

Second Edition

CONCERNING WAR

VOLUME 1:

A Collection of Recollections
with Room for Ruminations



Written, or Compiled & Edited by

ANGELA HUNT

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Range
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Concerning War - Volume 1: A Collection of Recollections with Room for Ruminaton
Written, or Compiled and Edited by Angela Hunt.

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A Collection of Recollections with Room for Ruminaton

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Dedication

For the conscripted
Volunteered
Enlisted
Drafted
Signed-up
Served
And yet to serve;

For the families
Of all the above.

In honor of freedom of speech,
Which people have fought
And died to preserve;

And for those quiet Minnesotans
Who exercised it,
Offering comment
About their experiences
In service to our country.

In Appreciation

Thank you, Tim, for challenging me to try a full-sized book and for believing that I would have something to say. That really means a lot to me. So in a way, it's all your fault.

To the amazing team at Range PrintWorks, my patient and computer-savvy husband, Jim; savant proofreader and historical contributor Gary White; beta-reader Shannon Wetzel, the writing community of Carver County who listened, read, and offered advice; to all who asked or consented to be interviewed. It takes a village to birth a book. Thanks especially to Linda, who cooked those meals while I stewed over verbiage, then picked bones out of the text amid computer glitches.

Thanks to John Thornberg, a former U.S. Coast Guard Reservist and poet from Chisago City, MN, for 4 contributions. Also included is an essay by Jim Kane, Vietnam veteran of Chanhassen, MN, published in the 23rd edition of Talkingstick. Both are members of the Jackpine Writer's Bloc, Park Rapids, MN.

Selections based on War by Sebastian Junger and Suicidal Veterans by Vic Montgomery are used by permission.

With great appreciation to Jesse Hunt for contributing his knowledge and expertise on weapons and gear functionality. Artifacts and uniforms are from his military memorabilia collection and from family archives, unless otherwise noted. Any sensitive artifacts have been declassified.

With gratitude to mentor Barbara Colhapp for teaching me to ask questions and then let someone else's words come out.

Thanks especially to my mother, Elaine, for her forethought to preserve family stories and stuff, and to all the generations before her who were packrats.

Introduction

This book is a series of Studs Terkel-style personal stories about what it looks like to be in service to our country: in war, in its aftermath, from home. The book started with a phone visit with my Vietnam-Era combat-vet cousin. It grew. Most of the over 100 people who were interviewed I'd not known before starting this project. I have tried to be accurate in tone, word and intent, to honor their opinions or conclusions. The accounts remind us others have come home to pick up their pieces. They wanted to say that readjustment is possible. Stories help those who have *not* experienced service to realize its indelibility; battle accounts help those at home to understand the depth of war's stain.

There is moral ambiguity surrounding war; this book wants to honor that, too. People can hate war and serve honorably; people can be energized by war and show great compassion. Depending on what they were called to do, people can see their service as a rite of passage, a heavy difficulty, a privilege, an embarrassment, a career, an interruption—all in the same tour of duty. Ambivalence was often expressed: "On the one hand, I'm glad we have a system for defense set up. On the other hand, I wish..." In that spirit, opposing viewpoints are presented.

This book is also based on my family, who started arriving to the New World in 1535 to build a new life, so it seemed important to include a snippet of early history to view how wars affected migration to Minnesota. I also wanted to honor my Iroquois, Mohawk, Chippewa/Ojibway ancestors who, of course, were already here and graciously welcomed settlers into their tribes through marriage. The King Philip's War section includes details from their artifacts, family accounts, oral history, and corroborative period histories.

Civil War contributors were two of my great-great-grandfathers. Subsequent wars have netted individual written accounts, recollections gathered from oral history, letters from the deceased, and verbal interviews from currently living soldiers and their families. Contributors are identified as they asked to be; some wished to remain anonymous.

Even though certain of their stories have become free verse poetry and other accounts have been set in abbreviated prose, I have tried to remain faithful to the spirit and intent of their messages. The project has become a microcosm of opinion about war, service, patriotism, dissent, objection, encouragement, and healing. I hope you will appreciate how average Minnesotans in remarkable circumstances have dealt with war. The way our Christian faith has helped. The stories were generously provided. Any errors are mine alone.

Our service personnel uphold the right to free speech. These few—and many others—have provided the words. I include an overarching view because each war is distinctive, because all wars have a common thread.

To all the people who offered to contribute to this book, thank you for sharing your struggle through times when our nation has been at war. I am full, both of sorrow over what you have had to suffer, and of pride that I now know you. I want returning vets and their family members to be helped in some way through this effort, if only to say, "There, they've said it and we can, too."

—Angela Hunt

Table of Contents

Concerning War - Volume 1:

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	Page:
Prequel: Early Settlement in the New World Pre-1675	ix
Section 1: Wars¹ on Historical North American Soil: Building the U.S.	1
1.1 King Philip's War	1675-1676 3
1.2 French and Indian War(s)	1756-1763 13
1.3 Revolutionary War	1775-1783 17
1.4 War of 1812	1812 23
1.5 Mexican Wars	1846-1848 29
1.6 Civil War	1860-1865 37
1.7 Spanish-American War Era	1898-1901 55
Section 2: Modern Wars¹ of the United States of America: Personal Accounts and Information	63
2.1 World War I	1914-1918 65
2.2 World War II-Pacific Theater	1941-1945 83
2.3 World War II-European Theater	1941-1945 99
2.4 Korean War	1950-1953 117
2.5 Cold War Era	1954-1963 133
2.6 Vietnam Era	1961-1975 139
2.7 Post-Vietnam Era	1976-1989 187
2.8 Gulf Wars Era	1990-2015 199
2.9 Afghan Wars	2000-Present 237
Epilogue:	263

¹Most conflict dates provided by <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/html/search/search.html>. These official dates may vary from other sources.

0.1 PREQUEL:

EARLY SETTLEMENT IN THE NEW WORLD

PRE-1675

A glimpse of early immigration to the New World, based on the author's family history:

“When the first of your people came,
They were part of the Creator's plan.
It was not our place to deny them,
Because it was not our right to control them.
They were searching. We both learned.
We fed them and helped them.
They were like raindrops that fell out of the sky.”

—“Dan”, A Dakota elder's perspective from Neither Wolf Nor Dog by Kent Nerburn, p. 46.



Reproduced from “Map of the World” by Claudius Ptolemy c. 150 A.D. Ulm Edition, 1482 (points west).
Reproduced from the original in the Edward E. Ayer Collection of the Newberry Library. Family archives.



Landing of the Pilgrims Tercentenary stamp 1620-1920.

They Came, 1621¹

Some were led, some were pushed,²
A frightening few were dragged,³
At least two were held,⁴
Picked apart by the ague, rickets, pellagra,⁵
Who knows why in the world—
But they came.



Reproduction of hand-drawn
Mayflower. From family archives.

¹The original Mayflower is thought to have made just one protracted trip (starting out 3 times), but was one ship of many. The significant difference was it came for colonization rather than for trade and assimilation.

²Besides practice of faith and avoidance of political persecution, unfair inheritance law was a major motivator. Families across Europe had divided and re-divided inherited land, favoring the firstborn male for generations. Those who had to feed large families on only a sliver of property found the promise of free land—in spite of danger and probable death—lucrative. A very few in the 16th and 17th centuries looked up from their situation, saw the opportunity, had the means to take it, and actually survived.

³Indentured servants could legally be brought along by families without assent. In a shockingly few years, many, many more human beings were sold down the river, shipped and brought as slaves to the home of the free.

⁴A baby in arms. The ship's manifest reported births during the voyage. "Oceanus" and "Pergrine" were both born on the Mayflower. The author is the descendant of 2 persons who arrived on the Mayflower.

⁵3 common diseases contracted on extended sea voyages. Ague: acute regularly returning fever; rickets: weakening bones due to vitamin D deficiency (because of extended time below decks); pellagra: a niacin/B3 deficiency characterized by dermatitis, diarrhea, dementia, and death.

Land Ho! 1639

Thomas, 29, and Emma, 27,¹
Green, fresh from the sea voyage,
Youth and inexperience revealed in such circumstances,
Nonetheless came, certain it was the Providence of God;
Started a family: Samuel, Sarah, John, Thomas, Dinah, Zechariah, Emma.²

With others who'd bonded over the harshness of the venture

Founded Stratford, Connecticut, “Settlers of Catan,”³
With no defense in the war against the cold, the croup,
Willing to learn⁴ from Native peoples,
Staking their young English lives on that generosity.

¹2 of the author’s English ancestors arrived in 1639 and were aligned with the Reformed Movement of England after 1517. Thomas was a founding citizen of Stratford, CT. He was elected deputy of the General Court in 1654 and in 1664, and was 4 times nominated for Assistant Governor, was a merchant and owned a home on what is now Elm Street, Bridgeport. —The History of Stratford, Connecticut 1639-1939 by William Howard Wilcoxson.

²All survived childhood. Samuel was the 1st white child born in Stratford, Connecticut.

³ Settlers of Catan: Reference to a 21st Century popular board game where players assess raw materials and the skills of those available to develop a settlement in the New World.

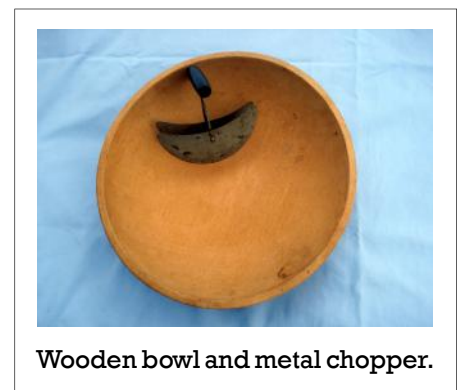
⁴Oral history suggests a New World Indigenous teenager, Squanto, had been kidnapped, sold by a warring tribe, and taken back to England as a slave. Over 14 years he learned the language, cultivated a Christian faith, and was so charming he won the hearts of all he met, eventually being introduced to the royal family as a curiosity. They were so impressed with him they offered his freedom and free passage back to the New World.

Squanto would have returned about the time of Thomas and Emma and to the same region. Though his tribe had been nearly wiped out by smallpox, he could converse with a neighboring tribe, and became an interpreter between that tribe and the English settlers. The story is reasonably corroborated in One Nation, published in the late 1970s.

Note: a similar situation occurred in the Old Testament with Joseph being sold as a slave, having to learn the language and culture of Egypt, also being introduced to Pharaoh. He told his brothers years later, “And now do not be distressed and angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. God meant it for good.” —Genesis 45:5. A magnanimous forgiveness must have been given by the young brave above, as well.

La Famille du Robideau I

Individuals, willing to try (1664)
Wanting to plant roots;
Pierre et Julia Robideau,¹ oùi, les immigrants
Hoping only for a place to be, to survive
Without persecuting or being persecuted.
Are we like them?



Wooden bowl and metal chopper.

Having sons, *les jeunes hommes*
 The same as any other,
 Forging alliances, friendships, matrimony
 With Native tribes;² learning, trading,
 Wanting the same for all lives:
 Peace, safety, livelihood:

Banding together;³ they, like us?
 Seeing a land:
 Promising. Available? Forbidding!
 Arriving,
 Entreating Him to protect, defend, bless;
 Are we like them?



Huguenot-Walloon Tercentenary
 Stamp, 1624-1924.

¹Some early French settlers were also Huguenots escaping European religious persecution. Some early (1535) fur traders (as apparently Peter Robideau was) were brought wives (“the King’s Daughters”) who were young volunteer French women paid by the King of France for the voyage and provided passage to the New World by ship. Unfortunately many lost teeth, weight and hair due to the poor diet *en voyage*. Still, they were a sight for sore eyes according to the Frenchmen awaiting their arrival [genealogist Teresa Mercier, 2010]. Others married into local tribes.

²French intermarriage with indigenous people was common. See French & Indian War section.

³Tadadaho, the Onondaga (“keepers of the council fire”) leader, was “the last chief of the 6 [Iroquois] Nations converted to the ways of Peace by the Great Peacemaker, 1722,” near present-day Syracuse, NY. This conversion reinforced a miraculous event bonding the “5 Nations, or the Great League of Peace formed by the Peacemaker” in the 15th century among the Mohawk, Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca, and Tuscarora nations. (<http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iroquois>). Apparently there was a spiritual awakening among these tribes. The author is not aware of white settler influence upon these events 139 miles from where the author’s French-Indigenous ancestors lived in Mohawk territory.

A Native’s Perspective

“Our whole people were ruined
 By your whole people.
 But there are good people in the middle.
 There always have been.
 We used to help settlers. They would help us.
 We thought we could all live together.
 But we were so different.”



Toddler moccasins made by
 Maryola Anderson of Labrador in
 the old ways from elk hide, rabbit
 fur, and wool, for Elizabeth H.

—“Dan”, Dakotah Elder, *Neither Wolf Nor Dog* by Kent Nerburn, p. 42.

SECTION 1:

WARS ON HISTORICAL NORTH AMERICAN SOIL: BUILDING THE U.S.

“Keep your powder dry”, good advice based on the need to carry black powder for flintlock rifles of the time. It has come to mean “Keep a thoughtful, patient demeanor until all the facts are revealed.”



“A new and correct map of the United States of North America, 1784” by Abel Buell. Reproduced from the original at the New Jersey State Historical Society. From family archives.

Enlargement shows the East Coast.



1.1 KING PHILIP'S WAR 1675-1676

King Philip's War (1675-1676), sometimes called the First Indian War, or Metacom's Rebellion, was the first war the English colonies fought against the Indigenous people, and it set the tone for unchecked colonial expansion at the expense of Native Americans.

Massasoit, the Wampanoag Chief, and Captain Miles Standish of the Puritan Separatist pilgrim colony, had signed the first treaty for mutual aid in 1621. The peace and goodwill lasted for more than 50 years.

Old Praying Towns

It was no secret Indigenous people had saved the newcomers upon their arrival. What if God also had sent Dutch and English Puritans and Huguenots from France (who all suffered persecution in their home countries) to the New World to return the favor of protection? In the 1650s several tribes were fleeing persecution by Mohawks and several other New England Indian groups. John Eliot of Massachusetts asked the General Court to establish five "Old Praying Towns" (similar to cities of refuge in the Old Testament) to harbor "*our praying friends* (Indigenous people were recognized as fellow believers)". The request was granted, and 8,000 acres were home to 10 Indian families and innocent victims of a feud between tribes. Eliot and others visited the towns regularly for fellowship, counsel, and to make sure the residents were safe. Indigenous leaders governed and spiritually led the Old Praying Towns. Before King Philip's War, 15 additional families lived at another site.

English settlement was also increased in the surrounding area in the mid-1650s as a way of discouraging marauders who were trying to take revenge on the protected Indigenous believers.

—Based on John Eliot's Mission to the Indians Before King Philip's War by Richard W. Cogley (ebook), Harvard University Press, pp. 144-154. An eyewitness account.



Stone knife, from family archives.

First Contact

Did we know of Jesus before First Contact? Long ago on the prairie, my tribe passed down this account: “We didn’t have healing medicine or reliable food sources; living quarters were poor. Our children didn’t live long. We cried out to the Creator for help. Suddenly a herd of buffalo came over a ridge. We had never seen such creatures before. A man different yet the same as us was riding the lead buffalo. We could not discern his tribe. This man jumped off and went to our holy man, asking in a concerned way about our people. “Why are you so sickly? Why do you have such difficulty getting through the winter? Why are your children dying?” The holy man could only say, “We don’t know how to do it any better. We don’t know how to get along with others.” So the man stayed with us for many years. He taught us to hunt with respect, not to over-kill. He taught us to help our neighbors, to join together in feasts. He taught better nutrition, the purposes for plants, how to select healing herbs, more effective housing solutions, wildlife and plant management, so children could survive to adulthood. We listened and learned.

One day the man said, “I need to leave. There are others I need to teach.” We were sad. We felt so much love from him, and we had grown to love him in return. He smiled and said, “I will come back. Continue to walk as you have been taught.” With that he walked a few steps into the prairie grasses and then disappeared before our eyes.”

—Wally Inyun Walkon, from memories of the elders of the Dakotah people.

This should not surprise us:

John 10:16 :“And I have other sheep which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they shall hear My voice; and they shall become one flock with one shepherd.”

John 21:25: “And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books which were written.”

“As long as genuine faith was organic, that is, exuded naturally out of a person, things were OK. The Puritans, Moravians, Lutherans and Huguenots had already faced so much persecution in Europe for their new expressions of faith that they came here very humble and teachable. It was more a sharing of information, and mutually uplifting one another than ‘conversion’ from either side. At first, in the

beginning so to speak, we both agreed the Creator was in charge, that peace in our hearts was possible regardless of what was going on around us. A personal relationship with our Creator, a strong prayer life, a continual sense of gratitude to Him unifies; truly hearing the Creator’s voice is calming. We see His creation as good, just like in Genesis. There is no other than One Creator and His Son who came to teach His ways. People who can agree on that get along fine.”

—Wally Inyun Walkon

“Between at least 1653 -1670 *Native American* missionaries travelled as apostles from the Old Praying Towns. We were resolved to bring this message, because the Jesus of the white settlers was consistent with the character and gentleness of the ancient accounts of One who had visited North America long ago to heal, and teach peace and forgiveness.” — Based on John Eliot’s Mission to the Indians Before King Philip’s War by Richard W. Cogley (ebook), Harvard University Press, pp. 144-154; Corroborated by Wally Inyun Walkon.

“The One who visited us in the ancient days had taught keys to a better way: praying and anointing each other. The knowledge was not ours to keep, so we shared it.”

—Wally Inyun Walkon, from the memories of the elders, Dakotah tribe.

James 5:13-16: “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call the elders and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Creator, and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Creator will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him. Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man accomplishes much.”

Hole digger (for planting seed); awl (to place holes in hides to lace them together for clothing).



Unravelling

The Mohawk tribe seemed particularly adverse to the message Indigenous apostles were trying to share; thus Eliot’s idea of Old Praying Towns for native protection.

Many “non-praying” of both English and Indigenous ethnicities experienced entanglements with the Mohawks. In 1670 New France forged an anti-Mohawk alliance that gained much support.

A Mr. Gookin observed part of the reason for the Mohawk resistance. “...Indians do not much rejoice under the Englishmen’s shadow who do so overtop them in their number of people, stocks of cattle, etc.”

To try to thwart dwindling mutual respect, Eliot proposed a biracial school to remove racial stigma for the next generation, ‘provide competent building maintenance, and make a place of worship together,’ and it was approved by Indian rulers and teachers as well as White settlers, with equal opportunity to learn from each other, but the war broke out before it was built.

Sorrowfully, things began to unravel from all directions. In 1670 the peaceful Pantucket were prohibited from Wamesit Praying Town because they “refused to desist from pow-wowing.”

—Selections from John Eliot’s writings.

Unfortunately, the cultural expression of prayer to the Creator with movement and drum cadence in worship didn’t fit the other cultural mold of pious silent prayer and stock-still church services.

Contact In Context

We shake hands
You, firm,
Looking me in the eye to detect intention, to display assertion,
And long,
As you were taught by your forefathers,
So we can not draw arms against each other.

I look you in the eye to show we are equals,
I shake hands lightly
As I was taught by my grandfathers
So you know you are free to be your own person,
So you understand we should live together in peace.

You depart
Unable to respect my ‘weakness’

And I depart,
Sure you will dominate me.

—Based on “Dan”, from The Wolf at Twilight: An Indian Elder’s Journey Through a Land of Ghosts and Shadows by Kent Nerburn, pp. 125-127.

One Dakotah’s Perspective

“Whites have the mistaken impression that Indigenous people were always skirmishing and jockeying for position. Not so. Only after First Contact when we were being crowded out, with diminishing food supply, did the bickering among tribes start.

But looking at history, I’d have to say when ‘relationship’ disintegrates to ‘a religion of legalism’, it only messes things up. Europeans fled here because legalism became persecution there. Why did they then lose that tenderness toward His Son and begin to legislate to us what was ‘true religion’? Yes, it was religious persecution: the old ones had to take our spirituality underground.”

—Wally Inyun Walkon

Unfortunately, the remembrance of European persecution toward Puritans and Huguenots did fade. Their belief in New Testament grace soon disintegrated into punitive behavior, and assumed a mandate to “claim the land” by conquest just as they envisioned the Israelites had done to the Promised Land (The Israelites, however, had actually been called to *redeem* the land with personal repentance, testimony of what God had done for them, and with praise to usher in God’s glory, which would have made physical battle unnecessary, as evidenced by the effect on the wall of Jericho.).

By 1671 relations were being strained beyond repair. The Wampanoag, now led by Massasoit’s second son, Metacom(et)—or King Philip as he was dubbed by the English—and other neighboring tribes were being pressured for hunting land by the expanding English colonies to the east and by the Iroquois tribes to their west who were fighting the Beaver Wars against still other tribes. In 1671 King Philip was under duress to sign over all rights to their land, gave up most of their arms and ammunition, and agreed to be subject to English law in exchange for protection and the right to trade with the English. That treaty didn’t last long; things came to a head in 1675 when a Christian Native American, acting as an English spy, was murdered and 3 Wampanoag were executed for the crime. Metacom/King Philip retaliated. —<http://www.history.com/this-day-history/king-philips-war-begins/print2/1/2016>

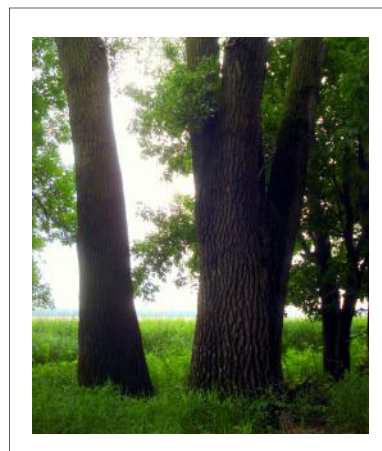
“Samuel Moselur was captain of a band of Dutch and English pirates that were then pardoned to participate in King Phillip’s War. Moselur twice brutalized the Okommakamesit and other Indigenous people who had taken refuge in an Old Praying Town. It was reported the pirates were ‘no lovers of Christian Indians.’ Besides, they desired the Praying Town land.”

—Selections from John Eliot’s writings.

Note: Native peoples knew that only The Great Spirit could truly *own* property, so it had been an early indigenous inside joke that whites thought land could be traded for *anything*.

Q: How might the decision (from both sides) to go to battle have overridden what God ultimately had in mind for the New World?

Q: Was the Mohawk nation intended to test a lasting mutual association between “praying-Indigenous” and “praying-Europeans” so the new relationship would be based on true fellowship and *lack* of interest in war? How might our nation look different today had no one “taken the bait”?



Red oak trees.

Uprooted and Replanted

Digory Sargeant served the Church of England on American soil,
Served his family and neighbors as a carpenter
Then served as a soldier in the very tragic King Phillip’s War.

Warned of Indian attacks, settlers
Were encouraged to leave their Worcester, MA, homes.
Digory, who had lived there for 10 years, flatly refused.

He had, after all, cleared fields, built a barn
Then a cabin, and simply didn’t have the constitution to start over.

For his part, King Phillip only wanted the peace and quiet
He had enjoyed at his lake home each summer. Then, people wandered
In uninvited, over-fished and over-hunted; developments encroached;

Deforestation came square by square, new settlers started fires on the land,
Took things as they were and uprooted them. Put boxes around themselves,
Then, quite pointedly, fences. When fear chilled bones, it came to a head.

Digory was enlisted in the war, scalped and killed in the Maine winter¹
“And buried somewhere on his land at the foot of an oak tree²
Presumably by his belated white rescuers, but
It is unknown exactly when the burial took place.”³

Some tribes, depending upon their tradition,
Accepted a substitute into the tribe for each brave
Killed in the line of duty
Or each innocent mercilessly mowed down.
An eye for an eye, a child for a child.

“Digory’s wife and 5 children were carried off
By Indians to Canada.” The Indians “killed Digory’s wife
Who was unable to keep up; a baby was killed, too.”

Another scenario:
She and the infant died after childbirth while being
Accompanied to a Native settlement.⁴

“Martha, John and Thomas were eventually ransomed⁵
And were returned to Massachusetts
Where they grew to adulthood.

Daniel was affiliated with the Abenaki [Abenakis] tribe
And came to be known as
Louis-Phillippe Serien dit L’anglais de Riviere Quelle⁶.
Mary stayed in Canada with the Indians the rest of her life.”

An oak tree is the Native symbol of courage,
Willingness to stand alone for a belief deeply held,
And for entreaty in continual prayer.⁷

—With Dan R., “Dan”, and Wally.

¹There are discrepancies about date of death. 1703/04 is after the official dates of King Philip’s War, but the conflict could easily have lasted past Philip’s death. The Mohawks are recorded as having attacked the area of Digory’s home after King Philip’s War.

²Red oak is the most common [tree] in the [Eastern seacoast] area; its red inner bark has red streaks running down the sides of the tree. —<http://www.seacoastonline.com/article/20110223/life/102230306> See photo on p. 10.

³While the Mohawk were clearly aggressors at this point in time and may have contacted



Red oak leaf in the fall.

Digory in battle, after study of the dynamics of conflict in the area, it is possible a peaceful tribe came following the battle to respectfully lay Digory to rest and to rescue the remaining family members to bring them to an Old Praying Town or remote Native village for safe keeping.

⁴“Speaking from the perspective of the Dakotah tribe, any captives (whether from a different tribe or from the settlers) were taken in as a ti-osh-bay-ee (ti-OSH-bay-ee: family) member and were raised, protected, fed and taught. Yes, there were always some Natives who didn’t want Wasichu (Wa-SI-chu: non-Indians) around, but at the point of First Contact with French, English or Dutch/German settlers, there was more curiosity than anything. Whites had a totally different concept of life and reality. The question soon became, ‘How to co-exist?’ Co-existence from the Indian worldview meant ‘How do we share the available resources so everyone has enough?’ There were suddenly more people than any tribe had ever seen before.” —Wally Inyun Walkon, from the memories of the Dakotah elders.

⁵The Minnesota family that reported this account (including stanza 9 quotation) noted: the Indians said they “gave” Thomas to Philippe de Rigault Vaudreuil. The family indicates perhaps he was “redeemed” by the Frenchman. The Descendants of Digory Sargeant of St. Germain’s of Cornwall, England and Worcester, Massachusetts by Lynnet Auher Kiehl, chronicles this part of Dan R.’s genealogy, who shared part of this story of the conflict.

⁶Both Daniel and Mary seem to have adopted Native affiliation and lifestyle, not likely if they were treated as hated prisoners of war. The Abenaki/Abenakis tribe was French-speaking and renamed Daniel to commemorate some event in his life. The French transliterated means “Famous warrior, one who loves horses/an apostle in succession, the one who speaks English like the River What (The one who asks a lot of questions(?))”; or reframed, “What a wonderful necklace of precious stones [he is] (alternate meaning of ‘riviere’)! [We are blessed] to have him in our Creator-loving line of succession, an English-speaking famous defender who loves horses and treats all with great kindness, one who questions, after the likeness of our own King Philip.”

⁷The possibility exists Digory was buried under the oak tree by a friendly tribe to atone for the actions of a common enemy. That act of kindness underscored their respect for his courage, his belief system, and to acknowledge his prayer life.

“The oak reveals its heart to those who observe.”

—Native American Proverb

Northern Red Oak by Josh Fecteau. <http://joshfecteau.com/>
Used with permission.



An Epilogue

Generosity had fallen to law. After 14 months of bloody fighting and heavy loss of lives and villages on both sides, King Philip was captured, beheaded, his head displayed on a stake in Plymouth. Many of his people, including his second wife and son, were sold into slavery in the West Indies. Many Indians fled to Canada, and the remaining 1st Nation people lived in poverty or servitude on their former land.

—Additional Sources: <http://www.history.com/this-day-history/king-philips-war-begins/print> 2/1/2016; <http://www.history.com/this-day-history/the-pilgrim-wampanoag-peace-treaty>; *The Reader's Companion to American History*, Eric Foner and John A. Garraty, Editors, 1991, by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Co.; <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/metacomet>.

What's In A Name?

"It might surprise white people that the word 'savage' is a French word actually pronounced sau-VAGE, originally meaning 'Godlike', and still includes 'save' and 'unspoiled'.

In the Greek, ' ἔθνη ', 'heathen' means 'a nation, a people, non-Jews; Gentiles'.

An example of the word use is:

Galatians 3:8-9: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the *Gentiles* [non-Jews including Native Americans] by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'All the nations shall be blessed in you.' So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer."

When Columbus and his shipmates had terrible dysentery, we coaxed them off the boat, cared for them, and taught them how to regain their health. Columbus used the Spanish 'indios' to describe us. '*In Dios*' is 'God inside, but looking like people,' or 'God's representatives'.

Whoever encountered us saw how the Man who came and taught us had changed and helped us. We freely provided that knowledge because it wasn't to be kept for ourselves alone. The Creator is not greedy. He provides everything in the Native life for our well-being. If His teachings are followed, it will be well with us when we return to Him. It is good, for everything that is already His will go right back to the Creator.

Q: How did those words get so bastardized in this nation? How was it those identifications of our identity in the Creator, those compliments about our reflection of Him, became slurs of shame?”

—Wally Inyun Walkon., from the memories of the elders of the Dakotah people.

Postscript: After the time of this historical account of Mohawk actions, there was a revival among the Mohawks, who have a vibrant church to this day.

1.2 FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR(S) 1756-1763

“The French and Indian War was actually an extension of the widespread European conflict of the Seven Years’ War. Coming to be known as the first war that involved Europe and America, the Seven Years’ War began in 1756 and involved every major European and colonial power: Great Britain and its allies (including Prussia) fought against France, Austria, Saxony and Sweden. The prize: slices of the New World. When the war concluded, between 900,000 and 1.4 million were dead in Europe alone, and war had moved in deadly earnest to New World soil.”

—David Treuer, Rez Life: An Indian’s Journey Through Reservation Life, Atlantic Monthly Press, 2012, pp. 32-33.

After Pierre Robideau received his bride Julia in the New World, at least the next two descendant generations of the author’s first hearty French ancestors married wives from the Iroquois League. Therefore generations 4,5, and 6 had personal stakes which made choosing sides very difficult during the French and Indian Wars, their mixed blood suddenly represented on both sides of the conflict and their northern New York ties placing them in harm’s way.



Native American stone tomahawk head on left, hide processing tools on right.

La Famille du Robideau II

Immigrants and residents
Wanting the freedom to serve God
Above any other *liberté*,
Seeing a land:
Promising. Available? Forbidding!
Arriving, expecting Him to protect,
Defend, bless.
Are we like them?

The Crushing Contests of Crowns

Allegiances show their colors¹

Yellow, green, orange

Blue, red, gold:

Foiling and pooling until

Black and white words

Turn skin red then blue;

The good and the bad

The wrong and the right

The need and the greed

The yours and the mine,

Conquerors and defenders

Clashing and mingling

Crushing and merging

To gunpowder grey.

¹Colors commemorate the French and Indian War (including the tribal colors of Seneca, Mohawk, Ottawa, Ojibwa, Huron, Delaware, Shawnee, Winnebago, and others) against the colors of the British and Iroquois Confederacy (Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Tuscarora) plus the Spanish and Dutch, over land rights on North American soil.



By the late 17th century, the English Hudson's Bay Company was bartering with French and First Nation traders for furs in exchange for knives, kettles, beads, needles and blankets. This warm blanket style, introduced in 1780, was sought by Indigenous peoples who traded furs for them because wool was easier to stitch into garments. The blanket, brought from Labrador by Great-Uncle David Fortier, represents a sample of the region's tribal colors, and was an acknowledgement of their authority. From family archives.

The Treaty of Paris ended the French and Indian War(s) February 10, 1763. <http://www.datesandevents.org/events-timelines/14-american-history-timeline.html>

As conditions of the treaty, the British asked for designated tribal lands and forbade Anglo-European (white) settlements west of the Appalachian Mountains, but it was unenforceable. The Iroquois League (or 5 Nations, as the British knew them) accepted intermarriage. Descent and inheritance were passed through maternal lines in Native American culture, and children were considered of the mother's clan. It is probable that *famille du Robideau* moved as part of the 1st Nation migration post-war to settle in Black Hawk Territory in Michigan, then into what became Wisconsin Territory.

The British opted for tribal relocation to implement the plan for using a mountain range as a settlement separation line. While no one can say exactly when or why the *la famille du Robideau* moved so abruptly from their well-established livelihoods in the NY area, the most plausible explanation is the disruption caused by the French and Indian Wars.

“The pain, memory and loss of war’s what’s got us
raw and removed.”

—Aaron Teal, English ancestor of the author and settler from northern New York, of the very difficult British negotiation of the Treaty of Paris, as friends and neighbors were assigned to one side or the other of the mountain. From family archives.

Q: If the inter-married French had been more successful than the English in this war, might Native Americans have been treated more as partners in life and government in what is now the United States of America?

A Native’s Perspective II

“How could we people ever talk together
When we each believed our God
Had told us something different
About the land?
We couldn’t and we never did.
But you were stronger.
There were more of you, so your way won out.
You took the land and you turned it into property.
Now our Mother is silent.

But we still listen for her voice.
And here is what I wonder:
If she sent diseases and harsh winters
When she was angry with us,
And we were good to her,
What will she send when she speaks back to *you*?"

—"Dan", Dakotah elder, Neither Wolf Nor Dog, by Kent Nerburn, p. 51.

"My lands are where
my dead lie buried."

—Crazy Horse. A sentiment
that could be echoed by many chiefs.

From the 1770s until 1791, John Marrant, a free black¹ from New York City, preached to "a great number of Indians and white people." He carried the gospel to the Cherokee, Creek, Catawar, and Housaw tribes. Tribes were glad to receive his message after having been disillusioned by "a chief who spoke but did not walk in the way of the Great Spirit". They returned the favor of Marrant's grace and integrity: Native Americans harbored not a few escaped slaves, passing them to tribes farther afield. —Based on "Black History Month: Christian Missionaries of African Heritage": <https://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/black.htm> ; <http://www.freemaninstitute.com/blackcm.htm>

¹The word "black", referring to African Americans, is not capitalized in this selection. Throughout this book, quotes will contain capitalization as found in the sources.

“It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible.”
—George Washington.

Fate of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence

Have you ever wondered what happened to the fifty-six men who signed the Declaration of Independence? While there was civil war-like pressure applied against Loyalists, too, (Scars of Independence by H. Houke, ch. 1) this is the price Patriots paid:

George Walton, Thomas Heyward, Jr., Arthur Middleton, and Edward Rutledge were captured by the British in the Siege of Charleston as prisoners of war.

Richard Stockton was dragged from his bed by night and taken prisoner because he had signed the Declaration, and was imprisoned in New York City’s infamous Provost Jail.

Twelve had their homes ransacked and burned. John Witherspoon saw his eldest son killed in the Battle of Germantown. Abraham Clark saw two sons captured and incarcerated on the prison ship Jersey.

What kind of men were they? Twenty-four were lawyers and jurists. Eleven were merchants. Nine were farmers and large plantation owners. All were men of means, well educated land speculators. But they signed the Declaration of Independence knowing full well that the penalty could be death if they were captured.

Carter Braxton of Virginia, a wealthy planter and trader, saw his ships swept from the seas by the British Navy.

Thomas McKean wrote to John Adams that he was “hunted like a fox by the enemy...compelled to remove his family five times in three months.” His wife and children were kept in hiding while he served in the Congress and as a volunteer leader of the militia.

Vandals or soldiers, or both, looted the properties of Ellery, Clymer, Hall, Walton, Gwinnett, Heyward, Rutledge, and Middleton during warfare. The homes of Samuel Adams, John Hancock, Benjamin Franklin, James Wilson, Benjamin Rush, and Robert Morris were also occupied by the British during the war, but those structures were left intact.

A most inspiring example of “undaunted resolution” was at the Battle of Yorktown. Thomas Nelson, Jr. was returning from Philadelphia to become Governor of Virginia and joined Gen. Washington just outside of Yorktown. He then noted that British Gen. Cornwallis had taken over the Nelson home for his headquarters, but that the patriots were directing their artillery fire all over the town except for the vicinity of his own beautiful home. Nelson asked why they were not firing in that direction, and the soldiers replied, “Out of respect to you, Sir.” Nelson

quietly urged to open fire, and stepping forward to the nearest cannon, aimed at his own house and fired. The other guns joined in. A shell went through a window, landed on the dinner table surrounded by a large party of British officers, killing or wounding a number of them. As part of the Colonial National Historical Park, the southeast face of the residence shows evidence of damage from cannon fire to this day.

Francis Lewis' Long Island home was raided and properties were destroyed while he was in Philadelphia attending to congressional matters. His wife was thrown into a damp dark prison cell without a bed. Health ruined, Mrs. Lewis eventually died from the effects of confinement. Lewis' son would later die in British captivity.

"Honest John" Hart's wife died several weeks earlier than Mrs. Lewis, having suffered a similar fate. British and Hessian troops invaded New Jersey months after he signed the Declaration, looting the Speaker of the Assembly's home. The father of 13 mostly-grown children was eventually re-elected to the New Jersey assembly, having invited the American Army to encamp on his farmland.

Lewis Morris' home was overtaken as barracks and his horses and livestock were commandeered by the Continental Army, as many others were, then looted and burned by the British. Three of Morris' sons fought the British.

Philip Livingston lost several properties to the British occupation and sold off others to support the war effort. He died in 1778 before he could recover the loss.

New Jersey's Richard Stockton, after rescuing his wife and children from advancing British troops, was betrayed by a loyalist, imprisoned, beaten and nearly starved. He returned an invalid to find his home gutted, and his library and papers burned. He never recovered, dying in 1781 a broken man.

Arthur Middleton, Edward Rutledge and Thomas Heyward, Jr. went home to South Carolina. In the British invasion of the South, Heyward was wounded and all three were captured. As he rotted on a prison ship in St. Augustine, Heyward's plantation was raided, buildings burned, and his wife, who witnessed it all, died. Other Southern signers suffered the same general fate.

Among the first to sign had been John Hancock, who wrote in big, bold script so George III "could read my name without spectacles and could now double his reward of 500 pounds for my head. If the cause of the revolution commands it," roared Hancock, "burn Boston and make John Hancock a beggar!"

Here were men who believed in a cause far beyond themselves even while uncertain of the outcome. Such were the stories and sacrifices of the America Revolution. These were not wild-eyed, rabble-rousing ruffians. They were soft-spoken, educated men. They had security, but they valued liberty more. Standing tall, straight, and unwavering, they pledged:

“For the support of this Declaration, with firm reliance on the protection of the Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.”

—Condensed from a piece by Gary Hildrith http://www.whatreallyhappened.com/.../DOCUMENTS/the_signers.html from a reading by Paul Harvey, “The Rest of the Story”, aired on KNOF-FM, July 4, 1976, 1983.

Invisible Enemies

Three of us made our way to the cabin about dawn,
Determined to help Sarah, who'd taken a fever.
Fierce it was.
Her husband, a Minuteman¹ in hiding,
Couldn't risk exposure;
It fell (as it usually did) to womenfolk to care for her.

We'd provided her morning constitutional,
Set the house in order: fetched water,
Changed her bed, hung out the laundry,
Put bread to rise, chopped kindling;
'Twas Sally suggested we go out through the woods
To the meadow for broth herbs.

The baking bread drew them.

Only a spline of tall grass between us,
Redcoats broke down the door,
Commandeered what they saw,
Hastily butchered two just-whelped sows
Beside the house,
Bloody meat loaded on horses' rumps.
Heavy hoofbeats away.

Sarah was left untouched;
Her fever saved her.

—Based on a letter to Albert from an elderly Aunt Minty recounting oral history from The Revolution. From family archives.

¹Patriot Militiaman who pledged to drop everything and grab a gun when a skirmish with the British materialized.



To the Point/à la pointe

143 years after establishing a pattern
Lives are unraveling;
Their verve of ease set aside like
An embroidery hoop in the parlor,
The European gentility of velvet, dimity, taffeta
In a New World now Torn Asunder.

Even while battles are being stoked,
Homefires are kindled by women.
Without skipping a stitch,
Debutantes set aside their fancy needlework
To manage business at hand:

Pack provisions
Attend underground meetings
Hem in livestock
Tear strips for bandages
Stitch wounded flesh
Prepare ammunition
Fervently pray.

Sewing circles become war councils
To take on the affairs of estate:
Some redirect dowries to the war effort
(Fathers and fiancés up-taking arms);¹
Some, quarters ransacked, houses burned;
A few, their virtue wrestled from them.
Yet they persevere.

The rhythm of life still pulses;
Clothing wears out
Is recommissioned to quilt
Goes up in smoke
Needs to be replaced.

So warp and weft,
Women keep stitching
To bind all the pieces together,
The Great Experiment,² begun.

¹Families mustered and provisioned their own militiamen.

²“Self-governed people with an education system designed to create informed citizens who developed critical thinking skills by the 2nd grade” was called “The Great Experiment.”





At least 2 of the author's relatives served in the militias before subsequent generations moved west for Nebraska, then into Iowa, and finally arrived in Minnesota. This quilt, circa 1778-1812, was most probably made by Mayflower-passenger Sarah's great-granddaughter. It was hand-sewn from new pieces of fine fabric which suggests that its maker led a genteel life in the colonies. Note what appear to be bombs bursting in air in the center-right panel. From family archives.

1.4 WAR OF 1812

The Second War with England

The cause of this contest, barely 27 years from the first:
Napoleon ordered British ports to close to American vessels,
England then demanded “No U.S. ships in French ports”.
The heart of U.S. trade skipped a beat.
England feigned American vessels were leaking through;
Hundreds of U.S. ships were thus arrested.
England declared America held British sailors aboard.
Many seamen naturalized or born in the U.S. were forcibly withdrawn,
Transfusing fresh corpuscles into the British Navy.

James Madison declared war and spats began:
The British captured Detroit, America took York,¹
Then grabbed Fort George. Tit for Tat,
England raided, plundered and burned northern New York,
Dolly Madison fled the White House,
Managing to preserve a carriage of art and artifacts²
As Redcoats entered another door.



Americans captured many English warships.
One hero was Captain Perry. After a horrible volley,
Only 14 of his crew of 100 were unhurt, his ship
Lay upon the water a wreck. With the battle-flag,
They took to an open boat and made their way under sore fire
Toward the American “Niagara”. Actually reaching the ship
Gave courage to the American fleet. They turned on the British
With all guns, and in 15 minutes the entire British squadron surrendered.

Perry’s dispatch: “We have met the enemy, and they are ours.”

—Based on information from First Lessons in Our Country’s History: Bring-
ing Out Its Salient Points, Aiming to Combine Simplicity with Sense by William
Swinton, A.M., 1871, pp. 132-136. Purchased by one-room school teacher Ella A.
Moore, Crystal, Iowa, May 20, 1875. From family archives.

¹Now Toronto, Canada.

²President Obama in 2016 credited Paul Jennings, James Madison’s 15-year-old slave in 1814,
who helped save Washington, D.C.’s treasures. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burning_of_Washington

Freedom Run

Way I see it, I have a choice and a chance.
These threatenin' times of 1813 is my ticket.
I bought passage with my bloody back last time,
I can do no worse now. Picked my time.
Stole away in the night, crossed two rivers,
A swamp, an' run like a demon pursued all night,
Barefoot, soaked to the bone, a sliver a'bread inside m'shirt.
Already done plenty work to earn m'keep so the slate's clean.
On my books I'm a free man of color now.

—Chronicles in Slavery in the United States: A Narrative of the Life of Charles Ball, A Black Man, who lived Forty Years in Maryland, South Carolina, and Georgia as a Slave, by John S. Taylor, 1837.

The British fleet was moored in the Chesapeake Bay. A runaway could offer his services to the King, or he could volunteer for the fledgling American navy and defend his country. Ball chose the latter and he was not alone. In 1813 African Americans made up at least 15% of U.S. naval corps. Although official U.S. policy at the start of the war forbade the recruitment of black sailors, a chronic shortage of manpower compelled the navy to accept any able-bodied man. Captain Oliver Hazard Perry complained about having blacks on his ship but Commodore Isaac Chauncey replied, "I have nearly fifty blacks on this boat and many of them are among the best of my men." At the Battle of Lake Erie, where Perry's fleet overcame the British, his black soldiers performed so well that he wrote to the Secretary of the Navy, praising their courage.

Orders given to the British Royal Navy's Admiral Sir George Cockburn specifically said to focus on gaining "the cordial support of the black population," according to Harper's Magazine. Cockburn was told to strike in places that would draw in black families, who would then be told they wouldn't be given back to owners, according to Harper's. Adult men were reportedly trained to the Colonial Marines regiment, which took part in many battles—like the British attack on Fort McHenry, and the effort to burn Washington, D.C.

"An estimated 6000 blacks (one source mentioned 4000. Perhaps it was 4000 men plus their families.), both runaway slaves and freedmen, did defect to the British. According to custom, a slave arriving on British soil was free; a British ship at war had the status of British land itself. The British offered the Colonial Marines farmland in Trinidad in February 1816, nearly a year after the end of the war. Their descendants live in Trinidad still, in freedom, and call themselves 'the Merikans'. Others were deposited on Canada's shores. The British were true to their word and refused to return slaves even though the U.S. government demanded it." —<http://www.pbs.org/wned/war-of-1812/essays/black-soldier-and-sailors-war/>

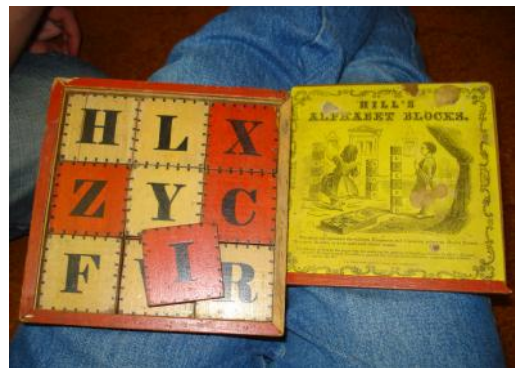
The Flag Was Still There

Lawyer Francis Scott Key negotiated for the release
Of American prisoners of war sequestered in a ship off shore.
The British Admiral agreed to a one-for-one exchange of POWs
And Key opened the hold belowdecks to tell the men.
When he came back up, the Admiral would keep the agreement but it
Had become merely academic: all would be British subjects in a day;
The entire English war fleet was upon the horizon to attack Fort McHenry.
Yet England offered leniency: lower your flag and our cannons fall silent;
The fort becomes British—and the rest of the country, too.
It was particularly difficult for the men, knowing
The Fort housed mostly families:

Women,



Children,



With but a few soldiers.

Key freed the news to caged men; they spontaneously went to prayer
That the flag would stay in place.¹

Through the volleys of the night, he reported back to those captives.
All the firepower of the English fleet was trained on the fort, then in rage,
At the flag. It suffered several direct hits, yet remained inexplicably aloft.
When the fleet had expended its wares, the flag was still there.
After an on-shore inspection,

Key unlocked the mystery:

The flag was held up by piles of Patriot's bodies large and small,
Each one having taken a turn holding up that flag.²

—Based on <https://www.youtube.com/embed/YaxGNQE5ZLA>

¹Be mindful of how prayers are framed. What if they had asked for cannon balls to be deflected?

²Author unable to find support or denial of the story, other than differences in reporting the tone of the Admiral and numbers stationed at the fort. That the battle was so noteworthy as to create a stirring poem becoming the national anthem commemorating the event, battle circumstances must surely have been remarkable.

Pictured on previous page are: wooden box, ladle, clay and glass marbles, and Hill's Wooden Alphabet Blocks of the era, from family archives.



The Battle of Ft. McHenry, North America's decisive turning point in the struggle to govern itself, ended the War of 1812, and the Treaty of Ghent at the Belgium Peace Talks sealed it. U.S. Commemorative stamp, 2014.

The star-spangled banner that Francis Scott Key saw flying over Fort McHenry is now at the Smithsonian. Photo: <https://abagond.files.wordpress.com/2016/08/star-spangled-banner.jpg>



“Defence of Fort M’Henry”

Oh, say, can you see by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars thro' the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watch'd were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof thro' the night that our flag was still there.
O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

—Francis Scott Key

On first reading we note that Key is asking us if the flag is still waving. Then I'd like to believe that he is asking himself, a slave owner, if this land really is "free" for everyone. A poet's introspection should ask, "Have I fought, not just for my own freedom from British rule, but for the right to freedom for my own slaves?" Perhaps it was a thought that in 1814 could not find the light of day. Key's verse 3 reads:

"And where is that band who so vauntingly swore,
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a country should leave us no more?
Their blood has wash'd out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave,
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave."

Some read this verse to mean Key hoped escaped and freed slaves seeking refuge by fighting on the British side would get their just deserts, which, he hoped, not even those killed in battle could avoid.

"You can decide for yourself whether there's some connection between what happened 200 years ago and what professional athlete Colin Kaepernick (who in 2016 is refusing to stand respectfully for the National Anthem) is angry about today," Jon Schwarz posited. "Maybe it's all ancient, meaningless history. Or maybe it's not, and Kaepernick is right, and we really need a new national anthem."

—Jon Schwarz. <http://readersupportednews.org/opinion2/277-75/38844-colin-kaepernick-is-righter-than-you-know-the-national-anthem-is-a-celebration-of-slavery>

Or, maybe we need to drop vs. 3 and pay more attention to vs. 4 of The Star Spangled Banner, as suggested in 2014 by Duluth citizen Roger Morris, which prompted this 2017 editorial:

"The fourth verse easily is the most poignant, the most powerful and the most patriotic of Francis Scott Key's signature work. Set to music, it became the national anthem in 1931. So sing that fourth verse for the Fourth this year. Every year. Make it a tradition. Heck, sing all four verses." Verse 4:

Oh! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand,
Between their loved home and the war's desolation!
Blest with victory and peace, may the heav'n rescued land,
Praise the Pow'r that hath made and preserved us a nation.
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,

And this be our motto: 'In God is our trust.'
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave,
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

—“Sing Forth the Fourth for the Fourth”, by Duluth News Tribune Editorial Board on 7/2/2017 at 8:21 p.m. (Reprinted 7/4/2017 in Mesabi Daily News, Virginia, MN.)

On Another Front: A Native American Perspective

“The largest conflict presented itself after those efforts to contain us disintegrated into punitive strategy. Andrew Jackson was elected in 1829 largely because the government needed to ‘take care of the Indian problem’. The white missionaries were unfortunately used by both the legalism of religion and the policy of government to try to change us into the white man. The missionaries were strictly trained in dogma and not open-minded enough to understand our spirituality, those elements of great meaning we use to worship the Creator of all things. They came with their own man-created shame and expectation heaped upon them. The government could not wipe us out, so they developed a policy to remove our language and ways from us by convincing parents they needed to move with the times and send their children to boarding schools. If they did not relent, their children were forcibly removed from them and submitted to re-education plans, not unlike POWs in a concentration camp.

For example, my own uncle was taken from his parents at age 8 in Sisseton, SD. His hair was cut, he had kerosene applied to his head, his clothes were stripped off and he was re-dressed like a Lakota Jesuit. He knew no English. The first time he responded to a question in Lakota, he was laid on the floor, had his ankles tied together, his wrists were tied to his waist, then he was hung by the ankles upside-down in a doorframe and the bottoms of his feet were beaten. They didn't lower him to the floor until the blood dripped to his forehead. Then they told him to “go outside and play.” He got to the yard with no small difficulty and answered a concerned friend—in Lakota. The schoolmaster heard it and took him right back to the doorframe and repeated the process. He walked with a limp until he died in old age.

With that influence, it became unreasonable from a spiritual point of view that we could co-exist as 2 nations on one soil. One-on-one at the human level still worked, though, and still does. When we get to know individuals and see their good character, it is still possible to trust. It is possible to be as gentle with each other as though we had an owl's fingertips.”

—Wally Inyun Walkon

1.5 MEXICAN WARS 1846-1848

France's position was not to compete in the New World with Spain after the French Civil War in 1785, so Napoleon Bonaparte offered to sell the Louisiana Purchase (the south central part of North America) to release France from sending nonexistent soldiers to defend up-to-then unproductive territory—and to gain some badly needed cash—in 1803. The sale included some of what became the Wisconsin Territory (including Minnesota), and was negotiated by Thomas Jefferson. <http://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/people>

The Mexican Constitution of 1824 officially established The United Mexican States, or the First Mexican Empire. It was the largest extension of Mexico as an independent country. The 24 Intendencias of the Empire in 1821 included what is now California, Nevada, Arizona, Utah, New Mexico, parts of Colorado and Texas.

Border disputes included whether people from the United States could move through Mexican Sonoran land to reach California. The Gold Rush of 1848 would soon test the decision. By 1849 Mexico had dwindled to its current size. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French-intervention>

Q: How should adding historical perspective inform attitudes concerning Mexican migrant workers and public immigration policy?

Gaining Ground

In 1846 we entered the Mexican Wars.
In 1848 Wisconsin became a state.
My 2-greats grandfather
Received a Wisconsin Land Grant
For serving in that war.



The U.S. Postal Service began in 1847. The Franklin (stamp with the smudge on his nose = hand cancellation) was produced by a private security printing company. The other Franklin and Washington are from the first stamp set produced by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing in 1894. Stamp sizes were standardized, and workmanship became more difficult to forge. —Mystic Stamp Company “Secrets Behind 19th Century Stamps”, circa 1962. In 2005 postage stamp production was again given to private printing firms. —<http://www.moneyfactory.gov/researchstamps.html>

La famille du Robideau had already been pushed from Iroquois Territory in northern New York to Black Hawk Territory in Michigan. As a result of the Black Hawk War they were nudged further west. After the Mexican War, the following generation married into the Chippewa tribe of Wisconsin Territory, then they moved into Dakotah Territory in what would become Minnesota, intermarrying Ojibwa.

