



# **WWII Biography of Lt. Col. Roderick M. Stewart**



I WAS BORN IN SHELTON, CONN. JULY 12, 1915. MY PARENTS WERE RODERICK M. STEWART SR. AND DOROTHY KELLOGG STEWART. WE LEFT CONNECTICUT 1919 MOVING TO TULSA, OKLAHOMA . THE FAMILY MOVED TO EXCELSIOR, MINNESOTA. IN 1927 MY MOTHER PASSED AWAY AND TWO YEARS LATER MY FATHER REMARRIED AND WE MOVED TO HINSDALE, ILLINOIS.

AFTER GRADUATION FROM HIGH SCHOOL IN HINSDALE, I ATTENDED CORNELL COLLEGE AND GRADUATED IN 1937. IN AUGUST OF 1940 I ENLISTED AS A FLYING CADET IN THE AIR FORCE WITH PRIMARY SCHOOL AT PARKS AIR COLLEGE IN EAST ST. LOUIS, ILLINOIS. BASIC TRAINING WAS AT RANDOLPH FIELD, TEXAS AND ADVANCED TRAINING AT BROOKS FIELD, TEXAS, GRADUATING MAY 31, 1941 IN CLASS 41-D. A LIFE LONG FRIEND, COLONEL GEORGE E. (SMOKEY) STOVER WAS IN THE SAME CLASS AND WE WERE BOTH TRANSFERRED TO THE 7<sup>TH</sup> BOMB GROUP AT SALT LAKE CITY.

IN THE FALL OF 1941, SECRET ORDERS WERE ISSUED TO THE 7<sup>TH</sup> BOMB GROUP TRANSFERRING THEM TO THE PHILLIPINE ISLANDS. SMOKEY WAS DELEGATED TO GO BY SHIP WITH OTHER PILOTS AND MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL. AT THIS TIME I WAS TRANSFERRED FROM THE 11<sup>TH</sup> BOMB SQUADRON TO THE 88<sup>TH</sup> RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON OF THE 7<sup>TH</sup> BOMB GROUP AND WAS ASSIGNED TO A COMBAT CREW. WE WERE TO GO BY AIR AND MEET THE GROUND ESCHELON ON THE ISLAND OF MINDANAO, PHILLIPINE ISLANDS. THE SHIP LEFT AROUND NOVEMBER 20, 1941 AND THE B-17 FLIGHT WAS SCHEDULED TO LEAVE DECEMBER 6, 1941.

ON DECEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup>, 12 B-17s WERE PARKED ON THE RAMP AT HAMILTON FIELD IN PREPARATION FOR THE FLIGHT TO THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS. DUE TO THE DISTANCE, 2000 NAUTICAL MILES, NO AMUNITION WAS CARRIED TO REDUCE ALL POSSIBLE WEIGHT. PRIOR TO TAKE-OFF GENERAL HAP ARNOLD, CHIEF OF THE ARMY AIR CORPS ADDRESSED THE COMBAT CREWS AND HIS FINAL REMARKS WERE "GOOD HUNTING AND GOOD BOMBING". AT TEN THAT EVENING THE AIRCRAFT BEGAN TAKING OFF AT FIVE MINUTE INTERVALS. THE FLIGHT OVER WAS UNEVENTFUL. ABOUT SIX A.M, WHEN WE WERE ABOUT TWO HUNDRED MILES FROM THE ISLANDS, WE SAW OTHER B-17s AND KNEW THAT WE WERE ON COURSE. BY SEVEN A.M. WE SIGHTED THE ISLAND OF OAHU AND HAD THE RADIO STATION TUNE IN. SHORTLY AFTER SEVEN WE NOTICED PUFFS OF BLACK SMOKE OVER THE PEARL HARBOR AREA AND HICKAM FIELD. AFTER PASSING DIAMOND HEAD, WE CALLED THE HICKAM TOWER AND ASKED FOR LANDING INSTRUCTIONS. THE TOWER REPLIED, "DO NOT LAND, ENEMY AIRCRAFT ARE ATTACKING THE FIELD" . WE ADVISED THE TOWER WE WERE VERY LOW IN FUEL AND MUST LAND. WE CONTINUED ON AND FLEW OVER PEARL HARBOR AT TWO THOUSAND FEET AND RECEIVED NOT SO FRIENDLY FIRE FROM THE NAVY AT PEARL HARBOR. WE CONTINUED ON AND LANDED ON AN EAST/WEST RUNWAY. WE TOUCHED DOWN THE CENTER OF THE RUNWAY WITH EXCESS SPEED WHICH CAUSED THE TWO TIRES TO BLOW OUT. WE FINALLY STOPPED THE AIRCRAFT WITH A GROUND LOOP AT THE END OF THE RUNWAY. WE ALL JUMPED OUT AND RAN ACROSS THE RUNWAY AND LAID DOWN IN THE GRASS. AMAZINGLY, AFTER THE STRAFING ATTACK BY JAPANESE FIGHTERS, EVERY MAN STOOD UP. NO ONE HAD BEEN HIT.

