

Faded Valor

by Clark N. Nelson, Sr.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank those listed below for their encouragements and a willingness to share historical fact, artwork, and photographs. Intentions herein are not to embellish or enhance, but to restore luster to faded valor.

David Metherell	Clayton Balcombe	George R. Cannon, Jr.
Ben Brown	LaRee Jones	Peter Kassak
Kenneth Keats	Barbara Bauer	Gary L. Moncur
		Charles Sloca
		Mark Styling

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Preface

A handful of the few have determined the fate of thousands since man seized the rhetoric to control the populace; based upon fear, forsaking debate for absolute obedience. This proves indigenous to tyranny as well as righteousness. Such was the case during the 1930s as a League twiddled it's thumbs, as appeasement and indifference flourished.

Lambs do graze on grassy fields while some are bound to be slaughtered. For whom the accountability for fermenting these fields, from grassy fields to battlefields. What man stands by as a crop is destroyed then begs for a fleet of wheat. What kind of man finds comfort in these. As nobility of men diversify, so shall their anguish.

Childhood Impressions

I was in the front yard the afternoon of December 7, 1941. I was a month shy of my fifth birthday. My father drove up and stopped in a cloud of dust. He hurried up the walkway filled with anxiety, "*Pearl Harbor was bombed*"! He was very upset so I ran inside.

My parents and my grandmother were standing in the living room. They were overwhelmed by two ordinary words: *Pearl Harbor*. My brother and I weren't aware of the significance, the cost in human lives. When things calmed down I asked my mother the meaning of Pearl Harbor.

As the weeks wore on my father assumed the duties of an air raid warden. Black out drills were as common as the morning milk delivery. I'd overheard discussions about a possible invasion by the Japanese. I was a five-year old kid. I knew nothing about Japan or the Japanese.

My best source for information were the older kids in the neighborhood. We always found time to discuss the war. Three names were prominent with each discussion: Tojo, Hitler, and Mussolini.

Our confidence was either nourished or weakened based upon movies of the period: *Bataan* (1943), *Destination Tokyo* (1943), *Wing and a Prayer* (1944), and *Bombardier* (1943). *Bataan* proved the most-discouraging while others just the opposite.

Men and women were going to war in one fashion or another. Their roots lie in our communities, our neighborhoods. They were prepared to give their lives in order to preserve our freedom. What greater gift can there be? *There can be no greater gift, save those ordained by Diety.*

Men and women in uniform were our heroes. I remember my brother writing to a member of the Army Air Force named Virgil. He didn't know Virgil personally, just happened to meet him at the Big Hand Café, a scheduled rest stop for Greyhound bus lines.

I remember asking servicemen for military patches representing their branch of service, their rank, or the command they served under. This was accomplished at the Big Hand Café as servicemen stepped down from a bus. I had hoped for a set of dog tags but it wasn't to be.

I met a member of the Army Air Force named Bill. Bill and a friend from his squadron were spending a few days in St. George. They were staying at the Liberty Hotel. I walked to the hotel parking lot with a friend.

We yelled in the direction of the hotel and tried to get their attention. Then Bill opened a second floor window and waved. He told us to meet them inside the Liberty Drug Store. He offered to buy us a milkshake. We found them waiting inside a few minutes later.

They gave us nicknames. I was a kid with blonde hair and they called me "Whitey". My friend's hair was brown so they called him "Brownny". They ordered our milkshakes accordingly; mine was vanilla and my friend's was chocolate.

When we finished our milkshakes and prepared to leave, Bill asked if I'd like to write to him. I replied, "Yes, I would"! Bill grabbed a piece of paper and wrote down his mailing address. We thanked them for the milkshakes and never saw them again. I wrote to Bill over a period of several weeks. He sent a few military patches that were worn at shoulder level. Bill was eventually reassigned and I never heard from him again. I've wondered if Bill survived the war.

I remember the excitement when receiving a V-Mail from my uncle Miles. He was serving with the 7th Armored Division, 106th Infantry in Europe. I remember my grandmother baking a cake and mailing it to Miles. It never caught up with him. It was returned unopened a month or so later.

When walking home from school I usually took a shortcut. I walked between two homes near the intersection of Third East and Tabernacle. A garden was located at the rear and just beyond lie an airplane. It was small in comparison yet similar to those used for stunt flying.

It was a bi-plane, had an open cockpit, and the top wing was missing. The construction was aircraft plywood which is normally mahogany or birch. The lower wing remained intact except for it's overall length. It was shortened on each side by at least a foot, as if violently shredded or torn.

The landing gear had either been removed or destroyed. The rear stabilizer was nowhere to be found. Most of the seat in the cockpit remained but the instrument panel was missing. The aircraft had endured an encounter with disaster; beyond repair, forever earthbound. Yet it kindled imagination.

I occasionally walked the wings and took a seat inside. I tried to imagine what a fighter pilot was thinking as he rose higher and higher in the sky. I tried to imagine the climbing, the diving, the twisting and turning.

When I was nine or ten I overheard my parents discussing the death of a young man from Washington, Utah. My father was overcome with grief when he told my mother, "Rodney Neilson was beheaded by the Japanese". I didn't know what a beheading was so I asked for an explanation. The horror of that day has been with me for more than sixty years.

Flight Officer Rodney Neilson



Rodney Neilson was born July 24, 1919 in Washington, Utah. He was the son of Israel and Caddie Neilson. Rodney was a graduate of Dixie Junior College and attended Utah State Agricultural College for one year. He was employed by Douglas Aircraft in Santa Monica, California when he entered military service January 7, 1943 at Fort Douglas, Utah. Branch of service was the U. S. Army Air Corps.

Following graduation as a gunner in Laredo, Texas he received radio training at Sioux Falls, South Dakota. He received additional training in other phases at Grand Forks, North Dakota; Santa Anna, Blythe, and Bakersfield, California. On March 23, 1944, at Ripley Aux. Field #1 in Blythe, Rodney was piloting a Fairchild PT-27 trainer (#42-15747) and was involved in a takeoff mid-air collision with another student pilot. Both pilots survived.

Rodney received his commission as a Flight Officer at La Junta, Colorado having received special training with the Lockheed P-38. Rodney left for overseas duty in March of 1945. He was assigned to the 38th Photo Reconnaissance Squadron under the 13th Air Force in the South Pacific. The 38th was assigned to the 4th Photo Recon Group on December 12, 1944.



A total of five bases had been activated by the Fall of 1944:

**January 13, 1943 - Noumea, New Caledonia
January 21, 1943 - Espiritu Santo
January 13, 1944 - Guadalcanal
June 15, 1944 - Los Negros
September 13, 1944 - Hollandia, New Guinea**

These were unarmed long distance mapping flights over enemy-held territory; primarily the Dutch East Indies and the Philippines. The campaigns would include Guadalcanal; New Guinea; Northern Solomons; Bismarck Archipelago; Western Pacific; Leyte; Southern Philippines.

Rodney was flying a mission May 13, 1945 aboard a F5F-2 (#44-24942), a modified version of the P-38, when his plane failed to return. He was on a mission to the SE Celebes when his plane ran out of fuel at Pulau Merampit, an island of the Nanoesa group, near the Talaud Islands, located southeast of Mindanao, P. I.

