



Date of event: January to April 1944

Date written: Same

GOING OVERSEAS, Part 1

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION: In the first few months of 1944, the 40th Bomb Group shipped overseas to take the first B-29s into combat. The movement overseas was a massive undertaking, involving thousands of men, dozens of B-29s, and huge amounts of specialized equipment for maintenance and operations. Some men flew over; some sailed via the Pacific; and some sailed across the Atlantic, through the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal. Each group had its adventures and its difficulties. We have collected a few stories about the trip overseas. This issue contains part of the story, with more to appear in Issue #24.

Written by: Morton (Marty) Roth in 1944 (Edited 7/88 to shorten)

I was a member of the 1st Bombardment Maintenance Squadron when it was formed at Pratt, Kansas, and it was alerted about January 20, 1944. On February 1 at 8:00 p.m., we were told to prepare to ship at any moment. At 11:00 p.m. we marched to the train and boarded.

Predictions of our destination were many, including both coasts, and lively discussions helped pass the time away. Friday afternoon, February 4, we knew we were close, for residents of Virginia recognized their home state. At 5:00 p.m. we detrained—a hungry, dirty, solemn group of men silently marching to the barracks. After a meal and a shower, our spirits rose. Once more we became a jolly bunch, and nonsensical rumors were the result. After another week of processing and physical exams, we got orders on Feb. 10 to board ship at 3:00 a.m. on Feb. 11. Not many of us slept.

Next morning we marched silently and awkwardly to a waiting train. It was a damp, misty day, and rail fell intermittently. We entrained for Norfolk harbor. Arrived at 6:00, weary. We could see our ship through the fog. Red Cross women greeted us with a smile and delicious hot coffee. After an hour or so we were called to board ship. It was the last time we were to set foot on the States for some time to come.

Our ship was the Liberty ship, "Abraham Lincoln." The vessel was unimpressive, small and not too sturdy, but we were soon to find out that the old boat could take it. Our quarters were very close—450 men in a space no larger than twice the size of a four-room compartment. Cots were suspended on a pole, six deep. One soldier was assigned to a cot with all his equipment. Anxious to get going, we sat around jabbering, all the next day while supplies were loaded. On Feb. 13 the ship sailed into the ocean and soon caused nausea among a few of us. We spent our first day becoming acclimated. The Transport Officer gave lectures on shipboard behavior and assigned emergency stations. We "hit the sack" gladly that night.

The next day we all became acquainted with sea sickness. A storm had cropped up. Vomiting was common, and the vomitus was all over. I took a phenobarbital and sat on deck all day. The ship

would lurch from side to side at a 30-degree angle, causing the Atlantic waters to flow onto the decks. Our 96-ship convoy was split up so badly that we could not see a single ship. Work in the dispensary and hospital was nearly impossible; drugs were strewn all over, and water was well above two inches. I went to sleep with one hand on the pole for fear of falling. Next morning the storm was raging at its peak. Those who got up to eat breakfast did so at risk. Between the lurching ship and the treacherous floor, there was no sure movement. A rope was spread across the mess line to hold on to, but it did not prevent a few injuries. Some of my buddies lacerated their scalps when they lost their footing, and we had to suture them. Lt. Petit, our Medical Officer, did a splendid job even though he was not feeling well. Again I stood on deck and took phenobarbitals to soothe my nerves.

Finally the next morning the sea became calm again. We settled down to a routine of daily work and playing cards, or reading. Card games went on 24 hours a day. Chow was rather poor; fresh meat was a rarity. Invariably it was powdered eggs for breakfast at 6:00 a.m., stew at 3:00 p.m., and cold sandwiches at 7:00 p.m. There was a crew of about 11 Navy men who manned the guns and ate three hearty meals in the galley. One day two of them became ill, and we treated them in the ship's hospital. They brought food from the galley whenever possible to show their appreciation. Often behind closed doors of the dispensary, we ate at wee hours of the morning.

Tuesday, Feb. 23, another storm cropped up-even more intense than the first. It was impossible to cook food so we were forced to go on field rations, "K" and "C". It wasn't until Feb. 29 that all became calm again. Our hopes rose when we were told that we were to see land the next day.

Wednesday, March 1, a beautiful clear warm morning, we got our first glimpse of land in 18 days-the "Rock of Gibraltar." We entered the Mediterranean Sea, which was calm and blue. The convoy split, with some ships heading for Casablanca, but we sailed east along the African coast so as to have an umbrella of air cover. Constantly planes roared overhead. The following day we were able to see Africa and Spain at the same time. As we crept up the African coastline, we knew we were soon to dock. Friday the port of Oran came into view, and we dropped anchor about 4:00 p.m.

