40th Bomb Group Association

MEMORIES

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Editor's Introduction: This story is going to take more than one issue of MEMORIES to tell. This segment is truly a story of survival under the harshest conditions. It is also a recognition of the value of survival training and of crew members absorbing and using what they learned,

BAILOUT, SURVIVAL AND RESCUE IN SIBERIA

The August 20-21 raid on Yawata was the seventh B-29 mission and was made in daylight. This is a condensed account of the hazardous journey made by Maj. Richard McGlinn's crew beginning on August 20, 1944. They had been on the mission to Yawata and had lost an engine. All eleven men bailed out over mountainous Russian territory, north of Vladivostok and east of Khabarovsk in darkness into the forest below. They made notes or kept small diaries of their struggles to survive, their rescue and internment in the USSR. These notes and diaries were later written up for the Air Force archives. The members of McGlinn's crew and 280 others were sworn to secrecy to protect wartime US-USSR relations.

Gradually, classified papers about their experiences were released. Occasional articles were printed after 1946 in newspapers and magazines, but little was known until the government removed the materials from Top Secret classification. This was not done on some papers until as late as 1986. A book, *Home From Siberia,* by Otis Hays, was published in 1990 by Texas A&M University Press. Some of the Russian "Guests" agreed to talk, and Hays covers all 37 crews interned from the Doolittle mission members to Navy men in 1945.

All of the McGlinn crew's diaries were retyped years ago from little notes and papers they had hidden away during their stay with the Russians. For instance, Dick McGlinn's original diary was written on strips of paper. It was furnished by his widow, Mrs. Catherine McGlinn, who now lives in Santa Clara, California. Ernie Caudle supplied his and Lyle Turner's diary based on notes on calendar pages. Bill Stocks' recollections came from interrogation reports. There are other such reports in the archives.

The first B-29 mission to Japan was a night raid on June 15, 1944 to hit the Imperial Iron and Steel Works at Yawata, Kyushu. It didn't do much damage. It did alert the Japanese, however, that this industrial target, which produced 25% of the Nippon steel products, would continue to be hit until destroyed or badly damaged. Thus the enemy concentrated defensive anti-aircraft batteries and fighters around the area.

This maximum effort daylight raid had 98 B-29s in China. Only 75, however, were airborne. A crash on the runway at the 462nd base prevented planes from taking off. A second flight took off later in the day to hit Yawata at night. A total of 71 planes bombed the primary target. They encountered heavy AA fire and rugged fighter attacks. Fourteen planes were lost on this raid if we include 40th's #425 "B-Sweet." Capt. William Schaal (with L/Col. H.R. Sullivan aboard) bailed out over the Hump en route to A-1

Several planes went down over Yawata when rammed by Jap fighters or hit by heavy AA. Capt. James Slattery and crew were missing. Their crashed plane was found later west of A-1. Capt. Boyd Grubaugh and crew bailed out near Laohokow with three men killed. Maj. Richard McGlinn's crew, which is the subject of this MEMORIES, locked their radio key down as they bailed out near Vladivostok.

There had been a mystery for years about the McGlinn crew. Secrecy had been imposed upon their story by the U.S. and Russia. It was learned in October, 1944 that they were in a neutral country, but even today most 40th Group members do not know what happened to the members of this crew or even if they are alive. In fact, all eleven members of the crew survived the bailout and the privations that followed, their internment in Russia and their ultimate release. Six members of the crew are still living at this writing. All but Eugene C. Murphy have been located and are on the 40th Group roster. Following is the list of crew members:

A/C	Maj. Richard M. McGlinn *	
P	1st/Lt. Ernest E. Caudle	
N	2nd/Lt. Lyle C. Turner	
B	1st/Lt. Eugene C. Murphy	
FE	1st/Lt. Aiman W. Conrath	
V	Sgt. Otis Childs *	
R	S/Sgt. Melvin O. Webb	
CFC	S/Sgt. William T. Stocks	
TG	S/Sgt. Charles H. Robson	
RG	Sgt. John G. Beckley *	
LG	Sgt. Louis M. Mannatt	* Deceased

The crew had flown B-29 #291 from Pratt to Chakulia in April, 1944. They had flown it over the Hump a few times and on two combat missions. The plane was lost in late July in a crash shortly after takeoff from Chakulia when Capt. Alvin Hills had two engines fail. A replacement plane, #42-93829, was assigned to Maj. McGlinn in early August. Diary accounts tell the crew's story beginning with takeoff from A-1.

Richard McGlinn's Diary. August 20: We shook hands all around before climbing to stations in #829, "CAIT PAOMAT II," (Gaelic for St. Catherine) and were in the air before dawn. We enjoyed good weather all along the route; in fact, it was excellent bombing weather over our target in Japan. Just before the IP, radar operator Childs informed me that his set was inoperative. I gave the signal for an echelon to the right, and Capt. Woolsey (#466) took the lead, but it changed quickly as Capt. Doyle (#237) took over. Flak bursts were really intense and coming right at us. We had dropped our bombs and started a right turn when, Bingo, #2 was hit, and it didn't keep its oil very long so we feathered it. We again took the lead, being a cripple, and Mr. Nip was waiting for just such a setup. We waded through the fighters, but this did not end our troubles in going such a distance to our destination.

We soon concluded that if we could get to Vladivostok, a good airplane could be delivered to your friends, the Russians, even though they are not at war with the Japs. En route we could dispose of the airplane in the sea, if necessary, rather than let our enemy get its hands on it. We bid goodbye to members of our formation, ducked under #2 and headed north. We had good cloud coverage as far as protection from fighter opposition, but this later worked toward our disadvantage up the Korean Coast. While on instruments, we saw that we were flying a difference of some 50° between Flux Gate and Magnetic which threw us off course and our DR to Vladivostok. Now, we didn't know exactly where we were.

Darkness had set in, and when we altered course and came upon lights, we were not certain if they were our friends or Japs. We flew over a lighted area on one occasion, and there were searchlights playing, but we could not prove it wasn't some Jap ruse. We therefore flew a course of 360° for 40 minutes, hoping we would be near a railroad spur running NE from the Trans Siberian R.R. Plans for abandoning were carried out, and our base at A -1 was so informed even through it was giving QDM's back to A-1. I went aft and explained the situation to all the men. They were in excellent spirits. We were pretty well equipped for a bailout in a temperate climate.

Cloud coverage below gave us no hint of lights, which wasn't very hospitable. Lt. Turner, our Nav, went to the rear, and we were on the intercom with him giving an account of the men leaving. Those in the front dropped through the nose wheel door before I went down the hatch after cutting the master switch. The 'Cait" was left on AFCE with nose turned down in hopes she might land somewhat intact, and we could get equipment such as radios, life rafts, additional food and water, plus 101 other items that would aid us in keeping alive until we could be rescued.