Rodney landed offshore at 1500 hrs. in the vicinity of Raruhe village. He was apprehended by the village chief and turned over to the Japanese May 22, 1945. He was taken to Rainis, a village in the Talauds, and executed by decapitation June 10, 1945. Rodney's remains were buried in a round grave near Rainis.

In March of 1947 Rodney's remains were recovered and transported to the Philippines by Flight Lieutenant F. Belcher of the Royal Australian Air Force. Burial was performed at the USAF cemetery Manila #2, plot 4, row 5, grave 630, on March 4, 1947.

On November 6, 1944, 1st Lt. James C. Steele, an Air Corps P-47 pilot, ran out of fuel and crashed at the southern tip of Talaud Island. He was captured by the Japanese and transported up the island to the village of Beo.

On March 23, 1945, Lt. Steele was stabbed to death along with three Australian airmen. The Australians were forced down over the Talaud Islands in February while enroute from Morotai to Noemfoor. The Australians were Flight Sergeant L. N. King, Warrant Officer Peter Waters, and Flying Officer F. E. Hann.

The four airmen were bound to crosses, blindfolded, then bayoneted through the heart. The occasion for the executions was the ceremonial presentation of colors. The event would serve as a *Roman Holiday* for the Japanese. Captain Tokio Iwasa, one of those found guilty for ordering the executions, stated "The men (victims)

behaved very bravely. They did not utter a word". The victim's remains were buried near Beo.

The R.A.A.F. component of an Australian P.O.W. contact party visited the Talaud Islands in September of 1945. They reported three Australians and two Americans had been prisoners in the area.

The Japanese garrison commander, Colonel Shige Koba, alleged the prisoners had been evacuated in July of 1945 and sent to the Celebes. However investigations established the prisoners had been executed. The graves of the five men had not been located when the contact party left the islands.

A local islander named Theofilus Joera, at great personal risk, contacted airmen held as prisoners of war on Talaud. He maintained a diary of Japanese atrocities. Theofilus, as well as his diary, proved invaluable as to atrocities committed, grave locations, and recovery of personal items.

Joera described in detail some of the indignities suffered by the airmen at the hands of the Japanese and certain local inhabitants.

A total of six personal items were retrieved. Three were in the possession of girls in the village of Rainis. One item was a chain worn by a girl named Mada Majumpo. She claimed a Japanese soldier gave it to her for a souvenir.

Two other chains, one long and one short, were in the possession of a girl named Mailina Aoende. She claimed the chains were given to her by the Japanese soldier Taleshi Matsuzaki as a souvenir.

Joera was able to retrieve a victory medallion which included an emblem of the sport. The medallion was in the possession of Manase Winawoda, an islander living in Rainis. He said he bought the medallion from a Japanese soldier, the medium of exchange having been tobacco.

Joera found Rodney Neilson's gold ring with the initials 'R. N.' inside. The ring was in the possession of Yasat Sedoe, a Japanese appointed policeman in the village of Rainis. He told Joera the ring was given to him by a Japanese soldier.

Joera also found a gold fishing rod. Since Neilson was forced down in the sea, it was presumed the fishing rod came from an emergency kit. The gold fishing rod was in the possession of Pilipoes Tarandang, an old man living on Spay (Lahoe) Karakeland.

Joera gave the three chains, the victory medallion, and Neilson's gold ring to a Dutch chaplain. The chaplain's intention was to turn over the items to a NICA officer. Joera provided detailed sketches of four graves near Beo, as well as Neilson's grave near Rainis.

Lt. Taleshi Matsuzaki was apprehended and taken to Morotai in connection with the execution of Rodney Neilson. Matsuzaki's sketch of Neilson's grave location corresponded with Joera's.

Six personal items were found, including the fishing rod. Five were found in Rainis, one was definitely Neilson's. Two items had been in the possession of Lt. Taleshi

Matsuzaki. Items such as the victory medallion are supported by a chain and worn as a pendant. I believe the chains described had originally been one chain and attached to the medallion. I'm confident all of the items found were once the property of Rodney Neilson.



**Japanese officers enroute to Morotai to await trial for war crimes
L-R: Lt. Nomura, Lt. Yabe, Lt. Misumi, Lt. Tanaka, Capt. Iwasa, Lt. Asoaka**

Six Japanese officers were implicated in the execution of the four allied airmen, however Lt. Asoaka was found not guilty. These officers were members of the 111th Regiment of the Japanese 32nd Division. One of those implicated was Tokio Iwasa, the 24 year-old son of a Japanese Lieutenant General.

These officers received orders from Colonel Shige Koba, Japanese commander in the Talaud Islands, through his second in command Major Tamura, to carry out the executions with bayonets. At the trials in Morotai these five Japanese officers were tried and convicted for war crimes. They were sentenced to death and shot.



**Japanese enlisted enroute to Morotai to await trial for war crimes
L-R: Sergeant Uchino, Sup-Pte Tanaka, Sup-Pte Gato, Pte Suzuki, Pte Oishi**

Five enlisted men were tried and convicted for the bayoneting of the four allied airmen. These enlisted men were members of the 111th Regiment of the Japanese 32nd Division. They were detailed by the aforementioned officers to carry out the executions with bayonets. The fifth man was detailed because one of the airmen was still alive following the executions. These five Japanese enlisted men were sentenced to ten years imprisonment.

Colonel Shige Koba confessed to ordering the executions of five captured allied airmen. He claimed to have received orders from Lt. General Katsura at Japanese Headquarters to dispose of the five allied airmen. The order Colonel Koba alleged to have received was '*genchi shobun*'.

In time of war *genchi shobun* translates *disposal on the spot* or *dispose of by execution*. Lt. Colonel Komura, the former staff officer at General Katsura's headquarters, claimed the order Colonel Koba alleged to have received was never given. However Lt. Colonel Komura, while under the command of Major General Endo, would later be charged with having given that order.

Colonel Shige Koba, a gray-haired 54 year-old with six children and his second in command 29 year-old Major Tamura, a professional soldier since 1936, were tried and convicted of war crimes. While in the witness chair, Tamura claimed he never knew it was a war crime to kill prisoners, since orders had to be obeyed. Both Koba and Tamura were sentenced to death and shot.



**Lt. Taleshi Matsuzaki
beheaded Rodney Neilson**

Lt. Taleshi Matsuzaki, upon receiving a verbal order from Colonel Shige Koba, Japanese commander in the Talaud Islands, through his second in command Major Tamura, executed an allied airman.

The airman was beheaded with a sword June 10, 1945 at Rainis on Karakelong Island. Lt. Taleshi Matsuzaki confessed to the beheading of Rodney Neilson and was held at a prisoner of war compound in Morotai awaiting trial for war crimes. His fate is unknown at this writing.

Natives Theofilus Joera, Josef Mietoem, and Manuel Tjong attended the war crimes trials as witnesses to Japanese atrocities.

Rodney Neilson's uncle Kenneth is alive and well at this writing. Kenneth is the younger brother of Rodney's mother Caddie. Kenneth recalls Rodney's father Israel receiving a telegram.

