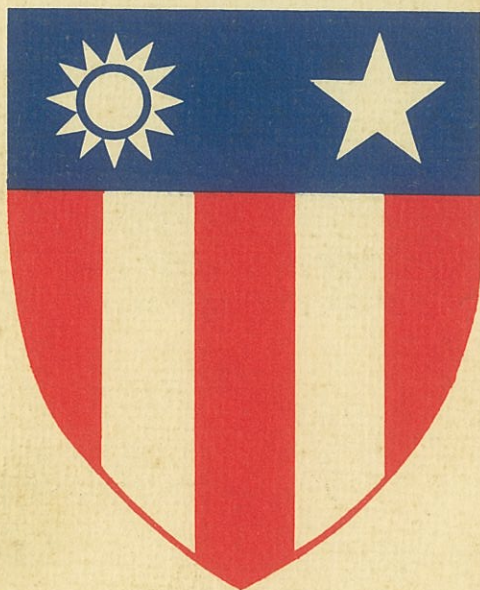


Betty Krystow

WINGS OVER ASIA

MEMORIES OF C.N.A.C.



CHINA - BURMA - INDIA

TO

BILLIE & HENRY KRISTOW

FROM

Hugh L. "Woodie" Woods

WINGS OVER ASIA

Volume IV

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Pictures compliments of Robbie Roberts, Jim Dalby, H. L. Wood

The Maharajah of Dinjan

I think we should give you a brief resume of the author of these chapters of CNAC.



THEN

Captain Hugh L. Woods was born in Winfield, Kansas and educated at Friends University in Wichita. In 1922 Woodie was employed by Laird Swallow Company. He became interested in flying and learned to fly in Kansas City in 1927. He became an instructor with the American Eagle Company in Kansas City and also a

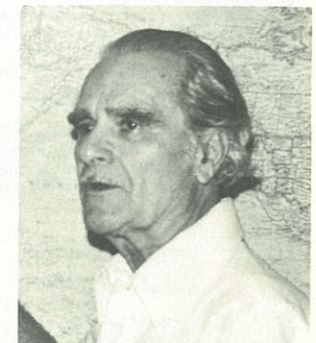
test pilot. In 1929 Woodie left the cold cold north and went to Florida as an instructor. In 1929 he joined Pan American World Airways as a copilot. He was stationed in San Juan, Puerto Rico and flew West Indies routes.

In 1933 Woodie was sent to Shanghai to bolster the flying staff of CNAC. Woodie has the unique record of flying for CNAC for 14 years flying as copilot, pilot, Chief pilot and Operations Manager.

He was Chief pilot for CNAC in Hong Kong prior to the war with the Japanese. After Pearl Harbor Woodie was assigned the difficult task of running the operation across the Hump from Dinjan to Kunming.

Our hats are off to Woodie. He did an outstanding job in every position that he held.

These stories that Woodie has written are outstanding and well worth recording for CNAC.



NOW

Federation Aeronautique
Internationale

UNITED STATES
OF
AMERICA


ANNUAL SPORTING
LICENSE ISSUED TO

M Hugh L. Woods,

Place of Birth Winfield, Kan.

Date of Birth Mar. 15, 1906

Orville Wright
Chairman
N. A. A. Contest Committee



1931

License No. 179

F. A. I. Certificate No. 7421

Issued by N. A. A.

Type of Aircraft Airplane

Signature of Licensee

Valid until December 31, 1931

Federation Aeronautique
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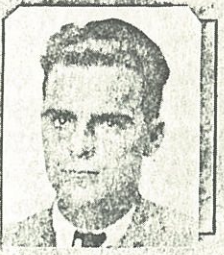
ANNUAL SPORTING
LICENSE ISSUED TO

M Hugh Leslie Woods

Place of Birth Winfield, Kans.

Date of Birth March 15, 1906

Orville Wright
Chairman
N. A. A. Contest Committee



1930

License No. 7

F. A. I. Certificate No. 7421

Issued by N. A. A.

Type of Aircraft Airplane

Hugh L. Woods
Signature of Licensee

Valid until December 31, 1930

FEDERATION AERONAUTIQUE
INTERNATIONALE

NATIONAL AERONAUTIC
ASSOCIATION OF U. S. A.
INC.

Certificate No. 7421

The above named Association, recognized by the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale, as the governing authority for the United States of America, certifies that

Hugh Leslie Woods

born 15th day of March, 1906


having fulfilled all the conditions required by the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale, for an Aviator Pilot is hereby brevetted as such.

Dated January 11, 1930

CONTEST COMMITTEE

Orville Wright
Chairman

James H. Doolittle
Executive Vice-Chairman




[SEAL]

Signature of pilot:
Hugh L. Woods

C.N.A.C. 13957

THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
NANKING, CHINA

AIRMAN CERTIFICATE NO. 1



This certifies that HUGH L. WOODS has been found to be properly qualified to exercise the privilege of A COMMERCIAL PILOT

This certificate is valid for a period of 6 (six) months unless the holder hereof is otherwise notified by the Competent Authority within such period, and it shall continue in effect thereafter until otherwise specified suspended or revoked.

AIRMAN RATING RECORD

Ratings with Limitations.

Single Engine Land 0 - 600 HP Multi Engine Land 2,000 - 6,000 HP

Instrument

Airline Transport Rating

Date of Issuance 1/11/46 By direction of the C.N.A.C. as authorized by Memorandum No. 13957 dated Oct. 22, 1946 from the Ministry of Communications, the Republic of China.

Ch. H. Shen
Examiner

This certificate is not valid unless accompanied by a Medical Certificate evidencing compliance with physical requirements prescribed by the Competent Authority.

Any alteration of this certificate is punishable by a fine or cancellation, or both.

Signature of Holder *H. L. Woods*

PRE-WAR SHANGHAI AND HONG KONG

The slightly over two decades of China National Aviation Corporation's (CEENAK to the GI's) existence throughout the 1930s and 1940s might be divided into segments depending on the base of operations. It started in Shanghai and remained there until mid-1937 when the Japanese invaded China. The next base was in British Hong Kong until Pearl Harbor, December 1941, at which time Hong Kong was occupied by the Japanese. During the war years of 1942 through 1945 Calcutta was headquarters. The move back to Shanghai was made early in 1946 where it remained until the Communist take-over.

The social life in prewar Shanghai was delightful and most of the flying was not too demanding. The one exception was the fog bound coast on the Shanghai-Hong Kong run which cost several lives before instrument flying became general practice. Salaries were not high but the cost of living was ridiculously low. Leisure time was spent at either the American luncheon club in the center of the city or at the recreation club known as the Columbia Country Club in the outskirts.

The large American corporations handpicked their foreign staff and the result was for the most part a very intelligent and interesting group of people. Young college graduates were usually on a one or two year probation and then permanently established.

Quite often, as soon as the trial period was ended, the employee would send for his fiancée to join him. This entailed some risk as young unaccompanied girls were subjected to considerable temptation during the three-week boat trip from the States to the Far East. They would be outnumbered at least ten to one by handsome young men either on their first trip out or returning from home leave. The leisure time forced rather close association, resulting in some torrid love affairs. It was thought that the motion of the boat might have stirred latent and suppressed sexual

desires. Who knows? The end result was that quite often a reluctant and slightly used bride would arrive and wed her unsuspecting swain. Although others were quite aware of the shenanigans aboard ship, most of those who strayed probably think to this day that their trysts were unknown to any but themselves and the one other party, and would be quite 'shook up' to learn otherwise. On at least two occasions the brides-to-be refused to disembark, leaving the intended grooms disconsolate.

Living in China was easy, particularly for the foreign women. The average household had no less than three servants who took care of cooking, grocery shopping, house cleaning, laundry and practically all other menial jobs. It was not unusual to hear a wife remark that she hadn't set foot in her kitchen for six months. Quite often, after the tennis or bowling at the club was over, several friends would sit around and have a few drinks. The party would get so convivial that they just couldn't bear to break it up so someone would instruct the waiter to phone his house boy and inform him that instead of the expected two or three for dinner, there would be eight or ten. The house boys were most ingenious. They would find out from the waiter just who would be there, then phone the guests' house boys and they would pool their menus. Within half an hour all was ready and could be handled as though it had been planned for a week.

When a wife would give birth to a child the baby was handed over to an Amah (nursemaid) and the mother's job was done. Children usually had their meals in the kitchen with the servants. Most parents would schedule a get-together with their children sometime in the evening after the kids had been bathed and fed, but this family gathering was often bypassed when social affairs intervened. It was not unusual for parents not to see their offspring for perhaps two or three days running. The children would learn to speak Chinese first and not acquire very much of an English vocabulary until they started to school. Chinese women love children and a lifelong bond of affection would develop between them and their charges.

A series of parties for executives reaching retirement age were gala affairs. A good sized contingent of friends and

business associates could be depended upon to see them off when their boat sailed. There was always an undercurrent of melancholy attached to these farewells despite solemn promises to arrange later visits. So often it was a permanent goodbye. Returning to the States and becoming a Mr. Nobody and the abrupt change in life style was more than they could become adjusted to without great difficulty. So regularly would word be received that so and so had kicked off within 12 to 18 months after their return that it became expected.

The Japanese were a constant threat. They occupied part of Manchuria and continually provoked incidents. We knew they would eventually move in and that the weak Chinese Central Government would be unable to defend itself. It was just a matter of when.

The actual outbreak of hostilities in Shanghai occurred in mid August of 1937. I was out on what I expected to be a four-day trip. Instead of returning as scheduled I joined a group of pilots that had taken a plane out of Shanghai more or less under fire and proceeded to Hankow. Later we flew on down to Hong Kong. It was 8½ years before I returned to Shanghai.

Getting established in Hong Kong was a slow trial and error process. We had gotten three DC-2s out of Shanghai and had lost the balance of our fleet consisting of about a dozen aircraft of assorted types.

The Central Government established itself first in Hankow and later in Chungking. Our service was Hong Kong—Hankow—Chungking—Kunming. This was later extended to Hanoi and Rangoon.

We assumed that inasmuch as we were a strictly commercial operation with mostly American pilots the Japanese would not molest us, but we were proven wrong. They let us go for several months but jumped me at about 8:30 in the morning of the 24th of August 1938 just outside of Hong Kong and forced me down on the Pearl River near Canton. The result—14 passengers and crew members killed

by the machine gun strafing after we had landed. One passenger, the radio operator and I escaped. After that we operated in and out of Hong Kong at night.

We gradually increased our fleet and staff until Pearl Harbor. When we evacuated Hong Kong we again lost all our equipment except three Douglas DC-3s, which we used to get established in Calcutta.

The Japanese had obviously made their plans to take Hong Kong long in advance. After the war it was discovered that the sand traps on their golf course near the edge of the Colony had gun emplacements concealed just under the surface. Many apparent coolies turned out to be Japanese spies. The barber several of us patronized donned a Japanese Army Lieutenant's uniform immediately after their conquest.

The attack on the Hawaiian Islands and Hong Kong came simultaneously and caught us by surprise. Our first warning was a phone call at about 8:00 A.M. from the airport manager stating the Japanese were overhead and were bombing and strafing the field. We rushed out and between raids were able to get one DC-3 out of the hangar and somewhat camouflaged it at the opposite side of the field. That plane and the two which were out on schedules were all we saved.

The Japanese kept up their attack throughout the day. Obviously they made an attempt to kill off the American airline staff as they tried to bomb the apartment complex where most of us lived, but their aim was poor and the bombs fell in the street in front, making some large holes in the pavement. Their intentions being obvious after the near misses on our apartment building, we would rush out and climb a nearby hill when the siren sounded and shelter ourselves behind some large boulders. We tried to sit down at the dining room table and have lunch but before we could get started good another air raid alarm would be heard and we would take to the hill again. This happened about six times. When we finally did eat the pork chops which were on the menu were so dried out and dehydrated from reheating we could hardly chew them.



Dec. 8, 1941, Hong Kong. In natural shelter during Jap Air Raid. Chuck, Pop Kessler, Maje and Emil Scott.

As soon as it got dark Bill McDonald, who had been out on a Rangoon trip, came in. We loaded his plane and the other plane we had concealed and took off for Chungking.

We restricted ourselves and the passengers, all company staff, to 20 lbs. of baggage. I had charge of the scales and it was my duty to see that the weight limit was not exceeded. I have never been completely forgiven for insisting that Maj, my girl friend at that time, reduce her suitcase to the allowable limit, which she could do only by discarding her favorite evening gown and leaving it on the hanger floor when we left.

We fully expected to return to Hong Kong the next few nights but were restricted by the British Military as they informed us that they could not distinguish us from the Japanese at night and were going to shoot at any aircraft overhead.

Prior to our evacuation of Hong Kong we had made some plans for just such action by moving some essential

staff and spare parts to Chungking, but the Japanese still caught us by surprise.

Just about a week before the attack the American Consul General had called all U. S. citizens together and announced that he had just returned from Washington and had it "straight from the horse's mouth", meaning FDR, that there would be no war! Common sense, however, told us otherwise. The U. S. had been instrumental in restricting the oil the Japanese could get from the Dutch in Java and the Japanese had no alternative but to go to war. We knew it was coming and that Hong Kong would be unable to defend itself.

Japanese soldiers' rapacious behavior in occupied territory was well known. Quite a few of the Americans sent their families to the States when the threats became ominous. I recall that during one such period someone asked the very witty and fun-loving wife of one of the Standard Oil Company's executive's wives if she wasn't going to evacuate. Her reply was, "Hell no, not until the rapings are over."

CNAC survived throughout the turbulent war years but finally succumbed to the Communist take-over.

II

'SHOT' IN THE LEG

The following is in no way intended to be a historical chronology but rather a memory refresher for those who have already heard most of these tales.

As is mentioned elsewhere, the run between Hankow and Chungking became rather monotonous. 'Chili' Vaughn, one of the early CNAC pilots who recently retired as a Vice President of Pan American Airways, started this schedule and soon had it in regular operation. Back at that time he was a somewhat playful sort of fellow and one of the things he took great delight in was scattering a bunch of soldiers who were usually drilling on a parade ground near Wanhsien. He would zoom down on them and scare them half to death. He was soon broken of this habit. The last time he did it he felt a sort of a sting in the calf of his leg and looked down and, sure enough, it was bleeding slightly. He realized he had been hit by rifle fire as he could feel what seemed to be a bullet under the skin.

Chili had visions of keeping the bullet as a souvenir and mounting it in an impressive way so he could show it off to his grandchildren.

As soon as he returned to his base he went to the doctor and had the foreign object removed. Instead of a bullet it turned out to be a small aluminum nut with a part of the bolt in it. A later examination of the plane disclosed where a bullet had entered and had hit the nut and sheared it off. Chili was so thoroughly disgusted with his 'souvenir' that he immediately threw it away.

III

EDDIE SMITH

One of the original Loening pilots was Eddie Smith. Eddie was rather quiet, soft spoken, and very precise in his mannerisms. Everything had to be just so around his home and he would tolerate no slipshod or indifferent behavior among the Chinese with whom he came in contact. He was a martinet as far as they were concerned. He was also very finicky about his eating habits.