After we entered the overcast, it was raining, and it was not too pleasant. I hit the trees crashing through branches and coming to a sudden stop. My body was OK. I grabbed the tree: rough bark, trunk 36" in circumference, branches small; some broke, and I tossed them to the ground, but there was no sound of them hitting. What a predicament, being hung up on the forest of Siberia with nothing to do but sit in the rain and sweat out daylight. The ground was hardly visible because of the density of the trees. Off to the west I could make out a canyon running northward. I used my trench knife to cut short pieces of shroud line to make a safety belt to hold me against the tree. I dropped my jungle kit to the ground and cut shrouds to start the silk canopy on way down, with help of wind and rain. The ordeal of my extraction from the tree was very tiring, a matter of six hours' work to go down 60 feet. Finally, about eight feet from the ground, I became hung up and was actually choking when I managed to hack the shroud belt and drop to the ground.

I made a temporary camp of my chute, but it was soaking wet as were my clothes, and it seemed impossible to get a fire going to dry out. I did a bit of scouting by blazing a rough trail, but did not go very far as my body was tired and weak from lack of sleep, so I made a rough lean-to and tried to get some rest.

The first night was very uncomfortable, and much time was spent exercising to keep up my circulation. At dawn, I ate the last half of my K-ration from the day before and started out blazing as I went along. Late in the morning I noted a birch tree and, using the fire starter in the jungle kit, got a fire started. Shortly, the rain let up, and I stripped to the nude. I began to dry my equipment, but it wasn't much fun gathering more wood in the cold, damp, quiet, and dreary forest without wearing anything more than a set of dog tags.

I hit a small river sometime later, but there was no trail. I shot at two grouse and a luxurious squirrel, but I missed each time. I found a bend up in the river to make a campsite where I put nicks in my machete making camp. Made a good fire and brewed a tea of grass leaves and black ants (which were numerous). Tried to use my fish line in the river, but no luck. Had a good night's sleep. I started out early to climb up over the mountain to look for the airplane. I was carrying canteen, pistol and machete and one K-ration. The woods were very rough, but I managed to climb the mountain with the aid of my compass. I thought I might gain a vista and spot the wreckage, but the dense woods permitted visibility of only a few hundred yards, and there was no clear path. I decided to abandon the search as it would be very easy to pass within a few feet of the wreckage and miss it. Better travel downstream for aid rather than lose valuable energy seeking an unknown. When I went back to my camp, S/Sgt. Charles Robson, my tail gunner, was there. We had a very happy reunion, and we talked until late about the rest of the men and wondered how they were doing. We ate more ants and found a dead stump with boring grubs in the bark. These were soaked and were very good. This was Wednesday, August 23rd.

William Stocks' Diary: When bailout was made on Sunday evening, August 20th, from the rear of B-29 #829 into the sky over unknown Siberian territory, it was in order: Sgt Otis Childs, V; Sgt John Beckley, RG; Sgt Louis Mannatt, LG; S/Sgt William Stocks, CFD; S/Sgt Charles Robson, TG; and 2nd Lt Lyle Turner, Nav.

After parachutes had opened, several men noticed the exhausts and lights of the ship as it pulled away and also saw other party members blinking flashlights as they descended through cloud layers. They alighted in a heavily wooded and hilly terrain, varying in distances apart from a half mile to two miles. All men were wearing Mae-West life jackets under their parachute harnesses as they were uncertain about being over land or water. It was raining when they bailed out, and the rain continued for the next few days.

Sgt Webb alighted in a tree about six feet above the ground, and it was necessary for him to cut his parachute shrouds to drop to the ground, suffering no injury. He left his chute hanging in the tree.

Lt Conrath had filled his pockets with as many K-rations as he could handle and had difficulty getting out of the plane. After his chute opened, he blinked his flashlight around until an answer was seen from someone floating between himself and the plane. When he noticed a tree going by, he drew up his legs to break the fall, but his chute caught in the branches, and he barely touched ground. He gathered his equipment together the next morning to head north as he planned. After walking a half hour, he fired two shots and heard response from both south and southeast. When he didn't hear anymore from the others in the next half hour, he moved north another half hour before firing another shot. The answer came from the southeast, and he began walking in that direction to meet Sgts Webb and Stocks and Lt Murphy.

When Lt Murphy jumped he did not delay long enough in pulling his rip cord which caused him to black out momentarily when the chute opened. He was not prepared in the dark rainy clouds for reaching the ground and was knocked out as he went down through the tree branches. When he came to, he threw up as his back and ribs had received painful blows.

Sgt Childs, who was the first to leave the plane from the rear section, counted ten before pulling the rip cord, and he felt only a slight shock when the chute opened. He felt tree branches just before he hit the ground, slightly spraining his knees and ankles which were to bother him for several days. Soon after daylight he started walking north and, within two hours, met Sgt Beckley.

Beckley had no trouble with his chute opening and saw several flashlights blinking on the way down. After passing through the cloud layer, he landed in a treetop. The branches gave way, and he fell to the ground hurting his ribs and making a deep cut on his nose as he was knocked out. Most of his underclothes were torn off. He covered himself with his chute and jungle kit blanket, remaining on the hillside until daybreak before going down to meet Childs.

While the crew was preparing to jump, Sgt Mannatt's rip cord handle was caught on Stocks' pack and the chute popped out onto the floor. Sgt Robson quickly repacked the chute which soon opened to perfection. Mannatt didn't feel the jar of landing as much as others; perhaps because he was lighter. After landing, he was able to build a small lean-to, wrapped himself in chute and jungle kit blanket, and fell asleep. Mannatt had fastened a carbine to his chute harness.

After Robson and Stocks had pushed Mannatt out the door, S/Sgt Stocks quickly followed him and then blacked out when the chute opened. He came to after landing in some trees, some 40 feet above the ground and was able to bring his chute down with him. He erected a crude lean-to to get out of the weather, but he could not sleep. After daylight, he was happy to see Webb show up.

Lt Turner remained in the spot in which he landed until morning. His chute was caught in a tree, and he could only cut a part of it away. Shortly after he woke up in the morning, he met Lt Caudle, and they started moving north. Both heard a few shots to the southeast and after a half day of walking north in difficult brush and terrain, they changed directions and headed south.

Lt Caudle, before jumping, had put three K-rations in his pockets together with halazone tablets, tourniquet, and morphine. After his chute opened, the canopy split from center to rim, and several shroud lines broke; probably because of his weight. This caused him to spin all the way down, but he was lucky to land atop a large fir tree with branches breaking his fall all the way to the ground where he went up to his knees in a leafy mold. He was able to pull his chute down and rolled up in it, but could not sleep. At daybreak, he cut his chute in two, made a pack of the chute straps and jungle kit and started up the mountainside where he found Turner only a couple hundred yards away. Both men must have jumped at about the same time from front and aft of the ship to land so close.

S/Sgt Robson's chute opened without much of a jar, and he saw a light flashing before entering the clouds, but none after that. He was able to see treetops with his own light before crashing through them to almost the ground. A branch which held him soon gave way, and he landed on his back, but without injury. Despite a steady rain, he was able to get under a cover of his chute and jungle kit blanket. He was awakened by sounds of shots which he answered, but was unable to see anyone in any direction. He found a stream to follow in a northwesterly direction. During his second day of travel he came upon Maj. McGlinn's camp and waited for him to return. It was odd that he would float far enough to land near McGlinn.