In the evening twilight we walked down the gangplank carrying all our possessions. It was the first time we had set foot on terra firma for 32 days. Some of us looked mighty silly staggering about like little children walking for the first time. No doubt about our being expected for a number of trucks stood waiting to carry us to a nearby camp. We sped upward along a winding road, passing the fortress of Oran, and on to the Arab villages. Often the natives swarmed together in the road, causing our driver to stop, and begging for cigarettes, or "do you want to have sexual intercourse with my sister?" Finally we reached the camp and got our tent quarters. Gladly we hit the sack that night; some did not even bother to undress. We awoke the next morning frozen to the very marrows of our bones. Africa in winter is damp and cold. We got "C" rations and built fires to heat the food. The medics set up a temporary dispensary to hold sick call. For once a rumor became a reality: we could get passes to the city of Oran. I rushed to the orderly room and became one of the first in line. The third afternoon I was there I received a pass. After issue of a doughboy kit, we rode off in trucks. The first thing we did was to visit the immense Red Cross. I ate a few sandwiches and went to a movie. The night dwindled away with me propped up on a barstool, guzzling cognac and beer that tasted like urine. In a mild stupor, I met the truck to take us back to camp.

Slowly the days passed: posting guards, eating meals, routine sick call, and a very pleasant surprise-mail from home. During my stay I went to town once more and roamed about the city. I especially wanted to test my knowledge of French, but the French inhabitants paid their respects to the American soldier from a distance. The Arabs were willing to converse, but I stood my distance. They stole many a watch or precious gem from the GIs.

Thursday evening, March 10, we prepared to leave. Our cots were taken away, and we lay on the cold damp ground. Slowly the minutes passed into hours, and still we lay there conversing in the bitter cold. Finally dawn broke, and we met it with red-rimmed eyes. I don't believe that I was ever so cold in my life. Carrying pack and blanket roll, we moved to waiting trucks. We retraced the road from eight days before, detrucked along the shore, and lined up to march to a ship awaiting us in the harbor. We marched for about an hour, and lay down, very tired, on the docks awaiting further orders. After much delay, it was decided that the first two grades would have staterooms. We boarded the ship about noon and climbed to our assigned places. The ship was named "Champollion," manned by Free French merchant mariners and run by the English. During peacetime it had been a liner that traversed the Mediterranean. We lay in the harbor for over two days before shoving off to sea the morning of March 12.

That, and the following day, we enjoyed the beautiful sea. Tuesday afternoon, March 14, we sighted Italy and sailed up its coast to Naples harbor. From afar the city looked beautiful, but as we approached its coastline, we could see the damage and ruins from the pounding by the allied air forces. In the harbor all about us lay sunken vessels of all nations, and the city lay in a morbid state, with death, destruction, and sorrow all about. Small groups of Italian men rowed out to greet us and begged for food and smokes. As always, the GIs complied. Puffs of smoke from artillery fire could be seen in the distance, about 50 miles away, where the allied forces continued their attack. Observation planes circled the city constantly. With night came strict blackout regulations, and we ambled below to our sleeping quarters.

A terrific roar, followed by another, and still another, awakened us at 1:30 a.m. We hit the deck, reaching for life preservers. A few panicky ones ventured up the stairway, but the majority were level-headed and remained below. As quickly as the confusion began, it ended. Soon we learned that German bombers had dropped their eggs in the harbor. Our ship trembled from near misses. After discussion, we hit our sacks again.

The next day we were tense and on the alert for anything. Toward evening we left Naples with no regrets. Mt. Vesuvius, an active volcano overlooking Naples, started to erupt. We maintained a high rate of speed for the following three days, passing through Messina Straits, by Sicily, along the boot of Italy and eastward into the Mediterranean.

Our only cause for excitement along the course was passing Crete, a Greek island held by the Germans. Monday, March 20, we passed Alexandria, Egypt. The following day we entered Port Said to dock, gather stores and refuel. Egyptian merchants sold their wares from small boats docked against our vessel. The next morning we entered the Suez Canal. We spent the entire day traversing the canal and dropped anchor in Port Suez that evening. Here lay the English fleet that roamed Asiatic waters. Ships of all types met the eye for miles about, notably the aircraft carriers, beautifully designed, and menacing in their latent power. A semiblackout was observed, for at the time this area was comparatively safe. The majority of us lay on deck until the early hours of morning, talking of a million different things, enjoying the pleasant, cool night air.

