It was my birthday. We left Calcutta about two weeks later at three in the morning in order to make the trip to Shanghai in one day. It was raining with low visibility and ceiling. On our takeoff run we felt the plane hit something. Because of our speed and because everything seemed normal after the impact, we continued with the takeoff. At daybreak we landed at Bhamo in Burma---and ran off the runway into a ditch! We later discovered that a water buffalo had wandered out onto the runway at Calcutta. Our fuselage passed directly over him and we had killed him with our tailwheel. He in turn had ruptured the hydraulic lines in the tail, bleeding away all our fluid. Our subsequent landing was made without brakes. The crosswind put us off the runway into the ditch. The plane is now flying once again and no one was injured.

On the first of October the company checked me out as a Captain, after riding the line for four months. As I write this, I have only drawn two Captain's checks, but can now see the possibilities in the job. I am principally on the Chungking run now because of its high mountains and known icing conditions. I am looking forward to increasing seniority and some of the better runs.

As the holidays approached in December, I volunteered for extra trips, because Sara and Andrea were still in the States. On Christmas morning I departed Shanghai for Lanchow. On that day our company lost two planes, killing seventy people, injuring sixteen and losing one American pilot. It has been called the "World's worst commercial air disaster". Three of our ships approached Shanghai just at dusk on Christmas day to find it fogged in solid. The weather had lifted just long enough in the afternoon to be above the minimum and to draw all of these anxious planes into the air. The usual alternate, Nanking, was also below minimum. Navy G.C.A. brought one plane in to a successful landing. The other three pilots did the best they could because they were unable to contact G.C.A. They tried long approaches to our inner marker, hoping to "chop" everything as they passed over it. They all crashed and burned. On January 5th we lost another ship at Tsingtao against the side of a mountain. Right now things are "tough and go". The Ministry of Communications, under whom we operate, are yelling for some heads. The newspapers are having a field day. No one seems to know where it will end.

Sara is still in Michigan City, Indiana---preparing to have our second child. She is close to all her family, so she won't be alone. I understand that her brother-in-law will deliver the baby. I hope that some summer she will be with me.

1946 was a tough year. It saw me drawing money from the Government under 52-20. It saw me separated from my family, living for the most part on co-pilot's pay in a highly inflated Shanghai. The Christmas Day crashes make me realize that a guy could get hurt in this business—but prefer that chance against rotting as a bank clerk. 1947 looks better; my salary is up. A reunion with my family is in the offing. I see a home in Shanghai, with lots of servants to take care of us and enough leisure to see and enjoy our friends. Come to China and see us! Just a postcard to me at American Club, Shanghai will keep you on my 1947 mailing list. Sara's address is 416 West 9th Street, Michigan City, Indiana.

1947

The start of 1947 found the Vivian family still half a world apart. Sara was in Michigan City, Indiana, awaiting the arrival of her second child and I was still with China National Aviation Corporation based in Shanghai. Things were looking up for us, for as soon as the baby was born and could travel, Sara and the children would start for the Orient to join me.

January 1947 found our company still staggering under the effects of the terrible Christmas night crashes. That black night we lost two ships at Shanghai, due to a ceiling that was right on the ground and planes in the air using Shanghai as an alternate for Nanking, which was also closed. Our third ship that night was talked down by G.C.A. It brought home the terrible fact that in order to use G.C.A., one had to establish communication with them. This was something our two crashed ships were unable to do.

January 5, 1947, found me in Chungking after spending three days trying to complete a two day trip. The weather was bad all over China once again. Word reached us that we had lost another ship. It seemed that a C-46 with 38 people aboard crashed into a low hill beyond the airfield at Tsingtao where he was trying to get under a low ceiling. The Minister of Communications threw up his hands and grounded both airlines for a week, for a complete investigation. So I sat in Chungking for a week. The investigation came up with nothing startling, so we resumed a full schedule once again. I received a cable from home saying that another young lady had joined the Vivian family on January 19, 1947, and that Sara was fine. She was named Stephanie Ann and came into the "ring" at 7 pounds 9 ounces. Now to get on with the travel arrangements.

The airline operated smoothly until January 26th when a C-47 flying from Hongkong to Chungking failed to arrive at Chungking. It was another of those bad weather days with known icing conditions. On the 28th a C-46 departing Hankow for Chungking with a full load of passengers caught fire and crashed sixty miles away. Several days later the C-47 was found on a mountain side with no survivors. Only one small child escaped the crash at Hankow. The minister of Communications threw up his hands once again and grounded the airline. In just over a month we had lost five planes with only a handful of survivors. Trying to analyze what had happened in each case would be futile, I believe, as the investigations came up with very little information.

During four days not a plane departed from the station at which the grounding order caught it. Then we were permitted to resume operations on a restricted schedule and carrying only cargo. From the pilot's point of view, it became a source of comfort to see parachutes carried on all flights. During most of February the investigation pot boiled. We continued on a restricted schedule. Then in early March we resumed a regular passenger schedule.

In March, April and May nothing of consequence occurred. Sara was making preparations to join me and I was flying and looking for an apartment in my spare time. Housing is very short here in Shanghai and has created the "key money racket". The occupant of a rented apartment with the knowledge of the landlord, offers the furniture for sale. When a sale is effected, the seller vacates the premises and leaves the furniture. The landlord gets about 25% of the sale price for issuing a new lease and the buyer has a place to live-- although his bank balance may be depleted by 5 - 15 thousand U. S. dollars.

Occasionally, I ran into a straight rental proposition. In this, however, they wanted monthly figures that started around \$250.00 U. S. dollars, and wanted anywhere from one to three years paid in advance. This ran into large figures, so I concentrated on finding as nice a place for low "key money" as possible. In early June, with Sara's arrival only fifteen days away, I settled on a small apartment in the ex-French Concession. It took all the starch from my bank account.

With the help of the Scheduler in Operations, I managed to be in town on June 16th when Sara and the children arrived aboard the "General Gordon" of the American President Lines. It was a day worth waiting for - the reunion after a year and my first glimpse of Stephanie Ann. It was a hectic few hours until Sara and the children were able to get off the ship and through customs. Back at the apartment, there was a cook boy with a well-stocked kitchen standing by and a baby Amah waiting for the children. To make the picture complete, the company said that I could have the entire next day off.

Then the Vivian family sort of leveled off. I flew when scheduled and settled down in that wonderful sticky domesticity. Through the summer the flying tempo picked up until we were flying about 125 hours a month. This gave us just one day off in Shanghai between trips. This was just enough time to pay bills. Social life had to be squeezed in as best we could. The level of consumption of alcohol took a nose dive, which I think is understandable.

We are only flying one type of plane since April of this year. Late in that month one of our pilots lost an engine on take-off. He did a good job of struggling around the field, but it was felt that pilots should not be changing from the C-46 to the C-47. So from that time I have been a C-47 driver.

In August we purchased a Chinese pedicab. It is a bicycle with two rear wheels. Between those two wheels there is a body with a seat and foot rest that can carry two people. It was a wonderful solution for transportation for the Amah and the children. Andrea goes to nursery school in it in the mornings, and both children go to the park in the afternoons. We have a very good pedicab coolie. He doesn't speak word "one" of English. We get around this by giving instructions to the baby Amah. When he isn't out on a trip, he helps around the house with the heavy cleaning.

China is in bad shape financially, as I guess you already know through the stateside newspapers. They try to conserve their U. S. dollar credits. They asked us to take a portion of our salary in Chinese National Dollars. This was accepted by the American personnel, as we needed some for our living expenses. At the time, the official exchange and the black market was about the same. Soon the black market started up and with it the commodity prices. We were still being paid at the official rate of 12,000 to 1. We viewed it as a cut in pay and expressed our views accordingly. When it became apparent that nothing was contemplated, our talk became stronger.