NATURALLY, EVERYONE WAS MAD AS HELL AND READY TO FIGHT. WE CONTACTED A COLONEL WHO GAVE US ABOUT TWENTY-FIVE MEN TO HELP CHANGE THE TIRES AND



LOAD BOMBS AND AMMUNITION WHICH WE DIDNT HAVE WHEN WE ARRIVED. IN ABOUT THREE HOURS THE PLANE WAS FUELED AND READY TO GO. BUT, BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THE COMMANDING GENERAL REFUSED PERMISSION TO LET US TAKE-OFF.

THAT NIGHT WE CAMPED IN THE WOODS , WITNESSED THE SHOOTING DOWN OF FOUR NAVY PLANES BY OUR OWN GROUND FORCES. WHO PANICKED AND WERE SHOOTING AT ANYTHING. THESE PLANES CAME FROM THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER "THE ENTERPRISE".

AFTER LIVING IN TENTS IN THE WOODS FOR TWO DAYS, WE WERE QUARTERED AT HICKAM AND HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF A SHOWER AND REGULAR MEALS. WE WERE ASSIGNED TO FLY PATROLS OUT OF HICKAM AIRFIELD, A DISTANCE OF APPROXIMATLEY 800 MILES AND SEARCHED PIE SHAPED QUADRANTS EVERY OTHER DAY. MAINLY, WE WERE SEARCHING FOR SUBMARINES AND ENEMY SHIPPING. THIS CONTINUED UNTIL APPROXIMATELY ON JANUARY 10, 1942. AT THAT TIME ORDERS WERE RECEIVED ASSIGNING TWELVE B 17s TO A NAVAL TASK FORCE WITH THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER LEXINGTON WHICH WAS STEAMING TOWARDS THE JAPANESE HELD ISLAND OF NEW BRITON. THESE PLANES WERE PILOTED BY COL CARMICHAEL, FLIGHT COMMANDER WITH 2<sup>ND</sup> LT. RODERICK M. STEWART, CO-PILOT, CAPT. BILL LEWIS, 1<sup>ST</sup> ROBERT THACKER, 1<sup>ST</sup> LT. CHAFFIN, WHO WAS LATER KILLED IN NEW GUINEA, LT. BRANDON, 1<sup>ST</sup> LT. RALLS, CAPT. FRANK BOSTROM, 1<sup>ST</sup> LT FRED EATON AND OTHERS.

THE TASK FORCE WAS PREPARING TO ATTACK REBAUL HARBOR WHICH THE JAPANESE HAD OCCUPIED IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE WAR. OUR B-17s FLEW IN GROUPS OF THREE TO PALMYRA, REMAINING OVER NIGHT THERE. THE NEXT DAY, IN GROUPS OF THREE, THEY PRECEDED TO CANTON ISLAND . BEFORE LANDING AT CANTON ISLAND, THE AREA WAS SEARCHED A RADIUS OF THREE HUNDRED MILES TO DETECT ANY ENEMY SHIPPING OR SUBMARINES. THE FOLLOWING DAY THE AIRCRAFT TOOK OFF FOR THE FIJI ISLANDS. FROM THE FIJI ISLANDS WE FLEW TO NEW CALADONIA AND REMAINED THERE OVERNIGHT, REFUELING THE AIRCRAFT FROM 55 GALLON DRUMS WITH HAND PUMPS.

THE NEXT DAY WE FLEW TO BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA. AT THE BRISBANE AIRPORT I WAS LOOKING AT ONE OF THE B-17s WHEN SOMEONE KICKED ME IN THE BUTT AND I TURNED AROUND AND IT WAS SMOKEY STOVER, WHO WAS MY ROOMMATE IN SALT LAKE CITY. THE CONVOY HE WAS IN ON ITS WAY TO THE PHILLIPINES WAS DIVERTED TO AUSTRALIA WITH A STOP-OVER AT THE FIJI ISLANDS. THE CONVOY ARRIVED AT BRISBANE ON DECEMBER 31, 1941. FROM BRISBANE, WE FLEW TO TOWNSVILLE AND PREPARED FOR OUR FIRST MISSION FOR THE FOLLOWING NIGHT. NINE B-17s TOOK OFF ON THE NIGHT OF FEB. 22, 1942 FOR REBAUL. DUE TO MECHANICAL AND ENGINE PROBLEMS, ONLY SIX REACHED THE TARGET. THE TARGET WAS OVERCAST AND WE FLEW IN THE AREA FOR THIRTY MINUTES BEFORE WE COULD FIND AN OPENING IN THE CLOUDS TO DROP OUR BOMBS. ONE PLANE MADE A SECOND PASS AND WAS JUMPED BY SEVERAL ZERO FIGHTERS. DUE TO A SHORTAGE OF FUEL, THIS SINGLE AIRCRAFT LANDED IN A SWAMP IN NEW GUINEA BUT THE CREW WERE ABLE TO REACH THE COAST AND, AFTER SIX WEEKS, MADE IT BACK TO PORT MORSBY. EVERYONE WHO HELPED THEM ESCAPE (NATIVES) AND INCLUDING THE ANGLICAN NUNS WERE ALL EXECUTED BY THE JAPANESE. THE CREW OF THIS AIRCRAFT WAS LT. FRED EATON, PILOT, LT. (HOTFOOT) HARLOW, CO-PILOT, CORPORAL OLIVER, BOMBADIER AND SIX OTHERS. THE OTHER FIVE AIRCRAFT WERE ALSO ATTACKED BY ZEROS BUT DID MANAGE TO FLY BACK TO PORT MORSBY. ALL WERE EXTREMELY LOW ON FUEL. IN FACT, ONE OF THEM LOST TWO ENGINES WHILE IN THE LANDING PATTERN.