Eddie was on the run between Shanghai and Hankow which called for over-nighting in Hankow. The pilots would usually stay at Chili Vaughn's apartment while there and the next day Chili's cook would prepare a sandwich for their lunch on the return trip. Eddie had had several run-ins with the cook. On one trip as he was preparing to eat his sandwich he took it apart to see just exactly what it contained, and he found out! There was a great big flying cockroach neatly embedded in the potted ham.

After that Eddie found other accommodations for his lay-over in Hankow.

IV LIAISON REVEALED

With all the normal household chores performed by servants in the East and a considerable surplus of males, it would be natural to expect a bit of playing around by the wives, particularly if there was a bit of discord in their marital relations. Most of them were, I'm sure, quite chaste and circumspect in their behavior but there was the exception or two.

There was one instance where a liaison existed that I'm sure the pilot's wife involved thinks to this day was never revealed. She would be greatly surprised if she reads this, and would surely recognize herself. Both her husband and her lover are now deceased and there is no particular reason to tell this story except to show just how easy it is to miscalculate and have one's innermost secrets become known to others.

There was one bachelor pilot who was quite friendly with an American who represented a large company. They were on close enough terms that neither bothered to be announced when calling at the other's residence. On one particular occasion the pilot walked into the other's living room and found it empty but observed that a bedroom door was closed. He rapped on the door and was answered by his friend who requested him to wait a moment. The door was soon opened a few inches and the friend, apparently disrobed, advised the caller that he would meet him at the club later in the day and to wait for him there.

What the occupants of the room failed to take into consideration was the wall mirror, which gave the caller a clear view of the bed and revealed that he had a bed mate.

"Be sure your sins will find you out!"

V NAVY WIFE

Flights in the old Loening open cockpit amphibians were physically exhausting and the crews usually retired early the night before they were scheduled out in order to get their rest.

One of the other pilots and I shared an apartment in Hankow for a while during our Upper Yangtze assignment. We had very pleasant quarters and it was a favorite hangout for some of the American Navy officers stationed in that area. Some of the officers brought their families to Hankow as each ship spent about half of its time there and the other half divided among the other upper river ports.

One evening my roommate was entertaining a Navy wife when I retired as I had an early flight. A couple of days later, after my return, the Navy wife dropped by. I asked her and my roommate if they had rid the place of all the vipers. This brought a puzzled expression to their faces until I explained that from the racket they had made in the room adjoining my bedroom on the night prior to my departure I had to assume that they must have been killing snakes.

Their affair lasted several weeks and carried on even after both had left Hankow and had gone to Shanghai. The pilot was scheduled for home leave and had his booking on an American President line passenger ship, this being before Trans-Pacific air travel had been inaugurated. In the meantime relations between the Navy wife and her husband deteriorated and her infatuation with the pilot grew stronger, but was not returned to any degree.

The breaking point was reached about ten days before our pilot's boat sailed. The Navy wife and her husband had almost a knock-down drag-out battle and she admitted her affair with our friend, which sent the husband out looking for him.

The wife was able to get word to her lover, who was staying in an apartment occupied by three other pilots,

before the husband arrived. By the time he got to their quarters they had things fixed up. They said that on the previous day the pilot had decided not to wait around any longer and had gone down to the ship docks and had made arrangements with the Captain of a tramp freighter for passage that would eventually land him in the States. They even had the name of a ship that had sailed the day before. The servants had been instructed to answer any inquiries regarding his whereabouts with "him go Stateside."

The pilot meanwhile was really confined to quarters! He didn't dare leave the apartment and kept his vigil by a window to watch for the jealous husband who probably had murderous intentions. Whenever callers would drop in he would remain secluded in a bedroom. While the other boys were at the club swimming, bowling, playing tennis or going out to dinner at Chinese, Italian or Russian restaurants our fugitive would have to keep concealed.

On the day his passenger liner sailed he was whisked to the dock, quickly boarded ship without any of the usual fanfare, slipped into his stateroom and locked the door. He didn't dare to return to China so sought and obtained employment with one of the domestic airlines.

I am very happy to report that seven years later, while I was in the States on a home leave, I had a telephone call from the Naval officer, with whom I had been quite friendly. He reported that he and his wife had been reconciled and the incident had been forgiven and forgotten.

VI

DR. RAPPE AND TROMBONE PARKER

Missionaries found China and India a fertile field for their endeavors. In the Middle West where I was raised the term "Heathen Chinese" was almost one word. Most of these people were dedicated and sincere but there were some who obviously chose that career in order to avoid working for a living. No good sized city or heavily populated area was without one or more representatives of some denomination. They usually served 7-year stretches before home leave. They did not fly much with us due to the extra cost, but we occasionally had contact with them. In the remote interior sections they invariably had large families. No electricity, and kerosene for lighting being scarce and expensive necessitated their retiring shortly after dark. Disease and pestilence caused many casualties among their offspring, but each family could be expected to produce one issue per year, the same as the Chinese.

There were some outstanding members of this group, one of them being Dr. Rappe. When we first knew him he spelled his name with one 'P' but when his daughters started growing up they insisted on the change in spelling, making two syllables in its pronunciation.

Chili Vaughn was visiting with Dr. Rappe one day and in the course of their conversation Chili asked him if, in his 30 years of missionary work there, he had made a lot of Christian converts. Dr. Rappe thought for a moment and replied, "If you had asked me that question in my early years, I would have answered that I was sure there were many. As time went on my optimism began to fade as there were so many instances of blacksliding. These seemed to increase more and more. If you had asked me five years ago I would have said that while I hoped my efforts had not been in vain, I had been disillusioned so many times that I honestly could have been 100% sure of only one, and that was my house boy, Wong. That confidence was shattered shortly thereafter. Wong came to me one day and asked for a raise in pay. I said to him, 'Wong, you are making just about

the same salary as other house boys. Your father worked for me and you were born in my house. I paid all the doctor bills when you were ill. I bought your clothes and sent you to school, and when your father retired I gave you a job so you could work into being a house boy. I think I have been fair and generous with you and see no reason you should have more money.' Wong stood silent for a moment, then replied 'Mastah' (Master), you no pay me more money, I no more likee Jesus Christ!'

It was hard for the missionaries to accept the fact that Chinese thinking and reasoning often followed entirely different channels than expected. Second and third generation Chinese in the Western Hemisphere think as the rest of us do and are as much at sea on a return visit to the land of their ancestors as is the average accidental on a trip to the East.

Chinese like to retain the services of a doctor and compensate him regularly as long as they are well, but when illness strikes the doctor's pay stops because they figure he has not done his job. It is not reinstated until they have recovered.

Another instance of this nature is in their relationship with the spirits. A family may build a fairly impressive shrine containing a statue which the spirit is supposed to inhabit. Regular pilgrimages are made and joss consisting of incense and decorations are contributed as long as things go well. If misfortune strikes, it is the fault of the spirit and the idol is removed and the shrine abandoned or destroyed.

Its easy to see what inspired Kipling when he wrote 'East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet.'

One missionary we sometimes saw was 'Trombone' Parker. This man established himself in Wanhsien, a city on the Yangtze River a hundred and fifty miles or so below Chungking. He acquired the nickname from his use of a trombone to lead the singing in the services he conducted.

It wasn't long before the attendance at his meetings skyrocketed. He was immensely flattered and wrote glowing

reports back to his diocese telling of the impressive work he must be doing and comparing his following to that of others in the city. Some of these other missionaries decided to investigate and try to determine just what magnetism Parker had that brought him in such an audience. Upon inquiry one of them unlocked the secret. The answer, "Everybody go see man swallow horn."

VII ERIC JUST AND CECIL SELLERS

Among the early pilots in CNAC were a former German Luftwaffe war ace named Eric Just ("eric just Eric" we called him) and Cecil Sellers, an American who had joined the British Air Force and participated in several bombing raids during World War I. These two men were good friends and often had a drink together but rarely mentioned anything about their wartime flying experiences. Neither of them was the braggadocio type.

It did so happen one time when they were sitting with some friends that the subject of the war came up and Sellers, upon being questioned about one specific raid, mentioned that their squadron had run into Richthofen's group and all the other British planes except his had been shot down. Eric spoke up and asked what sector it had been in and the date it had occurred. Sellers gave him the information. Eric said, "Do you remember the Fokker that was on your tail and then came up alongside you and waved and then turned away?" Sellers said he most certainly did. Eric said, "That was me. I'm glad now that my guns had jammed."

Sellers was killed later along with PAA Chief Pilot Ed Musick near Canton Island in the South Pacific. They were on the initial survey flight from the Hawaiian Islands to New Zealand and Musick and Sellers were familiarizing themselves with the run. They had just refueled and taken off when for some reason decided to return and land at the island, but it necessitated dumping some gasoline. Apparently enough of the fumes were sucked back into the cabin as the plane exploded in midair.

The last we ever heard of Eric was a report that he was in charge of the blind flying school for German pilots in Munich just before the U. S. entered World War II.

VIII THE SPARROWS

Being based in Hankow and flying back and forth between there and Chungking through the Yangtze Gorges became quite routine and somewhat tiresome, especially if one is assigned to that operation for two years at a stretch, which several of us were. We were flying an open cockpit six-place Loening amphibian from which the landing gear had been removed and it was operated strictly as a seaplane. It carried a pilot, copilot and four passengers. We made intermediate stops at Shasi, Ichang and Wanhsien, following the Yangtze River most of the way. While we had no blind flying instruments (and wouldn't have known how to use them if we had been so equipped), weather never caused us to cancel a schedule. When the visibility became too restricted we would set down in the river and could usually taxi on the step at 25 or 30 MPH, or even more. Only on very rare occasions would it be necessary to drop off the step and proceed slowly, and usually such conditions would last for only a very short time. Two crews were assigned to the run. Our schedule called for—up one day and back the next with two trips one week and one trip the next alternately.

We had one very welcome break in the routine at Ichang. While refueling we tied up at a small floating dock about 50 yards below the American gun boat. There were several gun boats assigned to the Yangtze patrol and they alternated at the various stations. CNAC pilots were always welcome aboard as we could usually provide some news or scuttlebut to the very bored personnel aboard ship. Usually we settled for a cup of coffee as we very seldom arrived there at the lunch hour.

One gun boat Captain provided us with a continuous story which we always delighted in relating to ready listeners up and down the line. It seemed that at some other station on the river he had come across a baby sparrow which apparently had fallen out of a nest, and had befriended it somehow and, according to him the sparrow never forgot and made it a point to visit the gun boat regularly and never ventured very far away from it. The skipper named the

sparrow 'Mr. Beep'. It followed the boat whenever there was a change in assignment. Each time I came aboard I had to listen to the latest events relating to Mr. Beep. Mr. Beep eventually acquired a mate. Shortly afterwards, according to my informant, and as time went on, more sparrows gathered at the regular feeding of bread crumbs on the foreshore which were pointed out to me as Mrs. Beep, three or four Beep Juniors and even third generation Beeps. The skipper was a hard boiled martinet and disciplinarian and no crew member ever dared let the slightest indication of a smile or ridicule cross their face while the Captain was talking about his "family".

On both terminals of my run I had ready listeners awaiting my report on the latest activities of the Beeps. Jess Poole, the Standard Oil installation Superintendent in Chungking, and a very clever wit, at whose residence we boarded and roomed on that end of the run, was always eager to hear the latest. On one trip I related to him that the Captain had reported that even skeptics had become convinced of his story as old timers in Ichang stated that there had never before been such an accumulation of sparrows on the dock. Jess's remark put it succinctly, "That's not hard to explain. There's never been so much horseshit around there before."

IX CELERY

Little incidences can assume tragic proportions under certain circumstances.

I had been stationed in Hankow for about a year and a half when one of the Shanghai based pilots brought me a head of fresh celery which had been given him by a purser on one of the American passenger ships from the States. This doesn't sound like much, but in China in those days it would be fatal to eat a raw vegetable. Lettuce, radishes, celery and some other vegetables we eat raw and take for granted in the States were strictly taboo there due to their custom of gathering and using all human excrement available for fertilizer and dysentery was rampant.

I was elated with the celery and took it to the kitchen and asked my cook if he knew what it was and how to serve it. He assured me that he was familiar with it and as he had been a cook-boy on an American gun boat I supposed he knew what he was talking about. (He had been dismissed when his blood test showed up 4-plus.)

I looked forward to my dinner hour and could picture myself sitting there crunching and savoring that fresh celery.

Dinner was finally served. No one can fully appreciate my consternation and disappointment when I saw what was sitting in front of me. There was a dish of boiled celery!

I seriously considered committing a homicide but decided to let nature take its course. He had no future anyway.

X

'SILENT' JIM

We had one Loening seaplane pilot who was a rather garrulous good-natured fellow by the name of Howard Norris. His verbosity earned him the nickname of 'Silent Jim'. The name 'Howard' was practically forgotten. He was always referred to as 'Jim'.

On one trip from Hankow to Shanghai following the Yangtze River visibility was very poor and Jim was following the shore line at about tree-top level. Fortunately he had an American passenger who was sitting in the cabin on the side where he could watch the shore line.

The passenger noticed a rather unusual looking house near the river bank but thought very little of it. Sometime later he happened to see a house that very much resembled the other one, which he thought rather strange. They rode on for quite a considerable length of time when all of a sudden the odd house showed up again. The passenger had observed something that could positively be identified so there was no mistaking the fact that it was the same house he had seen twice before. He opened the cabin door to the cockpit and advised Norris.

Norris quickly grasped the situation and realized that he had somehow miscalculated due to the river bank being on the copilot's side and had been flying around a large island. He made the necessary correction and picked up the regular shore line, and proceeded to Shanghai with a badly depleted gas supply.

Poor Jim! The passenger knew several of the CNAC crowd and told the story. Jim never lived it down.

XI

IMPORTANT PACKAGE TO CHUNGKING

Civilians have little chance of winning Navy medals, even in war-time, but I think I earned some mention when I was flying a regular Hankow—Chungking run in the mid-1930s.

Events were touched off late one afternoon shortly after my arrival at Chungking. A United States Navy motorboat from the USN Monocacy pulled beside my Loening seaplane just after we had tied up in the Yangtze River.

An officer and two enlisted men were aboard and all seemed concerned. The officer lowered his voice and asked if I would do a great favor for the Navy.

I was ready for anything.

"It's just a small package," he said. "Could you pick it up and bring it on your next trip?"

It was an extremely important mission, he explained. Two other shipments had failed to get through. Both had been put aboard small river boats that may have run aground, or even worse.

I met the challenge. I knew that the Monocacy was a small gun boat with a crew of four officers and 30 men, that the perils of the Upper Yangtze had been so difficult on the up trip there several years ago the Navy hardly dared a return trip and chose to send replacements by small Standard Oil tank boats, built for the job.

The mysterious package was delivered to my home in Hankow in short order. I examined it curiously but left its bindings untouched. The package was 6 or 8 inches square and 3 or 4 inches deep. On the next trip I carried it as "pidgin cargo."

The small Navy boat was there to meet me at Chungking. I handed the package to the officer, unexamined. But I couldn't conceal my burning curiosity.

"What the heck is it?" I asked. "What's so important?"

My imagination had run rife. Undoubtedly it was serum, a strong potion to protect the crew from an outbreak of typhus or bubonic plague.

"You have saved the day," the officer said, gravely. "You have relieved the tension aboard ship, the restlessness among the crew, possibly a mutiny."