The Company finally acted. They served notice on all of us that in 30 days all our contracts were terminated. It was so unlooked for that there was an element of shock in the news. Sara and I stopped to consider our position. I had come to China and ridden co-pilot for five months at a low salary. Upon my checkout, the larger part of my salary was sent home to help Sara get ready to join me. Then, when the bank account began to stir and show signs of life, I all but killed it by paying key money for our apartment - and now this.

Sara decided that she would get a job with the American Consulate until the situation became clearer. The company started issuing a re-written contract that cleared up the CN dollar payments. They had a general house cleaning at the very same time. About fifteen of the captains did not receive new contracts. I received a new contract.

Sara went to work for the Foreign Liquidation Commission as an administrative assistant. The agency that is handling the bulk sale to China of all the gear left behind on the Pacific Islands. She works from 8 to 5 with Wednesday afternoon, Saturday afternoon, Sunday and all American and Chinese national holidays off. It is a surprisingly easy routine and not like a job at all. Her job has paid some unlooked for dividends. Our shipment of personal effects were brought in duty free and without examination, because Sara was an employee of the State Department. I was resigned to fighting with the customs over our refrigerator and stove and in the end paying several hundred dollars. She enjoys the privileges of State Department Commissary, Army Post Exchange and postal system and the Naval facilities. After six years in the Navy, and still holding my reserve commission, my wife enjoys more Naval facilities than I.

The company counted on hiring pilots here in the Orient from those Army pilots who were asking for separation, and those who had been refused regular commissions. The pilots that were purged in September easily found positions with General Chennault's new airline and with our rival "Central Air Transport Corporation". The "rattling of the saber" the world around, has led to a stiffening of the Army policy on release of pilots. So we are staggering along with about fifteen less pilots than we should have. It has upped the monthly level to 140. We are walking around with our tongues hanging out and lucky to get one day off in Shanghai between trips. The compensation comes, of course, at the end of the month when we receive overtime checks in excess of our

salary checks. It is just a question of how long you can keep up the pace. My own answer is money or no money, Sara and I are going to have two weeks vacation in Hongkong, starting January 16th.

The months of October and November slid by without incident. Then came those happy weeks of shopping for presents for Christmas. Selecting and decorating a tree, trying to wheedle and cajole the operations scheduler so you will arrive back in Shanghai on Christmas Eve, trying to furtively wrap presents in a three room apartment with kids, Sara and four servants walking in and out.

It was all a lot of fun. I arrived back in town on the 24th of December; Andrea got the biggest kick from the things Santa put under the tree; Stephanie had more fun with the crinkly paper the presents came in - and Sara and I were pleased in our exchange of presents.

New Years Eve Sara and I joined a CNAC party at the U. S. Naval Officers Club. Not having to fly the next day, allowed us to "let our hair down". We did just that and ended 'ole '47 in each others arms on the dance floor, singing Auld Lang Syne.

Here are a few happenings of my "on the line" flying. I've flown planes chartered by T. V. Soong and Dr. H. H. Kung. Caught my radio operator pouring tea in the hydraulic system, (a new man who thought we pointed at the tea bottle when we pointed at the spare can of hydraulic fluid. Carried a ton of opium to the coast from the interior. Lost my hydraulic pressure and landed at Canton without any brakes. Customs found 17 cases of contraband on my plane, listed as cotton shirts. It was nylon hose, girdles and woolen material for the interior. Lost no engines in 1947!! It was a big thrill to have Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh as my co-pilot from Nanking to Shanghai. Actually, he was a passenger, and in the Orient for Pan American World Airways. He came up forward on my invitation, and we passed a very pleasant hour talking about flying.

1947 saw the Chinese National dollar inflated from 12,000 to one, to 150,000 to one. It saw the breakdown of negotiations between the Kuomintang and the Communists and the assured continuation of the Civil war. It saw very few improvements in our living conditions. Rents are still very high, food about the same as at home. We still drink boiled water and wash our fruits and vegetables in solutions of potassium permanganate. Kerosene sells for out \$3.00 U. S. on the black market, for a 5 gallon tine; doctors get \$10.00 U. S. for a house call, and \$5.00 U. S. for an office call. All our movies are old when they open in Shanghai; i. e. "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" has just opened and is quite popular. Stoves and refrigerators are bringing about \$1,000.00 U. S.

On the optimistic side- Servants are plentiful and cheap (about \$20.00 U. S. a month); Sara's commissary privileges help with the food bill, airplane maintenance is improving, the anti-foreign feeling has leveled off here in Shanghai, we are together and a year closer to our home leave in 1949. So I'm sure that we will stick it out another year.

Getting a post card from you would tell us that our letter reached you and that the address we have is a current one. Would you drop one in the mail to us? An address that will always reach us is c/o American Club, Shanghai, China. But until Sara gives up her position, we can be reached by airmail (5¢) to Mrs. Sara G. Vivian, F. L. C., APO 917, c/o Postmaster, San Francisco, California.

Sara, the children and I join in wishing you a very Happy and Prosperous New Year.

The Vivians.

1948

The arrival of 1948 found the Vivians still in Shanghai. John flying for China National Aviation Corporation, Sara with the Foreign Liquidation Commission, attached to the State Department, Andrea approaching four years of age, attending the Wonderland Kindergarten, and Stephanie nearing two, getting serious about walking and talking.

We were still living in our tiny Rue LaFayette apartment, becoming more dissatisfied every day. In this year we were to change cook boys once, house coolies twice and wash Amahs four times. Our baby Amah is very good and the children are attached to her.

In early January my local leave was approved and service tickets issued to Hongkong. January 16th found us on our way. Hongkong is stuck onto the bottom of China like gum to a theatre seat. It consists of a small portion of mainland, an island opposite with the enclosed water space providing an excellent harbour. The city is filled with Chinese, although the British rule everything with an iron hand. Hongkong is an open port and most imports may be landed duty free. The city is filled with English woollens and whiskey, American cars and appliances and Chinese silks and laces. Truly a shoppers paradise. Hongkong is located about 23 north latitude. About the same as Miami and is pleasantly warm in the winter.

It was vacation time and the hotels were crowded. We were fortunate in securing a double room on Hongkong Island. Then began those wonderful days of sleeping late, consuming the plentiful seafood and shopping. We made a side trip by boat to the Portuguese Island of Macao. It is famous for its gambling and as a smuggling base for China. Because the weather had turned cold, we stayed only one day. Upon our return to Shanghai, Sara returned to the F.L.C. and I to C.N.A.C.

Since the previous April, I had been flying passengers in C-47's. Now began my re-checkout in cargo C-46's. It was welcome, because it was a step up the ladder and because they were flying about ninety hours in overtime every month. Although this greatly enhanced the paycheck, it unfortunately changed the character of the routes. Where I had been flying well dressed Chinese and a few foreigners to well known cities and watering places, I was now flying rice, ammunition and lice infested refugees in the civil war areas.

In the early months of '48, the Communists and the Nationalists about equally divided Manchuria and the north of China. Generally speaking, the Reds held the countryside and the Nationalists the large cities. The supply bases were the cities of Tientsin, Peiping, Hankow, Chinchow, and Tsingtao. The cities cut off from China proper and dependent on air-lift were the cities of Changchun, Mukden, Tsinan, Tayuan and Sian. It was a huge operation. C.N.A.C. kept about twenty C-46's and a few C-47's on shuttle service in addition to serving the remainder of China with passenger and cargo service. Pilots and crewmen averaged 140 hours every month. On the shuttle planes, our utilization ran from 9-10 hours per day. From Peiping we were taking rice, flour and ammunition into Taiyuan

and Mukden. From Tsingtao to Tsinan, a general cargo in and cotton out. From Hankow to Sian, a general cargo including cigarettes in and cotton for the mills in Shanghai out. A pilot would leave Shanghai for two weeks, fly ten hours a day with every fourth day off out of Peiping and return, withover 100 hours—and your tongue hanging out.