Thursday, March 23, we hoisted anchor and headed for the Red Sea. It got extremely warm, and a number of us got sunburned. Shores on both sides were nothing but white desert sands. The few inhabitants along the shore dwelt in cave huts, below the earth's surface to escape the intense heat.

My first experience with diarrhea occurred that night. About two in the morning, I awoke with cramps in my stomach. Up to the WC on the next deck I went, only to find 20 GIs waiting in line. I "sweated it out," literally. I finally reached the door just in time. I returned to my hammock and no sooner had lain down when the gripping pains started again. I hit the deck, but I knew it would be disastrous if I sweated out the line to the latrine, this time twice as long. It seems that all of us were afflicted with the same malady. No doubt something we "et"-British rations. I groped my way around to the main deck to another water closet, but all seats were taken. SRO at this performance being unwise, I groped about in the darkness in what I thought a lost cause. Silhouetted against the moonlight I saw a GI, pants down, sitting on the rail of the ship, holding onto a pole, excreting into the Red Sea. I dashed to the railing, pulled down my pants, and grabbed the other side of the pole. Relief was wonderful. Lucky for both of us the wind was not too strong. Nature beckoned a dozen or more times, so I spent the night close to that spot.

The next day was warmer, so warm we were allowed to sleep on deck. Hammocks were tied all over the ship. Sleeping under the beautiful moonlit starry sky with a warm wind blowing was a treat. Card games, dice, shooting the breeze, or just gazing at the ocean were our only diversions. The greatest difficulty in gambling was the many kinds of monies used: American invasion, French, English, Egyptian, and Italian. Flying fish were plentiful, and I never tired of watching them. At times porpoises or sharks would appear. We passed a most interesting spot the next day: 11 rocks jutting out of the sea, which turned out to be the "Gates of Hell"--in peacetime, awesome; in wartime, perfect observation posts.

Monday, March 27, we docked at Port Aden, a small harbor compared to others we had seen. The heat would have been intense if not for the sea breeze. English vessels predominated the surrounding waters. Native swimmers swam out to the ship. Their native tongue was strange to us, but their gestures were clear. We threw coins into the water and watched them dive into the clear green sea. One native thrust about 15 coins into his mouth and still dove for more. Stores and fuel were again taken aboard.

Tuesday, March 28, we left Port Aden in early morning. Some time that day we entered the Indian Ocean. Here only slight danger lurked, for the fortunes of war had turned these waters from Jap-infested control six months ago into Allied hands. Three dull days passed slowly. On the fourth day, land was to be sighted. Our destroyer escort unloaded its depth charges, and sharp lookout for the enemy ceased.

The morning of April 1, 1944, Bombay's shoreline came into view. Sight of land always caused happiness aboard, and this was no exception. We docked about 1100 with eager anticipation. It takes less than 15 minutes for a soldier to gather all his possessions. We hastily threw on our packs, lifted our barracks' bags, clambered down the gangplank, and marched to a waiting train. The Indian version of a troop train resembles a box car lined with wooden benches to serve all purposes. We settled down and drew British "B" rations. A highlight was issue of two cans of American beer, our first since leaving home. Soon we got under way. The scenery was barren sand spots, occasional trees, creeks, rice paddies, and animals that looked half alive grazing on dry weeds. About every hour the train would stop, and beggars would come to our windows to plead for food, money, or

cigarettes. They were trained professional beggars: young children who sang, danced, and spoke GI slang; and women carrying babies, exposing their half-dry breasts and pointing to their empty stomachs.

For 4 days and 4 nights we traveled in this cramped, hot, dusty train. Wednesday, April 4, in late afternoon, we got off at Dhulai, a rest camp. Afoot with pack, carbine, and barracks bag, we marched to our barracks. We made our bunks, ate supper, and hit the sack. Next morning, we were told about this place. Nearly the entire speech by our Intelligence Officer consisted of "don'ts" and "can'ts." Food was terrible: hard water, buffalo steak, and vulture eggs. We ate at a Chinese restaurant located some distance from our barracks. Italian POWs, captured in the North African campaign, were plentiful here. With my limited knowledge of Italian, I made fast friends with them. Days were extremely hot; nights cool. Change of climatic conditions and poor, greasy food gave many of us diarrhea. Six days sped by quickly, as we played sports and bought souvenirs.