"How did I do that?" I asked.

"You've delivered a box of condoms," he said "We have had to bar the men from shore leave—gonorrhoea and syphilis, you know. It's been so difficult, maintaining discipline."

I never got anything from the Navy except the lieutenant's thanks. It looks like I could at least have received a citation. A rubber duck, perhaps?

XII PLAYTIME IN CHUNGKING

If the powers above ever decide to install a digestive system in this old globe, Chungking is a ready-made site for the location of the vent for the elimination tract.

Various narrow gorges below the city restrict the flow of the Yangtze River during the high water season. This causes the river to rise as much as 108 feet above mean low water level from the middle of June until sometime in September due to melting snows in the mountains.

Travel throughout the city was mostly confined to sedan chairs or walking. Very few streets could accommodate automobiles due to their hilly nature. Where hills were encountered, steps had been built instead of sloping the road. There were 213 steps to climb to reach the Standard Oil Company installation where we overnighted during the low water season.

Our landing strip was a gravel bar in the river which flooded when the water reached the 58-foot level, requiring us to use another field several miles from the city. There were no accommodations at this alternate field so crews overnighting there usually slept in the plane as travel time to the city and return would be several hours.

General Chiang Kai-shek's government was driven out of Nanking in 1938 and eventually got established in Chungking. The influx of government staff plus refugees fleeing the Japanese greatly over-extended the living accommodations available.

There was one ramshackle hotel, the Shu Teh Gunza, a 3-story establishment which more or less catered to foreigners run by a fellow named Harrison. He was a short, wizened Eurasian who looked, to paraphrase a Jess Poole description, as though a 20-minute love affair with a cooperative female and a bum breakfast would finish him off. His establishment was a dirty, filthy, rat-infested 'dump' but was about the only place available for a non-Chinese speaking

newcomer. Most of the CNAC Americans stayed at the Standard Oil installation across the river, by invitation, but sometimes the overflow would be required to bed down in Harrison's establishment. There were absolutely no social diversions in the city and hotel residents were more or less required to hibernate after dark and create their own entertainment. Poker, crap games and bridge helped but when those became boring another type of entertainment was devised.

The No. 1 bell boy, Chow ('Joe' to the Americans), spoke some English and could be summoned by merely sticking one's head out the door and shouting. He would be instructed to bring in some prostitutes. A short while later 5 to 10 reasonably young Chinese coolie girls would arrive ready for business. The procedure would be to have them completely disrobe and parade around the room in the nude. After they had been looked over Chow would be informed that none of them was satisfactory. They would each be given one Chinese dollar and sent on their way. A short while later another group would arrive and the procedure would be repeated. This would usually go on four or five times until the boys tired of the sport. There was apparently an inexhaustible supply of girls and after the word got spread around that they could earn such an easy buck, they congregated near the hotel. At the exchange rate of about 20 Chinese dollars to one U. S. it was an inexpensive pastime.

I suppose there were times when one of the boys would become desperate enough to relegate the thought of the hazards involved far enough into the deep recesses of his mind to allow him to proceed with the function that the girls normally would expect. Venereal diseases of all types and of a drastically more virulent variety were most prevalent. Also, the coolie girls themselves had practically no sex appeal. Further, the display of their under clothing made of coarse cotton ("Bed tickin' " as described by one wit.) did nothing to arouse sexual desires, but at least the game helped pass the long dull evenings.

There was a case, however, of one of the boys leading a girl out towards another room and remarking, "Damn it, I promised my wife I wouldn't do this anymore."

XIII ERNEST HEMINGWAY'S LAST SNORT

One of the bonuses of living and working in the Far East was the opportunity to meet and get to know some very interesting and important people. On one trip from Hong Kong to Chungking I had as passengers Ernest Hemingway and his wife, authoress Martha Gelhorn; and Erskine Caldwell and his wife, Margaret Bourke-White, a very well known photographer. (On one trip quite sometime before I carried Sir Reginald Knatchbull-Huggeson [I don't guarantee the spelling], who at that time was the British Ambassador to China. Some might remember that he later became their Ambassador to Turkey and his valet got hold of General Eisenhower's plans for the 1943 invasion of Europe and relayed them to Germany. Fortunately, Hitler apparently filed them with other reports and didn't attach much significance to them, otherwise the course of history might have been changed.)

On the trip to Chungking referred to above, the Hemingways disembarked in Chungking and proceeded over land to an area some distance to the south where the Central Chinese Government's Army was engaged in fighting with some group that was staging an open rebellion. Martha was commissioned by Colliers Magazine (to the best of my recollection) to write a first-hand story of the affair.

A few days later I was again enroute Hong Kong to Lashio by way of Chungking and Kunming. The Hemingways had completed their mission and were waiting in Chungking to board my plane, this time going to Burma. Ernest cornered me while the plane was being refueled and wanted to know just what time we could expect to arrive in Lashio. He showed me a Gordon's Gin bottle with about one inch of gin remaining. He explained that that was all there was left of the supply he had brought with him and he wanted to stretch it out evenly as he knew he could replenish his supply there. I gave him the information he requested and he looked at his watch and determined the exact times he would have the two remaining drinks.

Shortly thereafter we took off and later, about mid-day, we were cruising along at 10,000 or 11,000 feet over quite mountainous country in bright sunny weather. The air was relatively smooth and I had the controls on the automatic pilot and was sitting slouched down in my seat about half asleep. Fortunately I had long before formed the habit of keeping my seat belt fastened whenever I was in the air because suddenly, without warning, we hit a down draft that was probably the most severe I ever encountered in clear air. It was over as quickly as it began and as soon as I thought a recurrence appeared unlikely I went back into the cabin to determine how the passengers had fared.

Ernest was sitting about half way back holding an empty gin bottle in one hand and a water glass in the other. He had a scowl on his face and when I asked him the cause, he pointed to the ceiling which was all wet with gin dripping down on him and in the aisle. What had happened was he had poured all the gin out in a water glass so that he could measure it accurately and before he could act we had hit the bump, and, of course, the result was obvious. The only compensation he had was watching when one rather slight Chinese passenger sitting directly in front of him, and who had apparently been in the process of rising out of his seat, was thrown completely across the aisle and landed in the lap of a Chinese lady sitting there who still had her seat belt fastened. Ernest's description of the resulting confusion and the way it struck him somewhat assuaged his anger and disappointment in losing his last two drinks.

XIV HEMINGWAYS TO BURMA

Upon arrival at Lashio, Burma, where we were scheduled to overnight, the Hemingways, both Ernest and Martha (Her professional surname was Gelhorn.) and I proceeded to the CNAC hotel. This was a place our company had built as there were practically no transient quarters available there for foreigners. It consisted of about a half dozen hotel rooms with bathrooms, a dining room and a small room which might be designated as a lobby although it lacked the amenities usually associated with such. The room accommodations merely consisted of a few chairs placed around the walls. It was the usual procedure for the guests to congregate there shortly before dinner and get acquainted with each other and be readily available when it was announced.

After checking in and cleaning up a bit I proceeded to the waiting room and met the half dozen or so other guests, some of whom I had met and possibly flown previously. They were a rather high class group of men, all of them Americans as best I can remember, occupying important positions in the big companies with which they were associated. The atmosphere, while not exactly stiff or formal, was what might be described as rather reserved as is usual among a group of people mostly strangers to each other.

Ernest came in a short while later and the usual small talk began with the polite restraint one would expect when a person of such fame joins a group.

Martha soon entered and was introduced around. The above-described atmosphere was somewhat shattered by her very shortly thereafter when someone remarked that they understood she was traveling around the East gathering material for her writings. "Yes", she replied, "I have to get out and dig for my stuff. Ernest just sits around the house on his ass and writes and gets most of his ideas out of whore houses."

XV
THE BOXER REBELLION

The Boxer Rebellion has probably been forgotten by most people under 50 years of age, but in Hong Kong in the late 30s it was still fresh in the minds of the foreigners and a more or less watchful eye was kept on the situation in anticipation of a repetition. A reference was made to it at one small gathering that tickled some of our funny bones.

Nearly every afternoon around five p.m. two or three CNAC staff members, together with a few other local Americans and occasionally visitors passing through the Colony, would gather in the lobby of the Hong Kong Hotel and have a drink or two and exchange gossip and chitchat. Sometimes some well known people would join the group. Ernest Hemingway could always be depended on to be present during his stay in the Far East, and usually Emily 'Mickey' Hahn was there as she was taking an extended vacation from her book writing and her contributions to the New Yorker magazine. She was also quite involved in an affair with a British Army officer by the name of Major Boxer. (They were later married but I understand they are now divorced.)

One afternoon as the session was progressing as usual someone missed Mickey and made the remark that they wondered where she was. Hemingway spoke up and said, "I don't know, but I suspect she's putting down a Boxer uprising."

Of course, we could hardly wait to relay the quip to Mickey, whose answer was, "You can report back to Ernest that no one need be concerned. I had the situation in hand."

XVI
GIBBONS

When Chuck Sharp and I were bachelors and sharing an apartment in Hong Kong he mentioned once that he thought he would get a gibbon as a pet. I never gave the idea any further thought at the time, but it occurred to me later.

I had Emily 'Mickey' Hahn as a passenger from Chungking to Hong Kong and had her ride in the copilot's seat on the trip down. During the course of our conversation she mentioned that she was enroute to the States shortly but was concerned about finding accommodations for her two pet gibbons which had been left with a lady in Shanghai. This lady was leaving Shanghai soon and was bringing them back to Mickey.

Recalling Chuck's reference to gibbons I spoke right up, thinking I'd sort of steal a march on him, and volunteered to keep them for her while she was away. She readily accepted the offer.

A short while later Mickey called me and said that the boat with the gibbons aboard was anchored in the harbor and would I like to accompany her to go pick them up. We boarded a harbor sampan or Walla Walla as they were called because it always took so much talk (Walla Walla) to arrive at the price they were going to charge. I should have had some warning of what I was in for as quite sometime before we got into ordinary earshot a lady appeared at the ship's rail and yelled out asking "Are you Mickey Hahn?" "Yes" hollered Mickey as loud as she could. "Thank God," came the reply.

After some confusion we took possession of the apes and I proceeded to our apartment with them. After I thought I had them calmed down sufficiently I unsnapped the chains attached to their collars. That was **one big mistake!** Immediately after they were freed they started running around, upsetting chairs, pulling everything off the tables and mantel piece, and creating what I thought was havoc, but I had more to learn. Perhaps my angry approach to them

caused them to panic as then the trouble really began. They would climb up the curtains and leap around the room. Then they started to defecate all over the place, and I mean ALL over the place. They also had exceedingly loose bowels,—on the curtains, on the walls, on the rugs, chairs, tables. If there was anything in that living or dining room not smeared with soft gibbon crap, I don't know what it was!

I eventually got their chains back on and by exercising great self control refrained from killing them, but took them to the local SPCA and arranged for their keep. Sometime later and after the smell of ape s - - - in our apartment had abated to some extent I got rather concerned about my commitment to Mickey and decided I'd better take the animals out of their cage and let them exercise a bit. I took them to the airport and was sitting in the bar room there with a couple of the staff having a beer, leaving the gibbons attached to my chair by a chain about ten feet long. It was on a Sunday afternoon and luckily very few people were around.

Mr. A. J. R. Moss, the airport manager, happened to stroll in. He was a tall, lanky Britisher with a bristly, straggly moustache, and usually carried a swagger stick and wore shorts. He was exactly the prototype of the typical Colonial Englishman. "Oh, I say, what have you there?" he queried, spotting the animals. I explained the situation and assured him I had everything under control.

Moss stood by our table for a while and chatted. While no one was looking the larger of the gibbons came up behind him and looked up Moss's shorts and what he saw must have excited his curiosity. Quielty he reached up and grasped one of the visible objects and gave it a squeeze. Well, the you-know-what hit the fan! Moss jumped about two feet in the air and let out a string of expletives that defy description. The terrified apes broke loose and climbed up into the girders of the hangar. Meanwhile, the rest of us exploded in laughter.

I don't know if gibbons are an endanger species or not. They would be if I had my way. I think that a few stuffed

specimens of these anthropoids scattered around in museums would meet the world's need for gibbons.

I saw Mickey sometime later and she informed me that the small gibbon, named 'Moo-Moo', was all right but that the large one, which she called 'Mr. Mills' had developed open sores around his private parts. At a later encounter with her she reported that Mr. Mills had died. She said that while she did not have a professional diagnosis made of his ailment, she was convinced he had died of syphilis!

XVII
MADAME CHIANG – T. V. SOONG –
FIELD MARSHALL WAVELL

During the four years we were based in Hong Kong prior to World War II we quite often carried well known and important people. It happened with such regularity that none of us were particularly awed by their presence. Most of these big shots were courteous and interesting but there were, of course, exceptions.

One lady, Madame Chiang Kai-shek, wife of the Generalissimo, was very demanding and expected everyone to be duly impressed by her very presence. When she rode on our planes she always insisted on sitting in the copilot's seat, where she could smoke. She couldn't do this in front of the Chinese passengers as she headed a so-called 'New Life Movement' which was supposedly organized to improve the general welfare of the Chinese people and among its tenets was a definite restriction against the use of tobacco.

One night enroute Chungking to Hong Kong she was in her usual seat and looked down to the ground out of her side window. She suddenly yelled in a terrified manner and said that someone below was flashing lights at us. Naturally, I hastily leaned over and looked out and quickly reassured her that what she saw was merely a reflection of the moon in the rice paddies. That explanation and a few more cigarettes kept her fairly well pacified until we landed.

Madame Chiang's brother, Dr. T. V. Soong, who usually occupied a very important position in the Government, was a very fine, polite and courteous gentleman. He couldn't ride in a sitting up position so he would charter a special flight and have two or three seats removed to make room for a bed so he could lie down during the flight. At the end of the trip he never failed to come up to the cockpit and thank the pilot for the trip. I mentioned that Dr. Soong 'usually' occupied a high position in the Government. At times a feud would exist between him and the Generalissimo and Dr. Soong would be temporarily removed from the Government.

There was one man and his wife who did not rank very high on our popularity chart. The man headed a company which published a very popular magazine. His wife was a prominent playwright. I met the gentleman (I use the term reservedly.) in the lobby of the hotel in Kowloon and invited him to a table to sit down, which he did. He immediately very rudely demanded to know just what I wanted and when he was told that I just wanted to make his acquaintance, he pushed back his chair in a huff and very rudely informed me that he had no time to waste on people like myself. Actually, I'd had in mind asking if he had accommodations up country on his forthcoming trip. It wasn't long before I had the opportunity to avenge the rebuff.

About three days later he was a passenger on my flight into China. Our procedure was to leave Hong Kong two or three hours before daylight as we had to cross Japanese-occupied territory and arrive in Chungking for refueling, usually before any air raids started. We would wait around the landing strip in Chungking to determine where the Japanese were concentrating their activities on that particular day and, of course, stand by close to the plane in order to take off immediately if it appeared the Japanese were headed for Chungking, which they quite often were. They also were quite active around Kunming, which was our next stop. We had a telephone on the field in Chungking to keep us up-to-date by the Air Defense. The passengers would huddle around the plane or possibly sit inside it. The phone was perhaps 75 yards away in a small temporary shack.