In early May, Sara put her foot down and said that she would not spend another summer in this hot and small apartment where four people and four servants were trying to live and work in four small rooms. She looked continuously and I helped when in town. In late May we ran across a very beautiful furnished apartment with lots of room and quarters for the servants. It was on the top floor of a nine story apartment building and faced south, west and north. It meant that we could comb the servants out of our hair. We came to terms and moved in on the first of June.

Our new car arrived from Hongkong on June 4th. A Dodge Sedan; Sara used it in getting to work. The children continued to use our coolie pedaled pedicab for school and the park. Then began five months of blue skies and comfortable living. I was averaging 140 hours per month on the shuttles and managing about ten days per month in town. Sara had the kids, a new car, a comfortable apartment and her job to keep her occupied. The Communists had made no overt moves. The printing presses continued to turn out currency and the inflation continued apace. The exchange rate in early August had reached 12 million Chinese dollars to one U. S. dollar. In mid August a new currency was introduced. It was called "Gold Yuan" and was to be backed by the assets of the Government owned enterprises and by the gold and other currencies turned over in exchange for this new currency. The newspaper propaganda created the impression that this was China's last chance. If this new currency went to pot, the Nation was finished. Everyone was willing to cooperate. The Army, Navy and Consular officials warned the Americans from dealing on the black market, saying that they could give no help if one were caught. Chinese queued for blocks to turn in their gold bars and hard currencies for this new G. Y. To insure cooperation from any possible skeptics, the Generalissimo sent his son to Shanghai to head a 12,000 man army of economic police. Prices and wages were frozen. The economic police (without warrants) searched warehouses and business premises. Where hoarding was evident, the owners were hauled off to jail and the stock put up for sale. The campaign of fear went so far that a wealthy business man was executed for violation of the emergency economic laws! At frozen selling prices the manufacturer found that he was losing money. Even our own OPA, during the war, was forced to grant increases in selling prices. But here there was no machinery for granting increases and some economic crackpots insisted it wasn't necessary.

Then like fever spreading through a body, the people began to realize that the G. Y. they had received from turning in their life savings was destined to inflate like the previous C.N.C. A wild buying spree started with the food and clothing stores. The merchants were forced to sell at fixed prices and any attempt to hide merchandise usually

led to the appearance of the economic police. Then the spree spread to just anything. Hardware and Paint stores were stripped of their stocks. Even the coffin makers couldn't keep any stock on hand. No one wanted to hold G. Y. If it was forced on you in a business transaction, your immediate problem was to put it into something that wouldn't deteriorate. It started a real estate boom and the purchase of cars and trucks. Even the service stations couldn't keep gasoline on hand and it was a common sight to see lines of cars at every station.

Then came the event that broke the deadlock. The farmers in the surrounding country decided that they just wouldn't bring their produce to town for the inflating currency. The storekeepers wouldn't buy anything to sell at fixed prices so food began to disappear from the shops. Rice became unobtainable. The Chinese will stand for almost anything but this. Rice riots started. Shops were broken into and it was dangerous to attempt to transport rice in the street. The Government took the only step it could. It rescinded the emergency economic laws, allowed prices to rise, made it legal once again to own gold and other currencies—and the emergency was over. I described this at some length to show how the merchants and the people who did not join in the buying spree were raped of their life savings. Those who did join in the spree now had their savings in brass doorknobs and coffins.

In early September, Sara managed some time off and flew to Peiping, where I was shuttling. It was a wonderful change from Shanghai for her. Peiping represents old China. The palaces of the emperors are still standing and are a must for the tourists. During the last days of the Manchus, beautiful and elaborate timepieces were considered acceptable gifts in the palace. Beautiful pieces of silks woven for the Emperors and family were also considered worthy. Now that the republic is here and the empire is no more, many tribute silks and timepieces are offered on the market. Combine the above with rare furs from Manchuria and Siberia and you will understand that Sara did more shopping than sight seeing.

Soon after Sara's return to Shanghai in mid September, the Red war machine began to stir and yawn. In one short week Tsinan fell to them. This was hastened by the defection of a whole division of Nationalist troops, a common occurrence in Chinese warfare. In the opening days of October, Manchuria began to flame. The point of attack was Chinchow. Two supply bases for Mukden were Peiping and Chinchow. Peiping was 400 miles away and Chinchow 130. Mukden was receiving double the supplies from the closer base. It was clearly good strategy to capture it. The battle lasted about a week and when it fell, the first supply base fell to the reds. In addition to the war supplies, E.C.A., the Chinese arm of the Marshall plan lost 400 tons of flour. The ease with which Changchun and Mukden fell soon after began to generate a feeling of alarm. In a short month and one-half, all of Manchuria had been captured and North China began to totter. The reds were quick to grasp opportunities. Despite the fact that large numbers of their troops

were still mopping up in Manchuria, they started a southward drive against Hsuehchow, which guarded the approaches to Nanking.

Up to now the war areas had been a comfortable distance from Shanghai where we are based and where we are living with our wives and families. Now as November came onto the scene, the reds were about 400 miles away. Evidences of the fear broke out in solid airline bookings to the south; packers and shippers could only put you on a waiting list. Ships to Hongkong and Canton were booked until mid January. In the midst of this confusion, I began to feel nauseated and had no appetite. The doctor examined my rapidly yellowing eyeballs and pronounced "Yellow Jaundice". What a time to spend four weeks in bed.

By mid November, Hsuehchow fell and the road to Nanking lay open. This was the blackest period. Sara called one day from the office and urged me to fill the tub with water and send the coolie out to buy kerosene lamps. Rumors were that the utilities would be cut. The American Consul General urged that anyone not having pressing reasons for remaining, to come and register for evacuation. What to do? Sara and I agreed that liquidation of our car, refrigerator, washing machine, wire recorder and radios were in order. Our policy was just the recovery of our investment. In June we had been offered four thousand dollars for our car and had refused it. The time was to come in mid December when we couldn't have sold it for one thousand. But fortunately, in mid November people were undecided on what course to take and we were able to get out even. Our washing machine was the hardest to sell because one can't tell a machine to stop washing and go across the street and bring back a cold beer. We did sell it to some missionaries.

In early December it became apparent that the red drive was slowing down. Not necessarily from the opposition put up by the Nationalists, but by the over-extension of supply lines and the necessity for regrouping. Everyone was still convinced that if the drive was continued, it would only be a question of time before Nanking and Shanghai will fall. Sara quit her job. The evacuation continued apace. Sara and the children were evacuated to Hongkong by C.N.A.C. on December 18th.

Christmas '48 was a washout. Sara in Hongkong; I was in Shanghai not even flying. Six hundred feet with drizzle all day. Spent it with friends and had a wild ride in a jeep to get home before the rigid eleven o'clock curfew. If they catch you after eleven, you spend the remaining hours until five in the morning in a cold police station with not a place to sit. Christmas time is a rough time of year to be away from the family.

In an attempt to be with her on New Year's Eve, I hurriedly managed to have 15 days of local leave approved. Operations assigned me as extra crew on the Shanghai-Hongkong plane leaving on the morning of the 31st and arriving about noon in Hongkong. And it fell through. The field was closed all morning with low ceilings and visibility. We waited until deadline and finally cancelled out. So Sara and I will go

our separate ways tonight and will probably meet each other tomorrow afternoon with hangovers. I must elect to be home before eleven or stay until five, wherever I go.

