

# **World War II Recollections**

**By**

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### As I remember::

On my first day on Attu Island I heard my name on the radio given by Tokyo Rose. She had our squadron member's name right and as well as the names of our home towns. I missed being a real hero when I didn't recognize an ill-clad Japanese rummaging in our garbage barrel as I was on my way to duty armed with a 45 cal. pistol. The Jap had come down from the mountain in search of food. He was later captured by a more alert officer.

I watched a gold toothed Russian woman flying a Russian Yak fly along side of us and fire a stream of tracers and motion us out to sea off the coast of Kamchatka Peninsula. We had made landfall on Russian Territory and were being told to get out to sea. She had a wonderful smile as she sat on our wing tip and smiled broadly and she had a wonderful gold tooth.

I remember a long trip home flying wing on Lt. Garnett's plane for 814 nautical miles back to Attu on a single engine after their oil cooler had been shot off. They had voted not to be interned in Russia. Our plane flew along side of Garnett's plane for the entire trip. Had they gone down in the 35 degree F water there was little we could do but maybe drop a second raft. At the end of our hazardous trip on our safe arrival at Attu we watched Garnett make a successful go-round on a single engine because he had screwed up his approach. He landed safely. What a celebration we had!

An Oscar – a Jap fighter – sent a train of tracers at us and missed. <sup>We</sup> ~~It~~ two blocked the engine (two block means to squeeze the throttles together and shove them forward ( but for no more than 15 seconds.) Our plane leaped forward and we achieved enough speed to see Oscar fall behind. Radioman George Sproul standing in the plastic celestial bubble took a picture of this event and I'm supplying a crumpled picture of this escape.

When flying wing on another squadron plane we spotted a large Japanese Trawler. The lead plane dropped a wing tank instead of a bomb on the deck of the trawler. The tank hit the foredeck of the trawler and it was empty and did not explode, but took a rebounding path right where our plane would be flying. We pulled up as we splashed our bombs in the North Pacific Ocean. I have a picture of the wing tank in the air. The person responsible for dropping the wing tank instead of a bomb never wanted the picture and I won't mention his name now!

### A Lighter Side:

Japanese ships needed the Cape La Patca lighthouse to navigate the narrows between Russia and the Japanese Kurles. It was our duty to keep the lighthouse down. Two rockets hit the lighthouse base and down it came to a pile of stone blocks that would be reassembled in a matter of days. They never quit, nor did we! Paramashiro-Bombardment was nearly our down fall. We lost our radio (antennae shot off) and our trailing antenna necessary for loran (shot off).

Hank Green and I had our Navy Issue fleece lined green parkas stolen as we ate at the Army mess. In retaliation we borrowed a Army Dodge command car and kept it hidden

for two months. I later saw our wonderful coats hanging on the Army mess coat rack. We took them back, but kept the command car.