Israel read the telegram then handed it to Kenneth. Israel asked, "Does this mean what I think it means"? Once reading the telegram Kenneth replied, "Uncle Israel, decapitation means they chopped Rodney's head off". Israel replied, "Caddie must

never know this. We never saw this, it never came". Israel tore the telegram in pieces and they never discussed it again.

As I ponder Rodney's final thoughts, what they might've been, a phrase comes to mind: *"There's no greater love than a mother's love"*. Yet for Israel and Caddie Neilson the heartbreak had only begun. They would lose another son only nine months following Rodney's death.

An emblem of a star contains five points, each point confirming grandeur and brilliance. The dedication, courage, nobility, and legacy of Rodney Neilson warrant the brightest, most brilliant of all. His greatest gift to this country was his life. I can think of nothing more precious or sacred.

2nd Lt. Keith Leland Hafen



Keith Leland Hafen was born August 20, 1921 in Santa Clara, Utah. Keith entered military service January 6, 1941 and served with the U. S. Army Air Corps. Flying wasn't new to Keith since he'd been a member of the *Dixie Hellcats*. The Hellcats were a group of enthusiastic fliers attending Dixie Junior College. They were a part of the government-trained reserve pilots program.

Keith was the son of Leland and Elsie Hafen. At a point during the late-1940s, while thumbing through my mother's yearbooks, I spotted a picture of the Dixie College basketball team. A young boy was pictured with the team. He was noted as being the team mascot. His name was Keith Hafen. This was my first encounter with the name.

Keith's father was an admired and respected member of the community. He was a former Dixie High School basketball coach and a member of the high school faculty. I was a member of his American History class as a junior. He occasionally mentioned Keith and the events preceding his death. .

I spoke with Keith's father a few times after class. He recounted the excitement his son felt as he looked forward to being assigned an aircraft. The aircraft would be waiting in Brazil. I can only assume it was at Belem Field but I have no source for verification.

On March 31, 1943 2nd Lt. Keith Hafen, a B-17F co-pilot, was a member of the 8th Air Force, 303rd Bomb Group (H), 358th Bomb Squadron, based at Molesworth, England. The fuselage artwork on the B-17F (#42-29573) read *Two Beauts* with a nude female image nearby. This would be the 303rd's 27th mission yet only the second for Lt. Keith Hafen. It would be the 48th mission for 8th Air Force.

Other crew members aboard *Two Beauts*: 2nd Lt. James R. Dunn (pilot); 2nd Lt. George H. Boyd (navigator); 2nd Lt. Robert A. Lizotte (bombardier); T/Sgt Lamoine D. Yager (flight engineer); T/Sgt Earl Hogue (radio); S/Sgt Carl E. Shellman (ball turret gunner); S/Sgt Stanislaus Nowak (right waist gunner); S/Sgt William A. Testoni (left waist gunner); S/Sgt Eugene C. Clowe (tail gunner).



Two Beauts (42-29573) – courtesy Mark Styling – aviation artist

The target for mission 27 was the Wilton Shipyards, Rotterdam, the Netherlands. Twenty air crews would be dispatched. The mission would consume four hours and forty-five minutes. The bomb load would be six 1000 pound high explosive M44 bombs; altitude for the bombing run would be 24,000 feet.

In anticipation of a break in the weather a loading order was given at 0335 hours. An operational order at 0600 hours confirmed the Rotterdam shipyards would be the primary target; a secondary target wasn't named. The briefing was scheduled for 0800 hours with takeoff set for 0935 hours.

The takeoffs went according to schedule; the last aircraft was airborne at 0946 hours. At approximately 1026 hours a pilot aborted the mission due to a solid overcast and loss of contact with the formation. The crew reported seeing a mid-air collision involving two B-17s.

The collision occurred in the vicinity of Wellington as they passed through a solid overcast. The aircraft involved were *Ooold Soljer* (#41-24559) from the 360th Bomb Squadron and *Two Beauts* (#42-29573) from the 358th Bomb Squadron.

According to the crew that witnessed the collision, it appeared *Two Beauts* nudged the starboard wing of *Ooold Soljer*, that the outboard engine, then the wing fell away. Both aircraft went into a dive from 7000 feet.

Crew members killed aboard *Two Beauts* were Lt. Dunn, Lt. Hafen, Lt. Boyd, Lt. Lizzote, T/Sgt Yager, S/Sgt Clowe, and S/Sgt Shellman. S/Sgt Testoni, T/Sgt Hogue, and S/Sgt Nowak were able to bail out. T/Sgt Hogue and S/Sgt Nowak suffered injuries and were hospitalized.

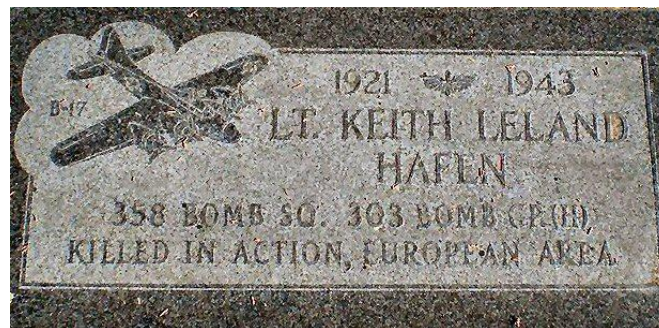
There were two survivors from *Ooold Soljer* who were able to bail out. These were T/Sgt Clayton Balcombe (radio) and S/Sgt Tom McGriffin (left waist gunner). Considering the moment of collision and the ball turret position, I can think of nothing more terrifying.

Based upon research and hazards of the ball turret, a waist gunner would open the latch and help the gunner out. However during a recent conversation with Clayton Balcombe, an *Ooold Soljer* survivor, the gunner had the means to exit the turret by himself. According to Balcombe, they didn't enter the turret until the aircraft assumed a defensive posture.

The seventeen remaining B-17s continued on and bombed the Rotterdam shipyards with fifty-one tons of bombs from 24,000 feet. Both *Ooold Soljer* and *Two Beauts* crashed near Mears Ashby, UK. Fifteen crew members died and five survived. A memorial and plaque were established at the Mears Ashby crash site March 31, 1996.

As a youngster I stood at Keith Hafen's gravesite. To be honest, I felt drawn to it. The marker was immaculate and impressive. It contained his name and rank, a B-17 emblem, and the group he served with: *358 BOMB SQ. 303 BOMB GP. (H)*

I've encountered notation as to the location of Keith's mortal remains. One of them infers they lie at Brookwood American Cemetery at Brookwood, Surrey, England. Yet another infers they were repatriated. If repatriation was indeed accomplished, the date of such action is not available to the author. However, based upon research and gravesite location, I consider repatriation accurate.



Keith was 22 years of age when he gave his life. I admire his willingness to accept responsibility, to face the odds that might possibly take his life. As a point of a star proves relevant to grandeur and brilliance, might it signify, yet also be enhanced by the courage of Keith Hafen.

2nd Lt. Stanley M. Schmutz



Stanley Schmutz was born April 27th in St. George, Utah. He was the son of John and Ada Schmutz. The actual year of his birth remains a mystery. The 1940 census states he was born sometime around 1919. The birth date noted in his obituary gives the year 1923, while a WW II veteran source shows 1917.