Le Famille du Robideau III

Progeny moving 3 lifetimes away (1840)
To a place that would be named Princeton (territorial MN),
A *Gulag* on the savannah,
Testament to the self-discipline of soul and body.

Le tôme du vie telling *le temperature*
By how high the frost creeps inside a tarpaper shack,
By chipping ice out of the washbowl before dawn chores;
Of huddling masses—around a single pot of boiled *vegetables*,
Of sharing one candle, *lucère*,¹
One language: *vîva la lang, Française!*
One collective memory, *l'illuminae grande êt brillante*.
Knowing *la consçience* could never again allow
Le solidarite with a soft life of ease.

We are not at all like them.

Quelle chângé!

Family, people celebrating births,
Commemorations d'anniversaires,
Burying, *il sont môrte*, their dead,
In front of God, *Ton Père. Má Díos, ouï, á je suis*,
Mourning and celebrating and living out
What is and was and is to come:
We are just like them.

Community people
Raising barns
Sharing butter and milk and eggs
Mending fences
Finding *le commonality*
Putting in hours— *beaucoup des heures!*—
For the common good;



Steel and leather cornhusker,
1840-1860, from family archives.

Along with self-improvement of *situation*,
Requirement beaucoup des jours,
Just like us.

Sharing a rich, old language
Knowing roots are solid, good, sure,
Able to move forward
Because of what was laid down before
Je suis et nous somme:
Just like them.

Survivors
Thrivers
Despite *le politic*
La situation
La location
Les ambiances
Les choses très difficile
Will we be like them?

¹*Lucére*: verb; “to shine”.

Chippewa horsehair, doghair, and wool blanket from family archives. Handmade blankets are given by Native Americans to seal a bargain, marriage, or friendship, signalling a covering, a protection: “I’ll watch your back.” Received by Great-Grandfather Harry from a good friend, “Indian Joe”.

By contrast, during the 1600s, a few European entrepreneurs had brought blankets infected with smallpox to present to tribes that were in the way of progress.

—From Indian Givers: How the Indians of the Americas Transformed the World by Jack Weatherford.



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The first rail system in America was built on the East Coast in 1826. Railroad construction was quite primitive at first, but had progressed from wood wheels on wood rails to iron wheels on iron-surfaced wood rails with stone ties. In 1862 President Lincoln chartered the first continental rail system, but the Civil War prevented action.

Congress gave land grants for the project after the war. The Central Pacific Railway building east in 1865 from Sacramento recruited only Chinese workers.<sup>1</sup> Nearly all communicated with a single language and worked well together. Gold had been discovered in the new state of California in 1848 and by 1849 it attracted prospectors worldwide. Some Chinese were already prospecting and others were courted from abroad for the rail project.

The Union Pacific Rail Company attracted [or purchased and brought] Irish (see p. 36) and hired other immigrants to Council Bluffs, Nebraska, to build west. Their polyglot crew had difficulty understanding each other. The companies were paid by laid track: \$20,000 per mile on the prairie, \$40,000 a mile in the foothills, and \$60,000 each mile in the mountains. There was no incentive to make it straight. At Ogden, Utah, they missed meeting each other and kept building for the trackage dollars. It was quickly determined they needed to meet in Promontory, Utah, to prevent more cost overruns. The rail line followed the same tried-and-true route the 49'ers used, which was the route of the Mormons, the telegraph right-of-way, and the Pony Express before them. It eventually was called the Lincoln Highway, which is I-80 today.

Ten years after the first rail line, the Northern Pacific received a land grant from Congress (1880), and by 1890 the Southern Pacific also made good on its land grant. In return for the investment, the government received free transportation for troops and supplies to 1900. Starting in 1901 the government could still move military passengers and freight for 50% of the regular fee. There was a federal tax on all other tickets and freight. Even with subsidies, all 3 government-contract lines failed. The only still-existing rail lines [were and] are all privately owned enterprises.

Since a big chunk of Mexico made our Southwest states, The Mexican Wars had to decide who could expand and use the resources that became accessible with rail traffic. Spain poked at wanting the advantageous situation in 1847 and again in 1898.

—Gary W., Railroad Historian

<sup>1</sup>Until the Last Spike: The Journal of Sean Sullivan, Transcontinental Railroad Worker, Nebraska & Points West, 1867 by William Durban, 2013.

Collectible stamped brass transportation buttons and charms were popular marketing gimmicks in 1849. The center button is a Doodlebug rail engine charm. From family archives.



## Room to Breathe

“Over time free Negroes trained as cavalry soldiers and were sent to a rugged frontier no one was keen on taming, to manage ‘the Indian problem’. ‘Buffalo Soldiers’, they were called. But I’ll have to say, they were more like respectful peacekeepers; at the very least fair fighters; they understood oppression. Too well.

I went to pastor a Methodist Church in the Mexican Mountains. Yes, The Union won, took possession of the area in 1848 as The Territory of New Mexico, then *bought* it in the Gadsden Purchase, transferring title from the Mexican State of Sonora, to become the State of Arizona February 14, 1912.

The cavalry helped clear the land for railroads and settlement. That meant they rounded up Native Americans for reservation life. Imagine the emotional and moral dilemma for Negro soldiers. Arizona had sparse population, cattle, cotton, citrus and copper. The “Great Migration of 1945” hadn’t been thought of yet.<sup>1</sup>

When I, a Minnesota kid fresh from seminary, began to visit the people on Arizona reservations in 1944, I had no clue. But they educated me if I listened closely enough. They had been on the land there since 900 A.D. That is forever, in a very real sense. In Minnesota we swell our chests if our family farms are 100 years old. When I had first contact with my congregation, they had already been there 1040 years. Think of it.

Due to my military father, my own history is full of relocations. But I could relate: the years I spent in one spot from 4th grade through high school is the longest time I’ve been in any one place. I was gone from Minnesota for 60 years, but when I’d go back to that neighborhood to visit, there was the rushing in of ‘home’ for me. I’ve been to every class reunion. The few roots I have are in that soil.

My relatives came in 1620 to America and met the East Coast Penobscot Indians, who archaeologists now say had been there since 700 A.D. They were rooted to the place we call Martha’s Vineyard, to a place we named Boston. Plymouth Plantation is their back yard. The Penobscot tended and appreciated that land 920 full years before the Pilgrims landed.

So I bonded with my Arizona congregation on that fact: they had something so deep and enduring, something I needed, too. I began to understand, just a little, what it must have meant to feel like bull-dozed trees pushed off their own property, away from the graves of their grandfathers, and in a way, their eternal way of life. I can understand, too, that those of Sonoran/Mexican heritage would feel an equal kinship to the place and feel it is their own regardless of some political borders. They are imprinted with the landscape and the fierce

independence it requires to survive in the unforgiving climate.

I also took comfort from from a Methodist Pastor from Echo, Dakota, in the 1870s. Things were pretty touchy there for a long while during the 1865 Dakotah War, the terrible massacres on both sides of the conflict. He gave this counsel to his wife and children: ‘When I’m gone on the circuit to the meetings (church services across the region), pray for me. If anyone comes near, go into the soddy, close the door, forget about trying to collect the animals. I’m not sure what the Cavalry would want with us or why they should ever need civilian provision, but the Indians are just hungry. If they need an animal, let them have it. They won’t take more than they need.’ He continued, ‘In the winter an Indigenous man would come. He would take one animal, and leave. I’m glad we had enough to share. They never harmed my family or me. By the grace of God, I hope I have never harmed one of their people.’”

—Harold Biederman, Pastor, retired back to Minnesota.

<sup>1</sup>Retirees coming from the north for favorable climate and inexpensive living once air-conditioning was perfected after World War II.

**Q:** “Is it surprising that there are border disputes, frustration and confusion about why the land in the Southwestern states is not available to descendants of Sonoran people who originally had homes and history there?” —Mexican man, Chaska, MN

Meanwhile, Minnesota’s borders were established one by one. The French and Indian War decided the northern border (New France/Canada and the Northwest Territory/U.S.) The section west of the Mississippi River was part of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. Congress determined the St. Louis River would be Minnesota’s eastern border to give it access to Lake Superior. The southern border was set when Iowa was made a state in 1846. The western border of Minnesota went undetermined for 10 years due to government bureaucracy, but was surveyed for statehood in 1858.

—Based on How the States Got Their Shapes by Mark Stein, pp.145-152.



[www.50states.com/flag/mnflag.htm](http://www.50states.com/flag/mnflag.htm)



“My grandfather served in the Mexican-American War. My grandmother was very worried about him, but he came home. I’m sure many more of my family before him were involved in the wars of this nation.” —Ardis, age 93.

## **PRE-CIVIL WAR**

### The Arc of Drawing a Bead (Technology that would affect the Civil War)

Revolutionary War (1775) weapons were more deadly accurate  
Than those factory-manufactured after the Industrial Revolution:  
Weapons designed and made by craftsmen  
Had custom-fit mechanisms, tried sights, and  
Provided a more tightly fitted tolerance  
Than a close-march of privates.  
Militia guns were privately owned,  
Intimately understood and carefully attended.

Still, the factory-produced Springfield minné ball<sup>1</sup>  
Changed the tide of the Civil War  
For a time, creating an advantage for the Ceded States:  
A charge flared the hollow end of the ball  
To fill the chamber for greater velocity,  
Producing graver wounds.  
But by the end of the war  
The Union also had their own ship come in,<sup>2</sup>  
So the tide turned back.

Casualties mounted because many officers  
On both sides had attended West Point,<sup>3</sup>  
Studied the same textbook,  
Then added stronger weapons,  
So gentlemen’s rules of war  
Were too well understood,  
Then shot to hell.

—Jesse H.

<sup>1</sup>Claude-Etienne Minié’s conical iron plug has lead skirting, and 3 exterior grease-filled grooves.

<sup>2</sup>The Confederacy purchased superior weaponry from the French, thus their early upper hand in the coming conflict. Later, the Union confiscated a trainload of the shipped weaponry, noted better battle success, then followed suit, also ordering munitions from

the French. Because they badly needed money to keep their own ship of state afloat, the French supplied both sides of our civil conflict.

<sup>3</sup>“Both Generals Lee (Confederate) and Grant (Union) had fought together in the Mexican Wars and had learned war at West Point; but Grant was much younger and Lee didn’t recall him.” —Jac P.

## Irish Slaves

“Black slaves had it plenty rough. But in a way—though it hardly seems possible—Irish slaves might have had it even worse. Blacks were at least valued and cared about, if only because lots of money changed hands. King George of England, however, wishing to send a strong message to keep Ireland under his thumb, sent boatloads of his POWs to America, demanding they be deliberately sold to the North<sup>1</sup> at bargain basement prices (inferring they weren’t worth as much as blacks). This was done in order to demoralize the Irish left at home, and stigmatize any Irish who had escaped his grip by managing to make it to North America on their own. The king had PLENTY of prisoners; consequently they were treated as though they were an expendable commodity.”<sup>2</sup>

—Stephen Gaston, Irish immigrant to Minnesota, 2014.

<sup>1</sup>This policy to sell Irish people reduced the “advantage” of the South, glutted the labor market in the North, drove down industrial wages (causing anger against the Irish), fed the textile industry which caused higher demand for cotton. That prompted the North to seek the fiber from other sources like Egypt, which angered the South and became a cause for the Civil War.

<sup>2</sup>The author’s great-grandfather came from Ireland to Canada about 1848. The information above added an aspect that helped fill in the blanks why her MN father, of Irish extraction, never felt worth very much 3 generations later.



Valley Forge Bunting, Amazon.com

Lincoln’s election victory in 1860 precipitated the secession of the South. His Secretary of State Seward focused most of his efforts on preventing foreign recognition of the Confederacy as a new country. <http://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/>

# 1.6 CIVIL WAR 1860-1865

The Ceded States vs. The Union; The Johnny Rebs vs. The Boys in Blue.

U.S. Civil War: 750,000 confirmed fighters died. Many more unconfirmed and civilians died.

“Bugle calls were developed to easily rally all the immigrant language groups to battle.”  
—Doug Ohman, a MN photographer, author and speaker.

“Sleep in peace, soldier boy” are the words to “*Taps*” by Dorothy Alexander, played at memorial services. Why “boy”?

From April 12, 1861, to the close of the Civil War boys were enlisted (Union Army figures only) in the following ages:

|                      |                    |                    |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 10 and under. ... 25 | Age 13.....75      | Age 16.....126,064 |
| Age 11.....13        | Age 14.....1223    | Age 17.....113,930 |
| Age 12.....187       | Age 15.....103,464 | Age 18.....806,457 |

Even with these startling figures, the average age of soldiers during the Civil War was actually 36.

Source: “*Veteran Service Office News*”, Carver County, reported by Julie Carie, VSO, June, 2005. p. 1.

**The Civil War: Strange & Fascinating Facts** corroborates (chapter 11, p. 63): “There were 2,000,000 Federal soldiers age 21 and under; 100,000 15 and under, 275 age 13 or under.” Most of the youngest were fifers and drummers positioned at the front of a march or charge to rally the troops, but were regularly enrolled as soldiers and sometimes were fighters.

According to Wikipedia.com, national conscription occurred again during the American Civil War. 2% of the Union army were draftees, 6% were substitutes paid by draftees. There was much evasion and overt resistance to the draft. NYC draft riots were in direct response to the announcement of a draft in the U.S.

On the Confederate side, conscription was instituted March 28, 1862, and resistance to it was widespread and violent. It took freed slaves volunteering to fight for the Union to press Southerners into Confederate service. Confederate desertion prompted action by heavy-handed conscription officers and judges. The planter class was exempted; favoritism was widely practiced, sometimes bribes were taken.

## Don't Cotton to It

“The Civil War was a war over the economy, taxation without representation, and states’ rights to govern themselves. The South wanted to sell cotton overseas where the price was better. The North lobbied to create extremely high export taxes on it so raw materials would continue to be routed north, to return as finished goods at high prices to the Southern market. The Southern states had already resolved to get rid of slavery before the war in a gradual drawdown [the invention of the cotton gin reduced the need for hand labor] which, if proponents had been allowed to do, would have saved the Southern economy and untold suffering.”

—Wesley H., 8-year veteran of the Iraq War. Posted on Facebook 7/10/15.

**Q:** Did the North suddenly act morally superior concerning slavery after enjoying profits from slave-produced raw materials for a century? Recall, the Civil War culminated after the Southern states ceded from the Union, not because of the issue of slavery alone, which had existed in the New World for 140 years.

Popular blue & gold Civil War era quilt backing. The Union used special fabric promotions to subliminally encourage feminine loyalty to its cause. From family archives.



## Un-Civil War

Those supplies come slower'n molasses.  
We woulda gladly waited,  
Had we knowed *molasses* was actu'ly aboard,  
But, we wasn't sure,  
An', well, we done what we done.

Hunger-ravaged, weak, cold, near useless,  
Needin' battle gristle—bad—we come across a pasture;  
Someone shot at what moved ta our left:  
Lo and b'hold there was four milk cows, one down,  
The others soon dispatched.



Hand-forged cow bell with wire and nut clapper. Family archives.

400 of us swarmed upon 'em  
Cuttin' chunks out with our bayonets  
'Fore they even quit movin'.  
Like wolves we was, 'n spite of ourselves,  
Willin' the warm blood ta warm our own.

—Based on Echoes of the Civil War: The Blue: Perspectives on History, Series ed. by Stephen M. Forman. “An Unappetizing Food Supply,” p. 29. Source: Lawrence Van Alstyne, Diary of an Enlisted Man, Tuttle, Morehouse & Taylor Co., New Haven, Connecticut, 1910, p. 29.



“Bayonets were far more commonly used to sever and cook food, including baking banyan (quick bread) over an open fire, than to engage in battle.” —Jesse H.



## The Gallant Bird that Made a Regiment Famous

“A bald eagle went through the war with the 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment, becoming as well-known worldwide as any general who fought in the same battles with him. My first acquaintance with the bird was in the Spring of 1861. The 8<sup>th</sup>, which I had the honor to command, was going to Camp Randall and with one of the companies, that commanded by Capt. Perkins, came the eagle, [who was] then a chicken about half or two-thirds grown.

It was understood before we left camp that the bird was enlisted. He was christened "Old Abe", and one of the tallest in the regiment [was] detailed to carry and take care of him, with the understanding that at the end of the war he was to convey him to Washington and present him to his namesake, the President.

A standard with a slanting platform on it was made over which was a carved quiver and arrows for the bird to stand upon. On this he made his way when on the march. A cord attached to his leg secured him to his standard, and standing on his perch, over the shoulders of his bearer, and near the colors of the regiment, he was observed of all observers."

**Q: "Did he ever get away from the regiment?"**

**A:** "Yes, several times, but never for long. The most noted was at the Battle of Corinth. I lost one third of all the men I had, either killed or wounded, was shot myself, a bullet cut "Old Abe's" cord, all in a moment of time. I saw our eagle soaring with the dignity of flight away over the rebel lines, and supposed he was gone for keeps, as did we all, and sorry enough we were. We were in trouble: licked for the time being, our friends killed, Gen. Mower's horse shot (we all liked the old beast). And above all, our eagle gone over to the Rebs.

Some of my men gathered me up in a blanket and took me along the best they could, and we had not gone far before "Old Abe" came swooping back to his perch, which was being brought along, for we did not [intend] to let the Johnnies crow over that, anyhow. This sounds almost too poetical to be believed, but there were too many eye-witnesses to it to be successfully contradicted. I know these things of my own knowledge, and assert them to be true."

**Q: "How do you account for the eagle knowing the regiment, and where to find his place?"**

**A:** "I don't account for it. All I have to do about it is to state facts. I believe the eagle knew our regiment as well as we knew it ourselves, and that he could tell it as far off as any of us. When soldiers from other regiments visited us and called on him, as they usually did, he did not act the same before them as he did with any members of the 8<sup>th</sup>. He knew who belonged to his regiment and who did not. I am not superstitious, but I fully believe that bird could think."

**Q: "What did he find to live on in the field?"**

**A:** "Rebel chickens seemed to agree with his constitution remarkably well. He never suffered for want of food, as the rest of us sometimes did. I have seen the whole regiment in chase after a single rabbit across the field after a hard day's march. Of course, it was because the eagle helped the hunt that made it fun."

**Q:** “Where was he usually during an engagement?”

**A:** “Always in the thickest of the fight, near the orders, usually on the ground, occasionally flying to his perch and screaming battle cries terrifically. He seemed to know that business was being transacted and the nature of it.

He would stand by the cannon which was being served with the greatest rapidity without flinching, and the rattle of small arms appeared to delight him. Of course he did not know what it was to be hurt by the minné balls, but I believe that he appreciated that trouble came to those about him by their means. He was a bird only, but he was the embodiment of principle, a companion and champion of the cause.”

—Hal Daves, commander 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment, interviewed by a reporter of the Milwaukee Republican on his recollections of the war, Friday, July 7, 1882, and re-run in article, “The Gallant Wisconsin Regiment Famous”, “Iowa Star-Clipper” (Traer, IA), Friday, October 5, 1883. From family archives.

**Q:** What is the purpose of a mascot? Why are animals used?

## The Ravages of War

Johnny come marchin’ home awright,  
With no one to hold him up in his bone-weariness  
But his own wounded innocence;

Past ragged corn regiments and  
Gulley-scarred trenches,  
Another birthing’s stretchmarks across the land.

President Lincoln called for greater social generosity in considering the plight of post-war families: “...to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan...” —Abraham Lincoln, Second Inaugural Address, April 1863, relying on James 1:27 as his text. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abraham\\_Lincoln%27s\\_second\\_inaugural\\_address](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abraham_Lincoln%27s_second_inaugural_address)

James 1:27 “This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father, to visit orphans and widows in their distress...”

## Wagons Ho

We was a-loadin' blue and grey bodies—  
Swellin' and blackenin' in the heat,  
Human cordwood—inta buckboard wagons, streams of red all over.  
If we could iden'ify the unit, or the state they come from,  
Then we'd drop 'em in the trench by the right sign.  
What a tangle. What a sorry mess!

Only 10 small years ta fergit  
What we done ta earn 'mancipation,  
They gat up a parade, see, on Decoration Day<sup>1</sup>  
An' want those of us still standin' ta join in.  
Ah thought long 'n' hard after my 'nitial negation,  
Thought, then, it might hep put somethin' behind me, so

Ah ordered me a gen-u-ine parade sword delivered by train  
Ta rally us all,  
Ta try ta put a good face on it for the townsfolk  
Who didn't know no better 'n to celebrate.  
The ones gettin' it up say they jes' wanta honor us.  
Honor? 'Tweren't no honor ta do what I done.

Did they say back then,

*"We respectfully request the honor of your presence"*

On linen stationery like as if war was a fancy doin's?  
They did not.  
And they woulda been right not ta, ya' hear?

So ah said agin las' week,  
Ah don't want no part in no parade.  
But even sayin' "no" bothered me plenty.  
Tol' 'em then  
Ah *meant* "yes".  
Why, ah had vomitin' fits the las' few days.

Plowin'? Done *worse* 'n no good!  
Gol-dern' horse  
Wannered all over the field.  
Ma eyes curdled into tears  
B'hind the outhouse.  
Ah bin a blubberin' fool since.



Had ta pry m'own rattlin' fingers  
Off the wrinkled sheets this mornin'  
Jus' ta face the day.

*A celebration?*

This is torture of the wors' kind.  
Yessir. The wors' kind.

But, not knowin' what to 'xpect, 'xactly,  
Ah was curious ta see if anyone would really show up.  
So, ah moseyed ta the other end-a town casual like,  
'Cept ma fingernails drew blood from my palms,  
That dang-fool parade sword bouncin' off ma hip  
To cadence time outta nowheres.

Ah come up sideways on the scene so's ah could vamoose,  
But there was Clint 'n' Edward, good ol' Heimer with his crutch,  
So ah figured if they could put up a good front, then ah could, too.  
We bolstered each other up with small talk  
'Bout that game a' checkers las' night  
Assessed our aches, the crops, the condition a' the wind,

The rain yes-ta'dee, which turned out a  
Good hidin' spot for mendin' fences.  
We was doin' awright,  
The band practicin' a lively tune b'hin' us.  
But then it happened.  
They drove in the las' nail.

Up pulled a buckboard wagon  
Red streamers all aroun'.

*A buckboard.*

Fer *us*.



"Buckboard Wagon" by Larry Williams  
<http://il.trekearth.com/photos/89450/teslr01wagon0712081795.jpg> Permission requested.

<sup>1</sup>By the late 1860s communities had solemn Spring observances where people decorated the graves of those who died in the Civil War. Using the example of Southern States' picnics on the sacred battlegrounds as early as 1862, Union General Logan designated May 30, 1868, as the first yearly Decoration Day so everyone could commemorate the event together.

**Q:** Why was Edwin unsettled about participating in the parade?

“African-American slaves memorialized 250 Union soldiers who died as prisoners in a Confederate prison camp by digging up the bodies from a mass grave and giving them a proper burial in gratitude for their sacrifice.”

—Rev. Dean J. Seal, in sermon “Do According to All That the Foreigner Calls To You” (They went above and beyond.), 5/29/2016, at Shepherd of the Hill Church, Chaska, MN.

*Note: My grandmother Essie opened a nailed-shut north room closet in her farmhouse in 1965. She was a fresh widow needing to sell the farm during the centennial of the Civil War. In that musty Minnesota time capsule were letters concerning what had happened to family members during and after the conflict, and memorabilia including a bayonet and sheath forged in 1876. As a child, I puzzled about that date, since I imagined it to be a sword that led a charge—but the war had long concluded by the time it was procured. So I imagined Edwin was being patriotic, just wanting something to hang over his mantle. Or he’d thought about what he would have done (or did) in command and could now purchase that vicariously. Perhaps he’d been asked to lead a parade of Veterans to celebrate victory? The following poem is what settled out:*

## Charge

When that sword come in the mailbag  
With its mockin’ gold cord  
It disappointin’ly was only fer parade dress.  
I’d hoped for one real an’ punishin’.

I’d drempt and thought  
Ta wedge the hilt in the rock pile on the back 40  
And jes’ like Saul,<sup>1</sup> run at the thing  
Throw myself on it ta find a fittin’ end  
For a miser’ble old soldier.  
Th’ only way ta blunt these piercin’ plans  
Was ta charge right in.

So I took it ta the grindin’ wheel  
And set ta peddlin’ a real point ta it<sup>2</sup>  
Until it felt like mine until  
It felt like mine until it felt like  
Mine until *I felt.*<sup>3</sup>



Bayonet and sheath, 1876.

A suicide of honor  
Is harder than it looks.  
You face it.  
It faces you.  
You walk back 100 paces ta get a good strong run at it  
But discover the lead in the lef' leg won't cooperate  
So you address it again,

This time at 75 yards  
Get up the resolve and *c\_h\_e\_e\_a\_r\_g\_e!*  
But it's hayin' season an' the lungs aren't  
What they were 'fore gunpowder spoke,

So.  
Winded, you venture up close ta salute this phallic foe  
Walk back, now ta duelin' span,<sup>4</sup>  
Ta think on it awhile. Is the angle right? Has it shifted?

Move forward, fiddle with the rocks, head back  
Pivot at 25 paces, stan' at attention,  
Feel a breeze cool the sweat between shoulder blades and belt  
And realize the day's shot.

Don't wanta be left ta the wolves tonight;  
Pick up the cane, walk back ta the house,  
Maybe the wife's made Johnny Cake<sup>5</sup> fer supper.

<sup>1</sup>I Samuel 31:4 "Then Saul said to his armor bearer, "Draw your sword and pierce me through with it, lest these uncircumcised come and pierce me through and make sport of me." But his armor bearer would not, for he was greatly afraid. So Saul took his sword and fell on it. And when his armor bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword and died with him."

<sup>2</sup>Ezekiel 21:9-15, 30: "Say, 'A sword, a sword sharpened, and also polished! Sharpened to make a slaughter, polished to flash like lightning! Shall we rejoice?'... Rather, cry out and wail, son of man; for it is against [yourself] you have sharpened it. For there is a testing...declares the Lord God...Let the sword be bent beyond recognition, impossible to be used, that [your] heart may soften [toward yourself]...Just as you would return it to its sheath, return to the place where you were created, in the land of your origin, the place where you encountered [Jesus], [and heal]."  
(Some context added by author.)

<sup>3</sup>Testing a stone-sharpened knife requires stroking it with the thumb. Being cut would indicate the blade is finally ready. Those who practice ritual cutting report it is the only time they sense normal emotional release.

**Q:** Why might Edwin have been attempting suicide? What could a friend do?

<sup>4</sup>2 duelers each take 20 paces away from the starting point = 40 paces apart.

<sup>5</sup>Between battles Confederate and Union soldiers often visited across battle lines. It is not unreasonable to think recipes could have been shared if the food smelled good.

Union Hardtack was government-issued, pre-made rock-hard crackers, made of flour, salt and water. Soldiers often softened the crackers by crumbling them into coffee, or frying them with animal fat. Sometimes, hardtack was all a soldier had to eat for many days. It was well-named; people have cracked teeth on it.

By contrast, Confederate soldiers did not receive hardtack as part of their rations. Instead, they used provided rations of cornmeal, milk and salt to cook fresh “Johnny Cake”. This served the same purpose as hardtack because the cakes dried quickly and could be easily transported; but it was a happier meal. <http://www.arkansascivilwar150.com/research-education/kids-projects/>

### Johnny Cake<sup>1</sup>

**Ingredients:** 3 cups sweet milk (not sour)  
3 eggs  
1 hand (scant cup) yellow corn meal  
Butter the size of a walnut, melted  
A hollow (3 teaspoons) baking powder, “a good amount”  
(fits in the hollow of your hand)  
A good pinch (1/2 tsp.) of salt

**Options:** 1 hand shredded Cheddar, divided  
1 hand corn kernels, drained  
A short hand (1/2 cup) chopped green onions, (to cover the palm but not the fingers)  
A dash (1/8 tsp.) red pepper flakes

#### **Directions:**

Stir corn meal into 2/3 of the milk in a skillet and let mixture come to a boil, making a mush. Add the remaining milk and well-beaten eggs. Stir in salt, baking powder and melted butter. Bake half an hour in a fast oven. (400 degrees.).

—Based on Lady Bird Johnson’s mother’s recipe

<sup>1</sup>Southern soldiers were called “Johnnies” so people from the North often referred to Johnny Cake as Spoonbread, instead.



Wilhelm Thie Wien Civil War era harmonica from family archives. <http://harp-l.org/pipemail/harp-l/2007-Feb>

“As bad as the Civil War was, the worst was in Kansas. It had been a territory with the whole country holding its breath about which side it would take. The battle lines were drawn right through the middle of the state, causing great family and political upheaval.” —Gail Johnson

*Note: The following poem is deliberately ambiguous. Create your own scenario.*

## Wishes

I wish I'd not seen  
A letter not sent but torn in two;  
Both sent to war and left to wish;  
I wish I'd not seen the 'passioned plea  
To tell the deed, the place you fell.

I wish I'd not gone to find the deed,  
To find the button torn from grey  
Button bent, grey thrust through;  
Two brothers, thrust apart, then fought.  
*Fought.*                      And one left you.

*Now, write your own backstory based on your responses to some of these questions:*

**Q's** for your imagination:

Stanza 1:

Who is “I”? Mother? Sister? Wife? Fiancée?

Who wrote the letter?

What was the “letter”? Confession? Suicide note? Apology? Point of law? A decision to withdraw from the family? From the Union?

Why was it written? Why was it not sent? Who tore it up?  
What was the “wish? Of the one sent to war? Of the one waiting at home? Of the one who found the letter?  
What was the “passioned plea” about? Why would the person finding it rather not have known about it?  
What was the “deed”?  
Who is “you”?  
What was “the place you fell”? In battle? Being misguided? An accident? A moral failure?

Stanza 2:

What and why did “I” investigate?  
Where did the person “find the deed”?  
How much time had passed between reading “the letter” and “finding the deed”?  
What happened to bend a metal button?  
What was “grey”? (Humans often go to war with unresolved questions.)  
Why was “grey” “thrust through”? Was it an accident? A personal vendetta? A horrible error? “Friendly fire”? A challenge behind the barn? Being pierced with angst, or a sword?  
Was the person wounded or killed? A casualty of war? The subject of a duel?  
Why were “two brothers” “thrust apart”? Were they actual brothers, or a metaphor? (Brothers often wrestle for superiority, especially when close in birth age.)  
Why were these “brothers” particularly at odds?  
Did both feel justified? Why?  
Did the fight settle the issues? How do you know?  
Who left whom and when? In what physical/emotional/ideological state were the brothers departed?  
Did “I” love the brothers equally, or one more than the other?  
Which one was left, and how does “I” feel about that?  
Now try switching from the color grey to the color blue. Do you feel differently?

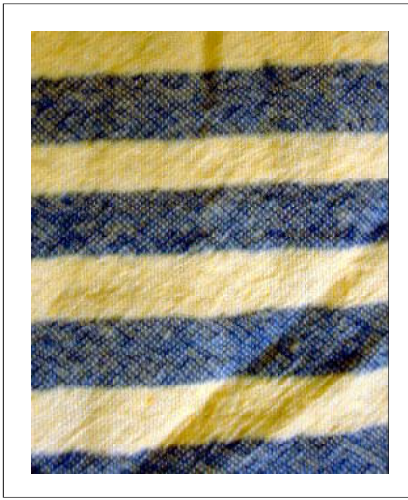
## The Bottom Line

War is a tangled mess  
Involving humans who go to the battlefield  
With their own unresolved personal issues.  
People involved in it spending their lifetimes  
Trying to figure out what really happened there  
And how to make sense of it all  
In order to go on living.

—With L.C.



Whittled wooden comb used for wool.



Possible wool prisoner uniform cloth, raised, processed and woven by Ervietta Moore, Traer, IA, before she moved to MN. Contracted by? Stripes were unmistakable social code for "prisoner" in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**Q:** How could my own great-great-grandmother use her perfectly good wool to weave yardgoods that would be party to such human suffering as prisoner of war uniforms? Did she do it to pay the bills? Was it patriotism? Did she do her best weaving to give them some measure of comfort? Was it to provide supplies for her own husband?

## Lost in Battle

'Twas hard ta tell jus' what this hombly homesteader earned  
As a Minnesota<sup>1</sup> Volunteer, and what innocence we'd all lost;  
In fact, nothin' changed so very much after Antietam<sup>2</sup>  
Once the war was decided,  
'Cept things gat *worse* fer awhile,<sup>3</sup>

And me,  
One small white pawn ta blame. After all,  
Who back here on the farm  
Could un'erstand bayonets sharp as curses,  
Or a white man standin' up for Negroes he never even met?<sup>4</sup>

What ah seen, Lord! What ah seen  
Ah caint wash from my eyes  
No matter how many times ah stick my head too long in the rain barrel  
Or put my leg over the side-a the well<sup>5</sup>  
Waitin' fer the wind ta push me in, my courage bled out.

I give life a good try.  
Raised skunks fer pelts, but couldn't *bear* ta see 'em skinned,  
A shriekin' memory still creepin' under my own.  
Tried a Shores Medicine Wagon, but  
Tested the samples a mite too often.  
*Son* Albert an' *grandson* Floyd come near ta bein'  
Slaves themselves ta salve my debt.

I was part-a the cav-alry in the thick of it,  
With gov'ment-issued horses we couldn't keep.  
My only souvenir the stirrups from those bloody raids.  
Many never returned, 'course, but ah marched,  
Took the train from Missoura, then walked some more  
—hopin' fambly could be my Cal-vary.

I put on my Blues the day too much regret blew in,  
The acrid smoke of battle stale,  
The smell of fearsome sweat still lodged in that dangerous cloth.  
Only thing is, 'twas my *daughter*  
Who come up agains' my spit 'n' polished ridin' boots,

Ma legs danglin' in the chicken coop  
That same fine grey mornin' a  
Cacklin' hecklin' spirit  
Finally  
Got.  
My.  
Goat.



Great-great-grandfather  
Edwin's riding boots.

Now ah knows ah cain't be buried with the rest,<sup>6</sup>  
But that's jus' as well; Ah no longer belonged nohow.  
*Wife*<sup>7</sup> will wear black the remainder a' her days, though,  
The windows papered, the house dimmed, so 'shamed  
She can never again show her face in town.

*Me*<sup>8</sup> Ah might've given consid'able more thought ta Solomon's advice:  
*"For ta him  
That is yet  
Attached ta all the living  
There is yet hope."*  
—King Solomon, Ecclesiastes 9:4.

<sup>1</sup>Minnesota Volunteer Infantry (MIV) soldiers played key roles at pivotal engagements: 1<sup>st</sup> MVI at Gettysburg and 4<sup>th</sup> MVI were among the first to enter Vicksburg, prompting the South to wonder if their dream of independence could be sustained, while Northerners renewed their hope for a reunited country. MVI soldiers additionally had a hand in securing control of the Mississippi River, effectively splitting the Confederacy in half." —Adam Scher, "Long Remember: Minnesota at Gettysburg and Vicksburg", History Matters, Summer 2013, publication of the Minnesota Historical Society, pp. 220-221.

<sup>2</sup>The Battle of Antietam (An-tee'tum) was fought in Sharpsburg, Maryland, and was the bloodiest one-day battle in American history, with roughly 23,000 casualties from both sides.



<sup>3</sup>Reconstruction and its corruption—including kidnapping freedmen—brought its own set of heavy difficulties for survivors in the South. In the post-war South through the 1930s, freed Negroes could be jailed on trumped-up charges for the purpose of extracting hard labor or fines. Slavery by Another Name: The Re-enslavement of Black Americans From the Civil War to WWII., Douglas A. Blackmon, Doubleday, 2008.

<sup>4</sup>According to family records, the author's 2-greats grandfather was already a 30 year-old married man when he left for the Civil War, so the principle of freeing slaves and reuniting the country must have been a much larger driver for him than a youngster's desire for adventure or excitement. His daughter Ella was conceived after his return, and born in 1868. She was 20 years old at his death, which means he suffered with battle memories and untreated depression for a very long time.

<sup>5</sup>Edwin had already experienced too much violence, so much so that he was trying to find the least violent way to end his life, even willing to take "the woman's way out (to drown in a well)" in order to keep from shooting another gun.

<sup>6</sup>Upon his death by suicide he was not allowed to be buried in a church cemetery, according to family oral history. Ervietta wore mourning black crepe the rest of her life to honor a beloved but emotionally tortured husband, and was so aware of social stigma she ventured off the farm from that day on only to attend funerals.

<sup>7</sup>Note on italicized family members: This poem was written to highlight the fact that suicide affects the whole family—even to the 5<sup>th</sup> generation. In 1957 the author, siblings, parents and grandparents made pilgrimage to successfully find Edwin's grave in a hayfield on an abandoned homestead.

*(This poem was read by the author for Minnesota PenWomen, and on LMCC-TV July 21, 2013, 5:00 pm repeating Oct-Nov 2013, then posted on YouTube from the program "Read My Thoughts". <http://www.booksbyangelahunt.com>)*

## The Ties That Bind<sup>1</sup>

The last nail of this great railroad  
Was of gold, driven with a hammer of silver.  
1776 miles fastened by a single representative spike.  
Let's hope this steel band<sup>2</sup> continues to hold the country together;  
After years of Get Up Jack,<sup>3</sup> this Iron Horse  
Hosts a whistle, not a call to arms.  
A call to build. Together.

Of the 185,000 miles of railroad constructed in the world  
Which have been completed in this half century [sic],  
Nearly half belongs to the U.S....

No wonder they<sup>4</sup> are so hungry for our sound of wheel on iron—  
Grinding out 40-60 miles by the hour.  
The wealth in railroads makes us mighty vulnerable.<sup>5</sup>

—S. T. Cowan, Crystal, Lower [sic], as written in a letter Dec. 30, 1887.  
From family archives.

<sup>1</sup>May 10, 1869, the first U.S. transcontinental railroad was completed. The poem title refers to laying wood ties bound East to West post-war, but the railroad also created binding public debt because the massive government project incurred giant cost overruns. Railroads were built to transport troops, to oversee U.S. interior acquisitions and, as available, for freight and passengers. It bound uncomfortably because, as much as it was used, it was never profitable.

<sup>2</sup>Railroad corporations and their alliances were often “marriages“ of convenience between unlikely bedfellows. But as vast land-holdings were accessioned, there was also concern that the bedroom door couldn’t be locked.

<sup>3</sup>“Get Up Jack” a common phrase to get a horse moving, now applied to an Iron Horse, as well as the Union Jack (flag). Cowan is calling for both Northern and Southern businesses and commerce to work together—not to war over the transport of raw materials.

<sup>4</sup>Spain was the major contender for acquired land in the New World after 1846 because France turned its attention to European interests and its own internal affairs. The more track-age the U.S. built, the more attractive North America became to Spain.

<sup>5</sup>The Iron Horse made us both very mighty and also open to attack by countries wanting to take over the technology and gain access to significant natural resources. Too, we were vulnerable to our own pride in what we had accomplished by the work of our hands.

## A Native American Perspective, Looking Back: Dakota Wars

“The Civil War era was a great struggle for the First Nation people as well as for the Negroes. In 1862, yes, Natives committed atrocities. These are well-publicized. But one rarely hears of the atrocities Whites committed against the Native people. During that time the elders saw the military capturing little boys. They would be tied to wagon wheels. The wagons would be driven over rutted terrain for miles and miles until the boys died. Soldiers would not have treated animals so cruelly. That mentality caused much genocide; there are also stories during and after the Civil War that freed Negroes who found themselves on the wrong piece of American soil might be castrated and skinned alive.

In a more recent era, it was not so different. The Jews are said to have lost 6 million people in Europe during WWII. We North American Indians lost less

people only because there were fewer of us to begin with. The massacres of women, children and the elderly at Sand Creek and Washita on the western frontier only indicated there was no less of a plan to eradicate Indians from the land, and in fact, from the earth. Black Kettle's Village was another example. He was cooperative and did not want to put his people through the distress of war. Black Kettle was told if he flew the American flag over the lodge where he was gathering everyone in to protect his people, the cavalry would not attack. But apparently the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry watched for the flag *in order to* attack. They destroyed all they could find: pregnant women had their children cut out of them, young boys were desecrated, old men were cut down. Soldiers left the scene with lady parts stretched over their saddle horns.

It goes back to soldiers being trained to think, 'You are not human, therefore I can kill you.' Isn't it the same with any war? Native people were originally taught the Creator didn't talk about fighting and killing, but about understanding and forgiveness. You Whites have provided much to understand and forgive! We Indians have failed, too.

Perhaps such a struggle is so we appreciate what we have. Perhaps one day your people will face the gift of such a struggle as well, and learn how precious forgiveness is.

Free Blacks had the right to vote and actually held various elected offices throughout the North from the very beginning of 1866. But, the post-war slave states of the South set up barriers against Blacks to vote, or do much of anything other than work in mines, factories and mills. All this was without the benefit of a slave owner protecting his investment by feeding, clothing, providing shelter and shoes for his 'property'. Post Civil War, Black people were regularly worked to death as attested by the mass graves discovered on Southern industrial properties.<sup>1</sup> The ratification of the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment codified the right to vote throughout the United States, but Jim Crow laws of the South were an attempt to avert the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment until the Civil Rights Acts of the 1950s, and finally Peace Marches in 1964 put an end to those laws...in the Southern States."

—Wally I. with Jinhul; <http://www.funtrivia.com/askft/Question41620.html>

**<sup>1</sup>Slavery by Another Name: The Re-enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II, by Douglas A. Blackmon. Doubleday, 2008.**

"America's original residents weren't allowed to be citizens until 1923.<sup>1</sup> (White women became citizens with the right to vote in 1920.) Including Blacks, none of these 3 voices were allowed to be heard in any part of America. If a voice

will not be acknowledged, the assumption is that it is subhuman. How can one human do that to another?

The Freedom of Religion Act signed into law by President Carter in 1978 is considered by Native Americans to be one of the most liberating moments in our history. He gave us back the right to practice our religion, the right to honor the Creator in the old ways. That was robbed from us during the boarding school years (1870-1978). Carter respected us enough to trust that our honoring the Creator was the right course.

The last of the boarding schools closed in the early 1980s. We still generationally suffer the effects of what happened in them. The memories formed in them is why there is so much alcoholism, abuse and so many fractured families in our community today. But we are being led to forgive and it will heal us.”

—Wally Inyun Walkon, with memories of the elders of The Dakotah Nation.



<sup>1</sup>Voted in 1923; ratified in 1924. —“Securing Indian Voting Rights: Developments in the Law”, Harvard Law Review, 4/8/2016, Issue 1731, No. 129. <http://harvardlawreview.org/2016/04/securing-indian-voting-rights/>

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In 1893, there was a conspiracy to overthrow the indigenous and lawful government of Hawaii by the U.S. government. Queen Liliuokalani composed, then tearfully sang “Aloha Oi”, and publicly asked God to vindicate her people and set things right in her farewell address just before she stepped down from the throne on January 14.



Edison cylinder record of “Aloha Oi” from family archives. Cost was 18 cents in 1908.

The author’s grandmother, Essie, respected the Queen for her faith and the love she had for her country, and as a young woman Essie purchased a cylinder recording of the 1893 broadcast. It took 100 years for the Queen’s prayer to be answered by an apology from the U.S. government signed by President Clinton on November 23, 1993. <https://www.hawaii-nation.org/publawall.html>

When the author visited Hawaii in 2005, the island of Kaho’olawe had been set aside for indigenous people who want to live in the old ways—no tourists or white people are allowed. An effort is being made to restore eroded and exploded land (a former U.S. bomb test site). Close to half the population of Hawaii is now of Japanese extraction.

1.7 SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR ERA 1898-1901

France gave up an interest in colonizing North America due to France's near bankruptcy, which left Spain salivating for the chance at more New World land. After the explosion on the USS Maine in Havana Harbor which was blamed on Spain, the U.S. battled Spain on its Pacific islands of Guam, Philippines, Hawaii and other outlying islands and took on the Spanish insurgents in Cuba, winning on all fronts.

“Senator Henry Cabot Lodge believed that America at the end of the 19th century had become ‘over civilized’—that young men were turning soft and needed to somehow stir ‘the wolf rising in the heart,’ as Theodore Roosevelt put it. It is significant that Lodge and Roosevelt, who pushed America to go to war with Spain in 1898, had written about war a great deal but [had] never seen it. President William McKinley resisted; he had, as he noted, ‘seen the dead piled up at Antietam’ in the Civil War. But the Hawks in America were able to roll the Doves, not for the last time.”

—Sebastian Junger, author of War. Hachette Book Group, 2011.

“Navy Hymn”

Eternal Father, Strong to save,
Whose arm does calm the restless wave,
Who tells the mighty ocean deep
Its own appointed limits keep.
Oh, hear us when we cry to Thee
For those in danger on the sea.

—William Whiting/Music by
John B. Dykes, penned in the 1870s.



Three sailors in their wool uniforms,
from Great-Aunt Edna's scrapbook.

The Continental Navy was established 10/13/1775. Several of its armored cruisers and newer ships were sunk or scuttled in the Battle of Santiago (Cuba), 7/3/1898. Some of the rest were sunk in the Battle of Santiago (Guam) and in the Caribbean. The replacement steel navy was sorely tested, but emerged victorious, liberating Cuba from Spanish rule, adding acreage to the Union, due to The Treaty of Paris: netting the Philippines, Hawai'i, Puerto Rico, and Guam, among other islands, which made trade with Asia feasible by providing coal depots for refueling American ships.

—<https://en.wikipedia.org>

The following poem is to honor the peculiar penchant for slang used in all the branches of the military over world history. A colorful sampling of 1898 Navy slang is woven here, with accompanying translation.

In Other Words

Bare navy

Makes us long for a Grub-spoiler's Tommy.
Now Banyan days avast Admiralty ham
And worse, Harriet Lane;

In Other Words: Definitions of Stanza One

“Bare navy”: tinned rations of standard-issue crackers and beans

Makes us long for **“Grub-spoiler's Tommy”**: a poor military or lumber camp cook's soft bread and fresh provisions, no matter how hastily prepared.

Now our meal-planner may as well be from the

Banyan Hindu caste, which abstains from animal-based foods,

“days avast”: who will create more and more space between two meals that feature flesh, and then serve only a navy specialty: tinned mystery meat/tinned fish dubbed

“Admiralty ham”: touted to be so delicious as to be served only to officers,

“And worse, “Harriet Lane”: an unfortunate young woman, victim of an infamous crime in the 19th century who was murdered, chopped up, with her remains undiscovered for a long time; thus, her name is a coarse euphemism for beef jerky.

For can make a tarpaulin
Leave landlubber,
To a skulker be
When a sailor eats and clears his yard-arm.

In Other Words: Definitions of Stanza Two

“Tarpaulin”: an efficient seaman

“Leave Landlubber”: pass a person who does not possess a stomach suited for the sea to be the first one to the ship's rail,

“To a Sulker”: one who keeps completely out of the way when any work is to be done; meaning the food served can quickly make even a good worker into one who is unable to attend to any meaningful duties;

“A sailor eats and “Clears his yard-arm”: to fold the sail, so the wind can't catch it. However, in this setting the sailor has digestive distress; it's the food's fault [Its wind catches him, regardless of his good intentions.].

Finally all that remains is Black Bess
Brown George
Cookhouse rumor
Europe on the chest, and the sea.



“If you would ever have to eat
The food which you prepare,
The doctors soon would give you up
As you'd do with your bill of fare.”

In Other Words: Definitions of Stanza Three

“**Black Bess**”: one’s firelock or firearm

“**Brown George**”: Munion bread, or hard-as-a-bullet flatbread, contracted by and supplied to the Navy; also a reference to the dry salty crusty unsavory toughness of England’s King George IV.

“**Cookhouse rumor**”: the natural result of eating something that doesn’t agree with digestion; i.e. flatulence,

“**Europe on the chest**”: homesickness. From an old reference to being away from home while on the high seas; also perhaps having in possession a small carved personal wooden locker for valuables embossed with the country of origin or coat of arms, inferring “everything of personal value to me is under my crest (heart).”

“**And the sea**”: “We are reduced to the very bare necessities and their influences upon us” and are unable to escape them, because there is always and everywhere the sea.

For additional interesting terminology see [Slang, Today and Yesterday](#) by Eric Partridge, pp. 251-252. (No publication date in the book; perhaps 1964.)

A tattered well-folded paper was found with letters and a military-ration can opener, indicating this Psalm probably travelled into battle. From family archives.

Psalm 27

The Lord is my light and my salvation,
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life,
of whom shall I be afraid?
Though an army encamp against me,
my heart shall not fear,
Though war rise up against me,
yet in this will I be confident:
Some trust in chariots, some trust in horses,
But I will remember the name
Of the Lord my God.

—General David

1902 Indian head penny (on right); 5-cent George Washington, 1-cent Ben Franklin and 5-cent Theodore Roosevelt stamps from the engraved Famous American series of the era.



Buffalo Soldier:¹ A Resume

Son of free black farmers Severn and Elizabeth Bivins, at Age 15 in charge of an 8-horse Virginia tract. Longed for something other than the predictability of crops and animals, Entered Hampton Institute for African Americans.

“Having a very great desire for adventure and to see the Wild West, Joined the army, shipped out to the 10th U.S. Cavalry, Missouri, 1887.”² Stationed in Arizona Territory 1888 in the campaign against Geronimo, Patrolled, kept peace during the final days of the Apache Wars.

Company clerked 1889-90, then stationed in Dakotas and Montana.

Trained Irish Water Spaniel “Booth” as a messenger dog; inseparable.

Expert marksman: 8 War Department medals in Illinois 1892-94 and more thru 1910. (Only soldier ever to win 3 Army golds in a year.)

Buffalo Bill Cody offered a Wild West Show job, but Bivins declined.

The 2/15/1898 explosion of USS Maine in Havana Harbor triggered war. [Cause of the blast was never determined, but the U.S. was eager to end European colonization in North America, so blamed Spain.³] All 4 African American regiments headed across the Midwest toward FL in palace-train coaches bolstered by cheering crowds who gave them gifts. But in the South it was different.

Bivins was taken aback by Jim Crow segregation that had become entrenched in the former Confederate states during his years of western service, calling it “the curse of the South.” The 10th Cavalry African Americans who were denied basic rights there fought to free Cubans on Spanish soil with Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, 1st Volunteer Cavalry.⁴

Bivins wrote a friend, “There is no people on earth more loyal and devoted to country than the Negro. God grant the time will soon come when this country will have the power to enforce the teaching of this heavenly doctrine that all men are created free and equal.”



Buffalo Soldier Horace Waymon Bivins, (1862–1937) with his messenger dog, Booth. Public Domain.

June 24, 1898, Gunner Corporal Bivins took up the call to attend the Spanish American War at the site of skirmishes between Spanish troops and Cuban insurgents. Casualties were very high, but the Americans drove the Spanish from position. July 1: San Juan Hill. "Hot day, we had no water. Some canteens, but they had been pierced by bullets. We were under a terrific fire," Corporal Bivins recalled.⁵ Operating a 3-man Hotchkiss breech-loading cannon alone, he suffered a head wound: a Spanish bullet bounced to glance off his temple.⁶ "It stunned me for about 2 minutes. I recovered, re-sighted my gun, pulled the lanyard, then watched with my [field] glasses the result of the shot."⁷

Medal of Bravery 1901. Dog "Booth" protected dead soldiers until they were retrieved. Bivins authored a book: Under Fire with the Tenth Cavalry. President McKinley acknowledged Black soldiers' contributions in the war: "They vindicated their own liberty on the field, and with other brave soldiers gave the priceless gift of liberty to another suffering race."⁷

Captain: served 6 months in the Philippines leading patrols against the forces of Emilio Aguinaldo (pre-Panama Canal⁸). Ordinance Specialist Bivins stationed in Montana, California, Wyoming, New York, and Vermont.⁹ Married Claudia Browning from early Fort Custer days; settled in Billings, Montana. He had 3 children and retired 7/19/1913.

Horace, age 55, volunteered for U.S. Army service again in WWI as Supply Captain at Fort Dix, NJ. Liberia, the African settlement for freed U.S. slaves, asked Bivins to train 115,000 planning to fight against the Germans in W. Africa. He declined, returned to Billings to study taxidermy and grow lush gardens with his family for many years.

—With Antonio Bivins, Horace's great-great-grand nephew, Chaska, MN.

¹"Buffalo Soldier": name Native Americans used to describe Negro troopers.

²African Americans in the Military, Catherine Reef, pp. 29-32.

³<http://billingsgazette.com/news/features/magazine/much-decorated-soldierservedmany-years...>

⁴The Rough Riders

^{5-7, 9}<http://www.blackpast.org/aah/bivans-horace-w-1862-1937>

⁸President Theodore Roosevelt oversaw the work for a trans-isthmian canal in 1903-13.



Commemorative Buffalo stamp.

Note from his nephew Antonio Bivens: “When I first moved to Minnesota for university, a man heard my last name and said it sounded familiar. Since there are not many people by this name, I became curious. It turns out Horace was quite a natural scientist who chronicled many species he encountered. He brought back from the Philippines a Monkey-eating Eagle. After it died, he had it taxidermied. It resides at the Bell Museum of Natural History at the U of M to this day, the reason the man was familiar with my name. There is also a display of Horace’s life and extensive collection of his natural-history artifacts of rare birds, lizards, snakes and other items at the Yellowstone Museum. Horace knew Teddy Roosevelt personally from his experiences in Cuba. President Roosevelt, a fellow naturalist, created the U.S. Forest Service and established 150 National Forests and 5 National Parks during his presidency (1901-1909). Roosevelt went out to Billings to see both Yellowstone and Horace, but Horace was at Fort Dix at the time.”