Thus on Monday, August 21st, crew members gradually started getting together in the dense forest, but not all were following streams in the same direction. McGlinn and Robson went north, whereas Caudle and Turner circled. Beckley, Childs and Mannatt had a fire built within a couple hours to dry clothes. Murphy started north and found an insurmountable cliff, so he turned south to run into Webb and Stocks, and shortly afterwards, Lt Conrath appeared and joined them. By the end of the day, this foursome came across the camp of Beckley, Childs and Mannatt, making a party of seven. They were trying to use a small map of Soviet Siberia that Murphy had which didn't show enough detail to locate themselves, but did show railroads running parallel to the Amur River and another running to the coast. They walked until 1700 to make a new camp with parachutes, jungle kits, pine boughs, and firewood cut with the machetes. It was decided to make K-rations last as long as possible by only eating one meal per day. Anyone who woke during the night kept the fire going by adding wood.

Tuesday, August 22nd: The seven-man party arose before daylight, ate meagerly from the K-rations, broke camp, and followed the stream southwesterly. Childs had wrenched knees and ankles, Beckley had rib pains, and Murphy's back gave him trouble so progress was slow, estimated at four to five miles per day. Walking was extremely difficult due to the constant swamps the spreading stream caused. The heavy rains made the stream grow rapidly and every canyon added more water. At times it was necessary to walk along the sides of steep hills where windfalls and the tangled vines became so bad that walking became more difficult than wading through the swampy areas. A sharp lookout was kept for game; Mannatt shot a black squirrel that was divided seven ways and was boiled in small frying pans that evening. At 1600 camp was made. Due to constant rain and walking through swamps, the entire party was soaked, and several hours were spent trying to dry shoes and clothing.

Wednesday, August 23rd: The day's travel along the stream, through brush, swamp, and edge of hills was similar to previous one, but more frequent stops were made to help Murphy, Beckley, and Childs with their injuries. In addition, Mannatt needed first aid when he cut his fingers while chopping firewood with a machete. Webb had been trained to use the first-aid kit. Webb also gave Murphy a morphine shot the night before to help him sleep. It was the best day for hunting as Mannatt shot four grouse and a squirrel.

Thursday-Friday, August 24-25--Days 4-5: Some sunshine cheered the travelers. A squirrel and a fish were cooked for the evening meal with bullion powder added to make it more tasty. No noon meals were ever eaten during the long ordeal. Drinking water presented no problem as it was abundant, but halazone tables were used as a precaution. An old lean-to shelter, rotted rope, and an old blazed trail along the stream were the first signs seen of previous men in the rugged country, and this cheered everyone up with the hope that rescue might be made. The stream had by now grown so large that the party was no longer able to cross it, and it remained on their right side the rest of their journey. That night they ate two squirrels amongst them.

Saturday and Sunday, August 26-27: Each day the men struggled along the indistinct trail with Webb leading the way, breaking a new path through the rugged undergrowth. Time and again, the old occasional hatchet marks on tree trunks would disappear and then be found again. Once it led them up a steep mountain where they found thick second growth of timber, many vines and windfalls slowing them down. They were able to find a few wild grapes to eat. Childs had a "Survival" pamphlet which was helpful. They learned "rock moss" was edible and contained large amounts of starch, so they started to boil that to supplement the occasional fish/game.

Monday and Tuesday, August 28-29--Days 8-9: They started wading through a swamp when they suddenly spotted the river flowing quietly and smoothly along. What had originally been a stream only a foot wide was now a river, which constantly broke down into branches and log jams. Moss, a few mushrooms, and frogs added to the meager grouse and squirrels for dinner. The men had long since eaten the last of their K-rations and parachute tin rations. The rain reduced visibility, and Tuesday was almost lost when they neglected to use the compass and found they traveled in a circle in the swamp. They never failed to use it after that. Small bottles of insect repellent in the jungle kits were used to good advantage as mosquitoes were often present in the thousands and large enough to draw blood. Even more troublesome were jiggers, a short stubby fly, which were in great numbers and were constantly getting in their eyes where the repellent couldn't be used. Head nets were worn in evenings and at night, but not during the day because of snags with trees and brush. At night, the smoke under the parachute kept the insects away and made sleeping easier. In making their camp, various tasks were handled by two to three men erecting the parachute, two cutting pine boughs, one cleaning game, and all cutting firewood to burn through the night. This usually took an hour and a half and consumed a considerable amount of their remaining strength.

August 30-31--Days 10-11: Sgt Childs' had a cold which worsened, making him even weaker. Packs became lighter as rations were used, and other items deemed unnecessary were abandoned. One machete was lost. Blankets were in waterproof bags, and men consolidated their packs into one so they could take turns carrying them. Sometimes swamps were avoided by trying to walk along rugged hillsides which sapped their strength and also took them away from the river. Scratches, bruises, torn clothing and insects made them grouchy as they became weaker in the wet weather. When camp was made, some of the men kept a fire going so they could thaw out and dry their clothes.

Friday/Saturday, September 1-2--Days 12-13: It was decided that they would have to build rafts and float down the river, as progress was so slow. Cutting logs was done in shifts. No dry logs were available so fallen, half-green ones were used to build a raft. Four main logs, about a foot thick, were used to support some 30 smaller ones. Two end and center cross members were notched to match notches in main timbers. All the rest were notched and held in place by the parachute cords. The biggest job was carrying the heavy main members to the lagoon before assembly was started. Only seven frogs and some moss made up the evening meal, so everyone went to bed tired and hungry.

It soon became apparent that only one raft could be completed in a short time, as the light machetes were not made for log cutting. When a raft was launched, it was found only three men could ride on it, and even then it was partly submerged. It was decided that the three strongest men, Lt Murphy and Sgts Webb and Beckley, would go ahead to seek help. Before parting, the seven men said prayers and a grouse was eaten for lunch. About 1400, the advance party got on the raft and floated downstream. The remaining foursome sat around feeling sick and blue, dreading eventual deaths if no help was received.

Lyle C. Turner's Diary: I was in the rear of aircraft 42-93829 with others when abandon ship order was given by Maj. McGlinn. When we jumped we were flying at 11,000 feet on a heading of due north.

After landing we were to go north in hope of finding the crashed plane and to assemble. I was not scared to jump. The chute opened, and after several minutes, I hit the ground with a terrific wallop. I sat there in the rain, slightly dazed, for a few minutes. It was very dark, and I could barely see five feet, but I could see that I was in tall trees on a steep hill. I stood up to make sure I was OK, then took a step and fell in a hole, so decided it would be best to stay right there until daylight. I could not pull my parachute down from the broken tree, so I lay down in the cold and tried to sleep.

By daylight I was so wet and cold I could hardly stand up, and then I could only see about 20-30 yards. I took inventory of my equipment: jungle pack, knife, cigarette lighter, belt and canteen, and first-aid kit. I was wearing a summer flying suit, leather jacket, socks, G.I. shoes, and flight cap, and I carried a .45 in a shoulder holster. Around 0700 I saw Lt Caudle coming from the south up the hill which was hard climbing. I took my parachute harness straps and tied them to my jungle pack after cutting all the chute I could reach off the tree before we started down the hill. We followed a stream to the north, but ran into trees that were very tall or fallen rotten ones which we had to climb over by the hundreds in very bad footing. Sometimes we had to almost climb straight up cliffs. Caudle decided his flying boots were too heavy and discarded them.