My earliest recollection of Stan Schmutz relates to a local newspaper. It featured a picture of Stan standing inside a B-17. I don't recall the caption underneath nor the article involved, only his name. Based upon Stan's military record, it might've noted he was missing in action or survived a prisoner of war compound.

I knew nothing about Stan until I entered high school. Stan was an accomplished musician and a member of the Woodward Junior High School faculty. I enrolled in one of his classes as a freshman and later as a sophomore. I was also a member of the 'a capella' chorus. Stan was blessed with a keen sense of pitch. If a student was a little off-key Stan was bound to hear it. I considered Stan *the human tuning fork*.

Stan was likeable, yet on occasion, displayed a quick temper. Stan insisted on everyone's attention. If students weren't focused on the lesson, a blackboard eraser or a piece of chalk was headed in their direction. We were told there were reasons for Stan's quick temper. Those reasons had never been revealed. Then one of the teachers found time to explain.

I remember sitting in her history class as a sophomore. We anticipated a second-hand account of an amazing story of survival, under extraordinary circumstances. I recall the story verbatim. She recounted Stan's military exploits as well as a trauma common to former prisoners of war.

She told us Stan served as a bombardier aboard a B-17 Flying Fortress. While on a mission over France their plane was shot down and Stan was able to bail out. She said he came down on a farm of some kind and was befriended by a French couple. She said they were able to hide Stan but only for a day or so. A haystack and barn were mentioned.

She said Stan was eventually captured by German troops and taken to a prisoner of war compound. She mentioned how cold it was, how food had proven a luxury. She said they were starving and were killing rats and eating them.

I've accepted this story as gospel for the past fifty-nine years. I have no clue as to the origin. I wasn't aware of the fallacy therein until April of this year. Moreover, I witnessed something in 2006 that had my head spinning. I'll recount that event at the appropriate juncture.

Stan entered military service August 7, 1942 at Fort Douglas, Utah. Branch of service was the U. S. Army Air Corps. In 1944 Stan was a member of the 15th Air Force, 5th Bomb Wing, 301st Bomb Group (H), 353rd Bomb Squadron. The 5th Bomb Wing was headquartered at Foggia, Italy. The 301st Bomb Group (H) was based at Lucera, Italy.

On August 7, 1944, two years to the day after entering military service, Stan was preparing for a mission. The target would be the Blechhammer Oil Refineries at Breslau. Crew members aboard B-17G (#42-31697) were: 2nd Lt. Anthony Pryde (pilot); 2nd Lt. Charles Sloca (co-pilot); 2nd Lt. Wilfred G. Burton (navigator); 2nd Lt. Stanley M. Schmutz (bombardier); Sgt. Lester E. Ward Jr. (engineer – gunner); Sgt. Richard A. Leyendecker (radio operator – gunner); Sgt. Arthur L. Bradley (ball turret gunner); Sgt. Wallace L. Stanson (waist gunner); Sgt. Harry C. Frisby (tail gunner).

As they arrived over the target they were hit by flak and the navigator was badly injured. They couldn't keep up with the formation since they'd lost one of their engines. They were told to try to make it to Russia since they were so far north. But they decided to try to return from whence they came. The sky conditions were 70% altocumulus with cloud tops at 12,000 feet.

They were flying without navigation since the navigator was wounded. The bombardier was looking after him in the nose section. They simply flew south, alone. They were losing altitude. They were concerned one of the wings might break off due to a windmilling propellor. The co-pilot, Lt. Charles Sloca, prepared crew members for a bail out.

The pilot, Lt. Anthony Pryde, realizing the wounded navigator could neither move nor get out, aborted the bail out. The bombardier, Lt. Stanley Schmutz, at great personal risk, offered to bail out with the navigator. According to Lt. Sloca, this would've meant almost certain death since they were issued chest-mounted parachutes. Lt. Schmutz would later be recommended for a medal.

Lt. Pryde decided to crash land in a level corn field. It was August, corn stalks were loaded with ripe ears of corn. The landing gear would remain in the up position. It would have to be a belly-landing. The landing was a complete success, they were able to remove the navigator from the plane.

Several farmers carrying weapons walked up and led them to an area with a barn. A few crew members were able to walk back and set fire to the plane using flares. Most of the plane was destroyed. The navigator was loaded into a truck and transported to a hospital. The police took the rest of the crew to the local jail.

The crew had no idea where they were. The people who captured them didn't speak English. The only word spoken that seemed to have meaning was "Ungar". According to Lt. Sloca, they were in greater danger in the hands of local citizens, than in the hands of German troops.

When the Germans arrived they placed the crew members in a Budapest prison. The crew assumed they'd landed in Hungary. Members of the crew were taken as prisoners of war; enlisted in one group, officers in another.

The navigator, Lt. Wilfred Burton, did not survive. It's my understanding he was buried somewhere near the crash site. Lt. Pryde became ill while enroute to a prison camp. He was removed from the train at Vienna and taken somewhere else.

Lt. Sloca and Lt. Schmutz were taken to Stalag Luft III, then later to Marlag-Milag, where British POWs were being held. This occurred when the Russians invaded Germany. They were POWs for almost a year.

During a conversation with Charles Sloca he described conditions near wars end. As they made their way back in deep snow and sub-zero temperatures, Stan was clinging to an old violin case with a clarinet inside. He suggested Stan should lighten his load and leave them behind. He said at the outset Stan refused, but following hours in sub-zero temperatures he left them in the snow and never looked back.

As to the fate of Lt. Pryde I had no information suggesting he survived or didn't survive. However, following a recent conversation with Charles Sloca, Lt. Pryde's survival was confirmed. Lt. Pryde was awarded the Air Medal with one Oak-Leaf Cluster. The meritorious achievement period was July 14 through July 19, 1944 and July 20 through August 7, 1944.

Three witnesses to B-17G (#42-31697) being crippled and leaving the formation were noted the following day, August 8, 1944:

(1) 2nd Lt. Charles L. Potter, pilot of #42-32105, was flying the 23rd position with #42-31697 in the 13th position below his left wing. Potter stated #42-31697 had three good engines running; if not jumped by German fighters they could've made it to Russia. He said the number two engine appeared to have been hit by a burst from an ME-109, since the wing was covered with oil. They were feathering the engine when last seen heading east. No parachutes were seen.

(2) 2nd Lt. John W. McClendon was the navigator aboard the squadron lead ship. He stated #42-31697 was on their left wing in the 13 position. After coming off target and getting back on course at 1209 hours, the pilot of #42-31697 called the leader and reported he had a wounded navigator aboard, that his oxygen was shot out. The leader suggested they drop beneath the clouds and try to make it to the Russian lines, some 220 to 240 miles to the east. McClendon added they remained in position for four or five minutes then pulled out, as if they took their advice.

(3) 2nd Lt. Novello A. Gubitosi was the bombardier aboard A/C #42-32105 in the 23rd position, second wave. He said he saw what he thought was #42-31697 peeling off from the formation and heading eastward. He thought the plane had a good chance for survival since it didn't appear seriously disabled. He saw no parachutes.