Early on Tuesday, April 11, we marched to the train, boarded, and left Dhulai. The same dull, hot, dusty trip we endured before, we underwent again. On Saturday, April 15, 1944, in mid-afternoon, we sighted a flying field with B-29s. We knew that was it, our destination: Chakulia, India.

Written By: George W. Steinman in 1944

[Diary started Jan. 1, 1944, Pratt, KS] 1/1/44: Worked night shift. 1/10: Transferred from 19th Bomb Maintenance Squadron to 3rd BMS with Capt. H.B. Miller as CO. 1/11: Had a helluva cold in sinus. 1/13: Was to have gone to get supplies from Los Angeles, but Group transferred in a Tech Supply Officer to do it. 1/19: Jean (wife) arrived in Pratt; obtained room on Taylor Street. 1/22: Attended Officers' Club dance. Terrific time with pint of scotch. Have now completed 3 years service in military. 1/25: Jean returned to Chicago, and I really hated to see her leave! It may be the last time together for a long while. 1/27: Looks like the real McCoy about move, as mail is now being censored. 1/28: Worked all day crating and chasing supplies for Lt. Bello. 1/29: Finished with packing; move delayed 24 hours, maybe until Tuesday. 1/31: Pay Day; called mother & Butch; first time realized I am going.

2/1: (Tuesday) Left Pratt on train at midnite. 2/2: Time to spare on train; went through Kansas City and then St. Louis. 2/3: On train travelling through Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Huntington, WV. 2/4: Arrived at staging area of Camp Patrick Henry, VA. Marched to barracks area, which is a large place. Troops moving out for overseas all the time. Have been assigned a loading detail and will leave 24 hours early. 2/6: (Sunday) Up at 0900 at Patrick Henry and had to censor mail. 2/7: Rained and snowed at P.H. No news about move. 2/9: Played pool at Officers' Club. 2/11: Rain. Ordered to report aboard vessel with advanced detail. H.R. 944, CALEB STRONG. Called Jean. 2/12: Entire squadron aboard by 1000. Left pier at Hampton Roads, VA, at 1412 and at midnite was laying in the Roads in a convoy. 2/13: Sunday services on sunny morning. Convoy moved out. 2/14: Convoy formed and started out on sea; was Officer of Day until midnite; high wind came at 1800 and got worse. 2/15: Awoke at 0220 in a helluva sea; everyone in #2 hold (EM) sick as ship was taking on water, we had 2 inches in our cabin; went topside at 0800 to find 60 mph gale, 50-foot waves, 65 temp, but storm subsided in afternoon; played cards on deck til midnite. 2/16: Up at 0715 for breakfast and on bridge until 1130 with convoy maneuvers; after dinner played Blackjack and won \$9; up on deck at 2300, stars out. 2/17: Up at 1000; bright and sunny day, but light rain in afternoon; beautiful sunset. 2/18: Up at 1000 to watch bad practice alert and gunnery, warm and rainy. 2/19: "Doc" Henry told me he has to operate (emergency appendicitis); sent out call for another doctor to

assist, DD SS Fred J. Talbott came alongside and shot a breeches buoy with doc coming over in a bosun's chair. He went back after the 1 hour 10 minute operation the same way. Was exciting watching the destroyers alongside in the heavy seas. 2/20: Slept till noon, then had turkey dinner; laid out on boat deck in the sun all afternoon; played cards till midnight. 2/21: Up at 0730 with classes until 1100; did washing today. 2/22: Woke at 1030. Boy came down from topside to say storm would arrive by supertime; no sleep all night from tossing around; sounded like boat was breaking up. 2/23: Up at 0730 as couldn't sleep with storm raging; barometer 29.70, but was down to 29.67. Sky cleared after noon, but this storm was much worse than previous one. Boys took it better, and there was no water in the holds, but did lose one life boat. Some boats in convoy in bad shape. 2/24: Storm still hanging on until afternoon; was O.D. from midnight to noon. 2/25: Dawn at 0645; bright and warm sun. Cleaned up men's quarters, removed #2 and #3 hatch covers, aired and scrubbed out. General Alarm practice at 1600; played cards til 0200 and had "best day yet." 2/26: Up at 1000 and changed sheets but didn't feel good; sky overcast and wind; wrote letters to Jean and home; played cards. 2/27: Slept till noon; read and played cards (losing \$10). 2/28: General Alarm caught me in bed at 1000, and I darned near broke neck trying to get out on wrong side. 2/29: Everyone speculating on where they are going; up on bridge to watch moon as was nice night despite heavy swell.