Thor¹

I poured white-hot rain into molds
Then released soft breathing ingots;
I witnessed the velvet heart of iron
Then rolled it into red-violet veins
That flattened with a ten-pound hammer
Into ribbons of gloaming might;
I bent and shaped sorrel blanks on the anvil
Swedged out holes pink pink pink;
Plunged ‘em into a tepid tank to temper
Gave each chestnut steed a pedicure, then
Het, pinched, spread, nipped, crimped,
Wedged a fit and shod the huffing Morgans² of war,
Who pawed brown ground with fresh blue-grey muscle,
Impatient for battle.

—In memory of 120-pound soft spoken Andy Stockholm, Farrier, Finlayson, MN, and with thanks to Robert Burns, Blacksmith, Carver, MN.

¹God of War in Norse Mythology.

²Morgans: stocky-bodied sorrel (rust-colored) or chestnut (dark brown) horses with short legs known for their endurance, quick and agile step, healthy legs and feet, and notorious calmness in battle. Though General Stonewall Jackson received a mortal wound in battle, his horse, Little Sorrel, lived to be a regular visitor at wounded soldier’s homes throughout the South for years after the war and died at the age of 36 (in about 1898), after which he was stuffed by a taxidermist and remains in a museum to this day.



Individually forged horseshoe and brass harness cleats. From family archives.



It was considered a tragedy to kill a horse in battle. To the victor go the spoils, including 4-year-old horses. Yearlings are trained to a bridle; 2-year-olds are broken to a saddle and know basic commands; 3-year-olds overcome the fear of water, shadows, gunshots, tight places, and walking backwards. A well-trained 4-year-old is an asset to any war campaign.

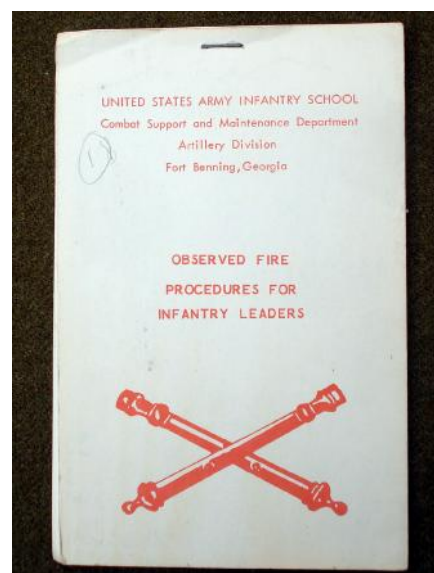
At the close of the Spanish-American War and the beginning of the 20th Century, it went without saying that man relied not only on water, but also upon the horse for travel and battle. Gas-powered machines were considered experimental, unreliable and limited (due to unimproved roads), so horses were used extensively through World War I. Millions of well-trained horses grew up on U.S. farms, were requisitioned for Europe and smelled death. Some were shot, all were overworked, and despite promises from the government, most were never returned to the farms that lent them. Even as mechanized as our nation was in WWII, the U.S. Army Veterinary Corps was responsible for the professional care of over 56,000 horses and mules that were employed as cavalry and field artillery draft animals for supply trains at the beginning of our part in the war. By 1943, however, only 3 horses were procured. http://olive-drab.com/od_army-horses-mules_ww2.php

You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him think." —The author

After the Battle

There is a time after battle
when winning or losing
doesn't matter anymore,
when the wreckage of it
is bigger than the cause,
when the line that dared
us to take sides has blended
like blood into the sand,
when a weariness sets in
like a tide overtopping
the beachhead of silence,
we cling to in the darkness
after the storm has passed.

This is a time when regrets
outpace the dreams of glory,
a time when we see at last



Observed Fire Procedures for Infantry Leaders, circa 1898. It established the standard for U.S. modern warfare: Our guys had to be shot at before they could shoot. Therefore, it was determined the U.S. would not be the aggressor.

how the great steeds of war
pulled us, winners and losers,
heads lowered, unswerving,
to the same dark place.

—John Thornberg, 12/10/2010, Veteran, and member of writer’s groups in
Chisago and Stillwater, MN.

For My Country

I ought to love my country,
The land in which I live,
Yes, I am very sure my heart
Its truest love should give.

I must be good and honest,
I must be kind and true,
I never should be lazy,
I must be gentle, too.

For, if I love my country,
I’ll try to be a man
My country may be proud of;
And if I try, I can.

She wants men brave and noble,
She needs men brave and kind,
My country needs that I should be
The best man She can find.

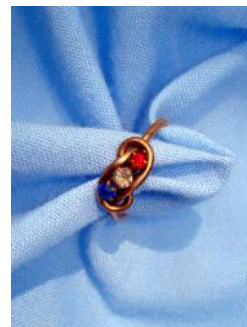
—Listed as “Anonymous” in several sources for education or recitation.
Handwritten copy signed “Lloyd H. Bates (age 9)” circa 1898. Family archives.

Note: During the Expansion Era patriotic pieces written in a child’s voice were popular for memorization and handwriting practice in schools, and could be found in major magazines of the time. Looking back, did they act as propaganda to create a feeder program for the next war?

“America does not go abroad for monsters to destroy.” —John Quincy Adams



U.S. Commemorative stamp for centennial of Spanish-American War, 1897-1997.



Red, white and blue ring my grandmother found in 1902 as a prize in canned Pet Milk.

SECTION 2:

MODERN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: PERSONAL ACCOUNTS AND INFORMATION

“... This saying goodbye on the edge of the dark
And cold to an orchard so young in the bark
Reminds me of all that can happen to harm
An orchard away at the end of the farm.”

—From “Goodbye and Keep Cold” by Robert
Frost, 1874-1963, in “Harper’s Magazine”, July 1920.

2.1 WORLD WAR I 1914-1918

Only 60 years prior to the war, Germany was a group of fiefdoms and kingdoms that couldn't get along with each other; Otto von Bismarck unified the kingdoms of Germany and took on France, Belgium, Britain, and Russia—and nearly won. How did it start? Serbia assassinated the Archduke of Austria because they wanted independence from Austria; Germany wanted Austria to avenge the death; Russia didn't like Austria picking on Serbia; Austria couldn't take on Russia so Germany came to Austria's aid. Due to joint agreements, pacts and alliances, all of Europe fell into war. France and Russia had a pact against Germany. Belgium had a pact with France. When Germany asked to march through Belgium in order to attack France, Belgium resisted to protect France. Britain came to France's aid. Within days, the Allied Powers—France, Russia, Belgium, Italy, the British Empire (and the U.S. in 1917)—faced the Central Powers—Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and Bulgaria. —The author with Gary W., historian. <https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/discover/history/general-history/first-world-war/>

WWI resulted in a world-wide total of 17 million deaths and 20 million wounded. It is ranked among the deadliest conflicts in history. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_I_casualties

American conscription began June 5, 1917 (only 73,000 had voluntarily enlisted) and adjusted policies for fairness, allowing for dependency exemptions and religious scruples against war. It prohibited substitutions or purchased exemptions. Local boards were formed of leading respected citizens to limit graft and resistance. —*World War I Minnesota* by Iric Nathanson, Chapter 2.

The U.S. started with the 21-31 age group (later expanded to 18-45). Male registration was universal, including blacks and whites on the same terms, but they served in separate units. 500,000 immigrants were drafted, and were kept in language groups. By the end of 1917, 10 million were registered, still inadequate for replacing the staggering loss of life in Europe. By the end of 1918, 24 million were registered with 3 million inducted.

The government built support for the war by shutting down newspapers and magazines that published articles against WWI involvement. Although Draft Dodgers became local political heroes when they wrote letters and demanded reforms, Objectors served 20 years in Leavenworth Prison. In fact: 7 were given the death penalty, 142 served life sentences, 345 were sent to labor camp. The argument that conscription was slavery or involuntary servitude was struck down by the Supreme Court. The Court upheld Congressional power to declare war and raise armies and argued conscription was part of the rights-and-duties contract citizens held. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/conscription_in_the_United_States

“Until WWI, there were free and open borders in Europe.
Only since then are passports and checkpoints ‘necessities’.”
—Ludmilla, emigre from Russia to Minnesota

It's All Relative¹: American Homefront

My father says that the reason why
We always keep the Fourth of July
Is 'cause 'twas on that day, you know
(Ever and ever so long ago)
Our wonderful Uncle Sam was born:
And so we keep his birthday morn.

He must be the bravest kind of man,
'Cause father says that he began
To fight right off and always won,
And made the other fellows run:
'Till, when he was just 7 years old
He drove his enemies out in the cold.

Then he cut down forests and built instead
Great towns and cities, and went ahead
Building and working without any rest,
And moving farther and farther West.
He made the very first steamboat, too,
The year before he was 32.

When he was 73, he found
A lot of silver and gold in the ground;
But that wasn't all, for the crops he grew
Were worth the gold and the silver, too.
So Uncle Sam is the richest man
That ever has been since the world began.

He can do 'most anything, he's so strong;
But he always thinks as he goes along
Of the easiest, quickest, newest ways
Of doing things,—so my father says;
And he lets the people from everywhere come
To live with him in his beautiful home.

He'll be, on this coming Fourth of July,
A hundred and twenty-seven—oh, my!
There's nobody else ever lived so long;
But Uncle Sam is still young and strong;
My father says, and is growing yet,
So no one knows how big he will get.
I never have seen our Uncle Sam,



"I Want YOU!" painted by James Montgomery Flagg, who used himself as a model for a WWI enlistment campaign. The campaign blossomed prior to our involvement in WWI to include this picture of a beloved but stern Uncle pressuring military volunteerism as the only option for the patriotic. A work of the U.S. federal government, the image is public domain. —"Smithsonian Magazine", reprinted July 1995, p.70.

But I've often noticed his monogram—
“U.S.”—upon lots and lots of things;
And every year, when the summer brings
It round, I keep his birthday, too,
I like it as well as my own; don't you?

—Barbara Griffiths, undated clipping (possible source “Liberty Magazine”).
From family archives.

¹Until WWI, the ideals of the country were depicted by feminine visages of justice, fairness and nurture. Now politicians needed a stern father figure that could subliminally or overtly create enough duress to prompt enlistment. The skillfully crafted poem above, written by an adult using a child's voice and presumed innocence, is one device used for propaganda. In peacetime a poem like this would be considered happily patriotic. Interestingly, stanzas 3-5 about the character of Uncle Sam also relate to the main philosophical differences between Native American culture and the policy of Manifest Destiny.

Out of the Frying Pan: 1914 Europe

A holy hush encrusted the battered countryside
That Christmas Night, 1914.
Beat Tommies,¹ whipped by cold,
Folded into raw snow.
Seasoned songs suddenly rose above the trenches;

Nourishing words, recognized,
Rolled and blended with other tongues,
*O Holy Night*² became so by lack of conflict
Jelled by melody,
Men gingerly minced out of hiding
Ready to offer an olive branch.

Fresh.
Eternal.
A star.
A Baby.
Stable times.

Life celebrated as Before Conflict (B.C.)
Warmth shared. Bread broken.
But for the generals' half-baked schemes



Bubble lights.

And top brass stirring the pot,
Peace, the bun in the oven³, almost birthed.

—Based on “Sainsbury’s Christmas: the story behind our Christmas (chocolate bar) ad.” <http://youtube/2slYvnfcFVs>

¹British soldiers.

²”O Holy Night” (French: “Cantique de Noël”) is an international Christmas Carol composed by Adolphe Adam in 1847.

³A phrase begun in England sometime before the end of the war, to refer to pregnancy. Townspeople, families, soldiers, and several leaders wanted peace.

A Letter of Thanks: 1914 Europe

“I feel it is my duty as a German officer to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the guards and sentries. Please see that my gratitude is passed on to the men. Although they never neglected their duty, they have shown always the utmost courtesy and consideration towards me.”



—Written by German Lieutenant Lody the day before Lody’s own execution for spying and treason on 11/6/1914, in gratitude for British hospitality and gentlemanly courtesy while being kept at their POW headquarters. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2677425/I-like-express-thanks-men-going-execute-Found-100-years-letter-German-spy-captured-WWI-Guards-Tower-London.htm>

Into the Fire: 1915 Europe

Recently an infernal place,
The trenches again caught the spark
Of Carols sung by lonely men
Christmas, 1915. The same warm tunes heard,
If one listened carefully,
In several languages.
Eternal antiphonal hopes.



Embossed postcard. The meaning of a white rose is “silence”.

The fighting stopped and kept stopping for days
Because sworn enemies put down swords and became merely Christians,
Human beings, all, with a common culture, seeking one night of Silence.¹
Adversaries became men and men became acquaintances.
The candle almost caught: but for the generals²
Kindness *almost* kindled.

—To honor Gary

¹The carol “Silent Night” (German: “Stille Nacht”) was written in 1869 and by 1915 was translated into several languages.

²The charge meted out on the conscripted at the Front regardless of country would have been “fraternizing with the enemy”, worthy of stockade or death. Socializing with the other side is strictly forbidden in rules of engagement because inexperienced soldiers can feel more camaraderie with fellow privates—regardless of allegiance—who are suffering the same indignities, than loyalty to their own officers. Thus, they can easily come to recognize “the enemy” as fellow human beings and refuse to kill. It has been estimated based on bullet tonnage used and trajectory at battle lines that more ammunition was shot above targets than pointed at individual soldiers in WWI.

The Russian Czar and his cousin the German Kaiser both spoke English, and sent regular correspondence to each other (all preserved). Neither wanted war, but militarists took over to assure one.

Confiding in a Buddy: 1916 Australia

It's the talkin' over things, as friend to friend
And through it all the blessed certainty
This war's workin' out for you an' me
As we would 'ave it work.

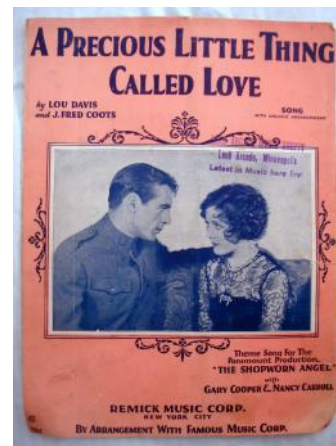
Fritz maybe, and the Turk
Feel that way, too,
The same as me an' you,
And dream o' victory at last, although
The silly cows don't know yet 'ow freedom truly feels.

But this is Christmas, and I'm feeling blue,
An' lonely, too.
I want to get out from this smash and wreck
Just for today,

And feel a pair of arms slip round me neck
In that one girl's special way.
I want to 'ear the splendid roar and shout
O' breakers comin' in on Bondi Beach

While she walks by me side,
And looks into my face.
I'll do me bit, an' make no fuss of it;
But for today I somehow want to be
At home, just 'er an' me.

—Unknown author, from the Sydney, Australia,
“Sunday Times”, circa 1916. From family archives.



Piano sheet music from a popular movie starring Gary Cooper and Nancy Carroll.

"He kept us out of war" was Woodrow Wilson's slogan for the 1916 election.
The "Peace Candidate" promised:

"You are working; not fighting!
Alive and happy; not cannon fodder!
Wilson and peace with honor?
Or Hughes with Roosevelt and war?"

—Paid advertisement, World War I Minnesota by Iric Nathanson, Chapter 1.

After Wilson's re-election the official position of the White House reversed. About a month after he took office, the U.S. declared war on Germany.

WWI conscription had a national target of 1 million enrollees in the first six weeks of our overt involvement with the war, thus the need to use media to heighten patriotism.



DaMaris family
Infantry Soldier.



Wool spats.

Like Father, Like Son: Homefront to War Front

I was full of vinegar
And signed up.¹
My old man was so proud of me
He signed up, too.
We served in the same outfit.
Saw him killed right before my eyes.
I got off without a scratch
Except for this ulcer.

—Mr. Danell, of WWI in “Meet John Doe”, starring Gary Cooper.

¹“30,000 men enlisted in WWI per day.” —The Great War: notes by Adam Hochschild.

General Delivery: 1917 Europe

One Doughboy’s assignment: keep the flivvers in good repair
Play with the sparkbox, flip the magneto
Lean into the crank;
Dispatch generals
To summits and war rooms
Hold secrets close to the vest
Keep whispers under the hat.
A mechanical man of few words,
He was type-cast.

—In memory of Earl DeMaris, U.S. Staff car driver, WWI, WWII.



Great Uncle Earl drives a General through a European checkpoint.



Great
Uncle
Earl:
husband
and
soldier
at
age 16.



Great Uncle Lloyd's Mountaineering Training.

Psalm 91 is called the "Soldier's Psalm". In World War I, the soldiers of the 91st Brigade recited it daily. They engaged in three of the war's bloodiest battles. Other units suffered up to 90% casualties, but the 91st Brigade did not suffer a single combat-related death.

Psalm 91

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.
I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge
and fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

Surely He will save you from the fowler's snare
and from the deadly pestilence.
He will cover you with His feathers,
and under His wings you will find refuge;
You will not fear the terror of night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,
Nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness,
nor the destruction that destroys at midday.
A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand
at your right hand, but it will not come near you.

If you make the Most High your dwelling—
even the Lord, who is your refuge—
Then no harm will befall you,
no disaster will come near your tent.
For He will command His angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways;
They will lift you up in their hands, so that
you will not strike your foot against a stone.

You will tread upon the lion and the cobra;
you will trample the young lion and the serpent.

“Because he loves Me,” says the Lord,
“I will rescue him; I will protect him,
for he acknowledges My Name.
He will call upon Me, and I will answer him;
I will be with him in trouble,
I will deliver him and honor him.
With long life I will satisfy him
and show him My salvation.”

—From “Prayer is the War. God’s Word is the Weapon.” To request a laminated copy of this Psalm: The Father’s Business, P.O. Box 380333, Birmingham, AL 35238.

At Capacity: Homefront

“He was delayed on a stateside street by a procession of 5 men each carrying 6 army overcoats which they placed in a truck drawn up to the curb. By the time the 5th man had packed his load neatly in, the 1st man was back with another armful and so the endless chain kept on until the Minnesota visitor wondered if it ever would cease.

He was informed that the firm in question was shipping its daily quota of 5,100 Army uniform overcoats. If a single firm manufactures 5,100 coats every day, how many garments would all the firms employed in such work turn out in a week?”

—“Hogan’s Mirror,” Kerrick, MN, Vol. 2, No. 8, 11/20/1917, family archives.

Fort Robinson, Nebraska: July 12, 1918

“I got my hat cord and gun Monday the 9th.
The hat cord is blue and I like it fine but darn that old gun.
When we got them they were packed in grease
And we had to get every bit of it off and it sure was some job.
I got the stuff off all right but don’t like it at all.
Guess that machine gun spoiled me;

We didn't have to carry those, we had a mule to pull them—
But now we got to carry these and Gee, I hate that.
I tried to tell the Supply Sergeant that revolvers would be better
For guard duty, but he wouldn't listen to me, quite naturally,
So s'pose I will have to like that ol' rifle
And keep it shining like glass all the time.

If the papers has got anything to do with it,
I don't think it will last much longer, but darn,
A fellow can't hardly believe them, neither. I hope
It don't last many more years. Did you write Pine City
About that furlow yet so's I can help with haying and
Potato-digging? I am getting anxious to get home."

Oh, yes, they got a slacker in Crawford the other day.
He did not fill out his questionnaire so they bro't him
Out here and put him in jail and I don't think he has had
A shave or hair cut for a month. S'pose I will get a chance
To make him work some day next week
On my turn at guard."

—Letter from Lloyd Bates, Infantry.

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## Weather or Not

We pilots were always watching the sky:  
To imagine our moves,  
To determine the weather.  
There were no fancy instruments,  
Simply a wind sock, a barometer—  
And our bones.

—Pilot Jack Albinson

## The 103rd Aero Squadron:<sup>1</sup> 1918 Europe

"We have one chance at this,"  
He said, "One chance alone,"



Great Uncle Lloyd.



As he sized up the propeller  
Pulled on his leather hat  
Zipped his sheepskin, climbed the rungs

Situated the chute behind him  
Gave himself some mental calculations  
And a good pep talk.

Impossible,  
So impossible were the odds  
It just had to work.  
He revved the engine  
We looked each other in the eye  
And I climbed in my own cockpit.

On a wing  
And someone else's prayer,  
I swallowed my breath  
Jumped on the throttle  
Pulled back on the stick  
And she lurched forward.  
"Aim high,"  
Is all I heard  
From the heart in my throat,  
"Aim high. Aim high."  
So I did.

And I'm here today to tell you  
It didn't hurt none  
To pray myself, neither.

—Selected from poem "Aim High"  
in Way Out on a Limb by the author.



<sup>1</sup>The 1917 biplane shown is a French SPAD XIII C.1, flown by the 103rd Aero Squadron of the U.S. Air Service which served in combat in France during WWI. U.S. pilots volunteered for the British or French air forces before America joined the war in 1917. The U.S. Army Air Service 103rd Aero Squadron was formed from the disbanded Lafayette Escadrille and Lafayette Flying Corps. At the start of U.S. involvement, the inexperienced American pilots flew mostly obsolete British and French aircraft. But they came into their own in the air as improved equipment, such as the SPAD XIII C.1, was introduced near the end of the war. Pilot casualties were heavy. Of the 2000+ American flight personnel to see combat, 681 died—75% of those were from accidents. The Squadron continues as part of the 94<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron of the U.S. Air Force. —[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/103d\\_Aero\\_Squadron](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/103d_Aero_Squadron); <http://histclo.com/essay/war/ww1/air/cou/wlac-us.html>

"Pilots on both sides showed that fledgling airplanes could be used in reconnaissance missions with good success at the beginning of WWI. The skies quickly became too small; soon opposing pilots started interfering with each other's missions by throwing bricks, grenades, and rope to tangle into the opposition's propeller. Dogfights began with handguns and soon moved to machine guns. Anthony Fokker, Dutch plane designer for the Germans, solved the problem of shooting forward through the propeller by synchronizing the gun to the engine timing. Eventually dogfights meant a close-range fight to the death in the air, someone said, "like knife fighting in a phone booth." —Fly Papers by A.E. Illingworth, 1919.

## Home Fires: Homefront

“I think the past year will be long remembered  
As one that brought sorrow to many homes:  
The fires,<sup>1</sup> the War, and the Flu,  
All have taken their toll.  
The Salem<sup>2</sup> neighborhood had a hard siege of flu,<sup>3</sup>  
Hardly a family escaped.  
Harry lost one big hog to the flu, but had the rest vaccinated  
And they did not like it one bit!  
Johnnie is still in France;  
We are getting very anxious to have him home.”

—Personal letter from Belle M. Rose, family archives.

<sup>1</sup>Among tragedies Minnesotans endured: Fires including the Moose Lake Fire in 1918 that razed thousands of acres in northeast Minnesota and prairie fires in southern MN; the worldwide Influenza Epidemic of 1918-1919; and the steady march of young men to World War I.

<sup>2</sup>Salem Township, Olmsted County, MN.

<sup>3</sup>“The draft can be credited with the spread of the influenza epidemic: conscription caused troop movement across the country, close quarters in barracks, and a short return home on leave before being shipped across Europe. Patients turned a strange color, and people died from apparent internal tissue breakdown which caused drowning in one's own body fluids. At one Army camp incubation site, 20,000 new cases were reported during 48 hours.” —WWI MN by Iric Nathanson, Chapter 6.

## Man to Man: Homefront

“My uncle was a war hero in WWI. Kind of famous in our town.  
He never liked to talk about what he did in the war though.  
After I got my orders to go overseas he pulls me aside and says,  
'Don't be ashamed if you're scared to death in combat.  
*I was terrified most of the time.*' Hearing that  
Coming from him, I was really shocked...  
But once I saw action I understood.”

—Cpl. 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Virgil Rhodes, Amvets National Service Foundation.

## Marching Home: 1918



The march from the pier  
To the front doors of their homes  
(The ultimate Annie Laurie<sup>1</sup>),  
Displayed the vanquishing heroes  
To the open windows and waiting hearts above.

He neared this shore, hoping to leave the other behind forever  
Then made it to the corner of Motherhood and Apple Pie  
Gritting against bone-exhaustion,  
Pivoting left, breaking rank and crossing the finish line  
Miles past the threshold of Enough, a collapse of all his constitution for war.

He and his fellows, doors down<sup>2</sup>,  
Slept the sleep of the feverish for days,  
Then dozed the nap of the languishing<sup>3</sup> for weeks,  
Sick to death of death.  
So, why didn't that international inoculation *take*?<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Annie Laurie: to transport away from the front.

<sup>2</sup> "Doors down": neighbors; also a phrase indicating a shelter is secure.

<sup>3</sup> Languish: to become weak; to live in a state of depression or decreasing vitality; to become dispirited; to assume an expression of grief, to require empathy. Webster's Dictionary.

<sup>4</sup> Inoculation: vaccine against war; also a comparison to the 1918 flu epidemic, it was regarded worldwide that humankind needed an inoculation against the desire for war and many thought WWI was such a preventative from future wars. Unfortunately the principle of revolving war, or the sociological tendency to reduce the population and restructure boundaries still works like clockwork, and not just in Western culture: "*alsimrichio mahakari*" is Japanese for "tearing down/destroying and recreating in our own image."

**Q:** Why does humanity seem to need war?

Parlez-Vous?: 1918

Screaming artillery shells.  
Screaming people.  
Screaming sirens.

When the war finally fell silent  
A fully-functioning auditory system  
Suddenly ceased sending signals:  
A mercy-delayed kill-switch.

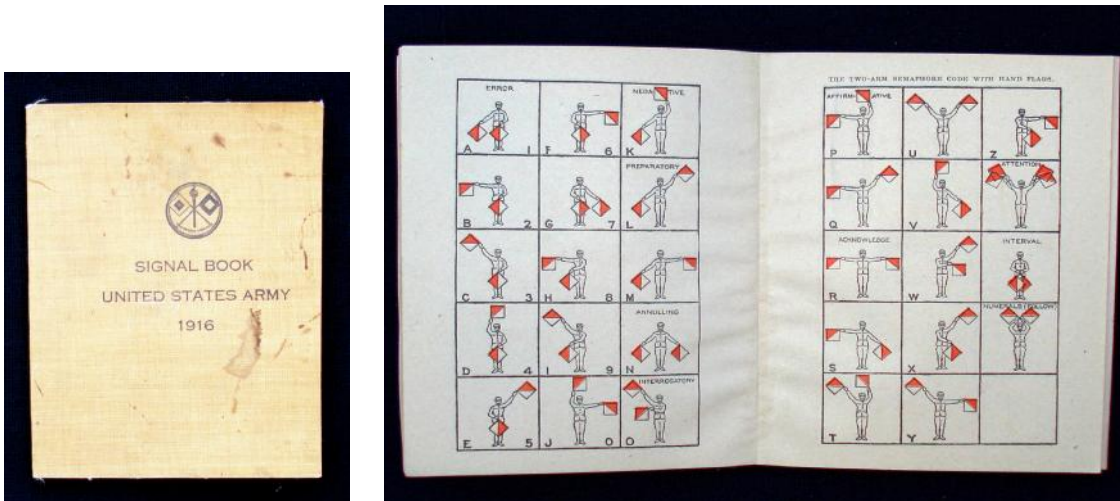


—In memory of Denys A.’s great-great-medic-uncle stationed in France, who’d driven ambulance but could no longer hear after his discharge, despite a minimally-damaged auditory system.

The poem title above is French for “Do you understand?” Psychosomatic conditions can manifest in blocked sensory reception due to hyper-sensory stimulation like war. When the reason for the shut-down (not *wanting* to hear the screams) becomes apparent to the owner of the condition, it has occurred that the subconsciously blocked hearing, speech, or even vision has begun working again.

People who had seen too much war were described as “minds the Dead have ravished” by poet and WWI soldier Wilfred Owen. From article “Military Brain Shell Shock Solved: Scientists Pinpoint Brain Injury That Causes Pain, Anxiety and Breakdowns in Soldiers.” By Sarah Griffiths for MailOnline, posted 1/16/2015.

The term “shell shock” was first used to explain combat maladies ranging from sleeplessness, reduced visual field, loss of taste, hearing and memory in “The Lancet”, Feb. 1915.



1916 Army Corps of Engineers Signal Book.

## The Road to Progress: 1919

Earl  
Set down his Field Manual and Signal Book,  
Came home from the Great War  
Saw the future  
And with his mustering out, bought himself  
A team of horses and a road grader;  
Hired hands,  
Then started building roads  
For townships, counties, cities  
In the state of Minnesota.

Pretty soon he had *more* teams, with more men  
Drawing \$1.50 for a good hard day.  
That's how most roads got built<sup>1</sup>  
By crews of WWI vets.

—In memory of Uncle Earl DeMaris, Army Corps of Engineers road builder who made a way to get equipment and supplies to the Front, and still came home a peaceful and resourceful man.

<sup>1</sup> Earl built roads in Pine, Carlton and St. Louis Counties on the east side of Minnesota and in Bock, MN, in the center of the state. He used small diameter logs as a road base, creating the characteristic “washboard road” which prevented automobiles from sinking to the axles in the spring mud, assisted commerce and made truck transportation possible in rural areas after the war.

## “We Have an Anchor”

Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,  
When the clouds unfold their wings of strife?  
When the strong tides lift, and the cables strain,  
Will your anchor drift, or firm remain?

—From WWI-era hymn by  
William J. Kirkpatrick (1838-1921).

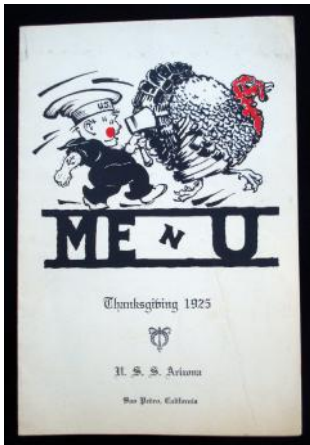
Hebrews 6:19: “We have this hope as an anchor for the soul,  
firm and secure.”



Great Uncle Earl (age 19)  
returned home to his wife  
after 3 years in the Army.



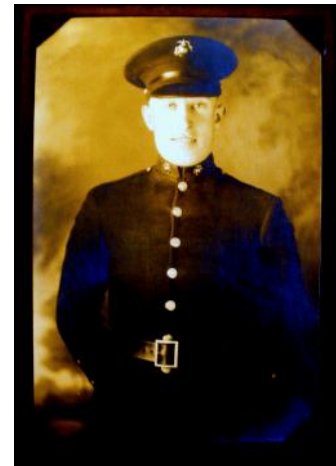
Gene D., age 7.



Thanksgiving menu, USS Arizona, 1925.



The USS Arizona was built at the New York Navy Yard, Brooklyn, NY, and was commissioned in October 1916. Lyle Bates served 4 years on that ship and developed the forklift to transport supplies in warehouse or on deck. The USS Arizona went down in Pearl Harbor on 12/7/1941.



Great Uncle Lyle.

## Canvassing

WWI American veterans were to get combat pensions<sup>1</sup> after a certain time, But wanted—needed—them early due to the Great Depression. Letters, discussions, editorials, talks, created Hope that gnawing on the same bone would Create a workable meal ticket. But as the stew thinned to soup, An undeniable tent city rose in Washington, D.C.: Speeches, protests, signatures, marches. Troops were sent in<sup>2</sup> to chop up the shanty town.



Personal I.D. tag.

Vets didn't get sympathy because *everyone* was on their last nerve. Rather than honor extended, Viciousness lashed out. Other common men reasoned the "handout" was undeserved dole: WWI had gained nothing for America, They dared say, except for 50,000 fewer in the workforce. Jealousy, disenchantment, anger, entitlement, All distortions in a reflecting pool.

—With thanks to Gary

<sup>1</sup>An enlistment incentive because the U.S. was having trouble producing enough stateside sympathy and warm bodies for the war effort. Eventually America adopted the draft, or conscription, so not even all vets of the same war were eligible for the pensions, which further created envy toward those who were.

<sup>2</sup>There is always difficulty determining the right amount of authority to exert concerning protests. Too little can allow looting, too much is seen as repression, and protests mushroom.

—Inspired by NPR 9/19/2014, 10:33 am, comparing Iraqi protests against ISIS/ISIL in Sept., 2014, to Kent State in America.

## To End All: 1919

“A war dubbed ‘The War to End All Wars’  
Must have thrown up such horrors  
The survivors believed  
It was the last word on the matter period.

Showing only what happened  
Between the General and the Grave  
Gives us hope that even after 100 years  
The bad taste has not been washed from our mouths.”

—Joe Sacco, Researcher and illustrator of The Great War: 7/1/1916: The First Day of the Battle of The Somme: an Illustrated Panorama on the Great War, 2013.



The long and short of it: Great Uncle Dave is on the right.

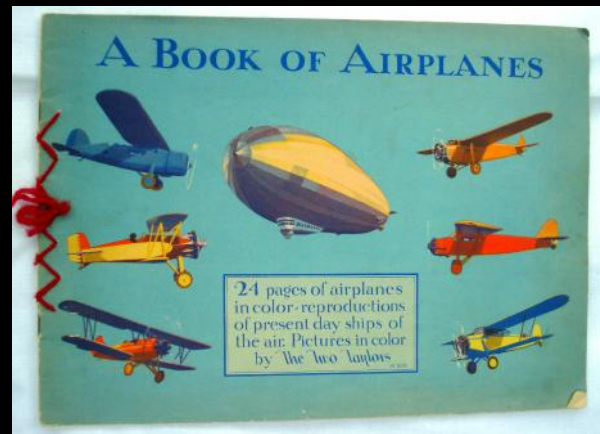


Great Uncle David Fortier in his barracks electrician's shop.

David Fortier learned skills as an Army electrician. He returned home to Minnesota then worked to electrify small Pine County towns through the Rural Electrification Act until his death in 1949.

## World War I Aeronautic Technology

These color reproductions are from *A Book of Airplanes* by The Two Taylors, circa 1923, showing World I aircraft. Family archives.



The Ryan Brougham  
The Sikorsky Amphibian

Fokker  
Boeing Model 100



# WORLD WAR II ON TWO FRONTS

|      |          |                                                         |
|------|----------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 1941 | Dec. 7:  | Japanese attack U.S. Naval Base in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii |
|      | Dec. 8:  | U.S. declares war against Japan                         |
|      | Dec. 11: | Hitler declares war against U.S.                        |
| 1942 | Jan. 13: | The Japanese in America moved to relocation centers     |
|      | June:    | Mass incineration of Jews begins in Germany             |
|      | Aug. 17: | First All-American air attack in Europe                 |
| 1943 | Jan. 7:  | First bomb raid by America on Germany                   |
| 1945 | May 8:   | Victory in Europe Day                                   |
|      | Aug. 6:  | Atom bombs dropped on Japan by the United States        |
|      | Aug. 14: | Japan's unconditional surrender                         |

1941-1945 Soldiers were called Dog Faces (as in having taken a lot of abuse), Leathernecks, or Jerines. The average man who fought in WWII was 26 years of age.

—Capt. Marshall Anson, USNR (Ret) & Capt. Scott Beaton, Statistical Source.

“Surely a live dog  
Is better than a dead lion.”

—King Solomon, Ecclesiastes 9:4b KJV.

“WWII: 16 million Americans served. 400,000 died. Our memory is a holy ground.”

—Charlie Derney, Jr., Actor; Omaha Beach First Wave, 3 Purple Hearts, Bronze Star, Silver Star. Speech recorded for National Memorial Day Concert, 5/27/2013.  
[http://www.pbs.org/memorial\\_concert](http://www.pbs.org/memorial_concert)



Basic Training:

“I’ve got a 3-hour date with a Big Green Tick”, eventually shortened to ‘BGT’”. (Translation: “I have a 12-mile road march with a fully-loaded army-issue Alice pack.”)



## 2.2 WORLD WAR II 1941-1945

### PART A: PACIFIC THEATER

**Sunday, December 7, 1941 –Washington D.C.–** The last part of a 14-part coded Japanese message stating that diplomatic relations with the U.S. are to be broken off reaches Washington in the morning and is decoded at approximately 9 am. About an hour later, another Japanese message is intercepted. It instructs the Japanese embassy to deliver the main message to the Americans at 1 pm. The Americans realize this time corresponds with early morning in Pearl Harbor. The U.S. War Department then sends out an alert but uses a commercial telegraph because radio contact with Hawaii is temporarily broken. Delays prevent the alert from arriving in Oahu until Pacific noontime, four hours after the attack has already begun. — <http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/timeline/pearl.html>

#### Sunday Morning Comin' Down

Blazed into collective memory,  
Where you were, who you were  
When you heard the news,

Sticks still. I was a young boy in Pico, CA  
Celebrating my golden birthday, December 7.  
Everyone left my cake and turned up the radio.

Being on the coast, we watched the sky for years.  
I felt very vulnerable, afraid to go outside  
Until Dad said armistice papers were signed.

—Pastor Harold Biederman

#### Sunday Morning, December 7

There was terrible loss of life that fateful day,  
But it could have been much, much worse.  
The majority of island service personnel  
Were in church that morning,  
As was their habit, and the national pastime.

No churches were bombed in the raid,  
The only targets were threatening military accoutrements.

Those stationed at the repair shipyard didn't suffer a scratch.  
There was even a specialty ship almost too conveniently docked  
Right there to re-right harbor tangle and  
Clear the channel's throat. The Japanese  
Percussed enough to make history  
But not enough to change it.

—Connie S.

### Innocence Abroad

We rather reluctantly  
Fought in uniform on not 1, but 2 fronts,  
Yet most of America  
Had no electricity until 1947<sup>1</sup>  
Still used outhouses and hand pumps.  
We had no computers  
Yet through reliance on God  
Organized intricate battle plans  
And kept them completely secret.



Flashlight with several inter-changeable colored disks to reveal hidden features on battle plan maps.

—Jack Albinson, former Staff Sergeant, national speaker on WWII history, and writer of Bonhoeffer and the German Resistance.

<sup>1</sup>The Rural Electrification Act and the Rural Electrical Cooperative Movement of the 1940s were chronicled by Stephen Keillor in Cooperative Commonwealth: Co-ops in Rural Minnesota, 1859-1939, Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2000.

### Comin' In On a Wing and a Prayer

Comin' in on a wing and a prayer  
Comin' in on a wing and a prayer  
With our full crew on board  
And our *thrust* from the Lord<sup>1</sup>  
We're comin' in on a wing and a prayer.



—Chorus to song of the same title by Harold Adamson and Jimmy McHugh.  
[http://www.lyricsfreak.com/r/ry+cooder/comin'+in+on+a+wing+and+a+prayer\\_20171102](http://www.lyricsfreak.com/r/ry+cooder/comin'+in+on+a+wing+and+a+prayer_20171102)

<sup>1</sup>Poetic license by author; original words are “trust in the Lord”.

## Three Pilots from Minnesota

Betty Wahl flew in WWII as a winged WASP.<sup>1</sup>  
She wasn't allowed in combat, so was assigned  
An even more dangerous mission:  
Pulling targets, so males could practice turret use,  
Giving Betty's bi-plane many boo-Boops,  
“Friendly” freckles.

In military-speak, she could *privately* “number oversights lodged in her fuselage”,  
But couldn't take bragging rights (protocol lodging in her throat), or get hazard pay  
(Icicles hanging from her words), because they were pocks from *practice* drills,  
And the CO didn't want it getting out that  
Turret gunners weren't born perfect shots.

Pilot Tom Dougherty of Hibbing  
Was the first American fired upon in the European Theatre,  
Then flew ahead of battleships in the Pacific  
To help aim the 16” guns, test their 16-mile range—  
If not over the rainbow, certainly past the horizon.  
A pilot had to have 6, 10, 20, finally, by the end of the war,  
65 missions to be rotated home. Even at that, some re-upped.

Norm Steerie got 3 Navy Crosses  
Flying the last torpedo bomber in WWII.  
It was a 100-mph airplane in a 300-mph war.  
It didn't last much longer. *He did.*

“I started writing war stories  
To make people read the newspaper,  
And got caught  
In the overwhelming humanity of it.”

—Al Zdon, 10/15/2011, author of War Stories I, War Stories II, One Step Forward: The Life of Ken Dahlberg. All proceeds from his books go to the



Case for a 105mm Howitzer  
artillery round.



Aviation engine cover used  
during repairs.

American Legion and the Minnesota War Memorial at the Capitol.

<sup>1</sup>WASP: Women's Air Service Personnel

## Braid and Clusters

A Captain of an LST<sup>1</sup> and  
Temporary Commander of a flotilla of five  
Comes upon a kitchen scullery scene:  
KPs throwing raw meat at a bull's-eye,  
Chuckling,

"This one's for the Commander, that Anchor Clanker!"  
I've a choice: to grille them good  
Or realize they're letting off steam,  
Tenderizing between battles.  
I decide to let it slide:

With all at sudden attention  
(Sweat galore! Knowing I heard that succulent tidbit!)  
I bend my brass, pick my next meal off the floor,  
Sawdust clinging to the steak;  
With just a sprinkle of a twinkle  
Say, "Is *that* how you boys get them so tender here?!"

3 years ago,  
I was young myself.  
It seems a lifetime since.  
Though guns rage and radar ranges,  
Nary a man has been lost  
While on my watch,

The men  
So smooth a team  
Perhaps because we've set  
So many childhoods adrift.

The sadness is,  
As a farm boy by birth  
(And humble handyman at aged death,)



Uncle Ken skippered his LST  
in the Pacific during WWII.

Never will anyone respect me again  
As much as they do this instant.

—In memory of Skipper C. Kenneth Carroll (1908-2001).

<sup>1</sup>LST: Landing Ship, Tank is the military designation for naval vessels created during WWII to support amphibious operations by carrying vehicles, cargo, and troops directly onto a beach.

## Fruits of Labor

Stationed as a medic in Saipan  
At an evac hospital  
He went about his duties  
Then stepped into the mess hall,  
Picked up his armored cow<sup>1</sup>  
And asked the organ grinder<sup>2</sup>  
For his ration of liver and onions.

Fortunately he liked liver, and that was a good thing;  
They served it up for the patients 4x per week  
Hoping to give them a better chance at recovery,  
And thought the medics should have the same fare.  
Since all the staff gave blood four times a fortnight  
To keep up with the staggering demand,  
It wasn't a bad idea.

Still, tired of all that *and* Army strawberries,<sup>3</sup> staff  
Eyed the unusual fruit manifesting itself in the surrounding trees,  
Counted the days, and just when it could be ripe by morning—  
Imagining<sup>4</sup> the sticky sweet juice, salivating for the treat—  
Instead of humans, a tree snail the size of your forearm  
Had stealthed in the middle of the night  
And bled it dry.

—In memory of Medic John D. Hunt's service at a Saipan field hospital.

<sup>1</sup>Armored cow: canned milk

<sup>2</sup>Organ grinder: cook

<sup>3</sup>Army strawberries: prunes



Radio bag.

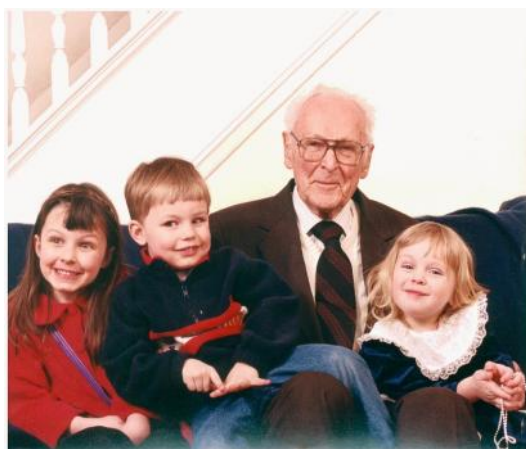


Mosquito hat.

<sup>4</sup>In the 2 years he was stationed on Saipan, (between Iwo Jima and Guam) there was curiosity and much speculation about what possible delights—or poisonous imposters—were developing in the tropical vegetation, but *not once* did any of them actually beat a snail to the finish line for wild local produce.

## Bed-Check, Mate. Bed Checkmate

360 Tents, government issue  
1 Typhoon, relentless  
8 Bunkmates, assorted  
1 Idea: collapse the cots,  
implode the tent, lie low.  
5 Days, excruciating  
1 Sun, drying out camp  
359 Canvasses, destroyed  
2872 Beds, wrecked  
1 Tent, re-pitched  
8 bunkmates, triumphant!



Grandfather John with 2 of his grandchildren and his great-grandchild.

—In memory of John D. Hunt and his British-American ingenuity.

**MN Service in Pacific Patch: Arrow:** The MN Battalion went toward the north in the Saipan campaign. The island chain is depicted on the patch as the stars of the large and small dippers, which can be combined to show the date: 12/7/41, a reminder of “The Day of Infamy” (the day Japan bombed Pearl Harbor). —John Hunt, St. Paul, MN



## Unarmed, Unharmed

The order was to clear an occupied Japanese island.  
On one lonely beach was a sole native fisherman.  
He saw me coming to strafe the shore,  
Realized he could not run for the forest fast enough  
And decided to stand facing me  
His arms stretched wide, void of strife,  
Fully accepting his imminent death.

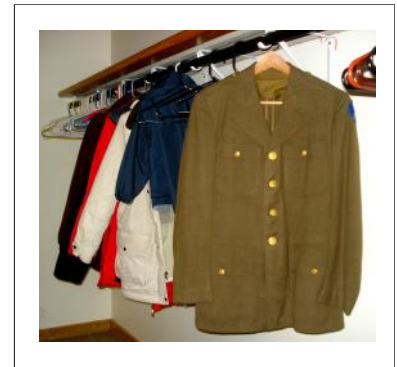


He was so completely disarming  
I could not bear to shoot.  
That's once I did something right, alright.

—Of a mission recorded in *The Wartime Journals of Charles Lindbergh*, 1970. Charles was against the war his Senator father reluctantly voted to declare, but volunteered anyway and flew some 50 missions. *The author with her parents, siblings and grandparents made the trip to his Little Falls, MN, home in 1962.*

## Furlough

It was unbelievably great to be quiet.  
No mud, dust, shell holes, noise, smells, confusion.  
It was good merely to know you were alive;  
Good to shower, eat, sleep. Especially sleep.



—Sgt. Max Reiger, of furlough, AMVETS National Service Foundation World War II 50th Year of Victory Calendar, Feb. 1995.

## Home on Leave

They never seemed addlebrained or moonstruck:  
Don and Dottie Lou were best friends.  
When Don came home on leave,  
They met as before in a coffee shop in facing booth seats.  
In the middle of the jocularity he said, "Marry me." She said, "Great!"  
Then they moved on to another engaging subject.

—In memory of Don and Dottie Lou, who shared 42 laughter-filled years together. Aitkin, MN.

## Cut From Whole Cloth at the Rumor Mill

There was a rumor the Japanese coated their bullets with poison.  
I don't know, maybe it was started by Tokyo Rose.<sup>1</sup>  
It turned out to be purely manufactured buzz.  
Still, it put a knot in us.

—Based on Harold’s recollections, Love Stories of World War II, compiled by Larry King, Crown Publishers. “Harold & Adelle”, p. 180.

<sup>1</sup>“Tokyo Rose” was a propaganda tactic by the Japanese involving a sultry American-accented radio personality announcing fake news stories and insider facts meant to demoralize U.S. troops.

## No More Innings

Top of the ninth,  
Best glove in town  
Three balls, one strike,  
Just two to count down.



1940s Kid's baseball glove.

Staff Car at the diamond.  
Little Glove off the mound.  
“Your dad is gone, son,  
Won't be back around.”

—With Staff Sergeant Jack Albinson

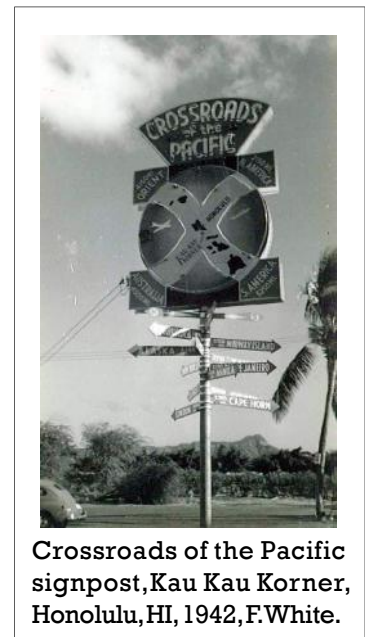
## Fright on the Half-Shell

Shells that had not been loaded with enough powder  
Fell short of the intended inland Philippine target,  
Skipped playfully on the water  
Toward our beachhead and tents  
As foreboding friendly fire.

—Felix W.

## Paid It Forward

“We were the first ship in Subic Bay.<sup>1</sup>  
We saw heavy action right away...  
All we ever talked about was the war, and  
“What’s it gonna be like when it’s over?”  
I felt that if some guy ten years from now



Crossroads of the Pacific signpost, Kau Kau Korner, Honolulu, HI, 1942, F.White.



Honolulu's Kau Kau Korner Restaurant (as it looked in 1935-1960) where generations of U.S. servicemen have stopped on the way to their bases in the Pacific. [http://www.downwindproductions.com/kau\\_kau\\_corner1.html](http://www.downwindproductions.com/kau_kau_corner1.html) Photo by Felix White, 1942.

Is livin' pretty good,  
Well,  
I had somethin' to do with it."

—Seaman Fred Sevigny, AMVETS National Service Foundation World War II 50th Year of Victory Calendar, November 1995.

<sup>1</sup>Subic Bay is on the west coast of the island of Luzon in Zambales, Philippines, about 62 miles northwest of Manila Bay.

## Metallic Taste in the Mouth

I was a Master Supply Sergeant in Honolulu.  
After the war was settled—  
In order to avoid another Depression—  
They took out and scuttled shiploads of copper  
I had painstakingly counted, organized  
And guarded with my life.

—In memory of Master Sergeant  
Felix W. (1918-2002)



Felix W. (on left) and friends outside their barracks in Honolulu. 1942 photo from Felix W.'s family archives.

## Trickling Home

My dad got R&R inadvertently.  
His mine sweeper<sup>1</sup> hit a booby-trapped buoy  
Just under the surface of the water.  
He was knocked rotten,<sup>2</sup>  
Torched over 30% of his body  
And narrowly overlooked in the burning water  
By the Japanese. 'Twas a nice day for it.<sup>3</sup>

An Australian fishing trawler spotted 'im.  
Those six-bob-a-day tourists<sup>4</sup> took the bait, scooped 'im out.  
The excruciating saltwater rinsed off 'im,  
En-zedda<sup>5</sup> cooled down with cold fish,  
He was chugged to Australia's north coast  
Given hospital care with 'opes  
He could be transported to a stateside burn unit.

—With Anon.

Soldier slang from The Digger's Dictionary by Walter Hubert Downing, Victoria, Australia, 1919.

<sup>1</sup>Mine sweepers were made of wood with stainless steel engines so they wouldn't be attracted by magnetic mines.

<sup>2</sup>Struck unconscious.

<sup>3</sup>Sardonic phrase applied to the overly unpleasant.

<sup>4</sup>Modestly paid soldiers/sailors from Australia.

<sup>5</sup>A wound that would take him home.

## Bataan Death March

So you are dead.  
Those lifeless eyes see only loss.  
This hunger, thirst, fatigue,  
Combine to drain  
All feeling from a man.  
The endless glare of ocean, brutal heat,  
Have fried the mind.

There is no mourning pall.  
I helped you; now my load is gone.  
A suffering column urged along,  
Tallied by bayonet;  
Its ciphers fewer now.  
So you are dead.  
One more corpse beside the road.

—Abbreviated from “Death March” by Lt. Henry G. Lee from Forged by War: A Daughter Shaped by a WWII POW Story by Candie Blankman., 2011. p 77.

## On a Wing and a Prayer II

After the Bataan Death March and hard labor  
In Japanese coal mines, POWs would eat anything.  
My father told of a locust swarm overtaking one of the camps.  
It shut down all the work details. Guards disappeared  
For shelter from insect-pelting.  
For the workers, it was manna from heaven.  
Besides respite from backbreaking labor,  
They ate all the locusts they could capture.

My father understood what it meant to be starving.  
He enlisted at 165 pounds and was rescued at 90 pounds.<sup>1</sup>  
His faith that God would see him through kept him alive.

—Based on Forged by War: A Daughter Shaped by a WWII POW Story by Candie Blankman, p. 22. Ms Blankman grew up in northern MN, taught history in Richfield, MN, and is now a Presbyterian Pastor in California. <http://www.ocregister.com/2015/11/09/pows-daughter-salutes-veterans-by-telling-her-dads-story/>

<sup>1</sup>This soldier was diverted to and kept in a prison camp at a coal field not on American Intelligence radar (mined also by Japan's own political prisoners), so it was miraculous this man was discovered and rescued after the armistice was signed.

## Prisoner of War, Individual of Peace

Folded hands. Age 83.

"I long ago forgave the Japanese for what they did to me on Kwajalein,  
The beatings, the hate-black hot box. Torture in the night.  
It's just that I never wanted EVER to come back, and now I'm here.<sup>1</sup>  
Can I *really* shake off the past to see Kwajalein and my captors in a different light?"

—Louis Zamperini, author of Devil at My Heels: A World War II Hero's Epic Saga of Torment, Survival, and Forgiveness, with David Rensin, 2003, p. 285.

<sup>1</sup>Years after his capture, Louis had penned a letter to his most brutal torturer, a vicious Japanese war criminal nicknamed "The Bird": "The post-war nightmares had caused my life to crumble," Louis wrote, "but thanks to a confrontation with God...I committed my life to Christ. Love replaced the hate I had for you." Former POW Zamperini was invited and attended a prison camp memorial ceremony, greeted his captors who were serving time for war crimes, and spoke at a commemorative service hosted by by the Japanese government for healing from war memories. "The Bird", however, refused to meet with him.

Sources: the book Unbroken by Laura Hillenbrand; a movie by the same name; Flier #GTS-506, Gospel Tract Society, Inc, Box 1118, Independence, MO 64051.