General Stillwell proved that the Chinese soldier would stand up and fight if you gave him enough to eat, an assurance that someone would look after him if he were injured, enough training to react to battle problems and some hard cash each month.

The reason he doesn't fight and usually defects to the enemy is, that he is underfed, underpaid, and given practically no attention if wounded.

Dishonesty in Government underlies all the trouble in China. army paylists are padded to unbelievable lengths. Intelligence level in the army is very low, due to the purchase of a substitute if the son of an educated or wealthy man happens to be pressed into uniform.

No one is interested in the welfare of the army because no person of position has any relatives in it.

There will be no turn in this downgrade until the present regime is removed from power. The new Government must be honest, follow basic economic laws, abolish the institution of face, coordinate its efforts and model its trade relations on a system that will nourish the profit motive.

Until then lets keep our money in our pockets and our hands off.

The response to our yearly letter has been heartwarming. We will continue to send it on the slightest sign of encouragement. We are enclosing a picture this year. It isn't very good, but was done in a hurry. Our baby Amah is included, for she has become a member of the family. She is now in Hongkong with the children.

Our address from now until June 1, 1949, will be the American Club, 209 Foochow Road, Shanghai, China. In June, July and August we will be on home leave and our mail drop will be #9 The Circle, New Rochelle, New York. The remainder of '49 will probably be back to the American Club in Shanghai.

Sara, the kids and I join in wishing you a happy and prosperous 1949!

The Vivians

1949

Just a little late getting it out--the Vivian report for 1949.

We were based now in Shanghai. The civil war had been going very badly for the Nationalists so that our operations were beginning to go into the state of continual emergencies. I had moved into a small apartment in the Hamilton House formerly occupied by a ground staff member of the company who was now in Hongkong. Of the four servants who were with us when Sara and the children were in Shanghai, I kept only the cook boy. He doubled up and washed my clothes and kept the apartment clean. He slept on the floor in the entrance way and stayed at the apartment continually. With curfew moved ahead to ten o'clock, it would have been difficult for him to get home in time. The curfew was lifted at six each morning so that if I was scheduled for a flight, he could never have arrived in time to prepare my breakfast. So in order to do all these things and to protect my living quarters from thieves, he stayed on. Little did all this mean to me, for all I did after returning to work was to fly, travel to and from the airport and sleep.

The most northern city still held by the Nationalists in mid January was the city of Taiyusan. It was completely isolated and was being supplied only by an airlift of food from the city of Tsingtao on the coast. In the closing months of 1948 the defending army was able to keep a large enough ring about the city so that planes could land and off-load the food in safety. By this time, however, the defenses had been pushed back so far that the airfields had come within range of the communists guns and landing had to be abandoned. Instead we came in over the city and circled down in a small area. From an altitude of one thousand feet we dropped our bags of rice onto the airport. The cargo doors had been removed and Chinese soldiers with ropes around their middies stacked the bags of rice and pushed them out at my signal. In order to drop accurately and keep the bags from damaging the horizontal stabilizers, we lowered the wheels and partially extended the flaps. We flew this pattern at just over stalling speed. Imagine then, if you will, the large changes in the balance of a fifteen ton plane as over a ton of rice would be pushed through the doors at such slow speed. On the approach to make another drop of rice, the situation was no better, for then the soldiers would be sliding the bags of rice back and stacking them in the open doorway. Any airline pilot will tell you that he knows when a single passenger goes to the rear of his plane. The change in location of all this weight kept me busy correcting the trim of the plane. It was a real pleasure to drop the last of the load and get the gear and flaps back up in flying position. We made it a point to climb over the city to avoid gunfire from the Communists surrounding the city.

This was my assignment on returning from my wonderful Hongkong holiday. Off to Tsingtao for two weeks to fly the shuttle. Arise at four in the morning to be carried cold and half asleep to the airport in broken down and monoxide-smelling cars called taxis. We would always be stopped at least five times in the trip. The driver would show his

curfew pass with the garrison commander's "chop" prominently visible. He would further explain that we were going to the airport to help the war effort. At times we would be passed quickly and others there would be a long argument in which my Chinese co-pilot and radio operator often joined. At the airport we ate a greasy breakfast of potatoes, eggs, toast and coffee, while the Chinese ground staff shoved gasoline slips and load manifests at me for signature.

If the engines checked O.K. on the runup test, we generally found our flying day starting as it began to get light in the east. After reaching our cruising altitude of seven thousand feet there was little to do. It was too early to talk with the other planes in the same flight for no one was in a mood for idle chatter. It was still too dark to read, except with lights on in the cockpit. This was undesirable, for if anything happened, our eyes were not adjusted for the gloom in which we were flying. It usually turned out that with your permission, the co-pilot slouched down in his seat and went back to sleep. The radio operator always fell asleep after reporting to the ground station the time of departure and the gallons of fuel aboard. The Chinese soldiers who were to push the rice out later were all asleep lying across bags of rice in the cabin. It was indeed a strange feeling to sit there idly watching the instruments and seeing the grey clouds below turn pink as the sun rose behind the ship. In the two hours of flying to and from the beleaguered city, I had come to do a lot of things; eat box lunches, read all kinds of books and magazines, write letters, listen to short wave broadcasts from the armed forces radio in Japan, take Chinese lessons from my co-pilot and sleep.

The remainder of January was spent shuttling food. The only thing that stands out in my memory was a fire that started in one of the engines as we were starting out one morning. Usually the fire is blown out when the engine starts to run--but this time I couldn't get the engine to catch. An eerie sight to have the flames illuminate the ground crew who were pushing up a fire extinguisher. And that is the way it was finally put out, for I never did get the engine going.

Early February found me off the shuttle and flying evacuation trips from Shanghai to the south. The handwriting was on the wall. The wealthy Chinese began to realize that Shanghai was going to fall to the Reds. Shanghai to Canton in the southernmost part of China was the route. Our passengers were now well groomed women and fat, well fed men. Expensive luggage filled the plane and our common cardboard lunch box was disregarded as they ate their own delicacies.

In mid-February, with the approach of the opening of the amusement park in which Sara and the other wives were living, it was necessary to find other living quarters. My home leave was due to start at the end of May, so Sara moved to a hotel instead of looking for an apartment or a house. At my urging Sara started to make definite plans to start back to the States as soon as reservations could be arranged.

My next flying assignment was two more weeks on the shuttle. But for one incident it was old routine of dropping rice. My plane was

out of commission for a minor repair, and in order not to keep a crew sitting around, I was assigned to take another ship. Several hours later, as I was coming back to the base, I heard a pilot reporting that one engine had failed soon after takeoff and that he was turning around and starting his approach. It was my plane being flown by a relief pilot!

March came and went without much change. On a night flight to Kunming my alternate airport was declared unsafe, due to Communist activity and the Chinese Air Force refused to allow our ground staff to put out flare pots to mark the runway. They demanded that a drum of aviation gas be delivered to them to run their electrical generator, and for a small additional charge in money, we could have the regular field lights. This was a common form of sandbagging and our company had no choice but to comply. Aviation fuel was worth one dollar and a gallon in Kunming.

In early April I managed to be back in Shanghai when Sara and the children came through enroute to the States. They were to make brief stops in Tokyo, Wake Island, Honolulu to San Francisco. I sure hated to see them go.

Our company was now flying evacuation flights out of Nanking, the capitol of Shanghai, and now Hankow was added to the list of cities being evacuated. I flew a few of these trips and then it was my time to get back to the food airdrop on the city of Taiyuan.