Early in the day, we had heard seven shots to the southeast, but never heard anything more. After changing directions, we followed a stream which became wider as we crossed two creeks flowing into it in the heavily forested mountains. We saw several waterfalls, one about 25 feet high, as the stream became quite swift. By 1530 we were worn out so we built a tent and fire to dry our clothes.

Tuesday-Wednesday, August 22-23: Up at 0600; both of us ate one K-ration breakfast prior to walking downstream, crossing from one side to another on fallen trees, or wading the stream itself. We took approximately ten minutes of each hour to rest. Fog and trees kept us from seeing tops of the steep mountains (5-6,000'). We were a little discouraged by evening as it was still raining. We ran onto no trails of any kind, never even saw an animal of any description all day. We built a fire in the opening of our tent, but our firewood was all gone by midnight. I slept poorly, even though I was worn out. It was too cold to sleep most of the night.

We ate the last K-rations for breakfast before going downstream on a cold, foggy, rainy day. Our stream had turned and now ran south-southwest which is better as civilization should be to the west. When we crossed another stream of equal size to ours at 1600, we camped on a flat spot in tall, wet grass. We were sore and tired with blistered feet. Again, poor sleeping after the fire went out.

August 24-25--Days 3-4: Ate parachute rations (4-oz. chocolate bar, dehydrated bar of cheese, three sugar cubes, stick of gum, and four crackers) each day (all meals). We wore head nets as mosquitoes and gnats were terrible. Still saw no game or trails, but mountains looked lower. My feet were so sore and swollen that it was difficult to get shoes on, and my socks were still wet. Caudle's feet were badly blistered, and the ends of his toes were raw. We ate nothing for breakfast and finished parachute rations by end of the day. Our jungle kits contained the following articles: pair of sunglasses, head net, machete, small blanket, fishing gear, small frying pan, first-aid kit, pocket knife,

and compass. We also carried the E-3 kit containing: five iodine ampoules, two tubes halazone tablets, box Benzedrine tablets, eight salt tablets, eight tea tables, three Band-Aids, small roll adhesive tape, and 4-oz chocolate bar. We found an old blazed trail which was several years old along the river. It was hard to follow, but easier than no trail at all. We also found a few game trails and saw claw marks made by bears on some trees. Caudle missed twice at the first bird seen worth shooting at; we were disappointed as we certainly needed food. We now only had 40 rounds of .45 ammunition, plus eight rounds for Caudle's .38 gun. When the sun came out for the first time, we took our jackets off and laid around in it for an hour. Caudle lost his canteen in the river while trying to fill it.

Saturday, August 26--Day 5: Cloudy again. Water drips off trees, grass, underbrush. Nothing to eat except 4-oz. chocolate bar which lasted the whole day. We are weaker, feet are very sore as are our backs and shoulders from carrying equipment packs. For the first time we came upon a flat forest. Mountains are steep on the left riverbank, whereas we were a mile away on the right before following animal trail back to the river which is now 40-50 feet wide, still running southwest. We pitched our tent early and built fire to dry shoes and clothing which were wet from either falling in the river or wading in it. We went to bed cold and without food.

Sunday, August 27--Day 6: We arose stiff, cold, sore, hungry, in the dark, foggy weather. I wrapped my legs in parachute silk because my coveralls from the knees down had been torn off. It was uncomfortable walking on legs that were raw and a mass of bites. My wrists were nearly twice normal size from mosquito and other insect bites; my small gloves gave little protection. Caudle's head net had burned during the night by a spark from the fire; thus, he wore cumbersome goggles which steamed up in the rain and were difficult to see through. The hills, covered by dense forests, were difficult to see, but appeared to be lower each day. About noon we found a fresh trail made by human feet which we thought to be made by our crew members. We soon found a campsite with empty E-3 kits, Conrath's name on a canteen belt, and an empty tobacco can (which would be Webb's). We knew there was at least another in the party by small footprints which could be Sgt Robson. This really boosted our morale, despite no food. We had a cup of hot tea. Caudle's eyes were badly swollen from the insects which were worse day by day. Walking is easier because we were following the other's trail.

Monday-Friday, August 28-September 1--Days 7-11: We awoke wet from rain which came through the silk of the tent. We had rough going on steep hillsides which came down to the stream; sometime we would have to climb straight up 200 feet and in a few yards be forced to go down again. Caudle shot a duck and also a grouse, which we cut into small pieces to cook in our frying pans on the hillside camp. Broth and meat tasted so good as we were getting very weak by this time. We never left the camp Tuesday as the rain came down, and we only had tea to drink. Wednesday was spent trying to follow the river through underbrush and numerous backwater streams, but it was so slow going that we went back to the mountains, despite their steepness. Thursday we caught or found three frogs and eight snails which we ate raw, but had a squirrel that Caudle shot to boil for dinner. Friday, we had to rest in the tent all day with nothing to eat.

Saturday-Monday, September 2-4--Days 12-14: We decided to walk the hills after running into swamps and heavy brush along the river, even though the hills were covered with fallen trees in the thick forest. We only had three raw frogs and a few berries during the day, but Caudle shot a grouse and a squirrel to go with a few snails for dinner.

On Sunday, we moved back to crossing a swamp and backwater areas where we had to camp with only a few snails for food. On Monday, Caudle used the last of the .45 ammunition to kill a grouse.

We tried fishing, but the river was so flooded that there was plenty of fish to eat even without going for our plain hooks.

Tuesday, September 5--Day 15: We arose later than usual and started fishing again when we found bait for the hooks. Caudle caught a nice 16-inch trout. About 1100 we had just gotten through some underbrush when we looked across a lagoon, and there stood Sgt Childs. We were very surprised and glad to see him. He took us to his camp where we found the three other men cutting logs to make a raft. We cooked our fish and a grouse Mannatt had shot. They told us that they had built a raft made of heavy green logs, and only three could use it in the high, swift water. Lt Murphy and Sgts Beckley and Webb had left on it only the day before.

Richard McGlinn's Diary. [From this point on no attempt was made to make daily notations.] August 24: We traveled through swamp land and on the side of mountains along the river for periods of time, which seemed never-ending. Thousands of acres of decadent forest caused us to crawl under, over, and around fallen trees in various stages of decay, or there were acres of shoulder-high grass and terrible areas of yew and vines. While we were strong we could plow through, but as we lost strength, it was necessary to hack our way or bypass them. At times we climbed on ridges of mountains to avoid the "impassable" riverbank only to find tough going and a fight to get back to the stream.

We were taught to live off the land so our meager rations were supplemented with anything that crawled. We had several good messes of frogs which were boiled in our skillets and eaten whole; sometimes we used a head as fish bait, but it was the only part we wasted. Snails were a delicacy, and field mice, though small, were tasty as was the broth from boiling them. We were disheartened many days, but then along came a mess of frogs, a fish, or similar "delicacy," and we would have new hope for our outcome. We also filled up with berries, leaves, and moss.