A number of years following the war, questions arose regarding the location or the country where the belly-landing occurred. There were inferences suggesting the landing actually occurred in Slovakia rather than Hungary. After researching this possibility I've located notations to that effect: 7 Aug 44 B-17G (#42-31697) crash landing at Kava-Martovce, Slovakia.

Sometime during 2006 I was watching a documentary on one of the cable channels. The subject was World War Two in Europe. A segment of footage showed a B-17 in an open field following a belly-landing. The footage included the aircraft and several crew members. They wore frowns on their faces and their hands were held high.

One member of the crew looked familiar. He was the spitting image of a young Stan Schmutz. His frown was very familiar, as well as his mannerisms and the clenched, rippling jaw muscles. I was convinced the man was Stan Schmutz.

Then I recalled the story from 1953. We were told Stan's B-17 was shot down over France and Stan was able to bail out. So my only option was to dismiss what I'd seen. I considered the crew member's likeness a coincidence.

Six years have passed since watching that documentary. Had I only taken time to write down the serial numbers on that B-17; had I only looked for the 'Y' on the

tail section. Moreover, during a recent conversation with Charles Sloca, it was confirmed the filming of the crash site and crew was indeed a probability.

The last time I spoke with Stan came at the close of the school year in 1953. Stan was seated at his desk. He was signing yearbooks. I took my place in line. When I handed Stan my yearbook I turned to a section in the back filled with candid photographs.

There was Stan at a very young age. He was seated in a tire swing. I asked Stan to autograph the picture. He turned to me with a broad smile and asked, "Are you sure you want me to sign there"? This is my last memory of Stan Schmutz.

Stan endured hardships and trauma few might ever survive. Stan was a fighter, a real survivor. As a point of a star proves relevant to grandeur and brilliance, might it signify, yet also be enhanced by the strength and courage of Stan Schmutz.

2nd Lt. Samuel Walter Chynoweth



I wasn't familiar with the name Sam Chynoweth until the Spring of 1956. Just inside the office of Dixie Junior College president Arthur F. Bruhn, a group of plaques were mounted on a wall. They were in commemoration of the military service of alumni who had given their lives in defense of this country. The name on one of the plaques read *Samuel W. Chynoweth*. He was missing over the Gulf of Mexico.

I've always been intrigued by this story. I've always wondered how, I've always wondered why. I wasn't sure which branch of service was involved, only Sam's name and the connection with the Gulf of Mexico. Since the Gulf of Mexico was involved, I assumed Sam served with the United States Navy. I was incorrect.

Samuel Walter Chynoweth was born March 18, 1921 in Henrieville, Garfield County, Utah. Sam was a member of the Dixie Junior College basketball team and a member of the Dixie Hellcats. This proves ironic since Sam and Keith Hafen played the same position on the same basketball team, both had been members of the Dixie Hellcats.

The date Sam entered military service is unknown at this writing. However, according to a Utah military index Sam's county of residence was Millard. Sam held the rank of 2nd Lieutenant with the U. S. Army Air Corps. According to the military index, cause of death was *DNB (died non-battle)*.

In 1943 Sam was assigned to the 1079th Twin Engine Flying Training Squadron at Freeman AAF, located near Seymour, Indiana. Graduates at Freeman went on to

fly multi-engine aircraft such as the B-17 Flying Fortress, the B-24 Liberator, and the B-29 Super Fortress. On October 23, 1943 Sam was involved in an accident during takeoff while piloting a Beechcraft AT-10BH (#42-2260).

In November of 1943, the 88th Bombardment Group was assigned to 3rd Bomber Command at Avon Park AAF, Florida. The 88th BG was a B-17 Flying Fortress Replacement Training Unit (RTU). The 88th BG was inactivated May 1, 1944.

Notwithstanding inactivation of the 88th, Sam was serving with 3rd Air Force, assigned to a Replacement Training Unit (RTU) at Avon Park AAF. The mission of 3rd Air Force was threefold: (1) provide coastal defense; (2) train air crews; (3) conduct anti-submarine patrols.

On May 22, 1944 Sam departed Avon Park AAF as the pilot of B-17F (#42-30555). The aircraft entered Gulf of Mexico airspace and was never seen again; a total loss of crew and aircraft. Whatever occurred must've happened in the blink of an eye. I've been unable to locate reference to crew member names, distress calls, or radio communications.

As a point of a star proves relevant to grandeur and brilliance, might it signify, yet also be enhanced by the strength and courage of Sam Chynoweth. Sam was 23 years of age. His greatest gift to this country was his life. The leaner the years, more significant the gift.

Sergeant Walter Voss Jensen



The 1940 census claims Walter Jensen was born in 1931 but I've found no record of the exact date. The census has the family residence located at 236 West 100 North in St. George, Utah.

I knew Walter Jensen when I was eleven or twelve years of age. I don't recall seeing him after that. He was six years my senior yet he played a role in my life. Walter's parents were the proprietors of Jensen's Pharmacy. Walter was active in the family business.

The reason I knew Walter for such a short time relates to medical prescriptions filled and refilled. My parents would drive to the pharmacy, pull in and park, then send me inside. I was to pick up a prescription or wait for a refill. I struggled with the similarity of two ordinary words: *subscription* and *prescription*. Whenever Walter asked if he could help me with something, I told him I was there to pick up

a *subscription* or have one refilled. I couldn't seem to grasp the correct word. But Walter always smiled and replied, "I think you mean a prescription". I believe most individuals would've laughed but Walter never did.

Walter seemed to understand frustrations and embarrassments common to a youngster. Not only my own, but any youngster in town. He had a way of putting youngsters at ease. He chose to encourage rather than ridicule. Considering my beleaguered childhood, I've never forgotten how important that was.

Candy bars were expensive. Nickels were hard to come by. I remember wanting a candy bar or a soft drink when I didn't have any money. People like Walter Jensen are rare; they come along once in a lifetime. I remember Walter handing out candy bars to kids with empty pockets.

My parents opened a business on Main Street in 1949. It was located on the site of the old Wadsworth Fountain. Following a few changes and improvements, the name was changed to Rex's Fountain. In 1951, at the age of 14, my father insisted I become involved in the family enterprise. I hoped to emulate Walter's personal merits.

When North Korean forces invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950 I was the shoeshine boy at Prisbrey's Barber Shop. I knew one or two individuals who were drafted or volunteered, but the name *Walter Jensen* never came to mind.

I was seated inside the Dixie theater when hostilities ceased in July of 1953. A siren began its prolonged, wailing high-pitch sound. It had normally confirmed emergencies and the noon hour. I was concerned. I hurried up the aisle to the concession stand and inquired. I was told hostilities in Korea had come to an end.

I wasn't aware of Walter's fate until my sophomore year in high school. I was at the city park for a celebration of some kind. I overheard the following statement: *Walter Jensen's listed as missing in Korea.*

Walter Jensen was a member of the 1st Cavalry Division, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Battalion, HQ Company; their encampment near Unsan in present-day North Korea. Beginning at dusk November 1, 1950 the regiment was overrun by the Chinese 39th Corps, two Chinese infantry divisions.

An accidental encounter, as intruders are to fire ants; a symphony of psychological terror orchestrated by horns, whistles, bugles, and flares. These were 20,000 well-trained Chinese infantrymen, experts in tactics of guerrilla warfare, under cover of darkness, supported only by mortars.