Little did I realize when I landed at the airdrop base that this was to be our last week of dropping rice. The trouble started when the early morning flights of April 21st arrived over the city. During the night, the Communists had moved up anti-aircraft guns, probably brought from Mukden. The opening bursts caught us entirely off-guard. We had been dropping for months and though some of us had brought some bullet holes back, it was all rifle fire from the ground. Now we were up against the real McCoy and this stuff could really knock you out of the air. The inter-plane communication channel was jammed with each of us shouting advice and reports on the nearness of the bursts. We had the choice of staying up high and taking our chances with the anti-aircraft and trying to drop the rice into the city or returning to Tsingtao without dropping. We decided to return without dropping for the lack of accuracy in dropping a fifty pound bag from ten thousand feet might actually injure people we were trying to help.

The next day we dropped from the high altitude at the insistence of the army command back at Tsingtao. We could see the dust rise as the bags of rice fell inside the city walls. I shuddered to think of the bags falling through the roofs into the shops and homes. What defense was there against this?

April 23rd told the story. The gun concentration was greater and the gun crews seemed to be getting onto the hang of putting up more shells oftener. It took just a few moments for the decision after wallowing through the bursts and rough air. All planes turned back and reported by radio that further air-lifting of food was impossible.

Our orders were prompt in coming back. Pack up all equipment and return to Shanghai. We learned the reason why. Rapid advances of the Reds had captured the capitol, Nanking, and the armies were starting for Shanghai.

Getting back to Shanghai was a morale builder for all of us. I had just my own clothes and belongings to get out of the city, but many of the Chinese crewmen had families to evacuate. It was indeed a queer feeling that evening to go to bed after packing my clothes knowing that this would be the last time I would sleep in Shanghai, and that soon the city would be under siege. The cook boy was paid three months salary and he was taking the remaining food, pots, etc., that I didn't want to bother with.

The next morning all roads out of Shanghai to the south were jammed and the road to the airport was the worst. It took two hours of creeping, in a taxi that I had been lucky enough to get, and passing an inspection by the military before I finally reached our operations office. The ride which normally cost about a U.S. dollar now cost me ten—but it was worth it.

For the next few days, home was where I hung my hat, Kuming, Chungking, Canton and finally Hongkong, where I off-loaded my baggage and found a room in a hotel.

With the advance of the Red armies our operations were curtailed with every city that was captured. Taiyuan had fallen to the encircling army, Nanking had fallen and the entire north of China plus Manchuria was lost. We were still operating in the South of China, but pilots found their flying time much less than previous months.

The evacuation of Shanghai continued, but this time from bases in the south, Hongkong and Taipeh on Formosa. The planes would land, load with passengers, and take off again. Each night three planes would remain in order to evacuate our own personnel in an emergency. Cots had been put in the hangar and our food was cooked in the passenger terminal. On May 20th I was scheduled to remain overnight on the field. During dinner our ground staff told us that the situation was about the same. The Red armies lay to the north and west, and some shells had landed in the outskirts of the city. The only evidence of a war was the rumble of artillery off in the distance. The windows in the hangar would shake just perceptibly during the bursting of the shells.

I rolled uneasily as the night wore on, for sleeping in my clothes had never been one of my strong points. The rumble and the rattling continued. Faintly I could hear someone running. The minute he hit the wooden steps leading up to our barracks room, I knew that the emergency evacuation order had been given. Lights came on as I struggled up into a sitting position and reached for my shoes. It was one of the operations staff and all he said was, "O.K., fellows, the word has just been passed". My wrist watch showed 3:10 A.M., as I picked up my bags and started down the stairs. A cold wind blowing from the

north and a low overcast I noted as I hurried across the apron to my plane. I handed my bags up the ladder to a dark form in the doorway. The plane was packed with sleeping forms and baggage and I tried not to step on anyone as I shouldered my way up to the cockpit. My crew was there and ready and as I slid into my seat I heard another engine come to life—someone who had beat me out to his plane. As our engines warmed up and a check of the instruments was being made, I was able to talk with the other pilots on the radio. We were able to control ourselves as to whom was ready for takeoff and who was going to line up next. Normally this would be done by the control tower, but on this occasion the operator was sitting in my plane as a passenger. Soon after leaving the ground, we were in the clouds and I realized that there was no turning back. Even with engine trouble we would have to proceed. Even with engine trouble we would have to proceed. Our flight was completed just before dawn by our arrival on the island of Formosa. We later learned that the officer of the airport garrison had climbed aboard the last plane and was shot for desertion upon his arrival in Swatow.

With Shanghai out of the picture, our operations were further curtailed. The company now had an excess of crewmen for the size of their operations. It was indeed fortunate that my three years would be up in just ten days, and I would be starting back to the States.

May 27th was the big day. I was assigned the co-pilot's berth on a DC-4 that was scheduled from Hongkong to Canton (the flight had to start from Chinese soil) to Guam, Wake, Honolulu and San Francisco. We arrived at Guam at night. We had a very good meal there, but I saw very little of our bastion in the Pacific. We arrived in mid-morning at Wake Island to refuel both tank and stomach. Just a tiny dot in the Pacific and not a very good place to be based. Honolulu at night for several hours of custom examination, examination by the immigration authorities and Agriculture Department. After 42 hours and 50 minutes of flying we arrived at San Francisco dead tired.

At the hotel I got wind of a new Convair plane that was to be delivered to China by way of Europe and was leaving for the East coast the very next morning. My visit to the Chinese in charge was not profitable. He quoted me a lot of regulations and I ended up by coming back east to Chicago on United Airlines.

Sara met me at the airport in our new '49 green dynaflo Buick convertible. Rather than rush right out to Michigan City where we had decided to spend the summer and where Sara had a sister and brother, we spent several days in Chicago seeing the sights.

When Sara started looking for a place to live, there was practically nothing available. She finally settled for a furnished cottage on Lake Michigan. It was there that we spent a most enjoyable summer. In June we took off for New York City in our new Buick to visit my Mother in New Rochelle and my sister and brother-in-law in the big city. We didn't do too much, saw a few plays and renewed friendships. It was good to be back with my Mother. Living in the Orient has its advantages and its disadvantages. My Father had passed away on August 17th, and

although I talked with my Mother on the 'phone, coming home was out of the question because I could not have arrived, even for the funeral.

My sister and brother-in-law were starting their vacation and were going to school in Colorado Springs. They came back with us to see the children and relax with us. We drove to Buffalo and took the boat overnight to Detroit. We enjoyed it very much and recommend it.

The days of June and July seemed to come and go without purpose. We joined the local country club, played golf and swam as the notion took us and did our share to keep the club busy. Andrea, our five year old daughter, spent most of her waking moments at the pool. Stephanie, our two year old, stayed pretty close to home. The only element of discord in this wonderful picture was a rapidly deteriorating situation in China and the growing conviction that there could be no job to go back to.

In late July I started on the assumption that there would be no job and that I would have to find something else to do. The South American picture in aviation came quickly. Aviation income was in the local currencies where expenses of some pilots and all parts and gasoline had to be paid in the United States and in US currency. To buy our dollars with their local money was very expensive and often left little for profits of operation. The supply of pilots exceeded the demand.

I was experienced enough, but too old to consider starting with any of the scheduled airlines. Non-scheduled operations offered some possibility. The success of a non-scheduled operation lies in just a few people doing all the work. So in addition to flying, the captain is responsible for gassing his ship, arranging and paying for enroute maintenance, helping to load and off-load at our of the way stations and a thousand other details. Getting an American Airline Transport Rating License would not be too hard, but it would be expensive to rent a ship for the test. Then too, I would be gone from home a major portion of the time. For the past nine years I have had my stomach full of that. So although I didn't decide against it, I decided to look further.