Note: "Those who have been confined in concentration camps and then are unexpectedly released have profound alternations of shame for having been caught as POWs, self-loathing, and a sense of failure." Escape from Camp 14 by Shin, p.179.

“The kingdom of heaven is like a pearl of great price hidden in the field,  
which a man found and hid: and...he goes and sells all that he has,  
and buys that field.” —Matthew 13:45, 46.

## Pick Up the Pearl

Go to the field  
Back where it all happened.  
Gather your courage, resources.  
Buy that field back from the enemy.  
Even if your enemy is *you*.  
Now pick up that pearl.



Commodore Matthew Perry opened Japan in 1854. In 1860 the Treaty of Amity and Commerce was signed between the first Japan Embassy and U.S. President James Buchanan. On May 27, 1912, Japan sent a gift of cherry trees to

Washington, D.C. Fortunately, the long-standing friendship was healed and restored after WWII.

*“Many men have said, ‘Yeah, I was in Pearl...’ meaning they were stationed in Honolulu when the attack came. In Matthew 13:44-46 (discussing a hidden treasure/pearl, found...,) it seems the Lord counsels: ‘There is something of value hidden in those memories, do some digging, invest in your healing. Tuck it away to remind yourself you survived for a purpose. The lesson is a pearl to be passed on to the next generation.’”*

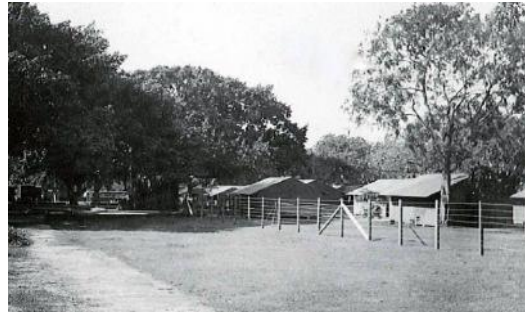
## Jump Ship if You Have To, but Jump Back on the Bandwagon ASAP

I prepped torpedo bombers on aircraft carriers.  
For every 4 sent out to fly, only one would make it back.  
4 carriers I served on were sunk by dive-bombers.

The thing that made a difference for me when I came back  
Was I could work anywhere, I just needed to stay busy  
And get the feeling “I’m still worth something.”

I gave programs at church, taught courses,  
Volunteered to speak in schools, worked in food service.  
Tried to keep a smile on my face so they’d want me around.  
Minimum wage saved my life.

—Supply Sergeant, First Class Donald Barkony, who is still volunteering at the Chaska Police Department at age 87.



Fenced-in barracks, 1942, Felix W.

## Japanese Internment Camp: Stateside: West Coast

“It was an extreme difficulty to see placards posted on our businesses so no one should patronize them. It was an insult that our hard work had to be disposed, liquidated; our family history stored with acquaintances, or left to looters.

In less than a week after the order came to go to the relocation camps, our lives were put on hold indefinitely, our honor suspect. Some of the young men were offered opportunity to fight in Europe to redeem family honor and display their loyalty to our new homeland. Many took that offer rather than to sit idly, but some had already become bitter and disillusioned. After our release, several returned home to Japan to rebuild that nation and never came back. What a loss for America and our relocated families!

It helped to get a formal apology from the American government,<sup>1</sup> but it came too late for our fathers—who eventually died recalling lost livelihoods, property, health and dignity. Still, the years become good teachers: had the soldiers not brought us to camps, human hysteria being what it is, we might have been murdered in our own beds, even though we loved the hope of this new land as much as did our would-be “murderers”.

Being taken away from our new lives forced us into a community of tight mutual support we could not have relied on otherwise—for fear of being suspected of holding clandestine meetings. The concern, of course, was that we would become spies for Japan, be coerced, or unwittingly provide information to infiltrators who wanted to know the details of American harbors and factories. Like it or not, the government needed to know which of us were citizens, and/or who was here on subversive assignment, up to no good.

As unlikely as it seemed, it was for *our* security, too, that we were locked behind fences; there we had no potential for (or interest in) committing crimes against the state; our records were—and remained—clean. We made the best of a rough situation; there our allegiance could remain without a mark: either retaliatory, or placed there by someone else wishing to implicate us. We had ‘airtight alibis’.

There was some bigotry after the war, of course—it was sad to see our decorated European war heroes come home to racial slurs—but no one could argue we had been disloyal during the war: our internment papers showed otherwise. And while we were there, our elders reinforced a desire for peace.

No one wants to live captive in a camp, but we were fed, got news, mail was delivered, there were simple opportunities for recreation, a garden to grow our own vegetables. Most importantly, families stayed together. Marriages were arranged and consummated. Daughters married Japanese-American husbands, which was a joy and relief to fathers. I grew from a boy to a man there. It turned out well for me, a groom, too!”

—Japanese-American elder, Chaska, MN, with additional information from Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet by Jamie Ford; The Journey: Japanese Americans, Racism, and Renewal by Sheila Hamanaka; and The Children of Topaz: The Story of a Japanese-American Internment Camp by Michael O. Tunnell.

<sup>1</sup>In 1988, President Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act which offered a formal apology and \$20,000 to each of the surviving 100,000+ Japanese-Americans held in internment camps during World War II. — <http://www.npr.org/selections/codeswitch/2013/08/09/210138278/japanese-internment-redress>

**“The Japanese didn’t hate individual Americans or America,  
but elders who have gone through WWII are against war.”**

—Dan O.

### ABS: Almost Blew Strategy

“My father was president of the American Bible Society during WWII. When the war ended, a diplomatic office was immediately re-established in Japan. Their emperor presented himself to our envoy, bowed and said he submitted himself to our President and also presented himself and his people to our God. Unfortunately ABS was unprepared for such a statement and did not have a scripture translation fully completed in Japanese. We missed an incredible opportunity to share our faith, answer questions about it. By the time the translation was ready and published, the Japanese government had basically assumed the free enterprise system was our god and set to emulating corporate wealth...”

—Bill



## 2.3 WORLD WAR II 1941-1945

### PART B: EUROPEAN THEATER

Adolph Hitler, half Jewish, won the hearts of the German people and convinced them of his right to rule. Allied troops opposed his plan to have all Europe under one roof. When reports of mass genocide of the disabled, frail, Christian believers, those who politically opposed him, and the Jews became known, the world was horrified.

#### Goodness

“We received a shipment of candy to give away to the locals (chocolate was a rationed commodity in the U.S. for this purpose), but there wasn’t enough for the whole battalion to take part.” Arne continued. “Instead, our CO presented a chocolate bar to each German POW in our care. Even though we felt they were sometimes treated better than our own soldiers, we didn’t wish POW status on anyone... Frankly, there *was* a little grouching about it. Why would he give away chocolate we deserved?”

Angela, age 4, was on Arne’s side. Her father patiently explained the difference. “Hitler was bent on giving certain of his own countrymen a bitter pill—and the rest of the world twisted ideology—to swallow, using up his people in grey-green wrappers to the last man or boy, while we were determined to offer chocolate and kindness to those in our care.”

—The author; her father, Robert C.; and Arne K., father’s good friend, recalling Arne’s WWII service at the dinner table, 1957.



It is said that Mr. Hershey had a benevolent heart and donated tremendous amounts of chocolate bars to the war effort, which may have even caused him to edge toward bankruptcy. Whether that is true or not, due to his Ration D Bars, GIs had a much easier time winning the trust of the nationals. 3 billion Bars went overseas and some of his government-contract profits were used to care for American orphans and build hospitals.



Early Nazi Germany Naval flag, 1939-41, made of experimental synthetic fabric.

## Flandrau State Park

The Civilian Conservation Corps built a MN camp in the 1930s  
In a style to reflect the strong ethnic German heritage of the area.  
In 1944 Camp New Ulm's repurposed barracks  
Suddenly housed 160 German prisoners of war.

"Prisoners of War" are defined to be  
"Combatants or noncombatants  
From a belligerent power  
During or after an armed conflict."

One New Ulm family was fined \$300<sup>1</sup>  
For removing a prisoner from the camp,  
Housing him  
And taking him to church.

—[www.http://en.wikipedia.com](http://en.wikipedia.com)

<sup>1</sup>\$4,067.97 in 2015 dollars.



## The American Way

The simple human decency  
Of our people  
Left behind an indelible impression  
Of the American democratic ideal.

—Cpl. George Anderson, AMVETS National  
Service Foundation World War II 50th Year of  
Victory Calendar, March, 1995.

## Band of Possible Brothers

We might have had a lot in common [with those we were fighting].  
We might've liked to fish, you know, he might've liked to hunt.  
Of course, they were doing what they were supposed to do,  
And I was doing what I was supposed to do.  
But under different circumstances, we might have been good friends.



—Darrell “Shifty” Powers, WWII Easy Company of the 506<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Infantry, immortalized in HBO mini-series from Band of Brothers by Stephen Ambrose, interview from DVD series.

## Licking Stamps

A girl from a town the size of a postage stamp  
Wanted to host a class reunion,  
But discovering all the classmates were flung  
To the four corners of the world,  
Wrote to each family asking for APO (Army Post Office) addresses.  
She compiled an open letter recounting hometown news  
So everyone could belong again  
For a moment to *their* little corner.



—Of Elaine F., one-room school teacher, Bruno, MN.

## Stamp of Approval

“One thing our small rural high school class was going to flip their wig over was no reunion. 6 years post-graduation, but still smack dab in the middle of the war, everyone’s parents sent me the dope:<sup>1</sup> their son or daughter was stationed here or there or had moved to take a job for the war effort.

I’m an eager beaver. Rather than snap my cap<sup>2</sup> or pass the buck, in cahoots with their folks I included typed carbon copies of the scoop inside handmade cards I hoped weren’t too cheesy, sent from home to everyone without much lettuce.<sup>3</sup> They got a hi-de-ho flung across the globe. We couldn’t be Dicky Shincrackers,<sup>4</sup> but it was a big relief we were all still alive, and could see how each of us was supporting the war. Many found the time to write “What’s buzzin’, cousin?” to the whole batch. Killer diller.<sup>5</sup> It was a real gas.”

—From Elaine’s diary.

<sup>1</sup>dope: information

<sup>2</sup>snap my cap: get angry or disappointed

<sup>3</sup>lettuce: money

<sup>4</sup>Dicky Shincrackers: accomplished dancers at a party

<sup>5</sup>killer diller: good stuff

## Letters At Home

Bud is in Germany, about 6 months now  
In the 102<sup>nd</sup> Division in the 7<sup>th</sup> Army  
Guarding a German hospital camp  
Near the Czech border.  
He thinks he'll be back in the States by Christmas.



My youngest sister, Ruth, and her baby girl,  
And I and little Buddy are apartment-living  
Until our brave G.I.s come back.  
I take care of the two babies  
And Ruth works as a bookkeeper in the bank.  
As ever, Nora



**Two local boys in uniform who  
received the class update letter.**

—Letter from family archives.

“I received a letter from Mrs. S. yesterday telling me you were trying to get the addresses of the Class of ‘38. John has been in the Army since Jan. 1941. He enlisted in the Army Air Force at that time and took his Mechanical training at the Boeing School for Aeronautics in California.

He is now stationed in Italy as a propeller specialist with a Bomber squadron. He works with the B-24s...Harold was a gunner (aerial) in the squadron to which Johnny was attached at that time and he was so glad to see him they had one grand reunion. If I can find the letter with the address Johnny had while in Utah, I will send it to you and you might be able to contact the air command there.

Sincerely, Mrs. John C.”, from family archives.

“...It's a pretty good idea of yours, Elaine, and I do hope it gets around to everyone in a short while. I noticed that you had Kay P.'s address down on the list. You perhaps don't know then that she joined the Air WACs. She left Fort Des Moines a short time ago. I can give you Harold's APO address to add to the list. He's in the Air Corps in Italy. He's seen quite a bit of action, too. Won't it be fun to have a class reunion: this!”

—Dorothy

## Strings Attached

Sweethearts

A war

Promises to write

Perfumed stationery

APO addresses

Red white and blue tissue paper responses

Love letters, read reread memorized

Wrapped with ribbons

Promises to marry

Promises to wait

The Battle of the Bulge;

He never returned

She never forgot

—With thanks to Patricia who found her mother's letters from a pre-war suitor tied with a ribbon after her 99 year-old mother died.



**SWOL: Surface War Officer: Loved**

**SWAK: Sealed/Sent With A Kiss**



**WW II sweethearts,  
Clayton and Elaine.**



**Clayton modeling a gas  
mask for his girlfriend.**

## Music to My Ears

“We occupied a frontage on the Rhine,  
South of Cologne,  
Staying in bombed-out buildings.

One of the things we found  
Was an old music box.  
It played the same song  
I used to sing as a kid in the choir.  
I broke down...and then  
I prayed for the first time in quite a while.”

—Lt. Thomas Estes, AMVETS National  
Service Foundation

## Dug In

My uncle lived through Normandy, then was killed  
When his shovel hit French dirt and grazed a mine.  
He was Grave Officer. His marker went in where he'd stood.

—Pastor Harold Biederman

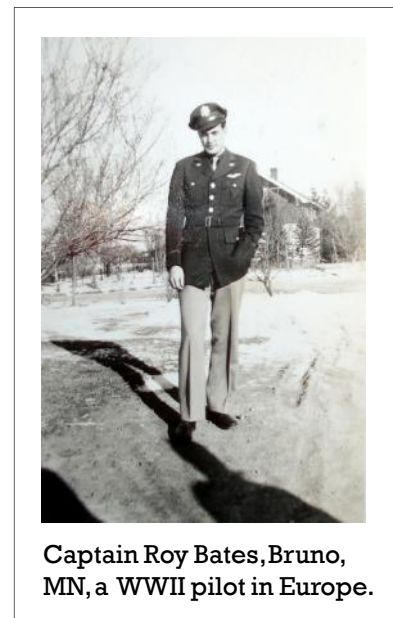
## Excerpts from the Prayer of St. Patrick

I arise today  
Through the strength of heaven...  
I arise today  
Through God's strength to pilot me,  
God's might to uphold me,  
God's wisdom to guide me,  
God's eye to look before me,  
God's ear to hear me,  
God's word to speak for me,  
God's hand to guard me,  
God's way to lie before me,  
God's shield to protect me,  
God's hosts to save me  
Afar and anear,  
Alone or in a multitude.

Christ shield me today  
Against wounding,  
Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,



Great Aunt Edna's  
music box with arctic  
swanskin powder puff.



Captain Roy Bates, Bruno,  
MN, a WWII pilot in Europe.

Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,  
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,  
Christ when I lie down...

I arise today  
Through the mighty strength  
Of the Lord of Creation.

—UMC & UCC Congregational Church, Sandstone, MN, “United News”, April 2014.  
Pilots routinely said this prayer before going on a mission.

## Creative Accounting

Hitler knew the reputation of Norwegian engineers.  
He liked fine things. Norway tried to stay neutral during the war,  
But Nazis were neighbors a little too close for comfort;  
Pragmatism and pressure demanded  
Ships be built for the German war effort.  
My father designed them brilliantly  
And had them built to spec,  
Charging what Germans expected  
To pay for fine workmanship.  
What they didn't know:  
Norwegians are so frugal they could  
Build *two* boats for one price,  
The other tucked in a fjord  
For the service of the Allies<sup>1</sup>.

—R.

<sup>1</sup>The Old Testament book of Esther set the precedent for the Norwegian decision to “play both sides”: in 465 B.C. a country legalized the extermination of the Jews and set a date for slaughter. Queen Esther saw the plan for what it was and convinced the King (who could not strike down the law) to supply defensive weapons to the Jews, providing an equalizer to the situation.

## It All Adds Up

“We’d known each other a short time taking business school courses together.  
When he was drafted, we decided to elope. I met him in New Jersey after Basic

Training, we stood before a judge, and in 2 weeks he shipped out. (He didn't come back to the states again for 4 years, 4 months and 3 days.) When I came home to Winona (MN) as a married woman, my father was furious with me. We barely spoke for 3 years. I rented a bedroom in a widow's house in La Crosse (WI). It was the best time of my life! For the first time women were encouraged to work outside the home, so I had a good job at the OPA [Office of Price Administration, which managed rationing programs] and bought nice things for myself. Felix sent his check home, too. I was always sending back pictures of myself with a new dress I'd sewn. One time I made the mistake of sending him a photo of my new fur coat. He shot back, "I'm risking my LIFE so you can have some dead animal on your shoulders?!" I decided to tone any spending down after that, but truly, things were so prosperous, it didn't seem like there was a war on."

—Lois W.

## **Rationed Goods in the U.S. During World War II<sup>1</sup>**

A wide variety of commodities were rationed in the United States. Rationing ended when supplies were no longer directed to the war effort or were again sufficient to meet customer demand.

| <b>Rationed Items</b>                                                   | <b>Rationing Duration</b>  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Tires                                                                   | January 1942–December 1945 |
| Cars                                                                    | February 1942–October 1945 |
| Bicycles                                                                | July 1942–September 1945   |
| Gasoline                                                                | May 1942–August 1945       |
| Fuel Oil & Kerosene                                                     | October 1942–August 1945   |
| Solid Fuels                                                             | September 1943–August 1945 |
| Stoves                                                                  | December 1942–August 1945  |
| Rubber Footwear                                                         | October 1942–August 1945   |
| Shoes                                                                   | February 1943–October 1945 |
| Silk, nylon, wool, cotton <sup>2</sup>                                  | November 1943–1947         |
| Sugar                                                                   | May 1942–1947              |
| Coffee                                                                  | November 1942–July 1943    |
| Processed Foods                                                         | March 1943–August 1945     |
| Meats, canned fish, cheese,<br>canned milk, butter,<br>lard, other fats | March 1943–November 1945   |



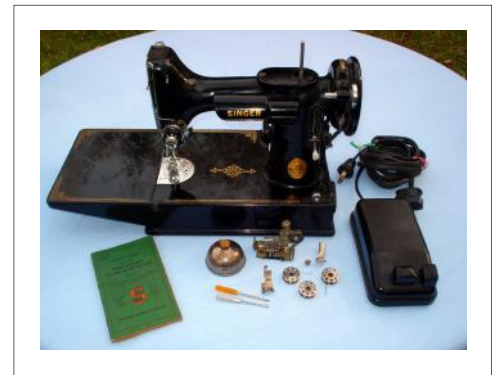
Great-grandma Ella (61), chopping firewood and smoking a pipe.



Common items like paper clips were re-designed to use less raw materials.



|                                                     |                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Penicillin                                          | Mid-1943–March 1945   |
| Typewriters, sewing machines, radios, refrigerators | March 1942–April 1944 |



<sup>1</sup>[http://www.ameshistory.org/exhibits/ration\\_items.htm](http://www.ameshistory.org/exhibits/ration_items.htm) ; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rationing\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rationing_in_the_United_States); <http://www.lawrencecountymemoirs.com/lcmpages/432/war-rationing-efforts-1941-1945-new-castle-pa> ; <https://www.acs.org/content/acs/en/education/whatischemistry/landmarks/flemingpenicillin.html>; [http://www.fashionencyclopedia.com/fashion\\_costume\\_culture/Modern-World-1930-1945/Rationing-Fashion-in-the-United-States.html](http://www.fashionencyclopedia.com/fashion_costume_culture/Modern-World-1930-1945/Rationing-Fashion-in-the-United-States.html)

<sup>2</sup>“Make It Do—Clothing Restrictions in World War II” by Sarah Sundin, POSTED: Monday, March 28, 2011, blog [http://www.sarasundin.com/make\\_it\\_do\\_clothing\\_restrictions\\_in](http://www.sarasundin.com/make_it_do_clothing_restrictions_in)



## Ration Stamps

“Dear Elaine,  
 I hate to ask this but Park Rapids is out of chocolate chips.<sup>1</sup>  
 Could you check to see if there are any in Bruno?  
 Also, I wonder if you could use one of your ration stamps for marshmallows?  
 Maybe Bruno has some of those as well.  
 Harold wrote he would love his favorite cookies from home,  
 But I am having a terrible time coming up with the ingredients. I enclose \$2.<sup>2</sup>  
 Thanks so much for trying.

Love, Jane”, 1943 (Family archives)

<sup>1</sup>During WWII, U.S. soldiers from Massachusetts who were stationed overseas shared the cookies they received in care packages from back home with soldiers from other parts of the U.S. Soon, hundreds of soldiers were writing home asking their families to send them some Toll House cookies. Thus began the nationwide craze for the chocolate chip cookie. [http://www.wow.com/wiki/Chocolate\\_chip\\_cookie?s\\_chn=28&s\\_pt=aolsem&v\\_t=content](http://www.wow.com/wiki/Chocolate_chip_cookie?s_chn=28&s_pt=aolsem&v_t=content)

<sup>2</sup>\$13.56 in 2015 dollars.

### **Suggestions for Your Own Soldier in 2017:**

- **Fill the void of loneliness with a care package.**
- **Write letters of gratitude and casual conversation to Service Personnel.**

“Hey, [name]—as you prepare for your deployment to [place], I want to tell you a few things before you go. To start, I’m grateful. The price of freedom is not free, but some bear more of the cost than others. The share you’ve accepted is enormous, but I’m sure you think it is worth it...”

“Dear [Soldier], We are so proud of you and thank you for your great service to our nation and to the world. We think of you daily in our prayers and hope that your work will be complete soon so that you might return to be with those you love. We want you to feel the support and encouragement we hope you find as we reach out today. Thank you for your effort and dedication. You are missed, remembered, and honored at home...”

“Dear \_\_\_\_, Wanted to let you know you’re not forgotten just because you can’t be here at work. We appreciate what you’re doing, and...”

— <http://goliath.ecnext.com/com2/g: 0199-6087934/letter-to-a-soldier.html>

### Easter Surprise

“Easter Sunday Mr. and Mrs. Hans Lunde (Danish-Americans) received authentic information that their son, Pvt. Werner J. Lunde, is a prisoner of war somewhere in Germany. Previously Pvt. Lunde was officially reported missing in action... He is a paratrooper and for a long time was together with Svend Christensen and Eldon Abrahamsen who are also paratroopers.

The official notice signed by Pvt. Lunde, was mailed in Germany sometime in January but did not reach Askov, MN, before Sunday, April 1. The information that Pvt. Lunde was a prisoner of war was picked up by many short-wave radio receiving sets at various points in the East last week and the listeners hastened to convey the good news to Mr. and Mrs. Lunde.”

—“Askov American”, Thursday, April 5, 1945 (family archives).

## The Homecoming

The answering of a family's prayers:  
A son returned from war, safe and sound.  
For those reappearing home  
It was time to come to terms with the horrors of war  
And try with the help of loved ones and God  
To assimilate into the lives they'd left behind.

—AMVETS National Service Foundation WW II 50<sup>th</sup> Year  
of Victory Calendar, 7/1995.



“Brylcreem Boys”, Clayton and Kenneth Cahoon in sheepskin bombardier suits. Pilots were so named because of their liberal use of the popular patent hair pomade.

## Dead Men Do Tell Tales

In a 1950 Marine recovery unit to find WWII MIAs,<sup>1</sup>  
A Mortuary Science Degree from Wheaton College was a plus:  
There had to be a signature on every certificate for cause of death, so I got the job.  
What an opportunity! Learning anthropology, physics,  
And diplomacy from the assignment.  
Using the new science of forensics, we verified race, age,  
Identified injuries and personal artifacts, never relying on guesswork:  
There must be 3 evidential supports to positively ID a body.

Sometimes guys would trade dog tags with a favorite WAC;<sup>2</sup>  
Even *that* turned out to be good verifiable evidence.  
There were 40,000 unaccounted for by 1946, so the job was huge.  
Some were found alive, GI's who'd melted into French Society.  
The death penalty was never exercised for AWOLs.<sup>3</sup>  
They'd experienced enough already.  
We found 8-9 of our dead per month, which gave a lot of closure to families.  
It was my job to contact the next of kin. Every month I'd write those letters  
And sometimes I'd get a grateful response back.

We tried to find guys whose chutes didn't open,  
Those who'd landed in the trees behind enemy lines.  
We traced old planes to people's barns, used for parts;  
There were aircraft crashed into cemeteries:  
Complicated.

We looked mostly for pilots pummeled into the earth;  
Even found MIAs from WWI  
And two recognizable Roman Centurions<sup>4</sup> in the strata searched!



Aviator glasses.

We'd unearth soldiers that had been fighting the same war, but for other countries,  
And in a quiet spirit, negotiated with their state departments to deliver their dead.  
The Russians were very helpful;  
They wanted to understand our forensic methods  
To identify their own heroes.  
In fact, Europeans and former Soviets are still finding equipment and remains.  
The search goes on;  
Everyone deserves to have an accounting.<sup>5</sup>

It was common for a U.S. pilot to get his wings and 2 weeks' furlough  
Before getting shipped out.  
But because replacement pilots came to be needed so badly at the front,  
They never got that visit back home.

Now, 8 years later, one of our MIA casualties was being particularly evasive:  
He'd radioed his position when he was hit, so we knew we were in the right area.  
Germans kept meticulous records,  
And we could trade their comrade's bones for information,  
But they had nothing listing him as captured.  
Then a farmer was expanding his vineyard  
And found the tail tip of a burned plane, buried vertically.  
It was a P-47 Thunderbolt, a murderous maneuverable fighter.  
We had a backhoe, and there he was,  
Having been killed on impact, the fuselage his shroud.

Folded in to his remarkably preserved clothes  
Was a GI-issue Gideon New Testament.  
He'd signed the page that said, "I've asked Jesus into my heart,"  
Dated just 14 days before he died.  
There was a place to write his favorite verse, and he'd chosen:  
    "Behold I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice,  
    And open the door, I will come in to him,  
    And will sup with him, and he with me." —Revelation 3:20

He had a shopping list for a stateside grocery store run  
Still in his pocket for his Christmas 1944 furlough,  
And a receipt with the date from Fort Smith  
For items to make his parents a dinner  
Before he deployed for Europe.  
However, he never cooked that food. Called up and shipped out,  
He was lost in his first raid in heavy artillery fire:  
The Battle of the Bulge, December 16.

Still in the civilian clothes  
He'd worn on his way to the American grocery store,  
He'd been whisked to England.  
They'd handed him a standard-issue overcoat,  
Ushered him to a plane and he flew into the fricassee.  
That's how urgently they needed pilots,  
How rapidly they were deployed,  
How quickly they were eaten up.

I wanted his mother to see what pains he had taken  
Making preparations for them,  
How much he'd hoped to give them a happy Christmas memory,  
How he'd taken scripture to heart.  
We made a policy not to send anything shameful or embarrassing to family,  
But with joy, I sent those few items to his mother.

She not only understood the significance of the artifacts,  
But wrote back from Arkansas how grateful she was for them, for him, for us.

—With thanks to Retired Master Sergeant Jack Albinson

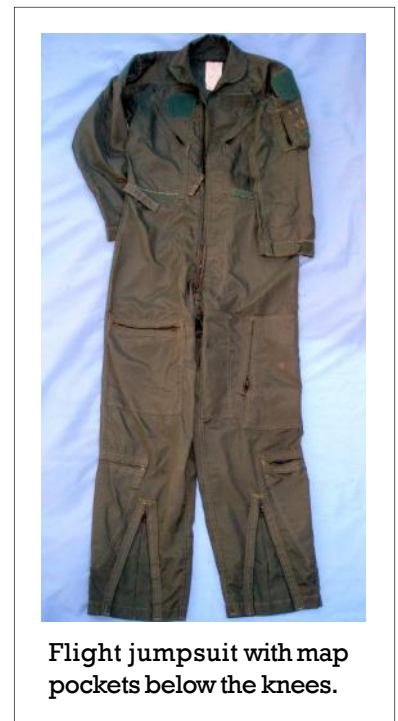
<sup>1</sup>Missing in Action.

<sup>2</sup>Women's Air Corps

<sup>3</sup>AWOLs: soldiers Absent WithOut Leave.

<sup>4</sup>Perfectly preserved because there was virtually no acid in the soil at the dig. Once they were exposed to air, they quickly decomposed, but many tests were efficiently done, and the uniforms were easily identifiable.

<sup>5</sup>"In the Pacific, however, even only 5 years after the war, it was very difficult to find any remains because the jungle eats everything up. Even metal." —Jack A.



Flight jumpsuit with map pockets below the knees.

"The tomb of a hero is in the hearts of the living."

—Plaque at St. Joan of Arc Chapel, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI, 2016.



German stamps: Adolf Hitler, Führer of Nazi Germany from 1934 to 1945.

## Making Two Germanys<sup>1</sup>

“During the transition we heard some of our soldiers were pretty rough with the locals. I suppose it depended on what those GIs had seen liberating concentration camps and whether the civilians had been in the Nazi party. I can’t say. But my own German upbringing in America endeared me to the people and my flawless German helped smooth the way between our GIs and the people they were called to observe while things were being sorted out.”

—Firmus Opitz

<sup>1</sup>As a condition of peace, Germany was divided into East (occupied by Russia) and West (occupied by Allied peacekeepers), with an impenetrable wall that divided the city of Berlin, located inside East Germany. Anyone trying to enter West Germany was shot; a very few freely crossed the checkpoint into East Germany, and no one was allowed to return.

## Custodial Care

The town made good on its promise  
 To take care of its own.  
 The gregarious guy gaggled around  
 Got a hero’s welcome home from the VA Hospital.  
 Josefa still wanted him, steel skull plate and all.  
 The fits of anger were a problem,  
 Frustration boiling up from trouble with words,  
 His bright future dimmed  
 To a bare bulb in a janitor’s closet  
 At the little school, a short labored walk from the house.  
 Still, it was a job, their belief in him that mattered.

The noise in the halls! The turmoil of lunch!  
 Sometimes he bellered, “Quiet!!” A toil just  
 To hear himself think.  
 The food that was wasted! The leftover milk!  
 He didn’t waffle: “Go back. Eat that.”  
 Urging with those 4 moiled words  
 To educate about the suffering he’d seen,



Custodian Paul

The pangs he'd felt himself on the Front;  
But what *they* soaked in was a gravy of gruffness  
Embroidered on institutional trays.  
So pigs got fat.<sup>1</sup>

—In memory and appreciation of Paul K.

<sup>1</sup>School lunch leftovers were given to a local hog farm.

## First and Second Wave Normandy, Then Bastogne

Uncle, tell me about the war;  
I'm a history teacher;  
I need to know.

No!  
Let your books tell you  
When I'm dead.

—With thanks to Daniel O'Brien

## Swinging from a Thread

It's been said returning combat vets seek out  
The most dangerous civilian occupations:  
Pilots become civilian pilots with brutal schedules stateside.  
"I've already gone to hell and back. What could be worse than that?"  
They are explosives experts trying to find bombs that haven't said their "boom".  
"My preservation then demands payment now."  
They contract as consultants to stay near the gladiator's arena.  
"Just doing my part." "I want to be where the action is." "Money's great!"

Fighter pilots become racecar drivers:  
"I am invincible," but also a little "I am suicidal," or  
"It's not right I survived," or  
"What I did demands payment with my life."

They are bridge painters, high-rise builders:  
"The stimulation will keep my full attention on other things besides  
what haunts me."

“This is what I *have* to do to assuage survivor guilt.”  
“There’s this yearning for adrenaline.”

They sometimes admit:

“We enjoy the quick thinking of violence, the romance of going off to war,  
the adventure, the element of risk.”

That’s why wars are fought by 18 year-olds.

Nations know this

And use the young to perpetrate violence they don’t yet understand.

Nations shall be judged for this.

It’s hard to tell what will haunt 40 years from now,

What acts of justification or contrition will play out.

If you think about it, what’s most amazing

Is people CAN come back and live good lives

Even with all that baggage. It’s possible.

After WWII, guys came back shell-shocked, too.

And yet there was a deliberate and thoughtful evaluation:

“We have won this time. We own it. How will we invest it?”

—Retired Staff Sergeant James Albinson, invested as a racecar driver,  
author, film-maker, mortician, and Fellowship of Christian Athletes speaker.

## Out-foxed?

They say there are no atheists inside foxholes,

But maybe some are made once they venture out.

Perhaps it depends to which hell they were sent.

One soldier had been in the second wave over Omaha Beach

And had survived 60 more years.

An earnest funeral director

Officiating at a Fort Snelling graveside,

Wanting to do it right for a fellow soldier,

Whispered to the family, offering to lead the Lord’s Prayer

To avoid a clumsy silence before triggers saluted.

The deceased’s daughter responded,

“If anyone prayed now,

Dad would be terribly offended.”

Understanding battle drives some to alcohol,

Others to God, and still others away,



Out of respect  
For what that soldier had endured  
(Familiar with that Beach himself,  
Familiar with that particular hell,)

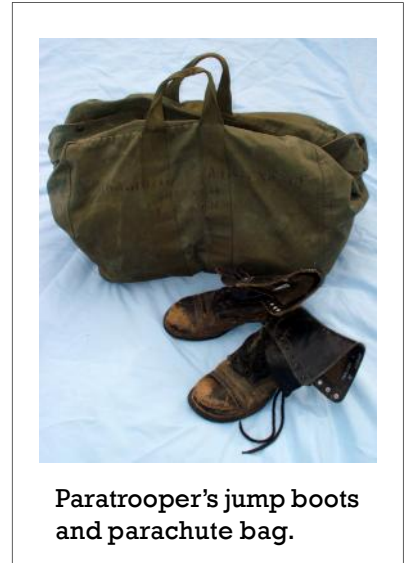
He realized  
The questions  
That man had probably *already* asked God,  
And respectfully held his tongue.

—James A.

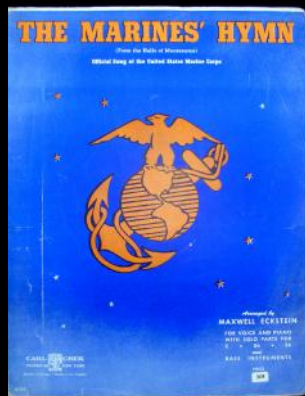
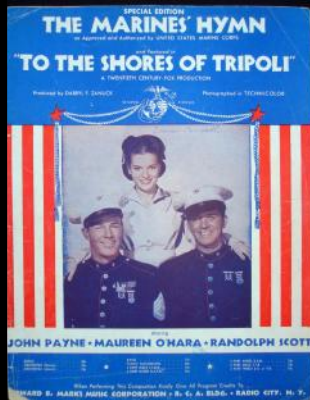
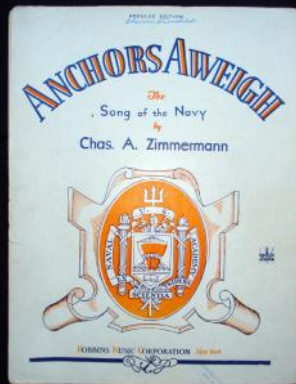
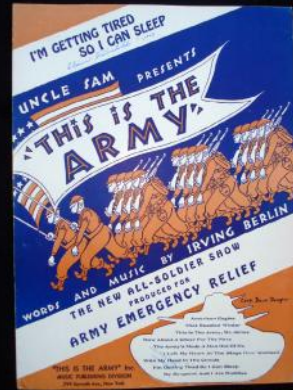
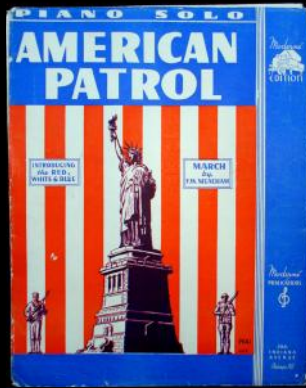
### “The Greatest Generation”?

Has labeling eras  
Made us tell ourselves  
    The Greatest Generation has already come and gone,  
    So America *must* be in decline?  
    Is there therefore nothing left for the young to accomplish?  
Instead, perhaps, the greatest generation is still to come.

—Gary, age 64.



Paratrooper's jump boots  
and parachute bag.



## 2.4 KOREAN WAR 1950-1953

American soldiers in Korea were called GIs: short for Government Issue; General Infantry.

The Korean War started counting 3 years on 6/25/1950. In those 3 years 33,652 GIs died and another 103,000 were wounded. The conflict continued and has remained a sore spot on the earth's skin. North Korea remains Communist; the government of South Korea is patterned after the U.S. Constitution.

“North Korea keeps 1,000,000 troops positioned within 60 miles of the DMZ (Demilitarized Zone, the 2.5 mile wide monitored space between the 2 Koreas.). South Korea has 690,000 troops with 37,000 U.S. advisors. The area is still unsettled due to North Korea's interest in developing nuclear capability, in violation of a 1994 agreement.” —“The 2 Koreas”, [national geographic.com](http://nationalgeographic.com), 2003.

“In 1950 the infantry was getting slaughtered, and they were sending cooks, clerks and the like to fill in the front lines.”

—“Ed”, Healing Suicidal Veterans, p. 148.

Sign at Valley Evangelical Free Church, Chaska, MN, 6/6/13,  
when Korea again became a volatile hotbed:

“Courage is fear that has said its prayers.”

“The Cold War was more frigid in Korea than anywhere else in the world.”

—Bruce Cumings, Korean Historian

During this time, U.S. troops continued to serve in Germany as Military Police to monitor East and West Germany.

## Psalm 33:13-22: Korea

The LORD looks down from heaven and sees the whole human race,  
From His throne He observes all who live on the earth. He made their hearts,  
So He understands everything they do.

The best-equipped army cannot save a king,  
Nor is great strength enough to save a warrior.

Don't count on your Jeep to give you victory—  
For all its strength, it cannot save you.

The LORD watches over those who fear Him,  
Those who rely on His unfailing love.

Your eyes, LORD, are focused on [Richard] right now,  
Let Your unfailing love rest upon him.

—In memory of Captain and Pilot Richard “Dick” Carroll, 1933-2011. Psalm 33, NASB, with some adjustments by the author. Read at his funeral 7/30/2011.



Cousin Dick.

## Private Pain: Korea

I was trained as a grease monkey  
At Wold Chamberlain Naval Base to support the pilots.  
Ended up repairing jeeps.  
When I came back  
Everything was OK.  
It had to be. By order of my father.  
And it was.  
Except for the crying jags at night.



Grease monkey cap.

—In appreciation of Bill G., 1937-2012, who finally told his story Summer 2011.

## Conflicted Conscripted: Back Home from Korea

Back in '62  
The parents didn't even pick me up at the airport.  
I had to find my own way to the VA,<sup>1</sup> then to my town.  
Pa warmed a barstool after work at the foundry,

Wondering when I would get off my high horse

—a little head injury, my foot!—

And get back to *real* work.

Ma was on the line at the pickle factory, glad for the late shift,

Preferring vinegar to his sourness at the house.

I came back from the 51<sup>st</sup> parallel

To their DMZ.

—With compassion for Bill, who enlisted at age 16 to get away from home.

<sup>1</sup>Veterans Administration Hospital, Mpls-St. Paul, MN.



U.S. Army Lee-Jackson  
mechanic shirt.



Pilot's lined pants with be-  
low-the-knee map pocket.

## Pushing Up... Pushing Away: Korea

1...2...3...4...

I'm so homesick for my wife and kid...10...11...

Why did *he* get to go home 15...16...and I didn't? 25...26...

I'm grateful...27...he carried my package to them, ...30...31

But he got to smell her perfume 41.....42....43. 44.

*He's* the one who grinned at my little girl. 54. 55. 56. 57.

Peg wrote congenially that Erin called *him* "Daddy". 68 69

It grinds my gut. 7475767778

*I'll never get that time back*: 80 81 82 hearing that word, 84.....85....

Seeing her learn to walk. ...94.....

—“Captain B. J. Hunnicutt, M.D.” (Mike Farrell), based on M\*A\*S\*H 4077 (Medical Army Surgical Hospital), episode 178, 10/15/1979, when “Corporal Radar O’Reilly” (Gary Burghoff) was rotated home.

*Poem below is in memory of all the generations of children who have been introduced to military life because older brothers came back, but not soon enough. In honor especially of a 10-year-old classmate David, who worried quietly at school about his older brother fresh back from Korea in 1961-62. They shared a room at home and Brother slept with his eyes open, loaded rifle in hand:*

## Gentle Footsteps: Back Home from Korea

Jesus, walk through my quarters  
Mop up my worries, clean that mess I stowed;  
Make me ready for inspection.



Korean War Duffel.

Sweep in with Physician's confidence. Brush my brow,  
Close my eyes while I sleep, if You would; I'm so tired of hyper-vigilance.  
Take my jungle bugs, my unease and re-entry culture shock with You.

And while You are ambling by my office  
You could go ahead and pay those bills while You're at it!  
My heart is an open checkbook to You, regardless.

Come in to check on me in the night,  
Gently lift my hand from my rifle. Put the gun in the closet.  
Help me trust You to protect me instead.

Take the bullets out. Count 'em. Then hide 'em.  
*Quietly* wake me; call my name, touch my toe so I don't choke You out.  
Relieve the memories that trigger all that adrenaline.

Open Your glue, re-bond me to kid brother. Bring me out of my camouflage.  
Help me attend to tone of voice, unmet need, small annoyance;  
May I use Your soft slippers to keep from stepping on toes? Amen.

—To honor David and his older brother.

**"In Korea, soldiers didn't sleep. Guys who  
ended up going to sleep  
woke up dead."**

**—One soldier, quoted by Rev. Dean J. Seal,  
Shepherd of the Hill Church, Chaska, MN, 5/29/2016.**

## Selected Service: Divided Germany

I moved my appointment date up so I could go in sooner. Fresh off the bus from Minnesota to Basic Training in California: “You, you, you. Go down the hall.”

Without that officer even knowing my name or that my father was a town constable, my purpose in the Army—and probably my life direction—were sealed due to the order in which we got off that bus.

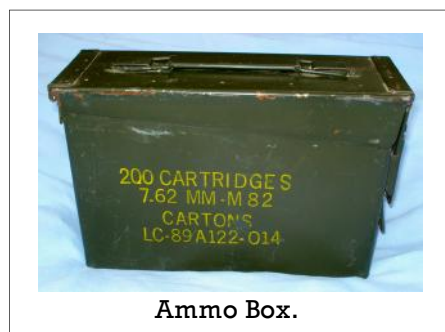
During the heat of the Korean Conflict, I became part of the Military Police followed by an entire tour of duty in Germany to maintain the division of that country due to the decisions from WWII. On leave I visited France, Holland, then Italy twice. It was very nice, but not all that exciting.

I learned when you get a bunch of young GIs together, they do what they think is right among them. If that collective intelligence isn’t guided by character, things can change in a hurry. “It seemed like a good idea at the time” is heard in a lot of MP brigs and police stations.

I met my wife while stationed in Germany. Moving to the U.S. was not easy for her, but my parents were extremely happy—because they were both German immigrants. My cousins are still there; we have returned for visits many times. It was a good experience all the way around.

I had a fine life for 3 years overseas, then became a police officer in Minnesota for 40 years. Unfortunately some young men continued the same carousing lifestyle they decided to pursue in the military. That’s where I came in, again. Admittedly, most of my job would have been unnecessary in either location if there were no alcohol. Some GIs drink because of negative experiences, as a means of survival, to fit in, due to loneliness; some because they abandoned—or embraced—what they learned as youngsters. Others drink because they were never plugged into what they could do well; alcohol use has been attributed to boredom, also so folks can still live with themselves and their memories.

—Retired Military Police Sergeant Firmus Opitz



## A Fine Line: Divided Germany

Military Police recognize personnel have a choice: (to be or not to be law-abiding, that is the question), but soldiers and civilians can both get confused about what a good choice looks like. Sometimes suicide looks like a good choice to guys who have seen too much. Discipline is one thing, but discipline with the use of guilt only magnifies guilt.

It is crucial to instill the ability to reason in members of the police and military rather than “action by emotion”. When I was out searching for insurgents in my war, thinking it through was the only thing that stopped me from shooting innocents a couple of times. I came so close to making the wrong judgment call. Any of us could. A person trains to react the way one’s judgement states at the moment. Will I survive or will he? Using reason with overarching Christian principle worked for me.

Look for logic in the situation: is it logical for him to be here at this hour? With a bag over the shoulder when women in this culture are the bearers of burdens? Does it look like he will harm me? If I could give any advice it would be to rely on God’s protection. We did something called “door rattling”— checking to make sure a location was secure. For some reason I skipped a door. I never skipped a door, but that night I did. It was discovered later that behind that door was an enemy who would have shot as soon as the doorknob moved. Be led. Be prepared spiritually. If you miss His nudge, and they find you, you will still go to heaven. That sure helped my nerves in “police action”.

Yes, I did shoot someone in the line of duty. Yes, it bothers me plenty. If I take the gospel as my own, I also have to take “*Thou shalt not kill.*” It was justified, I went through protocol, but that didn’t halt the guilt or the second-guessing. No jury would have convicted me for doing it in the line of duty, but by God’s law, I still don’t feel justified, all these years later. Did I offend the Lord by doing it? All we seem to be able to do is to bring the rules of war as close as we can to His rules for society. Regardless of any tribunal or departmental investigation, no matter which human being releases culpability for my action, it is still hard. For all the reasons I could put behind stopping an insurgent who should not have been there, imagine how hard it would be to have made the wrong judgment call, to have discovered a different reason for that person’s presence after the fact.

We are called to love one another, even if we don’t agree with an ideological choice or a cultural penchant. This is extremely difficult under normal circumstances; but in war, a person tells himself all the reasons why the other side should deserve death in order to bolster courage. How can a person reconcile that with “*Love one another*”? The spiritual tug-of-war is almost impossible.

—Firmus Opitz



## Over-Extended: Navy

I signed up for 4 years in the Navy in 1946. They must have had a shortage of men because about when my time was up, we all got a directive: “You extend your enlistment to 5 years, or we’ll do it for you.” We’d been assigned to take Naval Reservists back to Guantanamo Bay base anyway, so I didn’t get the paper-work filed, but they were true to their word. Some took the option of taking Naval Reserve instead of the extra year, and they were discharged, then surprisingly found themselves on the way back to Korea the next day.

Instead, I was shipped to New Orleans Yeomen School for practice shooting drones (not the sophisticated kind they have now), then spent my year in the Atlantic and Mediterranean on the lookout for them. Once that was fulfilled and I was discharged, I took a turn on the Selective Service Board.

—Yeomen 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Tom H., Chaska, MN.

## Break Him or Make Him?: Navy

I’m not the same person as when I left North Carolina for the Navy. Now there’s something that can change you! Parents have sent sons into the service to “make a man out of him”. I don’t know how many went into Korean Conflict Service to be made men of, but I can assure you you’re never the same when you come out as when you go in. You see things that you never saw before and, more to the point, hope never to see again. That’s not to say the service is all bad, but you do experience some of the seamier aspects of human nature.

My parents had us kids in church every time the doors were open. I thought it was part of my fabric, but when I got under the sails, I had trouble staying dry. “Water, water everywhere but nary a drop to drink” was not quite accurate: sailing in water was our *modus operandi*, but alcohol was almost as plentiful. It was cheap and drinking it was the expected behavior. It very nearly became my Waterloo.

It was in the Navy I took my first alcoholic drink. It very quickly became my pattern to go out and get snookered every Saturday night, maneuverably tipsy. But, no matter how big the hangover, I was ALWAYS in church the next day. The pattern that had been ingrained into me by my parents stayed with me, even if my lifestyle changed. Sunday was not complete until I went to church, asked forgiveness. I was searching to find out who I really was then and realized beverages were not doing me any favors. I still go to church, though! It works for me. I’m still changing. I’m still growing daily.<sup>1</sup> Still learning

to accept myself for who I am. God doesn't criticize me, so maybe I can let up on being my own worst critic. I'm learning about self-worth. 60 years after my service, I'm less conflicted, more willing to carefully and studiously form an opinion. I'm gratefully even more a man now than then, learning to become "a workman who has no cause to be ashamed."<sup>2</sup>

—Tom H.

<sup>1</sup>Tom's favorite book to help his journey is Bless My Growing by Gerhard Frost, from a friend in Cursillo.

<sup>2</sup>2 Timothy 2:15

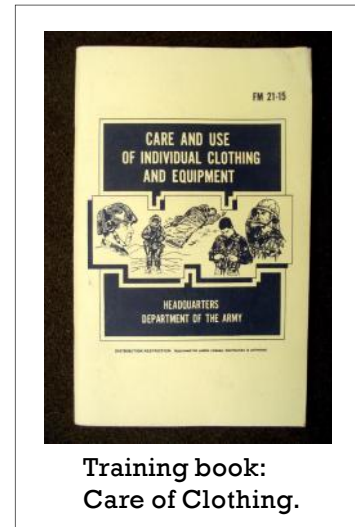
## On Thoughts at Sea: Navy

### 1. Newbie on the Water

The fresh clean feeling on deck early in the morning  
The endless expanse of water encircling earth's girth  
The sunlight skipping off water  
The noonday brilliance scrubbing the tips of waves bleach-white  
The feeling of security as the ship climbs again to  
The top of each crest after each dip-and-roll in  
The ponderous, mountainous swells  
The self-defiance against the forces of nature during the fury of a storm  
The wind-torn waves wildly sending spray and spume  
The sea shuddering the bow, being caught in the grip of its ague<sup>1</sup>  
The taste of both salty sea water and fresh rain blowing in your face

The silver flying fish gliding, gleaming and glistening, racing crest to crest  
The water changing its hues with light's spectrum  
The cathedral of the deep pierced by a shaft of light  
The shark playing steal tag with ferocious antagonism  
The sudden decent of the sun into the sea, and  
The flaring sky, a promise of tomorrow. Lying on deck watching  
The night sky slide in and out of position with each roll  
The phosphorus, plankton and krill dancing in the froth  
The comfort of sleeping topside on hot summer nights  
The hustle of vital activity every day

The interminable chow lines in all conditions  
The false richness of payday and



Training book:  
Care of Clothing.

The inevitable crap game, the crest-fallen loser and beaming winner  
The steady sssahhh, sssahhh, sssahhh of  
The lava stones cleaning the wooden deck  
The sweating in knee-length dungarees  
The swearing, pushing forward to a gleaming finish for the cursed inspection  
The test when men stand stiff and strained to be appraised or criticized  
The minute inspection by gloved liveried<sup>2</sup> officers for any specks that shouldn't  
be there  
The time you can call your own, unhampered by dutiful things  
The listening to music you have heard innumerable times and never tire of

## 2. Shore Leave

The routine chores becoming eagerly awaited tasks to complete as time is  
hurried forward  
The last-minute preparations  
The feeling of arriving at a familiar port  
The self-same objects recognized that make up the picture of strangeness  
The way the sun lights up the Acropolis, sets the Parthenon gleaming  
The snow-covered peaks merging with the clouds into nothingness  
The golden beaches stretching out of sight  
The modern cliff dwellers of Sorrento  
The indescribable beauty of Capri, the reflecting canals of Venice  
The serene quietness of the Suez Canal, the *blueness* of "The Red Sea"  
The dirt and squalor of Old Tangerian Casbah and  
The clean-cut lines of the new town  
The Rock of Gibraltar jutting defiantly into  
The sea, clinging with one finger to the mainland  
The way people come to look at the ship, admire and exclaim  
The peddlers who meet the ship as though they were foretold of our coming  
The anticipation of getting away from  
The ship for a few hours to see strange and interesting faces  
The continuous babble of voices intoning an older country, a foreign nation  
The ancient atmosphere, bleak buildings, pompous ruins, reminiscent of more  
glorious times  
The haggard look of people, the scarcity of grey heads,  
The thinness of the children  
The way it always seems to rain when the sun should shine  
The wonderful assurance of returning to a warm ship, food, and faithful buddies

### 3. Back Out to Sea

A sigh of resignation from things hoped for to things realized  
A withdrawal from port, faces and bodies on shore merging into one colored  
mass,  
All signs of life sinking from sight on the retreating horizon  
A final month, interminably long  
A delay rumored, herds of scuttlebutt dispersed

### 4. Finally Homeward Bound

When the ship edges into the dock  
When casting mooring lines followed by sisal Hauser ropes  
When docking is complete  
When upturned faces scan the ship, searching  
When recognition breaks  
When strained faces become smile-wreathed countenances  
When ecstatic greetings are exchanged  
When discharges are being transferred  
When sailors give their temporary home a last once-over  
When there are papers and more papers, examinations, insults and victories  
When walking out the gate the last time  
When triumph of completion intermingles with feelings of desertion, aloneness  
When home at last with time to think of anything else, there are thoughts on  
things past...

—With Tom H.

<sup>1</sup>Ague: chronic revisit of malaria; reference to the sea having a bout of chills and shakes.

<sup>2</sup>Liveried: standard issue, colors and uniform, complying to regulation.

Death of a loved one can affect service personnel even more than civilians because there is an unwritten contract: soldiers prepare to die in combat protecting the safety of loved ones back home, and loved ones should be waiting for them when they return. If the “contract” is broken—and there is no longer a “tribe” to protect—the reason for prevailing in combat diminishes.

—Based on Samuel A. Stouffer's and Arthur A. Lumsdaine's “Studies in Social Psychology in World War II”, 1942, and The American Soldier: Combat and Its Aftermath (Studies in Social Psychology in World War II), 1949.

## Grieving: Navy

Grief sucks at the bones of your loss:  
Death of a buddy, divorce, duty done, job gone,  
All in some way provided by the government.

Grieving double-time:  
Over what we did  
And what we failed to do.

Anger, guilt, anxiety, sadness, despair,  
Even ignoring there is something to grieve over,  
All part of the hidden marrow.

Some don't grieve loss until several years later  
After the fracture has festered. Like being peeved every Tuesday  
And realizing it's because hubby's no longer there to put out the garbage.

Letting go of the infection is tough smelly work.  
A person can lose sleep, change appetite, get sick. Yet  
Taking time to grieve and redirect all that energy is a good thing.

Find ways to say goodbye.  
Reconcile to each loss that's felt, whether it seems rational or not.  
Let healing take its time—but take it.