Throughout our journey we were continuously attacked by gnats, houseflies, blood-sucking flies, and mosquitoes; little wonder that there is no human life and little animal life in those woods. Our jungle kits contained insect repellent, two extra pair of socks to help keep our feet warm and dry. Boric acid ointment soothed our skin, and sulpha powder healed our wounds. A jackknife was handy for a thousand reasons in the woods. The compass kept us from going in circles. A water bag held frogs and snails. A head net was used to carry berries, moss, and leaves more often than warding off insects. A handbook on survival aided our "comfort." Matches and fire starter gave us fires even in heavy rain, and we always added pitch when available. Fish line and hooks were helpful. We'll never know if our mirrors reflected the light to help the Russian airmen find us. Gloves kept my hands from being torn to pieces by briars and rocks. A feather-filled quilt protected our bodies at night.

About September 7th, we got a bearing on a mountain ridge with a view of the river. This saved us days of travel. However, our first real view of the country ahead was a bitter disappointment, for as far as the eye could see, there were hills covered by forests. We concluded that our only way out was on a raft, and we would have to chance it regardless of the dangers of swift water. When we got back to the river, we camped alongside a quiet stream with a good bank and sufficient timber for our boat building. Unfortunately, Sgt Robson became very weak so we changed after three days from boat building to making a raft.

When we did get a small raft built, despite Robson's poor shape for travel, we put it in the river, but it didn't go far--about 300 yards--around a turn was white water. We soon ran into several log jams and were upset. In the dunking we got, I lost my trusty .45 and three remaining cartridges. Robson lost his left shoe and machete. Here we were, miles from civilization, and he only had one shoe to cover the distance. At first we planned to make a permanent camp in that vicinity and hole up to wait for death by starvation and exposure or to see a hunter/trapper.

Robson made a sandal out of his .45 holster and shroud lines. After three more days of living on wild grapes and fish, we moved downstream again with very slow going as Robson suffered with his foot. Berries became less plentiful, leaves were falling, and geese flew south. Living by a babbling brook might be all right for some folks, but I heard too much of a singing, talking, mocking, tantalizing stream; it almost drove us mad. One day we found an abandoned cabin with 30 old traps, crossbow and arrows, and I left a ten-rupee note with a message in case someone would happen by. On a few occasions we yelled at squirrels who had pine nuts in their mouths; they would then drop them. These choice morsels were very tasty. The arrows were used with no success on fish.

On September 20th, a month after we had been to Yawata, things were getting desperate. Our clothes were tatters, there was hardly any food, and we were very weak. We prayed to St. Theresa (patron saint of aviators) for some rose petal sign. A voice came back that seemed to say, 'In two days."

Mel Webb's Diary. Saturday, September 2nd--Day 13: Lt Murphy, Beckley and I only drifted about five miles before we ran into rapids where we were tossed into a log jam and dumped into the river. We were lucky we weren't drowned, but we lost ponchos and our first-aid kit. Lt Murphy hurt his back which hindered us from then on. We spent that night on the island where the river forked. The next day, I shot a squirrel with my .45 so we had meat for breakfast for three hungry men. We got the raft out, but soon had more episodes with log jams. We gave up the raft as it took too much of our strength, which was needed for walking along the swift river.

September 3-10: After leaving the raft, we walked for seven more days, subsisting on a few birds I shot, some berries and moss. One day we found a hunter's shelter, which was quite snug. It had a hammock swinging from two trees and was protected by branches. We knew we were getting closer to people when a couple days later, we found a field with stacks of wild hay which had been cut. It was dry so we set one on fire to see if we could get anyone's attention--but no luck.

Finally, we saw an abandoned village or logging camp across the river. While we were resting (as Lt Murphy's back was really bothering him) a small girl stepped out of the tall grass on the riverbank. We shouted and waved at her, but this frightened her, and she disappeared back into the grass. We were sure she could not be alone, but it was an hour before the child reappeared with a woman beside her. Again we yelled to them, but they couldn't understand us or our gestures. After a while, a dugout appeared from downstream paddled by a man and a boy. They pulled onto the riverbank beside us. They could not understand us, nor we them. However, by sign language, they understood we were lost. We got into the dugout and were taken across the river where the woman gave us raw vegetables to eat.

We then followed the woman and girl on a path downstream for about two miles to a village, a cluster of log buildings. We were greeted by others, fed, and slept on blankets on the floor. I shall never forget how thankful I was to see those kind Russian people. The little children soon made friends with us, and we found a soft spot in our hearts for them. They were kind and loving.

September 11: We were able to make the villagers understand that more men were still back up the river, and a search party was sent from the village, but it never went far enough to see the others. A plane was used that did locate our crewmen and dropped them supplies. They thought that Lt Conrath was baldheaded. His hair was so blond that from the air, he looked bald. Meanwhile two boys rowed us down the Monoma River about 45 miles to another village, Petnatsovick, where there were two Russian officers. They couldn't speak English, but treated us very well. We had a whole roast pig for supper and another for breakfast, plus a roast goose and plates of eggs. The people in the high country eat well. We all got stomach aches because we were not used to eating such rich food.

September 12: The Soviet officers took us on horseback for two hours to Troitskoye on the Amur River where we were turned over the Border Patrol officers; we were still dirty and in bad physical shape. We were taken to a nearby primitive, wooden hospital building where two doctors treated us for malnutrition, cuts and bruises. They took our guns from us to clean them, but of course, we never saw them again.

September 16: We rested and were fed enough at Troitskoye to make the 200 km. trip by motorboat up the Amur River to Khabarovsk where we were hospitalized for recuperation and to wait for the others. We were questioned immediately about our missing crew members and told that contact had been made with a six-man party on the river above Troitskoye. The Soviet widened their search after learning the direction of our B-29 prior to leaving the plane and of our own travels.

Lyle Turner's Diary. Days 16-22: The six of us started walking along the river, but soon came to an enormous steep hill running into the water. It was miles long. A vote was taken at noon on whether to go back and build rafts or keep on walking--which is what we did. However, we made very slow progress on the hill. Mannatt had killed four grouse and a squirrel. These, plus six frogs and 30 snails, made up the evening meal. We went to bed early, tired and wet. As the hillside became tougher, we decided to build rafts at the first chance, which came on our 19th day of travel. We tried to build three two-man rafts as we teamed up. Caudle and I selected a dead pine, tall enough to make three logs about 12 feet long and 14 inches thick. It took until noon to chop it down with our machetes and another three hours to cut off the first two logs. Caudle went off hunting/fishing, and I finished the third log, but the others did not get their cutting done.

As usual lately, we shared three to four grouse for dinner, and the broth was good. We ate everything; heads and feet were never wasted. We always had tea or hot water each morning and night when we said prayers and read from the bible, ending with the Lord's Prayer. Firewood was scarce, and it was always dark before we had cut enough to build a fire in the center of the tent, wigwam style. We could not all get around the fire during the night to keep both heads and feet warm. We got into some good arguments when someone took more than his share of space at the fire.

It took three days to get the logs and cross pieces to the river, notching them and tying the cross pieces with parachute cord. We were not optimistic. Rafts were sure to bump into something and maybe drown us as we were too weak to swim much in the swift river. Game became scarcer and would be less since Mannatt had used the last round for his carbine, and there wasn't much .45 ammunition. Just before sunset on September 12th, we saw two planes flying up the river, but we could not signal as it was cloudy and raining.

September 13--Day 23: We waited until the sun was well up because it was very cold on the river. The water was near freezing, and we knew we would be wet when we would launch the rafts. Stocks and Mannatt took the lead as their raft was farthest downstream. During the first hour we went a good distance as the river moved about five mph, but we had problems guiding our heavy rafts, even with poles. The current always carried us to the outside around bends where there was usually log piles.