Walter Jensen remains MIA. I've been told there's a marker for Walter at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific aka: Punchbowl in Honolulu, Hawaii. I've been told a marker exists at Tonaquint Cemetery in St. George, Utah. My source for both is deceased. Individuals have searched for a marker at Tonaquint yet a marker has never been found.

Walter and his girlfriend Barbara cherished an endearing relationship; an endearment that touches the heart, brings images to mind as memories prevail; as fate would have it, an endearment in solitude for more than sixty years.

During a recent conversation Barbara told me Walter had his sights set on being an airline pilot. She said he lied about his age so he could serve with friends of the qualifying age. Considering Walter's age and the horror of Unsan, it must've proven a terror beyond comprehension; a nightmare like most come to dream, yet few come to experience.

No markers, no memories, as if he never existed. These prove the catalyst for what I've written here. I consider this a tragedy, an oversight of puzzling proportion. As a point of a star proves relevant to grandeur and brilliance, might it signify, yet also be enhanced by the legacy of Walter Jensen.

Epilogue

How do we remember men like Rodney Neilson, Keith Hafen, Stan Schmutz, Sam Chynoweth, and Walter Jensen? *We eulogize their exploits in stone.* Yet mistakes are made; the essential solution is threefold: *We care enough to be accurate; we verify the spelling of their names; we verify their branch of service.*

Example: the United States Air Force was formed as a separate branch of the military September 18, 1947 under the National Security Act of 1947. Individuals who lost their lives during World War Two were never members of the United States Air Force.

I'd like to see a Jensen Boulevard. I'd like to see a Keith Hafen Park. I'd like to see a Rodney Neilson High School. I'd like to see a Schmutz Auditorium. I'd like to see a Chynoweth Street. Sports figures receive greater acknowledgement than those who ensured their freedoms.

Measurements of value define our destiny. They're determined by the freedom to think, evaluate, and follow that dream; pursuant to a quality of life based upon principle and responsibility ensuring that freedom.

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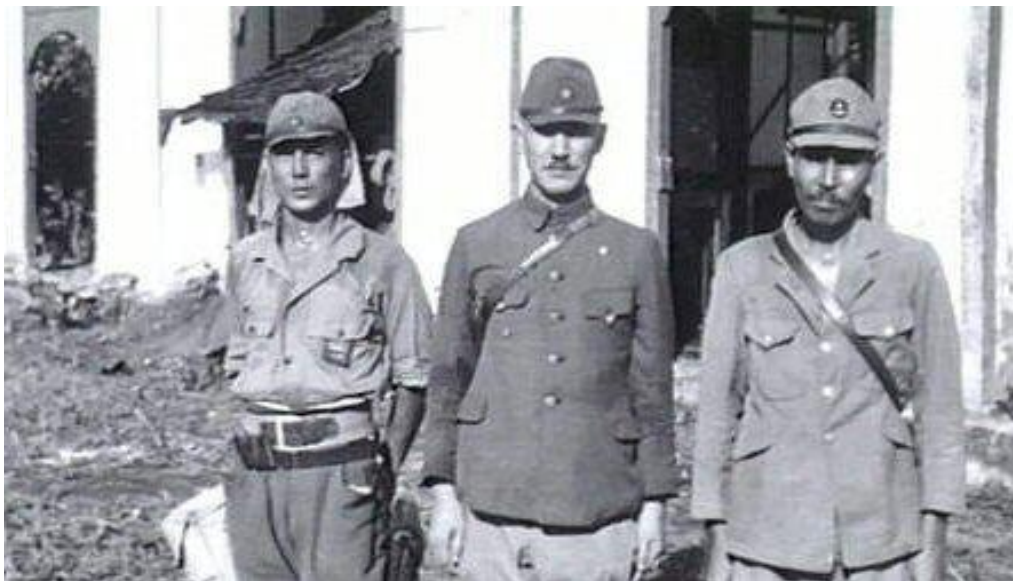
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Photos – Letters – War Ration Stamps



*Talud Islands Garrison
L-R: Captain Takahashi - Colonel Shige Koba - Lieutenant Shigeda*



***bombed out church at Beo, Karakelong Island
October 14, 1945***



***Australian military examines Japanese weapons stored in bombed out church
Beo, Karakelong Island - October 14, 1945***



***Colonel Shige Koba comes aboard HMAS Bowen following surrender
October 13, 1945***



***Colonel Shige Koba enroute to Morotai for war crimes trials
November 3, 1945***



Lt. Taleshi Matsuzaki enroute to Morotai for war crimes trials – November 3, 1945



***Morotai war crimes trials commencement -- November 29, 1945
Captain John Woodcock of the AIF leads those accused into court
Captain Tokio Iwasa of the Japanese 32nd Division is first in line***



Lt. Tanaka and Major Tamura wrestle inside the Morotai compound



Sergeant Mannering of the RAAF examines cell where an allied airman was held



*Japanese officers sentenced to death play cards while awaiting results of their appeal
December 18, 1945*



*Japanese prisoners hear proclamation of liberation for Talaud Islands – October 15, 1945
(front row) – Colonel Koba – Major Tamura – Lt. Shigeda – (second row) Capt. Takahashi*



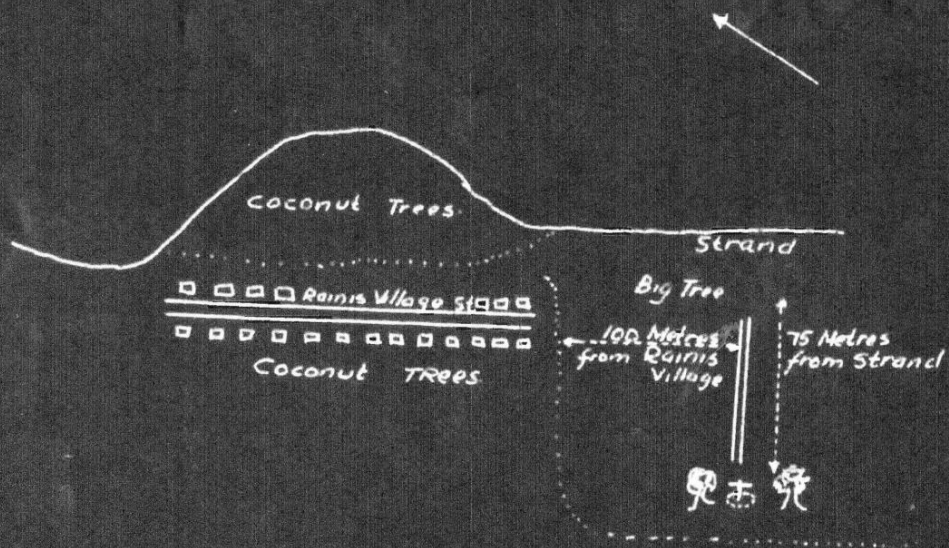
Captain Tokio Iwasa, with head bowed, receives guilty verdict -- November 30, 1945



*Theofilus Joera
Maintained diary of Japanese atrocities*

PICTURE OF GRAVE OF RODNEY NELSON

ON RAINIS, KARAKELANG ISLAND



The place of the Grave is behind

" LIANG POEH "

The grave is round.