We all grieve—in one way or another. I believe even God grieves when He sees  
How far His Creation has fallen, even knowing that it would happen.  
Because He has grieved so much, He can help with ours.

Maybe disturbing dreams aren't a bad thing;  
They are bringing hidden things to the open.  
When my mother was dying, I knew I'd not visited enough.

I'd been in the Navy on the high seas for 5 years. Now that I needed to,  
I didn't get a flight home quickly enough. I've had to live with that.  
I've grieved over the years at not ever having told my mother I loved her.  
Of course she knew I loved her, but I never verbalized it.

I've had dreams about seeing her, unable to reach her to tell her.  
In one dream I was finally able to hug her and say so...and woke up crying.  
That dream, making it right, put it in perspective.



“In the Sweet Bye and Bye”  
(we will meet on that beautiful shore), published in 1887,  
was a popular song at funerals into the 1950s and 60s.

An adult Sunday School class helped me imagine my own death bed.  
“If you had one piece of advice to give your friends, or say one farewell,  
What would it be?” I’d say: “Keep in touch.” “Tell them so.”

Some day there will be no more “just a minute”.  
What we care about most gets all used up and goes away.  
So take care of it, fix it when it’s broken . . . and heal it when it’s sick if you can.

This is true for marriage, for children with bad report cards,  
Dogs with bad hips, aging parents and grandparents.  
We keep them because they’re worth it . . . because WE are worth it.

—With Tom H., U.S. Navy.

**Six Practical Steps in Family Redevelopment:**

1. Redefine the priorities of your life and be sure you make people more important than things.
2. Put an end to credit buying and begin to pay your way out of debt.
3. Spend time with the people who count in your life. Build memories.
4. Provide healthy love and discipline for each child. Base consequences on their personality.
5. Verbalize your love.
6. Stay in touch with each other and in tune with the Lord.

—Dr. Richard D. Dobbins, from Pamphlet: “Your Family is Your Fortune”,  
EMERGE Ministries, Inc, Akron, Ohio, p.11.

The Mettle of a Man: Navy

I signed up off the farm  
Graduated as a Yeomen A,  
Begged to get out from behind  
A typewriter on base;  
Found duty on USS Worcester CCL-144  
Out of Norfolk, VA  
And saw half the globe  
Typing on the ship.



Portable government issue typewriter,  
end of Korean Conflict - Vietnam.

—Norman Monroe, 1<sup>st</sup> Class Petty Officer, retired, Chaska, MN.

**Vets or Family Members:** To receive deserved but never yet awarded medals, list the most significant duty assignment (example: U.S.S. Worcester CL-144) with documentation. You will need the person's service number to obtain earned but never received medals. (Go to the county of induction for the discharge number, Form DD-214)/ Postage only will be charged for the medals shipped (correct for their service time period back to the Civil War). Replacement medals and patches will have a cost, but it is not a great amount.

For posthumous service personnel: a blood relative must provide place of birth and pursue the claim. Visit the Registrar of Deeds in that county. If they registered for service, that office should have a copy of their military service DD-214 that would show any medals or ribbons earned. Compare that to what has already been received. 1-800-308-0849 <http://www.medalsofamerica.com> —Dr. Norman Monroe

## God Has Tattoos, Too: Navy

I have engraved thee  
Upon the palms of My hands.

—Isaiah 49:16



[TattooDesigns24.com](http://TattooDesigns24.com)

[Tell Me a Tattoo Story](#) by Alison McGhee and Eliza Wheeler, 2016, ISBN 1452119376. A young son learns about his father's service and life.

“A man has a certain gravitas, or personal presence and power. He gets points among other men, for example, for being able to grow a bushy beard. It's why a guy wears greasy clothes into an auto parts store or an army jacket in his home town. It gives him “street cred”. In service culture, tattoos have always added to one's toughness quotient when beards aren't allowed.”

—Jesse H.

## Medic!: Korea

In specialist training we were told  
Not to depend on little red crosses  
(better than bullseyes)  
Or the Geneva Convention to shield us.



In fact, Navy Intelligence figured  
Sniping one medic was more effective for the enemy  
Than shooting 5 Marines;

Besides demoralizing our troops,  
One down meant we couldn't  
Patch 5 up.

It was not lost on us that statistically, any medic  
Got the chance to help only 5 guys before  
He was taken out. Lousy odds for all that training.

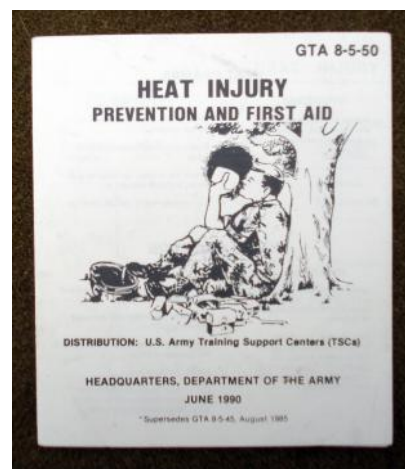
So, I “lost” my patches,  
Had the guys call me “Rex”<sup>2</sup> instead.  
Strapped on a holster—full of bandages—

Kept my head down.  
For some reason  
I beat those odds.

—George H.

<sup>1</sup>The Geneva Convention provided agreed upon rules of war etiquette in western culture. Included was the mutual agreement not to fire upon any medical personnel or schools. Korea/Asia was not invited to the table when these rules were made.

<sup>2</sup>Rx as code for “Help!”, instead of the expected “Medic!”.



Treatment of Heat Injury,  
Army training manual.

## Rexie: Back Home from Korea

I've been told I was the only pro baseball player drafted<sup>1</sup> from North Dakota. Unfortunately it only lasted one year before I was drafted into the Korean Conflict. After my 4 years as a nurse in the Army for the Marines, I returned, deciding to go to Hamline College for pre-Med on the GI Bill. Due to service, I was older than the rest (they called me “Gramps”). There was a recall in the middle of a semester: an FBI Agent came right to the campus and knocked on the classroom door. My professor said, “George, are you in some kind of trouble?” But the Agent just delivered my orders—then made sure I didn't forget I'd be leaving at the end of the hour. I guess they needed medics pretty bad. Fortunately



I got credit for most of my classes, but some I had to take over.

When I returned from the second tour, I was always trying to make ends meet while none of the “kids” seemed worried about finances. It wasn’t too long before I ran out of money—with a wife and small children to support, I figured I’d have to drop out to get a job. I asked the Dean for advice. He retorted, “Well, every time you come in my office, you seem to sell me something I hadn’t known I needed. Try pharmaceutical sales.” So I did. A drug company realized I knew the terminology, told me I had more real-life education and experience than most young general practitioners stateside; hired me on the spot. I spent the next 50 years visiting family doctors as a pharmaceutical rep and it sure paid the bills. It worked for me.

—George “Rexie” H.

<sup>1</sup>Was recruited and played for the New York Yankees farm team in the Northern League.

## Sky Pilot: Korea

Mom was pregnant with me  
When Dad went to the Korean War.

He was a pilot—my hero—  
Killed in battle at age 32,

His life on earth ended  
On the day of my birth.

I learned God could be my Father  
Because I had no other choice that made sense.

I had no one to watch my back until I realized,  
“He guards the hands and lives of His faithful ones.” Psalm 97:10

—Rev. Clyde Harvey, speaking about his father, Captain Robert G. Harvey,  
“Valentines to God” sermon 2/14/2016.



An F-51D Mustang taxis past another parked F-51. (U.S. Air Force photo) <http://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/shared/media/photodb/photos/050429-F-1234P-001.jpg>

## Vergib Mir?<sup>1</sup>: Divided Germany

Dear Erika, Marta, Gabi, Crista,

I'm sorry about American prejudice against German-speakers in the United States post-WWII and during the Cold War. We hardly knew how to think about our own German heritage after the war, let alone someone else's. War does terrible things, and I'm guessing it did a disservice to you as you were trying to become American wives and citizens. *Vergib mir?* I hope you can find it in your heart to forgive us for our insensitivity toward war brides. I officially welcome you now! Thank you for coming to America.

—Angela

<sup>1</sup>*Vergib mir?*: German for “Forgive me?”



Cold War West German War Flag, 1949 - 1990 . Vexillo-logical Association Focused on Flags: a Shorthand of History, <http://www.loeser.us/flags/cold.html>

## Harry and Joe: Back Home from Korea

“I worked at the Naval Hospital as a Navy Nurse in Washington, D.C. on my second tour of duty. To my surprise, not only flown-in wounded soldiers, but anyone anywhere in the government could use the facility, including a legislator who had the sniffles.

I was on the graveyard shift one night. I'd just done rounds at 5:00 am and it was quiet so I went down to get a cup of coffee. Just as the elevator door was closing, I managed to push the call button to stop it and wrestled the doors open. There were President Harry Truman and 2 guardians! The Secret Service members immediately reached for their pistols (I'd surprised them, too), but Truman said, “He's OK. He's just got a cup of coffee.” I don't even recall if I offered it to him.”

—George Heger

## 2.5 THE COLD WAR ERA 1954-1963

The Cold War was a state of political and military tension after World War II between powers in the Western Bloc (the United States, its NATO allies and others) and powers in the Eastern Bloc (the Soviet Union and its allies in the Warsaw Pact).

Historians have not fully agreed on the official government dates 1954-1963. An informal range of 1947–1991 is common. It was termed as "cold" because there was no large-scale fighting directly between the two sides. There were major regional wars, known as proxy wars, in Korea, Vietnam and Afghanistan that the two sides supported.

—[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cold\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cold_War)



Sharp-shooter mittens.



Russian belt and buckle.



This coarse POW uniform made by Russia, was intended for German political prisoners after World War II.

### Spy versus Spy?

U.S./NATO camouflage polar parka and insulated over-pants for spies going across the Polar Cap to Russia, through 1987.



Russian and East German Special Forces Arctic Circle polar parka and over-pants with pine branch camouflage for spies going over the Bering Sea to Alaska, through 1987.

## A Wide Atlantic, A Cold War

The Navy was very active, enough so we were all extended a year during the Cuban Missile Crisis. As a Sonar Class 3, I was trained to search for submarines from the air. I didn't do a whole lot of sightseeing from my vantage point; that's not what we were there to do. We were to be vigilant. It was my job to find Russian submarines to prevent them from entering our territorial waters. We knew what we were looking and listening for: subs quietly, regularly ping, whereas whales make a *lot* of noise—they are always vocalizing.

Day-to-day work was OK. Almost pleasant.  
Then we lost a sister plane in the Atlantic.  
Lost lots of our school on that flight.  
We were supposed to watch each other's tails.  
It was a Crisis alright.

But nothing like the action my older brother saw in the second wave of Iwo Jima (WWII). Even besides coming home with Dengue Fever and Malaria, he was never the same person. He'd seen too much. And he never talked about it.

My advice? Give your returning service personnel time to heal when they come back. There is a significant adjustment no matter the assignment. That set of memories will always be a part of him, but most guys are able to eventually adapt and return to the expectations of civilian life. The ones who talk about it a little seem to adjust more quickly.

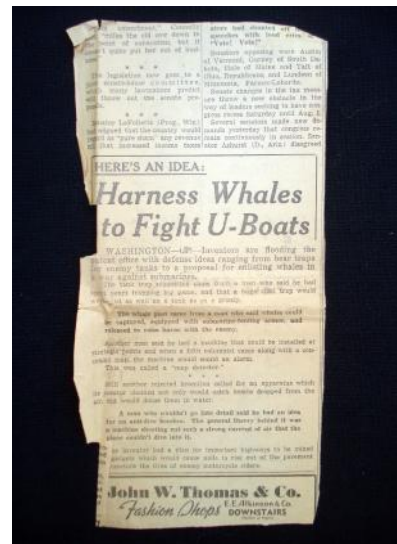
Focus first on coming back alive.  
Then determine to come back to living.  
Take part in family events.  
*Hear* people when they greet you,  
When they thank you,  
When they want you around.

—Butch I.

## Over-sight

He sent from above,  
He took me,  
He drew me out of many deep waters.

—Psalm 18:16



The U.S. Government considers harnessing whales to pull submarines so they can't be detected by the Soviets. Circa, 1960.

Rollin Dasen's memorial flag; Rollin, center, and his Air Force buddies.



## Spy in the Sky

Rollin was stationed at Biloxi/Keesler AFB in the Electronics Training Center of the USAF as an Airman.

Then he was promoted to staff sergeant stationed in Darmstadt, Germany as head of a barracks. The guys in the barracks made wooden cabinets for speakers and electronic parts for the base sometimes, or for the locals at other times, but that was just their cover. They were really non-coms trained as a Security Service unit to fly spy missions over Russia 1952-55. All 13 in his squadron flew the missions and lived together in the same barracks. No one else on base ever knew.

For a long time Rollin would not talk about it, but many years later, he happened to see a TV documentary about the times. When he heard his own unit discussed, he realized the information had been declassified, and he was willing to talk about it a little after that.

His training as a radio operator provided him an opportunity to work in FM radio the rest of his life.

—In memory of Staff Sergeant Rollin Dasen



1954 Corvette  
[www.buyavette.net/](http://www.buyavette.net/)  
Unfortunately, not from family archives.

## Motorama New York Auto Show

The Corporal's core orders: ferry vehicles of army drab  
Day in, day out. Day in, day out.  
Day in, day out. Day in, day out.

On release from corps captivity, the Vet's corporeal duty:  
Order himself a brand new corpuscle-red Corvette!



Corvette Rally Jacket  
is from family archives.

## *C'est la vie, avoir froid*<sup>1</sup>

The French could never quite forgive America  
Because it restored Germany—to the disadvantage of the French.  
De Gaulle felt America's policies were making France vulnerable again.  
Arguments could be made.  
Then 18 years later, the French, ever gracious, *les avocats, les counselors*, said:  
“Stay away from Vietnam. It will be *un mistake grand*.”  
So America *trompe l'oeil*<sup>2</sup> right in there.  
Are the French cold people?  
Well..., they've been **forthright**, *sur le point de paraître*,<sup>3</sup>  
But like a teenager, the U.S. hasn't received the counsel.

—With thanks to *Jacques*

<sup>1</sup>*C'est la vie*: that's life, that's the way it is.

*avoir froid*: to have coolness toward; to remain aloof.

<sup>2</sup>*trompe l'oeil*: realistic imagery to create an optical illusion; painted in a way to look like a real object; the art of illusion, to camouflage an eyesore. Related words:

*se tromper (m)*: to delude, mislead; to deceive with a façade; betray; to be wrong, take the wrong road; make a mistake.

*la trompette (f)*: turned-up nose, self-assured trollop.

<sup>3</sup>*sur le point de paraître*: to come out undergirding a point.

## Smart Alec

A U.S. Navy Admiral was attending a naval conference that included Admirals from the American, English, Canadian, Australian and French Navies. At a reception, he found himself standing with a large group of officers that included personnel from most of those countries.

Everyone was chatting away in English as they sipped their drinks, but a French Admiral suddenly complained that, whereas Europeans learn many languages, Americans learn only English. He then asked, “Why is it that we always have to speak English in these conferences rather than speaking French?”

Without hesitating, the U.S. Admiral replied, “Maybe it's because the Brits, Canadians, Aussies and Americans arranged it so you wouldn't have to speak German.”

You could have heard a pin drop.

—ChuckExAnon, Answerbag. Excerpt from his Blog, 3/25/2008.  
<http://www.answerbag.com/qview/1354354#ixzz3lboJq1H>

## Boogie-Woogie Bugler

Joyce could throw a 50-pound bale up' the hayloft,  
Sing alto or tenor in the little Methodist Church choir,  
Do chores and walk like a farmer;  
Had that tenacity and a perpetual smile on her face.

Joyce could pick up any instrument in our small school band  
And play a recognizable tune in a couple-a minutes.  
She advanced to State with a trumpet solo,  
Worked the snare drum with precision,

Made the baritone wail in a saxophone quartet.  
She strapped on an accordion or bounced on the tuba for fun.  
When she graduated with honors and got her track team trophy,  
She headed for the Army in her short-cropped wavy chestnut hair.

Joyce had no trouble with the obstacle course or the weight-lifting bench,  
But maybe had issues with the narrow uniform skirt and the regulation  
high heels.

I heard she earned a chair in the U.S. Army Corps band—  
A marriage made in heaven.

—In honor of Joyce S., “Hometown Girl Makes Good”.



1959: 49 star flag,  
only viable for 6  
months between  
Alaska and Hawaii  
statehoods.



The Marshall Islands, site of 23 U.S. nuclear tests from 1946-1958. The 15-megaton Bravo shot vaporized 3 islands.<sup>1</sup> [www.washingtonpost.com/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/)



Boxes of Civil Defense emergency food stored since 1962 in an old city building designated as a Fallout Shelter.



Chemical Warfare Hazmat Boots. NBC: Nuclear, Biological, Chemical.

In 1951 forward there were 700 designated fission and nuclear tests in Nevada and the Marshall Islands. In the 1980s David W. successfully lobbied to compensate virtually the entire population of at least 2 of the Marshall Islands for the effects of radiation, cloud drift health problems, and loss of crop land. While visiting the island, he observed an horrific number of birth defects per capita.

## Made Memories

Anyone

Who has ever used

A bombed-out building as a playground

Or has unwittingly played catch with a live grenade,

Anyone

Who has taken a wheelbarrow of currency

To buy groceries for supper,

Or has ever been rationed

Not at all enough to eat,

Anyone

Who has tried to get the attention

Of a grandparent staring toward the horizon,

And is caregiver

Because Mama and Papa never return,

Anyone

Who has lived

These things,

Or remembers,

Will never seek another war.

—Ericka C., MN war bride, born in Germany.



## Stalking Feat

During the Cold War years

I was an officer under water on the Pomfret,

A ship about 2/5 as large as a fleet-type submarine.

Due to potential conflict with Soviet submarines,

We would go deep, stop propulsion, turn off

All unnecessary equipment,

And at these times of silence,

All of us removed our shoes

And walked—only when necessary—

In stocking feet.



Children's socks with "USA", an eagle, biplanes, and what looks like an atom bomb in the woven decoration on the cuffs. Cold War Era. Family archives.

—Former President Jimmy Carter, based on A Full Life: Reflections at Ninety ("The Navy Years"), pp. 41-49.



## 2.6 VIETNAM ERA: 1961-1975

The government referred to its force as soldiers or servicemen. America again instituted the draft to fill the Vietnam “dance card”, and again found not many wanted to fill it.

“Soldiers in Vietnam called each other ‘Grunts’.”  
—Tim O’Brien, The Things They Carried.

“The things that you carry are burdensome.  
A load for the weary beast.”

—Isaiah 46:1a, The Holy Bible, NASB

The average infantryman in the South Pacific during World War II saw about 40 days of combat in four years. The average infantryman in Vietnam saw about 240 days of combat in one year thanks to the mobility of the helicopter. One out of every 10 Americans who served in Vietnam was a casualty; 58,148<sup>1</sup> were killed and 304,000 wounded out of 2.7 million who served. Although the percent that died is similar to other wars, amputations or crippling wounds were 300 percent higher than in World War II. 75,000 Vietnam veterans are severely disabled. MEDEVAC helicopters flew nearly 500,000 missions. Over 900,000 patients were airlifted (nearly half were American).

—Capt. Marshal Hanson, USNR (Ret.) and Capt. Scott Beaton, Statistical Source. From blog: “Vietnam War: Facts, Stats & Myths”.

<sup>1</sup>Protests over the conflict began in 1964. As of 2012, there are 58,300 service deaths attributed to the war. More previously designated MIAs, PKIAs, and graves of Prisoners of War were found between 1997 and 2012. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnam\\_Veterans\\_Memorial](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnam_Veterans_Memorial).

### **Dedication**

To all my friends  
Who found themselves in uniform,  
Including my brother.

## Command is a Heavy Load

I once carried a dead man  
60 kilometers through Korean no-man's land  
On my back  
Because he had been my radio operator  
And because Marines don't leave anybody behind.  
I wrote a letter to his family.  
I wrote a lot of letters to families.

But it was Vietnam that gave me nightmares. I drank too much  
And had night sweats. Unwhole, stumbling around, a dead man walking.  
Tired of being a chameleon commando, I had to change something inside.  
So I cleaned up my act and got help.  
Went to support groups in Thailand where there were guys,  
Wounded, disillusioned, unsettled, who had been through the same crap.  
It helped. It helped a lot.

I believe we gave each other a hand to climb back out.  
I was then told I could be a full colonel or receive a discharge,  
And I finally saw the stress for what it was. So I got out.  
Stateside, there was a telegram offering me a job,  
So I came to Minnesota, sight unseen. Suddenly I was making  
3x more than in the military without having to blow things up.  
It worked for me.

—Retired Lt. Colonel Eugene (Dick) Tirk

“How to Succeed with Brunettes” is a 1966 United States Navy Training Film about how to be polite, proper and gentlemanly in social situations. <http://www.YouTube.com> to view.



Hand-to-Hand  
Combat Manual.

“Rookie soldiers usually suffer casualty within the first five minutes of their first battle. If they survive those minutes, Then surprisingly, most come home alive, because they aren't rookies any more.”

—“Lieutenant Dan”, in the movie “Forrest Gump”, Warner Brothers, 1994.

## Life at the Speed of Teenage Angst + Boot Camp

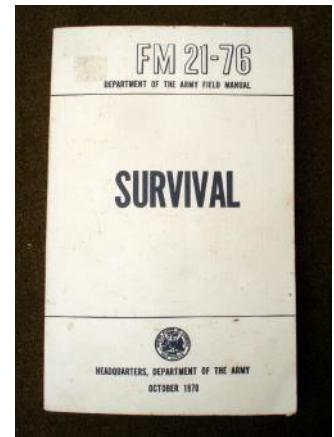
My Dear Son,  
You said, "I am a failure".  
That doesn't add up.

Better:

"Unaccustomed as I am to live ammo,  
I did not fulfill their expectation of me.

For 30 tiny seconds  
I paused.  
I fumbled.  
I was scared.

I was unstellar;  
The star they expected  
Didn't flash in brilliance  
There. In that drill. That's all."



Survival Training Manual.

Son,  
While it's true you must learn to take mastery of  
Frightful situations in order to survive  
The predicament over there, what I mean to say is  
You *will* take mastery.<sup>1</sup>

You *will* overcome with training and faith and grit.  
And even if that fear rears its ugly head  
When you get into a real circumstance, if the pundits are right,  
You have as much as 4:59<sup>2</sup> to gain hold and course-correct.

But you are so much more than a battle machine.  
You, my Son, have succeeded in  
Talking *me* out of the deepest depression,  
Beyond wildest expectations,

You  
Have been the most faithful friend  
To your fellows the world has ever known;

You,  
Who holds daily counsel with God,  
Allow startlingly pure humility  
To slay dragons in the spirit.

You appropriately  
Question authority—though  
You might not get to exercise that just now!

You eloquently present logic  
Refute argument  
Offer solutions,  
Get to the heart of a matter.

So you forgive yourself, and then be released  
From trying to be perfect in order to make up for inexperience  
As an earnest, but not-yet fully-matured and seasoned man  
Who has been told to become a soldier.

God would not tell us  
We have committed unpardonable sins,  
So whose voice is it,  
Condemning us still, but our own?

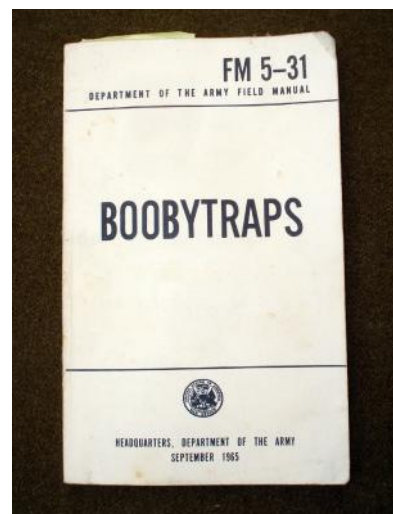
Centuries ago, an overwhelmed Chinese General  
Zeng Guofar wrote in his report to his Emperor  
Of an impossible situation:  
“We fight, but the enemy defeats us.”

His Comrade, General Zuo, read the account and suggested  
But one correction:  
“The enemy defeats us, but we fight on.”<sup>3</sup>  
Still truth. Still fact.  
Except this new “but” leaves hope for change.

There are enough Blood Stripes<sup>4</sup> to ante up;  
Enough enemies in this cold and heartless world; so  
Let us not be  
Our own worst.

Let us be as good and kind  
To ourselves  
As we learn to be  
To each other.

The Lord does not condemn us;  
In whatever our heart condemns us,



God is greater than our heart,  
And knows all things. (I John 3:20)

Love, Dad

<sup>1</sup>Mastery: i.e. “Bruno Zulu”: Well done (Radio code).

<sup>2</sup>Since statistically the average novice ground trooper has a few minutes survival time in which to orient himself to battle, use the time to good advantage.

- Observe what seasoned veterans of combat are doing.
- Discover the positions of aggression.
- Form a plan for stealth.
- To avoid friendly fire, let others in your platoon know your idea.
- Use cover and back-up to advance your position.
- Conserve ammo by planning shots.
- Let training kick in and take over.
- Wait the first minutes out to acclimate to the situation if you are able, and talk yourself into making reason—rather than panic—rule.
- Make peace with God ahead of the onslaught. It helps.
- Review constantly your platoon’s objective and your part in it.

—For Gary W.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted in Grammar Moves: Shaping Who You Are: First Edition by Lawrence Weinstein, Thomas Finn. Longman Publishers 2010. Chapter: “Grammar for Being Optimistic”, Section: “But”.

<sup>4</sup>Blood Stripes: an immediate promotion due to death of the person who previously filled the position.

A 1969 Army study of daily urine and blood samples from the Army troops along the Ho Chi Minh Trail showed there was less stress in troops than in officers coming up to the day of a predicted attack. The troops were physically preparing perimeter defenses which calmed their nerves, whereas the officers were planning for possible contingencies and unknowns.

—Based on War by Sebastian Junger, p. 34.



## DeserveD

Basic was almost over.  
We were tested with live ammo in battle simulation.  
The launcher jammed and an artillery shell exploded in my barrel.  
The flash wounded several of us,  
Instantly permanently took my hearing, and  
Admitted me to the infirmary for a couple of weeks.

I would have gone to serve, hearing or not,  
But they discharged me. "Unfit" they said.  
"If you didn't finish basic, you aren't a vet", they said.  
So I did not receive anything for my loss until 3 years ago.<sup>1</sup>  
A lifetime of missed music is now valued at \$236 a month.

—Daryl O.

<sup>1</sup>45 years after injury, disability compensation was begun.

**Note: See Book 3 for additional information and help  
for PTSD, with questions for discussion.**



Rain poncho. 4-6 ponchos  
snap together to make a tent.

## Now I Know Why There's Been So Much Rain

May the rain you experience in life  
Nourish your roots,

May the blustery wind grow your trunk strong,  
May lightning strikes produce fortified air to breathe.

Then may your branches, though scarred,  
Be a shelter and a testimony for all.

—Based on Psalm 1; Jeremiah 17:7-8.



Bamboo, by Chuck  
Keller.

*Note: The preceding poem was judged to be one of the top 3 submissions of the Sower Gallery Spirit Writing Competition, June 17, 2017.*

## Coming of Age

A 12-year-old tomboy  
Observes and identifies  
Fighter aircraft  
In tight formation over the farm.

A 13 year-old girl  
Plays with her dog on the walk from the bus,  
Waves at training jets  
Circling from Duluth.

Pilots on low maneuvers  
Make eye contact from cockpits  
And dip their wings above quilted fields,  
Picturesque lakes and pocked gravel pit,  
A place to practice emergency fuel dumps.

A 14 year-old farmer's daughter  
In raggy-bottomed cut-offs, pigtails and halter top  
Pulls miscreants from her father's ranks of vegetables,  
Smiles and salutes.

Pilots in good humor  
Watching from above  
Consider her frequent presence a destination,  
A one-person general-audiences USO show.

A 15 year-old cheerleader practices her routines,  
Sees family and friends off to war,  
Sits in her room writing letters,  
Her blue fountain pen and Flower Power stationery  
An encouragement factory.

She writes of normal things, daily things,  
Signs with "A friendly hello", "Your good friend",  
"See you soon", and "Always".  
Seals it with a prayer, stamps it halfway around the world  
To pack into a rucksack, rain and tears blurring the words.



Angela at age 13.

## Frog in the Kettle

2 female Pre-Med Biology Lab partners:

Me, a wide-eyed teen

Wanting to challenge brain cells with science,

She, a girl wanting to save the world,

Kiss every boo-boo, make it all better,

Compassion oozing through blue eyes, out every pore.

He, a male nurse, rotated out from Vietnam,

An old young man who understood triage too well;

Bodies full of working parts poured out in gory splendor,

Trying to save the human being in each one,

Wondering about having been of benefit;

Looking exhausted in his fatigues,

Wanting olive-drab to melt him again into invisibility.

The assignment: to conduct experiments on poor jungle-green frogs.

Me, rationalizing this, trying to see the benefits:

Its senseless pain for the greater good:

Our medical boot camp: redundancy getting

Us ready to combat the next step. Me: considering a hypothesis:

She, Angel of Mercy needing desensitization,

He, stuttering, shaking, needing a stiff drink of Human Kindness.

Me, taking a chance, approaching the no-nonsense Prof,

Hoping She will see the benefits.

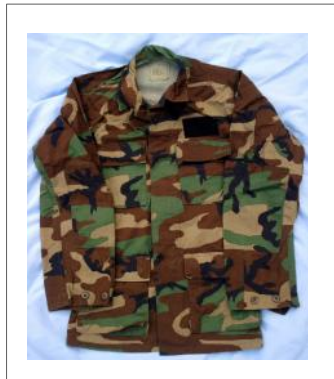
Her, making a good tactical call.

Me, donating a perfectly fine lab partner for an experiment:

She of The Big Heart to He of The Broken Corpus,

Me, going it alone. Not minding the extra work.

*—Hope it worked out to benefit you both, Mike and Debi.*





## Ambivalent to Bivouac?

I was coming up on 18 when I registered at trade school for Refrigeration and the Draft blew in. It took me to the main post office; someone had opened the Registration for Selective Service Window. I was fingerprinted, all identifying marks and scars were cataloged. They scrutinized the driver's license and social security number to make sure it was me.

I had a good classification, but school was moving faster than the war did. Being sent to battle was a prime motivator for doing well in college. Everyone was focused. When war quotas were at their highest, stipulations and stringency for degree programs wranked<sup>1</sup> up, too. It was a stress to achieve—either in school or in Basic, to claw for a better assignment; one test score, one birth date over another seemed to mean life or death.

A person didn't have the luxury of taking time to decide a long-term plan of action or any dream about the future, just lock into a course path or marching orders and keep moving forward. Would the government's whims about the "Police Action" ultimately determine if I would ever be married or have children?

The lottery came because they could not seem to fill the holes fast enough. Once the number was drawn, that was it—everyone with that birthdate was called. They took up to number 186 that year. (My birthdate had become number 273.) We kept friendship so loosely attached; Guys would see the handwriting on the wall<sup>2</sup> and march in step: to Basic Training to join the fray—or try to disappear. So little talk of what each future might hold.

Enlistment would allow specialties, but drafted guys were meat for the killing machine. Still, if I'd had a low number, I would have waited to get drafted before I would enlist. It was not in my constitution to kill or even to fight. But a big part of me was raised to be Patriotic, to do my part, to step up and be a man, as if the only attribute of Manliness is to be able to shoot someone else.

The more we discovered, the more struggle we had seeing a benevolent America behind the red-and-white striped curtain, seeing stars again in our eyes. Were we in Vietnam for the right reasons? What was the ultimate goal? Could I be willing to die for why we were really there? So few reliable sources to consult. I was not good at convincing people of my worth: I'd be just one more body to the Army.

A body to fill a hole, like everyone else 18 years old. Our lives seemed so cheap. Even though I wasn't Prime Rib, I didn't want to be Hamburger. I was willing to be a support by repairing vehicles; if they'd take the time to type me, a

parts master would be a good match. But would my help make me culpable for someone else's death? It was war then, understand, not "peacekeeping."

I'd be lying if I said I wasn't reluctant to die in Vietnam, but not going was barely a choice; they were hunting guys down and prosecuting them for not reporting. Faith that the Lord would give me strength to do whatever I had to do sustained me. I didn't think He would ask me to kill anyone. Turned out I was right.

I'd thought about it a lot. How strongly do I take "Thou shalt not kill?"<sup>3</sup> We are also to pray for and obey our leaders.<sup>4</sup> If the President commands me to go to war to kill, will the Lord take that into consideration?

Those who wanted Conscientious Objector status were subjected to character assassination, intimating that a guy who wouldn't kill was a freak of nature. Going to the Draft Office? Whoever delayed became a prime candidate to be a draftee—some even said *marked* for the front lines. If a person didn't register, he didn't get a student deferment, so he was stamped "Prime Meat A-1." It was very nearly "no win", just like the war.

Being assigned to Germany or stateside?

It didn't seem likely.

I never felt I missed something

Valuable or important in my life

Just because I was not drafted.

Conscientious Objector? I decided I didn't quite fit that criteria. I gradually hoped I'd have the strength to do what was commanded of me. I believed in the *concepts* of the country. I thought at the time we *must* be there for a decent reason, but I am a guy who doesn't make waves, doesn't feed on confrontation, doesn't fight back, so it would have been very, very difficult.

Trying to grow into adulthood during that time affected me because I didn't learn *how* to make plans or learn to consider future consequences. Too, a person used to look people in the eye when speaking. But in the 60's and '70's, there was very little eye contact, especially between guys, whether civilian or GI, maybe to keep from revealing our fear. Avoidance hasn't served us well.

We didn't dare say things, really, because everyone seemed so conflicted about service or non-service. Just kids, we barely had our *own* opinion formulated, let alone want to step on a friend's. So a few freely protested; the rest of us stayed knotted in the closet. The draft, that lottery, still divides my generation of men: those who served and those who didn't.

Society grabbed angst and anger, bombast and bullets,

But it didn't entertain questions or options very well:  
It didn't allow us the etiquette of dialogue *or* choices:

“Could I still serve somehow, and be against *this* particular war?”

“Could I bow out of *this* one and still be a patriotic American?”

Couldn't we have said honestly, “Maybe you and I feel the same ambivalence about Vietnam. I'm hoping to fade into the woodwork so they won't pick me yet, you're in Camouflage, already blending in as best you can; maybe that's all the difference there is.”

Then suddenly, Vietnam was declared “over”, just because they said it was. We left the place a wreck: ostracized Amerasians, orphans; their economy, ourselves, in shambles.

—James, 1969 high school graduate.

<sup>1</sup>Wranked: overgrown. Degree programs were suddenly augmented with rigorous coursework requirements, seemingly to intentionally cause students to wash out.

<sup>2</sup>Prophetic reference to the future Vietnam Memorial.

<sup>3</sup>Exodus 20:13. <sup>4</sup>1 Timothy 2:2.

## What's One Day More or Less?

He turned 5<sup>1</sup> on Labor Day, 1957, so became a kindergartener the next morning. That meant he was able to get a student deferment for college—the last one on the last day they were ever issued, which was also the first day of his 4-year<sup>2</sup> university program. Electrified by study, he didn't give the draft another thought until the night of the Lottery.

By contrast, his best friend Bob S. had been in the womb a couple more days: He wasn't eligible to start kindergarten until 1958. Therefore, he didn't get a student deferment for college, so had the unenviable choice of the Draft, the National Guard, or Canada. He chose the Guard, which required Basic, so he started University not 1—but 2—years later than his buddy, and had a 6-year service commitment vying for study time.

When the Lottery was instituted, Guy 1 was only number 70, (they picked up to number 95 that year) but with a 1-S,<sup>3</sup> he was hopeful for one more year in school. The war was winding down and even if they called him, including time

in Basic, he figured he might miss the action.

The Army gave everyone an IQ test so they were typing people all the way through. The stronger Uncle Sam built the political platform for war, the broader the stripe was painted for service. They took anyone over 70 IQ, but rumor was they reserved anyone higher than 149 for special projects like Intelligence and Decoding. That helped settle him a lot. Even in a desperate situation, he reasoned it was unlikely the Army would plug anyone with an Electrical Engineering Degree into the front lines.

He also calculated 9 support staff to every combat soldier, so his odds improved past the worry mark. He finished school in June, the Lottery was suddenly disbanded and Saigon fell the next spring. Even if they had drafted him the day after graduation, he might have spent only a few days grounded, packing up the stuff of war.

—Gary, 1970 high school graduate.

<sup>1</sup>Starting kindergarten never seemed so life-defining, with draft registration required by a male's 18th birthday.

<sup>2</sup>If starting in the next cohort, the Electrical Engineer program required 5 years of study.

<sup>3</sup>Code for Student Deferment. With 186 dates called the first year and 95 the second year, 85 days on the calendar were never called for the Vietnam Draft.

## Students of War, Students of Peace

### South Campus, West Bank

Ugly attacked the university one Spring day:  
The noise of demonstrations interrupted Logic 20,<sup>1</sup>

Scuffles on the street vied with wrestling ideas.  
Then there was a FFFOOP.  
We ran for the window and threw down the sash,  
Fools believing that stiff film  
Was an insulator from the unrest,  
Shutting ourselves up  
Against a gagging belch of tear gas.  
How could people possibly study with a war going on?  
Eureka! Inverse Logic:<sup>2</sup>  
We kept our heads down

Our noses buried in theory,  
Therefore, daring with syllogism<sup>2</sup> the chaos to end.

—Gary

<sup>1</sup>CB code 20: everything's fine; "Copasetic, Good Buddy"

<sup>2</sup>People cannot study because a war is going on. War is disrupting our lives. Ergo, war cannot survive if everyone becomes busy studying instead.

## North Campus

SDS<sup>1</sup> came to campus after Freshman Week,  
Inviting everyone to a meeting at Student Union.  
Curious for news of the war, I attended.  
Perhaps 30 came. As people gathered,  
I asked the speaker what his major was. He was vague.  
Being an event planner myself,  
I asked how much time it took to do all this organizing,  
When did he have time to study? Warming to my long blonde,  
He admitted he didn't actually attend campus right there or then, he  
travelled a lot.  
The co-ed in me had already seen his wedding ring,  
5:00 shadow density  
And his intensity: no 20-year-old. A student impersonator.

His demeanor made me savvy,  
But not in the direction he'd hoped.  
A demonstration was whipped up for the following day.  
I went to the Provost and asked,  
If *they* could have a sit-in,  
Could *we* stand for troop support?  
Showing colors was strange to the little middle-of-the-road campus,  
But he created a solution:  
SDS wrangled on the south side of the building,  
A bullhorn shouting what to think at their corralled handful,  
And all 5 of us found each other north of the Midian hillside,<sup>2</sup>  
Not knowing what to bleat, the silent minority.

<sup>1</sup>Students for a Democratic Society, which later was rumored to have been a CIA front organization hoping vacillating students would acquiesce to the draft rather than to the student unrest; and if they didn't, through the miracle of generational disagreement, would garner adult Silent Majority and Dove support to fund the war.

<sup>2</sup>Numbers 31:8 Biblical reference to 5 smug kings on high ground being blindsided by the Israelite Army. Our campus was built on a hill, and we 5 students had the mistaken impression we were merely taking the moral high ground by not being angry. It also echoes the reference to the Meridian/parallel dividing North and South Vietnam.

“In his famous book, Rules for Radicals, Saul Alinsky, an activist and organizer of the Far Left, makes it clear that leftists trying to effect change are to have no conversations with their opponents, because open discussion could lend credence to their opponents’ arguments and humanize them in the sight of the public...Alinsky suggests cultivating hypersensitivity to perceived slights (proffered by conservatives) as a convenient way to halt important conversations and to demonize opponents. Unfortunately, hypersensitivity is not limited to those on the Left. Conservative politicians have also adopted the strategy of feigned offense...We must start focusing on what is the right [thing to do or the wrong thing to do as a nation] and not on what someone else did.”

—Ben Carson, M.D. in One Nation: What We Can All Do to Save America's Future, 2015, p. 15.

## The Read, Why'd and Blew

*One Baby Boomer's observations about war from the 1940s forward:*

### *Late 1940s*

I've stood beside this flag,  
A veil of values, a plump of pride to swelling notes;  
This furl in the wind swelling my chest,  
Dragging me into its black-and-white living-color spell  
At the end of the 8:30 pm broadcast day, an innocent observer.

### *1950s*

I've not cast a die  
Or yet truly lived under this flag. Mine  
An illusion<sup>1</sup> of innocence:  
I've not hard-questioned its sometimes questionable standings  
Nor tested its fibrous filibustered strength,

### *1960s*

Nor looked behind the curtain of its red and blue Party window-dressings  
Nor exposed its smoke-filled bilious shenanigans—

Or struck my own ☒ to a ballot.  
I've shrugged at this flag, allegiance mere schoolroom platitude.  
Assuring the ideals be true? Foreign.

### *1970s*

I gave my time,  
Fulfilled my duty,  
I was willing to die for my country, for this flag,  
But I never made the bargain to be dragged back sick  
Ignored, haunted, and half a man because of it.

### *1980s*

I've now spent myself for this exhausted flag  
A sheet of shreds, a tatter of tenacity  
This white of my knuckles  
Still gripping **blued** metal  
In the fading rain.

### *1990s*

I've suffered for this flag,  
A suffering more dear than dyeing a clearly marked battlefield  
For an altruistic cause at a well-defined moment.  
A tired shroud of mere survival, beaten by the wind of relived recollection,  
Great drops of blood easier than this great sweat of memory.

### *2000s*

I've died for this flag  
A stripe of strike, a vein of victory  
This **red** of my allegiance, this **blue** of my loyalty  
Pouring out duty,  
Its **red ochre** iron flowering florid<sup>2</sup> in conflict's ground.

### *2010s*

I've lain under this flag  
A cerement<sup>3</sup> of strength over an expressionless empty,  
A Bailiwick,<sup>4</sup> an epitome of veils; these lips of **blue**  
Neither objecting to the heat of battle nor  
Smacking over another Cold War.



<sup>1</sup>Illusion is a filmy tulle fabric. Layered over an opaque one, it was a popular fashion statement of the 1960s. Illusion: being intellectually misled; causing misinterpretation.

<sup>2</sup>Florid iron flowering: iron-rich blood takes on a distinctive odor and color when exposed to jungle heat and humidity.

<sup>3</sup>A waxed cloth to cover a corpse.

<sup>4</sup>Bailiwick: a special domain (Bailey: a place for; the space between two outer walls of a castle; inside hiding spot.) Beetle Bailey, a popular military cartoon character for Baby Boomers, was thought to have only air between his ears, but he also often created safe or sacred space for a peaceful activity, such as watching butterflies, smelling flowers or napping.

### **Important dates in American History**

<http://www.datesandevents.org/events-timelines/14-american-history-timeline.htm> including dates like National Anthem Day declared March 3, 1931.

For a list of days when to display the flag from sunrise to sunset as weather permits, ask for “Memobook 11”, Disabled American Veterans, Box 14201, Cincinnati, Ohio 45250-0301.

Check your local county government center to sign up for state e-alerts on when and why to fly the flag half-staff.

An editor in Cincinnati, puffing<sup>1</sup> air-tight caskets, said, “No person having tried one of these coffins will ever use any other.” —“Iowa State Register”, Des Moines, Iowa, on Friday, July 7, 1882, “Thistles” column. From family archives.

<sup>1</sup>That is, advertising using embellishment.

## Hair-Razing Trail

The military machine recruited soldiers from  
The American Indian Reservations as jungle trackers  
But after they became Marine Brothers with shaved heads,  
Why did their accuracy drop from a hair’s breadth into an abyss—  
Despite 2 pairs of stalkings in combat boots.

It was discovered long hair is an extension of the nervous system  
Enhancing intuition, creating antennae, providing a sixth sense.  
Oops.



When Anglo vets got out of Vietnam  
Many grew theirs long, too,  
Trying to feel again.  
The Beast of War, it seems,  
Shaves heads so we can't detect  
Its logic has a bald spot.

—With thanks to Gary

## Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow

Old Testament David “hid in the mountains with 400  
Whose faces were like the faces of lions,<sup>1</sup>  
Who lived like wild goats,”<sup>2</sup>  
And kept an army of 3000 stealthfully at bay  
While the kingdom was in contest.

Biblical Samson<sup>3</sup> should have paid attention  
To what the raised hairs on the back  
Of his neck were telling him;  
Instead, his enemies dispatched them;  
His hands were tied.

<sup>1</sup> Chronicles 12:8: Not regulation; scruffy; rogue warriors.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Samuel 24:2. Kashmir goats of the area have particularly long hair, live precariously and thrive on craggy hillsides.

<sup>3</sup> Judges 16:18-22. Enamored with his own strength, Samson was enticed into a compromising position, then provided with a crewcut by his enemies.

## Stealth Sheath

A stab in the dark  
Decides who is dominant  
Whom submissive;  
A stab in the dark determines  
Who will speak in the morning,  
Whom cannot.



Black Cold War era and forward Special Forces uniform, developed but never used officially except for mercenaries and contractors.



Bayonet for M-16 Rifle, Vietnam Era, was strapped to the soldier's leg to use as a knife or affixed to his rifle.

## Pop Goes

My M-16 grew slimy rust overnight in the jungle heat, despite effort.  
Once it misfired. The only thing that saved me was a vine-covered tree—

Adrenaline propelled me up the trunk into the canopy  
And I waited, a mere snake's tongue from the enemy.  
From then on I watched for a chance at an AK-47

And found one at the end of my Bowie knife.  
“My” Kalashnikov was sturdy, reliable as a dog, compact, lightweight.  
It could dispatch 7.62 mm rounds in fully automatic mode,<sup>1</sup>  
The tumbling action of the high muzzle velocity<sup>2</sup>  
Contributed to, shall we say, its faithfulness.

Operator accuracy was not a major requirement, which was good in the dark.  
I suddenly had thirty bullets at a moment's notice between me and the VC  
But its pop drew friendly fire like fleas. So I learned  
To make it bark the Star Spangled Banner  
And hoped our grunts were singing along.

—“Butch”

<sup>1</sup>An AK (Auto-Kalashnikov) reports like a machine gun, as long as the trigger is squeezed.

<sup>2</sup>Machining inside the barrel creates the producing-speed of the bullet after firing. <http://www.vietvet.org/glossary.htm>



**The National Veterans Art Museum in Chicago** has an unusual work of art. When visitors first enter the museum, they will hear a sound like wind chimes coming from above them and their attention will be drawn upward 24 feet to the ceiling of the two-story atrium.

Dog tags of the more than 58,000 service men and women who died in the Vietnam War hang from the ceiling of the National Vietnam Veterans Art Museum in Chicago installed for Veterans Day, November 11, 2010. The 10-by-40-foot sculpture, entitled “Above & Beyond”, was designed by Ned Broderick and Richard Stein.

The tens of thousands of metal dog tags are suspended, 1-inch apart, from fine lines that allow them to move and chime with shifting air currents. Museum employees using a kiosk and laser pointer help visitors locate the exact dog tag with the imprinted name of their lost friend or relative. <http://www.nvam.org/>



Close up of dog tags by Lucas Carter, reprinted with permission from "The American Legion Magazine" © March, 2016. [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org) During "The Conflict" protesters and the news media were calling for a review of total casualties and daily body counts, wondering if they were accurate or low-balled.



58,000 dog tags suspended from the ceiling of the NVA Museum in Chicago. Photo used with permission from Keeley Construction, Inc. [www.keeley.com](http://www.keeley.com)

## Cleaning House

What is it  
About life  
That demands our attention  
Keeps us beating our hearts  
Even when emergency rooms  
Paddles and monitors  
Are nowhere in sight?

What is it  
About the will to live  
That creates order  
Prioritizes the facts  
Triages the urgencies in neat, stacked piles  
And helps us work through them, one by one,  
Until the crisis has passed?

—From I Am Still Me! Brains are Injured, Hearts are Mended by the author, p. 74.

## Help! Medic

I was a medical corpsman in Da Nang in '65.  
There was a kid  
Just *a kid*  
Who'd been wounded in a firefight.  
I patched him up.



2 medic packs.

They sent him back to the fighting before he could even heal.  
He had no stamina.  
The likelihood of infection in that jungle heat was almost assured.  
But I didn't have to worry about that.  
He was struck immediately on the battlefield.  
It's like both sides could hardly wait to see him dead.  
Not too much made sense to me about war after that.

—Anonymous

## Is there a Doctor in the House?

If grade school friends came over, I was drafted into their war games,  
But I always wanted to be the medic, because I didn't want to kill anything.  
The biggest problem for medics in combat is compassion fatigue.

Add to that the lack of supplies and evac support,  
Then being shot at without respect for Geneva Convention Rules.<sup>1</sup>  
Add to that the lack of value for human life from some commanders.  
Then there are the sights, sounds and smells of combat:

Of phosphorous burning holes in bowel,  
Wild screams of a GI watching his own gut  
Being eaten by eerie green heat.  
Add to that the futility of war: that no one ever truly wins;  
After all the carnage, we look around and ask, "For what?"

—Anonymous

<sup>1</sup>Referring to rules of war etiquette.

Photo of Maggie's truck taken by Chris Cram, contributed by Kenneth Roberts to Noonie Fortin, for her website dedicated to Martha Raye: <http://www.colonelmaggie.com/vets.htm> This truck became well known in the BanMe Thout area of Vietnam in 1971. Used by permission of Ms. Fortin.



## Entertain the Idea

Just before Thanksgiving 1967

We were scheduled to have singer and comedienne Martha Raye  
As entertainment for a USO show.

We were ferrying dead and wounded from a large GRF<sup>1</sup>.

We'd run out of body bags by noon, so the Hook<sup>2</sup>

Was pretty rough in the back.

We couldn't manage a program that evening with all the triage.

As it turned out,

Martha landed in her Special Forces beret<sup>3</sup> and jungle fatigues,

Helped process wounded. Raye set the tables,<sup>4</sup>

Assisted with surgical shifts and gave breaks

At the Army Field Hospital in Pleiku,

Exactly the spot of sunshine we needed.

Martha is the only woman<sup>5</sup> buried

In the Special Forces cemetery at Ft. Bragg.

—Author unknown, from "Martha Raye, Who Knew?" received by e-mail 10/4/13. Details corrected by Noonie Fortin, First Sergeant, (Retired), U.S. Army, biographer and author of Memories of Maggie.

<sup>1</sup>Ground Relay Facility.

<sup>2</sup>CH-47 Chinook helicopter.

<sup>3</sup>Martha Raye was given honorary rank of Colonel, with uniform and medals, which she proudly wore when she visited and entertained soldiers in combat zones, often at her own expense.

<sup>4</sup>Prepared instrument trays for operating room tables. Although Maggie had very little medical training, "she was a fast learner and often helped in the military hospitals doing all types of things—extra hands were always welcomed." —Noonie Fortin.

<sup>5</sup>Statistic viable at the time she was buried. The Afghanistan War changed that.

## War Games

When we played monopoly  
He always chose the battleship.

He played soldier every day  
Even before he got his Daisy BB Gun.

Vietnam was starving for hungry pilots.  
He bit.

—A Brother



Angela with the Luger-Tuber in kitchen-jungle training; no match for a Salad Shooter.

## Things I Have to Do Today

After a failed mission  
With *beaucoup* casualties  
Fear of a tarnished service record  
Choked me.  
What other job could I possibly do,  
When all I knew was dropping bombs?

The weariness lifts:  
“Only three things are required of me:  
To love mercy,  
To do justly,  
And to walk humbly with my God.”

—Inspired by Micah 6:8b and a combat pilot.



The Luger-Tuber, the original potato gun, Grown by Jesse Hunt.

## A Family Affair

It's a family value: graduate, enlist, marry.  
Grandpas, cousins, both men and women  
Have made the service a career.

My Army uncle wrote home  
Anxious to take leave for his senses.  
He never made it back.

My female cousin signed up for the Navy on a lark.  
When graduation day came, she fluttered,  
Preferred to be a free bird,  
And thought her parents would help turn the key to her cage.  
They wouldn't;  
She migrated—and loved it.

Another uncle returned on leave  
Sat against the wall and fell dead asleep.  
When mom woke him for supper  
He threw her across the room.  
She nudged him with a broom handle after that.

—Sue T.

### How Green Was My Valley?

Bunker yard at Firebase Buttons near the base of Bao Yo Mountain  
Was bulldozed stark, heavily sprayed with defoliants,  
A toxic dump swept by orange dust devils as vehicles passed.  
There were *a lot* of passing vehicles.

Even though our outpost at topography's apex  
Got shelled by the Viet Cong. Every. Single. Day.  
And every single day our base camp in the valley got shot at, too.  
Bao Yo itself was a verdant cone of trees,

An up-facing foliage-tunnel  
Of vibrant growth between the two.  
In the midst of all the bleakness.  
It was restful, surprisingly restorative

To gaze at that voluptuous vortex in the setting sun.  
In the middle of the heat of hell,  
I was juxtaposed at the mouth  
Of the Garden of Eden.

—From interview with James Kane, 6/28/2015.

**“Before leave I showered 3 times to try to get the orange Firebase Buttons dust out of my hair. It still stained the pillowcase when I met my wife and child in Hawaii for R&R.”  
—James Kane.**

## Ciao, Italia

After two years of classes I was no longer sure why I was in the UMD Industrial Ed Department day after day. My lottery number was 91, so rather than drop out and wait for the draft to carry me away, I went down to the recruiter's office with a buddy and enlisted after finals the spring of 1971.

It worked out OK, though. Rather than Vietnam, the Air Force kept its promise and shipped me to the Security Service base in Italy where I was part of a team that monitored coded messages on shortwave radio for the war effort.