THE NAVAL TASK FORCE TO WHICH WE WERE ASSIGNED FOR THIS MISSION PLANNED TO ATTACK REBAUL ON THE EARLY MORNING OF FEBRUARY 23 SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH OUR B-17 ATTACK. ON FEBRUARY 22<sup>ND</sup> , DUE TO EXCESSIVE RADIO TRAFFIC, THE



JAPANESE WERE ALERTED TO THE PRESENCE OF THE TASK FORCE. THE JAPANESE DISPATCHED RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT WHICH LOCATED THE TASK FORCE. ALTHOUGH, THE JAPANESE RECONNAISSANCE PLANES WERE DESTROYED, THE TASK FORCE FEARED THAT RABAUWAS ALERTED. THE TASK FORCE ABORTED THE MISSION AND WITHDREW FROM THE AREA.

WE CONTINUED TO FLY MISSIONS UNTIL NOVEMBER 1942. AT THAT TIME THE ENTIRE 19<sup>TH</sup> BOMB GROUP WAS ORDERED TO RETURN TO THE STATES. WE ARRIVED IN SAN FRANCISCO BY AIR IN MID-DECEMBER OF 1942. EVERYONE WAS GIVEN LEAVE AND WE WERE ALL HOME FOR CHRISTMAS.

\*\*\*\*\* MISSIONS FLOWN\*\*\*\*\*  
SOUTHWEST PACIFIC IN 1942

JUNE 16, 1942

UP AT 3:30 A.M. TOOK OFF AT 5:00 ON PHOTO RECCO OF GUADACANAL ISLAND. THIS ISLAND LIES DUE EAST OF NEW GUINEA, ABOUT 900 MILES FROM PORT MORSBY. GUADACANAL IS THE ONLY ISLAND OF THE SOLOMAN GROUP THAT THE JAPS MIGHT BUILD AN AIR BASE AND IT IS IMPORTANT THAT ANY ENEMY MOVES BE NOTED. TO THE NORTH OF GUADACANAL LIES TAULGI, A SMALL ISLAND SEAPLANE BASE AND EXCELLENT HARBOR NOW IN JAPANESE HANDS. VERY LITTLE ACTIVITY WAS EVIDENT AT TAULGI. ALTHOUGH OUR ALTITUDE AND DISTANCE WAS TOO GREAT FOR GOOD OBSERVATIONS, WE DID, HOWEVER, OBTAIN GOOD PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE GUADACANAL AREA AND FEEL THAT THE MISSION WAS A SUCCESS. BACK AT MORSBY HAD A TALK WITH THE B-25 AND 26 BOYS WHO RAIDED LAE AND SALAMONA. EACH SHIP REACHED ITS OBJECTIVE AND RETURNED WITHOUT ENEMY FIGHTER INTERCEPTION. THE B-17s ATTACKED BEFORE THEM TO DRAW OFF ENEMY PURSUIT, SO WHEN THE MEDIUM BOMBERS ARRIVED, LARGE FIRES WERE ALREADY BURNING AROUND LAE AIRDROME. THEIR BOMBS JUST ADDED TO THE INFERNO. IN MY OPINION, THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL CORDINATED RAIDS OF THE WAR IN THIS AREA.

JUNE 17, 1942

WE PLANNED TO RETURN DIRECT TO TOWNSEVILE THIS AM BUT THE COMMAND WANTS PICTURES OF THE MILINE BAY AREA ON THE SOUTH EAST TIP OF NEW GUINEA. WHEN WE GET THERE THE CEILING IS ONLY 1500 TO 1200 FEET—TOO LOW FOR GOOD PHOTOGRAPHY. STILL WE OBTAINED PICTURES OF THE AREA AT A SLOW SPEED TO PREVENT BLURING. LANDED TOWNSVILLE ABOUT NOON.