3/1 (Wednesday): Swell day; convoy split with some ships going to Casablanca; spent 4 hours on bridge talking to Skipper; nearing Gibraltar and should go into the straits about midnite. 3/2: Thru straits at 0452 and saw Gibraltar at sunup. Both Africa and Spanish coasts are visible: Had party in Officers' Mess with cake and cokes. 3/3: Neared Oran and headed for harbor at 1300; tied up at 1630; I stayed aboard ship as Sqdn left boat at 1800 for staging area. Harbor busy as hell. Worked all night loading baggage and TAT equipment on barges. 3/4: After 1 hour sleep, up at 0730 for breakfast on ship and finished cleaning by 1100 so left for C.P. #2 which is 12 miles from Oran. Tents, no floors; "C" rations; candlelight; etc., so to bed at 2130 with wind blowing and some rain; Bellos, Hadley, and I in tent together. 3/5: Up at 0800 for church services held on side of hill. Still on "C" rations. Received 9 letters from home so went to Red Cross hut to write. 3/6: Up for good breakfast, not much doing. Went into Oran Officers' Club and got a bit stinko on wine and champagne. City is dirty. Came back with Doc Henry and Hadley at 2230. 3/7: We are on alert to leave; met the gang from CALEB STRONG at Club with most everyone tight. I didn't drink. Saw John Gregg from home. Back at 2300. 3/8: Up at 0800 for breakfast and then on Pay Detail. Was paid off at 1630 in Invasion Money and Francs; \$16,200. 3/9: Turned back money to Canastel. Orders for TAT to go aboard ship. Went to Oran with Bellos and Gaugh and spent 3 hours. Sent Jean a cable. 3/10: Up all last night with no blankets or cots. Left C.P. #2 at 0745 and on board at 1100. Six in a cabin with nice bunks and swell food. It is an old French ship run by the British. Was appointed one of three Police Officers. Am in charge of all Guards and Details. Ship is S.S. Champollion. It was captured during the Oran invasion. 3/11: Up at 0730 to meet "Limey" Sgt. Major who we will work with. Planned all day for Detail Posts. Swell Officers' Lounge and Mess. Left Oran harbor at 1800 and to bed at 2230. 3/12 (Sun) Up at 0730 and checked all Details before church. Read and slept in afternoon. Made rounds to turn out lights. Damned near seasick. To bed 2330. 3/13: Up at 0800 but didn't feel well in big ground swell. At noon turned to Italy and Naples although no one seems to know why. Played cards. 3/14: Up at 0730 and went past Isle of Capri and entered Naples harbor where we can see Mt. Vesuvius still smoking on one side. The city and harbor are in ruins; ships sunk all over the harbor, which is well filled with all types of Allied ships. We will spend night here. We awakened at 0130 by bombs and gunfire. We went out into the hall as the bombs rocked the ship. The air raid lasted 45 minutes and then back to bed. I was scared! 3/15: We pulled into the outer

harbor at 0700, laying at anchor opposite Mt. Vesuvius. Everyone sweating out another air raid. We heard the AAF dropped 1500 tons on Casino, only 40 miles away. 3/16: Up early after a restless night, but there was NO raid. Thank God. The German communique said an 18,000-ton ship was sunk in Naples harbor. I know that's wrong, 'cause we're still afloat along with all the rest of the troop transports. (Saw 6 of them during the attack.) 3/17: Up at 0730 to look at Sicily and Mt. Etna as we followed the Italian coast all day. We heard on radio that Naples was raided from 1900 to 0400. We are now in a troopship convoy headed southeast. 3/ 18: Up at 0730 and then slept all day as I wasn't feeling well. We headed out toward the African coast with an air escort overhead most of the time. 3/ 19 (Sun.): Up early with the GIs and weak as a kitten. We could see the coast of Africa most of the day. Lost \$40 playing cards to add to my misery. 3/20: Up at 0730 to do a big wash. We are supposed to pull into Port Said tomorrow. Censored mail until came down with chills and fever. Doc took me to ship's hospital. 3/21: Awoke early. After sweating all night, fever broke. We were in Port Said at 0800 to take on oil and supplies. Feel better, but weak. 3/22: Started through Suez Canal early, but I am still in hospital. Got to Suez at 1700 where we anchored all night. Carrier behind us. 3/23: Left Suez and into the Red Sea at 1100. Can hardly wait for mail to arrive. All wonder what their wives and families are doing. 3/24: Still in hospital, but up and around as we cruised through Red Sea. Was out in hot sun for awhile. 3/25: Up early and was discharged from hospital. Hot as hell. Chet Gaugh, Bump Hadley, me and all the Line Chiefs had a conference to set up crews for stations on deck after dark. 3/26 (Sun.): Went to church. Still in Red Sea; passed many islands. Was very hot in the sun. 3/27: Pulled into the harbor at Aden at 1000 to refuel. It is a nice harbor and full of ships where they are well protected. Left at 1800 with two DDs as escort. Still very hot. 3/28: Up at 0730 to interview on mechanics. Watched boxing matches. 3/29: Still in Arabian Sea headed NE. Sea is calm, and some of the boys saw whales and flying fish. Good show at night. Should be in Bombay Saturday. 3/30: Up at 0800 and I saw flying fish, but no whales. Anxious to get off. 3/31: Up at 0800 and packed all day to disembark tomorrow. Many rumors.