I looked into Optometry, for it seems to be a profitable field and I didn't think it would take too long to qualify. It is now necessary to go to school for five years in order to learn how to refract eyes and fit glasses. Not having five years to spare, that thought went down the drain.

Just what could an ex-pilot do with some chances of success? My business experience was several years of banking in New York and I definitely did not want any more of that. It was a big problem and it loomed even larger because I had a family who must continue to eat.

Then Steve Donovan, my brother-in-law, suggested that I look into the consumer finance field. And the more I looked, the more I liked what I saw.-- Regular office hours for the first time in years,

high income on low principal. Established small loan companies report losses as low as 1% of receivables per annum. Gross income averages almost 2½% per month. What did I know about deciding whether a person was a good credit risk, or how did one deal with a person who, after getting your money, decided he couldn't or wouldn't repay it? The answer here, of course, lay in going to work for an established concern and getting these answers, then deciding whether it would be better to stay with them and work my way up or cut loose and establish my own office.

In early August the situation looked so bad in China that I decided that it was nothing into which I could take my family. Household Finance Corporation offered me a job as outside representative here in Michigan City. The salary was a magnificent \$150.00 per month, with allowance for my car. My car! Wow! I couldn't start calling on delinquents in a '49 Buick convertible. So I traded it off for a '46 Hudson Coupe which we are still driving. It was with some feeling of doubt that I approached the first days with Household. My duties were to make personal calls on borrowers who were not maintaining their repayment schedule and endeavor to find out the reason and help them to see where they could make the payments. The other interesting portion of my duties was to investigate people who wanted to borrow money and on whom the manager wanted more information. Following delinquents, I discovered, was not as distasteful as I had imagined. They are people just as you and I. They welcomed me into their home and even thanked me for coming. This was truly my first big lesson in the small loan field. The second was the realization that granting loans with certainty was easy when all the facts had been assembled. It was being sure that you had all the facts that was so very important. Household taught me how important it is to get into the home, see how they live, see how they keep their receipts and whether the home shows any planning.

My employment with Household lasted only until September 28th, far short of the time necessary to decide if I wanted to stay with a big company or strike out on my own. The branch manager and I just didn't get along.

In early September the people from whom we were renting returned and we were obligated to find another place to live. The place we found this time was on the reverse side of the beach rental. You see, the owners of beach property move out in the summer and rent their homes for large rental figures. Then when the season is over they move back into their home. In our case we managed to rent the city apartment of people who were moving back to the beach.

When I first started investigating the possibilities of the small loan field, I met a man who was running his own small company and feeling his way with small capital as he trained himself. Now finding myself out of Household Finance, I went to him and proposed a merger of our efforts. Here was really something, a man who had been former City Treasurer for 25 years and I, an ex-pilot, who had spent seven weeks working for Household, now starting out as "Superior Finance Service".

November was the first of two black months. Our loan business began to come to life with the transfusion of my capital. The income, however, was practically nothing—I drew \$34.94 for the entire month. I talked with myself and pointed out how these things are necessary in a new enterprise and that it would improve, and it did for the month of December came to just over \$50.00. Now to cover expenses, all I needed to find was another \$250.00 each month.

With just the above ideas in mind, I created and had licensed the "Vivian Adjustment Bureau", through which I solicited and collected accounts for local merchants for a percentage of the bill. This turned out to be quite a lot of work for the return, but I figured that it was continuing my education in the small loan field.

Christmas was a wonderful experience. The kids were now old enough to anticipate and enjoy it. We were back in the States so that we could be with the family on the big day. It was a big day with all the relatives that could make it from around Chicago.

This year we not only spent Christmas together, but New Years as well. It was planned and everything went off on schedule. We spent it at our country club and had a wonderful time.

This has been a memorable year. A complete change in location and a complete change in jobs. One might even observe that I am now beginning to settle down. It has been such a rat race that our yearly letter has had to wait until now. This is being completed about the end of May, 1950, and I hope to have it in the mail soon. Essentially, little has changed in the opening five months of this year. I have a new job with a dry cleaning firm in addition to our loan company and my collection agency—and I am now about to buy a home. All in detail in our 1950 letter — write now, tell us about yourselves and reserve your 1950 edition of the Vivian report. It has been fun talking with you once again.

Our best as always,

The Vivians.

The Vivian Report for 1950 - Late as usual.

The advent of 1950 opened on rather a dreary note for us. Aviation had been put on the shelf. My savings from flying in the Orient were invested in a small loan company, so small that it couldn't even support one. Vivian Adjustment Bureau, a collection agency, growing but still very small ... and to make ends meet I had to take a job with a dry cleaning firm. The requirement in hours was high, eight to five for groceries and the remaining hours in the day for sleeping and building a business that would secure our future. Like a fish out of water, my previous skills were now useless. Altimeter setting and dew point became unimportant, depth perception now only assisted me to pilot my automobile around town safely. Now it was responsibility consciousness, evidence of ability to pay and ample security for the loan that were important. For the time invested and the unchanging picture in the aviation field there was no turning back.

January and February sort of blended together to form a memory of cold weather and hard work. James Buchanan of Buchanan's Coast to Coast Cleaners and Dyers put me to work on a sales promotion program. It was completely new and very interesting. It worked on the principal that a customer, after sending an order to the plant, would not be permitted to retire into oblivion. We set out to find why no further orders were received from the customer. Usually they were pleased at our interest and returned again even over their claims of poor work received. Couple this with a drive for new customers and you have an idea of my new job with Buchanan Cleaners.

Each noon I relieved my partner at the loan office while he had some lunch, a quick sandwich for myself and back to the cleaners until five, back to the office to see my partner, review the day with him and plan what I would do that evening.

That evening after a quick dinner at home, I would either sit in the office mailing dunning notices to overdue accounts, phoning those that had ignored our notices, or I would be out in the car driving to see those who did not have phones and needed personal pressure to bring their accounts up to date. This, in the beginning, was my toughest assignment. The delinquents soon taught me otherwise. While they weren't glad to see me, they did ask me into their homes and we sat down and talked about their problems. The principle here was that the noisiest wheel got the grease. Collecting money boils down to asking for it and then helping the debtor see from a discussion of his income and bills that he can get a payment to you. It was over this problem that I resigned from Household Finance Corporation. The manager insisted that I get tough in this discussion and threaten all kinds of legal pressure. I have since proved to myself that it is the constant calls back with friendly insistence that will bring in the money. There is, however, a small percentage of people who do not react to friendliness. In this case we do threaten and actually set a deadline for their compliance, and turn it over to an attorney when the date is broken.

With the arrival of spring and with our lease expiring in early June we began to advertise for a place to rent. To this inquiry we received practically no answers. We were then forced to the decision to buy a home. To this advertised inquiry, our phone was ringing constantly

with offers of homeowners to sell. Our investigations of these offers brought the realization that even for the flimsiest of cracker boxes they wanted ten thousand dollars and up. I thought I had seen inflation in China! We finally found a two story house with six rooms down and four up, a full basement, a large yard and garage. We could rent the upper apartment and have that help in paying for the house. We completed the arrangements and moved in early in June with just enough time to get settled so Sara could take off.

Sara had received a wonderful opportunity to take a six week tour of Europe. It came through a sister in the travel business in Chicago. I nodded assent for it was a chance that doesn't come along everyday and we could get along six weeks somehow.