JUNE 19, 1942

HEARD THE JAPS SENT EIGHTEEN BOMBERS OVER PORT MORSBY AND MADE THREE HITS ON A FREIGHTER IN THE HARBOR. THE BOMBERS DROPPED THEIR ENTIRE LOAD ON THIS ONE SHIP. SEVERAL CREW MEMBERS WERE SERIOUSLLY BURNED,

JUNE 20, 1942



WELL, WE MADE UP FOR YESTERDAY'S JAP ATTACK ON MORSBY BY SINKING A 10,000 TON TANKER IN RABAUH HARBOR AND OBTAINING DIRECT HITS ON BOMBERS ON THE AIRDROME.

JUNE 21, 1942

TOOK OFF THIS MORNING FOR A TEN DAY TRIP TO PORT DARWIN, AUSTRALIA. TWO CREWS ARE FLYING UP IN ONE AIRPLANE AND IT IS PLANNED THAT BY ALTERNATING AND EACH CREW FLYING EVERY OTHER DAY, WE CAN ACCOMPLISH ABOUT TEN RECONNIASANCE MISSIONS FROM THE DARWIN AREA.

JUNE 22, 1942

WE ARE STAYING IN A CAMP NEAR BATCHELER FIELD ABOUT FORTY MILES OUT OF PORT DARWIN. DIDN'T FLY TODAY, SO HAD AN OPPORTUNITY OF SEEING THE COUNTRY. ONE COULD ALMOST IMAGINE THAT HE WAS IN AFRICA. WATER HOLES ARE FEW AND FAR BETWEEN, AND THE COUNTRY ABOUNDS IN BUFFALO, WILD TURKEY, WILD HOG AND KANGAROO. WE CAUGHT A MONSTROUS LIZZARD, ALMOST FIVE FEET LONG - THAT HAD LODGED ITSELF IN A TREE TRUNK. ONE OF THE MEN DRIVING ALONG THE ROAD IN A JEEP RAN OVER A PYTHON. THE SNAKE CURLED AROUND THE CAR AND THE SURPRISED DRIVER QUICKLY MADE HIS EXIT. THE OFFICERS ARE GIVEN INDIVIDUAL TENTS AND JUST IMAGE HAVING SPRING BEDS AND SHEETS AND PILLOWS. THE NIGHTS ARE COOL ENOUGH FOR BLANKETS AND A GOOD AMERICAN MESS. THERE IS A RADIO HERE ON WHICH WE CAN HEAR SHORT WAVE BROADCASTS FROM THE STATES. ITS THE FIRST TIME IN NEARLY SIX MONTHS THAT WE HAVE HEARD A NEWS BROADCAST FROM THE USA.

JUNE 23, 1942

WE ARE TO RUN A PHOTO RECCON OF TIMOR ISLAND AIRDROMES AND AIRDROME SITES ON ADJACENT ISLANDS. IT LOOKS LIKE OUR TOUGHEST MISSION, SO WILL DO IT FIRST. EVERYTHING GOES WELL AND WE PHOTOGRAPH THE FIRST AIRPORT ON TIMOR FROM 26,000 FEET. THE WEATHER IS IDEAL AND WE GET ALL AIRDROMES ON TIMOR. WINDING UP OVER KOEPANG AIRPORT AND THE TOWN PORT KOEPANG. THIS AIRPORT IS LOCATED APPROXIMATELY 600 MILES NORTHWEST OF PORT DARWIN IN THE DUTCH EAST INDIES. ALL THE DUTCH EAST INDIES HAVE BEEN OCCUPIED BY THE JAPANESE EARLIER IN THE WAR. THE AIRFIELD WAS CONSTRUCTED OF CORAL THAT HAS BEEN BLEACHED WHITE BY THE SUN. ON CLEAR DAYS, ONE CAN SEE IT ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY MILES AWAY. ACK-ACK FIRE OVER KOEPANG WAS QUITE INEFFECTIVE. I NOTICED SEVERAL BURSTS BEGINNING ABOUT 20,000 FEET UP TO OUR ALTITUDE BUT AT LEAST 500 TO 1000 FEET AFT OF US. ON OUR RETURN TO DARWIN, ABOUT 100 MILES OUT AN ENEMY FIGHTER INTERCEPTED US. HE DIDN'T APPEAR TO BE A ZERO BUT RESEMBLED THE MUCH PUBLICIZED GERMAN FULK-WOLF 190. HE MADE TWO PASSES ON US FROM BELOW. ON THE SECOND PASS, HE CAME AT US ABEAM AND WHEN ALMOST UNDER THE SHIP, PULLED STRAIGHT INTO US WITH BOTH 20 MM CANNONS AND .275MMs FIRING. AT TWO HUNDRED YARDS, THE JAP BROKE AWAY AND FELL OFF TOWARDS OUR TAIL. OUR TAIL GUNNERS PUT SEVERAL HUNDRED ROUNDS INTO, OR AT LEAST IN HIS DIRECTION. HE WAS LAST SEEN SMOKING AND LOSING ATTITUDE AND APPARENTLY OUT OF CONTROL. PHOTOGRAPHERS OF THE AIRDROME SITES ON THE ADJACENT ISLANDS WERE SECURED WITHOUT INCIDENT. ON THE WAY HOME, ONE ENGINE CONSUMED AN EXCESSIVE AMOUNT OF GASOLINE AND WE FINALLY FEATHERED IT. AFTER LANDING, A THOROUGH EXAMINATION DISCLOSED NO BULLET HOLES BUT MERELY A FAULTY GAS LINE.