4/1: Up at 0725 and sighted land at 1100. After docking, we changed money into Rupees. Got mail in Bombay. Got letters from Jean and sent her cable. Helped with baggage until 0400. Had a can of ice cold Pabst beer--so good. 4/2(Sun.): Left ship at 0800 and marched to Bombay station to take the train to Dhulai British Camp. When we arrived we marched 8 miles to area, but came back to Officers' area by truck. 4/3: Received our baggage and had first laundry done since leaving Pratt Feb. 1. Clean clothes made us feel good after 42 days on the water. Tomorrow is my 2nd wedding anniversary and wasn't with Jean last year either. 4/4: Had breakfast at 0730 and got a bike. Repacked clothes and exchanged woolen clothes for khakis. Sat in Mess and drank gin and lime while talking to Harper Miller, Bump Hadley, Irv Bellos and Sharon Risk until 2300. 4/8: Received more mail today: 3 letters from Jean. What a morale factor the letters can be; last one was dated 3/ 14. Went to the Officers' Club for a dance. Much lime and gin. The country here is pretty well burned off, but rains will start in May or June. Lt. Bill Rooney and I have a bearer and have picked up a few words in Hindustani, but there doesn't appear much rhyme or reason to their language. 4/9 (Sun.): Easter services by a British Chaplain were very good. Went to the O-Club to eat supper and then to a show. Came back to the tent at midnight with the GIs. 4/10: Had GIs all day so loafed in the Mess ...couldn't leave the can. 4/11: Received orders to leave at 0900 and I still have GIs. Paid my bill of 310.5 Rupees. Train pulled out at 0100 from Dhulai siding, destination unknown! GIs are better, but it is very hot: 200 miles NE of Dhulai and still unknown destination. 4/ 15: The 3rd Bomb Maintenance Sqdn arrived at its final destination after 76 days of travel on two boats, trains or cattle cars, etc. The name of the place is Chakulia which has been set up for 18 months as an air base. What a sight it

was when the train pulled in to see B-29 airplanes-lots of them. We unloaded and were trucked to our area where we are to sleep on the ground with no cots. 4/16 (Sun.): Chet Gaugh and I checked the field to find out about equipment and to meet some of the crews. 4/17: Started work as there are 6 airplanes here in the 45th Sqdn. We set up tents and started trucking equipment already arrived, to the Engineering Section, working until well past midnight. 4/18: We worked hard all day as all nine planes for the Sqdn are here now. They came over in 4 hops. We have now set up for night operations with electric lights (a novelty here), an Engineering Tent, Tech Supply, Electrical Shop, Sheet Metal Shop. However we are still sleeping on the ground. The Japs called here and told us to get out as they were going to bomb this base yesterday. They didn't. We have foxholes and trenches. The Japs are only about 450 miles from here, which isn't far enough for comfort.

EDITOR'S POSTSCRIPT: The editor of this issue, and of one further issue on the Group's travel overseas, is Robert L. Hall. If you have further memories of that travel, please send them to Robert L. Hall, P.O. Box 544, St. Michaels, MD 21663 by Sept. 25 for possible inclusion in Issue #24.

Please send other material for MEMORIES to William A. Rooney, 517-1/2 Ridge Road, Wilmette, IL 60091. Contributions of money in support of the publication of MEMORIES- are welcome: Please make your check to the 40th Bomb Group Association, and mail it to M.E. Carmichael, Treasurer, 2514 Oregon Avenue, Alamogordo, NM 88310.



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