On June 17th I took Sara to the Chicago airport and saw her off for New York. She spent some time with my family and sailed on the 19th on the British ship "Stratheddn". She reported that the weather was bad all the way with little chance to be out on deck. The food was wonderful and far too much of it, beef tea between breakfast and luncheon and tea and pastry between luncheon and dinner. Then late sandwiches in the lounge during the evening. They played a lot of bridge and generally rested on the way over.

On June 27th they arrived at Southampton. A train took the party, of which Sara was a member, into London in several hours where they were put up in the South Kensington Hotel. For three days they saw London and the Shakespeare country. She noted the change in the food from the ship and was thrilled at seeing historical places about which she had read. On the evening of June 30 they departed London for Harwich, where they took a boat to Holland. They arrived at The Hague on the morning of July 1st and spent the day seeing Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Volendam, returning to The Hague for dinner at the Hotel Central. There they had good food again and a small band that outdid themselves by playing all requests whether American or European.

- The next morning the party departed for Coblenz in Germany with a trip down the Rhine river by steamer and overnight in Schlangenbad at the Kur Hotel. What a wonderful surprise it was to meet an old friend from the University of Michigan aboard the boat, Professor Emerson Conlon of the Aeronautics Department.

By motor coach the next morning to Frankfort, Heidelberg and Baden Baden. She commented on the destruction in Germany from Allied bombing during this part of her trip. They stayed at the Hotel Badischerhof in Baden Baden where the bathtubs had four taps, hot and cold mineral water as well as plain water. It was a beautiful little city and one that Sara would like to return to some day. On July 4 they left by motor coach for Oberammergau via Munich, Stuttgart and Ulm. The entire day of July 5 was spent seeing the Passion Play. Her description of the theatre gave me the picture of the audience sitting in an airplane hangar with the doors open at one end and the stage out in the open. The play is presented on Wednesdays and Sundays during the tourist season. It started at eight-thirty in the morning and lasted until six in the evening with a two hour break at noon. The play is given regardless of the weather. It was the most unbelievably beautiful spectacle she had ever seen.

By bus next morning for Lucerne where the party spent two days sight seeing. A side trip was made to Interlaken where they travelled through part of the Alps. This was really beautiful country that finds no comparison anywhere. July 9 they departed Lucerne by motor coach for Milan. Luncheon in Milan and an afternoon train for Venice, arriving in time for dinner. The city is built

almost entirely on piles driven into about eighty small islands in the shallow waters of the Bay of Venice. The eighty islands on which the city is built are separated from each other by narrow channels, which serve the purpose of thoroughfares, being constantly used by gondolas and motor boats, answering the purpose of cabs and busses. Sara fell in love with the city immediately. It appealed because of its difference from anything that she had ever seen, canals in place of streets and stone buildings everywhere instead of frame construction as we know it here at home. One could walk anywhere in the city by using the narrow sidewalks along the canals. On the second night Sara and several of the party visited Lido Beach and the Casino. It was a lavish nite club and must have cost a fortune to build, rose colored carpets and walls with terracing down to the dance floor to accommodate the tables. One drink around the the floor show completed the evening.

On July 11th they left by train for Florence. Poor accommodations with roaches on the walls and smellly lavatory spoiled the visit in Florence. They departed on the 13th for Rome. Rome is a beautiful city and an old city that was saved from the war by commong agreement. An audience with the Pope had been arranged. It was a moving experience for Sara although a non-Catholic. She commented that he was a fine and kind appearing man and that the camera never does him justice. That evening the party visited the Casino della Rose, and this was an outside garden with tables arranged around two dance floors with two orchestras. It was here that several young Italian and French men came to the table and asked Sara's permission to dance with the young college girls in the party. From then on Sara was known as the chaperone of the group.

July 15th the party started for Naples. The hotel there had been open about a month, beautiful marble bathroom and all the latest gadgets. One could lie in bed, push buttons and call the various servants, push another button to ppen the door when the servant arrived. The next morning the return trip to Rome was started with visits to Pompeii and Sorrento. Sara noted that Pompeii had also suffered damage from World War II. It was gorgeous country through Sorrento and on the return to Rome.

July 16th they left Rome by train for Genoa where they had luncheon and continued to Monte Carlo. They visited the casino for several hours and watched the gambling, some brave souls losing a few francs. Then on to Nice for three days on the Riviera. This was a very gay and lovely spot for bathing, resting and shopping.

While in Nice they spent sometime in Grasse, the perfume city of France and Cannes, another resort city in France. On July 19th they left Nice on the famous Blue Train for Paris. They had four days in Paris. More sightseeing with visits to Versailles and Malmaison. They saw the Hall of Mirrors in the Palace of Versailles where the World War I treaty was signed. In Paris they visited the Louvre and saw the Mona Lisa and Venus de Milo. One of the evenings they visited the Folies Bergere. Where Sara had expected a racy girlie show that would not compare with our musicals at home, she was pleasantly surprised to see the artistry in a wonderful show. It was racy in spots. They visited a night club in Montmarte and later stumbled on an American hamburger joint where the burgers were out of this world.

July 24th the party departed Paris for LeHavre where the Stratheden was waiting to take them back home. What a relief to settle down in one place where there would be no early morning departure by bus for another furious day of sightseeing. They slept late, wrote letters and diaries, relaxed in general and played lots of bridge. The food was the same but had lost a lot of its appeal due to the wonderful food they had on the continent.

My own activities during the six weeks can be summed up quickly. I worked at the cleaning plant and at the loan office and tried to see that the kids didn't miss their mother too much. I took them on a swimming party in near-by Lake Michigan and played with them in the yard.

On August 2nd I drove into Chicago, made reservations at the Hotel Sheraton and drove out to meet Sara arriving from New York. It was indeed good to see her and to welcome her home. We stayed in Chicago for several days as a sort of vacation for me.

With Sara back as my partner in running the family I undertook the painting of the exterior of our home. It was more than I had bargained for, no matter how madly I painted the house seemed to stretch ahead of me for miles. And then to have to do it all over again with the second coat almost finished me.

In early September we tackled the upper four rooms to redecorate so that it could be offered for rent. We steamed off wallpaper that people had been putting on layer upon layer for the past twenty years. Then more painting and cleaning that goes with the job. We finished it, including plumbing, kitchen remodeling and furnishing, finally renting it for the month of November.

November 7th was the black day that tragedy hit the Vivians. We arose just a little early for it was election day and it had been some years since we had exercised our rights as American citizens. I drove down to the polls while Sara stayed with the children. Then we reversed the situation while she voted. I drove off to work soon after her return. At 11:45am my sister-in-law called and said that Andrea (our oldest daughter) had called her and said her mother was sick. The only phone number she knew how to call was her aunt's. I left the plant and drove quickly toward home arriving as my sister-in-law was going in the door. We found Sara in bed. Her color was gone and replaced by a terrible ashen gray and there was blood all over the pillow. I went to the edge of the bed and asked her what had happened. She looked at me as though she didn't know who I was and mumbled something about falling down the stairs. Those damned cellar stairs.

I remember that she had planned on cleaning the basement and she had fallen. What a break to have a doctor for a brother-in-law at a moment like this. I called him and was lucky to find him in his office. Would he come? Yes he could. While we were waiting Sara said that Stephanie (our youngest daughter) hadn't had any breakfast. No breakfast? When did Sara fall? Did she lie at the bottom of the stairs for any length of time? The only one competent to give the answer was lying in bed dazed and incoherent. When Steve arrived and moved her head he found an ugly gash in the back of her head which required a half dozen stitches to close.