Sergeant D.C., USAFSS.

Everything's been declassified now, the base is closed and all the technology has changed. With our huge circular antenna array (we called it "the elephant cage") we listened to all Soviet bloc diplomatic transmissions. It was our job to find, copy, record and send them on to NSA headquarters stateside for analysis. During the October War, 1973, we experienced the highest volume of radio traffic in my 3.5 year assignment.

Our little base was on high alert and was swarming with UN troops from northwest Europe bivouacking for a few days in a fenced tent city en-route to Israel. That's as close as I got during my enlistment to a fighting war and it was sobering to think that maybe some of those guys on the other side of the chain link might not make an upright return trip. (They all made it home. [https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/statsbyyear\\_1\\_8.pdf](https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/statsbyyear_1_8.pdf))

We weren't informed officially of any details and "The Stars and Stripes" was always stale, so the way we kept up with current news was to read the teletype print-out of AP that we bootlegged on a spare equipment rack. We could see the base commander hunched over the printer, too, several times a day during that time.

About 3 months later our unit received a letter of commendation for copying valuable transmissions during that tense period. In the letter, they printed one of those decrypted hot messages to encourage us. However, it was word for word one of those AP stories I remember reading on the teletype. Instead of making us feel proud in our accomplishment, that "commendation" left me wondering what a waste of so much manpower and money to discover that the Russians were passing AP stories to each other! Or, what does the brass think of us that they would insult our intelligence through such a phony attaboy? That experience had significant influence on my resolve to never be a lifer.



—D.C., Sergeant, USAFSS, brother of the author.

D.C. and his wife brought this Frittelli recipe back to Minnesota from Italy:

### *Frittelli*

#### *Ingredients:*

*1 garlic clove, extra-virgin olive oil, 1 tin diced tomatoes (about 15 oz.), salt, potatoes, handful of flour, chopped fresh basil, diced ham or other meat.*

#### *Making it:*

*Fry a clove of garlic in olive oil until it turns to a golden brown. Add the drained tomatoes, cooked diced meat and a pinch of salt. Cook for 30 minutes. Add a touch of basil.*

*Boil half a kilo of potatoes (a little more than 1 pound) in salty water. Once soft, skin them and mash them into a paste with the flour. Add more salt if needed.*

*Form and roll the potato mixture into disc shapes 10 cm. (4 inches) in diameter. Add tomato and meat mixture. Fold dough over and match edges to make a pouch. Running a moist finger around the edges, pinch dough together to seal. (Water is volatile in hot fat, so make sure the vegetables are drained and the crust doesn't leak.)*

*Deep fry in hot fat for a couple minutes until dough is golden brown. Drain and serve.*

### Off Base

If people don't truly mingle with the locals when they travel, they have no clue how others see America. Where I was stationed in the early 1970s, almost everyone loved America. There was political unrest in pockets of the country, but not over what *we* were doing in the world.

I was surprised by Italian infrastructure compared to how much we took for

granted at home as American citizens: reliable electricity, clean water, available food we didn't always have to grow ourselves.

By contrast, in the country where I was stationed, there was little reliance on refrigeration because electricity was so sporadic. Off-base we had blackouts all the time; no one paid much attention, just kept working as usual. We were counseled to drink water only from the base; food, uncooked, was available only in the open-air market from noon to 2:00 pm.

On my part, there *was* a little culture shock coming back, mostly being surprised people didn't appreciate more the conveniences of living in America.

—D.C., Airman 1<sup>st</sup> Class

### *se è proprio necessario*<sup>1</sup>

I lived overseas off base with my Air Force husband. Italian men had a reputation of pinching women. I had a baby by then, so I was cautious about when I went to market. But I found they never bothered a married woman.

Italians are culturally very vocal, passionate people, visual communicators, outspoken with definite opinions. By contrast, my husband and I are both Scandinavian introverts! After we realized that, it was an overall very good experience.

Dean learned to speak Italian fluently with our new friends; I only learned a few words. I wish I'd taken better advantage of the opportunity to experience another culture, but women there mostly stayed at home unless accompanied by their husbands. We did take several trips with friends to see as much as we could on passes.

Our stately apartment had 12' ceilings, polished alabaster floors and a large portico. The wonderful, cool stone on hot days also meant it was cooler at night, with no heat source. Still, it was hard to settle for a small American apartment—at 3 times the price—after experiencing Old World “luxury”, even if that meant we'd also had only a European icebox and 2 bare electric bulbs as conveniences.

—Donna, wife of an Airman, stationed off-base.

<sup>1</sup>Italian for “in a pinch”.

## One Mom of One Son

Our second son, Lawrence Bronczyk, enlisted as an Army Paratrooper in May, 1967. After training, he came home for Thanksgiving, then was deployed for search & destroy missions in Vietnam. His Commanding Officer told them only half would come back. Larry was out in the field from November to May, never sleeping in a bed, except for two nights in the base hospital after stepping on a Punji stick.<sup>1</sup>

The unit took jars of peanut butter out on patrol. At night they would open the jars and light the surface oil as a lamp. Nighttime was hard. During the day they would have befriended local kids, but at night, some of those kids would shoot at them.

Larry and a friend routinely swapped out on patrol as radio man. One day they traded places in the rotation. His friend stayed at the receiver on base, Larry stepped second in line on patrol with the radio on a routine drop—if you can call it that. Usually the helicopter found a place to land, the platoon unloaded in less than 60 seconds, and the helicopter lifted off before the Viet Cong could start shooting. It must have been quite a sinking feeling, seeing that helicopter disappear and be left deep in enemy territory day after day.

I never saw him again once he left the States. This did not surprise me. I'd prayed every day, pleading for his safety, but one day the Lord gently said, "I'm sorry, but he will not be coming back." I knew in my heart that it was true. "Lord, he is Yours; do Your will for him," I prayed instead.

My son was killed instantly when he stepped out of the helicopter onto a land mine.

Larry had been looking forward to R & R, but wanted to wait for his 20th birthday to celebrate out of harm's way. He died 6 weeks before that, on Mother's Day, May 12, 1968. It was the week of the highest reported fatalities in the war, with the government having reported over 500 young men losing their lives that one week during the Tet Offensive.<sup>2</sup>

The morning the military sent a representative to tell us what had happened, I had seen the khaki government car with a man studying a map as I went to pick up the girls midmorning from school for appointments in Duluth. By the time we got back home, everyone in town seemed to know there was ominous news because the soldier had been inquiring how to find us. He had checked the school to see if there were siblings, our neighbors to see if they knew where we worked. The man spoke to my husband Stan at work, but it is

government policy to personally share the news with both parents, so the officer waited 5 hours for me to come home. Stan made some coffee, I rummaged for some cookies when he came to the door. With the look on Stan's face and Pastor Ericson already at our house, *I knew* what his news would be.

It took 11 days to get Larry's body back. We were informed about when it would arrive so we made funeral arrangements, but waited to announce a date until the casket came into the U.S. A young man, Keith Settles, same rank as Larry's, accompanied his casket on the plane from the East Coast to our little town's funeral home. We asked him to stay overnight at our house. He ended up sleeping in Larry's bed.

Larry had been a basketball and baseball player, was well-liked by everyone. The Superintendent excused Juniors and Seniors to attend his funeral. His teachers and principal came. Most of the student body ended up at the church with us. Keith stood at attention right by the casket throughout the visitation and funeral. He said it was a privilege, his duty, and also one of the hardest things a person could ever do.

The whole town responded to our loss. Flags were half-staff all down the street. There was a motorcade of all our friends. Everybody knew everybody in our small town, and our loss was theirs, too. We had lots of support. Larry was the first one to die in Vietnam in our area. VFW Post #160 added his name to their flag.

It was a closed casket. After the funeral, even though we couldn't view him, we knew he was gone. I'd written to him almost every day, but after that I had no feeling there was someone I needed to compose a letter to. I never cried; as I say, the Lord had prepared me to face his death.

Significantly after the funeral, we received a package in the mail. He'd had his buddies take some pictures of himself on base, and then had sent them to be developed. The photos returned to Vietnam, then eventually found their way to our house. It was wonderful to see his face again. We appreciated seeing the last things he had seen, his gift to us. I'd asked once why he wanted to enlist. Larry said, "I'm single. If I go, someone with a wife and children won't have to."

—Rosella Bronczyk, mother.

<sup>1</sup>Short sharpened sticks driven upright in a pattern usually on sloped ground by the Viet Cong, intended for impalement injury to unsuspecting ground troops.

<sup>2</sup>367 casualties reported 5/12/1968.

Gold Star Moms provides support for mothers who have lost sons or daughters in the war.  
<http://www.goldstarmoms.org>

Society of Military Widows for all U.S. uniformed services 800-842-3451 <http://www.militarywidows.org> ; [benefits@militarywidows.org](mailto:benefits@militarywidows.org)

“The Tet Offensive: 1968, was the deadliest year of the Vietnam War, with over 16,500 Americans (average of 317/week) killed, but also a tactical disaster for the Communists. The Viet Cong were totally destroyed as a fighting force and were never again strong enough to mount a Phase III offensive in the Maoist style. The NVA was beaten so soundly that Comrade Giap later confessed they were almost to the point of giving up, and they reverted to only Phase II operations while licking their wounds for months to come.

But in the U.S. the battle was seen in a completely different light. Especially prominent was CBS News Anchor Walter Cronkite’s misinterpretation of the results. When he decided it was a U.S. defeat and pronounced the war unwinnable, a large section of the American populace believed him, so it became a huge strategic defeat. President Johnson summed it up :“If I’ve lost Cronkite, I’ve lost middle America.” Having a tactical victory turned into a strategic defeat by the media is a problem the military has still not forgotten.” —W.W.D. <http://www.com/question/index?qid=20080420133740AANXoKy>

“Prayer is not asking.  
Prayer is putting oneself in the hands of God,  
At His disposition,  
To listen to His voice in the depths of one’s heart.”

—Mother Teresa

## Fire Base

I

We flew in to Bien Hoa Air Force Base on a commercial jet liner with regular stewardesses and everything. We were treated really swell, a bunch of carefree 18 year-olds, for the 23 hours in the air. Some of the stewardesses were crying when we got off the plane. It dawned on me later they knew some of us wouldn’t return.

A distinctive odor met me when I disembarked. The humidity would not let the combination of cooking spices and fumes from their sewage system dissipate.

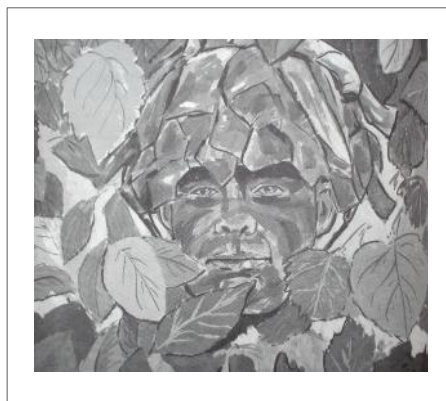
It seemed impossible to untangle the two; surprisingly it didn't take much time at all to get used to it. In 2-5 days we were off to our unit.

I arrived on Vietnamese soil directly south of Saigon in January 1969 from Basic Training in Ft. Campbell, KY, and Advanced Infantry Training in Washington State. They'd identified high mechanical aptitude in me and wanted me to go to helicopter engine repair school, which would require 3 years of service. There was no way I wanted to be in the army more than 2 years. The higher-ups were trying to counsel me to see the light—that I would be support staff instead of infantry—but I was adamant. I often wonder how the rest of my life would have turned out if I'd come out with a skill like that. What I took instead was combat engagement. I knew exactly what my government was calling me to do.

I was assigned to night ambush patrol. We would go out in the daytime to set up in a circle or on a canal. We always set up a perimeter guard system. Then we went back in after dark. Because no one was supposed to be out and about at night (the locals knew the rules), we could therefore assume movements were VC insurgents.

We set up Claymore mines; they had a variety of traps for us, too! When we were out on a mission, our fire base had new night radar to oversee us. There was a battalion of support at the fire base we could call. I can never remember a time we were short of ammo or needed supplies that didn't come. There was some comfort in that.

**Illustration of a soldier in camouflage from Army Field Manual, FM 5-20.**



Each of us had 4 canteens, personal ammo, rations, plus I had 60 pounds of machine gun and its 1000 rounds of ammo to carry. I'd usually lay down to slide my arms into my pack and 2 guys would pull me up and stand me on my feet. An infantry machine gunner at age 18-19 is pretty fit and builds up the necessary muscles pretty fast. The assistant machine gunner would have another 500 rounds, and the medic could carry ammo for us sometimes but he had packs of supplies, too. We tried to help the medics with their packs as well, until they got light enough to manage.

Everybody realized how crucial medical stuff was. We could refill at the First-Aid station at Battalion Fire Base. It was pretty well stocked and supplied. Helicopters took us on missions and landed just outside our perimeter. Artillery could be called on by our radio man if we got in trouble. We had bunkers to sleep in we had dug ourselves—we checked for snakes and spiders before we jumped in if we could. We used poncho liners as blankets and were warm all the time except if we got wet in monsoon season or crossing a canal. Besides rations and water, hot meals were flown out to us sometimes. We got mail call once in awhile even though we were out on patrol for 2 weeks at a time, maybe longer. If we got in trouble I'd have the radio man call in jet strikes. The best drinking water was in bomb craters. The fresh rain water smelled like gunpowder, but it had no germs. (Sulfur, an antibiotic, and charcoal, a water purifier, are both in gunpowder.)



## II

We'd find things to do to lighten things up a little. The assistant machine gunner and I looked a lot alike, so we would trade off shaving mustaches to confuse people. We had some fun in the middle of it all.

A person goes into combat pretty much the same as they will come out. In other words, if you are prone to nightmares, you will surely have them when you get away from the situation. If you have a calm take-charge demeanor, it will serve you well there, too.

Merely days before we came in, the previous group of guys got slaughtered. You might remember the Tet Offensive. Some guards had fallen asleep one night; the camp was overrun. Most of the rest were shot while sleeping in their tents. The few guys who managed to jump in the river and swim downstream became our trainers. It helped a lot to have experienced people show us the ropes, teach us how to look for booby traps, understand strategy and build on it. We ended up learning and applying what they had discovered from trial and error in the jungle, added to it, then passed that body of knowledge on to the next recruits. No one was stingy with advice on how to

do the job or stay alive. Those few survivors made our training effective and elite. If someone else got in trouble, we were called.

If I had some advice for young recruits, it would be to listen to the old guys that have been there ahead of you, watch and learn what they do in a situation, and watch each other's back. There is a purpose for everything. For example, we tightened the strings on the bottom of our pant legs to discourage leeches while trudging through standing water. For those that wiggled in we used lit cigarettes or matches to get them off our skin. They weren't too bad—there are more leeches in Minnesota than in Vietnam. The VC leeches are just bigger, that's all.

Growing up in Minnesota, I was used to paddling a canoe; it's not much different than a sampan. The guys noticed "Hey, Gary can stand up in one!" There'd been lots of foibles, so I taught the guys to sit down Indian-style and I paddled them over to outposts. I told them if they didn't move during the trip, they'd stay dry. I never tipped anyone over. Mine was the longest waiting line to ferry across the canals!

We also rode the river boats a few times. One night we set up on a river. I carried a machine gun, the assistant machine gunner had extra ammo, the radio man was with me. We were on a back side, the rest of the platoon was on the canal. We heard a transmission: "Sampans coming down river." That meant be on the alert because the Viet Cong often used river transportation couched as innocent traffic. They would load the boat with their wives and children to remove suspicion. In fact, any women and children they could commandeer would do.

Fire opened up and there was quite a volley. Then there was a lull. After a couple of minutes we heard babies crying on the boats. Then another burst of machine gun from the other side of the canal and the sampan fell deadly quiet. One of the hardest things I then had to do was to walk through a village. We were all on very high alert. There was a great and ominous silence. We kept walking and looking straight ahead, knowing the villagers had also heard those children's cries.

A hamlet might be 4-5 hootches with related families. If all we saw were women and children, boys up to 10 years old, we would suspect either VC sympathizers or that the VC had helped the men and boys "volunteer" for service. We'd check on it. Sometimes we would use a village as an outpost to lay up for a few days. It felt like home away from home because normal things were going on like cooking supper and children playing. It was good R&R to see family life. They kept their ducks tethered to keep them close to the hootch. A soldier could buy a whole duck and Mama-san would cook it for 50¢. We could also get duck egg breakfasts. There was a rain barrel by each hootch where we



were welcomed to fill our canteens. We learned to stir the water with a stick to see if a snake would come up to the surface before we took a drink.

Vietnamese women appreciated the protection, so they would come out to our remote outposts with Coca Cola. They always wanted the bottles back because there was a 5¢ deposit on them. If we were on the move, we'd have to ante up the deposit!

We would visit with the families, give kids candy, see if anyone needed health care for ailments, try to get those folks airlifted to the MASH units for help. Scratches could get infected quickly in the jungle. My only wound, if you could call it that, was a spot on my left calf—probably a skin ailment that I scratched and got infected—about the size of a 50¢ piece. It was about 1/4" deep. I had to stay in the MASH unit for a week and see medics about it every day. I got 2 penicillin shots a day with a long thick needle, but it cleared up.

A benefit our company enjoyed was a "Tiger Scout", a VC converted to our side. "Sao" was a real nice guy. He'd walk with us, find and point out booby traps on trails, interpret for us to the locals. Some of our guys who could speak French or passable Vietnamese said he always conducted himself honestly and interpreted correctly.

One night we set up on a trail: I was on backside on a secondary trail. Although I was exhausted, it was my turn for guard duty. The guys to the left and right of me laid down and were instantly sleeping. My machine gun was the only thing keeping me company and it wasn't all set up yet. In the moonlight, I spotted 2 VC coming on the trail and grabbed the starlight scope, which made them almost daylight-visible. As I was quietly and frantically trying to install the last pieces of the machine gun, they saw us, too, and ran away.

There were times we'd be out and a whole column of VC would be coming down a trail. We'd lay low 200 yards away, dead quiet. I'd call in artillery and out would come helicopters: one bombardier in a small glass bubble on the underside of aircraft would drop flares to light up the area so the airplanes could improve accuracy. At night every 5<sup>th</sup> shell was a red tracer which created a solid red line to the ground for our benefit. Dubbed Iroquois Warriors, the Cobra Helicopters<sup>1</sup> had 2 pilots, one in front of the other, flying support for us.

As machine gunner, I was always last on, first off, in a hot landing zone. Sometimes we were dropped off by helicopter and then walked back to base camp; sometimes the chopper came back for us. One time they flew a lot of us in, dropped us off as a battalion. We could hear the VC dropping mortars down the tube before the launch—*thoomp*—but couldn't seem to locate the position of the source in the

dark. Fire Base sent the same number of helicopters back for us, but there were only 1/3 of us left alive.

I heard that some Minnesota guys had gotten killed farther North than we were. The farther north, the rougher the fighting. We were assigned to keep Highway 4 (running east and west) secure at what became the border between North and South Vietnam. After 6 months securing the border between South (no-firing zone) and North (free-fire), I was part of the first 25,000 they pulled out of Vietnam. Guys were rotating out all the time, of course, but we were south of Saigon, and by then there was not much going on there; the South Vietnamese army was taking over for us, we were just helping the transition with night ambush patrols. Our purpose was to help the South Vietnamese army so they could do the lion's share of defending their own country from Communism. We were on the right side of the conflict. The villagers were supportive. People can do a lot if they feel they are on the right side<sup>2</sup>, doing some good.

### III

Close to the end of my tour, an Agent Orange-like chemical was dropped in our proximity, and the wind changed. We weren't allowed to cross the highway, so that stuff landed on us—our eyes burned. I set the machine gun on the highway—I was near-sighted anyway, but suddenly I *really* couldn't see for tears due to that cloud. I pointed the gun in the direction of an oncoming vehicle. Everyone was lying on the highway, incapacitated. We were sitting ducks, needing some cover. I recognized the jeep as American only due to the blowing horn. Out steps a colonel. A lieutenant came over and got between us and told me to get some glasses on. When I recovered a little, I apologized.

### IV

When we were in Nam, black and white people relied on each other. We had each other's backs. But when we landed in Hawai'i, the blacks regrouped to themselves, listened to their own music, celebrated apart from whites. It surprised me and I didn't like it—I'd grown used to mixed company, their friendship. Maybe they retreated to another kind of survival mode, ready for re-entry into the States. It was 1969, things weren't rosy for Blacks back home. That's for sure. They may have thought *I* wouldn't stay friends when we got back.

Our unit never had a reunion. I lived in Georgia in the 1980s and saw one of the guys a few times a year. As movies came out about the war, we'd see them. "Platoon" was accurate. "Apocalypse Now", "Saving Private Ryan", "Forest Gump", "American Sniper"; some fit us, some didn't.

I realize now having been in Vietnam is part of who I am, but I no longer think of those times every moment, every day, every month.

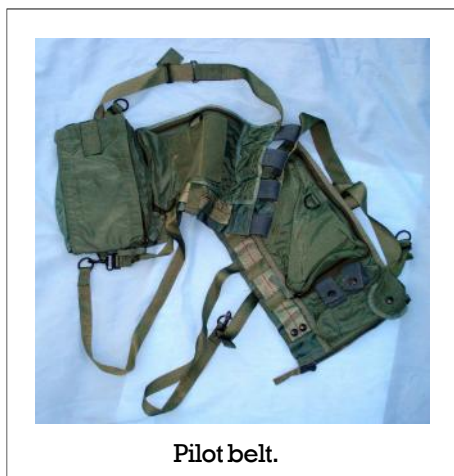
—“SPEC 4” (Rank Specialist 4) Gary T.

<sup>1</sup>In Shakopee, MN, at Dangerfield Park there is a Cobra Helicopter from the era.

<sup>2</sup>**Myth:** “The Domino Theory” was proved false.

**Fact:** “The Domino Theory”, asserting one country would fall to Communism after another if a war was not fought in Vietnam, was accurate. The ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries: Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand, stayed free of Communism because of the U.S. commitment to Vietnam. Without American intervention, Communism would have swept all the way to the Malacca Straits, south of Singapore and of great strategic importance to the free world. If you ask people who live in these countries, they have a different opinion from the American news media. The Vietnam War was the turning point for Communism.

—Captain Marshall Hanson, USNR (Ret.) and Captain Scott Beaton, Statistical Sources.



## A Sister of the World

Lawrence’s (from “One Mom of One Son”. p. 164) sister Roseanna went to Vietnam as one of 3 Wycliffe missionary teachers at a K-6<sup>th</sup> grade jungle school “to see where Larry had been”. Parents living deep in the jungle sent their children to the school for at least a month at a time.

War was encroaching; things were getting tenuous. One day the teachers received a telegram to move out the next morning: all American non-coms were being evacuated. Our commanders estimated the Viet Cong would be overrunning the

area by the next day. The teachers had no choice but to bring along all the children. They were airlifted to Saigon just as the city was falling. After a quick discussion about the legalities involved with the children (they clearly weren't orphans at that moment), it was decided to airlift the teachers and children to the Philippines for safe keeping. Roseanna thought she would be sent with her students, pleaded with the authorities to let her board, too, so they would have someone familiar with them. But there was no more room on the plane, so she had to wait for the next flight. The children had only ropes strung across the cargo bay to hold on to. Having no experience with flight, they were unprepared for the force of takeoff. The load shifted and the plane crashed barely after liftoff, killing all her students before her eyes.

Perhaps had she been on that flight, instructing them what to do, showing by example, helping them stay calm, they would have survived. The remaining students were relocated to the Philippines with Roseanna and the other two teachers where they finished the school year. The children were later reunited, as best as possible, with their parents.

My advice? Love your kids while you have them. It doesn't take a war to remove them from you. Anything can happen. Any time.

—Rosella Bronczyk, mother

## The Day Into Which Saigon Fell

The sky was full<sup>1</sup>  
The streets were overflowing.



Vietnamese Bible, 1975.

### **Our operation:**

To be a ghost of the night, a Spectre from the north:  
A phantom lethal air asset with experimental night tactical capabilities.

### **Our job:**

To provide air cover<sup>2</sup> for helicopters into and out  
of our embassy that last night.

### **Our problem:**

Those blades created a vacuum that sucked in the North Vietnamese.

Knowing *we* were in the sky to protect those civilian passengers,  
And fearing our stealth bite, the enemy ignored  
The snack of Hueys overstuffed with women and children

And spent all their hunger barraging us instead,<sup>3</sup>  
Trying to buy a final trophy  
With a May Day budget of rockets.

—With retired Lt. Col. Robert White

<sup>1</sup>The 16th Special Operations Squadron 388<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing out of Royal Thai Air Force Base, Korat, Thailand. One of a 9-member flight crew on an AC-130 (code name Spectre) gunship. Reference to the intensity of battle, similar to Fort McHenry in 1812, when the “Star Spangled Banner” was penned.

<sup>2</sup>If the enemy fired on our helicopters, we had permission to return fire on any and all enemy positions. For this mission in April 1975, helicopters were to drop passengers on an aircraft carrier 15 miles out in the Bay and return for more. The job got bigger fast as the Embassy gates were stormed and people poured in with the hope of escape.

<sup>3</sup>“I believe there have only been 280 Presidential Unit Citations ever granted in our nation’s history. While I was assigned to the 16<sup>th</sup> SOS, our unit received two. One was for the evacuation of our embassy in Saigon.” —Lt. Col. Robert White

Note: The Presidential Unit Citation is the highest honor a unit can receive. A unit must be set apart in performing with gallantry, determination and *esprit de corps* in accomplishing its mission with marked distinction under difficult and hazardous conditions against an armed enemy of the U.S. It is the unit equivalent of the Distinguished Service Cross for an individual, no greater award for heroism in battle.

## Mayaguez Incident<sup>1</sup>

Cambodian Swift Boats seized  
A U.S. merchant container ship  
In international sea lanes.  
Khmer Rouge rubbed its red tide  
Over the end of the War.

—With Lt. Col. Robert White



<sup>1</sup>May 12-15, 1975. A coordinated effort secured the release of the crew, but officially, 3 Marines were stranded, and later executed on land. On May 14 jets were joined by an AC-130H Spectre gunship from the 16th Special Operations Squadron (SOS) attached to the 388<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing to engage Khmer Swift boats with cannons, flying in support of the Marines who landed on Koh Tang Island. Unfortunately, some of those Marines became the last casualties of the Vietnam War. A second Presidential Unit Citation was issued for that contact. Other teams were also involved in assaults and strategies over the 4 days.

## Biplane, By See, Biped

Fighting a war on foot is completely different  
Than fighting one from 10,000 feet.  
I have the greatest admiration for those who did it on the ground.  
Not that we didn't lose our share of friends also,  
But most of the time we returned "home" to a bed and a hot meal.  
Pilots see exactly what's going on but can't go in to help  
Until given the word.  
Sometimes that word doesn't come  
Though the carnage goes on.  
Looking back,  
A bird's eye view can outlive the last rod or cone.

—A Pilot

## Repeat: No Visual

Somewhere  
Deep inside  
A box  
Amongst dozens of other boxes  
Is my picture  
Of the Mayaguez.  
Not sure I could even look at it. Still.

—Anonymous



The Mayaguez, U.S. Air Force  
photo, Public Domain.

## Snatched, Dispatched, MASHed, Patched

As medics, we were trained to keep a casualty alive until the Medevac helicopter came. Usually within 15 minutes he was in the sky on his way to a MASH<sup>1</sup> unit. Even with ambushes, rocket-propelled grenades, booby traps, and pressure-detonated mines, if we weren't pinned down and could touch the victim while he was still alive, there was a 97.6% chance we could save his life,<sup>2</sup> an amazing statistic. We did everything right, but news reports shot through with politics back home got it wrong.

—Ronald J. Glasser, MD, author of Wounded: Vietnam, Iraq, "Medics". pp. 27, 28.

<sup>1</sup>Mobile Army Surgical Hospital

<sup>2</sup>Only 2.4% death rate for Vietnam casualties who made it to a surgical or evac hospital.

**Myth:** The United States lost the war in Vietnam.

**Fact:** The American military was not defeated in Vietnam. The American military did not lose a battle of any consequence. From a military standpoint, it was almost an unprecedented performance.

—Capt. Marshal Hanson USNR (Ret) and Capt. Scott Beaton, Statistical Source.

## My Son is No Less Loved Than Yours

I'm not mad at you.  
I'm not mad at your son.  
I'm mad at God.  
Both our boys went to war;  
Why would God  
Give you back your son  
And take mine away?"

—“Nancy Rowling” (Margo Mortendale) in movie “Heaven is for Real” and book with the same title by Todd Burpo. “Pastor” gives an excellent response to the question.

## “I Was There”

“I was one of a handful of Americans who'd been there 2 years already, and stayed in Saigon while the U.S. was putting people on helicopters at the Embassy...A C54A aircraft that was packed with children, but unbalanced, crashed in mid-April 1975, killing 138 people.

The Americans dropped carpet bombs and cluster bombs, and planted hundreds of thousands of land mines over the course of the war, at a frenzied pace in the last months. They continued to test new technology until the very end. The U.S. tested Agent Orange and white phosphorous on the Vietnamese population. South Vietnam dropped an American CBU-55 bomb on civilian Vietnamese, killing anything in range that breathed oxygen.

Saigon's population had been mostly shielded from the war until the end, while those who lived outside the city suffered for years. As the war came to a climax in Saigon there was

understandably fear and panic. But when the Liberation Front Forces arrived in buses and tanks, we saw people throw flowers and cigarettes to the arriving soldiers. South Vietnamese soldiers in Saigon discarded their uniforms, turned in their weapons at collection centers and joined the crowds. North Vietnamese soldiers camped in city parks, washed laundry and strung clotheslines between trees. They all spoke the same language. It seemed to me more like a family reunion than a coup. In fact, many families were reunited.

July 1975 found us helping Vietnamese friends after the capture of Saigon and change of regime. In the face of extensive propaganda that the conquering North Vietnamese and National Liberation Front soldiers would maim, murder, mutilate and destroy, we stayed. But they didn't do that.

Surprisingly, once installed in Saigon, the North Vietnamese government sought to improve general health care, housing and education, increase access to water and electricity, and, yes, "re-educate" high-level South Vietnamese officials who were still there. But there were no firing squads; we observed no murder, no torture, no clubbings in the streets. The Vietcong seemed committed to reconciliation as the only way to unite the country and make progress. Contrary to propaganda news reports from the West, the Vietcong tried to avoid retribution, and apparently no political enemies were executed. They even extended an olive branch to America, despite the long, deadly war that had ruined their country and put their civilians in danger.

The new government was money-poor and refugee-rich. Many people left the country over the following years. Refugees streamed in from Cambodia where the Khmer Rouge had taken over. There was antagonism with China and Russia as well as clan difficulties. The U.S. embargo caused tremendous suffering. Vietnamese rice fields were destroyed or littered with unspent landmines, so their main export was non-existent for several years. The rich people in Saigon lost most of their money, but much of it was made through wartime contacts with Americans. The new government did redistribute wealth, much of it having been made on the Black Market to the disadvantage of the poor.

Of course there was danger. It was a war. There were bombs, rockets, artillery and random rifle fire soon after America pulled out. But the transition was more peaceful than we expected.

Now America is enriched with many new Vietnamese-American citizens. Vietnam is enriched with a peaceful relationship with America.

And, we have moved on to other wars."

—Condensed from "Eyewitness To the Capture of Saigon: It Was Not a Bloodbath" by Claudia Krich, from "The Veteran: Vietnam Veterans Against the War", Vol 45, Number 2, Fall 2015, pp.1, 10.



Bicycle peddler, 2016, by Chuck Keller.



## Voices Rap

Voices are calling me HOME.  
Where? Motherland is Cambodia...  
And spaces between states of America.

Voices upon my soul  
Searching  
Telling me to:  
    Meditate  
    Change policy  
    Change perspective  
    Change purpose  
Move to change, not to perfection.

Chains in theory  
Redeem controversy  
Make substantial progress  
Quick-change.

Change of chairs  
Freedom gain  
Will there be  
An organic change?

Voices for human equality  
Voices for reality.  
Voices for truth  
Voices for lies  
Voices creating more chains.

Voices silent for years  
My native land: Kingdom of Kampuchea  
Voices that cannot speak  
Voices that were eliminated  
Murdered '75 to '79

Voices that were bombed  
Voices counting  
600 millions of pounds of bombs  
To scream or cry was not allowed

Education or not,



Thatched hut in Cambodia, 2016.



Two farmers at the edge of a village, 2017.

Chuck Keller's Cambodian photos taken between 2004 and 2017 (pp. 179-183) show a restored Cambodia, not the war-torn land Narate Judie Keys escaped from nearly 40 years ago. Chuck and his wife, Sally, are Wycliffe missionaries who left Cambodia in March 1975, entering Thailand at a rural border crossing a month before The Khmer Rouge entered the capital city Phnom Penh and took power. The Kellers continue to translate the Bible into Krun and live in Cambodia for 6 months, and northern Minnesota for 6 months, each year.

Voices were demonized.  
Destroyed. DESTROYED by

600 million TONS of bombs  
Dropped EXPLOSIONS  
Still exploding

Novice escape during the night  
Daylight shunned the shadow  
Of the no-voiced

Shadow puppet played in darkness  
Sneering, "*Koun knov aw na?*"  
Leering, "Where are you, daughter?"

One by one by one  
600 hundred hundred ton  
EXPLOSIONS still exploding

*Tosh* in the field of bones and skulls  
Beaten and burned, burned  
Then buried, buried then died

I, found, referred,  
Transferred from Toul Seng  
Once a school  
Turned prison.

Once a place of knowledge shared  
Turned a place of torture bare  
Voices of spirits roaming

Wishing to be burned, turned to ashes  
Waiting to be reincarnated  
Searching for Providence.

My native tongue, Khmer, suppressed for 25 years  
Thailand Flashback: '81 to '91  
Refugee Camp Site 2

One Voice sang our Khmer Anthem  
Then voices of children  
Unsure, unbeatable



Children outside their home, 2004.



Children gather by a stream, 2005.

Born in Thailand  
Deported to Cambodia  
Voices heard, unheard, undeterred

Voices suppressed, compressed  
Muted then silent  
My native language: Music, decompressed  
during my return  
to being (August 2015)

Voices of a Cambodian Journey  
Captured on film (August 2016)  
Filling tears with joy  
destined to return  
to the music of voices

My quiet Voices roar inside  
My heart, BEATEN  
And I don't know why  
but I know  
it's telling you to listen!

Voices in winds  
voices in rain  
voices in snow  
one Voice among us  
voices, voices that are US.



Two houses built on stilts, 2017.



Rolling hill farm scene, Cambodia, 2017.

—Narate Judie Keys, CMT, Author & Poet from Cambodia to America  
[http:// www.NarateKeys.com](http://www.NarateKeys.com)

*“Ar kun:”* “Thank you for listening” in Khmer.

## Why Cambodia?

The Cambodian incursion set off a chain of events. The U.S. sent troops in to stop the North Vietnamese who already had sent 2 divisions in to occupy Cambodia. There really was no win: we were both on foreign soil, neither side had any moral high ground. Had we avoided the conflict altogether, there would have been a blood bath. If we had pulled out earlier, there would have been a blood bath. Had we stayed longer, blood bath. The Khmer Rouge contributed the Killing Fields. Pol Pot grew his utopia fertilized by one

million educated civilian bodies.

I was on the U of M campus the day after the incursion. Hurrying from one class on the West Bank across the Washington Avenue Bridge for my next class on the East Bank, it was eerie that all traffic was at a dead stop. Even more disconcerting that a demonstration against the war was clogging arteries through the Quad, a plaque of protesters blocking the bridge. Suddenly dissenters were fleeing opposite Coffman Union, police in riot gear chasing them brandishing nightsticks.

I plugged to electrical lab class at IT with no small difficulty. Inside we smelled what seemed like a burning circuit. Suddenly a guy with the longest hair in the room shouted, "Tear gas! Shut the windows!" He warned us not to touch our eyes or get any water near them, which would make the effects worse.<sup>1</sup> He seemed to know what he was talking about. We stayed circuit-board snug in the classroom for quite some time.

I recall feeling the strange exhilaration of combat. The fog of war. Prickles of electricity going through my body—I didn't know if someone would get killed, or how extensive the riot. When the crowd thinned maybe 2 hours later, I took my chance to get away from the mess. I tried to board a bus, but the driver wouldn't open the door. I stayed on the fringes as much as possible, but nearing the Dinkytown Army Recruiting Center, it really got ugly. Helicopters were circling with pepper foggers. It was a war zone. I was relieved to actually make it to my car at the Elm/Kasota lot.

As much as we appreciated what was happening half a world away, for good or bad, afterwards we realized university students didn't start it. The U is an eclectic place; we were there for class and needed to get our money's worth, but lots of other people came to campus for the feel of it, the anonymity. Such a display made for good TV, adding to the premise there was a conspiracy going on, inferring "those radicals on campuses needed to be subdued."

It reminded me when fire was set to the U of M ROTC building, winter 1970, about the time of Kent State. Protesters used axes on the fire hoses, the same as in Ohio. People who were killed at the Kent State demonstration weren't protesters. The National Guardsmen who were ordered to shoot protesters shot over their heads—they didn't want to kill anyone. Unfortunately, the bullets struck students up on a ridge who weren't even involved.

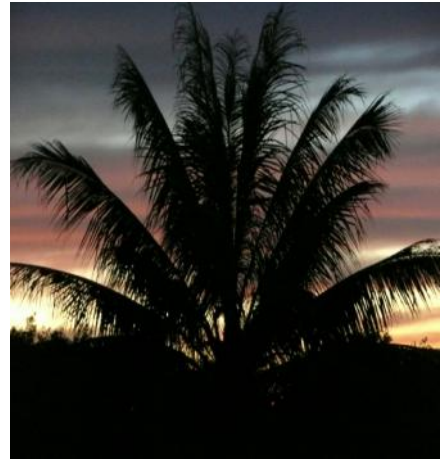
—G.

<sup>1</sup>The best way is to flush eyes with milk. A volatile chemical reaction occurs when water is used.

## The Chase: Cambodia

i wait in forest filled with misty rain  
set opposite the rice field  
underneath blue sky  
the sun begins a slow set, flashing, descending,  
a distant palm now colorless black.  
i search for grain, an indescript rodent,  
as Khmer Rouge tries to trap me.

—Narate Judie Keys



Sunset glows behind a palm tree, 2009.

## Run Away

A sand storm conquers.  
Villagers are fleeing  
Take cover! A cave!  
No plan for survival.

Villagers are fleeing  
Walking, running toward Neverland  
No plan for survival  
The night caves in.

Walking, running toward the river  
Barefoot but hopeful  
A broken ship  
To sail into the dissipating sand storm

A sand storm dispersed  
To discover a safe haven  
A new island uncovered, covered in sand  
A new life to discover.

—Narate Judie Keys, CMT, Author and poet from Cambodia to America.

[www.NarateKeys.com](http://www.NarateKeys.com)



Does anyone know what kind of Cambodian flower this is?

**Note:** Narate Keys came to the United States in 1987, after escaping from Cambodia and living in a relocation camp outside of Cambodia for 15 long years, waiting for paperwork to be processed, as happens to many refugees.

## The Many Doors to Minnesota

Door wide open  
To the broken stone  
Taken by jungle weed

Suppressed by Pol Pot  
Door slam shut  
Without warning  
Stone hearts control  
Refugee camps

Door wide shut  
Escape at daylight  
Miles and miles walked  
Bearing unborn child

Gate wide open  
Two stone pagodas greet  
Our ancestors celebrate  
A New Year begun.

Door wide open  
Without a key  
Agate stone<sup>1</sup> at once shine  
Without polishing...

—Narate Judie Keys



<sup>1</sup>Agate stone refers to the kind Minnesota welcome she received.

*Note: the [Concerning War] author's parents were part of the Methodist Church movement in 1980 to help relocate Cambodian, Thai and Vietnamese asylees (seeking entry due to political danger), refugees (coming due to displacement because of war), and emigres (due to interest in relocation). Even small churches partnered with others to sponsor individuals or families. Thus, MN has one of the largest East Asian populations in the U.S. today. Their tiny church in Finlayson, with the church in Afton, brought the Phong family of 8 to live in its town of 213 people. Bob plowed and cultivated garden space, provided seed, and helped fix up a vacant house in town for the family to live in. Elaine, a retired teacher, received her ESL certification to teach the entire new family English and tutor the children in school. She taught 2 generations of the family (and even the grandmother for a short time), and all became gainfully employed, several children moving on to university. One son became a welder in Philadelphia, and probably put all the rest through college!*

## We Are All Casualties of War

“Revisiting Vietnam obliges us to enter into an indescribable hell,  
To understand a little more of  
The agonizing palpable naked terror which so many lived.

Searing power, blistering emotion, raging misery,  
A performance no Oscar can ever reward  
From the bestial inhumanity of war; any, every, all war.

Cruel, sickening, loathsome:  
The heartbreaking base desperation in which  
A soul seethes to the boiling point.  
We are all casualties of war.”

—Post from Keith F. Hatcher, La Rioja, now living in Spain, 10/31/2001,  
praising the wrenchingly plausible performance of Thuy Thu Le and Michael  
J. Fox, concerning the movie “Casualties of War”, Brian De Palma, Director.

## Alpha Bullet Charlie

“I was a border guard at Checkpoint Charlie.<sup>1</sup>  
It was my job to process people through or keep them on their side.

One day a whole group sort of stormed the gatehouse.  
Language and body language, too, were both terrific barriers.  
I told them to halt. Multiple times. Began to think they were  
Creating a diversion to allow others across.  
I was losing control of the situation fast. They had no papers.  
The short of it was I shot them all.

Turns out they were a family  
Who'd been caught on the wrong side of the fence  
When the North/South directive came down.  
Just at wit's end, trying to get home like everyone else.  
I have to live with that judgment call.  
Every day.

—A man who's had many sleepless nights.

<sup>1</sup>Zone between North and South Vietnam.

## Bully for You!

“Fritz” was a nervous kid, shy, used to being teased,  
Afraid to talk to girls. Always looked  
Over his shoulder, no one to watch his back.  
5 years later, he possessed peace, calm, confidence.  
He easily spoke. What happened? I had to know.  
“I went into the Marines.”  
Compared to being bullied,  
Basic was a piece of cake.  
It worked for him.



"Shoulder to Shoulder, Even the Fallen Stand Tall". This bronze Veteran's Memorial statue in Virginia, MN, was designed by local sculptor Gareth Andrews and dedicated in 2012 to service members from World War I to the Persian Gulf War.

Enlargement shows details of the 8 service members from all branches of the military sheltered in the wings of an American bald eagle.





## 2.7 POST-VIETNAM ERA: 1976-1989

### Statistics

- Vietnam Vets: 9.7% of their generation.
- 9,087,000 GIs served on active duty in the Vietnam Era 8/05/1964-5/07/1975.
- 40 - 60% either fought in combat, provided close support or were at least fairly regularly exposed to enemy attack.
- 2,644,000 served within the borders of South Vietnam 1/01/1960-3/28/1973.
- Peak troop strength in Vietnam: 543,482 - 3/30/1968.
- 7,484 women served; 83.5% were nurses. 8 died, one KIA.
- Total casualties: 58,202 (Includes men formerly classified as MIA and Mayaguez casualties).
- Severely disabled: 75,000 (23,214 were 100% disabled), 5,283 lost limbs.
- MIA: 2,338. POWs: 766 (114 died in captivity).
- Soldiers were an average of 22.8 years old: 61% of those killed were 21 or younger.
- Servicemen were 88.4% Caucasian (including Hispanic), 10.6 % Black, 1% other.
- 170,00 Hispanics served in Vietnam; 5.2% (3,070) died there.
- 25% (648,500) of total forces in this country were draftees (66% were drafted in WWII).
- Total draftees (1965-1973): 1,728,344. 38% actually served in Vietnam.
- Draftees accounted for 30.4% of combat deaths in Vietnam.
- National Guard: 6,140 served, 101 died.
- 76% of all personnel sent were from lower middle/working class (above poverty level); 50% from middle-income backgrounds; 23% had fathers with professional, managerial or technical occupations.
  - 79% had high school education or better at the time they entered the service.
  - 97% of all vets were honorably discharged.
  - 91% of Vietnam War vets and 90% of those who saw heavy combat are proud to have served their country.
  - 82% of veterans who saw heavy combat strongly believe the war was lost because of lack of political will.
  - 87% of the public now holds Vietnam veterans in high esteem.



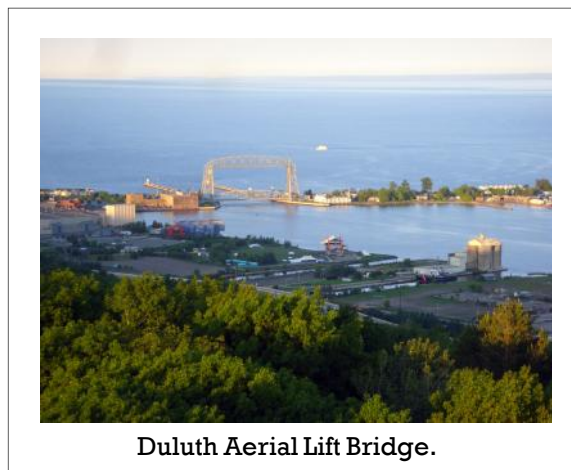
Rare Vietnam Era Navy Special Forces urban uniform prototype. Grey-tone scramble was never officially used until 1987.



-Courtesy of VFW Magazine, 4/12/1997. Facts listed: <http://www.history-world.org/stics.htm>

## Whitewash

Addicted to battle adrenalin,  
Invincible, in limbo  
With nothing more to lose,  
His face a white flag blocking the sun,<sup>1</sup>  
He dangled between heaven and earth,  
Swinging from a single thread  
Cleaning and painting bridges<sup>2</sup>  
After his war  
While the government  
Spun its silken web of  
Sanitized reports  
And whitewashed casualties.



Duluth Aerial Lift Bridge.

—For Ron C., with thanks to Becky Liestman<sup>1</sup> for inspiration.

<sup>2</sup>Aerial Lift Bridge and others were painted by Ron in Duluth, MN, circa 1970, after his discharge.

## Nibs

They were acquaintances, so she'd written regularly  
While he still lived out of his duffle,  
Though her fountain pen was no match for machetes<sup>1</sup>  
Nor her ink for monsoon rains.  
He came home but never found the time to look her up;  
Went back to his sweetheart, tied the knot,  
And got on with life.

Except for keeping company with Jack Daniels,  
Things seemed OK.  
Then Jesus re-introduced Himself  
And the half empty glass got clearer, then stayed dry.  
18 years later at a church camp retreat,  
He saw the writer of those friendly letters  
That had spoken of nothing, of everything, of home.

She greeted his wife warmly,  
Then looked into his eyes  
Earnestly, tenderly, simply:  
“I never actually thanked you  
For fighting just because

Your country asked you to.”  
They caught him, those words.

—For George and Carol J.

<sup>1</sup>A reference to the pen being mightier  
than the sword.



Duffle bag.

## Take No Prisoners

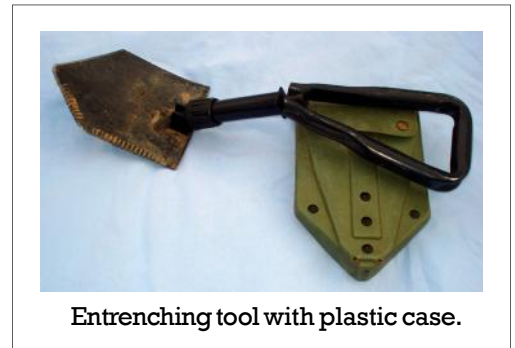
He'd been a general in the Vietnamese Army  
Trained by Americans, but  
Proud to fight his own war.  
19 years after Saigon fell  
He awoke in his Minnesota pajamas,  
The snub nose of his service revolver  
Inhaling his loving wife's blonde hair;  
Her, kneeling in POW stance,  
Pleading for him to recognize her  
Before he pulled the trigger.

—For his son, Nam

## Filling Those Boots

My oldest brother signed on.  
Had a terrible temper: he'd throw things at people,  
Refused to listen or have goals.  
He was angry at the world.  
2 years made a tremendous difference.  
He came home changed:  
Polite, courteous, gracious, respectful.  
He needed the discipline.  
Every young man should go in  
To make him appreciate what he's got.  
He went in a selfish boy and came out a good man.  
I'm glad it worked for him.

—Anonymous



Entrenching tool with plastic case.



## Set In Stone

A replica of the Vietnam Memorial came to Chisholm.  
My uncle's name on that wall did something for me,  
Knowing *others* commemorate *our* great loss.  
KIA<sup>1</sup> doesn't just affect the deceased;  
It changes the entire family structure going forward.

I wonder if the country of Vietnam has created a memorial, too?  
When soldiers have to kill someone,  
They must know it was some other family's child, husband.  
How difficult to be put in that position,  
To take a life!

What if countries made memorials for each other's dead?  
Calling a solemn assembly,  
Carving those names in hard  
That were once too easily taken away;  
Mixing letters with the DNA of stone.

Learning someone Over There  
Is as remorseful,  
As penitent, as willing to bear in mind,  
As grateful  
As I am right now.

—With Sue T.

<sup>1</sup>Killed in Action

**Note:** Architect Maya Lin, Chinese American, designed the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial completed in 1982. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnam\\_Veterans\\_Memorial](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnam_Veterans_Memorial)

## Engaged in Battle

I was engaged to a man in the service.  
Age 16, and he wanted me to wait for him.  
He was gone a year, stationed in Germany. We wrote.  
Then his sister died and even with the help of the Red Cross<sup>1</sup>  
It took 3 weeks to get him home for the funeral.  
Everyone was overwrought so it fell to me  
To make the arrangements and represent the family.  
He was only home 3 days.  
With everything else, we hardly saw each other.  
Her death skewed our relationship.

When he was finally discharged,  
We didn't know each other anymore.  
He'd become a very different person, while I was still a farm girl.  
He expected me to be a girlfriend, a sister, and a mom to him.  
How can a 17 year-old possibly know how to do that?  
2 days before the wedding, I called it off.  
He was being macho, saying, "You'll never see me cry,"  
But we were both crying.  
It ripped us in two, but we both knew  
Dissolving the relationship was the right thing to do.

He died in an accident 10 years ago.  
I'd given the engagement ring back,  
But it was sent to my care after he died.  
He'd wanted me to have it.

People change.  
They change when they are together, too,

But they seem to evolve as a couple  
So it is not such a stark reality.  
When sweethearts endure the service  
They change alone.

—Sue T.



<sup>1</sup>The names of the hospital, attending physician, coroner, and funeral home must all be supplied with the death certificate in order to gain emergency leave for a service member. In addition, since she was doing the paperwork, she also had to prove she was a family member.

## R & R<sup>1</sup>

A bobber or two on clear water  
A calm Canadian fishing trip  
A bonding experience for two brothers:

The One,  
    A nuclear power plant trainer,  
    A thyroid cancer survivor with  
    A fission submarine still under his skin.

The Other,  
    A conscientious medic *cum* beloved doctor,  
    A glaucoma much worse  
    (Agent Orange exposure now forcing retirement).

A harmless helicopter whirled by;

The Other propelled back 46 years to  
    Another side of the world:  
    da Nang, a Huey,  
    A canvas medic bag

    A flash of phosphorous grenade  
    A body on fire acrid fire infernal fire horrible fire  
    A reaching in, blood boiling his wrists.

A short vacation  
A serene lake  
A simple peace  
    All shot to hell.

—With D. R.

<sup>1</sup>2 brothers with a last name R, wanting to enjoy one another's company, both with the effects of their service still with them.



## Engraved in Time

Most wars *are* political.  
When we get involved, it might be a very important thing  
Or a mistake.  
The service of soldiers is by definition political, too.  
Where they end up, what they have to do:  
They've taken an oath to a government to uphold it,  
Whether they now believe in the new strategy or new administration.

If you go in,  
You will have that era etched  
On your soul for the rest of your life.  
If you don't go in,  
You might have a buddy who never made it back,  
And that, too, changes who you might've become...  
We are all en-graved, in time.

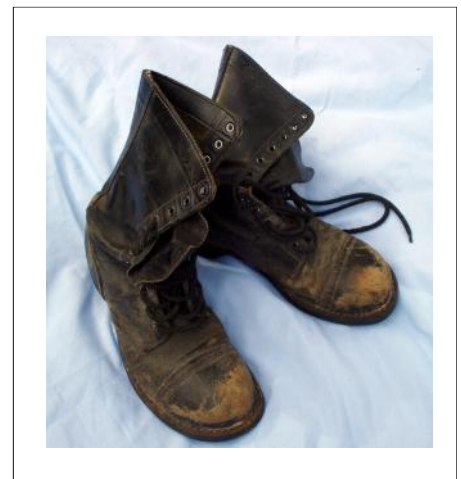
—With Sue T.

## Boots

Government issue,  
Smelling of spit and polish and pride;  
Scuffed on dust and rubble and mud,  
Hauled over wire and wood and wall,  
Tramped through sand and slough and swamp:  
Black Cadillacs<sup>1</sup>  
Saluting the fear that was overcome;  
Shipped away and, gratefully, back;  
Now stowed in closet-homage to brotherhood;  
Suddenly feeling booted out.

—To career-man David, knowing that you haven't felt the same since.

<sup>1</sup>Black Cadillacs: one's service transportation; combat boots. Due to the densely shaded undergrowth, Vietnam was the first war where all U.S. ground troops wore black rather than brown ones, similar to the WWII paratrooper boots above.



## Uniform

Non-soldier families can't know  
What it means to sacrifice a member.  
Having mandatory service would be a leveler:  
    Provide a common frame of reference,  
    Give solidarity around ideals,  
    Acculturate our undisciplined and ungrateful children.  
If we actually had to consider  
Where freedom of religion comes from  
On an individual basis,  
Maybe there would be a less casual approach to God.