On the particular flight referred to, after waiting for a couple of hours or so, this so-called gentleman came down to the phone shack and demanded to know just how much longer I was going to keep them waiting around. Now was my opportunity! I told him most emphatically that we would take off when I got damn good and ready and for him to get his ass back up there with the other passengers or I might decide not to take off for a week. He turned meekly and walked away. Hurrah! I was even with him!

Later, after we had moved to Calcutta, this man's wife, who like Madame Chiang, had no time for lesser folk, called

the field office one Sunday morning saying she had been informed that we had a cargo flight scheduled that day to Lashio and that she had papers from the Chinese Government authorizing her to make the trip with us, and wanted to know just exactly when it was to take off and if the pilot was going to be an American. (We had several Chinese pilots.) She was very terse and abrupt but I assured her that I would schedule an American pilot and let her know the departure time if she would call back in about an hour. I'm sure she was annoyed with our outfit, particularly after the altercation I had had with her husband sometime before. Her attitude irked me so I figured out a way to pass it back to her. I arranged the take-off schedule for 3 P.M. but when she called I told her it would be at one P.M. promptly and for her to be at the airport in plenty of time so she could be weighed in and properly listed on the manifest.

She showed up about twelve noon. I informed her that there might be a slight delay as it was Sunday and we had only a skeleton staff on duty but that we would get the flight under way as soon as we could. I didn't invite her to come in the office and sit down but left her standing out at the desk cooling her heels. Periodically I would reassure her that the minor trouble we had encountered would very soon be rectified and take-off would occur shortly.

Finally, just before departure, she discovered that the pilot was a Chinese (Moon Chin). She immediately jumped on me, saying I had assured her that the pilot would be an American. I informed her that the pilot was just as much an American as she was, having been born and reared in Baltimore. With a mumble and a scowl she boarded the plane and I considered the score even.

On another occasion when I was delaying the flight out of Chungking enroute Rangoon I had British Field Marshall Wavell as a passenger. That rank in the British Army is equivalent to our 5-star generals. He was very impatient at the delay but I was determined to exercise my very best judgment, and also explained in some detail what our experience had taught us about Japanese activity. He kept looking at his watch and checking with me to see if we could

possibly get going. I was worried about delaying such an important person as I could visualize a whole army standing around awaiting their commander before making any move. We finally got under way and I delivered him safely to Rangoon.

A year or so later, shortly after I became based in Upper Assam, India, a local big shot who was Superintendent of several tea gardens, held a get-acquainted reception for Wavell when he happened to be passing through the district. I was invited and while a bit hesitant, accepted the invitation.

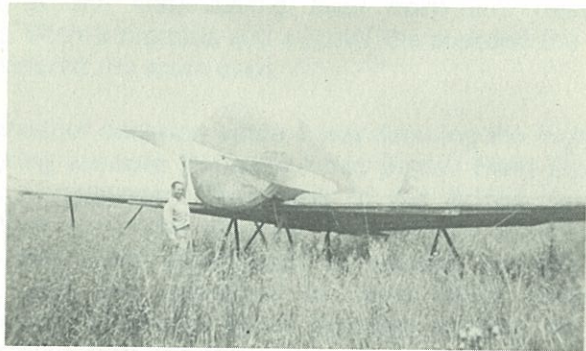
After nearly everyone, including myself, had had a couple of drinks I gathered sufficient courage to accost the Marshall and reintroduce myself and asked him if he had forgiven me for causing his delay in Chungking. A grin crossed his face and he replied, "I'll tell you now what was bothering me. I had a colt running in the sixth race in Rangoon and I thought he had an excellent chance of winning on his maiden race. It turned out he ran very poorly and I'm just as glad I wasn't there to witness it."

XVIII FOXY KENT

The practice of waiting in Chungking until we could determine where the Japanese activity would be concentrated each day was a precautionary measure that paid off. There was a reasonably good warning network surrounding the area and we would have a few minutes to get airborne and head away in the opposite direction from the Japanese approach.

Passengers would get very restless and it was a temptation to crowd our luck and take off towards Kunming and if there was an alarm there, to circle around some distance from the city or land at one of the three or four auxiliary fields within a radius of 100 miles from the city. The main hazard of this procedure was the lack of warnings. One of our pilots, Foxy Kent, made a practice of this, however, and was somewhat inclined to ridicule others whom he considered over cautious. I served as one of his pallbearers later. He landed at a field about 75 miles away while there was an air alarm at Kunming. Half a dozen Japanese pursuit planes had just strafed this field and were still close enough while regrouping for their flight formation to see him as he landed.

The Chinese would place a row or two of dummy wooden planes on these emergency fields to draw Japanese fire. The Japanese called this practice "another example of Chinese insincerity!"



Dummy wooden airplane.

XIX TRYST IN LASHIO

Looking back over the years spent in the Orient it seems that life was one crisis after another. There were few uneventful breathing spells in between. Some had best be forgotten as they might cause embarrassment to offspring of those involved, but others can be told if discretion is used.

On one overnight lay-over in Lashio one of our married pilots took a stroll after dinner with the daughter of a Britisher who had accompanied her father on a business trip to that station. This gentleman occupied an important position in the Government of Burma, that country then being under British rule.

The two had a pleasant walk along a quiet street and later returned to the hotel. There were just the two of them when they started out but they were accompanied by an embryo on their return!

Some weeks later upon my arrival in Rangoon this official met my plane and questioned me about the pilot just mentioned. I got a real third degree. His main concern seemed to be just when this man would be scheduled to that city.

As soon as I got back to our base in Hong Kong I told the pilot of the incident. He admitted that he and the daughter had a brief tete'-a-tete' before returning from their walk and suspected the worst. Each time a CNAC plane arrived in Rangoon for several weeks thereafter this Britisher met the plane. Our pilot friend made certain that he took no more schedules to Burma.

Sometime later I happened to see the girl involved and a quick glance erased all doubts about the cause of the father's concern.

Later it was reported that she had married a young British airman and had returned to England with him.

I guess all's well that ends well.

XX
CAR WRECK IN HONG KONG

Normally when accusations of misdeeds are directed my way they are justified and probably I have already planned my defense, and perhaps alibi. When I am completely innocent but some evidence points to me it takes a little while before I can come up with a suitable rebuttal.

This was demonstrated on one occasion in Hong Kong. I arrived late one night from an extended trip up country. As soon as I got to my residence I phoned my girlfriend, Maj. We had not been going together very long and our relationship was somewhat in the get-acquainted stage. I thought I detected a rather cold attitude which differed considerably from her usual warm reception. She asked about my arrival time, my take-off time from the last stop up country, did I encounter any unusual incidents on my trip, and other questions which required a detailed description of the flight. I answered her inquiries to the best of my ability, but then asked her why the sudden interest in the flight. Her reply was, "Did you see the morning newspaper?" I said, "No, I hadn't had time to look at it as I called you as soon as I stepped in the door." She replied, "Well, you better read it." She remained on the phone until I glanced at the headlines. There in bold type on the front page was an article about how CNAC pilot Hugh Woods had wrecked his car the previous night on a busy street when he crashed into a power line pole. There was no personal injuries but the car was damaged beyond repair and the accident must have been caused by excessive speed and careless driving. He had claimed that someone running across the road in front of him had caused him to veer off.

I had no explanation for the report but naturally denied involvement and told her to check with the airport and confirm my arrival. Little by little I regained her confidence and then set about determining just what had happened.

It developed that one of our American mechanics, Arnold Weir, had gotten himself a snoot full and had used my

name to identify himself to the police who investigated the accident. Drivers' licenses were not mandatory at that time so they accepted his verbal identification. Maj had been considerably embarrassed by phone calls from well-meaning friends as soon as the paper had come out and she had no explanation for them.



C-47 Aircraft flying "The Hump" with Likiang "Lady of the Fan" Mountain in the background.



Richsha — Taxi and Jeep in Calcutta.

XXI HOUSE BOY SHU

Life in the States now seems quite tranquil, but not so in the East. Some incidents were trivial and perhaps laughable, while others were serious and saddening.

One of the latter occurred in Hong Kong while Chuck Sharp and I were sharing an apartment.

We had a cook boy by the name of Shu who had worked for us quite a long time. His wife was our amah who took care of the laundry and assisted her husband in the kitchen. The third member of the servant staff was the coolie who did the general cleaning and dirty work. This was the normal household staff which foreigners employed. Things had been running smoothly in our establishment and we were very well satisfied with our general living conditions.

One evening Chuck had his girl friend, and later his wife, Sylvia, and I had mine, Maj, over for dinner. After we finished eating we retired to the living room and a short time later the cook boy Shu came in and handed each of us a small handwritten note. He left the room immediately and before we had time to thoroughly grasp the full significance of the notes, his wife, the amah, rushed into the room and yelled, "Shu have go off topside." We lived on the top floor of a 3-story apartment building so we rushed downstairs and there on the cement driveway lay Shu obviously dead. It was a tragedy. He had been such a competent and cheerful person. We could hardly believe our eyes and could not for the life of us figure out what had caused his action.

We had the explanation later. He had suffered a bad head cold and had gone to an American educated Chinese doctor who had given him some quinine but had failed to describe the reaction he would have. It caused the buzzing and ringing sensation in his ears so well known to anyone who has taken this medicine. He thought it was a permanent affliction and that he was losing his mind.

We found out later that this was not an isolated occurrence but had happened before when Chinese had taken quinine.

The notes he had handed us thanked us individually for being so kind and generous and he wanted to say goodbye.

XXII STEWARDESSES IN HONG KONG

Some of the more affluent Britishers in Hong Kong would acquire young, usually attractive Chinese girls, perhaps in their late teens, and designate them as 'wards'. There was no particular stigma attached to this practice if the parties involved were discreet, and there may have been those whose relationship was just what the term implied. A couple of these so-called wards were interested in becoming stewardesses on CNAC. One who was actually hired was looked after by a high ranking officer in the constabulary. We were glad to establish a compatible association with someone in his position and he apparently was interested in seeing that his ward received special consideration.

Several of our American pilots had been able to acquire membership in the Kowloon Cricket Club in order to have the use of its Badminton courts, which we used often, through the sponsorship of this officer.

Chuck Sharp and I stopped by the Club one evening for a drink and to see if any of our friends were there. We burst through the swinging doors to the barroom and found 50 or 60 members seated there having their annual meeting. As unobtrusively as possible we slipped into seats in the rear and realized we were 'stuck' for some time. The meeting carried on with trivial matters being discussed and finally came to the election to fill the vacancies on the Board of Governors. Several nominations were submitted. Finally our friend from the Constabulary arose and asked if there was any statute in their charter which prohibited an American from serving on the board.

The old, very proper Britisher conducting the meeting drawled in a rather ponderous manner that "No—as far as he knew, there was no restriction but that no Americans had ever evidenced any interest in their activities and that it was unlikely that any would." Someone informed him that there were two Americans present at the time. He peered over his glasses and remarked, "Oh yes, I suppose they are the couple

in the rear of this room." My name was submitted and placed on the blackboard along with the others.

The voting was called and lo and behold I was one of the three selected. I think the Britishers were curious to see just how an American would react in such circumstances. The club's main activities were cricket and lawn bowls. We considered both rated somewhere below backyard croquet in general interest.

In order to preserve our access to the badminton courts I took my obligation seriously and attended board meetings regularly when I was in town until we evacuated. I'm sure that to this day I'm the only American who ever served in such a capacity in the Colony.

The other 'ward' was sponsored by a high Government official with the surname of Steel-Perkins. He was in charge of a branch of the civil defense and one of his projects was to bore a considerable number of caves in the hills and mountains in and about the city to be used as air raid shelters. The young lady was a Miss Mimi Lao. Mimi was quite friendly with some of our people, apparently preferring foreigners to Chinese in her social life. At least one, and maybe more of us, had been invited to her living quarters but cautioned that our arrival and departure must be very discreet. The invitation was not taken advantage of in this particular case as disclosures could have had disastrous results.

A considerable scandal erupted when someone charged that Steel-Perkins might have misdirected some of the funds earmarked for bomb shelter caves and the newspaper soon got wind of his association with Miss Lao. Numerous articles appeared linking the two.

Investigation failed to disclose any outright mishandling of the funds and the man's name was cleared of the charges. The incident was soon known as "Stainless Steel-Perkins and his Mimi holes."

There was too much notoriety involved for us to place Miss Lao on our payroll.

XXIII

GROCERY SHOPPING IN UPPER ASSAM

When we first started our freight operations base in Upper Assam in the Spring of 1942 we had a lot to learn about the habits and mores of the local tea planters. They had certain established taboos and restrictions of which we were unaware and violated regularly.

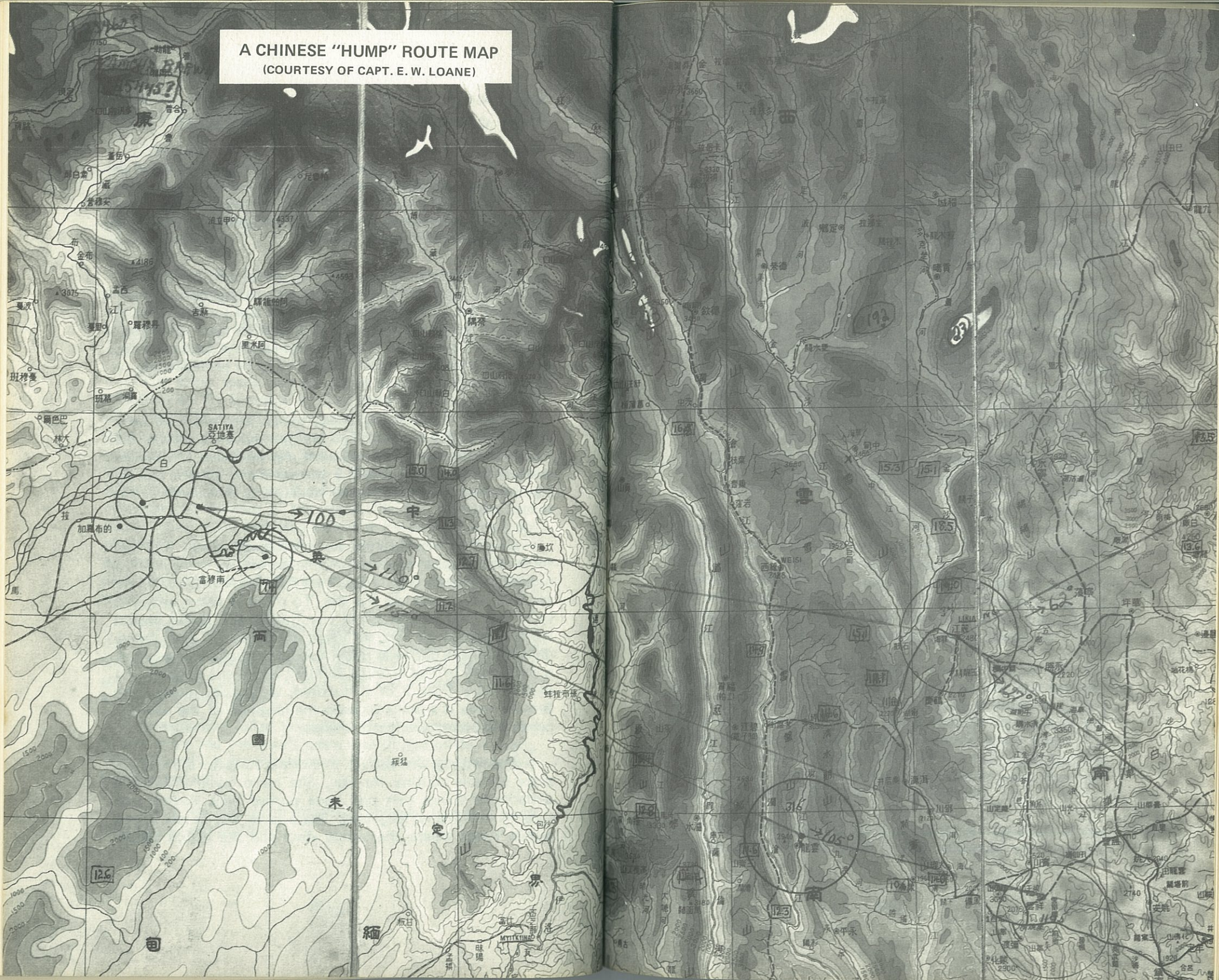
For instance, in a friendly game of bridge with ridiculously small stakes the bidder was not allowed to touch a card in the dummy's hand unless he was picking it up to play. The exception would be if he called out "arranging" before making contact. A violation called for a misdeal. Now, while this may be a regulation adhered to by professionals, or high stake players, it was new to us.