Rodney Neilson's grave location near the village of Rainis
**** (the word 'grave' and Rodney's last name are misspelled)**
sketch drawn by Theofilus Joera -- 1945



*Talaud Islands native women perform a dance following the ceremony of liberation
October 14, 1945*



*Theofilus Joera being interviewed by the Australian military
November 6, 1945*



***Morotai war crimes trials verdicts - December 6, 1945
Lt. Asoaka (nearest camera) not guilty - Pte Suzuki and Pte Oishi guilty***



***Natives attending Morotai war crimes trials as witnesses to Japanese atrocities
L-R: Josef Mietoem Theofilus Joera Manuel Tjong***



***Japanese officers awaiting the results of their appeal – December 18, 1945
Lt. Misumi with the bamboo flute cheers the other two
Major Tamura on the left - Colonel Koba on the right***



***Beo, Karakelong Island - October 15, 1945
Japanese prisoners dump ammunition into 15 fathoms of water***



B-17F Ooold Soljer (41-24559) -- courtesy Gary L. Moncur



B-17F Two Beauts (42-29573) -- courtesy Gary L. Moncur



B-17F Ooold Soljer (41-24559)
courtesy Ben Brown -- Sywell Aerodrome -- Northamptonshire, UK



B-17F Two Beauts (42-29573) -- courtesy Mark Styling -- aviation artist



**Memorial plaque placed at the Mears Ashby crash site March 31, 1996
courtesy Gary L. Moncur**



**2nd Lt. Anthony Pryde as Air Cadet with wife Dorothy
Pilot of B-17G (42-31697) -- belly-landing at Kava-Martovce, Slovakia -- August 7, 1944
courtesy Peter Kassak - Slovakia**



IN REPLY REFER TO:

AGPD-R Pryde, Anthon
(26 Jan 45) O 764 785

WAR DEPARTMENT
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



26 January 1945

• Mrs. Dorothy J. Pryde,
Biggs, California.

My dear Mrs. Pryde:

I have the honor to inform you that, by direction of the President, the Air Medal and one Oak-leaf Cluster, representing an additional award of the same decoration, have been awarded to your husband, Second Lieutenant Anthon Pryde, Air Corps. The citation is as follows:

AIR MEDAL AND ONE OAK-LEAF CLUSTER

"For meritorious achievement in aerial flight while participating in sustained operational activities against the enemy from 14 July 1944 to 19 July 1944, and from 20 July 1944 to 7 August 1944."

Since these awards cannot be formally presented to your husband at this time, the decorations will be presented to you. The Air Medal and one Oak-leaf Cluster will be forwarded to the Commanding General, Ninth Service Command, Fort Douglas, Utah, who will select an officer to make the presentation. The officer selected will communicate with you concerning your wishes in the matter.

Sincerely yours,


ROBERT H. DUNLOP,
Brigadier General,
Acting The Adjutant General.

**Letter received by Mrs. Dorothy Pryde -- Air Medal and One Oak- Leaf Cluster
courtesy Peter Kassak - Slovakia**



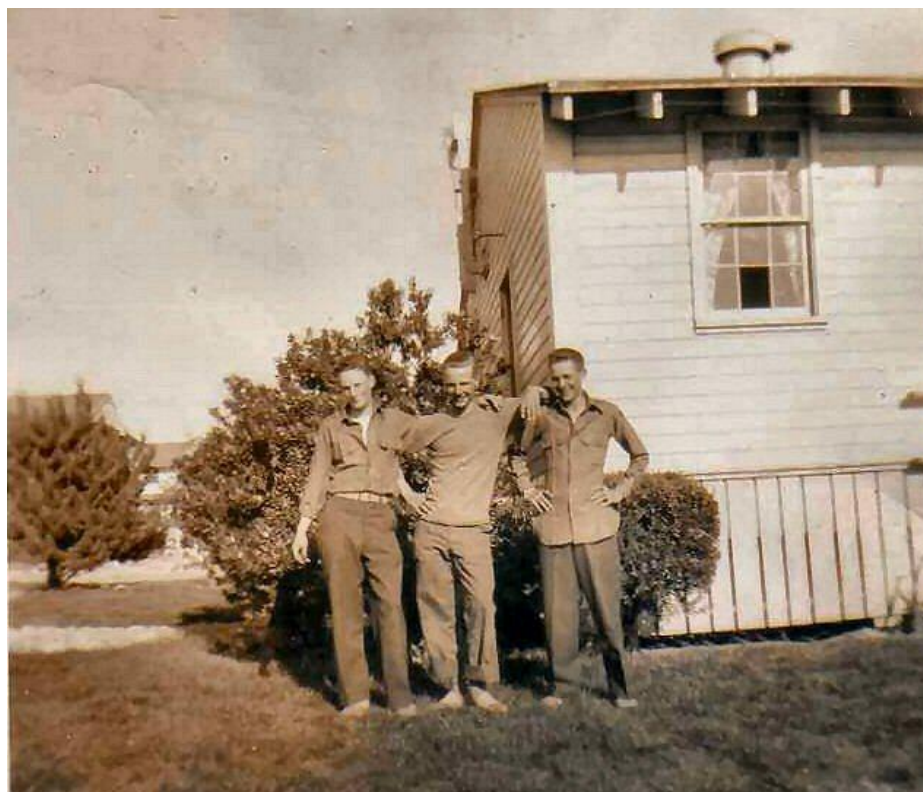
***2nd Lt. Charles Sloca -- co-pilot B-17G (42-31697)
belly-landing at Kava-Martovce, Slovakia -- August 7, 1944
a prisoner of war with Stanley Schmutz at Stalag Luft III
courtesy Peter Kassak - Slovakia***



***Walter Jensen
Woodward Junior High School***



Walter Jensen (at right) with arm around buddy at Fort Ord, California



Walter Jensen (at center of group) at Fort Ord, California



Unsan battlefield - 2005 - flat area in center of picture - courtesy David Methereil



Part of Unsan battlefield area - 2005 - courtesy David Methereil



Looking down on part of Unsan battlefield area – 2005 – courtesy David Metherell



***Looking toward where the Battle of Unsan took place -- 2005
courtesy David Metherell***



U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

Dec. 1, 1944

Dear Larry + Jerry -

Well here I am back in harness again after a very nice three weeks off. I spent five days in Denver, six in Texas and a week in Los Angeles - Went to the horse races three times and to one football game. Really had a good time.

Thanks a million for the books. You gave me a very nice surprise, fellow. I have been unable to find stuff you wanted, but I'm sending the rings. Hope you both like them.

I'm in St. George again. Let look you guys up. Thanks again for the books.

