

Cloudfall

Have often wondered if anyone else ever saw the cloud phenomenon we were privileged to behold one morning eastbound out of Sookerating. Did not record the date, that I can find, but feel sure it was near the end or after the 1943 monsoon season. It was before the 24 hour operations as we had made a crack-of-dawn take-off. We had been through some clouds but were in the open I believe over the Salween or Mekong valley. We were about three - five miles away and to the right of an overflowing basin of clouds pouring out of a low place in the southwest corner in a cloudfall down about 500 feet and pooling in a lower basin. The pool had spread about 4-5 diameters of the vertical portion of the cloudfall when we first saw it. Really was a beautiful and spectacular phenomenon to behold. Could easily see the flow lines out of the upper basin. The cloud was white and fluffy, not at all like a fog, with ripples along the edges of the falling portion just like a waterfall. The pooling the lower basin was growing rapidly and flat on the top. A serene scene so much so that it invaded the cockpit almost to overwhelming. I was suddenly aware of a calmness, never experienced before, and feeling that all was well and everything was going to be alright. There was not a camera on board so we did not get a photo. Would like to have had one but do have it indelible in my mind. There were other airplanes in the area but have never talked to any one who had witnessed that cloudfall. If anyone did I would like to talk to them about it and maybe get a copy of any surviving picture. I know there is a lot of controversy about 'signs' but it was a sign to me.

Publisher's Note: *Wilkie was a pilot with ATC - Sookerating, Karachi, 4/43 - 9/44*

A Little Final Humor

Four brothers left home for college, and they became successful doctors and lawyers and prospered. Some years later, they chatted after having dinner together. They discussed the gifts they were able to give their elderly mother who lived far away in another city.

The first said "I had a big house built for Mama."

The second said "I had a hundred thousand dollar theater built in the house."

The third said "I had my Mercedes dealer deliver an SL600 to her."

The fourth said, "You know how Mama loved reading the Bible and you know she can't read anymore because she can't see very well. I met this preacher who told me about a parrot that can recite the entire Bible. It took twenty preachers 12 years to teach him. I had to pledge to contribute \$100,000 a year for twenty years to the church, but it was worth it. Mama just has to name the chapter and verse and the parrot will recite it."

The other brothers were impressed.

After the holidays Mom sent out her Thank You notes. She wrote:

"Milton, the house you built is so huge. I live in only one room, but I have to clean the whole house. Thanks anyway.

"Marvin, I am too old to travel. I stay home, I have my groceries delivered, so I never use the Mercedes. The thought was good. Thanks.

"Michael, you gave me an expensive theater with Dolby sound, it could hold 50 people, but all my friends are dead, I've lost my hearing and I'm nearly blind. I'll never use it. Thank you for the gesture just the same.

"Dearest Melvin, you were the only son to have the good sense to give a little thought to your gift. The chicken was delicious. Thank you."

Aviation Truisms

What's the difference between God and fighter pilots?
God doesn't think he's a fighter pilot.

The only thing worse than a captain who never flew as a copilot is a copilot who was once a captain.