One of the upsetting things we did was when we went grocery shopping. We would go prying around the shelves and storerooms to determine just what was available. The British women hardly ever entered a grocery store, usually leaving the shopping to the servants or resorting to the telephone for special requests.

Our flight and ground crews increased rapidly and had to be fed. It was quite some time before we were able to organize a grocery supply line from Calcutta. Also, we had no servants who could do the job. To make it more difficult, very, very few natives spoke any English and it was several months before we had sufficient command of their native dialect to make ourselves understood. Eventually we acquired a vocabulary of two or three hundred words and as theirs was hardly more than 7 or 8 hundred, we got by nicely. The British made it a point to learn the language of the country rather than teach the locals English.

Ransacking the shelves and storerooms in the market place became routine for Maj. She came back with some remarkable things that had been pushed back further and further and finally forgotten. There were five or six towns within range where she would shop and she would return

A CHINESE "HUMP" ROUTE MAP
(COURTESY OF CAPT. E. W. LOANE)



with an unbelievable assortment of groceries. She cleaned out every store of their tinned goods that had lost their labels. A lot of them had been accumulated over the years. We would have no idea what we were going to have for the next meal until the cans were opened.

American cigarettes were a very scarce item and we could not bring ourselves to smoke the English variety. I would have given up the habit long before I did if I had no others to smoke than theirs. One of Maj's forays disclosed quite a supply of Raleigh cigarettes that must have predated World War I. They were badly discolored and full of worm holes, but we preferred them over anything else available. It was a full time job to smoke them. They would have to be examined to determine just where the worm holes were, then arrange them, sometimes using both hands, so that our fingers covered enough worm holes to make it possible to draw. Usually we would have to ask another person to hold the light while we held the cigarette.

We eventually set up a commissary of our own in Calcutta and problems of this nature were solved.

XXIV TEA ESTATES AND DR. McCOMBIE

Upper Assam, India, was mainly agricultural and the main product was tea. Some teak wood was obtained from the surrounding jungle and a small oil field with limited production contributed to the economy. Tea gardens, however, provided employment and support to many times the number of people than all the other industries combined.

Our airport, Dinjan, got its name from the tea garden upon which it was located. The Chinese staff house was on one named Limbiguri and the American bungalow was on one called Balijan North. These were typical of the average large gardens in the area. They consisted of two to three thousand acres of which about a third was in tea and the balance in thatch grass for the roofs of the native houses, pasture for their live stock and areas for the employe's living quarters and vegetable gardens. The balance of the land was usually wild and swampy and unfit for cultivation. A herd of from 75 to 100 elephants would graze around the neighborhood each Fall. Each garden had about 1000 native laborers. They and their families brought the average population up to around 3000. The living area was always divided into three groups,—one each for the Hindus, the Muslims and the Christians. These people might work together under the direct supervision of the British Manager and assistants, but would not, under any circumstances, live or socialize with each other. Of the three groups the Christians were the least trustworthy and dependable.

The tea plant was nurtured and pruned so that the producing bush was about three and one-half feet tall and spread out so as to develop as many sprigs as possible. During the plucking season, which lasted five months during the Spring and Summer, the tea was harvested about once every ten days. All that was plucked were the two leaves and the bud of a new sprout. The leaves were taken when they had developed to about half their full grown size.

After plucking, the tea was placed on racks out of the sun for a few hours until it had withered to a certain

predetermined degree and then placed in huge circular rotating drums. This gently bruised the leaves and they became quite moist from the sap which exuded. Care had to be taken in this process as over extending the time or the rate of rotation of the drums would cause an inner sap to surface which was quite bitter tasting. The tea was then placed on the floor and spread out to about 4 inches in depth and left for approximately 36 hours. This was the fermenting process and causes Indian tea to be black in color. This step is usually eliminated in China which results in Chinese tea remaining green. The tea is then placed back in the large rotating drums, but this time heat and ventilation are applied and the tea is dried out. It is then packed in aluminum foil lined wooden boxes and is ready for marketing. When tea is brewed it is the outside dehydrated portion that is dissolved and consumed.

Every tea garden manager was thoroughly convinced his product was vastly superior to that of any other garden, which occasionally resulted in some heated arguments after a few drinks at their social gatherings. Each garden and even each plucking resulted in some variation in the taste of the final product. Tea that is marketed under one particular brand name tastes the same. This is achieved by very highly skilled and very well paid tea tasters who, by sampling each batch, can determine just how to mix the various teas to achieve the desired flavor. These men have the reputation of being heavy drinkers and it's hard to see how they can retain their taste sensitivity enough to perform their duties.

Tea plantation laborers were taken care of quite well. Their homes were built in good drainage areas and care was taken that their wells produced uncontaminated water. They were not paid very much by our standards, but they received free housing and medical attention, and bought their food supplies at the garden commissary at controlled prices. They were not overworked and had an ample retirement program, and their children were given some schooling. Their sanitation facilities were closely inspected and properly maintained. (In reference to this it might be mentioned that the women stand up and hold the front of their dresses out and let it splatter when they relieve themselves, while the

men squat down. The men believe that standing during this function saps their vitality.)

Each garden had its own medical facilities headed by an Indian medical practitioner. He was referred to as a doctor but actually held a Bachelor's degree in medicine instead of a Doctorate. Their training took much less time. It would qualify them somewhere between a registered nurse and a medical doctor. They were highly competent in diagnosing and treating local ills and ailments, but lacked training, particularly in surgery, that an M.D. would get.

There was one British M.D. in the area, Dr. McCombie. A book could and perhaps should be written about this man. He was a "rugged individual" if the term could be applied to anyone.

McCombie came to the East as soon as he had finished his medical training and internship in England. He made perhaps two or three trips back to his homeland, but his life and interests were in the East. He was retained by 15 or 16 tea gardens to oversee their medical departments and perform the surgery which their own men could not handle.

When we first met the doctor he was in his mid sixties and had lived in Upper Assam for about 40 years. He had



Dr. McCombie, Upper Assam, 1944.

never married. At the time we knew him his main interest was in the welfare of a young tea planter's daughter about 10 or 12 years old who was his godchild. There were rumors that he had been a bit cozy with the child's mother and there were some who claimed they could see a resemblance between him and the girl.

Maj and I roomed and boarded at the Doctor's bungalow for quite some time. His eating habits made it difficult for me as I was getting up at about 3 A.M. seven days a week and going to the staff house to rouse the crews for the day's flights. The old doctor would never have dinner served before 10:00 P.M. It made a short night but I could usually get an afternoon siesta.

The doctor would get up around 7:00 A.M., have breakfast and go visit one or two tea plantations and perform the necessary surgery. He would return about noon, have a beer or two and a couple of gin and bitters. After lunch he would rest for a couple of hours, then have his tea and bath. He would then start his evening drinking session. It would start with two or three generous sized scotch and sodas. Then he would switch to his "Teen Rookums" meaning 'three things'—Sweet Vermouth, Dry Vermouth and Gin in about equal portions. (I had one "Teen Rookum" with him one evening and didn't make it to the dinner table.) These were served in a tall stemmed glass which held as much as a large coffee cup.

He would finally order dinner to be served and as soon as it was over he would have a brandy and soda and take it into his bedroom to consume while preparing for bed. Every day was exactly the same routine. He died shortly after the war with cirrhosis of the liver. I can't understand why.

The thing that probably did him in was that he sold his allotment of good gin and whiskey, which the local liquor store rationed out during the war years, and bought a product made in a small town nearby called Dikum. A distillery was set up there during the war when alcoholic beverages became scarce. In no time at all they were marketing scotch, gin, rum, brandy or anything else one

asked for. At least that's what the label on the bottle said it was. Their output was immediately dubbed "Dikum Death" by the American GIs. It compared quite favorably with some of the poorer grades of moonshine liquor in the States. McCombie could get up to US\$100.00 for a bottle of Dewars White Label on the black market which would buy a couple of gallons of the local poison. I never heard him complain about its quality.

While we were living in another bungalow I came down with malaria. I was running quite a fever and felt horrible. The doctor came by, quickly diagnosed the ailment and sat down to visit. I asked him if he would like a drink. He readily accepted and suggested I have one with him. I was very much surprised but he assured me there was nothing wrong with my digestive tract, so I joined him. Maj was completely flabbergasted when she came in the room and found me sitting up in bed drinking a whiskey soda while running a temperature of about 102 degrees.

Later on I contracted bacillary dysentery but he would allow no alcoholic beverages until I had completely recovered.

XXV PHONIES

During the war years in China, mid 1937, when the Japanese started their occupation to VJ Day, a period of eight years, CNAC grew from a small domestic passenger carrying service to a large international freight and passenger carrying organization. The foreign staff grew from a few to several hundred. Screening the applicants, which was mostly done by PAA in their New York office, was time consuming and sometimes done without a very thorough investigation. This resulted in an occasional phoney slipping in and being hired. A couple of them are brought to mind.

One fellow, Richards ("Just call me Ace.") presented a well filled out log book showing many trips across the North Atlantic in the Ferry Command and a varied and somewhat extensive amount of experience prior to that.

Richards started flying as copilot and made a few trips. I would always make it a point to check on the progress of prospective captains and did so in his case. Pilots were reluctant to 'rat' on fellow pilots and all I got was a casual "Oh, he's getting along all right."

We had about half a dozen older and more experienced captains who we used as final check pilots. They would allow the fledgling to ride in the left hand seat and act as first pilot. After an okeh from a couple of them the newcomer would be checked out.

The first check pilot to whom we assigned Richards came back with the report that he was very disappointed with the man's progress. We assigned him to another check pilot and his report confirmed the other report.

We called Richards in and informed him that he was to be released as he was obviously unqualified. Before he left he admitted the ruse. He had made all the trips across the North Atlantic his log book showed, but in the capacity of flight engineer. His actual piloting experience consisted of holding the controls in the air for short periods of time.

Another phoney became very well known to the alumni. I wouldn't report on him except for the fact he passed away some time ago so no harm will be done by exposing him. I'm talking about 'Pappy' Quinn.

Pappy showed up in Hong Kong a short while before our evacuation. I don't remember whether he was sent out by the New York office or came out on his own on speculation, as several did.

Our very first interview with him cast some doubts on the veracity of his story. He came up to the apartment which Chuck Sharp and I were sharing. His mien and attitude were foreign to anything we had encountered before. He acted very subservient and overly polite. When pilots get together they are relaxed and at ease even though they may represent the job applicant and employer. Quinn's attitude made it appear as master and servant. He sat on the edge of the chair in a very upright and rigid stance and if Sharp or I walked across the room and passed in front of him, he would rise immediately, click his heels together and stand at stiff attention until requested to sit down. It reminded one of plebe and upper classman.

I've forgotten what excuse he gave for not having a valid pilot's license in his possession. He did have an impressive log book, however.

On his first trip we scheduled him with one of our regular pilots, Hal Sweet, on a flight from Hong Kong to Chungking. Our procedure was to take off about two a.m. and climb to 15,000 feet over Hong Kong, then head on a course of zero degrees, or due North for one hour, and then turn to 330 degrees. This was done to avoid flying too near the Canton Airfield where the Japanese had a large air base.

Upon Sweet's return we asked about Quinn. He told us a rather incredible story. He said that he had turned the controls over to Quinn after he had established his altitude and course but that when he instructed him to switch to 330 degrees, Quinn looked rather puzzled and undecided, but finally started to swing around. Instead of turning 30 degrees

to the left, he turned to the right and made a 330 degree turn. Sweet said he made no more effort towards further indoctrination as that was enough for him.

Sweet's report seemed so unreal that we thought there must be some explanation so we scheduled Quinn with me on my next trip. Sure enough, when I instructed him to swing to 330 degrees he showed the same indecision described by Sweet, then started a right hand turn. I did not have the patience to ride it out but took over the controls and proceeded on our course.

We naturally expected to release Quinn immediately but then discovered that he was actually a professional dining room waiter. We desperately needed a man to run our hotel and mess in Lashio, Burma, and offered the job to him, which he readily accepted.

Quinn performed reasonably well at Lashio as the job was not too demanding. At least our crew members had a place to eat and sleep on lay-over there.

After we moved to Calcutta and the Japanese started their siege of Rangoon we got a message one day from Pappy stating that some refugees wanted to charter a flight from Lashio to Calcutta and could we arrange it, and how much would it cost. Sharp radioed that we could do it and the charge would be Rupees 7,500. The charter trip was made and the money paid. What we found out later, however, was that Quinn had quoted them Rupees 10,000, which they paid to him and he had pocketed the extra Rupees 2,500.

Shortly after that the Japanese overran Lashio and Quinn was moved to Calcutta and later released.

Pappy considered CNAC his Alma Mater. He was very much of a loner. I never heard of his having a girl friend or a date. Apparently his social life was restricted to the CNAC annual reunions and the duties connected with his job as Treasurer of the alumni organization. He was in his glory at these gatherings. His main obsession was to be in the forefront in every picture taken. As soon as he saw someone

focusing a camera he would elbow his way into a prominent, conspicuous position. He was tolerated by the group and no one, as far as I know, ever reprimanded him for hogging the spotlight. After each reunion he would retire quietly to his waiter's job and not be heard from again until the next meeting except to solicit dues to the organization. Needless to say, some of us were reluctant to contribute to anything where the money had to pass through his hands, knowing of his past.

XXVI

LINK

When the Japanese moved into South Burma it was obvious that we would soon be subjected to air raids. In fact, the Japanese English speaking news announced that they would obliterate all the airfields in Upper Assam in the near future.

We knew we had practically no air alarm network set up in the jungle surrounding us and that probably our first warning would come when the Japanese were overhead, which was actually the case when they staged their first raid.

I built a small dispersal strip four miles West of Dinjan Airport where we were based. It was a couple of miles East of the foreign staff bungalow. The strip actually saved us any losses from Japanese bombings. However, we did lose one plane on account of the engines losing power right after takeoff due to their sucking up dust into the carburetor while warming up.