Shortly after noon we went around a sharp bend. There were Stocks and Mannatt standing on a log jam with their raft hung up. They yelled for us to stop and help them, but the swift current took us a good mile downstream before we stopped. Conrath and Childs stopped their raft close to us. We started back upstream when I said to Caudle: "Listen." Sure enough--in a few minutes we saw two planes coming up the river. Caudle had his signal mirror on them in no time, and we could see the big red star on the tail, so we knew they were Russian. The planes made a sharp bank and then flew over us several times. They dipped their wings and shot flares, so we knew they had seen us. It was a grand feeling we had at the first sight of anything human in 23 days. We were not certain they had been searching for us; they did not drop any food or messages.

September 14--Day 24: Since we had camped where we were, we were cramped and cold all night because of lack of firewood and the small tent. We had used the cord for the rafts. About noon, we heard planes in the distance and got out mirrors and blankets to get their attention. They flew over several times and dropped a bag which fell in the river. We tried to get the bag by using one of the rafts, but couldn't find it. We were really disappointed. Later on the planes returned again, and this time they dropped two bags; one contained flares and a pistol; the other had two loaves of bread, lard, sugar, flour, cookies, five cans of beef and four packs of Russian cigarettes and matches. Contents were water soaked as both had fallen into the river, but Caudle jumped in and saved them. We dug into the wet loaves of bread; it was the most wonderful taste in the world! We didn't eat much, however, for fear of getting sick.

The bag contained a note saying Murphy, Beckley, and Webb were recovering in a village and that Russian comrades were on the way to get us. They asked us to fire a flare every hour. We cut wood, made a fire, and fried some bread in the lard and ate a half can of meat apiece. I ate too much and had a bad stomach ache.

September 15-16--Days 25-26: We lay around all morning drying out the bread by frying it. About noon the planes returned with more bags of food; fresh salmon, four cans of American pork sausage, and two bags of black bread along with two notes. They told us to fire one flare if Mai McGlinn had joined us; two if not. We fired two as McGlinn had not been heard from. The other note was from Lt Murphy who told us to stay where we were and that they were in a small hospital 26 air miles away. No one came to get us either day. I had miserable stomach cramps all the time.

Sunday, September 17--Day 27: About 1100, three long, narrow, shallow boats came with six men poling them. We shook hands with each, but could not talk except by drawing pictures and using sign language. They prepared a meal of three large pots of potatoes and beef stew which we all ate, even me, because it smelled too good to resist. We got in the canoes and left in a chilly wind that made us weak passengers really cold. We soon ran into log jams completely across the river which would have ended our raft trips, if not our lives. The boatmen let us out on the bank and pulled the boats over the jams. There were several more such jams, and we could now see why it took four days for those husky men to come up the river to us. Along the way we met more men with more canoes who took us downstream until about 1700 where we got off on a gravel bank. A doctor was among the new men there. They had a nice fire and another big pot of stew with a big chunk of butter in it. After this delicious meal we had condensed milk with our tea before we crawled into a tent which was heated by a wood stove. We were the happiest, most contented people in the world that night.

Monday, September 18--Day 28: We arose on a cold, cloudy day to find breakfast ready. We left by 0900 and stopped every hour for a break and to get around more log jams. At noon another man coming upstream had lunch for us on a gravel bar. We finally arrived at the village of Monoma, on the Monoma River, about 1700 and were taken to a log cabin. We were in the mayor's cabin where people constantly came in to look at us; none could speak English. We were given lots of bread and fresh milk to drink (the first we had tasted since leaving the States) before we were served a nice vegetable soup. There, we slept in beds on the floor, the first night's sleep under a roof in 30 days. We were disappointed to learn that we had another day's travel by boat, and a 15-kilometer horseback ride before we would reach the hospital with our buddies.

Tuesday, September 19--Day 29: We had more soup for breakfast with fresh eggs. When we left Monoma about 1100, the whole village turned out to see us off. Although we only had one log jam to cross all day, it was after dark and in a heavy thunderstorm before we reached Petnosky and went to Lt Vanya's home. I don't know how those boatmen were able to dodge rocks, trees, and debris in the river without once tipping us over. Vanya's home was a nice log building with electric lights. Mrs. Vanya had dinner waiting, including a whole roast pig. We ate far too much for our shriveled stomachs. Then we sat around listening to Russian songs and music on a victrola. We really slept good that night.

Wednesday, September 20--Day 30: Our breakfast was similar to the night before with a new roast pig and fried eggs. At 1000 they brought horses for us. We shook hands all around with the boatmen and villagers. The major (doctor) was still with us for a four-hour ride in bright warm sunshine to Troisk where we were taken to Army headquarters. There our names and information were taken as well as snapshots. We received copies. When we arrived at the hospital, we found that the first three men had left for Khabarovsk. We took our baths, under supervision of the women, and received clean clothes. We had another interrogation between meals before we went to bed for a good sleep.

Ernest Caudle's Diary. Thursday-Friday, September 21-22--Days 31-32: We received our first haircuts and shaves in over a month; what a relief to get the brush off my face. A Russian major who could speak English had been met the day before and was in charge of questions. Turner and I located on a map where we had bailed out. Search was started north of there for Maj McGlinn and Sgt Robson. Until this time, the Russians had been searching too far south for them. We were questioned all day and into the night. I bore the brunt of the interrogations since I was in command in the absence of Maj McGlinn. The Russians were courteous and considerate, never pressing me when I refused to answer a question or sign a document.

We received our own laundered clothing back before we left Troisk for Khabarovsk at about 9:30. We traveled up the Amur River to the south in a government launch, accompanied by the English-speaking major and a captain. We had a very nice trip in the sunshine as the boat was a cabin job, very snug and warm. We had a noon lunch of bread and Spam. We arrived at Khabarovsk about 1900. We were taken to a hospital in a Ford Model A bus where we had a happy reunion with Murphy, Webb, and Beckley. We received a bath, ate, and went to bed. We were all nine in one room on the sixth floor of the hospital. We talked far into the night before we fell asleep.

Richard McGlinn's Diary. Friday, September 22--Day 32: As we couldn't get back to the river by evening, we made camp out of sheer exhaustion near an old hollow stump. As usual, we built a fire first and while cutting boughs to sleep on, we heard aircraft approaching. Boughs were tossed on the fire to make a smudge, but the planes passed by rather high and to the east. Again our hopes were shattered, but after a while, the planes became audible, and we heaped more boughs on the blaze. We used our mirrors as best we could in the trees and setting sun. The planes circled and finally buzzed as it became apparent we were the objects of a search.

Saturday, September 23: We moved onto the river by midmorning to set up a spot we could tend fire, fish, wait, and pray. By afternoon, clouds moved in to hide the sun. We heard the planes again. They circled our old campsite. Our fire would only turn out a puny smudge, and we couldn't use the mirrors to attract them our way. I can't explain how lost we felt when they flew away. Much later, we heard the putt-putt of a light training plane. This time, when we heaped on grass, we got a good smudge. After a couple passes, the pilot saw us and swung around to us. He dropped a gunny sack which fell in the river. Robson was able to retrieve it. We had tears in our eyes when we opened it, then really cried with happiness as we read the note:

"Good day, Comrades. You are in USSR. Raise high left the hand if you need help."

