

## War Stories (Cont.)

of Texas when they arrived at the hotel. Again the center of attraction curiosity got so out of hand a guard was posted at the door. He was given a room with four beds. Nick dried out, took a short nap and brought his diary up to date. Noted his survival gear lacked a signaling mirror. He had supper in his room with a Chinese dignitary who supplied some liquor that Nick says would melt a brass monkey and offered Nick a woman companion. Nick declined the offer and gingerly sipped some of the liquor.

During these overnight stops he had given portions of his parachute to his benefactors, including his first Chinese soldier, now a member of his group, in appreciation of their hospitality. Aug 3 With the addition to his rescue party of the Chinese soldier, food improved: usually chicken, soup, rice, fried eggs (the old fashioned kind that you have to break in half).

**Aug 4th** he got a dozen bananas, 4 peaches, and a nag with a wound on a leg. When Nick mounted the horse started to buck. Nick stayed on for about a minute and a half in true cowboy fashion then decided with the horse to dismount and walk the six miles to the next stop.

His host that night showed Nick pictures of downed crews he had helped and took down the names of Nick's buddies.

**Aug 5th** brought a good breakfast after a good night, two uniformed Chinese soldiers as guides, and a good horse.

Along the way a runner brought an even better horse with a honest-to-goodness saddle. Nick rode the rest of the way.

**Aug 5** Two uniformed guards became his new guides and a couple hours into their trek Nick was given a fresh horse and, Nick says, an honest to goodness saddle. It was another eight hours to a supper of noodles.

**Aug 5 - 9** parallels the preceding days with little variation.

**Aug 10** Nick alternately walked and rode a mule for the five hours to a Chinese garrison. Mitsui was in sight in the distance above a large arrow pointing to a sign proclaiming U.S. Army Headquarters. Two and a half hour later Nick was in Yunanyi and American food.

Happily the rest of the crew, in a group, was also rescued, and after a hospital checkup it was back to flying.

### 17th Hump Flight

by Richard C. Nethaway

A class 42-I Victorville, CA, Multi-engine school Sept 1942 graduate Richard had been drafted on 15 July 1941 in Salinas, California, noted for various row crops such as lettuce and artichokes.

He was assigned to 82nd Observation Squadron.

In March 1942 he was in Santa Ana, Calif. Basic Training.

Primary flight training was at Visalia. Calif. Basic was in Chico, Calif. and Advanced in Victorville, Calif. in AT-17s and AT-9s.

On graduation 29 September, 1942 Dick was sent to Long Beach, Calif., from where he flew Ferry Command for two months. Then he was sent to TWA, Kansas City for six weeks.

In mid January he was sent to Braniff in Brownsville, TX. In this stint as a C-47 copilot, he learned airline procedures and scheduling and enjoyed trips to Panama via Guatemala City.

In April 1943 he went to Coral Gables for C-46 transition.

In July 1943 it was on to Fairfield, Connecticut to pick up a brand new C-46 for Miami. At 07:00, 14 July Lt. Richard Nethaway, copilot James Spurlock, navigator Jim Scraggie, and unnamed radio operator and crew chief left for the CBI. Dick was one plane in a group of five led by an airline pilot in the lead plane.

Ten minute separations allowed for navigational as well as pilot and other crew enroute training. Weather changes added spice to their adventure.

As we have all experienced there were delays along the way from communications, hydraulics, oil leaks and the necessary aircraft and engine flight hours inspections.

Their arrival at Masira Island over a recent C-47 crash at runway end was a spirit dampening introduction to the CBI area.