JULY 19, 1942

WE TOOK OFF TOWNSVILLE THIS AFTERNOON WITH TWO CREWS FOR A SPECIAL RECCO MISSION OUT OF PORT MORSBY. NOTHING OF UNUSUAL INTEREST IN THE TRIP AND WE WERE GIVEN THE SAME DIRTY TENT TO SLEEP IN. THE FOOD WAS IMPROVED AND THERE IS EVEN SOME FRESH MILK. MOSQUITOES, HOWEVER, ARE AS BAD AS USUAL.

JULY 20, 1942

TOOK OFF AT DAWN FOR A PHOTO RECCO OF RABAUH HARBOR AND OUTLYING AREAS. IMMEDIATELY AFTER LEAVING NEW GUINEA WE WENT ON INSTRUMENTS AND FINALLY BROKE OUT AT 28,000 FEET, ONLY 90 MILES SOUTH OF RABAUH. THERE WE SIGHTED AN ENEMY CONVOY OF TRANSPORTS, CRUISERS AND WHAT APPEARED TO BE TWO BATTLE SHIPS. THEY WERE HEADING SOUTH, INTENT PROBABLY ON INVASIONS SOMEWHERE. WE PHOTOGRAPHED RABAUH HARBOR FROM 32,100 AND SPOTTED 13 ENEMY TRANSPORTS AT ANCHOR. A.A.FIRE WAS ABOUT 1000 FEET BELOW US AND WIDE. IN 30 MINUTES WE ENTERED CLOUDS AND PREVENTED ENEMY PURSUIT INTERCEPTION. BACK AT MORSBY THEY WOULDNT BELIEVE US ABOUT THE CONVOY WITH TWO BATTLESHIPS, BUT A NAVAL EXPERT COULD NOT DENY OUR CLAIM FROM THE PHOTOGRAPHS.

JULY 21, 1942

THE ALTERNATE CREW AGAIN SIGHTED THE CONVOY ONLY 60 MILES FROM LAE AT NOON TODAY. WE LOAD UP 4-1000 LB BOMBS AND GO OUT. GENERAL WALKER CAME ALONG AS OUR OBSERVER. AFTER LEAVING MORSBY, WE START A GRADUAL CLIMB AND ARE 25,000 AT THE SPOT WHERE THEY WERE LAST SIGHTED, BUT LOW CLOUDS PREVENT US SEEING THEM. TWO ENEMY FIGHTERS ARE SEEN BELOW, BUT THEY APPARENTLY DO NOT SEE US. THAN WE DESCEND ABOVE THE CLOUDS WITH NEGATIVE RESULTS SO FAR. THE GENERAL FEELS THEY MUST BE IN LAE OR THE SOLAMONA HARBOR. WE SEE A SUB AND MAKE A RUN FOR IT, BUT IT TURNS OUT TO BE A HALF SUBMERGED ROCK. OUR LAST ATTEMPT IS TO FOLLOW THE COAST DOWN SOUTH OF LAE AND CHANCE FINDING THEM. SOON THE CLOUDS DISAPPEAR AND A THICK HAZE COVERS THE WATER. THIRTY MILES FROM BUNA WE RUN SMACK INTO THE COVOY. GENERAL WALKER RADIOED BACK THE POSITIONS WHILE WE CLIMBED TO 11,000 FEET.