The loss of this plane occurred one morning when one of our Captains, 'Link' Laughlin, former Flying Tiger ace, was preparing to give some landing practice to one of our copilots, Bill Bartling.

My office at the time was in the bungalow and I happened to glance up and saw a column of black smoke arising, which is typical of an aircraft fire. I rushed to the strip and found both Link and the copilot had been pulled from the wreck and were sitting on the ground leaning against trees some distance away, where they had been placed by some natives who had rescued them.

Both the boys were badly injured. The copilot had a compound leg fracture and head injuries. Link looked like a horse might have stepped on his face. I asked them if they were all right (A rather senseless question). The copilot, somewhat more seriously bruised, could not give me a

coherent answer. Link's first answer was that he was very sorry he had smashed up the plane. I told him to forget about the plane, my concern was about them. His reply was, "Then, how's my love muscle?"

Both boys recovered nicely and are alive and well today.

XXVII OVER THE HUMP

The nearly four years in Upper Assam were filled with interesting incidents which provide subjects for bull sessions to this day. The loss of some of the boys due to the hazards in flying the Hump still sadden us as they represented about the finest group of young American manhood ever assembled. Most were rather fatalistic and believed that disaster could happen to others, but not to them. Each loss cast an aura of depression that had to be overcome as there was a job of work to be done. Their youthful vigor and optimism would soon take over and they would regain their normal attitude.

Somewhere along the line someone acquired a bear named 'Elmer', which the boys quickly adopted as a mascot. The bear was hauled back and forth across the Hump occupying the copilot's seat and any remonstrance I would make would always evoke the response that the bear was just as competent and actually more trustworthy than their regularly assigned copilot. We finally had to put a stop to the prank as the stench created by its unhouse-broken habits was overwhelming.



Kunming Lake and Scarface mountain. Always a welcome sight.



View of the Yangtze river splitting Likiang Mountain looking Northeast.



C-46 aircraft were also used by CNAC on the "HUMP".

On three or four occasions we would get a report from a pilot upon arrival at the Dinjan terminal that his plane must be sent in for practically a complete overhaul. It would hardly get off the ground at Kunming, altitude 6200 feet, climb very slowly, handle sluggishly in the air, and should be relegated to the junk heap. Then when the military would unload the plane it would be discovered that it had a double load!

What would happen at the Kunming end prior to departure was that the military would load the plane with mercury which was contained in quite small crockery jars and lashed under the seats. They, of course, were extremely heavy and it didn't require very many to provide the weight limit load, but their small bulk and location under the seats would give the appearance on casual inspection that the plane was empty. Another one of the loading trucks would pull up and toss in a load of pig bristles or something, failing to notice the mercury under the seats.

We were fortunate that no engine failures occurred on any of these double load trips as the single engine performance would have resembled that of a streamlined brick.

XXVIII IOUs

Around the staff house there was quite often a poker game in progress and the stakes would sometimes get out of reason. The boys were young and making good money and they sometimes lost their sense of values. Naturally they didn't carry much cash on their persons so some of the pots would contain IOUs for considerable sums.

Most of the boys would redeem their IOUs as soon as they got back to Calcutta or on the next pay day, but there were quite a few who would procrastinate in settling up. The holders of these notes would use them in other poker games but as they aged, their value decreased. There would be quite a discussion about their acceptability based on their date and the general reputation of the issuer. A note not too old might be accepted in the pot at 75% of its face amount. Later this might drop to 50% and even down to 25%. After that it became merely a souvenir, and some remain that way to this day.

XXIX COLSON

One plane encountered trouble over the jungle in Upper Burma and the crew bailed out. Colson, the pilot, landed in a tree where the ground was so heavily covered with underbrush he realized he could never make his way out.

The U.S. forces had the equipment and well trained personnel that could make these rescues and Colson felt assured that they would eventually find him, which they did.

Upon being questioned about his ordeal he was asked if he hadn't gotten pretty hungry during the three days he sat in the tree. He replied that hunger hadn't bothered him too much as he ate leeches! Seeing the incredulous looks that brought on he added, "Hell fire, they were eating me. Why shouldn't I eat them? I was just getting my own blood back."

XXX HOUSE FIRE

Occasionally one of the department heads from Calcutta would pay a visit to our base in Upper Assam. They never contributed very much in the way of useful services while there, but it was sort of a vacation and break in the monotony for them. It usually resulted in a pretty good booze party.

One visitor was a member of the engineering department. They must have thrown a wing-dilly the night of his arrival. We had arranged for him to bed down in a tea planter's bungalow which my wife, Maj, and I were occupying.

Sometime during the night he came in and crawled into bed apparently smoking a cigarette. Maj and I were awakened by the loud scratching on the door to our bedroom by a terrified cat trying to escape. We opened the door and found the hallway filled with smoke. We quickly opened the bedroom door from which the smoke appeared to be coming, which was the room our guest was supposed to be occupying, and found the mosquito netting and bed ablaze. The ceiling and wooden floor were just about to catch fire, but no sign of the occupant.

We quickly grabbed buckets and filled them from the bathroom water spigot and started dousing the fire. It didn't look like we would make it for a while, but finally began to make a little progress.

Just about the time we started getting the fire a bit under control our water supply suddenly stopped. I quickly ran downstairs to find out what had happened and try to locate another source of supply. I finally located a sleepy night watchman and discovered he had thought the toilet bowl was overflowing and had turned off the main water valve. Again the fire almost got ahead of us, but we finally got it extinguished. Then I started looking around for our guest. I found him in another room and when I tried to

arouse him and tell him about the fire, all I got was a drunken and nearly incoherent response,—something to the effect that "I told them there was a fire some place but they wouldn't pay any attention to me."

I left him to sleep off his drunken stupor, but the next day I let him know in no uncertain terms that he was no longer welcome around there and that the best thing he could do was to get his rear end on back to Calcutta and stay there, which he did.

That cat may have saved some lives.

XXXI HOWARD DEAN

The youngest American employee we ever had was an Operations Clerk in Upper Assam by the name of Howard Dean. Howard was born and raised in New York City and could probably have made monkeys out of us country hicks if he had had us back in the city, but in the jungles of India he was literally a babe in the woods. He was hard working, capable and conscientious, and had a good sense of humor. He was well liked by the group but was the butt of some good natural kidding and practical jokes which he enjoyed as much as the perpetrators.

Howard lived in the pilots' staff house but his working hours seldom allowed him to eat his meals with the others. He would be ready for dinner about the time they had finished.

One evening one of the pilots, Jimmy Scoff, sat with Howard while he was eating. About the time he finished Scoff announced that he thought he would now eat his dessert. He said that one of the pilots, who had just arrived from Calcutta, had brought up a small container of ice cream



Howard Dean and friend, Dinjan.

and that he had put his share aside when he had finished dinner but was ready for it now. Ice Cream was practically unknown in that part of the world as it was before ice cube makers and deep freezes had reached there. Howard was very fond of ice cream and really missed it. When he saw that Scoff, who could get as much of it as he wanted in Calcutta, was going to sit there in front of him and eat the last chocolate covered serving, Howard was really upset. He told Scoff what a selfish louse he considered him to be. Scoff toyed with him for some time and finally told Dean to take it, he would be big hearted and pass it on to him.

Howard dug into it with great gusto. What Scoff had previously done was prepare a scoop of mashed potatoes with the chocolate sauce, and with the connivance of one of the servants had arranged the whole thing. Howard thought momentarily that his taste buds had gone awry. He soon caught on though, especially when he saw the numerous faces at the window enjoying his consternation.

While living in Calcutta prior to his transfer to Upper Assam Howard decided one time he would like some popcorn so had his cookboy purchase some. He had eaten it all his life but had never before seen it in its unpopped stage. He asked the native cook what he should do with it, but the cook didn't know either as that was the first time he had ever seen it. They finally decided to boil it. After it had sat on the stove boiling for half an hour or so Howard tried eating the kernels but was sadly disappointed with the outcome. He was a good enough sport to tell the story on himself after he later found out the proper method.

XXXII JIMMY SCOFF

The term "character" could be applied to Jimmy Scoff as appropriately as to any one in the organization. He was a genuine soldier of fortune. He had to bail out in the middle of one stormy night after all his radio and homing equipment failed. Someone asked him later what he thought about on the way down in his parachute over strange and possibly even hostile land. His reply was, "I was worried about a \$700.00 pay check in my pocket that I hadn't had a chance to spend."

On one occasion Jimmy shot the lock off the door of a whore house that he thought had closed up too early. The house was operated by a working madam of English descent who later came to Miami to live. Apparently her sins found her out as before long she had to be committed to a mental institution where she was when last heard from, at least to my knowledge.

XXXIII
BIG ROBBIE

George 'Robbie' Robertson was another 'one of a kind' type of character, but he fitted into our organization beautifully during the wartime operations.

He was a capable, dependable pilot and a good morale builder when the going got rough. He had started in aviation, with a very limited formal education, as a parachute jumper. Somewhere along the line he had learned to fly.

This man could never have lasted as a modern day airline pilot. He could not have conformed to the regimentation and exemplary personal behavior demanded of them. We had no concern whatsoever as to how they conducted themselves off duty as long as they were ready to work when called upon.

Many stories are told about Robbie and by him. On one flight to Kunming during the period when Japanese activity was at its most intense and everyone was on pins and needles while in the air he came out with a crack that helped ease the situation. One of our real young pilots, Sharkey, came on the air three different times within about an hour and announced that he saw something that looked like Japanese planes. After the third time Robbie opened his mike and said, "Sharkey, wipe that formation of Zeroes off your windshield." No more enemy planes were reported that day.

Robbie got hold of the biggest 45 caliber, long barrel pistol any of us had ever seen. It almost needed wheels. He paraded around with it and announced that he was prepared to give a good account of himself if the Japanese ground forces came into our area. (Actually, they weren't too far away.) Rumors were flying thick and fast and Robbie decided to stand guard one night at the staff house bungalow. He sat down in a chair in front of the door with his 'Hog', as he called it, on his lap and a bottle of booze on the floor alongside. I found him there the next morning slumped down in the chair out cold. The bottle was about two-thirds empty but he still had a firm grip on the gun. I was reluctant to

accost him as no telling what he might do in his stupor, but he was finally aroused and put to bed where he slept it off.

Robbie told one story about overhearing a conversation between an Air Force pilot and a ground controller. The pilot asked for a bearing but the controller was reluctant to give it to him as there had been occasions where English speaking Japanese pilots had requested bearings and then used them to direct their bombing missions. The ground operator asked for identification, which was furnished promptly, but he was still somewhat suspicious. He demanded to know when and where the pilot had trained.

"In 1940 in San Antonio, Texas," was the answer.

"Where are the best whore houses in San Antonio?" was the next question.

"Matamoras Street," was the immediate reply.

"Okeh, here's your bearing," came the prompt response.

The last time I saw Robbie, which was several years ago, he had just returned from India with the thirteenth C-46 he had ferried back. Most of the trips he made alone. He said his procedure was to go to an airport where a bunch of C-46s were parked and hadn't been moved since WWII and pick one out. He would make arrangements for its release and return to the field with a battery and tire pump. This was all he needed to prepare for the trip across the Atlantic. He also said that up to then he hadn't been paid one cent for the job he was doing, but still had hopes.

XXXIV SMUGGLING

No story could be written about the war years without some reference to the smuggling activities engaged in by a considerable portion of the flying and the ground staff, both Chinese and American. Smugglers in normal times are looked down upon and the average citizen is pleased when they are apprehended. This attitude did not exist in the East as no moral stigma was attached to the practice. It was simply a golden opportunity to make a lot of money and no one considered it the least bit unpatriotic or in any way harmful to the war effort.

Huge profits could be made by bringing various scarce articles into China but the most lucrative items were gold and foreign currency. Both sold at a tremendous premium in China, and the Chinese currency could be exchanged in India at the established rate. The Chinese and Indian Governments restricted the export of their own currency so it was an irresistible setup.

The ingenuity and resourcefulness used in this illicit traffic was amazing and the whole story will never be told,—nor was smuggling confined to just CNAC. Many members of the U.S. Air Force and Chinese Air Force feathered their nests the same way.

One method used by some of the maintenance men was to cast some gold so that it could be used to substitute for a certain part in a propeller hub. It would be inserted in Calcutta and removed by a cohort in Kunming and a proper part reinstalled. Also, a wire or string would be attached to gold bars and the bars placed in the oil tank with the other end fastened to the chain to the tank cover. No Customs officer was going to fish around in an oil tank unless he had been informed that there was gold in some particular one.

Lawbreakers are sometimes apt to forget just where to draw the line. Nearly all the boys who thought it would be silly not to take advantage of the opportunities within such

easy reach at that time became respectful law abiding citizens upon their return to the States. However, there was an exception or two.

One very highly placed former PAA employee lost his sense of values after he returned to the parent company after the war. He was placed in a responsible position in charge of one of the massive hangars. Unbeknownst to him, PAA conducted an occasional secret inventory. It was discovered that certain very expensive items could not be accounted for. Concealed cameras were installed and he was photographed in the act of making off with some equipment. A search warrant was obtained and the employee's living quarters were searched, where a lot of the missing things were found.

PAA took this man's long and proficient service record into account and did not press criminal charges. He was merely dismissed but sacrificed a healthy pension due in the not too distant future which he had worked for and looked forward to for many years as he had been given credit towards his retirement for his service in CNAC.

XXXV
PLANE LOADS OF GOLD

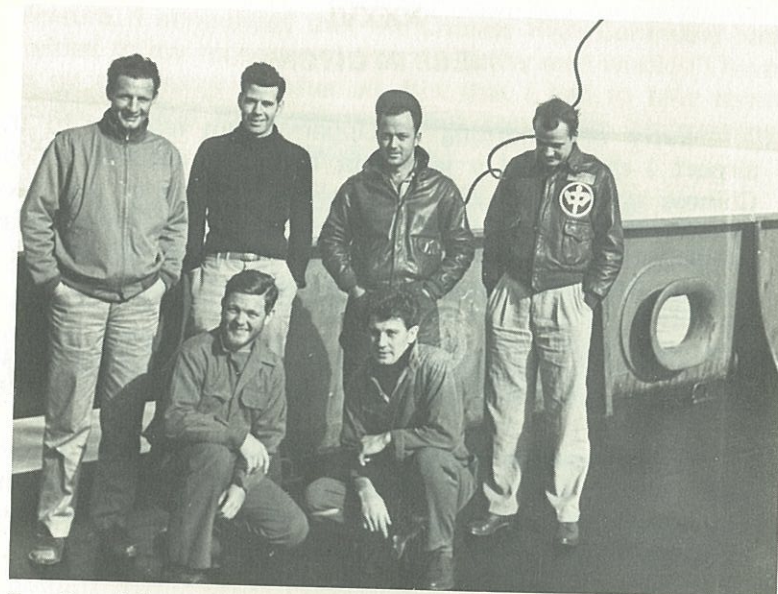
Apparently the gold supply of the Chinese Government consisted of 14 or 15 plane loads (C-47) as during the war years we would get orders to carry about this amount either out or into China. Why this was done, we never knew. It must have had something to do with the fortunes of the war, or maybe just the whims of the politicians. Anyway, CNAC carried perhaps a total of nearly a hundred plane loads and never lost a gold bar. I always worried when we got word that a shipment was scheduled as I knew that if we had encountered a situation demanding that the cargo be jettisoned, we would be subjected to endless investigations and would never hear the end of it.