—With Sue T.

## Raw Recruits

Early summer at the lake,  
and the waves lined up  
by a brusque CPO wind,  
white caps at jaunty angles,  
march for the nearest shore  
to bivouac on the beach.  
These are the raw recruits  
training hard for their role  
in the skirmish of seasons.  
Soon will come fall with  
its bright banners waving,  
to promise liberation from  
the stifling August<sup>1</sup> heat  
only to sell us out at last to  
be taken prisoner by winter.

—John Thornberg, June 2011

<sup>1</sup>August: a month; also: marked by majestic dignity or grandeur. Webster's Dictionary, p. 74.



U.S. Regal mess kit, 1967 design. What a luxury it would have been to enjoy C-Rations with the trifecta of table knife, fork AND spoon! (Forks and knives were NOT U.S. issue, but were used for camping gear from the 1980s on.) Soldiers had only a spoon and their bowie knife.



## Fire and Brimstone

The American government didn't like draft dodgers  
Any more than the Canadian government did.  
"Stay on your side of the line." [what America said]  
"We don't want *you* here." [what Canada said]

Before the close of the war,  
When we moved to Canada and wanted to become citizens,  
We heard plenty of derogatory remarks, but one day, to one guy  
Ron said, "What do you mean? I served my time in hell."  
He never heard another slur.

—Cheri

## Normative Behavior

They'd tried to bring him, a Ranger, back to non-feral,  
But when released back into the tame,  
His musky instinct was still whispering "jungle".  
He saw the world through one glass iris in too much black and white;  
Healing from his injuries, wanting to get back to living,  
Sure of what he knew; not about to retreat from what he didn't.

"Dominant male seeks recessive female."  
Testosterone competing with bravado on the Richter Scale,  
He was looking for a woman who could be meek enough,  
But women had struggled free while he was at war,  
And the field was foreign now.  
Some of them, anyone could tell him, were positively independent.

Flummoxed,  
He dismissed most summarily.  
One, he mildly tolerated  
For the mental parlay over dinner prep,  
Scrubbing potatoes in KP competition  
With her until the eyes were gone.

—For Norm



Canadian Flag  
from 1965.





1969 Postage stamp honoring Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

### **Trading Up? Non-Violence for an M-16?**

Blacks had a war of Ideology on their hands at home, some would say, as powerful as any battles in Asia. Blacks saw service in Vietnam as a more level playing field than the streets at home, thus signing on for combat. Equal rights demonstrators on domestic turf determined to stand as courageously, albeit without weapons, against fully armed and armored National Guardsmen. During the Vietnam Era, 13.5% of our total population was Black. 34% of Blacks who enlisted volunteered for combat roles. 12.1% of combat fatalities were Black.

—VFW Magazine, 4/12/1997. Facts listed: <http://www.history-world.org/stics.htm>

**Vietnam War Title Sampler**  
Carver County Library System 2016

959.704 CHI **Air War in Vietnam** / Phil Chinnery.

**327.1747 ZAK 2016 Almighty : courage, resistance, and existential peril in the nuclear age** / Dan Zak.

959.70437 NOR **Bouncing Back : how a heroic band of POWs survived Vietnam** / Geoffrey Norman.

641.59597 JAC **Cafe Vietnam** (cookbook) / Annabel Jackson ; photography by Jeremy Hopley.

J LYN Fiction Series 2013-2014 : **Casualties of War ; Free-fire zone ; Sharpshooter** / Chris Lynch.

CD POP ROCK CRY **Crystal Castles** / (Musical Group - Also title of their album.)

DVD HISTORY BIO DIC **Dick Cavett's Vietnam** / directed by John Scheinfeld ; produced by Steve Burns.

959.7043 DUN **Dirty Little Secrets of the Vietnam War** / James F. Dunnigan and Albert A. Nofi.

KUB **Dong Xoai, Vietnam 1965** / written and illustrated by Joe Kubert ; lettering and production by Pete Carlsson.

REF 959.703 ENC **Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War : a political, social, and military history** / Spencer C. Tucker, editor.

641.59596 BAS **The Food and Cooking of Vietnam & Cambodia : discover the deliciously fragrant cuisines of Indo-China; with over 150 authentic step-by-step recipes and over 750 photographs** / Ghillie Basan ; with photographs by Ghillie Basan.

959.70434 SUM **Historical Atlas of the Vietnam War** / Harry G. Summers, Jr. ; introduction and epilogue by Stanley Karnow.

DVD HISTORY BIO LAS **Last Days in Vietnam** / Moxie Firecracker Films ; directed and produced by Rory Kennedy ; written by Keven McAlester, Mark Bailey.

915.97 NAT **National Geographic Traveler. Vietnam.**

959.704 PRI **Primary Sources: Vietnam War** / edited by David M. Haugen.

DVD HISTORY BIO VIE **Vietnam** / a production of Millennium III Communications for Istituto Geografico de Agostini ; distributed by Film Ideas, Inc.

959.70438 CHA **Vietnam : a portrait of its people at war** / David Chanoff and Doan Van Toai.

959.704 DAV **Vietnam at War : the history, 1946-1975** / Phillip B. Davidson.

915.9704 VIE 2012 **Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos & Northern Thailand** (travel).

DVD HISTORY BIO VIE **Vietnam in HD** / produced by Lou Reda Productions for History.

959.7044 LAM **Vietnam, Now : a reporter returns** / David Lamb.

959.7043 VIE **The Vietnam Reader : the definitive collection of American fiction and nonfiction on the war** / edited by Stewart O'Nan.

959.7 ISA **Vietnam Shadows : the war, its ghosts, and its legacy** / Arnold R. Isaacs.

DVD HISTORY BIO VIE **Vietnam Soldiers' Story : the invisible enemy** / produced by Ron Steinman ; an ABC News Production for the Learning Channel.

959.7043373 LIN **Vietnam, the Necessary War : a reinterpretation of America's most disastrous military conflict** / Michael Lind.

J959.70436 DUB **The Vietnam Veterans Memorial** / by Muriel L. Dubois.

ZIM **The Vietnam War : a graphic history** (graphic novel) /written by Dwight Zimmerman ; art by Wayne Vasant ; foreword by General Chuck Horner. 2009.

J REF 959.7043 HIL **Vietnam War: almanac** / Kevin Hillstrom and Laurie Collier Hillstrom ; Diane Sawinski, editor.

959.7043 DUD **The Vietnam War: opposing viewpoints** / William Dudley, book editor.

REF 973 CHA **The Vietnam War: the Tet Offensive onward** / Christopher Chant.

J 959.70438 KEN **The Vietnam Women's Memorial** / Deborah Kent.

TRA **Vietnamerica: a family's journey** / by GB Tran.

495.9223 VIE **Vietnamese Phrasebook & Dictionary.**

DVD HISTORY BIO VIE **Vietnam's Unseen War : pictures from the other side** / MSNBC and National Geographic Television ; producer, David Clark, Brian Breger ; writer, Brian Breger.

DVD HISTORY BIO WEW **We Were Heroes : 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), Viet Nam** / Madacy Video presents.

303.484 BIN 2016 **Witness to the Revolution : radicals, resisters, vets, hippies, and the year America lost its mind and found its soul** / Clara Bingham. 2016.

## 2.8 GULF WARS ERA: 1990 - 2015

The justification for these wars included: oil, political volatility in the areas, friendship with Israel, 9/11, reports of weapons of mass destruction, deposing leaders, threat of al-Qaeda or ISIS/ISIL operatives.

“Jarheads” are Marines, so called due to “lid” haircuts to prevent helmet contact to bare scalps in desert heat. The Gulf Wars were the first foreign conflicts in which mostly National Guard Reservists were called up to serve in order to avoid having a draft.

### **Gulf Wars Era**

All the below conflicts and their various terminologies will be noted in this book as Gulf Wars Era:

|                                  |                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| U.S. Support of Shah of Iran     | 1979                                                                                 |
| Iran-Contra Affair CIA           | Pre-1980                                                                             |
| First Persian Gulf War Iran-Iraq | 1980-1988                                                                            |
| Desert Era                       | 1990-2000                                                                            |
| Kuwait-Iraq War, August          | 1990                                                                                 |
| Second Persian Gulf War          | 1990                                                                                 |
| First Gulf War started Feb.      | 1991                                                                                 |
| OEF/OIF/OND <sup>1</sup>         | 2001-Present                                                                         |
| Operation Freedom Gulf War II    | 2001                                                                                 |
| Second Iraq War                  | March 2003-Dec 2011, including initial attack phase, and 7-year phase of occupation. |
| Continuing Involvement           | 2012-Present                                                                         |

<sup>1</sup>OEF: Operation Enduring Freedom, OIF: Operation Iraqi Freedom, OND: Operation New Dawn. EOF, however, means Escalation of Force.

“An estimated 60,000 Minnesotans were deployed in Iraq or Afghanistan.” —Figure from Department of Veterans Affairs. Quoted by “Chaska Herald”, 9/19/2013, p. A15. The State of Minnesota has been one of the heaviest contributors of reservists for the Gulf Wars Era.

“Similar to the Vietnam Era, today the average age of the soldiers fighting in Iraq is nineteen,... not old enough to buy beer, but old enough to die for their country.” —Source: Veterans Service Office News, Julie Carie, VSO, Carver County, June 2005, p. 1.

### **Dedication**

To Dan & Tammy; Janet & David; and sisters Dorothy Ann, Charlotte & Margaret.

## ambiguous loss<sup>1</sup>

you are here  
as big as life  
then gone again  
waves lapping at your heels  
with me  
in a wake

just when i've buoyed up  
changed seasons  
folded you away  
and am ready to shut the drawer  
the tides turn, you bob back  
looking almost as grand as in my imagination

you re-scent<sup>1</sup> my pillowcase  
then pack yourself  
in your sea duffle  
and i carry my own weight of the world  
along to the pier,  
left holding the bag<sup>2</sup> again

we say our goodbyes  
re-resent like Captain Nemo's<sup>3</sup> broken waves  
and i see you  
making way  
while i drift, singular as the life  
i lead without you

Sister 1: "You deal well with ambiguity."<sup>2</sup>

Sister 2: "Well, yes and no."



Navy tee shirt.

<sup>1</sup>Several homonyms are interchangeable for this poem: re-scent, recent, re-sent, resent.

<sup>2</sup>Containing mixed feelings including great love, grief of loss, fear of replacement, potential for personal growth, resentment of absence.

<sup>3</sup>Nemo: Self-controlled in-charge skipper of a futuristic submarine who relied on himself rather than on radio contact. In psychology, Nemo is an archetype denoting disambiguation, for he never intends to return to land nor allow his passengers or crew to do so, in order to preserve his stealth. From 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea, by Jules Verne, first translated into English in 1873.

**Q:** Why and how does a relationship change with absence? Why is it so difficult to talk about the probability of growing apart?

## Reviewing the Troops

There was much to say  
About seasons that came and went  
About leaves that grew and fell  
While I was away

About things I saw and things I wish I hadn't  
The letters I sent, and the letters I didn't  
About things that fell away  
While I was here.

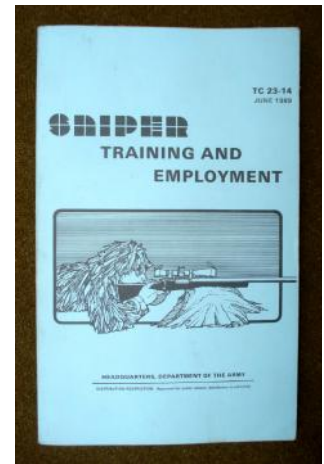
In your silence  
And in mine, too  
There is much to say.  
When I get back  
I'm counting on you.

—For Daniel

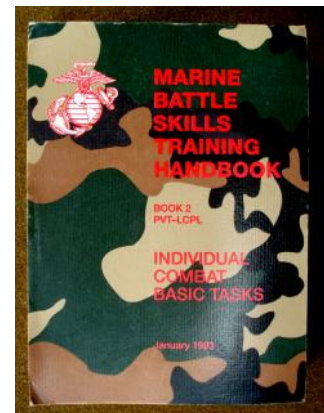
## A Few Good Men

Following the fun of simulated war games  
After school every night  
In a fallow field on a nearby farm,  
My friends enlisted for real  
One after the other  
Fresh from high school,  
Wanting to prove their toughness,  
Each craving elite training,  
Hoping to pay for education.

One became a Marine aboard ship in the Persian Gulf.  
“Saw some action,” is all he told me  
As he sipped a single swallow from my gift of his favorite label  
And finally left it there by my garage to collect Hornets,<sup>1</sup>  
Nothing else to say.  
“Sent home early,” “Unstable,” was all I could glean from friends.  
Parents helped him figure it out, though,  
And after some years,  
He finally was able to go to college.



Sniper Training and Marine Battle Skills training manuals.



Another headed for Paratrooper school,  
“Wanting to test myself.”  
Started saying the hazing was barbaric.  
Guys would report to the office for discipline  
For a minor infraction and come out with a broken arm,  
Stuff like that. The pressure was incredible.  
He was worried about the desert training,  
Afraid of scorpions, not finding water.  
With prayer he made it. Heading toward graduation,

He found out they would pin and pummel your wings into your bare chest  
So you would get a proper scar to be part of the brotherhood.  
He worried about the unchecked congratulatory punching and kicking.  
More prayer. He ended up in the infirmary with a fever for a few days  
So he missed the surprise ceremony.  
I heard second-hand he was honorably discharged.  
Never heard from him again.  
Last I checked, his parents hadn't, either.  
There was a journalism piece  
Aired on the hazing rituals and savagery  
Surrounding paratroopers getting their wings.  
Boy, I hope your body is not buried under some dune.

One friend went into Special Forces.  
“It wasn't for me,” he said,  
So after months and months of paperwork,  
He got out. Another found the Army Rangers  
About the time the Ayatollah Khomeini found his international voice.  
I heard “Range” saw some action  
But never heard directly from him again.

Me? All of 'em called me crazy for not enlisting at the time.  
I was thinking about it, too, wondering  
If I could with my puny GED and trade school certificate.  
Even went to a recruiter to hear what he had to say.  
Asked some questions about life and death he couldn't answer,  
About reentry into a cubicle world from that sphere of influence.  
I guess we just didn't see eye to eye.

—Jesse

<sup>1</sup>Also a reference to the F/A-18 Hornet (Fighter/Attack): a twin-engine supersonic, all-weather carrier-capable multirole combat jet designed by McDonnell Douglas and Northrop. The



U.S.Navy's Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels, has used the Hornet since 1986. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hornet\\_F/A-18](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hornet_F/A-18)

## Face the Music

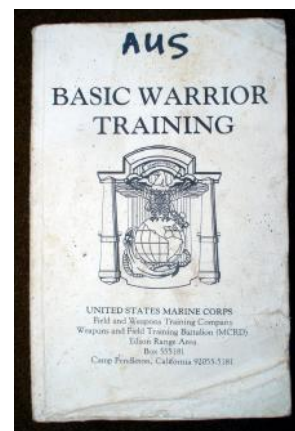
I was a trombone player in college  
And figured I could support the effort better behind a slide  
Than I could behind a gun, so the recruiter promised me  
A slot in the Air Force Band if I would enlist.  
I did, but found out after basic that the Band required a rigorous audition.  
I worked hard to pass it, but didn't make the first cut.  
They were in a hurry to substitute gun oil for valve oil,  
So I noted my contract and was able to very assertively argue  
That I had been promised something that would not be realized.  
To my great relief and some surprise, I got an honorable discharge.

—Dean R.

## Union-Suited

I enlisted in the Air Force.  
Boot Camp wasn't hard.  
If they tell you to fold your underwear a certain way,  
Then fold your underwear that way.  
That's how they know  
You'll obey their orders in the chafe of battle.

—Dean R.



**Basic Warrior  
Training manual.**

## Cumme Çi Cumme Ça<sup>1</sup>

He: I enlisted.

*She: That's good! You got your college paid for.*

He: Not necessarily. That's what the recruiter said, but due to my summer birthday,  
I missed the GI Bill by 6 weeks.

*She: Oh, that's terrible!*

He: Maybe not. They came out with a new program: matching funds for school.

*She: Oh, that's a relief.*

He: Maybe. I started with the \$20 in my pocket and saved \$5000 while on the sub, which I was thrilled about. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Seaman

*She: What a great nest egg!*

He: Maybe not. By the time my 6 years enlistment was up, tuition had almost tripled. I quit college when the money ran out, so never got my degree.

*She: Oh, that's a shame!*

He: It wasn't so bad. Because I'd been in Nuclear Operations in the Navy, that got me a job that has paid better than many college graduates, so it worked for me.

—For Dan

<sup>1</sup>"Like this, like that". (Example: "The dessert was wonderful, but the meal was *cumme çi cumme ça*. —neither good nor bad.)

## Convoked<sup>1</sup> Conscripted, Conflicted, Convicted

Fantasies

Paint with slow brush strokes  
A lustrous picture of you, my wife.  
I imagine you in a filmy dress  
Ready to be ravaged.

Realities:

You actually meet the ship at the pier  
With the other wives,  
Looking only for me;  
You've lost weight  
You're a hunk of good-looking,

(Projectiles):

Cotton voile revealing your slighter frame  
*Almost* perfect. How could you — — !?  
Display yourself! A dainty!  
In front of all these  
Hungry men?!

—T.

<sup>1</sup>Convoked: summoned.

## U.S.S. Seahorse

Buried under sea  
Same as dead,  
Bubbleheads<sup>1</sup> on high alert, 12 on, 6 off,  
Slog through the bilge to find a nut.<sup>2</sup>

I head for a hot rack<sup>3</sup>  
Hung 4-high  
Over full torpedo bays,  
Swing my tired nautical bones  
Onto the berth and hit the sheets  
Still warm from another sailor's body.  
I'm slim, so there are 8 whole inches to breathe  
Wracked out<sup>4</sup> under the next bunk's bulge.

With months under water,  
There is no longer eye contact among the crew  
For fear of fistfights  
Over brushing against someone passing to the head,<sup>5</sup>

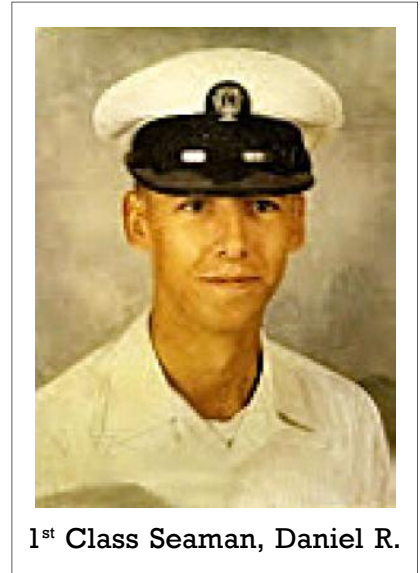
On high alert, so brittle  
We've given up checkers in the mess hall.  
Even the butter knives are stowed.  
But that's OK, all the fresh food is long gone anyway.

In the morning there'll be inspection  
So I'll jettison the letters you've packed for me as rations,  
My 12-inch cube too full.<sup>6</sup> They are memorized anyway,  
And I'll *need* my toothbrush.

Some shiny brass got the bright idea to see how long  
Men could endure without surfacing;  
4 months out and some guy cracked..  
When the helicopter comes, we're hoping for mail.<sup>7</sup>

I wonder if you're given to more novels,  
Writing every tidbit of your day? Or given up?  
If you've mailed, I'll pocket my toothbrush or the cube won't secure.  
If there's naught, what I have is better gone.

Me,  
I hardly write anything;



There's nothing in my nuclear war head  
Beneath the monotony left to say.

—From an interview with Nuclear Operator Seaman First Class Daniel R.

<sup>1</sup>Bubblehead: any submariner who is awake and alert.

<sup>2</sup>Slogging through the bilge: when a part to a pump came loose, they had to sift through the unsavory slimy water in the bilge tank below decks in order to find it because they must rely only on parts available on board.

<sup>3</sup>Hot racking: sharing bunks; i.e. when one goes on duty, another can sleep, therefore the bed never gets cold. Submarines are built with 2 beds for every 3 men. To sleep is to “rack out”.

<sup>4</sup>Wrack: limp seaweed.      <sup>5</sup>Head: bathroom.

<sup>6</sup>Racki-dexterous: the ability to get stuff out of your locker without getting out of your rack. Too much stowed, and mounted cubes on the rack wall over the torpedo bay won't secure.

<sup>7</sup>Since “poking holes” in the surface betrays position, only an emergency would prompt surfacing during high alert status. There may or may not have been enough time to load a bag of sometimes ambiguous 25-word familygrams intended for the crew onto the dispatched helicopter. (Each family is allowed only 2 each deployment, so they usually contain dreaded news.) Additional mail would only be delivered if time permitted. One prank duty given some new submariners is to watch for the (fictitious) mail buoy.

## Sweet Dreams are Made of This<sup>1</sup>

'Til my shift I'm in a dead sleep  
Over a loaded atomic torpedo bay.  
It is absolutely the best place:  
There's great peace in knowing  
I'd never be wounded  
At ground zero—  
Only vaporized.”

—Anonymous

<sup>1</sup>Eurythmics' hit song, 1985, with the inference of being in the Navy.



## Reflecting Off the Water

Clearing the baffle,<sup>1</sup>  
I turn to<sup>2</sup> the buoy of our 33rd anniversary,  
And see now how my 6-year life in a tin can has affected us.<sup>3</sup>

—Anonymous

<sup>1</sup>Clear your baffle: look behind you

<sup>2</sup>Turn to: get started toward

<sup>3</sup>Like a Ping Jockey (sonar technician), this submariner vet at last starts to look at the entire screen of the relationship with his “Snatch in the Hatch”, the woman who has weathered life’s storms with him.

~ ~ ~

## Red, White, Black and Blue or Conduct Unbecoming

During the campaign of 1983  
The mantra of the Marines was  
“Kick ass and move on.”

Women who loved them understood the need for a solidified goal:  
They’d been trained *to act*. The slogan, though, promoted  
The same untoward conduct toward some Marine wives.

—With compassion for one battered Marine wife

## Power Play

Robert was a lifer.  
He took some PTSD classes for his Vietnam issues,  
But his personal war with drugs and alcohol had already started  
Before he’d even enlisted on the day he turned 18;  
It was either jail or the military for him. He chose the Navy.

His wild lifestyle became disguised in the trim uniform  
Of a recruiter out of Central High School., St. Paul, MN.

He was really good at the job; it still requires the selling of a product apart from reality.<sup>1</sup> There is quota pressure; recruiters are tempted to be lacking in conscience: promise everything. Deliver nothing of significance.

Alcohol was a cultural norm in the Navy 1980, so what he sold was the party life, Which, unfortunately, made him true to his word: there were beer machines in the commissaries, sanctioned port ale houses, a gallon of rum was allowed on board for each sailor coming back from leave.<sup>2</sup> Pulling into port meant “family picnics,” but the only item on the wooden table in the sunshine was alcohol.

It's cleaned up a lot,  
And let me tell you, families are grateful.

There was so much PTSD in my *own* life—  
Both from him gone so much, and from living *with* him.  
He didn't like that I was no longer totally dependent upon him.  
He bullied people to get my counseling records  
To see if I'd spilled any of his Navy beans,  
Then threw me out, one black-eyed pea,  
Keeping our pod of little sprouts<sup>3</sup> to be hurtful.  
He was not a fit father and I worried about them all the time.  
With the clothes on my back, a pair of shoes and \$6,  
I learned to live on my own, take care of myself and go to Al-Anon.  
He grew disinterested in the kids  
When he could not control me with them,  
So I got them back, which was the best day of my life.  
He can't recall it.

—Dorothy Ann Hunt

<sup>1,2</sup>These statements are those of an interviewed subject. Author fact checked<sup>2</sup> the report of this policy. While not officially sanctioned per the U.S. Navy official website, liberal use of alcohol was corroborated by other Navy personnel of the era. <http://news.usni.org/2014/07/01/hundred-years-dry-u-s-navys-end-alcohol-sea> Drinking idioms like “Down the hatch”, “Groggy”, Binge” and “Mind your Ps and Qs (pints and quarts)” were coined by Navy personnel.

<sup>3</sup>2 preschool children and the apartment.

**Q:** What's to become of the drunken sailor?

Al-Anon <http://www.al-anon.org> Ala-Teen 952-920-3961 for friends and families of problem drinkers.



## ♂ Interplay

“I was a male in the first class to admit women  
In the Navy nuclear power program.  
The women were plenty capable.  
The Navy unfortunately created the ability for women to be in the program  
With no place to effectively be put to work  
And then blamed them for not being productive or successful.  
Now 35 years later, the first women will be allowed on submarines  
Which will create a more complex situation in close quarters,  
Especially during high alert.  
They are not less capable, but will they be less valued again?”

I don't think it will create fights to have women serve in a combat situation:  
As a sailor, you know the consequences are  
Incredibly high if there is misconduct,  
Confinement under the water is already a prison;  
You know your duties and keep your head down,  
Yet, unlike jail, there is self-worth and a team mentality:  
Your own government has purchased equipment worth millions—  
And then entrusted it to a bunch of 20-year olds to keep it tip-top.  
Submerged, we are relying on ourselves  
To make our own air and water supply,  
So on a sub, it has to get fixed right the first time.  
If it breaks while we're down, we have no choice  
But to figure out how to fix it with what we have on hand.  
Lives are depending upon how *I personally* do my job  
Whether it's wartime or not.  
That's very motivational.  
There is great purpose.

There is a very clear hierarchy  
Which is completely understood:  
Every person wears his place on his sleeve.  
Each one knows that place, that job.  
It is this, this, and this;  
You also know what's *not* your job  
And you don't cross those boundaries.  
Man or woman, that doesn't change.

I never saw misconduct on my boat in 6 years.  
There was a very diverse population on board.  
We had every ethnic group—except no women back then—

And no problems with how we all worked together.  
Of course there is another dynamic making WAVES,  
But addressing it directly in training helps.  
I don't foresee trained people  
Becoming unglued over that one issue."

—Daniel

## ♀ Claws Come Out, or Clause: Come Out

"Women in combat?  
Wives at home are already going crazy  
Worrying about prostitutes during shore leave  
Or having their husbands meeting nice girls half a world away.  
Men and women can form bonds and jealousies in all work situations  
Especially when going through life-and-death  
Predicaments in close quarters,  
Including deep bonding that happens  
When two people face combat interdependently.  
I'm thinking NO.  
No way can marriages at home survive that."

—Tammy, hospital worker and Navy wife.

## ♀ Just Desserts

"I've got his paycheck, auto deposited.  
He's gallivanting around the world  
On what seems like a vacation to me  
Compared to my taking care of the kids,  
Holding a fulltime job  
AND fixing my own plumbing  
Here at home (which *he used to* do),  
So I feel like I deserve to go out  
And treat myself sometimes, y'know?"

—Marla



## ♂ Just Deserts

She has the freedom to be  
Wherever she wants to be  
But I can't leave my post  
Until I'm told I can,  
Having a mere 24 hours  
To see something on leave besides:

1. water
2. rocks
3. sand

—And she's thinking *she* deserves

To spend the money *I earned* in this (choose one):

1. Stuffy bilgy sardine can
2. Ominous oppressive outpost
3. Dangerous dirty desert
4. Grimy gooey jungle
5. Nippy numbing tundra
6. Restricted dusty perimeter
7. Barren bombshelled basecamp
8. Hated heinous hellhole.



Desert Shield/Desert Storm  
Commemorative Stamp.

## ♂ Sea Sick

“She had the feeling I abandoned her.  
We were scheduled to have dry dock for a year  
So I sent word,  
We stood at the altar, flew back to base,  
But only 2 days after we settled into an apartment,  
My green card<sup>1</sup> got waved in my face:  
The original orders suddenly belayed  
Due to tensions in the Middle East.  
By morning I was out to sea again.  
We had a communications blackout  
To avoid relaying our position  
And I didn't come back  
Out of the deep for 7 months.”

—D

<sup>1</sup>“You have a green card. You **will** be there.” One of the most hated phrases, meaning that you

have a Navy identification card, you are the Navy's property and you will be back on board whether or not you had other plans scheduled." <http://www.facebook.com/notes/randy-pace/submarine-slang-terms-and-phrases/10151136788588486>

## ♀ Aborted Mission

“We had so few common experiences and memories  
During those six years because we saw each other so little.  
As much as “I got it”:  
    What he was doing  
    The threat of imminent war  
    My place as a wife in all that,  
We still had relationship troubles.  
He missed our pregnancy  
                    and miscarriage.  
He should have been here.”

—T

## ♀ Six of One, Half a Dozen of the Other

“Every time the boat leaves  
You wonder who will divorce this time.  
Once Boomer Widows<sup>1</sup> know how a ‘dance card’<sup>2</sup> works,  
They get tempted to fill it.  
One woman I knew had two husbands - - - - - on opposite rotations  
And as far as I know,  
No one else ever found out.”

—T

<sup>1</sup>Boomer Widow: wives' definition: those with husbands 6 months in port, 6 months out. Sailor's definition: used to describe a sailor's wife looking for a temporary fling, often with another sailor. In some cases the wife would take on a lover from the other crew, thus reducing her chances of getting caught. A boom is a movable pitched mast easily redirected to help load and off-load cargo.

<sup>2</sup>Dance card: the predictable practice of being stationed 6 months on the water, 6 months home.

## ♀ The Cruse<sup>1</sup>

“His longest active duty was on a seaport in the Mediterranean.  
The partying overseas was legendary.

.....<sup>2</sup>  
But mostly chose the locale because he knew its reputation.

He wanted 20 years, but was discharged 2 years early  
On a medical disability for his stiff neck.<sup>3</sup>  
It took precious time to find someone on the inside  
Willing to help me do an intervention,  
But he finally also took alcohol rehab for his disabled personality  
After ‘the Mediterranean Cruise’”.

—Dorothy Ann

<sup>1</sup>Cruse: a container for water, honey, wine or olive oil that won't leak, made of clay, from early Mediterranean culture. (1 Samuel 26:11, 1 Kings 14, 17:12). Oil speaks of a smooth operation. Nowadays pourable decorative decanters of alcohol are kept in a prominent location for frequent “lubrication”.

<sup>2</sup>Time served must include overseas duty for pension requirements.

<sup>3</sup>To be stiff-necked also means to be very stubborn and unwilling to change.

~~~~~

Senseless

My Oedipus id won't let me forget
The 8 year old kid
Standing in the road
I was commanded to run over

So our Humvee
Wouldn't be ambushed
By insurgents,
Or dismembered by a bomb
Sarge thought for sure was
Dug into the shoulder for our demise.
At that moment we *had* to be
Middle-of-the-roaders. Diehard.

What kind of enemy
Would send a child to do a man's job?¹
What kind of monster
Would mow down a boy
Whose friends watched from a soccer field?

—With compassion for "Mike", Humvee driver, who perhaps said this to himself, "In the Valley of Elah".

¹To stop or redirect a massive truck full of enemy soldiers.

The American Legion holds small group sessions to work on PTSD symptoms and the epidemic of suicide over service memories. 1-888-681-6816.

Under the Groves

To get at my kill-nerve
They had to activate that tangle of vicey neurons:
 Gambling
 Swearing
 Fornicating
 Drinking
 Smoking,
Twisted branches
From the dark side of the Tree of Knowledge.¹



—"Mike", who might well have said this to himself, "In the Valley of Elah".

¹Based on Genesis 2:9

Q: Once tapped, is it possible for the military to do a better job "shutting off" the "kill nerve" of a soldier during debriefing when duty is done? If so, why don't they go through those steps pre-release to reduce addictions, PTSD and suicidal thoughts post-service?

Q: What do some individuals do to successfully transition? How can those behaviors be replicated in others? Write your congressman, head of your service branch or Yellow Ribbon Regeneration Program with ideas sparked from these questions.

Unspoken

In this cryptic culture, we are rewarded,
Soothed and bonded by alcohol.
Drugs don't ask, don't tell.
Why should we quit just because
We are rotated out?

We are criers "on the rocks"¹ in a rocky land.
In the act of raising a glass
Is the liturgy of forgetting;
Releasing a toke, the incense
Of the smoldering tip of memory.

—"Mike", who might have thought it, "In the Valley of Elah".

¹Military training infers, "If we are in a tough spot, we respond with toughness". Luke 19:40: "I tell you, if these [disciples] become silent, the stones will cry out!" "If we stay silent/close-lipped, then only the rocks will cry out. No one will believe rocks, so our secret is safe. If we wish to cry, we are Spartan-trained to be so tough, only sand comes out, not tears." Iraq is a hard place. We find ourselves poured out on the rocks. Native American understanding is that rocks are animated and have more feelings than soldiers now allow themselves. "A rock" is a homonym for "Iraq". Therefore, to allow emotion is "Between Iraq and a hard place."
—A.

Liturgy for Military Souls

God of all comfort:
God of warm blanket, God of fluffed pillow,
God of embrace when we are tired and alone,
God of encouragement when we feel like we are not "enough",
God of grace when we are full of frustration and shame,
God of hot chicken soup after a long, cold night,
God of flannel jammies when we are depressed,
God of tears;

God of "atta boys" when we have been ridiculed,
God of compliments when we have labored all day and no one else noticed,
God of thanks when we give up our selves to His service,
God of a Good Book when we don't know where else to turn,

God of the listening ear when we need to vent,
God of butterflies defying gravity when our load is too heavy,
God of funny bunnies and soft kittens and nuzzly puppies when we take
our tough selves too seriously,
God of belly laughter;

God of the good word, the right word, the final word,
when we have been bawled out by humans,
God of silence when we expect the other shoe to drop,
God of the deluge when we deserve a sprinkle,
God of extravagance when we have given a mere pittance,
God of wisdom when we have acted the fool,
God of mercy when we finally see our sin,
God of help just exactly when and how and where we need it,
God of chocolate, God of steak.

I'll say it 'til I believe it: Thank you, Lord, I'm a military soul:
Thank you even for difficulty making ends meet:
so I can quit trying to figure it all out myself
and only listen to You with my spiritual ear.
Thank you even for friction, for that very gnaw and fight
reminds me I want to keep living.
Thank you even for fears:
the one wondering if I will ever be fully appreciated
and understood by that certain someone,
the one about loneliness,
about having to be *interdependent* for so long when I want
very much to be *independent*,
for in those fears I will more likely seek Your arms,
Your care, Your solace, Your promise of Your perfect remembrance,
Your pledge that, though my body might not,
The Word in me WILL remain forever, and that is Enough.

Thank you, Lord, for the chance now to acknowledge all the abilities
You had given me to use over the years
that I never quite needed to notice before.

So, thank you for giving,
And thank you for taking away:
My anxiety,
My apprehension,
My solitary existence. Blessed be Your Name:
Creator, Abider, Enough, O, God.

Thank You, Lord,
For making me, and then calling me good.
For naming me Your beloved.
For keeping me, and never saying to me, "Til death —then I part".
For loving me through sickness and in health.
Be my companion while mine is absent, Jesus.

May I know beyond knowing, today Father,
What it means *to You* that I am Your child.
May I recognize today that is exactly Enough,
God of all comfort, every kind.

—For Janet, wife of Army lifer, David. Based on "Letter to Leone" from I Am Still Me!, p. 238, by the author.

Growing, Apart

He: Aren't you proud of me?

She: Yes. No.
You should be home.

He: I am providing you a sense of safety from afar; it's a sailor's job.

She: I am lost. Then I am found: the captain's wife
Hosts a support group at her home, and I learn I can be strong.

*He: Wow, you've got it all covered!
But...I was supposed to be your covering.*

She: Now I feel stifled.

He: You've replaced me.

She: I've learned to cope
—perhaps too well— without you.

He: Where do I fit in your life now?

She: What do you expect me to give up
Because you're back?

She: After all, you weren't here
When I was struggling, were you?

He: But...it is my duty to be protecting you...

Ah, it is the delicate dance
Of self
And sufficiency.

—For Karen and Phillip

For a Marine on the Plane from NY, with Tears in His Eyes

Two young people enlist
Find each other
Marry, then are flung like clay pigeons
To separate corners of the world.
The enemy's bead, trained,

Confluence cracked,
Breaking shards unpacked,
Skewered splinters from the friendly fire
Of their duffed union,
One more smithereen of war.

—For Zach and Sarah, both the Army's, who made it work; and for Karen and for Phillip, two Marines who pledged to try the DVD "Fireproof" starring Kirk Cameron, and book, The Love Dare, by Alex Kendrick, 2013, ISBN1433677590, written to heal disappointment due to unmet expectations and unfulfilled vows in marriage.

Images of Iraq

Sweat burning eyes
Confusion
Smoke, noise
Bullets hissing toward the sound barrier
Into swaying elephant grass—
At me.

—Mike



6-color uniform jacket from the Gulf War, meant to confuse camera surveillance—and this printer.

Camel Spiders

Every war has something.

Vietnam had leeches.

Iraq has arachnids the size of camels. OK, I exaggerate.

They're desert tan. They have legs that work. Really well.

They're big. Marine rough and tough. They gallop.

They aren't *really* aggressive toward people. It's just a reputation.

What they are looking for is shade.

If they see some behind you

They will run to catch up to it and then try to show their gratitude.

Of course a spider gallumping purposefully

Is an unnerving sight, especially if its eyes

—located appreciably higher than the ground—are trained on *you*;

So soldiers tend to run to get out of their way. The stealth beasts

Aren't about to let that precious shade escape so they run faster to catch it,¹

Which, of course, encourages a guy in desert tan to approach

The land speed record.² Believe me.

—Wesley H.

¹For most people 4 to 5 mph is a very fast walk or jog; and anything over 5 mph is considered running. —“What are the Right Walking and Running Speeds”, Runner's World, 3/7/2013 <http://www.runnersworld.com/...what-are-the-right-walking-and-running-speeds>

²Contrary to soldier lore, camel spiders can run *only* 10 mph. The fastest runner in the world, Usain Bolt, sprinted for 100 meters at 28 mph in 2010.



Camel spiders. (This is considered a bogus photo using forced perspective. Most are hand-sized.) <http://www.camel.spiders.net/>

Testador¹

It was simply what I had to do.
I had always planned to join the Army
And hopefully become a Green Beret
—Until I took that first flight in ROTC!²
It was then I set my sights on Air Force Pilot School.
I don't know whether I got out of the military
All I expected, or exactly what
The expectations of that boy were, but they
Sure as hell got what they expected out of me.
They got all the blood, sweat, and tears
They could squeeze out of any one person,
Short of dying for them.

—Lt. Colonel R.W.

¹Amalgamation of matador, conquistador, tester; Testator: reliable witness; someone who leaves a will or testimony in force at his death.

²ROTC: Reserve Officer's Training Corps

An Education

I started as an ROTC freshman
And never stopped training.
Unless we were at war,
We were playing war games.

—Bob White, 24-year veteran



1950s plastic toy airplane for playing childhood war games.

Slipping the Surly Bonds

My best day? When I got my wings in 1974!
I'd never thought very much about flying,
Besides the usual dreams children have of
Moving weightlessly straight on 'til morning.
Never thought I would ever do this professionally
And certainly never dreamed I would be a fighter pilot.

All that changed the first time

I was invited into a ○○○○ **high-performance jet fighter**....

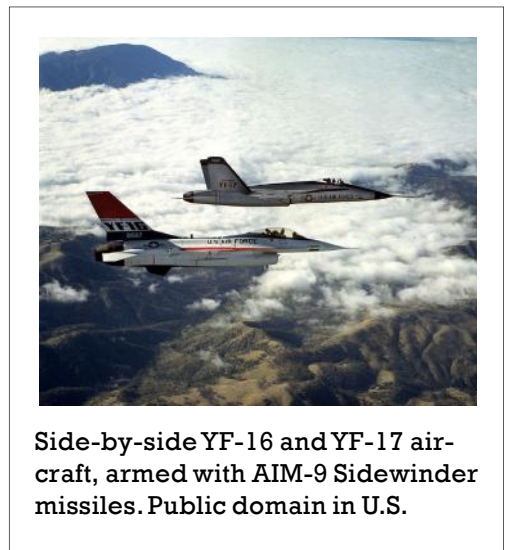
Call it celestial heavenly euphoria,
There are otherwise no words to describe that kind of flight.
You have to do it. In the Air Force I've done so many things
Off-ground that the general population can't even imagine:

Skating on air currents along Snake River Canyon,
Communing with the quiet beauty of the Oregon desert,
"Climbing" Mount McKinley,
Creating my own Star Wars flight sequence
 deep inside the Grand Canyon,
Glimpsing the untouched Canadian wilderness,
Nosing about Norwegian fjords,
Kissing England's coast,
Admiring Germany's mountain castles,
Saluting Spain's terrain.

I lived this dream¹
Every day for 20 years.
Not many men can say that.
My worst day?
When I had to quit flying.

—Career Pilot Lt. Col. Robert White

¹"I had the privilege of flying with Chuck Yeager in a two-ship of F-16s one time many years ago: one of the true highlights of my career." —Lt. Col. Bob White



Side-by-side YF-16 and YF-17 aircraft, armed with AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles. Public domain in U.S.

“High Flight”

“Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I’ve climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds—and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of—wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov’ring there,
I’ve chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air...

Up, up the long, delirious burning blue
I’ve topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace
Where never lark, nor ever eagle flew—
And, while with silent, lifting mind I’ve trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.”

—Excerpt from “High Flight” by John Gillespie Magee, Jr, in the public domain. <http://brainsflight.blogspot.com/2009/07/high-flight-poem-reached-out-touched.html>

Crunching Numbers

While testing the F-4 in simulated air-2-air combat
With 2 A-7D Corsairs of the New Mexico Air National Guard,
An object fell off our plane¹ and
We had 3 seconds 2 decide whether 2 eject.
Pulling that lever meant a 50/50 chance of survival.
Jerking out of the opening cockpit, my helmet hit and broke in 2.

My shoulder also made contact on the way out,
And had roughly the same result.
There is a jet pack on the eject 2 remove the pilot as far and as fast
From the damaged flight as possible;
It was so brisk my finger came along 4 the ride
But my wedding ring stayed behind!²
We were already 2 low 2 allow a parachute
2 open completely;³ I slammed in 2 the desert on my knees.

2 strangers in an RV had seen the plane fly over;
It spoke something

So they followed
And miraculously came across 2 very damaged men in the barren desert
Bleeding out, a world away from base.

When both airmen arrived at the hospital
The factory rep of those ejection seats
Came 2 room 10-34 2 give us 2 thumbs up: "2 survivors. Yessss!"
And was astounded the technology had *actually worked*.
It was the 1st time both pilots ever had come out of an ejected crash alive.

I felt euphoria about living,
Immediately renewing our 9-year marriage vows.
Some of the circumstances were 2 amazing 2 do anything but laugh.
We made the right decision but lost a \$1 million plane.
Brass hauled our behinds in⁴ 2 demand some explaining
And towed the carcass 2 the base entrance⁵
2 make sure everyone got the message.

The pilot was restricted from flight 4 awhile,
But eventually took 2 wing again.
After a 7 month recovery, I returned 2 some duties.
The government didn't want 2 give disability status,
So I finally had 2 write my congressman 4 help.
Up 'til the accident, I was a marathon runner.⁶
That crash 8/10/1982 ejected me 2 an early track 4 desk work
And I was never able again 2 run or compete physically.

¹No one, including the official Air Force Accident Board had a definitive answer about what malfunctioned. Eyewitnesses reported something dropped from the plane to the desert floor, but the item was not found.

²"G": one gravity. Under one G, a pilot is in level flight and feels his normal weight. Some fighter aircraft are capable of up to 9 Gs.

³He ejected as the plane was headed straight down at 4900 feet altitude (at 425 knots, about 475 mph). Robert had a broken back, a broken ocular bone, right arm nearly torn off, collapsed lung, bruised heart, and many other injuries.

⁴FEB: "Flying Evaluation Board." A committee of officers to which a pilot is referred if someone questions his ability to continue safely flying. An FEB can take away a pilot's wings.

⁵405th Tactical Fighter Wing, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

⁶Robert had competed at San Francisco Marathon and Grandma's Marathon (in Duluth), as well as other races.

a pol-sci major—to stay put! They would do the deciding when I could go home.

A week to view a free sky! The quiet was absolutely remarkable. After normal flights were suspended, our war planes then were sucked into the clouds, patrolling the borders and flyways, hungry war birds looking for prey. All America's best were peppering the atmosphere. It was not only an awesome sight, it was a sobering show of force. Thank God they're on our side.

I recall thinking if terrorists hit Boston Nuclear Power Plant, I'd be perfectly OK, instantly vaporized.

Maybe if we'd been less cocky, the Towers might not have tumbled from their pedestal?

—Becky L.

The north face of Two World Trade Center (South Tower) immediately after being struck by United Airlines Flight 175 on 9/11/2001. Wikipedia Commons license.



Psalm 139:1-18

God, You search me and know me—and know exactly where I am.
You know if I am sitting, or standing—jumping—
or on my knees in some desert.

You perceive my thoughts and needs.

Whether I can walk or only lie in a hospital bed, You are watching;
You are familiar with all my ways of doing things and know the help I need.
Before a word is even on my brain-damaged tongue,
O God, You know it completely.

Close behind me and close in front of me,

You hem me in,

Shielding me with Your hand.

Such knowledge is beyond my understanding, too high beyond my reach.

Where could I go if I wanted to escape your Spirit?

Where could I possibly flee from Your presence?

If I climb the North Tower, You are there;

There, too, if I topple to the deepest depths.

If I fly to the point of the sunrise, or far across the sea,

Your hand would still be guiding me, Your right hand holding me.
If I ask darkness to cover me and light to become as night around me,
That darkness would not be dark to You; night would shine as the day.
You know me through and through: You see my every action.
O God, Your thoughts are mysterious! How vast is their sum!

—Shared by former Military Chaplain Rebecca Ellenson, Finlayson, MN,
United Methodist Church, 8/11/2013, with some context additions by author.

They Also Serve

Gregory grew up in the East West Indies on the islands of Antigua and St. Thomas. He joined the Army National Guard of the Virgin Islands in 2002 to serve as a chaplain. After graduating from Seminary in 2006, his battalion was mobilized to serve in Guantanamo Bay for a year. He was mobilized again to serve in Iraq in 2009.

—Rev. Glenvil Gregory now resides in Newark, NJ, and continues to serve in the National Guard with the HHC 228 Support Battalion that drills in Sellersville, PA. From “Ministry in a War Zone”, Moravian Magazine, March 2010, pp. 12-13.

Note: The author was a short-term missionary to the island of Antigua 1996 after a devastating hurricane, where she met Glenvil. It was a surprise to learn that even in America's protectorates, people faithfully serve United States' interests.

Protectorates, officially called “insular areas of the United States,” are jurisdictions administered by the United States that aren't part of a state or a federal district. Freely associated states administered by the United States include the Marshall Islands, Federal States of Micronesia and Palau. Other protectorates of the United States include the unincorporated territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the uninhabited U.S. Minor Outlying Islands. In the past, territories such as the Philippines, Cuba and the Panama Canal Zone were also considered protectorates, but all 3 have gained full independence. —https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_territory

Man of the Cloth in the Land of the Hajib¹

“The Battalion Commander endorsed the religious program I carried out, including weekly worship services for all faiths, weekly Bible studies, pastoral visitations, counseling, marriage enrichment seminars, and religious instruction. War presents a variety of emotions: feeling spiritually challenged, homesick, dealing with issues of death and dying. My personal challenge was to control my frustrations and affirm my own belief that God was in Iraq with us. Further, I was faced with helping soldiers talk about the effects of war, hoping to affirm that God is present even when death reduces a person to a fading memory.

The destruction of family life, which is a casualty of this war, makes me angry and sad; it introduces a new element of loneliness and loss. As a chaplain, I had to find healthy coping mechanisms and stay focused on the soldier’s issues without imposing my own situation. The difficult goals were to be resilient and affirm the strength of the human spirit, show that living in times like these requires nothing short of the grace of God. Some soldiers will always find the advice of chaplains difficult. They feel chaplains aren’t exposed to fighting so they can’t possibly understand. The wounds of war are very deep. The path to healing is a long hurtful process because we have to enter into that pain again.”

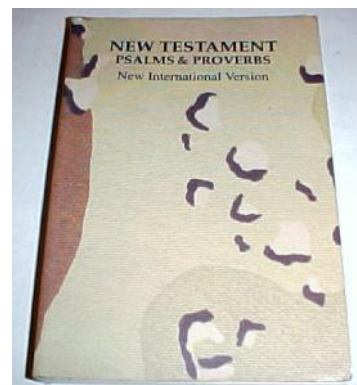
Wounds hurt and so does healing. The difference is that one multiplies the pain, the other leads to health and liberation.”

—From “An Interview with a Military Chaplain: The Rev. Glenvil Gregory”, *The Moravian Magazine*, March 2010. pp. 12-17.

¹Hajib: Muslim woman’s veil.

Front Words

Expressions of faith are manifested in different ways
But faith plays a pivotal role in soldier’s lives.
For any deployment there is a search for
Protection from harm, a constant search for peace,
A grasping for reassurance from a supernatural source.
This means pursuing God like never before and
Seeking a stronger connection to Him.



Desert Storm
New Testament

Faith is what kept us focused, motivated, inspired to serve.
Wanting to uphold the army values consistently in the face of adversity,
I would ask,

Q: “What is God’s purpose in this war?”

Q: “Is it necessary for so many people to die?”

Q: “What value does human life have?”

Q: “How can we learn to value life and refrain from destroying it?”

—The Rev. Glenvil Gregory, Chaplin, Iraq. “The Moravian Magazine, March, 2010, p. 18.

Sorties of Victory: Prayer: A Report Back

One Combat Soldier’s Comment:

Q: “Why bother to ask God’s help when you can radio in a Thunderbolt?”¹

God’s Response:

MEMO

RE: Daily Counsel

Dear Soldier,

My options are not the same as yours. My decisions are not toggled “this” or “that”. My ways are not linear: they are a mesh of infinite dimension, proportion, latitude, longitude and duration. They are a spiral of cause and effect that corkscrew into realms you do not know. Your prayers resonate not only here and now, but for eternity, continuing to affect events in the hereafter. This is the power of prayer: it does not die when it comes from your lips. A prayer is an entity with authority in My throne room, not to manipulate or “strong-arm” Me, but the humble prayer of a righteous person² stands sentinel as witness to faithfulness, so come to Me with your need.

I am NOT too busy to review these “troops” and send them on missions of completion on your behalf! I would that an army of these “armed-guard prayers” would crowd My throne room to report for duty, to be recommissioned to surround you with My blessing!

Do not hesitate to “take up My precious time”, for by My Nature, I multitask (so your own human nature, at times overwhelmed by events and circumstances, can be relieved). Present your needs like battle objectives to Me. Let Me dispatch My “troops” like faithful soldiers on missions of completion and outcome, performing sorties of victory.

Do not be afraid you will interrupt Me. Ask, that your joy may be full,³ and My joy will also be full, knowing My children think enough of Me to involve Me in their lives. Ask *largely* that your fruit might remain⁴ on the earth. (Try to get a Thunderbolt to do that!) In every *thing*—every life event, every fork in the road, every circumstance or dilemma—let your requests be made known unto Me. Give Me every opportunity to reveal Myself strong in your life.

—Your Heavenly Father, Almighty God, Commander and Chief

¹An A-10 Thunderbolt II is an American twin-engine jet assault aircraft developed by Fairchild-Republic in the early 1970s to attack tanks, armored vehicles and other ground targets. <https://youtu.be/BuSBBL6m2h0>

²James 5:16 “Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous person can accomplish much.”

³John 16:24 “Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be made full.”

⁴John 15:16 “You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask of the Father in My name, ‘Jesus’, He may give to you.”

~~~

## Ask Good Questions Instead of Looking at His Shiny Car

The army trains you well  
But no recruiter will tell  
That “training time” isn’t the same as “stint”;  
You must “work off the debt” (there’s a hint).

Negotiate  
Your fate:  
Write the country where you’d like to act

And your desired task into the contract.  
It's no longer a given to get college tuition;  
*Stipulate* upon enlistment to come to fruition.

—Phillip, Marine, 2007

## Vanguard

10-12% of us are protectors.  
That's who recruiters look for.  
We naturally want to be *the best* at protecting,  
Therefore we sign on with the Marines.

Recruiters then up the ante  
To tantalize us with the excitement of ordinance,  
Bomb detonator disconnection,  
To fill *their* hidden quotas, replace damaged specialists.

Our brains are shaken in training,  
Our adrenals eventually go up in smoke  
And life without that kind of excitement  
Can seem like no life at all.

—For Tyler

**Note: 12% are conscriptable in any population. Typically 2% serve, even in Bible times, based on population figures and armies mentioned in Genesis and Isaiah.**

## Full Service

1981 Minnesota Pinto  
Rolled, recovered, back on all fours;  
Saddled with the Air National Guard.  
Phony hand-painted racing stripe

Followed the dotted line from Ogden to Oklahoma,  
Screwdriver for a shifter; picked up a drifter,  
Hit a rock, drove the oil filter north and  
Sealed fate.

Pothole popped the rear windshield  
Pony-expressing from Oklahoma to Oracle, AZ.  
Died a smoke-screen death.  
Eulogized on a bombing range;

Gave its life for its country:  
Target fodder gone foul.<sup>1</sup>  
It might still be in the desert;  
At least a piece or two.

—Wth Gary

<sup>1</sup>Foul: Used similar to its sports origins, a pilot commits a “foul” when he violates protocol on an air to ground bombing range. The range controller transmits, “Foul, 2,” to let pilot #2 know he committed the error. Also used generically to express discontent with another’s actions.

## This is No Vacation

There’s an understanding among soldiers:  
I’ll watch your back  
But your luggage is your own responsibility.