IF WE CAN GET TWO TRANSPORTS, IT MIGHT STOP THEM, SO WE ADJUST OUR AUTOMATIC FLIGHT EQUIPMENT FOR 30 MINUTES TO DO THE BEST BOMBING. ON THE FIRST RUN THE JAP TRANSPORT TURNED INTO US SO WE DIDNT RELEASE ANY BOMBS. THE ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE WAS TERRIFIC. ONE SHOT PUT A HOLE IN OUR STARBOARD WING. THE SECOND RUN WAS ON A TRANSPORT, BUT MISSED BY TWO HUNDRED FEET. ON THE THIRD RUN, THE TRANSPORT AGAIN TURNED, ALTHOUGH WE LAID ONE ONLY 100 FEET FROM THE STERN. IT TAKES 25 SECONDS FOR THE BOMBS TO FALL FROM 11,000 FEET AND THESE SHIPS CAN JUST TURN OUT FROM UNDER THEM. IF HE HAD HELD HIS COURSE, THE BLAST WOULD HAVE CUT HIM IN TWO. WHEN YOU HEAR THE SHELLS EXPLODE, YOU KNOW THAT THEY ARE CLOSE. WE WATCH THE CONVOY UNTIL DUSK UNABLE TO DO ANYTHING WHILE BARGES, BLACK WITH JAPS Poured ASHORE AT BUNA. WE LANDED AT MORESBY AFTER DARK DISGUSTED ABOUT AN INVASION THAT COULD EASILY HAVE BEEN HALTED IF ONLY OUR DECADENT AMERICAN COMBINED



HEADQUARTERS WOULD BELIEVE US. THEY OUGHT TO CLEAN OUT 98% OF THIS OUTFIT, THEN WE MIGHT GET GOING. I HAVE NO RESPECT FOR THESE AUSTRALIANS IN THE TOP ECHELON. A FEW ARE ON THE BALL BUT MOST OF THEM ARE SNAFU AND TOO SLOW AND THICK TO ACT QUICKLY.

JULY 22, 1942

THE ALTERNATE CREW - LT. DE BORD, PILOT WENT OUT AGAIN TO THE INVASION SITE AND MADE A BOMB RUN ON A TRANSPORT AND DROPPED 10 -300 LB. BOMBS WITH THREE DIRECT HITS. AFTER THEY CAME BACK, WE AGAIN WENT OUT WITH 14-300 LB BOMBS. THE TRANSPORT THEY HIT IN THE MORNING WAS STILL BURNING IN THE HARBOR. WE SEARCHED UNTIL DARK FOR THE CONVOY BUT COULD NOT FIND THEM. APPARENTLY THEY HAD SLIPPED UNDER THE COVER OF LOW HANGING CLOUDS. AT DUSK WE RELEASED OUR BOMB LOAD ON SHORE INSTALLATIONS, BUT IT WAS TOO DARK TO OBSERVE RESULTS. AA GUNS ARE ALREADY SET UP AND THEIR FIRE IS INACCURATE AS YET.

JULY 23, 1942

TOOK OFF FROM MORSBY AT DAWN AND RETURNED TO TOWNSVILLE BECAUSE OF ENGINE TROUBLE.

JULY 26, 1942

TOOK OFF AT TOWNSVILLE AT 2:00 AM FOR PORT MORSBY. ABOUT ONE HOUR BEFORE TAKE-OFF, FOUR JAP FLYING BOATS RAIDED TOWNSVILLE DOCKS. THEY INCURRED NO RESISTANCE FROM ACK-ACK FIRE OR OUR PURSUIT. THEY ATTEMPTED TO HIT THE DOCKS, BUT ALL BOMBS FELL WIDE OF THE MARK. WE ARRIVED AT PORT MORSBY AT DAWN AND TRIED TO GET SOME SLEEP DURING THE MORNING. JUST AFTER WE LANDED, FIVE B-25 MEDIUM BOMBERS TOOK OFF TO RAID BUNA BAY AREA. ABOUT NINE O'CLOCK THREE OF THEM CAME BACK WITH ZEROS ON THEIR TAILS. THE ZEROS CHASED THEM ALL THE WAY TO THE EDGE OF MORSBY'S RUNWAY WITH THE JAP TRACERS KICKING UP DIRT AND DUST ALONG THE STRIP. FIFTEEN ZEROS HAD JUMPED THE FIVE MEDIUM BOMBERS AND HAD SHOT TWO OF THEM DOWN IN FLAMES. SOME OF THE CREWS WERE OBSERVED TO HAVE BAILED OUT AND WE ALL WISHED THEM THE BEST OF LUCK IN MAKING THEIR WAY BACK THROUGH RUGGED COUNTRY. AT THREE THIS AFTERNOON FIVE ZEROS MADE A RECCO OF THE FIELD FROM AT LEAST 25,000 FEET. P-39s DID NOT TRY TO INTERCEPT.