One of the favorite subjects around the staff house was just how to go about making off with a plane load. There were some pretty far-out and actually some rather ingenious plans proposed. Fortunately, they were all daydreams and none ever attempted.

It was necessary on one or two occasions to jettison a load of paper currency. Not much fuss was made about that as it was easily replaceable and not too valuable anyway.

As regards to the gold shipments we made, I sometimes wondered if all the bars we hauled were actually solid gold. In pre-war Shanghai the Chinese silver dollar was in general circulation as paper money was somewhat distrusted. The Chinese were extremely skillful in splitting a coin and hollowing it out to get as much silver out as possible without mutilating the outside, then filling the inside with lead and sealing it back together. Their work was so well done that the deception could hardly be detected by casual examination. The fare collectors at theaters or taxi stands, etc. would always take the proffered coin and throw it smartly on a board. If the result was a ringing clang, it was accepted. If it made a dull thud, it was handed back to the customer. How I wish I had saved all those 'thuds' as souvenirs! They would be worth more now than the regular coins.

I wonder if some of those gold bars weren't filled with lead.



Top Row left to right: Ed Terry, Vic McHenry, Chas. Roundtree, Don Bussard. Bottom Row: Robbie Roberts, Julius Petach.



Kitty Shilling, Calcutta with Richsha and puller.

XXXVI
JEEP IN DITCH

Early one morning in Upper Assam enroute to the airport I discovered a jeep that had been assigned to our Chinese staff house in a ditch along the side of the road, where it had no reason to be traveling, in a slightly battered condition. I arranged immediately for its salvage and started a cross-examination of the staff to get the full story.

It wasn't long before I learned that one of the Chinese maintenance men had taken some of the crew for a joy ride.

Transportation equipment was always in short supply and I had to take some action to put a stop to any driving that wasn't absolutely necessary, also see to it that student drivers were restrained.

I passed the word that the act of theft which resulted in putting a vital piece of equipment out of commission when the country was at war was just as serious an offense as selling secrets to the enemy or any other act bordering on treason. I said that I considered the offense too serious for me to determine the punishment so I would refer it to the high Chinese authorities as I had been instructed to do in cases of theft or sabotage. I also said that I considered the riders just as guilty as the driver.

I waited two or three days and then, with a great show of concern, I said that I had received instructions to send the culprits to Chungking where they would stand military trial. Human life being so cheap, that would likely mean execution. I said that I had asked the head office of the American partners to intercede and to please let me take the proper disciplinary action as I considered the men competent loyal employees and would see to it that the punishment would be of sufficient severity to prevent any recurrence of the crime. I knew that everything I said was being broadcast by the 'Bamboo Wireless', which was what I counted on. I dropped a hint occasionally in the next few days that the matter was still pending and, finally, with apparent great

pleasure, I announced that the Chinese High Command had yielded to my request and that the guilty men wouldn't have to go to Chungking after all, but that I had to take some action. I asked for suggestions, but none were forthcoming and, naturally, I didn't expect any.

The matter finally died a natural death as I had planned. I felt it was a case of 'mission accomplished'. I never heard of another case of unauthorized use of equipment. Also, I thought I detected a better attitude towards me on the part of the Chinese. It was not too often that a 'foreigner' would go to bat for one of them like I apparently had.

XXXVII THE ROVING WIFE

Roving females are not a new breed and I suppose there are many more of them now due to the vastly increased population and woman's lib than there were a few decades ago. At that time it was just a little unusual to be thrown in close contact with one as brazen and determined as was the Latin American wife of one of the members of the staff sent to China in 1933 soon after PAA acquired its interest in CNAC.

I was among the group that sailed from Savannah, Georgia, to Shanghai to start a coastal run from there to Canton. The first, but by no means the last time I was openly approached by this gal was on a dance floor in Panama while our freighter was awaiting its turn to enter the canal. Her command of English at that time was very limited but she made her desires known first by physical contact, then with enough crude English words to inform me just what she wanted to do with me. I laughed it off and told her maybe it could be arranged later.

During the trip across the Pacific I tried not to place myself in a position where any of her overtures could possibly be observed, but was not always sure of my success. At night after dinner all the passengers would usually step out on deck and line up along the rail to take advantage of the cool breeze and let their dinners settle. She would often sidle close and start groping in places off limits to the uninvited. Any super ego I might have had over my apparent irresistible sex appeal was shattered later when, after comparing notes with some other members of our party, it was disclosed that two of them had experienced the same thing.

This woman's husband was my immediate supervisor so I had to be very careful and diplomatic to avoid our relationship developing further and yet not place her in the position of a woman spurned.

After we arrived in Shanghai I seldom saw her as she and her husband lived in a different section of the city than I did. Also, there was a group of Jai Alai players in her neighborhood. They were more her type anyway and, of course, spoke her language.

Years later, after we all had left China, she and her husband settled in Miami, where I also resided. They were soon divorced and he later died. She bought a small motel and operated it for some time. I never saw her after her divorce, but I would get an occasional phone call with a warm invitation to pay her a visit.

One day I got a call saying she wanted to sell her motel and return to her native country as a relative had died and had left her a considerable estate. She knew I was in the Real Estate business and wanted me to come get a listing on her place. I told her either I or an associate of mine who specialized in motel sales would be around. Having no intention of getting involved, I called a fellow who had recently joined the organization with which I was affiliated, and asked him to go get the listing.

He called me later and asked if I knew what I had gotten him into. I told him I suspected I had a good idea and started to apologize, but he reassured me that everything was okeh and he had greatly enjoyed himself. He said that he and the owner didn't get past the first bedroom on his inspection tour. He also said that obviously she was running more of an assignation house than a motel as later, after they had gone into her office, two or three couples had driven up and handed her a five dollar bill, got a key and proceeded to a room. No one bothered to register. She would show him the five dollars and exclaim, "See how easy I make money."

I got a phone call from her the next day and she said she wanted to thank me for sending the man to call on her. Our conversation went as follows:

"You send me very nice man. Thank you very much."

"I'm glad you liked him. Did he make love to you real good?"

"Ya-a-a-s!" was the emphatic reply.

"Well, good for him," I stated.

"Good for me too!" was her instant rejoinder.

It must have been good for both of them as before long he divorced his wife and they got married, and he quit the Real Estate business to help run the motel. I heard later that he was drinking heavily, even to the point of passing out and sleeping in the driveway when she would lock him out of the place. I don't know if they ever went through the formality of a divorce or not as she soon sold her property and returned to her native land. I haven't heard from her in recent years as that country is now controlled by an iron fisted dictator and travel in and out of there is extremely limited. Her ex-husband told me some time before he passed away that he had a letter from her wanting him to join her as the dictator, who was then in the process of taking over, had been a guest at her motel when he had been temporarily exiled, and that they had been on very friendly terms.

He told her "No, thank you!"

XXXVIII GREEN PIDGON SHOOTS

Being based in the remote areas of Upper Assam had its compensations, especially for the recreational opportunities it provided. The two most popular sporting activities were the pigeon shoots and the fishing safaris. Fortunately they occurred at different times of the year.

The tea garden managers planted a shade for the growing tea bushes called a Peoples Berry tree. These were spaced intermittently throughout the growing area so as to provide a partial shelter from the day-long bright sunshine during the dry season. Early in the Fall, near the end of the monsoon season, these trees produced a small berry which enticed a green feathered pigeon out of the jungle to feed. As the fruit began to ripen these 'Greeners', as they were called, would start coming into their feeding grounds shortly after daybreak and continue for a couple of hours. They were slightly larger than our Turtle Dove but not quite as big as our domestic pigeon. They would appear in flocks of anywhere from a half a dozen upwards to perhaps a hundred birds.

The pigeon shoots had to be organized in advance as it took some planning. It was best to assemble a group of from 15 to 18 hunters or 'guns', as they were referred to, and each 'gun' was assigned four small boys as retrievers. The reason for so many shooters was due to the pigeon's tendency, after having been shot at, to alight in the top of a tall tree nearby and remain there for an indefinite period unless disturbed. A flock entering the shooting area would be unable to settle, but kept on the wing circling due to the constant gun fire. The shooters were stationed so that when the birds got out of range of one gun they came in range of another. When a large flock flew in, the gun fire sounded like a small war was in progress. Sometimes the gun barrels would get too hot to touch with the bare hand.

The pigeons flew in a fast and erratic manner and there were more misses than hits. The old timers were, as a rule,

fairly good shots and could average one bird for every two or two and a half shots. Newcomers would usually get no more than one for every three or more shots.

On a good morning's shoot the hunters would each bag all the way from 35 to 80 birds. According to the established custom, all the birds shot would become the property of the host, who would be the manager of the garden on which the shoot took place. He would then portion them out as he saw fit.

The birds made delectable eating. None were wasted. They were usually baked and it required two or more for each portion at meal time. The extra birds, as a general rule, were boiled until the meat could be easily removed from the bones and then canned. Some of the planters' wives would then make a meat paste that was a delicious sandwich spread.

About the only cost of a pigeon shoot was for the shotgun shells. That cost was eliminated for some of us when the U.S. Air Force condemned a railroad car load of skeet shells and, with permission from some of my friends in the service, I was allowed to help myself. I supplied the tea planters with enough 12-gauge shotgun shells to last them for the next decade as otherwise the Air Force would have destroyed them.

The pigeon shoots were exciting. As the birds came in the small receiver boys would start yelling "Atta Hai," (There they are.) and the cannonade would begin. After returning from the first couple of shoots with my shoulder and arm black and blue clear down to my elbow I learned to exercise some control and give a little more consideration to each shot. I not only saved myself considerable discomfort, but my score improved noticeably when I held the gun securely against my shoulder and concentrated on my aim.

XXXIX FISHING SAFARI

The winter fishing safaris also required some advance planning and scheduling plus some special equipment. The tea planter and his wife with whom we fished had accumulated all the necessary paraphernalia to accommodate a party of four to six fishermen with everything needed for trips usually lasting from ten days to two weeks. Our group generally took 15 servants from the tea garden which consisted of cooks, dishwashers, waiters, laundry men, etc. We would then rendezvous with the boatmen at some predetermined spot on the Upper Brahmaputra River near where it emerged from the mountain. To handle our staff and equipment required six boats, each manned by three oarsmen, which brought the native contingent to about 33.

We would go by truck and ferry as far as the road would permit, then transfer to the boats. These were dugout canoes about 20 feet long and were fairly well loaded down by the time all the people and equipment were aboard.

The water was clear and cold and the countryside was mostly dense jungle. We would select a camp site on a sandbar where our retinue would unload and set up the tents. These consisted of a convenience tent for the natives, one good sized cook tent, one quite large tent used for a dining room, and small tents for sleeping quarters for the Europeans. The natives slept outside on the ground or in the kitchen tent. We had brought folding chairs, tables and sleeping cots with us. We even had regular china and tablecloths. Unless the fishing was exceptionally good in one particular spot, we would move about every three days. Dismantling and setting up a new camp was quite a job, but was done entirely by the servants while we were out fishing. Two of us would fish from one boat with three boatmen doing the rowing. We would leave camp around 10:00 a.m. and return about 3:30 or 4:00 p.m., having taken sandwiches with us for lunch.

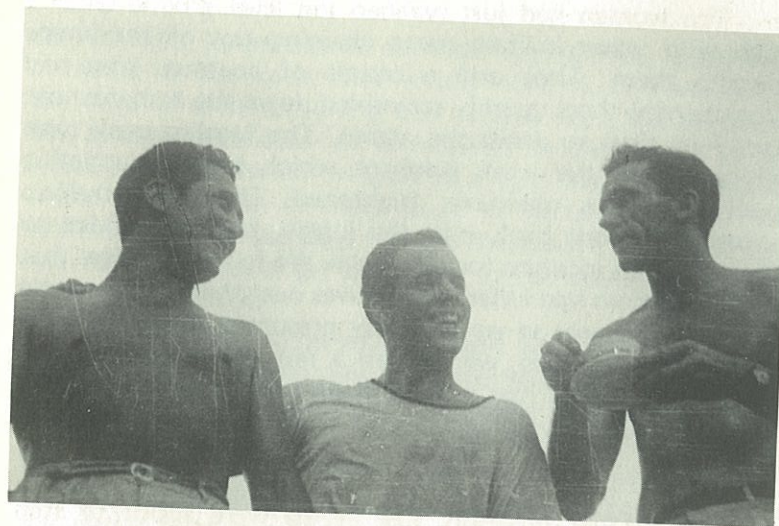
When we returned to camp we would have our regular afternoon tea and then our bath. A small bathtub was always

brought along and the servants would heat the water and prepare the bath. After the bath we would light a huge campfire built from good sized logs gathered during the day by the natives. Sitting around it having our drinks and discussing the day's activity and plans for the next day was very relaxing, Dinner would be served upon request in the well lighted dining tent and, after eating, a pinochle game was usually next on the agenda. Maj and I had never played pinochle before, but on my first hand I held eight aces, the most you can get. This was just beginner's luck as I haven't seen them since even though we now play at least once a month.

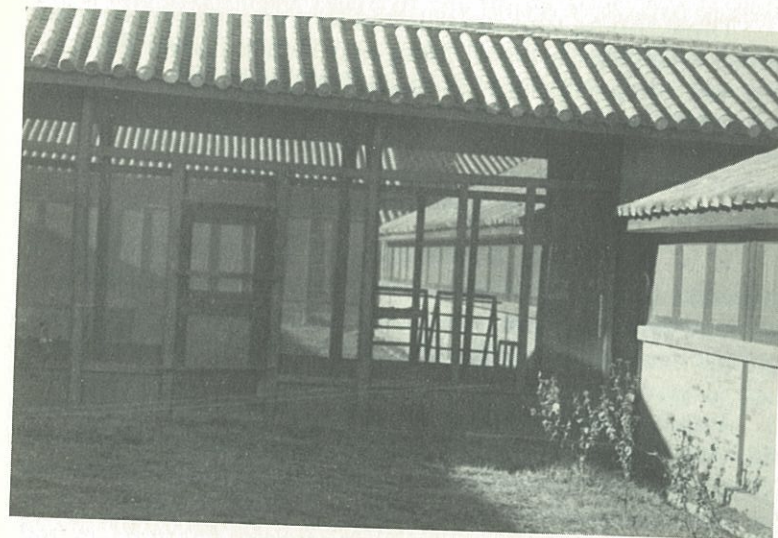
The fishing was not what might be expected in such a remote and rather inaccessible area. The summer monsoon resulted in a torrent of murky water rushing down the river. Also, an occasional porpoise helped deplete the fish population. About all we would catch was a fish that resembled a carp, which would run anywhere from 12 to 40 pounds. They were fairly good eating, but not what could be called a real fighting fish. They were prepared in various ways. They made a good chowder and were quite tasty when smoked. The campfire was usually surrounded by chunks of fish skewered on stakes driven into the ground absorbing the smoke.