We waved everything, not only because we were in desperate need, but for joy. We opened the water-soaked pack (contents protected by hay) to find two loaves of bread, two-pound sack of C&H sugar, canned US pork, salt pork, bag of white flour, and some tobacco.

Robson rolled us cigarettes as I threw out the skillet of moss and started cooking our new food, eating bread all the while. We ate almost continuously for eight hours before dropping off to sleep under the stars for seven hours.

When we woke on Sunday, the 24th, we said our prayers and thanked St. Theresa, before we grabbed the bread and started another session of eating. This was for four hours and the wrong thing to do, but starving men can't be reasonable when food is given to them. My legs and feet began to swell and when I finally got my shoes on, I didn't take them off for the next three days. Our friendly plane returned late in the afternoon to drop two packages in the woods. We found one, but never located the other.

In addition to the food, we received more joy from a note and map enclosed which gave us our position with instructions to go to the village of Tolomo, some eight to ten miles away. We had hoped for a guide or rescue party, but were determined to do for ourselves as best we could. We had to rest a couple more days, trying to fix our torn clothes as we gained strength from eating again. One day a plane did go by, but did not find us. We figured it would take a week to travel to Tolomo in our weakened condition and slow going along the river. However, two planes showed up a couple days later and dropped three bags of food. Their aim was good, and we only had to move a few feet to retrieve them. Each bag contained food and a note stating: "Stay where you are do not move our people are coming after you. Light fires along the river if you do move. Nine men of your crew are safe and well." That news was wonderful. What a relief to hear that.

We had a very good supper of fish. Just before making camp we came across a salmon which had been caught by an eagle that had eaten the choice parts. The gills were still a bright red so I knew the fish was fresh. It was wonderful. It also provided us with breakfast and even a light noon lunch. Shortly after this, human voices were heard shouting downstream. Finally a canoe being poled by three men was visible. We did not think it possible to get a craft up that river and had been expecting to see a land party show up.

How can a man write of his joy of meeting human beings who are bent on rescue, when that man had almost tasted death from want, privation, starvation, exposure and just plain loneliness? The party consisted of Alex A. Pobozhy, Russian engineer, and two natives, Emil John and Kobin. What an experience-we not being able to speak Russian, and they unable to converse in English, but by signs we did pretty well. We were loaded into the canoe to start on a difficult trek. The boat was about 16 feet long with a forward deck of about three to four feet. Robson and I reclined in the middle, and it was a pleasure to watch the fallen timber, tall grass, and swampland go by at five to six mph. When we came to log jams, Emil John and Kobin would keep up a steady talk as they slowed the craft, jockeyed into place, and guided it through waters that we thought were impassable. Sometimes on jams, they would have to chop and cut their way through, but never once did we have to portage. Even the rugged scenery appeared more beautiful during our ride.

About two-thirds of the way to Tolomo, we came onto a gravel bar where a Russian named Nick Nick, was operating a radio back to his base. We continued downstream in our loaded canoe through calm water, white water, and under log jams. The skill of the boatman never faltered. We rounded a bend and joined another river where we saw damaged log cabins. This was all that was left of Tolomo village. High waters had washed most of the place away. Nick Nick called out "New York." Even the city of New York wouldn't have looked any better to us then.

We swung over onto a gravel bar and were met by a group of Russians and natives. The natives were living in primitive-style shacks made of skins, tree bark, and grass, all supported by cut saplings. They had dogs, racks drying fish, salmon (which they had speared), and venison. Skins were being dried and tanning done. Some Russians were living there as "squaw men" in a dozen or so huts. We were taken into a hut to meet other Russian engineers and given chocolate. We rested in dog fur sleeping bags until hot water was prepared, and we were given a sponge bath, which felt good. Soon a meal of pork soup, canned US tomatoes, and bread was ready. We ate and ate without having had to build a fire, prepare the food, and do dishes. That night was the first time since we left India that we slept warm.

Nick Nick was on the radio constantly-talk that concerned us but which we could not understand. Our boatmen visited us, and Kobin brought us two pairs of fancy native moccasins for which we were most grateful. Emil John and his 16-year-old son would take us down the river. Alex Pobozhy kept us out of harm's way when an aircraft flew over and dropped packages. Natives came from all around to see us in their canoes which lined the riverbanks.

After a 24-hour stay at Tolomo, we headed down the river in boats with Pobozhy and friends giving us special care and treatment. Their vigil did not relax until we were turned over to the doctors at the Red Army Hospital in Komsomolsk, 40 days after parachuting from our plane. S/Sgt Robson weighed 40 kilograms (88.2 pounds, a loss of 35 pounds), and I weighed 61 kilograms (135 pounds, a loss of 25 pounds). We remained under excellent care at Komsomolsk until the 44th day. We arrived at Khabarovsk on the 45th day--thus uniting the entire crew on October 5th.

ROAD THROUGH THE TAIGA

In 1974, Russian engineer, Alexander Pobozhy, wrote *Roads Through the Taiga,* a book published by Molodaya Gvardiya Publishing House. In 1944, Pobozhy headed a railroad survey team in the Sikhote-Alin mountain range where the USSR planned to build a second trans-Siberian railroad. In February 1975, excerpts from his book were published in *Soviet Life Magazine.* In it, Pobozhy recalled his part in the 1944 rescue of Richard McGlinn and Charles Robson.

Alexander Pobozhy's Memories: On September 20, late in the evening, a radio operator and his guide arrived at our camp on exhausted horses. The radioman handed me a sealed packet which said, in part, "This is a government mission to rescue two men who, along with nine men already rescued, parachuted from an allied B-29 into vicinity of the Khodzyai ridge, about 60 miles from Khabarovsk." I was told to explore the valley of the Khoso River, a tributary of the Khungari, with selected men in a search party. Two planes were assigned to us to help in search and drop supplies.

Today is the 20th of September, which means that the American fliers had been in the Taiga for more than a month, a long time to be lost in wild, dense forests. They could have died of starvation or been torn to pieces by wild animals. A trip was nothing for us into the Taiga as we had much equipment from which to select. We quickly put together sleeping bags, cooking utensils, saws, axes, and enough rations for 10 days. We planned our search to go down the Khungari by rowboat to the village of Kun and exchange our boats for local ulmagdas which were more suited for swift, rough rivers. We rose at dawn the next day, and after preparing a first-aid kit, five of us left in two boats.

The rumble of rapids reached us long before we saw them, and as we went on, the current became stronger. We met our first severe test negotiating through timber obstructions in the rapids, but could expect at least 20 more clogged rapids on ahead. After passing some cliffs, we came upon an Oroche village which noisily greeted us strangers as the village was far from any roads. Most of the Oroche men were off at the war front or fishing salmon, stocking up on food supplies for the Army. Only old women and children remained. They told us our clumsy boats, without a guide, would never make it up the Khungari channels and tributaries, but I had a map to help us. We were able to safely pass several more rapids as we worked our oars, but with close calls. Our shoulders and hands ached.