JULY 27, 1942

OUR MISSION IS TO SEARCH THE AREA BETWEEN TAE AND BUNA LOCATING ANY ENEMY SHIPPING THAT MIGHT TRY TO SLIP INTO BUNA. BUNA BAY IS OVERCAST AND WE ARE FORCED TO GO TO 1500 FEET TO OBSERVE THE COASTLINE AND WATER. WE OBSERVED NO ENEMY SHIPPING, BUT MADE AN OBSERVATION AT BUNA THAT LOOKS MIGHTY FISHY. AS WE FLEW PAST BUNA, THE TRANSPORT THAT HAD BEEN BOMBED, SUDDENLY BEGAN TO EMIT BLACK CLOUDS OF SMOKE, JUST AS IF THE FIRE HAD STRUCK THE OIL DRUMS. BUT THREE HOURS LATER NO SMOKE WAS VISIBLE. CAN IT BE THAT THE JAPS ARE PULLING A FAST ONE? THEY MIGHT HAVE SUNKED THE OLD WRECK AND SUBSTITUTED A LOADED TRANSPORT FOR IT. SEVERAL OTHER AIRPLANES REPORTED THAT THE BOAT LOOKED FISHY. SO TOMORROW THE DIVE BOMBERS ARE GOING TO POLISH IT OFF TO BE SURE. RAN INTO BOB CASTLE, WHO IS ATTACHED TO A-24 DIVE



BOMBER SQUADRON. BOB IS THE FIRST HINSDALE BOY I HAVE SEEN FOR ALMOST TEN MONTHS.

JULY 28, 1942

TWO CREWS RETURNED THIS AFTERNOON TO TOWNSVILLE IN OUR AIRPLANE. AROUND MIDNIGHT, ONE JAP FOUR ENGINE FLYING BOAT AGAIN RAIDED TOWNSVILLE. THIS TIME ONE P-39 INTERCEPTED AND AT ONE TIME SET THE TAIL OF THE BOAT AFIRE. HOWEVER, IT WENT OUT AND APPARENTLY THE JAPS GOT AWAY AGAIN!

AUGUST 2, 1942

JUST HEARD THAT BOB CASTLES IS MISSING. SEVEN DIVE BOMBERS WERE JUMPED BY ZEROS NEAR BUNA. THE MAJOR WAS SHOT DOWN IN FLAMES AND BOB HAS NOT YET RETURNED. ONE SHIP CAME HOME.

AUGUST 7, 1942

TOOK OFF FROM PORT MORSBY IN "NIPPONESE NIPPER" WHICH IS ONE OF OUR LB-30's. OUR MISSION IS PATROLLING SEA-LANES BEYOND NEW IRELAND TO WITHIN 30 MILES OF THE EQUATOR. THE FLIGHT WAS 2300 MILES. NO SHIPPING SIGHTED.

AUGUST 9, 1942

RAN THE SAME TIRESOME MISSION ON THE DAY BEFORE WITH NO SIGHTINGS.

AUGUST 16, 1942

FINALLY GOT CHECKED OFF AS FIRST PILOT ON B-17.

AUGUST 17, 1942

FLEW TO MILNE BAY IN LB-30 TO LAND AIRBORNE ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS. THE RUNWAY IS OF THE STEEL MAT TYPE SET IN A COCOANUT PLANTATION.

AUGUST 19, 1942

MY FIRST MISSION AS FIRST PILOT TOOK PHOTOS OF BUKA AIRDROME FROM 17,000 FEET. NIL ACTIVITY WAS REPORTED, BUT PHOTOS SHOWED CONSTRUCTION WORK ON AIRDROME.

AUGUST 20, 1942

TOOK OFF PORT MORSBY TO PHOTOGRAPH LAE BUNA - GONA AREA. LAE AREA WAS OVERCAST, BUT WE PHOTOGRAPHED A SEVENTY FIVE MILE STRIP FROM 29,000 FEET OVER BUNA. PHOTOS SHOWED WHERE THE JAPS ARE CONSTRUCTING A NEW AIRDROME.

AUGUST 27, 1942





THIS IS THE MISSION EVERYONE DREADS - GOING OVER RABAUL HARBOR. ABOUT ONE HOUR OUT, A GAS CONNECTOR BREAKS AND WE LOSE 200 GALLONS OF GASOLINE THAT RUNS INTO THE BOTTOM OF THE SHIP. IT TOOK AN HOUR TO FIX IT, THEN ALL OUR FLIGHT INSTRUMENTS GO OUT. I DECIDED NOT TO GO OVER RABAUL, BUT PATROL AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. WITH NO FLIGHT INSTRUMENTS WE CANNOT AFFORD TO FLY UNDER INSTRUMENT CONDITIONS.