If it wasn't a fracture it was certainly a concussion. We moved her to the hospital as quickly as we could get an ambulance. It was there she began to come out of the shock and was exposed to the full brunt of the pain ... and failed to recognize me. It hung in this balance for several days and then she began to improve slowly. What a wonderful feeling to know that she was completely rational and would recover. The rest is unimportant and needn't be re-hashed too much. On November 19th she sat up for the first time. On our tenth wedding anniversary, November 22nd, we held hands across the hospital bed and bemoaned the fact that we couldn't celebrate more appropriately. On the 26th I was allowed to take her out of the hospital for a short drive and dinner. On the 28th I brought her home.

December was just a completely normal month. Sara did what she felt like doing. We had a woman come in to do the heavy cleaning. I worked at all three of my jobs and tried to be at home as much as possible. The kids had a wonderful Christmas with presents galore. The family came from Chicago and we were all together. I missed this more than any other single thing while living in the Orient.

Sara continued to improve all month. She had none of the re-curring headaches that we had feared. The fracture had apparently healed and there seemed to be complete recovery. She cleared up the time element of her fall. Stephanie had not wanted any breakfast upon awakening. Sara crawled out of the basement immediately after her fall. She even agreed to get up and go with me to the club on the 30th to help celebrate the New Year.

1951 lies open before us offering us both opportunities and problems. Will the Navy call me back to duty this year and wash out all that I have tried to build this last year and half? Will I give up the dry cleaning business and end up in the loan business. Or will the reverse be true? My collection agency, Vivian Adjustment Bureau, has been transferred to a young man in town who has the time for it. Will I be able to continue suppressing my love of flying?

The above questions and many more will be answered in the Vivian report of 1951. Get your requests in early and assure your place on the mailing list. Sara and I know this mimeographed letter is not a substitute for personal letters and should not demand a personal answer each year. We do feel that once in three years is a good round time to hear from people who enjoy hearing from us.

We wish you all a very happy and prosperous 1951.

The Vivians

Here is the Vivian report for 1951 - late as usual.

1951 was just a year of mediocrity. Just a lot of hard work and trying to live within a restricted budget.

My partner in Superior Finance Service was keeping the office open and I was out in my car evenings contacting applicants and delinquents. Still had my job at Buchanan's Cleaners, in the office. When the weather broke in the spring we started redecorating. We decided that we would strip the wallpaper, patch the plaster and paint. How green were we in this home-owning business. We soon discovered that you get into the business, find out what you have to do and then do the best you can with the money available.

The patching of the plaster turned into a major operation. We moved out of our house and in with relatives to get away from the plaster dust and mess. Got back in our house in May ... and only then did we agree that it was worth it. The summer was cool and uneventful.

Late in August my partner, who had been changing automobiles, accepted delivery of a new Chrysler New Yorker. That evening, August 25, 1951, he and Mrs. Clough decided to take a ride in their new car. It was his last ride on earth. A young man who had been drinking was driving an old car on the wrong side of the road. He hit them head-on; the impact drove the body of the car forward about nine inches on the frame, throwing them both into the windshield. My partner was killed instantly. His wife was injured so badly that there was doubt for several days if she would live.

The man in the other car, enjoying the intangible protection that alcohol seems to give, rolled with the impact. Although taken to the hospital, there was never any question my partner would recover. This tragic episode catapulted me into business for myself. My new license reads John P. Vivian d/b/a (doing business as) Superior Loan Company.

In the fall of the year Sara and I decided to do our first serious canning. We drove into the country on a beautiful Sunday afternoon and purchased bushels of fruit and vegetables. We sat around in the kitchen by the hour peeling and cleaning. It is fun when not taken too seriously or in too large a project. As I write this letter in March of 1952, with most of the good food consumed, we know we will do it again this year. It was an undertaking that was possible for we knew that in a few months we would not be moving on to something else ... like most of our previous years of married life.

Thanksgiving, Christmas and the arrival of the New Year were times that the family gathered. We all had a lot of fun that requires no special reporting.

We seem to have closed two exciting chapters in our life. The Navy was first. It was an exciting life with many happy memories and unless the Navy recalls me to active duty, I feel we now have it out of our system. The second chapter was our wonderful times living and flying in China. A recent letter told us that an opportunity existed to go back to Indonesia. It seems that the chief pilot is here to hire some pilots. Sara and I have talked this over with negative results but don't quite feel that the door is closed tight here.

This letter over the years has generated many warm responses. We want to thank you for your answering letters. It has enabled us to keep the "pipe" open where the passing years would normally have closed them. We hope to hear soon from you.

The Vivian Report for 1952

The Vivians are still in Michigan City, Indiana. A city of about 26,000 people on the southern shores of Lake Michigan, about 60 miles from Chicago. It sits on the edge of the fertile farming areas to the south and benefits from the influx of vacationists from Chicago each summer.

Andrea, approaching nine years of age, is enrolled in Class 3A at one of our local schools. Stephanie, six years old, is in 1A at the same school. Sara is still going like a house-a-fire working and keeping the home. John is still owner-manager of Superior Loan Company, a much improved and enlarged version.

There is little to distinguish the year 1952. Up and at them each morning of the work day week. A little howling on Saturday evening and church on Sunday with a big dinner during the afternoon.

Our lives took a sharp turn in June when Sara climbed over the walls of the rut and set a new course. She went to work at the Kingsbury Ordnance Plant. It is a shell loading plant for ammunition headed for Korea. She is in the cost accounting department with hours of 4:30pm to 1:00am. She deliberately chose that shift because it gave her maximum time with the children. We have a woman who comes in the afternoon and stays until my business hours are finished in the evening.

If anyone has ever wondered why we settled in Michigan City, this is the reason. During 1949 when it became apparent that we were not returning to the Orient, we started the search for something to do and somewhere to live. The answer to the job, you know, was Superior Loan Company. The answer to the place was determined on the basis of Sara's sister and her husband, Dr. S. J. Donovan, was living here and her mother and brother lived in Chicago.

In July 1952 Dr. Donovan decided to stop the general practice of medicine after fifteen exhausting years. The decision was to move to Florida and to accept a salaried position with the Veteran's Administration in Lake City. It was quite a bomb-shell for us and we certainly hated to see them make that decision.

Sara had talked about tonsil operations for the children. It never crossed our minds that anyone but Uncle Steve would perform the operation. Now Sara had to rush the children to the hospital to have the deed done. It made my heart sink to see them that afternoon. The recovery, however, was quick and complete.

In August, Sara agreed to keep the loan office open on a restricted schedule while I drove Sara's sister and her daughter to Florida. It was good to get away and it was good to get back. There is little to report about the remainder of the year. Christmas was a big time for the kids.

The loan business continues to teach me about people and their money. It is one thing to make a dollar and quite another to manage it ... salvage as much of it as possible and put it to work. Where a family has two good managers the family tends toward drabness and restrictions. Too much of the income is being saved. Neither will take the responsibility of spending any money. The saving of money becomes an end in itself. We rarely see this type in the loan

business. We see the opposite all the time. They fall prey to all the selling lures ... no money down ... 25 cents a day ... take three long years to pay, etc. They buy things they have no use for and soon find themselves saturated with payments.

As we are exposed to these people in the collection of the loan, we try to educate them at the same time. First by getting out of the present problem by rotating creditors and paying once in sixty days instead of thirty. Second, how to avoid getting back into the same mess by computing what the paycheck will stand and what it won't. We always come out all right with this type. We keep after them all the time and even go out on pay night with enough cash to take his paycheck if he hasn't cashed it. It is the doctor and the dentist who cannot spend the time and end up by chraging them off to profit and loss.

It's been fun talking with you once again. We want to thank all of you for your wonderful letters that always come each year after we get this letter into the mails. Wonderful long letter from you. Glad to hear all the info.

Sara and John