

War Stories

Did You Miss Me, Honey?

by Peyton R. Walmsley

It was February or March 1943. I was still billeted on the second floor of the Mohanbari tea Planter's T-shaped bungalow with the pilots from '42. They knew where their wives and sweethearts were but not vice versa.

While I, as copilot, was round-tripping China one day two of our crews brought in two loads of nurses destined for the hospital at Chabua. The pilots determined the nurses needed "RON acclimation" before starting work in Chabua. The party was in full swing with victrola music and open bar when we arrived "home."

After showers and change of clothes he went to the bar.

A warm body pressed against Lt. Reed's back and her arms encircled his ribs, hands firmly clasped around his stomach. She kissed the back of his neck and whispered "Have you missed me, Honey?" She was his wife, transferred from Coral Gables, FL, hospital.

Since there was one pilot more than nurses and I was the only "acknowledged" married officer, I drew OD that night.

Introduction To Assam

by Peyton R. Walmsley

In June 1943 I, with a first-flight-in-the-area copilot and a seasoned radio operator/crew chief, were sent in a C-47 from Mohanbari to Accra, Gold Coast, West Africa to pick up equipment or personnel for the upcoming push into Burma.

In those early days we flew daylight hours only so it was several RONS between Mohanbari and Accra. By the time we got to Accra we had a very rough-running right engine.

We also were in a queue with a three day wait. An engine exchange was unavailable but they did exchange plugs and tune up.

The Accra airbase, miles from our enemy, was enclosed by a tall chain link fence and patrolled by MPs with dogs, day and night. Walkways were asphalt with drainage ditches on both sides and the

buildings were stateside in construction. There also was a BX.

The three of us were billeted in a 4-man tent alongside the walkway leading past the BX to the mess hall. BX purchases were limited to three of an item per purchase. Behind the BX we scrounged a large wooden box and several candy cartons.

Then the three of us walked from tent through the BX back to the tent, to the BX. When the cartons were full they went into the wooden box which just slid nicely beneath the metal spring cot.

This rotation resumed early our first morning, each buying three of the same item until we filled the cartons in which they belonged. However these purchases were not without incident.

The three of us were returning to the BX when the horrific siren put us automatically into the drainage ditch along the walk. Passersby looked down at us and asked what was wrong with us. "Air raid," we replied in unison. "Naw," someone said. "That's just the noon reminder to knock off work and go to lunch." We wondered what would announce an air raid.

We bought candy, stockings for the nurses, cigarettes, and two cases of Carew's Gin. It took two of us to lift the box.

On the third day Weight and Balance said we had 350 pounds of personal items in addition to an overload.

On the third morning, with an overload plus, we left Accra.

Editor: This is a two part story. The fun part will appear in the Summer Newsletter.

Flying the Hump

Roger D. Taylor submits as flight scheduling officer he didn't have to go on this trip but when were weather reports accurate except when from a pilot in flight?

It was an early evening flight from Chabua in C-46 # 580 with the usual load of gasoline. Bill Tolbert was pilot.

Before entering the overcast at 15,500 they luckily corrected 20 degrees right for drift.