These trips were most enjoyable and always ended too soon. We tried to arrange two of them each winter season. The costs were negligible. The servants from the tea garden were on the regular payroll and would have been paid by the garden anyway, and the boatmen were paid about the equivalent of thirty cents each per day. They all provided their own food with the exception of rice, the cost of which was very little, and ate some of the fish we caught.

On one occasion when we got ready to stop for lunch Maj and the tea planter's wife, who were in one boat, went ashore to stretch their legs and take a walk. They had to climb a small embankment to reach level ground. There was a grassy pasture-like clearing that looked like a good picnic ground. There were four or five natives and a work elephant nearby getting some logs ready to be floated down the river.



George Huang, Howard Dean and Nasholds.



The Kunming Hotel — a quiet view.

The women had just reached the level ground when a huge wild water buffalo came charging out of the jungle towards them. They and a couple of boatmen who had accompanied them quickly scrambled down the embankment barely in time to avoid the attack. The logging crew took refuge behind the work elephant which began trumpeting loudly and was obviously frightened. The water buffalo turned and went back into the jungle, but we decided to select another location for our lunch. We found out later that a water buffalo had killed two natives near that spot a couple of days previously so we naturally presumed it was the same animal we saw. Also, we learned a few days later that the work elephant had met a tragic death when it got trapped by quicksand while trying to cross the river there and was unable to get free.

On another occasion, just as we were about to step ashore we heard a tiger that was apparently resting in a large clump of weeds near the river emit a noisy growl. Needless to say, we moved on.

These fishing trips never lasted long enough and we were always reluctant to break camp and return home. We look back on these outings as some of the most enjoyable moments of our lives.

BUGS

If all the flying insects hatched out in one season in India and Burma were placed end to end, I'm sure the line would extend from one edge of our solar system to the other. It might even penetrate the adjoining galaxies.

I've seen concentrations of mosquitoes in the Everglades and have driven through the growing swarms of 'love bugs' in Central Florida, but in sheer density they do not equal the bug population in those countries.

There was one small green flying insect about the size of our lady bug that invaded the Lashio, Burma, area in astronomical numbers. They were not too noticeable during

the daylight hours but as darkness approached, apparently attracted by the lights, they would move in. This was before the days of airconditioning and screens were not in general use as they restricted air circulation so each room in our hotel became infested as soon as a light was turned on. We would get a dozen or more stuck in the lather on our face while shaving. It was hard to keep them out of our eyes, ears and nose. We could get by better in our rooms by groping around in the dark.

In the dining room where a light was necessary it was a different story. During dinner, at the height of the hatch, it would not be an exaggeration to estimate that we would each pick as many as 20 to 25 little green bugs out of our dishes. We would hold a newspaper over our plate and remove it momentarily while grabbing a forkful of food, but sometimes the pesky bugs would become imbedded before the food reached our mouths. I would never have had the courage to watch what went on in the kitchen during preparation of the meal. Apparently they were not poisonous as no doubt we ate a few and I never heard of any illness attributed to them.

We didn't have many of these pests in India but we had billions of flying termites in both countries. They too were attracted by lights and would swarm around our hotel in Lashio, and during their flight would start to shed their wings. I've seen the porch so completely covered with termite wings that when they were swept up they would make half a dozen piles a foot high.

In Upper Assam we used to watch these insects come up out of the ground and take wing. They ascended vertically until out of sight. Obviously the eggs in a nest would hatch simultaneously as the bugs would not be over three or four inches apart as they rose. It would require perhaps 15 minutes for each hatch to take to the air. Often there were more than a dozen columns visible at one time. Birds would start feeding on them in midair as soon as the hatches started, but in 15 or 20 minutes the birds would be filled up and the bugs would proceed unmolested.

There were numerous other flying insects but not the heavy concentration of any other particular species like the

termites and green bugs. Some grew to almost the size of an English sparrow.

Most of our foreign staff learned to take the bug invasion without becoming too distressed. We had one pilot, however, who was the exception and that was Fred Hodges. Fred simply could not remain in a room with one of the huge beetles flying around. He soon became known as 'Fearless Freddie' as he would frantically jump up out of his chair whether at the dining room table or in the staff house lounge and take to the boondocks when one of the giant bugs came roaring through.

It was surprising how soon we became inured to the presence of these flying insects. I recall one evening, shortly after we had arrived in Upper Assam, we were sitting in our bungalow having a drink with a local tea planter when one about the size of our common June bug landed in our guest's whisky soda. He was relating a story of some sort when it happened, but paid slight attention to the invasion—merely fishing the bug out with his fingers and throwing it away without the slightest interruption in his conversation. We were astounded at the time but found ourselves doing the same thing within a short time.

There was one mosquito we carefully avoided. That was the one which carried the elephantiasis infection. Fortunately, these insects confined themselves to comparatively small sections of jungle of perhaps 20 to 30 acres and there was little chance of a person becoming infected if he stayed away from these places. The infected areas were wellknown and one of the first things a newcomer learned was where they were located. It would usually be a clump of trees. These trees were left unmolested but the surrounding brush would be cleared. This tactic was apparently successful and confined the plague to the degree that it was no great hazard, while cutting the trees would have caused the mosquitoes to spread. I suppose modern aerial spraying could eradicate them entirely.

Elephantiasis is an insidious disease. Often no symptoms develop for as long as seven years from the time of the

infection. Modern medicine may have made some advances in its cure or control, but at the time we were stationed in India very little was known about it except that it produced many horribly disfigured victims. We saw many of them.

The post war moving of the bases of operations from Upper Assam and Calcutta to Shanghai commenced late in 1945 and carried on gradually over the next several months.

It was a very difficult period. Schedule demands exceeding our capacity were made by the Chinese Government and yet ever increasing restrictions were imposed upon us by the military. Some of these asinine regulations caused several fatal accidents as they banned the use of alternate fields during bad weather conditions. Everyone lived in fear of the Army brass. In writing my reports on the accidents I was not permitted to mention the fact that the arbitrary restrictions limiting our use of these fields had left the pilot with no alternative but to attempt landings in fields below weather minimums.

The handwriting was on the wall but many foreigners refused to accept it. China was to be for the Chinese! The foreigner would be tolerated only as long as he was useful, but there was a concentrated effort continuously being made to replace him. The Chinese resentment of the foreigners being a privileged class was the same as ours would be if the circumstances had been reversed.

Extraterritoriality (X-trality, as we called it) had been done away with and aliens came under Chinese jurisdiction subject to their laws. One pilot's wife with a nursing baby was jailed for a minor traffic infraction. An attempt was made to erase all vestiges of foreign control. Streets and buildings bearing non-Chinese names were renamed. They wanted nothing left to remind them of outside domination.

PAA had reduced their percentage of ownership in CNAC from 45% to 25% by selling the 20% differential to the Chinese Government for a price that practically recovered their total investment. The funds used for this transaction

naturally came out of Lend Lease monies so it was the U.S. taxpayer who financed the deal.

By the end of 1946 it was obvious to all but the stubborn diehards and wishful thinkers that the Communists would eventually win out. It was not a matter of if, but when. Conditions preceding their take-over deteriorated rapidly. Coal was US\$250.00 per ton and was of such poor quality that it had to be fed kindling constantly to keep burning. All cast iron heating pipes had been removed from buildings by the Japanese to supply metal for their war effort. It was a cold winter and hard to keep warm. It was more difficult for some of us oldtimers in CNAC than for those who had joined the company later. The contrast was more than we could adjust to. The Chinese dollar literally became less valuable than the paper on which it was printed. The largest denomination was 10 dollars. To go grocery shopping required a bundle of currency larger than the package of groceries it purchased.

Bidding farewell to the Far East after living there 14 years was a traumatic experience but I left with few regrets. As for the Chinese themselves—I wish them well.

'The Lord works in mysterious ways, his wonders to perform' and I might add, "So do the Chinese."

East is East and West is West and those twain sure as heck haven't met yet!

XXXX FIRST 'HUMP' FLIGHT

Throughout the years there has been some confusion as to just when the first "Hump" trip was made and who flew it. Dr. Arthur Young, a member of the Board of Directors of CNAC and Z. Soldinski, Chief Mechanic, wrote articles which were published in recent books on the history of the airline. Both were under the impression that a trip into Upper Assam from China late in 1941, flown by Captain C. L. Sharp, was the first Hump flight. This trip was undoubtedly the first one between the northern part of Burma to Assam over the Naga Hills.

The actual first flight over the Hump was flown by myself a year earlier as described in the accompanying letter written by Mr. W. L. Bond, Vice President of CNAC. He also was a passenger on both flights as his letter indicates.

The purpose of my flight was to determine if it were possible and practical to operate a freight and passenger service over that route. It was obvious that the Japanese intended to occupy all the coastal areas and supplies into China would eventually have to reach them by air from the rail head in Northeast India.

Very little was known about the geography of that general area. Some of our maps made no attempt to show any features whatsoever. They merely indicated the area as 'unexplored'. Later, when maps started showing some detail, we questioned their estimates of mountain elevations and exact locations.

The day we selected to explore the route was absolutely perfect from a weather standpoint. There were a few small clouds at 14,000 feet, topping out at about 14,500 feet, and exceptionally clear horizontal visibility. As the cloud base was constant I could easily determine with great accuracy the height of the mountains underneath. The only one that soared above the clouds was Likiang Peak, which I determined to be between 16,500 and 17,000 feet. I did not

measure the exact elevation as it was too far north of the direct route we would have to fly to be any great hazard.

Perhaps Dr. Young and Mr. Soldinski never saw the report I filed on the survey trip. Also, there might have been some confusion in their minds as to just what section was designated by the term "Hump". Obviously it could most logically be applied to the mountains which were in the area of the Burma and Chinese border and not the lower range between Burma and India, none of which reached 8,000 feet.

AN EXPLANATION

Capt. H. L. Woods flew first survey flight over the Hump Nov. 1940.

Capt. C. L. Sharp flew first Dinjan Kunming flight a year later.

Letter No. B111-44

April 19, 1944

Mr. H. M. Bixby
Pan American Airways
Chrysler Building
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Bixby:

I refer to your letter No. B118-44 in which you ask for details on CNAC's pioneering work for the operation of the service between India and China.

Our efforts on this went back to several years ago. Our attention was first drawn to the possible needs of this service when the Japs occupied Indo-China and stopped the railroad service between Indo-China and China.

In November 1940, Captain H. L. Woods as Pilot, F. L. Higgs as copilot and radio operator Joe Loh and myself started from Lashio, flew north to Myitkyina, where there was no airport at that time, and then continued northeast to Likiang. From there we flew to Sichong, from there to Suifu, and from there to Chungking. This flight was made non-stop in a DC-2. We had no radio enroute except at Suifu. It did not look very encouraging. I later took it up with the Governor of Burma, in fact two Governors of Burma, Sir Alexander Cochrane and Sir Dorman-Smith, and through their efforts the field at Myitkyina was built. This field was of the utmost importance during the evacuation from Burma. The Japanese now have it but are able to make very little use of it. It will later be extremely valuable to the Allies.

In the summer of 1941, while I was home on leave, I drew up a plan for flying freight from India into China based on the Burma Road being cut, or intercepted in some way. This was presented to the United States Government through China Defense Supplies. We also started urging on the Chinese Government the importance of being prepared to operate a service from China to India. As a result of this I was authorized by the Chinese Government to proceed to India to discuss with the Indian Government the idea of such a service.

In January 1941, Captain C. L. Sharp, Copilot Frank Higgs, radio operator Joe Loh and myself flew from Chungking to Kunming, to Lashio, to Chittagong, to Calcutta, surveying this proposed route. We then proceeded to New Delhi, where we discussed the matter with the Indian Government. There were no immediate results in this conference but we did discuss the idea of obtaining all necessary information and met the proper government officials in charge of such things. It is probable, that as a result of this conference, the airport at Dinjan was built. At that time there were no airports in northeast India.

In November 1941, the situation became critical and it was obvious that trouble was coming. Captain Sharp, Copilot S. H. DeKantzow, radio operator Joe Loh and Myself started from Lashio, flew north over Myitkyina where work in the new airport was progressing and continued to Dinjan, where we landed on the new field, then not completed, and spent the night. Dinjan being close to the terminus of the railroad running to northeast India. We took with us on this flight eight RAF officers who had just come up from Singapore for the purpose of looking over the country with the idea, we understood, of establishing a British Air Force in China similar to the AVG. We also had with us two British highway engineers who were to make an aerial survey over this road to obtain some idea as to the best location for a highway running from Assam to China. To aid in this mission, we covered considerable area along this route. We landed at Likiang and later took off and flew to Kunming.

When the Pacific War broke out in December 1941, CNAC made its last flight out of Hong Kong on December 10th, 1941. We made our first regular flight from Chungking to Calcutta on December 20th. From that date until now we have made regular flights from China into India. When we arrived in Calcutta on this flight, we were met at the airport by a Mr. Frederick Tymms, now Sir Frederick, who was the Director of Civil Aviation in India. He is now a member for communications on the Viceroy's Council. Sir Frederick gave us one hundred percent cooperation and support, and in fact turned everything on the airport over to us.

Shortly after the fall of Malaya and the invasion of Burma began, I sent a telegram to Dr. T. V. Soong in Washington, proposing a freight air service from Dinjan to Myitkyina whereby supplies would come down to the railroad to Mandalay and up to Lashio, thus keeping the Burma Road open in case Rangoon was blockaded. In my message, I stated that as much cargo could be flown in this way that was then being transported over the Burma Road. (sic) Unfortunately, however, not only was Rangoon blockaded but Mandalay was occupied and so was Lashio and so was Myitkyina, and we found ourselves holding the bag since we had stated that supplies could be flown in from India. So we had to consider the idea of regular flights from Dinjan right into Kunming. At the moment we could do nothing about it as we had only three planes.

Shortly thereafter we began to get airplanes but the fall of Burma had started and all our efforts had to be diverted to the evacuation. It was not until June 1942, that we could make serious efforts towards flying the "Hump." However, we did establish a base in Dinjan in April 1942, and began to make all necessary preparations for such a service so that when the evacuation from Burma was completed we could give our undivided attention to this work.

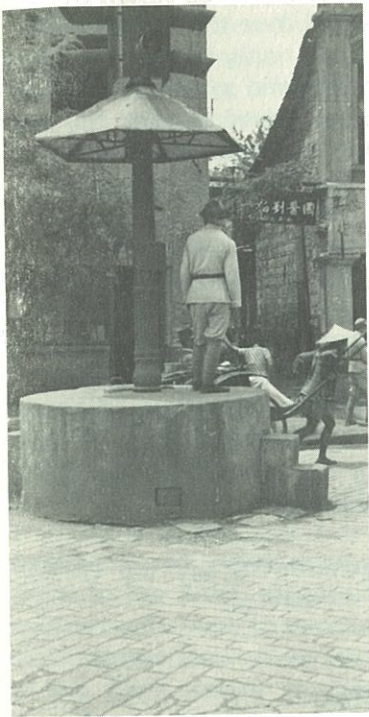
We believe it is not exaggeration to say the CNAC originated this idea and pioneered the service.

Signed

W. L. Bond, V.P. CNAC



Maje Majors (Then)



A traffic policeman in Kunming.



Capt. H. L. Woods 1939 San Pu Pa
Airport at Chungking