—”Mitzy”

## Private Conflict, General Mayhem

A helicopter repair specialist for the MN National Guard  
Was called up for the heat of battle while  
A teenage daughter melted her wiring,  
His rotation not consulting family times.

Took a deferral after “Reserving” 12 years  
To admit her to rehab after intervention.  
Frankly, mechanics and electricals were much easier  
For him to fix than a strung out daughter;

Psychologists were better able to give her a tune-up.  
No deferral was allowed the next rotation



U.S. Military duffle bag.  
<https://www.army-surplusworld.com>

When wife collided with the strain,  
Started missing on some cylinders, creating

A battleground at home over duty? or family?  
Still, could a marriage have been overhauled  
Had he not had to fight a war  
On 3 fronts?

—With compassion for George

### Homeward Bound

Families cluster into Welcome Center bivouacs  
A cloud of witnesses anticipate return  
From the most recent Front.

The ice breaks as expectation mounts.  
A crease-faced man, thinks “*This* is how it should have been”,  
Kneels down, warms to a patriotic child:

“What have you got there?”  
She lifts a slim blue iris<sup>1</sup> toward his nose.  
“Flowers. How ‘bout you? Did you bring a gift for your soldier?”

The flat-topped man nods,  
Slowly opens his calloused hands  
For her to see and whispers, “Hope.”

### Donut Holes

My wife and I didn’t get  
Nearly as much free health and dental care  
As we were promised.  
The VA is 8 hours away  
So I pay for some locally.  
It was a promise they couldn’t keep.

—Bob



<sup>1</sup>Iris is the symbol for  
hope, fidelity, valor.

## Mail Call on the Front: Gulf Wars

Just when I thought the only thing  
To look forward to behind the perimeter  
Was dung beetles in my underwear,  
We have mail call.

Skype is nice  
But there is still something about a letter from home  
A piece of substance that proves you exist,  
Our history before deployment *not* contrived dream.

First I feel the heft of it, rub it between my fingers, across my lips  
Catch the scent of anything that does not smell of here  
Kiss the stamp you licked,  
Note its difficult journey

Imagine its treasure  
Trace your handwritten address  
Invent you at the desk, a pen, your hand, *that* dress, you  
Thinking of me. These things can't be rushed.

I listen to the page unfold  
Watch the rhythm of crossed t's  
The way you poke at your i's,  
● Can tell upside-down when you jest ●  
●

Follow each line with my eyes,  
My heart;  
Hear your voice form every word:  
    "The dog had puppies,  
        the silo finally fell,  
            the team won."

## Battle-Scarred: Thoughts on Memorial Day

On battlefields around the world  
I've watched the men who still have breath  
step slowly past the flags unfurled  
to walk the rows and rows of death.

These are men who braved the blast  
with fallen comrades lying here,  
who bravely come to search the past:  
its inner pain, its haunting fear.

...A battle flashback, rumbling low,  
too faint for us who watch them kneel,  
erupts along a distant row,  
its silent screams impaled on steel..

Their wounds are not just outer kinds,  
but bits torn bleeding from the soul;  
the deepest wounds are in their minds,  
it's here war takes its steepest toll.

The cause they fought so hard to win,  
for which they paid the highest price,  
once led them through a battle's din  
to make of blood their sacrifice.

Watch these men and learn from them,  
they stand as mentors to us all.  
Hear them sing their battle hymn  
to those who answered freedom's call.

For freedom's call will come again,  
her enemies will never rest,  
but here and there a few good men  
will hear, will answer with their best.

—John Thornberg, November 2001

**Memorial Day  
Service at  
Biwabik Town-  
ship Cemetery  
(rural Gilbert,  
MN) 5/25/2009.**





## Desert/Gulf/Iraq Wars Title Sampler

Carver County Library System 2016

956.7044 GOL **Ahmad's war, Ahmad's peace : surviving under Saddam, dying in the new Iraq** / Michael Goldfarb.

956.70443 BON **Arrows of the night : Ahmad Chalabi's long journey to triumph in Iraq** / Richard Bonin.

956.70443 PAC **The assassins' gate : America in Iraq** / George Packer.

709.2 MUM **Baghdad journal : an artist in occupied Iraq** / by Steve Mumford.

920 HOL **Band of sisters : American women at war in Iraq** / Kirsten Holmstedt ; foreword by L. Tammy Duckworth.

956.70443 JAM **Beyond the green zone : dispatches from an unembedded journalist in occupied Iraq** / Dahr Jamail ; foreword by Amy Goodman.

956.70443 ZIN **Boots on the ground : a month with the 82nd Airborne in the battle for Iraq** / Karl Zinsmeister.

CD 070.92 DOZ (u) **Breathing the fire** [sound recording] : **fighting to report—and survive—the war in Iraq** / Kimberly Dozier.

956.70443 GOR **Cobra II : the inside story of the invasion and occupation of Iraq** / Michael R. Gordon and Bernard E. Trainor.

J 956.7044 DOA **Conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan** / Robin Doak.

616.85212 ARM **Courage after fire : coping strategies for troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan and their families** / Keith Armstrong, Suzanne Best, Paula Domenici ; foreword by Bob Dole.

956.7044 SMI 2016 **Danger close : my epic journey as a combat helicopter pilot in Iraq and Afghanistan** / Amber Smith.

355.0082 MON **A few good women : America's military women from World War I to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan** / Evelyn M. Monahan and Rosemary Neidel-Greenlee.

956.70443 RIC **Fiasco : the American military adventure in Iraq** / Thomas E. Ricks.

956.70443 AJA **The foreigner's gift : the Americans, the Arabs, and the Iraqis in Iraq** / Fouad Ajami.

956.7044 RIC **The gamble : General David Petraeus and the American military adventure in Iraq, 2006-2008** / Thomas E. Ricks.

920 HOL **The girls come marching home : stories of women warriors returning from the war in Iraq** / Kirsten Holmstedt.

CD 956.7044 HER (u) **Heroes among us** [sound recording] :  **firsthand accounts of combat from America's most decorated warriors in Iraq and Afghanistan** / edited and with an introduction by Chuck Larson ; [with a foreword by Tommy Franks and an afterword by John McCain].

956.70443 GLA **How America lost Iraq** / Aaron Glantz.

956.704431 ISI **Hubris : the inside story of spin, scandal, and the selling of the Iraq War** / Michael Isikoff and David Corn.

J 956.7 BAL **Iraq** / [written by Dynise Balcavage]. 2003.

956.70443 IRA **Iraq and the lessons of Vietnam, or, How not to learn from the past** / edited by Lloyd C. Gardner and Marilyn B. Young.

956.7 COL **Iraq in the news : past, present, and future** / Wim Coleman and Pat Perrin.

DVD HISTORY BIO IRA **The Iraq war** [videorecording] / The History Channel.

956.70443 MUR **The Iraq war : a military history** / Williamson Murray, Robert H. Scales, Jr.

921 AL-ASKARI **Mayada, daughter of Iraq : one woman's survival under Saddam Hussein** / Jean Sasson.

956.70443 YON **Moment of truth in Iraq : how a new "Greatest Generation" of American soldiers is turning defeat and disaster into victory and hope** / Michael Yon.

956.7 POL **Understanding Iraq : the whole sweep of Iraqi history, from Genghis Khan's Mongols to the Ottoman Turks to the British mandate to the American occupation** / William R. Polk.

327.730567 KRI **The war over Iraq : Saddam's tyranny and America's mission** / William Kristol and Lawrence Kaplan

920 MUH 2016 **We Survived Iraq and Turkey : Long Road to Freedom : A True Story of an Iraqi Kurdish Family's Escape to America** / Taha M. Muhammad.

## 2.9 AFGHAN WARS: 2000–PRESENT

Names for soldiers during this war: troops, peacekeepers, warriors.

Afghanistan has been a place of conflict since 1978, when Russia began battling against what became al-Qaeda. 2001: NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) intervention began. The public aims were to dismantle al-Qaeda and deny it a safe basis of operation in Afghanistan by removing the Taliban from power. Afghanistan asked Bin Laden and al-Qaeda to leave, but did not demand it.

As of 2013, tens of thousands of people had been killed in the war; over 4,000 ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) soldiers and civilian contractors as well as over 10,000 Afghan National Security Forces had been killed. —<https://en.wikipedia.com>

“Encourage the exhausted and strengthen the weary.  
Say to those with an anxious heart, “Take courage, fear not.”  
(Isaiah 35:3,4)

“Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear, not absence of fear.” —Mark Twain

“Cobbled together in Kabul together.” —Angela Hunt

### **Dedication**

For all those who have mostly come back,  
For those who kept vigil at home,  
For those who are yet to go,  
I salute you.

## Flying Solo

Our whole family history is tied to the sea.  
My great-great grandfather had a schooner in the War of 1812.  
In my lifetime, no sooner than he left, my dad died in the Navy in WWII  
And came back to us by Destroyer in a box at the Boston shipyards Oct. 10, 1946.  
My grandfather was a Coast Guard lifer and served until Oct. 16, 1947.  
If one word could describe a family,  
Ours would be “stoic”.  
Gone from each other for months at a time,  
Everyone carries on.

In this Afghanistan generation,  
Navy Special Forces still perch in crow’s nests.  
The surroundings are rocks and sand, lonely as water.  
Being a drone operator is like being submerged in stealth:  
There are nests<sup>1</sup> where operators are stationed alone for months.  
Sometimes in the heat one can barely breathe;  
At other times one barely *dares* breathe.  
When we are rotated back to civilization,  
We are overwhelmed by things and people and can hardly speak.

—Jane L.

<sup>1</sup>Based in secret locations. Aboard an 1812 schooner, a “crow’s nest” is a place apart providing a bird’s eye view.

## Welcome Home

Out past the laws of propriety, back in the raw,  
We test the incoming cherries,<sup>1</sup>  
Pit them against each other,  
To prove ourselves.  
Stressified boredom produces  
Brutal examinations  
Simulating combat to the death,  
Because the time, it will come.

Testosterone takes us by the throat  
And because no one can survive here with *crystal* balls,  
We beat each other up to test our mettle,  
To keep us alert, to say “welcome” and “farewell”.<sup>2</sup>

So what's the problem, as MOF<sup>3</sup> rotated out,  
When I greet my wife,  
Home from work,  
With my fist?

<sup>1</sup>Freshly rotated-in recruits

<sup>2</sup>“For a lot of men, the security of being enclosed by a group like this apparently outweighs the terror of being in combat. During World War II, wounded soldiers kept going AWOL (Absent Without Leave) from the rear-base hospitals in order to rejoin their units on the front line. Clearly, for those men, rejoining their comrades was more important than the risk of death.”  
—Poem based on War by Sebastian Junger, Hachette, 2010, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup>Modern Opposition Forces

*Note: Some have experienced 2-3 hyper-stressful tours of duty in Afghanistan lasting 12 months each. No wonder yo-yoing between cultures creates difficulties with reassimilation.*

## Choices

Decisions soldiers face can be tough.  
You capture 4 people on a recon mission.  
You know in your gut one is an insurgent  
And have a pretty good idea the other three are innocent goat herders  
But nobody ain't sayin' nothin', at least that you can understand.

In order to act, there is a strict protocol:  
There must be deadly force used against you before *your* first shot.  
The rules of engagement<sup>1</sup> come multiple choice.  
(Note: All might be wrong answers):

- A. Execute the probable terrorist in front of three witnesses.
- B. “Dispatch” them all for security’s sake, making more enemies in the village. Or,
- C. Because there is no certain proof, let all 4 go free, which will return 3 fathers safe to their children tonight, and allow the other one to set up an ambush—for you.

—Based on “Jason’s” scenario in movie “Sole Survivor”.

<sup>1</sup>The upshot is the rules of engagement are becoming impossibly complex—to the point that our soldiers are being mowed down before they can sort out the details.

## No Excuses

A blast  
Instant shrapnel to the thigh  
Medic materializes, extracts,  
Applies a miracle pack  
It burns bad, but  
Cauterization: immediate!  
Sarge barks,  
“Now get up that hill.”  
No butts.

—Mike



Because ballistics are so effective, platoon members so spread out, personnel so minimal, and terrain so rugged, wounded guys can bleed out before medics can approach them. Each soldier is now provided a standard issue personal medic pack like this one from the 1<sup>st</sup> Gulf War, but now with instructions how to stop one's own bleedout.

## Ameliorate Or Aggravate?

Wounded Vets in Vietnam had Air Evac  
To give them a 97.6% survival rate.  
There is not sufficient cover in Afghanistan to provide  
Immediate helicopter support for the wounded; so  
A modern medic is trained to treat soldiers the same as in the Civil War:  
Ambitious field surgery. The operating theater? The all-outdoors.  
Amputate. Amend with prostheses<sup>1</sup> later. But,  
Rather than ameliorate, that surgery can leave  
Ambient dust in wounds  
Causing sepsis, sometimes years later,  
Which ramps up auto-immune responses,  
Bringing ambiguous symptoms.

—With Paul Overton, “Project Neurosteroid”. [TPT.org](http://TPT.org) at Pittsburg, PA, Research Hospital.

<sup>1</sup>Each prosthesis costs about \$50,000, requiring regular tune-ups/adjustments and replacements. Pricey medical technology and the staggering need for it has been an unexpected cost of this war.

**Q:** Is funding for the war factoring in the specific policy to amputate?

**Q:** Is paying for the war sustainable, given the prognosis for its aftermath?

## Caged Rage

Soldiers have been  
Guinea pigs  
Way too long.

—Connie

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3041126/Almost-1-000-membersArmed-Forces-require-psychiatric-treatment-given-anti-Malaria-drug-linked-mentalhealth-problems.html#ixzz3XWRbvErD>

## Take Cover

As a translator,  
I was reassured by a  
Description of the objective,

But also by the fact that  
Rangers hadn't prayed as a team  
Before they left that day.

A group prayer always came  
On nights when the men believed  
They were facing a dangerous task.

Otherwise, most of them  
Prayed as I did, quietly and in their own way,  
As they headed out.

—Nadia, Afghan translator, based on Ashley's War: The Untold Story of a Team of Women Soldiers on the Special Ops Battlefield, by Gayle Tzemach Lemmon, 2016, p. 228.

## Cleaning House II

What is it  
About death or life  
That demands our attention  
Keeps us beating our hearts



Even when emergency rooms  
Paddles and monitors  
Are nowhere in sight?

What is it  
About the will to live  
That creates order  
Prioritizes duty  
Lays the facts in neat, stacked piles  
And helps us work  
Through them in nanoseconds?

What is it  
That coagulates a potential bleedout  
From bullet-ripped flesh  
Into congealed buddies, compression of time  
Tourniquets made from our own belts  
—That might have hung *ourselves* an hour ago—  
And the sweet Rx of encouragement  
Until The Crisis has passed?

—Based on “Cleaning House” by the author, from I Am Still Me! p. 74.

## Standing for What’s Fair

Everything about the military  
Is hurry up and wait,  
But  
Hurry to surgery  
Then have to wait in line for years  
For health care when  
I’ve already given away my legs?

## Peg in a Deep Dark Hole

Learning to walk  
With stick legs  
Is easier than learning  
To live with bionic nightmares.



It's the mental aspect of injury that's tough:  
The electric pain my mind still knows as  
The limb that is currently invisible,  
I grieve for the parts I left in Afghanistan;  
Maybe these stabs are *my pieces*  
Grieving for *me*.

They cool the body in crisis down to 10 degrees Celsius brain temp  
To control massive blood loss,  
Which provides twice the survival rate for dramatic injuries,  
Allowing more multiple amputees to walk away  
With even greater grieving over more lost parts.  
In a previous war, we would have been casualties remaining at rest.  
Now we must remain in ertia...I'd rather be inert...  
What meaningful jobs are there for Titanium Men that *don't* include  
“Lab Rat”, “Super Sprinter”, or “Detector of Poison’s<sup>1</sup> Exit (DOPE)?”  
Now a Chromali part or two is screwed in,  
Some say “better than new”,  
But we, the screwed, know better.

This is the new frontier:  
We must negotiate *mortis causa*, the prospect of death,  
Then beyond—  
Coming to *modus vivendi*,  
A way of getting along with our selves—  
*And* coming to terms with all our moving parts.  
How much can be lost and still be us  
On the precipice of this brave new world?

—Based on a report by Paul Overton. [TPT.org](http://TPT.org) “Project Neurosteroid” at  
Pittsburg, PA Research Hospital and Grady Memorial Hospital/Dr. Wright, BBC,  
5/31/2013, 8:30 pm.

<sup>1</sup>It has been suggested that Titanium could be a carcinogen, so a new steel process has provided  
a new product: Chromali. —Jesse H.

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“152 women have now (2016) died serving the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan.”

—Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta at a news conference with Chairman of The
Joint Chiefs Martin Dempsey, reported in [Ashley's War](#).

Uniformity

There is no question
Women and men are both
Committed to doing the job
A uniform demands.
They're fighting and
They're dying together.
The time has come
For our policies
To recognize that reality.

—General Leon Panetta, U.S. Pentagon

In June 2013, a Pentagon news conference highlighted integrating women into more combat-interfaced jobs like Special Operations, according to General Bennet Sacolick. That includes American women soldiers interacting with Afghan women and children to obtain information about insurgents. Sacolick said, “These women very well may provide the foundation for ultimate integration of men and women in the service.” The women of CST (Command Forward Support) Battalion have pleaded that the appeal to Afghan women to help finish the war in Afghanistan be expanded because it is working.

On 1/1/2016, President Obama quietly signed a special operations command that each of the services will either fully open all roles to women or explain the reasons why they will stay male-only. All exemptions will have to be approved by both the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of Joint Chiefs. (Based on Ashley's War, p. 280.)

Some read that to mean a wall has been breached, a ceiling smashed. Others feel a dam has burst: women will no longer have a choice in their service whether they are sent to combat units or to support roles.

With this executive directive, women's service can provide a new demographic not only to keep the war-machine well-oiled, but potentially to escalate its influence, to fuel its reach.
Q: Is this the very best use of the natural resource of our young women and men?

Women who are expected to carry 70# packs have ended careers prematurely with painful hip socket wear because women's pelvises are built differently than men's. **Q:** Will this type of repetitive motion injury treatment be funded when men don't seem to suffer from it? Is it prudent to submit any soldiers to a practice that could wear down bone?

—Partially inspired by the news story, “Growing VA Needs More [Help For] Women,” KARE-TV 11 News, 3/31/2015, 10 pm. 30,000 female vets in Minnesota have been admitted to the VA Hospital with sexual trauma, gynecology and mental health issues.

♀ Shut Up and March!

Women are recruited with this basic premise:

Be a man. Join the Army.

It used to be they were offered support roles

And could apply for more dangerous missions.

The lobby to say women are as capable has some credence,

But now there is no longer a choice how to serve.

They will put you where they need you. No discussion.

—Barb

♀ Kill Them With Kindness?

I hope to help the neediest people.

I never felt I could bring enough benefit along.

There is great poverty and need during any war.

I still want to do humanitarian aid when the conflict stops,

Still want to build schools, maybe clinics.

That is the best way to convince people away from jihad;

Are we doing kind things for the populace that really matter?

I pray for the safety of those I meet.

Also that there will not be personal repercussions

For the women who provide us with information.

It is an incredibly courageous thing they do.

Husbands or brothers might beat their wives or sisters

—Or worse—if they found out they are “soft” on Americans.

It is an amazing thing that in order to save other’s lives,

Afghan females provide American females information

About where weapons are stashed,

IEDs are buried, or insurgents are hiding out.

It takes great trust that we can do the job they place faith in us to do.

—Nadia, translator, based on information in Ashley’s War, p. 229.

Q: Does the CIA/military ask some missionaries to be translators? Do CIA agents pose as missionaries and English teachers? If so, how does that impact the effectiveness of their other message to the culture?

Note: “Some Afghan women are trying to end this war, and some Afghan men also risk their lives for ideology, and to help American soldiers.” —”The Voice of the Martyrs”,

In Tact

He came home from the war intact
Stopped to change someone's tire on the side
Of the road, was hit by a passing car;
He'll be in a wheelchair for the rest of his life.

He makes sandwiches for his daughter
Every morning with great and painful difficulty.
Each moment is a sacrifice, a sacrament,
Of knife, of bread, of handing a bag.

Every moment, therefore, is holy.
He chooses to fill his heart with good,
Figuring he cannot give to others
What he does not already own.

—Based on story related by Father Thomas Joseph from Becoming Who You Are by James Martin, SJ, Subject of a homily at St. Nicholas Church, Carver, MN, 9/2/2012.

War Hounds

The secrets of combat
They are dark
And they are deep
They howl
And bark in the night
They must be taught
To heel, to sit, to stay.

Screams

My warfare-obsessed 11-year-old grandson and I are seated at the kitchen island, paging through his book of military vehicles when he asks, "What was it like

in Afghanistan, Grandpa?” and suddenly I see the little girl outside the frost-etched window in her ragged tunic, staring at me with wide-open, emotionless, haunting eyes.

I see her frequently, almost everywhere I go, in fact, but never before at my grandson’s house, and instantly I worry that she has intentions upon him as well. I have no weapons that can stop her now. I glance at him quickly to see if he has noticed her, but she is not yet visible to him and besides, he is busy memorizing tanks. I have told no one about her.

He asks again and I can only offer generalities in words he has already heard: dangerous, traumatic, hot, exhausting, exhilarating. I know what he really wants to understand, but how can I tell him? I cannot even find words for it inside my own mind and fear its true expression will be a volcanic, innards-spewing eruption of a scream that, once released, might never end.

But even if I *could* find words he is too young, his world too good and full of promise to be prematurely awakened. He still trusts. He still believes. I know that sooner or later he will eat the forbidden fruit, yet right now his innocence is a glorious thing, a shining protective cloak, and I wish I could touch its hem and be made whole.

I can tell he is impatient with my sanitized answer for he sits drumming his sturdy athletic fingers on the granite countertop, but there is another hand drumming there, too: skinny with almost translucent skin. Grandson is between her and me, obscuring her except for the hand and the stick-like arm.

“Well, did you kill anyone over there?” he persists, stirring the rumbling magma, and she leans forward to fix those hollow eyes on me, waiting for my answer.

For my scream.

It nearly comes, but quite unexpectedly he gently slides a hand over mine as he reads my face and says, “It’s OK, Grandpa. It’s OK.”

Almost instantly she vaporizes, and I can almost hear *her* scream. I will hold fast to him for as long as he will permit, for right now he has the greater power. He is my newfound weapon.

—James Robert Kane, author and veteran. Short Story first published in Talking Stick 23 by Jackpine Writers’ Bloc, October 2014. Used by permission.

Sending Military Aid: Flashback

Someone said, “Have you heard the latest dumb stunt President Bush has done? He has sent an aircraft carrier to Indonesia to help the tsunami victims. What does he intended to do, bomb them?”

An engineer replied quietly, “Our carriers have three hospitals on board that can treat several hundred people; their nuclear power can supply emergency electrical power to shore facilities; they have three cafeterias with the capacity to feed 3,000 people three meals a day, they can produce several thousand gallons of fresh water from sea water each day, and they carry half a dozen helicopters for use in transporting victims and injured to and from their flight deck. We have eleven such ships; it’s called ‘humanitarian aid’. What did you send?”

—Based on blog post by ChuckExAnon on 3/25/2009. http://www.answerbag.com/q_view1354354

♀ *A-propos'*

I am one sub-contractor of many. We work in retrofitting the M-RAP (Mine-Resistant Attack Protection) vehicle so the contractors can do the actual repairs. I do background checks to make sure everything is done safely.

I’m honored to do my job. I hold our flag, our nation and patriotism very tender to my heart. It’s a family affair; 2 brothers-in-law, father, grandfather and his two sisters have all served. My sister is in Afghanistan now. I always saw people in uniform honoring that uniform.

The more I see discontent over a nation that is drawn toward conflict, the more appreciative I am of the faithful and cooperative service of individuals. It’s admiration, even. I realize I shouldn’t take things for granted: my freedom to vote, my freedom of religion.

Our service people are not empowered to decide where to serve but they do bring honor and dedication wherever they are placed. Those of us who remain at home don’t think to uproot *ourselves* in solidarity when our loved ones are shipped out! We citizens get to stay put, to elect who decides how long each war will last; while the deployed only have the choice to muster up the courage to fight it.

Our service personnel get blamed for the actions they are directed to take. Respect is denied them from the whole world due to poor leadership choices or political opportunism. There might be experiments conducted on soldiers in the form of inoculations or maybe amputation of a limb not assured to survive in order to try a new-concept bionic device. They are asked, “Wouldn’t you like to be better than before?” They forget the grieving a wounded soldier goes through on behalf of his own body.

The lowest paid personnel are usually the ones most likely to be in harm’s way. What if that were reversed? Would Brass still stay in *for life*? What is the right compensation for young families who are without a father or mother for their formative years?

Privates, Sergeants and Lieutenants die in the line of duty. But strangers back home breach the sanctity of their memory by protesting at funerals, as if a memorial service were merely another anti-war rally. They were *volunteers who were given orders!* We can’t forget that.

—Denyse

¹French: *À-propos*: relevant, opportune, appropriate. Transliterated: without theatrical props, genuine.

Under the Influence

The United States has two faces in the world:
We might be the saving grace for small nations,
But they might just as likely consider our intervention
“Military persecution” when *we* label it “help”.

We say we represent justice and freedom for other countries.
But not all want our corporate capitalism;
A benevolent dictatorship might offer a security that people want, too.
It doesn’t matter the place;
Everyone pictures his own country as the hero of their people.
Their military and their leaders might be *their* heroes.

—Denyse

Bottom Line

“There is very little our own soldiers want:

- To be remembered for their selfless service.
- That their families be taken care of back home while they can't do it.
- To return to intact families.
- To see peace when they leave their station and come back to civilian life.
- To have the sense that it mattered they risked their lives.

Instead they:

- Are belittled for their part in a war that has gone on too long and cost too much.
- Have been demoted at work for taking service leave; find their previous job has been phased out due to economic changes.
- Come back to fractured families and debt.
- Return to a bickering or ungrateful populace.
- See misdirected effort, discover politics rather than prudent strategy.

How can we help? From my perspective:

- Give a “Thank you.”
- Donate a little money to a trusted local organization. If that doesn't feel like enough, consider this:
- If troops are being mobilized, then we citizens should be mobilized to personally help, too.”

—Denyse

Here are some of Denyse's ideas:

For families of troops:

Develop or support effective organizations to help local members of our military.

1. Try **Beyond the Yellow Ribbon** organization: connecting service members and their families with local community support, training, services and resources before, during, and after deployment. <http://www.btyrofchaska.org> (Source: “Chaska Today”, July 2014, p. 1)

2. Concentrate on service families who are our own neighbors as the beneficiaries of service projects. Discover and meet their needs: shovel their driveway, invite them to dinner, shop for their birthdays and Christmas, bring groceries—today's military families fall on tight times.

3. Request the White House send a phone card to a specific soldier: *Write a letter to a soldier, include a request, mail it to the White House, and they will add a phone card and forward your letter to that soldier.* <http://www.saveoursoldiers.us/2.html> Mail to: Mr. President, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC 20501-0002.

4. **Ship a Package to a Military (APO/FPO) Address:** <http://www.ehow.com/how/4606462> , includes “What to Send Someone in [Navy] Boot Camp”, “How to Write Someone at [Navy] Boot Camp”, “How to Send Mail to a [Navy] Ship” (5/04/2013). Check the web for the stipulations of other service branches.

5. Learn about aftercare through the **Wounded Warriors** program. Assist with physical therapy. Offer rides to the doctor. Wounded Warrior Project's mission is to honor and empower wounded soldiers. It serves veterans and service members who incurred a physical or mental injury, illness, or wound, co-incident to their military service on or after 9/11/2011, and their families. Programs focus on engagement, economics, families, and mind and body. <http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org>



♀ Horrific Hazing

Women have paid to participate as soldiers
With their psyches (ostracised and bullied by their male teammates)
Their constitutions (hair set on fire)
Their hymens (hate/dominance rape).

♀ Damaged Goods

Rape is such a terrible raw word
A cold and brutal utterance
Sordid, unsavory,
One stark monosyllable
That dangles as a suffix
From everything that happens

thereafter.

When you,
You you,
Whoever you all are, harassed,

Then raped my candid, confident, competent daughter
Simply for sport, to make your point,
To leave your dominant musk,
Do you know what a trail of tears you left?
Do you care?

You you you were supposed to have her back,¹
But stole from between her legs.
As soon as she was able
She showered and showered again
Hoping to wash away the stench of you you you
The feel
The gooseflesh.
She kept your secret and kept it well

For the good of the unit
Not even willing to tell her friends, family, superior officer,
Confining herself to her barracks, then her room,
Then her bunk of depression, to lock in the secret,
To lock out the world, until it seethed, boiled out,
And she started cutting herself,
Her only pressure valve.

—Based on “Rape”, from Way Out on a Limb, One Mother’s Journey Through Her Daughter’s Rape, by the author.

¹30% of U.S. female troops report harassment, sexual harassment, violation and rape. Some consider the actual figure to be more than 50% of all enlisted women. In order to keep units intact to finish the objective, many decide not to report the crime until they are processed out. A variety of sources were consulted including Healing Suicidal Veterans by Vic Montgomery, MAEd,CMAC, RAS. (Master of Addictions Educator, Certified MA Counselor, and Registered MA Specialist.)

♀ Erogenous War Zone

Sexual aggressors are often military comrades
Proving manhood with and without a gun.
Living in high-stress primitive conditions affects behavior,
Turns some feral. Female soldiers wonder,
“What will a report of harassment do to my promotion?
I’m supposed to be tough.
What will allegations of his emotional abuse do to my career?
How will saying a fellow soldier raped me affect the success of this mission?”

Once a victim of sexual assault is physically safe,
The trauma is not over:
“I have lost my dignity, honor, confidence.
I now feel dirty in the uniform, so I have given up my career.
I am angry, disgusted with myself, live with guilt and sorrow. I cry.”
The moral burden is not hers, but ours.

Of the female vets returning from OIF/OEF, 23-33% have experienced military sexual trauma (MST). Vet reactions to service abuse and rape range in severity, timing, duration, and type, including bulimia, anorexia, sexual dysfunction, drug abuse, borderline personality disorder (mood swings, physical symptoms without medical diagnosis and others now termed Complex PTSD), apathy and cutting. Military personnel are taught to be self-reliant and courageous, so it can be difficult to ask for help. “A suicide attempt indicates a vet is under extreme duress and in a state of acute crisis rather than primarily exhibiting attention-seeking behavior...Beneficial treatment options: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Interpersonal Therapy (IPT), Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Service Dogs (SD), Art Therapy. (Try the Art of Recovery Program: <http://www.arts.state.mn.us/aor/2010>) Don't be afraid to seek help from several different counselors, therapists, or to try different treatment methods.” —Vic Montgomery. Based on Healing Suicidal Veterans, pp. 59-69.

♀ “Father” Knows Best or Bread and Water

“My curmudgeonly CO is so pro-active about potential entanglements
Among his male and female personnel, he doesn't even let us talk to each other.
If there is an exchange, he prods in his brittle way like a protective father
To see if it was any more than, ‘Do you know what's for dinner tonight?’
There are so few other women here I may as well be in solitary confinement.”

—One Soldier who volunteered for duty.

♀ Pregnant Pilot

I've passed my 1-year pilot's service marker
Logging a pregnancy.
We've been hoping for a child for 3 years.
That can be difficult when we are flying in opposite directions!
My husband and I are delighted,

Yet, having a baby will affect my career:
I won't be likely to want those combat stripes now.

Too, there is uncertainty for our little family.
I am assured 6 weeks leave after the birth,
But my husband's taking online classes for advancement.
Throwing a baby into the mix sounds suddenly selfish and foolhardy.
My parents are on my approved next of kin list.
There is great comfort in knowing that when I'm deployed
Or if hubby doesn't make it back, that our child will be well cared for.

This is a demanding career. They say they own me.
I wonder sometimes if the Air Force will pressure me to abort this mission.
Even if Mom and Dad come to our aid,
Why should I have to delegate parenthood?
Will s/he forgive me for not being there?
Can I forgive myself for being so far away from motherhood duty?
How will my not being with our child affect him/her?

—One Female Pilot

Note: It can be confusing to families that there is only a small segment of soldiers involved in "action" compared to "support".

For children worried about war, terrorism; and for psychological issues concerning children, try Connect for Kids, resources for parents, educators and others to help children cope. http://www.connectforkids.org/resources3139/resources_show_htm?doc_id+120823 Post 3/24/2003 is devoted to "Kids in Tense Times", an interactive presentation by Dr. Alvin Poussaint, noted child psychologist, historian William Tuttle and Glasgow Middle School Principal G. J. Tarazi., p. 220.

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## ♂ The Joy of Killing

Out in the Korengal  
Rock faces shoulder boulders;  
Cedar arms  
Climb the backbone of a hill.

An enemy's stony silence  
A stoic wall of will, vicious vines  
Tentacles of terror, roots deepening;  
The law of justice: jihad.

A confirmed insurgent?  
Rigid guns thrust  
Predator aggression pumps,  
Ejeculating explosive energy.

Testosterone gains  
A firefight conquest;  
That foe  
Won't kill again.

—Based on War by Sebastian Junger

## Still There

"I Pledge Allegiance to the flag  
Of the United States of America,  
And to the Republic for which it stands,  
One nation under God,<sup>1</sup>  
Indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

<sup>1</sup>A poll taken by NBC on 9/24/13 (registering the highest number of responses to any of their polls) indicated 86% of America's population wants to keep the words "In God We Trust" on money, and "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance (2007 version, above). 14% were against.

Note: To enter the "Patriot's Pen Competition" yearly essay contest: VFW/Veterans of Foreign Wars and Ladies' Auxiliary, Kansas City, MO. Questions: [Kharmer@vfw.org](mailto:Kharmer@vfw.org) 818-968-1117.

"If we ever forget that we're one nation under God,  
then we will be a nation gone under."

—Ronald Reagan

## Project America

One Life, One Flag, One Mile.

Running a risk:

Planting a flag every 5280 feet

Pounding 2200 miles of pavement,

One for each service person lost in Afghanistan

A marathon every day punctuated with 22 salutes.

—Based on a story about Mike Erick <http://www.pickleballchannel.com/2014/05/memorial-day>

### “The Battling Boys of Benghazi”

We’re the battling boys of Benghazi,  
no fame, no glory, no paparazzi.

Just a fiery death in a blazing hell,  
defending our country we loved so well.

It wasn’t our job, but we answered the call,  
fought to the Consulate and scaled the wall.

We pulled twenty countrymen from the jaws of fate,  
led them to safety and stood at the gate.

Just the two of us and foes by the score,  
but we stood fast to bar the door.

Three calls for reinforcement, but all were denied.  
So we fought and we fought and we fought ‘til we died.

We gave our all for our Uncle Sam,  
but Barack and Hillary didn’t give a damn.

Just two dead Seals who carried the load.  
No thanks to us...we were just “Bumps In The Road”.

—Excerpts from Anonymous, received by email, 9/16/2015.



Note: U.S. Special Operations, JSOC (Joint Special Operations Command—our most top secret commandos), CIA and State Department worked on a mission in 2012 in response to a premeditated Islamic Militia attack in Benghazi, Libya. Many Libyans condemned Khattala Ansar al-Sharia's attack and praised U.S. Ambassador Stevens, who was killed. On the weekend of 7/14/2014, U.S. Army Special Operations Forces and the FBI captured Khattala Ansar al-Sharia in Libya.

Multiple anonymous sources reported the main function of our U.S. Ambassador's diplomatic office was to move weapons from Libya to anti-Assad rebels in Syria, without any other political role. By contrast, on-the-record testimony reported: "The CIA was not sending weapons. The post was a symbolic gesture, that the U.S. stood behind Benghazi's dream of establishing a new democracy." —[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2912\\_Benghazi\\_attack](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2912_Benghazi_attack)

"We've spent many years chasing and killing men who were, in fact, not even there."

—Brian Castner, author of All the Ways We Kill and Die: An Elegy for a Fallen Comrade, and the Hunt for His Killer, 2016, p. 50.

## What This SEAL Stands For

Justice, integrity, leadership, but more than that;  
Destiny will favor me if I am prepared in mind, body, and spirit.  
I must work harder than expected and be more patient than others.  
Leadership is a privilege, not a right.  
As a warrior, I will be the last to pick up my sword but will fight  
To defend myself, my family, my country and my way of life.  
I will find my peace and happiness through seeking truth, wisdom and love,  
Not by chasing thrills, wealth, titles or fame.  
I will seek to improve myself, my team, the world every day."

—From The Way of the SEAL by Retired Navy Seal Mark Divine as quoted by Harvey Mackay in "Discover Your Personal Values for a Fulfilling Life", "Minneapolis Tribune", Monday, 10/20/2014.

## Sound Off

There's no way to describe the sound of a high-velocity bullet.  
When I was a kid a .22 would go "pew"; in Vietnam it was "pop".  
But in battle these days it is more like a "snap" or an eerie cracky "thoup"  
As it breaks the sound barrier right over your head.

—Mike

## Rattled

During bivouac training  
There were lots of desert survival exercises  
To get us to think critically about  
How we did things.  
One might even say, “To think crucially”.  
We learned to shake out blankets before going to sleep.  
One morning there was a rattlesnake  
On my stomach who had sought warmth overnight.  
The training must have helped;  
I’m still here.

—Firmus O.

## Blue Hats at the Door

“If I don’t answer the door  
Then he’s not dead.  
He’s not dead yet.

—Jenny W., from All the Ways We Kill and Die” An Elegy for a Fallen Comrade, and the Hunt for His Killer by Brian Castner, p. 8.

“World War II was remarkable, in that virtually 100% of the Minnesota population was involved in some way. Besides radio and newspapers, there were newsreels every day at the movie theaters that kept people informed, even if some was propaganda to keep people motivated to sacrifice, save bacon fat (to pack in bullets to keep the powder dry), and collect milkweed or goat’s beard pods (the fluff was used for life vest flotation) for the war effort.



A goat’s beard pod after it popped open.

But in the Afghanistan era, only about 2% serve, 3% of the population follow news about



the war. The government has created a virtual news blackout so people won't recoil about military spending or object to what they have no knowledge of. Unless you have someone serving there from your family, it's pretty hard to follow exactly what's going on."

—With Tom Kerber

Note: As of 2014 the VA estimates there were 22 million military veterans in the U.S. population. 7.3% of all living Americans have served at some point in their lives. —Mona Chalabi <http://fivethirtyeight.com/betalab/>

## Keep Peace Like the Irish but Learn War from the Scots

I've been stabbed.  
Shot,  
Hit in the head—you name it—In several countries.  
I did not start any of those conflicts.

I had to tell myself,  
As service personnel  
"Ours is not to reason why,  
Ours is but to do or die"<sup>1</sup>  
And so that is what I needed to do.

The Marines want "Scots". That is, historically,  
The Irish could dodge and run on their island to disengage conflict.  
The Scots, who owned a forbidding sheer rock face, had no such luxury;  
They had no place to retreat so had no choice but to learn how to fight.  
I've lost some of my own Scots blood soldering on.  
My heritage says, "I stand ground".

—Colonel Anonymous, a Scottish-American from Minnesota<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>From "The Charge of the Light Brigade" by Alfred Lord Tennyson, Poet Laureate of the United Kingdom. Written in 1854 during the Crimean War:

(2)     "Theirs not to make reply,  
          Theirs not to reason why,  
          Theirs but to do and die:  
          Into the valley of Death  
              Rode the six hundred.

(3) Cannon to right of them,  
Cannon to the left of them,  
Cannon in front of them  
Volley'd and thunder'd;  
Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
Boldly they rode and well,  
Into the jaws of Death,  
Into the mouth of Hell  
Rode the six hundred."

<sup>2</sup>The author met the Scottish-American marine one day, a very engaging, brilliant sort who had just returned from war to be with his kids. He was someone with an uncanny ability to read body language and personality type. 2 days later she also met him in jail ministry Bible Study. He had found himself in jail because Afghanistan hadn't let go of him yet.



## **War in Afghanistan Title Sampler**

Carver County Library System 2016

958.1047 AFG **Afghan Endgames : strategy and policy choices for America's longest war** / Rothstein and John Arquilla, editors. 2012.

J 958.1 WIL **Afghanistan** / Terri Willis.

J 958.1 BJO **Afghanistan** / Ruth Bjorklund. 2011.

958.1 EWA **Afghanistan : a short history of its people and politics** / Martin Ewans.

958.1 GOO **Afghanistan's Endless War : state failure, regional politics, and the rise of the Taliban** / Larry P. Goodson.

958.1047 CAS **All the Ways We Kill and Die : an elegy for a fallen comrade, and the hunt for his killer** / Brian Castner. 2016.

956.054 ENG **And Then All Hell Broke Loose : two decades in the Middle East** / Richard Engel. 2016

958.1047 FEL **Aspiration and Ambivalence : strategies and realities of counterinsurgency and state building in Afghanistan** / Vanda Felbab-Brown. 2013.

J 956.7044 DOA **Conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan** / Robin Doak.

954.053 RAS **Descent Into Chaos : the U.S. and the failure of nation building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia** / Ahmed Rashid.

921 KOOFI **The Favored Daughter : one woman's fight to lead Afghanistan into the future** / Fawzia Koofi with Nadene Gourhi. 2012.

958.1046 SCH **First In : an insider's account of how the CIA spearheaded the war on terror in Afghanistan** / Gary C. Schroen. 2012.

958.1047 SAD **Forbidden Lessons in a Kabul Guesthouse : the true story of a woman who risked everything to bring hope to Afghanistan** / Suraya Sadeed with Damien Lewis.

958.1 ANS **Games Without Rules : the often interrupted history of Afghanistan** / Tamim Ansary. 2012.

958.1045 COL **Ghost Wars : the secret history of the CIA, Afghanistan, and bin Laden, from the Soviet invasion to September 10, 2001** / Steve Coll.

958.1047 FAI **The Good War : why we couldn't win the war or the peace in Afghanistan** / Jack Fairweather. 2014.

958.1045 FEI **The Great Gamble : the Soviet war in Afghanistan** / Gregory Feifer.

362.2 MON **Healing Suicidal Veterans : recognizing, supporting and answering their pleas for help** / Victor Montgomery.

958.1047 STA **Horse Soldiers : the extraordinary story of a band of U.S. soldiers who rode to victory in Afghanistan** / Doug Stanton.

958.1047 JON **In the Graveyard of Empires : America's war in Afghanistan** / Seth G. Jones.

958.1047 GOL **Level Zero Heroes : the story of U.S. Marine Special Operations in Bala Murghab, Afghanistan** / Michael Golembesky with John R. Bruning. 2014.

958.1047 CHA **Little America : the war within the war for Afghanistan** / Rajiv Chandrasekaran.

958.1047 BLE **The Only Thing Worth Dying For : how eleven Green Berets forged a new Afghanistan** / Eric Blehm.

958.1047 HAS **The Operators : the wild and terrifying inside story of America's war in Afghanistan** / Michael Hastings.

958.1047 PAR **Outlaw Platoon : heroes, renegades, infidels, and the brotherhood of war in Afghanistan** / Sean Parnell with John R. Bruning.

920 CUR **Prisoners of Hope : the story of our captivity and freedom in Afghanistan** / Dayna Curry and Heather Mercer with Stacy Mattingly.

CD 958.104 CHA (u) **The Punishment of Virtue** [sound recording] : **inside Afghanistan after the Taliban** / Sarah Chayes.

TEEN ABA **The Secret Sky : a novel of forbidden love in Afghanistan** / Atia Abawi. 2014.

371.82342 MOR **Stones Into Schools : promoting peace with books, not bombs, in Afghanistan and Pakistan** / Greg Mortenson.

305.3095 NOR **The Underground Girls of Kabul : in search of a hidden resistance in Afghanistan** / Jenny Nordberg. 2014.

Ebook / 958.1047 **Whiskey Tango Foxtrot : strange days in Afghanistan and Pakistan** / Kim Barker. 2016.

958.1047 GAL **The Wrong Enemy : America in Afghanistan, 2001-2014** / Carlotta Gall. 2014.

CD 958.1047 JUN **War** / Sebastian Junger. 2010.

# Epilogue

John Bright, a member of the House of Commons, using Biblical context during the debate over the 1853-1856 Crimean War, said, “An angel of death has been abroad throughout the land, you may almost hear the beating of his wings;...We looked for peace, but no good came.” It has been no better on this side of the pond.

Concerning War chronicles many—but not all—of the conflicts on American soil and overseas in tandem with other nations. How many times have we truly said, “We looked for peace”? How many times have we had to admit of our actions, “No good came.” Still, war has enticed the human race again and again.

The work below is backstory from an orchestral and choir piece “Dona Nobis Pacem” [“Lord, Grant Us Peace”] by Ralph Vaughn Williams with words by Walt Whitman. The author attended a concert featuring the piece while completing Concerning War - Book 1.

## Dona 1861

A Civil War volunteer, age 42,  
In the military hospitals outside Washington,  
Walt Whitman<sup>1</sup> served as unofficial nurse  
But majored as morale officer,  
His bedside manner didn't matter  
Which side that bed was on;

Tenderly visiting torn men  
Penning words home to worried folk.  
The wounded came in and  
The dead left on a road scored by ruts.  
Those times found their way into him  
Pierced through him

Brought cadenced ranks of words  
To the fronts of pages,  
Pealed warnings to lovers of wars,  
Whispered condolence to widows with tears.  
Yet, through other darker memory, he recalled  
Its halls of sulfurous smoke,

Scorched leaves of grass;  
Its gagging butchery,  
Scarred carnage;  
'Twas then he grasped  
For wisps of words  
Vaporous.

## Nobis 1914

Half a century away and a continent apart, another war,  
Hardly civil. Full of vibrato, altruism, wanting to save his  
English speaking world from clash and crush,  
Ralph Vaughn Williams<sup>2</sup> volunteered for The Great War,  
Wearing 42 long years under his uniform

Courage driving  
Ambulance managing  
Faith locating shed blood triaging  
Through craters of suffering.  
They watched. They saw. They made

The measured leader in him<sup>3</sup>  
An orchestrator of armament, *their* score  
Written for a timpani of artillery,  
A cacophony of cannon  
Fodder. The Score, barely kept.<sup>4</sup>

## Pacem 1937

Few note nor long remember  
Past a score of years. But  
After his music fell  
Silent, but as ideology shook,  
Sympathetic memory reverberated

Then came to attention as  
The stage was set again.<sup>5</sup>  
The composer with the poet's heart<sup>6</sup>  
In rotary rhythm  
Moved himself and a generation

Stanza to stanza toward an idea. He penned  
And penned 'til his tears ran dry,  
While Brass warmed by degrees  
For a reprise of the same worn tune:  
“Even the score”.

The powers that be moved  
In a thrombosis of political lockstep;  
His response: thunderous trombones  
A choir in potent harmonious discord  
Beautiful ominous sorrowful words  
Tremulous frightening trenchant<sup>7</sup> healing music.

<sup>1</sup>Poet Walt Whitman was 42 when the American Civil War broke out. Though he was against slavery and for free soil states, he was even more against war, so he chose to volunteer in hospitals on both sides of the conflict. He wrote Leaves of Grass in 1885 and added to it throughout his lifetime. It became the 1891-92 “Death-bed” Edition with 697 pages.

<sup>2</sup>Ralph Vaughn Williams enlisted as an ambulance driver in WWI, also at age 42. War was declared in 1914, Armistice signed in 1918, but there were continued confrontations in Eastern Europe, Balkans, and Romania through 1922. —The Vanquished: Why the First World War Failed to End by Robert Gerwarth, 1964, 2016. ISBN 0374282455.

The war was a profound disillusionment to those who thought to find something noble or heroic in personal combat. What they found instead was a use of technology whose sole purpose was mass killing: the manufacture of poison gas, aerial surveillance, distance bombardment (artillery, tanks, machine guns, flame throwers, mortars), and automatic weapons. We cannot congratulate ourselves for advancing so very far from WWI, can we?

—Inspired by Program Notes for Ralph Vaughan Williams: *Dona Nobis Pacem* by Michael Moore, Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia. Reprinted by permission for “A Concert for Peace” by the Wayzata Community Church, Chancel Choir and Friends of the Wayzata Symphony Orchestra, Sunday, 3/19/2017.

<sup>3</sup>Vaughn Williams served the injured because he didn't want to shoot a gun. The strategies he used for efficiency & safety caused his "promotion" as an artillery officer. That moral wounding blocked musical composing for years to come.

<sup>4</sup>An estimated 8.5 million people were killed, but no country has absolutely exact figures.

<sup>5</sup>William's symphonic and choral work “*Dona Nobis Pacem*” was composed in 1937 while Europe was surrounded by the rise of Nazism and Fascism, civil war in Spain and the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. His opus was courageously meant as a clarion warning against war and a call toward peace.

<sup>6</sup>Vaughn Williams used Walt Whitman's poetry as well as scripture for his choral text.

<sup>7</sup>Trenchant: penetrating, keen, biting, deep feeling.

## Dona Nobis Pacem

“Nation shall not lift up a sword against nation,  
Neither shall they learn war any more.  
And nothing shall make them afraid,  
Neither the sword go through their land.  
Mercy and truth are met together;  
Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Truth shall spring out of the earth,  
And righteousness shall look down from heaven.  
Open to me the gates of righteousness, I will go into them.  
Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled  
And let them hear, and say,  
    It is the truth.

And it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues,  
And they shall come and see my glory. And I will set a sign among them,  
And they shall declare my glory among the nations...  
Dona Nobis Pacem  
    God grant us peace.

—Adapted from Micah 4:3, Leviticus 26:6, Psalm 118:19, Isaiah 43:9, Isaiah 66:18-22, and Luke 2:14.



# Coming in Volume 2:

There will be at least 22 more personal veteran and vet-family stories in **Concerning War - Volume 2**. Here is the list of topics that will be covered:

## **Volume 2: Current Issues: Abroad & At Home 2015–Present**

### **Section 1: Foreign Policy:**

- 1.1 Sovereignty
- 1.2 Cold War
- 1.3 NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)
- 1.4 Ukraine/Crimea
- 1.5 Balkan War
- 1.6 North Korea
- 1.7 Terrorism & Ethnic Cleansing
- 1.8 Libya
- 1.9 Syria
- 1.10 Food for Thought

### **Section 2: Domestic Policy:**

- 2.1 Immigration
- 2.2 Constitutional Rights
- 2.3 Native American Issues
- 2.4 African American Issues
- 2.5 Fake News
- 2.6 A Call to Prayer

# Coming in Volume 3:

There will be still more personal veteran and vet-family stories in **Concerning War - Volume 3**. Here is the list of topics that will be covered:

## **Volume 3: Resources for Returning Vets and Their Families:**

- 3.1 Relationships
- 3.2 PTSD
- 3.3 Moral Injury
- 3.4 Society
- 3.5 Suicide
- 3.6 Conscientious Objectors
- 3.7 Solutions
- 3.8 Devotions with One Vietnam Vet
- 3.9 Reprise/More Veteran's Stories Organized by War
- 3.10 Epilogue
- 3.11 Resources
- 3.12 Bibliography
- 3.13 Index of Volumes 1, 2 and 3

# Also by Angela Hunt

## Books:\*

- My Father in Verse: Working Through the End of Life  
Understanding, communicating with, and ministering to the terminally ill.
- Am I Still Me? A Group of Words with Fundamental Questions for Those Struggling to Recover Themselves  
Awareness of and coping with the struggle of brain malfunction. (Crisis-phase companion to "I Am Still Me!")
- Way Out on a Limb: One Mother's Journey Through Her Daughter's Rape  
Discovering the function of family, the possibility of forgiveness.
- I Am Still Me! Brains are Injured, Hearts are Mended  
Another collection of recovery helps for stroke and Traumatic Brain Injury survivors, their caregivers, and anyone else asking, "Am I Still Me?"

\*All of the above free-verse books include questions for discussion and helpful resources.

## Assists:

- Concept editor for Cremation or Burial? by Jack Albinson.
- Interviewer and chronicler for an upcoming autobiography of Father Thomas Joseph's year serving with Mother Teresa.

## Anthologies:

- "Thor" in 15th Annual Poet-Artist Collaboration April 4-May 4, Crossings of Zumbrota Anthology, 2016.
- Selections in Where Rivers Converge: Prose & Poetry of Carver County Writers, 2016.
- Selections in When Time and Space Conspire, 38 poets from 6 countries, 2017.

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CONCERNING WAR - VOLUME 1: A COLLECTION OF RECOLLECTIONS WITH ROOM FOR RUMINATION

A retrospective of personal accounts, tidbits of history and free verse about American military involvement from First Contact to Afghanistan, CONCERNING WAR - VOLUME 1 is a cross-section about how Minnesotans feel about war.

This book is full of opinion:

From all types of people,
Many of them strangers to me who wanted to
be interviewed,
Wanted to voice what they felt right now about war,
About coming back from it,
About going into it again.

Some of it is not particularly flattering or comfortable,
Others will swell your chest.
But isn't that what we say we've fought and died for,
The freedom of speech?
The people who were willing to say something
Felt strongly enough to say it.

I'd like to honor that.
I hope you'll value that honesty, too.

—Angela Hunt

Over 100 Minnesotans have been interviewed for this book. It is illustrated with more than 270 photos, including family artifacts from 1778 forward and a collection of military memorabilia from the Civil War to Iraq.

Praise for CONCERNING WAR - VOLUME 1:

"Angela honors what vets can't tell us. And she honors what they did say. The contents are as unique as individual experience and as universal as war itself."

—Doug Munson, author of *By the Time I Got to Woodstock*.

"Read your war. Then read the rest."

—Retired Lt. Colonel Eugene (Dick) Tirk



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