AUGUST 29, 1942

TOOK OFF IN A B-17 FOR GIZO ISLAND, FAISI ISLAND, 800 MILES NORTHEAST OF PORT MORSBY, AND BUKA PASSAGE IN THE NORTHERN SOLOMONS. HALF WAY TO THE TARGET, WE FLEW BY AN ISLAND IN THE TROBERIAND GROUP. THE LOWER TURRET MAN SPOTTED AN AIRPLANE IN A CLEARED SPACE. IT TURNED OUT TO BE A B-26 WHICH HAD CRASHED. HE LANDED WITH WHEELS DOWN, SKIDDED 100 YDS AND FLOPPED OVER ON HIS BACK. LATER I LEARNED THAT ALL WERE KILLED BUT ONE MAN. TWO SMALL BOATS 100 TONS OR LESS WERE PHOTOGRAPHED NEAR FAISE ISLAND. AT THE MOUTH OF TRONDEI HARBOR WERE SEVEN ENEMY DESTROYERS, FOUR 8,000 TON TRANSPORTS, ONE SEAPLANE TENDER. NO A.A. OBSERVED ALATHOUGH THE SEA PLANE TENDER APPEARED TO BE FIRING. AFTER LEAVING GIZO, I ONLY HAD 900 GALLONS OF FUEL LEFT, SO DECIDED TO HEAD BACK TO MORSBY. BY 4:00 OUR ETA WAS UP AND NO MORSBY. WE ONLY HAD 345 GALLONS THEN AND WERE ON STRANGE COAST. THE RADIO OPERATOR GOT A BEARING WHICH SHOWED THAT WE WERE FLYING 180 DEGREES OFF COURSE. FINALLY WITH THE NAVIGATOR WE ESTABLISHED OUR POSITION AND HEADED BACK TO MORSBY. IT WAS 4:45 THEN AND A CEILING OF 500 FEET. AT 6:20 WE WERE 50 MILES NORTH OF MORSBY IN A RAIN STORM AND GETTING BLACKER EACH MINUTE. AT 6:35 I SAW THE LIGHTS OF MORSBY HARBOR. THE INBOARD TANKS SHOWED ZERO GALLONS AND THE OUTBOARDS ONLY 30 GALLONS EACH. FINALLY I SET HER DOWN TO THE RELIEF OF ALL WITH OUR ESTIMATED 40 GALLONS TOTAL

\*\*\*\*\*EUROPEAN THEATRE\*\*\*\*\*

DURING 1943 I WAS ASSIGNED TO THE TRAINING COMMAND STATION AT BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA AND WAS ASSIGNED SQUADRON OPERATIONS OFFICER AND B-17 CHECK PILOT. IN MID AUGUST 1943 I WAS ENROLLED IN FIRST AIR FORCE STAFF COURSE AND MET SMOKEY STOVER WHO WAS ALSO ASSIGNED FOR THE COURSE. UPON COMPLETION OF THE COURSE IN DECEMBER 1943, WE WERE TOLD THAT WE WERE ALL GOING OVERSEAS BUT WE COULD ELECT THE THEATRE OF OUR CHOICE. BOTH SMOKEY AND I ELECTED TO GO TO THE UK AND WE WERE BOTH ASSIGNED TO THE ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY AIR FORCE (AEAF) IN LONDON. AFTER THE INVASION, THE TRAINING COMMAND WAS DISBANDED. I WAS THEN ASSIGNED TO THE 94<sup>TH</sup> BOMB GROUP HEADQUARTERS IN BURY ST. EDMUND.

WHILE FLYING WITH THE 94<sup>TH</sup> BOMB GROUP I FLEW AS ACTING COMMAND PILOT AND FLEW THE FOLLOWING MISSIONS:

\*\*\*\*\* MISSIONS FLOWN IN THE ETO BY\*\*\*\*\*

COL. RODERICK M. STEWART

- |    |           |          |         |      |      |
|----|-----------|----------|---------|------|------|
| 1. | AUGUST 25 | REICHLIN | GERMANY | 1944 | 94-B |
| 2. | AUGUST 30 | BREMEM   | GERMANY | 1944 | 94-B |

3.	SEPTEMBER 8	MAINZ	GERMANY	1944	94-A
4.	SEPTEMBER 10	GIEBELSTADT	GERMANY	1944	94-B
5.	SEPTEMBER 13	WEISBADEN	GERMANY	1944	94-B
6.	SEPTEMBER 22	KASSEL	GERMANY	1944	94-C
7.	SEPTEMBER 27	LUDWIGSHAFEN	GERMANY	1944	94-B
8.	OCTOBER 7	BIELFILD	GERMANY	1944	94-A
9.	OCTOBER 19	MANHEIM	GERMANY	1944	94-B
10.	NOVEMBER 2	MERSEBURG	GERMANY	1944	94-B
11.	NOVEMBER 21	WETZLAR	GERMANY	1944	94-C
12.	NOVEMBER 30	LUTZGENDORF	GERMANY	1944	94-A
13.	DECEMBER 11	GIERSSSEN	GERMANY	1944	94-A
14.	DECEMBER 30	MANHEIM	GERMANY	1944	94-A
15.	JANUARY 5	PRONSFIELD	GERMANY	1945	94-A
16.	JANUARY 16	PLAVEN	GERMANY	1945	94-A
17.	FEBRUARY 3	BERLIN	GERMANY	1945	94-A
18.	UNKNOWN	BERLIN	GERMANY	1945	94-A
19.	FEBRUARY 16	HAMMGER	GERMANY	1945	94-A
20.	FEBRUARY 22	RUTLINGLEN	GERMANY	1945	94-A