Your Friend
Virgil

Letter my brother Larry received from Virgil in 1944
(Jerry was a friend)

	TO: Mrs. Bob Nelson St. George, Utah Box 301	FROM: Pfc. Miles G. Nelson 37724225 Co. 7424 Inf. 2 po. 443 2 postmaster New York N.Y. Dec - 16-44 (Sender's complete address above)
[CENSOR'S STAMP]	SEE INSTRUCTION NO. 2	
Dear Rethleo & Family I am over here some where in Germany - high up in the mountains and colder than than hell it looks as if it might snow. It sounds like the first day of deer season around here tonight but you get used to the noise - we are as comfortable as possible considering where we are - I would give a lot to be able to take my clothes off and get in a nice warm bed - I don't have much time to write but I try and write to mother and Melba so you will have to read these letters once in a while - it is hard to write over here as you can't write much and nothing to write on only your knee or the ground - We were in France and Belgium a while but most of the countries are the same only some are colder - we slept in mud in France and was always wet - you get so you can stand anything and sleep anywhere - we are still looking forward to coming home before too long - I hope you are all well and have a nice Christmas - I hope Santa Claus can find my fat hole - Tell the folks hello - I hope my mail catches me before long - Love Miles		
HAVE YOU FILLED IN COMPLETE ADDRESS AT TOP?	REPLY BY V...-MAIL	HAVE YOU FILLED IN COMPLETE ADDRESS AT TOP?

V-Mail received from my uncle Miles dated December 16, 1944
 7th Armored Division -- 106th Infantry
 Wounded Christmas Day 1944 -- Battle of the Bulge
 Relieved by the 82nd Airborne Division

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
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- 2 Each stamp authorizes you to purchase rationed goods in the quantities and at the times designated by the Office of Price Administration. Without the stamps you will be unable to purchase those goods.
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- 4 Do not throw this book away when all of the stamps have been used, or when the time for their use has expired. You may be required to present this book when you apply for subsequent books.

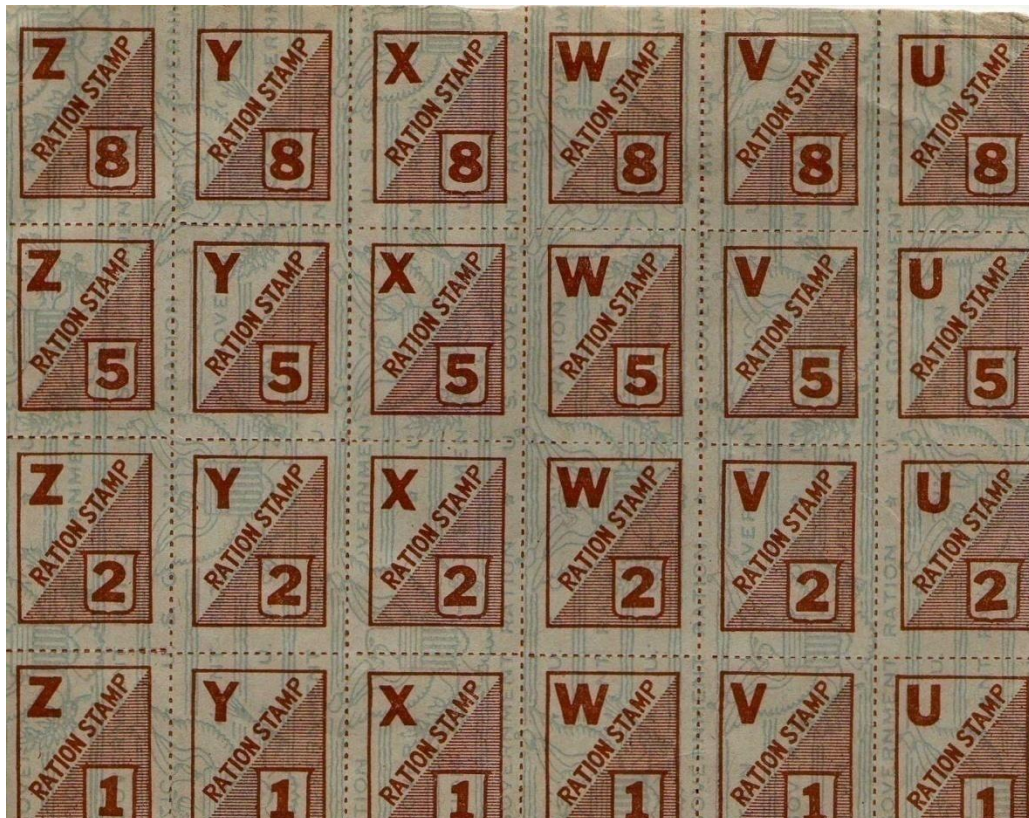
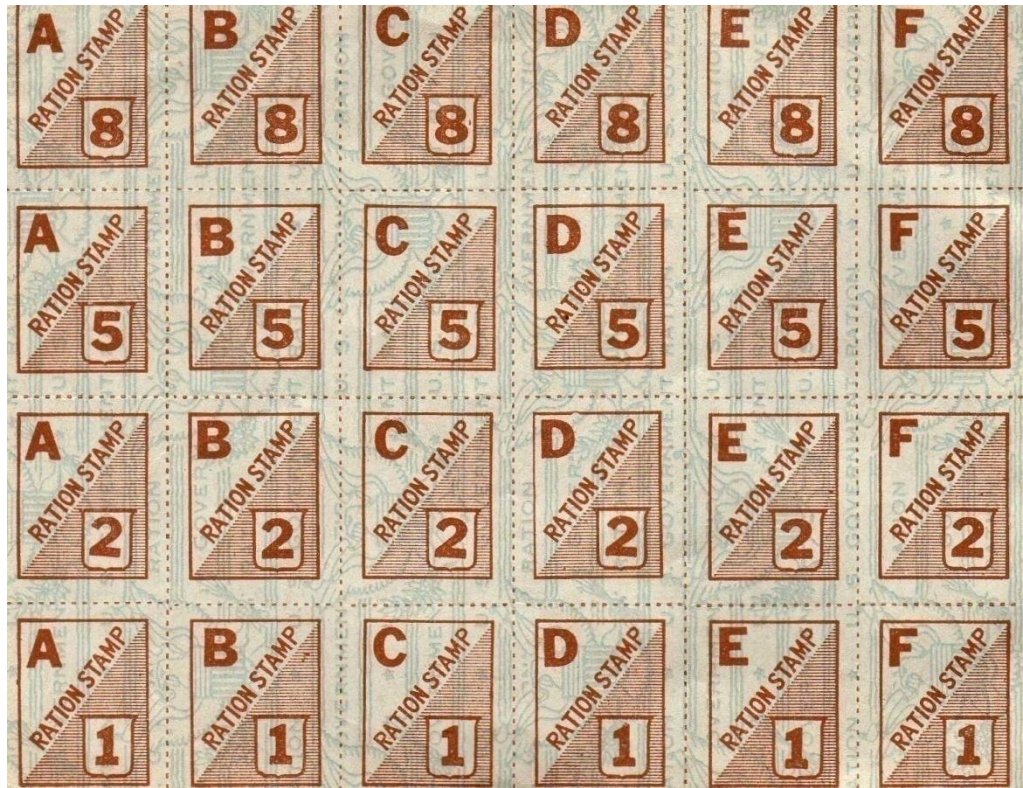
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This book is your Government's assurance of your right to buy your fair share of certain goods made scarce by war. Price ceilings have also been established for your protection. Dealers must post these prices conspicuously. Don't pay more.

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"If you don't need it, DON'T BUY IT."

16-32299-1 ☆ U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1943











- END -