We almost met disaster at one rapids as we were flung against a log jam and onto it. Our radio operator was hurt quite badly in the face and arms. Luckily we did save one of the boats and could continue after bandaging the victim and leaving him at the spot. Twice later in the day, we had to lug our boat/equipment along the shore for more than two hours. We covered over 35 miles against severe headwinds before we reached the Tolomo settlement that day. Part of the town washed away earlier in the spring floods, and natives were rebuilding on higher ground. Our search on September 22nd and 23rd up the left valley of the Khoso yielded nothing.

The next morning when we climbed out of our sleeping bags we found cold weather had set in as our bags were covered by hoar frost. The further we went up a main Khoso channel, the harder our progress became as we ran into shoals where we had to drag our boats ourselves, sometimes waist high in the water. More and more we had to chop and clear our way through fallen timber. We only covered 12 miles that day (September 24th).

At daybreak on the 25th, Sasha, Kilya and I set out making rapid progress as we only had to clear ourselves occasionally. Often we would come out on the bank to examine it and shout. By noon I was absolutely hoarse. We had already decided to return when suddenly some weak voices nearby seemed to respond to my call. We pushed our poles eagerly, and after covering another 700 feet, saw a thin column of smoke and then two men standing near a campfire on the bank. I wanted to yell "We've come for you!" and a lot more, but I didn't know any English words. Not knowing how to greet those people from far across the ocean, I shouted "Mister America!" In a few minutes, a most confused "conversation" started as we tried to gesticulate with words in English, Russian, and Udeghe, but none of us understood a thing. The Americans broke into tears and got on their knees to pray.

Sasha gave the fliers a bar of chocolate each, and they shared them with us even though I tried to tell them they should eat; they were so weak they had to sit down as they couldn't stand for long. I looked them over calmly: they were emaciated and bearded, wearing ragged and tattered overalls that hardly covered the knees. One wore a leather jacket and battered shoes while the other had a foot covered by rags while the other foot had a pistol holster tied to it. Their faces and bodies were so lacerated by midges that sores and contusions had formed. I jabbed my finger on my chest and said slowly, "Engineer Alexander Pobozhy." The tall man introduced himself, "Dick McGlinn," and the other said he was "Charles Robson." By gestures, we understood they had been in an airplane.

Our ulmagda was a rather long one, and we spread out sleeping bags on the bottom so that Dick and Charles could lie on them. We moved back downstream and arrived back at our first campsite while the sun was still high. Our radio operator used his set to report the rescue news back to base while the rest of us built some shelters out of branches. We had to find out what ailed them most. Gradually, we found they had stomach problems when McGlinn rubbed his stomach and moaned. Medicine was given to them to help overcome disorders from acute exhaustion and the plant diet they had endured. We heated water and washed our patients, put ointment on wounds, and bandaged them. We collected enough clothes from amongst us to give the Americans a complete change. I ordered the airplane for the next day to drop more underwear, warm clothes, shoes and provisions.

After a good night's sleep for the exhausted men, I drew a map to show Dick and Charles where we were headed and where we now were. Soon two airplanes arrived and dropped their cargo where we had built our signals along the river. After we had fitted Dick and Charles out, they gave us a Colt revolver which held only two cartridges. Dick made drawings on paper which we understood to mean that they were going to wait three more days, dig their graves, and then use the pistol to kill themselves. Dick wrote his name and address on a piece of paper, but it got wet in the rain, and I forgot to ask him to write them again for me. The next day we approached a settlement near the mouth of the Khungari, and the radio operator called out "New York." Both Dick and Charles smiled, and the latter said, "Empire Empire" as he pointed to the biggest house.

After spending a night in the clean, pleasant house of the doctor, we went down the swift Khungari out onto the broad, placid Amur River. A big launch was only two miles away, and it took us all to the Komsomolsk-on-Amur at midday. Charles and Dick were driven off to the hospital, but not before asking to have their pictures taken so they would have a momento of how they looked in the Taiga. We met again one more time five days later at the hospital where they were convalescing. Dick pulled out a piece of paper from which he read slowly, in Russian: "Alexander, we Americans will never forget the exploit of the brave and gallant Russians." I never saw them again, and we didn't write to one another. I wonder now if Dick and Charles remember our friendship on a Taiga river, the Khoso?

Editor's Note: Although this is by far the longest MEMORIES published to date, the rest of the story of the McGlinn crew is still to be told. Harry Changnon will complete the story in another issue of MEMORIES to be published later this year.

In all, crews from 37 planes were interned in Siberian Russia. These included one crew of a B-25 from the Doolittle raid. Of the 16 planes on this mission, this was the only one that did not crash land. All of the rest went down in China. In fact, at the time of the Doolittle mission, Gen. Doolittle proposed that the planes fly off the carrier, bomb Japan and then fly to Vladivostok. Since we were delivering planes to Russia, via Alaska, why not deliver them to Russia while doing a little bombing along the way. Russia, at that time, was not at war with Japan and did not wish to entertain the possibility of a retaliatory attack on Russian Siberia by the Japanese through Manchuria. There had been border clashes with the Japanese in Manchuria followed by a peace agreement which Russia did not want to break while fighting a war of survival in Europe. Indeed, later it was agreed upon between Russia and the Allies that Russia would enter the war with Japan after Germany had surrendered but that was more than two years away.

It was to maintain this facade of peace that the Russians frowned on any American planes seeking sanctuary in their far Eastern territories. Notwithstanding this, three other B-29 crews landed in the Vladivostok area. Two were from the 468th and one from 467th. Twenty-one crews from the 11th Air Force flying out of Alaska landed in Russian territory or were rescued from the Northern Pacific waters. Another 11 crews from the Navy Fleet Air Wing Four were interned in Russia.

The plane from the 467th flew to Russian territory on July 29, 1944 after the Anshan mission when they experienced engine trouble and figured they could not make it back to friendly Chinese territory. The two planes from the 468th came after McGlinn's crew had bailed out. These planes were on missions to Omura on November 11, and November 21, 1944. On both occasions weather was the contributing factor in their having to divert to Vladivostok. In the case of the plane having to land after the November 21 mission, they had sustained battle damage over the target as well as experiencing hazards from the weather that included headwinds of up to 120 mph.

In the case of all of these B-29s, they landed on Russian runways without incident. Of course, once the crew was escorted from the plane, they never were allowed to go back to it. In one instance, the pilot had picked out a concrete runway on an airfield where he intended to land. Instead, Russian fighters escorting him indicated a grass field where they wanted him to land. He obeyed, but observed that he did not see how the Russians ever could get the plane out of there again.

Information from another source underscores the difficulty attendant to attacking the Yawata steel-making complex that was the target for McGlinn's crew the day they were hit. A year later when the crew of Bock's Car was trying to find a hole in the clouds which would allow them to bomb Nagasaki visually, they flew in the area bordering Yawata. They reported that the volume of flak being thrown up around Yawata made it a very uninviting target.

In sharing their interment with the Doolittle crew members, there was one melancholy note expressed by one of the B-25 crew. He remarked that he had spent one day in combat, and the rest of his period in service during the war was in a Russian internment camp. Another melancholy note may be found in the fact that some of the prisoners were not released by the Russians until after the Japanese surrender. By the time these internees got home, no one knew or cared who they were.

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Address Correction Requested